Information communication technology in e-government in zimbabwe essay sample

Government

Our country is experiencing a new industrial and technological revolution which is bringing about a significant, fast and extensive transformation of society and industry. The result of this revolution is that there is now a rapid increase in the processes of production and the transmission of goods and services produced. The ICT revolution is also encouraging new goods and services, changing the nature and organisation of work, replacing materials, resources, energy and land with information and knowledge as the principal factors of production. HISTORY OF INFORMATION COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT) AND E-GOEVRNEMENT The history of Information Communication Technology (ICT) in general and e-government in particular in Zimbabwe, can be traced back to 1972 with the institution of the Central Computing Services (CCS), which was aimed at providing ICT services to the public service. This was then followed with the adoption of the Integrated Results Based Management (IRBM) System in 2005, in which the e-government is an integral component and one of the three important body of the main pillars or cornerstones of the system.

Thereafter, following the advent of the Inclusive Government under the Global Political Agreement, a fully fledged Ministry of Information Communication Technology was established with the mandate of promoting the use of ICTs to enhance national competitiveness and socio-economic growth. The development of ICTs is very rapid and this has become very vital in many companies and sectors of Zimbabwe. The National Information Communication Technology (NICT) was launched in 2005. It was mentioned that it is against the background of ICT that the Ministry of Information Communication Technology will be conducting consultative workshops on

the review of National ICT policy framework in all provinces of Zimbabwe as from 03 to 30 July 2012. Currently Zimbabwe has an e-government development index ranking of 0. 3230 based on the United Nations e-government measurement criteria. The E-government players include both the Government and the private sector. INFORMATION COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

Information Communication Technology (ICT) is an umbrella word including any communication devices or application. This encircles the following: radios, television, cellular phones, computer and network hardware and software, satellite systems as well as the various services. Applications associated with them such as videoconferencing and distance learning. Information Communication Technologies (ICT) is often spoken in the context of those of Education, Health and libraries. Now, In this day and age IT is becoming one of the most useful and needed jobs around since everybody is moving on from the olden days into a technology filled world. This brings extra opportunities for people who wanted to do something different. There are two major categories under Information Communication Technology that is the Computer based technologies which are concerned about personal computer or using computers at home or at work, and Digital communication technologies which allow people and organisations to communicate, share documents and information digitally This is new E-science of collecting, storing, and processing and communicating information that has revolutionized service quality in business.

It refers to more particularly today to how computers store, process and transmit information through for example, telephone lines, cable and satellite. It covers the convergence of information, computing and telecommunications. ICT has changed telecoms business quality and improved service quality in communication where anyone has access to a telephone/cellphone which has been partnered together with as internet on the same e. g. ADSL from TelOne which has improved the services of business communication. The use of computers has dominated globally which has made the world to be one globe since one can do business with another country on the internet without any travelling expenses being incurred. This has improved the service quality in business globally. The advent of ICT has empowered consumers to identify, customize and purchase at the same time for example tourism products and the support of globalization industry. One can enquire bills on line and pay for groceries online again which has increased the service quality in business. E-Government

The implementation of e-government strategies focusing on applications aimed at innovating and promoting transparency in public administrations and democratic processes, improving efficiency (allocation of resources, public goods) and strengthening relations with citizens. This type of e-government has improved the service quality in government sector as many government departments are now computerized. In addition the e-government connects citizens of different social, academic, political and cultural backgrounds. By so doing it builds external interactions especially between Zimbabwe and other countries in the global world. The e-

government uses the ICTs in various ways such as to make the government more accountable, transparent and effective, maintenance of law and order in the country as well as in the facilitating in the electoral processes.

One challenge that Zimbabwe faces in governance is the lack of engagement and communication between holders of public office and their constituents. This is fundamentally a problem for two reasons. Firstly there is lack of transparency and accountability in the operations of public officials meaning that they have the leeway to prioritize their own interests at the expense of those citizens. Secondly, lack of engagement leads to the formulation of policies, and the implementation of projects that may not augur well with citizens and are thus rejected leading to wastage of taxpayers' money and stunted developmental growth. Unfortunately, the culture in Zimbabwe has been never been one for affording citizens access to information or promotion of engaegement, accountability and transparency. E-business

Governments, international organizations and the private sector are encouraged to promote the benefits of international trade and the use of e-business, and promote the use of e-business models in developing countries and countries with economies in transition. The e-business has improved through the use of ICT since communication is now easy as well as the service quality. Government policies now favour assistance, and growth of SMEs, in the ICT industry, as well as their entry into e-business, to stimulate economic growth and job creation as an element of a strategy for poverty reduction through wealth creation. Modern marketers through advertising and promotional activities inform customers of the benefits, availability and

prices of their products. Packaging and labeling may mean the quality and best use of products. By communicating with the public, marketers make products more useful. This is according to Mupemhi and Duve in their book Mastering Marketing Management. E-marketing has been brought by the evolution of ICT and has improved the quality of marketing business.

E-learning

The advent of ICTs has contributed to the achievement of universal education worldwide, through delivery of education and training of teachers, and offering improved conditions for learning, encompassing people that are outside the formal education process, and improving professional skills. This revolution has made learning easier as for example students may access their results through internet and get their modules again through internet. Unlike the past when one has to write notes on the board for students to copy, again students would travel to the respective colleges to collect their results. Government has developed domestic policies to ensure that ICTs are fully integrated in education and training at all levels, including in curriculum development, teacher training, institutional administration and management, and in support of the concept of lifelong learning. This has improved the service quality in education business. In Zimbabwe, the country has got a Ministry of ICT which has the mandate to develop and promote ICT programmes to eradicate illiteracy at national, regional and international levels.

Promotion of e-literacy skills for all, for example by designing and offering courses for public administration, taking advantage of existing facilities such

as libraries, multipurpose community centres, public access points and by establishing local ICT training centres with the cooperation of all stakeholders. This was made possible by the government paying special attention to disadvantaged and vulnerable groups. Through the Ministry of Education, the government has ensured that young people are equipped with knowledge and skills to use ICTs, including the capacity to analyse and treat information in creative and innovative ways, share their expertise and participate fully in the ICT. Although this may sound good but not all students who have access to this ICT especially those in remote areas. The launch of pilot projects to design new forms of ICT-based networking, e g. (ERP) Enterprises Resource Planning, linking education, training and research institutions has made service quality easy between companies in different countries. E-health

The promotion of collaborative efforts of governments, planners, health professionals, and other agencies along with the participation of international organizations for creating a reliable, timely, high quality and affordable health care and health information systems and for promoting continuous medical training, education, and research has made possible through the use of ICTs. The revolution in service quality to facilitate access to the world's medical knowledge and locally-relevant content resources for strengthening public health research and prevention programmes and promoting women's and men's health, such as content on sexual and reproductive health and sexually transmitted infections, and for diseases that attract full attention of the world including HIV/AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis has improved through ICT. Workshops are now being done using

computers and projectors. Alert, monitor and control the spread of communicable diseases, through the improvement of common information systems. Before the revolution of ICT, health staff used to travel long distance to give a lecture on e. g. TB or malaria but now with use of ICT health staff will just sent the information to another health centre and quality business will be conducted within a short period of time.

Encourage the adoption of ICTs to improve and extend health care and health information systems to remote and underserved areas and vulnerable populations, recognising women's roles as health providers in their families and communities. In Zimbabwe, many people believe in seeing rather than hearing so with the use of ICT women mostly in rural areas are now able to remember information through seeing it. e. g. bi-scope cinemas. This has improved the quality service of the health system in many rural areas. The advent of ICT has strengthened and expanded ICT-based initiatives for providing medical and humanitarian assistance in disasters and emergencies. e. g. Cholera epidemic was assisted by WHO and UNICEF through ICT communication. E-agriculture

The systematic dissemination of information using ICTs on agriculture, and food, in order to provide ready access to comprehensive, up-to-date and detailed knowledge and information, particularly in rural areas has been made easy through the revolution. e. g. GMB's distribution of maize to the provinces. E-science

Promotion of affordable and reliable high-speed Internet connection for all universities and research institutions to support their critical role in

information and knowledge production, education and training, and to support the establishment of partnerships, cooperation and networking between these institutions has been made possible by use of ICT. Promotion of electronic publishing, differential pricing and open access initiatives to make scientific information affordable and accessible in all countries on an equitable basis. Promotion of the long-term systematic and efficient collection, dissemination and preservation of essential scientific digital data, for example, population and meteorological data in all countries. The promotion principles and metadata standards to facilitate cooperation and effective use of collected scientific information and data as appropriate to conduct scientific research e. g. the cause of typhoid in Harare.

Reference:

Mupemhi, S. and Duve, R. (2011) Mastering Marketing Management, First Edition. Booklove Publishers McCormick D, & Onjala J, (2007) Methodology for value chain analysis in ICT Industry Framework