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An Assessment of Revenue Collection Constraints in Zimbabwean Local Authorities: A Case Study of Bindura Municipality (2009-2013)

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Abstract:

This research assessed the revenue collection constraints of Zimbabwean local authorities, taking Bindura Municipality in Mashonaland Central Province, Zimbabwe as a case study over the period 2009 -2013. The main objectives where to : identify the main sources of revenue of the local authorities, identify the drivers of revenue, identify rates payers perception of local authorities management of funds and to make recommendations on how local authorities can improve revenue inflows. The findings of the study were that: poor quality of service delivery, poor perception of governance systems, inadequate capitalization greatly affected the collection of revenue. The qualitative research collected primary data from selected municipality staff, ratepayers of Bindura and also used secondary published data. Both non-probability (purposive) and probability based(stratified random sampling) techniques were used to come up with the sample frame of 165 respondents. The major recommendations of the study where that in order to improve on revenue collection, local authorities should: improve on quality of delivery of services; carry out awareness campaigns on the importance of paying rates to the rate payers; embark on income generating activities; be up to date in audited financial report so as to attract donors; levy interest penalties on arrear balances as a deterrence measure and enhance public accountability.

Keywords: local authority, revenue, ratepayers, constraints. Drivers of revenue

1. Background to the Organization and the Study

Bindura municipality is the provincial capital of Mashonaland central, Zimbabwe and has enjoyed municipality status since 1999. It has approximately 100,000 residents. Since 2009 to 2013, there has been an outcry of poor service delivery provided by local authorities in Zimbabwe (Denhere et al (2011)), the root cause being liquidity challenges. The Minister of Local government and urban development had to employ powers vested in him [by the Urban Councils Act Chapter 29:15] to appoint resuscitation and advisory teams in several Zimbabwean towns such as Bindura, Chinhoyi, Redcliff and Chitungwiza at some point during the period covered by this study but ironically, the liquidity quagmires did not improve.

As part of decentralization efforts, the Zimbabwean government allowed revenue collection and expenditure responsibilities to local authorities who face the challenge of mobilizing appropriate levels of revenue to effectively fund services and infrastructure.

A sound revenue collection system is vital for proper running of local government (Oluwu and Wunsch:2003). In Africa, the revenue collection systems are often inefficient and large amounts of revenues are left uncollected, whilst that collected are sometimes inappropriately managed. (Fjeldstad 2005)

Revenue generation in Zimbabwe local authorities is mainly derived from levies. Internal revenue sources denotes all incomes from local taxes, rates, development levies, fees, fines and income generating activities which local authorities mobilize from within and outside their jurisdictional arenas. According to Larson (2004), local authority collection systems vary depending on size of

jurisdiction, payment methods allowed and the nature of revenues received. External sources of funds include government transfers, grants and loans. However external revenue sources force recipients to do what the donor wants, in place of priorities set up by Local Authorities.

1.1. Justification of the Research

Bindura is the administrative capital of Mashonaland Central Province, Zimbabwe and it has the provincial hospital, provincial police command, three universities, provincial administration, as well as thousands of newly resettled farmers who depend on it for goods and services. It must therefore be well administered and financial matters are a vital ingredient of any administration. The extent of revenue collection is therefore an important factor in the well being of any organization and this spurred this research to identify what is happening and what needs to be done to enhance revenue collection at Bindura municipality.

1.2. Research Problem

1.2.1. Bindura Municipality's Uncollected Debt Pattern

The introduction of the multi currency system did not produce any substantial relief to Bindura Municipality in terms of revenue collection. The local authority was owed \$2.33 million as at 31 December 2009, \$4.24 million at 31 December 2010, \$6.73 million in 31 December 2011 \$7.99 million in 2012 and \$4.98 million in 2013. In July 2013, all local authorities were directed by the minister to write off all arrears on outstanding debts as at that date and this explains the significant decline in arrears at the end of 2013. Commercial and industrial ratepayers were excluded from this benefit. The local authority lagged behind in delivery of quality service to its residents as a result of lack of funding.

1.2.2. Uncollected Debt in Million Dollars

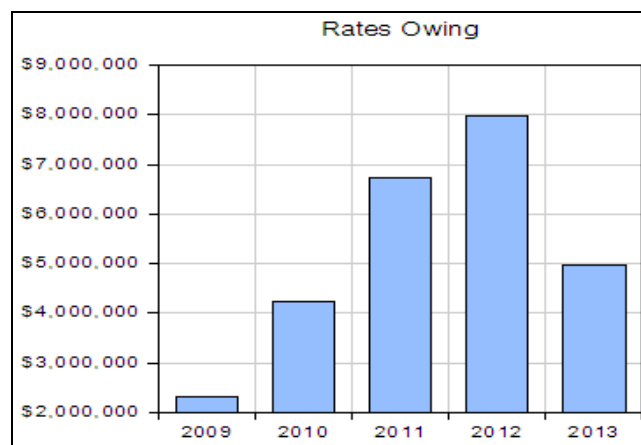


Figure 1

Source: secondary data

Like many local authorities in Zimbabwe, Bindura Municipality owed its employees' salaries dating back to 2010. On a number of occasions, the Zimbabwe Electricity Authority (ZESA) switched off power to the local authority in order to recover overdue debts.

Revenue performance has been declining over the years due to evasion which has increased. Levies are crucial because they are the main source of local revenue.

Despite the Zimbabwean government directive to all Zimbabwean local authorities to wipe off all arrears on rates in July 2013, Bindura municipality is already saddled with arrear balances and this has affected financing of its budget.

Water is rationed, garbage is sporadically collected and there are persistent sewerage blockages in the high density and highly populated suburbs of Chipadze and Chiwaridzo. The road network is riddled with potholes and urgently needs major revamping.

During the period September 2008 to March 2012, UNICEF donated water treatment chemicals to all Zimbabwean local authorities in order to assist in supply of healthy drinking water. Expectations were very high that liquidity for Local Authorities, Bindura included, would improve since water chemicals contribute a large percentage of Local authority expenditure.

If there is poor revenue inflows, donors and Central government will ultimately remain major sources of revenue hence reducing the autonomy of local authorities.

1.3. Research Questions

- What variables explain the revenue collection pattern at Bindura Municipality?
- What are the major sources of revenue for Bindura Municipality?
- What measures can be initiated to improve revenue collection at Bindura municipality?
- How do ratepayers perceive payments of rates to the municipality?

- What other revenue sources can benefit Bindura Municipality?

1.4. Importance of this Study

This study addressed the critical issues of revenue collection methods for Bindura municipality in particular and several other Zimbabwean local authorities in general. Revenue inflows are the drivers of quality service delivery and the recommendations would result in a win-win situation to both the municipality and to the residents. Improved revenues would also reduce burden on the Zimbabwean central government to subsidise local authorities.

1.5. Delimitation of this Study

The information gathered covers the period from February 2009 (when Zimbabwe adopted the multi currency system) to February 2014. It was focused on Bindura Municipality, Mashonaland Central Province, Zimbabwe and it focused only on revenue collection constraints.

2. Literature Review

Local authorities are small democratic units which are created to spur democratic participation to citizens in matters that affect their daily lives. (Vosloo et al., 1974) and in Zimbabwe they are regulated mainly by the urban Councils Act Chapter 29:03. In Zimbabwe the size of local authorities range from municipalities, town councils, rural district councils and town boards. Mushuku et al (2012) concurs with Mangiza (1992) that local authorities are responsible for management of infrastructure and services, economic development and poverty alleviation.

2.1. Meaning of revenue collection

It is the compulsory contributions imposed by public authorities on residents, having jurisdiction, to defray the cost of their activities. (Ali-Nakyea, 2006). Local authorities in Zimbabwe are empowered to collect revenue for water, housing, street lighting, refuse removal, hospital and a host of other public services offered by the local authorities. Major external sources of revenue include loans for capital projects such as National Housing Fund, quotas from Zimbabwe National Roads Authority (ZINARA) for improvement of local roads and funding from International donors. Local authorities are also permitted by the Urban Councils Act to embark on revenue generating projects such as beer halls, farming activities, farm brick moulding and other activities in order to reduce reliance on tariffs to ratepayers. However, they are often poorly funded, poorly managed and devoid of adequate accountability systems and hence are not viable.

2.2. Guiding principles of local government finance

The House of Commons committee on Housing, Planning, Local Government and regions set forth the following guiding principles for any system of local government finances: equity, simplicity, flexibility, transparency, accountability.

- Equity: It must be fair or seen to be fair, as between different local authorities, within individual local authorities and in its impact on individuals;
- Simplicity: it must be relatively easy to collect; and easy for a taxpayer to understand as is compatible with equity and accountability;
- Flexibility: it must be adequate to changing economic and constitutional circumstances;
- Transparency: it must provide for a visible link to local levels of expenditure and
- Accountability: it must allow for authorities who raise and spend money to be, and be seen to be, accountable to the people they save.

The fundamental question to be asked is: are Zimbabwean local authorities taking into consideration these guiding principles in their bid to collect revenue from their community.

2.3. Revenue Collection Constraints Faced by Local Authorities

Dr Gono (2006), the then Zimbabwean Reserve Bank governor, in a quarterly financial review of the Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe, cited that the major challenges facing Zimbabwean local authorities were lack of transparency, lax corporate governance practices and poor policy implementation. He asserted that these challenges lead to dwindling revenue collections and hence budget deficits.

Gono (2006) further observed the following reasons as contributing to liquidity challenges in most local authorities:

- High staff turnover, especially critical professionals such as the technical staff and financial experts;
- Staff members remaining in acting positions for long periods;
- Lack of incentives to attract and retain qualified staff;
- Low staff morale;
- councillors who are political appointees, have tended to lack necessary technical expertise required for prudent policy making;
- Most of the councillors are into local authorities to pursue their own political self interests and may not necessarily add any value to the running of entities.
- Shrinking revenue base as traditional sources of revenue including property taxes, charges and grants, fees, rates, tariffs and loans from central government have shrunk steadily;

- Local authorities have found it difficult to levy economic rates because of the fear of political protest;
- Lack of adequate communication especially between the local authorities and stakeholders stalls progress in most cases;
- Much of the infrastructure such as water; roads; communication equipment and sewer pipes is old and constantly breaks down;
- Management of debt is poor as evidenced by huge mismatches between creditors and debtors;
- Declining Public Sector Investment Programme Support (PPSIP); and
- Some pieces of legislation tend to inhibit rather than enhance the role of local authorities.

USAID (2006) in an article titled *A Guide to Enhancing of Municipal Revenue* cited the following reasons for poor debt collection in South African local authorities:

- Lack of political will to enforce credit control measures on indigent households and councillors who influence the operations of officials;
- Lack of skills and capacity to manage the collection of outstanding debt;
- Incorrect interpretation of legislation pertaining to credit control and debt control procedures and
- Lack of integration and coordination among the financial management, credit control and debt collection systems within local authorities.

2.4. Enhancement of Local Authority Revenue

USAID (2006) suggested that revenue for local authorities can be improved and sustained via sound communication strategy, provision of metered services, accurate billing and debt and credit management. The Zimbabwe National Farmers Union has urged local authorities to charge affordable development levy and other levies charged to farmers. The more affordable the levies are, the greater the probability that residents will pay. Denhere et al (2011) concur that service delivery has to be improved for residents to start paying bills. To elaborate on these elements USAID came up with the following revenue enhancement model

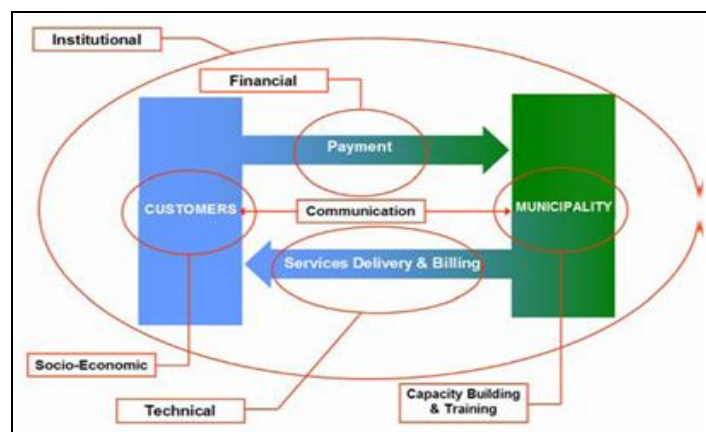


Figure 2: Revenue enhancement model

Source: USAID report (2006)

According to the USAID (2006) report, revenue models focus on maximizing revenue collection, reducing inefficiency and costs, and reducing uncollectible debt. A holistic approach to local government sustainability is crucial to ensuring that all the above mentioned critical elements are simultaneously addressed. Each of the above highlighted performance areas will contribute to the implementation of a successful Revenue Enhancement Strategy. Neglecting one of the above elements will negatively impact on the successful implementation of a Revenue Enhancement Project.

2.5. Political Intervention in Local Authorities

There was a long standing outcry by residents of virtually all Zimbabwean local authorities concerning the exorbitant amounts owing to various local authorities. These high amounts were as result of many factors such as the conversion rates used to convert balances from the Zimbabwean currency to the United States dollars in 2008, the depressed economic activities due to economic sanctions, inaccurate billing and many other reasons. In July 2013, the minister of local government, in sympathy with the residents issued a directive to write off all the debts of all ratepayers. This was done without offering alternative solutions to capitalise the local authorities.

2.6. Sources of Revenue for Local Authorities

United cities and local government [UCLG] (2006) cited legislation governing the operations of urban councils conferring on them a wide range of powers which includes:

- Water for domestic, commercial or industrial areas;
- Hospitals, clinics, ambulances, maternity and child welfare;

- Schools, libraries, theatres and musical and scientific institutions;
- Provision of housing and transport facilities;
- Construction and maintenance of drains, sewers and bridges;
- Cleansing and refuse removal and disposal;
- Prevention of air, land and water pollution;
- Operation of fire brigades and municipal police;
- Street lighting;
- Public places provision of parks; and
- Recreation grounds and open spaces.

UCLG (2006) further cited the main sources of revenue for Zimbabwean urban councils as;

- The levying of assessment rates on property;
- Tariffs or fees for service rendered;
- Loans for capital works from central government through the National Housing Fund, General loan fund in respect of other infrastructure like water and sewerage reticulation, roads and storm water drainage;
- Loans from the open market after obtaining necessary borrowing powers from the minister.

Externally derived traditional revenue includes grants and loans from central government and donors, as well as overdrafts and short term loans from banks and building societies (Urban Councils Act, Section 290).

2.7. Empirical Review

Kellam and Kew (2004) identified toll charges, sewerage charges, open space entry fees, hazardous waste fees and burial service charges as the main sources of revenues of local authorities in Rwanda.

Babawale and Nubi (2001) assert that property tax has been known to yield much revenue in developed countries and cite Kelly (1995) who observed that developing countries realise significantly less revenue from property tax.

Fjeldstad and Semboja (2000) cited poor administrative capacity in Tanzania as contributing to many local authorities' inability to realise fully the revenue due to them. They cited most councils in Tanzania having fewer tax collectors than the number of market centres. They also pinpointed that lack of transport exacerbated the situation.

Semboja and Therkildsen (1992) cited resistance from Tanzanian ratepayers as another challenge to revenue collection. They discovered that rates were widely perceived as unfair and ratepayers see few tangible benefits in return for the taxes that they pay.

Semboja and Therkildsen (1992) also identified corruption and political pressure as major impediments to revenue collections in some of Tanzania's local authorities. Taxes are generally disliked and councillors who want to be re elected disassociate themselves from increased taxation. Councillors are also reluctant to raise taxes and charges because they are major landowners or business people who seek to minimize their personal tax burden and they will obstruct tax collection by talking 'cheap politics'.

Local authority officials cannot turn off the water supplies of schools, hospitals and central government ministries on both moral and political grounds (Fjeldstad and Semboja, 2000).

Newsday, a Zimbabwe independent newspaper, reported on July 6 2012 that the cities of Harare and Chitungwiza were owed millions of dollars by central government ministries and yet were threatening to sue defaulting residents.

Ramphele (2008) explained that national economic performance has a significant impact on the performance of local authorities and the business community at large. He stressed that due to stretched disposal income, consumers may find it difficult to pay for municipal services.

3. Research Methodology

A case study approach was used and Bindura municipality was selected for its proximity to be the focus of the study. Largely qualitative as well as quantitative methods were applied to collect data. Descriptive research design was used to establish the state of revenue collection in the municipality.

Category	No	Sample
Staff (in revenue and credit control)	13	5
High density ratepayers	6020	100
Medium density ratepayers	2056	20
Low density ratepayers	1540	20
Commercial & Industrial	393	20
Total	10022	165

Table 1: Sample Frame Table

The target population consisted of rate payers as well as employees from the revenue and credit control sections of council. Bindura municipality has 13 employees in the revenue and credit control sections, has about 9,600 residential ratepayers and about 400 commercial and industrial ratepayers and these constituted the population. 5 employees from the revenue and credit control sections were randomly chosen as well as 140 residential ratepayers and 20 commercial ratepayers. Systematic sampling was applied from the rates registers to come up with the sample targets.

3.1. Data Collection

Primary data was gathered using questionnaires and structured interviews. Secondary data from public documents produced by council was also used. The questionnaires as well as the interview guide questions were pretested for validity and errors and suggestions made were incorporated in the final draft of the questionnaires.

4. Findings, Analysis and Discussion

4.1. Response Rate to Questionnaires

Category of response	Number of respondents		Response rate
	Targeted	Actual	
Municipality staff	5	4	80%
Residential ratepayers	140	81	59%
Commercial ratepayers	20	13	65%
Average responses	165	98	59%

Table 2
Source: Primary data

The researcher considered the response rate (59%) high enough to draw conclusions from the data that was obtained. Below is an analysis of the source of revenue, percentage contribution to the budget and percentage collection in the year 2011:

4.2. Sources of Revenue for Bindura Municipality

The table below depicts the percentage contribution to budget for different sources of revenue compared to their percentage collection for the period between January 2009 and June 2013.

- Revenue sources, percentage contribution to Bindura Municipality Budget and percentage collection during the period 2009-2013

Revenue source	% Contribution to Budget	% Collection
Sale of Stands (Housing and Industrial)	39	40
Rates	23	5
Water	11	45
Shop licences	5	80
Bus Entry	4	97
Supplementary charges	3	45
Graveyards and Hall Hire	2	98
Refuse removal	2	45
Roads	2	45
Street lighting	2	45
Fire charges	2	45
Inspection fees	2	95
Others	3	80
Total	100	

Table 3
Source: Secondary data

4.2.1. Analysis

Graveyards and hall hire are on cash basis and hence the collection percentage is ninety eight percent. The two percent of uncollected revenue is attributed to bad debts.

Shop licences and inspection fees have large collection rates 80% and 95% though they have small contributions to the budget 5% and 2%. The Zimbabwe Republic Police [ZRP] also assists in efforts to collect this revenue when it checks for expired liquor and trading licences. Property owners who are not compliant risk exorbitant fines (one to the police and another to Bindura Municipality) or have their trading licences withdrawn.

The remaining levies which are; water, refuse removal, sewerage charges, roads and street lighting and supplementary charges have the same collection rate of forty five percent. These contribute significant amount to municipality revenues so low levels severely affect the Municipality. Bindura is only getting traditional revenue sources of any other local authority and has no significant sources of revenue from income generating activities as cited by Kellam and Kahew(2004) which may include farming activities, bar sales and toll charges.

4.3. Frequency of Payment of Rates by Respondents

The diagram below illustrates the frequency of payment of rates by the residents.

- Frequency of payment of bills by residents:

Frequency of payment	No of Respondents	%
Always	36	39
Sometimes	41	41
Never	21	20
Total	98	100

Table 4

Source: Primary data

20% respondents indicated that they have never paid for their rates since the introduction of the multi- currency system in February 2009. The main culprits are from Chipadze and Chiwaridzo high density areas. However, 41% respondents indicated that they randomly paid part of their rates while 39% revealed that they always pay their rates on time. Most of those who pay in time are commercial and industrial ratepayers and companies which own staff houses.

4.4. Challenges with bills/Statements

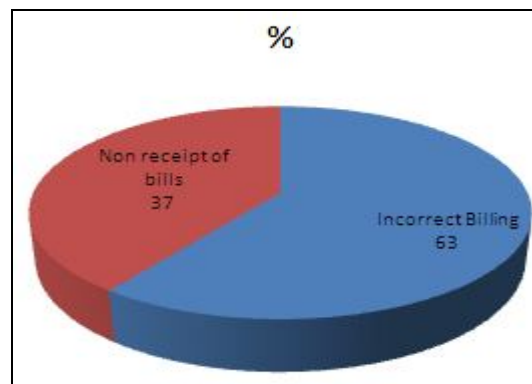


Figure 3

Source: Primary data

Incorrect billing (63%) and late receipt (37%) were cited as the source of disputes on rates invoices from Bindura Municipality. Information gathered from municipality staff was that monthly invoices were indeed not timely produced. It was estimated that 50% of water meters in Bindura are not working and council uses an estimate based on average consumption over a period of three months(at the time the meters were working). Some wards in the municipality, especially ward 6 have received no water for the past two years yet they receive bills with water charges. Water billing was the main source of dispute between Bindura Municipality and big consumers such as Bindura University, Ashanti Mine and Bindura Hospital. These findings confirm a USAID [2006] report which concluded that accurate property information and accurate tariffs associated to the property enhanced payment of municipal bills. USAID further encouraged both preventative and detective controls so as to achieve accurate billing.

4.5. Revenue Collection Constraints

Lack of transport (53%), inadequate staffing (27%) and civic pressure (20%) were cited as causes of failing to collect revenue. Civic pressure emanated from residents association such as Bindura Residents Association (BIRA) who petitioned for improved delivery of services. Inadequate transport was hampering efforts to enhance revenue collection. At the time, the Finance/ Treasury department had to rely on a pool vehicle to carry out its mandate of collecting revenue. It was also cited that the Credit Control section was not

adequately staffed. This finding supported Fjelstad and Semboja (2000) whose findings were that lack of reliable transport inhibits revenue collection.

4.6. Reasons for not Paying Rates (Multiple Answers were Permitted)

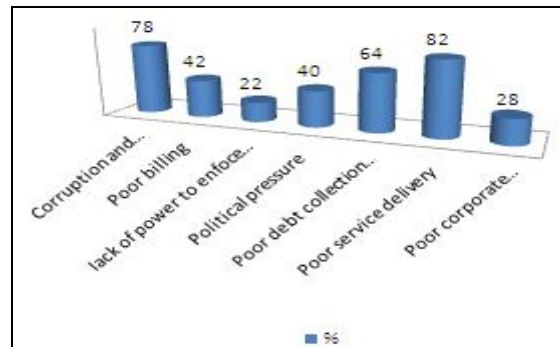


Figure 4

Source: Primary data

Poor service delivery (82%), corruption and embezzlement (78%), ineffective debt collection (64%), poor billing (42%) inadequate corporate governance systems (28%) and lack of power to enforce payment (22%) by council administration were some of the reasons for non-payment cited by those respondents who have arrears with Bindura Municipality.

Further research revealed that some of the properties in Bindura are owned by indigents and this fact is not taken into consideration when crafting annual budgets. The level of income among the ratepayers has a significant contribution towards the payment of rates by property owners.

Interviewees also noted that politics and civic activism played a big role in the effective collection of revenue by local authorities. The intended closure of business premises in March 2012 to enforce payment of shop licences faced fierce resistance from politicians and the program was abandoned prematurely..This finding is in agreement with Fjelstad and Semboja (2000) who cited political pressure as a major impediment to revenue collection in Africa. They concluded that rates are generally disliked and councillors who want to be re- elected disassociate themselves from increased rates. Councillors also reluctant to raise taxes and charges for selfish reasons: mainly because they are themselves landowners or business people who seek to minimize their personal tax burden and they will obstruct increase in charges by talking 'cheap politics'.

Corruption and embezzlement of funds by municipality staff were also been cited as constraining the local authority from collecting revenue. Some Senior Municipality staff faced criminal charges between 2009 and 2012 arising from allegations of corruption and some were even convicted. The corruption could have been caused low level of wages, inadequate controls and collusion between ratepayers and unscrupulous municipality staff. This finding is in support of Prud'homme (1992) who highlighted some of the factors leading to corruption as being:

- The low level of wages paid to staff;
- The complex nature of the tax structure; and
- Inadequate controls.

Government departments were identified as chronic late payers and Bindura Municipality records indicated that huge sums were owed by government ministries but the municipality cannot disconnect water supplies to the prisons, police and hospitals because these institutions offer vital services to the community.

4.7. Possible Solutions to Revenue Collection Constraints (Multiple Responses Were Permitted)

The table below shows suggested measures from respondents on how revenue collection could be enhanced:

Suggestion	Mean % response
Improve service delivery	93
Reduction of charges	63
Suing defaulters	47
Effective communication	43
Effective debt collection	41
Improve billing	35
Empowering local authorities	27

Table 5

Source: Primary data

The table above summarises suggestions from respondents on how Bindura municipality may increase revenue collection and topping the list was the need to improve service delivery so that residents could enjoy an immediate benefit. The lowest response was ascribed to empowering local authorities (27%) when it was suggested that the central government should empower local authorities in revenue generation and collection through legislation. The current acts [Urban Councils Act and Rural District Councils Act] do not adequately empower local authorities in recovering their debts. Tariff increases can either be approved or rejected by the minister. Local authorities were also excluded when the licencing of vehicles was taken away from them through legislation.

4.8. Sources of Revenue Not Fully Utilized by Bindura Municipality

According to the respondents, revenue sources which the municipality could tap into were :

- Liquor sales
- Income generating projects such as poultry, maize production and other cash crops
- Billing of council schools
- Fines on ox-driven push carts and other stray animals

Information gathered revealed that council schools are not billed for services offered despite the fact that they are now administered by the School Development Authorities [SDAs]. Council beer halls are not operational though the local authority is the licencing officer. The main reasons cited for their closures are competition and viability problems.

4.9. The Relationship between Politics and Revenue Collections

Most respondents acknowledged that there is a direct relationship between politics and revenue collection. Councillors were always caught in between the dilemma of protecting the interests of the electorate and efficient service delivery to the same electorate. Councillors made populist decisions to please the electorate so as to garner adequate votes in the next election. Consequently there is always a misunderstanding between officials and the councillors when it comes to the enforcement of revenue payments. Jacobsen (1999) found that there is a 'trust deficit' in the political/administrative relations at the local government level in Tanzania and this also existed at Bindura municipality.

5. Conclusion

- The study established that there is a positive relationship between service delivery and willingness of ratepayers to pay for the services. As service delivery improves, ratepayers are more willing to pay for the services offered.
- Accurate billing, good corporate governance, employment of competent and qualified staff, adequate communication with ratepayers, and improved revenue collection mechanisms can assist the local authority to enhance its revenue collections.
- Corruption and embezzlement of funds by council officials have soiled the public image of local authorities and needs to be addressed.
- The study also discovered that the high density ratepayers are more prone to defaulting on payments because of their low income levels.
- Bindura Municipality has many sources of revenue at its disposal but it is facing a working capital crisis because it cannot effectively utilize these sources. The municipality is also not innovative enough to identify new sources to augment its existing revenue streams.
- Ratepayers in Bindura are afraid of being penalized for non-payment of bills.

6. Recommendations

Basing on the above findings and conclusions; the researcher recommends the following:

- Grants from Central government or a donor is urgently needed by the local authority to revamp the dilapidated sewer and water reticulation infrastructure and to increase the service delivery fleet. An improvement in these areas will result in an improved payment from residents.
- Bindura municipality should come up with a debt collection policy. Punitive measures such as levying interest on arrear balances, warning letters and disconnections thereafter and ultimately suing defaulters after exhausting all channels of repayment should improve payments.
- Bindura Municipality should urgently use underutilized revenue sources at its disposal. Liquor outlets should be operational or they should be leased to outsiders so as to improve collections. New initiatives should be made to increase revenue collections e.g fines for stray animals, bicycle licences and engage in income generating farming projects at its nearby farm such as piggyery, poultry and market gardening which yield fast returns. There is also a vast market in Bindura and the capital city, Harare.
- The revenue collection section and the credit control section should be adequately equipped with qualified staff and service vehicles. Staff should be trained on customer care and debt collection so that they could be more competent.
- More revenue could be realized if government departments paid their dues and councillors could use their political leverage to approach relevant permanent secretaries/ministers.
- All faulty meters should be replaced with new ones in order to achieve correct billing.

- Bindura Municipality should make efforts to engage with all ratepayers who in turn will support initiatives that the organization takes towards revenue collections. Campaigns to educate ratepayers on the importance of paying for services should be started forthwith. Mechanisms to whistle blow by both staff should be in place to curb corrupt activities.
- New and refined policies and legislation empowering local authorities in areas such as revenue generation and collection should be crafted to improve the flexibility of the legal framework within which local authorities operate and to improve the leadership, management and accountability in local authorities.
- The local authority should come up with code of ethics in order to preserve good corporate governance.
- Bindura municipality should have its books of accounts audited in time so as to access lines of credits.
- The Municipality should be involved in twinning arrangements with other municipalities in developed countries and participate in Municipality International Corporation (MIC) activities so that it can undertake joint projects and get technical assistance from well-wishers.

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