ENHANCING THE CONTRIBUTION OF A PUBLIC SECTOR BUYING OFFICE IN PUBLIC PROCUREMENT: A STUDY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF ZIMBABWE'S PROCUREMENT SYSTEM (2009 TO 2013)

BY

TERENCE ENOCK MAUMBE
R036020M

DISSERTATION SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE MASTERS IN BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION DEGREE

2013

GRADUATE SCHOOL OF MANAGEMENT
UNIVERSITY OF ZIMBABWE

SUPERVISOR: DR P.G. KADENGE

DECLARATION

I, Terence Enock Maumbe, do hereby declare that this dissertation is the result of my own investigation and research, except to the extent indicated in the Acknowledgements, References and by comments included in the body of the report, and that it has not been submitted in part or in full for any other degree to any other University or College.

Student: Signed………..…………   Date……………………...

Supervisor: Signed………………………   Date………………………....

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my wife for her support during my studies.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

ABSTRACT

The aim of this study was to evaluate whether the University of Zimbabwe's Buying Office had effectively contributed to public procurement processes between 2009 and 2013. Public procurement has been accused of being ineffective thus raising questions on the involvement of a public organisation's Buying Office. Previous procurement studies have focused more on private sector procurement than public sector procurement. The studies that have specifically examined public procurement have been collective case studies and have not explored complexities within individual cases. Consequently, this study adopted a case study design and a case study strategy in order to gather in-depth evidence on public procurement in a typical public organisation. A qualitative methodology was used in the study in order to contextualise evidence collected from archival documents and records, semi-structured interviews and observations. The unit of analysis was the text unit. Respondents were selected through purposive sampling and theoretical saturation was achieved after interviewing fifteen respondents who represented all levels of the University hierarchy. Texts from interviews and observation notes were analysed through manual content analysis whilst documents and records were examined using the intertextuality method.

The study concluded that the contribution of the University's Buying Office to the public procurement system was ineffective. Respondents were concerned with the state of the procurement system because the Buying Office failed to satisfy primary procurement interests. The Buying Office also ignored crucial non-procurement interests which were supposed to be achieved through public procurement. The role of the Office was obscure and limited to administrative involvement. A lack of strategic contribution allowed procurement decisions to be dominated by procurement goals. The study established a need for legal and operational reforms to address challenges such as incompetence, inadequate market enquiry and poor decision making by the Buying Office. The study also provided insightful empirical evidence on the limited involvement of a typical Buying Office in public procurement as a result of organisational, individual and product limitations. The study's conceptual model showed that in the absence of a strategic contribution by the Buying Office, public procurement becomes ineffective.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES

ABBREVIATIONS

ADB	African Development Bank
CIPS	Chartered Institute of Purchasing and Supply
COMESA	Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa
EU	European Union
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
ILO	International Labour Organisation
IT	Information Technology
JIT	Just in Time
SME	Small to Medium Enterprises
TQM	Total Quality Management
UK	United Kingdom
UNCITRAL	United Nations Commission on International Trade Law
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UZ	University of Zimbabwe
WB	World Bank
WTO	World Trade Organisation
ZESA	Zimbabwe Electricity Supply Authority

CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

1.1 INTRODUCTION

One of the challenges faced by public sector institutions in Zimbabwe is an ineffective public procurement system (http://www.zimra.co.zw, accessed on 6 February 2013). Presenting the 2012 Mid-Year Fiscal Policy Review, the Finance Minister noted that Zimbabwe had experienced major leakages of public resources through inefficient public sector procurement (http://www.zimra.co.zw, accessed on 6 February 2013). Ross (2011) noted that inefficient public procurement is actually a global concern. Since Government is often the single biggest customer in a country, it has the potential to use its purchasing power to influence the behaviour of private sector organisations as well as to deliver broader government objectives (Walker and Brammer, 2009).

Despite the pressing need to effectively manage public procurement, Matthews (2005), Murray (2009) and Brammer and Walker (2011) all concurred that most studies in the area of procurement have focused on private sector procurement strategy and management and less on public sector procurement. This limited accumulated knowledge and scientific analysis in this area was also noted by Knight, Harland, Telgen's (2007) study (cited in Knight, Harland, Telgen and Caldwell 2007). The researcher was therefore challenged to undertake a study of the contribution of a public sector Buying Office to public procurement processes. In this study, the researcher chose the University of Zimbabwe's (UZ) Central Buying Office as an instrumental case study.

1.2 BACKGROUND

1.2.1 Magnitude of Public Procurement

By all accounts, the scale of public procurement and public spending in any economy is significant. The World Bank (WB) made conservative estimates at between eight to twelve percent, depending on the country (http://web.worldbank.org, accessed on 21st

February 2013) and the World Trade Organisation's (WTO) estimates were marginally higher at ten to fifteen percent of a country's gross domestic product (GDP). This was the range also provided by the 2011 statistics from the Center for International Trade, Harvard University (cited by Waterman and McCue, 2012). In Africa, Quinot and Arrowsmith (2013) noted that the member states of the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) represent the largest economic zone with an estimated annual public procurement market of US$50 billion. With regards to Zimbabwe, reports from the 2011 Index of Economic Freedom, Heritage Foundation and Wall St Journal (as cited by Ross 2011) showed that despite Zimbabwe having a low Gross Domestic Product per head, its public sector expenditure as a percentage of GDP was one hundred and twenty five percent greater than the global average. Clearly, the magnitude of public spending is significant. Knight, Harland, Telgen and Caldwell (2007, p.1) actually challenged us to "imagine how much might be saved and reinvested in public service provision if spending was reduced by just one percent in any nation."

1.2.2 Public Procurement Developments at the UZ

The University of Zimbabwe (UZ) is a public institution which was established in 1952. It is the largest tertiary institution in the country. As it executes its mission of providing quality education and training, the University's departments engage the Central Buying Office to procure diverse goods and services which are then used by ten faculties which are Faculty of Arts, Faculty of Agriculture, Faculty of Commerce, Faculty of Education, Faculty of Engineering, Faculty of Law, the College of Health Sciences, Veterinary Studies and Faculty of Social Studies. These goods and services are also used by over forty-five non-teaching departments (www.uz.ac.zw, accessed 16th February 2013).

The UZ was not spared by the economic hardships that prevailed in Zimbabwe between the years 2000 and 2009. The hyperinflationary period almost halted procurement operations as the institution had very little grant funding and student fees income to expend. The institution could no longer continue with normal purchasing activities which had contained a mix of local and foreign buying. There was a countrywide shortage of foreign currency and this negatively impacted on the ability of the UZ to conduct foreign

buying. Domestic procurement was also negatively affected by a depreciating local currency which led to a demise of local industries which had traditionally supplied some of the goods and services required by the University.

With the advent of dollarisation in 2009, the economy began to show signs of recovery. A semblance of normalcy began to return in terms of procurement activity at the UZ. Despite coming from a low base, the trend as portrayed in Figure 1.1 showed that procurement substantially increased. Year on year, between 2009 and 2011 spending rose by over 100%. In this new business environment, procurement shifted mainly towards domestic buying.
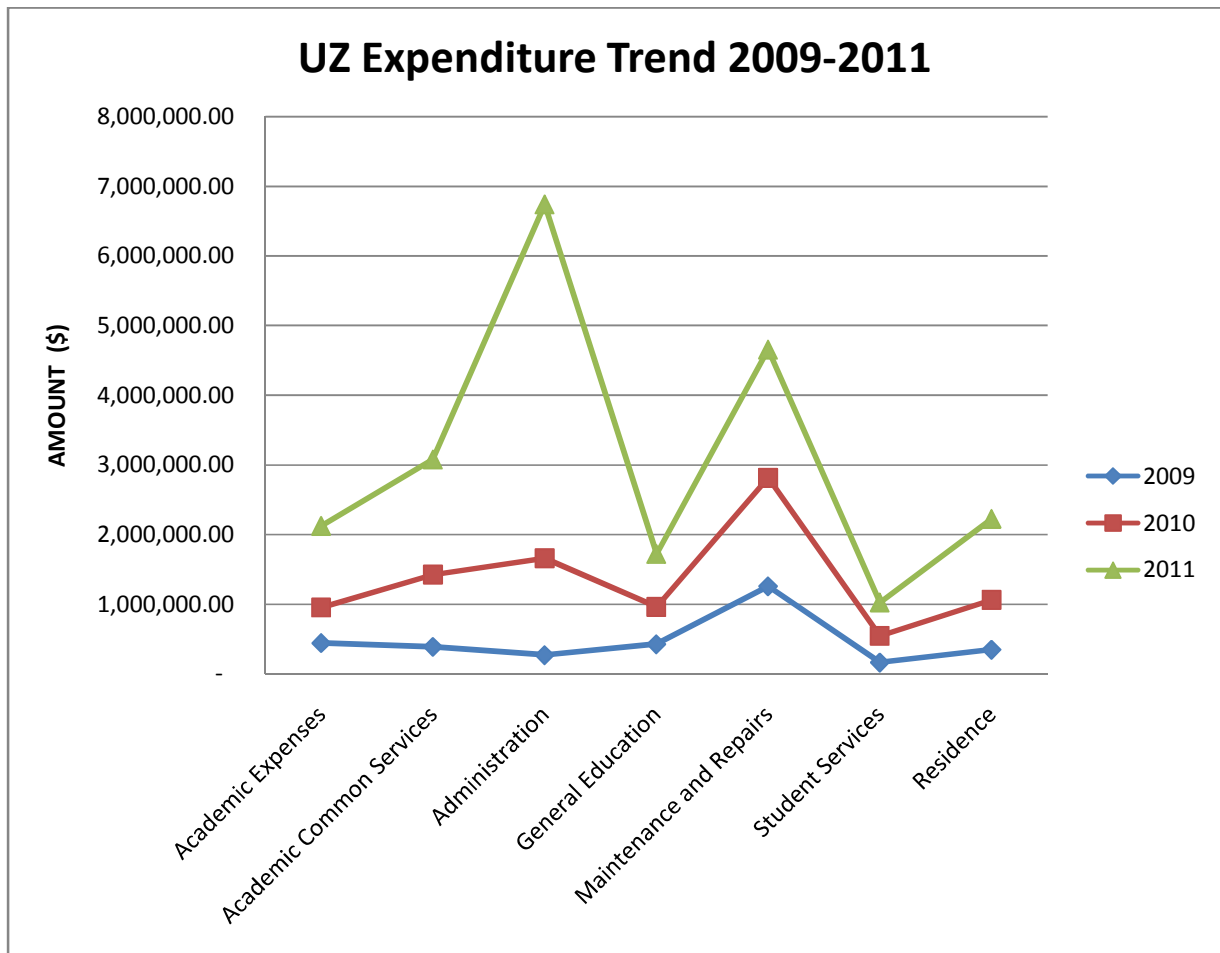
Figure 1.1: Comparative Analysis of UZ Expenditure (2009-2011)

Source: 2010 and 2011 UZ Audited Financial Statements

The UZ's Financial Regulations clearly indicated that the institution's procurement system was guided by procurement procedures as prescribed by the Procurement Act Chapter 22:14. This legislation set limits of various classes of tenders for public enterprises as part of economic reform and decentralisation of procurement procedures and authority. The value limits were as follows:

- Competitive Quotes   Below USD10 000
- Informal Tenders   Between USD10 000 to USD300 000
- Formal Tenders   Above USD300 000

(www.uz.ac.zw, accessed 16th February 2013)

In the past five years, different stakeholders have raised their concerns regarding the developments in the UZ's procurement system. For instance, External auditors questioned the integrity of the University's public procurement processes whilst the Government together with disadvantaged communities was on record calling for greater economic and social support through public procurement. Internally, the relationships between UZ client departments and the Central Buying Office have been antagonistic. Major outcries have been on poor quality of goods and services delivered to the University and poor administrative and decision making processes in the procurement system.

The UZ tried to enhance its procurement system when in 2010 it changed the Information Technology (IT) system, migrating from Data Ease, an MS-Dos based software package to a more modern Pastel procurement system. The involvement of the Buying Office has been reviewed through assurance reports by Internal and External auditors as well as Information Technology consultants engaged periodically. These evaluations have mainly concentrated on evaluating financial matters of the buying process. There has been minimal effort to evaluate the non-financial contribution of the Buying Office. In this study, the researcher argued that when evaluating the effectiveness of the contribution of a Buying Office in a public institution, consideration of financial and operational issues alone is myopic because a public institution has multiple competing objectives and mandates which are both financial and non-financial.

1.3 PROBLEM STATEMENT

During the period under study (2009 to 2013), the problem has been that the contribution of the UZ Buying Office to the public procurement system has been ineffective. Its involvement has been operational with very little attention on the Office's strategic input. Instead of pursuing multiple objectives as expected in public procurement, the Office has concentrated mostly on the primary procurement objectives. In order to properly diagnose the contribution of the Buying Office as well as to prescribe improvements that will improve public procurement systems, the researcher sought to evaluate the contribution of the UZ Buying Office using a framework that is relevant to public sector procurement.

1.4 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

1.4.1 Aim of the Study

The main objective of this study was to evaluate whether the Buying Office of the University of Zimbabwe had been effectively contributing to the public procurement system during the period (2009 to 2013). The researcher also wanted to suggest measures that could be adopted to improve the involvement of this Office in public procurement processes.

1.4.1.1 Specific Objectives

The study wanted:

1) To find out whether the UZ Buying Office had satisfied the expectations of the key stakeholders in the institution's public procurement system during the period (2009 - 2013).

2) To determine the role played by the UZ's Buying Office in the public procurement system during the period (2009 - 2013).

3) To establish the key considerations which influenced the buying decisions at the UZ during the period (2009 - 2013)

4) To identify possible solutions that would enhance the contribution of the UZ's Buying Office to the public procurement system.

1.5 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The study sought to answer the following research questions:

(i) Did the Buying Office meet the expectations of key stakeholders in the UZ's public procurement system during the period (2009 - 2013)?

(ii) What role did the Buying Office play in the public procurement system during the period (2009 - 2013)?

(iii) What were the key considerations that influenced buying decisions in the public procurement process during the period (2009 - 2013)?

(iv) What solutions would enable the procurement department to contribute more effectively to the public procurement process?

1.6 RESEARCH PROPOSITIONS

The propositions in this study were:

(a) In order for the Buying Office to effectively contribute to public procurement, it had to be involved in all the buying processes.

(b) Public procurement could not be effective without strategic input from the Buying Office.

(c) There were other limitations beyond organisational factors which weaken public procurement systems.

Where there was evidence to support a research proposition, the proposition was accepted. If a proposition was not supported by evidence from the research, it was either modified or rejected.

1.7 JUSTIFICATION OF RESEARCH

This study was vital because it unpacked the role that must be played by a procurement department in a public sector organisation. The study added to the limited knowledge in the field of public procurement. Matthews (2005) noted that the field of public procurement has not been sufficiently integrated in public management or strategic management studies despite the importance and potential impact of the profession being evident.

Zimbabwe needs an efficient public procurement system and Brammer and Walker (2011) argued that this is an important policy tool that could be used to meet the goals of a nation. If the University was to move towards achieving its vision of being a principal University working for success and dignity locally and beyond, its public procurement system would need to contribute effectively together with the teaching and research functions of the institution (www.uz.ac.zw, accessed 16th February 2013). The researcher also noted that most of the studies in public sector procurement had been international studies hence this study would provide a local context which was more applicable to the local public sector. Public sector managers at the University and beyond would benefit from the lessons and solutions provided by this study.

1.8 SCOPE OF RESEARCH

This research concentrated on the period 2009 to 2013, an era when the economy of Zimbabwe had relatively improved. The researcher argued that prior to the year 2009 there was relatively subdued public procurement due to the unfavourable macroeconomic fundamentals. Therefore, events from the period before 2009 would not be a true reflection of recent conditions. The study was a single case study of the University of Zimbabwe. This would assist in understanding the entity specific factors that exist in a typical public organisation. The research was conducted in Harare where the UZ executives, key administrators, the Central Buying Office and UZ client departments were mainly located.

1.9 RESEARCH ASSUMPTIONS

The first assumption of this study was that there was need to contain the study in the five year period from 2009 because public procurement processes and conditions had markedly changed from those that prevailed prior to 2009. The researcher's second assumption was that there were regular identifiable relationships between the documentary evidence studied in the research.

1.10 ETHICAL ISSUES

Denzin and Lincoln (2003) and Bowen (2005) made it clear that qualitative researchers must be good mannered and should adhere to a stern code of ethics because their respondents risk exposure and embarrassment from their responses. Denzin and Lincoln (2005) highlighted that researchers must beware of the subjective nature of responses. In this study, the researcher addressed some of the ethical concerns highlighted by Rossman and Rallis (2012) which include privacy and confidentiality, deception and consent as well as trust and betrayal in the following manner:

Deployment of multiple data collection tools: The researcher used multiple data collection tools (observations, interviews and documentation) to interpret subtle variations of respondents' experiences. Moreover, the researcher was aware of the need to balance perspectives of executives, administrators, technicians and operatives. Therefore, the researcher avoided overreliance on responses from a single group of respondents.

Seeking approval for research in advance: Prior to commencing the research, the researcher sought approval from the Bursar to carry out a case study of the University of Zimbabwe's procurement system.

Informed consent: The researcher provided respondents with a description of the study and emphasised that the aim of the study was to get themes from interviews. The researcher also assured respondents of confidentiality when handling all the evidence gathered from the study.

Pilot testing the interview questions: By pilot testing interview questions, the researcher ensured that low-priority probing of sensitive issues was avoided.

1.11 DISSERTATION STRUCTURE

Chapter One: Introduction

The first chapter is an introductory chapter which launches the research. The study is centered in the area of public sector procurement. It is a single case study on the UZ procurement system. A background of the study is provided in order to contextualize the statement of the problem. Research objectives and research questions clearly outlining the study are revealed. The researcher justifies the importance of the study and proceeds to explain the scope of the research. Measures to address ethical concerns are also explained in this chapter.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

The second chapter is on literature review. The researcher guided by the research objectives and research questions, examines theories and models propounded by scholars in the field of public sector procurement. The researcher also looks at empirical literature. The researcher develops a conceptual framework that will be used to examine the contribution of the Buying Office to the UZ's procurement system.

Chapter Three: Research Methodology

The third chapter is on research methodology. The researcher explores the nature of the study and conducts a qualitative study. The researcher examines the existing theory on research paradigms and proceeds to situate the study in the constructivist-interpretive paradigm. The researcher's methodology is illustrated through a clear research design. The population of the research, the selection method and the data collection techniques used in the study are all explained. Throughout the chapter, the researcher justifies why certain methods were preferred to alternatives.

Chapter Four: Data Analysis and Presentation

In the fourth chapter on data analysis and presentation, the researcher presents evidence collected from interviews, observational notes, documents and records. This evidence is presented, analysed and then interpreted in the context of literature

reviewed in chapter two of this study. Appendices are attached to illustrate how data was processed for all the research questions.

Chapter Five: Conclusions and Recommendations

In the final chapter on conclusions and recommendations, the researcher answers the research questions and tests the research propositions. The researcher then provides recommendations and wraps up the study by suggesting areas for further research.

1.12 CONCLUSION

Chapter one instigated the study. It provided a background of the study, identified the problem of the study, set the aim of the study and the relevant research questions. In this chapter, the researcher explained the significance of evaluating the contribution of the UZ's Buying Office to the public procurement processes. The researcher also outlined the scope of the study in terms of time and geography. Explanations were provided on how ethical considerations were managed in the study. A brief summary of the dissertation structure was outlined and then a conclusion closed the chapter.

CHAPTER TWO
LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

In this literature review chapter, the researcher develops a conceptual framework of the involvement of a Buying Office in the public procurement system. A critique of public procurement studies is conducted with the focus being on the analysis of stakeholder demands in public procurement, the role of a Buying Office in public procurement, influences which affect the decision making processes in public procurement and suggestions on how to improve the public procurement system. A conclusion then closes the chapter.

2.2 MAIN DISCUSSION

2.2.1 Defining Public Procurement

Brammer and Walker (2011) defined public procurement as the acquisition of goods and services by government or public sector organisations. The acquisition of works by public agencies is also considered to be public procurement (Quinot and Arrowsmith, 2013). The definitions emphasise that public procurement is a procedure which takes place in public organisations. The Department of Finance, National Public Procurement Policy Unit Ireland (cited in McKevitt, Davis, Woldring, Smith, Flynn and McEvoy, 2012) added that the aim of public procurement is to fulfill public functions and that the acquisition process could either be under formal contract or not.

2.2.2 Defining the Public Procurement Process

Several authors presented related views on the public procurement process. Wind and Thomas' (1980) study (cited by Lindskog, Brege and Brehmer, 2010) as well as Quinot and Arrowsmith (2013) concur that the buying process encompasses several activities which start from the moment when a need arises for a product or service, to the buying decision and its subsequent evaluation. McCue and Gianakis' (2001) study (cited by Matthews, 2005) similarly propounded a generalized frame of the public purchasing

process which involves four phases which are planning, formalisation, implementation, and evaluation. Their model is shown in figure 2.1.
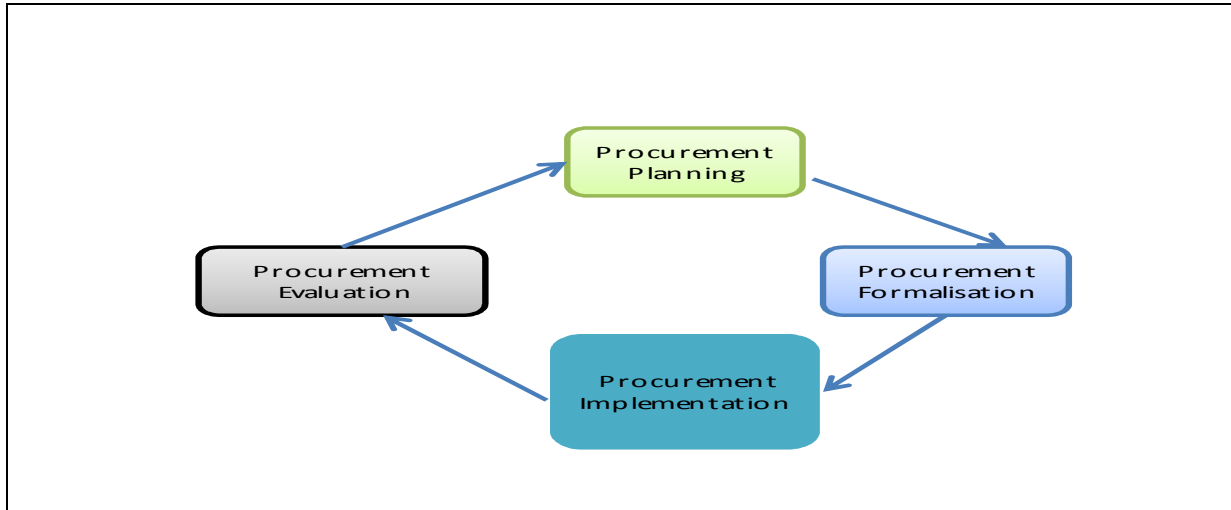
Figure 2.1: The Public Purchasing Process
Source: Matthews (2005)

Kotler's (1997) study (cited by Lindskog, Brege and Brehmer, 2010; p.179) is more elaborate on the specific activities that take place in the procurement process. He provides an eight step industrial purchasing model which involves anticipating a problem as well as awareness of the possibility to solve a problem by purchasing, determining the characteristics and quantity of the needed item, describing the characteristics and quantity of the needed item, sometimes in close contact with suppliers, searching for and qualification of potential sources regarding suppliers' organization and buying situation, acquiring and analysing proposals, evaluating proposals and selection of suppliers and often negotiations, selecting an order routine and performance feedback and evaluating how the procured product or service solved the initial problem. Lindskog's (2008) study (cited by Lindskog, Brege and Brehmer, 2010) however noted that in public procurement some of the activities occur in parallel and the dependencies are illustrated in Figure 2.2.

Key
K0 – Anticipation of need to start
K1 – Market investigation – suppliers
K2 – Market investigation –users
K3 – Collection and analysis of needs
K4 – Development of RfP
K5 – Evaluation of tenders
K6 –Decision taking and contract signing
K7 – Administration of the contract
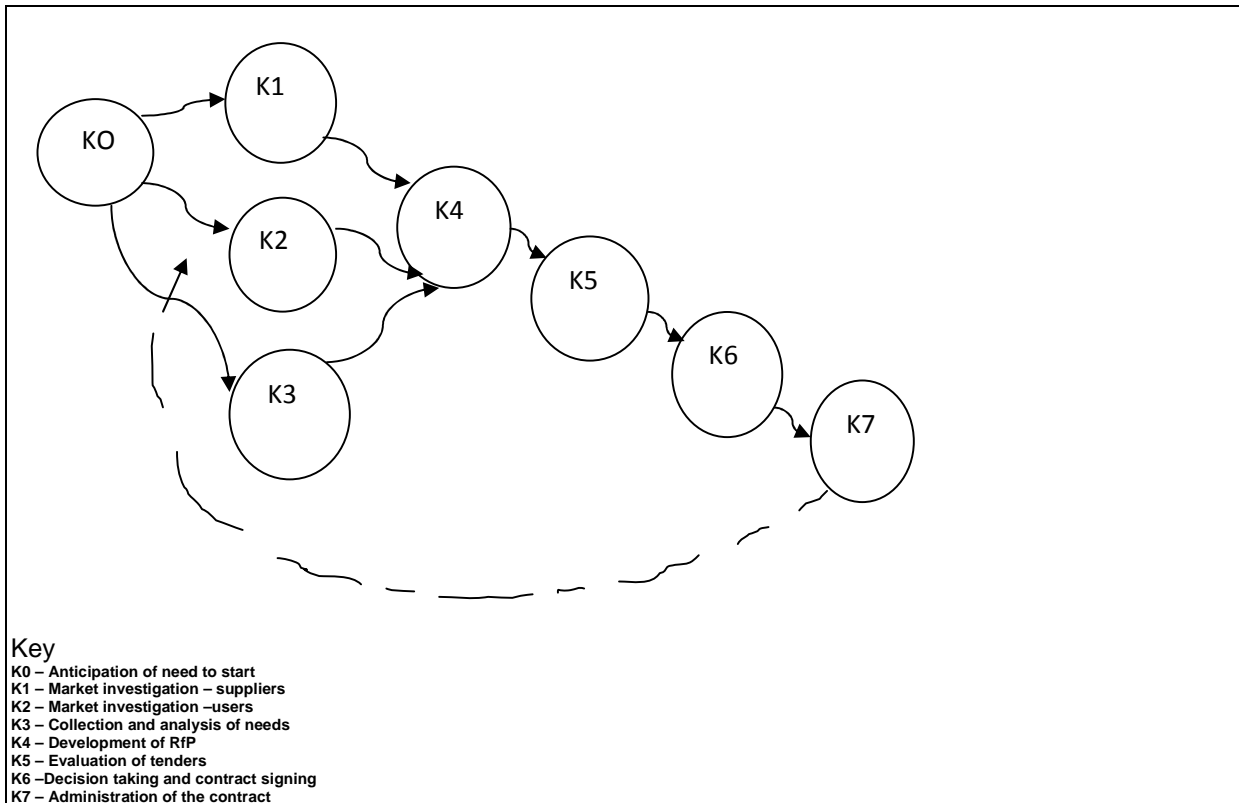
Figure 2.2: Categorisation of the Public Procurement Process

Source: Lindskog, Brege and Brehmer (2010)

Research Proposition (1)

From this section of the literature review, the first proposition was that in order for a Buying Office to effectively contribute to the public procurement process, it had to be involved in all the procurement activities noted above.

2.2.3 The Environment of a Public Procurement System

The environment influencing a public procurement system is a culmination of many types of environments which include the market environment, internal environment, legal environment, political environment, and socio-economic environment among other environments (Thai, 2001). These major forces in the public procurement system are illustrated in Figure 2.3.

The Environment of Public Procurement System

Internal Forces

Market Forces

Public Procurement System

Social, Economic & Other Forces

Political Forces
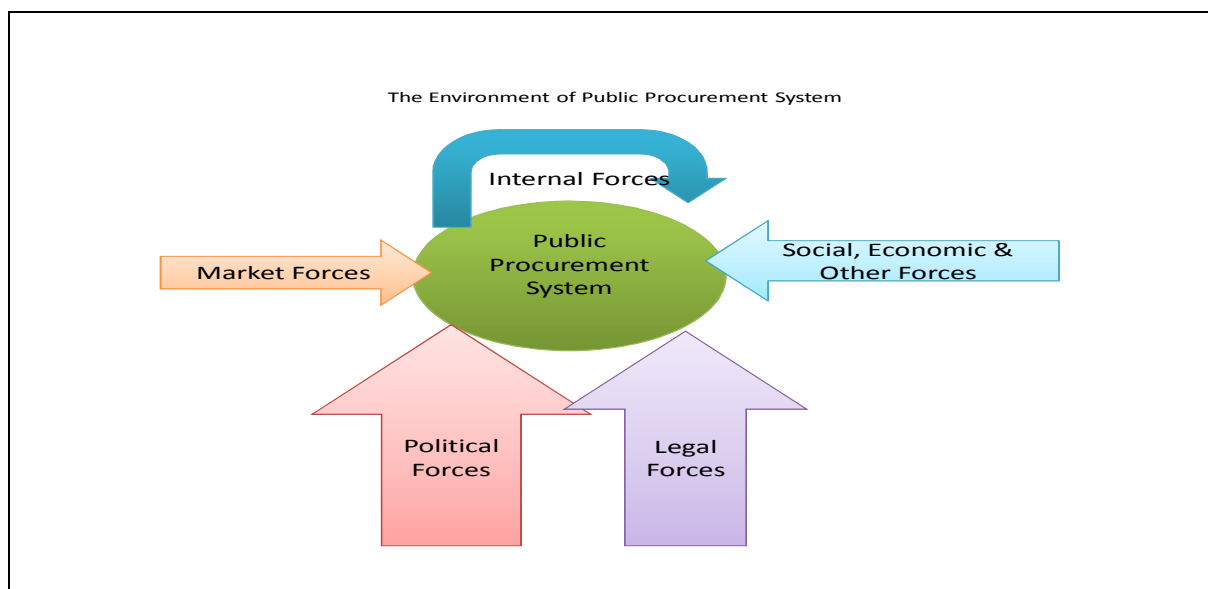
Legal Forces

Figure 2.3: The Forces in the Public Procurement

Source: Thai (2001)

Like Thai's (2001) analogy, Walker and Brammer (2009) also noted that internal and external forces affect public procurement. They identified informational aspects, organisational culture and the supply side or the availability of sustainably produced goods and services as forces that exist in public procurement. According to the World Bank, whilst a country's procurement system has different subsystems or forces, the mere presence of these subsystems in a public procurement environment cannot describe how well or poorly a procurement system works (http://web.worldbank.org, accessed on 21st February 2013). Therefore, there is need to evaluate the performance of different elements of a public procurement system.

2.2.4 Expectations of Key Stakeholders from Public Procurement

2.2.4.1 Taxpayer Demands

Taxpayers contribute the money which public sector organizations spend on goods and services. Therefore, citizens have principles which they expect like transparency, accountability and achieving value for money. Value for money ensures effective control over public expenditure as public funds would be paid to achieve as much as possible which means getting the best possible quality of products and services, paying the least

possible price and agreeing to the best possible terms of a contract (Walker and Brammer, 2009).

2.2.4.2 Government's Interest

Government plays a dual role in the public procurement system. Firstly, it is involved as a regulator and secondly, as a purchaser. As a regulator, McCrudden's (2004) study (cited by Walker and Brammer, 2009) noted that although buyers in government and the commercial sector might both be concerned with reducing cost and achieving value, public sector buyers have the additional task of achieving social and environmental benefits in their purchasing in order to fulfill the responsibilities of government to society. In the case of private firms, pursuing socially responsible purchasing is a choice rather than an obligation.

Governments use public procurement to pursue goals such as stimulating innovation in supply markets, to support environmental or social objectives and for supporting domestic markets. The WTO noted that many member countries still use their purchasing decisions to achieve domestic policy goals, such as the promotion of specific local industry sectors or social groups (http://www.wto.org). The call for sustainable development is leading governments to seek ways of achieving "sustainable procurement" from the public procurement system (McCrudden, 2004 and McKevitt et al. 2012). This is a holistic concept of linkages in which procurement systems take into account economical and social issues and importance is placed on green procurement, social procurement and sustainable development. The type of emphasis is country specific as Governments have specific goals due to unique circumstances like the prevailing economic circumstances, the country's history, the country's politics, the resources and demands placed by a country's public (Ross, 2011).

When governments play their role as a purchaser, they expect value for money from the procurement process. They consider the efficiency of the buying process mainly because of the scarcity of resources. Waterman and McCue (2012) explained that in order for value for money to be achieved, governments want increased competition and

this is achieved when the procurement process possesses attributes such as openness, non-discrimination and transparency.

2.2.4.3 Demands by the Political Leadership

According to Murray's (2001a) study (as cited in Murray, 2009), although the role played by politicians is pervasive, it is not clearly comprehended and is at times deemed negatively. In some instances, there is a lack of correlation between politicians and procurement managers' priorities. Barber's (2007, p. 312-13) study (cited by Murray, 2009:p.95) said "all too often though constraint … is through other means such as excessive risk aversion, exaggeration of the likely difficulties, refusing to believe that what politicians have said they want is what they really want, slowing down or watering down implementation and, last but not least, simple incompetence …". Managers show a lack of concern towards or even disregard the preferences of principals who are the political leadership. Instead, they make the relationship between the procurement department and the supplier the core relationship (Murray, 2009).

Other researchers who include Lindskog, Brege and Brehmer (2010) and Quinot and Arrowsmith (2013) agree with Murray's (2009) perspective which says that since politicians are democratically elected officials, they answer to the voting public for the performance of public institutions, hence they are responsible for shaping public procurement regulations and strategic procurement management which involves processes like setting strategic procurement priorities, ensuring that procurement managers have the will and competence to deliver aligned procurement strategies and managing the performance of procurement strategy implementation.

The prominence of political leadership in public procurement is reiterated by Thai (2001). By illustrating the political environment in public procurement as an iron triangle relationship, he argued that in a democracy there are several individuals, groups, and institutions who are actively involved in all aspects of the public procurement system. The interest groups lobby legislators to come up with public procurement regulations which place constraints on the contracts and awarding mechanisms that public

procurement agencies can use. This is different from the private sector where the added flexibility in private sector procurement offers efficiency advantages (Tadelis, 2012). In turn, the actions of bureaucrats affect individuals and interest groups. Therefore, the triangle relationship is maintained as shown in the following Figure 2.4.

Legislative bodies

Bureaucrats

Interest Groups
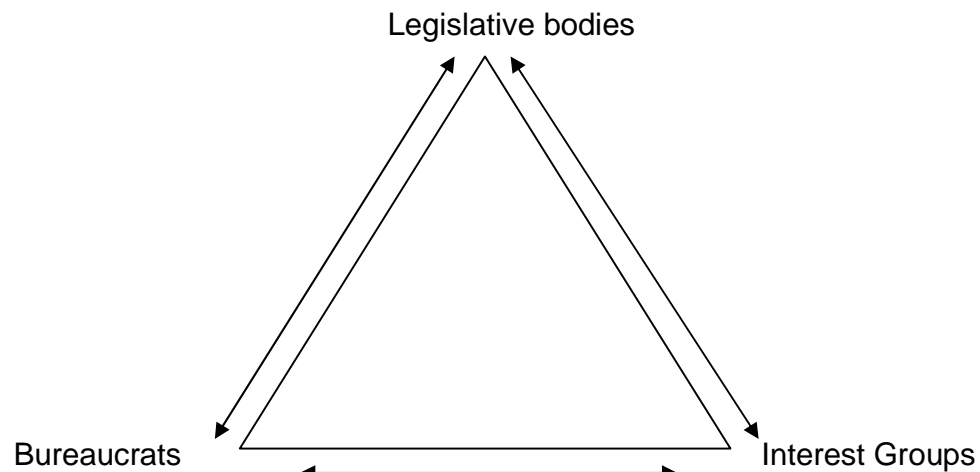
Figure 2.4: The Politics of Procurement: An Iron Triangle Relationship
Source: Thai (2001)

2.2.4.4 Expectations of Multilateral Institutions

Multilateral institutions which include the World Bank, the World Trade Organisation and the African Development Bank are concerned with public procurement policies and procedures in member countries. Their argument is that in order to achieve development goals, efficient public procurement is vital (http://web.worldbank.org, http://www.afdb.org and http://www.wto.org). They aim to promote integrity, to promote the use of internationally accepted practices and to develop capacities especially in the planning and monitoring processes. McCrudden (2004) added that international organizations such as the International Labour Organisation (ILO) and United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) expect public procurement to promote social linkages such as beneficiation of local communities and promotion of international human rights norms. Therefore, international organisations believe that public procurement systems function well when they achieve objectives which include transparency, competition, economy and efficiency, fairness and accountability.

2.2.4.5 Client Departments' Expectations

Among the internal stakeholders are the client departments (Thai, 2001). These are the end users of the procured materials. They seek efficiency in the procurement procedure. However, Quinot and Arrowsmith (2013) argued that public procurement procedure must provide a tradeoff between the efficiency objective and competition as a means to achieve value for money because in some instances it may not be worthwhile in terms of cost and time to go through a comprehensive procurement process.

2.2.5 Framing Stakeholder Interests

2.2.5.1 Primary/Procurement and Secondary/Non-procurement Interest

In order to conceptualise all the stakeholder interests explained earlier, Thai (2001) and Knight, Harland and Telgen's (2007) studies provide useful analogies. They both identified two categories of goals which they called procurement and non-procurement goals and primary and secondary interests respectively. Procurement goals and primary interests are similar because they both focus on the effective execution of the contract at hand. The main themes include quality, timeliness, cost (which is not limited to the price element), reducing business, financial and technical risks, maximising competition, and maintaining integrity. On the other hand, non-procurement goals and secondary interests both go beyond the contract at hand. They look at broader matters such as economic goals (preferring domestic or local firms), environment protection or green procurement (promoting the use of recycled goods), social goals (assisting minority and woman-owned business concerns), and international relations goals.

2.2.5.2 Joint Interest and Competition Interest

Knight, Harland and Telgen (2007) identified two additional interests which they called Joint Interest and Competition Interest. Joint interest is where the buying party and the supplying party have a similar interest in the process for instance minimizing transaction costs. Competition interest is where both parties are keen to promote fair competition. Such meeting of the minds is aimed at eliminating discrimination and promoting transparency. However, there are also instances when there are conflicting goals

between the buying party and selling party according to Murray's (1999) study (cited by Knight, Harland and Telgen, 2007).

2.2.6 The Role of the Procurement Department in Public Procurement

2.2.6.1 Defining Meaningful Contribution of the Buying Department

Studies have been carried out to determine the contribution that is expected from public procurement offices. Stuart's (1991, p. 30) study (cited by Schiele and McCue, 2006) defined meaningful involvement as "The timely and useful collaboration of purchasing knowledge and expertise … in all aspects of the acquisition process, including the decision making process, leading to the best buy decision with the objective of satisfying the immediate needs of the specifier and the long term needs and strategic objectives of the organization as a whole." The definition is comprehensive because it calls for efficiency and effectiveness, skills and competency, a holistic contribution which requires strategic and tactical input by the procurement department.

2.2.6.2 Type of Involvement

Researchers have postulated contrasting models on the type of involvement expected from the Buying Office.

2.2.6.2.1 Johnson and Leenders' Continuum

Johnson and Leenders' (2003) study (cited in Schiele and McCue, 2006) provided a continuum of the different roles and levels of involvement of the buying department in a public procurement system. This continuum clearly indicates that different skills are required for different types of contribution. On one hand the continuum starts with no involvement where the department is completely bypassed. It then progresses to documentary involvement, then to professional involvement and finally to meaningful involvement.

Documentary or Administrative Involvement: is whereby the purchasing department performs elementary administrative activities for client departments and these activities require basic buying skills.

Professional Involvement: entails the performance of higher order activities which include consultative discussions to establish needs, providing additional helpful information that may improve the purchasing process. This stage requires greater skill than that used in the Administrative role.

Strategic involvement: this is meaningful involvement which occurs when the professional role skills are combined with conceptual skills. The Buying Office is aware of the interrelationships between its actions and their impact on the strategy and long term needs of the institution.

2.2.6.2.2 Knight, Harland, Telgen's Seven Stage Framework

As an alternative to locating the involvement of a buying office in a continuum, Knight, Harland, Telgen's (2007) study (cited in Knight, Harland, Telgen, and Caldwell, 2007) provided a hierarchical seven–stage framework to illustrate the involvement of procurement personnel in the buying processes. Their classification focuses on whether buying personnel are proactive or reactive at each stage of the buying process. Strategic contribution of a Buying Office is seen as secondary to the operational contribution.

Stage One: Sourcing and Delivering Goods and Services

Availability is the objective and the public procurement function is merely reactive rather than proactive. The department exists to serve others in the organization.

Stage Two: Compliance with Legislation Regulation

The main issue is to minimise leakages through preventing fraud and corruption. The contribution is still reactive as the department also considers the process followed.

Stage Three: Efficient use of Public Funds

This is still a reactive process although the focus shifts to assessing whether the best price has been achieved in addition to the availability and procedure objective.

Stage Four: Accountability

The emphasis is on transparency and the public procurement function must be able to explain (to the legislature, the general public, the press) that it is doing its job well, that required items have been purchased, that there was no fraudulent activity and that the agreed price was good.

Stage Five: Value for Money

The focus starts to change from reactive to proactive, but the main objectives are still internally oriented. The scope is broader as it is not only cost or cost versus quality that is important in public procurement, but also the value that is brought into the organization by the procured items and services.

Stage Six: Supporter of Broader Government Policy Objectives

This is when the public procurement function contributes to the goals of the public sector organization. This is when it starts to have an external role by aiding policy delivery. Knight, Harland and Telgen (2007) suggested that public procurement may contribute to policy areas like job creation and employment, strengthening the industry, SME/regional involvement, stimulating innovation, sustainability and environment and development aid amongst many other reasons.

Stage seven: Deliverer of broader government objectives

This is when public procurement takes the lead in economic social change, and has the full responsibility for delivering policy for instance aspirational policy change.

2.2.6.2.3 Operational Role for the Buying Office

Other scholars suggested a purely operational role for a public sector procurement function. Stuart's (1991) study (cited by Schiele and McCue, 2006) and Thai (2001) advocated that the role of the procurement office is functional. Stuart's (1991) study explained that the procurement department contributes to procurement processes by seeking suppliers, examining functional and technical specifications and saving time in the procurement process whilst Thai (2001) used a systems approach illustrated in

Figure 2.5. Five core elements of the procurement system which are policy making and management, procurement regulations, procurement authorization and appropriations, public procurement function in operations, and feedback are identified. Thai's (2001) model shows policy makers at the helm of the procurement system, setting the framework in terms of authorization of spending and setting regulations which the buying office will adhere to. The procurement department provides feedback of its experiences to the policy makers so that improvements in regulations and appropriations can be made.
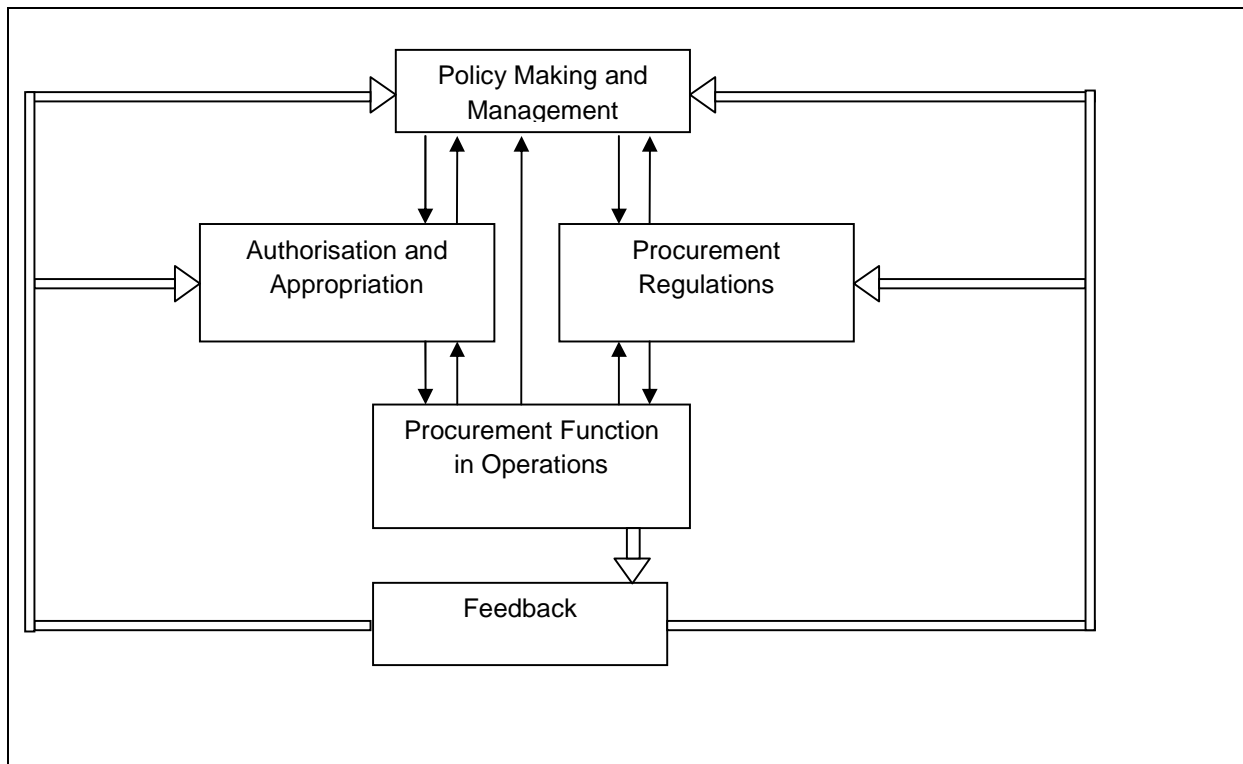
Key

———————▶   Direction Relationship

═════════▷   Feedback and reforms / adjustments

Figure 2.5: Public Procurement System

Source: Thai (2001)

Despite showing rigid roles in the public procurement system as illustrated above, Thai (2001) acknowledged that in reality the elements work in a dynamic and intricate

manner. Matthews (2005) argued that there is a fundamental weakness with the top-down model of procurement roles such as the model presented by Thai (2001). He called this the public administration versus public accountability dilemma. On one hand, despite the power that a buying unit may have in terms of expending the public's money, there still remains a subtle boundary given that a public agency has stringent policies and guidelines on how procurement must be handled. Matthews (2005:p.391) called these "marching orders" and questioned what decision making responsibility the purchasing agent actually possesses. On the other hand, when it comes to accountability Matthews (2005) also believed that regimented procurement processes create a platform for the public purchaser to carry out orders without any consequence.

2.2.6.2.4 Dynamic Shift from Tactical to Strategic Role

It has been argued by some authors that it is difficult to fix the role of the Buying Office in public procurement because of the dynamism of the environment. They note that although public sector purchasing has been traditionally seen as a clerical and controlling gatekeeper function, this view is changing. Procurement officials have been thrust into strategic roles from tactical roles because of advances in technology which include e-procurement, e-business, and e-commerce. Traditional duties such as issuing purchase orders and tracking orders have been replaced by activities like spend analysis and global sourcing, according to research by Grimm (1999) and Milligan (1999) (as cited by Matthews, 2005). Other transformational changes include shifts from purchase order issuance to supplier alliances, vendor file maintenance to cost management, excess inventory to global sourcing, local vendors to spend management. Therefore, public procurement is becoming more of a strategic function. Buyers have now got the ability to control the movement of substantial amounts of money (Murray, 2009).

Research Proposition (2)

The literature review in this section suggested that the Buying Office cannot effectively contribute to the public procurement process without strategic input into the process.

2.2.6.3 Skills and Competencies Required for Meaningful Involvement

Meaningful contribution by the Buying Office in the procurement process requires both strategic and tactical involvement. The buying team must therefore have adequate skills and competencies. Research by Cousins, Lamming, Lawson and Squire's (2008) and Gammelgaard and Larson (2001) as cited by McKevitt et al. (2012) made a clear distinction between skills and competencies required by buying personnel. The variation is that procurement skills are broad and are context independent knowledge which is learnt in classrooms whilst procurement competencies emanate from work experience and are gained as personnel appreciate institutional factors such as culture and business strategy. Procurement personnel must possess commercial, person centered, political and pragmatic competencies in order to be efficient and effective.

2.2.7 Considerations which Influence the Buying Decision

2.2.7.1Trade-off in Buying Decisions

In public procurement, a Buying Office is expected to make trade-offs in buying decisions. According to Thai (2001), policy makers and public procurement professionals face difficulties trying to make an optimum decision as they try to balance procurement and non-procurement goals. Knight, Harland and Telgen's (2007) study (cited in Knight, Harland, Telgen and Caldwell 2007) also noted that there are varying demands made by different stakeholders in public procurement which must be balanced. They also argued that the demands in the public sector are much more than those affecting the private sector.

Parikka-Alhola and Nissinen (2012) explained that in the case of the European Union (EU), tenders can be awarded based either on the lowest price or the most economically advantageous tender. They defined the latter as combining other award criteria such as price and environmental aspects. This flexibility may compromise the transparency of a decision because not all of the relevant aspects may be considered. Moreover, the weightings for different elements may not reflect the actual impact in practice. Focusing on a single goal such as achieving value for money is not a panacea for all public procurement systems. Quinot and Arrowsmith (2013) explained that it can

be argued that integrity is possibly the overall goal of competitive bidding in public procurement. Similarly the expectation of equal treatment can also be said to be of much importance as achieving value for money. Therefore, public procurement is a very complicated system within which there are many competing interests from the stakeholders mentioned earlier in the study.

2.2.8 Factors Inhibiting the Effectiveness of a Public Procurement System

In 2010 the United Kingdom (UK) government identified waste as a key limitation in public procurement process. Waste refers to activities that do not add value. It was identified through seven forms of "muda", a Japanese expression explained by Womack and Jones' (2003; p.6) study (cited by Waterman and McCue, 2012) as "any human activity which absorbs resources but creates no value". The study showed that seven types of waste are usually found in the procurement function: transportation holdups; merchandise defects; unsuitable processing; superfluous waiting (queuing) times; unnecessary movement; unnecessary stock; and overproduction. Waste and inefficiencies in the United Kingdom's government procurement system were identified in five thematic areas which were process design and management, bureaucracy, capability, hasty procurement and misuse (Waterman and McCue, 2012).

2.2.8.1 Organisational Limitations

Another comprehensive explanation of limitations in the public procurement system was provided by the World Bank which believes that factors inherent in the society or in the organization may create inefficiencies and risks which can undermine a public procurement system. It identified organisational factors such as poor dissemination of rules, inadequate training of personnel, lack of enforcement, failure to maintain good records and endemic corruption (http://web.worldbank.org, accessed on 21st February 2013). Pfeffer's (1978) study (as cited by Schiele and McCue, 2006) noted that procurement policies direct the manner in which the buying department operates and a procurement department may see its mandate as only following the standard operating procedures set. This rigidity may lead to inefficiencies in the procurement process.

2.2.8.2 Societal Factors

The causes of substandard procurement quality in public procurement may be related to the extent to which top leadership in government uphold a culture of accountability, the status of the public sector staff responsible for procurement, the remuneration structure of public sector procurement staff as compared to their private sector counterparts, the extent to which procurement officials are free from political interference, the existence of ethical and competent procurement personnel, and the presence of clear written procedures and authority lines (http://web.worldbank.org, accessed on 21st February 2013).

2.2.8.3 Individual Limitations

A lack of awareness of benefits that may come from working with procurement department may deter meaningful involvement. In addition, an ineffective procurement system may also be attributed to other individual factors relating to the decision maker for instance unethical behavior. According to Matthews (2005), ethical boundaries surround the public purchaser and these boundaries for the public purchasers extend beyond the acquisition process to include standards for personal conduct. A lack of trust, past experience and a low perception of the abilities of the purchasing department are part of individual limitations which hinder the ability to make the most effective procurement decisions (Schiele and McCue, 2006). The model below showed that in order for the purchasing department to meaningfully contribute to the procurement process, it must have the ability and benevolence which in turn builds trust and willingness to involve the purchasing department in the procurement process. Ability is attributed to factors such as knowledge and experience which Matthews (2005) found to be lacking in the procurement department, whilst good interpersonal skills are the main attributes of benevolence factors.
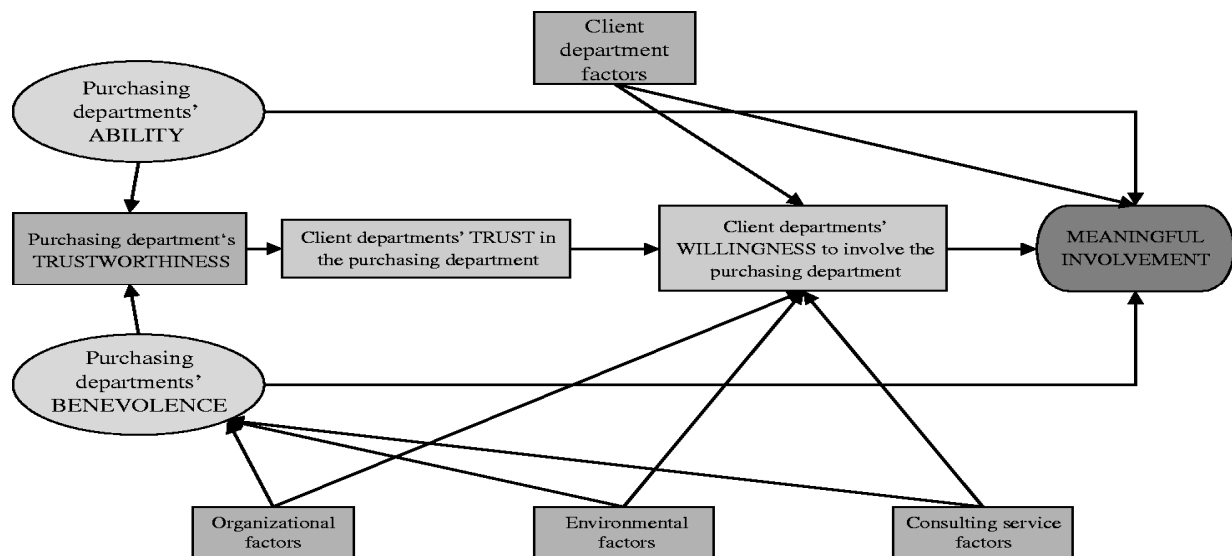
Figure 2.6: Conditions for Meaningful Involvement by Purchasing Department

Source: Schiele and McCue (2006)

2.2.8.4 Product or Service Factors

The complexity of the product has an impact on the type of role that the buying department can play. Complex or intangible products limit the contribution that can be made by the procurement officials because there is a general lack of understanding on how purchasing managers can manage the procurement process unlike the procurement of standard items (Schiele and McCue, 2006).

Research Proposition (3)

The literature above suggests that there are other limitations beyond organisational factors which weaken the public procurement systems.

2.2.8.5 Weaknesses in Zimbabwe's Public Procurement System

According to the 2011 Fiscal Policy Procurement Review Report by the Chartered Institute of Purchasing and Supply (CIPS), some of the challenges faced in Zimbabwe's public procurement system included a lack of procurement planning in Government institutions which leads to a negative bearing on the awarding of contracts to supply goods and services, challenges related to tender procedures leading to slow project implementation, a loss of skills in the period prior to 2009 which drastically reduced

Government's capacity to implement and manage public sector projects, a lack of technical capacity to manage project procurement, failure by Government structures to recognize procurement as a profession and subordinating the function to finance and administration and a lack of motivation to develop project procurement and contract management skills and leakage of project resources through self-enrichment and rent seeking for suppliers and public officials.

These problems can be classified as organisational, societal and individual weaknesses. The Global Integrity Report on Zimbabwe identified similar concerns. The country's 2009 and 2011 overall rating on procurement integrity deteriorated from being moderate to being very weak. Ratings on the effectiveness of the public procurement process marginally declined in 2011 from the 2009 ratings of 63 to 60 mainly attributed to the absence in law of mandatory professional training for public procurement officials, a lack of mechanisms that monitor assets and earnings and spending habits of public procurement officials and the laxity of formal requirements to limit the extent of sole sourcing as well as the existence of laws which allow the government to waive certain requirements in favor of sole sourcing.

The Global Integrity Report on Zimbabwe also showed that access to the public procurement by the public had markedly declined with ratings falling from 83 in 2009 to 58 in 2011. The reasons for the deteriorating situation were linked to failure to access public procurement regulations at a reasonable cost by citizens particularly those who reside outside the capital city and limited access to major public procurement bids since the process is highly centralized, and information only available in the capital city where Parliament is located (http://report.globalintegrity.org, accessed on 19th April 2013).

In a study of public procurement system challenges in Zimbabwe, Musanzikwa (2013) carried out case studies on key government projects which included the procurement of prepaid electricity meters at the Zimbabwe Electricity Supply Authority (ZESA), the construction of airport road in Harare and the extension of Gokwe District Hospital among other projects. The major challenges identified included incompetence of

personnel involved in the procurement processes leading to inadequate market enquiry and delays in decision making. Evidence of a high level of corruption activities in the public procurement was also identified. Overall, local literature on public procurement demonstrates significant alarm because of the deteriorating public procurement system.

2.2.9 Recommendations from Other Studies

The researcher notes that there are several comparable and contrasting suggestions that have been proposed on how to enhance the public procurement process. These suggestions include the use of legal and non-legal means, the use of philosophical and practical tools and the use of strategic and tactical mechanisms. The researcher analyses some of the ideas from various countries and continents. Findings show that there is no universal antidote that may be used to enhance the public procurement system.

2.2.9.1 Lessons from the African Continent

2.2.9.1.1Reform the Public Procurement System

Many African systems have experienced major developments in public procurement regulation as they increasingly appreciate the need to enact legislation which provides for clear and unambiguous laws on procurement. Conventions such as the 1998 International Conference on Public Procurement Reform in Africa and the 2009 High Level Forum on Public Procurement Reform in Africa emphasised the need to modernise public procurement in order to match international best practices, lobby for the public procurement reforms and promote reforms which focus on accountability, efficiency and transparency (http://www.afdb.org, viewed on 19th April 2013)

2.2.9.1.2 Build Stronger Capacities

In Zimbabwe, CIPS recommended an urgent need to build stronger capacities in Government procurement departments in addition to strengthening Government procurement structures and laws relating to public procurement. They also recommended professionalising procurement through enactment of a Purchasing and Supply Council of Zimbabwe which will be responsible for licensing buyers and

regulating the purchasing and supply profession to reduce the effects of leakages of public funds through procurement (https://www.cips.org, viewed on 10 February 2013).

2.2.9.1.3 Greater Enforcement

Although African countries are reforming their public procurement systems in line with the two major international regulatory regimes on public procurement which are the World Trade Organization's Agreement on Government Procurement and the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL) Model Law on the Procurement of Goods, Construction and Services, there is need for greater enforcement of the procurement rules and reorientation of stakeholders to sustain the formation of procurement markets known for integrity and efficiency (Quinot and Arrowsmith, 2013).

2.2.9.2 Lessons from European Studies
2.2.9.2.1The Use of a Lean Procurement Philosophy

The UK government put in place a lean procurement philosophy. The philosophy creates value for the customer by eliminating waste throughout the entire supply-chain and improving the flow of goods and services. Lean Procurement is a strategic view of the management process which is similar to the Toyota Production System. Schelie and McCue's (2011) study (as cited by Waterman and McCue, 2012) highlighted the key success factor of this philosophy as a shift of emphasis from the application of individuals tools like Total Quality Management (TQM), Just in Time (JIT) and vendor stocking programs to a strategic orientation guided by lean sourcing principles. Waterman and McCue (2012) argued that turnaround times could be lowered by up to seventy percent, with savings of £3.5m to brokers across a typical procurement system, and a reduction of around £400,000 in transaction costs per procurement. Other recommendations that may be used to improve public procurement are suggested by Rainford and Tinkler (2011). However, as mentioned earlier, findings from different scholars suggest that recommendations are not standard and must therefore be contextualized.

2.2.9.2.2 Centralising Procurement

Procurement must be centralised in order to improve on efficiency, according to Rainford and Tinkler (2011). Empirical findings by Glock and Broens' (2013) study of German municipalities also concur with this notion. They explained that a high degree of specialization in procurement leads to efficiency gains in the processing of purchases. Furthermore, entities can increase the degree of specialization by either outsourcing the purchase of products that are only infrequently needed or by establishing purchasing consortia for infrequent necessities. By pooling requirements with other institutions, the consortium can employ specialists for the requirements and this also lowers prices.

2.2.9.2.3 Greater or Limited use of Information Technology

Some scholars recommend the simplification and increased utilisation of IT and e-procurement solutions so that there is greater involvement of small to medium enterprises, a higher degree of centralisation for the purchasing process and efficient digital data collection (Rainford and Tinkler, 2011 and Glock and Broens, 2013). Operation and cost efficiency benefits arise from the use of tools such as e-auction, e-catalogue, e-submission and e-notice, according to Croom and Johnston's (2003) study (as cited by McCue and Roman, 2012). The relationship between buyers and sellers is enhanced by the more competitive markets that provide increased transparency and limited discretionary selection.

Critics of the increased use of IT and implementation of e-procurement argue that in the last twenty years there have been limited transformative changes at the organizational or network levels due to challenges such as unsuitability of software platforms, organizational resistance, lack of strategic systems' integration and failure to involve public procurement professionals in the design of e-procurement systems (McCue and Roman, 2012). In some instances badly designed IT implementation processes have been responsible for business failure and financial waste, according to Somasundaram and Damsgaard's (2005) study (as cited by McCue and Roman, 2012). They suggested that all the stakeholders must be involved when adopting and implementing IT in procurement.

2.2.9.2.4 Increase or Reduce the Use of Formal Statutes

Formal regulations have been used by European countries like France and also in the North America to achieve social procurement goals amongst other goals (Thai, 2001). In Northern Ireland the regulations were aimed at eliminating religious discrimination, in Canada the goal was to promote marginalized aboriginal businesses and in the USA federal government intended to increase spending with minority SMEs. The use of internal administrative circulars to direct the actions of procurement officers has also been used in the United Kingdom and those countries under the U.K.'s influence such as Malaysia. Arrowsmith's (1998) study as cited in Thai (2001) explained that countries have adopted public procurement rules and regulations for the first time have reformed their existing procurement legal provisions particularly countries with newer constitutions. Public procurement legislation has also been used as a foreign policy tool by countries like Pakistan. Knight, Harland and Telgen's (2007) study (cited in Knight, Harland, Telgen, and Caldwell, 2007) explained that public procurement have been used to deliver government objectives, such as the black economic empowerment policy in South Africa favouring public spending with black-owned suppliers. The use of clear frameworks in all these situations helps in assessing whether value for money has been achieved (McCrudden, 2004).

There is also a contrary view which advocates for the simplification of procurement rules to enhance procurement systems. Empirical findings by Glock and Broens (2013) showed that highly formalized organizations may result in slow decision processes and therefore large entities should try to implement measures that reduce formalization in purchasing. Certain levels of formalization are attributed to the regulations of public procurement law which entities must simply adhere to. However, the challenge arises when organisations implement additional regulations in the purchasing process, which complicates a decision process that is already highly formalized. The suggestion is that public organizations should consider whether the behavior of their employees can be controlled without implementing additional rules and regulation through options like using incentive systems, which could help align the personal objectives of the

employees with the goals of the institution. This would render the use of additional rules and regulations unnecessary.

2.2.9.2.5 Strategic Positioning of the Buying Function in the Hierarchy

It is suggested that a purchasing function should be represented at higher levels in an entity's hierarchy. According to Glock and Broens (2013), the buying function is still underrepresented on high hierarchical levels of large entities like municipalities, which implies that the attention of decision makers needs to be raised in order to reflect the financial benefits and the quality of the services that may emanate from a professionally organized purchasing function.

2.3 SYNTHESISING AND CONCEPTUAL MODEL

Miles and Huberman's (1994) study (cited by Maxwell, 2005) defined a conceptual framework as a graphic or narrative product which explains the key factors to be studied for instance concepts, or variables and the presumed relationship among them. When depicting a conceptual framework diagrammatically Hennink, Hutter and Bailey (2011) explained that boxes that are linked together with arrows to indicate potential relationships between the concepts which will be further explored in a study. After reviewing this literature, the researcher developed the following conceptual.
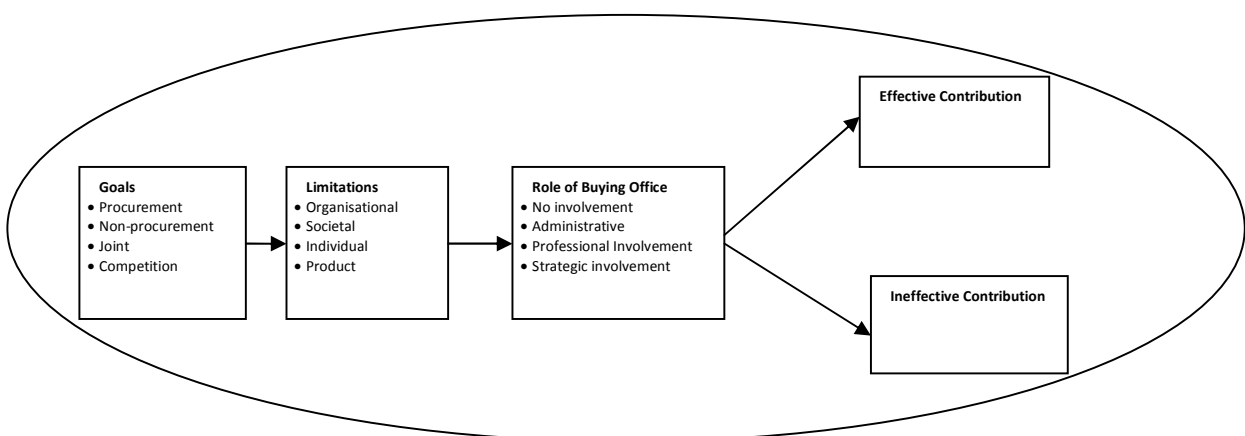
Figure 2.7: Conceptual Model of Effective Contribution in Public Procurement

2.4 CONCLUSION

The literature review chapter introduced the concept of public procurement. It first defined the theory of public procurement and the public procurement process. Expectations from the main stakeholders involved in public procurement were explored, followed by a review of the multiple roles played by a procurement office. The decision making process was examined and then various recommendations on how to improve the public procurement system were appraised. The researcher developed a conceptual framework before concluding the chapter.

CHAPTER THREE
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

In this research methodology section of the study, the researcher begins by recapping the problem statement, the objectives of the study, the research questions and research propositions. The researcher uses this guidance together with theory on research methodology and develops the actual design of the study. The research type, research philosophy, research approach, research methodology and research strategy adopted in this study are outlined and justified. Similarly, the population and selection techniques as well as data analysis and display methods are explained. The limitations encountered in the research are revealed and the measures implemented to enhance the validity of the research are noted.

3.2 RECAP OF PROBLEM STATEMENT

In the period under study (2009 to 2013), the contribution of the UZ Buying Office to public procurement has been ineffective. The involvement of the Buying Office has been operational with limited strategic input. Its interest has been on the financial objectives instead of pursuing multiple objectives. Therefore, the researcher sought to study the performance of the Buying Office using a framework that is relevant to public sector procurement.

3.3 RESEARCH DESIGN
3.3.1 Defining Research Design

Research design refers to the structure or framework of an enquiry. It is used to make sure that the evidence obtained enables the researcher to answer the initial research question as unambiguously as possible (de Vaus, 2003, Bryman and Bell, 2012 and http://www.nyu.edu, viewed 28 February 2013). Yin's (1989:29) study (cited by de Vaus, 2012) explained that "a research design deals with a logical problem and not a logistical problem". For that reason, research design entails justifying why a particular structure of

an enquiry is more appropriate than alternative designs and it is not a description of the process of data collection. LeCompte and Preissle's (1993) study (cited in Denzin and Lincoln, 2005) explained that when coming up with a research design the centre of attention is on the research question, the purposes of the study and what information most appropriately answers specific research questions, and the strategies that are most effective for obtaining it. De Vaus (2003) added that failure to address research design issues leads to weak and unpersuasive conclusions and a failure to answer the research question.

3.3.2 Types of Research Design

The four types of broad designs are Experimental, Longitudinal, Cross-sectional and Case study (de Vaus, 2003). Bryman and Bell (2012) added Comparative design to this list. After analyzing the alternative options, the researcher concluded that the Case Study design was the most appropriate design because case study designs rely less on comparing cases than on exhaustive analysis of individual cases and then comparing with other cases (de Vaus, 2003). These designs are unique because contextual information is collected about a case so that there is a context within which to understand causal processes. The design was appropriate since answers to the research questions required gathering in depth evidence of the manner in which the UZ public procurement system functioned. Thereafter, the researcher would be able to suggest solutions.

3.4 RESEARCH TYPE

3.4.1 Descriptive Research

Descriptive research describes the state of affairs, according to Fraenkel and Wallen (1993) and the description can be concrete or abstract (de Vaus, 2003). In this study although describing what was going on would be helpful, it was more important to understand why things were the way they were. From there the researcher would then be in a position to provide recommendations as required by the fourth research question.

3.4.2 Explanatory Research

Explanatory research extends beyond grasping of trends by providing explanations of phenomena, according to de Vaus (2003). Fraenkel and Wallen (1993) explained that explanatory research is also associational as it reveals how things are related so that scholars can better understand occurrence. This type of study was more appropriate for this research because the researcher would be able to contextualize the involvement of the Buying Office in the public procurement process.

3.5 RESEARCH PHILOSOPHY

3.5.1 Defining Research Philosophy /Research Paradigm

According to Guba's (1990, p.17) study (cited in Denzin and Lincoln, 2003), a paradigm is "a set of beliefs that guides action taken during research". Guba and Lincoln (1994) say this worldview is used by a researcher to choose the method and type of questions to be asked in a study. Denzin and Lincoln (2005) propounded a similar explanation. Overall, the researcher gathered that the research philosophy contains epistemological, ontological and methodological premises.

3.5.2 Types of Research Philosophies

3.5.2.1 Naturalist View

Naturalistic view assumes that reality is dynamic and can be known only indirectly, through the interpretations of people. The view accepts the possibility of multiple realities (www.sagepub.com/upm-data/43179_2, viewed on 15 April 2013). The study was naturalistic because of the need to comprehend the public procurement system from the different perspectives of individuals involved in the system. Recommendations to improve the UZ public procurement system would be more applicable and better appreciated if the researcher understood the unique perspectives of stakeholders.

3.5.2.2 Positivist View

Positivists assume that reality is fixed, directly measurable, and knowable and that there is just one truth, one external reality (www.sagepub.com/upm-data/43179_2, viewed on 15 April 2013). This view of one truth was not suitable in this study because the

researcher recognised that the different stakeholders involved in the public procurement processes could have diverse and sometimes conflicting views of the contribution of the Buying Office and this would be in spite of the variations.

The naturalistic and positivist paradigms can be further broken down into more specific views. Guba and Lincoln (1994) argued that no construction is incontrovertibly right and advocates of any particular construction must rely on persuasiveness and utility rather than proof in arguing their position. The researcher familiarized himself with some of the competing paradigms identified by Guba and Lincoln (1994), Denzin and Lincoln (2005) as well as Bowen (2005) and concluded that the study was best situated in the Constructivist - Interpretive Paradigm because the paradigm allowed the researcher to analyse the perspective of different study participants as argued by Hennink, Hutter, and Bailey (2011).

3.5.3 Constructivist - Interpretive Paradigm

Ontology: The constructivist-interpretive paradigm accepts a relativist ontology in which constructions are not more or less true in any absolute sense but simply more or less informed. There can be multiple apprehandable and sometimes conflicting social realities that are the products of human intellects (Guba and Lincoln, 1994; Denzin and Lincoln, 2005).

Epistemology: This paradigm assumes a subjectivist epistemology whereby the knower and respondent co-create understandings. Guba and Lincoln (1994) explained that the investigator and the object of investigation are assumed to be interactively linked so that the findings are literally created as investigation proceeds.

Methodology: In this constructivist-interpretive paradigm, there is a naturalistic set of methodological procedures and an important mechanism for transferring knowledge from one setting to another is through the provision of explicit experience often supplied by case study reports (Guba and Lincoln, 1994).

The researcher explored alternative paradigms and found them incompatible with this particular study. These included the following:

3.5.4 Positivist Paradigm

This paradigm was incompatible with the research because the researcher accepted multiple realities of stakeholder demands in public procurement, of roles played by the Buying Office and multiple realities of factors that influenced buying decisions. This contradicted the fundamental view of the positivist philosophy which says that reality is context free. In addition the dualist and objectivist assumptions of this paradigm were inappropriate given that the researcher helped to build and contextualize findings thus opposing the spine of this paradigm explained by Guba and Lincoln (1994) and Davoudi (2012).

3.5.5 Critical Theory Philosophy

This view was not suitable because the critical theory paradigm says that the researcher is expected to understand what transformations are needed in advance (Guba and Lincoln, 1994). However, the researcher approached this study without preconceived solutions of how to enhance the contribution of the Buying Office in public procurement. Instead, the researcher tried to first grasp phenomena and then prescribe suggestions only after understanding the state of affairs.

3.6 RESEARCH APPROACH

3.6.1 Inductive Research

Inductive research is research work that builds explanations from the ground up, based on what is discovered. This was the approach used in the study because the researcher sought to first understand the individual perspectives of respondents and then develop themes from the associations and relationships of the evidence gathered from the study. The deductive research in which research work starts out with broad theories and suppositions and then systematically tests for implications was not adopted as interpretations of individual respondents was vital (www.sagepub.com/upm-data/43179_2, viewed on 15 April 2013).

3.7 METHODOLOGY TYPE

The researcher used a qualitative research methodology because the main objective of the study as well as all the research questions both required contextualization rather than generalization.

3.8 RESEARCH STRATEGY

Walsh and Wigens (2003) explained that a research strategy is a decision about the data collection tactics to be used and it is different from a data collection method. This strategy encompasses a collection of skills, assumptions and practices that are employed by the researcher as he or she moves from paradigm to empirical world (Denzin and Lincoln, 2005). Some of the research strategies identified by Denzin and Lincoln (2005), Creswell (2012) and Lambert and Lambert (2013) include Case study, Ethnography, Phenomenology, Grounded theory, Life history, Historical method, Action and applied research and Clinical Research. Gresswell's (2007, p.6) study (cited by Merriam, 2009) suggested that there is no consensus as to how to classify "the baffling numbers of choices or approaches" to qualitative research. The researcher analysed some of the basic qualitative research strategies explained by Creswell's (1998) study (cited by Bowen, 2005) and Merriam (2009) and selected the case study as the most appropriate strategy on the following basis.

3.8.1 Case Study Strategy

According to Cassell and Symon (2004), case study involves a detailed investigation of occurrences, with evidence collected over a period of time and the evidence is contained by an environment. Yin's (1994) study (as cited by Cassell and Symon, 2004) noted that multiple methods are used in case study research. Bryman and Bell (2012) said that the specific case could be a community, organisation or person. In this research, the specific case was the University of Zimbabwe's procurement system. The case study strategy was selected because of:

Access to Data: The researcher considered the relative ease of accessing important sources of data. As an employee of this institution, the researcher realised that it would

be relatively easier to access data from his workplace than to access data from multiple public sector institutions.

Need to Replicate Effective Research Strategy: Scholars such as Schiele and McCue (2006), Walker and Brammer (2009) and Musanzikwa (2013) all tried to understand public procurement phenomena using this case study strategy. This was deliberate and crucial because it enables other scholars to first understand context when seeking lessons from such a study.

3.8.1.1 Types of Case Studies

Denzin and Lincoln (2005) identified three types of case studies which are intrinsic, instrumental and collective case study. The researcher examined all three types of case studies and determined that this research would be an instrumental case study.This case study is carried out when a particular case is examined mainly to provide insight into an issue or to redraw a generalization. The case is looked at in depth, its contexts scrutinized, its ordinary activities detailed, all because this helps the researcher to pursue the external interest. Denzin and Lincoln (2003) argued that the case is of secondary interest because it plays a supportive role and it facilitates our understanding of something else. In this UZ case study, one of the key justifications for carrying out this research was to add to the body of knowledge that could be used to improve public sector procurement hence the instrumental case study strategy would assist in this regard. Collective case studies by scholars like Musanzikwa (2013) acknowledged that they lacked comprehensive analysis of specific institutions and this researcher intended to close this gap by focusing on the internal complexities that affect a typical public institution.

3.9 DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

3.9.1 Unit of Analysis

In this study, phenomena was clarified and understood by analysing text units which are also known as meaning units. Graneheim and Lundman (2003) explained that a meaning unit refers to words, sentences or paragraphs containing aspects related to

each other through their content and context. Therefore, the researcher ensured that all evidence was in text format before it was examined.

3.9.2 Data Collection Methods

Walsh and Wigens (2003) argued that whatever strategy is chosen, it is generally possible to use a variety of different data collection methods because these data collection methods are not predetermined by the choice of research strategy. Denzin and Lincoln (2005) as well as Bryman and Bell (2012) did not dispute this notion, but they insist that research methods can be and are usually associated with different kinds of research design citing the case study strategy as an example of a strategy which relies on interviewing, observing and document analysis. They explained that each empirical research instrument portrays the world in a unique manner hence the need to use more than one interpretive practice in a study. In this study, the researcher assessed some of the qualitative instruments available which included Ethnography and Participant observation, Interviews, Focus groups, Language in qualitative research, Documents as data sources and Visual methods (Woods, 2006; Hennink, Hutter, and Bailey, 2011; and Bryman, 2012) and decided to use the following instruments.

3.9.2.1 Archival Records

The main records examined included the Annual Management Reports prepared by external auditors during the period under study, the Annual Audited Financial Statements for the same period, the Supplier Evaluation records for suppliers registered on the UZ suppliers list, official purchase orders processed in the five years under study and research journals that have studied ways of enhancing public procurement systems. Guba and Lincoln's (1981; p.228) study (cited by Appleton and Cowley, 1997) defined a record as "any written statement prepared by an individual or an agency for the purpose of attesting to an event or providing an accounting."

3.9.2.2 Documentation

The documents analysed in the study included the University Procurement Regulations contained in the University Financial Regulations, Zimbabwe Procurement Act, Chapter

22:14 Procurement Regulations of 2002, the Public Finance Management Act [Chapter 22:19] (appendices 17,18,19 and 20) and the UZ Prequalification Supplier Evaluation Form. Guba and Lincoln's (1981; p.228) study (cited by Appleton and Cowley, 1997) defines a document as "any material other than a record that was not prepared specifically in response to some request from the investigator."

3.9.2.2.1 Advantages of Documents and Records
By studying documents and records, the major advantages enjoyed included:
- Readily available documents which minimized the time spent collecting data,
- The data was relatively inexpensive to collect,
- The use of records that were unbiased by the data collection procedure,
- The ability of the researcher to gather evidence without being present during data collection for instance the 2009 to 2012 reports on procurement system by external auditors.

3.9.2.2.2 Disadvantages of Documents and Records
According to Woods (2006), documents are sometimes not sources of objective truth as they can be contextualized in circumstances. In order to reduce this weakness the researcher triangulated evidence from different data sources to ensure that evidence was credible. Triangulation was also necessary to minimize the weakness of potential bias in terms of selective deposit.

3.9.2.3 Semi-Structured Interviews
The researcher conducted semi-structured interviews with key informants involved in the UZ's public procurement process. These included members of the University Executive, UZ Administrators, Central Buying Office personnel and functionaries from both teaching and non-teaching departments. The researcher designed interview questions by referring to some validated questions that were used by other scholars such as Schiele and McCue (2006) and Walker and Brammer (2009) who carried out related studies on public procurement. Denscombe (2010) argued that interviews are

more appropriate when the researcher wants to understand complex phenomena rather than straight forward factual information and this was the case in this study.

3.9.2.3.1 Advantages of Semi-Structured Interviews

One of the major benefits enjoyed by the researcher from using semi-structured interviews was that they permitted the researcher to control the context of the questions by keeping the discussions relevant to the contribution of the Buying Office. Another advantage was the ability of the researcher to probe interviewees whenever clarification of matters was necessary.

3.9.2.4 Observation Method

The researcher used the Participant Observation method. Kawulich (2005) described observation as a process which enables researchers to learn about the activities of the people under study in the natural setting through observing and participating in those activities. As an employee of the organisation under study, the researcher was able to closely observe the buying processes and take notes of themes related to involvement of the Buying Office in key public procurement processes.

3.9.2.4.1 Advantages of Observation

DeMunck and Sobo's (1998; p.43) study (cited by Kawulich, 2005) said that the merits of the observation technique include access to the "backstage culture, rich detailed descriptions and opportunities for viewing or participating in unscheduled events." The researcher was able to get firsthand experience of how the procurement system functions.

3.9.2.4.2 Disadvantages of Observation

Johnson and Sackett's (1998) study (cited by Kawulich, 2005) noted that participant observation may be a source of erroneous description in behavioral research. The information collected may not be representative of the culture since much of the data collected by the researcher is observed based on the researcher's individual interest in a setting or behavior, rather than being representative of what actually happens in a

culture. The researcher reduced the chances of erroneous description by firstly conducting reflective dialogues to clarify evidence and secondly triangulating evidence from observations with documentary evidence and interview evidence.

3.9.3 Pilot Study

Van Teijlingen and Hundley (2001) explained that a pilot study is a mini version of a complete study and it is also a detailed test of a particular research instrument before the main study. They further argue that in qualitative research, contamination is less of a concern since qualitative data collection and analysis is often progressive in the sense that a subsequent interview in a series should be an improvement on the previous interview.

In this study, the researcher carried out a pretest of the interview in order to check the adequacy of the interview guide and to identify possible logistical problems which could occur during the subsequent interviews. The actual piloting process saw the researcher holding the first interview with a former Central Buyer who is still employed by the UZ in another capacity. The interviewee gave feedback that the time taken to complete the interview was reasonable, that the question on key buying influences was ambiguous and needed to be clarified through the use of follow up questions. The researcher was satisfied with the efficiency of using his mobile phone as a recording instrument.

3.10 POPULATION AND SELECTION TECHNIQUES

3.10.1 Target Population

The target population of this study was made up of all the stakeholders who are involved in the University's public procurement system and these included:

- **Buying Office Personnel**: The Central Buyer and his two clerks
- **Client Departments:** Administrators and technicians from ten UZ faculties and forty five non-teaching departments
- **University Leadership**: The members of the UZ executive led by the Vice Chancellor, his two Pro-Vice Chancellors, the Registrar, the Bursar and the Librarian,

- **Government:** The different Ministries that make policies concerning public procurement.
- **Suppliers:** All suppliers registered on the UZ Suppliers List.

3.10.2 Selection of Research Sample

Bryman's (1998) study (cited by Silverman, 2011) argued that qualitative research follows a theoretical, rather than a statistical logic hence samples should be selected in terms of generalisability to theoretical propositions rather than to populations or universes. The researcher's propositions were interested in the role of the Buying Office hence the researcher believed that internal stakeholders would be better positioned to provide a more knowledgeable perspective of phenomena regarding the Buying Office. External perspectives on the contribution of the UZ Buying Office would be gathered from records and documents. The researcher achieved theoretical saturation which Hesse-Biber and Leavy (2011) described as a stage arrived at when there is nothing new coming from the same population after interviewing fifteen respondents. The composition of the respondents was two executives, three Central Buying personnel, one former Central Buyer, five respondents from academic client departments and four administrators from non-teaching departments.

3.10.3 Selection Technique
3.10.3.1 Non-Probability Sampling

Rea and Parker (2005) explained that sampling may be classified as either probability sampling or non-probability sampling. Since the researcher was relatively less interested in statistical representativeness, non-probability sampling was applied in the study.

3.10.3.2 Theoretical Sampling

The researcher wanted greater control of the accumulation of data hence decisions on who to question next and the necessary additional documentary evidence had to be purposive. Therefore, the researcher used the theoretical sampling (purposive sampling) technique. Mason's (1996; p.93-4) study (cited by Silverman, 2010) explained

that theoretical sampling entails selecting groups or categories to study on the basis of their relevance to the research questions, the theoretical position and most importantly the explanation or account being developed. Hesse-Biber and Leavy (2011) similarly noted that theoretical sampling implies that the researcher decides who or what to sample next, based on prior data gathered from the same research project so that comparisons can be made with previous findings.

3.11 DATA ANALYSIS METHODS

3.11.1 Content Analysis of Texts from Interviews

The researcher carried out manual qualitative content analysis of responses provided by interviewees. In this method, the researcher first recorded interviews and then transcribed them into written evidence. Data was condensed according the different research questions and condensed meaning units were extracted. The driving force of these condensed meaning units was identified and coded. Coffey and Atkinson's (1996, p. 32) study (cited by Graneheim and Lundman, 2003) said that 'codes are tools to think with' and labeling a condensed meaning unit with a code allows the data to be thought about in new and different ways. Having identified all the codes, the researcher grouped common data codes and developed sub-categories and overall categories of the codes. Finally, the researcher looked for meanings that would link all categories and these were noted as themes. Polit and Hungler's (1999) study (cited by Graneheim and Lundman, 2003) described a theme as a recurring regularity developed within categories or cutting across categories.

3.11.2 Content Analysis of Observation Texts

The researcher carried out manual content analysis of text notes from observing the UZ public procurement system. The researcher had jotted six observational notes and transcribed the reflective dialogues. The notes were arranged into meaning units and then reduced to short descriptions that summarized the key text. The summary descriptions were condensed to identify the underlying meanings and then abstracted into sub-themes. By referring to some of the main issues that the researcher had noted

earlier in the literature review section of the study, the researcher was able to develop the final themes.

3.11.3 Intertexuality of Documents and Records

The documentary evidence which was collected in the study was analysed to identify the underlying meanings using the intertextuality method. The researcher examined dimensions of similarity and differences pertaining to the involvement of the Buying Office in public procurement by examining records and documents (Appendices 17,18,19 and 20) which include the University Procurement Regulations contained in the University Financial Regulations, Zimbabwe Procurement Act, Chapter 22:14 Procurement regulations 2002, the Public Finance Management Act [Chapter 22:19] and annual Management Reports prepared by external auditors for the years 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2012. The researcher also examined the extent of relationships between these documents and records that dealt with the UZ's public procurement process. Silverman (2011) advises that the analysis of documentary reality must look beyond separate texts to asking how they are related (referential value of texts). He argues that texts are not transparent representations of organisational routines, decision making processes or professional practices therefore, they cannot be treated no matter how official as firm evidence of what they report.

3.11.4 Data Display

Most of the evidence from the study was either presented in the form of narrative text or tabulated for better analysis and comparison.

3.12 RESEARCH PROCEDURE

The data collection process was smoothened by seeking of authority upfront to carry out the study.

Interviews: The researcher booked appointments in advance and delivered the interview guide to interviewees so that they would think about their responses in advance. The researcher managed to hold most of the interviews in an unused office

thus avoiding disturbances. The researcher used an interview guide (Appendix 1) in order to keep the discussions relevant to the research questions. During the actual interviews, interviewees were notified that they would be recorded and that their contributions were going to be handled with strict confidentiality. Recorded interviews were kept in an electronic database.

Observation: Guided by the research questions, the researcher observed the public procurement processes and kept notes. The researcher asked relevant stakeholders for their perspectives on observations and the texts on reflective dialogues were saved in the electronic database.

Documentary Analysis: Once permission was granted to examine official documents, the researcher made photocopies of relevant evidence and stored these in a physical file. However, the electronic database was used to keep downloaded public documents related to public procurement.

3.13 VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY

According to Denzin and Lincoln (1994), Lincoln and Guba (1985) and Padgett's (1998) studies (cited in Bowen, 2005), qualitative researchers who research in the interpretive paradigm must think more in terms of trustworthiness rather than the positivistic criteria of internal and external validity, reliability, and objectivity. Denzin and Lincoln (2005) concurred and explained that terms such as credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability replace the positivist criteria. The researcher addressed the four aspects of trustworthiness using suggestions by Guba's (1981) model (cited in Krefting, 1991) as follows:

3.13.1 Truth Value

In order to guarantee a greater confidence in the truth of the findings (credibility) of the informants and the context in which the study was undertaken, the researcher gathered evidence through a prolonged engagement strategy. This involved spending an extended period of time with informants during the interview checking perspectives and

allowing the informants to become comfortable with the researcher. By presenting direct responses as evidence provided by respondents, the researcher was able to also triangulate multiple perspectives cross checking data and identifying areas of mutual confirmation.

3.13.2 Applicability

One of the major aims of this study was to provide lessons for other practitioners involved in public procurement. Therefore, the researcher tried to enhance the degree of transferability by presenting sufficient descriptive data to assist in comparison. According to Guba's (1981) study (cited in Krefting, 1991), dense background information about the respondents and the research context allows future readers of this study to easily conduct a goodness of fit between their context and the context of the study.

3.13.3 Consistency

According to Krefting (1991) variability is expected in qualitative research, and consistency is defined in terms of dependability. He cites Guba's (1981)'s study which argued that the concept of dependability implies trackable variability, that is, variability that can be ascribed to identified sources. As such, the researcher provided a clear audit trail strategy in which appendices were attached so that findings, interpretations, and recommendations could be traced back to their sources. Lincoln and Guba (1985) and also Padgett's (1998) study (cited in Bowen, 2005) agreed that an audit trail can be used to accomplish dependability and confirmability simultaneously.

3.13.4 Neutrality

Lincoln and Guba's (1985) study (cited in Bowen, 2005), suggested that confirmability is the criterion of neutrality. Triangulation of methods was used to study evidence from interviews, documents and observations as illustrated in Figure 3.1. Murray (2009) called for more triangulation in public procurement studies to incorporate other actors' perceptions, particularly those of leadership in government.
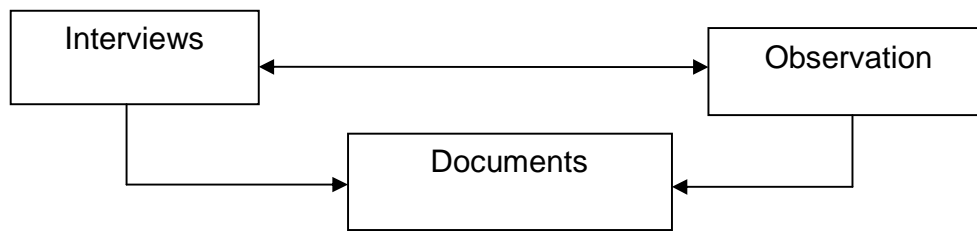
Figure 3.1: Triangulation by Method

Source: Bowen (2005)

The researcher ensured that perceptions of all the different actors were at least considered through interviews, documents or observation.

3.14 RESEARCH LIMITATIONS

Bowen (2005) explained that limitations in terms of design, methods, and findings from a study must be noted. As such, the following limitations affected the study:

Complexity of UZ procurement system: The researcher realized that the case study was conducted in a relatively complex public institution in terms of the assortment of goods and services procured. This complexity may be atypical of other public institutions. The researcher concentrated on analysing key procurement themes in order to counter the effects of this uniqueness.

Respondents' Biases: A threat of respondents' biases was present hence the researcher triangulated evidence from the different data sources.

Complexity of Interview Questions: The researcher noted the ambiguity of questions on the considerations made when making buying decisions. In order to minimize this challenge, the researcher increased the list of probing questions that could be asked to broaden the discussions.

3.15 CONCLUSION

This third chapter outlined the methodology applied in the study. The researcher identified the research design and research strategy for the study. The population and

selection techniques used in the study were explained. Thereafter, the data collection instruments and justifications why they were selected were provided. Finally, the manner in which evidence was collected and analysed was outlined.

CHAPTER FOUR
RESEARCH FINDINGS, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter four is on research findings, analysis and discussion. The researcher commences the chapter by providing a background of the case evidence. Thereafter, the researcher presents the findings. An interpretation of the key findings follows and then the researcher discusses the evidence in light of concepts explored in the literature review section of the study. The chapter ends with a conclusion.

4.2 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

This instrumental case study was conducted at the University of Zimbabwe, the biggest public institution in the Higher and Tertiary Education sector. As a public institution, the purchasing activities of the University of Zimbabwe are governed by the Zimbabwe Procurement Act, Chapter 22:14 Procurement Regulations of 2002 which were promulgated to establish a State Procurement Board as well as to make provisions for the procurement of goods and services by public institutions.

Evidence in this study was gathered from fifteen respondents (Appendix 21) involved in public procurement processes within the University system. Responses were collected from all the levels of the UZ hierarchy (executive, administrative and functional level). This ensured that the researcher would not over rely on one group of respondents. Eleven of the fifteen respondents had been employed by the University for over ten years hence they were knowledgeable and experienced participants. The interview method was highly successful because the researcher was an employee of the same institution. This advantage also assisted the researcher to get permission to study internal records such as the Annual Management Reports prepared by external auditors for the years 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2012.

The researcher was able to use the observation method because he worked closely with the procurement function in his normal course of business. The researcher was also familiar with procurement processes as well as the participants under observation. This enabled the researcher to report on an internal view of evidence. Reflective dialogues were easily conducted to clarify observations.

The external view of the UZ's procurement processes was analysed by collecting documentary evidence available in the public domain. All the evidence from the various sources was arranged into five content areas as guided by the research questions and some of the key findings were as follows.

4.3 KEY EVIDENCE

4.3.1 State of the University Procurement System

Findings - Interviewee Evidence

Perspectives on the state of the University's procurement system were elicited by asking the question "How would you generally describe the state of the UZ's procurement system in the last five years (2009-2013)?" Some of the respondents said, "We used to pay before delivery and things would not come…we would follow up a product until we were tired" and "It has been poor, for example, all the tonners I have received are refills and these fail to print the minimum number of pages as stated on packaging."

The coded interviewee responses (Appendices 3 and 4) highlighted weaknesses such as a lack of policy guidelines, inadequate resources, sketchy supplier appraisal and unsatisfactory quality. A positive code which appeared to be contradictory was "improved product availability". Further probing revealed that this situation was attributed to the registration of more suppliers on the suppliers list without rigorous appraisal.

Findings - Observations

Sub-themes from the observations (Appendix 2) also revealed deficiencies in the procurement cycle. There was an absence of procurement evaluation, questionable procurement planning, unconvincing procurement formalization and incomplete procurement implementation.

Analysis

From the interviewee responses, it would appear as if respondents were generally unimpressed with the state of the procurement system. It seemed that stakeholders were concerned with the deficiencies that existed in the input, process and output stages. Seven of the twelve codes (Appendix 4) suggested that organisational challenges were responsible for weakening the input phase of the procurement system. UZ procurement rules and regulations were identified as the major source of the problems. Three of the twelve codes expressed dissatisfaction with the procurement processes and seemed to point to individual weaknesses as the reason for the problems. The last two codes pertained to inefficiencies in the output phase of the procurement system. The risk of financial losses and concerns over poor quality were raised and these challenges were mainly attributed to organisational and individual limitations respectively. A triangulation of interviewee evidence, the sub-themes from the researcher's observations and management records seemed to agree that the procurement system was ineffective.

Discussion:

The inefficiencies and ineffectiveness of the UZ's procurement system in the last five years confirm the concerns raised in the 2012 Mid –Year Fiscal Policy Review. The WB's argument that the mere presence of important factors such as legal and procurement system frameworks cannot describe how well a procurement system works was confirmed in this study. In spite of the presence of a procurement legal framework and established procurement procedures, weaknesses in the study were similar to those identified by Waterman and McCue (2012).

4.3.2 Ability to Satisfy Stakeholder Interests

Findings - Documentary Evidence

UZ procurement regulations (Appendix 18) have been guided by The Procurement Act (Chapter 22.14) Procurement Regulations of 2002 which sets limits of various classes of tenders for public enterprises. The interest of these two regulations is to achieve economic reform and decentralisation of procurement procedures and authority.

UZ procurement regulations and The Procurement Act (Chapter 22.14) Procurement Regulations of 2002 as well as the UZ Prequalification Supplier Evaluation Form (Appendix 19) are also interested in the integrity of the public procurement process. They all insist that suppliers must be rejected outright if they do not meet the basic conditions which include being registered with the State Procurement Board, being properly registered with the Registrar of Companies and failing to produce a tax clearance certificate. Section (30:2) of The Procurement Act says that "a procuring entity in regard to any matter that is not prescribed in the Procurement Act may fix regulations provided that all suppliers are treated fairly and impartially." This demonstrates a desire for integrity in public procurement.

The Procurement Act, the UZ Regulations and the Public Finance Management Act [Chapter 22:19] seem to infer a desire to achieve value for money. Section 45 subsection C of The Public Finance Management Act (Appendix 20) said that personnel in public entities should **"take effective and appropriate steps to prevent any irregular expenditure and fruitless and wasteful expenditure ……"** and the other two documents insist on thresholds for different types of tendering.

A trend analysis of Annual Management Reports prepared by external auditors showed an increasing concern with regards to the lack of integrity of the procurement process. Although the Management Report for the year ended 31 December 2009 did not mention procurement at all, the annual reports which follow thereafter all question the integrity of the procurement process. In 2010, the external auditors noted the absence of central receiving point for purchases and this increased the risk of misappropriation of

assets. At the time when this study was conducted, the matter had not yet been addressed.

Interviewee Findings

An appraisal of whether the Central Buying Office had met the diverse stakeholder interests was evoked by asking interviewees the question: "Since 2009, has the Buying Office managed to meet different stakeholder interests?"

Examples of cases provided by interviewees (Appendix 7) suggested that the Buying Office had failed to meet stakeholder expectations such as achieving minimum quality standards, time deadlines, process integrity and value for money. Some of the interviewees provided the following responses. The fourth respondent said "When I come for a centrally procured product, the officer says that he will go to the Buying Office. However, the Buying Office does not know where to source the item, so they end up asking me…. where 'did you last buy' the items from?" The second interviewee was amused as he said that "the Buying Office is unable to gauge quality of deliveries because they do not even know the items purchased."

Respondents noted that the Buying Office had been successful in increasing competition with the second interviewee suggesting that "suppliers had increased by 70 to 80 percent because the UZ did not take time unlike other government departments which took long periods to pay." As respondents provided their responses, the first respondent giggled when the matter of non-procurement goals was being discussed. The fifth respondent stammered when asked about the same matter. These non-verbal cues suggested that non-procurement goals were not a major concern.

Analysis

Documentary evidence showed that public procurement at the UZ's was expected to achieve multiple stakeholder interests which included:
* Economic objectives
* Integrity

- Value for money

Coded responses (Appendices 5 and 6) suggested that the Buying Office was barely able to achieve primary procurement interests. Only two of seven codes noted that the Office succeeded in improving product sourcing and communication capabilities. The remainder of the codes on primary interest seemed to show major problems related to delays and poor quality of goods and services received in the UZ system.

With regards to secondary interests, it appeared as if there was total ignorance of environment and social interests. There was a resistance towards economic goals because on one hand engagement of local suppliers was explicitly opposed and price unattractiveness was given as a major excuse. On the other hand those respondents that argued that they supported economic goals revealed that this support was indirect. They explained that although they did not maintain an explicit agenda to support local suppliers directly, this interest group was promoted by being registered with the State Procurement Board. The two codes pertaining to the joint interests showed that the Buying Office was unable to address joint procurement interests like minimising transaction costs and building supplier commitment because of individual and product limitations. The two codes (Appendix 6) on competition interests showed that the Buying Office successfully enhanced its ability to identify potential suppliers. This improvement was however curtailed by the increased risk of non-delivery of goods and services procured by the UZ.

Discussion
The study confirmed that the UZ's public procurement system had multiple expectations which were both procurement and non-procurement related. This concurred with the arguments postulated by organizations such as the WTO, the ILO and UNICEF. It also resonated with the views of scholars like Walker and Brammer (2009). The UZ procurement system failed to satisfy important stakeholder interests because of reasons which included incompetence, inadequate market enquiry in the awarding of tenders and delays in decision making. These findings were comparable with findings made in

the 2011 Fiscal Policy Procurement Review Report by the Chartered Institute of Purchasing and Supply (CIPS) and Musanzikwa (2013). The researcher also noticed a divergent relationship between priorities of political leadership and respondents who were involved in public procurement. This phenomenon was highlighted by Murray's (2001a) study (cited in Murray 2009) and Thai (2001).

4.3.3 The Role Played by Buying Office in Procurement Process

Findings – Documentary Evidence

The Procurement Act has provisions allowing rules and regulations to be crafted by a public institution hence UZ procurement regulations were fundamental to the procurement process. The UZ regulations indicated that the University of Zimbabwe Internal Tender Committee was to give guidance to the rest of the institution on all procurement matters.

The researcher noted that UZ Procurement Regulations (Appendix 18) did not mention any role for the Procurement Office in any of the procurement processes (competitive bidding, informal tender and formal tender). With regards to competitive bidding, Section 2.1 of the UZ regulations said "Heads of Departments are to invite quotations, adjudicate the quotes, award the bid and then submit the name of the chosen suppliers and their registration details to the Bursar's office." Section 2.2 on informal tenders only mentioned the role of the University of Zimbabwe Internal Tender Committee and made no reference to the procurement personnel and Section 2.3 on formal tenders only explained the role of the State Procurement Board. This anomaly was also identified by the Management Report for the Year Ended 31 December 2012 which noted that "the University cannot keep track of whether all items acquired were received and recorded because there is no department designated to oversee the receipt of all goods acquired by the institution hence the UZ ran the risk of paying for fictitious goods."

Findings – Interviewee Evidence

Interviewee responses on the role played by the Buying Office in the procurement process were induced by asking the question **"**How would you describe the role of the

Buying Office in the University's procurement processes in the last five years?" Some of the telling responses to this question were "this is a powerless Buying Office because its role is too limited", "their main duty is to register companies….to just ensure that the companies are legal entities", "our Buying Office was not meant to buy…, they buy items for themselves but not for the institution", " there is no role for the Buying Office , it is just a control office", "people used to steal by ordering things and not deliver to the UZ…Central Buying relies on goods received vouchers but they do not verify the actual deliveries." The interviewer also noticed the following kinesics as interviewees expressed their opinions. The second respondent exclaimed that the Buying Office had been bypassed several times. The fourth interviewee chuckled, the fifth respondent made a sarcastic laugh and the sixth interviewee grinned as he stated that once he made decisions there was nothing that the Buying Office could do except to process the papers.

Findings – Observation notes

The evidence from the researcher's observations (Appendix 2) inferred a theme of ineffective involvement of the Buying Office in key procurement activities. Underlying meanings from reflective dialogues with respondents seemed to suggest that individual weaknesses were mainly responsible for ineffective involvement of the Buying Office in key procurement activities.

Analysis

Evidence (documents, observation and interviewee responses) seemed to point out that the role of the Buying Office was obscure. The researcher got the impression that the Central Buying Office played an administrative and reactive role because of a limited scope which basically involved processing purchasing paperwork. There were major deficiencies in the strategic and professional contributions of the Office as illustrated by cases noted in Appendix 10. The only exception was the provision of professional technical advice pertaining to foreign purchases.

A lack of coded responses (Appendices 8 and 9) on the strategic involvement of the Buying office seemed to suggest that the Office did not make strategic contributions to the procurement process. Eleven of the twenty five codes provided by respondents seemed to generally agree that the Buying Office performed more of an administrative role which mainly involved processing paperwork. Respondents inferred that there was a lack of professional involvement because of matters like poor supplier selection, mistrust of Buying office interventions and hasty decision making by the Office. Respondents also gave the impression that the Buying Office was bypassed because of it lacked authority, there was a decentralised decision making system and the Office was unable to contribute to the procurement process.

Discussion:

The obscure role of the UZ Buying Office was contrary to Stuart's (1991) definition (cited in Schiele and McCue, 2006) of meaningful contribution by the Buying Office. The evidence showed that there was no useful collaboration of the Buying Office's knowledge and expertise in aspects of the acquisition processes. The Office did not holistically contribute to the public procurement process as was identified by Johnson and Leenders' (2003) study (cited in Schiele and McCue, 2006) or by Knight, Harland, Telgen's (2007) study (cited in Knight, Harland, Telgen and Caldwell, 2007). The Office appeared to be operating using Thai's (2001) model receiving what Matthews (2005: p.391) called marching orders. The UZ procurement system was also guilty of failing to recognise procurement as a profession and subordinating the function to finance and administration as was noted by the 2011 Fiscal Policy Procurement Review Report by the Chartered Institute of Purchasing and Supply (CIPS). In addition the UZ was also guilty of failing to develop project procurement and contract management skills leading to the incompetence described by Musanzikwa (2013).

4.3.4 Key Influences in Buying Decisions

Findings - Documentary Evidence

Section (34:1) of the Procurement Act on the eligibility of suppliers (Appendix 17) notes that public entities must engage suppliers who among other things have the necessary

competencies, legal capacity, have paid of all their taxes, are not insolvent, and have not been convicted of offences, in that order. The UZ Prequalification Supplier Evaluation Form (Appendix 19) shows that supplier engagement must be based on whether the suppliers are registered with the State Procurement Board, properly registered by the Registrar of Companies, Directors are not UZ employees and whether suppliers have a tax clearance certificate. Thereafter, it then says suppliers must be checked for capacity and other competencies.

The Management Report for the Year Ended 31 December 2012 appeared to question the integrity of procurement decisions that have been made over the years. It identified a risk of fraud as payments were made against quotations or pro-forma invoices. This increased the likelihood of paying suppliers who did not have the necessary capacity to meet UZ expectations.

Part (A) of Section 2.2 on Informal Tenders of the UZ Procurement Regulations said that "….ensure that all eligible indigenous suppliers and contractors are given an opportunity to compete for all tenders." This inferred that economic goals were a key consideration in procurement decisions.

Findings - Interview Evidence

When the researcher asked the question, "Since 2009, to what extent would you say that purchasing decisions by the Buying Office have considered the economic influences?", typical responses were provided by the fourth, sixth and seventh interviewees who said "although we want to support local suppliers, Government will lose because of expenses incurred", "some indigenous persons are developing into crooks" and "they change prices midway" respectively.

Respondents also noted that although integrity of the procurement process was a key influence in procurement decisions, it was being weakened by management pressure, rejection of UZ payment policy, procurement rules and regulations and a rejection official advice by client departments. As interviewees provided their responses, the

researcher noticed that the first interviewee smiled as he was highlighting the matter of management pressure on decision making. On this same issue, the second interviewee said "the timetable is there for 2014 but they want to buy last minute, why?" Such responses gave the impression that integrity of decision making processes was compromised.

From the responses provided by interviewees, the researcher also got the impression that there was mistrust of decisions made by the departments and the Buying Office personnel. For instance, the seventh respondent said, "When I explain my concerns about a product, Buying Office staff take the side of the supplier, why? Probably there is personal interest."

In explaining the influence of product complexity in procurement decision making, the first respondent had a sarcastic smile as he explained that procurement at the University's Medical School was technical hence the process required senior technicians' input. This seemed to suggest that the procurement of complex items was beyond the capability of the Buying Office.

Cases identified by respondents (Appendix 13) hinted that procurement decisions were also influenced by issues of quality and time constraints. With regards to quality considerations, the third interviewee said "they have no say, I get my three quotations and assess bids and I select the best companies. The Buying Office does not have input in terms of supplier selection." The seventh interviewee said "we have companies which take less than four months whilst others take much longer, that is why we sometimes process much more expensive quotations."

Analysis

The Procurement Act Section (34:1) says that the first responsibility of a procuring entity when assessing eligibility of suppliers is to check the capacity of potential suppliers. However, the UZ prequalification regulations make this a secondary issue. Observations (Appendix 2) on state of the public procurement processes also

suggested that there was no supplier evaluation by management. A triangulation of data sources shows that capacity checks were required on paper but were not taking place on the ground.

Twelve of the eighteen codes (Appendix 12) suggested that procurement goals were the main influence of public procurement decisions. Most of the concerns were on price and integrity and this was followed by quality and time considerations. It would also appear as if non-procurement goals were not considered given the absence of coded responses on social and environmental influences. Whilst six of the eighteen codes were on economic goals, upon closer inspection, the researcher got an impression that there was resistance of economic goals of procurement given the explanations provided (Appendix 12).

Discussion:

Although Thai (2001) argued that trade-offs were required in public procurement, this study seemed to suggest that tradeoffs were minimal in the UZ procurement system. Procurement goals were the dominant influence whenever procurement decisions were made. The Buying Office was unable to apply "the most economically advantageous tender" concept described by Parikka-Alhola and Nissinen (2012) because it was reactive in most procurement processes. The study was able to confirm the influence of organisational and individual factors in public procurement decision making as argued by Matthews (2005) and the WB. However, the influence of societal factors was unclear. A lack of trust between the Buying Office and client departments as noted by Schiele and McCue (2006) was also apparent in the study.

4.3.5 Suggestions on How to Enhance Effectiveness of Buying Office

Findings - Documentary Evidence

Section (30:4) and Section 35 of the Procurement Act recommends record keeping for all procurement proceedings and justifications whenever any methods outside the norm have been used. Section 36 of the Act further advocates for public access to procurement regulations.

External auditors in their Management Report for the Year Ended 31 December 2010 recommended that there should be a central point for receiving of assets before being disbursed to the various departments. Although management acknowledged this lack, it continued unabated and this was noted in Management Reports for the Year Ended 31 December 2011 and 2012.

The Management Report for the Year Ended 31 December 2012 recommended that all purchases should be done and monitored by a central department. The department would be responsible for managing the entire process from approving the purchase order, sourcing suppliers, making the purchase and payments, receiving the goods and recording the goods.

Findings - Interviewee Evidence

Interviewee suggestions on how to improve the contribution of the Buying Office were called to mind by asking the question "How can the Buying Office improve its involvement in the UZ buying system?"

Some of the common responses to this question came from the second interviewee who said that the fact that some of the employees involved in procurement processes had not gained sufficient work experience from other employers meant that they lacked exposure in best procurement practices. Related responses came from the fourth and fifth interviewees who said that "We write Goods Received Vouchers but the Buying Office does not know the actual goods so how can they make recommendations?" and "They cannot help when they do not even know the fridges where items are stored. You cannot just look at purchase order book and make suggestions" respectively.

A common code accentuated the establishment of clear policies to govern the public procurement processes at the UZ. Evidence provided by interviewees (Appendix 15) suggested that legislative improvements by the UZ were required to improve the involvement of the Buying Office.

Analysis

The coded responses seemed to suggest that improvements were needed throughout the system. This made sense given that respondents had earlier noted concerns in the whole system. Thirty of the thirty-four codes called for non-legal improvements mainly in the input phase of the public procurement system. Respondents called for relatively more non-legal improvements in the processes phase than in the output phase. Interestingly, all the four codes in the input phase of the public procurement system were legal improvements and this seemed to suggest that respondents needed a legal platform for the Buying Office to play a more effective role and to apply all its competencies in the procurement process. The codes (Appendix 15) seemed to suggest that there were significant individual limitations which needed to be addressed in addition to organisational limitations. Cases illustrated by the respondents (Appendix 16) also seemed to suggest improvements at organisational and individual levels. There was minimal concern towards suggesting measures that would address product and societal limitations.

Discussion

The acceptance of the need to reform the public procurement system by respondents is in sync with suggestions put forward by institutions such as the ADB, WTO and CIPS. The call by interviewees for more regulations concurs with what Thai (2001) and McCrudden (2004) suggested. This view appears to be more appropriate than the contrary view suggested by Glock and Broens (2013) which calls for the simplification of procurement rules because respondents generally accepted that the behaviour of individuals involved in the UZ public procurement process could not be effectively controlled without implementing additional rules and regulations.

4.4 CONCLUSION

This fourth chapter was on the research findings, analysis and discussion of the research evidence. A background of the data gathered was first provided. Thereafter, the researcher presented and examined the data through manual content analysis of

interview texts, text notes from observations and documentary evidence. The evidence was discussed and then a conclusion closed the chapter.

CHAPTER FIVE
CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This final chapter is on conclusions and recommendations from the study. The researcher provides conclusions to the research questions and research propositions. Recommendations on how to enhance the contribution of the Buying Office are provided. Thereafter, the researcher explores the theoretical contribution of the study and concludes by suggesting areas for further research.

5.2 CONCLUSIONS

The thrust of the study was to inquire whether the UZ Buying Office was effectively involved in the public procurement system and the answer to this was that the Buying Office had not been effectively involved in the UZ procurement system.

The first research question required the researcher to assess whether the Buying Office had met the expectations of major stakeholders in public procurement. The answer to this question was that the UZ Buying Office had failed to meet critical expectations. Stakeholders expressed dissatisfaction with the failure by the Buying Office to effectively meet procurement and competition goals. They were also concerned with the Buying Office's ignorance of non-procurement and joint goals despite the fact that these goals were critical expectations of stakeholders who dealt with this public institution.

The second research question sought to identify the role played by the UZ Buying Office in the public procurement system. The study noted that the Office only played an administrative role in the public procurement system. There was no strategic involvement of the Office. In some cases, the Office was bypassed completely in the procurement processes and professional contribution was negligible. This partial role was attributed not only to organisational flaws but also to individual and product challenges.

The third research question required the researcher to discover the key considerations which have influenced the buying decisions in the procurement processes. The study showed that instead of balancing procurement and non-procurement goals, decisions were centered on procurement goals. Attempts by the Buying Office to encourage the awarding of orders that are the most economically advantageous were resisted because of unclear procurement policies, mistrust of the Buying Office and procurement decisions were being made by persons who were not professionals in procurement.

The fourth research question wanted to find out possible solutions that would help the Buying Office to contribute more effectively to the UZ procurement processes. The study noted that reforms throughout the system were vital. There was need for legal reforms to set the proper platform for the Buying Office to apply its competencies in the procurement process. In addition there was need for the Buying Office to carry out functional improvements in the public procurement system.

5.2.1 Proposition Validation

The research propositions in the study were also based on the involvement of the Buying Office in the public procurement process.

Proposition One

The foremost proposition argued that in order for a Buying Office to effectively contribute to public procurement, it must be involved in each and every buying process. The partial role played by the UZ Buying Office and the consequent weaknesses like poor decision making and increased risk of fraud in the UZ system confirmed that if a Buying Office is not directly involved in all the procurement processes, its role becomes menial and the procurement system becomes ineffective. Therefore, this proposition was accepted.

Proposition Two

The second proposition was that public procurement cannot be effective without strategic input from the Buying Office. The evidence showed that the Buying Office only

contributed administratively and did not play effective professional and strategic roles in all forms of public tendering leading to a failure to satisfy different stakeholder interests in public procurement. Procurement decisions were left to individuals oblivious of the impact of their actions on public procurement interests and on the long term needs of the UZ. This proposition was supported by evidence hence it was accepted.

Proposition Three

The third proposition argued that there were other limitations beyond organisational weaknesses responsible for weakening the contribution of the Buying Office in public procurement systems. Beyond organisational limitations, the study noted individual limitations and product or service limitations which negatively impacted on the ability of the Buying Office to contribute in decision making. This supporting evidence meant that the proposition was accepted.

5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

The researcher recommends the following improvements to the UZ procurement system

5.3.1 Amendment of UZ Regulatory Framework

The existing UZ procurement rules must be changed to integrate the significant role which must be played by the Buying Office. This will ensure that procurement professionals can then apply their skills and experience in the public procurement processes.

5.3.2 Restructuring the Buying Unit

The Buying Office must be restructured from the current set up where it operates under the Finance function to become a stand-alone department of the UZ. Benefits of such a move will include the allowance of balanced procurement decisions to be taken. This will manage the dominance of procurement interests such as financial considerations. The development of this key function will create the necessary capacity and skills required to carry out essential procurement activities like procurement planning, procurement formalization, procurement implementation and procurement evaluation.

5.3.3 Education, Training and Development

The UZ must engage properly qualified, competent and experienced personnel to man the public procurement function. This will further build on existing capabilities of the department. The UZ must ensure that the procurement personnel receive continuous professional training in order for them to be able to adopt international best practices in public procurement.

5.4 THEORETICAL CONTRIBUTION OF THE STUDY

5.4.1 Development of a Conceptual Model

Initially the researcher had proposed the following model to represent effective contribution by the Buying Office.
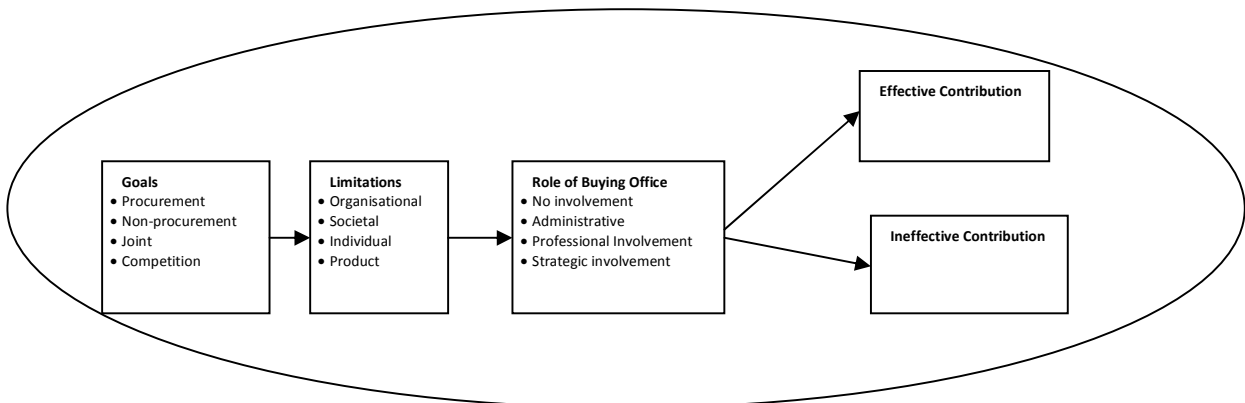
Figure 5.1: Initial Conceptual Model of Effective Contribution in Public Procurement

After analysing the evidence, the researcher noted that it was difficult for a public procurement to be effective whenever the Procurement Office was either bypassed or did not contribute strategically to the public procurement processes. Consequently, the researcher modified this initial model to take into account this evidence.
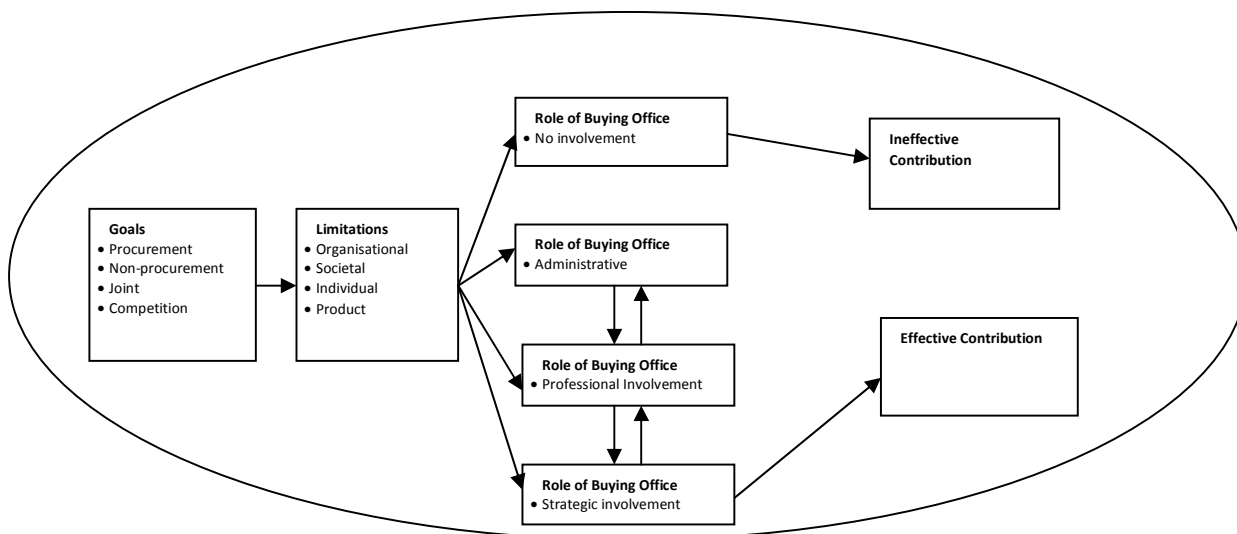
Figure 5.2: Modified Conceptual Model of Effective Contribution in Public Procurement

5.4.2 Empirical Evidence

Whilst related studies critiqued in the literature review chapter lacked complex analysis of single cases, for example the study by Musanzikwa (2013), this UZ case study helped to reduce this space.

5.4.3 Methodological Contribution

This study incorporated the interests of political leadership and government which has been a major oversight of other studies as denoted in the literature review. Secondly, studies on public procurement have used quantitative instruments which limited the access to in-depth and internal perspectives on public procurement phenomena. By engaging in reflective dialogues, the researcher managed to further probe respondents.

5.4.4 Managerial Recommendations

The researcher identified practical recommendations to enhance the contribution of the procurement professionals and to also improve the whole public procurement system in general.

5.5 GENERALISATION

The results from this study have shown that the role played by procurement professionals in public procurement has been ineffective. These recommendations are useful for other public institutions as well. If public institutions evaluate the role of procurement professionals by critiquing the public procurement legal framework, procurement and decision making systems and procurement administration systems, they would likely identify similar issues.

5.6 AREAS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

Further research should be carried out on how to enhance the involvement of the State Procurement Board in public procurement. There is need to study the contribution of this establishment in public procurement. It is a vital cog in effective public procurement because of its mandate which involves overseeing formal tendering, registering potential suppliers used in competitive bidding and providing procurement guidelines for public sector institutions.

The impact of social factors in the public procurement system is another area for further study. This research has shown how individual, product and organisational factors affect behaviour in public procurement. However, complexities caused by social factors need to be examined as this will help to explain the behaviour of Buying Office personnel in public sector procurement.

REFERENCES

1   Achuora, J., Arasa, R., and Ochriri. G. (2012). Precursors to Effectiveness of Public Procurement Audits for Constituency Development Funds (CDF) in Kenya, *European Scientific Journal*, Volume 8, No.25.

2   Appleton, J.V, and Cowley, S. (1997). Analysing Clinical Practice Guidelines. A Method of Documentary Analysis, *Journal of Advanced Nursing,* Volume 25, pp 1008-1017

3   Araujo, A. (2002). *Country Procurement Assessment Report*, viewed 21 February 2013, http://go.worldbank.org/J2H75S2RB0

4   Bajari, P., McMillan, R., and Tadelis, S. (2008). Auctions Versus Negotiations in Procurement: An Empirical Analysis, *The Journal of Law, Economics, & Organization*, Vol. 25, No. 2, doi:10.1093/jleo/ewn002, viewed 21 February 2013, http://jleo.oxfordjournals.org/

5   Baxter, P., and Jack, S. (2008). Qualitative Case Study Methodology: Study Design and Implementation for Novice Researchers, *The Qualitative Report,* Volume 13 Number 4 December 2008 544-559, http://www.nova.edu/ssss/QR/QR13-4/baxter.pdf

6   Bowen, G.A. (2005). Preparing a Qualitative Research-Based Dissertation: Lessons Learned, *The Qualitative Report,* Volume 10, Number 2, pp. 208-222, viewed 6th April 2013,   http://www.nova.edu/ssss/QR/QR10-2/bowen.pdf

7   Brammer, S. and Walker, H. (2011). "Sustainable Procurement in the Public Sector: An International Comparative Study": *International Journal of Operations & Production Management,* Vol. 31 Issue: 4, pp.452 – 476, DOI: 10.1108/01443571111119551 (Permanent URL)

8   Bryman, A. (2012). *Social Research Methods*, 4th Edition, Oxford University Press, New York.

9   Bryman, A., and Bell, E. (2012). *Business Research Methods*, Second Edition, Oxford University Press, Oxford.

10 Cassell, C., and Symon, G. (2004). *Essential Guide to Qualitative Methods in Organizational Research,* Sage Publications, London.

11 Chartered Institute of Purchasing and Supply (2011). *A Procurement View of Zimbabwe Mid-Year Fiscal Policy Review Statement*, viewed on 10 February 2013, https://www.cips.org

12 Creswell, J.W. (2012). *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing Among Five Approaches*, SAGE Publications, London.

13 Davoudi, S. (2012). The Legacy of Positivism and the Emergence of Interpretive Tradition in Spatial Planning, *Regional Studies*, p.429-441, http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/00343404.2011.618120

14 De Vaus, D.A. (2003). *Research Design in Social Research*, Sage Publications, London.

15 Denscombe, M. (2010). *The Good Research Guide: For Small-scale Social Research Projects*, Fourth Edition, Open University Press, Berkshire.

16 Denzin, N. K., and Lincoln, Y.S. (2003). *Strategies of Qualitative Inquiry*, 2nd Edition, Sage Publications, California, viewed 11th April 2013, http://books.google.co.zw/books

17 Denzin, N.K. and Lincoln, Y.S. (2005). *Handbook of Qualitative Research*, Third Edition, Sage Publications, Carlifornia, viewed 6th April 2013, web.media.mit.edu/.../Denzin

18 Denzin, N.K., and Lincoln, Y.S. (2005). *The Sage Handbook of Qualitative Research,* Third Edition, Sage Publications, California.

19 Eisenhardt, K.M., and Graebner, M.E. (2007). Theory Building from Cases: Opportunities and Challenges, *Academy of Management Journal*, Vol. 50, No. 1, 25–32. doi:10.5465/AMJ.2007.24160888

20 Fraenkel. J.R., and Wallen, N.E. (1993). *The Comparative Approach: Theory and Method,* Sage Publications, viewed 15 April 2013 on www.sagepub.com/upm-data/9869_039458Ch02.pdf

21 Glaser, B.G., and Strauss, A.L. (2012).*The Discovery of Grounded Theory: Strategies for Qualitative Research*, Seventh Edition, Transaction Publishers, USA.

22 Glock, C.H., and Broens, M. G. (2013). Size and Structure in the Purchasing Function: Evidence from German Municipalities, *Journal of Public Procurement*, Volume 13, Issue 1, pp.1-38.

23 Government of Zimbabwe. *Procurement Act of Zimbabwe Chapter 2:14 of 1999 and Chapter 22 of 2001*, Government Printers, Harare.

24 Government of Zimbabwe. *Public Finance Management Act Chapter 22:19 of 2009*, Government Printers, Harare.

25 Government of Zimbabwe. *The 2012 Mid-Year Fiscal Policy Review: "From Crisis to Austerity: Getting Back to Basics*", Presented by Hon. Minister of Finance, T. Biti to the Parliament of Zimbabwe, 93-94, viewed 6 February 2013, http://www.zimra.co.zw

26 Graneheim, U.H., and Lundman, B. (2003). Qualitative Content Analysis in Nursing Research: Concepts, Procedures and Measures to Achieve Trustworthiness, *Nurse Education Today*, volume 24, pp.105–112

27 Guba, E.G., and Lincoln, Y.S. (1994). *Handbook of Qualitative Research* (pp.105 - 117). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

28 Hennink, M., Hutter, I., and Bailey, A. (2011). *Qualitative Research Methods*, Sage Publications Ltd, London.

29 Hesse-Biber, S.N., and Leavy, P. (2011). *The Practice of Qualitative Research,* Second Edition, Sage Publications, London.

30 http://report.globalintegrity.org/Zimbabwe/2009/scorecard/62 20, viewed on 19th April 2013

31 http://www.afdb.org, viewed on 19th April 2013

32 http://www.sagepub.com/upm-data/9869_039458Ch02.pdf, viewed 15 April 2013

33 Kawulich, B.B. (2005). Participant Observation as a Data Collection Method, Forum Qualitative Sozialforschung / Forum: *Qualitative Social Research*, *6*(2), Art. 43, http://nbn-resolving.de/urn:nbn:de:0114-fqs0502430.

34 Knight, L., Harland, C., Telgen, J., Thai, K.V., Callender, G., and McKen, K. (2007). *Public Procurement: International Cases and Commentary*, Routledge, New York.

35 Krefting, L. (1991). Rigor in Qualitative Research: The Assessment of Trustworthiness, *American Journal of Occupational Therapy*, Volume 45, Number 3.

36 Lambert, V.A., and Lambert, C.E. (2013). Writing Appropriate Methods Section for a Research Article: Design, Ethical Considerations and Sample, *Thai Journal of Nursing Research,* Volume 13(3).

37 Lester, S. (1999). *'An Introduction to Phenomenological Research,'* Taunton UK, Stan Lester Developments viewed 15 April 2013, (www.sld.demon.co.uk/resmethy.pdf).

38 Lindskog, H., Brege, S., and Brehmer, P. (2010). Corruption in Public Procurement and Private Sector Purchasing, *Journal of Organisational Transformation and Social Change*, Volume 7, Number 2, doi: 10.1386/jots.7.2.167_1.

39 Matthews, D. (2005). Strategic Procurement in the Public Sector: A Mask for Financial and Administrative policy, *Journal of Public Procurement*, Volume 5, Issue 3, p.388-399.

40 Maxwell, J.A. (2005). *Qualitative Research Design: An Interactive Approach,* Second Edition**,** Sage Publications Inc, California.

41 McCrudden, C. (2004). Using Public Procurement to Achieve Social Outcomes. *Natural Resources Forum*, Volume 28, Issue 4, pages 257–267. doi: 10.1111/j.1477-8947.2004.00099.x

42 McCue, C., and Roman, A.V. (2012). E-Procurement: Myth or Reality?, *Journal of Public Procurement*, Vol.12, Issue 2, pp.221-248.

43 McKevitt, D., Davis, P., Woldring, R., Smith, K., Flynn, A., and McEvoy, E. (2012). An Exploration of Management Competencies in Public Sector Procurement, *Journal of Public Procurement*, Volume 12, Issue 3, pp. 333-355.

44 Merriam, S.B. (2009). *Qualitative Research: A Guide to Design and Implementation*, Jossey-Bass, California.

45 Murray, J.G. (2009). "Improving the Validity of Public Procurement Research", *International Journal of Public Sector Management*, Vol. 22 Iss: 2, pp.91 - 103 10.1108/09513550910934501 (Permanent URL).

46 Musanzikwa, M. (2013). Public Procurement System Challenges in Developing Countries: The Case of Zimbabwe, *International Journal of Economics, Finance and Management Sciences*, Vol. 1, No. 2, 2013, pp. 119-127. doi: 10.11648/j.ijefm.20130102.18

47 Parikka-Alhola, K., and Nissinen, A. (2012). Environmental Impacts and the Most Economically Advantageous Tender in Public Procurement, *Journal of Public Procurement,* Volume 12, Issue 1, pp. 43-80.

48 Quinot, G., and Arrowsmith, S. (2013). *Public Procurement Regulation in Africa*, Cambridge University Press, viewed 23 April 2013, www.cambridge.org/9781107028326

49 Rainford, P. and Tinkler, J. (2011*). Innovating in Public Sector Procurement: London School of Economics and Political Science Research Online,* viewed 21 February 2013, http://eprints.lse.ac.uk/37803/

50 Rea, L.M., and Parker, R.A. (2005). *Designing and Conducting Survey Research: A comprehensive guide.*3rd Edition, John Wiley and Sons Inc, CA.

51 *Research Philosophy and Qualitative Interviews*, Sage Publications viewed 15 April 2013 on www.sagepub.com/upm-data/43179_2.pdf

52 Ross, L. (2011). *Public Sector Performance: A Global Perspective*. Chartered Institute of Management Accountants, p.1-16.

53 Schiele, J.J. and McCue, C.P. (2006). "Professional Service Acquisition in Public Sector Procurement: A conceptual model of meaningful involvement", *International Journal of Operations & Production Management*, Vol. 26 Issue: 3, pp.300 - 325 DOI (Permanent URL): 10.1108/01443570610646210

54 Silverman, D. (2011). *Doing Qualitative Research,* Third Edition, Sage Publications Ltd, London.

55 Statutory Instrument 171 of 2002 Procurement Regulations, Government Printers, Harare.

56 Streubert-Speziale, H., Streubert Streubert, H. J., and Carpenter, D.R. (2011). *Qualitative Research in Nursing: Advancing the Humanistic Imperative,* Lippincott Williams and Wilkins, China.

57 Tadelis, S. (2012). Public Procurement Design: Lessons from the Private sector*, International Journal of Industrial Organization*, Volume 30, Issue 3, p. 297– 302.

58 Thai, K.V. (2001). Public Procurement Re-examined, *Journal of Public Procurement*, Volume 1, Issue: 1, p.9-50

59 University of Zimbabwe 2011 Audited Financial Statements, BDO Chartered Accountants, Harare.

60 University of Zimbabwe Financial Regulations, viewed 16 February 2013, www.uz.ac.zw

61 Van Teijlingen, E. and Hundley, V. (2001). The Importance of Pilot Studies*, Social Research Update,* (35), pp. 1-4.

62 Walker, H. and Brammer, S. (2009). Sustainable Procurement in the United Kingdom Public Sector, *Supply Chain Management: an International Journal*, Vol.14(2),pp.128–137, DOI (Permanent URL): 10.1108/13598540910941993

63 Walsh, M., and Wigens. L. (2003). *Introduction to Research: Foundations in Nursing and Health Care*, Nelson Thornes Ltd, Cheltenham.

64 Waterman, J., and McCue, C., (2012). Lean Thinking within Public Sector Purchasing Department: The Case of The U.K Public Service*, Journal of Public Procurement*, Volume 12, Issue 4, pp.505-527.

65 *What is Research Design*, Lecture Notes, viewed 28 February 2013, http://www.nyu.edu/classes/bkg/methods/005847ch1.pdf.

66 Woods, P. (2006). *Qualitative Research*, Faculty of Education, University of Plymouth, viewed 26 February 2013, http://www.edu.plymouth.ac.uk

67 World Trade Organisation, *Government Procurement,* viewed 21 February 2013, http://www.wto.org

APPENDIX 1:

Interview Guide

Interview Topics

Topic1: Has the Buying Office met stakeholder interests in public procurement?

Topic 2: The role played by the Buying Office in public procurement.

Topic 3: Buying Office considerations when making buying decisions in public procurement.

Topic 4: Recommendations on how to improve the involvement of the Buying Office in public procurement.

Opening Question: From your point of view, how would you generally describe the state of the University's procurement system in the last five years (2009-2013)?

Probing Questions

Topic1: How has the Buying Office handled stakeholder expectations in the public procurement process?

1.) Since 2009, has the Buying Office met the different stakeholder interests in public procurement?

Procurement Goals:

- Quality: Do your suppliers produce materials with consistent quality?
- Timeliness: Do suppliers consistently meet your requirements?
- Cost:
- Maintaining integrity

Non-procurement Goals

National policy priorities like:

- The support of domestic firms,
- Environmental protection,
- Other social goals like supporting the disabled and disadvantaged members of the society.

Joint Goals

- Reducing transaction costs
- Enhancing supplier commitment:

Competition Goals

- Fair competition: How has the number of suppliers to UZ changed in the last five years? (Walker and Brammer, 2009)

2) How would you describe the prioritisation of these interests?

Topic 2: The role played by the Buying Office in public procurement

a) How would you describe the contribution by the Buying Office in the University's procurement processes in the last five years?

b) Have there been cases when the Buying Office:
   - Was completely by-passed?
   - Provided mainly documentary (administrative) support?
   - Provided mainly specialist support?
   - Provided mainly strategic contribution (with emphasis on UZ strategy and national policy)?

c) Why do you think that the Buying Office has been involved in the manner that you have just described above?

Topic 3: Considerations when making buying decisions

1) Since 2009, what have been the key influences of buying decisions?

a) To what extent would you say that purchasing decisions by the Buying Office have considered the following factors? (Schiele and McCue, 2006)

Environmental Factors

- Such as availability of suppliers

Organisational Factors

- Such as University policies and procedures
- Pressure for success by senior management

Client Department Factors

- Such as knowledge and experience of client departments
- Trust of purchasing department
- Willingness to accept guidance from the Purchasing Department

Purchasing Department Factors

- Broad knowledge and experience
- Knowledge of client needs

Product or Service Factors

- Complexity of the product or service required
- Urgency of product or service needed
- Monetary value of the service needed

Topic 4: Recommendations to improve the involvement of the Buying Office

1.) In your opinion, how can the Buying Office improve its contribution to the UZ buying system?

2.) What factors do you think could negatively affect the implementation of your suggestions mentioned above?

Thank you

APPENDIX 2

The Meaning Units, Condensed Meaning Units, Sub themes and Theme from Content Analysis of Observations on the State of the UZ Public Procurement Processes

Meaning Unit	Condensed Meaning Unit Description Close to Text	Condensed Meaning Unit Interpretation of Underlying Meaning	Sub- Theme	Theme
There are many files of approved orders that have not been delivered.	Many outstanding orders	Supplier capacity checks is ineffective	Absence of procurement evaluation	Ineffective Involvement of Buying Office in key procurement activities
Responsible signatories on the Supplier Evaluation Forms have not signed off to accept supplier evaluations	Signatories have not signed to approve evaluation of suppliers	Suppliers used have not been evaluated by management		
There is no Buying Representative involved Formal Tender Process	Buying Office Personnel not represented in formal tender process	No procurement specialists in procurement process	Questionable procurement planning	
Purchases are approved despite votes being underfunded	Approval of payment without checking budget	Poor control mechanism		
Preference for buying from middlemen as opposed to manufacturers	Orders awarded to more expensive middlemen rather than manufacturer who is cheaper	Compromised supplier selection	Unconvincing procurement formalization	
Procurement Module has not been implemented for over a year	Failure to operationalise procurement module	Failure to coordinate implementation of ERP system	Incomplete procurement implementation	

Meaning Units, Condensed Meaning Units and Codes on the State of the UZ Procurement System

Meaning Units	Condensed Meaning Units	Codes
The system has been rigid because it is controlled by provisions of State Procurement Board which sets thresholds that must be religiously followed.	Rigid system because of State Procurement Board guidelines	Rigid procurement rules
No vehicle to use to verify existence of suppliers	Absence of vehicle to use in executing duties	Inadequate tools of trade
Financial rules are silent on important issues such as non-procurement goals	Rules and regulations are not comprehensive	A lack of policy guidelines
Staffers are limited and cannot be saddled with a need for thorough understanding of all purchases.	Inadequate personnel leading to partial execution of duties	Inadequate personnel
Improved access and availability of products due to use of the United States dollar.	Improved products availability due to economic stability	Improved product availability
There is a lot of bureaucracy.	Bureaucracy slows processes	Slow processes
No coordination at all between Central Buying and personnel responsible for procurement in departments.	No coordination between Central Buying and departments.	Stakeholder disharmony
There is no system for supplier selection, except for checking sufficiency of documentation.	Inadequate supplier appraisal, limited to checking documentation	Sketchy supplier appraisal
There is an "us and them" relationship between the Buying Office and client departments.	There is no teamwork	Stakeholder disharmony
The problem pertains to responsibility, whether it is their responsibility or a	Uncertainty of roles in procurement process	Role conflict and uncertainty

department's responsibility.		
No clear policies in the case that suppliers offer alternative products	Unclear policy when orders are breached	Unclear policy
Not sure that all products paid for by the UZ are received	Loss due to pilferage	High financial risk
Poor supplier selection	Suppliers not effectively evaluated	Ineffective supplier selection
Mass procurement does not check individual quality	Quality of centrally procured goods has been questionable	Unsatisfactory quality
I have to go to a department and the department goes to the supplier instead of going straight to supplier	Unnecessarily long processes	Slow processes
When there is a problem I have to go to department instead of going to supplier	Delays in rectifying challenges	Slow processes
Despite not exhausting our budget allocation, we are told there are no funds.	Inconsistent guidance by University Management	Planning inconsistencies

APPENDIX 4

Codes, Sub categories and a Theme from Content Analysis of Narratives on the State of the UZ Procurement System

Theme	INEFFECTIVE PROCUREMENT SYSTEM			
Category	INPUT		PROCESS	OUTPUT
Sub-Category	Rules	Resources	Procedures	Resources
	Rigid procurement rules	Inadequate tools of trade	Slow processes	Improved product availability
Codes	A lack of policy guidelines	Inadequate personnel	Stakeholder disharmony	High financial risk
	Role conflict and uncertainty		Sketchy supplier appraisal	Unsatisfactory quality
	Ineffective supplier selection			
	Planning inconsistencies			

APPENDIX 5

Meaning Units, Condensed Meaning Units and Codes on the Satisfaction of Stakeholder Expectations

Meaning Units	Condensed Meaning Units	Codes
9 out of 10 rating given for sourcing of products.	Buying Office was more effective in sourcing products	Improved product sourcing
Problems in ensuring the timeliness of deliveries	Challenges in ensuring timely deliveries	Delays in receiving goods and services.
UZ procures a diverse range of products which affects the ability of the Buying Office to effectively assess quality of supplies.	Product diversity increases difficulties in monitoring quality	Poor quality control
The problem in trying to develop a competitive environment is that emerging local companies charge higher prices as they try to recover their initial investment.	Uncompetitive prices by emerging local competitors reduce competition	Uncompetitive prices by local competitors
Nothing done in terms of reducing transaction costs.	No efforts to reduce transaction costs	High transaction costs
The system allowed for payment before delivery increasing the risk of non delivery of several items.	Failure to ensure delivery by allowing payment before delivery	Risk of non-delivery
Deliveries are made on time because of favourable payment terms by UZ.	Prompt deliveries as a result of prompt payments	Timely delivery
The UZ supports national priorities because it uses companies vetted by State Procurement Board.	State Procurement Board vets potential suppliers to ensure they are compliant with national policies.	Support of national priorities
We promote greater competition by looking at CR14 to check directors.	Ownership documents are examined to increase competitors	Increased competition
Environmental concerns are not managed because we are not even	There is a lack of knowledge on sustainable procurement goals.	Ignorance of non-procurement goals

aware of requirements of organizations like EMA		
Minimising transaction costs hampered because different faculties buy the same items at different prices.	Decentralisation increases transaction costs	High transaction costs
Not involved in improving supplier commitment because the system is decentralized. In addition there is also the problem of jargon	Decentralisation and jargon affecting ability to improve supplier relationships	No effort to build supplier commitment
Difficult to monitor the quality deliveries because of decentralisation.	Decentralisation makes it difficult in monitor quality of deliveries	No quality control
There is no shortage of suppliers but most suppliers are chancers	Most potential suppliers are unable to meet UZ expectations	Poor product quality
Locally we don't have products which are durable as locals look for refills which are brought back into the system	Local products are of inferior quality relative to imports	Poor product quality
Losing valuable time arguing and redoing the order and found wanting.	Delays in processing orders due to administrative differences	Delays in order processing
Even the orders made by Buying Office are being delayed	Lead times are long	Delays in receiving goods
Returns are there and quality is getting worse.	Increasing product returns for poor quality	Poor product quality
There is support of local firms since the registration criteria at State Procurement Board looks into this issue.	Reliance on State Procurement Board approved suppliers	Support of local suppliers
Nobody looks at issues like social goals like supporting disabled etc.	Ignorant of social goals of procurement	Ignorance of non-procurement goals
No problems with availability of companies, the only problem is on	Alternative suppliers are available but they differ on quality	Poor product quality

quality.		
There are many suppliers. As long as they are registered we can deal with them.	Abundance of suppliers to select from the registered suppliers list	Abundance of suppliers
In terms of integrity of the procurement process, we have had no problems because we are open with potential suppliers.	Integrity of procurement system has been maintained through open communication	Open communication system
We have challenges in terms of payments as our own cash flows show that we have money but we are told that we have insufficient cash.	Payments are slow due to inconsistent information	Transactions delays
There are chances that unauthentic documents have been considered or processed	Unauthentic paperwork corrupt genuine processes	Unauthentic processes
Purchase from retailers despite knowing the manufacturer who may be cheaper	Ignorance of stage in supply chain	Unfair competition
I always get refills which do not print minimum number of pages	Inferior products are received and this affects efficiency	Poor product quality
Buying becomes insensitive to our concerns regarding inferior quality	They do not appreciate our concerns	Poor product quality
They cannot trace supplier because of bulk buying	They are unable to pinpoint where problematic products come from.	Poor quality control

APPENDIX 6

Codes, Sub Categories and a Theme from Content Analysis of Narratives on the Satisfaction of Stakeholder Interests by the Public Procurement Process

Theme	ATTAINMENT OF GOALS IN PUBLIC PROCUREMENT								
Category	PRIMARY INTEREST				SECONDARY INTEREST			JOINT INTERESTS	COMPETITION INTEREST
Sub - Category	Availability	Timeliness	Quality	Integrity	Economic goals	Environmental goals	Social goals		
Codes	Improved product sourcing Risk of non-delivery	Delays in receiving goods and services. Delays in order processing Payment delays	Poor quality control Poor product quality	Open communication system	Uncompetitive prices by local competitors Support of national priorities	Ignorance of non-procurement goals	Ignorance of non-procurement goals	High transaction costs No effort to build supplier commitment	Increased competition Abundance of suppliers

APPENDIX 7

Cases Illustrating How the Buying Office Failed to Satisfy Stakeholder Expectations

Exemplar case	Summary	Contribution
Delay of over two and a half years to receive printers and eventually settling for equipment of questionable quality.	Failure to enforce contract specifications	Failure to achieve value for money
In stationery where they supply refills which damage equipment	Poor quality products damaging equipment	Poor quality control
Costs are not going down but quality is going down for example cartridges.	Price not commensurate with quality	Failure to achieve value for money
They promised to buy us uniforms a year ago and nothing has been done.	Delays in procurement	Failure to meet deadlines
Problems exist because there are no advance logistics such as shuttling fares.	Poor planning hinders integrity of procurement	Dishonest processes
Honesty when dealing with suppliers as they are told that "we cannot change horses in the middle of the race."	Open communication with suppliers	Process integrity
Our cash purchases are given to up and coming enterprises so there is fair competition	Support of emerging companies	Promotion of economic goals.
Even after assessing packaging, the Buying Office is unable to guarantee quality.	Failure to monitor quality of deliveries	Poor quality control

APPENDIX 8

Meaning Units, Condensed Meaning Units and Codes on the Role Played by Buying Office

Meaning Units	Condensed Meaning Units	Codes
Scope of the procurement department was limited and buying office was powerless to influence procurement decisions.	Buying Office has a limited scope which limits its influence	Limited scope
The contribution of the Buying Office was limited to administrative involvement. The client departments have been responsible for initiating orders and choosing supplier meaning that the process was a "done decision."	Departments initiate orders and choose suppliers	Decentralised decision making
The Buying office would only make sure of the existence and capacity of suppliers.	Mainly checking paperwork	Processing paperwork
Buying cannot ensure receipt of goods and this left many loopholes in the system.	Cannot physically verify delivery of goods and services.	No inspection mechanism
The Office is a recipient of decisions already taken and it was not empowered to decide.	Department has no decision making power making it a recipient of departmental decisions	Reactive involvement
Rarely specialist except in foreign buying.	Specialist support limited to foreign buying	Specialist support in foreign buying
Problem is that orders do not start with the Buying Office	Buying not involved in procurement planning	Reactive involvement
No communication and interaction with departments for instance just having meetings	No communication and interaction with departments	No collaboration with departments
Directives come from management to process purchases without sufficient detail given to	Directives implemented by Buying Office without sufficient detail	Processing directives

buying office		
When buying tries to intervene there is resistance because there is mistrust of buying office. Departments think that buying has an interest.	Mistrust of buying office interventions.	Mistrust of interventions
They do not know whether the order received meets all specs.	Buying office is unable to receive goods since it is not conversant with technical specifications	Incapable of assessing deliveries
Buying office only consulted when departments want companies	Mainly consulted in the process of identifying suppliers	Minimal consultation
We have strategies in place but we lack support from management and this allows departments to override Buying Office recommendations.	Decisions overruled by departments due to a lack of management support	Lack of authority
There were contradictions because departments would generate orders which are disregarded by Buying Office and the Office introduces its own companies which would be cheaper.	Conflict as a result of subjective parameters like price in supplier selection.	Price monitoring
The question is whether this is not a case of insider information given that the suggested alternatives would be cheaper.	Suspicion of insider information with regards to pricing	Price monitoring
Actual buying is done at departmental level, mandate of Buying Office is to moderate purchases	Decentralisation of procurement system means most work is done by departments.	Key procurement activities conducted at departmental level
Vetting is partial because of resource constraints	Assessment of suppliers affected by a lack of resources	Weak assessment of potential suppliers
Orders go through Central Buying Office, to ensure supplier compliance with UZ procedures	Buying Office assesses supplier compliance with UZ procedures	Compliance checks
Buying office not bypassed since all purchase orders pass through them and orders must have three quotations.	Buying Office mainly checks for compliance with UZ procedures	Compliance checks
They have no contribution. When I have recommended that is it.	Buying Office unable to alter departmental decisions	Rubber stamping

I do not know whether the Central Buyer phones suppliers.	Buying Office does not interact with suppliers	Minimal interaction
All they do here is to process requisitions	Buying Office mainly is involved in processing requisitions	Processing paperwork
I do not know whether they follow up on suppliers or phone companies to check prices or whether they exist	Buying office does not appraise suppliers	Minimal interaction
Role conflict because the department has its own buyer whose input should be considered.	Role conflict because of centralized and decentralized processes	Role conflict
Procurement processes slowed due to differences with the Buying Office.	Delays due to a lack of agreed procurement plan	Bottlenecks
The Office only suggests alternative suppliers without them first.	Recommendations by the Office are not bespoke due to a lack of client visits	Inappropriate recommendations
There is no contribution by buying office.	No contribution in procurement decisions	Rubber stamping
They are just there to expedite the process	Buying Office exists to quicken transactions	Expedite transactions
They are a clearing agent for imports	Mainly assist in foreign procurement	Handle import paperwork
They do not engage our suppliers which makes their role sketchy	Detached from supplier engagement	Minimal interaction
They are there to check papers	Check adequacy of paperwork	Document verification
We consult them if we are unable to find a supplier on the suppliers list.	Buying Office consulted to provide knowledge	Knowledge provision
University has not checked the suppliers' capacity	Buying Office not thorough	Hasty assistance

Codes, Sub categories and a Theme from Content Analysis of Narratives about the Role Played by the Central Buying Office in the UZ Procurement System

Theme	INVOLVEMENT OF BUYING IN PUBLIC PROCUREMENT			
Category	NO INVOLVEMENT	DOCUMENTARY INVOLVEMENT	PROFESSIONAL INVOLVEMENT	STRATEGIC INVOLVEMENT
Codes	Decentralised decision making No inspection mechanism No collaboration with departments Incapable of assessing deliveries Minimal consultation Lack of authority Procurement processes conducted at departmental level	Limited scope Processing paperwork Reactive involvement Specialist support in foreign buying Processing directives Price monitoring Compliance checks Rubber stamping Role conflict Bottlenecks Expedite transactions	Inappropriate recommendations Poor assessment of potential suppliers Mistrust of interventions Minimal interaction Knowledge provision Hasty assistance Foreign buying advice	

APPENDIX 10

Cases Provided to Illustrate the Role Played by Buying Office

Exemplar case	Summary	Contribution
Specialist support was provided by the buying office in the area of foreign buying.	Special support provided to manage importation logistics	Foreign buying support
Departments insist on the most expensive suppliers and send orders directly to management for approval without the contribution of the buying office.	Departments do not appreciate contribution of Buying Office	Buying office bypassed
There have been cases where payments were made for purchases which would not be delivered to the University.	Payments processed but no evaluation to verify deliveries	Partial contribution to procurement process.
When buying chickens, we assess the average weight per bird in order to derive standard portions in order to avoid problems when serving meals. Central Buying personnel do not appreciate such matters.	Lack of appreciation of procurement specifications by Central Buying	Unbefitting recommendations

APPENDIX 11

Meaning Units, Condensed Meaning Units and Codes on the Key Influences of Procurement Decisions

Meaning Units	Condensed Meaning Units	Codes
Reliance on technicians and personnel from client departments for expertise.	The office relies on departmental expertise	Lack of technical expertise
Management pressure affects decision making as the Office is perceived as creating bottlenecks	Management pressure to expedite processes leading to ignorance of processes.	Management pressure
University purchases predictable items except in a few cases when nature of product is complex	Purchase of predictable items allows standard procedures to be followed	Product Uniqueness
Whether suppliers are on suppliers list.	Suppliers must be registered on UZ suppliers list.	Rules and regulations
We compare three quotations	Price comparison	Price competitiveness
We consider whether they are retailers or suppliers	Consideration of stage in supply chain	Stage in supply chain
Reliance on IT department for specifications.	Technical specifications for IT related products provided by IT department	Lack of technical expertise
Pressure from management because of failure to plan ahead	Management pressure attributed to poor procurement planning	Management pressure
Products are sourced locally and not imported because of poor planning and communication.	Poor planning leading to emergency purchases.	Time
Successful in harmonizing requirements by trying to be ahead in sourcing diverse products.	Anticipation of client requirements	Time

No challenges with university policies and procedures.	University regulations are implementable	Procurement Regulations
The Buying Office personnel do not contribute as specialists, questions whether they have special training	No contribution because of lack of expertise	No buying office contribution
Some suppliers do not comply with University regulations by demanding payment upfront.	Suppliers veto UZ payment terms	Rejection of UZ payment policy
Other companies are also monopolies and dictate terms of trade.	Monopolies dictate terms of trade	Rejection of UZ payment policy
Central Buying Office overrides decisions based on price.	Decisions based on price	Price competitiveness
We tend to concentrate on a few suppliers because we are looking at quality.	Quality is a key influence in decision making.	Good Quality
No problems with supplier availability.	Easy to check alternative suppliers	Competition
There are no procedures except three quotations for competitive bidding.	Availability of three quotations is key for competitive bidding	Price competitiveness
Food does not have just in time but must be bought two weeks before it is consumed.	Control mechanisms limit pressure of procurement decisions	Timeliness
Pressure only faced when we have functions.	Unscheduled events put pressure on procurement decisions	Timeliness
Uncompetitive prices deter the promoting of economic and social goals, imports cheaper than locally available options.	Non-procurement goals not pursued because of price unattractiveness	Uncompetitive prices
The only guidance by the Office pertains to queries on prices.	Queries are mainly on prices quoted by the selected suppliers	Uncompetitive price quotes

When they make suggestions there is mistrust that they are benefitting improperly.	Mistrust of recommendations from buying office	Rejection of advice
Local suppliers do not have enough money	Lack of capacity of by local suppliers	Capacity limitations
Local suppliers cannot get product specifics	Lack of broad product range by local suppliers	Lack of product range
Local suppliers do not understand the business they are in.	Lack of business specialization	Lack of specialization
Local suppliers can be three times more expensive	Local suppliers more expensive than imports	Competiveness of imports
When faculties buy, they look at quality and availability	Availability of quality product	Good Quality
We procure everything else other than stationery because even in labs we look for people with technical knowhow	Technical expertise most important	Technical expertise
We rely too much on price	Concentration on price	Price competitiveness
We have companies that take more than four months whilst others take less time	Time considerations	Delivery Time
We know that chemicals all come from South Africa but we compare with local suppliers	Price different between import and local purchasing	Price

It is good and it is also bad to consider local suppliers because they lack business ethics	Unethical practices affect local sourcing	Unethical practices
Local suppliers shortchange us on price	Imports more competitive in terms of price	Price
We have no option but to buy from someone registered on UZ supplier list.	Forced to buy from registered supplier	Rules and regulations
No problem with supplier availability	Alternatives are readily available	Availability
We know that all the suppliers are buying from this cheaper source	Middlemen put unreasonable mark ups	Price
All we look at is the price from the three quotations	Price comparison	Price

APPENDIX 12

Codes, Sub categories and a Theme from Content Analysis of Narratives about the Key Influences of Procurement Decisions

Theme	KEY BUYING INFLUENCES						
Category	PROCUREMENT GOALS				NON PROCUREMENT GOALS		
Sub - Category	Time	Price	Quality	Integrity	Social	Economic	Environmental
Codes	Timeliness	Price competitiveness Stage in supply chain Uncompetitive price quotes Uncompetitive prices	Good Quality Technical expertise Product Uniqueness	Management pressure Rejection of UZ payment policy Procurement rules and regulations Rejecting official advice		Competition Capacity limitations Lack of product range Lack of specialization Competiveness of imports Unethical practices	

APPENDIX 13

Exemplar cases of key buying influences

Exemplar case	Summary	Contribution
Procurement policies were disregarded mainly when the university was purchasing unique items such as chairs and tables for major functions or servicing unique vehicles.	Formal procedures were disregarded when there were unique circumstances	Minimum quality standards
We have to disregard procurement processes for instance when there were problems with lighting problems.	Disregard process when emergencies occur	Time constraints
We used to have problems with departments who do not state their requirements on time.	Failure to plan putting pressure on process	Time constraints
When quotations come they say it is an inferior product for example when purchasing mercury.	Failure to make decisions due to a lack of technical expertise	Lack of technical expertise

APPENDIX 14

Meaning Units, Condensed Meaning Units and Codes on How to Enhance the Involvement of the Buying Office in the UZ Procurement System

Meaning Units	Condensed Meaning Units	Codes
The Buying office must be able to verify with alternative suppliers.	Need for market intelligence	Monitoring of suppliers
The need for a clear procurement policy framework.	Need for policy guidance	Policy framework
Mechanisms to ensure delivery	Need for checks to verify delivery	Audit processes
Provision of resources to improve the influence of this Office.	More resources needed	Resource provision
Need for greater communication with departments	Need for co-ordination between buying office and client departments	Communication and co-ordination
Need for a central receiving point	Need for a security check point	Receiving point
Need support from management in executing suggestions.	Need for management support	Managerial support
It is about getting the right product through identification of the right suppliers.	Need for rigorous supplier selection	Comprehensive supplier vetting
Integrity has been talked about but nothing has been done. There is need to talk and take action.	Need to put plans into action	Implementation of plans
Need for training to improve advice provided.	Need for procurement training to enhance advisory capability of buying office	Procurement training
Buying must interact with us so they know everybody's position.	Need for more interaction between buying office and departments	Increased inter-departmental communication and correspondence
It is their duty to ensure that every	Need to coordinate purchases	Co-ordination of processes

purchase is well coordinated.		
People have to be taught that whenever you make a purchase you must follow up.	Teaching of departments on the procurement process	Training of departments
We must decentralize administration of buying matters save a lot of time and money.	Decentralise processes to reduce procurement costs	Decentralisation of processes
Need someone to oversee whether there is actually delivered	Need for verification of deliveries	Verification of deliveries
There must be a team of professionals that have knowhow of suppliers and products.	Develop expertise and experience in procurement system	Professional training, effective recruitment
Buying Office must have lists of companies and frequently bought items that are computerised so that processes are more open.	Automate processes to improve integrity of processes	Automated business intelligence
There must be a joint exercise of procurement planning to improve the validity of bidding process.	Coordinated procurement planning	Coordinated procurement plans
There must be supplier visits before settling for suppliers to check capacity of suppliers, control	Supplier premises must be inspected	Supplier appraisal

systems, cleanliness and business ethics.		
There is need for cross functional teamwork between Central Buying and departments	Buying office must coordinate with departments	Coordinated processes
There is need clear policies and procedures.	Need for clear procurement policies and procedures	Process and procedures
Procurement should move away from the Bursary, a Procurement Manager can work with the departments effectively.	Restructure procurement function to enhance effectiveness	Restructure department
Need to go out in conjunction with departmental representatives.	Buying office must coordinate with departments	Coordinated processes
There must be clearly laid out procedures.	Need clear procurement procedures	Process and procedures Manual
Need for automation through the use of Enterprise Resource Planning systems which reduce human errors in recording	Automating procurement systems will minimise human error in processes	Automate processes
The buying office must also know the stock levels in department.	Buying office must be aware of inventory levels in departments	Oversee departments
Establish clear procurement policy	Establish formal procurement guidelines	Process and procedures Manual

addressing issues like minimum quotations, supplier compliance, general procedures and quality		
Source for products from internal counterparties first before engaging outsiders	Seek for internal solutions to needs and buy from outsiders as a last resort	Adopt internal solutions before outsourcing
Procurement must be centralized at faculty level for better control	Centralise procurement to enhance control	Centralise procurement
Teach buying office about supplier selection	Train buying personnel about procurement processes	Training
Buying must institutionalize processes in departments	Buying must oversee processes in client departments	Monitoring processes
Computerise procurement for better monitoring of inventories	Automate procurement processes	Automation
Departments must be able to transfer stocks to other counterparty departments	Interdepartmental transfer of stocks	Shared goods and services
Establish clear cost centers	Pin point cost centers for better control	Clear cost centers
More flexibility for quick purchases	More flexible procedures	Flexible rules
Buying personnel must be well versed with what we buy to appreciate what quality entails	Improve product knowledge through training	Training

Reduce size of purchases to avoid temptation of corrupt activities like kickbacks	Reduce size of orders to lower corrupt tendencies	Manage reorder quantities
Import products that have been noted as problem areas	Substitute local sourcing with foreign procurement for problematic areas	Foreign buying
Need for clear UZ procurement policy, addressing issues of 3 quotations, compliance of suppliers, procedures and quality	Need for clear policies	Process and procedures Manual
Need to source services and products internally within UZ system before engaging external counterparties	Sourcing goods and services from departments before engaging outsiders.	Internal procurement

Codes, Sub-categories and a Theme from Content Analysis of Narratives on How to Enhance the Involvement of a Buying Office

Theme	Enhancing the Involvement Procurement Process			
Category	Input stage		Processing stage	Output Stage
Sub-Category	Legal	Non-Legal	Non-Legal	Non-Legal
Codes	Policy framework Processes and procedures Manual Flexible rules Centralise procurement	Foreign buying Resource provision Comprehensive supplier vetting Managerial support Implementation of plans Procurement training Decentralisation of processes Effective recruitment Automated business intelligence Coordinated procurement plans Training of departments Restructure department Automate processes Adopt internal solutions before outsourcing	Communication and co-ordination Increased inter-departmental communication and correspondence Co-ordination of processes Oversee departments Coordinated processes Monitoring processes Clear cost centers Manage reorder quantity Internal procurement Shared goods and services	Monitoring of suppliers Audit processes Receiving point Verification of deliveries Supplier appraisal

APPENDIX 16

Examples of Required Improvements in the Procurement System

Case in Point	Summary	Contribution
Training programmes are critical because some departments do not know basic official documentation such as Goods Received Voucher notes.	Need to teach departments on procurement processes	Provide procurement training and education
Need to establish inventory control mechanisms to avoid the holding of unreasonably high volumes of inventory	Need to establish inventory controls	Provide business reports on inventory
Buying personnel must be able to check the packaging of stationery such as tonners.	There is need to inspect the quality of stationery deliveries	Quality control of stationery

APPENDIX 17

Sections of the Procurement Act

Section 34 subsection 1 of the Procurement Act on the eligibility of suppliers

"(a) possess the necessary professional and technical qualifications and competence, financial resources, equipment, facilities, personnel and experience to perform the procurement contract:

(b) The legal capacity to enter into a procurement contract;

(c) That suppliers are not insolvent, in liquidation or under judicial management …, and that proceedings have not been instituted …. for their sequestration or winding up or for placing them under judicial management;

(d) that they have paid all taxes, duties and rates for which they are liable in Zimbabwe, ….payments due under the National Social Security Authority Act [Chapter 17:04];

(e) That they are not ineligible to participate in procurement proceedings in terms of section forty-one;

(f) That …. in the preceding ten years have not been convicted in any country of an offence ….."

APPENDIX 18

University Procurement Regulations

1. INTRODUCTION

All the purchasing for the University of Zimbabwe is governed by State Procurement Regulations and its amendments from time to time. The Procurement Act (chapter 22.14) Procurement Regulations of 2002 reviews and *sets limits of various classes of tenders* for Public Enterprises as *part of economic reform and decentralisation of procurement procedures and authority.* The current value limits which are subject to review are as follows:

- Competitive Quotes   Below US$10 000
- Informal Tenders   Between US$10 000 to US$300 000
- Formal Tenders   Above US$300 000

1. THE PROCUREMENT PROCEDURES

In procuring all goods and services the University of Zimbabwe will have to adhere to the procedures articulated below governed by the following thresholds and conditions:

2.1 Competitive Quotes

- For goods and services below US$10 000(which are defined as competitive quotes), quotations should be obtained from a minimum of 3 suppliers. *The suppliers should be registered with the Registrar of Companies and the Department of Taxes and they "should be up to date with all forms of tax obligations."*
- When calling for quotations*, the written invitations should always state that these are submitted in sealed envelopes and should have a closing date and time.*
- For goods of US$10 000 and below – *Heads of Departments (i.e. Vice Chancellor, Pro Vice Chancellor, Registrar, Bursar, Librarian, IT Manager, Deans, Deputy Registrar (Academic), Deputy Registrar (Human Resources), Deputy Bursars and Departmental Chairpersons) are to invite quotations in writing using the list of suppliers in the University of Zimbabwe Internal Tender Committee data bank. They are to adjudicate the quotes, award the bid and then*

submit the name of the chosen suppliers and their registration details to the Bursar's office. The Bursar would then forward the combined list of suppliers from all departments to the Department of Taxes. If the suppliers in the University of Zimbabwe Internal Tender Committee recommended suppliers' data bank cannot supply, quotations should be invited from other suppliers.

- For goods above US$10 000 and up to US$300 000, bids must be submitted to and *adjudicated by the University of Zimbabwe Internal Tender Committee.*

2.2. Informal Tenders

For goods and services from US$10 000 to US$300 000, the following guidelines will apply:

a) *Department Heads shall submit their requests to the department responsible for procurement of Capital Expenditure items, currently the Registrar's department,* at least 2 months before the purchase or service is required.

b) The Registrar's office will present the request at the earliest Internal Tender Committee meeting from which invitations to tender are advertised in the press. The closing date and time is advised as well as the date for the opening of the bids to which tenderers are invited. The tenderers or their representatives are to be present at the opening of the bids and sign an attendance register administered by the Chairperson of the University of Zimbabwe Internal Tender Committee.

c) *The University of Zimbabwe Internal Tender Committee will adjudicate all informal tenders.*

d) The Attendance Register for the Tender opening sessions shall always be kept by the Secretary of the University of Zimbabwe Internal Tender Committee.

e) Minutes or a record of the tender opening shall be kept and signed by the Chairperson of the University of Zimbabwe Internal Tender Committee.

f) All tender documents shall always have bids evaluation criteria spelt out by the University of Zimbabwe Internal Tender Committee.

g) All informal tenders shall be approved by Vice Chancellor (Accounting Officer) through the University of Zimbabwe Internal Tender Committee.

h) There shall be no splitting of tenders (disaggregation) to bring the value to below the band levels. Where there is evidence of disaggregation, the State Procurement Board may withdraw the threshold authority.

i) The Vice Chancellor, through the Chairperson of the University of Zimbabwe tender Committee will *ensure that all eligible indigenous suppliers and contractors are given an opportunity to compete for all tenders.*

j) The Registrar's office should advise the department(s) that made the request of the outcome of the University of Zimbabwe Internal Tender Committee's adjudication in writing, quoting the University of Zimbabwe Internal Tender Committee resolution number within three days.

2.3 Formal Tender

For all goods and services from US$300 000 upwards, the following guidelines will apply:

a) *The Unit Heads will request for the requirements through Registrar's office* at least 4 months before the equipment or service is required.

b) The Registrar's Office should present the request to the University of Zimbabwe Internal Tender Committee in the form of an Invitation to Tender document and a Specifications of User Requirements (SOUR) document.

c) The University of Zimbabwe Internal Tender Committee reviews and adopts the documents. They are then passed on to the Registrar to present to the University of Zimbabwe lawyers and then to the Vice Chancellor before they are presented to the State Procurement Board.

d) After reviewing the documents, the State Procurement Board advertises in the press. The bids from the tenderers who respond to the advertisement are returned to the University of Zimbabwe Internal Tender Committee for

adjudication and ratification by the University of Zimbabwe Council through the Vice Chancellor.

e) *The results are returned to the State Procurement Board from where the authority to engage the supplier is then given.*

f) The department that initiated the request is informed in writing with the resolution number.

3. CONCLUSION

The above procurement procedures are as per the instructions given by the Ministry of Finance in Treasury Circulars 2 of 1994, 16 of 1998 and 6 of 2001 and its amendments. *The University of Zimbabwe Internal Tender Committee is to give guidance to the rest of the institution in all procurement matters.*

APPENDIX 19

UZ Prequalification Supplier Evaluation Form

CHECKLIST	YES	NO
1. Is supplier registered with the State Procurement Board		
2. Is the supplier properly registered with the registrar of companies		
3. Are the directors of the company workers of the University of Zimbabwe		
4. Does the supplier have a tax clearance certificate		
5. Is the supplier an Original Equipment Manufacturer		
6. Does the supplier have letters of distributorship		
7. Are trade references available		
8. Is the supplier's financial position satisfactory		
9. Does the supplier have a functional landline		

SCORE (%)………………

COMMENTS OF EVALUATORS

……………………………………………………………………………………

DECISION OF EVALUATORS   ACCEPT/REJECT

NAMES OF EVALUATORS   SIGNATURE

……………………………………………   …………………..

……………………………………………   …………………..

CENTRAL BUYER   …………………..

D/BURSAR PLANNING   …………………..

BURSAR   …………………..

Evaluation Criteria

1) Reject if conditions1 to 4 are not met

2) Reject if score is less than 50%

APPENDIX 20

Public Finance Management Act [Chapter 22:19]

Section 45 subsection C requires employees of public entities to *"take effective and appropriate steps to prevent any irregular expenditure and fruitless and wasteful expenditure and any under-collection of revenue due"*

APPENDIX 21

PROFILE OF RESPONDENTS

Hierarchy	Section	Years at UZ		
		-5	5 to 10	10+
Executives	Bursary			x
Technicians				
	Faculty of Science			x
	College of Health Sciences			x
	Faculty of Engineering			x
	Faculty of Agriculture	x		
	Faculty of Veterinary Science		x	
Administrators				
	Department of Accommodation and Catering	x		
	Works and Estates		x	
	Library		x	
	Central Buyer	x		
	Former Central Buyer	x		
Junior Non-Academic				
	Buying Office Clerk (1)		x	
	Buying Office Clerk (2)		x	
	Creditors Clerk			x
	Site and Transport		x	
	TOTAL	**4**	**6**	**5**