

MIDLANDS STATE UNIVERSITY



FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

DEPARTMENT OF LOCAL GOVERNANCE STUDIES

RESEARCH TOPIC: AN ASSESSMENT OF THE IMPACT OF E-GOVERNANCE ON SERVICE DELIVERY IN RURAL LOCAL AUTHORITIES. THE CASE OF TONGOGARA RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL.

SUBMITTED

BY

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This dissertation was submitted to the Department of Local Governance Studies in partial fulfilment of the requirements of BSC Local Governance Studies Honours Degree

DECLARATION

I, Gladmore Takudzwanashe Breakfast hereby declare that this dissertation submitted to the Department of Local Governance Studies at Midlands State University has never been submitted by anyone at any university or college, is my own work and all materials used are acknowledged.

Signed.....

Date.....

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my father Gibson Breakfast, my mother Miriam Breakfast, my brothers Gerald and Givemore Breakfast, aunt Martha Breakfast and all those who supported me during my four years at college. To God for this would never been possible without him, for HE guided and protected me during my college life.

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ABSTRACT

It has now been widely acknowledged that e-governance is the universal remedy to the plethora of woes bedeviling service provision in most rural local authorities in Zimbabwe and even their urban counterparts. E-governance refers to information and communication technology based networks of administration and services that exists in the new public management era. Low revenue inflows, and corruption, low levels of citizen participation and old methods of record and database management are some of the challenges that are hindering local authorities to deliver quality services to the people. This study therefore seeks to give an assessment of how e-governance has been implemented in rural local authorities with the aim to address the above mentioned challenges using Tongogara Rural Council as a case study. The study is based on globalization, bureaucracy and the principal-agent theories defining how council deliver services to the people and various stakeholders. These theories provide the point of reference to compare the system of e-governance in Zimbabwe and those from Cape Verde and two cases from India. This helps the researcher to give a conclusion and make some recommendations. Questionnaires and interviews were employed to collect data from the respondents and this allowed the production of reliable and relevant results for the study. The study shows that the use of internet is very low among rural local authorities and their citizens thus making it difficult for them to fully implement e-governance. The introduction of e-governance can increase the speed of service delivery and at the same time reducing overcrowding at council offices. All this serves time and cost of service delivery by the council thus resulting in effective and efficiency. Some of the major findings of the study were that the council has limited finances to fully implement e-governance initiatives this has been witnessed by the unavailability of a council website. There is also lack of government support in order to implement the system of e-governance despite being encouraged to do so. The study concludes that rural local authorities have not shown their readiness in implementing e-governance initiatives in their day to day running of business. Therefore, the researcher recommends Zimbabwean rural local authorities to consider e-governance as the best medicine for their problems that affect service delivery.

List of acronyms

- APA..... American Psychological Association
- FRIENDSFast, Reliable, Instant, Efficient Network for Disbursement of Services
- G2C..... Government to Citizens
- G2E..... Government to Employee
- G2B..... Government to Business
- G2G..... Government to Government
- ICT..... Information and Communication Technology
- IT..... Information Technology
- OCAC..... Orissa Computer Application Centre
- TRDC..... Tongogara Rural District Council
- UND.....United Nations Development Programme
- UNESCA..... United Nations Economic and Social Commission of Asia

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION OF THE STUDY

1.0 Introduction

The research focused on how electronic governance can improve service delivery in rural local authorities of Zimbabwe specifically using Tongogara Rural District Council as a case study. Electronic governance is the use of information and communication technologies in public sector organisations to improve service delivery and information flow to improve community participation and making governments more accountable, transparent and effective. The study looked at the major role that Information and Communication Technology play in triggering innovation, efficiency and effectiveness in service delivery and promoting democracy. The study achieved this by looking at the main objectives of e-governance, theoretical and conceptual framework that describes e-governance issues and the challenges being faced by rural local authorities in implementing information and communication technology issues. This will help local authorities realise opportunities that e-governance have in terms of service delivery. Reffat (2006) notes that in order to have a successful e-governance system, Information and Communication Technology (ICT) facilities, which are at the very core of the e-government infrastructure, have to be reachable to all citizens.

E-governance helps public organisation and their employees in identifying and developing new skills that are required in realizing the opportunities that help enhance service delivery. This chapter will look at the background of e-governance at international, regional, national and mainly at the local level. The gap that the research is trying to address is going to be looked at in the form of the statement of the problem. This will be done by focusing on the objectives of the study which will give rise to research questions. This chapter will also look at the limitations of the study which are the restraints that the researcher encountered in gathering the data for the success of the research. This chapter will also show where exactly the research is going to be confined to and the population under investigation. This chapter will then end by looking at definition of the most used terms in this research.

1.1 Background of the study

The World Wide Web introduction in the 1990s witnessed the integration of IT to government reform with the National Performance Review (NPR) Report in 1993 and this resulted in reinventing government movement (Aldrich 2002). Schelin, (2003) noted that the passing of

some important legislation during that period supported the use of IT in government entities. In 1995 there was the amendment of the 1980 Paperwork Reduction Act (PRA) which provided guidelines for government IT investments and encouraged more cross-agency information sharing. Schelin (2003) also noted that in 2001 there was the enactment of the E-Government Act which provided for the financial and organisational infrastructure for wide spread e-government initiatives. Improvements in public service delivery have been recorded through the introduction of e-governance applications in several countries including Canada, the United States, South Africa, Botswana, Malaysia, Kenya, Mauritius, Rwanda, New Zealand and Singapore (Thomas, 2006).

However, Reijswoud(2008) noted that governments in the developing world have been under extensive pressure from developed governments and donors to review and update their processes in order to provide better, faster services and to extend their information and service offerings to rural areas. Kitaw, (2006) noted that previous researches that were conducted in Rwanda indicated that though the country is poor, it has however managed to incorporate ICT facilities into its activities and as a result has managed to minimize problems caused by red-tape in governmental services delivered to its citizens. The above example indicates that success of e-governance in an organisation lays in its desire to move from the old manual way of doing business and readiness to implement ICT initiatives in its day to day functions. According to Kitaw organisations that use information and communication technologies seems to deliver better services than those organisations that do not use it.

1.1.1 Zimbabwean experience

Hikwa and Maisiri (2014) dated back the background of e-governance in Zimbabwe in the early 1970s when ICT services were being provided for by the Department of Central Computing Services. Then follows the adoption of the Integrated Results Based Management (IRBM) programmes in 2005 across government and e-governance was one of its integral components. According to Kussek and Rist (2004), the system of RBM across the globe have been triggered by the growing concerns and pressure from internal and external stakeholders for governments to provide more tangible and comprehensible results. In 2009 the government of Zimbabwe established the Ministry of Information and Communication Technology which engineers the digital access and e-government program in the country (Mhlanga 2006).

In 2011 the government of Zimbabwe launched the Electronic Government and highlighted that one of the major thrusts of results based management is e-government, which focuses on modernising government systems and processes through the use of information and

communication technologies (Mhlanga 2006). This statement is a clear testimony that the government system in the country before the adoption of the e-government system was characterised by bureaucratic red-tape, little or no citizen participation, rampant corruption, old manual methods of storing data among other weakness which hinder quality service delivery and thus the government wish to address this status quo. Hence the adoption of electronic governance sought to improve the quality and effectiveness of services delivered to the citizens. Thus the researcher found it necessary to conduct a research in the rural local authorities of Zimbabwe after realizing that many private companies and other developed countries are embracing electronic governance facilities in delivering quality services to their clients.

However, although the system of e-governance has gained much appreciation from the citizens, the media and the government itself very little have been successfully achieved. Thus it is the objective of this study to examine the reason why most rural local authorities have not managed to fully embrace electronic governance facilities using Tongogara Rural District Council as a case study as it is also a victim of low service delivery.

1.2 Statement of the problem

Service delivery at Tongogara Council has been regarded as poor due to a number of challenges that include low revenue inflows, and corruption, low levels of citizen participation and old methods of record management among others. In general, there is poor service delivery and poor communication between the council and citizens due to lack of access to relevant information and bureaucracy. Thus, the study seeks to give light on how e-governance can improve the state of service delivery in Tongogara district as it is increasingly becoming a tool for enhancing public administration by creating innovative driving forces that reduces inefficient and ineffective operations that have spoiled most local authorities in Zimbabwe. A lot of concern has been shown by many stakeholders on the capacity of TRDC in exhausting e-governance initiatives that will ensure better service delivery.

1.3 Research Questions

(a) Broad research question

What impact does e-governance have in service delivery in rural local authorities of Zimbabwe?

(b) Research questions

- How can e-governance improve the quality rural service delivery in Zimbabwe?
- Does e-governance empower community participation in service delivery?

- Does e-governance promote cost cutting in terms of service delivery in local authorities?
- How effective is e-governance in improving service delivery?
- What are measures that can be put in place to improve service delivery Tongogara Rural District Council?

1.4 Research Objectives

- To evaluate the relationship between e-governance and service delivery in local authorities.
- To evaluate the level of community participation in promoting good governance in local authorities through e-governance.
- To determine the effectiveness of e-governance on service delivery.
- To evaluate cost cutting measures that e-governance has towards service delivery.
- To give recommendations on ways to improve service delivery in rural local authorities

1.5 Justification of the study

This research seeks to help rural local authorities in finding ways that can improve their service provision through innovative ways necessitated by information communication and technology. The study will assist local authorities in findings ways that they can use in order to reduce the cost of doing business through e-servicing. It will help council to realise their full potential in terms of addressing challenges that affect efficient service delivery, which cannot be easily addressed through the old manual ways of doing business that is still prevailing in most rural local authorities. Most local government scholars have paid more attention on e-governance in urban local authorities and little attention have been paid to rural local authorities' capacity to use e-governance facilities in their day to day business. Thus research tries to fill in this gap and show how rural local also can also benefits from the opportunities that arise due to the use of ICTs. However, the findings of this research would be important to other researchers, as it would act as a source of reference on the application of e-governance strategies on service delivery among rural local authorities in Zimbabwe.

1.6 Limitations

The researcher faced some financial constraints which resulted in failure to meet travel expenses, stationery for questionnaires designs, telephone interviews among other expenses thus limiting the expected findings. One of the major limitations that the study faced includes the withholding of important information by respondents for fearing to expose some secret information about the organisation. The unawareness about the importance of the study by some council employees and councilors also limited the study in exploring its full findings.

Apart from the above limitations the researcher tried his best to come up with expected findings by adhering to the requisites of a scientific research. The research took advantage of Full council and Committee meetings conducted at the council offices during the time of the study to gather data from council officials and councilors that were part of the sample of the study. However, during the study some physical agreements were agreed on between the researcher and the informants that no information gathered will be divulged to anyone but only be used for academic purposes.

1.7 Delimitations

The scope of this study was limited to Tongogara Rural District Council in Zimbabwe and because of the large population of the district and limited resources to the researcher; the study will not be able to include all the populace of the area under study. The study will be carried out among councilors and council employees. The study will focus on the benefits that e-governance have in terms of service delivery and also the challenges that rural local authorities are facing in implementing e-governance. The use of e-governance systems in rural local authorities of Zimbabwe is limited than in their urban counterparts, (Mhlanga 2006) thus the study will give a focus to rural local authorities' experience specifically using TRDC as a case study.

1.8 Definition of terms

1.8.1 Service Delivery

Service is a product or activity that meets the needs of the user. Mutali (2008), quoted Parasuraman, Zeithmal and Berry (1991) and provided the following determinants of service quality by order of their importance to include reliability, responsiveness- willingness to help customers and prompt service assurance, and the ability to convey trust, empathy and individualized attention to customers. Other authorities have mentioned customer compliant and satisfaction as important measurements for quality service delivery. Satisfying the needs of the customers is an important component in service delivery as it strengthens the competitive advantage of the organisation (Berry 2007). The services should be of high quality, delivered on time and above all being able to respond to the needs/problems of the citizens quickly.

1.8.2 E-Government

A short definition of e-government involves the use of information and communication technology in the operations of governments. According to the Deloitte Research (2000), e-government is the use of information and communication technologies, particularly the internet, as a tool for delivering better government services to the citizens, businesses, and employees. The emergence of ICT provided governments and others private institutions a good

platform for better and faster of communication, effective management tool and efficient tool for data processing and retrieval thus a cost cutting measure in the day to day functions of an organisation. Reffat(2006), states that for e-government to be effective the ICT solutions have to be reachable by every citizen.

1.8.3 E-governance

The World Bank (2012), defined e-governance as the use of information and communication technologies (mobile computing, the internet and Wide Area Network) by governments agencies that have the ability to transform their relations with that of the citizens and other arms of government. The above definition shows that communication between the government and the citizens improves; making it easy and smooth thus the citizens are able to access service on time.

1.9 Chapter summary

The above chapter discussed on the background of e-governance on an international, national and local level looking at reasons which led to its introduction which include high cost of doing business, high levels of corruption, bureaucratic red-tape among others discussed above which all lead to poor service delivery in rural local authorities. This chapter looked at the limitations that where encountered by the researcher in carrying out the study and it also provide for the geographical boundary that the study was confined to. The next chapter will then look at the theoretical, conceptual framework and other experiences as provided by previous scholars and researcher in the field of e-governance. The theoretical framework and other aspects of literature will help to show the relationship between local governments and their citizens in terms of service provision.

CHAPTER TWO LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

The chapter will discuss the theoretical and conceptual frameworks surrounding e-governance. The theories which are to be used as a basis for data analysis are as follows: the globalization theory, the bureaucracy theory and the principal agent theory. The theories were selected for their immense impact on effective e-governance issues and how they describe service delivery

in public sector organizations. This chapter will also look at the various concepts surrounding the field of e-governance and how it helps in bring about good governance and a better service delivery in public sector organizations. The link between e-governance and good governance, e-government models of service delivery and the importance of e-governance towards improved service delivery will be also explored by this chapter. The benefits and challenges that are associated with the introduction of e-governance by governments are to be considered as well. The chapter will also consider the empirical evidence surrounding e-governance by looking at cases studies on a global scale to show how e-governance has helped in improving service delivery at local government level and the lessons that Zimbabwean rural local authorities can learn from these cases.

2.1 LITERATURE REVIEW

E-governance has the premeditated objective of supporting and simplifying governance for the government, citizens and businesses in order to bring about ‘Simple, Moral, Accountable, Responsive and Transparent’ (SMART) governance (Gartner 2000). According to Agarwal et al. (2003) highlighted that e-governance is usually expected to result in transparency, speedy information dissemination and improved service delivery in public sector organisations. E-governance is also a vehicle for cost-effective and efficient way of public service provision. Therefore, from the above definition it can be noted that e-governance uses electronic means to support and stimulate good governance, thus the objectives of e-governance and good governance are similar.

2.1.1 Defining e-governance?

The concept of e-governance has been used interchangeably with that of e-government in previous researches but it is the essence of this section to clarify that the two concepts are different and cannot be used interchangeably though they are supportive to each other. In this study e-government is defined as the use of tools and systems by governmental bodies that are supported by the use ICT that affect public administration whereas e-governance is defined as the ICT-based networks of services and administration in the new public management era. Thus e-government and e-governance are different from the viewpoint of e-administration and e-services respectively. The section will then give much attention to e-governance and its various aspects as proposed by other scholars.

According to Sheridan and Riley (2006), e-governance is a broader concept that deals with the whole spectrum of the relationship and networks within government regarding the usage and application of ICTs whereas e-government is limited to the development of online services. They also however argued that e-government is an institutional approach to jurisdictional

political operations whereas e-governance is a procedural approach to co-operative administrative relations that is the encompassing of basic and standard procedures within the confines of public administration. Backus (2000) agreed with the above assertion as he also argued that most of e-governance activities are aimed at improving the efficiency and effectiveness of overall government operations.

Karim (2002) argued that e-governance is the use of ICTs in public sector organizations with the aim of improving information and service delivery, enhancing citizen participation in the decision making process and making government, provincial and local governments more accountable, transparent and effective. E-governance is generally considered as a wider concept than e-government, since it can bring about a change in the way citizens relate to governments or vice-versa. E-governance can bring forth new concepts of citizenship, both in terms of citizen needs and responsibilities as some of its main objectives are to engage, enable and empower the citizen (Clift 2003).

Gilbert (2004) highlighted that e-governance system plays a significant role in improving service delivery as it increases access to information and services through facilities such as local government web portals which ensure good governance as citizens do not lose touch with their government. He also proposes that, the use of e-governance system by a range of local authorities ensures that citizens make informed choices rather than acting out of ignorance, this enhance local authorities' capacities to provide services to its citizens and stakeholders in an efficient and effective manner. Leitner (2004) also pointed out that services will be provided online as facilitated by the use ICTs and this helps in bringing those services closer to the people, reduces the council's operational costs and ensures that council business is carried out in a transparent manner and thus improving communication between the council and its various stakeholders.

2.1.2 Conceptualising E-governance

This part of the study provides the relationship between e-governance and service delivery in rural local governments and how various governments have incorporated it in their system of governance as a way of improving service delivery. According to Rossel and Finger (2007) to understand e-governance not merely as the use of Information and Communication Technology in public sector organisations we need to ask the following questions; why e-governance has come to exist in the first place and how it needs to be looked at if it has to mean something

more than ICT in government. To accomplish this, they proposed to place e-governance within the broad co-evolution between ICT in general and government institutions and this relates to all dominions of the society like health and education. However, e-governance has to be viewed and understood from the broader transformation of how collective problems and challenges have been dealt with previously looking at three main functions that is service delivery, policy making and regulation compliance.

Schellong (2007) recognizes reduction in cost of doing business, reduced time processing, improved information flow and sharing, inclusive competence, new systems of service delivery and higher citizen satisfaction as effects of e-governance initiatives in an organization. All these attributes will result in improved organizational transparency and accountability. This has been supported by Kraemer and King, (2005) who argue that ICT encouragements administrative reforms which will bring about transformation in a local government setup for example a more responsive local authority, increased efficiency and better service delivery to citizens.

The implementation of e-governance in rural local authorities is a way of reaching the yet unreached poor citizens with services hence improving their living standards by contributing to poverty eradication and reduction. By providing e-services to the marginalised and unreached citizens it then means that government is not only meeting the expectations of these people but also empower them to participate in crucial decision making processes that directly affect them. This concurs with West (2004) who points out that developed governments around the world are establishing websites as a way of facilitating citizen complaints and participation and business investment. He identifies Netherlands and Bulgaria as examples of governments that are using websites to attract foreign investment in their countries. Furthermore, one can easily argue that the introduction of e-governance systems and initiatives in a local authority can increase its investor participation in the district and at the same time increasing revenue base of council.

Thus e-governance is about reform in governance, facilitated by the use of Information and Communications Technology and it will result in better access to information and quality services for citizens, simplicity, efficiency and accountability in the government and extended stretch of governance by the citizens.

2.1.3 Theoretical framework for E-governance

E-governance can lead to improved service delivery processes if council appreciate and properly utilise e-governance initiatives in executing their business and also advocate for

citizens to use ICT facilities. Thus in this regard the relationship between citizens and governments can be explained through various theories. E-governance helps in developing a new relationship between the government and its citizens because, electronic services bring the government closer to people and make it people centred. The researcher used globalisation theory, the principal-agent theory and the bureaucracy theory as a guide to data analysis.

a) The globalisation theory

The *globalization theory* observes the emergence of the global cultural system that has been made possible with the use ICTs. Globalization thus describes a process in which the world moves toward an integrated global society and the implication of geographical borders decreases thus resulting in the connection of governments and citizens becoming more close to each other (Dean 2002). Schonberger and Hurley (2000) add that through globalisation communication is no longer one as to one but one as to many, meaning to say government can serve many clients or customers at the same using the same facility.

According to Waters (1995) globalization has created a new social process in which the constraints of geography on social and cultural arrangements move away and people are increasingly becoming aware that they are moving away. This generally means that people can easily participate and be aware of what the government intends to do regardless of their geographical location. According to Wood (2003), e-governance inspires good relationship between citizens and public employees; it makes governments more accountable to its citizens and it simplifies governmental activities, minimizes costs and reduces time used in delivering service. Thus the government do not lose their power and responsibility to deliver services to its clients and the citizens will not lose touch with the government initiatives; they are always informed through the websites and other platforms about what the government intends to do.

Kamarck (2000) argues that, globalisation has caused transformations in public administration in many countries due to global economic competition, democratisation and the performance deficit. Governments in the world are increasing their services by using electronic processes and initiatives (e-services) to gain competitive advantage over other service providers like the private sector. Globalisation has witnessed an increase in the participation of citizens in government activities through the introduction of e-government which has facilitated e-governance processes, thus they have more influence in making choices and finding solutions to problems that directly affect them. This has been supported by O' Loughlin (2004) who postulates that globalisation has created a borderless world which has seen the expansion of

the characteristics of good governance like democracy, transparency and social accountability. The presents of these characteristics of good governance in a local authority is equal to the task of providing quality services to the citizens.

The introduction of e-governance has been applauded by many for its remarkable contribution to the improvement of services delivered by government both at national, provincial and local level. The theory acknowledges that the world is not stagnant and that local authorities should not lag behind but rather moves with time. It explains how governments (national and local governments) can interact with other governments on a global market thus getting new ideas on how to improve their service delivery as well as increasing ways to generate more revenue.

The theory has a direct link with the study as it inspires rural local authorities in Zimbabwe to use electronic facilities as they are more effective and efficient in term of service delivery if properly implemented and used. O' Loughlin (2004) highlighted that country borders may have a negative influence on the lives of the people but globalisation improves the lives of the people through global interaction. This can be a reality to the lives of the rural populace if e-governance facilities are made available to them. Distance will not be a barrier for them to access council services anytime.

Thus a lot should be done in order for rural local authorities to compete with their urban counterparts and the private sector in terms of delivering services to the citizens. For example, rural local authorities with the support of the central government should establish websites and others electronic platforms that they can use to market their services to their customers for example residential and commercial stands and other investment opportunities in their area of jurisdiction. This will enable them to generate more revenue and can be able to deliver quality services with efficiency and effectiveness.

b) The principal-agent theory

The *principal-agent* theory as applied to the public sector, focuses attention on problems of accountability and transparency created by unbalanced information flows between agents(government) and principals(citizens) (Laffont and Martimort 2002), which leads to problems such as corruption and huge time and cost factors involved in service delivery. E-governance has the advantage of empowering the principals who can either bypass agents by using information technology based processes to help themselves or required to deal with principals empowered by improved knowledge of service delivery processes. These factors

have the ability to transform the way public services are delivered and improve relationships between public sector organisations and citizens.

According to the Pacific Council of International Policy (2002) citizens (principals) view their governments (agents) as lavish and unresponsive to their most pressing needs or problems and they view public office holders as profiteers thereby creating a mistrust of governments by the citizens which result in the principal-agent problem. The PCIP argued that the adoption of e-service is associated with several competitive advantages which include the creation of entry barriers, increased revenue generation from new services and enhanced productivity. Thus e-governance creates a good relationship between the principal and agent as it addresses a number of the former's aims of quality which include efficiency, effective, customer-driven and the empowerment (Teicher, Owen and Dow 2000). Nazet *al.*, (2006), argued that enhanced communication between the citizens and government means that the former participate in all activities of the later including policy making thereby creating a sense of trust and mutual interest.

ICT enabled systems eliminate chances of corrupt activities in the execution of public business as the principals are able to monitor and audit their agents and do council transactions themselves (Laffont and Martimort 2002). The system enables government activities to be open to scrutiny at all the times. Increased access to information in the public sector reduces office monopoly and also reduces the impact of distance and time which hinders citizens from conducting business with council.

Applying the theory to this study has great importance as the citizens (principals) are able to interact with council officials (agents) every time through online platforms which include organizational websites, Facebook pages among other electronic platforms. For example, citizens and other business entities can access stand application forms on council website and apply online, thereafter they can go on to make payments of their stands using facilities such as Eco-cash, Tele-cash and One wallet using council biller code without going to council offices and saving time and travelling cost.

c) Bureaucracy theory

Bureaucracy theory describes the roles and relations between citizens and bureaucrats. According to McLean (1996), this theory addresses the role of bureaucrats as permanent workers in public offices and elected officials in connection with rules that govern the hierarchical office in which appointment and promotion are based on merit. The theory assumes

that all decisions made are balanced and are not based on patronage. It also argues that bureaucrats always find alternatives that simplify their duties and being able to maintain quality service delivery, thus they adopt e-governance as an alternative to provide effective and efficient service to its citizens (Weber 1947).

Weber (1947) highlighted that the main objective of bureaucrats is to maximise efficiency at a minimum cost since institutionalised rules and regulations allow all employees to undertake their duties and responsibilities optimally. Nohria and Berkley (1994) are of the same view with that of Weber as they argue that the adoption of ICT to computerise the existing administrative procedures can improve its effectiveness and efficiency without changing its ideology. Thus this globalised village that we are now living in requires bureaucrats to use ICT to enhance effectiveness and efficiency in the day to day running of the organisations. Cordella (2007) supports this argument by stressing that information communication and technologies are tools that are used to support the bureaucratic administrative functions in an organisation. Through the use of e-governance it means that the old system of bureaucracy based on manual ways of getting work done is replaced with internet and computer based technologies in order to reduce the time and cost incurred service delivery (ibid).

Citizens view their governments as overstuffed, wasteful, and unresponsive to their most pressing needs and a lot of mistrust of government is common among the public and businesses as they see office bearers as profiteers (Pacific Council on International Policy 2002). A need to replace the government's rigid hierarchical structures with vibrant organisational structures that facilitates the participation of various stakeholders especially the citizens to promote a more customer oriented attitude to public service delivery to enhance productivity and efficiency (Pollit and Bouchaert 2004). Gore 1993 and Raney 2000, argues the non-hierarchical nature of e-governance delivery allows citizens to seek information at their own convenience, not just when they visit government offices. On the other hand, this interaction also allows bureaucrats to receive valuable information from the citizens which allow them to improve service quality through citizens' feedbacks and comments. E-governance has been praised as a way to improve service delivery and responsiveness to citizens, in the long run generating greater public confidence in government.

Peters, (2001) also argues that even democratic states have created bureaucratic institutions because their expressed values are extremely powerful for enforcing fairness and equality of citizens in front of the state. He further states that bureaucrats cannot be neglected in

formulating policies that aim at reforming public sector institutions even when the government is struggling to taking advantage of the benefits offered by e-governance in service delivery. Thus the argument by Peters shows that bureaucratic organisation with the help of e-governance can offer improved services to the citizens and other relevant stakeholders as the system (of e-governance) increases efficiency and effective in the performing of day to day activities in an organisation.

The theory is important to this study as it shows government officials (bureaucrats) the need to acknowledge the importance of e-governance in making service delivery more effective and efficient. The theory provides local authorities with an option to provide services to the citizens using e-governance facilities that makes it more cost effective and transparent to the public. The theory advocates local authorities to reduce unnecessary expenditures and lose of time incurred through bureaucratic red-tape.

2.2 Interactions in e-Governance

2.2.1 Government to Government (G2G)

In this case, ICT is used to increase the flow of information and services within and between different stakeholders and entities. According to Gregory (2007) this kind of interaction is only within the sphere of government and can be both horizontal (between different government agencies) and vertical (between national, provincial and local government agencies as well as between different levels within an organisation).

2.2.2 Government to Citizens (G2C)

An interface is created between the government and citizens, which enables the citizens to benefit from efficient delivery of a large range of public services (Seifert, 2003). This expands the availability and accessibility of public services on the one hand and improves the quality of services on the other. It gives citizens the choice of when to interact with the government, from where to interact with the government and how to interact with the government. According to Kitaw (2006) government websites and portal are good examples of the government to citizen interaction as government provide information and service to the public with public interest. Government can disseminate information on web portals for example providing downloadable forms online and can conduct training sessions to citizens online (Backus 2001). According to Benjamin (2001) this type of interaction allows the transferring of power, resources and authority to more localised levels of the public which may be seen as decentralisation with the aim of reducing costs and creating a more flexible and responsive government.

2.2.3 Government to Business (G2B)

Here, e-governance tools are used to aid the business community as providers of goods and services to seamlessly interact with the government (Pascual 2003). They can also be promotional and facilitative, such as in trade, tourism and investment. These measures help to provide a hospitable environment to businesses to enable them to perform more efficiently. Pascual (2003) also highlighted that ICT initiatives foster public-private partnerships that help in providing better services to the general citizens at a reduced cost. An example of activities that can be conducted between government and the business as explained by this model are government projects, procurements, taxes and tenders.

2.2.4 Government to Employees (G2E)

Government is by far the biggest employer and like any organisation, it has to interact with its employees on a regular basis. This interaction is a two-way process between the organisation and the employee. Seifert (2003) argued that the use of ICT tools helps in making these interactions fast and efficient on the one hand and increase satisfaction levels of employees on the other. Ntiro (2000) argue that technology help the government to plan, monitor and control their human resources by providing performance processes and standards.

However, Gartner an international e-business consultancy firm proposed that these interactions mature as explained in the four phases of e-governance maturity model. These phases are as follows: information, interaction, transaction and transformation. It states that governments start by offering online information and then with public demand it will then be required to offer more complexity services. It does not mean that all organisations should pass through all these phases at the same time. The overall assumption of this model is to offer different e-governance solutions to public sector problems.

2.3 E-governance maturity model

Stage1 Information

This is the first phase of the model which just means being present on the web, providing the public (citizens and business) with relevant information. Government information is publicly accessible through online facilities at any given time and thus becoming more transparent and improves democracy and service (e-democracy and e-services). Government can internally disseminate information with electronic means thus strengthening G2G interactions. The phase is all about providing information to the citizens and stakeholders so as to increase transparency and social accountability.

Stage2 Interaction

Interactions between government and the public (G2G, G2C and G2B) are strengthened through various applications that are available online. The public can use feedbacks and comments to proffer their concerns and inquiries from the government, use search engines to find information and can be able to download forms and documents from websites. For example, stand application forms can be made downloadable of council website to avoid visiting council offices to get those forms. These functions can be done online 24/7 and this saves time and travelling costs thus increasing efficiency and effectiveness. However, finalizations of the transaction are still done at council offices for example paying an administration fee, handing over evidence and signing papers.

Stage3 Transaction

In this phase complete transactions with stakeholders is done without visiting any council office. For example, license renewal, tax payments and payments other council services can now be done online and this increases complication of the application. The availability of these complications is because of security and personalization issues for example electronic signatures which required in enabling legal transfer of payments and services. E-procurement is another main feature of this phase and this means that a paperless transaction is now available online and this saves time and operational costs from both the council and citizens.

Stage4Transformation

This is the transformation phase in which all information systems are incorporated in one counter as government services are now available to everyone (G2C and G2B) on a single portal. The ultimate goal here is to radically change organizational culture, processes and responsibilities within the council. Council employees in different departments have to work together in a smooth and flawless way with the objective of reaching the highest level of customer satisfaction in an efficient and cost saving manner.

2.4 The link between e-governance and good governance

Good governance emerged as a concept to improve service in the public and its core values are efficiency, effective and economy. E-governance uses information communication and technology to promote good governance as it connects governments and the citizens at any given time. Good governance ensures that corruption is minimised and transparency is maximised and this can be achieved by giving a special focus to its characteristics which can be aided by e-governance. According to Kettl (2002), governance is a way of describing the links between government and its broader environment in terms of political, social, and administrative. Thus the purpose of bringing the electronic links to the system means improved interactions between the government and citizens and business which will enhance democracy,

effective and efficiency service delivery (ibid). These characteristics include participation, transparency, responsiveness, accountability, effectiveness and inclusiveness. These characteristics are interactive to produce a government that is legitimate, effective and widely supported by citizens as well as having a civil society that is strong and capable of playing a positive role in governance of public sector organisations.

2.4.1 Participation

The concept of good governance carries in it the essence of democracy through the mechanism of institutionalized citizen participation (Coulibaly 2004). Participation by all stakeholders (citizens, civil society and local businesses) is the key foundation of good governance and it could be either direct or through legitimate intermediate institutions or representatives. Through the introduction of information and communication technologies participation is enhanced as citizens can participate online through their feedbacks, comments and view which they post on council websites and others platforms that maybe available to them. UNDP Report (2008) shows that ICT investment in the public strengthen interactions between public officials and the general citizens to promote better public policies and services through a process known as e-participation. Stakeholders are well informed all the time and their participation if organised and it allows freedom of expression.

2.4.2 Transparency

Transparency means that rules and regulations are followed when decisions are taken and that they are with open to everyone. According to Wimmer (2004) transparency in government decision-making and public policy implementation reduces uncertainty and may help inhibit corruption among public officials. It means that information is freely available and directly accessible to those who will be affected by such decisions and their enforcement. The information provided should be easily understandable (ibid). Council websites can be used to distribute tender documents to interested clients and the forms can be easily downloaded by everyone with considering one's physical location.

2.4.3 Responsiveness

Good governance requires that governments try to serve all stakeholders within a reasonable timeframe (UNESCA 2009). This means that through the use of ICT which can either be hotline numbers and social platforms, citizens can notify the responsible authority where urgent response is needed and the council is able to respond quickly to the problem or need.

2.4.4 Accountability

Accountability is a key requirement of good governance. Both private and governmental institutions must be accountable to their stakeholders and in the case of local authorities both appointed and elected officials are supposed to be accountable to their citizens. Yong (2005) asserts that e-governance helps local authorities to increase accountability in their functioning as interactions between the stakeholders and citizens are increased. In general, an organization or an institution is accountable to those who will be affected by its decisions or actions.

2.4.5 Effectiveness

Good governance means that institutions produce results that meet the needs of society while making the best use of resources at their disposal. According to the World Bank (2011) the concept of efficiency in the context of good governance also covers the sustainable use of natural resources and the protection of the environment. This then means that e-governance can be used as a tool to monitor environmental activities and thus saving the resources.

2.4.6 Inclusiveness

A society's well-being depends on ensuring that all its members feel that they have a stake in it and do not feel excluded from the mainstream of society (United Nations Economic and Social Commission of Asia 2009). Inclusiveness requires all groups of the community to have opportunities to improve or maintain their well-being. Thus the introduction of e-governance in public sector organisations means that the society is well involved in the affairs of the council.

2.5 Benefits of e-governance

E-Governance is about reform in governance, facilitated by the creative use of Information and communications Technology. This research will look at the following dimensions of benefits: Economic benefits, Quality of service benefits, Quality of governance benefits, and Personal development.

2.5.1 Economic benefits

According to Bhatnagar (2009), Economic benefits of e-government are direct benefits realized by the citizens, which contribute to direct savings in costs and time. Cost savings include reduction in travel cost, savings on amount paid to agents to facilitate services and savings of expenses incurred on phone calls, posts, for transmitting information. Gallo et al., (2014), 'Time saving' benefits are related to the reduced number of transactions which include reduced travel time, time saved due to one-time submission of data on a given platform. There would be an immediate impact in terms of savings in time, effort and money, resulting from online and one-point accessibility of public services backed up by automation of back end processes.

2.5.2 Quality of service benefits

It is the mandate of each and every government to aim at providing high quality services to its citizens as it is the expectation of every citizen, thus government adopt e-governance as the way to improve the quality of service delivered to citizens. Agrawal and Wadhwa (2007) propose a multi-dimensional scale for measuring e-governance service quality which includes accuracy and reliability of information, friendly and courteous interaction by employees, integration of services, enhanced accessibility, active service recovery, and assurance of services. Hien (2014) outlined reliability, communication and responsiveness as his dimensions for measuring quality of service that are an outcome of successful e-governance. He defines reliability government's ability to provide accurate and dependable services, communication as keeping citizen aware and informed, whereas responsiveness is the willingness of government to assist the citizens by providing fast and efficient services.

2.5.3 Quality of governance benefits

It has been noted by various researchers that the objectives of e-governance are to promote good governance thus their objectives are the same. Gopakumar (2001) highlighted reduction of corruption, greater transparency and accountability as some of the benefits, observed as a result of implementing e-government. Transparency and accountability in governance contribute to societal harmony which benefit the citizens especially the down trodden and under privileged sections of the society (Pathak and Prasad, 2005). Rothstein and Teorell (2012) argue that quality of governance is indicated through impartiality, absence of corruption, democracy, and government efficiency. Public officials are held accountable by tracing and fixing their inappropriate actions through the e-governance system thus reducing chances of abusing of public offices. The end result would be simplification of the functioning of government, enhanced decision making abilities and increased efficiency across government – all contributing to an overall environment of a more accountable government machinery

2.5.4 Personal development

The adoption of e-governance may lead to personal development by enhancing their electronic skills, improving their digital literacy, and empowering them digitally. The United Nations Report on e-Government (2010) highlights the fact that e-governance in Romania has helped the citizens in acquiring e-skills and enhancing digital literacy. The report also discusses about the new competencies, and attitude and awareness changes developed in the citizens of Germany as a result of adopting e-governance. Thus e-governance helps citizens to be aware of how e-governance services should be used and utilized.

2.6 Challenges for the successful implementation of E-governance

The successful implementation of e-governance has faced many challenges and barriers and these include technical, financial, organizational and social challenges. These factors are going to be briefly discussed on how they hinder the successful implementation of e-governance in local authorities to improve the quality of service delivery.

2.6.1 Technical barriers

The successful implementation of e-governance in local authorities faces a number of difficulties, which include the lack of technological infrastructure, privacy and security. Internetworking is required to enable appropriate sharing of information and open up new channels for communication and delivery of new services. Many developing countries suffer from the digital divide which refers to the gap in opportunity between those who have access to the internet and those who do not. Thus, many developing countries do not have the appropriate ICT infrastructure for easy deployment of e-governance facilities.

Layane and Lee (2001) identified privacy and confidentiality as critical barriers on the way to the e- government implementation. Privacy refers to the guarantee of an appropriate level of protection regarding information attributed to an individual. E-governance should be approached with the need to protect individual privacy and security.

2.6.2 Organizational barriers

Top management support is critical for the successful implementation of information communication and technology in local authorities to guard against resistance to change to electronic ways of doing business by employees. Realin (2004) mentioned that many employees see the e-government implementation as a threat to their positions and fear losing their jobs and power. However, it is the duty of management to decrease the resistance to e-government systems employees have to understand the importance and significant of e-government and make sure that they will not endanger their jobs and this can be done through retraining and skill developments.

2.6.3 Financial barriers

Lack of finance in most public organisations is considered the major barrier for the successful of e-governance. Moon (2002) argued that the lack of financial support is considered as significant obstacle to the implementation of e-government in many countries. Carvin et al., (2004) stated that because of the high cost of implementation and maintenance the computer systems, many countries become in dilemma of funding e-government programs, even when a government entity has a plan for effective and accessible e-government. Thus the high cost of

systems hardware and maintenance, soft wares, training and education, are major barriers inhibiting local authorities and governments from using the technologies in service provision.

2.6.4 Social barriers

However, it's not only the financial, technical, organizational and other aspects that hinder the implementation of e-governance in local authorities but also social issues hinder the success of the use of technology in service provision. These social issues include culture, the level of computer literacy and digital divide (the gap between those with access to computers and the internet and those without) among others. Feng (2003) points out that the lack of Internet access among the society was considered the most important barrier to e-government development. Swartz (2003) states that cultural issues have negatively affected the acceptance and adoption of ICT system even in some developed countries such as the UK and Japan.

However, all the above mentioned challenges are what Uzokaet *al.*, (2007) mentioned as variables of e-readiness in a country. They also mentioned a conducive legal and policy environment as other important factors that determine the e-readiness of a country or organisation. It can be noted that the government of Zimbabwe has shown interest in supporting ICT in initiatives as it had come up with policies and initiatives that support its growth.

2.7 Empirical Evidence

Yin (1989) defines a case study as an experimental inquiry that investigates existing phenomenon within its real-life context when the boundaries between the phenomenon and context are not clearly evident and where multiple source of evidence are used. These case studies make it possible for Zimbabwean local authorities to appreciate the opportunities that can be realized through the use of information and communication technology in day to day running of their business. It also helps in tracing challenges encountered in the implementation of e-governance initiatives. This section will look at web-enabled planning services for citizens and citizen payment at FRIENDS centres in India and the case of Cape Verde.

2.7.1 The case of India

Seventy percent of India's population lives in rural areas which are said to be underdeveloped in terms of ICT infrastructure that makes the government lose touch with its citizens. However, the government of India has shown interest in reducing the digital divide by taking multiple e-governance initiatives across the country and mainly in rural areas.

a) Web-enabled Planning services for citizens in Orissa

Kitaw (2006) noted that most local governments and even central governments are facing a tense political situation and poor governance systems, and they appear to consider ICTs as an indispensable tool to alleviate poverty and facilitate state transformation aiming for effective

and efficient service delivery. A study carried out in Kalahandi district in the state of Orissa in India shows how e-governance facilitated web-enabled planning services for citizens. The service was developed by the Orissa Computer Application Centre based on client or server architecture and the system provides web-enabled information and services related to government programmes and activities to citizens.

General information provided within the system covers details of government administration and health services, commodity prices, district and village maps, tax schedules, and details of land use and road or river networks. This information provided on the system is in both English and Orissa's local language (Oriya). Online services include the ability to file a grievance petition or complaint and monitor its status and the ability to apply for a variety of government certificates that include nationality, residence, birth and death certificates.

The objectives for introducing the system are as follows:

- Undertake a needs assessment study on the specific information and services required by local people.
- Improve the quality of collection, validation, storage and retrieval of government information.
- Establish web-enabled delivery of information and services available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week
- Create awareness and motivation among the citizens to exercise their right to information and create an environment for an accountable, transparent, participatory district administration in the pilot project which can be repeated at other locations in future to achieve effective e-governance in the entire state of Orissa.

Its successes

- The system has been able to demonstrate a good level of awareness creation and wide participation and good approval ratings from citizens.
- The project has been able to develop a grassroots understanding of citizens' needs.
- These have used the latest Web technology, and OCAC staff have utilised inputs from India's National Informatics Centre to benefit from knowledge developed on other related projects.
- The project has been well supported financially by funds provided from the Government of India's Dept. of Personnel and Training, with UNDP support.

Constraints encountered

- The project faced a couple of particular delays; first, in selection of the organisation to undertake the needs survey; second, in release of funds for procurement of project hardware.
- Some of the public sector service providers were hesitant to include services in which they might be found helpless.
- The long distance (425 km) between pilot project location in Kalahandi and implementing agency location in Bhubaneswar proved to be a development constraint.

b) Citizen payment at FRIENDS centres in Kerala

The FRIENDS (Fast, Reliable, Instant, Efficient Network for Disbursement of Services) centres offer a one-stop, front-end, IT-enabled payment counter facility to citizens to make all kinds of government payments in the state of Kerala in South India. The counters are equipped to handle around 1,000 types of payment bills originating out of various public sector departments. The payments that citizens can make at the counters include utility payments for electricity and water, revenue taxes, license fees, motor vehicle taxes, university fees.

Purpose of the system

The state of Kerala has a number of different government and public sector organisations collecting taxes, utility bills, and other fees and payments. Individual citizens have historically been expected to pay at the office of the department or the agency concerned. This means that every citizen has to personally visit at least seven offices and stand in queues waiting their turn to pay the taxes and other payments due to government. Some efforts were earlier made to facilitate payments through the banking network. However, given the fact that many banks and government departments/agencies were not computerised, this effort only led to delayed collections and reconciliation problems.

Moreover, only 2 to 5 percent of the population used this facility. It was against this background that the FRIENDS project was conceived, enabling citizens to visit a single location to pay all bills without the requirement for back office computerisation in the involved departments/agencies. Aggarwal and Arora (2012) also noted that citizens can get their grievances addressed at any FRIENDS centres and get an acknowledgement, then forwarded to the relevant authority, where the grievance is marked to the concerned officer. The officers will then feed their response after attending to the grievance and the citizen can see the response from any internet access point.

Government was able to provide better service to the citizens and also demonstrate the benefits of ICTs in governance. Citizens now get better services at lower direct and indirect costs. It has

been calculated that, with FRIENDS, citizens need to spend an average of only 35% of the cost involved in making separate payments at department counters. By saving on travel costs, costs of using agents, and related costs, citizens using FRIENDS centres therefore make an average monthly saving of about US\$1 per citizen. Moreover, on average, citizens save about 42 minutes of their time every month. On average, each centre deals with around 400 citizen transactions per day.

Moreover, the project in itself was able to convince 80.1% of the user-citizens of the possibilities of ICTs in providing better citizen services. It has also demonstrated that, with appropriate training, skill up gradation and technology, existing government employees can deliver better services.

Success enablers

Front-end first approach

The completion of back-end computerisation in government departments of developing countries takes a lot of time on account of fund paucity and procedural hassles. Even if the process were completed, each department, due to socio-political reasons, would essentially end up as stand-alone projects delivering their services in an ICT-enabled mode. This would mean that citizens would continue to run from one agency to the other to complete their transactions. FRIENDS had two major advantages over back-end computerisation. One, the benefits of an ICT-enabled system was offered to citizens at a much earlier date rather than waiting for completion of back-end computerisation. Two, it ensured the irreversible (due to public response) integration of service delivery through one single window.

Immediate and high visibility with wider public participation.

Straight insight suggests that business process re-engineering lead to ICT implementation in any organisation. Even more than in business organisations, process re-engineering in a democratic government is time-consuming and cumbersome on account of the democratic institutions and interest groups involved in the process. While the importance of administrative reforms cannot be questioned, it is important to also have a reform strategy delivering quick, high-visibility gains to all sections of society. FRIENDS have managed to accomplish this. It is felt that a sufficiently successful project of this nature would ensure credibility for the use of ICTs in government and will also provide the pull factor for the long-term use of ICTs in government.

The human factor.

The contribution of the human factor to the success of FRIENDS project has been enormous. Though technology was a key enabler, it is ownership of the project by the Service Officers

that has critically helped. A combination of appropriate training with emphasis on behavioural aspects, skill up gradation, technology and good ambience created the appropriate motivation for these officers to deliver better services.

2.7.2 The case of Cape Verde

According to the UNDP Report of (2008) the government of Cape Verde in 2008 established Citizens' Centre which in their own language referred to as 'The Maison du Citoyen'. These are multidimensional initiatives that enable different electronic administrative services to be offered to citizens and businesses. It was set up as a dedicated physical centre on the island of Sal in February 2008 and in the town of Praia in July 2008. It is a unique portal: all the information services usually required by citizens and businesses are grouped under one roof, which prevents them from having to travel to several government ministries and departments before finding the services they want.

According to the UNDP Report (2008) Jean Marie Bonkougou, Former Director General of Public Contracts in Cape Verde noted that "The public administration did not previously wish to communicate with the private sector. Now, with the portal, economic operators will be able to stay informed about the progress of transactions linked to their contract, follow the progress of transactions from their office and contact the senior management of the organization as soon as they notice any anomaly. All this without having to leave their office." This generally means that there is increased transparency in public sector business and thus resulting in increased public service delivery by government entities.

Through the Maison du Citoyen citizens are able to have access to services through different channels which include the initiative's website, voice servers, email and also the option of direct meetings regardless of their physical location. This makes the lives of the citizens easier as time and costs of travelling are served particularly for the Cape Verdean Diasporas who experienced so many difficulties in accessing government services such as birth certificates. However, there are other websites such as of the Tarrafal de S. Nicolau municipal authorities which allows citizens to interact with local authorities through a chat application. Thus the government is using ICT as a vehicle for public consultations and contributions.

Main objectives of the initiative

- Facilitate maximum government citizen interaction.
- Make the greatest number of public and private services available on this same physical site.
- Directly or indirectly resolve a number of problems at this site.

- Be the main access between public services and citizens

Services offered through Maison du Citoyen

- Certificates online (birth, marriage).
- Starting up a company in one day.
- Electronic payment (various administrative services).
- Information system on public sector workers.
- Access to electoral information.

2.8 Lessons learnt

The experience drawn from the cases mentioned above shows that there is high potential for rural local authorities in Zimbabwe to improve their service delivery through effective use of e-governance. Website portals are a good example of how council can interact with its stakeholders in the form of G2C, G2C and G2B and able to offer online services. It is however wiser to note that effective e-governance services largely depend upon the existence of an effective e-government infrastructure through which the public service can communicate internally and with the intended beneficiaries of its services. It however shows that e-governance is still in its premature stages in rural areas as much has not been implemented but only talked about, though some improvements can be done to promote opportunities that can be brought in by the use of ICT in the day to day running of councils. Most council activities still involve a lot of paperwork, government to business activities are still frail. Much of the experience from Tongogara Rural District Council will be explained in greater detail in chapter four.

2.9 Chapter summary

The above chapter focused on the literature surrounding the issue of e-governance as viewed by previous researchers. More focus was put on theories that help to understand the concept of e-governance impact on service delivery and the link between e-governance and good governance was also explored. Various interactions that happen between governments and business, citizens and employees were also considered. This chapter also looked at the challenges and benefits that are associated with e-governance. Lastly empirical evidence from three case studies was also presented in this chapter and these include the case of Orissa, Kerala and Cape Verde, and lessons that Zimbabwean local authorities can learn from those case studies. The next chapter which is chapter 3 will then look at the methodology that was used to get data for this study.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND DESIGN

3.0 Introduction

The chapter specifically covers research methodology and the following sub-topics: research design, target population, research instruments, the sample and sampling procedures, data collection procedures and data analysis procedures. The justification for the choice of research methods employed are going to be illustrated by this chapter

3.1 Methodology

According to Baird (2008), a research methodology defines what the activity of the research is, how to proceed, how to measure progress and what constitutes success. According to Goddard and Melville (2009) the research methodology answers the unanswered questions and exploring current loopholes on the identified problems in a research. Research methodology is primarily confined to data collection that is the form of data to be collected, the methods of collecting data used and how it is analyzed. Rajasekar et al (2017) further asserts that the procedures by which researchers go about their work of describing, explaining and predicting phenomena are called research methodology.

3.2 Research Design

This section outlines the approaches that were taken in gathering relevant data and information for this study. Babbie and Mouton (2001) define a research design as a plan of how one intend to conduct the research and it focuses on the end product, point of departure and the logic of the search. It also presents the analytical tools that were employed in analysing the data in line with the objectives of the research. According to Rajasekar et al (2013) researches can be qualitative or quantitative or even both. This research is qualitative in nature as an array of tools, which include, open-ended and closed questionnaires as well as key informant interviews were used. Ragin (2004) stresses that, research design is a plan for collecting and analysing evidence that will make it possible for the researcher to answer the research questions.

Ark et al (2000) defined a descriptive research as a study which is designed in gathering information relating to the present status phenomena. Gibert et al (2002) say that descriptive research is typically concerned with determining the frequency with which something occurs or the relationship between two variables. Descriptive research enables the generation of more accurate and reliable information about the study since it on secondary data which helps in

developing the case basing on facts, sustained by statistics and descriptive interpretations from archival materials and data.

The purpose of this study is to investigate the role of e-governance in providing effective service delivery by rural local authorities. Thus to achieve this purpose this researcher adopts a descriptive approach.

3.3 Target population

This research was conducted in Tongogara Rural District Council's area of jurisdiction and the target population was the council officials and councilors. The research was conducted among 30 participants that were drawn mainly from council officials and councilors who were randomly selected basing from their understanding of e-governance.

3.4 Sampling methods used

Babbie (2001) defines sampling as the process of selecting certain members of the group to represent the entire group. This is because the entire population may be so large that it is not possible to collect data from. The researcher used purposive sampling, stratified sampling and random sampling.

3.4.1 Purposive sampling

Purposive sampling is one whereby a researcher selects a sample on the basis of their knowledge of the population, its elements and the nature of research aims Babbie (1990). According to Kumar (2011), purposive sampling can be very useful for situations where one need to reach a target sample quickly and where sampling for proportionality is not the primary concern. With purposive sample, you are likely to get the relevant opinions of your research questions. This sampling technique will therefore be used in this research in the selection of council officials for their relevant knowledge in the field of e-governance.

3.4.2 Random sampling

According to Panneerselvan (2004) random sampling is a form of probability sampling whereby each unit of the population has a probability of being selected as a unit of sampling. The researcher used random sampling because it can give the most reliable representation of the whole population and it is free from bias. The researcher used this sampling method in drawing a fair representation of the council officials and councilors and ensured that all representatives have the same opportunity of being selected.

3.5 Sources of data

The researcher used two main sources of data which are primary and secondary data. Sources for primary data include questionnaires and interviews which were conducted by the researcher during the time of the study. Singleton and Straits (1999) state that primary data is constituted

as eye witness account of events as they occur which makes the focal peak of the research. It was the main purpose of this study to get firsthand information from the providers of services (council officials) and the receivers of information (citizens represented by the councilors) so as to have clear picture of what is taking place and being able to make relevant recommendations.

3.6 Data collection methods

These are instruments which are used for data collection in a research and this research used questionnaires and interviews.

3.6.1 Questionnaires

Harper (2001) points out that a questionnaire is an important instrument for observing and recording data beyond the physical reaction of the observer which can either be structured or unstructured in with aim of recording information that is being researched upon. Boyd et al (2004) stipulates that the questionnaires are beneficial instruments to obtain primary data as they leave opportunity for the respondents to think outside the box to express themselves and to provide detailed answers. Thus in this research both open-ended and closed-ended questionnaires were used to collect data. Closed-ended questions provided the researcher with exact information on particular problems to be addressed and help in providing recommendations to the council whereas open-ended questions provided additional information that the researcher was not aware of and was not captured by closed-ended questions.

The questionnaires were given to head of departments at the council, middle level employees and low level employees and councilors who were randomly selected. The questionnaires were administered using the drop and pick later method so as to give each and every respondent enough time to respond to the questions carefully after a deep understand of what is being asked by the researcher.

Advantages of questionnaires

- Open-ended questions helped the researcher to get some of the unquestioned information which helped in provided recommendations and possible solutions to the current problems that e-governance is trying to address.
- Closed-ended questions also helped in providing information for specific areas thus helping the researcher in providing recommendations.
- The questionnaires proved to be fast and cheap as a lot of information was collected on a short period of time from many respondents.

Disadvantages of questionnaires

- Some officials refused to give adequate information which they deem to be private to divulge to anybody.
- Through questionnaires the researcher fails to get some forms of information which cannot be expressed on paper like the emotions, behaviour and the immediate feelings of the respondents.
- Some questionnaires were not returned after they were dispatched.

Some of the shortcomings of the questionnaires were compensated by the use of interviews where the researcher could be able to get clarity on certain issues under study. However, in some cases the questionnaires were answered in the presents of the researcher such that most the questionnaires were returned and the information received would be significant enough to justify the study.

3.6.2 Interviews

Kuman and Aaker (1999) define personal interviewing as direct contact between the interviewer and the respondent in a suitable environment. Gray (2009) defines an interview as a “conversation between people in which one person has the role of a researcher who elicit data on people’s view, attitudes and meaning that inter-pine their lives and behaviours”. Through interviews the interviewees come to understand the kind of person they were associating with and they were able to express their innermost feelings concerning the subject under discussion freely as these interviews were conducted face to face. The researcher used both the key informant interviews and semi-structured interviews in obtaining data from the respondents. Semi-structured interviews were used in gathering data because they are capable of obtaining and providing dynamic information about the topic under study within a short period of time. As for key informant interviews they helped in further understanding of the impact of e-governance on service delivery as well as identifying possible solutions to deal with current problems. Interviews were carried out amongst 6 heads of departments of the council who were purposively selected for their knowledge about e-governance.

Advantages of interviews

- There was room for clarity and further explanation on certain issues since between the researcher and the interviewees.
- The researcher in some instances could be able to interpret and observe non-verbal responses by the interviewees during the interview.

Disadvantages of interviews

- The interviews proved to be time consuming as a lot of time was used in conducting personal interviews.
- The type of feedback that was received was to some extent affected by the influence of officials who gave biased information.

To deal with some of the challenges encountered during the interviews the researcher created favorable atmosphere which allowed the interviewees to feel free to tell the actuality about the research study. For example, the researcher guaranteed the informants that he will not divulge the information the he will receive from them to anyone and will not be used for any other reasons other than academic purposes. Some of the methods used to deal with the problem encountered during the interview process are discussed in the ethical consideration section.

3.7 Ethical considerations

Kumar (2011) noted that all professions are guided by a code of ethics that has evolved over the years to accommodate the changing ethos, values, needs and expectations of those who hold a stake in the professions. This section highlights the importance of promises that the researcher can deliver to the informants during the research process. The researcher will honour and be bound by the psychological agreement or contract that he has with the informants that he will never divulge any inform that they provide to him and it will only be used for academic purposes.

According to the American Psychological Association (APA), such ethics considerations include the need to minimize harm and risks while maximizing benefits, respect human dignity, privacy, and autonomy. Thus, some information can be regarded as sensitive or confidential by some people and by disclosing the information it can lead to some ethical dilemmas that can affect them. Participation in the research was on the voluntary basis and freedom for any participant(s) to withdraw from the process at any given time if they wish to do so was permitted. However, names of respondents were avoided and thus he researcher used informant codes. Thus the permission to carry out the research will be requested from TRDC.

3.8 Data presentation and analysis

Data that was gathered by the researcher was presented using diagram, tables, numbers and percentages and this helped him in giving proper recommendations and conclusive comments which are based on facts and findings which are clearly presented. The methods that were applied in the presentation of data were more appropriate for a qualitative research than a quantitative as there are easy to interpret and give a proper analysis.

3.9 Pre-test

This is a process of gathering together some respondents to react to some components of research communication instruments before they are designed in final forms. This is used to determine if the respondents understand the issue under study and their willingness to participate. The researcher carried a pretesting process among council staff members who were randomly selected across all departments and this was successful and respondents showed interest and willingness to participate.

3.10 Chapter summary

This chapter looked at the plan of work and methods and that were used in collecting data for the study as well as the research design that the researcher chooses to use. It also provides for the purposive, stratified and random sampling techniques that were used in selecting the targeted population. The chapter also introduced interviews and questionnaires as primary sources of data collection and gathering. The interviews and questionnaire distribution were conducted in the six departments of the TRDC and other stakeholders to get a general understanding of e-governance impact on service delivery by both the service providers (council) and service receivers.

CHAPTER IV DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

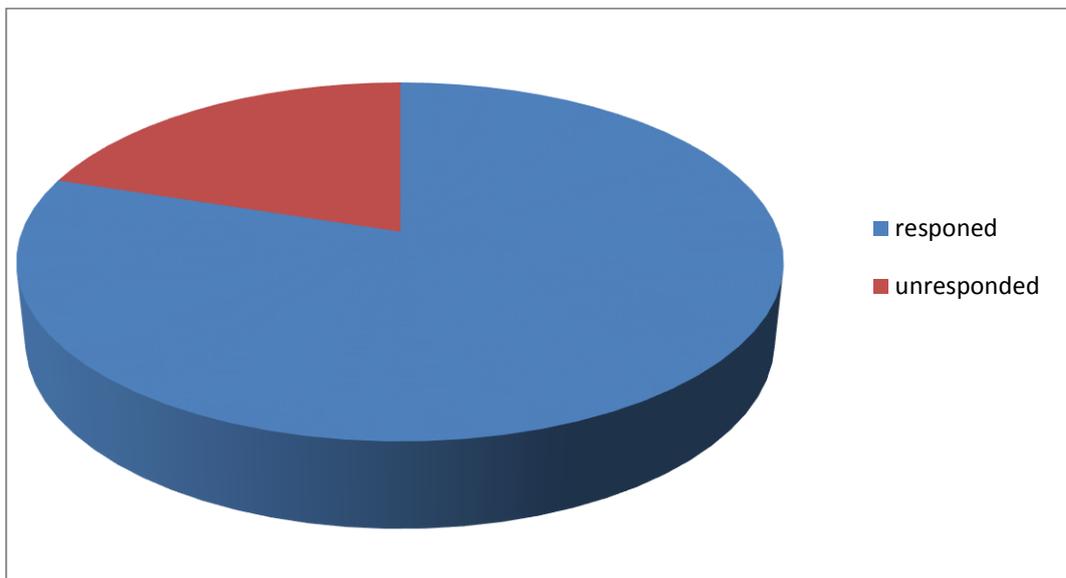
4.0 Introduction

The chapter will look at the findings of the research, data presentation and analysis. The data that is going to be presented on this chapter was obtained from primary sources of data which are questionnaires and interviews. This chapter will focus on the role of e-governance in various areas of the council in trying to enhance service delivery. These areas include how e-governance reduce crowding at council offices by rate payers, increase speed of service delivery, increase records and database management, reduce cost of service delivery, improve employee production and enhance citizen participation. The response rate, council working experience and the rate at which the respondents use internet are also discussed by this chapter so as to justify the relevance of the information provided. The findings of this study will be presented in form of tables, graphs and percentages where applicable.

4.1 Response Rate

Questionnaires were distributed to 30 informants and only 24 were able to respond to them representing 80% response rate and 6 were not returned representing 20% of the questionnaires that were not attended to. The pie chart below shows the percentage of response.

Figure 4.1: Response Rate



Source: Research data (2017)

The findings above show that the majority of the questionnaires were responded to by the respondents and this match with what Mugenda and Mugenda (1999) stipulate that a response

rate of 50% is adequate, 60% is good and 70% and over is excellent for analysis and reporting. Therefore, it can be assumed that the majority of the informants were willing to participate in examining the impact of e-governance in service delivery.

4.2 Work experience in Council

The study sought to find the general background information of respondents and their ability in providing relevant information to the study. This was done by showing the experience in terms of numbers of years working in council by respondents. The table below shows the experience categories, frequency of respondents and the percentages represented by each category.

Table 4.1: Work experience in Council

	Frequency	Percentage
Less than 5years	3	11.5%
6-10years	6	23.0%
11years and above	17	65.4%

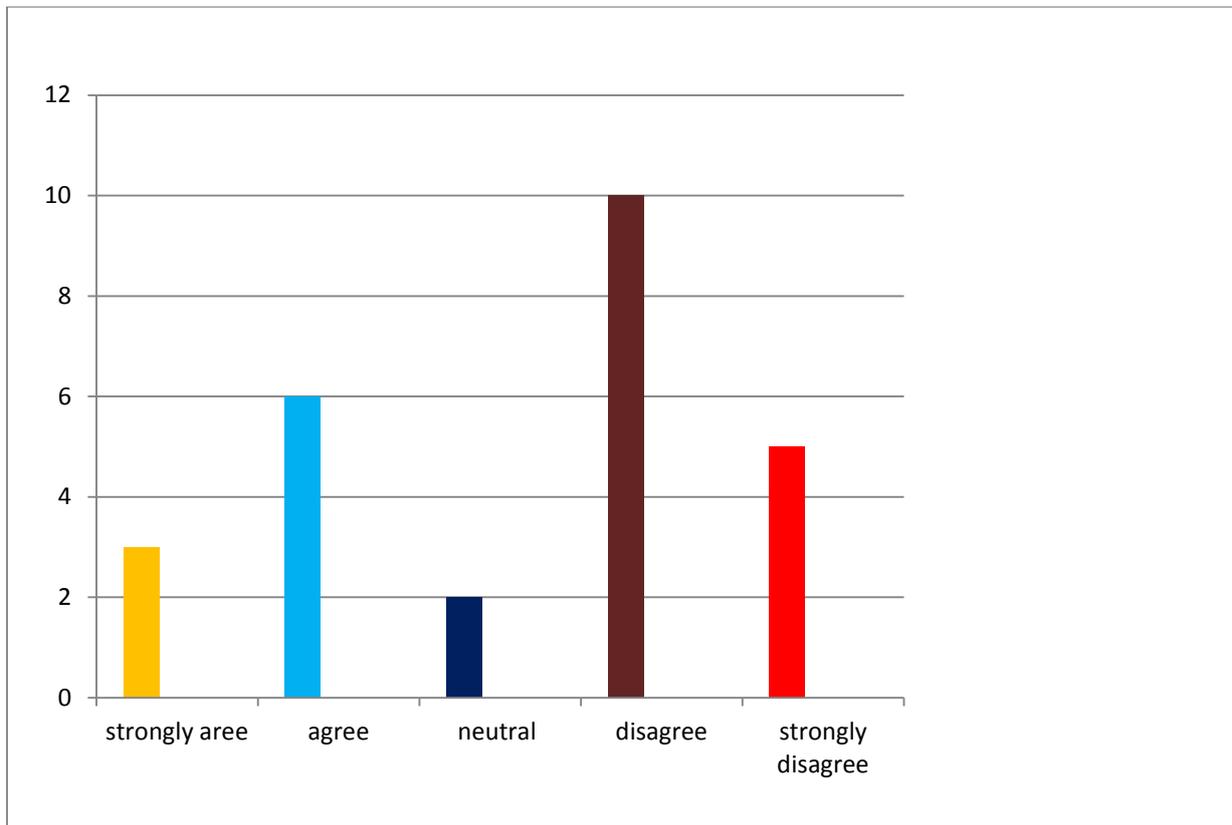
Source: Research data (2017)

The findings above show that the majority of the respondents had a work experience of 11 years and above represented by 65.4%, 23% had a work experience of between 6-10years. and 11.5% had less than 5 years' experience at the council. It can then be noted that the majority of the respondents had served the council for more than 11 years thus were knowledgeable to provide relevant information sought by the study as they had experienced the council work before and after the introduction of e-governance. Thus they were able to give reasonable information about the impact and importance of e-governance on service delivery.

4.3 Customer crowding at council offices

The study further seeks to find out if the introduction of e-governance has reduced customer crowding at council office. The findings are presented by the graph below.

Figure 4.2: **Customer crowding at council offices**



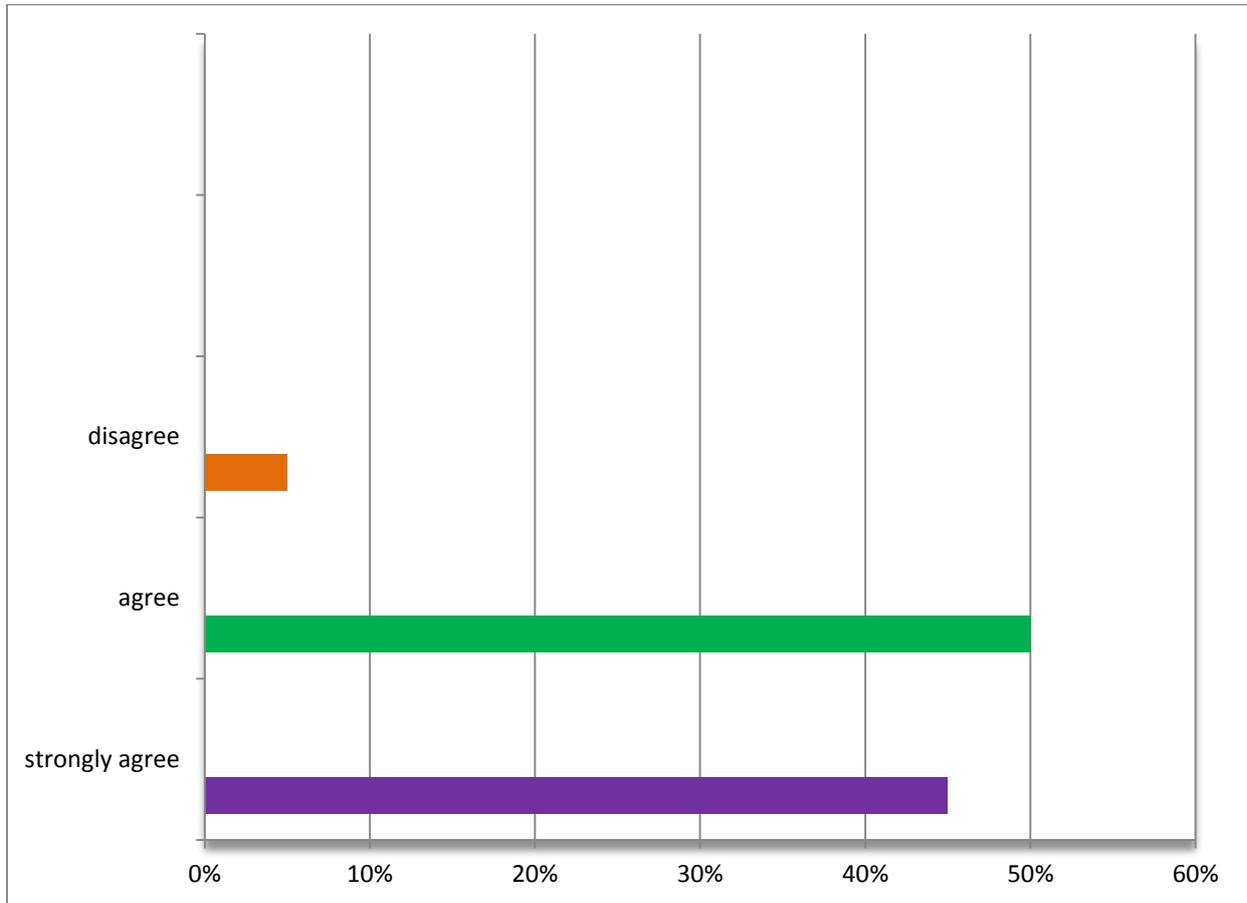
Source: Research data (2017)

The above graph illustrates that 3 respondents strongly agree that e-governance has reduced overcrowding at council offices by clients, 6 agree, 2 were neutral on the matter, 10 disagree whilst 5 strongly disagree. The findings showed that the introduction of e-governance at the council has reduced the number of clients who visit council offices to conduct business with council as then can access some of the services without even going to council. According to information gathered from interviews it shows that some of the payments of council bills are done using facilities such as Eco-cash and mobile bank transfers thus reducing the number of clients that visit council offices.

The findings also demonstrate that e-governance has enhanced G2C interactions and this conforms with Backus (2001) who states that governments can disseminate information online thus citizens able to save time and travelling costs. However, queues are still evident at council offices despite the introduction of e-governance facilities and this has been attributed to social barrier which Swartz (2003) states that even in developed countries issues of culture has negatively affected the acceptance of e-governance systems.

4.4 Record and database management

Figure 4.3: Record and database management



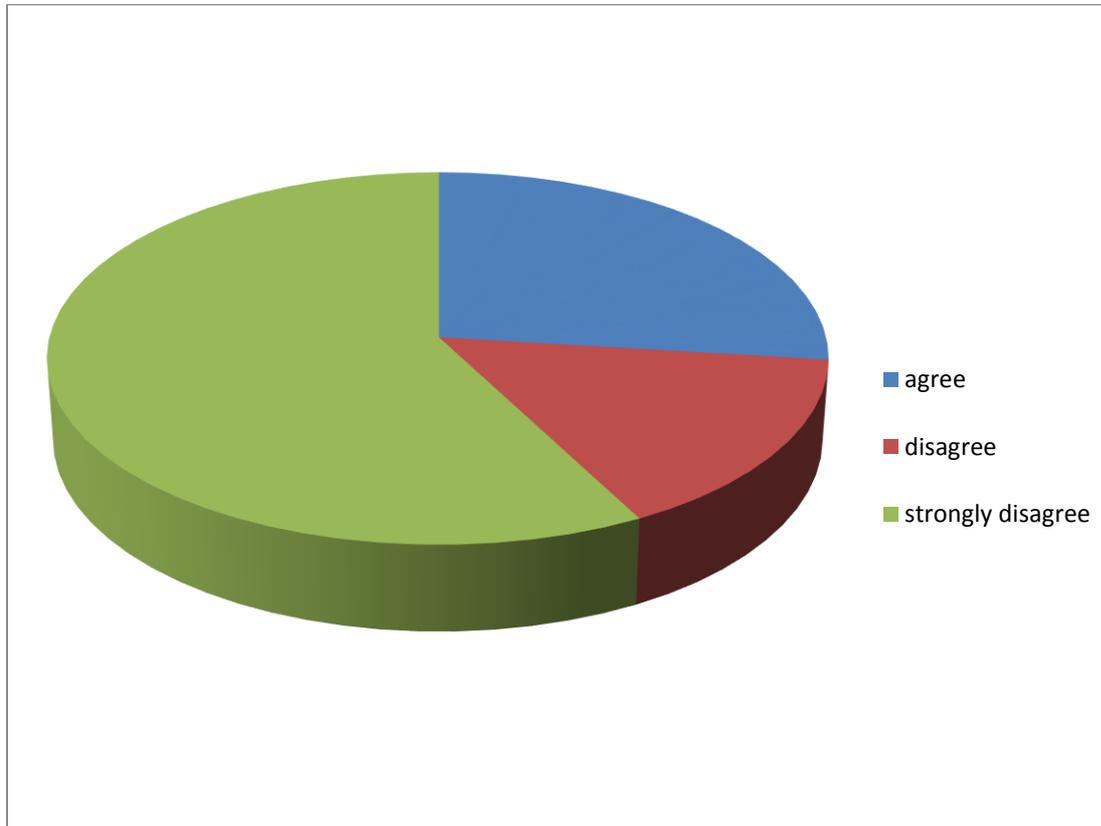
Source: Research data (2017)

The results from the findings shows that the majority (50%) of the respondents strongly agreed that the introduction of e-governance at the council has helped in improving records and database management, 45% agree whilst only 5% disagreed. This is a clear indication that e-governance implementation has help in the management of council records and data unlike in the past when the system was characterised with more paperwork. Thus the manual storing of data made it difficult for some council officials to retrieve various records when the one who deals with it is not around thus delaying council business.

However, the findings also show that there are some few who believe that more needs to be done to completely do away with paperwork. They argue that council offices should be networked to each other to allow data sharing electronically thus reducing storage duplication and reducing storage expenses. Information sharing support quick decision making as information is readily available for use to the relevant officials (Reffat 2006).

4.5 Cost of service delivery

Figure 4.4: Cost of service delivery



Source: Research data (2017)

The findings presented in Fig.4.4 shows that 57.6% of the respondents disagreed that e-governance has reduced the cost of service delivery by the council, 15.4% strongly disagree whilst 26.9% agree. This indicate that despite the existence of e-governance systems at council the cost of doing business has not yet reduced thus reducing effective service delivery. The council does not have a web portal which can allow it to do e-procurement and sourcing of quotation online (Bhatnagar 2009) but rather all this business in conducted in Gweru which implies that the council will experience some expenses through travelling and subsistence allowances.

Furthermore, information gathered from both the questionnaires and interviews also shows that the adoption of e-governance has reduced the cost of service as some transactions are done using the council's email address thus savings time and money. This conforms to Gallo et al., (2014), who states that time saving' benefits are related to the reduced number of transactions

which include reduced travel time, time saved due to one-time submission of data on a given platform facilitated by electronic services.

4.6 Speed of service delivery to the citizens

The study also sought to find out if the adoption of e-governance the council can increase the speed of service delivery to the citizen. The findings are presented by the following table.

Table 4.2: Speed of service delivery to the citizens

	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	12	46.2%
Agree	6	23.1%
Disagree	8	30.8%

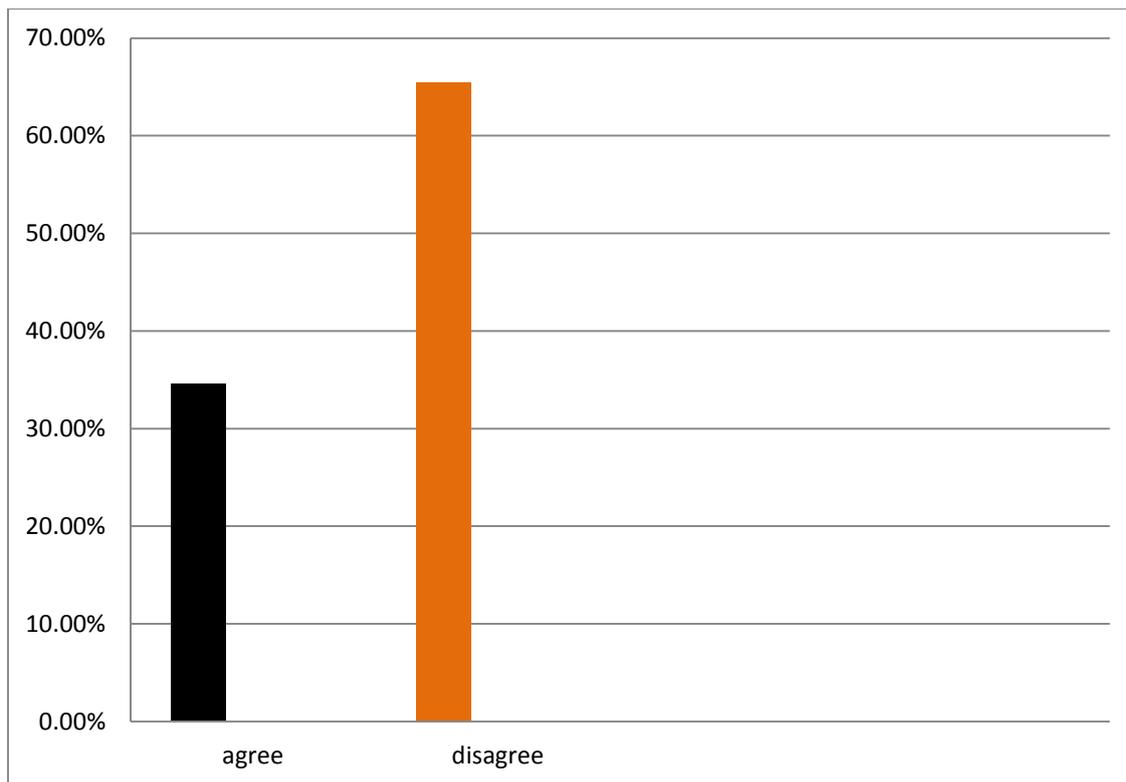
Source: Research data (2017)

The findings above show 46.2% of the respondents strongly agreed the introduction of e-governance helps in improving the speed at which the citizens are served by the council, 23.1% agree and 30.8% disagree. The findings show that the majority of respondents agree that the speed of service delivery is enhanced through the use ICT. Citizens can interact with the council at any given time thus able to be responded to their concerns quickly with reduced delays. Furthermore, the findings represented in Table 4.2 indicates that some respondents disagree that e-governance can increase the speed at which citizens are served since most of the rural populace do not have access to the internet even the council itself has not yet facilitated access to online services which can speed up the process of service delivery.

4.7 Employee production

The graph below shows how employees have been aided by the adoption of e-governance in terms of productivity.

Figure 4.6: Employee production



Source: Research data (2017)

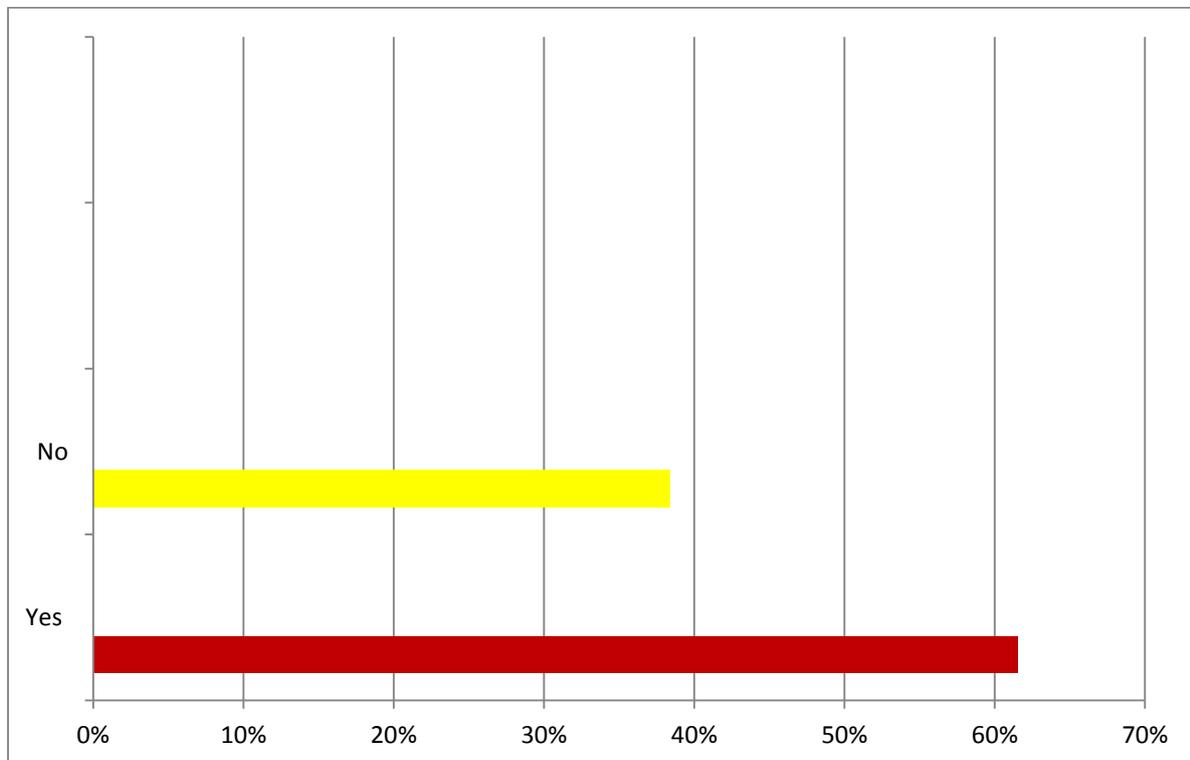
The above findings show that 65.4% of the respondents disagreed that the introduction of e-governance at the council has increased employee productivity whilst 34.6% agreed that employee productivity has increased due to the introduction of e-governance systems in the council. The majority disagreed owing to a number of reasons which include lack of technical know how about the subject thus citing lack of training by the council on the issue before its implementation. Through information gathered through interviews some cited that e-governance does not guarantee job security thus they fear to lose their jobs (Realin 2004), so they view e-governance as a barrier to their production.

However, those that agree that e-governance adoption by the council have enhanced their electronic skills and digital literacy. This has been supported by the United Nations Report on e-government (2010) which highlighted the fact that e-governance in Romania has helped the both public officials and citizens in acquiring e-skills and enhancing their digital literacy. The respondents also indicated that it has become easier to do some tasks which were initially manual for example records researching is now easier than when things were done manually and through the introduction of e-governance has helped council staff to utilise their time and do what is beneficial to the organisation as more time is served in accessing council records.

4.8 Revenue collection

The study further goes on to find out if e-governance can increase revenue collection at the council and Fig 4.7 represents the findings as shown by the respondents.

Figure 4.7: Revenue collection



Source: Research data (2017)

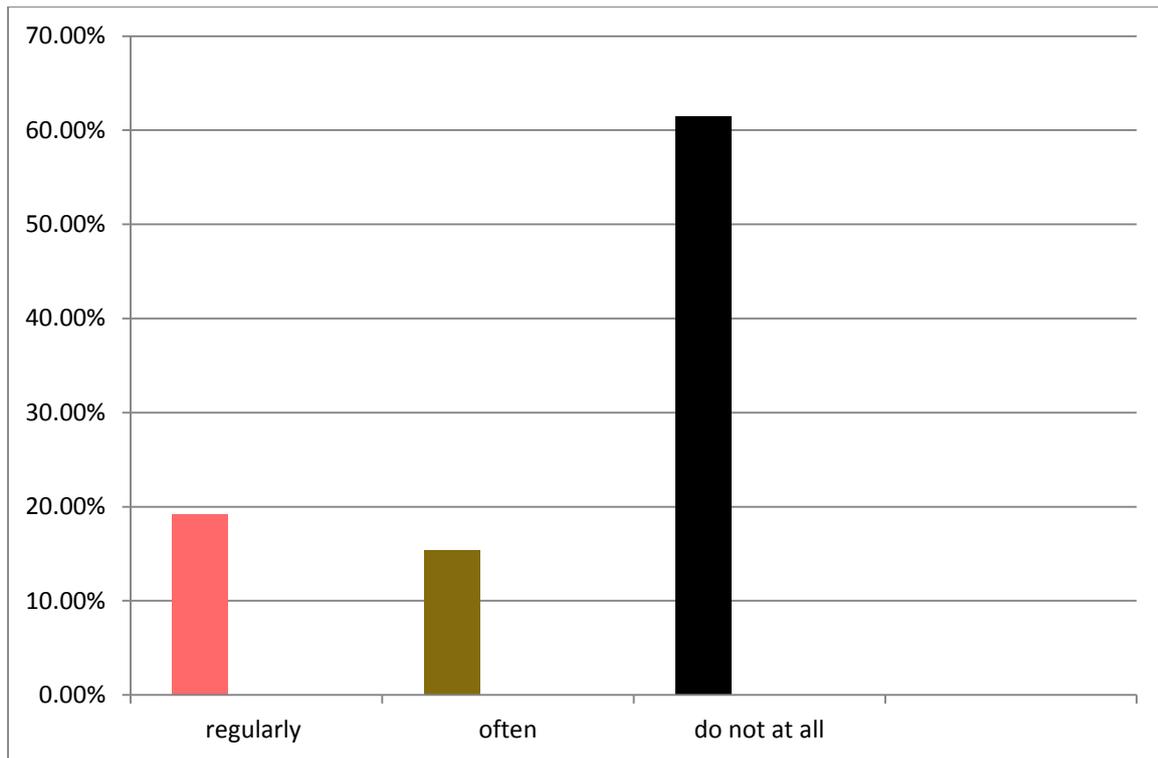
The findings represented in Fig 4.7 shows that the majority (61.5%) of respondents agreed that e-governance can increase revenue collection and 38.4% deny it. Those that were interviewed explained that the introduction of Eco-cash biller code and point of sale machines at the council have witnessed an increase in revenue received by council per each month considering that the country is facing cash crisis. Thus the use of ICT contributes to increased revenue collection which in turn means that service delivery quality and speed is increased as bill payments by customers guarantee the availability of resources. However, a lot needs to be done to increase awareness amongst the rural community so that they know the easiest way of paying their council bills.

4.9 Use of the internet per month

The research also sought to find out how often does respondents uses the internet per month.

The figure below represents those findings

Figure 4.8: Use of the internet per month



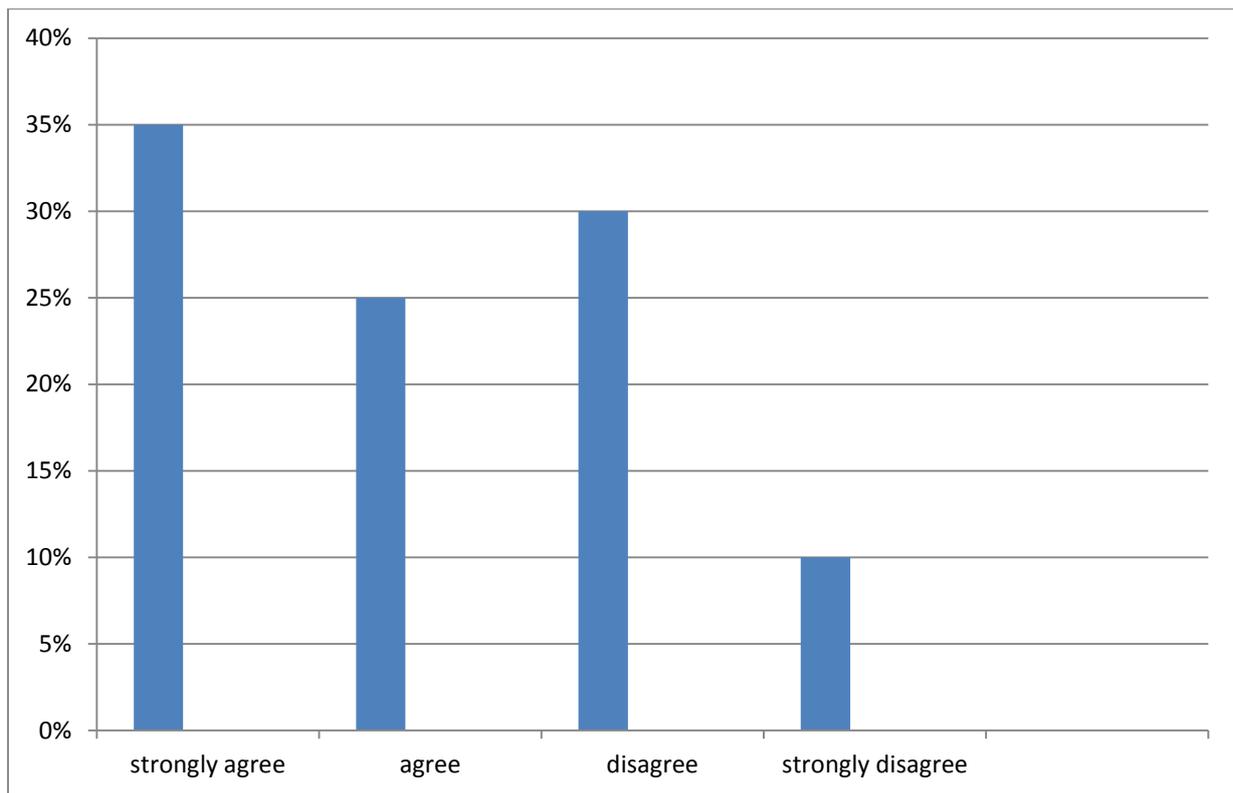
Source: Research data (2017)

The findings above indicate that the majority (61.5%) of people in rural community do not use internet at all, 15.4% often use it whilst 19.2% regularly use. The fact that the majority of the people indicate that they do not use the internet at all is a result of digital divide. This matches with what Matavire *et al.*, (2010) highlighted as he identifies material access, skills access, material access and usage as access problems which are part of the complication of the digital divide. This then means that even if the council exercise an effort in implementing e-governance its importance will not be realised unless some efforts are also done to equip and conduct training sessions on the use of ICTs as a way of enhancing service delivery.

4.10 Community participation in decision making

Furthermore, the study also seeks to find out if e-governance can increase the participation of the citizens as well as other stakeholders in governance issues of TRDC. The graph below represents the data obtained by the study.

Figure 4.9 Community participation in decision making



Source: Research data (2017)

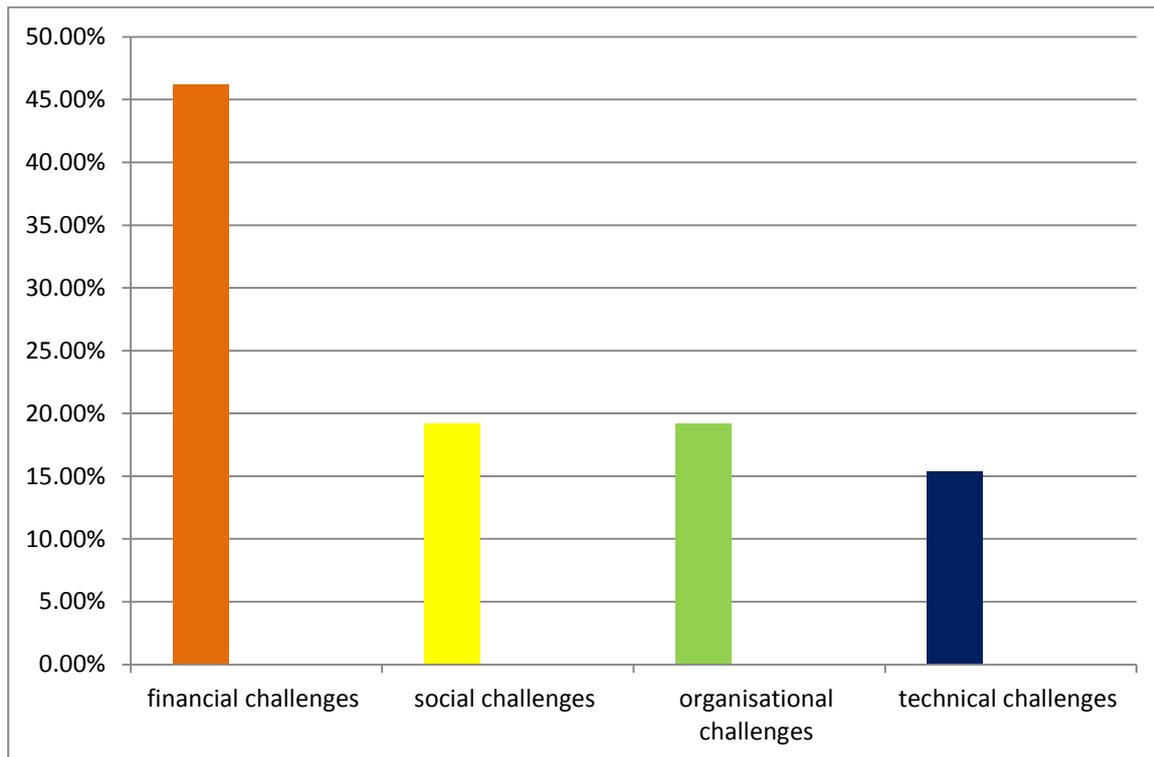
The findings of the study show that 35% of the respondents strongly agree that e-governance can increase stakeholder participation, 25% agree, 30% disagree whilst 10% strongly disagree. Most of the responds highlighted that the adoption of an effective e-governance system can increase the participation of various stakeholders in council issues that directly affect them on daily basis. Thus e-governance promotes G2C, and G2B interactions. This has been supported by the UNDP Report (2008) which highlighted that ICT investment in the public strengthens interactions between public officials and the general citizens to promote better public policies and services through a process known as e-participation.

Findings from the study also shows that some disagree with the notion the e-governance can increase citizens' participation due to a plethora of reasons which include digital divide which refers to the gap between those with access to computers and the internet and those without. Many rural citizens do not have access computers and the internet despite living in a globalised world thus leading to low rate of e-participation (Feng 2003).

4.11 Challenges faced in implementing e-governances

The study also seeks to identify some of the major challenges that are faced by TRDC in implementing e-governance initiatives to improve service delivery. Some of the major challenges identified include financial, social, technical and organizational challenges. The graph below presents the findings from the study.

Figure 4.10 Challenges faced in implementing e-governances



Source: Research data (2017)

46.2% of the respondents indicate that lack of funding is the major impeded of implementing e-governance systems by the council as it hinders the purchasing of the equipment and network setups that support e-governance initiatives. Carvin et al., (2004) stated that because of the high cost of implementation and maintenance the computer systems, many developing countries end up in dilemma of funding e-government programs, even when a government entity has a plan for effective and accessible e-government system. The findings from the study also show that social issues among the residents are a major challenge being faced by the council in implementing e-governance. These issues include culture, computer literacy and digital divide, they cause people to resist the use of technology in local authorities. For example, 19.2% of the respondents from council staff and management indicate that citizens at times resist the use of Eco-cash as a payment method for council bills. This has been supported by Swartz (2003)

who states that cultural issues have negatively affected the acceptance and adoption of ICT system even in some developed countries such as the UK and Japan. This has also been witnessed within the organization as some employees resist the use of ICT in their day to day business as they fear to lose their positions and jobs to computers. 19.2% of the respondents also show this as challenge that is facing TRDC in fully implementing e-governance. Technical challenges are also one of the findings that the respondents indicated as a barrier to the successful implementation of e-governance by the council. These challenges include lack of adequate electronic infrastructure and lack of privacy and security. According to Layane and Lee (2001) privacy refers to the guarantee of an appropriate level of protection regarding information attributed to an individual. Thus both the council and citizens tend not to use e-governance systems and this challenge has been represented by 15.4% of the respondents.

4.12 Suggested strategies that TRDC can use to make e-governance effective.

The researcher however also finds it necessary for respondents to proffer their suggestions on way that the council and the government can do in order to make e-governance effective in service delivery in rural local authorities in Zimbabwe. Most of these suggestions were gathered from council employees and they are as follows:

- Improve ICT training workshops and refresher course for council employees as some indicated that they do not have enough electronic skills which mean that ICT facilities will be underutilised despite their availability at council.
- Establishment of ICTs centres at growth across the district so that the citizens will be able to access internet to allow council officers easy communication with citizens regarding to the problems encountered.
- Council must ensure that internet is always available for use by council staff so that there is no interruption whenever they want to use it.
- Council departments should be interconnected to allow easy information sharing between the departments. For example, officers from the Department of Administration and Human Resources requested for this networking of all departments with their department to allow easy collection of weekly and monthly departmental reports for compilation.
- Suggested for the council to employ an ICT expert who is responsible for the maintenance of ICT infrastructure to ensure that they always in good condition.

4.13 Chapter summary

The chapter above showed the importance of e-governance in increasing service delivery and the areas that needs to be improved. Various findings that were gathered by the researcher through questionnaires and interviews are also presented. A response rate of 80% shows that respondents were willing to participate in the research thus providing adequate information for data analysis. The information gathered by the research as presented in the discussion above shows that the majority of respondents showed that e-governance helps in increasing record and database management as well as reducing the cost of service delivery by the council. However, a high share of the respondents also indicated that the speed at which citizens are served, citizen participation and revenue collection has increased due to the introduction of e-governance initiatives. However, the findings from data gathered by the researcher also show that there are a limited number of people that use internet per month in rural areas due to digital divide. Respondents also show that employee production has not yet increased despite several the introduction of e-governance. Chapter five will then look at the recommendations that the researcher recommend the council to do in order for it to increase service delivery necessitated by sound e-governance initiatives.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

This section will present a summary of findings done by the research, give a conclusion for the study and make recommendations that will help rural local authorities in Zimbabwe realise their full potentials in service delivery if they properly apply e-governance in their day to day activities. The chapter will look at those areas that need to be improved in the council as shown by the findings in the previous chapter and then provide recommendations.

5.1 Summary

Chapter one presented on the background of e-governance on an international, national and local level looking at reasons which led to its introduction which include high cost of doing business, high levels of corruption, bureaucratic red-tape among others discussed above which all lead to poor service delivery in rural local authorities. Thus by introducing e-governance in the day to day running of business it means that the cost of doing business is reduced as technology replaces the old way of conducting business that was expensive and time consuming.

The objectives of the carrying out the research are also the main aim this first chapter and these include to determine the effectiveness of e-governance in rural service delivery and to give recommendations that will help council to effectively deliver services to the citizens. Chapter also looked at the limitations that were encountered by the researcher in carrying out the study and how they were encountered and it also provide for the geographical boundary that the study was confined to.

Chapter two focused on the literature surrounding the issue of e-governance as viewed by other scholars who previously studied the field of e-governance. Globalisation theory, bureaucracy theory and the principal-agent theory are the three theories that were used by the researcher as a base for data analysis. The theories help local government managers how to understand the concept of e-governance and its importance in helping to improve service delivery. Various interactions that happen between governments and business, citizens and employees were also considered and how e-governance helps to strengthen those interactions. Economic benefits, quality of service benefits, quality of governance benefits, personal development are the major benefits that e-governance bring in an organisation and these benefits helps in providing quality service delivery to the citizens.

The successful implementation of e-governance in most rural local governments has encountered challenges that made the researcher to say that rural local authorities in Zimbabwe lack electronic readiness thus they lag behind in adopting e-governance in their organisational operations. These challenges include technical, organizational, financial and social barriers. Lastly empirical evidence from three case studies that include the case of Orissa, Kerala and Cape Verde, and lessons that Zimbabwean local authorities can learn from those case studies are presented. These case studies provide rural local authorities with the hope that e-governance can bring change to the challenges they face in service provision.

Chapter three presents the plan of work and methods and that were used in collecting data for the study as well as the research design that the researcher chooses to use. It also provides for the purposive and random sampling techniques that were used in selecting the targeted population. The chapter also introduced interviews and questionnaires as primary sources of data collection and gathering. The advantages and disadvantages of using these data collection instruments are provided for in chapter three. The disadvantages that interviews have in collecting data are complemented by the advantages of questionnaires and the disadvantages of using questionnaires are complemented by advantages of using interviews. Thus making it possible for the researcher to carry out the study and come up with enough findings for data analysis. The interviews and questionnaire distribution were conducted in the six departments of the TRDC and other stakeholders to get a general understanding of e-governance by both the service providers (council) and service receivers.

Chapter four presents the findings of the study and helps to show the importance of e-governance in increasing service delivery and the areas that needs to be improved. The findings from this study showed of 80% of the respondents participated in providing data for the research thus providing adequate information for data analysis. The information gathered by the research as presented in chapter four indicates that the majority of respondents showed that e-governance helps in increasing record and database management as well as reducing the cost of service delivery by the council.

Furthermore, a high share of the respondents also indicated that the speed at which citizens are served, citizen participation and revenue collection can increase as a result of the introduction of e-governance initiatives by the council. Findings from data gathered also shows that limited number of people use internet per month in rural areas due to digital divide. Respondents also show that employee production has not yet increased despite the introduction of some e-governance aspects at the council.

5.2 Conclusion

The research above has been a success despite facing some challenges mentioned above. The research exposed some challenges that rural local authorities in Zimbabwe are facing in implementing e-governance initiatives that can help improve their service delivery.

It was noted from the study both the council and the citizens still lag behind in terms of using the internet due to lack of ICT infrastructure and ignorance about the importance that ICT brings to the organisation. Therefore, it can be said that both the council and citizens lack e-readiness to implement e-governance initiatives. Therefore, from the findings above it can be concluded that e-governance has the potential to increase revenue collection as those people that hardly get money to pay council bills can pay using Eco-cash and this saves their travelling expenses. The findings presented in chapter four also signify that the introduction of e-governance increases citizens' participation in decision making processes that directly affect them and this ensures e-democracy. Therefore, the council can conduct their business in a transparent and accountable manner as information such as council minutes and audited reports can be easily accessed by the citizens.

The researcher then concluded that much needs to be done with both the council and the government in order to improve service delivery with the use of e-governance in their day to day business.

5.3 Recommendations

The study highlighted the challenges that the local authority still has despite the presence of some e-governance elements and these challenges are leading to low standards of service delivery around the district. Therefore, it is the essence of this section to provide recommendations to both policy makers and policy implementers so that they can consider e-governance policies and initiatives as an important factor improving the quality of service delivery.

- The study revealed that the speed at which citizens are being served and receive information about council is still low despite the presence of e-government infrastructure. The findings from the study also showed that customer crowding at council offices has not reduced. Therefore, the researcher recommends the council to establish a web-portal where they feed information so that the business community and the citizens at large can easily access information and make inquiries without visiting council offices. Downloadable forms and payments facilities can be provided for on the same web site.

- The study also established that very few rural people have access to ICTs and cannot access online facilities even if they are made available online. The researcher then recommends both the local council and the government to make efforts in establishing community information centres at growth points where citizens can access internet at a very low costing. These information centres can be established with the help of the private sector and Non-Government Organisation that operations within the district thus it is also important for council to engage them.
- The study also established that e-governance has not yet improved employee production at TRDC since most of its employees responded that they rarely use the internet and are not familiar with ICT system. Therefore, the researcher recommends the council to organise and conduct workshops that teaches about the use of ICT and how it can help improve service delivery at the council. The council can do these workshops in partnership with universities and colleges where a lot of research has been done about e-governance.
- The researcher also recommends the council to interconnect all the department of the council for easy sharing of information and reduction of double filing of documents as the findings shows that e-governance initiatives can increase data sharing and information management. Although the system is not yet fully implemented by the council.

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Appendix

MIDLANDS STATE UNIVERSITY



FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES
DEPARTMENT OF LOCAL GOVERNANCE STUDIES

RESEARCH TOPIC: AN ASSESSMENT OF THE IMPACT OF E-GOVERNANCE ON SERVICE DELIVERY IN RURAL LOCAL AUTHORITIES. THE CASE OF TONGOGARA RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL.

All the information will be treated with confidentiality and will only be used for academic purposes. So please answer all the questions as honestly as you can. (*Tick where appropriate*)

Questionnaires

Section A- BACKGROUND INFORMTION

1. Age 0__18 19__30 31____44 45and above _____
2. Gender Male_____ Female_____
3. Name of organisation/ ward.....
4. Number of years working at the organisation (if applicable)
.....
5. Position at the organisation Management Staff.....Other

Section B- IMPACT OF E-GOVERNANCE ON COUNCIL SERVICE DELIVERY

6. Do you know what is e-governance?

Yes ___

No ___

7. How many times do you use internet per month?

Regularly_____

Often_____

Do not at all_____

8. Does e-governance increase the participation of the community in council decision making?

Strongly disagree ___

Disagree ___

Neutral ___

Agree ___

Strongly agree ___

9. Can e-governance increase revenue collection at the council?

Yes _____

No_____

Below are statements on the impact of e-governance on service delivery at the council.

On a scale of 1-5(where 1= strongly disagree, 2= disagree, 3= neutral, 4= agree and 5= strongly agree) please tick the proper box to rate the level of your agreement to the statement.

1 2 3 4 5

10. The adoption of e-governance has decreased the number of customers crowding at council offices.

11. Record and database management has improved due to the introduction of e-governance.

12. The introduction of e-governance has reduced the cost of delivering services to the citizens.

13. Introduction of e-governance increased the speed at which the citizens are served.

14. Employee production have improved due to the introduction of e-governance.

15. How does e-governance help in acquiring or accessing council services? Explain.

16. What recommendations or suggestions can you provide in order to make e-governance more effective in Zimbabwe rural local authorities?

Interview Guide

Main questions that were asked to the interviewees

- Is e-governance a cost cutting measure in the delivery of services in public sector organisation?
- Does e-governance improve the quality of service delivery by the Council?
- Can the customers/citizens easily access e-governance facilities?
- Does e-governance help customers to receive services anytime without delay?
- Can e-governance help the Council in terms of revenue collection?
- Does e-governance help citizens to participate in Council issues that affect them directly?
- What recommendations can you make in order to improve the system of e-governance which can improve the quality of service delivery?