

**IMPLEMENTATION CHALLENGES OF e-
GOVERNMENT INITIATIVES IN ZIMBABWE. CASE
STUDY OF THE PARLIAMENT OF ZIMBABWE.**

BY

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DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my wife Hlozokuhle, my daughter Bernice Nontsikelelo and to my late parents. This is a culmination of all your efforts.

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ABSTRACT

The concept and practice of e-government remains a fairly new phenomenon in the Sub Sahara Africa, particularly in Zimbabwe. It has proceeded at a rather glacial pace regardless of its introduction many decades ago as one of the key strategies of the New Public Management. This study therefore strives to identify the reasons to this problem which has led to the slow progression in the implementation of e-government initiatives. Particularly, the study focuses its attention on the various implementation challenges that continue to contribute to the current state of e-government in Africa in general and Zimbabwe in particular. The current state of e-government in Zimbabwe mirrors the deep rooted problems ranging from financial, political, organisational and even socio economic. These problems have led to the failure by various governments in the developing world to fully realise the benefits of e-government notably the reformation of the public sector to make it a responsive and accessible institution which values the importance of efficiently and effectively delivering social goods and public services to the citizens. E-government is also instrumental in ensuring that public sector institutions are economic and as such manage their public expenditure and public finances in a manner that is cognisant of the needs and interests of the masses. This is a key consideration that African governments should prioritise in the wake of serious financial and economic challenges that bedevil the continent. In that respect, the concept of e-government needs be taken seriously in order to ameliorate these problems encountered in the African public sector. In light of that, this research also seeks to highlight opportunities presented in the successful implementation of e-government in order for policy makers, the academia and general public to appreciate this concept and its practice. The study proceeded from a qualitative perspective and the data gathered confirmed, in the major findings that most of the challenges experienced ranged from those highlighted above. Major conclusions were arrived at basing on the findings identified in Chapter four of the study, for instance, the central conclusion based on the role that e-government can play in improving the public sector and this is captured in the fifth chapter of the dissertation. Additionally, in chapter five, the research undertook the task to propose possible measures or strategies that can be adopted to address or solve these implementation challenges in order for e-government initiatives to be successfully undertaken, these were presented in form of recommendations.

ABBREVIATIONS

BTA	:	Botswana Telecommunications Authority
BUA	:	Bottom Up Approach
CCS	:	Central Computing Services
ECA	:	Economic Commission for Africa
KIIs	:	Key Informant Interviews
ICTs	:	Information and Communication Technologies
IDIs	:	In Depth Interviews
IRBMS	:	Integrated Results Based Management System
MoICTPCSs	:	Ministry of Information and Communication Technologies, Postal and Courier Services
NeGP	:	National e-Government Plan
OPC	:	Office of the President and Cabinet
OSA	:	Official Secrets Act
PFMS	:	Public Finance Management Systems
PoZ	:	Parliament of Zimbabwe
SSA	:	Sub Sahara Africa
TDA	:	Top Down Approach
WGC	:	Warana Group of Co operatives
ZIMASSET	:	Zimbabwe Agenda for Sustainable Socio Economic Transformation
ZIMRA	:	Zimbabwe Revenue Authority

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Background

With the dawn of the technological age, due to wide spread of Information Communication Technologies (ICTs), e-government is fast becoming of prime importance. (Nkohkwo and Islam 2013). It has been heralded as the new way forward for the public sector in both developing and the developed world.(Dada 2006:1) This has prompted many governments in Sub Sahara Africa to start thinking of going digital and Zimbabwe has been caught in that wave as well.

However, despite the zeal and commitment towards adoption of e-government most African governments still find it difficult to translate the commitment to real and meaningful implementation as they have faced a myriad of common problems which have continued to place Africa where it finds itself on the technological and e-government map on the global stage. Zimbabwe is amongst countries in the developing world that is experiencing challenges in implementing e-government initiatives in the bid to improve the outlook and reform the performance of the public sector. Problems bedevilling implementation of such initiatives are multifold. According to Al Rashidi (20010:3), these problems can vary from resistance from employees, legal systems constraints, cultural and political constraints, lack of senior management commitment, negative employee and user attitude and resistance to change. These problems can be both internal and external and contribute immensely in the state e-government projects in Zimbabwe finds themselves in.

According to United Nations (2012), Zimbabwe's progress in the implementation and growth of the ICTs and e-government has been unstable. For instance in 2008, Zimbabwe was ranked 138 in the world rankings and 129 in 2010, which was an improvement. However, in the subsequent years, the country's rankings fell to 133 in 2012.

History of the application of ICTs in Zimbabwe's public sector can be traced back to 1972 with the institution of the Central Computing Services (CCS), which was aimed at providing ICT services to the public service. This was then followed with the adoption of the Integrated Results Based Management (IRBM) System in 2005, in which the e-government is an integral component and one of the three important under pinnars of the main pillars or cornerstones of the system. Thereafter, following the advent of the Inclusive Government under the Global Political Agreement, a fully-fledged Ministry of Information Communication Technology was established with the mandate of promoting the use of ICTs to enhance national competitiveness and socio-economic growth. (<http://egov.comesa.int/index.php/submit-an-e-government-article/55-zimbabwe-e-government-updates.pdf>). Despite the evidence of the country's over three decades long experience of its commitment expressed towards transformation of the public sector through the employment of ICTs, there continues to be challenges that have arrested the growth of this sector most, if not all, which are implementation related.

Zimbabwe has up to date only managed implementation of only a sizeable e-government projects whilst some fail to even take off, dying at consummation stage. The establishment of the Public Finance Management System, Chitungwiza Hospital's District Health Information Systems, Zimbabwe Revenue Authority (ZIMRA)'s Fiscalisation Project, Computerisation of the Liquor Licencing Board, Computerisation of the Registrar General's Passport Office and that of the Parliament of Zimbabwe and establishment of the Public Service Computer Based Management Information Systems are e-initiatives that have so far, among others, been implemented. However, it has been noted that, although there has been considerable commitment towards these initiatives their implementation has remained nightmarish and problematic. These initiatives are notably hampered mainly by the shortage of financial resources, dearth in technical expertise, lack of political will indicated by inadequate legislation and specific policy directives to govern and support the implementation of these initiatives.

Ngulube (2007), citing InfoDev (2002), further adds that, a raft of problems affect the implementation of e-government in most Sub Saharan countries and reveals that Zimbabwe is not spared by problems related to lack of access to ICTs, lack of requisite ICT infrastructure, the digital divide, IT illiteracy, lack of legislative backing amongst many others that hinder the successful implementation of e-government initiatives.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

Adoption of e-government in Zimbabwe has been proceeding at a glacial pace and hence delaying prospects of improving the public sector, engendering inclusiveness in decision making and entrenching the people's confidence in their government aimed at enhancing good governance.

Efforts towards e-government development have been dealt a heavy blow as their implementation has proven to be complex, expensive and rather very slow. E-government projects in Zimbabwe have been marred by severe implementation problems with most of them even dying at embryonic or nascent stages.

Transformation of the Parliament of Zimbabwe has been suffering from problems which are hampering the successful implementation of ICT initiatives such as establishing an interactive website that is accessible to every user and can offer all services and information related to parliament without necessarily having to physically frequent the parliament building. Parliament of Zimbabwe hosts a website which however is only instrumental in informing the public or users but not capacitated to interact in terms of receiving feedback and establishment of chat rooms where citizens can interact with their representatives in the parliament and follow parliamentary debate and or download information packages such as Hansards, watch parliamentary proceedings online and participate in parliamentary proceedings to increase transparency and promote participation.

These problems are further reinforced by the lack of adequate infrastructure and necessary requisite technical skills, lack of access to internet and other IT consumables

required for one to operate such facilities since they are expensive and out of reach of the majority who are rural dwellers. This continues to be a privilege for their urban counterparts despite the increase of internet able mobile phones. These are further compounded by general political and economic problems that the country has been facing for the past decade or so.\

1.2 Research Objectives

Objectives of the study were:

- i. To understand the fundamental nature of e-government
- ii. To identify challenges encountered in the implementation of e-government initiatives in Zimbabwe.
- iii. To analyse how other governments have dealt with such implementation related problems
To ascertain whether e government initiatives are key in promoting accountability, transparency and participation in public sector processes
- iv. To propose/recommend strategies that can be utilised to ensure effective implementation of e-government

1.3 Justification of the Study

This research played an important role in investigating the reason behind failure of most e-government initiatives in Zimbabwe. In its pursuit of understanding specific challenges encountered in implementing e-government projects, the study came up with suggestions or recommendations as to how policy makers can formulate policies that resonate with the interests of the public in order to mitigate any challenges beforehand.

Particularly, findings from this research should be utilised in planning and designing of e-government and other related projects that the government and other stakeholders might consider implementing. This project also sought to contribute to the existing bodies of knowledge in the ICTs sector for both the public and private sectors and the academic fraternity.

Given the limited research and publication in the field of e-government, this research aspired to contribute in covering those gaps by being a published scholarly work upon its completion focusing specifically on proffering solutions to problems encountered in implementation of e-government initiatives in the developing world.

The study also endeavoured to contribute to the efforts, proposed in the Zimbabwe Agenda for Sustainable Socio-Economic Transformation (ZIMASSET), towards modernisation of the public sector. It suggested both immediate and long term strategies that can be undertaken to ensure the smooth implementation of these initiatives.

This research referred to case studies in developing and developed world where e-government initiatives have been implemented before in order to draw lessons on how implementation related problems would be dealt with.

1.4 Hypothesis

E-government initiatives fail because of lack of proper implementation procedures

1.5 Research Questions

- i. What is the nature of e-government?
- ii. What challenges or problems are encountered in implementing e government initiatives in Zimbabwe?
- iii. How have other governments addressed such problems in the past?
- iv. Does implementation of e-government initiatives increase transparency, accountability and promote all stakeholder participation in public sector processes?
- v. Which strategies can be adopted to ensure effective implementation of e-government projects?

1.6 Limitations of the Study

The study encountered challenges or barriers in accessing information from the relevant public institutions whose members are sworn to secrecy under the Official Secrets Act (OSA). To be specific, the researcher was denied permission to undertake research in the Office of the President and Cabinet's Modernisation Department which is the primary institution championing e-government in Zimbabwe. Waiting for the response which took so long to come delayed and also impeded data collection since crucial details related to e-government initiatives in Zimbabwe could not be accessed and hence compromised the quality of data required and impacted negatively on the research timeframe since the research could now only be confined to the Parliament and the Ministry of ICTs and its parastatals in the public sector. Nonetheless, the researcher will endeavour to prepare letters of notification to relevant management in the institutions with targeted respondents in order to be granted clearance to proceed with the research and access every relevant piece of data within the time provided.

The research also suffered another setback when it experienced challenges in accessing key informants whom are mostly senior government officials who often had very busy schedules. Of particular mention are the Acting Clerk of Parliament and the Permanent Secretary in the MoICTPCSs who took over two months to grant the researcher a slot within their schedules. To ratify this, highest level of patience should be exercised and timely booking of meetings with high profile government officials should be done prior. In some instances, the researcher resorted to e-mailing the interview questions to the respondents since they indicated their inability to meet with the researcher physically notably the Parliament's Network Administrator.

Lack of regular internet access can also become a limitation to the study since the research also depended on the internet for other research requirements. The researcher only had access to internet during the day at the University of Zimbabwe.

1.7 Delimitation of the Study

The study took place in Harare and specifically focused on the Parliament of Zimbabwe. Nonetheless, other related government institutions such as the Ministry of Information and Communication Technologies, Postal and Courier Services were considered in this research since it is the relevant ministry administering ICT and e-government policies. Interest was placed on the period beginning 2011-2013 when there was noticeable expression of commitment towards e-government initiatives, notably within the Parliament of Zimbabwe, such as the establishment of online management information systems, redesigning and upgrading of the Parliamentary website and so forth.

Respondents were drawn from the mentioned institutions with additional ones coming from parastatals such as Netone, Telone and Zarnet. In the private sector respondents were drawn from Barclays Bank, 23rd Century Systems and also from the Zimbabwe National Chamber of Commerce. Ordinary citizens were also interviewed.

1.8 Organisation of the Study

Chapter One- Introduction- contains the brief outline of all the other chapters of the dissertation

Chapter Two- Literature Review- includes the literature review, conceptual and theoretical framework

Chapter Three- Methodology- contains an outline of the research methodology

Chapter Four- Findings- highlights the major findings of the research

Chapter Five- Conclusions and Recommendations- contains recommendations and conclusion to be used in addressing the problem

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CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

This chapter reviews related study literature in accordance with the main categories grounding the study. The chapter shall also provide the link between existing knowledge, the theoretical framework chosen and how they offer an explanation to the understanding of e-government in general and implementation challenges encountered thereof. The chapter is broken into two major categories i.e. conceptual framework and theoretical framework. The conceptual framework includes definitions, overview and discussion of key concepts of the study which are electronic government and implementation. In the meanwhile, theoretical framework presents the theories underpinning the concept of implementation of e government from a public policy perspective aimed at providing an understanding on how these challenges can be ameliorated. Also covered in this chapter is a brief presentation on international best practices providing lessons both from the emerging economies in the Asian hemisphere and developing world pertaining to how Zimbabwe can better tackle and resolve implementation challenges of a common or similar nature.

2.1 Conceptual Framework

2.1.1 Electronic Government: The Concept

E- Government is a contemporary function aimed at improving the outlook, performance and accessibility of the public sector. It emerged as one of the major sub-doctrines or reform strategies of the New Public Management discourse intended to reform the public sector and it emanated from Europe in the late 1970s. E-government basically connotes the application and utilization of information and communication technologies (ICTs) in order to enhance and improve efficiency and effectiveness of the public sector. (ECA 2004).

E-government has been considered as a necessary precondition for nurturing and promoting accountability in the public sector. This opinion is also embraced by ECA (2004) when the report observes that “.....the creation of new information and communication systems are seen as an essential component in the creation of accountability”. ICTs are regarded as major trendsetters in the creation of a modern government which values its citizens and customs and upholds transparency, accountability and efficient and effective dispensation of public services and goods.

Heeks (1998) in ECA (2004) emphasizes the important realization of the potential that ICTs have in improving public administration activities and how it can enhance accountability in decision making. He expresses this by remarking that “.....when a decision is taken, information about that decision and its outcomes must flow to all those to whom the decision maker is accountable”. He also argues that, without such information flow, and without the information system to carry that flow, there can be no accountability because there can be no knowledge of the decision. Thus, the introduction of ICTs in the public sector aims at ensuring public involvement and popular participation by citizens in public policy and decision making.

2.1.2 E-Government: Definitions and Overview

E-government has been known by various names such as electronic government, electronic governance, digital government, online government, e gov etc. (Gronland 2004: 1) in Alseheri and Drew (2010: 1).

Alseheri and Drew (2010: 1) also acknowledge the existence of various definitions that pertain to e-government. They observe that “... there are many definitions for the term e-government and the differences reflect the priorities in the government strategies”. However, the duo chose to abide by the definition offered by Fany (2002) that refers to e government as “....a way of governments to use the most innovative ICTs, particularly web based internet applications, to provide citizens and businesses with more convenient access to government information and services, to improve the quality of services and to

provide greater opportunities to participate in democratic institutions and processes”. This is a more generic definition of e-government encompassing all its key components and aspirations.

UNESCO (2005: 5) defines e-government as use of ICTs to promote more efficient and effective government and make it more accessible and accountable to its citizens. The report identifies four key characteristics of e-government that include: *electronic service delivery, electronic workflow, electronic voting and electronic productivity*. E-government, in basic terms refers to, or means good governance. The real reason for initiation of e government is to achieve good governance. Since governance primarily refers to the manner in which power is exercised by governments in managing a country’s resources, good governance involves range of activity areas and an important facilitator of the same is the application of ICT in the process of governance (UNESCO 2005: 7). In this regard, ICTs in the public sector or e-government are an important enabler of good governance by virtue of their role in in enhancing the outlook, performance and accessibility of government facilities and services.

The reason for the sudden rise in e-government practices in the contemporary world is due to the fact that e-government systems have the capability of promoting better governance. E-government helps in achieving greater efficiency in government performance by raising service performance, service delivery, by eliminating inefficient processes and reducing bottlenecks and red tape in the service delivery process as much as possible. It is further added that, most of the times the need for e-government is driven by the country’s need for rationalization since e-government is considered to be cheaper, fewer people are needed to do the work and convenience (Nkohkwo and Islam 2013 citing OECD 2003, Mutala 2008 in Nkohkwo and Islam 2013).

One of the major propositions of e-government is the need for making public services readily available to the citizens. Heeks (2006) refers to the 24/7 agency which is an extension of his previous idea on the 5 Ws and 1 H, which are *who, what, when, where and how*. This implies that e government, as argued by Heeks (2006) will ensure the

fulltime accessibility and availability of public services throughout the day, week, month and year at any moment and anywhere. (Nkohkwo and Islam 2013).

2.1.3 The Scope of E- Government

The strength of e-government is derived from its umbilical connection with information society. It empowers government departments to network and integrate their services using ICTs in order to improve and enhance relationship between government and the citizens. (Ngulube 2007: 1).

2.1.2.1 Primary Models of e-government

These are popularly referred to as *primary* models of e government. According to Seifert (2003), there are three models of e-government and he identifies them in the following order: Government to Government (G2G), Government to Business (G2B) and Government to Citizens (G2C). The scholar acknowledges the existence of a fourth sector known as Government to Employee (G2E) but however argues that it is a sub component of G2G and as such will be discussed under that model as the review continues since it is an intra-agency activity.

2.1.2.2 *Government to Government (G2G)*

This delivery model concerns itself with sharing of data and conduct of electronic exchange of information amongst various government departments. It is argued that such platforms promote the establishment of common or one stop portals that ensure harmonization of electronic linkage between and among government departments meanwhile creating efficient government machinery. For Seifert (2003: 4), G2G represents the backbone of government. He argues that governments should invest in efforts to enhance and update their internal systems and procedures for electronic transactions to take place amongst a network of public agencies, businesses and the citizens. Here focus is placed on improving backend or back office operations. This point is also shared by Atkinson and Ulerich (2008).

G2G encourages both intra and inter-governmental connectivity at various levels and tiers of government, for instance, central, federal, regional and local levels. (Seifert 2003: 4). It is a platform that is aimed at de-bureaucratizing the public sector and doing away with rigid lines of communication. It emphasises interoperability and creating a seamless horizontal system of administration. Here, reference is also made to harmonisation of payroll systems, wage brackets and any other employee related information systems.

2.1.2.3 Government to Citizen (G2C)

UNESCO (2005: 9) observes that this is the form of interaction that takes place where electronic dissemination of information and electronic delivery of services takes place, fulfilling the primary objective of “e-government”. The submission further notes that initiatives in this delivery model attempt to make transactions such as obtaining of certificates, renewing licenses, payment of bills and taxes and applying for government schemes less time consuming and convenient. Also emphasized here is the inclusion of citizen participation in the public process of national interest (ibid.).

G2C initiatives are designed to facilitate citizen interaction with government through creation of “one stop shopping” site where citizens transact with multiple agencies, without requiring them to initiate physical contact with each agency individually. This promotes easy accessibility of government services available online. (Hasson 2000, Seifert 2003)

2.1.2.4 Government to Business (G2B)

It involves improved and efficient procurement of goods and services by the government from commercial entities. It also includes sale of government goods to the public with the potential for reducing costs through improved procurement practices and competition. (UNESCO 2005: 9). Seifert (2003) also concurs with this view. However, whilst this may be correct about developments of G2B e-government in general in the developed world, due to infrastructural and budgetary constraints, the developing world, notably Africa, is

yet to realize the and experience successful G2B initiatives and a fully efficient and functional e-government system.

2.2.4 Evolution of e-government

Stages of e-government

Gartner Group developed the Open Government Maturity Model which identifies four maturity phases or stages namely; *information, interaction, transaction and transformative*. This is the commonly used template in the development and evolution of e government initiatives. However, it should be kept in mind that these stages are not dependent on each other. (Seifert 2003, UNESCO 2005).

2.2.4.1 *Information*

This is the fundamental phase of e-government development. It is also called Web Presence Stage where only the web site is static and used to provide basic information to the citizen. (Allah et al 2014: 4). This stage represents the simplest and least expensive entrance into e-government, but also offers fewest options for citizens (Seifert 2003: 10). Thus, it can be argued and noted that, most countries in the developing world are still struggling at this stage due to financial and infrastructural shortcomings. Websites of the said countries exist for the mere purpose to communicate, though in a linear fashion with the users.

According to UNESCO (2005: 11), an ideal way for preparing a nation to enter this stage would be setting up a National Portal providing a ready and comprehensive access to the information online ranging from profile of the nation, Parliament, Constitution, Executive, Judiciary to government publications, government services and government schemes for the citizens or businesses. Examples of national portals can include the “firstgov” initiative in the United States of America symbolized by <http://www.firstgov.gov>, the United Kingdom’s “Directgov” indicated by <http://www.directgov.gov>, Singapore’s <http://www.gov.sg> and lastly Zimbabwe’s

<http://www.gov.zw>. These constitute an important part in the whole e-government evolution process enhancing accessibility and sharing of information pertaining to affairs of the state.

2.2.4.2 Interaction

This phase deals with the involvement of the public in the functioning of the government. Through use of technology, the interaction between government and citizens/businesses can be stimulated and made more effective (UNESCO 2005: 11). Interactions are relatively simple and generally revolve around information provision. These types of initiatives are designed to help the customer avoid making a trip to an office or make a phone call by making information or forms available around the clock 24 hours. (Seifert 2003: 10). This raises the level of trust of citizens in the government but also saves a lot of time by providing services on a 24/7 basis (UNESCO 2005).

2.2.4.3 Transaction

Transaction initiatives are more complex than simple information provision and embody the types of activities popularly associated with e-government (Seifert 2003: 10). They also enable clients to complete their tasks at any time of the day or night. At this stage, there shall be an active database and promotion of citizen engagement and participation. Priority should be given to the establishment of two way communication systems and enactment of interoperable technology promoting G2G, G2C, G2B and G2E.

Also involved at this level of e-government is the establishment of websites and their applications to allow users to conduct transactions online. Online monetary transaction is a crucial component of this phase (UNESCO 2005: 11). This phase demonstrates advancements of technologies such as digital signatures and certificates, payment gateways and results in long term cost saving and improvement in productivity (ibid.).

2.2.4.4 Transformation

This phase alludes to the stage where government has gone through the full transformation process and all citizen services are being made available online through a single “virtual” counter round the clock (UNESCO 2005: 11). Seifert (2003) christens it the “highest order of e-government evolution initiatives”. At this stage, ministerial/departmental/agency lines of demarcation are removed and services are clustered along common needs (UNESCO 2005). However, providing such fully integrated services shall require broad organizational change, aligning organizational setup with the new capacities and integrating back end operations and infrastructure in such a coherent and seamless manner that the government can effectively acquire the distinction of acquiring “digital statehood” (ibid.). In other words, transformative e-government initiatives often seek to remove organizational barriers that promote agency-centric solutions in favor of customer-centric solutions (Seifert 2003).

From the foregoing, it should be understood that e-government is to be seen as a continuous process and not just a means to an end nor an end in itself. Since various countries exist at different levels of maturity in terms of resources and infrastructure, the adoption of e-government also has to be viewed in the form of different maturity phases. Also important is to acknowledge that in as much as challenges experienced seem common, they are contextual and as such will tend to be configured exclusively different from country to country,

2.2.5 Implementation: *The Definition*

Implementation is understood to be the “carrying out of a basic public policy decision usually incorporated in a statute but can be in form of important executive orders, directives or court decisions (Mazmanian and Sabatier 1983). For Grindle (1980) implementation refers to the establishment of a link that allows goals of public policies to be realized as outcomes. He further substantiates that, it is a process of translating broad policy statements into action programs that bring change (ibid.).

The process of implementation is often rife with challenges and obstacles and to that end, this study intends to explore and further investigate the nature of these hurdles bedeviling this process. Pressman and Widalvsky (1984: xvi) underscore that, as programs are put into practice (implemented) it becomes apparent that not everyone is equally affected by them. Program clientele and other interested parties (stakeholders) take different positions on what exactly shall be implemented and in what way. This alone, proves how complicated the process of implementation can turn out to be. It is also indicative of the fact that implementation can be viewed and practiced differently by various actors and that is sufficient to cause problems in the process. Changing roles of the context and even content of policies are raised as issues by Pressman and Widalvsky (1984) when they observe that, as programmes are altered by their environments and organisations are affected by their programs, mutual adaptation changes both the context and content of what is being implemented. In this instance, these scholars emphasise the role played by the environment within which policies are being implemented which can be political, economic, social and even technological and their potential to poise challenges in the e-government implementation process as will be noted later in the review. Since implementation is a highly iterative process, there are likely to be lessons drawn from the process and hence the need to pay particular and close attention to detail.

In conclusion, Pressman and Widalvsky (1984:147) advise that “.....simplicity in policies is much to be desired.....the fewer the steps involved in carrying out the program, the fewer the opportunities for disaster to overtake it. The more directly the policy aims at its targets, the fewer the decisions involved in its ultimate realization and the greater likelihood it will be implemented”. In basic terms, emphasis is being placed on clearly articulating the goals and objectives of a policy and avoidance of ambiguity as a precursor to successful implementation of e-government policies and projects.

2.3 Achilles hill of e-government implementation: *The Challenges*

There are growing numbers of e-government projects, some of which are contributing to public sector reform and delivering gains of efficiency and effectiveness across a broad agenda. However, this picture must be set alongside significant challenges (Heeks 2003:1). There are common challenges widely experienced in the e-government implementation process and as such, it should be noted from an earlier point that some of these problems have a direct effect whilst others affect the process from a remote perspective, indirectly. Gichoya (2005) in Abdelsam (2007: 2) bemoans that, the poor infrastructure, poor data systems and capability, lacked of skilled personnel and leadership are some of the common challenges or problems faced in the bid to successfully execute e-government initiatives in Africa. Digital divide, legal and policy frameworks, e-illiteracy, security and privacy issues, financial or budgetary constraints, lack of political will, bureaucratic disinterest add on as other significant e-government challenges (Ngulube 2007: 182, Nkwe 2010: 3). Henceforth, as the study progresses, these challenges will be reviewed separate from each other and assess their impact on hampering efforts aimed at implementing e government initiatives.

Nkohkwo and Islam (2013: 256) postulate that these challenges are interconnected, that is to say, a relationship exists among these identifies challenges. These scholars further went to develop a concept for easy articulation and understanding of these challenges. In their concept known as IF-POSH, which summarises various aspects such as *infrastructure, finance, politics, organisations, socio-economic aspects, and human aspects*, they cluster these challenges under thematic groupings which will be discussed as the review progresses. The diagram below seeks to elaborate the interconnectedness of these implementation challenges

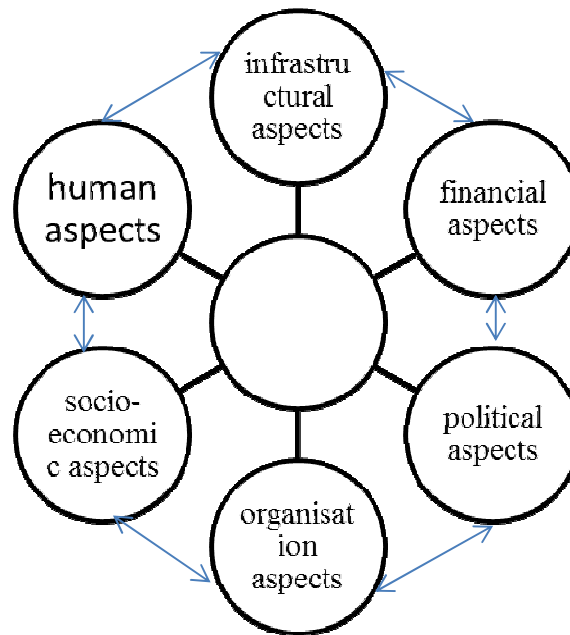


Figure 1 IF-POSH- The thematic challenges on implementing e-government initiatives

Source: Nkawkho and Islam (2010: 257)

A brief discussion of each of these thematic challenges will be discussed below and effort will be made to reveal how they link with one another and their exclusive impact on efforts of implementing e government initiatives.

2.3.1 Infrastructural Aspects/Challenges

ICT Infrastructural challenges particularly dominate the research on the challenges to the successful implementation of e-government initiatives in Sub Sahara Africa (SSA). (Nkohkwo and Islam 2013: 256). Citing Ndou (2004) and Ebrahim and Irani (2005), these authors further conclude that, with ICT infrastructure being the most common theme, one could assert that this is the main challenge for e-government in SSA

ICT infrastructural aspects remain the main challenge for e-government. (Ndou 2004, Ebrahim and Irani 2005, Nkohkwo and Islam 2013). Citing Bonham et al (2001), Bourn

(2002) and Dillon and Pelgrin (2001), Nkohkwo and Islam (2013: 258) postulate that, infrastructure is a huge challenge as also argued by the aforementioned scholars that it is a major barrier to provision of government services or transactions online. They also argue that, unreliable infrastructure will further influence to degrade e-government performance of respective governments. In concurrence, Ngulube (2007: 163) also adds that, the lack of ICT infrastructure in Africa has seriously restricted use of internet and the adoption of e-government in SSA. Internet use constitutes a critical position in the e government matrix since most if not all of the activities or transactions require one to be connected and lack of that deals a debilitating blow on the efforts of carrying out e-government activities, a serious obstacle to implementation of such initiatives. According to Ngulube (2007), what actually exacerbate the situation are the unaffordable internet rates and charges in SSA that make access very difficult and nearly impossible.

2.3.2 Financial Aspects/ Budgetary Constraints

Adequate funding or significant budgetary support is the bedrock of successful e-government projects. However, this has equally poised a serious threat to successful implementation of e-government initiatives in the developing world including Zimbabwe due to unprecedented economic hardships experienced in that part of the world. According to Nkohkwo and Islam (2013: 258), the most important aspects found under this bracket of challenges (financial) are “funding and cost of e government services”. Citing Ebrahim and Irani (2005), they reveal that, the main source of funding in public sector organisations come from the central government making it hard to control and sometimes goes in cycles of “ ‘east and famine’ that make it difficult to plan sustainable IT initiatives. (Heeks 1999) in Nkohkwo and Islam 2013: 258).

Additionally, Misuraca (2007) in Heflain (2009: 13) posits that, high cost of ICT equipment, applications and services remains a deterrent to the adoption or successful implementation of e-government projects. Henceforth, this study also observes that ICT consumables and services including internet cost have a negative impact on the efforts aimed at successful implementing e government initiatives. It can also be further added

that financial costs and budgetary preparations should be carefully considered as their inadequacy will be detrimental to the implementation of e government initiatives.

2.3.3 Political Aspects/Barriers

Leadership and the political climate or environments are the major or dominant issues under this theme of challenges. Ebrahim and Irani (2005) and Maclure (2001) are of the conviction that government leadership support of ICT initiatives is crucial since Ndou (2004:16) opines that “leadership is one of the main driving forces for every new and innovative project or initiative”. At this stage it is also critical to emphasise the role that political will, to be exercised by the bureaucratic and political leadership of the day, will play in ensuring successful implementation of e government plans. This is also emphasised by Alseheri and Drew (2010: 40) who argue that e-government implementation needs support from the highest level of government for successful completion. Ndou (2004: 16) concludes by citing that leadership is necessary before, during and after implementation. However, in most cases, e-government initiatives die prematurely due to lack of their prioritization by the top leadership in government.

Policy and legal framework aspects are hereunder considered as political aspects and they contribute to the successful implementation of e-government or failure thereof. Various scholars advise on the crucial necessity of enacting clear and elaborate e-government policies and legislation which are the basis for undertaking any e government project. Ndou (2004: 13) underscores that, processing of e-government principles and functions requires a range of new rules, policies, laws and legislative changes to regulate and govern electronic activities including electronic signatures, electronic archiving, and freedom of information, data protection, computer crime, intellectual property rights and copyright issues. It can be noted that failure to craft and align these basic policy and legislative considerations is nightmarish to the efforts aimed at implementing e government tasks.

2.3.4 Organisational Aspects/Problems

Here, the prevailing issues or sub themes include leadership and change management at organizational level. Nkohkwo and Islam (2013: 259). At this instance focus will be directed to the Parliament of Zimbabwe as an organisation. Garnet (1992) and Sharma and Gupta (2003), in Nkohkwo and Islam (2013) are of the notion that, in order to maintain the values and vision of all stakeholders in an e-government initiative there is need for organizational skills and communication and this can be derived from capable leadership. Dada (2006: 5) subscribes to a similar viewpoint by adding that the issue of change forms hard and soft gaps, as an e government initiative constitutes the realignment of working practices and government functions. Dada (2006) also advises that, the public sector must change and reengineer its processes to adapt to the new technology and culture of e government management. Thus, organizational change and adaptation is an important variable in the implementation of e-government initiatives for failure to acquire that dynamism within organisations tasked with overseeing these initiatives will result in their collapse or failure of successful completion. With that in mind, the role occupied by such aspects should not be underestimated but should be carefully dealt with.

2.3.5 Socioeconomic Aspects/Challenges

According to Transparency International, in the reference made by Nkohkwo and Islam (2013: 259), six of the most corrupt countries in the world are located in the SSA. Coupled with corruption, poverty levels in the region cause serious developmental challenges (ibid). Corruption, poverty, language barrier and e-illiteracy are dominant themes in this category and these are potentially harmful to e government implementation initiatives.

Ngulube (2007: 163) referring to Braaksma (2004: 51) acknowledges that, information literacy is fundamental to the use of information resources in the knowledge age. It is also argued that ICT literacy among citizens plays a significant role in that it prepares

them for compliance towards e-government projects hence making the implementation process a lot easier. It is fundamental to the ability of citizens in their bid to access and utilize electronic information. (Ngulube 2007). It can be noted that without necessary social and electronic skills it will be mammoth for citizens to understand electronic projects administered to them by the government. This would be a barrier even to accessing e-government services that will be rolled out by the government rendering all efforts worthless.

2.4 Prospects of Attaining e-Government: Lessons from Elsewhere

This subsection examines case studies drawn from two exemplary countries testifying the possibility of attaining e-government meanwhile providing key lessons for Zimbabwe, notably how the government can prepare for undertaking serious efforts of establishing an e-government environment in Zimbabwe. Two cases will be reviewed, Botswana will represent the developing world, specifically Sub Sahara Africa whilst e-government cases from the India will represent the emerging economies, particularly bridging the gap between the developing world and the capital North so the study can be able to draw comparisons from cases of similar developmental outlook to serve as inspiration and challenge to Zimbabwe

2.4.1 The Budding of e-Government in Sub Sahara Africa: The tale of Botswana

Botswana presents a very unique though interesting case on the growth of the e-government sector and implementation of electronic related initiatives in the public sector. As chronicled by Nkwe (2012:42), the Botswana government has been a player in the ICT market for a longtime having automated its functions some years back. He argues that the continued growth in the use of ICTs reached greater proportions between the years 1990-2000 when large systems within government were introduced.

The Botswana government has expressed commitment towards successful establishment of an electronic and online public sector. This is indicated by laying of legal, regulatory and institutional mechanisms to cater for easy and smooth proliferation of e-government.

For Nkwe (2012), the Government of Botswana (GoB) sees ICTs as a key driver of its developmental agenda: *economic growth, poverty reduction and global competitiveness*. The adoption of the Maitlano ICT Policy in 1997 which has the following goals: *creating an enabling environment, universal service and access ICT facilities, making Botswana a regional ICT hub*. The government, as heralded by Nkwe (2012) has also managed to put in place different legal and regulatory frameworks such as Botswana Telecommunications Authority (BTA) and the Botswana Telecommunications Company as ICT regulatory bodies and watchdogs.

Botswana recognizes the important role occupied by the parliament in the general discourse of good governance and in 2012 signaled the importance of ICTs as enabler of good governance by crafting, launching and implementing the ICT Master Plan through the Parliament of Botswana which is a representative body of the general populace and recognizing it as a key champion of e-government. (ICT Master Plan 2012: v). This is reflective of a government seriously committed to the implementation of e-government and as such provides a relevant lesson for the Zimbabwean government notably on the aspect of e government policy coordination and implementation. More to this, a National e-Government Strategy (2011-2016) was launched with a budget of USD76 million meant to cater for its implementation. This is a product of the e-Government Strategy Conference that was held on 30-31 May 2011 where non state actors including the private sector and non governmental organisations (NGOs) participated. The strategy in fact emphasises the crucial role that non state actors play in the implementation of e-government initiatives. (National e-Government Strategy 2011).

Various e government initiatives or projects have been flourishing in Botswana. However, this section will target a few for a brief analysis and these are Land Management Information Systems, e- Legislation, and e-Learning.

According to Nkwe (2012:43), in May 2008, the GoB undertook to improve **land management** through the introduction of electronic management information systems. The development of these systems flowed from the country's ICT policy, which provided

a roadmap that guided the transformation of the country toward e-government through the adoption of ICT strategies (ibid). Nkwe further postulates that Botswana has a dedicated agenda towards the promotion of e-government because its leaders have understood the importance of e-government to an appreciable extent.

e- Legislation is another successful e-government initiative being undertaken in Botswana. A pillar of e-democracy, the major goal of this project is to provide online connectivity to laws and policies. Nkwe (2012) notes that, it has helped in support of service delivery through electronic means and providing citizens basic rights and protection in a connected world. Hence it can be noted that, this gesture plays a critical role in cultivating a democratic culture in that citizens can access all laws and policies governing them and also in a way renders them a part to play in their governance since they can review these laws and policies.

Another e-government project currently underway is the **e-Learning** initiative. In Botswana, as observed by various scholars, there are a lot of efforts invested towards ICT enhanced learnership. Nkwe (2012) reveals that there is a National e-Learning Committee tasked with formulating and promotion of e-learning in Botswana. Maitlamo (2008) states that, government has invested in broad band connection to all schools, refurbishment of computers and training of teachers and administrators on e-learning. Other noteworthy e government projects in Botswana include e-Health, e-Business among other minor e government initiatives.

More so, also noteworthy is the **e-Parliament** that has to this end been considered a successful e-government venture in Botswana by many ICT commentators. The parliamentary website offers citizens a platform to interact with their representatives in parliament through an electronic facility called “Botswana Speaks”. This facility strengthens the citizens’ voice and at the same time assists parliamentarians to carry out their duties efficiently and effectively

2.4.3 E-Government in the Emerging Economies: The Case of India

India has a long history of e-government or e governance as is sometimes loosely referred to. Origins of e government in India can be traced to the computerization initiatives of the government in the 1970s. According to Ernst & Young (2009: 7), setting up of the National Informatics Centre in 1977, to develop and manage an information system for the Government of India (GoI). However, the main thrust for e-Governance was provided by the launching of NICNET in 1987 – the national satellite-based computer network. This was followed by the launch of the District Information System of the National Informatics Centre (DISNIC) program to computerize all district offices in the country for which free hardware and software was offered to the State Governments. NICNET was extended via the State capitals to all district headquarters by 1990. (http://arc.gov.in/11threp/arc_11threport_ch4.pdf. 23/01/15)

The telecommunications and internet revolution during the 1990s impelled the Government of India (GoI) to expose avenues for the delivery of citizens services through IT solutions and this decade witnessed numerous e government initiatives in the country at national, state, district and even block levels. (Ernst & Young 2009:7)

Government of India has invested in national and local legislative and institutional frameworks for the establishment, implementation and development of e government. Noteworthy is the prime national e government strategy known as the National e Government Plan (NeGP) launched in May 2006 with the main objective to have a comprehensive e government strategy and program for India. One of its ambitions is to lay foundation and provide impetus for long term growth of e-governance in India. By creating governance and institutional mechanisms and setting up core infrastructure and policies. (ibid). NeGP targets various areas including political ownership and national vision, program and project management, architecture and standards, core and support ICT infrastructure and re-engineering and change management. (Ernst & Young 2009:7)

Online statistics reveal that India has also invested heavily in e government initiatives and this reflects priorities in utilizing ICT to transform the government and realize the vision of NeGP, which is “...to make all government services accessible to all common man in his locality, through common service delivery outlets and ensure efficiency, transparency and reliability of such services at affordable costs and realize basic needs for the common man” (ibid). It has also emerged that, in support of e government, GoI has incurred a total cost of an estimated INR230 billion as of 2011 with the huge chunk of the amount dedicated to infrastructure. Below are the indications of how the money has been expended to finance e-government initiatives:

State Data Centre Scheme – INR16.320 million

Capacity Building Schemes- INR3.130 million

State Wide Area Networks – INR 33.340 million

Common Service Centre Scheme – INR 571420 million

(Source: http://dqindia.ciol.com/content/top_stories/2008/108030801.asp)

Commitment towards e government in India and its benefits and opportunities are not only realized at national level but also local. This is indicated by local e-government initiatives that will be reviewed as cases for providing lessons for Zimbabwe, below. Prasad (2012: 183) believes that this is one of the objectives laid in the NeGP, to extend internet and ICT services to the remotest areas in India with the aim to improve service delivery and enhance democracy. Monga (2008: 53) also acknowledges the transformation of services as a result of e government initiatives in India when the scholar argues that, the metamorphosis in the quality of delivery of services to the citizens by the government has been more pronounced in recent years with the advent of e-governance.

Case One- Village Information Kiosks for Warana Co-operatives in India.

According to Cecchino and Reina (2002) fifty four village information kiosks are facilitating the Warana Group of Co operatives (WGC) in the sugar cane production process in three stages and these are:

- First stage: With the yearly registration for plantation, when supervisors from WGC record mutations (changes to land property)
- Second stage: With the issuance of harvesting permits.
- Third stage: With payment information.

It is hence noted, also, that, WGC pays farmers for their crops in instalments which are credited to their bank accounts and these farmers visit kiosks to receive payments and do all necessary procedures in a one stop shop kiosk and complete transactions such as depositing money spent on transport and harvesting into the system without having to look for a bank but via online facilities. (<http://www.egov4dev.org/success/case/warana.shtml>). Henceforth, it can be argued that such grassroots projects indicate how deep e government has penetrated the Indian society and as such transformed the livelihood of its citizens.

Case Two – SETU: A Citizen Facilitation Centre in India

This is a one stop service center for citizens who have to visit government offices for certificates, permits, authentication, affidavits and other services. Singh (2002) notes that this was set up by the government of Maharashtra state in India in the City of Aurungabad and also reveals that SETU in the local language means a “bridge to connect the administration and the general public”. The canter attempts to apply ICTs to provide greater transparency, accessibility and efficiency to the procedures in decision making. It also makes use of the web to make information available to the clients. (<http://www.egov4dev.org/success/case/setu.shtml>)

2.5 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.5.1 Introduction

This section highlights and discusses two major theories or approaches underpinning the (public policy) implementation discourse and as such referred to, above, as “theoretical framework” as they constitute the fundamental dispensation of this study. These are (a) Top-Down Approach (TDA) which explains the classical and rational nature of policy implementation and narrates the policy implementation discipline from a centrally controlled perspective, and, (b) Bottom-Up Approach (BUA), an antonym to the top down approach and describes policy implementation from a user’s and service deliverers perspective as one of its central argument is regarding the implementation process as a multi stakeholder initiative and not only prorogated to the central government.

2.5.2 Top-Down Theory

This policy implementation model assumes that implementation begins with policy objectives and that implementation proceeds in a linear fashion. Scholars argue that this model is a direct descendant of the Rational Public Administration and by design; it is a scientific explanation of how public policies are implemented which assumes distinct policy formulation and implementation.

The top down approach lays emphasis on the actors who design the policy and the factors which can be manipulated from the centre. In the e-government policy implementation discourse, this approach assumes that in Zimbabwe for instance, e-government policy implementation should solely be the occupation of the Modernisation Departement in the Office of the President and Cabinet and the Ministry of Information and Communication Technologies, Postal and Courier Services (MoICTPS) which constitutes central government. It can hence be argued that, this approach also subsumes the notion that, implementation, even of e-government policies can be successful without involving multiple relevant agencies or non state actors. It does so by the virtue of its narrowed overemphasis on the potent role of the central government in the implementation matrix

in the meanwhile underestimating the impact that a multi stakeholder orientation can have on the implementation particularly of e- government initiatives. Central focus of the TDA is on the policy objectives prescribed by the political elite. None the less, it can be argued that , top down models perceive the starting point of policy implementation as the decision to set policy objectives and identifies central actors as the most influential in producing desired effects of the decision. (Mazmanian and Sabatier 1983).

The duo further reveal that, top down theorists are of the view that implementation is influenced by three sets of variables, and these are : tractability of the problem; ability to structure the problem and non statutory variables. As a prescriptive model, one can observe that such a model attempts to develop generalizable policy advice across different policy areas and this can be considered as one of its shortcomings since policy implementation is an exclusively distinct arena which cannot be considered general. It further ignores that policy implementation is a context specific discipline which cannot be generalised. In actual fact, e- government policies and initiatives are normally prone to challenges that are context borne such as, legal environment, lack of relevant and adequate infrastructure, skills dearth and many other. All these problems can be argued to be mainly context based; hence it is misleading to attempt to generalize policy implementation instructions as the case is with the TDA.

However, in as much as e-government policies and initiatives in Zimbabwe can argued to be formulated and implemented in a fashion closely resembling the top down trend, it is advisable not to fully incorporate all the prescriptions or suggestions made by this model for it can potentially cause a myriad of challenges that will seriously hamper the implementation efforts. More so, TDA can be reproached for its deliberate attempt to downplay the crucial part played by environmental and contextual variables in the process of implementation. It also ignores the significance of past actions yet the process of implementation is considered as iterative and a highly learning experience (Bardach).

2.5.3 Bottom-Up Approach

Schofield (2001) perceives the Bottom UP Approach as the embodiment of all criticism against TDA. He argues that, this model was developed from the inadequacies of TDA, which, according to him, ignore the behavioral aspect of implementation and the key role of local implementers.

The scholar further laments that, the main focus of TDA was on the motives and actions of actors involved in implementation and the assumption that formulation and implementation are an integrated process and are descriptive in nature as emphasis is on explaining the role of factors causing difficulty in implementation. TDA over simplifies the implementation process by ignoring various factors and stakeholders involved during the process and even after, yet scholars like Bardach () call it a game, an indication that it's a complex process.

Instead, Hjern and Potter (1981) and Hull and Hjern (1982) indicate that, BUA lays emphasis on target groups and service delivery and they state that, policy originates from this level. To add, bottom up models explain that policy implementation can be better understood by looking the policy or initiative from the viewpoint of target groups and service deliverers. This can be argued to be a correct and accurate observation in relation to implementation of e-government initiatives in the sense that, success or failure, challenges or opportunities for such projects can be best interpreted or understood by those affected by them, end users and those directly partaking in their implementation.

Matland (1995) concurs with the afore mentioned claim positing that implementation takes place in two phases and levels which are macro level and micro level. He argues that at macro level, it is where centrally located actors devise a government program whilst the micro level consists of local implementers who react to these plans and develop their own plans and implement them. Henceforth, the scholar further claims that, implementation problems often arise out of the interaction of policy at micro level institutions arguing that central actors can only indirectly influence micro level factors,

and autonomy at the local levels is necessary to allow adaptation of policy to suit contextual factors.

However, BUA also has its own share of weaknesses and one of the major criticism leveled against it is its over emphasis on the transfer of autonomy and responsibility on local implementers. Whereas policy control needs to be exercised by actors whose power to formulate policies is derived by virtue of the being elected officials. Schofield (2001) also adds that it is actually possible for rationalists to control or influence the goals and strategies of local implementers by determining institutional structure, resources made available to them and their access to the actual implementation arena.

Nonetheless, it is not absolutely cast in stone as to which theory or approach should be adopted in the implementation of e-government initiatives. It is the prerogative of those in control to choose given the disparate attributes, strengths and weaknesses that characterize these two major theories of policy implementation. In actual fact, these two approaches can be reconciliatory applied simultaneously in a complimentary fashion. Bernam (1980) advises also that, the use of any of these two can be determined based on the parameters describing the policy context. On the other hand, Matland concludes by arguing that, the dangers associated with TDA are resistance, disregard or pro forma compliance while BUA can lead to cooption and pursuit of individual goals which are contrary to the policy objectives.

2.6 Implications of the Literature Review on the Study

The utilization of ICTSs in the public sector or e-government has been seen to be a potential bringer of a modernized system of governance which is efficient, accountable, and effective and citizen centric. E-government has been heralded by various scholars as a package of reforms that advocate for a transparent, paperless and seam less public administration. Developing countries have been observed scrambling for opportunities to create environment for the establishment and proliferation of ICTs in the daily management of the public sector. However, the terrain has not been easy going as

indicated in the above review of implementation related challenges that bedevil e-government initiatives and these range from infrastructural challenges, budgetary constraints, and organizational challenges, literacy issues and the digital divide amongst many other. The review above attempted to unpack the concept of e-government and the implementation matrix.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter reviews the methodology which the study adopted in collecting and analysing the data. The choice of the methodology selected was influenced by the objectives of the study and the nature of the information required as outlined in the study topic. Henceforth, this section will discuss the research design, data collection methods, sampling methods, types and procedures; data analysis methods and ethical considerations that the study adhered to. Also a conclusion of this chapter will be included in order to highlight the merits and demerits of this study with the view to analyse their implications on the overall study.

3.1 Research Design

The study proceeded from a predominantly qualitative approach to determine the style of sampling its population for research, choice of data collection methods and data collection procedures, data analysis, interpretation and presentation.

3.2 Qualitative Research

This is a means of exploring and understanding how individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem. Creswell (2009: 4). This approach squarely dovetailed with the inquiry being made by this study which seeks to explore and understand the nature of implementation challenges in e-government initiatives in Zimbabwe with particular reference to the Parliament of Zimbabwe as a case study. In the same vein, Creswell (2009) further adds another characteristic of qualitative methodology when he observes that, this process of research involves emerging questions and procedures, data typically collected in the participant' setting , data analysed inductively from particulars to general themes and the researcher making interpretations of the meaning of the data. Likewise, this study identifies the parliamentary institution as a unit of reference, a particular case, in order to identify and analyse the challenges of implementation of initiatives that are

ICT related so that they can reflect the general picture of what really obtains within these public institutions and also to provide lessons for future related inquiries.

Given that research methodology is a continuum that is ever changing and ever developing (Leedy 1993: 137), it is critical to understand that, this study proceeded in an iterative manner that include constant modification of, for instance, data collection procedures and tools to suit the prevailing conditions. This reveals the flexible nature of qualitative approach to research which is one of the major advantages of this methodology. This is also supported by Mariamo, in Leedy (2009:140) who describes qualitative research as “...a creative, scientific process that necessitates a great deal of critical thinking, as well as emotional and intellectual energy. One must have a true desire to discover meaning and develop understanding and explain phenomena in the most thorough way possible qualitative is not slovenly, undisciplined “soft” research but creative scholarship at its best. Qualitative research renders the researcher an opportunity to develop an understanding, not only of the data being gathered but also of the social setting within which research is taking place. This is also reflected in Eisner (1991)’s contribution in Leedy (1993: 143), that, qualitative research considers the self as an instrument that engages the situation and makes sense of it. It is also interpretive in that inquirers try to account for what they have given an account of. Thus, this study proceeded in a qualitative manner mainly for the reasons to gain a comprehensive and personal understanding of the situation prevailing in the implementation of e-government initiatives in Zimbabwe, particularly within the parliament.

3.3 Research Philosophy

The study was informed by the social constructivist view or interpretive research philosophy. This is a perspective often seen as an approach to qualitative research. (Mertens 1998 in Creswell (2009: 4). Creswell further adds that “....in social constructivism, individuals seek an understanding of the world that they live and work. Individuals develop meanings toward certain objects or things, these meanings are varied and multiple, leading the researcher to look for complexity of views rather than

narrowing meanings into a few categories or ideas....the questions become broad and general so that the participants can construct meaning of the situation, typically forged in discussions and interactions with other persons”. This quotation explains essentially how this study was designed, how data collection procedures and techniques were formulated and implemented and also how findings were analysed.

3.4 Study Area and Unit of Analysis

The study was undertaken in Harare and particularly within the Parliament of Zimbabwe. The target population purposively consisted of the senior management of the Parliament of Zimbabwe beginning from Director Level up to the Clerk of Parliament. Also included in the study were junior management and staff who comprised of the Network Administrator (responsible for the Parliament’s website and other network related activities), IT Technician, and users from non-core departments such as Human Resources and External Relations.

The second tier of respondents was also purposively drawn from the Ministry of Information Communication Technologies, Postal and Courier Services. This cluster was made up of the Director of Research, Infrastructure and Development Management (Head E-government at Ministry level), Director Policy Co Ordination, Director ICT Services, Principal Director and the Permanent Secretary. One staffer from e-government department also completed the ministerial cohort.

The Clerk of the Parliamentary Portfolio Select Committee on ICTP&CS and a Member of Parliament from Zaka Constituency (Rural Zimbabwe), who is also a member of the Select Committee and a businessman in the ICTs sector completed another tier of respondents purposively selected to provide a viewpoint from the members of parliament and also responsible for ICTs in the PoZ.

Members from the business and academia sectors also constituted another section of the respondents and also included general members of the public in order to provide varied insights on their appreciation of e-government in Zimbabwe and particularly ICT

programmes within the Parliament of Zimbabwe. These respondents were also purposively selected while members of the business sector were reached through snowballing by way of referrals. This was also the case with members from the academia who, upon interviewing the first respondent, purposively selected; the researcher was referred to other colleagues whom he felt were insightful in this subject area. This helped to cater for almost all areas of the society who could be affected by e-government activities and also to present a fully representational unit of analysis seeing that not everyone from the population could be interviewed due to time, financial and other logistical constraints that this academic study could not provide for.

Another group of respondents comprised of senior management from state owned enterprises who were purposively drawn from Telone, Netone and Zarnet. In example, one manager from Zarnet was reached through snowballing since he was referred by one colleague from another parastatal. This group could not be ignored given their complimentary role to the central government which is tasked with policy formulation whilst these entities are pivotal in the implementation of these ICT policies and any other related activities.

3.5 Sampling Procedure and Technique

According to Leedy (1985: 144) the composition of a sample is derived from selecting units from those of a much larger population. Emphasis is made on the importance of the sample to be carefully chosen that through it, the researcher is able to see all the characteristics of the population with the same relationship that he would see them were he actually to inspect the total population in fact. Henceforth, due to the nature of the topic of this study, the size and target population which appeared highly technical and sophisticated, the research resorted to applying non probability sampling techniques particularly purposive sampling (which was the primary sampling method) and cumulatively, snowball sampling (which was more in complimentary role) since the target population is made up of senior executives and management from the public and private sectors.

3.5.1 Purposive Sampling

This is a type of nonprobability sampling in which the units to be observed are selected on the basis of the researcher's judgment about which ones will be the most useful or representative. It is dependent entirely on the researcher or expert's judgement on the purpose of selecting a sample (Babbie 2007: 184, Neuman 2007: 142). Silverman (2010: 141) argues that, purposive sampling allows us to choose a case because it illustrates some feature or process we are interested in, warning however that, this is not a simple process but it requires critical thinking. He also cites Denzin and Lincoln (1994:202) who reveal that this process is purposive and not randomseeks out groups, settings and individuals where the processes being studied are most likely to occur.

Therefore, given the technical nature of the course being pursued by this inquiry, the study opted for this type of sampling due to that the information required could be found from certain specific individuals. This was also guided by the fact that, in Zimbabwe, not everyone is tasked with implementation of certain initiatives. It can be noted also from the composition of the unit of analysis for this study that purposive or judgemental sampling could be the only logical and suitable technique that any study of this nature could utilise.

This technique was favoured as the relevant one seeing that, since the study proceeded qualitatively, it was also only sensible to employ a non-probability sampling technique and in this case, judgemental or reputational sampling technique. More so, this technique is reputable for its economic nature that limited resources can be expended and an in-depth understanding of a situation can be undertaken. (Miller and Whicker 1999: 111).

3.5.2 Snowball Sampling

This sampling method was used complementarily as noted earlier. Snowball sampling is a nonprobability sampling method often employed in field research whereby each person interviewed may be asked to suggest additional people for interviewing. (Babbie 2007: 184). According to Neuman (2007: 142) the crucial feature of this method is that “each

person or unit is connected with another through a direct or indirect linkage. Thus, this method was instrumental in that respondents in the senior management positions would refer the researcher to other members in the ICTs sector who are resourceful and sometimes unavoidable players in the implementation matrix of e-government initiatives, this was the case mainly with respondents drawn from the business sector and certain parastatals.

Snowballing played a very crucial role in filling the gaps in areas which could not be covered by respondents that would have been selected initially by way of purposive sampling, in this case helping to expand the unit of analysis identified by the study and also increasing opportunities of representation. It was also instrumental in reaching the highly esteemed and often not accessible offices such as that of the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of ICTs and Clerk of Parliament who are often deemed tightly scheduled officials. Neuman (2007: 144) reveals that, one use of snowball sampling is to sample a network. Thus, for a subject such as e-government in Zimbabwe, which is still at nascent stages, it is possibly one of the only ways (referrals) to have fully covered all the relevant stakeholders in that sector because depending solely on respondents identified by way of judgemental sampling would have jeopardised the study and undermined its potential for generalizability since it could have given critics room to dismiss the work as not fully representative. Hence, it can be noted how crucial snowballing was in facilitating the accessibility of certain, normally difficult to access, portions of the target population. It was also key in that it helped in preserving the limited resources that were used for the study.

There is, henceforth, continued emphasis on the pivotal role played by this type of sampling which secondarily aided the research in identifying and accessing respondents who were initially not included in the first sample population earmarked for interviews and as such assisted in expanding the sample population in order to involve other critical stakeholders who play a crucial role in the implementation of e-government initiatives in Zimbabwe.

3.6 Data Collection Procedure and Instruments

This section presents various qualitative methods and procedures that were employed in collecting relevant data to respond to the needs raised by this inquiry in chapter one through research objectives and research questions. Key informant interviews, in-depth interviews and non-participatory observation constituted major sources of primary data collection instruments. In this respect, questions guiding the interviews were drawn based on the study's objectives and questions and some of them were informed by issues that emerged in the literature review chapter. Secondary sources of data collection were also referred to, and these were in form of newspaper articles, magazines, conference reports, parliamentary reports and selected journals and articles on the internet.

3.6.1 Interviews

For the purposes of this study, qualitative interviewing will be made reference to since its various types are the ones which were employed for collecting primary data. Interviewing is essentially an interaction or conversation between the interviewer and the respondent in which the interviewer identifies the general direction for the conversation and pursues specific topics raised by the respondent; the interviewer normally has a general plan for the interview and the topics to be covered. (Babbie 2007:306)

Leedy (1985:140) emphasises that interviews should be considered as strictly professional situations that demand equally professional planning and conduct on the part of the interviewer. This is a relevant reminder being made by Leedy in the sense that, often times, there is that sense of casual approach amongst interviewers when preparing and conducting interviews which however, has an ultimately negative effect on the quality and accuracy of the final outcome of the study. Nonetheless, interviews help in keeping an easy, friendly and yet professional atmosphere. (ibid).

Rubin and Rubin (1995:46- 47) in Babbie (2007: 305) argue that the continuous nature of interviewing means the questioning is redesigned throughout the project. They argue that it is a tool that offers research flexibility and is iterative and continuous rather than other

rigid tools such as questionnaires which are locked in stone. This is one of the major advantages of qualitative research interviews; they arguably render the researcher the opportunity to even verify the data being collected since it will be done at first hand, face to face. Henceforth, this study made use of two closely related types of interviews to collect primary data from the target respondents, and these were in form of Key Informant Interviews and In depth Interviews.

3.6.1.2 Key Informant Interviews (KIIs)

These were conducted with respondents drawn from senior and executive management portfolios who wield crucial information regarding policy implementation issues in their organisations. In the target group drawn from the Parliament of Zimbabwe, KIIs were undertaken from the level of Director to that of Acting Clerk of Parliament. Director IT Services of the Parliament of Zimbabwe was a central respondent in this selection. In the MoICTP&CSs, KIIs were done from the level of Director up to the Permanent Secretary whilst in the private sector; one Managing Director of a leading financial institution was interviewed.

The rationale behind targeting the high profile officials was informed by the fact that, these are the incumbents who manage projects and certain initiatives within their departments and as such present a good opportunity for the needs of this study, which are to ascertain first-hand information relating to implementation challenges of (e-government) projects within their institutions. These selected interviewees proved worthwhile for the KIIs since they possessed valuable knowledge and experience concerning the subject at hand, of policy implementation.

During the course of administering KIIs, new and unanticipated concepts and ideas emerged which the researcher considered crucially important for the study and opened other areas that were initially not included in the design of the study. This can be argued to be due to the high levels of knowledge and expertise that characterise this calibre of respondents, who have considerably lengthy years of experience in their respective fields.

They also provided the practical viewpoint of e-government as they endeavoured to strike a comparison between the current status and where the nation ought to be in as far as championing the e-government agenda is concerned. In this respect, they were also instrumental in highlighting e-government success stories in Zimbabwe although implementation still appears to be piecemeal than comprehensive and fully engaging.

3.6.1.3 In Depth Interviews (IDIs)

This study also employed in depth interviews in collecting primary data from the population sample identified. In depth interviews were carried out mainly on junior staff members who are directly involved in the implementation of e-government initiatives in Zimbabwe. In the two major institutions for this research, Parliament of Zimbabwe and the MoICTs, junior staff were targeted and these were in form of Data Technicians, IT Technicians, IT Assistants, Network Administrator and Assistants and in some isolated cases, Interns in the IT and e-government departments from the identified institutions.

Following Boyce and Neale (2006: 3)'s definition that "... In-depth interviewing is a qualitative research technique that involves conducting intensive individual interviews with a small number of respondents to explore their perspectives on a particular idea, programme or situation. IDIs proved suitable for the junior technical staff who are hands on with the projects or initiatives being implemented by these public institutions. Henceforth, this group of respondents would normally provide accurate and honest information that would not have been acquired from the management who often want to present an "all things are normal" picture. More so, in depth interviews were relevant for this group or tier of respondents since they could avail more time due to their not so busy work programmes compared to that of the senior or executive management. To this end, a minimum of forty five minutes were spend with each respondent since the environments were more relaxed and as such gave the conversations room for the researcher to probe further and also to identify new concepts that would arise during the interview.

For Berry (1999), in depth interviews can also be referred to as unstructured interviews, the type in which the researcher has room to elicit information in order to achieve a holistic understanding and also to explore interesting areas for further investigation. This is an accurate observation made concerning this type of interviews as it was confirmed when this study undertook them. They provided the opportunity to fill the research puzzle spaces left from key informant interviews as more detailed information was gathered relating to real challenges faced in the implementation of e-government initiatives in Zimbabwe.

3.6.2 Documentary Search

This refers to reviewing any scholarly article or document that is relevant to the subject of inquiry. According to Phillips (1971:147) documents refer to any published materials that may be used as a source of information.....this would mean any material, the recording (and publishing) of which has not been the result of any special effort on the part of the investigator. Henceforth, the study utilised magazines, newspaper articles, conference reports, international bulletins, internet based sources and website, minutes from meetings and many other.

Creswell (2009:180) reveals that, review of such related material or publication enables the researcher to obtain the language and the words of participants and is advantageous in that they can be accessed at any time convenient to the researcher. This is indeed valid, since this study utilised this material in extracting other information that illuminated the findings acquired through research and this was done mainly at the researcher's time and proved to be an unobtrusive source of information which is inexpensive and time conservative.

3.6.3 Observation

The data gathering process provided the researcher to observe certain behavioural traits that were instrumental in data collection since it aided the interviewer in formulating

probing and follow up questions in lieu of getting a fully comprehensive understanding of the interviewee's perspectives about the situation in inquiry. This is also buttressed by Phillips (1971: 159), when he argues that "...communication seems to proceed at a non-verbal as well as a verbal level, and the interviewer who is alert to non-verbal cues and adept at interpreting their significance may emerge with a far greater knowledge than the one who pays attention to verbal responses alone". This is a relevant and accurate analysis by Phillips since observations were instrumental in helping the interviewer to probe further.

3.7 Data Analysis

Creswell (2009: 183) postulates that, the process of data analysis involves making sense out of text and image data....it involves preparing the data for analysis, moving deeper and deeper and deeper into understanding the data, representing the data and making an interpretation of larger meaning of data. This is a crucial stage which involves identifying themes and patterns and breaking up the data into manageable units of trends and relationships (Koshy 2005: 108, Monton 2001: 109). Data analysis plays a crucial role in organising and presenting evidence to support claims made in the study (Koshy 2005).

Therefore, for the purpose of this study, thematic data analysis was used as the primary data analysis technique. This tool was instrumental in dealing with data derived from the interviews and identified certain emerging and common themes of group of thoughts or sentiments which were used to identify mainly the major problems or challenges experienced in the implementation of e-government initiatives.

In addition, content analysis was also utilised as the secondary tool or method for analysing data. Data analysed through this method was extracted mainly from documents, i.e. textual data. Relevant content was gleaned mainly from magazines, journal articles and newspapers with the aim to enhance the quality and create meaning of the data gathered through research.

3.8 Ethical Considerations

Issues on ethics were planned for and observed during the study. Permission was obtained from relevant authorities, participants, interviewees and relevant officials. A consent clause was added on the survey tool and acknowledged by prospective respondents before interviews. Respondents were assured of the protection of their identities upon provision of information and the researcher highlighted beforehand that there were no benefit derivatives from taking part in the study. Responses were used for the purpose of academic research and were secured at all times.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

4.0 Introduction

This chapter presents findings from the research undertaken to investigate the challenges of implementation of e-government initiatives in Zimbabwe. Data was collected from various public and private institutions notably Parliament of Zimbabwe, Ministry of ICTPCSs, Zimbabwe National Chamber of Commerce (ZNCC), Academia (University of Zimbabwe) and from ordinary Citizens. A total number of 18 respondents were interviewed with key informant interviews conducted on eleven respondents drawn from the Parliament of Zimbabwe, Ministry of ICTPCSs and the academia. This group comprised of well experienced members from senior management positions which included the Clerk of Parliament and the Permanent Secretary from the Parliament and Ministry, respectively. In the meanwhile, seven other underwent the process of in-depth interviews and these included ordinary citizens, private sector, junior staff and a local Member of Parliament (M.P). Additional information was derived from texts which included conference presentations from the E-Tech Africa Expo 2015 hosted by Ministry of ICTs between 12 and 14 March 2015 in Harare, Zimbabwe. Magazines, Newspapers and Conference brochures and reports provided other necessary data for this study. Interview meetings lasted between 30 to 45 minutes and data was recorded using a note book and a voice recorder. Generally, interview atmosphere was relaxed and friendly.

4.1 E-Government in Zimbabwe: A Barometer of a Fundamental Understanding

Generally, there appears to be a basic understanding as to what e-government refers to. Data collected during key informant interview sessions indicate a fundamental understanding of e-government shown by the definitions given by the respondents. There is consensus to the notion that, central to e-government is the utility of Information Communication technologies (ICTs). Although levels of understanding differed, due to area of expertise and profession, there was a common agreement on the fact that e-government entailed the use of ICTs to improve the nature, role and mandate of the

public sector institutions in providing better services to the public. For instance, a respondent drawn from the Parliament of Zimbabwe and in a senior managerial position understood e-government to refer to:

“...the process of automating government functions in order to increase their efficiency. For instance, at the PoZ, electronic processing and payment of salaries, hosting of a website, presence of PoZ on the social media platforms and utilisation of other management information systems”

The Principal Director of Information Services at the Parliament of Zimbabwe however gave a comprehensive and fully detailed explanation of what is entailed by e-government. And according to him, this would mean:

“...the deployment of ICTs for the development of systems and processes that contribute to efficiency in government leading to improvement and efficiency of government systems. It is the establishment of virtual offices as opposed to physically visiting offices. In the parliament, this would mean e-Parliament-systems; procedures and processes should be computer based; efficient and accessible government, service provision and timely availability of information to the citizens at their convenience and boundless accessibility of government services should.”

A simple definition was also derived from another respondent in a key informant interview who indicated that e-government translated to a “...migration from too much paperwork and hard copies to reduced paperwork and soft copies; utilisation of ICTs for communication purposes”. Henceforth, as argued earlier on, it emerged that, fundamental to the understanding of e-government is the centrality of ICTs in the public sector and their role in enhancing efficiency and effectiveness of public sector institutions. This is in line with the definition and understanding of e-government as argued by the UNESCO (2005) who reveal that e-government is use of ICTs to promote more efficient and effective government and make it more accessible and accountable to its citizens.

Therefore, it can be noted that there is a general consensus even amongst the respondents as to what is entailed by e-government.

On the same note, respondents from the Ministry also indicated a knowledgeable understanding of e-government and as such their submissions could not be ignored. An example can be drawn from the definition offered by the Director of Infrastructure and..... who revealed that,

“....e-government refers to government’s doing of business with its citizenry through the use of internet and other electronic means of communication. One advantage of this is that it extends business beyond ordinary working hours”

The Principal Director in the same Ministry highlighted that this process involved the provision of services by government to its citizens and business through electronic means. He further argued that e-government entailed a total mind shift of the government from compartmentalised administration to integrated governance system where services are accessed uniformly and government systems, processes and procedures are interoperable. Thus, it can be noted that, emphasis made in these two definitions is on the aspect of improved government services envisaged in the deployment of ICTs in the public sector. Also starkly emerging is the belief that ICTs can enhance the universal and timely accessibility of public services if deployed properly. These sentiments were also echoed by the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry where, in his definition of e-government, highlighted benefits derived from implementing e-government projects such as the aspect of inclusivity and accessibility.

However, in as much as there appeared to be a consensus from key informant interviews on what fundamentally connotes e-government; this was not the case with the junior staff from both the Ministry and the PoZ. From the in depth interviews conducted with junior officers of PoZ and other respondents from lower job ranks in the MICTPCS, it came out that their knowledge concerning fundamental definitional issues in e-government was limited. For instance, an interview with an I.T officer from PoZ provided a fragmentary

explanation of e-government and how it can be utilised as a reform tool for the public sector or the PoZ itself. This was also similar with other responses derived from the Ministry which can be argued to be indicative of a lack of a comprehensive approach towards understanding, and let alone, implementation of e-government. The study can therefore postulate that, there are limited efforts, or none at all to sensitise all members of public institutions on what is meant by e-government. The research also identified that, critical information on e-government seems to be a privilege of a few in the senior managerial positions and as such constitutes a barrier to the proliferation of e-government concept which is a precursor to its successful information.

On the same token, another shortcoming was revealed in an interview with an ordinary citizen who displayed lack of knowledge about what e-government is all about. The respondent could not even define e-government since to him the subject was novel. In responding to subsequent questions pertaining to his understanding of social media platforms such as Facebook and Whatsapp, the respondent appeared impressively acquainted to these facilities which revealed his understanding of the existence of ICTs but surprisingly was clueless about the role of ICTs in the public sector and particularly what e-government is all about. Additionally, the interviewee did not know about the existence of the parliamentary website, an indication that there has not been much investment to create public awareness of these electronic platforms meant for the public's consumption and utilisation. This research hence realised that, this was a shortcoming on the part of the central government tasked with championing e-government in Zimbabwe. It indicates a lack of public awareness on what is meant by e-government and how it should be operationalized. This is one of the challenges identified by the study and will be presented in its relevant section.

The study also finds it noteworthy to reveal that, during interviews conducted with M.Ps, a result of mixed levels of knowledge was revealed. In an in depth interview with one M.P it came out that the respondent faced difficulties in responding to certain fundamental questions posed such as "*What is your understanding of e-government?*".

This indicated lack of knowledge even amongst certain MPs due to the fact that not many efforts have been made towards ensuring the creation of a basic and common understanding of e-government. Another factor could be out of the assumption that, lack of Bills or issues to do with ICTs and e-government to be debated in both Houses of Senate and of Assembly contributes to this glaring limitation of knowledge on what e-government entails. On the contrary, however, M.P Chakona from Zaka Central Constituency and a member of the Parliamentary Portfolio Select Committee on Information Communication Technologies (PPSCICTs), in an in depth interview displayed a knowledgeable understanding of what is meant by e-government. This was shown in his definition of e-government, that,

“...it is the computerisation of government information and government processing systems in order to enhance their accessibility in real time, online.....end frame processing of public services.”

On the fundamental aspects of ICTs, the respondent went on to further reveal that most MPs were finding it cumbersome to comprehend ICT issues and that the majority of them needed to be exposed to elementary ICT capacity building programmes as a first port of call before introducing them to e-government. The study identified this aspect to be one of the hurdles towards successful implementation of e-government in Zimbabwe, seeing that one of the major institutions of governance still required massive hand holding in order for its members to appreciate the concept and implementation of e-government in Zimbabwe. The research also noted that this would constitute a major problem even for the trickling down of information to the grassroots level since problems of lack of knowledge and understanding of e-government are observable even at the summit of representation or leadership. Henceforth, the study also, then, argues that until there is that average level of understanding such as that displayed by Hon Chakona, there will still be difficulties in the wholesome penetration of the idea of e-government; and the crafting of Bills to govern e-government operations will take a long time due to lack of fundamental comprehension on the part of the majority of M.Ps.

4.2 ICTs/E-Government: A precondition for Transparency, Accountability, Citizen-Participation, Efficiency and Effectiveness in the Public Sector.

Research findings derived from key informant and in depth interviews and from documentary search and conference presentations concur on the crucial role that ICTs and e-government in particular, are a precursor to the realisation of a transformed public sector which values transparency, popular participation in the decision making process, accountability, that is efficient and prioritises effective public service delivery. This notion is consistent with the postulations made in the literature review of this study by such scholars as Heeks (1998) in ECA (2004) who argue that “...when a decision is taken, information about that decision and its outcomes must flow to all those to whom the decision maker is accountable.....without such information flow, and without a the information system to carry that flow there can be no accountability because there can be no knowledge of the decision”. Henceforth, ICTs agreeably make this swift flow of information possible as revealed by respondents who were interviewed from public and private sector institutions.

In support of the above notion, a key informant interviewee confirmed the assumption made by Heeks (1998) when he revealed that ICTs have the potential to increase transparency and accountability since according to him, they provide timely information which is necessary for decision making and also to those who are interested key stakeholders in the decision being formulated. The respondent further added that ICT applications or e-government programmes provide tracking, monitoring and evaluation mechanisms which to ensure that public officials are held to account for their actions and also to carry out their duties diligently and effectively. He also argued that most of these applications are self-regulatory and supervisory in that they can operate without control from an individual (De individuation) and that aspect on its own make them not only enhance efficiency but also are economic in that they reduce man power which in most cases contribute to bureaucratic inertia and red tape.

On a related note, the respondent further added that e-government was a necessary tool in ensuring that citizens took part in the decision making process and that ICTs have increase transparency in that decision making process. Referring to the PoZ, the interviewee indicated that, for instance, if the website was interactive and provided for video and audio streaming platforms, it would be easier for public users to take part in the parliamentary process by simply accessing the proceedings through their cell phones, laptops, I pads amongst other communication gadgets at their own convenient time without having to physically visit the parliament offices.

In another key interview session held with the Acting Clerk of Parliament it emerged that, the senior bureaucrat was also convinced on the role that e-government initiatives can crucially play in bringing about transparency and accountability. The Clerk revealed that, since parliament was introducing video streaming on its website and also upgrading internet bandwidth to ensure uninterrupted access to parliamentary information by the citizenry, transparency was guaranteed in that all proceedings and activities of the parliament would be posted on the website and that members of the public would be able to trace the progress of their M.Ps and as such holding them accountable. The respondent further noted that video streaming of Parliamentary Select Committee meetings would enhance transparency and citizen participation in that this is the stage where Bills are open to public scrutiny and the stage where members of the public can suggest ideas into the legislative process of the country and as such increasing their role in making decisions.

An in depth interview with a certain local M.P also concurred with the notion that ICTs can enhance and nurture a culture of accountability, transparency and popular participation in decision making when she remarked that, due to readily availability of information provided through utilisation of ICTs transparency and accountability becomes automatic. The interviewee made reference to the online availability, for instance, of the Auditor General's report arguing that the comments section on these

online platforms ensured also that, the citizens' views are held equally important and as such their participation will be guaranteed.

In a Conference presentation made by Marufu A, Chief Operating Officer: 23rd Century Systems, at the **E-Tech Africa Expo** held in Harare between 12-14 March 2015 and hosted by the MoICTPCSs, it came out that e-government plays a crucial role in establishing public value which essentially refers to the **value** that an organization contributes to society. In this respect, Marufu highlighted that e-government applications ensured that public services will not only be transparent but also quickly and efficiently accessible. Using the analogy of the recently automated Liquor Licencing Board, the presenter indicated that, the previous manual liquor licensing system was not only opaque but also cumbersome, corrupt, inefficient and characterised by bureaucratic delays and so many "middlemen". He contrasted the previous system with the current online application system which he argued to be characterised by a reduced bureaucracy and that the citizen could now track the progress of their application and can also now hold public officials accountable for any hitches within the system. He also added that this ensured an ease of business since licences and rates can be paid for online whilst the applicant awaits the confirmation of their application within a stipulated short period of time which is opposed to the old manual system where the applicant could not forecast the time with which his or her application will be processed. In this respect, Marufu also intimated that, e-services were crucial in reducing paper trail and also for providing full audit trails which are useful in ensuring that government processes are transparent and accountable to the citizenry who also double as funders of the government through payment of taxes.

These sentiments also came out from a key informant interview held with the Director of Infrastructure in the MoICTPCS who commended the digitalisation of the Registrar General's Office citing that the process of application and processing of key national registration particulars such as birth certificates, death certificates, identity documents and passports had not only become efficient but also transparent. He revealed that, before

automation of these services, the RG's office was a hub of opaque and underhand dealings, suffered from backlogs, characterised by a frustrated and demotivated personnel and so forth. However, this changed tremendously with the coming in of digitalisation to which he attributed the energetic and speedy processing of such documents. He noted that the sad tale of long queues and underhand dealings had become phenomena of the past arguing that, presently, application for an ordinary passport had been reduced from 6 months to 3 weeks which is an improvement in public service delivery. He also revealed that the introduction of the hot short message (s.m.s) platform to notify applicants on the status of their application and the online access of the passport application form now ensured services that regard the value for money principle. To him, this is an indication of the usefulness of e-government initiatives in ensuring efficiency, effectiveness, transparency and accountability in the public sector.

Analysis of the available and related literature also revealed the role of the ICTs in ensuring the above noted public virtues which should ideally govern operations of public sector institutions. According to the PFMS Newsletter (2013: 3), introduction of the Public Finance Management System by the Ministry of Finance as a computer based accounting and financial management system has improved various processes in the operations of multiple government departments and public agencies. The Newsletter acknowledges that "...for the first time, in many years (since the introduction of the PFMS), Ministries were able to submit the 2012 year end returns for audit within the statutory deadlines". This is in contrast with the previously inefficient manual system. The PFMS also provides the Public Expenditure Tracking Surveys (PETS).

PETS refer to surveys undertaken to track funds disbursed by the Treasury for specific projects or entities that are intended to benefit citizens, such as schools, hospitals or clinics and other agencies that offer direct services to the public. The purpose of the tracking is to determine the proportion of funds disbursed that ultimately reaches the institutions, intended beneficiaries and establish proportion and reason for any leakage. In addition, expenditure tracking systems are usually conducted where Government wants

citizens to hold Government structures accountable for the use of the money and delivery of the services to the public (PFMS Newsletter 2013:10).

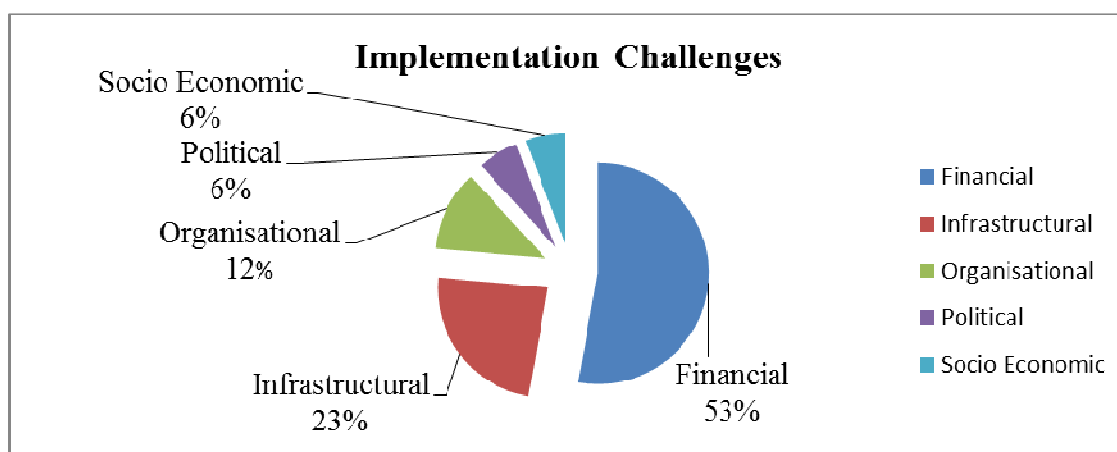
It is also argued that it brings accountability and responsibility as the survey results are publicised and it also empowers citizens to understand what they should expect from Government and how they can determine whether or not Government has provided the services. More so, the PFMS system makes expenditure tracking surveys much easier and more accurate than before (ibid.). The study can hence note that, ICTs and e-government initiatives or applications play a crucially important role in bring public institutions to the people, transforming them into efficient and effective performers that operate transparently and are accountable to the taxpayers or general citizenry. These are the whole marks of good governance as pronounced in Chapter Two of this study by Ngulube (2007:1) when he argues that ICTs improve and enhance the relationship between government and citizens. This relationship can survive only if the government delivers on its mandate to provide efficient and effective services to the people through highly transparent means that ensure their accountability to the citizenry.

This sentiment also came out in an in depth interview held with the Clerk of the PPSCICTs who revealed that, if e-government initiatives were implemented properly, there was great potential for the transformation of Zimbabwe's public sector. The respondent particularly referred to the role that ICTs can potentially play in ensuring an e-Parliament; he said this in contrast with the Rwandese Parliament which he said was interactive, accessible and accountable through public platforms created on its website. He said that, with the high literacy rates in Zimbabwe, the parliament could do better if ICTs were properly deployed in the operations and administration of parastatals. He further bemoaned the meetings of the committee which he said were still conducted by way of paper files and that the committee responsible for ICTs still depended on a manual paper filing and presentation system. To this end, the interviewee argued for the need to fully take up ICTs as a necessary transformative tool of the PoZ.

4.3 E-Government Implementation Challenges in Zimbabwe

The research identified various challenges that bedevil the implementation of e-government initiatives in Zimbabwe. Interviewees, both key informants and those from in depth interviews highlighted a number of challenges that are specific and unique to their situations or organisations. However, certain common challenges emerged and will be identified as the chapter proceeds; the frequency of their mentioning will also be revealed to identify which challenges cut across all situations in as far as the problems characterising implementation of e-government initiatives in Zimbabwe are concerned. There are some challenges that did not appear amongst the majority of respondents which the study considered important and worth noting and as such will be discussed separately from the major themes identified during data analysis notably, financial challenges, infrastructural challenges, organisational challenges, political challenges and social challenges. The distribution of frequency of these challenges as identified by the interviews, expressed as a percentage of the total 18 respondents is shown in the diagram below:

Figure2: Major Implementation Challenges



Source: Field Work

4.3.1 Financial Challenges

The research identified that, the majority of respondents, especially key informant interviewees most of whom were drawn from senior management of various public and private organisations concurred that, chief among the problems haunting e-government implementation in Zimbabwe was the issue of financial inadequacies. They attributed this challenge to the prevailing harsh economic situation in Zimbabwe which they said had translated to serious liquidity and transactional costs that resulted in the government and other players failing to pool financial resources towards the funding of e-government initiatives or projects. They also argued that, due to the expensive nature of ICTs, government found it difficult to fully commit significant resources towards the funding of e-government initiatives and this was expressed by over nine respondents with the majority drawn from the key informants and a few from in depth interviews.

It came out from a key informant interview with a senior manager within the PoZ that “... lack of funding tops the ranking of challenges faced by PoZ in its efforts to transform it into an e-Parliament...upgrading of both hardware and software required funding and this had severed relations between government and private service providers since government has in the past failed to settle its dues in time and such relations have resulted in the abandonment of maintenance and upgrading of certain systems ”. The argument forwarded by this respondent paints a situation that, funding or adequate budgetary assistance is a key consideration for the successful implementation of e-government projects.

Another respondent also buttressed that lack of financial resources strangled efforts aimed at the successful implementation of ICT initiatives in Zimbabwe. He decried the economic situation and labelled it as the origin of all these budgetary inadequacies when he noted that “...currently, there are competing priorities for financial resources and unfortunately e-government has not been placed on top of that list”. This is indicative of a dire financial inelasticity on the part of the government which has led to stifling many initiatives intended to advance the concept and practice of e-government in Zimbabwe.

The research also discovered that, financial challenges are not exclusive to the government alone. An outcome of an in depth interview with an ordinary member of the public revealed that, it was not cheap for an ordinary Zimbabwean to access ICT services that can enable one to be available online. It came out that, IT communication devices such as laptops, I Pads and smart cell phones were still not within reach of many ordinary Zimbabwe and these are the gadgets that can enable a citizen to access e-government services particularly in this highly modernised era where telephones and fax machines are slowly becoming extinct. More so, the interviewee indicated that, internet access was still expensive in Zimbabwe given that access rates range between USD1-2 and that on its own limits the access of ordinary citizens since that is the same price with a loaf of bread and for an unemployed citizen it is clear where priority will be placed in spending that USD1.

Sentiments raised by the M.P from a rural constituency concurred with the above noted outcomes. In another interview, Hon Chakona revealed that, ICTs had not significantly penetrated the rural areas largely due to the fact that access tools are very expensive and as such cannot be afforded by many rural folks. As an M.P representing a rural constituency, Chakona implored the government to look into ways that can ensure high penetration of mobile gadgets in the rural areas to pave way for successful implementation of e-government projects which will see popular participation even by members of rural communities. Henceforth, the study noted that, financial challenges were not only hampering the implementation of e-government initiatives only from a government's perspective but also from the users who find communication and access models highly exorbitant for an ordinary citizen.

4.3.2 Infrastructural Challenges

Infrastructure is the core frame for successful e-government. It is the backbone of every ICT initiative; for without requisite infrastructure there cannot be any meaningful mention of e-government or any ICT project. However, the research discovered that, chief among the problems that delayed or hampered progress in implementation of ICT

projects is the aspect of inadequate and in most cases obsolete or lack of requisite infrastructure to back up the implementation of e-government plans, policies, programmes and projects.

According to one of the key informant interviews held with a senior government official, current inland infrastructure cannot cater for the prevalent ICT needs and as such needs to be upgraded. It also came out that, for instance, current rates of internet speed could not provide for the levels required to fully orbit Zimbabwe into e-government space where every transaction or activity with the government can be accessed over the cell phone or laptop at any given moment. Internet speeds currently are slow and as such efforts were underway to upgrade the internet infrastructure and this was signalled by the migration to fibre optic internet whose cables are currently being dug into place. The interviewee also revealed that it was the government's vision that major towns be internet connected by 2018 to create Smart Cities that will ensure connectivity from points all over the cities. This can arguably increase the opportunities for successful implementation of e-government in Zimbabwe since internet will now be affordable and the convenient way to carry out one's business since it will mean that internet rates will be made affordable.

In another key informant interview held with the I.T Director also known as the Information Systems Manager, it was revealed that inadequacy of ICT infrastructure within the parliament is one of the limiting factors in the realisation of a fully electronically driven parliament. She argued that this was due to the dire financial straits bedevilling the institution. For instance, the respondent referred to the constitutional requirement stipulating that there are 16 official languages in Zimbabwe. She indicated that the current hardware and software infrastructure could only provide for the interpretation of only two languages and as such there was need to upgrade the channels to add the other fourteen. She indicated that, this was the case with the parliament's website which runs on an out dated operating system and is currently not interactive hence the

need to upgrade the software infrastructure in order to establish electronically competitive levels.

The Deputy Clerk of Parliament also added that, current ICT infrastructure could not match the occurring standards and could not compete with the private sector. She said parliament had no sufficient resources to purchase and maintain requisite and up to date software infrastructure. To this end, she revealed that PoZ at some point resorted to using a cheap although not popular Operating System known as Ubuntu but however faced some user resistance and was not interoperable with other government departments since it is not common software. Another senior manager within the parliament bemoaned the current status of ICT infrastructure when he noted that most ICT gadgets used within the public sector are as a result of the kindness of the Chinese Embassy which has been ameliorating the situation by parcelling out hand outs. Hence the study observes how dire the infrastructural situation is in Zimbabwe.

4.3.3 Organisational Challenges

According to Nkohkwo and Islam (2013) organisational aspects focus on leadership and change management in an organisation. It is factual that, introduction of ICTs in any organisation will entail certain fundamental restructuring and as such will result in certain behavioural characteristics, whether in support of change or against it. Also important will be to review the role of organisation's leadership in how they receive and deal with prospects and challenges poised by the coming in of ICTs as in important organisational instrument.

The research established that, issues to do with resistance to change were rife within public organisations particularly to change brought by ICTs. One respondent remarked that, user resistance is one of the factors that contribute to failure by personnel to change into the modern ways of operating as dictated by ICT devices. As a result, some ICT gadgets find themselves shelved away with members still finding it convenient to resort

to traditional manual systems. However, the interviewee indicated that this group was only a handful and will manage to migrate with time.

Aspects of leadership championing the concept of e-government also emerged in an in depth interview with a junior staffer in one of the departments who felt that senior leadership was not doing enough to introduce, market and champion the concept in a convincing way that would sell the souls of the young ones to understand what actually e-government is all about. The respondent actually expressed disappointment concerning the manner with which e-government is proceeding generally across the public sector. He felt that there is no representation at strategic level and as such e-government was meant to suffer or experience the current delays or the slow pace at which e-government is proceeding.

These sentiments resonated with the data gathered through a key informant interview held with a senior manager within the Ministry of ICTs who bemoaned the lack of clarity on how e-government should be implemented and which institution is charged with the sole mandate to oversee the implementation and processing of e-government initiatives. The interviewee said this in light of the arrangement that e-government in Zimbabwe is under the purview of Modernisation Department within the Office of the President and Cabinet. To him, this indicated the existence of a conflict of interest and lack of clarity on the parameters or boundaries of e-government championing since the Ministry also has such a department in place. Therefore, it can be noted that even at strategic and organisational leadership level, there are clarity problems as to which unit or department is fully responsible with e-government. Another respondent also reinforced this argument when he mentioned that one of the reasons for failure of e-government in Zimbabwe was due to the lack of a uniform procedure of formulating and implementing e-government projects. He highlighted that, Ministries of Home affairs, Commerce and Industry, ICTs and even the OPC were doing their own projects independent of one another and that shows lack of leadership to uniformly publicise and implement the concept of e-government in Zimbabwe.

In light of these revelations, the study noted henceforth that, the issue of organisational leadership and strategic representation was one of the key aspects to drive the concept and implementation of e-government and these revelations indicate that lack of leadership especially at strategic levels within the public sector contribute immensely to the current situation that the issue of implementing e-government is concerned in Zimbabwe.

4.3.4 Political Challenges

The research also established that politics also play a role in the implementation of e-government initiatives and to a considerable extent do so in the negative way which hampers the commencement and smooth procession of those projects. Political challenges will in this instance include also legal and policy frameworks revealing how their inadequacies negatively impact on the implementation of these ICT initiatives.

Political interference is one of the major problems that were ubiquitous in most of the interviews where political aspects emerged. For instance, a key informant revealed that in the procurement of ICT equipment, political priorities eclipse rationality and relegates matters of quality and durability of the equipment that is being purchased. He indicated that, politicians often prefer doing business with Chinese firms as a way of consolidating their political relationship at the expense of quality of the products and services since he argued that Chinese firms often serve them a raw deal supplying inferior products which are non-durable and pegged at very expensive rates. He added that, regardless of the three quotations principle governing public sector transactions, Chinese products are often given preference. This, according to the respondent, undermines efficiency and effectiveness of services delivered through inferior equipment and infrastructure.

This is also in tandem with the data gathered through another key informant interview with a senior manager from the banking sector where it also emerge that political expediency was prioritised at the expense of fully committing to the full adoption and implementation of e-government, the respondent highlighted that government was more

concerned with matters of political security than instituting mechanisms that would witness the smooth and successful implementation of ICT programmes. Legislative and institutional issues seemed to be the main concern of the respondent when he highlighted that their unavailability indicated lack of political will and commitment to fully embrace ICTs in the public sector. He also revealed that there is no clear roadmap on how the government wishes to proceed in the implementation of e-government in Zimbabwe and as such the private sector found itself confused in terms of which part to play apart from sponsoring e- conferences often held by the Ministry of ICTs and workshops organised by other government departments.

The respondent also added that, this lack of clarity and lack of adequate and unambiguous legislative and policy instruments governing e-government and ICTs explained the reason why the implementation of ICT projects in Zimbabwe is proceeding in a piecemeal fashion and according to him, this would not attract any serious investment from the private sector given the highly expensive and dynamic nature of ICTs a fact that makes them unaffordable for the government to carry the costs on its own. It is hence the observation of this research that politicising purely bureaucratic and technical issues of implementation of public projects bears so many irrecoverable costs for the government than it presents opportunities for their successful implementation.

In addition, the researcher observed inconsistencies on the responses given by senior management within the parliament of Zimbabwe when inquiries were made from key informants on the availability of e-government or ICT policies at institutional level to indicate the level of commitment by the institution in the adoption and implementation of e-government initiatives. For instance, the Principal Director Information Services revealed that the institution had an ICT policy in place whilst the Acting Clerk of Parliament gave a contradictory response indicating that the ICT Policy was still being drafted, however, the Parliament's Strategic Plan identified ICTs as one of its sixteen major clusters. The leader of parliament administration revealed that if the policy was in place then an organised approach to the implementation of e-government initiatives

would be realised. Therefore the research can also argue that, the policy inadequacies are not only extant at macro level but also are present at a micro level an incarnation that can be attributed to the lack of political commitment by those in leadership to advance the concept and practice of e-government.

Additionally, the challenge of lack of a legislative framework in place to direct and govern the procedures and processes of e-government is arguably one of the various reasons why e-government implementation is proceeding in an erratic fashion. This was revealed from an in depth interview with the Clerk of the Portfolio Committee on ICTs who indicated that, lack of an organised approach and an Act of Parliament contributed to the current state of affairs where each government department is implementing its own e-government project independent or separate from the other making the assessment of the level of e-government practice in Zimbabwe difficult and close to impossible. This revelation can also be supported by the clashes that characterised the ownership of the High Performance Computer domiciled at the University of Zimbabwe which saw the Ministry of Higher, Tertiary Education, Science and Technology, the OPC through its Modernisation Department and the MoICTPCSs through its Central Computing Services Bureau all claiming ownership in their various arguments and justifications.

4.3.5 Socio-Economic Challenges

Social challenges were mainly dominated by issues to do with poverty, lack of ICT literacy and unaffordability of ICT infrastructure, consumables and gadgets mainly in the down trodden parts of the country.

In an in depth interview with a local M.P it came out that the issue of affordability of access to ICTs was the main socio-economic challenge that affected the generality of Zimbabweans given that they would rather prioritise bread and butter issues than connectivity or access to ICT gadgets to communicate. Although mobile phone penetration has increased, this has also been a vice in as much as it has been regarded as a virtue. It is a vice in the sense that majority owners of those mobile phones cannot afford

applications that will enable them to communicate using the internet most frequently due to the expensive nature of internet in Zimbabwe.

Another M.P representing a rural constituency revealed in an interview that digital divide was mainly observable in the rural communities where most of the dwellers are not ICT literate and where levels of mobile phone and even electricity penetration are very low. According to the interviewee, this has led to the discrimination of this population that is often not considered in the implementation of ICT initiatives and this has had an adverse effect on the proliferation and popularity of ICTs to render them an endorsement even in the rural areas and hence constitute a challenge in the slow growth of ICTs in general in Zimbabwe.

4.4 Other Challenges

Apart from the major challenges identified by the study during the data collection phase, other isolated problems emerged whose negative impact cannot be ignored in as much as it cannot be over emphasised. These include lack of skilled personnel and technical expertise due to brain drainage to administer e-government activities, user resistance both from public administrators and general citizens, lack of a coordinated all stakeholder approach, lack of refresher courses or capacity building programmes to reinvigorate ICT personnel to keep up with the obtaining standards and trends in the ICT and e-government sectors amongst many others. More so, there has not been adequate public awareness concerning the nature and practice of e-government

4.5 Conclusion

From the obtaining findings presented above, it can be noted that, implementation of e-government initiatives in Zimbabwe is hampered by a raft of challenges stemming main from financial inadequacies, obsolete infrastructure, political interference, lack of political commitment and lack of adequate legislative and institutional support among many others. It also came out from the findings how senior government officials, junior

staffers and even ordinary citizens and academics understand the concept of ICTs and e-government as indicated in the responses gathered from definitions proffered at the beginning of this chapter.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

The study sought to investigate challenges encountered in the implementation of e-government initiatives in Zimbabwe. The research particularly focused on the Parliament of Zimbabwe as a case study. This chapter therefore presents the summary of the study, conclusions drawn from the research findings and data analysed and presented in Chapter Four. It also identifies and presents recommendations and strategies that the government, academic institutions and other entities can adopt in light of solving problems bedevilling policy implementation in Zimbabwe. It also presents information that will be necessary for the commencement of further research by any interested stakeholder in the field of public policy implantation. Conclusions and recommendations are made in light of the objectives and research questions which guided the study and are elaborated in Chapter One of the study and also from the emerging major issues identified throughout the study for instance in the Literature Review in Chapter Two and during Data Collection and in the presentation of findings in Chapter four.

Below are the objectives of the Study that guided the proceeding of the entire research:

- To understand the fundamental meaning of e-government.
- To identify challenges encountered in the implementation of e-government initiatives in Zimbabwe.
- To analyse how other governments have dealt with such implementation related problems.
- To ascertain whether e government initiatives are key in promoting accountability, transparency and participation in public sector processes.
- To propose/recommend strategies that can be utilised to ensure effective implementation of e-government.

5.1 Conclusions

Below are conclusions drawn from the study

5.1.1 The Importance of Fully Understanding the nature of e-Government.

The study established that, due to its complex and highly intricate nature, there is need for thoroughly unpacking and demystifying the concept of e-government in order to prepare positive conditions for its successful implementation. This would be done to forestall any foreseeable challenges of user resistance and resistance to organisational change. Relevant stakeholders should invest financial, material and human resources towards creation of public awareness and championing of e-government agenda, not only at policy and institutional level but also importantly at grassroots level in order also to deal with problems of digital divide that can have a debilitating impact on the implementation of e-government activities.

5.1.2 Legislative and Institutional Frameworks-Key enablers of e-government.

Enactment of relevant e-government legislation is one of the fundamental steps towards serious commitment in introducing and practicing e-government. This can equally be said about setting up e-government institutions or units specifically superintending over all e-government initiatives in the country for their absence leads to confusion, lack of clarity and conflict of interest which seriously hamper the successful implementation of e-government. Lack of enabling legislation in Zimbabwe has translated to the absence of a comprehensive e-government road map which will identify key sign posts for major e-government projects and set timelines for their completion. It will also assist in setting up e-government project flagships that will act as guidelines towards the commencement and procession of e-governance in Zimbabwe. Lack of these frameworks has seen Zimbabwe muddling through the concept and practice of e-government. Each government department has its own unique way of carrying out ICT initiatives and this has led to lack of uniformity in the implementation of e-government initiatives and as such made it impossible for the assessment and ranking of the level at which Zimbabwe is currently operating in as far as e-government is concerned.

5.1.3 All Stakeholder Approach Necessary for Successful Implementation of e-government

From the emerging data gathered throughout the research and from other scholarly submissions, an all-stakeholder approach towards the implementation of e-government initiatives is a critical component in ensuring success. It emerged that, concerted efforts amongst relevant key stakeholders would ensure that all government departments and agencies, private sector and the civil society are operating at the same levels hence harnessing all resources towards the completion of identified projects and this will help e-government projects to proceed systematically and uniformly.

5.1.4 Best Practices from Elsewhere Provide Resourceful Lessons

The study also realised the importance of highlighting nation cases where e-government has been successful to provide lessons for emerging e-government nations such as Zimbabwe. In Africa, countries such as Mauritius, Botswana and to a considerable extent, South Africa are leading cases and living testimonies of successful implementation of e-government. Such cases can provide lessons on what is required and how governments should proceed in the formulation and implementation of e-government initiatives. They also are testimonies of the miracles that ICTs have performed in the transformation of those countries' public sectors.

5.1.5 Adequate Budgetary Support, a Key ingredient in the success of e-government.

An important revelation in the whole gamut of e-government is the realisation that ICTs are generally expensive and usually out of the reach of many Sub Sahara African countries and as such there is need for sacrifice by governments to commit the scarce resources towards e-government if ever e-government success is to be realised. It does not only start and stop at pronouncements of policy commitments but also financial support is necessary for the realisation of successful implementation of e-government. Political will and commitment should be expressed even in terms of budgetary or financial commitment.

5.1.6 E-government, a Critical Component in the Reformation of the Public Sector.

One of the major conclusions reached by this study is the unavoidable role played by ICTs in transforming and improving public sector procedures, processes and systems. It is one of the New Public Management reform packages aimed at the utilisation of ICTs in the realisation of a new system of doing the job in the public sector. It introduces and sustains the concept of new "managerialism" in the public sector. Throughout the study it was emphasised how ICTs are crucial in the introduction and nurturing of public sector virtues namely; transparency, accountability, responsiveness, efficiency, economy, effectiveness and public participation in decision making in the public sector. It brings in the concept of the centrality of citizenry in the government process by ensuring easy and real time accessibility of public services.

5.2 Recommendations

Following are recommendations and suggestions that can be adopted for solving the problems encountered in public policy implementation. These suggestions mainly came from the respondents

5.2.1 Political Will and Commitment

This was a common suggestion or recommendation that cut across the views of the respondents on what should be done in order to ensure the smooth implementation of e-government. Many felt that government was not sincere in its pronouncement of adopting e-government and a number of respondents implored the government to “walk the talk” since to them it was not enough to just mention that government is committed to adopting and implementing e-government whilst not translating that into policy action. Emphasis was also placed on the need to express this commitment and political will through enacting enabling legislations and devoting significant budget allocations towards ICTs.

5.2.2 Inclusion of ICTs in the Education Curriculum beginning from Elementary Level

A strong sentiment among many respondents was the suggestion that government should introduce ICT courses into the schools education curriculum as compulsory from elementary up to tertiary levels as a way to nurture an e-generation that will understand the importance of a computerised society. This will be done in order to deal with challenges of user resistance and also to create conducive environment for the smooth implementation of ICT initiatives in Zimbabwe.

5.2.3 Creation of leading Institutions of e-government.

Various respondents recommended the important need to identify key governance institutions to champion e-government and ICTs in Zimbabwe. One such institution is the PoZ which, by nature of its configuration, stands to represent the needs of the majority and henceforth it is believed that it should take a leading role in championing e-government and also doing so to compliment efforts made by the implementation organ, the Executive arm of the State.

5.2.4 Public Private Partnerships in e-Government

The prevailing economic situation has rendered the government incapacitated to solely fund the highly expensive practice of e-government. A call was made by interviewees who implored the government to seek partnerships with the private sector and even the civil society and donor community in order to attract private capital and to harness skills, value and technical expertise in the formulation and implementation of e-government initiatives. This will reduce the burden of an already financially troubled government by transferring all costs to the private sector meanwhile developing the concept and furthering its successful implementation.

5.2.5 Public Awareness Campaigns

This is one of the crucial suggestions that emerged from the study. There was emphasis on the need to carry out extensive and comprehensive public awareness campaigns

through all forms of media in order to popularise the concept of e-government in preparation for its practice. Platforms such as Zimbabwe International Trade Fair and Harare Agricultural show and also other provincial shows were identified as other platforms where information on what e-government is can be exhibited. This would help in ensuring that all citizens at different levels fully embrace ICTs.

5.3 Conclusion

Electronic government (e-government) entails the use of ICTs to transform the public sector. It presents opportunities for an actively responsive, efficient and effective public administration. As a key component or strategy of the New Public Management paradigm, e-government sought to create a modern government that values the interests of its clients and citizens. However, its implementation has been grossly affected by various problems which have led to its slow progression in sub-Saharan Africa and in Zimbabwe, particularly.

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APPENDICES

RESEARCH INTERVIEW QUESTION FOR PoZ (1)

Introduction

My name is Nkosikhona Moyo an MSc in Public Administration (MPA) student from the University of Zimbabwe. In partial fulfilment of the requirements of the degree, I am conducting a study on **Challenges faced in the Implementation of e-government initiatives in Zimbabwe. The Case of Parliament of Zimbabwe**. You are amongst those that have been selected and I am thus requesting for your permission to carry out the study. The information obtained from this research is used purely for academic purposes and will be treated with strict confidentiality. Your assistance is therefore greatly appreciated.

Procedure

You will be asked a series of questions that relate to your understanding of e-government in general and also in specific reference to Zimbabwe. In identifying the challenges experienced, it will also be prudent and necessary that you provide suggestions in form of solutions to the problems currently faced. This exercise will take about 45 minutes of your time. You are free to opt out of the exercise now or anytime during the course of the exercise. If you feel uncomfortable in answering any question please say so. Information gathered through this research exercise will be used only for academic purposes and sources of information will remain anonymous.

Benefits

There are no direct financial or material benefits for participating in this study.

Further Information

Should you require further information about this research feel free to contact the The Chairperson Political and Administrative Studies. University of Zimbabwe P O Box MP 167 Mt Pleasant Harare Tel: 04-303211 Ext 14129

Basic Information:			
Name		Organization/ Company:	
Sex:		Job Title:	

Area of Expertise:		Years of Experience:	_ _ _ _
Date of Interview	_ _ _ _		
A	General Questions		
Q1	What is your understanding of electronic government (e-government)?		
Q2	In your own assessment, has there been significant commitment from the government to develop and advance the concept of e-government?		
Q3	If so, do you think the Government of Zimbabwe has adequately invested in the ICTs and e-government? (Briefly explain)		
Q5	Do you think ICT applications have the potential to enhance the Parliament's oversight function?		
Q6	Are there any e-government or ICT related initiatives that the PoZ is currently undertaking?		

	<p>If so, have you been experiencing any major challenges in their implementation, and what are they?</p>
Q7	<p>Does the parliament host an active website?</p> <p>How accessible is it to the general population?</p> <p>Does it provide an opportunity for members of the public to interact with their Members of Parliament?</p> <p>Does the Parliament of Zimbabwe have adequate ICT infrastructure necessary for the commencement and development of e-government ?</p>
Q8	<p>Does the Parliament host an internal information management system?</p> <p>If so, have you experienced any user related problems from the members of staff in working with the system?</p>
Q9	<p>In your own opinion, and in general, do you think that ICTs can enhance accountability and transparency in the operations of PoZ?</p>

	Can they also increase opportunities for citizen participation in the processes of decision making especially through the Parliament of Zimbabwe?
Q11.	Are there any recommendations or suggestions that can be adopted for the purpose of this study and also as solution to implementation challenges that are experienced in e-government initiatives?

THANK YOU!!!

RESEARCH INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR MINISTRY of ICTP&CSs

Introduction

My name is Nkosikhona Moyo, an MSc in Public Administration (MPA) student from the University of Zimbabwe. In partial fulfilment of the requirements of the degree, I am conducting a study on **Challenges faced in the Implementation of e-government initiatives in Zimbabwe. The Case of Parliament of Zimbabwe**. You are amongst those that have been selected and I am thus requesting for your permission to carry out the study. The information obtained from this research is used purely for academic purposes and will be treated with strict confidentiality. Your assistance and cooperation is therefore greatly appreciated.

Procedure

You will be asked a series of questions that relate to your understanding of e-government in general and also in specific reference to Zimbabwe. In identifying the challenges experienced, it will also be prudent and necessary that you provide suggestions in form of solutions to the problems currently faced. This exercise will take about 45 minutes of your time. You are free to opt out of the exercise now or anytime during the course of the exercise. If you feel uncomfortable in answering any question please say so. Information gathered through this research exercise will be used only for academic purposes and sources of information will remain anonymous.

Benefits

There are no direct financial or material benefits for participating in this study.

Further Information

Should you require further information about this research feel free to contact the The Chairperson Political and Administrative Studies, University of Zimbabwe P O Box MP 167 Mt Pleasant Harare Tel: 04-303211 Ext 14129

Basic Information:			
Name		Organization/ Company:	
Sex:		Job Title:	
Area of Expertise:		Years of Experience:	_ _ _ _
Date of Interview	_ _ _ _		
A	General Questions		
Q1	What is your understanding of electronic government (e-government)?		

Q2	In your own assessment, has there been significant commitment from the government to develop and advance the concept of e-government?
Q3	If so, do you think the Government of Zimbabwe has adequately invested in the ICTs and e-government? (Briefly explain)
Q5	As the Ministry responsible for ICTs in Zimbabwe, and given that e-government is under your institutional purview, can you highlight the major problems that your institution has suffered in the implementation of e government and any other ICT related initiatives.
Q6	Are there any other challenges that you consider minor, although constituting a barrier to implementation of e-government? If so, what are they?
Q7	Do you think there are any success cases of e-government initiatives in Zimbabwe? If so, can you briefly highlight?
Q8	What have been your experiences in the efforts to champion the e-government agenda in Zimbabwe?
Q9	Has there been an all stakeholder approach (including non-state actors such as the business and civil society agencies) in the implementation of e government and ICT related projects? Briefly explain.
Q10	Is the Ministerial staff exposed to refresher courses in order to enhance their understanding in their daily exercises of implementing e government programmes?
Q11	Are there any efforts that the Ministry is undertaking on the creation of public awareness relating to what e-government entails and the role of ICTs in the public sector?
Q12	In your own opinion, do you think there are adequate legislative and institutional frameworks in support of e-government in Zimbabwe?
Q13.	Are there any recommendations or suggestions that can be adopted for the purpose of this study and also as solution to implementation challenges that are experienced in e-government initiatives?

THANK YOU!!!!

RESEARCH INTERVIEW QUESTION FOR PRIVATE SECTOR

Introduction

My name is Nkosikhona Moyo an MSc in Public Administration (MPA) student from the University of Zimbabwe. In partial fulfilment of the requirements of the degree, I am conducting a study on **Challenges faced in the Implementation of e-government initiatives in Zimbabwe. The Case of Parliament of Zimbabwe**. You are amongst those that have been selected and I am thus requesting for your permission to carry out the study. The information obtained from this research is used purely for academic purposes and will be treated with strict confidentiality. Your assistance is therefore greatly appreciated.

Procedure

You will be asked a series of questions that relate to your understanding e-government in general and also in specific reference to Zimbabwe. In identifying the challenges experienced, it will also be prudent and necessary that you provide suggestions in form of solutions to the problems currently faced. This exercise will take about 45 minutes of your time. You are free to opt out of the exercise now or anytime during the course of the exercise. If you feel uncomfortable in answering any question please say so. Information gathered through this research exercise will be used only for academic purposes and sources of information will remain anonymous.

Benefits

There are no direct financial or material benefits for participating in this study.

Further Information

Should you require further information about this research feel free to contact the The Chairperson Political and Administrative Studies, University of Zimbabwe P O Box MP 167 Mt Pleasant Harare Tel: 04-303211 Ext 14129

Basic Information:			
Name		Organization/ Company:	
Sex:		Job Title:	
Area of Expertise:		Years of Experience:	_ _ _ _
Date of Interview	_ _ _ _		
A	General Questions		
Q1	What is your understanding of electronic government (e-government)?		

Q2	What do you think are the challenges that the government is facing in the implementation of e-government initiatives in Zimbabwe?
B	Specific Questions
Q3	Do you think the Government of Zimbabwe has adequately invested in the ICTs and e-government? (Briefly explain)
Q4	Do you know of any efforts that have been made to bring the government and the private (Business) sector in partnership towards establishment, implementation and development of ICTs in the public sector?
Q5	From a business perspective, do you think the current legal and institutional frameworks are conducive in supporting the engagement of the private and public sectors in promoting e-government in Zimbabwe?
Q6	Given the current prevailing economic situation, do you think government can afford to purchase and maintain infrastructure necessary for the implementation of e-government initiatives in Zimbabwe?
Q7	Given the current rates and internet charges, do you think internet usage can be afforded by every citizen, both in urban and rural Zimbabwe?
Q8	Are there any e –business models that can be adopted by government to improve its performance, outlook and accessibility?
Q9	Are there any recommendations that you can offer the government as lessons from the private sector ICT initiatives?

**DEPARTMENT OF
POLITICAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE STUDIES**

P. O. Box MP167
Mount Pleasant
Harare, Zimbabwe

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CHAIRPERSON: Dr C. Manyeruke
PhD MSc (Int'l Rel), BSc (Pol & Admin) (UZ)



UNIVERSITY OF ZIMBABWE

05 January 2015

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

Dear Sir/Madam

RE: CONFIRMATION LETTER: MOYO NKOSIKONA (R075321W)

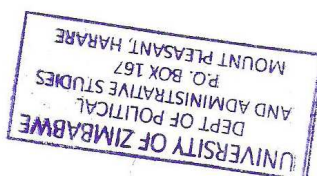
This letter serves to confirm that the above mentioned is our postgraduate student in the Department of Political and Administrative Studies. He is working on his Dissertation in partial fulfillment of the requirements for a Master of Public Administration Degree and his research topic is: ***"Challenges/Problems Encountered in the Implementation of E-Government Initiatives in Zimbabwe. A Case Study of Parliament of Zimbabwe"***.

Please be assured that the information gathered would be used for academic purposes only. Should you have any queries, please contact the Department.

Kindly assist him.

Yours faithfully

MR. T.C. RUBAYA
A/ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT



**MINISTRY OF INFORMATION COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY, POSTAL
AND COURIER SERVICES**

TELEPHONE: +263-04- 792820
FAX:
E-MAIL: ministryict@zarnet.ac.zw



Zimbabwe

MINISTRY OF INFORMATION COMMUNICATION
TECHNOLOGY, POSTAL AND COURIER SERVICES
PRIVATE BAG CY419, CAUSEWAY
7th FLOOR, BANK CHAMBERS BUILDING
76 SAMORA MACHEL AVE
HARARE

7 January 2015

Mr N Moyo
University of Zimbabwe
P O Box MP 167
Mt Pleasant
Harare

Dear Sir

APPLICATION FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

We refer to your letter dated 6 January 2015 concerning the above subject.

We are pleased to advise that permission is granted for you to conduct your research.
We also kindly request you to deposit a copy of your study with the Ministry at the
conclusion of your research.

We wish you every success in your study.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'S C Chigwamba'.

S C Chigwamba
Acting Secretary for ICT, Postal and Courier Services.

All communications should be addressed to:
CLERK OF PARLIAMENT

Fax: 252935



PARLIAMENT OF ZIMBABWE

P.O. Box CY 298

Causeway

Zimbabwe

Telephone: 700181-8, 252931

252936/7, 252940/2

252945/6, 708923

Ref: 12

Wednesday, January 14, 2015

Mr. Nkosikhona Moyo
University of Zimbabwe
Department of Political and Administrative Studies
Harare

Dear Mr. Moyo

RE: REQUEST TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

Reference is made to your letter dated 06 January 2015, wherein you requested to conduct research in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree programme you are currently doing.

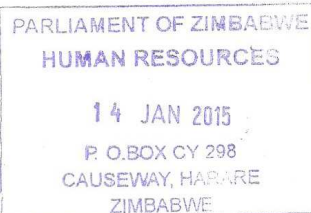
Please be advised that the Acting Clerk of Parliament has granted authority for you to conduct the said research. You will be required to report to the Human Resources Department before you proceed with the research work.

We wish you all the best in your research.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Chingoma H.", is written over the typed name.

Chingoma H. (Mr.)
Director Human Resources
For: Acting Clerk of Parliament



E-mail: clerk@parlzim.gov.zw

Website: www.parlzim.gov.zw

"A SAZ ISO 9001:2008 certified organisation"