A Qualitative Study on Best Practices in Technology Affordances, ICT and Good Governance in Managing Higher Education Institutions in Zimbabwe

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Abstract

The emergence and growth of unethical leadership in the corporate world in Zimbabwe militate against competitiveness of the nation. Governance issues of higher education institutions in Zimbabwe have affected their strategic response to new technological innovations and programmes associated with open educational resources (OERs), massive open online courses (MOOCS), e-learning and mobile learning in an increasingly networked environment. The purpose of the research was to evaluate the corporate governance issues that affect technology affordances and IT governance in an increasingly networked environment and the impact on strategic response to the new technologies in teaching and learning. The research methodology used was qualitative where focus group discussions were held with various groups involved in the management of higher education institutions. Semi-structured interviews were conducted on selected levels of university management on technology affordances, IT governance and business-IT alignment. Stratified sampling technique was used as the target population was stratified according to levels of management in higher education institutions, starting from the level of University Council going down to IT Managers and key users. The results show that there are corporate governance problems between the Vice Chancellor and Chairperson of the University Council, and the critical success factors were determined. However, all the higher education institutions involved in the study indicated the common problem of poor alignment between the business strategy and IT. Corporate governance and IT governance facilitate a conductive environment for technological progress and responsiveness to technological innovations such as e-learning,

m-learning, MOOCs and OERs.

1. Introduction

An *affordance* is a relation between an object, or environment, and the user. Affordances are the desirable properties of a user interface that facilitate interaction between users and the tool. The tool enables, leads and limits the degree of interaction (Salomon, 1990). Affordance presents distinctive action possibilities on the use of information and communication technology (ICT) in teaching and learning. Technology affordances in Zimbabwe are mainly dominated by the diffusion of mobile technology and e-learning (Kabanda, 2014). Governance issues are affecting the strategic responsiveness of higher education institutions to new technological innovations and programmes in an increasingly networked environment, including e-learning, mobile learning, open educational resources (OERs), and massive open online courses (MOOCS).

The overall governance of an organisation requires special attention on the management, performance and risks of Information Technology (IT) systems and projects. IT governance defines the processes that enable an organisation achieve its goals through the effective utilisation, management and control of IT. IT governance addresses the alignment between the business and strategic direction of IT, value-adding contributions of IT, risk management, resource management and performance measurement. Higher education institutions in Zimbabwe have embraced E-learning in the teaching and learning process, and this includes blended learning and pure online learning. The fastest growing aspect of e-learning is mobile learning (m-learning) which uses ubiquitous digital mobile devices.

The competitive nature of corporate entities in a nation defines its national competitiveness and wealth. Good corporate governance facilitates better operational performance and effectiveness and attracts easy flow of finance to businesses. However, the emergence and growth of unethical leadership in the corporate world in Zimbabwe militates against competitiveness of the nation and technological progress. The financial services sector in Zimbabwe was rocked by institutional failures between 2003 and 2004 arising from abuse of insider loans and involvement in non-banking business using depositors' funds. The resulting instability in the financial services sector during that period precipitated the liquidity challenges that currently persist in the banking sector and other scandals and corporate failures in the national economy (ZimCode, 2014). The Zimbabwe Code on Corporate Governance was officially launched in December 2014 for use by all business entities in both private and public sectors. However, best practice recommendations are required for the higher education sector.

Corporate Governance (CP) is defined as "the framework of rules and practices by which a board of directors ensures accountability, fairness, and transparency in a company's relationship with its all stakeholders". (http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/corporate-governance.html#ixzz3topTCN1T). Good corporate governance is characterized by the following key characteristics:

➢ Accountability

➢ Transparency

➢ Equity and Fairness

➢ Integrity / Probity - uprightness, goodness and willingness to go the extra mile.

➢ Responsibility - behaving in a manner that is considered acceptable, correct and proper.

➢ Independence

➢ Social responsibility

1.1 Statement of the Problem

Good corporate governance (CG) facilitates better operational performance and effectiveness and attracts easy flow of finance to businesses. However, the emergence and growth of unethical leadership in the corporate world in Zimbabwe militates against competitiveness of the nation and technological progress. The University belongs to the entire society where corporate governance can be a source of conflict, especially on the roles of Council and Vice Chancellor. Governance issues are affecting the preparedness of higher education institutions in their strategic response to new technological innovations in an increasingly networked environment. Technological progress, technology affordances and IT governance in an increasingly networked environment largely depend on the CG of the institution.

1.2 Purpose or Aim

The aim of the research paper was to evaluate the corporate governance issues that affect technological progress, technology affordances and IT governance in an increasingly networked environment and the impact on the strategic response to the new technological innovations in teaching and learning.

1.3 Main Research Question

How does good corporate governance affect strategic responses of higher education institutions to technology affordances and IT governance in an increasingly networked environment and participative collaborative inclusive communities of learning?

1.4 Objectives

The research objectives are to:

a) Ascertain the corporate governance issues affecting universities in Zimbabwe with reference to the University Council and Senior Management of a university

b) Assess the impact of corporate governance on technology affordances and usage pattern of OERs, MOOCs, e-learning, and mobile learning in higher education institutions in Zimbabwe.

c) Investigate on the major determinants and critical success factors of good corporate governance

d) Investigate if ICT is taken as a strategic issue in corporate governance

e) Evaluate best practices in IT governance

1.5 Research Questions

1) What are the major corporate governance issues facing management of higher education institutions in Zimbabwe?

2) What do you see as the corporate governance issues between the university Vice Chancellor and university Council Chairperson?

3) How do Vice Chancellors view their role, major positive attributes and challenges in their interaction with the University Council?

4) How do Council Chairpersons view their role, major positive attributes and challenges relevant to that of the Vice Chancellor and his/her management team?

5) What the major benefits, obstacles and factors driving good corporate governance?

6) How is ICT treated as a strategic issue in corporate governance?

7) How does corporate governance affect technological progress, technology affordances and usage patterns of OERs, MOOCs, e-learning and m-learning in Zimbabwe?

8) What are the best practices for IT governance and Business-IT alignment?

2. Review of Literature

A company acts through natural persons, mainly the Board of Directors which is the governing and controlling body of a company. The key principle is that the Board of Directors should provide effective corporate and entrepreneurial leadership (ZimCode, 2014). The Board may delegate certain of its roles, functions and duties to the chief executive officer on the basis of established benchmarks and performance indicators. Corporate conflicts are inherent in business.The nature and extent of compliance or enforcement or corporate governance principles depend on whether they are required by law or by best practice. According to the survey conducted by the author in April 2004 among 20 Zimbabwean banks, the ratings of the key corporate governance characteristics for banks are shown on Figure 1 below. Transparency, accountability and independence were rated very highly in comparison to equity and fairness followed by risk management. In Zimbabwe, the operations of all banking activities are governed by:

➢ the Banking Act (Chapter 24:20) and its regulations;

➢ the Collective Investments Act (Chapter 24:19) and its regulations;

➢ the Securities Act (Chapter 24:18) and its regulations;

➢ the Exchange Control Act (Chapter 22:05) and its regulations; as well as

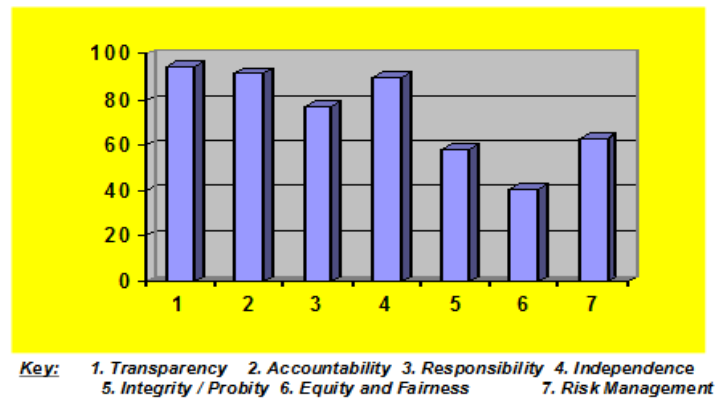➢ the Reserve Bank Act (Chapter 22:15) and its regulations.

Figure 1. The characteristics of good corporate governance in banks

The need for transparency of enterprise risks and the protection of shareholder value have been the main catalysts to governance developments. In the same vein, IT governance has been precipitated by the critical dependency on IT and rapid diffusion and adoption of technological advances. The board and executive management are responsible for IT governance in an organisation, as it is an integral component of the corporate governance structure (Carr, 2004). IT governance comprises the leadership and organisational structures and processes for the sustainability and success of the IT strategies of an organisation. Successful enterprises understand the risks and exploit the benefits of IT with a view to:

- Ensuring proper business-IT strategy alignment

- Cascading the IT strategic direction and objectives down into the enterprise

- Setting up appropriate organisational structures in support of the implementation of the business strategy

- Establish effective communication channels and healthy relationships between the business and IT, and with other external stakeholders

- Adopt and implement an IT control framework

- Measure the institutional performance of IT

IT governance involves interaction between different levels of the hierarchical structure from team leaders up to the board of directors and the associated reporting structure. The focus areas for IT governance are illustrated on Figure 2 below. The investment in IT is expected to be in harmony with the business strategic objectives in order to deliver business value, and the gap between the two constitutes an alignment problem.

Focus Areas of IT Governance
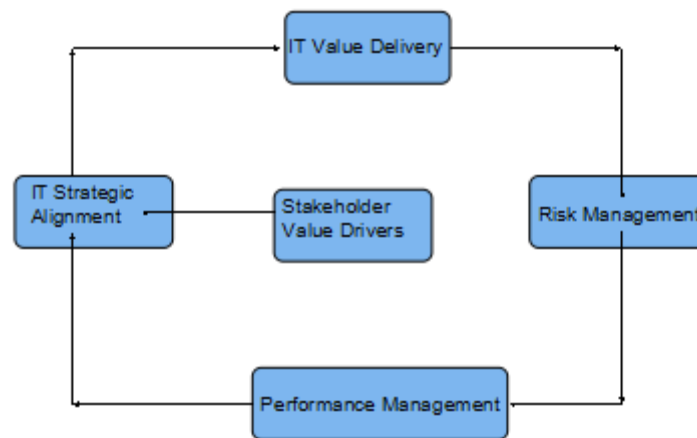
Source: IT Governance Institute; Board Briefing, Second Edition

Figure 2. Focus areas for IT governance

The top issues for IT management have moved from the technology to the management-related arenas. According to (McFarlan, 1981), these issues clearly map onto the IT governance areas:

➢ Strategic alignment between the business and IT solutions

➢ Value delivery by IT

➢ Risk management of IT related resources

➢ Resource management of the enterprise knowledge and IT infrastructure.

➢ Performance measurement of IT services.

The affordance theory does not limit the world to just object shapes and spatial relationships but also considers object possibilities for action, where perception drives action (Gibson, 1979, p. 127). These useful concepts describe the interaction between attributes of online technologies and other elements of a learning context. In this regard, affordances provide a complete learning context where online technologies are not treated in isolation from the context in which they are used (Kabanda, 2014).

Educational technology is about the effective use of technological tools in learning where e-learning is the electronic use of educational technology predominantly through ICT. E-learning exists in the form of supported learning, blended learning or pure online learning. The fastest growing aspect of e-learning is mobile learning (m-learning) which uses ubiquitous digital mobile devices. The teaching and learning business of a higher education institution can be regarded just like any business enterprise with the respect to the impact of ICT. The impact of ICT on a business environment, as illustrated in Figure 3 below, include performance, growth, expansion and new products.
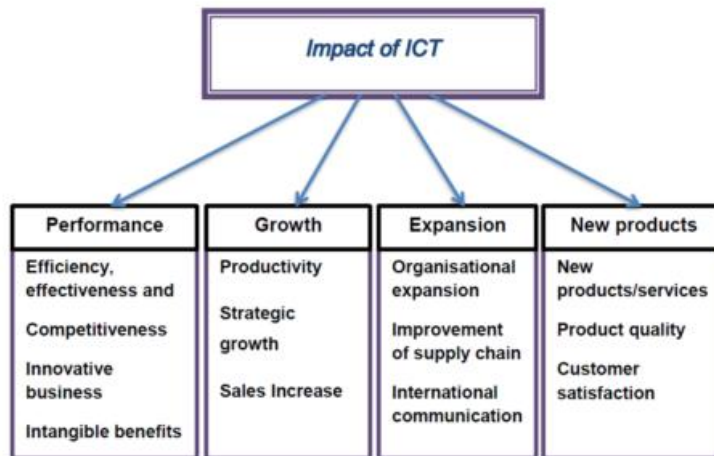
Figure 3. Impact of ICT adoption on business sector

Mobile learning (m-learning) uses ubiquitous digital mobile devices. The recommended m-learning architecture for higher education institutions that encompasses adaptive human interfaces, context-awareness tools, collaborative learning environment, and integration of mobile media delivery and learning content management systems is the Framework for the Rational Analysis of Mobile Education (FRAME) (Kabanda, 2014). The FRAME model is a convergence of mobile device aspects, learner aspects, and social interaction which addresses various pedagogical challenges associated with information overload, navigation during the learning process and the design of teaching and learning strategies for mobile education (Koole, 2009). The FRAME model is represented by a Venn diagram in which three aspects intersect, as shown on Figure 4, where the m-learning experiences arise from information consumed and created by learners collectively and individually.
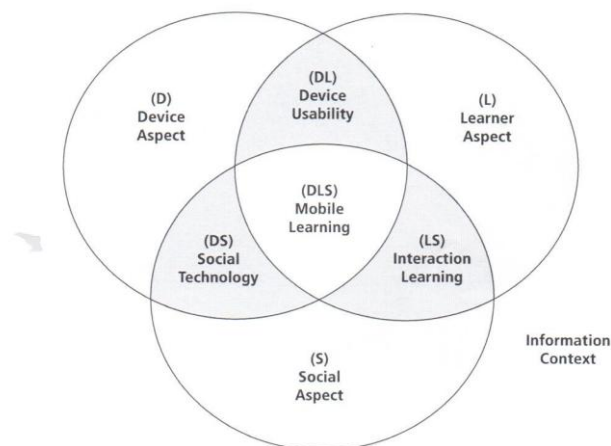

Figure 4. The FRAME model (Koole, 2009)

The ideal m-learning situation is the primary intersection of the device (D), learner (L), and social (S) aspects. The *affordances* of mobile technology is the intersection between the attributes of the device usability (DL) and social technology (DS). The interaction learning (LS) section places heavy emphasis on social constructivism derived from instructional and learning theories. Corporate governance issues affect technology affordances, e-learning and m-learning initiatives. Zimbabwean institutions of higher learning need to adequately prepare for a strategic response to the new technological innovations. Massive open online courses (MOOCs) have catapult the role of technological innovations in higher education by offering innovative models of pedagogy in a manner that could be both attractive and threatening (Marshall et al., 2013).

3. Research Methodology

The research philosophy, methodology and research design were guided by the research onion shown on Figure 5 below. The main research methodology used is qualitative where focus group discussions and semi-structured interviews were used as the main research design. Views on corporate governance and ICT policy-related matters are largely qualitative. According to Wegner, (1993), research design entails the tactics and strategies the researcher selects in carrying out a piece of research. It deals primarily with the aims, purposes, intentions and plans within the practical constrains of location, time, money and availability of research staff.
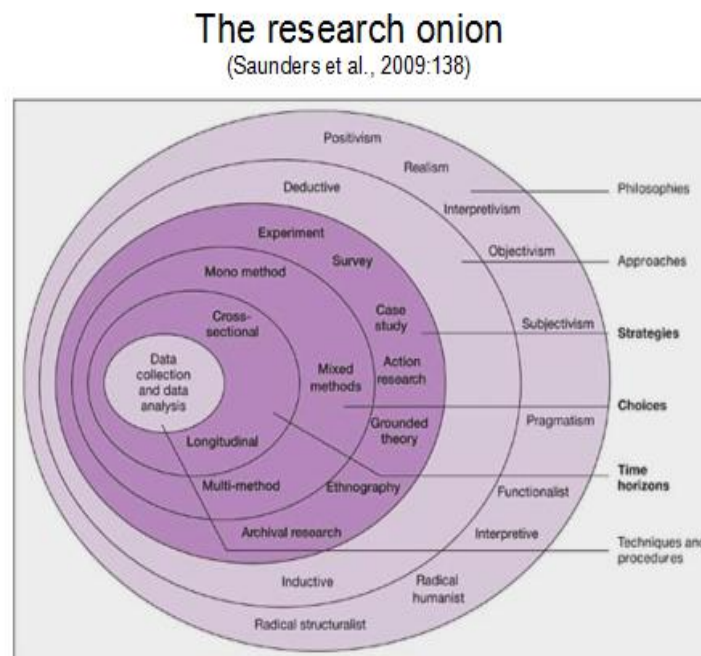

Figure 5. Research onion

A total of 46 workshop participants consisting of Vice Chancellors and Chairpersons of University Councils and/or their representatives were organised into 7 Focus Groups at an

Association of African Universities (AAU) workshop held in Victoria Falls in April 2015 and hosted by Great Zimbabwe University (GZU). The author facilitated and presented on the focus group discussions.

A qualitative approach was also taken where focus group discussions were held among the 30 workshop participants of the African Council for Distance Education Technical Committee on Collaboration (ACDE-TCC) member institutions, where the author is the leader for research and capacity building, held in Harare, Zimbabwe, on 11th November, 2014 to share experiences on OERs and MOOCs. The focus group discussions were used to evaluate the corporate governance issues that affect technological progress, technology affordances and IT governance in an increasingly networked environment and the impact on the strategic response to the new technological innovations in teaching and learning.

The research project covered 23 selected African countries where the higher education institutions are members of the African Council for Distance Education (ACDE) and involved 70 ACDE member institutions.

Semi-structured interviews were conducted on selected levels of university management on technology affordances, IT governance and business-IT governance.

In this study, the researcher used stratified sampling technique. The target population was stratified according to levels of management in higher education institutions, starting from the level of University council going down to IT Managers and key users.

4. Results and Analysis

The key findings to the research questions are presented below according to the following areas:

1) The major corporate governance issues facing management of higher education institutions in Zimbabwe

2) The corporate governance issues between the university Vice Chancellor (VC) and university Council Chairperson

3) How the Vice Chancellors view their role, major positive attributes and challenges in their interaction with the University Council

4) How the Council Chairpersons view their role, major positive attributes and challenges relevant to that of the Vice Chancellor and his/her management team

5) The major benefits, obstacles and factors driving good corporate governance

6) How ICT is treated as a strategic issue in corporate governance

7) How corporate governance affects technological progress, technology affordances and usage patterns of OERs, MOOCs, e-learning and m-learning in Zimbabwe

8) The best practices in technology affordances, IT governance and Business-IT alignment.

4.1 Corporate Governance Issues between University Council and Vice Chancellor

The role of the Vice Chancellor in the context of the University Council is presented on Table 1 below.

Table 1. Role of the Vice Chancellor

Question	Response
(a) How do Vice Chancellors view their role in the context of the University Council?	➤ The Vice Chancellor (VC) is the CEO, Chief Academic and Principal Administrator of the university. He/she is the strategist for the institution and is responsible for the management of the structures of the university. The VC is a strategic leader who manages operations daily – delegating power, accountability, empowerment of people to develop, etc. ➤ As an employee of Council trusted by Council, he/she directs the operations of the university and is the prime example of servant leadership. ➤ Although the role and responsibilities of VCs are different, as policy and practice are different, the VC should work with the enabling law/Act and Strategic Plan of the University, and clearly articulate the Vision of the university to all key stakeholders. Where the Vision is not shared by Council, the VC must create a forum for explaining the Vision statement to Chairman of Council and the whole Council to get buyin and support of the Vision. Personal and institutional Vision must be clearly articulated. ➤ The function fulfills the servant role to the general public, Council and Government and other stakeholders, and management of the strategic partnerships. This entails being a figurehead who works with various Committees and is monitored by the University Council. ➤ One on one discussions should be held with Council Chairman on major decisions and in a manner that avoids any conflict between VC and Chairman, which task requires boldness and outstanding leadership qualities.
(b) What do Vice Chancellors consider as their major positive attributes of their interaction with Council?	➤ VC sees his role of positively managing the institution in order to achieve the mandate of the university with the guidance of Council ➤ Positive relationship with all key stakeholders of the university is critical, and a very supportive University Council is required. ➤ A healthy relationship with the University Council is required and there must be trust and confidence, especially with the Chairman of Council. ➤ There is need for a consultative partnership including relating well with the accreditation and regulatory authorities. ➤ Regulatory attributes, functional attributes and reference point all require attention. ➤ Adequate consultation, resourcefulness and consistencies are critical success factors. ➤ The static nature of the University Act/Charter in a fast changing world is a problem to the required attributes of a VC. ➤ The VC and every Council member are expected to assist in getting funding for the university, and so fund raising skills are required.

(c) What do Vice Chancellors consider as the major challenges in their interaction with Council?	➢ The University Council interviews the Vice Chancellor and recommends the appointment to the Chancellor. However, the Vice Chancellor must read the law of the University. The first challenge is on the ability to drive, grow and depict the positive image of the university. ➢ A second challenge is when the roles of Council versus Vice Chancellor are not clear. A VC must not fight against the University Council. However, there are often challenges of personality. ➢ How much does a VC tell the University Chairman without disclosing his/her incompetence? A balancing act with Council members versus management issues is not easy. The VC must therefore be a politician who must also play politics. ➢ There is a challenge on how to balance local interest versus national interests. ➢ The way Council runs the show is a major challenge. Sometimes the Council micro-manages the show or is overly intrusive. ➢ Council may not appreciate how the university structures operate. ➢ There is a problem when Council gets involved in politics, as defined by the Act. People may come with their entrenched interest to Council business. ➢ Its necessary to take the Chairman of Council through education. The VC should always brief the Chairman of Council before the Full Council meeting to avoid surprises. It is equally important to let Council feel very important.

The role of The Role of Chairperson of Council and Council is shown on Table 2 below.

Table 2. The role of Chairperson of Council and Council

Question	Response
(a)How do Council Chairpersons view their role relevant to that of the VC and his/her management team?	➢ Successful governance of the university depends on the statutes that created the university – the Act/charter. The University must ensure that its Council knows their source of law. Deep knowledge of the Act and legal documents of the university is required. ➢ The Council Chairman is the VC's immediate line manager. There must be an excellent cooperation between the VC and Council. Council gives guidance to the management of the university and must refrain from micro managing the university. ➢ Council together with Senate must look on academic leadership. Council provides direction through policies as provided by the law. ➢ Council has a fiduciary role over the university, and so must appoint various Committees to deal with specific issues of Council where submissions are then tabled for consideration and ratification.
(b)What do they consider as major positive attributes of their interaction with the VC and his/her management team?	➢ The Chairperson must be a change agent and remain relevant to the mandate and sustainable success ➢ Collaboration, partnership and working together ➢ Trust and understanding of each other

	➢ Council must have a cordial relationship with the VC and avoids a poisoned working relationship
	➢ Appropriate mix of skills is required
	➢ There is more ground for research on issues affecting the university and the relevant attributes required.
(c)What do they consider as major challenges in their interaction with the VC and his/her management team?	➢ Arrogance of VC and Council is a major challenge, with possibilities of over stepping the mark or sometimes descending to stop abuse of power.
	➢ Short term of office for Council members is a challenge.
	➢ Innovation and resource mobilisation for the university is now a requirement.
	➢ Council represents the owner of the University – Government, and so conflict may arise due to personal interests.
	➢ Management of the law where the common law duties depict personal interest being found in conflict of interest.
	➢ There is a moral duty of patriotism.
	➢ Responsibility to lead has consequences.
	➢ Institutional core values should be observed.
	➢ A VC is a politician and must be politically correct.

Summary on the roles of Chairperson of Council versus Vice Chancellor:

➢ Clarity, roles, rights and obligations stipulated by law

➢ Robust appointments and skills mix of Council, creating synergistic approaches

➢ Creation of Joint Committees on Council that are business driven

➢ Teaching on ethical leadership

➢ Council members serving on University Committees

➢ Alignment of the Institutional Vision and VC's vision, and envisioning of Council members

➢ Appointment of VC and Councils vary from country to country

➢ The VC must develop and recommend to the Council the strategy and vision for the university

➢ The VC is required to develop and recommend for approval by the Council the annual institutional performance targets and budgets

➢ VC must achieve the university's systemic goals and objectives

➢ Ultimately the Council is responsible and accountable for ensuring that the university is sustainable and that it fulfills its mandate.

The 7 heteregenous group discussion points were centred on answering this question: What do you consider as the fundamental root causes of governance challenges experienced

between the Governing body and the University's executive management team? The response to question is shown on Table 3 below.

Table 3. The fundamental root causes of governance challenges experienced between the Governing body and the University's executive management team

Root cause	Recommendation
1. Role ambiguity on the roles, functions and responsibilities and duties	➤ There is need for orientation and continuous education on roles, functions, and responsibilities. ➤ Make all the sources of information available to all laws and statutes. ➤ Conduct training for the tripod on the roles, responsibilities, etc.
2. Corruption – disregard of policies and procedures, misuse of public office for personal gain, greediness and cutting corners, setting aside policies	➤ Policies and procedures must be clear and adhered to. Ethical leadership and management of crisis is required. ➤ Tendency to abuse office is there, for a university with too many capital projects and sectional interests in procurement, promotions, appointments. Govt could give a political instruction on allowing students to continue with their studies in violation of university policy, and this may be abused.
3. Diverse interests - Representation of different constituencies with diverse sectional interests	➤ As a leader, one must be positive about diversity and look for potential divergence to seek convergence. ➤ Chairman of Council must unify the whole Council and work on team building for the whole team. ➤ There is need for a blend of skills in the Council. ➤ Ethical behaviour is needed. ➤ There must be strict adherence to laws, policies and statutes.
4. Interference by the owners – Government and Church, and Donors. This may be political interference where the Line Minister gives impossible instructions, or students body and lecturers can play politics with a third outside agent or political party.	➤ Setup policies to manage elections and political issues or conduct. ➤ Conflict resolution techniques are required in order to bring about peace and harmony. Effective communication is key in breaking away antagonism. ➤ Always emphasise on student success and include them in decision making. Make students aware of the key projects.
5. Lack of resources	➤ We need a paradigm shift on resource mobilization where the university is run as a business. ➤ One must appreciate that appetite and demand for education is increasing and Government support is dwindling and yet Govt is controlling the fees ordinance. There must be freedom to charge competitive fees. ➤ Transparency in financial management is required. ➤ Mushrooming of parallel programmes and block release programmes, as symptoms, must be managed so as not to compromise on the quality.

The results of a survey conducted on 46 workshop participants in April 2015 are shown below in Figures 6-9.

The factors driving the focus on corporate governance are shown on Figure 6, where shareholders (51%), customer requirements (48%) and insurance requirements ($40%) dominate the area. However, most of these factors are externally driven. The main benefits of corporate governance implementation are shown on Figure 7 below. The main benefits of corporate governance implementation are mainly increased accountability (70%), greater standardisation (50%) and improved interaction with the Board (43%). The main obstacles to further corporate governance are shown on Figure 8 and these include lack of time/resources, increased administrative workload, internal cultural resistance, SLAS are adequate, reducing flexibility of the organisation, and inability to create meaningful measurements.
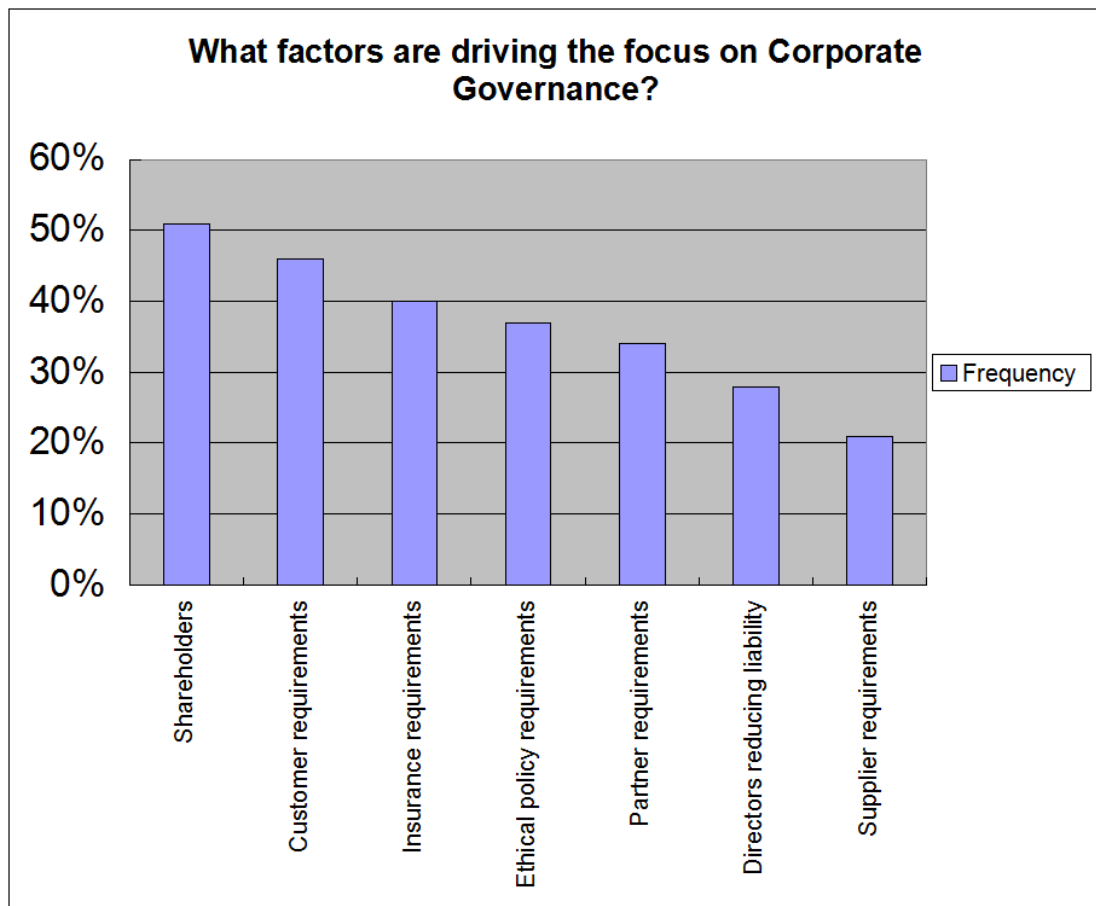

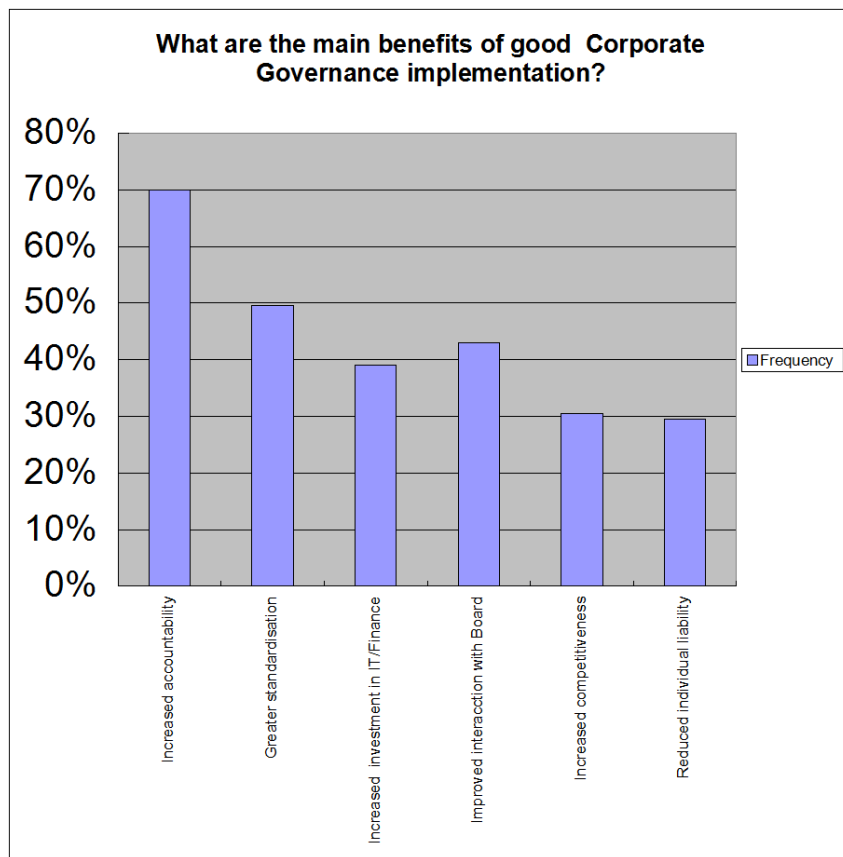Figure 6. Factors driving the focus on corporate governance

What are the main benefits of good Corporate Governance implementation?

Figure 7. The main benefits of corporate governance implementation

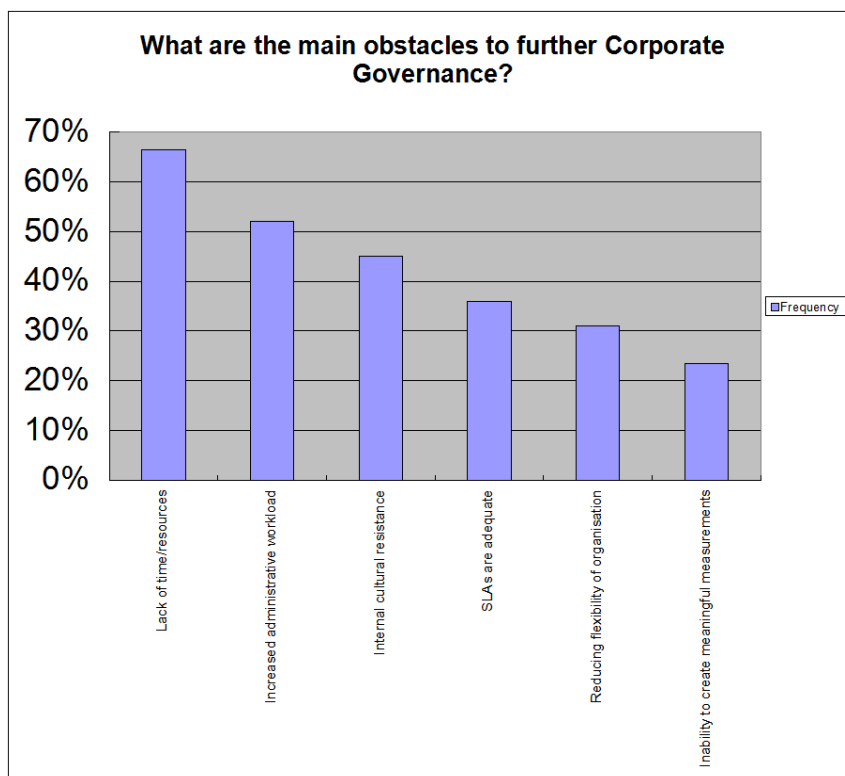**What are the main obstacles to further Corporate Governance?**

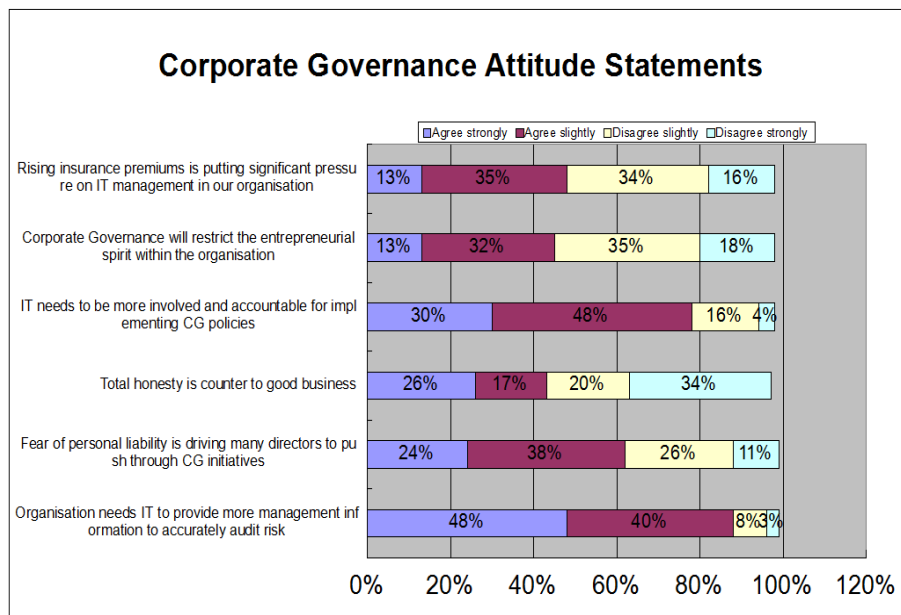Figure 8. The main obstacles to further CG

Figure 9. Corporate governance attitude statements

The corporate governance attitude statements are shown on Figure 9, where it shows that:

➢ 35% agree slightly whilst 34% disagree slightly to the rising insurance premiums as the main driver of IT management in an organisation

➢ 32% agree slightly whilst 35% disagree slightly with the restrictions of the entrepreneurial spirit imposed by corporate governance within the organisation

➢ 48% agree slightly to the involvement and increasing accountability of IT when implementing corporate governance policies

➢ Although 26% agree strongly, 34% disagree strongly with the statement that total honesty is counter to good business practice

➢ 24% strongly agree and 38% agree slightly that many directors are pushing through corporate governance initiatives for fear of personal liability

➢ 48% of the respondents strongly agree and 40% agree slightly that provision of management information to accurately audit risk is the main justification for the IT function.

4.2 Business Strategy - IT Alignment

All the higher education institutions involved indicated the common problem of poor alignment between the business strategy and IT, often characterised by the following:

➢ Inadequate allocation of financial and human resources for IT projects,

➢ User dissatisfaction,

➢ Difficulties in systems maintenance and systems integration,

> ➢ High friction and firing of IT managers,

> ➢ High turnover of IT professionals,

> ➢ Poor communication,

> ➢ Abandoning of many strategic IT projects,

> ➢ Weak championing of IT programmes,

> ➢ Lack of a clear IT strategic plan, and

> ➢ Enterprise losing the competitive advantage.

The Strategic Alignment problem requires validating and checking the fit of the business (business scope, distinctive competences and business governance) against ICT initiatives /IT strategy (technology scope, systemic competences and IT governance). The organisational infrastructure (administrative structure, processes and skills) must be adequately supported by the IT infrastructure (IT architecture, processes and skills). The recommended IT-Business alignment framework is shown on Figure 10.
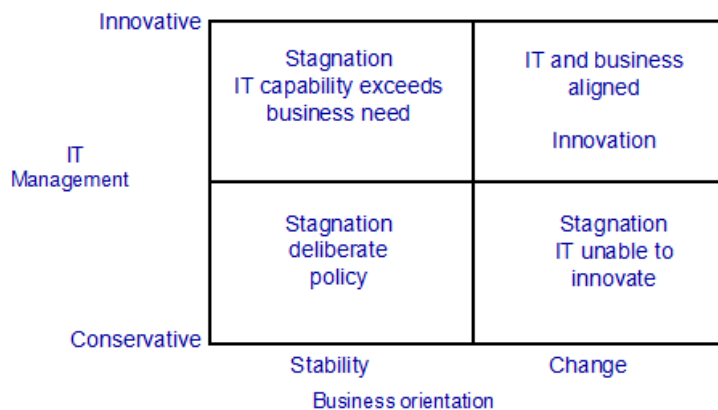

Figure 10. IT-business alignment governance framework

4.3 IT Governance

IT governance processes are purposed to ensure the effective utilisation and management of IT for the purposes of achieving and supporting the organisational goals. The enabling environment is provided by good corporate and financial governance and a healthy investment climate. Generally organisations that have superior IT governance achieve higher profits.

Control Objectives for Information and Related Technology (COBIT) is an international

standard framework for IT governance and management. COBIT balances effective business risk management with the IT technical control issues, whilst maximising on value creation and promoting business-IT alignment. This framework provides an enabling environment for policy development and best practices in IT.

In conclusion, best practices for corporate governance and IT governance are summarised by Figure 11, where COBIT and Val IT are the recommended IT Governance frameworks. Val IT is based on COBIT, and is a comprehensive collection of best practices in IT Governance to promote investment and innovation. Val IT build up on COBIT to set best practices for the process outcomes. Through Val IT, one can:

➢ Identify the best investment opportunity with the highest return,

➢ Control investment projects properly aligned to the business strategy,

➢ Develop accountability indicators and business ownership parameters, and

➢ Evaluate investment proposals.

King III interfaces good IT governance with the requirements of the law in support of corporate governance. King III requirements provide for prudent IT governance, promotes the use of corporate governance codes and guidelines, and enables prosecution of unethical corporate behaviour.
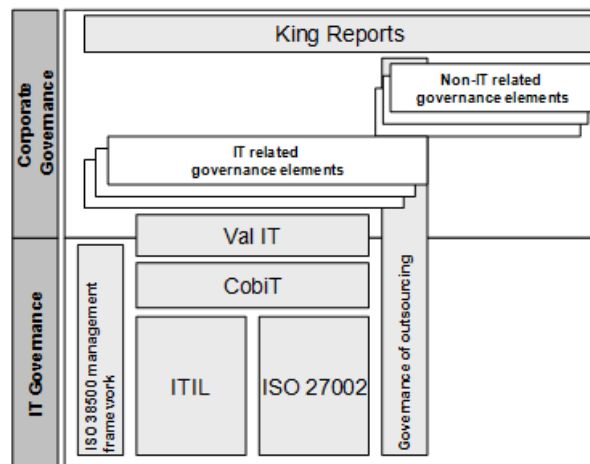

Figure 11. Best practices for CG and IT governance

Corporate governance and IT governance facilitate a conductive environment for technological progress and responsiveness to technological innovations such as e-learning, m-learning, MOOCs and OERs. It was established that best practices is one of the factors that

promotes the growth of e-learning in higher education institutions.

Despite the challenges of corporate governance and IT governance in higher education institutions in Zimbabwe, the following ICT innovations are being implemented widely at various levels of success, with institutions outside Zimbabwe being on average way ahead:

➢ Open and distance learning (ODL) pedagogy and technology affordances

➢ Development of ICT infrastructure and teaching/learning facilities

➢ Use of Facebook

➢ Use of blogs

➢ M-learning

➢ Integration of ICT in teaching and learning

➢ Technology mediated learning

➢ Multimedia technology mapped against students learning styles

5. Conclusion

The emergence and growth of unethical leadership in the corporate world in Zimbabwe militate against competitiveness of the nation. Governance issues of higher education institutions in Zimbabwe have affected their strategic response to new technological innovations and programmes in an increasingly networked environment. The research methodology used was qualitative where focus group discussions were held with various groups involved in the management of higher education institutions. Semi-structured interviews were conducted on selected levels of university management on technology affordances, IT governance and business-IT governance. Stratified sampling technique was used as the target population was stratified according to levels of management in higher education institutions, starting from the level of University Council going down to IT Managers and key users. The results show that there are corporate governance problems between the Vice Chancellor and Chairperson of the University Council. The critical success factors for corporate governance were determined.

However, all the higher education institutions involved in the study indicated the common problem of poor alignment between the business strategy and IT. Corporate governance and IT governance facilitate a conductive environment for technological progress and responsiveness to technological innovations such as e-learning, m-learning, MOOCs and OERs.

A corporate governance director development programme is recommended with the following elements:

1) Clarity of roles, rights, obligations and functions

2) Alignment to the visionary aspects

3) Sustainability of the institutions e.g. Innovation resource mobilisation, etc.

4) Benchmarking, branding and international outlook for both staff and students

5) Student enrolment strategies and introduction of STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) programmes

6) Infrastructure development and learning facilities

7) IT Governance

8) Research and development

9) Legacy and service delivery.

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