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GRADUATE SCHOOL OF BUSINESS

MASTERS IN BUSINESS LEADERSHIP

**TITLE OF DISSERTATION: THE EFFECTIVENESS OF PUBLIC
PROCUREMENT PROCESSES ON PUBLIC ENTITIES SERVICE DELIVERY: A
CASE STUDY OF ZIMBABWE UNITED PASSENGER COMPANY (2018-2022)**

BY

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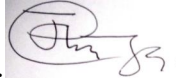
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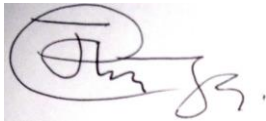
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DECLARATION

I, **JOHN CHISUNGA**, do hereby declare that this dissertation is a result of my own 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.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'John Chisunga', is written over a light gray rectangular background.

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this project to my wife, and my nephews, who gave me all their support throughout my studies. Thank you so much team, I did this programme for you.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to pass my sincere gratitude to my Supervisor, Dr. Remembrance Sithole who tirelessly guided me throughout this Masters study dissertation. His inspiration, support and encouragement went a long way in teaching me to be principled which made this project a success. Secondly, I would like to thank my colleagues and friends for their encouragement and wonderful Staff at the Graduate School of Business, Bindura University of Science Education, Zimbabwe for their magnificent administration of this Master's program. In addition, I pass my great appreciation to senior management at ZUPCO, for granting me authority to carry out this research study in various departments across the organisation who participated in the survey that formed part of this project for their valuable contributions. Lastly but not least, I give all thanks to the Almighty Heavenly God who gave me all the strength and will power to undertake this dissertation

ABSTRACT

The purpose of the study was to investigate the effectiveness of public procurement processes on service delivery performance of Zimbabwe United Passenger Company. The objectives of the study were to: ascertain the current state of public procurement policy on performance at ZUPCO; evaluate the extent to which public procurement planning influences the service delivery performance at ZUPCO; assess the effect of public tendering process on service delivery performance at ZUPCO and proffer possible recommendations on how best public procurement and service delivery can be improved. The current study adopted pragmatism philosophy. This study adopted quantitative method that is used for exploring the association among variables. The mixed methods research designs were adopted for the study so that they can complement each other to review the aspects under study. Public procurement process at ZUPCO suggested that they have a significant effect on service delivery of public entities. The study observed that there is a lot that needs to be done at ZUPCO to make the parastatal efficient in terms of the public procurement process and service delivery. The study presented mixed feelings about the state of planning at ZUPCO, sometimes the planning processes works well and sometimes it fails; tendering processes at ZUPCO is not very transparent, the study concludes that tendering process must be transparency and procurement contracting management is effective at ZUPCO. The target population was 65 ZUPCO employees and sample size was 56 employees. The study concluded that contract management affects service delivery in local government since it helps to reduce costs and improve financial and operational performance of the organizations. The study concluded that there is a positive association between public procurement processes and service delivery effectiveness at ZUPCO; there is a positive relationship between procurement planning and service delivery effectiveness at ZUPCO and there is a positive link between public tendering process and service delivery at ZUPCO. The study recommends that Government should create tight procurement oversight mechanism on departmental procuring entities and the State Procurement Board; all the procurement staff and persons involved in the tendering process is necessary in order to provide them with skills and knowledge of procurement process; and agitates for the establishment independent Contract Management Department for easy tracking of the contracts in the entity. This study was constrained on ZUPCO and hence study should be conducted in other entities in the country for comparison. Further researches should be conducted in other procurement procedures. Lastly research should be done in private institutions for comparison purposes and thus act on the divergences.

Key words

Public procurement, service delivery, and procurement procedures

ACRONYMS

CMED Central Mechanical Equipment Department

EU—European Union

PPDPA—Public Procurement and Disposal of Public Assets Act

PRAZ—Procurement Regulatory Authority of Zimbabwe

PMU—Procurement management units

USA—United States of America

WTO—World Trade Organisation

ZIMRA—Zimbabwe Revenue Authority

ZUPCO—Zimbabwe United Passenger Company

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CHAPTER I

1.0 Introduction

In the modern world, public procurement is increasingly recognized as essential in-service delivery (Grandia & Meehan, 2017), and it accounts for a high proportion of total expenditure. By understanding the steps involved with procurement, it is possible to get better understanding of real cost involved with attaining any goods and services (Mehmet & Vivona, 2021). The importance of public organizations as entity designed to serve the public, along with the imperative for accountability, makes the analysis of its procurement effectiveness key against its overall performance (Matabvu, 2022). The current chapter focuses on showing clearly the need to carry out research through background of the study and statement of the problem. In addition, the objectives and hypothesis were disclosed in the chapter which gave direction to the whole project.

1.1 Background of the study

The global economic crises that have emerged over the past few years have put tremendous strains on (and remains a challenge for) all the major economies of the whole world (Grandia & Meehan, 2017). Achieving the balance of retaining front line services for citizens and keeping staff whilst making economies fit for purpose in the long term is a challenging task for most economies. However, procurement can have a substantial role in achieving this (West, 2012). Sound public procurement policy brings immediate tangible macroeconomic benefits where more cost-effective procurement relaxes the budgetary pressure and creates fiscal space (Mehmet & Vivona, 2021). One initiative taken by the European Union (EU) as part of its plans to tackle the financial crisis is an accelerated public procurement procedure. This initiative should provide a boost to local economies by allowing a more rapid execution of major public investment projects, reducing procurement procedures from 87 days to 30 days. The EU Commission views that speeding up procurement procedures can support member state actions to foster growth in their economies through rapid execution of major public investment projects (Vivona, 2021).

Although many countries still have ‘closed’ procurement regimes, public procurement has become an international concern. This is evident from the fact that the public sector represents about 50% of many of the world’s economies in terms of spending on providing services and procuring from the private sector.

Therefore, many countries have developed highly evolved procurement regimes, which recognise the universal fundamentals of public procurement. Total public procurement in the EU, that is the purchases of goods, services and public works by governments and public utilities, is estimated at about 16.5% of the EU's Gross Domestic Product or GDP (Vivona, 2021).

In America, public procurement is a vital process in the timely delivery of services to the public and it enables the government entities to promote quality and accountability (Matabvu, 2022). A study by Anon., (2020) in USA found out that reforming public procurement was believed to be an essential aspect in the struggle against the political machines of the time and against the perceived corruption, and inefficiencies of government. In addition, achieving coordinated public procurement excellence is extremely challenging in decentralized, fragmented and skewed toward the local level systems, such as the one prevailing under American federalism.

In Asia a study by Anteneh, (2019) confirmed that public procurement is crucial in the delivery of public goods and services but recommended the governments to modify the procedures to curb corruption. In addition, the results of the study confirmed that procedures and processes in the public procurement has been a setback since it delays lot of projects and promotes corruption. The similar findings were in Austria, where a study by Mokogi, (2019) confirmed that public procurement is a necessity for parastatals but the timing and corruptions leaves a lot to be desired.

In addition, public procurement has been topical issue in Africa where many economies are striving to improve efficiency and effectiveness in the provision of goods and services. The recent studies in Africa has proved that public procurement is the way to go on effective service provision and cost cutting but there is still lot to be done on the procedures (Nzitunga, 2019). Studies by Tanzi and Davoodi (2020) in Tunisia, have established a link between corruption, collusion, and public procurement. They were of the view that corruption affects the allocation of public spending as investment decisions are influenced by the opportunity to obtain bribes. As a result, large construction projects like big dams are given priority over health and education projects, while spending on operation and maintenance is neglected. They also opined that as a result, corrupt public officials show a total disregard for existing procurement laws and procedures. Politicians may also be motivated to create inefficient rules intended only to generate rents for public officials **Invalid source specified..**

Studies by Dagaba (2018) in Ghana asserted that though the public procurement act has established guidelines, principles, and tender committees to take charge of its object, it has, however, failed to provide for emergency procurement procedures. This has culminated in procurement officers resorting to their discretion during emergency procurement which is subject to immense human error.

A study by Ado-Ekiti, (2021) in Nigeria confirmed that major problem expressed by the procurement officials is the confusion created by the existence of multiple procurement guidelines and procedures established by multiple agencies. There is neither a single comprehensive public procurement standard nor a single nodal agency to deal with public procurement policy. A Study by Nzitunga, (2019) in Zambia confirmed the findings of the study showed that procurement planning, procurement methods, procurement transparency, staff competency and contract management had significance effect on the performances of the organizations. Finally, the researcher recommended that public organizations should efficiently manage procurement practices to achieve effectively.

Public procurement is the government's activity of procuring goods and services needed to perform its function. Grandia & Meehan, (2017) define public procurement as the purchase by governments and state-owned enterprises of goods, services and works from organisations in both private and public sector. According to Parliament & President of Zimbabwe, (2017) through the PPDPA Act a procurement process means all stages or any stage of the procurement of goods, construction works or services conducted by a procuring entity from the pre-bid stage up to and including the award of the contract. Organisational processes can be broadly defined as structured, measured sets of activities that together and only together transform inputs into outputs, (Nzitunga, 2019). Public procurement is central to government service delivery as it often involves large sums of tax-payers' money, which is why its processes are scrutinised all the time, Mehmet & Vivona, (2021).

Public Procurement in Zimbabwe is governed by the provisions of the Public Procurement and Disposal of Public Assets Act and Public Procurement and Disposal of Public Assets Regulations (PPDPA Act). The PPDPA Act was established in 2018 and gave birth to the Procurement Regulatory Authority of Zimbabwe (PRAZ) charged with monitoring and evaluation, providing guidance on procurement matters and directing procuring entities for the benefit of the general public.

PPDPA Act provide for control the control and regulation of public procurement and the disposal of public assets so as to ensure that such procurement and disposal is effected in a manner that is transparent, fair, honest, cost-effective and competitive; to establish the PRAZ and to provide for its functions; to amend the infrastructure Development Bank of Zimbabwe Act; to repeal the procurement Act (Chapter 22:14) No. 2 of 1999 and to provide for matters connected with or incidental to the foregoing, Parliament & President of Zimbabwe, (2017).

The Zimbabwe United Passenger Company (ZUPCO) is a road passenger transport company which came into existence soon after independence in 1980. ZUPCO is a state-owned enterprise, wholly owned by the government of Zimbabwe under the purview of the Ministry of Local Government and Public Works. The company is mandated to provide safe, reliable, affordable and competitive passenger services in Zimbabwe. For the organisation to achieve its mandate procurement processes needs to be effective and innovative. The Urban Mass Transport System which was established in 2019, played a crucial role in accelerating growth of the organisation which saw changes being instituted leading to a significant expansion of the organisation (Musanzikwa, 2020). The organisation has moved from a fleet of 100 buses, 7 depots, 365 employees in 2018 to 831 buses, 896 omnibuses, 33 depots and over 6000 employees in 2022. ZUPCO now offers the following services, urban transport, rural transport, inter-city, cross border transport and bus hire services (Ministry of Local Government and Public Works, 2021).

ZUPCO procurement processes are guided and directed by the PPDPA Act which is why the researcher want to explore the service delivery effectiveness of these public procurement processes on transport operation such as ZUPCO.

1.2 Statement of the Problem:

The new public procurement law, Public Procurement & Disposal of Public Assets (PPDPA) Act (CHAPTER 22:23), was introduced in 2018 to modernise procurement processes, reduce procurement time and reduce issues of corruption in Zimbabwe. Despite the Procurement Regulatory Authority of Zimbabwe (PRAZ) working around the clock to educate public entities on use of the new Act, procuring entities in Zimbabwe complained that rather than making procurement easy, the new Act stifles it by prolonging procurement processes (ZBC Online Business News, 2022).

According to PRAZ resolution ref: PRAZ/C/64, ZUPCO as a public entity has made an application to PRAZ seeking permission to procure bus spares direct from China instead of using long and costly tendering processes which are delaying operations (Procurement Regulatory Authority of Zimbabwe, 2022). The justification for adoption of direct procurement given by ZUPCO Accounting Officer was the urgent need of spare parts to address transport shortages in both urban and rural areas. The ZUPCO—PRAZ resolution and complaints made by public entities on prolonged procurement processes and the above public procurement cases has prompted the researcher to want to find out if public procurement processes being used in Zimbabwe are providing effective service delivery.

1.3 Research objectives:

The main objective of the study is to investigate the effectiveness of public procurement processes on public entities services delivery using a case of Zimbabwe united passenger company using data for 2018 to 2022.

- i. To ascertain the current state of public procurement policy on performance at ZUPCO
- ii. To evaluate the extent to which public procurement planning influences the service delivery performance at ZUPCO
- iii. To assess the effect of public tendering process at ZUPCO
- iv. To Proffer possible recommendations on how best public procurement and service delivery can be improved

1.4 Research Questions:

What is the effectiveness of public procurement processes on public entities services delivery?

- i. To what extent does public procurement policy influence the performance at ZUPCO?
- ii. What is the effect of public tendering planning on service delivery performance at ZUPCO?
- iii. What is the impact of tendering processes at ZUPCO?
- iv. What are the possible recommendations on how best public procurement and service delivery can be improved?

1.5 Hypothesis:

H1: There is a positive association between public procurement processes and service delivery effectiveness at ZUPCO.

H0: There is no association between public procurement processes and service delivery at ZUPCO.

1.6 Research assumptions:

Sample

The study assumed the formula used in the determination of sample size determined the size that represents the whole population.

Participants

In addition, it was also assumed that the selected participants were faithful and gave honest and reliable responses.

1.7 Justification of the study

Few researches has been done on public procurement process after the formation of PRAZ. In addition, the procedures and practices brought by the new procurement board has not been evaluated against the performance of parastatals prompting the researcher to fill that gap. In addition, the delays, corruption and poor service delivery has motivated this study to evaluate the public procurement impact

1.8 Purpose of the Study:

The ultimate objective of the study is to assess the role of public procurement process on deteriorating performance of ZUPCO despite government subsidies. The study acknowledges that they may be several factors contributing but focus is on the public procurement processes impact

1.9 Significance/Importance of the study:

This will have significance to various constituencies as outlined below:

1.9.1 Significance to the Theory

The results and recommendations from this research could be used for development of academic theories around public procurement. The research may be vital in complementing divergent theoretical contribution to the improvement of public procurement processes and service delivery.

1.9.2 Significance to the Academia

The study may also add on to public procurement literature available to colleges, universities and professional Institutions such as the Chartered Institute of Procurement & Supply (CIPS).

1.9.3 Significance to the Practise

The study is going to contribute towards procurement regulation review and updates. ZUPCO management is going to use the research to align their procurement processes with effective procurement methods which will increase value-for-money to the organisation. The research study will of significant to the government procurement boards and public organisations. This proposed study framework is aimed at making an important contribution towards awakening interest in policy-making agencies and stakeholders on the importance and criticalness of the influence of public procurement decisions on public service delivery and redirects the attention of future studies towards a further empirical analysis of the relationship between public procurement and public service delivery in Zimbabwe local authorities and beyond. In addition, the study expands the horizon of the body of knowledge concerning public procurement

1.10 Limitations

Time and financial constraints were a major limitation in the study. The time is given to finish the project and researcher work commitments was affecting the researcher in carrying the study. In an attempt the overcome the challenge, the researcher will use the questionnaires and interviews research instruments which are time-saving. In addition, resistance from the participants was also a limiting factor which will be solved through engaging in ethical considerations. In addition, the literature on public procurement in Zimbabwean context was limited hence the study used from other countries. The determination of sample results which yields reliable results was not that easy as result the study opted for recommended formula of determining sample size.

1.11 Organisation of the study

Chapter one shall present a detailed research topic of this research study and the other issues to be discussed in this chapter shall include a background to the study, research problem, purpose of the study, research objectives, research questions, scope (delimitations) of the study, research assumptions, significance of the study, ethical considerations, research limitations and a summary.

Chapter two focuses on reviewing related literature making use of research objectives as the guidelines. The variables in this study will be defined first which are public procurement and service delivery in the context of ZUPCO. Theoretical framework will explain the adopted theories and justifies it. In addition, the conceptual framework will be based on the objectives and the last part will be the empirical evidence.

Chapter three provides the methodology in detail, highlighting how data will be gathered and analysed. The chapter discloses the research approach, research design, and philosophy, research instruments used and justifies them. In addition, the target population, the sample size, sampling techniques and research instruments were also justified.

Chapter four presents the collected data and proceed to analyze it accordingly while chapter 5 shall present a detailed summary of the entire research process, conclusions and the suggested recommendations.

1.12 Chapter summary

The chapter covered the background of the study which create a gap for further researching. In addition, the problem statement confirmed that poor service delivery was a major issue believed to be resulting from the public procurement processes. The chapter covered the research objectives, the hypothesis and the significance of the study. The next chapter focuses on literature review.

CHAPTER II

LIERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter reviews the existing body of knowledge around the subject challenges of public procurement. The organization of this chapter is based on a different school of thought or concept. The chapter defines the study variables, theoretical framework, conceptual framework and empirical studies. The conceptual framework in the current study is premised on the research objectives. The empirical evidence was based on previous studies that were solely public procurement.

2.2 The purpose of literature review

The ultimate goal of the literature review is to identify the theoretical gap and empirical gap which motivates the study to take place (Bolton, 2019). In relation to the current study, literature review identifies the gap in the background of the study and create the need to carry the research on Zimbabwean parastatals concerning the effectiveness of public procurement on performance. Ellram, (2020) postulated that literature review helps in the data presentation and analysis by allowing the researcher to validate the obtained results. In addition , literature review enables the researcher to make conclusions and recommendations of the obtained results. Masterman, (2016) postulated that previous studies and literature helps in the formulation of objective questionnaire.

Arrowsmith (2020) defines public procurement as the government's activity of purchasing goods and services needed to perform its functions. It refers to procurement planning, contract placement and contract administration. The history of public procurement dates back to 800B.C in the development of silk trade between China and a Greek colony as noted by Thai (2015). According to Coe (2011), there is evidence of the earliest procurement order inscribed on a red clay tablet found in Syria with order dates between 2400 and 2800B.C being for "50 jars of fragrant smooth oil for small weight in grain.

Public procurement is an activity of purchasing the goods and services which a government needs to carry out its functions. Other scholars use different terminology to mean the same concept. The World Trade Organisation (WTO) uses the term government procurement and the United States uses the term public contracts or government contracts (UNWTO, 2020).

Public procurement is central to government service delivery as it often involves large sums of money. The Organisation for European Co-operation and Development (OECD) has estimated that public procurement can account for up to 5% of gross domestic product in developing countries and averages about 20% of public expenditure (OECD, 2021).

Public and political expectations for effective service delivery put public procurement under intense scrutiny (Bolton, 2016). In Zimbabwe, public procurement is dominated by procedures and guidelines meant to ensure a fair process that provide value for money. In real practice, these guidelines tend to provide opportunities for abuse and malpractice for some procurement officials (Chigudu, 2019).

2.1.1 Principles of Public procurement

Thai (2019), opined that the fundamentals of a functioning public procurement system are:

Economy: the goal of every procurement system is to enable the purchaser of the goods to beat the market prices and make a super value for money. At every given price the procurement team must be able to get the best quality available and at the same quality level the procurement must be able to bring the best price home.

Efficiency: a good public procurement system must be able to meet the basics like reduced lead time. The department must also be supported with resources and staffed with competent people who can deliver even beyond the expectations of the public entity. This requires qualified and skilled experts with enough technological resources that coordination is simplified. This can also be attained through Vendor managed inventory systems.

Fairness: Good procurement is impartial, consistent, and therefore reliable. It offers all interested contractors, suppliers and consultants a level playing field on which to compete and thereby, directly expands the purchaser's options and opportunities. This will increase competition amongst the potential bidders, at the end this will improve on quality of goods and services, lead time and reduction in prices and the procuring entity had more options. Apart from the cost of the production and other deliverables, this will build public confidence of the entity's procurement systems. All public entities in Zimbabwe uses standard bidding documents in solicitation of bids from suppliers. These documents will contain similar information from suppliers, meaning all the bidders will prepare their bids using the same questionnaire.

Transparency: the procurement system must establish and provide rules and regulations that are stated in clear terms. It must not only be fair, but it must also be accountable and guided by ethical standards. It is not only fair, but it is seen to be fair. Accountability and Ethical. Public Procurement and Disposal of Public Assets Act, Chapter 22:23 of 2018 through section 4 state that all procuring entities to publish their procurement requirements in the print media that is accessed by all potential suppliers. Apart from the Act, Procurement Regulatory Authority of Zimbabwe in consultation with its stakeholders had designed standard bidding documents. These documents are used by procurement entities in the invitation for bids from all suppliers, as per the meaning of the document name, it is standard and is accessible by bidders with same conditions. The closing time and date will be mentioned in the submission file and all the bidders are evaluated basing on the stated conditions and criteria.

2.3 Theoretical Framework

The study adopted the following theories; Agency theory, contingency theory, Structural Contingency Theory, and the Theory of the Firm. The theoretical framework is grounded on theories related to both the dependent (service delivery) and independent (public procurement processes) variables. The presentation of the theoretical frame work is shown below in figure 1.

Figure 1: Theoretical Framework



Figure 2.1 Theoretical framework.

Source: Researcher's Model (2022)

2.4 Theories related to public procurement processes

The theoretical framework of this study will be; Agency theory, Contingency theory, Structural contingency theory, Partner selection theory, stakeholder theory, and the transaction cost economics that will provide the researcher with a context for organising the examination of the identified research problem and its attendant data collection processes (Creswell, 2019).

2.4.1 Agency Theory

Between state citizens and county government leaders and staff, the theory establishes a principal-agent relationship. This is due to the fact that the public entity officials and staff hold funds in faith for the public, particularly the citizens of the country, and do all businesses in favour of the citizens. According to the notion, it is in the greatest interests of local government offices to carry out all of their responsibilities with openness and accountability to their leaders, the inhabitants and people, (Hommen & Rolfstam, 2019).

Furthermore, procurement is thought of as comprising more than one part with opposing objectives: a buyer and vendors bidding for the contract. Nevertheless, also to note the agency connection between the buyer and vendors, the procurement process may be complicated by a variety of interior shareholders, some of whom may have opposing agendas. Political leaders, people, interest organizations working with the County, central government, service beneficiaries, and commercial interests within the County are examples of internal stakeholder groups (Ellram, 2020).

Due to the inherent risk that exist between the procurement practitioners and other stakeholder, the agency theory must be evaluated to assess the level of fit. The procurement department makes purchases on behalf of the principals, which are the departments and sections. However, there usually exists serious difference which results in conflicts between the procurement department practitioner and users due to preference of possibly different suppliers, which are sometimes difficult to accommodate under public procurement laws (Thai, 2006).

In order to ensure efficiency and effectiveness, public entities must be in a position to eliminate all the factors that affects centralised procurement such as procurement costs, coordination and lead times. In a centralised procurement system, agency costs are reduced in terms of number of employees and coordination costs. This will enable the organisation to be more competitive in the market as they will also enjoy economies of scale. Quality and standardisation of products and services is also possible with the use of a centralised procurement systems with the same agency monitoring and managing the contracts.

Centralised procurement efforts are justified by the need to establish technical standards for information technology system and computer software applications within a government department or ministry, similarly when there is need to set environmental standards to be included in the technical specifications for supplier's contract. This can be easily achieved in a centralised set up rather than in a highly fragmented system, especially in the absence of an office with sufficient formal and informal powers. We also have other non-cost benefits that supports the centralised system, such as better customer services rendered by more expert and responsive staff. Greater attention to contract management and problem solving can also add value to client and easier to deliver. Staff training and performance management can be easily undertaken as all the Procurement Management Unit staff are centrally located and also there will be fewer people to be trained as there are fewer agencies requiring procurement skills.

Transparency International (2014), urged that public entities should provide adequate incentives for procurement officials. A dedicated Procurement Management Unit is more likely able to deliver increased benefits each and every year, thereby sustaining periods of budget constraints like 2020 and 2021 for ZUPCO. Centralised procurement system encourages the spared of ethical standards such as keeping of proper records as stipulated in the Public Procurement and Disposal of Public Assets Act, Chapter 22:23 (2018). Proper recording and reporting of transactions, effective management controls and having proper audit trail open to public scrutiny is also another non-cost benefit for centralised procurement system.

It is due to the adoption of Industry point 4 that this argument is losing weight gradually. Industrialisation automation is key to standardisation and improvement of efficiency and effectiveness in most of the production system. The cost of products and services can now be reduced through mass production as well as elimination of high labour costs, rather than bulk buying only. The issue of price and demand is not simply a result of bulk buying. Marginal costs of production and supply risk can be both curbed through big contract of goods and services, however there are other economic benefits. Increased buying power of the Procurement Management Unit (agency) allows the streamlining of the supply base, thereby reducing overheads costs.

Procurement employees as agencies of the organisation make public procurement decisions which affect service delivery and the level of compliance to the dictates of the Public Procurement and Disposal of Public Asset Act. The theory is critical in ensuring that conflict of interest is avoid by the agency who in this case is the procurement managers.

All public procurement decision by in public entities should not be for personal gain of the individual procurement professional.

2.4.2 The Contingency Theory

Contrasting to the agency theory, the contingency theory, a type of behavioural theory that asserts that there is no single approach to organizing a company, managing, and or decision making. Instead, the decisions are more influence by the market prevailing circumstance like inflation, political stability, and social pressures and so on. Brandon, (1987) Many people have considered contingency theory as a way out of the "forest" of diverse theories since the 1960s, because it aids top administration in selecting the appropriate management tools for a specific circumstance. "Management principles are not universally applicable but are only acceptable if the right conditions exist in a certain context," according to contingency theory, often known as situational theory.

The open systems perspective and general systems theory are the foundations of the contingency approach to management. The open methods standpoint sees a composite organization as a collection of interconnected elements that, when combined, form a whole that is in turn interdependent with its surroundings. Because of the collaborative nature of the elements within the firm and between the firm and the setting, the contingency method has at least two open system features. The principle of adaptation states that the system's constituents adapt to one another in order to maintain the system's core nature. Furthermore, the principle of equifinality states that a system can arrive at the same final state via a range of initial conditions and trajectories (Hahn, 2017).

According to the idea, there are several degrees of fit, such as technology, human capital quality management, and decision-making frameworks, each with varying levels of performance. This implies that an organization may progressively go from one level of fit to the next by drawing up a strategy plan that outlines the steps to take until it reaches its optimal level of fit, which is equal performance across all of the company's fit points. ISO uses this format to assess organizational effectiveness and efficiency. This is a factor used in public procurement to measure the amount of fit achieved by involving several participants in the process (Bolton, 2019).

According to Snow et al (2006), while an organization may not achieve full fit, it might achieve a quasi-fit, or a structure that only partially matches the dependencies. This quasi-fit condition, according to the argument, may nevertheless improve performance enough to cause some contingency expansion. As a result, an organization that is misfit due to being below the fit line might go into quasi-fit rather than complete fit and continue a growth path of growing organizational size and structure (Snow et al, 2018). Such a misfit organization may be able to improve its structure enough to go up to the quasi-fit line. This degree of fit results in a rise in organizational performance, however not as much as if the organization had gone into full fit. Nonetheless, the organization's performance improves enough as a result of this quasi-fit that it now has additional excess resources that allow it to expand. This increase in growth drives the company ahead into a new state of misfit, which may be remedied by increasing the company's structural level to the point where it can return to the quasi-fit line (Rehmann, 2009).

According to Hahn (2007), contingency theory allows for the incorporation of various management theories. This suggestion envisions a scenario in which a company is experiencing declining profits, and the management must choose between three possible solutions based on three different theoretical foundations: using time studies derived from classical management theory to increase worker productivity, or involving workers in improving work methods as suggested by behavioural management theory, or establishing a new company. He goes on to say that, rather than completing all three, contingency theory emphasizes the need of first determining the underlying source of the problem and then choosing the appropriate course of action. To put it another way, the solution must be appropriate for the problem.

The contingency theory is key in coming up with appropriate procurement processes and achieving service delivery by finding a procurement strategy appropriate for the prevailing economic environment. For example, in Zimbabwe industrial performance has significantly reduced causing shortages of general supplies, but using of the contingency theory help companies such as ZUPCO to adopt alternative strategies such as global sourcing to ensure continuity of service delivery.

2.4.3 Structural Contingency Theory

According to structural contingency theory, no organizational system is extremely successful for all organizations. Each company must have a structure that is unique to its circumstances. A variety of contingency elements can characterize or impact this circumstance, which alters the choice of organizational structure once again. A variety of contingency elements are listed in structural contingency theory, including task ambiguity, expertise, ecological change, technological development, scale, and strategy. According to Donaldson (2001), the variables may be categorised into 3 main determinants: independence of the task, nature of the job and job relationship.

How big the organisation can be measured by factors, such as the total of personnel, is a contingency factor. The following shows how the organisation structure may affect the business performance: A simple centralized structure is suitable to an organisation that has a very limited number of employees. Because he or she has both the capacity and adequate overview of the whole company, the top management can have decision-making authority. This basic structure, however, this structure tends to fail dismally and substantial as the business evolves. Since a result, decentralization of decision-making power is becoming increasingly necessary, as the organisation structure becomes too complex making centralisation incompatible with the business demands.

Environmental and technological change are common causes of task ambiguity. This ambiguity is usually exacerbated by changes that are frequently required in reaction to these environmental and technological developments. When a job has a low level of ambiguity, it is best carried out in a centralized hierarchy, which enables for better forecasting and management. With significant task ambiguity, however, planned for in advance and the business must more on emergency solutions; as a result, formalization should be reduced and the firm's structure should be more decentralized.

Structural contingency theory helps in establishment of procurement management units (PMU) which are suitable for different industries instead of having a one size fit all structure for all public entities. For example, PMU at ZUPCO complies of staff with technical skills, contract management skills and expertise in logistics. This kind of a structure might no be appropriate for other organisation such as ZIMRA

2.4.4 Stakeholder Theory

Stakeholder theory has its roots in four major academic disciplines: sociology, economics, politics, and ethics, with a focus on business development, classifications theory, CSR, and organizational theory. Freeman (1984) describes how interested parties with comparable rights group themselves in his work *Strategic Management: A Stakeholder Approach*, which is often credited with introducing the stakeholder theory principles. The link between the corporation and its external environment, as well as its conduct within this context, was what Freeman was attempting to convey. The author laid up his model in the form of a chart, with the firm at the centre and stakeholders participating. The business and stakeholder connections are mutually linked and independently operate (Frooman, 1999).

Savage et al. (2014), opined that the fundamental premises of Stakeholder theory are as follows: the relationship between the firm and its world of interested parties or stakeholders; the philosophy emphasizes on the nature of these relations in terms of procedures and outcomes for the company and for stakeholders; there exists no conflict of interest between the interests of all genuine stakeholders and their expectations somehow carries some genuine expectations.

The theory is based on the management approach which directs the decision making process and discusses how interested parties strive to sway organizational decision-making processes to meet their demands and interests. In terms of firm, they have to try and comprehend and create meet reasonable expectations of the stakeholders. According to Baldwin, stakeholder management was created with these principles in mind so that firms might discover, measure, and examine the characteristics of partners influenced by organizational behaviour (Savage et al., 2014). As a result, management takes place on three levels: identifying stakeholders, establishing systems for recognizing and understanding their needs and interests, and forming relationships, all while keeping the organization's goals in mind.

Public procurement involves engagement with various stakeholders including suppliers, contractors, government ministries, regulatory bodies (eg PRAZ), taxpayers and ZIMRA. The stakeholder theory assists in ensuring that all stakeholder's interests and influence is well managed for the benefit of ZUPCO. Proper stakeholder management will lead to long-term relationships which result in improved quality, shorter lead times and responsive service delivery.

2.4.5 Transaction Cost Economics (TCE) Theory

Firms, according to this notion, are organizations made up of people with diverse perspectives and goals. It is assumed that the corporation has exceeded the point where it can substitute the determination of resources in the market. This indicates that the firm's design and arrangement affect pricing and output, with the transaction serving as the unit of analysis. According to the view, managers are opportunists who arrange business deals in their favour (Williamson, 1996).

The majority of extant prior studies does not explicitly or expressly measure costs associated with transactions, instead relying on historical approaches to address their study objectives. Transaction expenses or the research topic are directly defined as dependent variables in such indirect operationalization procedures. All of these incidental transaction cost computations are done after the fact, which is another source of contention with TCE (Dyer, 1996).

Transaction cost Economics theory help in coming up with procurement processes which will result in low transaction costs such as cost of buying in bulk versus split purchases. Decision made by public procurement officers in-terms of procurement methods used will have an implication on transactional cost. For example, using tendering process might result in reduced transaction cost due to high level of competition among bidding suppliers, compared to a direct purchase from a single supplier with no competition.

2.5.1 Theories related to public procurement

2.5.1 Resource Based View (RBV) Theory

Bain (1968) and Porter (1985) were two of the most prominent proponents of the RBV as a supplement to the industrial organization approach. The industrial organization perspective, based on this emphasis on business organisation and approach, places the determinants of company success outside the business, in the structure of its industry. The RBV, which is opposed to this viewpoint, seeks for internal sources of persistent competitive advantage and tries to explain why businesses in the same industry might perform differently. As a result, the RBV does not replace, but rather complements, the industrial organization viewpoint (Peteraf & Barney, 2016).

RBV proponents say that resources that are valuable, rare, inimitable, and non-substitutable at the same time may be a source of better performance and help a company maintain a competitive edge.

The business's RBV is therefore a good tool to explain competitive dynamics where resources include intangible and tangible assets that are semi-permanently attached to the firm, such as technical, social, and corporeal assets. Conversely, possessing funds alone is insufficient, hence RBV model introduces a new class of skills resulting from intricate forms of resource exchanges and synchronization, (Wong & Karia, 2019).

Resources and capabilities, according to RBV, are frequently interrelated in nature especially when combined with other theories. According to RBV, companies have distinct resource endowments, and the way they demand, create, manage, package, and deploy them through time leads to the establishment of competitive advantage and better performance. According to RBV tenets, resources and skills, such as a category of resources, must be valuable, uncommon, unique, and firm utilisation of resources. For instance, a business may have resources that complement the business and that may be used and maximized to produce long-term competitive advantage. In principle, RBV theory suggests that a firm's unique resources may be used to develop a competitive edge over its rivals (Paulraj, 2019).

Pursuing RBV theory is essential in achievement of competitive advantage as an organisation through sourcing of unique and innovative resources which separate ZUPCO from competitors due to quality of its staff and acquisition of innovative products. Availability of internal resources will improve ZUPCO and other public entities' procurement processes resulting in improved service delivery. For example, possession of high level of information technology will result in efficient procurement processes and effective service delivery.

2.5.2 Resource Dependency Theory

This theory states that sustainability of organisational operations depends on both internal and external resources. Human capital, financial resources and management competency forms the internal resource, while industry stakeholders such as suppliers, customers, government and other organisations forms the external resource. The entity's effective and efficient performance also depends on effective linkage between internal and external resources. Harrison et al, (2012) argues that resource dependency theory firms can minimize operations uncertainty through official and proper linkages with other payers in the industry. Resource Dependency Theory (RDT) as it was shown that through bonds with other firms, RDT enables entities to come up with superior products and services hence gaining a competitive edge in the market and improve efficiency.

The theory states that suppliers who crucial resources will seek relationship with others in order to get the required resources. Gadde & Hakansson, (2011) state that the need for external resources with result in the modification of an organisation's influence on other entities.

2.4.3 Partner Selection Theory

The literature on selection of partner is sparse and focuses on the basis for selecting allies rather than how partners are selected (Saffu & Mamman, 2021). The vast majority of publications presuppose a logical and reasonable manner based on very precise criteria. The existing literature on partner selection presupposes a straight-line selection procedure from start to conclusion (Saffu & Mamman, 2021). Specific partner attributes will be more or less beneficial depending on the alliance's overall objective. A rational selection criterion is devised, with the partner attributes of interest frequently taking precedence. Finally, a sensible spouse is chosen who meets all of the requirements. Personal relationships between important decision makers can lead to the formation of corporate alliances (Harrison, 2020).

Angeles (2020) employed surveys to collect information on the trade partner selection criteria of 152 respondent businesses. Strategic commitment, trading partner adaptability, and communications found to be the most critical elements. Regarding partner selection in multinational alliances, a lot of publications and ideas have been created. The partner selection pattern that was observed among developing and industrialized markets in North America and Europe is supported by resource-based and organizational learning theories (Hitt & Dacin, 2019). In choosing partners, developing market companies from Canada, Denmark and Czech searched for monetary assets, technological proficiencies, imperceptible assets, and a desire to get feedback about experiences from other partners. Partners were chosen by developed market corporations from Canada, France, and the United States based on distinctive skills, indigenous market expertise, and access (Mamman, 2021).

Partner selection theory is critical in the public procurement process of selecting suppliers and contractors, how suppliers and contractors are selected will affect the quality-of-service delivery. Selection of suppliers and contractors should be determined by the financial stability of the supplier, capacity, competence of supplier staff, supplier technology, culture of supplier and environmental protection by supplier. This theory will help in ensuring that ZUPCO partners with suppliers who will add value through improved service delivery.

2.5 Empirical literature review

The empirical evidence is based on similar studies carried out by other scholars

2.5.1 European evidence

Studies by Dagaba (2019) asserted that though the public procurement act has established guidelines, principles, and tender committees to take charge of its object, it has, however, failed to provide for emergency procurement procedures. This has culminated in procurement officers resorting to their discretion during emergency procurement which is subject to immense human error.

A study conducted by Ameyaw, Mensah and Osei-Tutu (2021) to review 205 goods contracts revealed that 33 per cent were procured via Sole Sourcing (SS), 62 per cent by Request for Quotation (RFQ) and 4 per cent by National Competitive Tendering (NCT), Further 22 per cent and 46 per cent of the respondents had engaged in Sole Sourcing (SS) and Request for Quotation (RFQ) respectively. The reasons given for the high percentage in Sole Sourcing and Request for Quotation as the preferred options for goods procurement reveal that lack of funds, lack of clear-cut emergency procedures and the uncooperativeness of suppliers were behind the high inclination towards Sole Sourcing.

Studies by Tanzi and Davoodi (2018) and Mauro (2017) have established a link between corruption, collusion, and public procurement. They were of the view that corruption affects the allocation of public spending as investment decisions are influenced by the opportunity to obtain bribes. As a result, large construction projects (e.g. Big dams) are given priority over health and education projects, while spending on operation and maintenance is neglected. They also opined that as a result, corrupt public officials show a total disregard for existing procurement laws and procedures. Politicians may also be motivated to create inefficient rules intended only to generate rents for public officials (Tanzi & Davoodi, 2018).

According to the Law of Ukraine "On public procurement", the type of procurement process is determined according to the threshold value of the purchased item, which is determined by the annual plan.

Features of implementation of purchases for ensuring defence requirements are established by a separate law – the law of Ukraine "On peculiarities of procurement of goods, works and services for safeguarding needs of defence".

The study by Jenabati et al. (2021) which was aimed at exploring the correlation between effective organizational processes and improved organizational performance found that processes are essential in fostering an environment of reduced conflict and increased connectedness in an organization, thereby enhancing organizational performance. A surprisingly strong association was revealed by the findings of their study between organizational processes and overall performance. Bearing in mind all the dynamics that can affect organizational performance, these findings are compelling (Jenabati et al., 2014). Moreover, the study of Dumas et al. (2013) underscored a positive link between organizational processes and organizational outcomes.

In their study, Jean et al. (2018) found evidence that IT capabilities contribute directly to improved organizational processes such as coordination, transaction-specific investment, absorptive capacity, and monitoring; and this, in turn, contributes to strategic and operational performance outcomes

2.5.2 Evidence from Brazil

The study uses a case study conducted in Brazil's Ministry of Planning, Budget, and Management from March to December 2011 to give empirical evidence of the benefits of centralized public procurement. The case study examines public tenders for the purchase of ICT products and services and shows how centralized procurement can help achieve the following benefits: (i) standardization of products and services; (ii) cost reduction through economies of scale (iii) information exchange; and (iv) product and service quality optimization and specialists collaborate more effectively, leading in more efficient use of human resources.

2.5.3 Evidence from Kenya case

Market circumstances are favourable in industrialized nations but may not be favourable in emerging countries due to differences in economic growth. "Before beginning on a foreign purchasing program, public procurement specialists must thoroughly examine the entire cost implications and compare them to domestic cost," according to the National Institute of Governmental Purchasing (2019).

When faced with the difficult decision of choosing between foreign and indigenous enterprises, public procurement professionals are frequently caught between their nations' economic development plans and free trade agreements, delivering to consumers, achieving demand forecasts, and creating a competitive advantage (Thai, 2011). However, this study did

not focus on manufacturing companies and did not examine the influence of inventory management strategies on overall company performance. Based on the study findings it was concluded that inventory control affects efficiency of the organisation and that the organization does not experience stock out. Further it was concluded that the organisation has a well-structured inventory management control system. Concerning cost, all the respondents were of the common idea that centralised purchasing reduces cost in their organization and it affect cost moderately. Additionally, the respondents indicated that centralised procurement result in better material management where it was found out that centralized purchasing highly affects materials management. The study recommended that the organizations should adopt an inventory keeping method that best suits their operation, also they should always ensure that there is a long-term, sustainable improvement in materials planning and purchasing to avoid stock outs (Odhiambo & Odari, 2019).

Njorege & Ngugi (2019), conducted a study about challenges facing implementation of public procurement regulations in public institutions of Kenya using a case of Nairobi County government. The key findings were that inadequate funding contributes more to the implementation of public procurement regulations in Kenya followed by staff competence. The study concludes that implementation of public procurement policies in public institutions today is tailored around enough funding and effective use of the available financial resources. The study also recommends that implementation of public procurement regulations in public institutions in Kenya to be successful, human resources function of public institutions and the PPOA must ensure there are capacity development initiatives across government.

2.5.4 Evidence from Zimbabwe

However, these researches did not evaluate the influence of centralised procurement system approaches such as stock management and their influence on organisational performance Chigudu (2020), conducted a study in Zimbabwe about public procurement in Zimbabwe focusing on issues and challenges, and the study revealed that public procurement processes is being affected by corruption.

2.6 Conceptual Framework

A conceptual framework is a system of concepts, assumptions, expectations, beliefs and theories that supports and informs research (Maxwell, 2015). The conceptual framework is shown below in figure 2

Figure 2: Conceptual Framework

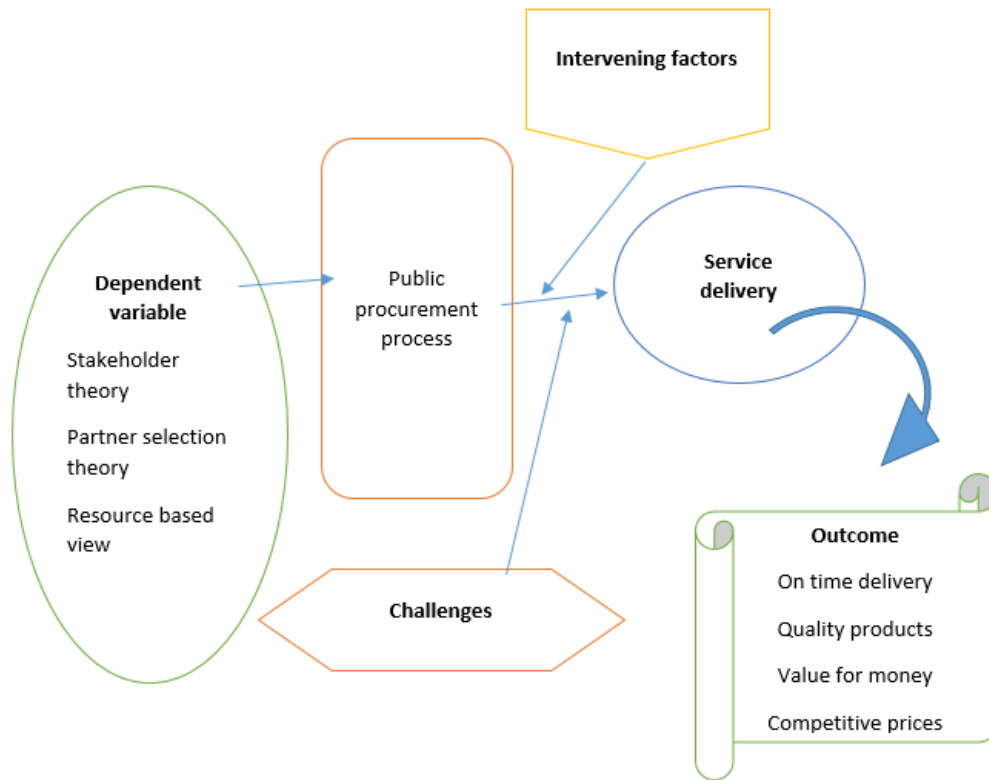


Figure 2:1 Conceptual

Source: Researcher’s model (2022)

2.6.1 Public procurement process

State Procurement Board procedures and the public procurement process have been blamed for the lagging behind of government projects that impact on public service delivery in Zimbabwe (Gweshe et al, 2022). In Zimbabwe, the public sector is that part of the economy that is in charge of providing various services by public entities (Dube & Danescu 2019). The composition of the public sector varies by country, but in general, the public sector includes services such as education, healthcare, communication and postal services, power generation and distribution, and water and sanitation, among others.

Giving a history of public procurement issues in Zimbabwe, Dzukey and Naude (2017) noted that public procurement in Zimbabwe was accompanied by several challenges. These challenges were mostly due to corruption, political influence, inadequate market research, competence of public procurement officials, centralised buying and nationalised policy. This was the state of affairs when the public procurement was under the State Procurement Board.

Public Procurement in Zimbabwe is governed by the provisions of the Public Procurement and Disposal of Public Assets Act and Public Procurement and Disposal of Public Assets Regulations (PPDPA Act). The PPDPA Act was established in 2018 and gave birth to the Procurement Regulatory Authority of Zimbabwe (PRAZ) charged with monitoring and evaluation, providing guidance on procurement matters and directing procuring entities for the benefit of the general public. PPDPA Act provide for control the control and regulation of public procurement and the disposal of public assets so as to ensure that such procurement and disposal is effected in a manner that is transparent, fair, honest, cost-effective and competitive; to establish the PRAZ and to provide for its functions; to amend the infrastructure Development Bank of Zimbabwe Act; to repeal the procurement Act (Chapter 22:14) No. 2 of 1999 and to provide for matters connected with or incidental to the foregoing, Parliament & President of Zimbabwe, 2019).

The State Procurement Board procedures and the public procurement process were criticised for lagging behind on government projects such as road construction, clean water provision, and sewer reticulation, to name a few (The Herald 20 January 2013). Inefficiency in the awarding of tenders for various projects is frequently criticized (Musanzikwa 2019), resulting in the delay or non-completion of critical projects. Failure to meet targets has hampered service delivery. As a result, the State Procurement Board was dissolved in 2018 as the government moved to bring efficiency, with procurement reverting to accounting officers in their entities in line with best practice world over (Ruwende, 2018).

In terms of the current state of affairs in Zimbabwe, the new Public Procurement and Disposal of Public Assets Act (Chapter 22:23) repealed the Procurement Act and abolished the State Procurement Board (SPB), replacing it with the Procurement Regulatory Authority of Zimbabwe (PRAZ) Chronicle (2018). The new Public Procurement and Disposal of Public Assets Act (Chapter 22:23) was published in the Government Gazette on August 4, 2017, and it provides for the control and regulation of public procurement and the disposal of public assets in order to ensure that such procurement and disposal is transparent, fair, honest, cost-effective, and competitive, as well as the establishment and functions of the Procurement Regulatory Authority of Zimbabwe.

According to the PRAZ website, the Authority's operations are managed and directed by a Board of seven or nine members appointed by the Minister after consultation with the President in accordance with Section 8 of the Act [Cap 22:23] for their knowledge and experience in

procurement and various relevant disciplines. The Chief Executive Officer serves as the Board's secretariat and is responsible for administering the Authority's affairs as well as any other functions conferred or imposed on him or her by or under the Act or that the Board may assign to him or her. A professional staff complement (Secretariat) led by the Chief Executive Officer assists the Board. The staff works to strict deadlines to ensure that the Board has all of the information it needs to make decisions.

The new Act governs the entire procurement cycle, including procurement planning, market approaches, tender evaluation and award, contract management, and asset disposal. The Act calls for the modernization and professionalization of public procurement, as well as the inclusion of public entities as defined in Section 2 of the Act. According to the Ncube (2021), it is believed that the government was wasting public funds through inefficient and ineffective procurement processes, which frequently resulted in the acquisition of substandard goods. Procurement officers have been accused in some cases of inflating the cost of goods and services.

Public procurement processes remain at the centre of political debate, with complex dynamics of political or state capture, failure to adhere to procurement processes, weak accountability and enforcement institutions, and a culture of impunity. Despite having progressive legislative frameworks guiding public procurement, this has allowed for continued leakages of public funds through skewed processes.

However, no in-depth studies have been taken to establish the extent to which the Procurement Regulatory Authority of Zimbabwe (PRAZ) regulated procurement processes are affecting service delivery. This explains why this research seeks to analyse the relationship between the current public procurement processes and service delivery

2.6.2 Public Procurement Planning and Service Delivery

Basheka (2018) argues that procurement planning is one of the major procurement activities that can contribute to the success of government operations and improved service delivery.

It is a function of the overall procurement or procurement process in local governments. Mullinins (2013) argues that procurement planning contributes to the efficient and effective delivery of public sector services is not generally controversial in both developed and developing countries. Mooh (1983) adds that an effective procurement plan is an important way to deliver the right service to the community and to increase the level of service delivery

available to the local supportive population. The procurement plan helps to ensure the maximum cost of purchasing services and allows companies to identify all related issues regarding a specific purchase before presenting their advertisements to suppliers of goods, works and services.

For a specified procurement (OCD-DEK, 2021), the correct procurement system must have a skilled workforce with defined skills and knowledge. Changes in procurement processes, promoting or expanding alternative contract approaches, and increasing the dependence on the services provided by the private sector can be challenging (Public Accountability Bureau 2015). They work hard at it" (Government Accountability Bureau 2015). Purchasing should have a complete professional perspective on the role it plays in the business as a whole and should include planning (Bailey et al, 1998). Raymond (2018) also had a shortage of high-quality public procurement workers associated with corruption, which ultimately undermined compliance. Effective training enhances people's knowledge, skills and behaviour and their successes. Improved performance increases productivity, increases corporate profits, and thus results in better investment results in training. Ruddff and Abbele (2016) state that government bodies have always been big buyers and have huge budgets.

Mahmoud (2020) also reiterated that public procurement represents 18.42% of the world's gross domestic product. In developing countries, public procurement is increasingly recognized as a necessary service (Bashe Ka and Bisbabasia, 2020), and contributes significantly to overall spending.

For example, government procurement is 60% in Kenya (Achech, 2020), Angola 58%, 40% in Malawi and 70% in Ugandan government expenditures (Witig, 1999, Government of Uganda, 2006) in Bashaka and Bisababasaja. (2020). This is very high compared to the 12-20% of the world average (Fristad et al., 2020). Lenny et al. (2012) although there is a significant increase in wealth in many developing countries, there is still growing recognition that it is declining. In service organizations, financial management was an obstacle to other activities that contributed to service delivery. (Adams and Colbor, 1999).

It is important to distinguish between 'bad costs' that increase bureaucracy and 'good costs' that improve organizational capacity and service delivery, and therefore become barriers to service delivery (Sen and Shibo, 2017).

Financial accountability is a prerequisite for the use of monetary, accounting, and accounting systems defined by the country's legal and institutional framework (Oliver-Cruz and others, 2021). Have no financial or technical capacity to report on the allocation, use and utilization of financial resources (Numer et al, 2022). Political and bureaucratic flows, fraud, mismanagement and malpractice can occur at various stages of the process, including mismanagement of expenditures, lack of process audit and control, organizational deficits, and mismanagement of public funds. The importance of procurement in all areas of the country can be seen in its scope and role in service delivery. The amount of money wasted on existing practices, reduced competition, higher prices due to market awareness

Planning consists of steps with an end result that is not concerned with decisions of today but today's impact of decisions that were made yesterday (Basheka, 2019). In addition, procurement planning involves finding out the business requirements that are best met by procuring services, works or goods. This process is concerned with; what to procure, how, where, how much, and when to procure (Snider & Rendon, 2012). Khan and Kumar (2012) noted that procurement plan illustrates the products being acquired, as well as when and how they are going to be acquired from suppliers. This process needs to be supported by other departments through appropriate and timely submission of their procurement needs to the procurement department. In addition, procuring entities need to carry out regular market research on prices of different procurement supplies in order to establish representative cost estimate/budget. A procurement plan must be prepared as required under public procurement act of 2015 for all public procuring entities so as to avoid emergency procurements and to use suitable procurement method wherever possible.

Further, Arney, Yadav, Miller and Wilkerson (2019) notes that procurement plan makes possible aggregation of its requirements wherever possible, both in the procuring entities as well as between procuring entities so as to gain value for money and lessen cost of procurement while drawing on contract framework wherever necessary to provide cost effectiveness, efficiency and a flexible approach to procurement of services, works and supplies which are continuously needed in a given period. Carrying out yearly procurement planning helps in addressing all departmental requirements within the organizations that are procuring.

The plan specifies the procurement method that will applied for procurements and determines the most effective means of reducing procurement processes' costs while maintaining the quality of materials being procured and at the same time meeting entity's delivery time line

(Waigwa & Njeru, 2016). Changing of procurement methods in the approved procurement plan frequently indicates poor procurement plan and subsequently results to inefficient procurement process (Mukura, Shalee, Kanda & Ngatia, 2016).

2.6.3 Public Procurement System and the regulatory environment in Zimbabwe

The procurement system refers to the way in which public procurement is conducted while the environment refers to the factors that influence the system including factors like political willingness, regulations, and social economic factors, internal and external factors. Efficiency and integrity in Public Procurement is essential to ensure sound public service delivery and maintains citizens trust in government. The procurement process must therefore be cost-effective, fair, transparent and effective

2.6.3.1 The internal environment

These are organisation specific factors that includes the level of professionalism within the procurement department and may include how ZUPCO interacts with the ministry of Climate and the public procurement regulatory board of Zimbabwe.

2.6.3.2 The external environment

This environment may also be referred to as the market environment. Market circumstances are favourable in industrialized nations but may not be favourable in emerging countries due to differences in economic growth. "Before beginning on a foreign purchasing program, public procurement specialists must thoroughly examine the entire cost implications and compare them to domestic cost," according to the National Institute of Governmental Purchasing (2019).

When faced with the difficult decision of choosing between foreign and indigenous enterprises, public procurement professionals are frequently caught between their nations' economic development plans and free trade agreements (Thai, 2019). Delivering to consumers, achieving demand forecasts, and creating a competitive advantage However, this study did not focus on manufacturing companies and did not examine the influence of inventory management strategies on overall company performance.

2.6.3.3 The political environment

The political environment in Zimbabwe is currently unstable mainly due to Zanu pf and CCC politics. In democratic society like Zimbabwe the government is made up of political motivated individuals who may priorities their personal benefit over public good. The rules and

regulations are a result of political willingness not necessary to maximise the public benefit. What normally sees the light of the day is a compromise between government and interest groups. Politicians determines the state of laws especially in developing countries like Zimbabwe.

2.6.3.4 The legal environment

As opposed to public procurement rules and regulations, the legal environment refers to broader legal framework that governs business activities. These include among others; regulations dealing with equal opportunities for the minorities and women, disclosure of product characteristics, deception of advertising, disclosure of information, workplace and pollution control, health and safety, manufacturing and marketing, contract law and disputes. The main legal instruments for public procurement in Zimbabwe are:

- The constitution of Zimbabwe
- The Public Procurement and Disposal of Public Asset Act
- The Regulations
 - Standard Bid Documents
 - Zimbabwe Public Procurement Manual
 - Circulars issued by the Procurement Regulatory Authority of Zimbabwe

2.6.3.5 The Constitution of Zimbabwe

Section 315 of the Constitution of Zimbabwe provides for a need of an Act of Parliament prescribing procedures for the procurement of goods and services by the State and all institutions of the Government in a manner that is transparent, fair, honest, cost effective and competitive and providing for negotiations of joint ventures and public private partnerships in a transparent, honest, cost effective and competitive manner

2.6.3.6 The Procurement Act of Zimbabwe [Chapter 22:14]

AN ACT establishing a State Procurement Board and defining its powers; making provisions for the State, statutory bodies, and other individuals to acquire products, construction work, and services; and providing for issues associated with or incidental to the same. The Act is the work in hand with the Public Procurement and Disposal of Public Assets Act (PPDPA)

(Chapter 22:23) and eventually replace the Procurement Act. The PPDDPA is to establish the Procurement Regulatory Authority of Zimbabwe and to provide for its functions; to amend the Infrastructure Development Bank of Zimbabwe Act [Chapter 24:14]; to repeal the Procurement Act [Chapter 22:14] (No. 2 of 1); and to provide for the control and regulation of public procurement and the disposal of public assets in order to ensure that such procurement and disposal are carried out in a transparent, fair, honest, cost-effective, and competitive manner.

The objectives of this Act are to ensure that procurement is carried out in a transparent, fair, honest, cost-effective, and competitive manner; to encourage competition among bidders; to provide for the fair and equitable treatment of all bidders, resulting in procurement contracts that are good value for money; to promote the integrity of, and fairness and public confidence in, procurement processes; and to ensure the implementation of any environmental, social, economic, or other policy that may be implemented. The act establishes the Procurement Regulatory Authority of Zimbabwe.

2.6.3.7 Procurement Regulatory Authority of Zimbabwe

The authority is responsible for various purposes include some of the listed below functions:

- to ensure that public procurement is conducted in a transparent, fair, honest, cost effective, competitive, and lawful manner; to monitor and supervise procuring entities and the public procurement system in order to ensure compliance with this Act, and
- to implement electronic means of monitoring and supervising procuring entities and the public procurement system; and to issue technical guidelines and instructions regarding the interpretation of this Act.
- to provide advice and assistance to procuring entities: provided, however, that no such advice or assistance shall limit a procuring entity's responsibilities for compliance with this Act; and
- to promote the training and professional development of those involved in public procurement in order to ensure their adherence to high ethical standards; and to develop and implement a transparent and equitable framework for the registration of bidders or contractors; and

- to establish and advise the government on how to use public procurement to implement Zimbabwe's environmental, social, and economic policies, especially those aimed at economic empowerment and domestic preferences.
- to refer violations of this Act to appropriate enforcement or disciplinary authorities; and
- to establish and implement an independent review mechanism to deal with challenges brought by aggrieved bidders in accordance with Part X or by other persons in accordance with Part XII; and
- to consult with people in the public and private sectors who have an interest in the public procurement system on a regular basis to assess their perceptions of the system; and to restructure the public procurement system as needed.

2.6.4 Challenges of Public Procurement

Public buyers and public procurement professionals are frequently confronted with a variety of challenges. According to Thai (2019), there are internal and external impediments to public procurement (organizational and non-organizational).

2.6.4.1 Internal Challenges

According to Thai (2016), internal influences such as these have a significant impact on an organization's capacity to achieve procurement goals and policies:

- Interactions between various aspects of the public procurement systems, various officials and organizations from the three branches of government, and multiple players and sub-agencies inside a department or executive agency, as well as external actors and organizations;
- Procurement workforce professionalism or quality;
- Staffing numbers (e.g., procurement practitioners to contract actions) and budget resources
- Procurement organizational structure, including the centralization vs. decentralization debate;
- Procurement policies, guidelines, and advice; and
- Internal controls and legislative supervision

2.6.4.2 External Challenges

According to Thai (2006), Market, legal, political, organizational, socio-economic, and technology issues have long created problems to public procurement practitioners.

2.6.4.2.1 Market Environment

The attempt of public procurement practitioners to maximize competition is heavily influenced by market circumstances. Furthermore, the market decides whether or not procurement's socioeconomic goals are met, whether or not a government institution can meet its demands, the timeliness of fulfilment, and the quality and cost of products, services, and capital assets bought. Market circumstances are highly favourable in industrialized nations, while they may be unfavourable in emerging ones, due to the various degrees of economic growth across countries throughout the world

2.6.4.2.2 Legal Environment

Aside from public procurement regulations and rules, the legal environment refers to a broad legal framework that governs all business activities, including research and development (regulations dealing with new product safety and health), manufacturing (safety and health regulations at the workplace and pollution control), finance (regulations dealing with information disclosure), marketing (regulations dealing with deceptive advertising, disclosure of product characteristics), and finance (regulations dealing with information disclosure). Indeed, most parts of contracts, whether public or private, are controlled by the same contract law, including contract obligations, disputes, and contract violation. Government contracts may require extensive clauses in emerging and transitional nations whose legal systems are not complete.

2.6.4.2.3 Political Environment

Many private sector people, groups, and organizations, such as trade associations, professional associations, and commercial corporations or businesses (often referred to as interest groups), are actively involved in all elements of the public procurement system in a democracy. Interest groups participate in the public procurement system in a variety of ways, including lobbying legislative bodies to establish or amend procurement legislation, influencing execution of these statutes, and influencing budget authorization and appropriations procedures. A government program that is subsequently implemented is usually the result of a compromise between various interest groups, policymakers, and management. In this democratic context, there are examples of policymakers, bureaucrats, and interest groups working together to have their policies implemented.

2.6.4.2.4 Social, Economic, and Other Environment Forces

While some countries impose social policies on their public procurement practices (such as a policy that places a fair proportion of government acquisitions with women/minority-owned small businesses or economically disadvantaged areas), most governmental entities — whether in developed or developing countries, or federal, state, and local governments — use their large procurement outlays for economic stabilization or development by preferring national or local firms over multinational corporations.

Public procurement practitioners may find themselves in a favourable economic environment or market (with 22 many competing tenderers in their nation or local regions) or in an unfavourable economic environment (with 22 many competing tenderers in their country or local areas) (where competition hardly exists). This environment would have a significant influence on their activities since they would be competing in an imperfect market. (Masterman, 2016).

2.6.5 Service delivery

Service is defined as an activity or a product that solves a user's problem or can be useful to users in their day-to-day events. Elsewhere, Carlson and O'Cass (2020) depicted service delivery as the relationship between policy makers, service providers and poor people. Service delivery encompasses services and their supporting systems that are typically regarded as a state responsibility. These include social services (primary education and basic health services), infrastructure (water, sanitation, roads and bridges) and services that promote personal security (Alford, 2019). It is hard and difficult task to measure services rendered.

However, Mugambi (2019) asserts that to be effective, services are related to attributes such as timeliness, availability at the right location, and the right time needed by the user. Services also need to be reliable dependable, usable, useful, and credible so that the user can confidently use it in decision-making and it should also be flexible and responsive to the changing user needs. The determinants of service quality by order of importance include reliability, responsiveness (willingness to help customers and prompt service assurance), and the ability to convey trust, empathy and individualized attention to customers (Mutali, 2019).

Public procurement is used as a strategic tool to enhance government performance and the quality of services and is thus central to the delivery of public services (Vellapi 2010). According to the World Bank (2021), public procurement programmes have a direct bearing on public service delivery, results, performance, consolidation and completion. Public services

can be defined as services that are funded with public money and are delivered by or on behalf of government. Improving public service delivery is one of the biggest challenges for all countries, as public services are a key determinant of quality of life and poverty reduction. The challenge is particularly apparent in Africa, where historically the quality-of-service provision has been poor and the needs of the poor continuously increase (Besley & Ghatak 2020).

However, globally, the public sector is facing pressure to deliver more effective and efficient public services to citizens despite a multitude of socio-economic and global challenges that governments are facing (PriceWaterhouseCoopers, 2019)

2.6.6.1 Stakeholder Theory

Stakeholder theory has its roots in four major academic disciplines: sociology, economics, politics, and ethics, with a focus on business development, classifications theory, CSR, and organizational theory. Freeman (1984) describes how interested parties with comparable rights group themselves in his work *Strategic Management: A Stakeholder Approach*, which is often credited with introducing the stakeholder theory principles. The link between the corporation and its external environment, as well as its conduct within this context, was what Freeman was attempting to convey. The author laid up his model in the form of a chart, with the firm at the centre and stakeholders participating. The business and stakeholder connections are mutually linked and independently operate (Frooman, 1999).

Savage et al. (2014), opined that the fundamental premises of Stakeholder theory are as follows: the relationship between the firm and its world of interested parties or stakeholders; the philosophy emphasizes on the nature of these relations in terms of procedures and outcomes for the company and for stakeholders; there exists no conflict of interest between the interests of all genuine stakeholders and their expectations somehow carries some genuine expectations.

The theory is based on the management approach which directs the decision making process and discusses how interested parties strive to sway organizational decision-making processes to meet their demands and interests. In terms of firm, they have to try and comprehend and create meet reasonable expectations of the stakeholders. According to Baldwin, stakeholder management was created with these principles in mind so that firms might discover, measure, and examine the characteristics of partners influenced by organizational behaviour (Savage et al., 2014). As a result, management takes place on three levels: identifying stakeholders, establishing systems for recognizing and understanding their needs and interests, and forming relationships, all while keeping the organization's goals in mind.

Public procurement involves engagement with various stakeholders including suppliers, contractors, government ministries, regulatory bodies (eg PRAZ), taxpayers and ZIMRA.

The stakeholder theory assists in ensuring that all stakeholder's interests and influence is well managed for the benefit of ZUPCO. Proper stakeholder management will lead to long-term relationships which result in improved quality, shorter lead times and responsive service delivery

2.6.6.2 Partner Selection Theory

The literature on selection of partner is sparse and focuses on the basis for selecting allies rather than how partners are selected (Saffu & Mamman, 2021). The vast majority of publications presuppose a logical and reasonable manner based on very precise criteria. The existing literature on partner selection presupposes a straight-line selection procedure from start to conclusion (Saffu & Mamman, 2021). Specific partner attributes will be more or less beneficial depending on the alliance's overall objective. A rational selection criterion is devised, with the partner attributes of interest frequently taking precedence. Finally, a sensible spouse is chosen who meets all of the requirements. Personal relationships between important decision makers can lead to the formation of corporate alliances (Harrison, 2020).

Angeles (2020) employed surveys to collect information on the trade partner selection criteria of 152 respondent businesses. Strategic commitment, trading partner adaptability, and communications found to be the most critical elements. Regarding partner selection in multinational alliances, a lot of publications and ideas have been created. The partner selection pattern that was observed among developing and industrialized markets in North America and Europe is supported by resource-based and organizational learning theories (Hitt & Dacin, 2019). In choosing partners, developing market companies from Canada, Denmark and Czech searched for monetary assets, technological proficiencies, imperceptible assets, and a desire to get feedback about experiences from other partners. Partners were chosen by developed market corporations from Canada, France, and the United States based on distinctive skills, indigenous market expertise, and access (Mamman, 2021).

Partner selection theory is critical in the public procurement process of selecting suppliers and contractors, how suppliers and contractors are selected will affect the quality-of-service delivery. Selection of suppliers and contractors should be determined by the financial stability of the supplier, capacity, competence of supplier staff, supplier technology, culture of supplier

and environmental protection by supplier. This theory will help in ensuring that ZUPCO partners with suppliers who will add value through improved service delivery

2.6.6.3 Resource Based View (RBV) Theory

Bain (1968) and Porter (1985) were two of the most prominent proponents of the RBV as a supplement to the industrial organization approach. The industrial organization perspective, based on this emphasis on business organisation and approach, places the determinants of company success outside the business, in the structure of its industry. The RBV, which is opposed to this viewpoint, seeks for internal sources of persistent competitive advantage and tries to explain why businesses in the same industry might perform differently. As a result, the RBV does not replace, but rather complements, the industrial organization viewpoint (Peteraf & Barney, 2016).

RBV proponents say that resources that are valuable, rare, inimitable, and non-substitutable at the same time may be a source of better performance and help a company maintain a competitive edge. The business's RBV is therefore a good tool to explain competitive dynamics where resources include intangible and tangible assets that are semi-permanently attached to the firm, such as technical, social, and corporeal assets. Conversely, possessing funds alone is insufficient, hence RBV model introduces a new class of skills resulting from intricate forms of resource exchanges and synchronization, (Wong & Karia, 2019).

Resources and capabilities, according to RBV, are frequently interrelated in nature especially when combined with other theories. According to RBV, companies have distinct resource endowments, and the way they demand, create, manage, package, and deploy them through time leads to the establishment of competitive advantage and better performance. According to RBV tenets, resources and skills, such as a category of resources, must be valuable, uncommon, unique, and firm utilisation of resources. For instance, a business may have resources that complement the business and that may be used and maximized to produce long-term competitive advantage. In principle, RBV theory suggests that a firm's unique resources may be used to develop a competitive edge over its rivals (Paulraj, 2019).

Pursuing RBV theory is essential in achievement of competitive advantage as an organisation through sourcing of unique and innovative resources which separate ZUPCO from competitors due to quality of its staff and acquisition of innovative products. Availability of internal resources will improve ZUPCO and other public entities' procurement processes resulting in

improved service delivery. For example, possession of high level of information technology will result in efficient procurement processes and effective service delivery

2.7 Critique of the literature review

According to the Public Procurement and Disposal of Public Assets Act, citizens should benefit from the public procurement process by getting excellent value for their money, receiving high-quality services, and receiving the same commodities and services on time. Despite the fact that these advantages have been proven in a number of studies, simply adopting the public procurement process does not guarantee that such businesses will perform better due to the numerous challenges of transforming public procurement into a collaborative and integrative process competence (Ellram, 2021).

As a result of the lengthy process, most public entities that employ the public procurement system may incur significant delivery delays. Leenders (2022) looked at why certain public entities are successful in adopting public procurement while others are not. The importance of deliberate decision and market characteristics in attaining public procurement process fit cannot be overstated. More research on the public procurement process and its influence on organizational performance, however, is required.

2.8 Research Gap

Despite the existence of some rules, public officials take use of tendering processes for personal benefit. Improved political will is required to enforce the law against illegal activity (Nadue, 2021). The procurement system should encourage value for money, but this isn't happening. There is no way for management and policymakers to get input (Chigudu, 2020). Many studies have concentrated on the impact of the procurement process on firm profitability, rather than considering how it affects areas such as service delivery, inventory management, and contract administration.

2.9 Chapter summary

Public procurement is an activity of purchasing goods and services needed to perform government functions. Centralised procurement systems reduce agency costs, improve customer services, and encourage ethical standards. Organizational processes are essential for fostering an environment of reduced conflict and increased connectedness in an organization, enhancing organizational performance. The new Public Procurement and Disposal of Public Assets Act (Chapter 22:23) provides for the control and regulation of public procurement and

the disposal of public assets, as well as the establishment and functions of the Procurement Regulatory Authority of Zimbabwe.

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

The preceding chapter focused on perusal of literature (theoretical, and empirical conceptual). This very chapter focuses on the research methodology of the study, this includes research design, research approach, research philosophy. The section also went further to establish the population which is 65, sample size and sampling technique which was used in the study.

3.2 Research philosophy

A research philosophy is a set of basic beliefs that guide the design and execution of a research study, and different research philosophies offer different ways of understanding scientific research (Katherine, et al, 2020). The research philosophies that can be used are realism, pragmatism, positivism and interpretivism.

3.2.1 Pragmatism philosophy

Pragmatism research philosophy accepts concepts to be relevant only if they support action. Pragmatics “recognise that there are many different ways of interpreting the world and undertaking research, that no single point of view can ever give the entire picture and that there may be multiple realities” (Bell, 2021). Pragmatics can combine both, positivist and interpretivism positions within the scope of a single research according to the nature of the research question. The current study adopted pragmatism philosophy. According to Saunders *et al.* (2018) research philosophy is crucial element and part of the research that focus on knowledge creation. In order to capture both the subjective and objective elements of centralised procurement system on the performance of public entities, using ZUPCO, the study used a pragmatic worldview to answer the research objectives. Utilizing open-ended questions in the questionnaire, the research was able to uncover this information using interpretivism perspectives. The study used a mixed approach in order to get as much information as possible about the effect of central procurement especially in Public sector of Zimbabwe using ZUPCO as the case of the study.

3.3.2 Positivism

According to Vermeulen (2018), in positivism, the social and physical reality is independent of those who observe it, and that observations of this reality may constitute scientific knowledge. Positivism searches for causal explanations and the creation of fundamental laws

through scientific analysis. Gill and Johnson (1997) as cited by Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2018) postulated that in positivism, there is strong emphasis on highly structured methodology to facilitate replication and quantifiable observations that lend themselves to statistical analysis. Positivists believe that reality is stable and can be seen and explained from an objective viewpoint and this usually involve changing of reality with variations in a single independent variable to isolate and pick regularities in, and to form the relationships between some of the basic elements in the social world (Ali & Younes, 2013). Positivism in the present study indicates the researchers' outlook regarding methodological enquiry instead of indicating the natural position. Walsham (1995) explains that the positivist philosophy maintains that scientific knowledge consists of facts while its philosophic theory considers reality as independent of social construction. According to this study positivism includes an outcome and adaptive oriented enquiry method, the research gathered data via a scientific way of data collection by using earlier studies hence the study resorted to utilize questionnaires and interviews to understand the public procurement process impact on the service delivery at ZUPCO. Positivism positions the researcher in the role of the objective analyst; hence, the researcher makes interpretations from the data collected in a value free manner.

3.3.3 Interpretivism

Bryman and Bell, (2019) noted that the subject matter of the social sciences, people and their institutions in interpretivism is fundamentally different from that of the natural sciences hence the need for a different research procedure. Interpretivism provides that only through the subjective interpretation of and intervention in reality can that reality be fully understood. Saunders et al. (2018) was of the view that the social world of business and management is far too complex to lend itself to theorising by definite "laws" in the same way as the physical sciences. The argument is that if such complexity were reduced to a series of law-like generalisations, rich insights into this complex world would be lost. Saunders et al. (2018) noted that this argument was persuasive for business and management cases because business situations are complex and diverse to each particular situation. Business situations are a function of a particular set of circumstances and individuals (Saunders et al., 2018).

This research study followed an interpretivism philosophy in trying to give meaning to the primary data that was gathered using interviews and secondary data

3.3 Research approach

Bell (2019) defined the research approach as either an analysis process or a quantitative or qualitative tool used for the data collection. There are three types of research approaches namely the qualitative, quantitative and the mixed approach. Bell, (2013) defined a qualitative approach as a research approach enabling the use of interviews in the collection of data that cannot be quantified. In addition, quantitative approach is the use of statistics in the data analysis where questionnaires designed in quantitative format are used. In some researches these two cannot work separately but complement each which is mixed approach (Mugena, 2021).

3.2.1 Mixed Approach

Tashakkori and Teddlie (2018) described a mixed research approach as an approach which allows the collection of qualitative data that builds a model that combines qualitative and quantitative approaches within different phases of the research process. In some research, qualitative and quantitative research approaches cannot be adopted separately but rather they are combined to complement each other, which is a mixed approach (Mugena, 2019). Earlier researchers found strong significance in both quantitative and qualitative explanations of human behaviour (Grover, 2019).

3.2.2 Quantitative Approach

Quantitative scientists attempt to work with objectivity and they presume to observe a fact and also presume that rational observers that look at the same phenomena essentially agree on their nature and their characteristics (Daniel, 2016). One method of educational analysis that makes decisions on what to study; poses basic and limited questions, gathers the participant's (numerous) quantifiable data; analyses these figures using statistics and performs the investigation impartially and purposefully. Tentatives of quantification of factors of interest generally must be measured alone (Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill, 2021). In a way, quantitative investigators want to investigate the phenomenon "at a point" that are of concern to them. To monitor closely what is being measured, standardised questionnaires and other measurement instruments are also used. Statistical metrics to draw many conclusions are used to evaluate outcomes (Yin, 2018).

This research study followed a quantitative research approach. This approach encompassed both aspects of quantitative research approaches which included statistical procedures of hypothesis testing, regression analysis and other statistical methods including ANOVA

analysis. The aim for the selection of this method was to gain the most out of accurately articulated statistical approach in understanding and answering the research problem. The quantitative approach was also used to determine the correlation and regression of the methods. The quantitative analysis allowed the research to be conclusive and focused in answering the research questions

3.2.3 Qualitative Approach

Qualitative analysis tries to understand the impact of society and environment generally. These phenomena can include how people perceive things around them and how they behave in response to phenomena. Qualitative study is when the researcher uses participants' views to conclude on the research questions (Haradhan, 2018). The researcher is the key tool for collecting data in qualitative analysis. Qualitative analysis begins with a whole range of views or paradigms that are central to quantification (Mohajan, 2017). By using this qualitative research, it enables the research to focus on the uniqueness and individuality of informants and also the researcher was able to explore in details the experiences and opinions of others in regards to the impact of public procurement processes on the performance of parastatals

In this study qualitative research design was suitable for exploring cognitive perceptions and also provided subjective data. These in-depth interviews assisted the researcher to understand people's perceptions through their verbal and nonverbal expression of the participants. Thus the study used in -depth interviews trying to probe for explanations, opinions and knowledge levels on the factors that lead to the cognitive perceptions for and against public procurement process on the performance of parastatals. In addition, public procurement being a government procurement method it involves political intervention hence qualitative was the best method since it allows respondents to freely express their opinions.

This approach was chosen because it allows in-depth examination of the complexity of a phenomenon, exploring how the participants make sense of their experiences, discovering how the different dimensions are related to one another and considering a phenomenon as an amalgam which is more than the sum of its parts (Griffin 2004; Willig 2021). The procurement staff, finance and operations were in a position to freely give their opinions without any disruption.

3.4 Research Strategy

The researcher adopted Case study for this research because specific data in accordance with specific research objectives was collected. A Case study can be defined as a list of questions with the objective of getting specific data from a certain group of people (Cresswell, 2003). The survey for this study was face to face in nature. The ZUPCO consists of many workers especially in the procurement and finance department resulting in survey strategy being the most suitable one among other strategies. The survey strategy enabled the researcher to collect more reliable and accurate information regarding the strategy implementation and the challenges in the implementation of strategies and was able to draw conclusions and make important decisions. Surveys allowed the respondents give candid or valid answers concerning public procurement processes at ZUPCO. More accurate results were obtained since respondents were free to speak their mind.

3.5 Research Design

Research design is one of the key elements of any study, according to Cooper and Schindler, (2011) research design refers to the procedures and approaches adopted in collection and analysis of data under a study. Hair et al, (2000), defined a research design as a controlling plan for a marketing research study in which the methods and procedures for collecting and analysing of information to be collected is specified. The mixed methods research designs were adopted for the study so that they can complement each other to review the aspects under study. Under the current study there is need to use both qualitative and quantitative designs to analyse the effect of central procurement on performance of public sector entity.

3.6 Research Population

Population refers to the group of people or articles likely to partake in a study (Uma, 2003). The fundamentals of the study must be undoubtedly known in order to make it easy to come up with the sample of the study (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2013). ZUPCO has a total of 500 employees.

3.7 Target Population

The study population is ZUPCO and the employees thereof are the grand population. Table 3.1 below shows the population of the study.

Table 3.1 Population of the study

Department	Number of employees
Finance	18
Procurement	12
Operations	35
Total	65

Source: ZUPCO (2022)

3.8 Sampling

The main purpose of sampling is to obtain a result that is representative of the whole population without asking everyone (Fisher, 2020). Using sampling techniques will enable the researcher to get a higher level of accuracy than considering the whole population (Moser & Kalton, 1986). Saunders et al. (2019) classified sampling techniques into two main groups, probability (representation) and non-probability (judgmental) sampling. Probability sampling is a sampling technique in which the researcher chooses samples from a larger population using a method based on the theory of probability while non-probability sampling is a sampling method in which not all members of the population have an equal chance of participating in the study (Kumar 2015). In probability sampling the subjects of the population get an equal opportunity to be selected as a representative sample whereas in nonprobability sampling it is not known which individual from the population will be selected as a sample (Watson 2015). Probability sampling uses sampling techniques such as random sampling, stratified sampling, cluster sampling and systematic sampling whereas non- probability sampling uses sampling techniques such as accidental sampling, convenience sampling, judgement sampling, purposive sampling, quota sampling, theoretical sampling, self-selection, and snowball sampling (Turner 2020). Judgemental and selective sampling were used in this research because of different reasons fully described below

3.8.1 Judgmental Sampling

For effective and efficient distribution of questionnaires to workers at ZUPCO specifically targeting the procurement and finance department, the researcher used judgemental sampling.

The workers at ZUPCO are more than five hundred making it difficult and impossible to identify every worker in the ministry resulting in the researcher using judgemental sampling as it was the most suitable for the research. Judgemental sampling will be used for the Harare department only since they are more than 500 workers across the country.

3.8.2 Convenience sampling

Convenience sampling was adopted because it was the most suitable for the researcher who wanted to carry out interviews on ZUPCO but majority coming from the procurement and finance department. Convenience sampling can be defined as the sample that is selected because of its convenience (Cunliffe, 2017). This type of sampling was used in this research because of different reasons which include financial instability and the unavailability of targeted people at time of interviews because of work pressure. In other words, finance was one of the research limitations resulting in the researcher interviewing the people who were available.

3.8.3 Purposive sampling

Purposive sampling sometimes called subjective sampling, is a sampling method where a researcher that is not intended to offer representative sample instead of honing on a certain process and or phenomena (Mugenda and Mugenda, 2013). As defined by Saunders et al. (2013) purposive sampling is a sampling technique where a sample is chosen based on characteristics of a population and the study objectives. The study went on to use purposive sampling to choose participants from finance, procurement and operations department.

3.9 Sample

A sample is a small part of the population that is set aside in order to get insights into the population characteristics (Saunders et al, 2009).

3.10 Sample Size

If the target population is predetermined, the following formula can be applied to estimate the required sample size (Krejice and Morgan, 1970)

$$S = \frac{X^2NP(1 - P)}{d^2(N - 1) + X^2P(1 + P)}$$

Where:

S = Sample size

X = Z value

N = Population Size

d = Degree of accuracy, expressed at 5% level

To simplify the process of determining the sample size for a finite population, Krejcie & Morgan (1970), came up with a table using sample size formula for finite population (Kananga, 2022). Using Table 3.2 below we can establish that the Population (N) is 65 (the number of people employed by ZUPCO in the procurement department, operations and or the finance department) and according the sample size (S), is 56.

3.11 Sampling Strategies

A sample is a subdivision of the population; this means not all elements of the population will participate in the study. The sample must be chosen in such a way that it represents all the essential characteristics of the population (Saunders, et al., 2016). Sampling method is an approach used for choosing a quota of the population that offers a comprehensive picture of the studied population (Montgomery & Runger, 2012). Sampling can be done by using probability techniques or non-probability techniques. When a probability approach is chosen, all elements in the population stands chance of being chosen to participate in the study, whereas when a non-probability approach is chosen not all elements in the population will stand a chance of participating in the study (Kothari, 2014). The study deliberately chose the non-probability approach, and specifically chose convenience sampling due to Covid 19 restrictions, and those with access to internet and or WhatsApp where chosen in the sample.

The sampling at ZUPCO was done in such a way that finance, procurement and operational employees were catered for in the study.

3.12 Sampling Procedures

There are two major types of procedures which are probability sampling and nonprobability sampling. Probability sampling techniques are those for which the chance of selecting a population element into the sample can be known and include simple random sampling, systematic sampling and stratified random sampling. On the other hand, nonprobability sampling techniques are those in which the sampling error cannot be estimated and include convenience sampling, judgement sampling, quota sampling and purposive sampling (ibid). In this study, purposive sampling was used to select participants from ZUPCO.

The main reason for using this criterion was that the research wanted only to select those respondents with concrete knowledge pertaining to public procurement since they would be the only ones best able to answer questions on the strength and weaknesses of the public procurement in Zimbabwe. In addition, the sampling criteria was instrumental in being convenient since the researcher used the insights of previous respondents to approach the subsequent ones. Also, only those that chose willingly to be sampled participated in the study, thus aiding the significance of the findings.

3.13 Data Collection Procedures

3.13.1 Data sources

There are mainly two sources of data available for use in every research, that is primary and secondary sources (Kother, 2016). In general data sources are the elements that provides data to the study. The study opted for using both primary and secondary sources.

3.13.2 Primary Sources

Primary sources refer to data gathered from new sources on real time basis (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2016). This kind of data can be gathered by interviews (both online and face to face), observations, experiments, questionnaires etc. The study deliberately opted for questionnaires and interviews due to the omnipresent properties of Covid-19, the study declared it unethical to conduct face to face interviews which exposes the respondents to Covid-19. The primary data at ZUPCO was collected from interviews.

3.13.3 Secondary Sources

Secondary data is the data found by perusing already existing data which may be either electronically or stored as textbooks, newspapers, magazines, journals, reports from regulatory boards, firm websites etc., the data will have been collected for other uses while it can also be used by some studies (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2016).

In this study, much information was gathered from websites of other public entities in Zimbabwe and outside Zimbabwe that are using central procurement approach. The secondary data for ZUPCO was collected from company financial statements.

3.13.4 Research instruments

Research instrument is a tool used to collect data from participants (Saunders et al, 2019), this study adopted the use of questionnaires and interviews

3.13.1.1 Questionnaire

A questionnaire is a designed document for easy responses by participants, where the respondents will complete structured document with a lot of easy (Cresswell, 2013). Emails, mails, or hand delivery were used by the researcher in the distribution of questionnaires. A telephone follow-up was used on those posted and emailed. The views, opinions, insights, and attitudes of the workers were important in this research therefore use of a questionnaire was necessary. The researcher designed a structured questionnaire which contained closed questions that were used in conducting the survey. The researcher's colleagues and the academic lectures reviewed the questionnaire before the real distribution was done.

The questionnaire was quantitative in nature that helped the researcher in data presentation and analysis. The Likert types of questionnaires were used for data collection regarding the strategic management of the ministry. According to Nemoto & Beglar, (2014), a Likert scale is a psychometric scale which has multiple categories from which respondents choose to indicate their opinions, attitudes, or feelings about a particular issue. In addition, four types of Likert scale are used in most research for data collection which are the dichotomous scale, three-point scale, four-point scale, five-point scale and seven-point scale (Brown, 2010). The dichotomous and five-point scales were used by the researcher in this research's questionnaire.

Likert-scale questionnaires helped the researcher to collect data quickly from large number of respondents and make valid interpretations. The questionnaire had an open-ended question where the respondents added their recommendations concerning the area under research. Also, there was a likelihood questions, hypothomes questions, and dichotomous questions.

This instrument was used because it is financially friendly and does not take a lot of time in gathering data. Furthermore, questionnaires covered large number of workers at ZUPCO compared to interviews where the researcher managed to interview 10 respondents only.

Close ended questions enabled the researcher to gain insight of the views of respondents within predetermined boundaries. However not all respondents were willing to fill the questionnaire as per targeted by the researcher resulting in some few questionnaires being ignored by the researcher.

3.13.1.2 Interviews Guide

Interview refers to a situation where a one-on-one conversation between 2 or more people where the respondent will be asked questions and freely respond (Cresswell, 2013). Personal interviews were carried out using interview guide on the ZUPCO workers. The interview guide contained open ended questions. Interview were developed from research objectives concentrating on areas the questionnaire failed to explore especial emotional areas. The researcher managed to interview 10 employees which not a bad number considering the value of data obtained from those interviews. Assurance was given to all interviewees that the information being gathered was to be used solely for academic purposes and it was to be handled with maximum congeniality.

Semi structured questions were used to eliminate bias and adopting interviews enabled the researcher to obtain more accurate, clear, and instant feedback from the management respondents understanding of the subject matter. Clarity was offered by respondents on information that needed clarification. This was possible because of open ended questions and that the respondents were free to answer according to their line of thinking and not constrained by any alternatives, the fact that the interviews will be pre-tested thus enhancing the validity and reliability of the interviews

3.14 Instruments Piloting

The term pilot study can refer to so-called feasibility studies which are “small scale version[s], or trial run[s], done in preparation for the major study” (Polit et al., 2001). However, a pilot study can also be the pre-testing or ‘trying out’ of a particular research instrument (Baker 1994). One of the advantages of conducting a pilot study is that it might give advance warning about where the main research project could fail, where research protocols may not be followed, or whether proposed methods or instruments are inappropriate or too complicated. In the words of De Vaus (1993) “Do not take the risk. Pilot test first.” These are important reasons for undertaking a pilot study, but there are additional reasons, for example convincing funding bodies that your research proposal for the main study is worth funding.

Thus, pilot studies are conducted for a range of different reasons. In this study a pilot study was done at CMED belvedere to test the suitability of the questionnaire, it was conducted in the procurement department at CMED Head office.

3.15 Ethical Considerations

This research study is an academic work which was guided by Bindura University ethical guidelines. These ethical procedures prescribed and provided the minimum expected professional guiding principles between the researcher, sampled organisation and research participants, Bindura University staff and Research Committees and officials. This research was scrutinised by both the Bindura University graduate research committees which were comprised of Research Ethics Council and Research Graduate Council. These committees guide the students and certify each stage of the research process to ensure that the research study processes remain faithful to the fulfilment of Bindura University’s master program. Ethical considerations in this research study noted that there were other external circumstances which were difficult to avoid hence the researcher made efforts to avoid and minimise procedures that could have compromised the research participant's integrity, dignity, and safety.

3.15.1 Participants’ informed consent

Before proceeding with the research, the researcher ensured that participants are made to sign informed consent forms. The informed consent forms ensured that prospective research participants were given as much information as possible for them to make informed decisions to be part of the study or otherwise.

3.15.2 Confidentiality and anonymity of participants

The researcher in this research study took full responsibility of not disclosing information learnt during the research study to anyone without approval. The researcher also ensured that participants do not write their names on any research instrument and on completion of the research study, the researcher destroyed all completed questionnaires and take full protection of all collected information for this research study.

3.15.3 Voluntary Participation

The researcher in this research study ensured that no one was coerced to participate in the study, thus the researcher ensured that participants had free choice of withdrawing their participation from this research exercise at any given time.

3.15.4 Protection of Data

The researcher ensured that the identity of all participants was protected, and this protection involved restricting access to raw data, storing all data securely, reporting findings in a manner that did not allow for ready identification of participants, and obtaining permission for subsequent use of data. The collected data was kept safe by the researcher and soft copies of the data were password protected. On completion of the research study, the researcher destroyed all completed questionnaires and take full protection of all collected information for this research study.

3.15.5 Health and Safety of participants

The researcher ensured that emotional harm to participants was avoided by desisting from forcing participants to respond to questions that they felt were uncomfortable.

3.16 Data Presentation

The data for the study was be presented using pie charts, bar graphs and frequency tables

3.17 Data Analysis

The triangulation process was followed, where the questionnaire method is the primary instrument for data collection. A pilot study was executed at CMED Belvedere technical staff to evaluate the questionnaire before implementing it in the main research. This was to cross check clarity, relevance and overall layout of the entire questionnaire. Data collected from the field using questionnaires, interviews and observations was computed and organised into categories.

The data was analysed using descriptive statistics and the regression analysis using Software Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). Data collected was presented in an organized format to allow for in depth analysis. Presentation was done in the form of texts, themes tables, pictures. Data collected was tested for validity, reliability and consistency so as to determine if the results can be generalised.

3.18 Research Methodology Limitations

The limitation is that a less suitable methodology may be used and results produced by the study may be misleading due to wrong methodology.

3.19 Hypothesis Testing

Hypotheses both null and alternative are presented.

H0: $\mu=0$ (Effectiveness of public procurement processes has a significant effect on service delivery)

H1: $\mu\neq 0$ (Effectiveness of public procurement processes has no significant effect on service delivery)

At a significance level equal to or greater than 5% ($=5\%$), the hypothesis test has to be carried out.

3.21 Chapter Summary

Research philosophy is a set of beliefs that guide the design and execution of a research study, and different research philosophies offer different ways of understanding scientific research. Positivism positions the researcher in the role of the objective analyst, while interpretivism provides that only through subjective interpretation of and intervention in reality can reality be fully understood. Mixed research approaches combine qualitative and quantitative approaches to gain the most out of accurately articulated statistical approaches. Qualitative analysis tries to understand the impact of society and environment. Research design is an important part of any study, and this study uses both qualitative and quantitative designs to analyse the effect of central procurement on performance of public sector entities. Sampling techniques include probability sampling and nonprobability sampling. Purposive sampling was used to select participants from ZUPCO. This study used primary and secondary sources to collect data from participants, with primary data from interviews and secondary data from websites of other

public entities. The researcher ensured participants' informed consent, confidentiality and anonymity, voluntary participation, and protection of data. Data was kept safe, presented in an organized format, and tested for validity, reliability and consistency to determine generalisation.

CHAPTER IV

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

4.0 Introduction

The previous chapter looked at methodology whereas the current chapter looks at data presentation and analysis. The data was presented in form of tables and bar graphs. Descriptive statistics, hypothesis and multiple regression were used in the data analysis. The interview responses were in thematic format. The research objectives were used as the guidelines.

4.1 Objectives revisited

- v. To ascertain the current state of public procurement policy on performance at ZUPCO
- vi. To evaluate the extent to which public procurement planning influences the service delivery performance at ZUPCO
- vii. To assess the effect of public tendering process on service delivery performance at ZUPCO
- viii. To Proffer possible recommendations on how best public procurement and service delivery can be improved

4.2 Response Rate

The statistics on the number of participants who returned questionnaires and those that responded on interviews are shown in table 1

Table 4:1:Response Rate

	Distributed	Returned	Response rate
Questionnaires	65	60	92%
Interviews	10	10	100%

Source: Research data (2022)

Response rate = returned/distributed *100

The study distributed 65 questionnaires and 60 were returned indicating 92% response rate. In addition, the study managed to carry out 10 interviews out of targeted 10 interviews indicating 100% response rate. The data presentation and analysis proceeded because of response rate above 75% as per Magenta (2019) recommendation.

4.2 Demographic Analysis

The demographics in this study were gender, educational level, position held and experience. The statistics on demographics are shown in table 2 below

Table 4.2: Gender

Category	Percentage
Male	51
Female	49
Total	100

Source: Research data (2022)

In academic research gender, sensitivity is paramount important hence there is a need to consider the views from both genders. The results obtained shows 51% males and 49% females. Public procurement practices are technical in nature therefore it was important to consider the level of education of the respondents.

Table 4.3: Level of education

Level of education		
	Certificate	45
	Diploma	30
	Degree	25
	Total	100.0

Source: Research data (2022)

The results obtained indicated that 45% were certificate holders, 25% diploma holders and 30% degree holders implying that educational level was considered in the distribution of the questionnaire and interviews.

Table 4.4: Work experience

Working experience		
	Less than 5 years	38
	5 – 10 years	52
	More than 10 years	10
	Total	100

Source: Research data (2022)

The experience in the organisation was also crucial as it determines the level of knowledge and policies that have been adopted before by the organisation.

The results obtained on the experience shows that those between 1-5 years were 38%, 6-10years were 52% and 10% those above 10 years.

The majority of the respondents were above 6 years of experience implying that the data was collected from people with enough knowledge of the organisation.

4.3 Reliability analysis

To assess the reliability of the data collected on the public procurement process on the service delivery, the reliability test was done. Table 5 shows Cronbach's alpha reliability statistics for the variables of the study.

Table4.5: Reliability Statistics

Factor dimension	Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
Procurement policies	.772	6
Procurement planning	.892	5
Tendering Process	.829	5

Source: Research data (2022)

The Cronbach alpha was done to show the extent to which the different items, measures or assessments are consistent with one another and the extent to which each measure is free from measurement error, this is shown in Table 4.5 above. In this study, Cronbach's Alpha was computed. The alpha for the three variables used to measure the impact of public procurement on the service delivery was found to be suitable for further analysis since the least value was 0.75 which indicates that all the items form a scale that has reasonable internal consistency and reliability. The result is also consistent with what was considered by Nunnaly (2018) who postulated that a Cronbach's alpha which is above 0.7 is recommended for further analysis which is acceptable.

4.4 Public procurement policy on Service Delivery

The descriptive statistics on the public procurement policy of service delivery are shown below

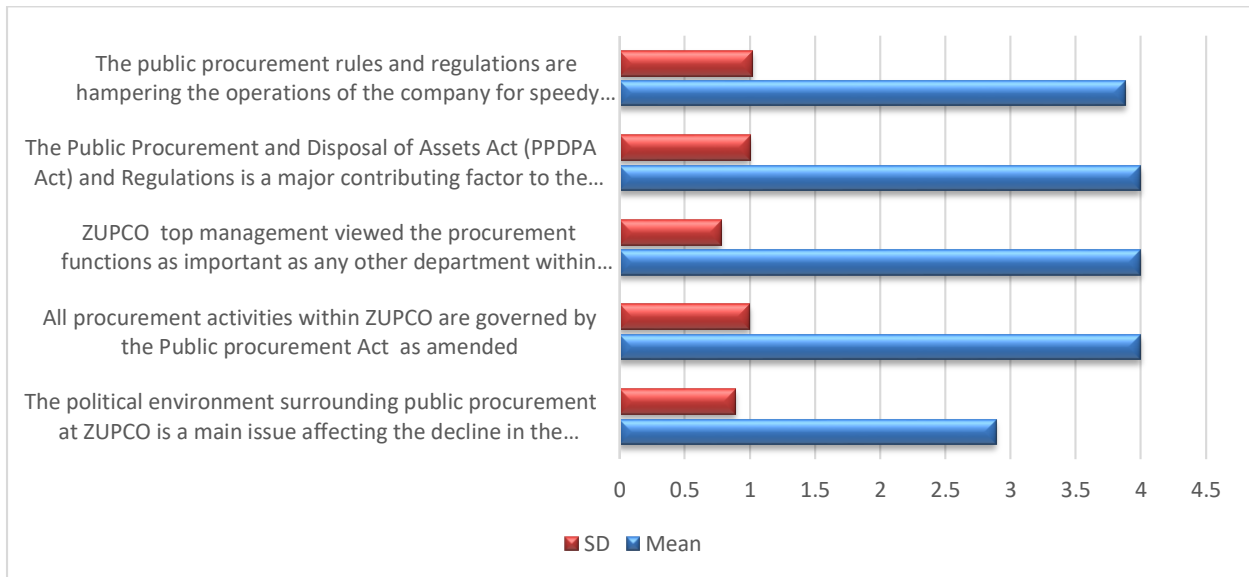


Figure 3.1: Public procurement policy on Service Delivery

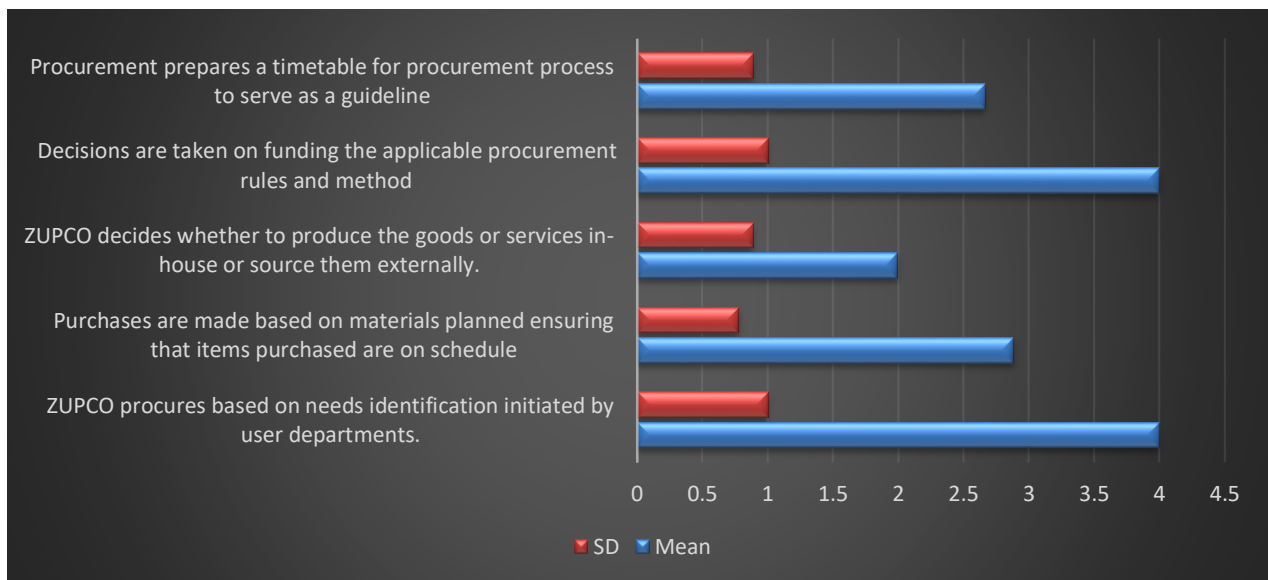
The respondents were neutral on whether the political environment surrounding public procurement at ZUPCO as affecting the quality of the goods procured and services rendered shown by the (Mean=2.8895, SD=0.8894). This was supported by Responded 1 “*yes there is political interference in the procurement but it is not the one significantly affecting the service delivery*”. In addition, the results confirmed that all procurement activities within ZUPCO are governed by the Public Procurement Act as amended and ZUPCO top management viewed the procurement functions as important as any other department within the company to help it achieve the missions and obligations of the company operations as shown by (Mean=3.9985, SD=0.9985) and (Mean=3.9965, SD=0.7784) respectively.

Ado-Ekiti, (2021) postulated that the public procurement acts in different countries hinders the smooth flowing of the operations giving room for politicians to interfere with the procurement process.

The results show that the management is supportive and they adhere to all public procurement requirements meaning that this is not a challenge affecting service delivery. Respondent 2 “*the management is supportive and the system allows us to adhere to procurements acts but the issue of adherence is prolonging the tendering process and delivery of goods and services*”. In addition, the participants also confirmed that Public Procurement and Disposal of Assets Act (PPDPA Act) and Regulations is a major contributing factor to the decline of the quality of goods procured and services rendered as shown by (Mean=3.9985, SD=1.0021). It was also confirmed that public procurement rules and regulations are hampering the operations of the company for speedy acquisition of goods and services or contractual arrangements as shown by (Mean=3.8854, SD=1.0220).

4.5 Public Procurement Planning on Service Delivery

The descriptive statistics on the public procurement policy of service delivery are shown below



Public procurement planning on Service Delivery

Source: Research data (2022)

The results suggested that ZUPCO procures based on needs identification initiated by user departments but were neutral on whether purchases are made based on materials planned to ensure that items purchased are on schedule as shown by (mean=3.9965, SD=1.0021) and (mean=2.8878, SD=0.7784) respectively. In support of this was interview respondent 3 “*identifying the needs and planning as ZUPCO is not a challenge by the regulations of the acts which are not flexible have killed a lot of things*”.

These results shows that ZUPCO procurement planning is satisfactory but the procedures to be followed are hindering the progress and the quality of services being provided.

The results show that planning controls purchasing of the goods. the respondents denied that ZUPCO decides whether to produce the goods or services in-house or source them externally but confirmed that decisions are taken on funding the applicable procurement rules and method as shown by (mean=1.9965, SD=0.8875) and (mean=4.0012, SD=1.0012) respectively. Dzuke & Naude, (2020) postulated that normally procurement is based on planning hence public procurement practices promotes planning. The results were neutral on whether procurement prepares a timetable for the procurement process to serve as a guideline as shown by a mean score of 2.6654 and standard deviation of 0.88745.

4.5 Tendering process on Service delivery

The descriptive statistics on the public procurement policy of service delivery are shown in table 6 below

Tendering process on Service delivery

	Mean	SD
The tendering process is a major contributing factor to the decline of the quality of goods procured and services rendered at ZUPCO	4.0121	0.8894
Tendering planning at ZUPCO is the reason for the decline in service provision	3.8875	1.0012
Tendering Policy at ZUPCO is the reason for the decline in quality of service provision	4.2212	0.7784
Contract management at ZUPCO is the major cause of decline in service quality	2.0021	0.9965

On tendering dimension, the results confirmed that tendering process is a major contributing factor to the decline of the quality of goods procured and services rendered at ZUPCO as shown by (Mean=4.0121, SD=0.8894). In addition, the tendering planning and the policy itself were also confirmed as the reason why ZUPCO is not performing as expected as shown by (Mean=3.8875, SD=1.0012) and (Mean=4.2212, SD=0.7784) respectively. This is supported by responded 6 “*the whole process of tendering from planning to evaluation are slowing things down and compromising the service quality at ZUPCO*”.

A study by Bolton, (2019) in Newsland also confirmed that the procurement tendering rules and acts promotes transparency and accountability and shun the efficiency element of the service provision which is key in an industry. The participants denied that contract management at ZUPCO is the major cause of decline in service quality as shown by (Mean=2.0021, SD=0.9965). In support of this was Responded 7 “the *contract management is major problem in this case and the department is doing well on those awarded tenders*”. Anteneh, (2019) postulated that management of contracts is not a major issue but the incompetence of those that are given Tenders.

4.6 Service Delivery

The descriptive statistics on the service delivery are shown in table 7 below

Service Delivery

	Mean	SD
ZUPCO ensures procurement system operates on a timely manner within a minimum bureaucracy with the involvement of top management and delivery schedules	2.9965	1.2201
Through policy reviews, delivery checking, and supplier audits, ZUPCO is able to achieve efficiency in terms of value for money	3.8875	0.9965
ZUPCO is able to achieve procurement effectiveness through system reviews and supplier evaluation	4.0012	1.0032
Through examination of the procurement cycle, ZUPCO is able to reduce corruption and also detect theft	3.8879	0.9965
ZUPCO is assured of quality improvement and supplier reliability through supplier audit and supplier evaluation	4.1121	0.9985
Before a decision is made all environmental risks are considered first before the implementation of the decision	2.0012	0.9965

Source: Research data (2022)

On the service dimension, participants were neutral on whether ZUPCO ensures the procurement system operates on time within a minimum bureaucracy with the involvement of top management and delivery schedules as shown by (mean=2.9965, SD=1.2201).

In addition, the results indicated that through policy reviews, delivery checking, and supplier audits, ZUPCO can achieve efficiency in terms of value for money as shown by (mean=3.8875, SD=0.9965). The results above imply that management may partly influence procurement but the culture of policy review, delivery checking and supplier audits is helping the organization in achieving operational efficiency.

In addition, the results confirmed that ZUPCO can achieve procurement effectiveness through system reviews and supplier evaluation and examination of the procurement cycle, ZUPCO can reduce corruption and also detect theft as shown by (mean=4.0012, SD=1.0032) and (mean=3.8879, SD=0.9965) respectively. The results show that objective policy reviews help the organization in the service delivery as also confirmed by Uyarra & Flanagan (2019) in their study on the impact of public procurement policies on performance. Furthermore, the results confirmed that ZUPCO is assured of quality improvement and supplier reliability through supplier audit and supplier evaluation but denied that before a decision is made all environmental risks are considered first before the implementation of the decision as shown by (mean=4.1121, SD=0.9985) and (mean=2.0012, SD=0.9965) respectively. In concluding the service dimension, the procurement practices that are effectively employed helps in the performance of the organization hence improving the service delivery.

4.8: Hypothesis Testing

The hypothesis was tested using a Pearson correlation, the statistics are shown in table 8.

Hypothesis testing The Pearson Correlation

		Procurement practices	Service delivery
Procurement practices	Pearson Correlation	1	.576**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000
Service delivery	Pearson Correlation	.576**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	

4.8.1 Hypothesis 1: procurement practices affect service delivery at ZUPCO

As shown in table 4.5, the results indicated that procurement practices and service delivery positively and significantly related (0.576^{**} , $p=0000<0.01$). This is a sign that if procurement practices improve results in increased service delivery. Likewise ignoring procurement practices can affect the delivery of service by ZUPCO. A study by Dzuke, (2020) confirmed that public procurement policies have a strong relationship with service delivery.

4.9 Multiple regressions:

Since normality, linearity and reliability were assumed, so regressions analysis can be used in the case at hand; especially after achieving the following underlying assumptions: Durbin-Watson test to ensure the independence of errors, If Durbin-Watson test value is about 2 the model does not violate this assumption (Durbin-Watson, 1985). While VIF (Variance Inflation Factor) and tolerance are used to test multicollinearity.

Durbin-Watson Test

Model	Durbin-Watson
1	1.647

If VIF is less than 10 and tolerance is more than 0.2, the multi-collinearity model does not violate this assumption. Table 4.7 shows that the Durbin Watson value is ($d=1.647$), which is around two the residuals are not correlated with each other; therefore, the independence of errors is not violated.

Table 10 result also shows that the VIF values are less than 10 and the tolerance values are more than 0.2. This indicates that there is no multicollinearity within the independent variables of the study.

Multiple Regression Model statistics

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
(Constant)	7.191	1.505		4.779	.000		
1 Procurement policy	.082	.100	.136	.816	.002	.346	2.888
Procurement planning	.088	.113	-.118	-.781	.000	.423	2.362
Tendering Process	.271	.079	.616	3.435	.001	.298	3.356

a. Dependent Variable: Service Delivery

Procurement policy has a significant relationship on public service delivery by ZUPCO at ($\alpha \leq 0.05$). Tables hows that there is a positive direct impact of procurement policy on service delivery, since (Beta= 0.136, t=0.816, sig. 0.002, $p < 0.05$). Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternative hypothesis is accepted, which shows that digital procurement policy has an impact on service delivery at ($\alpha \leq 0.05$).

Procurement planning has a positive relationship with service delivery, at ($\alpha \leq 0.05$). Table 4.8 shows that there is a positive impact of procurement planning on service delivery, since (Beta= 0.118, t=-0.781, sig. 0.000, $p < 0.05$), the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternative hypothesis is accepted, which indicates that the procurement planning has a positive impact on service delivery at ($\alpha \leq 0.05$).

Tendering Process has a positive impact on service delivery at ($\alpha \leq 0.05$). Table 4.8 shows that there is a positive direct impact of Tendering Process on service delivery, since (Beta= .616, t=3.435, sig. 0.001, $p < 0.05$), the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternative hypothesis is accepted, which indicates that Tendering Process has an impact on service delivery at ($\alpha \leq 0.05$).

From table 4.8, it can be concluded that all public procurement practices variables have an impact on service delivery.

From the regression equation above it emerged that holding procurement policy, procurement planning and Tendering Process on service delivery would be 7.191. A unit increase in procurement policy would lead to an increase in service delivery by 0.082 units. A unit increase in procurement planning would lead to an increase in service delivery by 0.088 units. A unit increase in Tendering Process would lead to an increase in service delivery by 0.271 units.

$$Y = \alpha + \beta_1\chi_1 + \beta_2\chi_2 + \beta_3\chi_3$$

$$Y = 7.191 + 0.082\chi_1 + 0.088\chi_2 + 0.271\chi_3$$

Where

Y= Service Delivery

X1 = Procurement Planning

X2 = Tendering processes

X3 = Contract management

4.10 One-Sample T-Testing

A one-sample T-test was performed using SPSS to test whether the perspective means of the three factors influencing service delivery as measured by respondent’s views is the same as the mean of the population (test value 0) as shown in table 4.9.

One sample test One-Sample Test

	Test Value = 0				
	T	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
				Lower	Upper
Procurement Policy	24.204	.000	19.11111	17.5198	20.7024
Procurement planning	26.660	.000	16.93333	15.6532	18.2134
Tendering Process	28.272	.000	30.64444	28.4599	32.8290

Source: Research data (2022)

The results of the one-sample t-test in table shows that the two-tailed p-value of the three variables namely: procurement policy, procurement planning and Tendering Process are (p = 0.000) respectively which is below 0.05.

Therefore, it can be concluded, in the case of the above three factors (procurement policy, procurement planning and sustainable procurement), that the sample means and the population means are not significantly different, meaning that the three factors respectively have a significant relationship with the service delivery. This result also suggests that if this test is repeated several times the result will not be significantly different from the results obtained in the current study.

4.11 Chapter Summary

The chapter looked at data presentation, analysis and interpretation. Mean and standard deviation were used to analyse the Likert scale from the respondents. The one-sample t-test was used to test the relationship between the demographic variables and dependent variables. The hypothesis was tested through the Pearson correlation and it helped in the creation of the multiple regression model. The next chapter looks at the summary of findings, conclusions and recommendations of the study.

CHAPTER V

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

The previous chapter looked at the presentation and analysis of the data whereas the current chapter summarizes the findings, giving the conclusions and the recommendations. In addition, the conclusion and the recommendations are based on the results obtained. The research objectives are also used as the guidelines in the study.

5.1 Summary of Findings

5.1.1 Public procurement policy on Service Delivery

Political environment surrounding public procurement at ZUPCO was confirmed not to be a major concern in the delivery of service. In addition, the results confirmed that all procurement activities within ZUPCO are governed by the Public Procurement Act as amended and ZUPCO top management viewed the procurement functions as important as any other department within the company to help it achieve the missions and obligations of the company operations. In addition, the participants also confirmed that Public Procurement and Disposal of Assets Act (PPDPA Act) and Regulations is a major contributing factor to the decline of the quality of goods procured and services rendered. It was also confirmed that public procurement rules and regulations are hampering the operations of the company for speedy acquisition of goods and services or contractual arrangements

5.1.2 Public Procurement Planning on Service Delivery

The results confirmed that ZUPCO procures based on needs identification initiated by user departments but were neutral on whether purchases are made based on materials planned to ensure that items purchased are on schedule. The results denied that ZUPCO decides whether to produce the goods or services in-house or source them externally but confirmed that decisions are taken on funding the applicable procurement rules and method. The results were neutral on whether procurement prepares a timetable for the procurement process to serve as a guideline

5.1.3 Tendering process on Service delivery

The results confirmed that tendering process is a major contributing factor to the decline of the quality of goods procured and services rendered at ZUPCO. In addition, the tendering planning and the policy itself were also confirmed as the reason why ZUPCO is not performing. The participants denied that contract management at ZUPCO is the major cause of decline in service quality.

5.1.4 Service Delivery

On the service dimension, participants were neutral on whether ZUPCO ensures the procurement system operates on time within a minimum bureaucracy with the involvement of top management and delivery schedules. In addition, the results indicated that through policy reviews, delivery checking, and supplier audits, ZUPCO can achieve efficiency in terms of value for money. The results above imply that management may partly influence procurement but the culture of policy review, delivery checking and supplier audits is helping the organization in achieving operational efficiency. In addition, the results confirmed that ZUPCO can achieve procurement effectiveness through system reviews and supplier evaluation and examination of the procurement cycle, ZUPCO can reduce corruption and also detect theft. Furthermore, the results confirmed that ZUPCO is assured of quality improvement and supplier reliability through supplier audit and supplier evaluation but denied that before a decision is made all environmental risks are considered first before the implementation of the decision. In concluding the service dimension, the procurement practices that are effectively employed helps in the performance of the organization hence improving the service delivery.

5.1.5: Hypothesis Testing

The results indicated that procurement practices and service delivery positively and significantly related (0.576^{**} , $p=0000<0.01$). This is a sign that if procurement practices improve results in increased service delivery. Likewise ignoring procurement practices can affect the delivery of service by ZUPCO

5.2 Conclusions

The obtained results indicated that public procurement policy is affecting the service delivery at ZUPCO. Political environment surrounding public procurement at ZUPCO was confirmed not to be a major concern in the delivery of service but Public Procurement and Disposal of Assets Act (PPDPA Act) and Regulations is a major contributing factor to the decline of the quality of goods procured and services rendered.

A research by Makumbe, Mandongwe and Jachi,(2019) on local authorities confirmed that adhering to the procurement acts and regulations has affected the performance of local authorities in Zimbabwe. With this information at hand, it can be concluded that the public procurement process in Zimbabwe is affecting many public organisation.

The contribution of procurement policy in facilitating efficient and effective service delivery in public sector organizations is generally undisputed in both developed and developing countries. Its contribution can be at both central and local government levels of public sector management. However, the policy should be flexible as procurement is an involving profession. In practice and theory, these laws should be clear, consistent, comprehensive, and flexible. Based on the results, the procurement planning itself is not a major challenge but regulations and acts guiding the planning are the problems. Madziva, Msipah and Tukuta, (2021) confirmed that public procurement planning in health sector was not affecting the performance but the acts guiding the planning. It can be concluded that public procurement planning partly influences the service delivery at ZUPCO. The results confirmed that tendering process is a major contributing factor to the decline of the quality of goods procured and services rendered at ZUPCO. In addition, the tendering planning and the policy itself were also confirmed as the reason why ZUPCO is not performing.

5.3 Recommendations

As a result of these study findings, the researcher put forward the following recommendations but not limited to:

- 5.3.1 The National procurement policy or rules and regulations should be review to put into place clauses that will lead to flexibility for the inclusion of emerging trends in the procurement process as procurement is an involving profession;
- 5.3.2 The top and middle management of ZUPCO should be de-polarized. For employees to perform to their best, job security and stability counts most for performance and service delivery; The top management should ensure that the procurement department is involved in all procurement and contract related activities as this will help in ensuring that contracts are awarded to the right bidders and that contract terms and conditions are adhered to;
- 5.3.3 The planning process for ZUPCO expansion should involve all concerned departments so that planning can be done in advance before budgets are approved. The planning should take the short, middle and long-term plans into consideration. This will ensure that budgetary approval does not affect the plans for expansion;
- 5.3.4 The company should put in place a monitoring team that will work along with the subcontractors to ensure that contracts are implemented to avoid system loss;
- 5.3.5 Government should increase its subsidy to the company's operation. This will make it easier for the inclusion of social programs that include the rural/urban communities. This will also help for the realization of the MDG's goals and the nation reaching its economic objectives fasters;
- 5.3.6 The company should include sustainable procurement criteria within its procurement and contracting decisions;
- 5.3.7 The Company should consider the long-term cost of ownership even though there is a huge demand and that could affect the supply in the short run;

5.4 Suggestion for Further Studies

This research was intended to evaluate procurement practices influencing service delivery but, the data was collected from the central office and urban service providers. Hence, future research should focus on the rural depot's procurement practices as well as the inclusion of other factors that could affect procurement. Future research should also focus on sustainable procurement exclusion and its effect on the company's operation.

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**ZIMBABWE UNITED
PASSENGER COMPANY LTD.**

Appendix 1: Questionnaire
Date...../...../ 2022

To whom it may concern:

Dear Sir/Madam,

Ref: Request for information for a research.
My name is Chisunga John a Masters of Business Leadership student at Bindura State University. I am undertaking a research titled **“The effectiveness of public procurement processes on public entities performance. A Case study of Zimbabwe United Passenger Company (2018 – 2022)”** This information will be solely used for academic purposes and will be in complementary partial fulfilment of the requirements for the

I would like to thank you in advance for your positive contribution to the success of the project by your participation in completing this questionnaire. Your participation is optional.

If you have any concerns, please contact the undersigned;

Chisunga John

Email address: jchisunga@gmail.com.

Cell: +263 778243357/+263 737894668/0718517852,

Instructions

Do not write your name

Respond by ticking the space provided or by writing in the space provided.

SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHICS OF RESPONDENTS

1. Please indicate you are the appropriate category on the table below.

Gender

Male		Female	
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Educational level

Certificate		Diploma		Degree	
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Position held

Management		Supervisor		Other	
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Experience

1-5 years		6-10 years		+10 years	
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SECTION B: PUBLIC PROCUREMENT POLICY AND PERFORMANCE

State the extent to which you agree to the following statements

Key: SD -strongly disagree; D- Disagree; N- Neutral; A- Agree and SA- strongly Agree

	SD	D	N	A	SA
The political environment surrounding public procurement at ZUPCO is a main issue affecting the decline in the quality of the goods procured and services rendered.					
All procurement activities within ZUPCO are governed by the Public procurement Act as amended					
ZUPCO top management viewed the procurement functions as important as any other department within the company to help it achieve the missions and obligations of the company operations					
The Public Procurement and Disposal of Assets Act (PPDPA Act) and Regulations is a major contributing factor to the decline of the quality of goods procured and services rendered					
The procurement policy procedures at ZUPCO are the reason for the deterioration in the quality of goods procured and services rendered					
The public procurement rules and regulations are hampering the operations of the company for speedy acquisition of goods and services or contractual arrangements					

SECTION C: PUBLIC PROCUREMENT PLANNING AND SERVICE DELIVERY

State the extent to which you agree to the following statements

Key: SD -strongly disagree; D- Disagree; N- Neutral; A- Agree and SA- strongly Agree

	SD	D	N	A	SA
ZUPCO procures based on needs identification initiated by user departments.					
Purchases are made based on materials planned ensuring that items purchased are on schedule					
ZUPCO decides whether to produce the goods or services in-house or source them externally.					
Decisions are taken on funding the applicable procurement rules and method					
Procurement prepares a timetable for procurement process to serve as a guideline					

SECTION D: PUBLIC PROCUREMENT TENDERING AND SERVICE DELIVERY

Dimension 4: Tendering process on Service delivery

Please indicate the extent to which you agree to the following statements

Key: SD -strongly disagree; D- Disagree; N- Neutral; A- Agree and SA- strongly Agree

	SD	D	N	A	SA
The tendering process is a major contributing factor to the decline of the quality of goods procured and services rendered at ZUPCO.					
Tendering planning at ZUPCO is the reason for the decline in service provision					
Tendering Policy at ZUPCO is the reason for the decline in quality of service provision					
Contract management at ZUPCO is the major cause of decline in service quality					

Dimension 4: Service Delivery

State the extent to which you agree to the following statements as they relate to your organisation

Key: SD -strongly disagree; D- Disagree; N- Neutral; A- Agree and SA- strongly Agree

	SD	D	N	A	SA
ZUPCO ensures procurement system operates on a timely manner within a minimum bureaucracy with the involvement of top management and delivery schedules					
Through policy reviews, delivery checking, and supplier audits, ZUPCO is able to achieve efficiency in terms of value for money					
ZUPCO is able to achieve procurement effectiveness through system reviews and supplier evaluation					
Through examination of the procurement cycle, ZUPCO is able to reduce corruption and also detect theft					
ZUPCO is assured of quality improvement and supplier reliability through supplier audit and supplier evaluation					
Before a decision is made all environmental risks are considered first before the implementation of the decision					

APPENDIX 2: INTERVIEW GUIDE

PART 1: Greetings and Introductions

My name is John Chisunga an MBL student at BUSE researching on public procurement processes effectiveness on public service delivery. The purpose of the interview is to establish whether public procurement processes are effective on service delivery.

PART 2: Interview Guide

- i. What is the current state of public procurement process on service delivery service delivery at ZUPCO?
- ii. To what extent does public procurement planning influence the performance at ZUPCO?
- iii. What is the effect of public tendering process on service delivery performance at ZUPCO?
- iv. What are the possible recommendations on how best public procurement and service delivery can be improved?

PART 3: Recommendations on best procurement practise:

- i. In your opinion what do you suggest to improve public procurement processes and service delivery at ZUPCO?
- ii. What can be done to improve public procurement planning at ZUPCO?
- iii. What improvements could be made to improve the tendering process at ZUPCO?
- iv. How significant is contract management in public serve delivery at ZUPCO?