

Challenges to the Implementation of It Governace in Zimbabwean Parastatals

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ABSTRACT

The research was aimed at finding the challenges to the implementation of IT governance in Zimbabwean parastatals. It assessed existing IT governance processes and frameworks in Zimbabwean parastatals. The participants of this study were managers, directors and the staff from five different Zimbabwe parastatals. Tools for data collection included questionnaires targeted at the staff from the different parastatals, interviews with managers and directors from five different Zimbabwean parastatals as well as document review. The research revealed that there were no clear IT governance strategies or written IT policy statements or frameworks being used to implement IT governance in Zimbabwean parastatals. The research also established that corporate governance which is the overall body covering IT governance is still at the developing stage in Zimbabwean parastatals. The research recommended the implementation of a documented IT policy statement and use such known frameworks such as COBIT and ITIL.

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I. INTRODUCTION

In this global information era, businesses have come to hinge more and more on information technology (IT). Businesses rely on IT for both operations support and management support so IT has become pivotal to the normal existence of businesses and with globalization and the creation of a global village, IT systems interface businesses with the world. Businesses are now able to compete competitively using IT as their back bone of core business operations, marketing is done electronically, handling costs are being reduced through the adoption of IT, orders and payments are now being done electronically, business meetings are being done in virtual boardrooms and in the comfort of one's home or office. This means IT services are becoming the point of contact between the client and the business, hence a strong need for good IT governance and management in business.

The Corporate governance best practices of 2002, defined parastatals as entities that are governed by Acts of Parliament for their operations, they are wholly owned by Government and they serve the state indirectly. The researcher looked at one parastatal in different sectors in the Zimbabwean economy. In the mining sector, the researcher looked at Hwange Colliery, Grain Marketing Board under the agricultural sector, Civil Aviation Authority of Zimbabwe under the transport sector, Zimbabwe National Family Planning Council under Healthy and Parks and Wildlife management under the environmental sector.

II. WHAT IS IT GOVERNANCE

The term IT governance has generated many different definitions. It was therefore, part of this study to arrive at a view in to what is meant by the term IT governance and its practical application in Zimbabwe parastatals. The concept of IT governance is described in a lot of literature sources to the extent that some authors have debated whether there is need to adopt a specific definition of IT governance at all, since it might curb exploration and restrict diversity. It is, therefore, important that we have a definition that is sufficiently broad to incorporate all aspects of IT governance, and that is not rendered obsolete through the introduction of further new technologies. IT governance in its broadest sense is a subset of enterprise governance and encompasses systems, infrastructure, and communication. Similarly, Matthew Magee, Petr Marounek, Lynn Mueller and Andrew Phillipson (2008) see IT governance as a subset of enterprise governance and overlaps with it, given all their commonalities. It is targeted for enterprises that develop products. IT governance is application of ICT for interaction among government, citizens and businesses as well as in internal government operations to simply and improves the governance, as defined by Vinay Thakur (2005). The Office of the Auditor General (OAG) of Uganda (2000) see IT governance as the process by which the top management and those in charge of governance of an organization ensure that ICT is optimally used to achieve the organizations business