

# MIDLANDS STATE UNIVERSITY



## FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

### DEPARTMENT OF POLITICS AND PUBLIC MANAGEMENT

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Dissertation

**An analysis of service delivery satisfaction levels for local authorities in  
Zimbabwe. The case of Victoria Falls Municipality (2010- 2015)**

*A dissertation submitted to the Midlands State University in partial fulfilment of the  
requirements of Bachelor of Social Science in Politics and Public Management  
Honours Degree.*

**NOVEMBER 2016**

# MIDLANDS STATE UNIVERSITY

## DEPARTMENT OF POLITICS AND PUBLIC MANAGEMENT

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### APPROVAL FORM

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The undersigned certifies that she has read and recommends to the Midlands State University for acceptance; a dissertation entitled:

**AN ANALYSIS OF SERVICE DELIVERY SATISFACTION LEVELS FOR LOCAL AUTHORITIES IN ZIMBABWE. THE CASE OF VICTORIA FALLS MUNICIPALITY (2010- 2015)**

Submitted by: **IMEDI NOTHANDO (R131782V)** in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the Bachelor of Social Sciences Honours Degree in Politics and Public Management.

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**DEGREE TO WHICH DISSERTATION WAS PRESENTED:** Bachelor of Science Honours Degree in Politics and Public Management.

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STUDENT: \_\_\_\_\_  
Signed Date

## **DEDICATION**

I would like to dedicate this work to my Guardians Mr and Mrs Sibanda and my mother Sinanzeni Mpofu.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

My sincere gratitude goes to the Lord Almighty God, for being my provider and for taking me this far. Thanking him for the wisdom and strength that he provided me to complete this work. I am very grateful to Mr and Mrs Sibanda who have been there for me and supported me all the way to this day, to my mother for the emotional support and encouragement. I am also thankful to my friends Ruth Chitsa, Brian Nyamande, Tholakele Moyo, Primrose Musiwa and Moses Musanhu for being true friends and for walking this journey with me. I wish to express my deepest gratitude to Mr. S Moyo (Supervisor) for the provision of scholarly supervision, skilful opinion and encouragement to complete this study.

## **ABSTRACT**

Public service delivery is of paramount importance to citizens around the globe. Service delivery is therefore meant to ensure good living conditions to the people thus there is need for good public service delivery. It can be noted that there are many factors that have been alluded to as causes of poor service delivery by local authorities and these factors are financial constraints, economic instability, political interference into the local authority issues and management thereby leading to poor public service delivery by local authorities in Zimbabwe. Therefore the aim of this study is to analyse the service delivery satisfaction levels for local authorities in Zimbabwe a case of Victoria Falls Municipality. To come up with a sound thesis three specific objectives with their underling hypothesis were designed and assessed by quantitative & qualitative research design. Following the fact that the research was a case study approach the researcher greatly employed primary and secondary sources of data, thus made use of online Articles, books, journals, interviews, questionnaires and even observations in order to produce a sound thesis. Background information on the proposed hypothesis the theoretical framework was established, conceptual and related literatures were also reviewed. After conducting the study, the researcher found out that there was need for improvement in service delivery by local authorities noting that a sound relationship between the service providers and the service users was to be establishes so as to allow effective communication that will enable efficient and effective service delivery.

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# **CHAPTER ONE**

## **1.0 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY**

### **1.1 Introduction**

Service delivery can be defined as a continuous cyclic process for developing and delivering user focused services. According to UNDP (1999) service delivery is a set of institutional arrangements adopted by the government to provide public goods and services to its citizens. Municipal Research and Services Centre (MRSC, 1993) defines service delivery as the actual producing of a services such as collecting refuse and disposing it or lighting the streets. Stauss (2005) supported this view and suggested that in economic transactions, it is specialized skills and knowledge that are exchanged for money rather than the physical resources. Whitaker (1980) observes that depending on the kind of service being offered, each service has a primary intervention of transforming the customer and that the client himself/herself is the principal beneficiary. As a crucial responsibility of government and government institutions, the public service should deliver services that a society requires to maintain and improve its welfare. To do this, government institutions require organizational structures and suitably qualified people who must be supported to deliver the services they are responsible for (Whitaker, 1980). Besley and Ghatak (2007) argue that public services are a key determinant of quality of life that is not measured in per capita income. The authors stress that service delivery is an important feature of the poverty reduction strategy. Hernandez (2006) concurs that services are vital to poverty alleviation and key to realizing the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) both directly and indirectly, i.e. enhancing the availability and affordability of education, health, energy, and information and communication technology services; and alleviating poverty and empowering women through entrepreneurial and employment creation opportunities in services enterprises respectively.

### **1.2 Background of the study**

The examination was provoked by the horrifying weakening in the quality of services offered by local authorities in Zimbabwe. Since the hyperinflation time of 2000-2008, Local

authorities have been confronting genuine difficulties in gathering their dues from residents and stakeholders. The presentation of the multi-cash framework in year 2009 did not convey any significant help to the draining institutions as they kept on confronting challenges in income accumulation. After some arrangement of open appeals over poor service delivery in many local authorities, many attempts by local authorities in general and Victoria Falls in particular have been implemented so as to try and address the issues of service delivery.

Like many local authorities in Zimbabwe, Victoria Falls Municipality is failing to offer quality service delivery to its residents due to its failure to effectively collect revenue. Water is regulated and the residents of Victoria Falls can access it for at most five hours a day. Sometimes Garbage remains uncollected in some of the town suburb and approximately sixty percent of the road network is old and needs major refurbishment such as resurfacing. And some of the streets still need installation of street lighting.

Local authorities get their revenue from payments for service delivered charges to residents. From these collections local authorities are legally obliged by the Urban Councils Act chapter 29; 15 second schedule section 198 paragraph 17, to provide the following services to the community:

- Water;
- Sewerage & Drainage;
- Street lighting;
- Fire services;
- Graveyard and burial grounds;
- Social amenities;
- Valuation and assessment of property for rating;
- Housing; and
- Roads;

In order to meet the above service delivery obligations local authorities needs to seize the opportunities that are available to them and overcome revenue collection challenges. The effectiveness of revenue collection matched against service delivery obligations, is an area that needs to be assessed. In the past, local authorities used to receive grants from the government but the system has since been replaced by that of self-reliant local authorities.

Local authorities are a crucial part of the economy and their proper functioning has a great impact on the economy and the living standards of the people. It is therefore impemn rative that local authorities be at their best in order to contribute to the growth of the economy.

### **1.3 Background of the Victoria Falls Municipality**



MUNICIPALITY OF VICTORIA FALLS

*Another world wonder*



**Town built from thundering smoke "Mosi-Oa-Tunya"**

Victoria Falls is a small tourist resort Town situated in Matabeleland North province in the northwest corner of Zimbabwe. The town is surrounded by National Parks and wildlife areas where all assortments of wild animals and natural resources are found. Originally the area was occupied by the Kololo who named the Falls Mosi –Oa- Tunya meaning the smoke that thunders. In 1904 the first railway line was constructed from Bulawayo to Victoria Falls. In 1965 the town was granted a Local Board status, 1972 it was declared a Town Council. In 1999 the Town council was upgraded to a Municipal status. This saw Mr. D. Pandya becoming the first Executive Mayor of Council and Mr. G.S Maphosa as the first Town Clerk.

### **1.3 Problem statement**

There has been a notable deterioration in service delivery by local authorities in general and Victoria Falls Municipality in particular; leading to the mistrust of the local authority by the residents. The services rendered by the local authority have been referred to as poor services and thereby noting the lowering of the residents' satisfaction levels on the services rendered by the local authorities. Thus this study seeks to come up with solutions on service delivery thereby building a positive relationship between the service providers and the residents'

### **1.4 Aims of the study**

The researcher noted that there has been some complaints by the residents on the issue of service delivery by the local authorities in Zimbabwe, especially the residents of Victoria Falls, thus it is the essence of the researcher to:

- a) Determine satisfaction levels among residents concerning services provided by the local authorities.
- b) Identify gaps between current performance and stakeholder expectations in service delivery.
- c) Establish the causes of poor service delivery in local authorities.
- d) Come up with different strategies for improving service delivery in local authorities.

### **1.5 Research questions**

1. What are the challenges faced by the Municipality in delivering services to the residents?
2. What mechanisms have been put forward in trying to ensure effective service delivery?
3. Is there any gap between current performance and stakeholder expectations in service delivery?

### **1.6 Significance of the study**

The importance of the research is two folded, that is the practical and theoretical components. This research is significant in that it provides factual information and evidence about importance of service delivery by local authorities and how it contributes to satisfaction of residents thereby leading to good relations between the local authority and the residents.

The research may be used as a tool to improve service delivery by government (policy makers) and above all the Victoria Falls Municipality and academias can also use this research in their different areas of study.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

### **1.7.0 Literature review**

#### **Introduction**

This chapter focused on the review of existing relevant and existing recent information about service delivery in local authorities. It assesses challenges in local authorities' service delivery, the causes of such difficulties in service delivery by local authorities as well as the legal framework guiding service delivery. Literature used includes books, internet, journals and other relevant articles. The literature provides the basis for discussion and recommendations based on established schools of thought. It should be noted that the existing literature on public service delivery has been perceived to be a Eurocentric rather than Afrocentric view. Most existing literature has been said to be addressing the situation of

service delivery in the developed world thereby neglecting the situation in the developing world.

Literature review is therefore the selection of available documents both published and unpublished on the topic, which contain information, ideas, data and evidence written from a particular standpoint to fulfil certain aims, or express views on the nature of the topic and how it is to be investigated and the effective evaluation of these documents in relation to the study.

### **1.7.1 Service delivery**

Municipal Research and Services Centre (1993) defines service delivery as the actual producing of a service such as collecting refuse and disposing it or lighting the streets. According to Le Chen et al “Service delivery” is a common phrase in South Africa used to describe the distribution of basic resources citizens depend on like water, electricity, sanitation infrastructure, land, and housing. According to OECD (2010), public services include all services provided by the government as well as all services where the government has a significant influence. OECD (2010) observes that public services can also be provided by private firms, for example, solid waste collection and disposal, or by voluntary organisations, for example, community volunteers of a fire brigade. In such cases, while the government does not provide the service it is involved in the process, perhaps by providing funds, establishing regulations or some other means. Examples of this type of arrangement would include the contracting out of local government services, such as refuse collection and local transport, to private companies.

### **1.7.2 Service delivery satisfaction level**

Service delivery satisfaction level can be said to be the measure of the customer’s happiness about the services. According to Hansemark and Abison (2004) posits that satisfaction is an overall customer attitude towards a service provider, or an emotional reaction to the difference between what customers anticipate and what they receive, regarding the fulfilment of some needs, goals or desires. Sharing the same view Biljana and zekuri (2011) articulated that customer satisfaction is the outcome felt by those that have experienced a company’s performance that have fulfilled their expectations. It has been noted that there is much

empirical evidence which shows the positive connection between customer satisfaction, loyalty and retention.

### **1.7.3 Public services**

Public services include water, wastewater, solid waste, heating, transport and other related services that are provided by national and local governments to residents in their areas of jurisdiction. Stauss (2005) argues that services are not physical resources but economic transactions exchanged for money, comprising of the exchange of specialized skills and knowledge. According to Bachmann and MacCleery (2006), the ideal situation requires that authorities should ensure adequate provision of these services. Nonetheless, many national and sub-national governments are found lacking in as far as provision of these services is concerned. Bachmann and MacCleery (2006) observe that quality public services support the economic development of local areas, while poor levels of service undermine quality of life in these local areas, retard economic growth, and erode trust between citizens and local governments.

Local authorities should therefore make sure that people in their areas have at least the basic services they need, some of which outlined above. These services have a direct and immediate effect on the quality of the lives of the people in that community. For example, if the water that is provided is of poor quality or refuse is not collected regularly, it will contribute to the creation of unhealthy and unsafe living environments. Poor services can also make it difficult to attract business or industry to an area and will limit job opportunities for residents

### **1.7.4 Local authority**

Local authority can be understood as an administrative body in local government. According to the Reverso dictionary local authority is an organisation that is officially responsible for all public services and facilities in a particular area. It can also be explained as an administrative body for a small geographic area such as a city or town. Local authorities are responsible for the provision of an extensive range of public services in an area. In addition, local authorities promote the interests of a local community, including the social, economic, environmental, recreational, cultural, community or general development of an area. Local authority according to Lolojih (2008) refers to an institution created by the central government to

provide services to the citizen. They are likely to be more bounded in their capacity to modify their system of government and increase their services.

The purpose of local government is to enable democratic local decision-making and action by, and on behalf of, communities, to meet the current and future needs of communities for good-quality local infrastructure, local public services and performance of regulatory functions in a way that is most cost-effective for households and businesses. (Local Government Act 2002, section 10 (1)).The role of local authorities is to lead and represent their communities. They must engage with their communities and encourage community participation in decision-making, while considering the needs of people currently living in communities and those who will live there in the future( International Affairs 2015).

### **1.7.5 Challenges faced by local authorities**

There are so many challenges facing local authorities in trying to deliver services to the residents, these challenges can be economic and or political. One can relate to factors such as economic instability, inflation and or political instability. Foster et al (2008) other contributing factors are lack of skilled and professional manpower in government to handle service issues and inadequate related services.

According to Mabika, H (2015), there is a deterioration of services provided by local authorities. The local authorities are pointing at poor cash flows as the root cause of the problem. Financial shortages have become a common cry in Zimbabwe local authorities. Some scholars blame other issues like Ahwoi blamed issues such as high rates of corruption, gross abuse of council property, high redundancy and staff turnover for problems experienced by local authorities. However the Zimbabwe Institute associated the diminishing quality of service in Zimbabwe local authorities to the deteriorating macroeconomic situation.

Dr Gono (2006), the then Zimbabwean Reserve Bank governor, in a quarterly financial review of the Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe, cited that the major challenges facing Zimbabwean local authorities were lack of transparency, sloppy corporate governance practices and poor policy implementation. He asserted that these challenges lead to dwindling revenue collections and hence budget deficits. Dewa et al (2013) was of the view that, the poor service delivery in Zimbabwean cities is attributed to a combination of socio-economic problems within the country and in City Councils.

The chairperson of the parliamentary committee on local government Irene Zindi articulated that local authorities in Zimbabwe have failed to address the continuing decline in service delivery due to misplaced priorities and a lack of strategic direction. According to The Source ZW (2014), the Victoria Falls Town Council say domestic debt has ballooned to \$5, 8 million as companies and residents contribute to default on paying rates, threatening service delivery in the county's prime resort town. In support of that, Pycroft (1996) stipulated that the lack of human and financial resources in some of the less developed councils, make service delivery problematic. If service delivery is not improved, it could undermine the new local democracy, considering that peoples' expectations remain unfulfilled. Political interference and manipulation, corruption, lack of accountability and transparency, and inadequate citizen participation, poor human resources policy, failure to manage change, lack of employee capacity, poor planning and poor monitoring and evaluation (Makanyeza, et al, 2013). There is need to institutionalize a system of accountability that makes service providers answerable to consumers and developing a strategy, through a consultative policy, including stakeholders (World Bank Group, 2002).

Aminuzzaman (2010) argues that although local authorities are the frontline local government organization closest to people, the scope and quality of service delivery is one of the most critical areas that have significantly tainted their credibility and institutional image. According to Gwayi (2010), some of the causes of poor service delivery in town councils include: councillor interference in administration, inadequate public participation; inadequate alignment of budget with the requirements of the central government; lack of political and administrative leadership; inadequate infrastructure and shortages of skills. The Department of Indigenous Affairs (DIA) of Western Australia in 1999 also cited several impediments to service delivery as: inadequate resources, land tenure and consequential non-rateability of land, a history of central government agencies circumventing local authorities approvals and involvement, the substandard nature of infrastructure, the limited powers of local authorities to enforce health and education services control and management, exemption of some areas from building controls and the polarized views of the parties.

According to the study by Makanyenza, C (2013), poor planning is also another major challenge facing local authorities in service delivery. Lack of sound plans that specify the direction the local authority is supposed to take and the resources to be used to achieve the objectives greatly leads to poor service delivery.

Another challenge to be considered is poor monitoring and evaluation, lack institutional arrangements to monitor and evaluate progress from time to time so as to be able to take corrective action if there are deviations from the plan.

**Ethnicity** also contributes to poor service delivery noting the tendency by council management to employ locals or relatives regardless of the qualifications or ability to carry out the intended tasks. It should also be noted that **resistance to change** is also another important contributory factor to poor service delivery, failure of the local authority to adapt to the changing environment so as to meet the objectives of the entity. There is organisational inertia and lack of management will to challenge the status

According to Murimoga,R. and Musingafi, M. (2014) Major challenges to service provision in Harare and Masvingo were found to be mainly emanating from the political environment and the economy of the country. For the past 15 years the economy has been sliding down due to political instability. This has resulted in poor services to the public. The study noted that there was a general decline of municipal service delivery in Zimbabwe's urban local authorities; and poor governance of urban local authorities affects the service delivery of these institutions. Thus was of the view that there be a multi-dimensional stakeholder involvement approach which ensures that all residents have a say in the management and development of municipal governance and service provision should be encouraged the municipalities should, at least, establish clear monitoring and control mechanisms to ensure that malpractices like corruption in the allocation of stands are discouraged; and for effective service delivery the local authorities should continuously train their workers in service provision and customer care so that they sell the organisation to residents through improved service delivery.

Following another study that was taken in 2014 about the Zambezi water project it was noted that it was shrouded with complications which meant delayed service to the people. The writer was of the view that while we all welcome news that Matabeleland Zambezi Water Project (MZWP) has finally secured funding to build the pipeline that will address water problems in the region, we should be asking questions about the procedures that are being laid out by government to make this dream a reality. We should worry about the continuing fruitless government meetings and other technical misunderstandings which raise doubts

about whether the work is being done to address the urgent problems of water shortages. First, for years this project has been called Matabeleland Zambezi Water Project (MZWP) and now we are told the Minister of Water and his advisors for this project have changed the name to National Matabeleland Water Project (NMZWP). I wonder how this name change is expected to will speed the process up; it looks suspiciously like an addition of government bureaucracy with no proper relation to the actual delivery of water services. To what does the “National” refer? I’m told that now that the government has finally put its house in order to act, it now feels the benefits of this project must not be limited to people residing around the proposed pipeline, hence noting the continual shortage of water in the taps of Bulawayo. With this in mind one can note the deterioration of satisfaction levels by the service users.

Following the contribution of different scholars on service delivery by local authorities the researcher noted that the scholars managed to a greater extent to analyse the challenges in service delivery by local authorities and some even came up with different theories so as to try and address the issue of poor service delivery by local authorities. It should be noted that the writer seeks to add flesh on their contribution basing on the notion that the relations between the council and the residents or beneficiaries is of crucial importance since it helps the council to get to know the feelings of its beneficiaries at first hand. It therefore follows that the local authorities will be in a greater position to exchange ideas with the residents so as to provide better, efficient and satisfactory services to the public.

The researcher noted that, the economic, social and political setup of the developed world and the developing world are different thus there is need to come up with a thesis that will be relevant to Africa in general and Zimbabwe in particular. The above reviewed literature has been alleged to be addressing issues in Europe thereby leaving loopholes in Africa that needs to be addressed. It has been perceived that there is little documentation when it comes to issues of public service delivery in the developing world. It is the essence of this study to create an inroad to academic researches on the context of public service delivery in Zimbabwe, since this study took a case study approach some ideas that will be raised may not be able to address the issues in all local government bodies in Zimbabwe but will help pave way for other researchers to conduct their further study and thereby use it as a secondary source of data.

## **1.8 Theoretical framework**

There are a number of theories that have been put forward in trying to enhance the service delivery in the public sector. The researcher was guided by Service Delivery Models in the study. According to UNDP (1999), service delivery is a set of institutional arrangements adopted by the government to provide public goods and services to its citizens. Therefore, it is the specific institutional arrangements that critically influence the performance of public service delivery. There are number of service delivery models which are: Direct service delivery model, Privatization service delivery model, Decentralization service delivery model, Alternative service delivery model.

However this research was guided by the decentralization Service Delivery Model. Decentralization of service delivery functions to local government bodies is the most popular service delivery model in the world. Decentralization is based on subsidiary principals of governance; a rule where provision, production and delivery of services are to be devolved to the lowest layer of the government, local bodies, subject to economics of scale and capacity. By virtue of being closest to the public, local bodies are better positioned to match supply of a given service to citizens' demands, transforming citizens from service recipient client, and ensuring citizens greater accountability for service quality. This model of service delivery was of important use in the study following that it helps create accountability and transparency in local authorities thus increasing the satisfactory levels of the residents.

The researcher also considered the Alternative service delivery model which has its focus firmly set on delivering beta outcomes for the service user. The model entails that new and existing services should be continually assessed to ensure that services are being delivered to the citizen by the most efficient, productive and cost effective means available. This involves the Alternative service delivery unit of the department working closely with other government departments, offices and publicly funded to assist and advise them on their current or proposed delivery models for the services they provide to the public. It involves the public sector having a greater role in commissioning with the community and voluntary sector in the future. This means specifying desired policy outcomes, planning and liaising with potential providers, procuring and engaging services to obtain the best value for money and managing the performance of such services that the needs of the service user are being met. This approach ensures that the taxpayer is getting the most from its investment in social and community services that are funded through the community and voluntary sector.

### **1.9.0 Research Methodology**

Irny,S. and Rose,A (2005) defines research methodology as the systematic, theoretical analysis of the methods applied to a field of study. It comprises a theoretical analysis of the body of methods, principles associated with a branch of knowledge. The chapter focuses on the research design, research instruments, target population, sample design, sample size and sampling techniques, data collection procedures, ethical considerations and data analysis and presentation that the researcher applied in carrying out the research.

#### **1.9.1 Research design**

Maree et al (2007) defined research design as a plan or strategy that moves from philosophical assumptions to selection of respondents, data gathering techniques and analysis to be done. According to Punch (2006), research design entails all issues involved in planning and executing a research project, from identifying the problem through to reporting and publishing the results. In other words research design is a plan outlining how information is to be gathered for an assessment or evaluation that includes identifying the data gathering methods, the instruments to be used or created, how the instruments will be administered, and how the information will be organized and analysed, (Fowler, 1995). Following the works of other scholars on service delivery, the research was more of a qualitative research in nature.

#### **1.9.2 Qualitative research design**

According to Lofland and Lofland (1984) qualitative research is a method of data collection and analysis that is non-quantitative, it focuses on ‘quality’ a term referring to essence or ambience of something as articulated by Berg (1989).Luck and Rubin (2005) defined qualitative research as a descriptive approach to research that gives the results in a descriptive interpretation. Babbie and Mouton (2005) alludes that qualitative research seeks to gain first hand holistic understanding of a phenomenon, using flexible methods such as interviews, open ended questions and questionnaire.

#### **1.9.3 Study Population**

According to Frenkel and Wallen (1996), study population refers to all the individuals that the research intends to get information from and make decisions. Thus, the citizens within a particular society that the researcher would like to investigate a problem. The targeted area was the Victoria Falls Township which constitutes nine (9) wards. The researcher targeted the

key informants such as the Councillors, Council employees, various stakeholders and the community at large.

#### **1.9.4 Target area**

A case study approach was employed in this research; the case was Victoria Falls municipality. Best and Khan (1993) defined target area as a geographical area which is described by its boundaries and also important is that its activities are relevant to the research. The target area in this research was the Victoria Falls Town.

#### **1.9.5 Sample**

A sample can be understood as a collection of units and people that has a capability of being selected, the main purpose of sampling are economies on the resources required for collecting and managing the data from a smaller sub group and improving the quality of data by focusing on a smaller group, (Grinnel, (1999). The sampling techniques were employed to properly select representatives within a particular group to manage time since it is costly. The sample was taken from the service users that is the citizens and also from council officials.

#### **Sampling method**

The researcher applied or employed purposive sampling as it was geared towards targeting people who had information about the subject matter.

#### **1.9.6 Research instruments**

Manian (1994) articulated that research instruments are tools used by the researcher in finding solutions to a related problem. Thus the researcher employed questionnaires and interviews to obtain the needed information.

##### **1.9.6.1 Questionnaires**

Cohen (2000) alludes that questionnaires are a set of questions designed by the researcher to collect data from a sample. The researcher also considered the use of open ended and closed questionnaire, which helped in obtaining data from the people about the service delivery in VFM. The questionnaire targeted the citizens in general and the Council officials in particular.

### Advantages of open ended questionnaire

- It makes it free for the responded to express their feelings and views towards the subject matter.
- They do not limit the respondent because they do not provide structured replies.
- Information obtained from these is wide and very useful

### Advantages of Closed questionnaires

- It is straight forward and answers the objectives of the study
- Less time consuming as most alternatives are Yes or No
- Fewer emotions are used when answering because the alternatives for answers are already provided.

### Disadvantages of using questionnaires

However questionnaires have drawbacks in that, since many evaluation methods occur after the event, participants may forget important issues. Because questionnaires are standardised it is not possible to explain any points in the questions that participants might misinterpret. Another setback could emanate from open-ended questions that can generate large amounts of data that can take a long time to process and analyse. One way of limiting this would be to limit the space available to employees so that their responses are concise. They may not wish to reveal the information or they might think that they will not benefit from responding perhaps even be penalised by giving their real opinion. Employees should be told why the information is being collected and how the results will be beneficial. They should be asked to reply honestly and told that if their response is negative it will give false data to the researcher.

### **1.9.6.2 Interviews**

Interviews with key informants were conducted largely targeting council officials and stakeholders so as to attain valuable information. It should greatly be noted that the researcher possessed good ethical conduct in gathering information such that privacy of interviewees was not violated in any way.

### Advantages of interview questions

- In this method information can be gathered from illiterate people too.
- There are no chances of non-response as the interviewer personally collects data.
- The collected data is very reliable since the interviewer tactfully collects the data by cross examining the responders.

Disadvantages:

- There is a chance of bias.
- The informants may not answer some personal questions.
- It is a time-consuming process.
- Money and manpower requirements are very high.
- Sometimes the interviewers are involved in pressurising respondents to share their personal information.

### **1.9.6.3 Observations**

Observations were used by the researcher on roads, clinics, schools, among others. The researcher embarked on observations in order to see the situation on the ground. They were done also at council premises to see the resources used by council to deliver services and to see if they are adequate.

## **1.9.7 Sources of data**

Primary and secondary data used by the researcher.

### **1.9.7.1 Primary data**

Primary data was gathered from council representatives and officials who are responsible for delivering services such as the Mayor, administrative officials and councillors, service seekers, civil society leaders and official documents such as full council minutes of meetings, annual budget reports, administrative reports and progress reports etc.

### **1.9.7.2 Secondary data**

The secondary data was gathered through published books, research reports, journals and newspaper articles and internet.

### **1.9.8 Data collection procedures**

Data collection procedure includes making appointments with research subjects, through telephone, distribution and administration of instruments on the sample for example by hand, mail or through research assistants and lastly through retrieval of instruments. The researcher made an appointment with selected council officials.

### **1.10 Data presentation**

Data was analysed and presented on tables, narrative description, bar graphs and pie charts. This was done to make the study easier to understand.

### **1.11 Limitations**

- **Time**- the time that the researcher had to complete the study was about 4-6 months, thus it was difficult for the researcher to get all the necessary information given a short time.
- **Funding** – the researcher needed money to use for transportation, printing and or photocopy the findings of the research thus it was difficult for the student to get the required money since the researcher was still a student.
- The researcher also encountered problems of ignorance from the targeted informants thus making it difficult for the researcher to acquire the required information on the subject under study.
- The researcher was also at risk of receiving biased information.

### **1.12 Delimitations**

- The research was a case study and only focused on Victoria Falls Municipality, and the information gathered was largely confined to a specific area which is Victoria Falls town.
- The study employed random sampling and aimed at acquiring 55 respondents so as to get enough information needed to come up with a sound thesis.
- The researcher employed a number of research instruments making use of both the primary and secondary sources of data.

## CHAPTER 2

### 2.0 ISSUES IN LOCAL GOVERNANCE

#### 2.1 The situation in local authorities before 2010

The local government system in Zimbabwe has experienced many changes and challenges during the colonial period and after independence in 1980. The Urban and Rural District Council Acts have been amended many times to initiate efficiency and effectiveness in local governance. The focus of such changes included the need to remove racial discrimination, abolish dual systems of development emphasizing white and black areas, develop democracy, good governance, decentralisation and to align local governments institutions, politics and policies in such a way that they support national strategies and visions for development. Despite many strategies or policies initiated over the years, the admirable local government system inherited from the colonial period has deteriorated significantly. Varied challenges have been articulated that include lack of funding, too much central government interventions in local issues, and decentralisation through forcing local government officers to report to Governors, Provincial Administrators and District Administrators, violence during local elections, abuses of political power by the Minister of Local Government or constantly has dismissed councillors, councils and mayors and so on. Achieving democracy, good governance and decentralization is needed. Jonga W (2014)

State attempts to improve service delivery have not been encouraging since the formation of the coalition government in 2009. City Councils across the country seem to be failing to present a proper plan on how problems like water and electricity shortages could be resolved. We hear more about problems related to corruption and much more about internal power struggles than encouraging service delivery news. In Bulawayo, for example, we are told that people can go up to two weeks without clean water. Burst pipes and sewage leaks are common phenomena in councils like Chitungwiza and other areas. In Harare, these water problems are the same that in the past have brought the cholera epidemics that have cost many lives as people die from using contaminated water. This can be seen as a huge problem because a major reason why people elect politicians is to help us coordinate better service delivery once they've collected taxes from them. For some reason people don't seem to be putting enough pressure on local government to deliver and people are expected to live with

these problems while the officials responsible drive around guilt-free in their new priority cars. Harare sunset (2012)

## **2.2 Notable changes in local governance**

The description of the local government system of Zimbabwe in the new National Constitution (2013) is a positive development. Local government legislation has given too much power to the Minister of Local Government who has tended to abuse it as evidenced by unilateral appointments of Commissions and firings of legal institutions. There is also need to elected literate councillors who can form policies or interpret statistical information like financial data especially during budget debates. The deterioration of a local government system cherished by many during the 1980s to the 1990s is a clear testimony of the slow political, governance and democratic development processes.

At independence, the government introduced aggressive strategies to counter the domination of the whites in local government business. The new structures and the expanded decentralization of local government structures and configurations were deliberately designed to cater for the majority of the people that had been disenfranchised before independence in 1980. In the process, the new thrust sowed the seeds for ministerial intervention and control over local authorities.

After independence, the government invariably made efforts to remove the racial connotations imbedded in the laws and practice of local government (The Economic Consulting Associates (ECA) (2011), Makumbe (1998). This has been done largely through giving more powers to the Minister to be able to intervene appropriately on behalf of the disadvantaged African populations in urban areas. Hemsing (1995) further notes that at independence (1980) the government of Zimbabwe amalgamated African councils into District Councils thereby establishing new legislations that are the Urban Councils Act (UCA) and the Rural District Councils Act (RDCA). A single ministry of local government was also created. However, the new setup did not completely hinder the central government from meddling in local government businesses. The UCA (chapter 29:15) gave the Minister of Local Government too much freedom and unlimited powers to interfere in the affairs of local authorities.

### **2.3 Current situation in local authorities**

Chilunjika, A and Zhou, G (2013) articulated that Urban Councils derive the bulk of their revenues from property, receipts from trading accounts, tariffs or fees for services rendered, registration and licensing of motor vehicles, education, health and road grants. Revenue is also from central government in the form of general and specified funds in respect of capital projects like water and sewerage reticulation, storm water drainage among others (<http://www.mlgvturd.gov.zw>). The Urban Councils Act permits councils to mobilize resources on their own by levying rate payers and charging user fees though the tariff increases as regulated by the central government.

### **2.4 Efforts made by local authorities to ensure good public service delivery**

The local authorities in Zimbabwe in general and Victoria Falls Municipality in particular have adopted a number of strategies in trying to ensure good service delivery. The Victoria Falls Municipality gets residents' opinion during the budgeting phase at the end of every year so as to garner residents' input. The council also employed the formation of a strong resident association. According to the United Nations Developments Project Conference of 1997, the major role of civil society is to bring out the voices of the voiceless. This allows the creation of positive relations between the service providers and the service users, which allows efficient and effective service delivery by local authorities since the Municipality will be in a position to deliver the relevant services at the right time.

The other important strategy that has been adopted by the councils in trying to improve its service delivery thereby ensuring good local governance is the re-alignment of the constitution and the local governance laws. It should be noted that this promotes efficiency and effectiveness in local governance.

The ordinary level passes was set as the prerequisite for one to run for councillor position. In this case the attainment of a professional course was an added advantage to those seeking to be in position of responsibility. This provision ensures that the rightful people will be given the responsibilities hence ensuring that the duties are performed satisfactorily thus promoting good local governance and good service delivery.

### **2.5.0 Centre - local relations on service delivery**

The minister has a tendency of controlling in detail the activities undertaken by the municipality. He is controlling the operations of the municipality using a remote control through the appointment of commissions and special interest councillors who are disturbing our responsibilities as representatives of the people. The Minister has a tendency of controlling in detail the activities undertaken by the municipality. This concurs with the view of Chipangura (2014:11) who argues that the Minister cannot simply leave local authorities to run their business. This is also in agreement with Golola (2003) who states that politicians at the centre have little wish to cede power to the local government. Centralisation of power is not peculiar to Zimbabwe. It is also bedevilling service delivery in other African countries. Olowu (2009:4) postulates that the major challenge facing decentralisation in Africa is that the national leaders fear that the transfer of power to local levels represents a zero-sum game in which local leaders (who might be politicians in a different party) gain power and resources at their expense.

The Minister who is supposed to play a strategic role in policy formulation and implementation is involved in the day to day running of the municipality leaving little room for elected councillors and residents in general to determine their own destiny. The Ministry has also been involved in routine decision making which in actual fact is a responsibility of the municipality. According to Madzivanyika (2011:33) efficient and effective provision of goods and services is compromised by a high level of central interference in the decision-making processes of local authorities. Findings indicated that the centre-local relationship that is supposed to foster independence and autonomy of the municipality in the provision of goods and services has turned into a master-servant relationship that has negatively affected service delivery in the Municipality.

Centre-local relations between the Minister of local governance and Municipality mean that the latter is more or less an extension of the former responsible for the implementation of ministerial directive at the lower level of government. This shows that centre-local relations between the two spheres of government are highly centralised with the Minister having supreme powers over the management of the Municipality. Resultantly, the municipality has been reduced to a mere implementing agent of the ministry and has been left vulnerable to torturous control by the parent ministry in a manner that greatly undermines its operational autonomy and service delivery in general

## **2.5.1 Implications of centre - local relations on service delivery**

### **Negative Implications**

The study revealed that centre-local relations are to a greater extent responsible for the deterioration of service delivery in Municipality. Key informants (council officials) cited ministerial directives as an important weapon at the disposal of the Minister of local governance to intervene in the affairs of the municipality to the detriment of service delivery. Jonga and Chirisa (2009) argue that directives traded good governance for political advantage and because of this the Minister therefore came heavily on urban councils thereby preventing any remaining elements of freedom, good governance, commitment and initiative amongst councillors and council employees. For example, in 2006 the Minister directed Zimbabwe National Water Authority (ZINWA) to take over the management of water and sewer from local authorities citing their incapacity to provide these services. However, documented search revealed that when the management of water and sewer was under ZINWA there were no noteworthy improvements in the service delivery situation (Mushamba (2010), Jonga and Chirisa (2009)).

Furthermore, the Minister of local governance directed the municipality in 2013 to cancel all debts owed by residents. The cancellation of debts became a highly contestable arena mainly because various stand points emerged from diverse constituencies in trying to explain its implications on service delivery. Residents appreciated the initiative but however the cancelation put a serious financial strain on council operations. The directive created shortages of council finances. An official in the department of finance described the directive as an unfortunate move that resulted in the dwindling of revenue in an already fiscally constrained municipality. The situation was worsened by the fact the government has no plans to financial support the municipality. This view was supported by Tafirenyika (2013) who revealed that in the aftermath of debts write-off revenue inflows in the municipality plummeted with council collecting an average of \$7 000 per day compared to the usual \$50 000. Salary problems in the municipality persisted with employees going for more than ten months without pay. This led to employee dissatisfaction resulting in poor service delivery. The municipality was not given a chance to be heard before the decision to cancel debts was reached. They further argue that in the period between 2000 and 2008 the water delivery situation worsened. This was evidenced by erratic water supply and constant bursting of main pipes. Officials in the department of finance argue that the transfer of water management to

ZINWA greatly affected revenue inflows. This was supported by Mushamba (2010:109) who postulates that local authorities viewed this as a planned move to deprive them of their traditional source of revenue. Therefore, hyper-centralised centre-local relations hinder effective service delivery.

Madzivanyika (2011:33) alleges that efficient and effective provision of services is undermined by a high level of central interference in the decisions of municipalities. The UCA empowers the Minister to approve budgets of local authorities and the Minister is also in control of the billing system by the municipality. Madzivanyika (2011:35) revealed that the design of the UCA limits the capacity of urban councils to raise taxes or tariffs. He further illustrated that urban councils can only raise taxes, surcharges or borrow within limits set by the minister. Lack of fiscal autonomy on the part of the municipality greatly compromises the final outcomes with regard to service delivery. The UCA section 314 notes that the Minister may reverse, suspend and rescind resolutions and decisions of the municipality. This scenario greatly undermines tariff charges agreed upon by the municipality and its residents. This is because the Minister is the one with the final say on the charges and some decisions of the council can be set aside.

### **Positive Implications**

#### Reduction of Corruption

Top officials in the Minister of local governance supported central control of municipalities citing issues of rampant corruption and misuse of funds. They argue that local authorities cannot be left on their own giving evidence of cases of corruption and misuse of taxpayers' for example the case of money in Chitungwiza municipality. Documentary search revealed that corruption is rampant and footloose in Chitungwiza municipality (Mukonza 2013:45). Cases of corruption in municipality include illegal selling and allocation of stands. In-depth interviews with residents illustrated that stands were sold and allocated in a way riddled with corruption without following the waiting list. Members of were of the view that top management in the municipality award themselves high salaries and allowances at the expense of service delivery. They were calling for an active role of the central government in monitoring and supervising the activities of the municipality to avoid corruption and misuse of public monies. Documentary search revealed that the centre should safeguard all public monies collected at various levels of government. Devas (2005:4) postulates that, "Indeed the

distinction between „central government money“ and „local government money“ is quite arbitrary: all public money is contributed by tax payers, and it is a matter of administrative convenience which level of government collect which revenue.” Implied is that the Minister of local governance must play an important role in making sure that ratepayers“ funds are used for the intended purpose. In this case centre-local relation is important in as far as service delivery is concerned.

## CHAPTER 3

### 3.0 POLICY ISSUES

#### 3.1 Guiding principles in local authorities

According to the Zimbabwean institute (2005), the local government system in Zimbabwe is a legislative rather than a constitutional creature. In practical terms, what this means is that Local Government is not an independent sphere of government, but an appendage of central government which determines the birth, development and death of this important sphere of governance. The activities of local government units are coordinated by the Ministry of Local Government, Public Works and National Housing (MLGPW&NH).

The juridical framework for local government is set out in several pieces of legislation. The principal Acts governing local authorities in Zimbabwe, the Urban Councils Act and the Rural District Councils Act set local authorities as separate and fairly autonomous legal corporate institutions. The main Acts for local governance purposes are the Urban Councils Act (Chapter 29:15), Urban Councils Amendment Act (Chapter 29:16), Rural District Councils Act (Chapter 29:13), Chiefs and Headmen Act (Chapter 29:01), Communal Land Act (Chapter 20:04), the Provincial Councils and Administration Act, the Customary Law and Local Courts Act (No. 2) of 1990 and the Traditional Leadership Act of 1998. In addition, there are a number of statutory instruments defining the legal parameters of local government. Zimbabwe has two main types of local authorities, the Rural District Councils in rural areas, and the Urban Councils in the urban areas. The institutional framework for local government in the country can be better understood in terms of three universes; the Centre, the Urban universe and the Rural universe, with the latter two orbiting around the centre.

Another critical ministry in the day-to-day functions of local government is the Ministry of Finance, especially in the area of development planning and public finance for capital projects. For instance, Section 290 of the Urban Councils Act provides that urban councils may, with the consent of the minister responsible for local government and the minister responsible for finance, raise the necessary funds by issuing stock, bonds, debentures or bills, or from any other source not mentioned in the Urban Councils Act.

Another critically pivotal institution in local governance is the Presidency. Throughout the various pieces of local government legislation, the President is empowered to intervene in a variety of cases, the ultimate being the dissolution of a council and dismissal of councillors

and Executive Mayors. Under the RDC Act, for instance, the President is empowered to declare, name, alter or abolish a district.

The fourth important national institution is the Local Government Board (LGB) established under the Urban Councils Act. This is six-member Board appointed by the central government to oversee the operations of local authorities but its visibility and authority is felt mainly in the appointment or dismissal of senior council employees. It provides guidance on the organisation, administration and personnel issues in local government and the minister may direct the LGB to institute investigations on any matter relating to local government administration. For avoidance of confusion, it must be clarified that local government staff are recruited by local authorities themselves and have the power to discipline and dismiss staff but the LGB must approve the appointments and dismissals of senior staff in urban authorities. For senior staff in the RDCs, the Ministry plays this role. To ensure some sense of fairness in the composition of the LGB, it has two public service commissioners (from the Public Service Commission – central staff agency); a representative from the Association of Rural District Council (ARDC); two representatives from councils; and one representative from the workers.

Also involved in staffing matters at the national level is the Public Service Commission. According to the 13th Principle to guide the decentralisation process, “the Public Service Commission will manage the transfer of personnel from central government to rural district councils where this happens as part of decentralisation.” In practice, the PSC has largely been invisible in the operations of local authorities and to this extent; its role has remained largely theoretical.

### **3.2 Policy changes and Policy gaps**

Mlilo, M (2012) articulates that, the deepening collapse in service delivery in most urban areas saw the formation of Bulawayo Progressive Residents Association (BPRA), Victoria Falls Combined Residents Association (VIFACORA) and Masvingo Residents Association (MURA) as tangible examples of the recent initiatives aimed at expanding democratic and political space. These organizations have connected the seemingly esoteric issues of human rights and democracy to the very basic, immediate, tangible and common issues of service delivery such as water, electricity, and sewerage and refuse collection. There is new evidence that civic agency around bread and butter issues can increase the numbers of people that participate in political and public meetings significantly. In its 2011 Strategic plan the Crisis

in Zimbabwe Coalition identified social and economic justice issues as an area for high impact and mobilisation in its programming. While significant progress has been made in a number of areas, there is widespread concern over the lack of effective participation of communities in these processes.

In fact, the current constitution making exercise resembles an electoral mode campaigning and a partisan engineered consent on constitutional issues. The worrying phenomenon is that the current processes of democratization do not indicate that politics is becoming more of what can be termed “competitive mass democracy.” Space for public and political participation even in policy making remains hugely controlled and inaccessible to the various stakeholders and ordinary citizens.

The culture of shared power and decision-making in our national and local politics is still weak. Policies, programs and pronouncements that entrench violence and exclusivity continue to be made to discourage communities and stakeholders from influencing the process. In the current power sharing arrangement, there is no shared power and decision-making that allows citizens to have conversations with multiple decision-makers. The continued lack of effective citizen participation in local and national political and policy processes means that the prospects of a legitimate democratic and development state are slim.

The proceeding discussion has indicated that Zimbabwe suffers major democratic deficits in the social service delivery system. These deficits have led to a near total collapse in the delivery of social services in Zimbabwe. An analysis of the social and economic conditions of Zimbabweans also reveals a sad situation despite the notable growth of the economy. The obtaining social and economic conditions in Zimbabwe can however, provide a fertile area for civic and political mobilisation.

### **3.3 Laws governing local authorities**

Local authorities in Zimbabwe are creatures of central government established through legislation rather than the constitution. The Urban Councils Act (Chapter 29:15) and the Rural District Councils Act (Chapter 29:13) provides for the establishment of Urban Councils and Rural District Councils respectively. The pieces of legislation determine the powers, functions and locus of local authorities. They shape urban and rural local governance and constitute the tools available to the Ministry of Local Government Urban and Rural Development to supervise, monitor, direct and control local authorities. The balance of power

enshrined in the numerous pieces of legislation reflects the “mortal” and ultimate vulnerability or protection which local authorities suffer or enjoy from the centre. Zimbabwe has a heavy-handed legal framework which accords unlimited power, authority and discretion to the Ministry and leaves councils at the mercy of the responsible minister who can easily manipulate, whip, politicize and jettison them and still remain intra vires.

The Urban Councils Act is critical in urban management particularly in its specifications on the operational structures of Local Authorities. In Harare, the Act sets a two-tier operational structure in which councillors are responsible for policy formulation and the employed officials led the implementation wing in the governance process. These employed officials are employed by council through the Local Government Board established in terms of section 116 of the Urban Councils Act. The Board’s functions are outlined in section 123 of the Act which includes conducting inquiries into the affairs and procedures of council and making model regulations stipulating the qualifications and appointments procedures for senior officials of council. The board is empowered by the Act to ensure efficient, effective and economic development management. In Victoria Falls however, the board’s role has largely been limited to the approval of the appointment and dismissal of senior staff of councils.

Local authorities are also empowered by the constitution to formulate their own bylaws relevant to their different places and its own activities, the Victoria Falls Municipality has many bylaws that relate to different activities undertaken by the Municipality to ensure its smooth day to day running, for example one can note that VFM passed the open space worship bylaw, business licence bylaw, animal control bylaw, council remuneration bylaw, inspection bylaw, noise bylaw to mention but a few. One can note that these bylaws have a greater impact on the day to day running of the VFM hence they help to keep Victoria Falls clean, healthy and safe for everyone.

### **3.4 Impacts of National politics on public service delivery**

National Politics can either affect the public service delivery activities positively or negatively. It should be noted that improving service delivery requires a new praxis (translating an idea into action) a more flexible approach, which builds off existing processes in Zimbabwe. It is therefore remarkable that service delivery relies on the manipulation of state power and networks for the furtherance of citizens’ progress through development and resource allocation. (Zimbabwe Independent, 2015)

## **Negative impacts**

The nature of the political regime has long been regarded a key determinant of the policy choices states make with regard to services. There has been a notable debate on whether democratic political systems, more than other types of regime, generate better service coverage and quality. The case in favour is that interactions between voters and politicians produce greater incentives for responsive public goods provision (Birner and Resnick, 2010). The realist view, as Harding and Wantchekon (2010) put it, is that ‘whether one pitches it as leaders buying support or as citizens demanding recognition, the outcome is the same: by virtue of elections, democracy increases the provision of public goods’ The impact of democracy on service provision has been shown to be contingent on the wider institutional context (Nelson, 2007).

Political instability also has a negative impact on service delivery. Political instability can be caused by many factors such as conflicts, demonstrations, functionalism among other factors, thus one can note that with such conditions the government will not be in a good position to effectively deliver its services to the people hence a deterioration in service delivery by the government. One can give a good example of the situation in Zimbabwe during the 2008 election where it was argued that there were conflicts due to unfair elections hence negatively affecting service delivery in Zimbabwe.

Another important point to note is that of poor policy formulation and implementation by the ruling party. It should be noted that in Zimbabwe the ruling party is the one responsible for formulating policies hence its failure to implement policy has a huge impact on service delivery. For example the ZIMASSET policy has being argued to be a poor policy noting that it was never implemented as planned hence reducing public service delivery. On the same note it can also be noted that the decisions that the government which is the ruling elite make has much bearing on public service delivery for instance one can refer to the slashing of debts or bills that was declared by the government in 2013. Political analyst have argued that the slashing of bills was a declaration by the government in a bid to win votes thereby retain power, but this had a negative impact on public service delivery in local authorities since there were left with no money to finance some of the activities.

The national politics also determines the foreign policy of the country, it should be noted that good politics free from corruption promotes good gainful foreign policy. Thus it has been

argued that the sanctions passed on Zimbabwe were as a result of the ruling party's behaviour hence reducing chances of getting foreign aid thereby reducing economic development, it therefore follows that the service delivery by the government will also be poor under such conditions.

Moreover, one should also note that the ruling party determines the distribution of funds and resources to the local bodies. It has been argued by the political analyst that, the outcomes of the elections has a great impact on service delivery. They are of the view that public services are good and satisfactory in the towns where the ruling party got more votes which means that the towns that did not support that ruling party into power will have poor services from the government, a good example that has been brought forward is that of the poor Zambezi water project which was meant to benefit Bulawayo, which is not yet implemented since 2013 claiming that if it was meant to benefit Harare it could have been long implemented. One cannot safely drive home this assertion since it is prone to criticism.

### **Positive impacts**

In a bid to gain political mileage, politics may lead to good public service delivery. It has been argued that the housing scheme in Victoria Falls and also in Bulawayo (Garikai -Hlalani Kuhle Housing Scheme) was adopted due to the need by the political party to gain support from the people hence noting an improvement in public service delivery. Thus it can be noted that politics can have a positive impact on public service delivery.

Some political phases that a country passes through also greatly affect the service delivery; one can note the improvements that were there in Zimbabwe during the coalition government (Government of National Unity 2013). It has been argued that there was improvement in the economy of Zimbabwe. There was infrastructural development, social development and even educational development thus leading one to be of the view that politics can improve public service delivery.

Furthermore, politics promote transparency and accountability by local authorities. Since the local authorities will be accountable to the central government this will mean that the services provided will be good. All the activities done by the local authorities are largely controlled by that government hence accountability is greatly enhanced.

## **CHAPTER 4**

### **4.0 RESEARCH FINDINGS**

#### **4.1 Introduction**

The chapter seeks to present the data that was exhumed after conducting a field study. The researcher greatly used Questionnaires, books, articles and interviews. The study was more of a case study greatly aiming at VFM hence the employees of VFM and the residents of Victoria Falls were the key informants, although some inputs from other towns like Bulawayo and Hwange and Harare were taken into consideration in trying to find out the challenges facing local authorities thereby bringing out solutions to the discovered challenges.

The research was guided by the following objectives:

1. What are the challenges faced by the Municipality in delivering services to the residents?
2. What mechanisms have been put forward in trying to ensure effective service delivery?
3. Is there any gap between current performance and stakeholder expectations in service delivery?

The questionnaires were divided according to the two groups of people that were targeted by the research that is the VFM employees and the residents of Victoria Falls. It should be noted that 45 questionnaires were distributed to the residents and 10 to the council employees so as to find the needed information about the challenges facing the VFM. The respondents were randomly selected.

#### **4.2 DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS**

Different questions were asked in trying to address the objectives of the study with the main aim of finding the challenges facing the VFM and at the end suggesting solutions to the challenges. In this section the researcher is going to present the findings of the study and thereby analysing it accordingly.

#### 4.2.1 Sample response rate

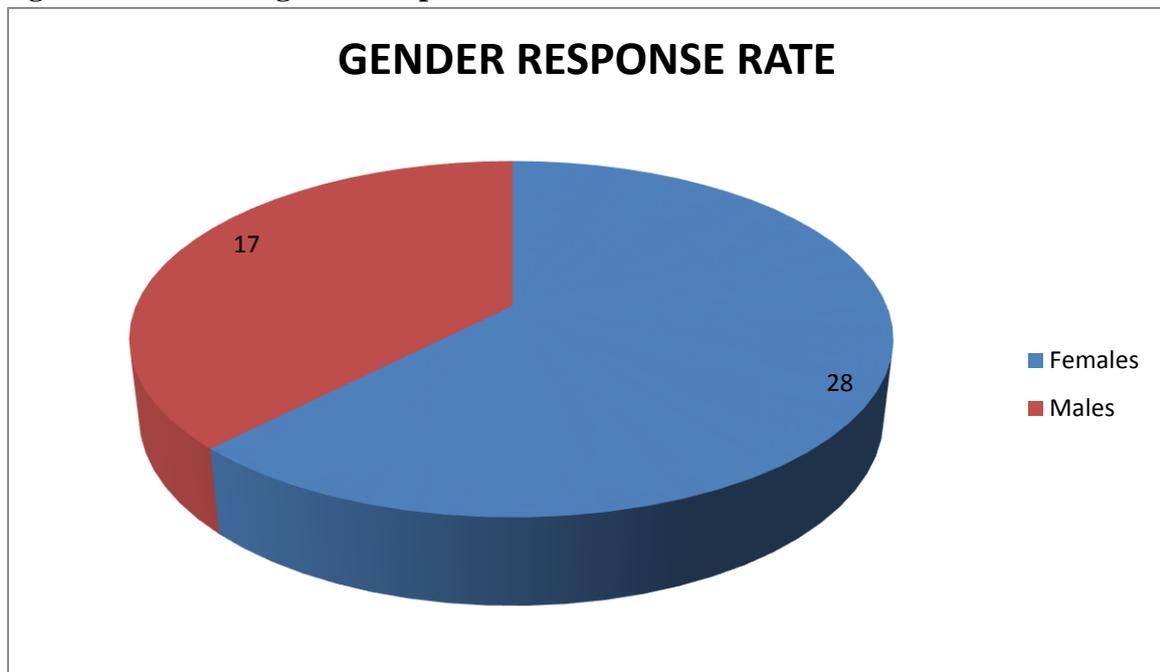
**Table 1: shows the response rate**

RESPONDENTS	TARGETED	RESPONDED	PERCENTAGE%
Council Employees	10	10	100
Residents	45	35	78
Total	55	45	82

The above table shows the sample response rate of the research, 55 questionnaires were distributed, 45 targeting the Victoria Falls residents and 10 targeting VFM employees. The targeted 10 employees all responded giving an outcome of 100% and among the 45 targeted residents only 35 responded giving a percentage of 78. The total response rate was 45 respondents against the targeted 55 giving an outcome of 82%. Thus the researcher had a positive response from the targeted respondents.

#### 4.2.2 Gender response rate

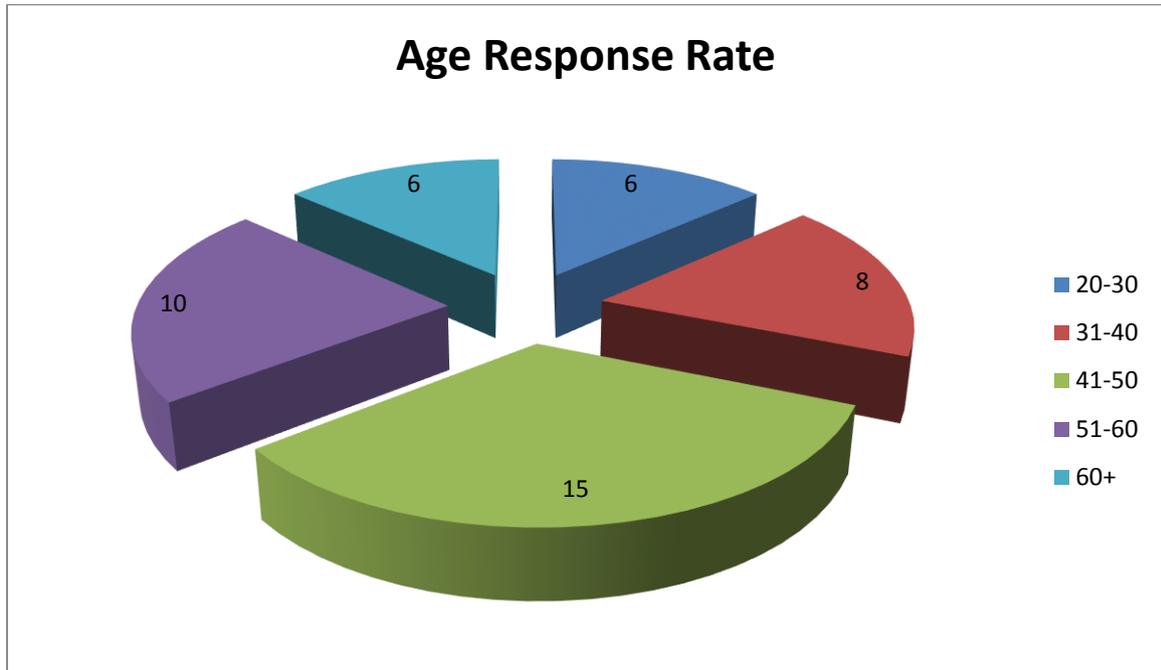
**Figure 1: shows the gender response rate**



From the chart above one can note that out of the responded 45. 28 females responded and the males that responded were 17. It can be noted that more females responded.

### 4.2.3 Age Response Rate

Figure 2: showing the age response rate

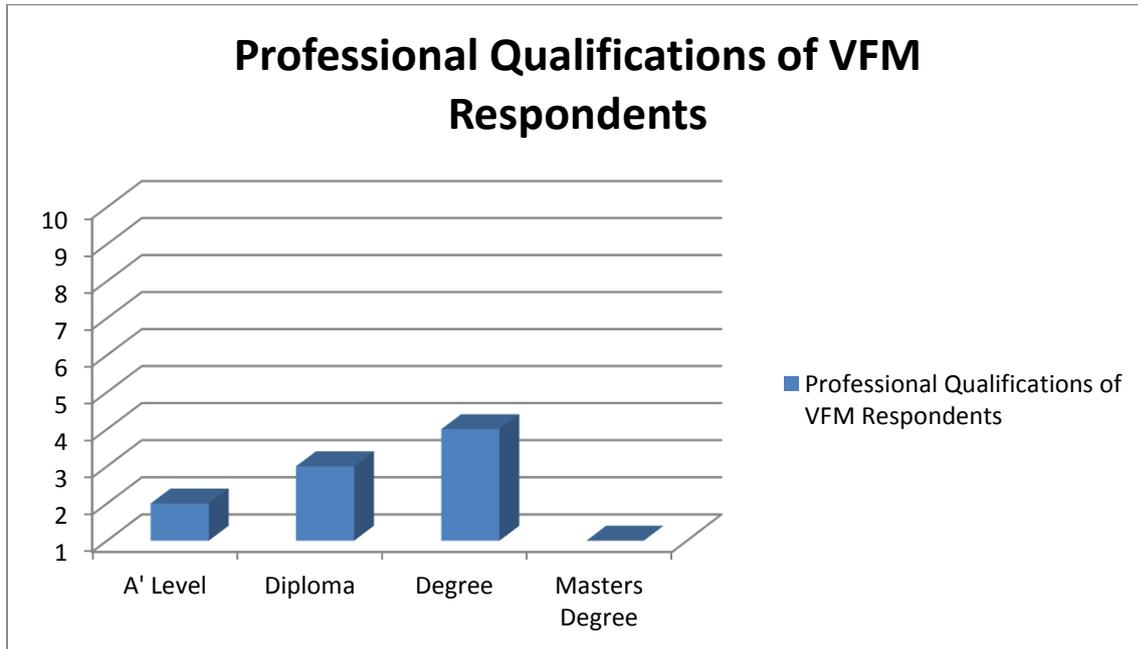


The above demographic data shows the differences in the ages of the people who responded to the distributed questionnaires. Of the 45 respondents 15 were aged between 41 and 50 years, 10 respondents were aged between 51 and 60, 8 respondents were aged between 31 and 40, 6 were 20 and 30 and the 6 respondents were 61+ years old. The 41 to 50 years old responded more.

### 4.2.4 Professional Qualifications of the respondents

The bar graph below shows that amongst the 10 responded VFM employees. 4 had degrees, 3 had Diplomas 2 had A 'level and 1 had a Master's Degree

**Figure 3; Professional Qualifications**



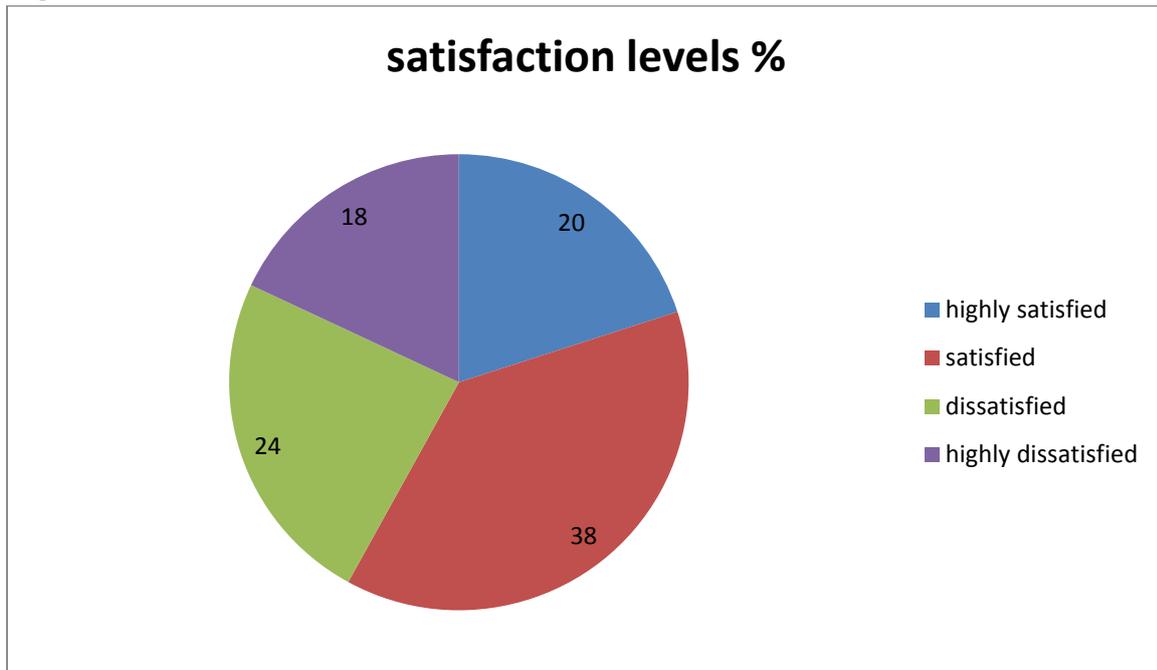
### **4.3 Response from residents**

#### **4.3.1 Satisfaction levels**

The first objective of the study was to determine satisfaction levels among the residents concerning services provided by the local authority. It should be noted that from the 45 residents that were interviewed, 20% of the respondents indicated that they are highly satisfied with the service delivery of the Victoria Falls Municipality while 38 % of them were moderately satisfied. 18% of the respondents were highly dissatisfied and a further 24% indicated moderate dissatisfaction.

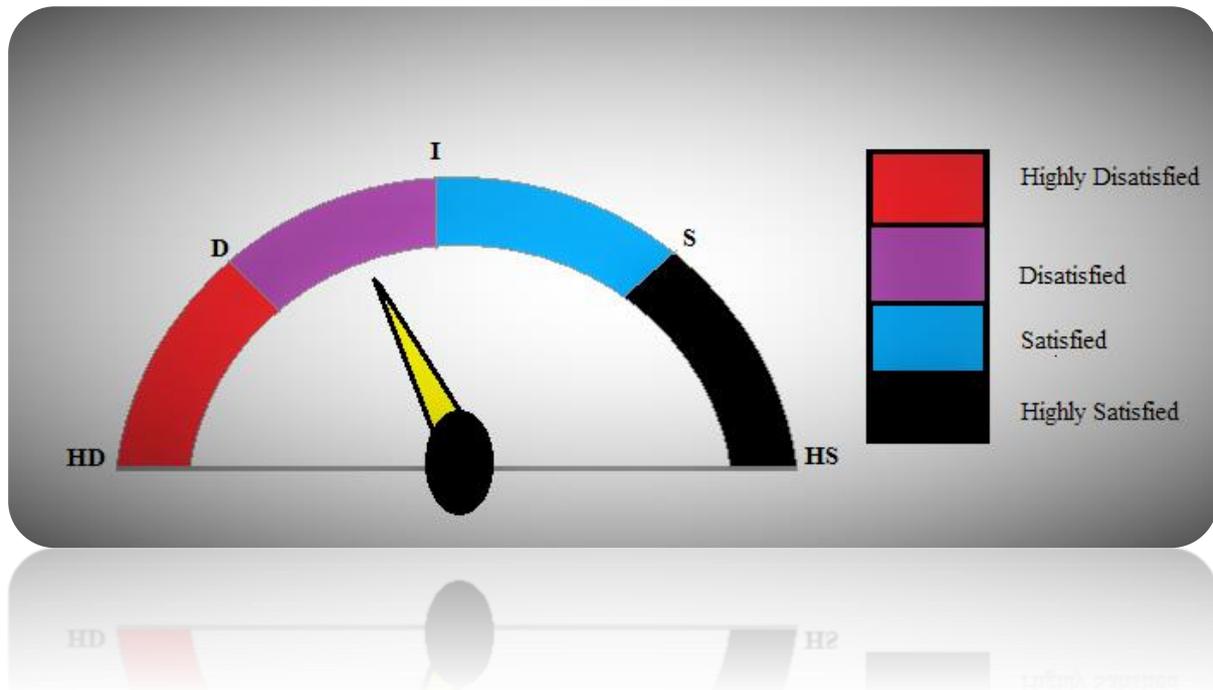
Below is a pie chart showing the percentage of the satisfaction levels by the Victoria Falls residents.

**Figure 4: Satisfaction levels**



From the above presentation one can note that the VFM's services are satisfactory to a lesser extent noting that only 20% of the respondents are highly satisfied by the serviced rendered by the local authority. Thus there is need for improvement by the local authority so that the needs of the service users are met.

**Figure 5: Overall satisfaction levels**



The above diagram shows the satisfaction levels of citizens it can be noted from the above that the citizens of Victoria Falls are dissatisfied with the services rendered by VFM thus there is for improvement.

#### **4.3.2 Gaps in service delivery expectations**

Identifying gaps between current performance and stakeholder expectations in service delivery was the other objective that was important in the study. Respondents indicated that they would like to see Improvement in the following areas: refuse collection (32%), water supply (81%) and roads (45%). The findings shows that there are loopholes in the services delivered by VFM, hence council needs to improve in water supply noting that most residents were not satisfied with water service that they received thus there is need to address the water supply by the local authority, Victoria Falls roads needed to be repaired since the residents were of the view that the roads were full of potholes thus serious attention was needed in repairing of the roads and also there was need to improve in refuse collection in the town

noting that some residents were of the view that the refuse can go for days without being collected and they were of the suggestion that refuse be collected twice a week.

Furthermore the researcher aimed at establishing the causes of poor service delivery in local authorities in general and in VFM in particular. The following causes of poor service delivery were identified for the VFM: poor planning, corruption, failure to manage change. Most of the respondents noted that the three aspects above were the main causes of poor service delivery by local authorities. There is need for the management of VFM to address the issues of corruption so as to good service delivery, poor planning was also another major problem that was raised by the service users. They were of the view that for the municipality to ensure good service delivery there is need for the local authority managers to engage in strategic planning and employ good planning skills that will ensure good service delivery thereby ensuring high levels of satisfaction by the service users.

#### **4.3.3 Recommendations to VFM by residents**

The other important aim of the study was to identify and recommend strategies for improving service delivery in local authorities. Thus the following Strategies for improving service delivery were recommended by the residents of Victoria Falls. There was need for investment promotion to increase revenue base for Council, employing people on merit rather than nepotism, government to give Council a share of proceeds from tourism activities in the town, revival of now defunct commercial undertakings of council, improved communication and cooperation between Council and stakeholders, participatory or community based budgeting.

#### **4.4.0 Council Management responses**

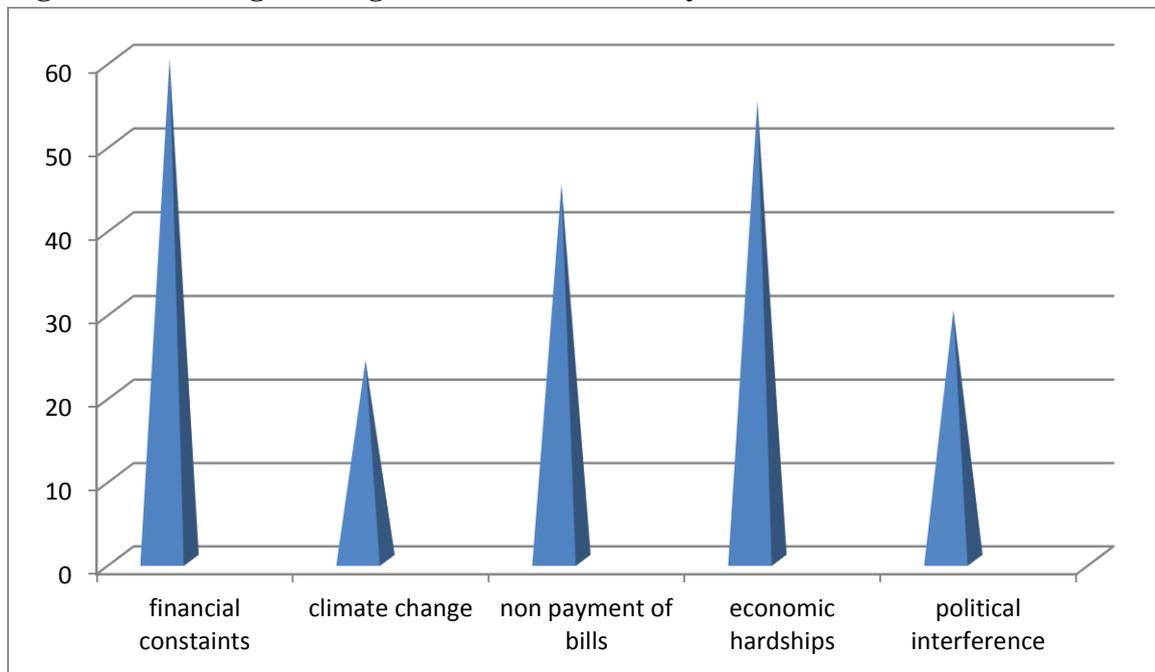
##### **4.4.1 Challenges faced by VFM**

The researcher aimed at finding out the challenges faced by VFM in its quest to deliver services and the interviewed council employees identified the following challenges:

- financial constraints
- climate change leading to water shortages
- power cuts and high electricity costs
- aging infrastructure

- non- payment of bills by residents
- economic hardships
- political interference

**Figure 6: Challenges facing vfm in service delivery**



The researcher noted that council employees face a number of challenges in trying to deliver services and meet the demands of the residents of Victoria Falls. Financial constraints were viewed as the main challenge faced by VFM. It can be noted that finance plays a critical role in ensuring good service delivery, therefore council employees posited that without finance it was difficult for them to meet the demands of the residents thereby leading to poor service delivery by local authorities.

Climate change was also viewed as the major problem facing VFM in trying to deliver services to the service users. The respondents made reference to the recent drought of 2013 and 2015 that faced Zimbabwe which greatly led to the drying of most of water reservoirs in the country thus leading to water shortages. The researcher learnt that climate change also plays a pivotal role in ensuring service delivery.

Moreover, non-payment of bills by residents was also a challenge faced by the municipality in its endeavour to deliver services to the citizens of Victoria Falls. The management of the

VFM were of the view that the citizens were not meeting their duty of paying their bills to council noting that some of the service users were ignorant to such issues and that the other cause was economic hardships facing the economy of Zimbabwe thereby making it difficult for the service users to pay their bills hence making it difficult for the municipality to meet its budget, it therefore follows that the services provided by the municipality will be highly dissatisfactory.

The respondents also stressed out the issue of political interference into the running of the municipality as another challenge that was being experienced by VFM. Reference was made to the write off that was made by the government in 2013 which was an advantage to the rate payers but a problem to service provider since council was left financially crippled thereby leading to poor service delivery by local authorities.

#### **4.4.2 Strategies by council to improve service delivery**

The researcher also aimed at discovering the strategies employed by Council to improve service delivery and the following strategies were given:

- Private-Public-Partnerships to finance council projects
- leasing out loss making business to save funds
- city diplomacy
- participatory budgeting-twinning with other towns
- look and learn visits to share best practices
- Conducting Service Level Benchmarking programme so as to ensure accountability
- Performance contract which is reviewed after every four years which helps in increasing performance by the Municipality through instilling the sense of transparency
- conducting field survey so as to get to know how the people feel about the services rendered by VFM for example the April to July 2015 property field survey

there are also some notable mechanisms that have been put forward by the local government in trying to ensure good service delivery in local authorities, one can give reference to the GIS programme, which is meant to benefit more in the Engineering department.

The MED lighting also which has benefited the council by putting street lights in town there improving the services offered by the Municipality.

The study was also aimed at finding out if the relationship between the residents and council was important. All respondents in this category concurred with the assertion that relationships between council and stakeholders had a strong bearing on service delivery noting that, it builds trust and thereby influencing willingness to pay bills. Thus leading to improved service delivery.

#### **4.4.3 Recommendations by VFM management**

The council management also came out with recommendations for improving service delivery and these recommendations are:

- Government must allocate funds to Councils in the national budget
- Council must benefit from local tourism industry proceeds
- residents must cooperate with council initiatives and donate or volunteer to assist with work where possible

## CHAPTER 5

### 5.0 LESSONS LEARNT, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

#### 5.1 Lessons Learnt

In trying to explore the topic of interest, the study conducted was greatly informative and educative. The researcher noted that conducting a research was a good experience which did not only benefit the researcher academically but also went a long way in teaching the researcher good morals, ethics and respect.

The researcher learnt that a successful study needs good planning, for example the researcher had to plan on how to gather information, where to get the information thus noting that a research needs commitment. It therefore follows that that the researcher learnt to employ the good methods of data collection

Communication was the key in conducting the study. It was observed that for the study to be fruitful the researcher needed to employ good communication skills which meant that the researcher needed to be a good listener so as to acquire the needed information on the topic under study.

Moreover the researcher learnt that for the study to yield positive fruits, one needed not to work alone but to seek help from other people. The inputs from other people are of great importance when one is conducting a study. Thus it was greatly noted that there is need for one to create good relations with people so as to acquire the needed information.

#### 5.2 Recommendations

The interest of the study was to get to know the service delivery satisfaction levels by the residents of Victoria Falls on the services delivered by VFM. After conducting the research the research came up with a number of recommendations which will go a long way in trying to improve public service delivery by local authorities. The researcher recommends that:

- Council continues to enter into public- private partnerships, which helps in financing council projects.
- Government should protect local authorities from political interference
- There should be inclusion of local authorities in national budgets so that the municipality can get to receive financial assistance from the government
- ZINWA to give water rights to council so as to cut water costs to residents

- Employ effective anti- corruption mechanisms in the organisation
- Encourage recruitment of skilled individuals (technocrats) and do away with nepotism
- Council should regularly appraise its employees to ensure good performance
- Create good relations with the residents (service users) so as to ensure feedback on its performance
- Utilise the technology and apply the e-governance system

### **5.3 Conclusion**

After an in-depth research on the service delivery satisfaction levels for local authorities, the researcher noted that there is need for improvement in service delivery by local authorities. The study revealed that to a greater extent the residents were not satisfied with the services by the local authorities in general and VFM in particular and there was need for improvement especially in the water supply, road networks and in refuse collection thus a lot is to be done so as ensure high levels of satisfaction by the local authorities.

It should be noted that poor service delivery leads to mistrust of the municipality by the citizens thereby causing tensions which may lead to poor feedback from the residents thus hindering progress. On the other one can conclude that good service delivery leads to good relations between the service provider and the service user thereby promoting development in the town

## ORGANISATION OF THE STUDY

The study is organised in five chapters described under the following headings:

**Chapter 1:** Background of the study

**Chapter 2:** Issues in Local Governance

**Chapter 3:** Policy Issues

**Chapter 4:** Research Findings

**Chapter 5:** Lessons Learnt, Recommendations and Conclusion

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## APPENDIX A

### Questionnaire 1: Residents

#### PREAMBLE

I Nothando Imedi a fourth year student at Midlands State University studying Politics and Public Management hereby carryout a study on **“An analysis of Service Delivery Satisfaction Levels for local authorities in Zimbabwe, a case of Victoria Falls Municipality(2010-2015)”**.

You are greatly assured that the information that you are going to provide is going to be used for academic purposes only. Your name will also not appear in the thesis to ensure your security

Kindly assist with honest answers

#### Section A

Part A: Please answer by ticking where applicable

1. Sex: Male  Female

Age: 20-30

31-40

41-50

51-60

61 and above

Marital Status: Married

Single

Divorced

Widowed

3. Occupation

formally employed

Self-employed

unemployed

4. What is your level of satisfaction with the quality of service provided by Victoria Falls Municipality?

moderately dissatisfied

highly dissatisfied

moderately satisfied

highly satisfied

5. In which areas of service delivery would you like to see an improvement?

water reticulation

waste management and refuse collection

roads maintenance

education

health services

fire and ambulance rescue

other (specify).....

6. Which of the following do you think negatively affect service delivery in Victoria Falls?

corruption

lack of skilled staff

poor planning

political interference

failure to manage change

poor policy implementation

lack of resources

lack of strategic direction

7. What do you think needs to be done to improve the quality of service provided by the Victoria Falls Municipality to its stakeholders?

.....

8. Please add any other comments you may have about the service delivery of Victoria Falls Municipality."

.....

.....

## APPENDIX B

Questionnaire 2: VFM employees

### PREAMBLE

I Nothando Imedi a fourth year student at Midlands State University studying Politics and Public Management hereby carryout a study on **“An analysis of Service Delivery Satisfaction Levels for local authorities in Zimbabwe, a case of Victoria Falls Municipality(2010-2015)”**.

You are greatly assured that the information that you are going to provide is going to be used for academic purposes only. Your name will also not appear in the thesis to ensure your security

Kindly assist with honest answers

### Section A

Please tick in the appropriate box

NAME: .....

SEX: Male

Female

Age: 20-30

31-40

41-50

51-60

61 and above

Marital Status: Married

Single

Divorced

Widowed

Professional Qualifications: O' Level

A' Level

Diploma

Degree

Master's Degree

**Section B**

1. What level of management are you in?

supervisory level

middle level

senior management

2. How satisfied are you with the service that your organization is providing to its stakeholders?

moderately dissatisfied

highly dissatisfied

moderately satisfied

highly satisfied

3. What are the challenges faced by your organization in service delivery?

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

4. What factors are affecting your organization's ability to deliver good service to its clients?

economic situation

relationship with stakeholders

political interference

resource limitations

other (specify).....

5. What strategies is your organization employing to improve service delivery?

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

.....

6. What do you think should be done to improve service delivery in local authorities in Zimbabwe as a whole?

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

7. Please add any other comments you may have about the service delivery of Victoria Falls Municipality.

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