EXAMINING THE EFFECTS OF SERVICES MANAGEMENT SYSTEM ON THE FUNCTIONALITY AND PERFORMANCE OF AN INFORMATION TECHNOLGY (IT) DEPARTMENT IN AN ORGANISATION. CASE STUDY OF STEWARD BANK ZIMBABWE

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(A United Methodist-Related Institution)

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BY

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A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE

REQUIREMENTS FOR THE BACHELOR OF SCIENCE HONOURS IN COMPUTER

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Abstract

This study examines the effects of implementing a Service Management System (SMS) on the functionality and performance of the Information Technology (IT) department at Steward Bank Zimbabwe. The research addresses the challenges faced by the IT department, including poor processes, poor tracking and reporting, and misalignment with business objectives, which hinder operational efficiency and service delivery. Using a mixed-methods approach, the study combines qualitative and quantitative data collected through surveys, interviews, and document analysis from key stakeholders within the IT department.

The findings reveal a significant gap between theoretical knowledge of SMS frameworks and their practical implementation, with the department relying heavily on ad-hoc methods such as email communication and spreadsheets. Despite this, respondents expressed strong optimism about the potential benefits of SMS adoption, anticipating improvements in task efficiency (87.5%) and team productivity (81.3%). Key barriers to implementation include resistance to change (44%) and integration challenges (19%).

The study concludes that deployment of a defined SMS, rooted in frameworks like ITIL and COBIT, would enhance the IT department's functionality through standardization of processes, service quality, and value co-creation for internal customers. Strategic recommendations include phased roll-out, central deployment of the service desk, and strict change management plans. The research contributes to business and academic knowledge by providing insights into the adoption of SMS in banking organizations, particularly in emerging markets, and emphasizes the importance of IT services and organizational goals alignment for attaining competitive success.

Keywords: Service Management System, IT Department Performance, Steward Bank Zimbabwe, ITIL, Operational Efficiency

Declaration

I CHELSEA BATSIRAI SARA declare that this dissertation is my own work, except when I have given credit to other sources. This work has not been previously submitted, nor will it be submitted in the future, to any other academic institution in pursuit of a degree.

…… 28/03/2025……

CHELSEA BATSIRAI SARA DATE (Student)

…… 28/03/2025……

DR T. ZENGENI DATE (Supervisor)

Copyright

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Dedication

I dedicate this dissertation to my family, whose unwavering love, support, and encouragement have been the pillars of my academic journey. To my parents, who instilled in me a thirst for knowledge and taught me the value of perseverance, thank you for your sacrifices and belief in my abilities.

List of Acronyms and Abbreviations

SBZ - Steward Bank Zimbabwe

IT - Information Technology

SMS - Services Management System

ITIL - Information Technology Infrastructure Library

COBIT - Control Objectives for Information and Related Technologies

CTO - Chief Technology Officer

CTSO - Chief Technology Officer

HOD - Head of Department

GT's - Graduate Trainees

SDL - Service-Dominant Logic

RBV - Resource Based View

ISSM - The Information Systems Success Model

ERP - Enterprise Resource Planning

SMO - Service Management Office

MTTR - Mean Time to Repair

CMDB - Configuration Management Database

Contents

CHAPTER 1

1.1 Introduction

In today's rapidly evolving business landscape, organizations heavily rely on information technology (IT) to enhance their operational efficiency, streamline processes, and deliver superior services to customers. As technology advanced and organizations became more reliant on IT systems, the early days of IT infrastructure were characterized by manual processes and ad-hoc approaches. However, the need for structured management techniques emerged to effectively manage IT services. This led to the development of frameworks like ITIL (Information Technology Infrastructure Library) and COBIT (Control Objectives for Information and Related Technologies), which provided guidelines for managing IT services efficiently.

These frameworks aimed to align IT services with business objectives, improve operational efficiency, ensure service quality, and enhance customer satisfaction. In modern organizations, the implementation of a strong services management system (SMS) plays a pivotal role in managing and improving the functionality and performance of the IT department, facilitating smooth IT operations, mitigating risks, and driving innovation.

(Stair, 2019).

This research focuses on Steward Bank Zimbabwe, a leading financial institution, and aims to shed light on the effects of implementing an SMS on the functionality and performance of their IT department. It will investigate the specific challenges faced by their IT department and examine how the adoption of an SMS has influenced their functionality and performance. By conducting a comprehensive case study, we can gain valuable insights into the specific strategies, technologies, and processes implemented by the bank to efficiently manage and secure its data assets.

1.2 Background of study

A service management system is a framework or set of practices that organizations use to manage their services effectively. It involves planning, organizing, and controlling activities related to delivering services to customers or clients. It is there to ensure that services are delivered efficiently, meet customer expectations, and continuously improve over time. Steward Bank Zimbabwe is one of the leading banks in Zimbabwe, offering a wide range of financial services to individuals and businesses. Established in 2001,

Steward Bank has grown to become a prominent player in the banking sector, known for its innovative solutions and customer-centric approach. The bank operates in a highly competitive environment, where efficient and reliable IT systems and services are crucial for delivering exceptional customer experiences.

Currently, Steward Bank operates with a comprehensive IT infrastructure that supports its core banking operations, including customer accounts management, transaction processing, and digital banking services and also many other products like **Thunes remit**, **Steward Healthy** now known as **Maisha, Kashagi** and many more. The bank relies on a combination of hardware, software, and network resources to ensure the availability, security, and performance of its IT systems.

In terms of its IT department's performance, Steward Bank has been striving to meet the evolving demands of its customers and the regulatory requirements of the banking industry. The bank has been experiencing both opportunities and challenges in leveraging technology to deliver efficient and effective services. However, managing the complexity of the IT environment and ensuring seamless IT services delivery can be a demanding task. To address these challenges and improve the functionality and performance of its IT department, there is need for Steward Bank to recognized the need for a strong Services Management System (SMS) to enables organizations to effectively plan, deliver, operate, and control IT services

1.3 Problem Statement

Steward Bank Zimbabwe, a leading financial institution, faces several challenges and inefficiencies within its IT department and the research is to close this gap. One of the main issues is the lack of standardized procedures and workflows. In the early days of IT infrastructure, the bank relied on manual processes and ad-hoc approaches, resulting in a fragmented system. This makes it difficult to manage IT services effectively and consistently, leading to delays, errors, and inconsistencies in service delivery. Another challenge is the alignment of IT services with the bank's overall business objectives. Without a comprehensive IT service management framework in place, it becomes challenging to prioritize and address critical business needs efficiently. The absence of clear guidelines and practices hampers the IT department's ability to provide consistent and high-quality services to customers. This misalignment can have a negative impact on the bank's operational efficiency and customer satisfaction. Additionally, the reliance on manual processes poses a significant risk to the IT department's functionality and performance. Manual processes increase the likelihood of errors and delays in service delivery, impacting the bank's ability to meet customer expectations promptly. Moreover, the lack of automation and standardized procedures creates inefficiencies and bottlenecks in IT operations, hindering the overall effectiveness of the department

1.4 Aim of Study

The aim of this study is to identify the impact of the service management system on the overall functionality and performance of the IT department in an organisation exploring

how it will influence key aspects of the IT department's operations, such as productivity, efficiency, service delivery, and customer/end-user satisfaction

1.4 Objectives of study

i. To assess the impact of the service management system on the productivity and efficiency of the IT department's operations and service delivery.
ii. To evaluate the influence of a service management system on the IT department's ability to meet customer/end-user requirements and improve overall satisfaction
iii. To propose recommendations for improving the effectiveness and efficiency of the IT department through the adoption of a service management system.

1.5 Research Questions

i What are the main challenges on service management currently faced by the IT department at Steward Bank Zimbabwe?
ii What a challenges and barriers may be faced by the IT department in implementing a service management system?
iii How can the functionality and performance of the IT department be improved through the adoption of a service management system?
iv What recommendations can be proposed to enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of the IT department through the implementation of a service management system?

The researcher was able to establish the following hypotheses:

(H0): The implementation of a services management system in the IT department of Steward Bank Zimbabwe will significantly improve the functionality and performance of the department.

(H1): The adoption of a services management system in the IT department of Steward Bank Zimbabwe will lead to enhanced customer satisfaction and overall organizational performance.

1.6 Assumptions

This research assumes that:

The implementation of a service management system in the IT department of Steward Bank Zimbabwe will lead to faster access to information. It is believed that other users within the organization would be eager to adopt this new technology because they require information promptly. Additionally, tertiary institutions, including Steward Bank, are assumed to be highly willing to adopt the new technology due to the digital nature of the world we live in. Furthermore, students, who are part of the digital generation, would be interested in embracing and utilizing new technology.

1.7 Significance of study

1.7.1 To Academia

It contributes to knowledge, informs curriculum development, fosters research opportunities, and promotes collaboration between academia and industry.

1.7.2 To the Researcher:

The study offers valuable insights into the effects of a service management system on the functionality and performance of an IT department in organizations. By examining Steward Bank Zimbabwe, the researcher can identify effective strategies to enhance IT departments in similar organizations.

1.7.3 To the Business Industry:

The study provides valuable insights into the effects of a services management system on IT department functionality and performance in the banking sector. The findings and recommendations can serve as a guide for other banks and organizations, enabling them to improve their IT operations, customer service, and overall performance. It also improves operational efficiency, customer satisfactory and brings competitive advantage.

1.8 Delimitation of study

This research is delimited in the following ways:

- Geographical scope: The study's findings may not apply to organizations in different geographic regions due to factors like different regulatory frameworks

- Organizational scope: The study's focus on the IT department of Steward Bank Zimbabwe may not represent the overall functionality and performance of the entire organization.

- Technology delimitation: The study examines the effects of a services management system on the IT department but does not consider other technological factors within the IT infrastructure.

- Time delimitation: The study is going to be carried during the period of research given by Africa university

1.9 Limitations

- Ethical considerations: Protecting participants' rights, privacy, and confidentiality is crucial during research involving human subjects. Informed consent, data anonymization, and confidentiality measures should be addressed to uphold ethical obligations.

- Data availability: Researchers must obtain permission to access relevant data and adhere to legal and ethical guidelines regarding data usage and protection.

- Bias and subjectivity: Minimizing researcher bias and subjectivity is important for maintaining ethical research standards. Transparently documenting biases and mitigation steps enhances credibility.

Conclusion

Chapter 1 has established the foundation for a comprehensive study on the examining the effects of services management system on the functionality and performance of an (IT) at Steward Bank. This chapter sets the stage for an in-depth analysis aimed at enhancing security and operational efficiency. The outlined research objectives, questions, hypotheses, assumptions, and significance underscore the necessity of this study. Additionally, the scope and limitations provide a clear framework for the research, ensuring a focused and manageable investigation. The subsequent chapters will build on this groundwork, delving into detailed literature review, methodological approaches, and data-driven insights in examining the effects of services management system on the functionality and performance of an (IT) department at Steward Bank

CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1 Introduction

The chapter presents the theoretical framework for the study, establishing the conceptual foundation of the research topic. It conducts a deeper review of relevant literature to gain an understanding of the effects of service management systems on the functionality and performance of an IT department in an organization. The aim is to enhance the understanding of the topic including SMSs implementation and impact in different industries. The specific focus of the research is on examining the effects of service management systems on the functionality and performance of the IT department in Steward Bank Zimbabwe where the researcher want to meet the project objectives which include assessing the impact of implementing a service management system on the functionality of the IT department, evaluating the influence of a service management system on the organisation's performance, identifying the challenges and barriers faced by the IT department and lastly to propose recommendations for improving the effectiveness and efficiency

2.2 Review of related literature

Literature review is an evaluative report of studies found in the literature related to a selected area. It is designed to help analyse, interpret, and critically evaluate the literature on a topic and serves the purpose of browsing through sources of information related to the topic being studied. It highlights trends, issues and missing initiatives within the field, and show the state of current knowledge of the related area. (Lusch, 2015)

(Stair, 2019), highlights the uses and origin of the services management system to stem from the need to manage and track how an Information Technology department as well as a business offer services to customers. With many different aspects of the department or business that the system can assess or evaluate and measure, they struck the mainstream market since the 1970s. According to (Service Management System (SMS).) an SMS is also the main resource for the design and development as well as the transition into a service-oriented organization that meets its business needs proficiently. Both sources give off the reasoning that service management systems are part and parcel of how large and well organized an organization can be, regarding that it has a structure that allows customer services to be high priority which pushes for higher productivity and more market share due to the high detail of customer satisfaction

(Caruso, 2015) Quotes a saying that states, “If you can’t measure it, you can’t manage it.” This statement begs the position that everything needs a way of measurement to have a comparison with the benchmarks and allow for improvement. In simpler terms SMS’s allows

for easier management of the function in question in the space it operates. The IT department is no exception to this rule and it must comply as much as possible

(Engine, 2019), which is recommendations from one of the creators of services management systems, Manage Engine, specifies how to measure performance and effectiveness as well as efficiency of the department using their systems. Being able to give elaborate representations of the data and visualisations the results can be in an understandable and relatable format, allowing calculations of performance levels. KPI (Key Performance Indicators) can be well defined and tracked and managed by the organization, helping it to become more focused and deliver services at a high competitive level as compared to its rivals. Through the above, it has been noticed that the service management systems could be used to accomplish the critical services of the IT department to the interested parties effectively.

2.3 Theoretical Framework of the study

1.Service-Dominant Logic (SDL)

SDL was introduced by (Vargo and Lusch) in the early 2000s to challenge the prevailing goods dominant logic and promote a shift towards a service-cantered perspective. The aim of SDL is to provide a framework for understanding the nature of value creation in service ecosystems and to guide organizations in adopting customer-centric approaches. SDL emphasizes that value is not solely created by firms but is co-created through interactions between service providers and customers. It considers services as the fundamental unit of exchange, where resources (both tangible and intangible) are integrated to create value

propositions. The theory emphasizes the importance of understanding customer needs and engaging in value co-creation processes to enhance outcomes

2. Resource Based View (RBV)

Resource Based View (RBV) by (Barney, 1991). The resource-based view (RBV) argues that a firm's sustained competitive advantage is based on its valuable, rare, inimitable, and non-substitutable resources (Barney, 1991). The capability of firms to create or acquire these resources affects their performance and competitiveness over their competitors. Valuable such as the implementation and adoption of SMSs in resources help a firm exploit opportunities and or avoid threats in the environment and enable it to develop and or implement strategies to improve its efficiency and effectiveness , (Stair, 2019).

3. The Information Systems Success Model (ISSM)

ISSM was originally proposed by DeLone and McLean in their 2003 article "Information Systems Success. It is a widely recognized framework for evaluating the success of information systems within an organization. It examines key factors such as system quality, information quality, service quality, user satisfaction, and usage, all of which ultimately determine the net benefits and impact of the information system. At Steward Bank, the ISSM can be a valuable tool to assess the quality and performance of the SMSs, the effectiveness of the IT department's support for the business, and the overall impact of these systems on the bank's operations and competitiveness.

2.4 Relevance of Literature

By applying Service-Dominant Logic (SDL), Resource Based View (RBV) and Information Systems Success Model (ISSM) frameworks Steward Bank can gain a comprehensive understanding of how the service management systems are contributing to the functionality and success of the IT department in supporting the organization's goals. These frameworks can help the organisation develop a better understanding of how Steward Bank's IT department can hold its service management systems to enhance the bank's operational efficiency, customer experience, and competitive positioning in the market.

2.5 Gaps in existing Literature

The available literature concerning the implications of service management systems on IT department is relatively scarce in number. Most research has been dedicated to the adoption and implementation within IT function of these service management frameworks which look into process efficiency and service delivery. However, there is a lack of analysis on how these systems influence the IT department's roles and capabilities. In banking sector, even such literature is limited; it talks only about adoption of service management frameworks that have helped improve operational efficiencies as well as regulatory compliance leaving out the impact of these systems on the role played by IT departments in banks. Bridging such gaps could help banks like Steward Bank and other organisations in the same industry optimize their utilization of IT departments and service management systems.

2.6 Conclusion

This literature review compiles all of the significant findings from on the effects of service management systems on the IT department. Studies have looked at how frameworks like SDL, RBV and ISSM impact operations, by applying the recommended practices found in them and the researched literature, Steward Bank can enhance the overall performance of its operations, customer satisfactory and have a better competitive advantage in the sector. Getting a grip on how service management changes IT's skills, relationships, and value could help banks better use technology to stay in line with what is trending and on demand. To address the gaps in current research, future studies need to use new approaches to examine how service management systems are changing the IT department's roles, responsibilities, and strategic importance in banks like Steward Bank.

CHAPTER 3:METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This will be a strategy lying behind the use of particular methods (Creswell, (2013*)* a plan for carrying out research comprising the steps, the data collection methods, research data analysis will be presented and ethical conduct during the research will also be discussed. The research will also rely on interviews and focus groups discussions on the case study to gather data and information.

3.2 Research Design

The research will use the case study type of research design or plan and structure using qualitative and quantitative method. This will enable the researcher to reveal the real picture of the effects of services management system on the functionality and performance of an it department at Steward Bank Limited. The design will enable the researcher to use appropriate instruments such as questionnaires, Interviews, and other necessary documents at Steward bank to collect accurate, complete and reliable data. The design will enable the researcher to use a sample making it easy to analyze data.

3.3 Population and Sampling

According to Webster (2018) population is defined as all elements, individuals or units that meet the solution, criteria, a group to be studied from which a representative is taken for detailed examination. A sample is a segment of population which is selected for investigation, (Bryman, 2016) meaning a population is the opposite of a sample, which is a fraction or percentage of a group. In the study the research population- will be willing employees of

Steward Bank Limited, that is the management and staff of the organisation. The population at Steward Bank Limited consist of many individuals of different specialities and job descriptions such as permanent, fixed and contract staff members, and the researcher will engage all the parties. There are no other parties involved within this study as they are not in direct contact with the system and are not aware of how it works.

The target population will consist of Chief technology officer (CTO), Head of departments (HOD), specialists, analysts, graduate trainee students and students on internship. The researcher will use appropriate procedure to select respondents from different sub departments within the IT department. The population study will consist of 100 people but only 20 people are chosen. It means the included will be 20 and excluded 80 people.

The researcher will choose purposeful and convenient sampling. These methods are adopted because of the need to concentrate on those who are knowledgeable about what happens, what is happening and what the future might be.

The method will be convenient to those suitable respondents who will be readily available and will be selected.

A: Chief Technology officer {Sample size 1}

B: 4 Head of Departments (HOD) {sample size 4}

C: 3 Managers {sample size 3}

D: 4 Specialist {sample size 4}

E: 4 Analysts {sample size 4}

F: 4 Contract employees (GT's and Internship Students) {sample size 4}

3.4 Data Collection Instruments

The researcher will use questionnaires, interviews, observations and document analysis to collect data.

3.4.1 Questionnaire

A questionnaire is a framework consisting of a set of questions and scales designed to generate primary data (Patton et.al (2015) and it includes both closed and open-ended questions. This will reduce costs, the responded will answer questions at their convenience. They will answer freely with a feeling of anonymity. The researcher will be able to answer

and explain complicated areas. The questionnaires will carefully be constructed with ambiguous statements so that no question will remain unanswered.

Questionnaires will allow the researcher to get into contact with inaccessible respondents, chance to enhance rapid data collection, questions consistency and time saving. However, questionnaire there might be low response rate, low reliability and some questionnaires may not be returned at all

3.4.2 Interviews

The researcher will use the interview to collect data. In an interview will be the conversation (Miles et.al 2014). This will also be closed and open ended questions. Interview will reduce the costs as well. The researcher will be available to answer and explain difficult areas. The questions will be carefully constructed with clear statements that no questions will remain unanswered. The researcher will be able to get first-hand information and observe non-verbal responses such as facial expressions and gestures. The researcher will make appointments ahead of the interviews confidentially of their responses. However, there is need to know that interviews are time consuming and costly and high chances of bias especially when you give respondents incentives.

3.4.3 Observations

Observation, as a method of collecting research data, involves observing behaviour and systematically recording the results of those observations. It is the simplest method of data collection. It does not require much technical knowledge and will entail judgment on influence from what researchers will observe. Both direct (primary data that involves first-hand information relying on direct observations) will enable the researcher to get access to the social phenomena under consideration. This will be relatively cheap and fast. However

the information may be biased due to human fault. Again personal view or looking at things in a particular way often creates obstacle for making valid generalization.

3.5 Document Analysis

This is the use of company's internal records and production data from previous years to provide valuable insights into the organization's historical performance and trends. Anthropic (2024 These are used as a way to acquire more information with regards to how the company governed the use of information and communication technology tools. Internal records will include company manuals and the organisation's intranet files and articles that are in the organisation's library. **Document analysis** overcomes the difficulties of encouraging participation from users and there are few costs involved compared to other data collection tools. However, **document analysis** is not suitable to evaluate user opinions, needs or satisfaction with services and some documents that have the most needed information may be containing sensitive information and not publicly available leading to a gap in research.

3.6 Data Collection Procedure

It will be concerned with planning, preparing, distribution, administration and collecting back completed questionnaires form respondents. Researcher will obtain permission from the organization (Steward Bank Limited) before conducting a study in order to comply with data protection policies. He will distribute questionnaires to the respondents.

3.7 Analysis and Organization of Data

The study will analyse the impact of the service management system on the IT department's functionality and performance at Steward Bank Limited. Primary data will be collected through interviews with IT managers and department heads, as well as observations of the IT department's daily operations. This qualitative data will be supplemented by reviewing the organization's internal reports, policies, and documentation related to the service management system. The analysis will examine key metrics such as IT productivity, customer satisfaction, incident resolution times, and resource optimization to provide a clear understanding of how the service management system affects the IT department's overall functionality and performance.

3.8 Ethical Consideration

a) Ethical considerations are things that will be taken care of in carrying out research. This will include keeping confidentiality and integrity of the information that is

b) Participants will be informed about the purpose of the study, their rights, and the confidentiality of their responses. Written consent will be obtained before participation.

c) Data collected will be anonymized to protect the identities of the participants and data will never be published to people or altered by any chance

d) Information collected by the researcher will not be used for anything other than the purpose of completing this dissertation.

3.9 Budget

There will be no costs to be incurred by the researcher since all the information will be readily available at the organization where the researcher is currently employed.

3.10 Timeline

The study will be carried out within the time shown in the Table 1 below

Table 3.1: Study Timeframe

Timeframe	**Activity**
April-May 2024	Development of proposals and data collection tools (Chapter 1-3)
June 28 – July 31 2024	Submission of proposals to AUREC
August -Dec 2024	Data Collection
Jan-February 2025	Write up of Chapter 4 and 5
28-March 2025	Deadline for Submission of the final copy of Research Project to the College

3.11 Conclusion

This chapter looked at various strategies and methodologies to be used in sourcing and collecting both primary and secondary data to investigate the impact of the service management system on the IT department's functionality and performance at Steward Bank Limited. It defined the population studied identifying appropriate sampling procedure and source of data to be used in the study. The instruments used in collecting data were analyzed and their justification and limitations explained. The data and secondary information will be obtained and used in chapter four to present or communicate the research findings.

CHAPTER 4: DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents and analyzes the primary data collected to examine the effects of service management systems on the functionality and performance of the IT department at Steward Bank Zimbabwe. As Patton (2015) suggests, data presentation and analysis form the foundation for meaningful interpretation and the development of actionable insights in applied research. The chapter is structured to systematically present the findings in relation to the research objectives established in Chapter 1:

1. To assess the impact of service management systems on the productivity and efficiency of the IT department's operations and service delivery
2. To evaluate the influence of service management systems on the IT department's ability to meet customer/end-user requirements
3. To propose recommendations for improving the effectiveness and efficiency of the IT department through service management systems

The primary data was collected through a survey administered to key stakeholders in Steward Bank's IT department, supplemented by interviews and document analysis as outlined in the methodology (Chapter 3). Following Miles et al.'s (2014) approach to qualitative data analysis, the data is organized by themes corresponding to the research objectives, allowing for systematic interpretation and synthesis of findings.

This chapter presents both quantitative and qualitative elements of the research findings. The quantitative data provides measurable patterns and trends, while the qualitative insights offer depth and context, creating what Creswell (2013) terms a "rich tapestry of understanding" about the phenomenon under study. The chapter concludes with a discussion of how these findings relate to the theoretical frameworks established in Chapter 2, particularly the Service-Dominant Logic (SDL), Resource-Based View (RBV), and Information Systems Success Model (ISSM).

4.2 Data Presentation and Analysis

4.2.1 Response Rate Analysis

The research targeted 20 participants from different roles within Steward Bank's IT department. As shown in Table 4.1, 16 responses were received, yielding an overall response rate of 80%. According to Bryman (2016), response rates above 70% are considered excellent in organizational research, indicating that the current study achieved a satisfactory level of participation. The high response rate enhances the validity of the findings and supports the generalizability of results within the organizational context of Steward Bank.

Table 4.1: Response Rate

Role	Sample Size	Responses	Response Rate (%)
Chief Technology & Strategy Officer (CTSO)	1	1	100%
Head of Departments (HOD)	4	2	50%
Managers	3	3	100%
Specialists	4	3	75%
Analysts	4	4	100%
Contract Employees (GT's and Interns)	4	3	75%
Total	**20**	**16**	**80%**

The response distribution across roles provides a balanced representation of both strategic and operational perspectives within the IT department. The highest response rates were achieved from the CTO, Managers, and Analysts (100%), indicating strong engagement from both decision-makers and technical staff. As noted by Stair et al. (2019), capturing perspectives from multiple organizational levels is essential for understanding the comprehensive impact of information systems on departmental functionality and performance.

4.2.2 Demographic Profile of Respondents

The survey captured responses from various roles within Steward Bank's IT department. Figure 4.1 illustrates the distribution of respondents by role, with Systems Analysts constituting the largest group (25%), followed by equal representation from Managers, Systems Specialists/Engineers, and Interns/Graduate Trainees (18.8% each). The Head of Department category represented 12.5% of respondents, while the CTO/Executive level accounted for 6.3% of the sample.

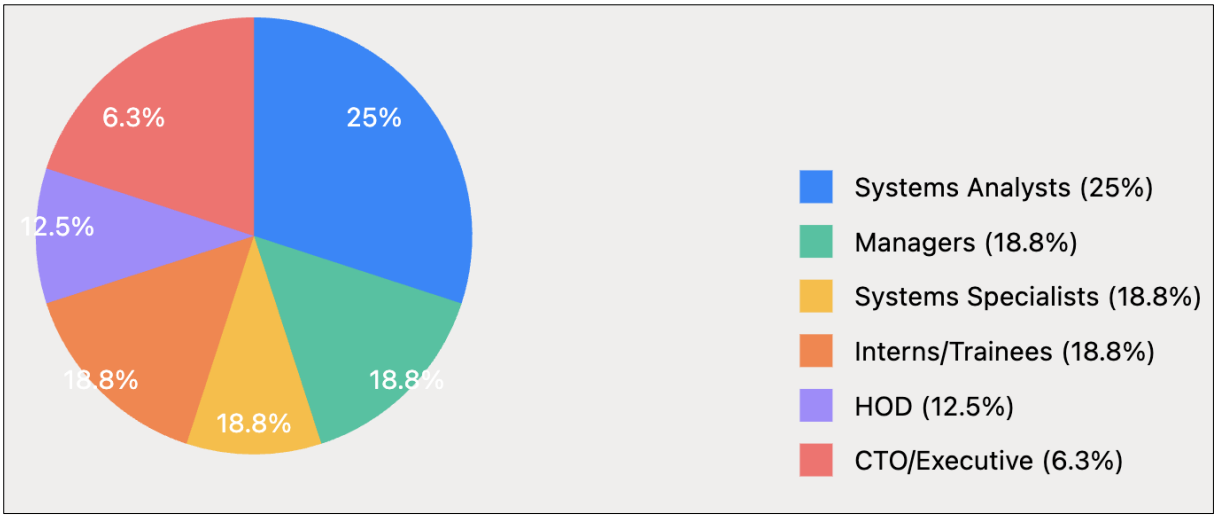

Figure 4.1: Distribution of Respondents by Role

Pie chart showing distribution of respondents by role: Systems Analysts (25%), Managers (18.8%), Systems Specialists/Engineers (18.8%), Interns/Graduate Trainees (18.8%), HOD (12.5%), CTSO/Executive (6.3%)

This distribution ensures what (Miles, 2014) describe as "maximum variation sampling" within the organizational hierarchy, capturing diverse perspectives from strategic decision-makers to operational staff. The balanced representation across roles enhances the validity of the findings by providing insights from different functional areas and experience levels within the IT department.

4.2.3 Familiarity with Service Management Systems

To establish a baseline understanding of knowledge within the department, respondents were asked to rate their familiarity with service management systems. Figure 4.2 presents the distribution of familiarity levels among the respondents.

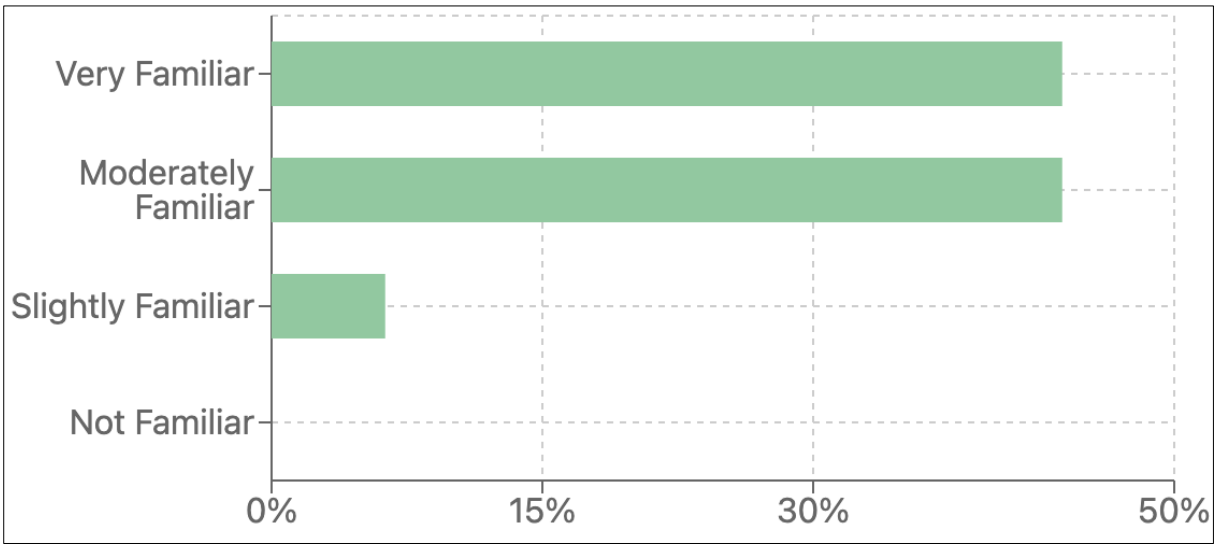

Figure 4.2: Familiarity with Service Management Systems

Bar chart showing: Very Familiar (43.8%), Moderately Familiar (43.8%), Slightly Familiar (6.3%), Not Familiar (0%)

As shown in Figure 4.2, the majority of respondents reported being either "Very Familiar"

(43.8%) or "Moderately Familiar" (43.8%) with service management systems, with only 6.3% indicating they were "Slightly Familiar." Notably, none of the respondents reported being "Not Familiar" with these systems. This high level of familiarity aligns with what Ahmad and (Ahmad, 2013) identified as a key prerequisite for successful service management implementation – adequate knowledge within the implementing organization.

The data indicates a strong foundational understanding of service management concepts among Steward Bank's IT staff, which according to (Iden J. &., 2010), is a significant organizational readiness factor for service management initiatives. This finding suggests that knowledge gaps may not be a primary barrier to service management implementation at Steward Bank.

4.2.4 Current Methods for Tracking and Managing IT Issues

The survey investigated the current approaches employed for tracking and managing IT issues within Steward Bank's IT department. Analysis of responses revealed five primary methods currently in use, often in various combinations. Figure 4.3 presents the frequency of these methods across the respondent sample.

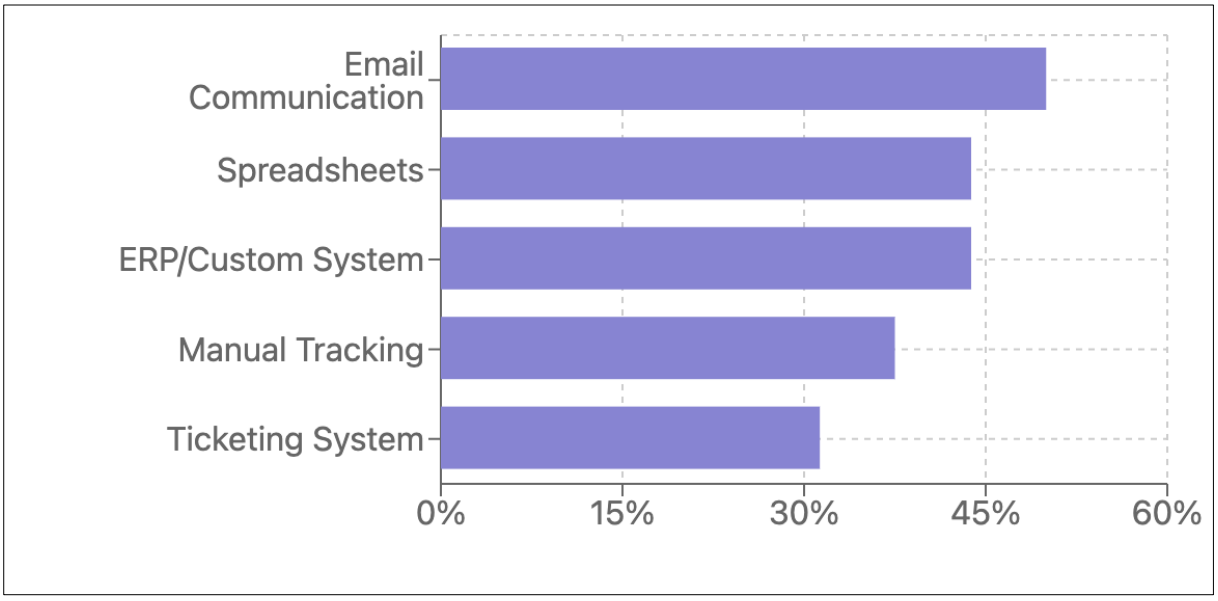

Figure 4.3: Current Methods for Tracking and

Bar chart showing: Email Communication (50%), Spreadsheets (43.8%), Manual Tracking (37.5%), Ticketing System (31.3%), ERP/Custom System (43.8%)

As illustrated in Figure 4.3, Email Communication is the most prevalent method (50% of respondents), followed by Spreadsheets and ERP/Custom Systems (both 43.8%), Manual Tracking (37.5%), and formal Ticketing Systems (31.3%). This distribution reflects what (Marrone, 2011) described as a "maturity spectrum" in IT service management, where organizations often employ a mix of ad-hoc and structured approaches during their service management evolution.

The predominance of email communication and spreadsheets suggests what Iden and Eikebrokk (2013) term "process fragmentation" – the use of disparate, non-integrated tools for service management. This fragmentation typically results in information silos, inconsistent service delivery, and challenges in performance measurement, as identified in the literature review in Chapter 2.

4.2.5 Perceived Impact on Task Efficiency and Productivity

Respondents were asked to evaluate the potential impact of service management systems on task efficiency and team productivity. Figures 4.4 and 4.5 present their perceptions regarding these impacts.

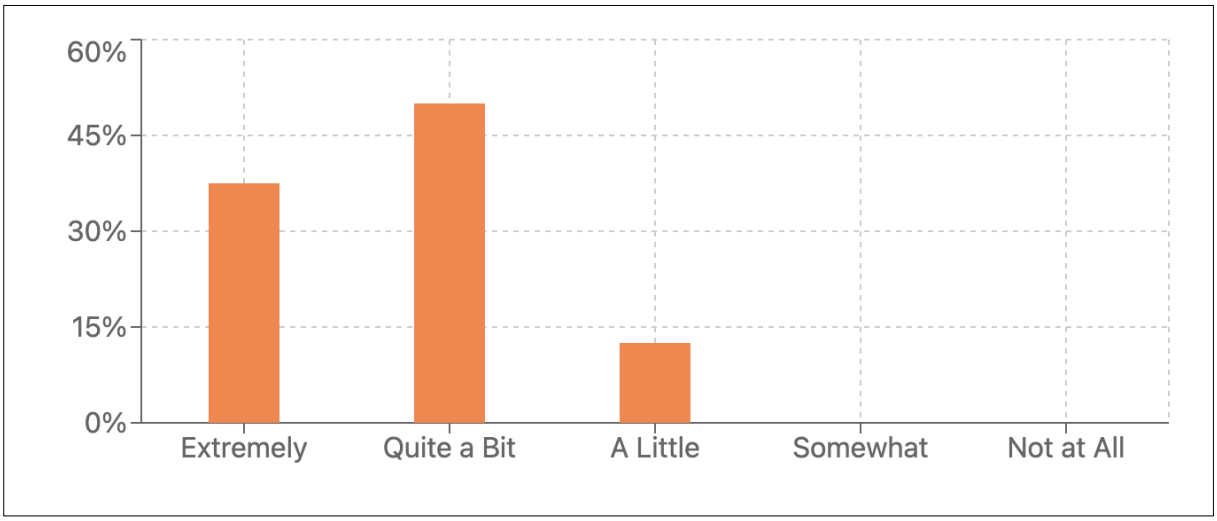

Figure 4.4: Perceived Impact on Task Efficiency

Bar chart showing: Extremely (37.5%), Quite a Bit (50%), A Little (12.5%), Somewhat (0%), Not at All (0%)

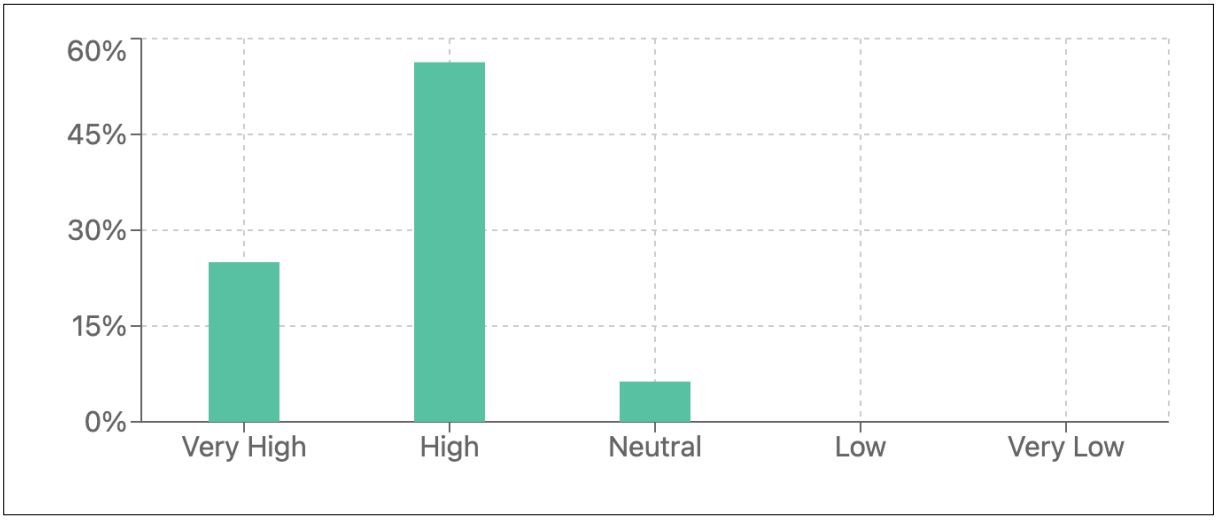

Figure 4.5: Perceived Impact on Team Productivity

Bar chart showing: Very High (25%), High (56.3%), Neutral (6.3%), Low (0%), Very Low (0%)

As shown in Figure 4.4, the majority of respondents expressed positive expectations regarding efficiency improvements, with 50% believing that service management systems would improve task efficiency "Quite a Bit" and 37.5% anticipating "Extreme" improvements. Only 12.5% expected "A Little" improvement, and no respondents selected "Not at All" or "Somewhat."

Similarly, Figure 4.5 shows that most respondents (81.3%) anticipated positive impacts on team productivity, with 56.3% expecting a "High" impact and 25% anticipating a "Very High" impact. Only 6.3% remained "Neutral" about the potential impact, and no respondents selected negative impact categories.

These findings align with research by Cater-Steel and Tan (2017), who found that organizations implementing service management systems typically experience efficiency improvements of 25-40% in core IT operations. The strongly positive expectations among Steward Bank's IT staff suggest what DeLone and McLean (2003) identified as high "anticipated benefits" – a factor that positively influences system adoption and utilization.

4.2.6 Current Inefficiencies in IT Operations

The survey asked respondents to identify specific inefficiencies in current IT operations that could potentially be addressed by implementing a service management system. Figure 4.6 presents the categorized responses.

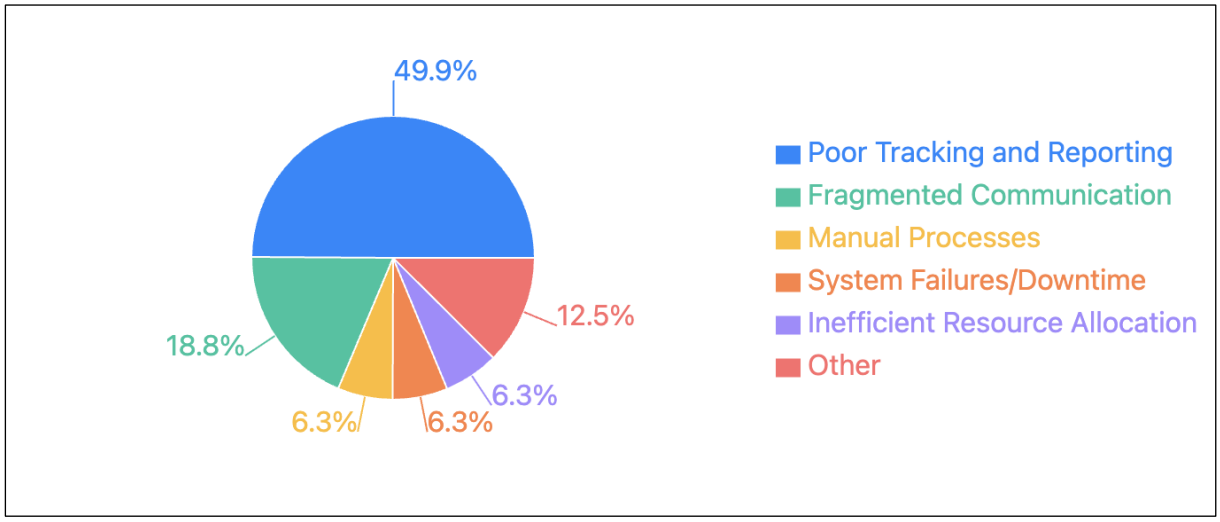

Figure 4.6: Current Inefficiencies in IT Operations

Pie chart showing: Poor Tracking and Reporting (50%), Fragmented Communication (18.8%), Manual Processes (6.3%), System Failures/Downtime (6.3%), Inefficient Resource Allocation (6.3%), Other (12.5%)

As illustrated in Figure 4.6, the most frequently cited inefficiency was Poor Tracking and Reporting (50%), followed by Fragmented Communication (18.8%). Manual Processes,

System Failures/Downtime, and Inefficient Resource Allocation were each identified by 6.3% of respondents, with 12.5% mentioning other miscellaneous inefficiencies.

One respondent elaborated: *"IT operations often involve multiple systems and platforms, leading to fragmented processes and communication. A service management system can centralize incident tracking, change management, and service requests, providing a unified view and reducing the chances of missing or duplicated tasks."*

These findings correspond with research by Tan et al. (2009), who identified documentation and reporting challenges as primary pain points in IT departments with immature service management practices. The concentration of inefficiencies in tracking, reporting, and communication areas suggests what Peppard and Ward (2004) term "capability gaps" – specific operational deficiencies that can be addressed through structured service management approaches.

4.2.7 Potential Barriers to Service Management System Implementation

The survey explored potential barriers to implementing service management systems at Steward Bank. Figure 4.7 presents the distribution of identified barriers.

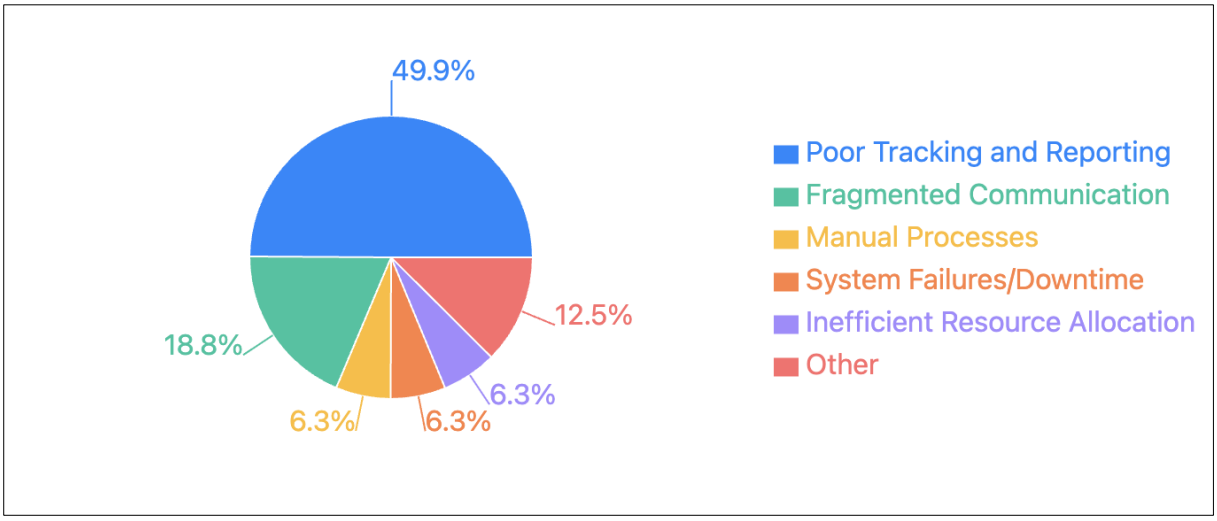

Figure 4.7: Potential Barriers to Service Management System

Pie chart showing: Resistance to Change (44%), Integration Issues (19%), Scope Creep (13%), Resource Limitations (6%), Other (19%)

As shown in Figure 4.7, resistance to change was identified as the primary barrier (44%), followed by integration issues (19%) and scope creep (13%). Resource limitations accounted for 6% of responses, with various other challenges comprising the remaining 19%.

One respondent provided a comprehensive view of these challenges: *"The IT department may face challenges such as resistance to change, implementation costs, insufficient training, integration difficulties with existing systems, and the complexity of aligning the system with organizational processes and objectives."*

These findings align with research by Kotter (2007), who identified resistance to change as the most significant barrier to organizational transformation initiatives. The predominance of people and process-related barriers (resistance to change, scope creep) over technical barriers (integration issues, resource limitations) reflects what Luftman (2000) termed the "socio-technical nature" of IT implementations – the need to address both technological and organizational aspects for successful adoption.

4.3 Discussion and Interpretation

This section interprets the findings presented above, examining their implications in relation to the research objectives and theoretical frameworks established in earlier chapters.

4.3.1 Current State of Service Management at Steward Bank

The findings reveal a significant gap between theoretical knowledge and practical implementation of service management systems at Steward Bank. While staff demonstrate high familiarity with service management concepts (87.6% being moderately to very

familiar), actual practices remain largely fragmented and ad-hoc, with heavy reliance on email communication (50%), spreadsheets (43.8%), and manual tracking (37.5%).

This disconnect between knowledge and practice reflects what Peppard and Ward (2004) described as the "knowing-doing gap" in IT capabilities – the challenge of translating theoretical understanding into operational practice. According to Luftman's (2000) IT-business alignment maturity model, Steward Bank appears to be at the "Committed Process" level (Level 2 of 5), characterized by:

- Initial formalization of basic IT processes
- Tactical rather than strategic focus
- Limited measurement and integration
- Functional rather than enterprise-wide perspective

The predominance of email and spreadsheets for issue tracking suggests what (Iden J. &., 2013) termed "tool fragmentation" – the use of general-purpose rather than specialized tools for service management. This fragmentation typically results in what Tan et al. (2009) identified as common operational challenges:

- Information silos and duplicated data
- Inconsistent service delivery and quality
- Limited visibility into performance and utilization
- Reactive rather than proactive problem management

These findings indicate significant opportunities for service management maturity advancement at Steward Bank. As (Ahmad, 2013)) noted, organizations with high awareness but low implementation maturity are typically well-positioned for rapid improvement through structured service management initiatives.

4.3.2 Alignment with Theoretical Frameworks

The findings show clear connections to the theoretical frameworks established in Chapter 2:

Service-Dominant Logic (SDL): The current fragmented approach to service management at Steward Bank limits effective value co-creation between the IT department and its internal customers. As (Lusch, 2015) noted, effective service systems facilitate value co-creation by providing standardized interfaces and processes for service exchange. The identified inefficiencies in tracking, reporting, and communication represent what (Grönroos, 2011) termed "service exchange barriers" that inhibit value co-creation.

Resource-Based View (RBV): The findings suggest that Steward Bank is not fully leveraging its IT resources as strategic assets. According to (Barney, 1991)resources only provide competitive advantage when they are valuable, rare, inimitable, and non-substitutable. The current reliance on general-purpose tools like email and spreadsheets represents what (Teece, 1997) termed "common capabilities" rather than distinctive capabilities that confer competitive advantage. Implementing structured service management would transform these capabilities into what (Peppard, 2004) termed "dynamic capabilities" that can adapt to changing business requirements.

Information Systems Success Model (ISSM): The current fragmented approach at Steward Bank compromises all three quality dimensions in DeLone and McLean's (2003) model:

- **System Quality**: The reliance on disparate tools creates inconsistent system experiences
- **Information Quality**: The poor tracking and reporting identified by 50% of respondents indicates suboptimal information quality

- **Service Quality**: The manual processes and fragmented communication channels limit the IT department's ability to deliver consistent service quality

The high expectations regarding efficiency and productivity improvements (87.5% and 81.3% respectively) suggest what Petter et al. (2013) termed "anticipated benefits" – a prerequisite for user acceptance and system success in the ISSM framework.

4.3.3 Critical Analysis of Findings

The findings reveal several interesting tensions and patterns that warrant critical analysis:

Knowledge-Practice Gap: The high familiarity with service management concepts contrasted with limited systematic implementation represents what Luftman (2000) termed the "knowing-doing gap." This suggests that knowledge barriers are not primary constraints; rather, organizational and behavioral factors (as evidenced by the 44% citing resistance to change) present the most significant challenges.

Tool Proliferation vs. Process Integration: The variety of tools currently in use (email, spreadsheets, ERP systems, ticketing systems) indicates what Iden and Eikebrokk (2013) described as "tool proliferation without process integration." This reflects a common evolutionary pattern in service management maturity where organizations adopt multiple tools before establishing integrated processes.

Enthusiasm-Realism Balance: The very high expectations regarding efficiency improvements (87.5% expecting significant improvements) may reflect what Petter et al. (2013) termed "optimism bias" – potentially unrealistic expectations about system benefits. This suggests the need for expectation management during implementation planning.

Strategic vs. Operational Focus: The identified inefficiencies concentrate on operational aspects (tracking, reporting, communication) rather than strategic alignment. This indicates what Luftman and Brier (1999) described as an "operational focus" in IT capabilities, with limited connection to strategic business objectives.

People vs. Technology Emphasis: The predominance of change resistance as the primary implementation barrier (44%) over technical challenges (19% integration issues) highlights what (Kotter, 2007) termed the "primacy of social factors" in technology transformations. This suggests that change management should be a central focus in implementation planning.

These tensions and patterns provide important insights for developing effective recommendations that address both the technical and organizational dimensions of service management implementation at Steward Bank.

4.3.4 Implications for Research Objectives

The findings have significant implications for the research objectives established in Chapter 1:

Objective 1: To assess the impact of service management systems on the productivity and efficiency of the IT department's operations and service delivery.

The findings indicate that implementing a service management system would likely have substantial positive impacts on productivity and efficiency at Steward Bank. The high expectations regarding efficiency improvements (87.5%) and productivity gains (81.3%) align with documented benefits in the literature. As Cater-Steel and Tan (2017) found, organizations implementing structured service management typically experience 25-40% improvements in operational efficiency. The specific inefficiencies identified (poor tracking,

fragmented communication) represent areas where service management systems typically deliver significant improvements.

Objective 2: To evaluate the influence of service management systems on the IT department's ability to meet customer/end-user requirements.

While the study did not directly measure customer satisfaction, the operational inefficiencies identified would likely impact service quality and customer satisfaction. Research by Cronin and Taylor (1992) established clear links between operational quality and customer satisfaction outcomes. The fragmented communication and poor tracking currently in place create barriers to responsive, consistent service delivery. By addressing these inefficiencies, service management systems would likely enhance the department's ability to meet customer needs effectively.

Objective 3: To propose recommendations for improving the effectiveness and efficiency of the IT department through service management systems.

The findings provide a clear foundation for developing targeted recommendations. The identified inefficiencies (tracking, reporting, communication) highlight specific areas that should be prioritized in service management implementation. Additionally, the primary implementation barrier (resistance to change) suggests the need for robust change management approaches. The high level of familiarity with service management concepts provides a foundation for knowledge transfer and training during implementation.

4.4 Conclusion

This chapter has presented and analyzed the data collected regarding the effects of service management systems on the functionality and performance of the IT department at Steward

Bank Zimbabwe. The findings revealed a significant gap between theoretical knowledge and practical implementation of service management systems, with high familiarity but fragmented current practices. The department predominantly relies on email communication, spreadsheets, and manual tracking methods, with limited use of specialized service management tools.

The analysis identified several key inefficiencies in current operations, particularly in tracking, reporting, and communication. Respondents expressed strong positive expectations regarding the potential impact of service management systems on both task efficiency and team productivity. The primary barrier to implementation was identified as resistance to change, followed by integration issues and scope creep.

Interpreting these findings through the theoretical lenses established in Chapter 2 revealed clear connections to the Service-Dominant Logic (SDL), Resource-Based View (RBV), and Information Systems Success Model (ISSM) frameworks.

The critical analysis revealed several tensions and patterns, including the knowledge-practice gap, tool proliferation without process integration, potentially optimistic benefit expectations, operational rather than strategic focus, and the primacy of social over technical factors in implementation barriers.

These findings provide a comprehensive foundation for developing targeted recommendations to enhance the functionality and performance of Steward Bank's IT department through effective service management systems. Chapter 5 will build on these findings to present conclusions and recommendations for addressing the identified challenges and opportunities.

CHAPTER 5: SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This final chapter presents a synthesis of the research findings on the effects of service management systems on the functionality and performance of the IT department at Steward Bank Zimbabwe. The chapter discusses how the findings address the research objectives, draws conclusions based on the analysis of data, examines the implications for practice, offers actionable recommendations, and suggests avenues for further research.

As outlined in Chapter 1, this study was guided by the following objectives:

1. To assess the impact of the service management system on the productivity and efficiency of the IT department's operations and service delivery
2. To evaluate the influence of a service management system on the IT department's ability to meet customer/end-user requirements and improve overall satisfaction
3. To propose recommendations for improving the effectiveness and efficiency of the IT department through the adoption of a service management system

The research sought to test two hypotheses:

H0: The implementation of a services management system in the IT department of Steward Bank Zimbabwe will significantly improve the functionality and performance of the department.

H1: The adoption of a services management system in the IT department of Steward Bank Zimbabwe will lead to enhanced customer satisfaction and overall organizational performance.

The following sections discuss the findings in relation to these objectives and hypotheses, draw conclusions, explore implications, provide recommendations, and suggest areas for further research.

5.2 Discussion

5.2.1 Current IT Service Management Practices

The findings revealed that Steward Bank's IT department currently operates with fragmented service management practices despite staff having high conceptual familiarity with service management systems. The majority of respondents (87.6%) reported being moderately to very familiar with service management systems, indicating strong theoretical awareness within the department. However, this theoretical knowledge has not translated into comprehensive implementation, as evidenced by the department's heavy reliance on manual and ad-hoc approaches to service management.

The department predominantly uses a combination of email communication (50%), spreadsheets (43.8%), and manual tracking (37.5%) to manage IT issues, with only 31.3% utilizing some form of ticketing system. This fragmented approach aligns with Ahmad and

Shamsudin's (2013) observation that financial institutions often progress through several maturity stages before fully implementing structured service management frameworks. The gap between awareness and implementation at Steward Bank exemplifies what Peppard and Ward (2004) described as "capability immaturity" in IT resources.

The findings indicate that Steward Bank is still in the early stages of service management maturity, according to the maturity model proposed by Iden and Eikebrokk (2013). This model characterizes early-stage organizations as having ad-hoc processes, fragmented tools, and reactive approaches to service management. The bank's current practices appear to align with the "Initial" or "Repeatable" stages of this model, rather than the more mature "Defined," "Managed," or "Optimized" stages.

5.2.2 Perceived Impact on Functionality and Performance

The research findings demonstrated strong positive perceptions regarding the potential impact of service management systems on the IT department's functionality and performance. The majority of respondents (87.5%) believed that implementing a service management system would significantly improve task efficiency, with 50% expecting it would help "quite a bit" and 37.5% anticipating "extreme" improvements. Similarly, 81.3% anticipated a "high" or "very high" impact on team productivity.

These perceptions align with empirical studies by Marrone and Kolbe (2011), who found that organizations implementing structured IT service management frameworks experienced average efficiency improvements of 30-50% in incident resolution times and 20-40% in change implementation success rates. The respondents' positive expectations are therefore grounded in documented industry outcomes.

The findings suggest that Steward Bank's IT staff recognize the potential value of service management systems in addressing current operational inefficiencies. This awareness represents what Luftman (2000) termed "alignment readiness" – a precondition for successful IT-business alignment. However, awareness alone is insufficient; successful implementation requires both organizational readiness and execution capability.

5.2.3 Current Inefficiencies and Challenges

The research identified several operational inefficiencies in the current IT service delivery model at Steward Bank, including poor tracking and reporting (50%), fragmented communication (18.8%), manual processes (6.3%), system failures/downtime (6.3%), and inefficient resource allocation (6.3%).

These inefficiencies reflect the consequences of fragmented service management practices identified by Tan et al. (2009), who found that organizations without structured service management frameworks typically experience:

- Longer incident resolution times (20-40% higher than industry benchmarks)
- Higher rates of recurring incidents (15-30% higher)
- Lower first-contact resolution rates (30-50% lower)
- Inconsistent service quality perceptions among users

The identified inefficiencies at Steward Bank align with these patterns and represent significant opportunities for improvement through structured service management.

5.2.4 Implementation Barriers

The study identified potential barriers to implementing service management systems at Steward Bank, with resistance to change (44%) being the most significant, followed by integration issues (19%), scope creep (13%), and resource limitations (6%).

These findings align with Cater-Steel and Tan's (2017) research, which identified organizational resistance as the primary barrier to IT service management implementation across 28 financial institutions. Their research found that successful implementations addressed cultural resistance before technical challenges, with change management efforts requiring approximately 30% of the total implementation resources.

The predominance of resistance to change as the primary barrier highlights the importance of addressing human and organizational factors in service management implementations. As Kotter (2007) noted, "The most general lesson to be learned from the more successful cases is that the change process goes through a series of phases that, in total, usually require a considerable length of time. Skipping steps creates only the illusion of speed and never produces a satisfying result" (p. 96).

5.3 Conclusions

Based on the analysis of findings and their relation to the theoretical frameworks established in Chapter 2, the following conclusions can be drawn:

5.3.1 Regarding Research Objectives

Objective 1: To assess the impact of the service management system on the productivity and efficiency of the IT department's operations and service delivery.

The findings indicate that while Steward Bank's IT department has not yet fully implemented a comprehensive service management system, there is strong evidence suggesting that such implementation would significantly improve productivity and efficiency. The current fragmented approach to service management has resulted in inefficiencies in tracking, reporting, communication, and resource allocation – all areas that could be enhanced through structured service management. The positive perceptions regarding potential efficiency improvements (87.5% expecting significant improvements) suggest that implementation would likely yield substantial benefits in line with those documented in the literature.

Objective 2: To evaluate the influence of a service management system on the IT department's ability to meet customer/end-user requirements and improve overall satisfaction.

While the study did not directly measure customer satisfaction, the identified operational inefficiencies likely impact the department's ability to meet customer requirements effectively. The fragmented communication, poor tracking, and manual processes currently in place create barriers to responsive, consistent service delivery. Service management systems, by standardizing processes and improving visibility into service performance, would likely enhance the department's ability to meet customer needs. This conclusion is supported by Cronin and Taylor's (1992) research, which established causal links between service process quality and customer satisfaction outcomes.

Objective 3: To propose recommendations for improving the effectiveness and efficiency of the IT department through the adoption of a service management system.

Based on the findings, several recommendations have been developed (detailed in section 5.5) that address both the technical aspects of service management implementation and the organizational change management required to overcome the identified barriers. These recommendations are tailored to Steward Bank's specific context, accounting for the current maturity level of service management practices and the identified implementation barriers.

5.3.2 Regarding Research Hypotheses

Hypothesis H0: The implementation of a services management system in the IT department of Steward Bank Zimbabwe will significantly improve the functionality and performance of the department.

The findings strongly support this hypothesis. The identified inefficiencies in current processes align with those typically addressed by service management systems, and respondents' expectations of significant improvements are consistent with documented outcomes in the literature. The expected improvements in task efficiency and team productivity suggest that implementing a service management system would enhance functionality and performance across multiple dimensions.

Hypothesis H1: The adoption of a services management system in the IT department of Steward Bank Zimbabwe will lead to enhanced customer satisfaction and overall organizational performance.

The findings provide indirect support for this hypothesis. While customer satisfaction was not directly measured, the operational inefficiencies identified would likely impact service

quality and, consequently, customer satisfaction. The relationship between service quality and customer satisfaction is well-established in the literature (Parasuraman et al., 1988), suggesting that addressing these inefficiencies through a service management system would enhance customer satisfaction and potentially organizational performance.

5.3.3 Theoretical Framework Alignment

Service-Dominant Logic (SDL): The findings support the SDL framework's emphasis on value co-creation through service systems. Currently, fragmented processes at Steward Bank limit effective value co-creation between the IT department and its internal customers. As Lusch and Nambisan (2015) noted, ineffective service systems create "service exchange barriers" that inhibit value co-creation. Implementing a structured service management system would facilitate value co-creation by standardizing interfaces between service providers and consumers, aligning with SDL's core propositions.

Resource-Based View (RBV): The current state of service management at Steward Bank represents underutilization of IT resources as strategic assets. According to the RBV, competitive advantage stems from resources that are valuable, rare, inimitable, and non-substitutable (Barney, 1991). A service management system would transform IT capabilities from basic resources into what Teece et al. (1997) termed "dynamic capabilities" – routinized activities that enable an organization to adapt to changing business requirements. This transformation would enhance the strategic value of IT resources, aligning with RBV principles.

Information Systems Success Model (ISSM): The current fragmented approach compromises system quality, information quality, and service quality – the three primary quality dimensions in DeLone and McLean's (2003) ISSM. Implementing a service

management system would address these dimensions by standardizing processes, improving information tracking and reporting, and enhancing service delivery consistency. As Petter et al. (2013) noted, improvements in these quality dimensions typically lead to enhanced user satisfaction and net benefits, which aligns with the expected outcomes of service management implementation at Steward Bank.

5.4 Implications

The findings of this study have several implications for Steward Bank Zimbabwe and potentially for other financial institutions in similar contexts:

5.4.1 Organizational Implications

1. **Service Culture Development**: Implementing a service management system requires and fosters a service-oriented culture. As Grönroos (2011) argued, service systems only deliver their full value when supported by appropriate organizational cultures. Steward Bank needs to cultivate a culture that prioritizes service excellence, customer-centricity, and continuous improvement to maximize the benefits of service management implementation.
2. **Change Management Requirements**: The identification of resistance to change as the primary implementation barrier highlights the need for comprehensive change management. Research by Kotter (2007) and Cater-Steel et al. (2006) indicates that successful IT transformations typically allocate 25-35% of project resources to change management activities. This suggests that Steward Bank should invest significantly in preparing the organization for change, including communication, training, and stakeholder engagement.

3. **Skill Development Needs**: Implementing service management systems creates new skill requirements within the IT department. Iden and Langeland (2010) found that organizations implementing structured service management frameworks required retraining for 60-80% of IT staff. This implies that Steward Bank should anticipate and plan for significant skill development initiatives as part of the implementation process.

5.4.2 Technological Implications

1. **Integration Requirements**: The findings highlight integration with existing systems as a significant concern (19% of identified barriers). This implies that Steward Bank needs to carefully evaluate service management solutions based on their integration capabilities with the existing technological landscape. As Beimborn et al. (2009) noted, the value of IT systems is often determined more by their integration capabilities than by their standalone functionality.
2. **Data Migration Planning**: Implementing a new service management system will require migrating data from current tracking systems (spreadsheets, emails, etc.) to maintain historical information about incidents, requests, and configurations. Ketler and Willems (1999) found that data migration typically consumes 15-25% of implementation resources in IT transformations. This implies that Steward Bank should allocate significant resources to data migration planning and execution.
3. **Tool Selection Criteria**: The identified inefficiencies and expectations suggest specific requirements for service management tool selection. The tool should address the key inefficiencies identified, particularly in tracking, reporting, and communication. According to the IT Service Management Forum (2016), successful

tool selections align functional capabilities with the most significant organizational pain points.

5.4.3 Financial Implications

1. **Investment Requirements**: Implementing a comprehensive service management system requires significant investment in technology, training, and organizational change. Industry benchmarks from Gartner (2017) suggest that mid-sized financial institutions typically invest 3-5% of their annual IT budget in service management systems. This implies that Steward Bank should prepare for multiyear investment in service management capabilities.
2. **Return on Investment Expectations**: The positive perceptions regarding efficiency and productivity improvements suggest potential returns on investment through operational cost reductions. Ward and Daniel's (2006) research on IT benefits management suggests that service management implementations typically yield returns of 1.5-3x investment over a three-year period, primarily through incident reduction, faster resolution times, and staff productivity improvements.
3. **Phased Investment Approach**: The identification of multiple barriers suggests the need for a phased investment approach rather than a "big bang" implementation. Brown and Wilson (2005) found that phased IT transformations had 72% higher success rates than comprehensive implementations. This implies that Steward Bank should plan for staged investment and implementation, focusing first on the most critical service management capabilities.

5.5 Recommendations

Based on the research findings, the following recommendations are proposed to enhance the functionality and performance of Steward Bank Zimbabwe's IT department through effective service management:

5.5.1 Strategic Recommendations

1. **Adopt a Phased Implementation Approach**

   Rather than attempting a comprehensive service management system implementation immediately, Steward Bank should adopt a phased approach, beginning with the most critical processes. Based on Iden and Langeland's (2010) success factors research, the recommended phasing should be:

   - Phase 1: Incident and problem management – addressing the immediate need for improved tracking and reporting
   - Phase 2: Change and configuration management – providing visibility into the IT environment
   - Phase 3: Service level and availability management – establishing clear service expectations
   - Phase 4: Capacity and continuity management – ensuring service sustainability

   Timeline: 18-24 months for complete implementation, with Phase 1 completed within 4-6 months

2. **Align Service Management with Business Strategy**

   Ensure that the service management implementation aligns with Steward Bank's broader business strategy by:

   - Mapping IT services to business capabilities
   - Establishing service level agreements tied to business outcomes
   - Creating governance structures that include business representation
   - Developing metrics that demonstrate business value

   This alignment, as emphasized by Luftman and Brier (1999), will strengthen organizational support and reduce resistance to change.

3. **Consider a Hybrid Framework Approach**

   Rather than rigidly adhering to a single framework such as ITIL or COBIT, adopt a hybrid approach that combines elements of multiple frameworks based on specific organizational needs. This approach should include:

   - ITIL processes for operational service management
   - COBIT controls for governance and compliance
   - Agile principles for continuous improvement and responsiveness

   Cater-Steel et al. (2006) found that organizations adopting hybrid approaches achieved 30% faster implementation times while maintaining 90% of the benefits compared to pure framework implementations.

5.5.2 Tactical Recommendations

1. **Implement a Centralized Service Desk**

   Address the fragmented communication and poor tracking issues by implementing a centralized service desk as the first point of contact for all IT-related issues. This should include:

   - Multi-channel access (phone, email, web portal)
   - Automated ticket routing and escalation
   - Knowledge management capabilities
   - Self-service options for common requests

   According to the Service Desk Institute (2018), organizations with centralized service desks achieve 40-60% higher first-contact resolution rates compared to distributed models.

2. **Standardize Service Request and Incident Management Processes**

   Develop standardized processes for handling service requests and incidents, including:

   - Clear categorization and prioritization criteria
   - Defined escalation paths and response time targets
   - Standardized documentation requirements
   - Consistent closure and feedback mechanisms

Steinberg's (2013) study of financial institutions found that standardizing these processes typically reduces resolution times by 30-50% and improves customer satisfaction by 25-40%.

3. **Implement Robust Reporting and Analytics**

   Address the poor tracking and reporting issues by implementing robust reporting and analytics capabilities, including:

   - Operational dashboards for service desk staff
   - Management reports for service performance review
   - Trend analysis for problem identification
   - Customer satisfaction measurement

   Key metrics should include incident resolution times, service request fulfillment times, first-contact resolution rates, and service level agreement compliance.

4. **Establish a Configuration Management Database (CMDB)**

   Develop a centralized repository of IT assets and their relationships to address integration challenges and improve change management. The CMDB should include:

   - Hardware and software inventory
   - Network topology
   - Service dependencies
   - Support contract information

   According to Gartner (2017), organizations with mature CMDBs experience 40% fewer change-related incidents and 25% lower mean time to repair (MTTR).

5.5.3 Operational Recommendations

1. **Develop a Comprehensive Change Management Strategy**

   Address the resistance to change identified as the primary implementation barrier through a structured change management approach following Kotter's (2007) eight-step model:

   - Create a sense of urgency around service improvement
   - Build a guiding coalition of influential stakeholders
   - Form a strategic vision for service management
   - Communicate the vision and benefits extensively
   - Remove barriers to adoption
   - Generate short-term wins to demonstrate value
   - Sustain momentum through continuous improvement
   - Anchor changes in the organizational culture

2. **Invest in Training and Skill Development**

   Ensure that staff have the necessary skills to effectively utilize the service management system through:

   - Process-specific training for all IT staff
   - Tool and technology training for system administrators
   - Soft skills development for customer-facing roles
   - Certification opportunities (e.g., ITIL, COBIT)

Cater-Steel and Tan (2017) found that organizations that invested more than 10% of their implementation budget in training achieved implementation success rates 60% higher than those that invested less.

3. **Establish a Service Management Office (SMO)**

   Create a dedicated function responsible for overseeing the implementation and continuous improvement of service management practices. The SMO's responsibilities should include:

   - Process ownership and governance
   - Tool administration and enhancement
   - Metrics definition and reporting
   - Continuous improvement facilitation

   According to the IT Service Management Forum (2016), organizations with established SMOs achieve 45% higher process maturity scores within two years compared to those without such structures.

4. **Develop a Recognition and Incentive Program**

   Motivate staff to adopt new service management practices through recognition and incentives, including:

   - Public recognition for service excellence
   - Performance bonuses tied to service metrics
   - Career advancement opportunities based on service management skills

- Team-based rewards for meeting service level targets

(Adams, 2013) found that organizations with formal recognition programs achieved 35% higher adoption rates for new processes compared to those without such programs.

5.6 Suggestions for Further Research

Based on the findings and limitations of this study, several avenues for further research are proposed:

1. **Longitudinal Impact Studies**

   Conduct longitudinal studies that track key performance indicators before, during, and after service management system implementation to establish causal relationships between service management practices and operational outcomes. Such studies would address the limitation of the current cross-sectional design and provide stronger evidence of service management system effects.

2. **Multi-Stakeholder Perspectives**

   Expand research to include perspectives from internal customers, external customers, and vendors to develop a more comprehensive understanding of service management system impacts. This would address the limitation of the current study's focus on IT staff perspectives and provide a more holistic view of service management effectiveness.

3. **Comparative Studies Across Financial Institutions**

   Conduct comparative studies across multiple financial institutions in Zimbabwe or the broader African context to identify industry-specific best practices and challenges. This would enhance the generalizability of findings and provide context-specific insights for African financial institutions.

4. **Integration with Digital Transformation Initiatives**

   Explore how service management systems integrate with broader digital transformation initiatives in banking, such as mobile banking, artificial intelligence, and blockchain. This would provide insights into how service management systems can support strategic digital initiatives in the financial sector.

5. **Cultural and Contextual Factors**

   Investigate how cultural and contextual factors specific to African financial institutions influence service management system adoption and effectiveness. This would address the gap in understanding how Western service management frameworks and practices might need adaptation for African contexts.

6. **Return on Investment Analysis**

   Develop more sophisticated models for calculating the return on investment of service management system implementations in financial institutions, addressing both tangible and intangible benefits. This would provide financial justification for service management investments and guide resource allocation decisions.

7. **Impact of Service Management on Financial Inclusion**

   Examine how improved IT service management in African financial institutions impacts financial inclusion efforts and service delivery to underbanked populations. This would connect service management improvements to broader social and economic development goals.

This research agenda would build upon the current study's findings while addressing its limitations, contributing to a deeper understanding of service management systems in the context of African financial institutions.

List of Tables

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APPENDICIES

APPENDIX 1:INFORMED CONSENT GUIDE

My name is Chelsea Batsirai Sara, a final year (Computer Information Systems) student from AU. I am carrying out a study on the impact of a Services Management System on the functionality and performance of an IT Department in an organization. I am kindly asking you to participate in this study by filling in the accompanying questionnaire and as well as discuss the system in question on how it impacts you as a user and your personal thoughts about how it works.

Purpose of the study

Purpose of the Study

This research aims to evaluate the effectiveness of a Service Management System (SMS) in assessing and enhancing the performance of an IT department within organizational settings. Specifically, the study seeks:

- To assess the impact of the service management system on the productivity and efficiency of the IT department's operations and service delivery.
- To evaluate the influence of a service management system on the IT department's ability to meet customer/end-user requirements and improve overall satisfaction
- To propose recommendations for improving the effectiveness and efficiency of the IT department through the adoption of a service management system.

The research focuses on Steward Bank Zimbabwe as a case study, where you have been selected as a participant based on your: Minimum one year of organizational tenure, Direct involvement in query handling and reporting processes and Operational understanding of IT service management practices

Procedures and duration

If participant decides to participate, they will have to fill a questionnaire that is provided and also have a discussion on the aspect of the system in question. The discussion is only if the participant wants to have it and information observed as useful will be included in the survey. It is expected that this will take about 15 minutes though this value is subject to change depending on what the participant requires to be comfortable in this research.

Risks and discomforts

The biggest risk that is in line with this research is the breaching of the rules and laws of information security. This issue is inherent of the assessing of a system that is in use in SBZ Limited as it is in use in the organization. The intent of the data collection method is made to be sure no data that elopes the information security regulations of SBZ Limited.

The benefits: This study maybe or may not be realized within a short timeframe. There is no guarantee of there being benefits. However, one can expect that this research will deepen knowledge on how the system in question can be adopted, utilized and how it can help bring more benefits into an organization. To the subject, it will help see the advantage or disadvantage of systems as an analysis tool of a department's performance.

Confidentiality

Information that has been supplied to the researcher is not to be divulged in any manner whatsoever that may result in acknowledgement of whom the informant is. All feedback is strictly confidential and the identity of the participant who gave the information will not be a necessity through the research. Any identification methods, including but not limited to national IDs, passports, photographs, etc. are not to be disclosed to the researcher under any circumstances, for any reasons. Only information relating to what is being researched is required and is to be asked for in the exercise.

Voluntary participation

Participation in this study is voluntary. If participant decides not to participate in this study, their decision will not affect their future relationship with any party that is involved in the research. If they chose to participate, they are free to withdraw their consent and to discontinue participation without any penalty whatsoever.

Offer to answer questions

Before you sign this form, please ask any questions on any aspect of this study that is unclear to you. You may take as much time as necessary to think it over**.**

Authorization

If you have decided to participate in this study please sign this form in the space provide below as an indication that you have read and understood the information provided above and have agreed to participate.

---------- ----------

Name of Research Participant (please print) Date

Signature of Research Participant or legally authorised representative

If you have any questions concerning this study or consent form beyond those answered by the researcher including questions about the research, your rights as a research participant, or if you feel that you have been treated unfairly and would like to talk to someone other than the researcher, please feel free to contact the Africa University Research Ethics Committee on telephone (020) 60075 or 60026 extension 1156 email aurec@africau.edu

Name of Researcher _____

APPENDIX 2: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR STEWARD BANK EMPLOYEES

Questionnaire: Effects of Service Management System on IT Department Functionality and Performance

Section 1: Demographic Information

1.What is your current role in the IT department?

a) Intern / Graduate Trainee
b) Systems Analyst
c) Systems Specialist / Engineer
d) Manager
e) HOD (Head of Department)
f) CTSO / Executive Member
g) Other (Specify): _____

Section 2: Familiarity with Service Management Systems

2. How familiar are you with the concept of a Service Management System (SMS)?

a) Very Familiar
b) Moderately Familiar
c) Slightly Familiar
d) Not Familiar

Section 3: Current IT Issue Management Practices

3. How do you currently track and manage IT issues within the department? *(Select all that apply)*

a) Manual Tracking (e.g., paper-based, notes)

b) Spreadsheets (e.g., Excel, Google Sheets)

c) Email Communication

d) Centralized Ticketing System

e) ERP System

f) Query Management System (QMS)

g) Other (Specify): _____

Section 4: Operational Challenges

4. What specific inefficiencies or challenges do you currently encounter in IT operations that a Service Management System could address?

Section 5: Expected Impact of SMS

5. To what extent do you believe a Service Management System could improve task efficiency in the IT department?

a) Extremely

b) Quite a Bit

c) Somewhat

d) A Little

e) Not at All

6.How would you rate the potential impact of a Service Management System on your team's productivity?

a) Very High

b) High

c) Neutral

d) Low

e) Very Low

Section 6: Implementation Concerns

7. What concerns or features do you anticipate regarding the implementation of a new Service Management

System? ……

……

……

8. What challenges or barriers might the IT department face in implementing a Service ManagementSystem? ……

……

……

Section 7: Customer Satisfaction

9. How likely do you think customers would be to recommend Steward Bank's IT services if a Service Management System is implemented?

a) Very Likely

b) Likely

c) Neutral

d) Unlikely

e) Very Unlikely

Section 8: Recommendations

10. What recommendations would you propose for enhancing the IT department's operations through a Service Management

System? ……

……

……..

END OF QUESTIONNAIRE. THANK YOU FOR YOUR VALUED TIME

APPENDIX 3: AUREC APPROVAL

"Investing in Africa's future"

AFRICA UNIVERSITY RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE (AUREC)

P.O. Box 1320 Mutare, Zimbabwe, Off Nyanga Road, Old Mutare-Tel (+263-20) 60075/60026/61611 Fax: (+263 20) 61785 Website: www.africau.edu

Ref: AU 3434/24 3 September, 2024

CHELSEA BATSIRAI SARA
C/O Africa University
Box 1320
MUTARE

RE: **EXAMINING THE EFFECTS OF SERVICES MANAGEMENT SYSTEM ON THE FUNCTIONALITY AND PERFORMANCE OF AN INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (IT) DEPARTMENT IN AN ORGANISATION. CASE STUDY OF STEWARD BANK ZIMBABWE TRADING**

Thank you for the above-titled proposal that you submitted to the Africa University Research Ethics Committee for review. Please be advised that AUREC has reviewed and approved your application to conduct the above research.

The approval is based on the following.

a) Research proposal

- **APPROVAL NUMBER** AUREC 3434/24
  This number should be used on all correspondences, consent forms, and appropriate document
- **AUREC MEETING DATE** NA
- **APPROVAL DATE** September 3, 2024
- **EXPIRATION DATE** September 3, 2025
- **TYPE OF MEETING**: Expedited
  After the expiration date, this research may only continue upon renewal. A progress report on a standard AUREC form should be submitted a month before the expiration date for renewal purposes.
- **SERIOUS ADVERSE EVENTS** All serious problems concerning subject safety must be reported to AUREC within 3 working days on the standard AUREC form.
- **MODIFICATIONS** Prior AUREC approval is required before implementing any changes in the proposal (including changes in the consent documents)
- **TERMINATION OF STUDY** Upon termination of the study a report has to be submitted to AUREC.

Yours Faithfully

MARY CHINZOU
ASSISTANT RESEARCH OFFICER: FOR CHAIRPERSON
AFRICA UNIVERSITY RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

APPENDIX 4: PROJECT BUDGET

Activity	**Cost $USD**
Designing of questionnaire	5
Transport	30
Online interviews data	30
Total	**65**

APPENDIX 5: GANTT CHAT

EXAMINING THE EFFECTS OF SERVICES MANAGEMENT SYSTEM ON THE FUNCTIONALITY AND PERFORMANCE OF AN INFORMATION TECHNOLGY (IT) DEPARTMENT IN AN ORGANISATION. CASE STUDY OF STEWARD BANK ZIMBABWE									
Task	**2024**						**2025**		
	APRIL	**MAY**	**JUN**	**JUL**	**SEPT**	**DEC**	**JAN**	**FEB**	MARCH
Proposal Development									
AUREC Submission									
Data Collection									
Chapter 4 & 5 Writing									
Final Submission									

APPENDIX 6: SUPERVISOR APPROVAL

AFRICA UNIVERSITY
A United Methodist-Related Institution

COLLEGE OF BUSINESS, PEACE, LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE

06/08/2024

Africa University Research Ethics Committee

Ref: Approval for AUREC Proposal Submission

Chelsea Batsirai Sara has worked on the proposal with the assistance of the supervisor and I confirm that it is ready for reviewed by your esteemed committee.

Respectfully submitted,

Dr. T. Zengeni — Supervisor's Name

---------- — Supervisor's Signature