

Performance Management In Zimbabwe : Review Of Current Issues

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Abstract

Performance management is a modern strategic management approach designed to achieve desired results with available resources. Being cognisant of the fact that Governments will continue to experience fiscal space challenges, the Government of Zimbabwe decided to promote optimum utilisation of the scarce revenue streams that flow into the national fiscus. This noble goal is to be achieved through performance management, a key component of Results Based Management system, which emphasise achievement of tangible and high quality results from limited resources. However, to vested interests, performance management is a subversive and revolutionary force. This paper critically traces and examines the evolution of performance management in Zimbabwe.

Keywords: performance management, results based management, Zimbabwe, accountability, corruption

1.0 General Introduction

Most public organisations are under the increasing demand to achieve greater results with fewer resources (Kettle 2002). The common popular complaints about government-that it does not focus on results and it wastes money-are indicative of public demands for quality services at affordable prices-in short, better performance (Moynihan and Pandey 2005:425).

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President Obama's inaugural address emphasised the need for the inculcation of a new 'ethics of responsibility' in corporate governance, echoing earlier calls by the then British Prime Minister, Gordon Brown (2008), for moral restraint within financial sector. Performance is a predominant language of the public sector since the end of the 20th and commencement of the 21st centuries. This results-oriented strategic management has changed the way government used to do business requiring public administrators to value results and identify the measures necessary to achieve results. Both public administrators and political scientists are well into the third decade of intensive public sector performance management. Yet it seems, so far as the use of performance information for public accountability purposes is concerned, governments are just beginning.

There is little systematic evidence about what politicians and the public do with the data. The Government of Zimbabwe issued the Results Based Management (RBM) policy guidance circular in May 2005 (OPC-General Letter No. 6 of 2005) advising stakeholders that RBM had been adopted. This marked the fervent commitment to improve performance in service delivery in Zimbabwe. As a contribution to the debate over the role of performance management in the public sector, this paper assesses the state of public sector management in Zimbabwe by focusing on what is happening in the state and its bureaucracy in relation to governance issues. Some of the issues the paper examines include:

- Tracing the evolution of the Zimbabwe performance management system from 1980 and in the process highlight some of the key attributes of the performance management system.
- Explore the effectiveness of strategies implemented to promote accountability and minimise corruption.
- Coming up with possible relevant alternative public sector management options for the future .

2.1 Conceptual Perspectives

RBM is a shift from focusing on inputs and activities (the resources and procedure) to focusing on outputs, outcomes, impact and the need for sustainable benefits (the results of what one does).

Results are the changes occurring as an effect of a development intervention and imply that a change of behaviour by individuals, groups of people, organisations, government bodies or society has taken place. RBM has four major pillars namely, performance budgeting, personnel performance, monitoring and evaluation and management information system including e-government. RBM is a strategy for achieving outcomes and impact. RBM deals with the culture of an organisation, its values, operational systems and decision making, staff and their skill and capacity and all its procedures, partners should be focussed on achieving outcomes and impact rather than activities and inputs. It aims at improving management effectiveness and accountability in achieving results. Monitoring is very critical. Performance management has become a “political and community expectation, not just a new management practice” (Kiedrowski and Collins 2010).

According to New Public Management (NPM) theory and many official pronouncements, performance management enhances public accountability. Information about outputs and outcomes rather than inputs and internal organisational processes sharpen the sense of responsibility of those service providers who are being measured and empower those who hold them to account.

In the early years of World War II, Friedrich and Finer engaged in a seminal dispute on how to organise responsibilities in modern democratic government (Friedrick 1940, Finer 1941). Their dispute was about the defining movements in the developments of the concepts of administrative responsibility and political accountability (Romzek 1996:96, Dubnick 2005:1). Fine focussed on mechanisms that ensure responsibility and accountability whereas Friedrich viewed accountability as a virtue as was clearly observed by Finer: The insistence on distinguishing responsibility as an arrangement of correction and punishment even up to dismissal of both politicians and other public officials is important. Equally critical is Fredrick’s view of the reliance on responsibility as a organisational virtue that should be upheld (Finer 1941:335). Both views of accountability as a personal or organisational virtue or an arrangement or mechanism are very useful for the study of and debate about performance management. Clearly, the concept of accountability is fundamental to the design of the Zimbabwean political system. One of the major assumptions of a democratic society is that the institutions and processes of government are designed to be answerable to the citizenry for their performance.

3.1 Global experiences

In the United Kingdom (UK), a Conservative Minister praised the performance targets set for executive agencies because they have “enhanced the exercise of accountability through clearer public definition of roles” (Chancellor of the Ducky of Lancaster 1997: V). New Labour’s Public Service Agreements (PSAs), festooned with performance targets, were described by a former UK Chancellor as a “contract with the people” (Prime Minister and Minister for the Cabinet office 1999:18). In the USA, the 1993 Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA) declared that new performance-oriented regime would:

Improve the confidence of the American people in the capability of the federal government by systematically holding federal agencies accountable for achieving programme results... improve federal programme effectiveness and public accountability by promoting a new focus on results, service quality and customer satisfaction (U.S. Congress, Committee on Governmental Affairs, Section 2).

In sum, performance management can help to improve accountability of:

- Public officials to the citizens they serve;
- Public service providers to their service clients, users or customers;
- Public service executives to their elected bodies or appointed governing boards of their organisations;
- Lower-level managers and staff to higher-level managers;
- Executives of public service organisations;
- Public service contractors and grantees to the government organisations that fund and regulate their services; and
- Governments and public authorities to their taxpayers, ratepayers, bondholders, bond rating agencies and other users of public reports (Epstein 1992:162).

This clearly shows that by producing results, that is, achieving specific, pre-established performance goals-public agencies may “begin slowly to convince the citizens that government performance is not an oxymoron” (Behn 2001:119).

Factors affecting the utilisation of performance information include:

- Information arrives at the time it is needed for consequential decisions, which is usually somewhere near the beginning of the active decision making process (Pollitt 2006a);
- Information is presented in a concise, simple, nontechnical way and in language that the decision maker can understand and deal with (Hibbard et al 1997, Pollitt 2006a);
- Information comes from someone trusted and/or known to the citizen/politician (Hibbard et al. 1997 and Pollitt 2006a); and
- All aspects of the process take place within the current norms, probably localised and specific, of the jurisdiction in question.

The most criticism of the performance measurement on public accountability is Tsouka's notion of the "tyranny of light" (Tsouka 1997). He argues that attempts to create measurement systems which will reassure the public that organisations and services are performing well eventually become self-defeating. This is because the process of measurement inevitably becomes a domain of experts and a deep asymmetry of knowledge development between these "insiders" and the citizens and politicians "outsiders". Ultimately, the strenuous efforts of the experts to cast light on the strengths and weaknesses of public policies have the paradoxical effect of increasing citizen distrust (Tsoukas 1997:834). This effect is amplified by the mass media with their partiality for stories of calamity, corruption and failure : mass media that are characterised by a combination of political-economic antagonism towards public services and journalistic cynicism about politics form a difficult setting for the publication and celebration of success stories (Clarke 2005:226).

It is difficult to attract press attention for performance information (Pollitt 2006a). This is true for politicians in England (Johnson and Talbot 2007), the United States (Gormley and Balla 2004:18), and the Netherlands (Ter Bogt 2004). This lack of attention is even more true for citizens (Marshall et al. 2000, Mannion and Gaddard 2003). When the British government put 100 000 copies of its annual performance reports into supermarkets only 12 000 were purchased at 2.99 British pounds and under the terms of the contract many thousands had to be bought back by the government (BBC News 1999, 2000). Citizens' capacities to process new information are very often limited.

They quickly give up or resort to vast and arbitrary simplifications (Hibbard et al. 1997). Citizens' soundness of judgement decies dramatically when the information concerns a service or condition of which that particular citizen does not have direct or recent experience (Van Ryzin 2007).

3.2 Lessons from the United States of America

Radin (2009) describes the popularity of performance management as a movement in the United States:

Citizens as taxpayers want their tax contributions to be used effectively, elected officials who face diminishing budgets want some assurance that their budget allocations produce effective programmes and managers as well as professionals want to be able to show that their efforts yield desired results (Radin 2009:506).

The Federal Law, the Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA), enacted in 1993 implemented by both the Congress and the Executive Brach formed the base for performance management. It provided the basis for a process to be undertaken in the Federal Office of Management and Budget (OMB) during the Bush Administration and the Programme Assessment Rating Tool (PART) which attempted to link executive branch budget and programme recommendations to the performance of specific federal programmes.

Both GPRA and PART did not fit easily into the institutional structures, functions and political realities of the American system (Radin 2000:101). The performance management ideas were borrowed from the private sector, local government, the experience of parliamentary systems or nations with smaller and more homogeneous populations.

GPRA was passed in 1993 by congress and required all federal agencies to develop strategic plans, annual performance plans and performance reports. These stipulations were implemented within the constraints and realities of the annual budget process. All of these requirements were meant to elicit a focus on the outcomes that have been achieved in the use of federal resources and to justify requests for dollars in terms of both promised and actual outcomes.

It assumes that it is possible to directly link planning, management and budgeting processes through performance information. It assumed that it is possible to avoid partisan political conflicts and the differences in policy constructs among programmes.

PART focused on the Executive Branch Performance Effort. The Bush Management Agenda sought to interrogate the budget and performance assessments. PART had the following objectives:

- To measure and diagnose programme performance;
- To evaluate programmes in a systematic, consistent and transparent manner;
- To inform agency and OMB decisions with regard to management, legislative or regulatory improvements and budget decisions; and
- To focus programme improvements and measures progress compared with prior year ratings. PART reported information on 67 progresses as part of the presidential budget for fiscal year 2003. Each programme was rated along four dimensions:
 - Programme purpose and design (weight 20%);
 - Strategic planning (weight 10%);
 - Programme Management (weight 20%); and
 - Programme results (weight 50%)

The USA employs a vocabulary that highlights outcomes rather than inputs, processes or even outputs. It focuses on the benefits derived from the use of public sector funds and seeks to establish a framework that moves away from traditional incremental decision making in which budgets are created largely on the basis of past allocation patterns. This rhetoric has been used as a way to counter the public's disillusionment with government as well as the government bashing that has been employed by political figures at both ends of the political spectrum. However, there is tension between Ministry of Finance (MoF), Departments and Agencies. The theoretical relationship between the performance information and the budget process provides MoF with an opportunity to make tradeoffs across programmes and organisational units and to deal with management issues as an aggregate.

The shorthand discussion of numbers is not conducive to capturing the detailed nuances of programme operations and tends to accentuate questions of efficiency-using limited resources rather than issues related to programme effectiveness or equity concerns. The tension emanated from the following: what are the measures, who defines them and what information is used to document them? These tensions are induced by bureaucratic accountability, political accountability and legal accountability.

Bureaucratic accountability deals with the POSDCORB acronym issues: planning, organising, staffing, directing, coordinating, reporting and budgeting, that is, efficiency values. This approach looks up to those at the top of the hierarchy to define its measures. The process takes place inside of the executive branch. The information includes data that documents the speed of agency action and the number of individuals who receive a service. This might face resistance from bureaucrats. The political accountability is concerned with political processes, responsiveness to public concerns, values of representativeness, political responsiveness and accountability through elected officials (Rosenbloom 1983:221). The information measures are through budget processes and through enactment/authorisation of programmes and policies. Interest groups influence the crafting of programmes and policies. Effectiveness, efficiency and equity goals are conflicting values. These can be at odds with those measures defined only by bureaucratic perspectives. The legal accountability measures deal with independent basis for scrutinising performance, for example, auditors and legislative oversight committees, actions from courts.

4.1 Zimbabwean Case

This section traces the background of performance management initiatives since 1980. In the early 1980s, Zimbabwe instituted the Africanisation of the civil service to align it with socialist principles. The development trajectory was guided by Growth with Equity policy statement of 1981 which advocated for “popular democratic participation in the ownership and management of national resources” (Government of Zimbabwe, Growth with Equity 1981) and the Three Year National Development Plan (1982-1985) addressed an important governance issue in a section entitled “The People, the Motive Force for Change”. The government could not develop and implement its own policies due to imposed structures and shortages of specialist skills in sectors like education, health and engineering.

In 1986 the Government of Zimbabwe set up the Public Service Review Commission (popularly known as Kavran Report 1989) to assess the performance of the public service. The report disclosed that there was a lack of performance management culture, arrogance and poor attitudes towards work, high staff turnover, a bloated, centralised and secretive bureaucracy that was non-transparent. Above all, corruption was rampant. Public offices became market places, where officials sold goods such as meat, bread and services such as the issuing of licences, passports, placement for nurse or teacher training. The most important lesson from the Kavran Report was the need to redefine the role of government.

From 1991 to 2014, the GoZ embarked on administrative reforms under the rubrics of the Framework for Economic Reform (1990-1995), Economic Structural Adjustment Programme (ESAP) (1990-1995), the Zimbabwe Programme for Economic and Social Transformation (ZIMPREST) (launched in 1998), the Millennium Economic Recovery Programme (MERP) (2000), National Economic Revival Plan (NERP) (2003), Vision 2020, The Six Point Plan, Short Term Economic Recovery Programme (STERP 1 & 2) (2009), Medium Term Plan (MTP) (2011-2015), Vision 2014 and the Zimbabwe Agenda for Socio-Economic Transformation (ZIM ASSET) (2014-2018). ESAP sought a fundamental shift from a pervasive state intervention system in the economy to one largely driven by market forces. The targets were:

- Achieve annual GDP growth of 5% during 1991-95;
- Raise savings to 25% of GDP;
- Raise investment to 25% of GDP; and
- Achieve export growth of 9% per annum during 1991-95 (Zimbabwe Government, Framework for Economic Reform, 1991).

ESAP failed to achieve these targets. The overall growth was erratic, attaining an average annual growth rate of less than 1 percent.

ZIMPREST was belatedly launched in April 1998. It began by drawing lessons from the weaknesses and shortcomings of ESAP. One of such lessons was the lack of fiscal discipline which resulted in excessive borrowings which in turn fuelled inflation and exacerbated poverty.

In this regard, parastatal, public service and financial sector reforms were identified as unfinished business under ESAP. However, ZIMPREST contained some fundamental weaknesses which cast doubt on its chances of success. The programme covered the period 1996-2000 and yet it was only launched in April 1998. Clearly, the programme was two years behind schedule. It was inaugurated at a time when resources had already been allocated through the 3-year rolling budget system.

The Millennium Economic Recovery Programme (MERP) was an 18-month programme launched in 2000 in order to mobilise all stakeholders-government, business, labour and civil society to implement measures designed to restore macro-economic stability. Unfortunately, MERP was over-shadowed by the millennium budget as the two ran in sync. The implementation of MERP lacked both co-ordination and commitment at all institutional levels resulting in the missing of targets by very wide margins.

The Public Service Reform Programme (1996-2002).

The Customer Service Survey of 1996 divulged that there was no change since the Kavran Report. According to the Kavran study, the government and people of Zimbabwe were not happy by the way the public sector discharged its mandate. Public servants were said to be indifferent, arrogant, insulting and rude (Kavran Report 1989, Vol, 1.8). The perception clearly demonstrated the need for a paradigm shift by the public service regarding the manner in which they rendered services and manage public institutions. The performance appraisal system was introduced but failed due to dearth of linkage between individual performance and its contribution to organisation results. However, since the publication of Kavran findings, not much changed despite the intervention of the Civil Service Reform Programme. For instance, the baseline survey commissioned by the Public Service Commission in 1997 to investigate the state of service delivery in the Zimbabwe public sector made painful reading:

“The most common complaints were that government employees were too slow in serving clients and this resulted in long queues and over-crowding, they were arrogant, uncaring and insensitive, they practiced favouritism in attending to clients, were lazy, spent too much time doing their own private business, or were unnecessarily absent from their work stations (e.g. through lengthy lunch breaks or going to the bank)” (PSC1998: iii).

The Public Service Reform Programme of 2002 recommended the adoption of Results Based Management (RBM) system. The Government of Zimbabwe (GoZ) issued the RBM policy guidance circular in May 2005 (Office of the President-General Letter No.6 of 2005) advising stakeholders that RBM had been adopted. Before the adoption, the GoZ set up a Review Mission which undertook study tours for participants with responsibility in the various RBM components to Malaysia, Singapore and Hong Kong in September 2005 and in June 2006. These studies provided a platform for comprehending and exchanging views about the value of RBM implementation for addressing developmental strategies and economic and financial fundamentals (UNDP Results Based Management-Preparatory Assistance Programme January-December 2005). It was meant to address service delivery challenges in the wake of scarce resources and increasing poverty. The RBM was construed as a best international practice in the management of public affairs in the quest to satisfy good governance demands from citizens. Why RBM:

- “Heads of parastatals and local authorities will henceforth sign performance contracts and adopt results based management approach to engender accountability”(President Mugabe Officially opening the First Session of the Eighth Parliament in Harare, 2013
- Using RBM, government entities are required to submit reports and be subject to routine inspection.
- Increasing resource constraints;
- Public wants better quality and more responsive services;
- Politicians more people-sensitive and service-oriented;
- Financial controllers want effective resource allocation;
- Private sector seeks improved services and infrastructure for development and growth;
- Donors want efficient and effective use of limited aid funds; and
- Growing challenges of the globalised borderless world (Munyaradzi 2012).

Therefore, the Government of Zimbabwe could offer better services by focusing on results and not activities. The benefits of focusing on results include better implementation, better communication, stronger capacity development, more realistic project schedules and useful evaluation results (ibid).

The Government of Zimbabwe should be commended for the following notable achievements:

- RBM institutionalisation in the civil service, that is, the whole government-parastatals and local authorities;
- Performance contracts introduced for permanent secretaries in 2011 and roll out programme for 2013 to Ministers, State enterprises and local authorities;
- E-government flagship programmes; and
- 60% of Ministries now have Results Based Strategic Plans which inform annual budgeting.

The literature consulted and key-informant interviews cited the following as the major challenges that face RBM and performance management in particular:

- Political uncertainty contributed to unstable policy environment
- Corruption leading to poor quality service delivery, lethargy and poor work ethics
- Legal framework on RBM and public accountability is weak-poor monitoring and evaluation
- Change management inertia
- Resource constraints
- Lack of political leadership
- Poor implementation of Results Based Budgeting
- Weak buy-in on RBM and performance contracts by Heads of Ministries.

When the House of Assembly crafts a programme that gives third parties significant discretion in determining how to implement the effort, it expects those parties to be able to define their own measures. For example, the House of Assembly enacted the Constituency Development Fund giving Members of Parliament and people authority to define the needs in their communities in the interests of political accountability.

The oversight and monitoring functions are done by the Auditor-General (AG), Zimbabwe Anti-Corruption Commission (ZACC) and Judiciary. Conflicts arise between the executive branch and the players involved in ensuring legal accountability.

This is attested by the blockage of ZACC by armed police in 2013 from conducting searches at the National Indigenisation and Economic Empowerment Board (NIEEB) and Zimbabwe Mining Development Corporation (ZMDC) offices. This was despite that the High Court had granted a warrant of search. This instance highlighted that the doctrine of separation of powers which underpins public administration was scuttled. The oversight players should have the ability to document, question, criticise and sometimes penalise the executive branch's choices about performance measurement. All the chronicled initiatives to enhance performance management in Zimbabwe failed to yield positive results. Below are the cases that show problems in performance management.

4.1.1 Ineptitude of Parastatals Boards

Patronage politics has created an environment where condescending politicians manipulate the behaviour of all to enlarge their power tentacles. It took four years for the Government of Zimbabwe to discover that a prominent taxpayer-funded organisation like Zimbabwe Broadcasting Corporation (ZBC) pays "12 percent of its total revenue to one person in salaries and allowances" (Reason Wafawarova, 2013) and this raises accountability issues. The ZBC workers had gone for six months without salaries whilst the CEO pampered himself with US\$40 000 a month in salaries and allowances, home entertainment US\$3000, housing allowance US\$ 3 000, US\$2 500 for his personal security, unlimited local air travel, unlimited fuel allowance and wages for his domestic servants.

The ZBC Board comprising leading personalities presided over this incontestable insanity. There is little doubt the suspended ZBC CEO owes his luxurious four years of inconceivable profligacy more to perfidious obedience to power than to any imaginable measure of merit or logic. This scenario pervades state-owned organisations like Netone, National Railways of Zimbabwe (NRZ), Zimbabwe Mining Development Corporation (ZMDC) and the Grain Marketing Board (GMB). The Premier Service Medical Aid Society Chief Executive Officer earned US\$ 230 000 monthly salary and his Managing Director US\$190 000. Unsustainable employment costs were due to huge and obscene salaries, allowances and perks being paid to top management of local authorities, parastatals and grant-aided institutions contrary to the Corporate Governance Framework for State Enterprises and Parastatals over principles of affordability and sustainability.

The Zimbabwean government is now planning to set up a salary regulation mechanism for the captains of public-owned companies. Where the same government was when all this malfeasance was happening? This was scandalous conduct of leadership in industry and politics. Wholesome looting from the nation and blaming it all on Western sanctions imposed on Zimbabwe. This is very inexcusable and unpardonable.

Administrative leadership does not react to events by anticipating, guiding and assessing them as a rational calculator. It is a political sounding board that sorts out competing pressures and somehow succeeds in getting them to work together for the time being. It pushes in favour of innovation, inspiration, encouragement and experimentation. It is composed of change agents with vision, will and power, who understand common objectives, forecast the ramifications of change and recognise the values at stake. They possess the ability to break through artificial barriers and stubborn resistance.

4.1.2 Corporate Governance deficiency

This section analyses the memo authored by Secretary for Media, Information and Publicity addressed to the then Minister on 01 November 2013. The memo dated 1 November 2012 held the suspended Zimbabwe Broadcasting Corporation (ZBC) Chief Executive Officer (CEO) culpable for the ZBC's rot. In 2012, ZBC workers wrote a petition alleging poor corporate governance against the senior management to lodge at the Anti-Corruption Commission. Sensing danger, the ZBC CEO, wrote a "State of Affairs" report to the Secretary to seemingly pre-empt a defense to the workers' allegations. Intriguingly, in his memo, the Secretary says that the report was the first the ZBC CEO had written to him after three and half years of assuming duty.

The ZBC CEO's report was overly defensive and reduced the adversities on ZBC to: the larger national politics, adverse macroeconomic environment, the absence of government funding and the alleged financial debilitating interface with government, departments and parastatals (George Charamba's Memo 2012).

This study made the following observations from the report:

- Non-production of reports. The secretary admitted that he had not for a very long time been favoured with basic corporate reports on ZBC as required by law and best practices. "I have not been receiving audit reports on ZBC, minutes and resolutions of Board of Governors' meetings, procurement reports, status reports and some such matters of corporate concern" (Charamba's Memo 2012). More perplexing is how the ZBC CEO could go for over three years without submitting a single report to the parent ministry. The issue is why the ministry could not demand them?
- The previous leadership (both Minister and Secretary) lacked the political will to unfalteringly deal with the ZBC CEO as the new Minister did. They forgot that actions speak louder than words. Others wrote and talked. The new Minister acted, therein lies the great difference. In his closing remarks and recommendations contained in the 2012 Memo, the Secretary advises the Minister not to take disciplinary action against the CEO and suggest protecting them from further stress: "There are real, substantial shortcomings in the ZBC CEO. A positive attitude is to view these as genuine weaknesses requiring remedial intervention, not disciplinary action. In any event, it would not be good to dispatch a Ministry team at the same time that the Commission is at ZBC. It might just add to the confusion and stress".
- The Memo says the CEO and "his management have an image of persons who crave for a larger life, all at the expense of workers and sound management of ZBC affairs". The Secretary's remedy was for the CEO "to readjust his personality so that he rebuilds his image and regains staff trust". This did not happen with staff going for months without pay.

Corporate governance problems pervade the entire parastatals and local authorities sectors. According to a December 2013 Harare City Council salary schedule signed by Town House top three officials shows that " 18 Town House bosses gobble US\$500 000 monthly" (<http://www.newsday.co.zw/2014/01/28/18-town-house-bosses-gobble-500k-monthly/>). The Town Clerk earns US\$37 642 and seven other top managers earn US\$36 999 each per month. Surprisingly, with these obscene salaries, the local authority is failing to honour contractual obligations such as salaries when they fall due.

Harare City Council Mayor suspended the Town clerk for a period of three months for allegedly refusing to furnish the salary and benefits schedule of all Harare City Council senior employees to the Mayor. The Minister of Local Government, Public Works and National Housing at a Press Conference described the suspension of Town Clerk as a nullity. "The allegations border on personal vendettas, which should not scuttle council business in any way" declared the Minister. For as long as patronage and protection politics remain the modus operandi in Zimbabwe, economic exploitation and robbery will be the order of the day.

These scenarios are also visible in parastatals such as Zimbabwe Electricity Supply Authority (ZESA), National Social Security Authority (NSSA), Zimbabwe National Road Administration (ZINARA), Zimbabwe Passengers Company (ZPCO), Zimbabwe National Water Authority (ZINWA), District Development Fund (DDF), NETONE, Grain Marketing Board (GMB), Agricultural, Research and Development Authority (ARDA), National Railways of Zimbabwe (NRZ), Premier Services Medical Aid Society (PSMAS), Air Zimbabwe (AIRZIM). Premier Service Medical Aid Society (PSMAS) pocketed US\$6.4 million in 2013 alone although the public entity has a US\$38 million debt hanging over its head.

National airline Air Zimbabwe has alone been sucked into a scam in which its company secretary allegedly authorised fraudulent payments to Navistar Insurance Brokers, prejudicing the parastatals of approximately US\$5 million (Kuda Bwititi 2014, The Sunday Mail, 2-8 February 2014). The looting is systematic and therefore cannot be addressed by firing chief executives and boards. The ZBC CEO and three senior managers are embroiled in a four-year multi-million dollar double dipping housing scandal. The four, without following procedure, allegedly set up a housing scheme with mortgage guarantees from Commercial Bank of Zimbabwe (CBZ) Building Society supported by US\$1.3 million deposited by ZBC in an investment account.

All these undesirable economic ills surfaced after ZANU PF resoundingly won 31 July 2013 general harmonised elections. One of ZANU PF election manifesto deliverables was to eliminate corruption in public institutions. It states that "Of particular concern is the rampant corruption in local authorities which interface directly with the people on a daily basis in terms of the delivery of key public services. This is why zero tolerance of corruption has become a national priority".

What exactly caused these pervasive corruption and corporate malfeasances? These festering scenarios were a culmination of the mistakes that were made some ten years or so ago when the Government of Zimbabwe decided that parastatals should be independent and be run by boards instead of being run by the Ministries through the permanent secretaries. What this meant was that the parastatals were now independent to negotiate their salaries which were outside of Government's salary schedule and this opened the loopholes for such contemptible salaries to exist. According to a columnist, African Focus, Tafataona Mahoso, in his article titled "Corruption: Destruction of Values", argues that "dollarization is a policy in the absence of a national currency has been corrupted and has corrupted national elites against the public's interests".

He further observed that dollarization as a well-intended temporary policy measure has been corrupted and is corrupting the entire national elite. The truth of the matter is that the national leadership has totally lost the ubuntu/unhu as well as national ethos. The inflated executive salaries and other conditions of service recently unearthed at state organisations represent examples of leadership corruption which are hard to prosecute. The executives may have stolen public resources belonging to the people but they were authorised to do so by their immediate bosses. The Boards that approved obscene salaries should be prosecuted not the CEOs because the boards and the parent Ministry play oversight roles. These two structures slept on duty not the CEOs. The CEOs were just like the biblical Lazarus at the looting table. Political booting and patronage made sure that those in the boards remained quiet about the goings on in the parastatals. There was no political commitment to do an oversight duty on these parastatals by the line ministers, permanent secretaries and Parliament since the salaries and perks of executives were approved by the entire boards. Gross disregard for good corporate governance should be dealt with forthwith and ruthlessly. This is an opportunity for ZANU PF to walk the talk on the election promises.

4.1.3 Were these CEOs Qualified for the Jobs?

The Secretary for Information and Broadcasting Services told the Parliamentary committee that the ZBC CEO was not qualified to head the corporation. The question then is when did he discover this?

Is it not the job of the permanent secretary to ensure that all parastatals under the ministry's ambit appoint properly qualified leaders and to ensure that these appointees are properly vetted before they are appointed? And who appoints the ZBC board which makes these high level appointments? The study noted that the minister appoints the CEOs but on the advice of the permanent secretary. Why are senior civil service appointments important? The appointment of the top people to run parastatals or government departments sets the tone, inevitably, for how the organisation is to function. Appointing the best board chairperson or permanent secretary is just as crucial as finding the right CEO of a state-owned organisation. Appointment processes should be fair, open and transparent. From the evidence of the study interviewees, the study is not convinced that the current system offers all these. Any organisation stands and falls on its ability to get the right people into the right jobs at the right time. The Civil Service is no exception. How top senior civil servants are recruited and appointed is therefore one of the most important issues in determining the effectiveness of government.

4.1.4 Reasons why recommendations made by Commissions of Inquiry were not implemented

4.1.4.1 Resistance to change

There was absence of growth and innovation as well as lack of political consensus. The unenlightened power elite with a self-image of god-like infallibility, the closeness of the people through kinship ties which make individuals reluctant to offend one another. A level of administrative skills so low that even the reformers are unable to plan, formulate or execute their own proposals.

4.1.4.2 Insufficient general knowledge may exist on which proposals can be formulated

Information and knowledge is kept as a secret inaccessible to outsiders. Available information may be inaccurate, distorted or unusable for change purposes. The intelligentsia with access to the requisite knowledge may be isolated within their society, alienated from public life either because they are feared by an anti or non-intellectual elite or because they have withdrawn from public life in protest or disgust at political antics.

Some are not prepared to lower their social esteem, dignity or status by being associated with sordid politicking or to compromise their lofty ideals for political advantage. Others may be disillusioned by their own political ineptness. When resources are inadequate, everybody competes against everybody else to get what is rightfully theirs and the premium is on those who can find the short cuts. In the scramble for what is available, corruption, favouritism, influence and power obviously count. The reforms likely to bolster justice and fairness, equality, integration and non-discrimination, freedom and national rights, equity, public, constitutionalism are not likely to be supported by the haves, who are the only ones likely to lose should they be implemented.

There may be no interests in improving administrative performance. Administration may be lowly valued or low performance standards may be perfectly acceptable. The root cause may be economic or social: it can be argued that few people really care about maladministration as long as they personally are not affected. Administrative reform is not only a political process but is directly related to the nature of the polity. Resistance to administrative reform by political leaders and political arrangements is only a reflection of underlying political attitudes. There must be good political reasons why maladministration exists and why it is allowed to persist with no apparent remedies in sight.

4.1.4.3 Parliamentary oversight

Under the new Constitution, the mandate of Parliament is provided for in section 117 (2) which states that "The legislative authority confers on the legislature the power to:

- a) Amend this Constitution in accordance with section 328;
- b) Make laws for the peace, order and good governance of Zimbabwe; and
- c) Confer subordinate legislative powers upon another body or authority in accordance with section 134."

Parliament is also tasked with protecting the Constitution, promote democratic governance, and ensure that the provisions of the Constitution are upheld, that state and all institutions and agencies of government at every level act constitutionally and in the national interest and that all institutions and agencies of the state and government at every level are accountable to it (Section 119 of the new Constitution). The parliament exercises its oversight role through thematic committees, portfolio committees, the Public Accounts Committee, the Post Audit Committee and other processes. For example, the report of the Portfolio Committee on Mines and Energy illustrated the effectiveness of the Portfolio Committee in bringing out issues affecting diamond mining in Zimbabwe. The report is candid in its expose, naming individuals who are part of the problem, as well as specifying gaps in legislative and policy frameworks governing diamond mining specifically and mining in general.

The report thus responded directly to the questions that many citizens had about diamond mining, indigenisation and corruption in the diamond sector, non-cooperation of the mining companies in enquiry processes of parliamentary oversight procedures with support or indifference from the Ministry of Mines. Implied here is that parliament is the weakest link in the exercise of the principle of the separation of powers between the executive, the judiciary and the legislature. Also the 'question and answer sessions' provide a chance for MPs to pose questions to any minister representing a specific portfolio. These sessions expose Ministries that are not performing satisfactorily. However, ministers can side-step the issues raised in question or questions can be posed to the wrong people. For instance, the former Prime Minister did not answer the question addressed to him concerning government policy with regard to restitution of finances to depositors whose savings and investments were eroded when Interfin and Genesis Banks were placed under curatorship. The Prime Minister referred the question to the relevant portfolio, Ministry of Finance (The Hansard House of Assembly Volume 38/43).

4.1.4.4 Self-aggrandisement. There has been allegations that a few of the Zimbabwe MPs are more concerned with making financial gains rather than improving the welfare of the citizens whom they represent. Among these allegations were the following:

- MPs were given car loans amounting to US\$30 000 each, which loans were supposed to be paid, but were written off in December 2012 by the Finance Ministry in a bid to appease MPs (Moyo 2012);
- MPs demanded sitting allowances and were paid a flat deposit of US\$15 000 each, pegged at US\$75 per sitting, even though some never attended Parliament (Moyo 2012);
- MPs abused the Constituency Development Funds (CDFs) they were given, using them for personal gain rather than community benefits. CDFs are made available to facilitate frequent visitation by parliamentarians to their constituencies through engagement and dialogue over use of the funds (Newsday 16 February 2012);
- MPs are paid a decent monthly salary with no corresponding procedure for evaluating their performance in a value—for-money-scenario; and
- Since the inception of the Seventh Parliament, MPs have demanded:
 - All-terrain vehicles to carry out their duties—even though most of them never visited their constituencies frequently;
 - Increased sitting allowances;
 - Exemptions from paying utility bills;
 - Increased salaries;
 - Increased personal vehicle financing; and
 - Free residential stands (Crisis in Zimbabwe Coalition 2012).

This section can be aptly summarised by the observation made by Machiavelli in *The Prince*: There is nothing more difficult to carry out, nor more doubtful of success, nor more dangerous to handle than to initiate a new order of things. For the reformer has enemies in all who profit by the old order, and only lukewarm defenders in all those who would profit by the new order. This lukewarmness arises partly from fear of their adversaries, who have the law in their favour, and partly from the incredulity of mankind, who do not truly believe in anything new until they have had actual experience of it.

4.1.4 What then should be done?

This paper proposes a technocratic government (TG) as a panacea to some of the problems. A technocratic government is a government in which the ministers of government are neither career politicians nor active members of political parties.

(<http://themonkeycage.org/2011/11/07/its-a-bird-its-a-plane-its-technocratic-government/>.) Technocratic governments are composed of experts in the fields of their respective ministries, for example, the Minister of Justice would be an individual with an academic background in law, with years of experience working in the legal fraternity. As Zaba aptly noted, " Cabinet is a key executive government body which deals with major policy issues, including important spending proposals and financial commitments, legislative agenda, decisions on international agreements, politically controversial questions, diplomatic matters and any other functions and tasks which affect citizens, business and the country's international relations" (Zaba 2013). The need for Cabinet to comprise capable individuals who perform effectively cannot be overstated. A TG means that individuals appointed are skilled, capable, and perform their duties in an objective, unbiased and non-partisan manner. They have their professional jacket to lose should they perform badly and could have impeccable reputations should they succeed. Zimbabwe has many such highly skilled citizens; the chance of finding capable individuals who are not politicians to lead key ministries is very high. To politicians this proposal is unacceptable for the following reasons:

- Ministers are appointed basing on their level of loyalty to the political party nominating them and their seniority within the party rather than their competence. The established practice in Zimbabwe is that ministerial portfolios are given as perks to the loyal and mighty rather than awarding them on the basis of expertise. Appointments in Zimbabwe following the 31st July 2013 elections, illustrate the level of cronyism characterising the process to such an extent that even the President of Zimbabwe admitted that, "The decision was based on how much of ZANU PF, how long have been with us and how educated you are" (Chikwanha and Munyuki 2013). Selection of Ministers based on their political affiliation and their loyalty to the party of the President, contravenes the selection criteria set out in Section 104 (3) as read with Section 104 (4) of the new Constitution, that Ministers must be chosen for their "professional skills and competence" with considerations made to regional and gender balance.
- Politicians are reluctant to relinquish power to non-politically aligned individuals fearing that they become less relevant in the public eye. For instance, through Minister of Youth, Indigenisation and Economic Empowerment, ZANU PF proposed a nationalistic agenda to the public, anchored in the need to empower blacks. Through the Minister of Finance and a member of their party, the MDC-T claimed fame as having restored sanity and stability to the national economy.

It was also through their Minister and member of their party that the MDC argued their efficiency to the public arguing that the education system had lost motivation, integrity and was performing dismally prior to the Minister's appointment as the Minister of Education. However, in reality it is technocrats in the form of Permanent Secretaries who do most of the work for ministries. Their independence and impartiality as civil servants is, however, questionable given that, the scourge of partisanship that came with the powers of the President to appoint key bodies also affected their tenure and survival as individuals.

5.1 Concluding Remarks

The extensive lack of good corporate governance bedevilling public entities is negatively impacting on the performance of the economy and should not be allowed to persist. It is clear that government's economic revival crusade is doomed to fail if the rot in public institutions is permitted to fester. While government organisations were key conduits of economic miracles in a number of East Asian economies in Zimbabwe the institutions are failing to deliver. Many state-owned organisations have continually failed to release audited financial results for years while workers often go without full salaries. The RBM system accorded the Zimbabwean government a platform for introducing a new culture of accountability, targeting corruption, indiscipline, speculation and bureaucratic inertia by strengthening oversight and enforcement of programmes. The constitutional prescription and political realities are mutually exclusive. With regard to appointment of Permanent Secretaries, section 205 (1) of the Constitution of Zimbabwe states that they should be appointed on performance contracts and their-reappointment is dependent upon good performance in line with the Results Based Management system.

6.1 Recommendations

- Institutionalisation of Results Based Management (RBM) system across the public sector. There is a need for a re-orientation of Government Ministries so that they can formulate policies and programmes guided by the (RBM) that focus on clear organisational visions, missions, values, key result areas, goals and objectives which are translated into a results framework of outcomes, outputs, strategies and resources.

To achieve this holistic approach to service delivery improvements, there is need to mainstream performance management for the whole public sector *inter alia* state enterprises and parastatals, local authorities as well as other statutory bodies.

- Political commitment and leadership from the highest level. Results Based Management needs both political and administrative champions who can explain and effectively communicate the purpose of RBM to increase buy-in of critical stakeholders. The leadership should put in place appropriate institutional systems and structures. For instance, the Office of the President and Cabinet should develop a guiding remuneration framework for all entities and such expenditure must be charged on the Consolidated Revenue Fund. There should be a governance oversight structure over remuneration, ability to pay and considering service delivery targets.
- Enhanced public sector accountability and transparency in the management of public resources and service delivery: The Zimbabwean government should embark on operationalisation of national corporate governance framework for parastatals, state enterprises and local authorities to strengthen and capacitate anti-corruption agencies. The Office of the President and Cabinet, Ministries of Home Affairs, Legal and Justice, Finance and Economic Development as well as security agencies should lead the march towards a non corrupt Zimbabwe. Public sector oversight bodies such as the Parliamentary Portfolio Committees, Auditor General's Office, Office of the Public Protector and Zimbabwe anti-corruption must be supported to strengthen their accountability and transparent.
- Resource mobilisation and allocation: the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development should encourage efficient use of public resources, financial discipline and accountability at all levels of public administration
- Public sector modernisation: the Office of the President and Cabinet, Civil Service Commission and the Ministry of Public Service should introduce performance contracts for all senior levels of government, Boards and Chief Executive Officers of parastatals and local authorities. This should only be done after comprehensive study of best practices from regional and international initiatives that promote RBM implementation. E-government must be strengthened across all ministries. Parliamentary oversight role in public sector performance needs to be strengthened.
- The Government should institute a Commission of Inquiry to interrogate the degree of maladministration and pocketing of obscene salaries by top executives

of parastatals and local authorities. The President has the powers to appoint investigators under the Commissions of Inquiry Act to protect the public interest.

- Implementation, monitoring and evaluation: the Government of Zimbabwe should establish an electronic M&E system and adopt contemporary best practices in M&E. M&E reports should be produced regularly. The Office of the President and Cabinet, Ministry of Finance and Economic Development, and Civil Service Commission should spearhead this process.
- Improved generation and utilisation of data for policy and programme development and implementation by the government. Currently, planning, monitoring, evaluation and reporting processes have been affected by a lack of up to date in the majority of sectors. This is attested by Zimbabwe Statistics Agency (ZIMSTAT) which has Labour Force Survey 2004, actual Gross Domestic Product 2004, poverty assessment 2003, and census of industrial production 2004. The national statistical system is very weak with limited coordination capacity for statistical production and insufficient human resources. The dearth of recent data has forced policy decision makers to either use estimates or conduct their own ad hoc rapid assessments.

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