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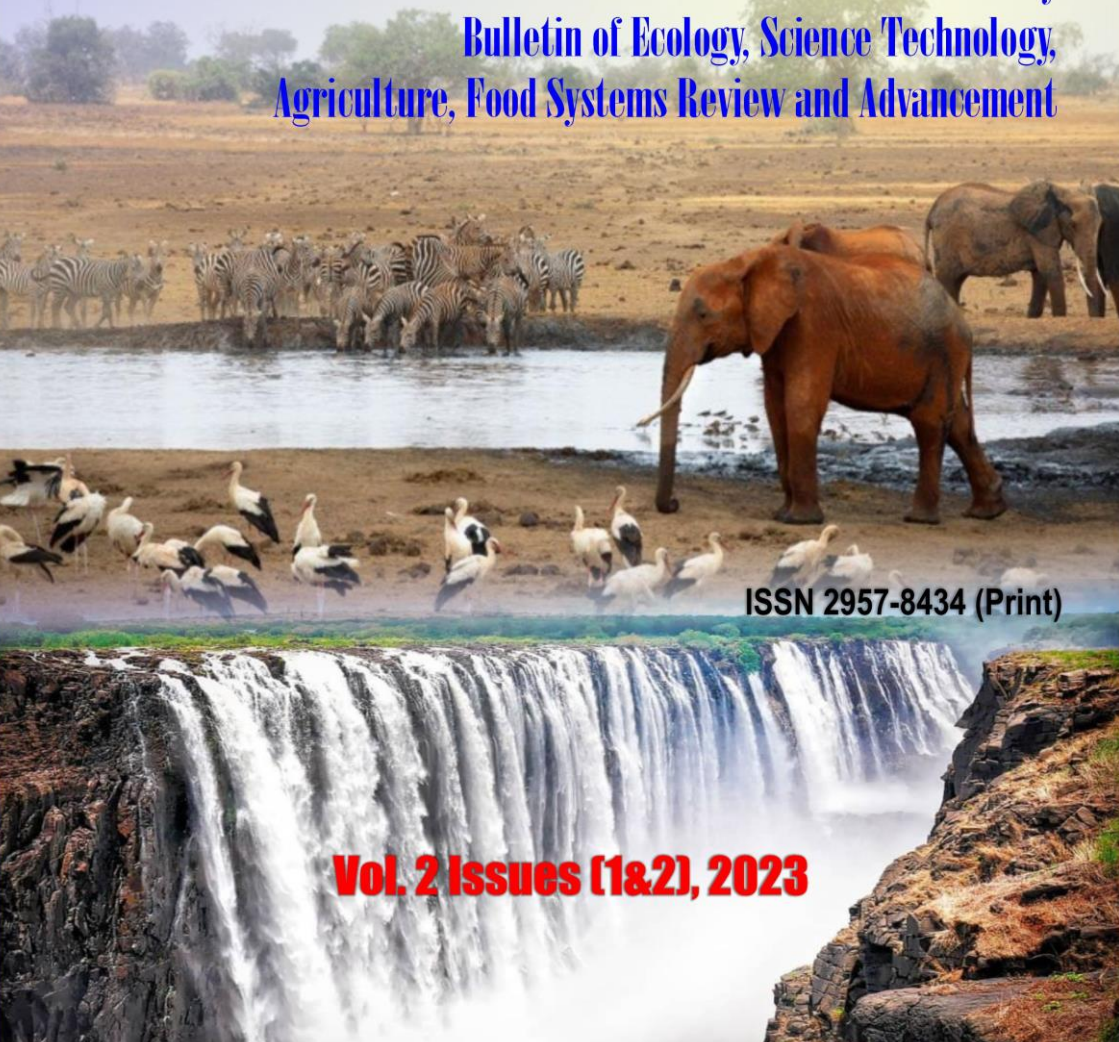

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The purpose of the *Oikos - The Zimbabwe Ezekiel Guti University Bulletin of Ecology, Science Technology, Agriculture and Food Systems Review and Advancement is* to provide a forum for scientific and technological solutions based on systems approach and thinking as the bedrock of intervention.

CONTRIBUTION AND READERSHIP

The natural scientists, engineering experts, technologists; multidisciplinary teams are encouraged.

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Exploring the Motivations and Critical Factors of Successful Enterprise Resource Planning Implementation in Organisations in Zimbabwe

JUSTIN MAKOTA, FERDINAND KABOTE[1] AND TOBIAS NHARO

Abstract

Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) systems have become increasingly popular among organisations worldwide, aiming at streamlining business processes and enhance overall efficiency. This article investigates the essence of ERP adoption in Zimbabwe, focusing on the motivations and critical factors contributing to successful implementation within organisations. A qualitative methodology was employed, involving 12 participants from four companies who have implemented ERP systems. Interviews and document analysis were used as methods for collecting data. The findings reveal that the main motivations for ERP adoption in Zimbabwe are centred around modernising the information technology (IT) environment, replacing aging systems, improving operational efficiency and enhancing customer satisfaction. Moreover, the research identifies critical success factors that significantly influence the implementation of ERP systems. Executive management support emerges as a crucial factor, indicating the importance of top-level commitment and leadership in driving successful implementation. Additionally, company-wide support, a positive organisational culture that embraces change and meaningful user involvement, are highlighted as vital factors in ensuring the successful adoption and utilisation of ERP systems. The findings provide valuable insights for organisations considering, or in the process of, implementing ERP systems in Zimbabwe, and for researchers and practitioners in the field of information systems and technology management. By understanding the motivations and

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critical success factors, organisations can make informed decisions and develop effective strategies for successful ERP implementation in Zimbabwe.

Keywords: Enterprise resource planning systems**,** implementation, critical success factors, challenges

INTRODUCTION

Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) systems have become an integral part of modern organisations, facilitating the management and integration of various business processes and functions.(Xie *et al.*, 2022). According to Kumar and Hillegersberg (2015), an ERP is a package that combines information and all data-based processes in an organisation and across all functional departments. ERP adoption offers numerous potential benefits, such as enhanced operational efficiency, improved decision-making, streamlined processes and increased competitiveness. However, implementing an ERP system is a complex undertaking that requires careful planning, substantial resources and organisational commitment.

Qureshi (2022) has pointed out that enterprise systems are software systems for business management, encompassing modules supporting functional areas such as planning, manufacturing, sales, marketing, distribution, accounting, financial, human resource management, project management, inventory management, service and maintenance, transportation and e-business. An ERP software provides an end-to-end information management solution for a company. The software can be used by all departments of the company to manage the information.

Salih *et al.* (2022) argue that the main goal of ERP is to provide the right information to the right person at the right time. It is modular and integrated, meaning it is made up of several modules that share information with each other. A module can share information and that information can flow from one module to another. The development of the ERP facilitates visible interconnection of modules that provides transparent flow of information between all functional departments in an organisation. Legacy systems are replaced by ERP that facilitates

the introduction of a single integrated system that links all functions. ERP is defined as a tool or method for best practices in planning and controlling of all resources needed in an organisation (Sitinjak and Jayadi, 2023). ERP is the result of business systems evolution. Manufacturing Resources Planning (MRP) was the first system to be developed in the early 1960s. It has evolved from the basic legacy system used by organisations. ERP brings many benefits to the organisation in form of increased operational and financial performance.

Despite the widespread adoption of ERP systems, many organisations still struggle with successful implementation. Nepal (2022) observes that there are numerous factors that contribute to the challenges faced during the implementation process, including technical issues, organisational resistance, inadequate training and poor change management strategies. Understanding the motivations behind ERP adoption and identifying critical success factors are crucial for organisations seeking to optimise their implementation efforts and maximise the benefits derived from these systems.

The process whereby the top executive makes a decision to install a computer based information system and is well integrated into the operations of an organisation, is called implementation (Burns and Turnipseed, 2016). Ghayas *et al.* (2022) argue that during the implementation process, much planning and consulting is done that it becomes a very difficult process all together. The whole process may take from three months up to one year. Many resources, such as money, investment time and internal resources, are required during the process of implementation. Generally, ERP systems implementation and the systems are very big and complex in nature and are associated with very large organisations. Legacy systems may seem good in small organisations as implementation of ERP will not yield desired results (Rajapakse and Thushara, 2023). ERP implementation comes mostly with changes in the operations that include change of staff and work practices. Due to its size and complexity, it is advisable that implementation consultants are hired as they are more cost-effective and are tried and tested than in-house

implementation. ERP benefits actually take time to accrue, in some cases, after three years.

ERP is characterised as the ability to assemble a cohesive suite of applications designed to manage various aspects of business operations. ERP tools share a general procedure and data model, covering a large and deep operational end-to-end process. These applications computerise and sustain a variety of managerial and operational business procedures across several industries, together with line of business, client-facing, administrative and the asset supervision aspects of an organisation. However, ERP systems tend to come at a considerable price and the business gains are complex to achieve and realis. (Gartner, 2013).

For an organisation to gain a competitive advantage, it must implement state of the art ERPs and new technologies to enhance its business operations. These systems are developed in such a way that they enhance organisations' business operations, i.e., customer interaction, real time response and preparation and manufacturing. The newly added concept of auditing has created both strengths and weaknesses in ERPs (Soral, 2017).

The aim of this article is to delve into the essence of ERP adoption by exploring the motivations that drive organisations to adopt ERP systems. By examining the underlying reasons for their adoption, we gain insights into the specific goals and expectations organisations have when embarking on an ERP implementation journey. Furthermore, this study seeks to identify critical factors that significantly impact the success of ERP implementation in organisations.

By unravelling the motivations behind ERP adoption, the strategic objectives that organisations seek to accomplish through the implementation of ERP systems can be better understood. Additionally, by examining the critical success factors, the key elements that organisations need to consider and address during the implementation process to increase the likelihood of achieving their intended outcomes, can be identified.

This research aims to contribute to the existing body of knowledge on ERP adoption and implementation by providing a comprehensive analysis of the underlying motivations and critical success factors. The findings from this study can save as a valuable resource for organisations planning to adopt an ERP system and enable them to make informed decisions, develop effective implementation strategies and enhance the overall success of their ERP initiatives. Ultimately, this research aims to advance the understanding of ERP adoption and implementation, thereby supporting organisations in harnessing the full potential of these systems to achieve their strategic objectives.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1) Why do organisations adopt ERP systems?
2) What are the critical factors that have an effect on ERP systems implementation success in Zimbabwe?

LITERATURE REVIEW

HISTORY OF ERP SYSTEMS

The origin of Enterprise Resource Planning improvement was from MRP. In the 1960s MRP was known as the Materials Resource Planning system, its many thrusts being on planning tasks in manufacturing companies. ERP systems, with extra modules that deal with consumers and suppliers as in internal and external environments, later came as an improvement of the earlier systems. ERP become unlimited enterprise software systems (Katuu, 2020).

MRP I was recognised in the 1960s, almost the same time the first computers were developed. The growth in hardware development over the years also led to the development of more accounting functions and a little bit on business process. SAP and JD Edwards were the first companies in software organisation, along with Oracle with the SQL. IBM became the best hardware trader around the 1980s and then came MRP II with more business processes (Katuu,*ibid*.). The 1990s witnessed a fast growth in ERPs that was saw the integration of all business functional units, i.e., the hardware and the transaction

processing systems. The choice in hardware and software increased on the market and the main among those that survived resistance, include Oracle and SAP. Resistance to change was the major contributor to failure of many ERP implementations. Projects and database management and budget overruns are other factors that cause the failure of ERPs. If the these above are done well, the rotation time and user friendliness for first-time users and frequent updating for active users, huge returns can be realised by the organisation (Nepal, 2022).

During the introduction stages of ERPs, they were used for simple accounting and human resource management applications. With the arrival of online technology, SAP and Oracle started to develop applications for ERP. New and better technology positively impacted the development of ERPs. Web technologies reduced costs as, generally, integration became simple and easy. Through the use of web-based services and other integrated compositions, the desire by users to access information without going through ERP systems was well achieved (Katuu, 2020).This was because users were now in a position to effortlessly perform several application services like placing orders and checking their bank accounts. Web technology also offered a stage for all the users to converse with software through the online webpage. With that, they avoided the complexity of the systems in place. SAP introduced mySAP and Oracle also offered the same service of broker hub setup that acts as an intermediary between web technology and an ERP software called E-Business Suite (De Almeida *et al*., 2018). A lot of improvements are still underway in the whole ERP production and use.

Lessa and Negash (n.d.) define information systems as a combination of software people, tangible components of a computer and infrastructure that aid decision-making in an organisation. Today' business has actually changed, it has been revolutionised through the development of new systems in all spheres of business, be it in insurance, wholesaling, finance, advertising and manufacturing. Information Technology has infiltrated in all departments with the

changing organisation of markets, product life cycle, production and redistribution patterns. Information systems have altered organisation of companies in this digital era.

Muchenje (2012) acknowledges that the digital era has resulted in intra-enterprise and inter-enterprise that is aided by customer relationship management (CRM) and supply chain management systems, demonstrating IT as an enabler in all organisational plans and strategies of today. The power of computers in helping decision-making in all organisations must be recognised through ways that gather, produce and assess data for managerial decision-making that is in line with organisational long-term plans, risk and controls. IT cannot increase the usefulness of auditing, but the responsible department must look for the best IT auditing systems to meet the objectives (Nepal, 2022).

IT has become the backbone of communications, for huge amounts of data to be moved from one organisation to another and risk mitigation, reliable and secure timely dissemination of information at all levels of the organisation. A well secured and foolproof system to be in place in an organisation. The introduction of ERPs has helped the dissemination of information. be it vertically or horizontally across organisations. The network of the internet also provides a way of disseminating information to external stakeholders (Muchenje, 2012).

ERP is a combination of systems that help in the administration of an organisation's resources, and they make it simple and include all processes contained by functional and technical lines in the company. These are very big management systems that combine a variety of software programmes that administer and integrate different processes in an organisation. The software programmes range from financial accounting, sales, distribution planning and production (Shehab *et al.,* 2019).

These packages are developed in such a way that they amplify the smooth flow of information in all processes, both internally and externally. ERP systems' main objective is to integrate the processes

within an organisation, both horizontally and vertically, to synchronise all software packages (Muchenje 2012).

If a corporation makes use of an ERP system, it can computerise all its main production aspects, reduce the difficulty and the cost of the organisation, force the organisation itself to partake in the business process re-engineering to optimise its operations and result in a successful business. Basically, ERPs are used to boost the performance of a supply chain network by reducing the rotation time. This can be in the high capital demanding companies like defence aerospace and building (Shehab *et al.,* 2019).

ERP LIFECYCLE

Chang (2004) highlights that the lifecycle of an ERP is made up of four stages, which are implementation, maintenance, upgrade and documentation. Each of the stages have phases, for the main one, i.e., implementation, has the phases Planning, Fit/GAP Building Testing and Deploying. Implementation is the most important stage in ERP and if is wrongly done, the ERP will fail. Several critical factors are supposed to be in place at several phases for it to succeed.

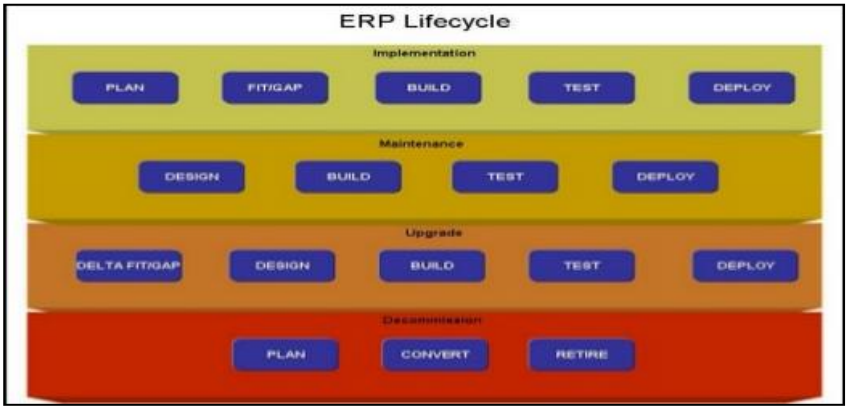

Figure 1: ERP Lifecycle (Chang, 2004)

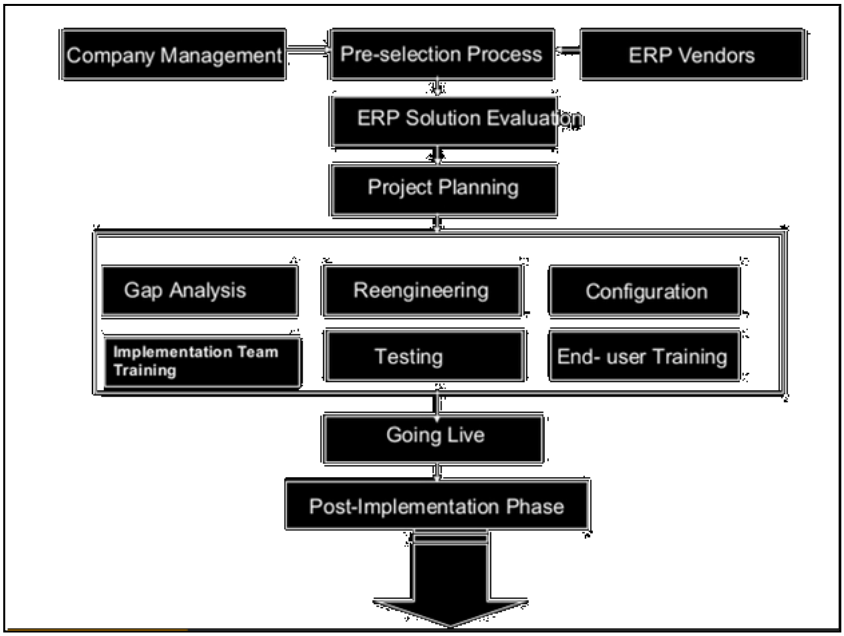

Figure 2: ERP Implementation Lifecycle **(**Chang, 2004)

According to Chang (2004), the implementation life cycle is made up of four phases of planning, GAP analysis, building and going live. Figure 2 illustrates a detailed implementation lifecycle.

ERP SYSTEMS IMPLEMENTATION LITERATURE

In comparison with other IT research and fields, ERP has attracted less attention. ERP systems, similar to other management information systems, are often perceived as very complex and difficult to implement. Most of available presentations in this area of ERP systems implementation lack concrete evidence, backed by academic and practical researches. Therefore, in this research information system literature is basically reviewed to find better theories that can adapt well to the less researched field of ERP. Limited studies have been conducted to identify critical factors affecting ERP systems implementation success, with many of them focusing on single-case studies of how ERP systems were implemented in a company.

This situation has led to the lack of a standardised way of implementing an ERP. Most writers have written much about how they managed to do their implementation (Harun *et al.,* 2022; Xie *et al.,* 2022; ; Anaya *et al.,* 2023)

Basically, the variables required during the implementation process determine the success of failure of the project. Rajapakse (2023) defines a success ERP implementation in two dimensions, improved performance and user satisfaction. Ali *et al.* (2023) recommend that the explanation and measurements of ERP success or failure are very difficult issues and that success is based on the angle from which one measures it.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Basing on ERP literature and information system research factors affecting ERP implementation, success has been identified. This was generally from the model of Ives *et al.* (1980). According to DeLone and Mclean (Year) information system success model variables that measure implementation success are all defined. These variables are combined with critical success factors.

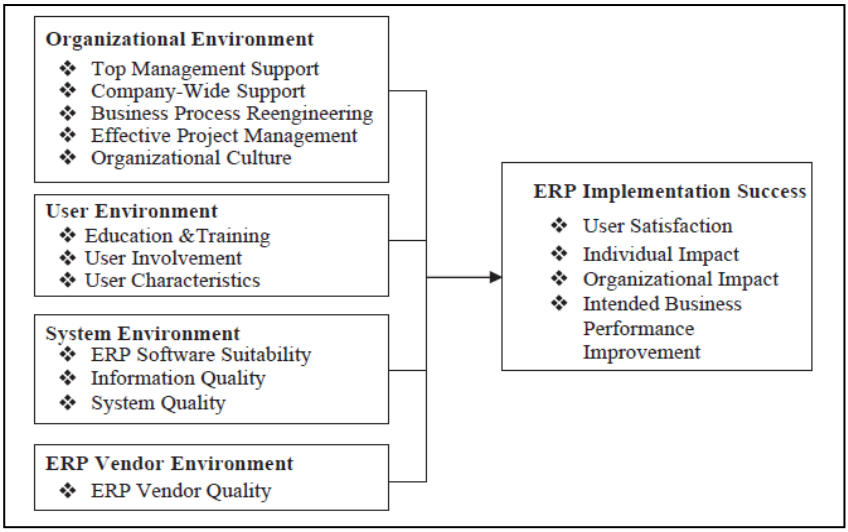

Figure 3: Conceptual Research Framework (Ives *et al.* 1980).

ORGANISATIONAL ENVIRONMENT

Organisational culture, re-engineering business process, top management support, effective project management and company wide support are the five factors under organisational environment.

TOP MANAGEMENT SUPPORT

Top management support has been stressed in many researches as the main ingredient to successful ERP implementation (Al-Mashari et al., 2003). In ERP implementation all staff members and all segments of an organisation need complete cooperation as it is an integrated Information System Top management must play a pivotal role in providing a clear way up and solving any problems within an organisation. ERP implementation is not all about removing legacy systems, but it is more about reengineering the business processes.

COMPANY WIDE COMMITMENT

An ERP is a well-integrated information system that requires commitment and support from all functional units in an organisation..(*Ghayas et al.,* 2022). Every worker from each and every department must be involved in the implementation process without being frequently monitored in their job positions.

RE-ENGINEERING BUSINESS PROCESSES

Hammer and Champyas (2001) define business process reengineering as the essential reformulation and redesigning of organisational process to accomplish improvements in significant measures in performances such as speed, service quality and cost. During the process of implementation, current business processes are re-engineered to the standardised process.(Ghayas *et al.,* 2022).

One of the critical failure factors in ERP implementation is the underestimation of the extent to which the organisation must re-engineer its process current process to accommodate the new system.

EFFECTIVE PROJECT MANAGEMENT

According to Coşkun *et al.* (2022), project management evolves because the company must control , plan and coordinate activities of big and commercial projects. A minimum of one to two years is needed in the

whole process of implementing ERP and involves all organisational functional units, therefore, there must be a strategy to control the process and the process must run within the budget and schedule.

ORGANISATIONAL CULTURE

Implementation failure is certain when an organisation tries to adapt the process to the current style of culture in that organisation (Xie *et al.,* 2022) As mentioned above on business re-engineering, a company must implement an ERP as it also changes it business processes. Customer culture is also affected by this change.

USER ENVIRONMENT

This element is more focused on people who will be using the system; therefore, lack of training and education and user involvement are the main factors that can lead to the failure of ERP implementation. It puts emphasis on the care of the stakeholders within the organisation.

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Training and education refer to the management and workers with reason and general concepts about the ERP system (Yusuf *et al.,* 2004). This enhances the understanding of employees in relation to their functional areas within the organisation. Every user is held accountable to make the system produce results and perform up to expectations. This can be very effective if proper training and education is done.

USER INVOLVEMENT.

The participation of users either during development or implementation process is referred to as user involvement. Some other researchers argue that user involvement during the development stages is very important to the success of a system.(Salih *et al.,* 2022). User involvement is the greatest tool to deal with wrong perceptions about the system from system users (resistance).

USER CHARACTERISTICS

Ives *et al.* (1980) outline that user characteristics have an impact on the success of the ERP. Basically, it is concerned with education levels, technical orientation or business orientation and user characters. ERP

vendors have several packages developed by different languages and meant for different markets, therefore enterprises must choose the best ERP that suits the users.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This article adopts a qualitative methodology to explore the motivations and critical factors contributing to the successful implementation of Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) systems in organisations in Zimbabwe. The qualitative approach allows for an in-depth exploration of participants' perspectives, experiences and insights regarding ERP adoption.

SAMPLE SELECTION

A purposive sampling technique was employed to select 12 participants from four different companies operating in Zimbabwe. The participants were chosen based on their involvement in the ERP implementation process and ability to provide rich and diverse insights into the research topic. The sample size was determined based on the principle of data saturation, ensuring that sufficient information was gathered to address the research objectives effectively. (Mimansha Patel and Nitin Patel, 2019)

DATA COLLECTION

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with the selected participants to collect the primary data. The interviews were designed to elicit detailed information about the motivations behind ERP adoption, and the critical success factors identified during the implementation process. The interview questions were developed based on a comprehensive literature review and pilot-tested to ensure clarity and relevance.

DATA ANALYSIS

The collected interview data were analysed using thematic analysis. The process involved several stages, starting with familiarisation by repeatedly reading and immersing in the data. Initial codes were generated by identifying recurring patterns, ideas and concepts related to motivations and critical success factors.(*ibid*.) These codes were then grouped into higher-order themes, capturing the main ideas and

trends emerging from the data. The analysis was conducted iteratively, allowing for refinement and revision of the themes until saturation was reached.

RESEARCH RIGOUR

To ensure the rigour and credibility of the research, various strategies were employed. These included triangulation of data sources (interviews with participants from multiple organisations), member checking (providing participants with a summary of their interview data to validate the findings) and peer debriefing (discussion and feedback from colleagues knowledgeable in qualitative research methods). The research process was also documented thoroughly to enhance transparency and replicability.

ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Ethical considerations were prioritised throughout the research process. Informed consent was obtained from all participants, ensuring their voluntary participation and confidentiality. The research also adhered to relevant ethical guidelines and protocols, protecting the rights and wellbeing of the participants.

LIMITATIONS

This qualitative study has some limitations. The findings are based on a relatively small sample size of 12 participants from four companies, which may limit the generalizability of the results. The research focused exclusively on organisations in Zimbabwe, which may restrict the transferability of the findings to other contexts. However, the study's rigorous methodology and detailed exploration of participants' perspectives provide valuable insights into the motivations and critical factors of ERP adoption in Zimbabwean organisations.

FINDINGS

The findings and discussion section provides an in-depth analysis of the motivations behind ERP adoption in Zimbabwe, delving into the core factors that drive organisations to embrace ERP systems. These factors are basically used during the measuring and evaluation of the whole process of ERP implementation. The factors are summarised below.

MODERNISE IT ENVIRONMENT

One of the primary motivations for organisations to adopt ERP systems is to modernise their IT environment. Legacy systems often become out dated and lack the capabilities to meet evolving business needs. By implementing ERP, organisations can leverage modern technologies and infrastructure, enabling them to streamline operations, enhance data management and improve overall efficiency. To this end Katuu (2020) and Xie *et al.* (2022) point out that most organisations adopt ERP to modernise their IT environments.

REPLACEMENT OF AGEING LEGACY SYSTEMS

Many organisations adopt ERP systems as a means to replace ageing legacy systems. Legacy systems may suffer from issues such as limited functionality, maintenance challenges and compatibility problems. ERP implementation allows organisations to migrate from these out dated systems to a comprehensive and integrated solution that offers enhanced functionalities and improved system reliability. According to Salih *et al.* (2022) and Katuu (2020), organisations adopt ERP systems with the intention of replacing their ageing legacy systems.

EFFICIENCY

ERP adoption is driven by the desire to improve efficiency within organisations. By implementing an ERP system, organisations can optimise processes, automate routine tasks and eliminate manual and redundant activities. This streamlining of operations leads to cost reductions, improved speed and increased accuracy in various business processes, such as inventory management, financial accounting and supply chain management. Ghayas *et al.* (2022) supports the assertion that ERP brings efficiency in organisations.

BETTER MANAGEMENT TOOLS (PLANNING)

ERP systems provide organisations with advanced management tools that facilitate planning and decision-making. The integrated nature of ERP allows for real-time access to critical data, enabling managers to make informed decisions based on accurate and up-to-date information. This improved visibility and data-driven decision-making contribute to more effective strategic planning and resource allocation

within organisations. As suggested by Salih *et al.* (2022) and Katuu (2020), organisations adopt ERP systems for better management tools.

INCREASED CUSTOMER SATISFACTION

ERP adoption can have a direct impact on customer satisfaction. Through the integration of customer relationship management (CRM) modules, organisations can effectively manage customer interactions, track customer preferences and provide personalised services. This capability enables organisations to enhance customer satisfaction by delivering improved customer experiences, addressing individual needs and maintaining strong customer relationships.

INTERNET-ENABLED WITH E-COMMERCE CAPABILITY

The integration of ERP systems with e-commerce capabilities allows organisations to expand their business reach and tap into online markets. By leveraging internet-enabled features, organisations can establish online storefronts, manage online transactions and seamlessly integrate online sales channels with backend operations. This integration facilitates efficient order processing, inventory management and customer support, leading to enhanced customer experiences and increased revenue opportunities. Internet-Enabled with E-commerce Capability is another factor why organisations adopt ERP systems, according to Aroba (2023).

INTEGRATION AND COLLABORATION WITH SUPPLY CHAIN

ERP adoption often aims to improve integration and collaboration within the supply chain. By implementing ERP systems, organisations can streamline supply chain operations, facilitate seamless information sharing and enable effective coordination with suppliers, distributors and other stakeholders. This integration and collaboration lead to improved supply chain visibility, reduced lead times, optimised inventory management and enhanced overall supply chain performance.

TIGHTER CONTROLS AND COMPLIANCE

ERP systems offer robust control mechanisms and help organisations ensure compliance with regulatory requirements and industry standards. Through standardised processes, centralised data

management and built-in security features, ERP systems help establish tighter controls over business operations and enhance data integrity. This capability is particularly important for organisations operating in highly regulated industries, such as finance, healthcare, and manufacturing. The aim of tighter controls and compliance motivates organisations to adopt ERP systems (Li, 2011).

The critical success factors identified in this research study are crucial elements that significantly influence the successful implementation of ERP systems in organisations. Participants drawn from four companies, the Grain Marketing Board, Telone, Enerst and Young and Guridge, highlighted the following critical success factors. Understanding and addressing these factors are essential for organisations to maximise the benefits derived from ERP adoption and achieve implementation success. The following discussion elaborates on each critical success factor:

EXECUTIVE MANAGEMENT SUPPORT

The support and commitment of top-level executives play a pivotal role in the success of ERP implementation. Executives who champion the ERP project provide the necessary resources, set clear goals and communicate the strategic importance of ERP adoption throughout the organisation. Their support ensures the allocation of adequate budget, personnel and time required for successful implementation.

COMPANY-WIDE SUPPORT

Alongside executive management, garnering support from all levels of the organisation is crucial. The active participation and endorsement of employees across departments create a collaborative environment and foster a sense of ownership for the ERP initiative. Company-wide support facilitates smoother change management, reduces resistance and promotes the adoption and effective utilisation of the ERP system.

PROJECT MANAGEMENT

Effective project management is vital for successful ERP implementation. Skilled project managers ensure proper planning, resource allocation, scheduling, risk management and coordination of

various implementation tasks. They establish clear milestones, monitor progress and address potential issues promptly, ensuring that the ERP project stays on track and meets objectives within defined timelines.

ORGANISATIONAL CULTURE

The organisational culture significantly impacts the acceptance and assimilation of an ERP system. An open and adaptable culture, characterised by a willingness to embrace change and continuous improvement, fosters a conducive environment for successful ERP implementation. Organisations that prioritise collaboration, knowledge-sharing and innovation are better equipped to navigate the challenges associated with ERP adoption.

USER INVOLVEMENT

Active involvement and engagement of end-users in the ERP implementation process are crucial. Users possess valuable insights into existing processes and requirements, making their input essential for effective system design and configuration. Involving end-users from the early stages, fosters a sense of ownership, increases user acceptance and facilitates smoother transitions.

USER CHARACTERISTICS

Understanding the characteristics and competencies of end-users is critical for ERP implementation success. Factors such as computer literacy, willingness to adapt to new technologies and the ability to embrace change, influence user adoption and system utilisation. Identifying user training needs and providing adequate support based on their characteristics ensures effective utilisation of the ERP system.

ERP SOFTWARE SUITABILITY

Choosing an ERP software solution that aligns with organisational needs and objectives is crucial. Evaluating the functionality, scalability, flexibility and compatibility of ERP software with existing systems and processes ensures a suitable fit. ERP software that meets organisational requirements and can be customised or configured to specific needs, increases the likelihood of successful implementation.

EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

Clear and consistent communication is essential throughout the ERP implementation process. Effective communication ensures that stakeholders are well-informed about the project's progress, benefits and expected changes. Transparent and timely communication helps manage expectations, address concerns and maintain stakeholder engagement and support.

SYSTEM QUALITY

The quality of the ERP system itself is a critical success factor. The system should be reliable, secure, scalable and capable of handling organisational demands. Robust system architecture, adequate system performance and data integrity contribute to the overall success of the implementation.

ERP VENDOR QUALITY

Selecting a reputable and reliable ERP vendor is vital. Vendors that offer quality products, on-going support and timely updates, ensure a smooth implementation process. Evaluating vendor experience, expertise and customer reviews helps in selecting a vendor that aligns with organisational requirements and can provide continuous support, post-implementation.

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Providing comprehensive education and training programmes to end-users is essential for successful ERP implementation. Proper training enhances user proficiency, reduces resistance, and ensures effective system utilisation. Continuous education and training programmes. Katuu (2020) shares the same thinking.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Results of this research demonstrate that organisations adopt ERP systems for a variety of reasons, including modernising IT environments, replacing ageing legacy systems, improving efficiency, providing better management tools, increasing customer satisfaction, enabling e-commerce capabilities, enhancing supply chain integration and collaboration, and establishing tighter controls and compliance. These findings underscore the multifaceted nature of ERP adoption

and highlight the critical factors that organisations consider when implementing ERP systems to achieve successful outcomes. Based on the findings of this article, the following recommendations are proposed for organisations considering the adoption and implementation of Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) systems in Zimbabwe.

EXECUTIVE MANAGEMENT SUPPORT

Organisations should ensure strong support and active involvement from top-level executives throughout the ERP implementation process. Executives should champion the ERP project, provide necessary resources and communicate the strategic importance of ERP adoption to the entire organisation.

COMPANY-WIDE SUPPORT

Garnering support from employees across all levels of the organisation is fundamental for successful ERP implementation. Organisations should foster a culture of collaboration and ownership, encouraging employees to embrace the change and actively participate in the implementation process.

EFFECTIVE PROJECT MANAGEMENT

Implementing effective project management practices is essential for a smooth and successful ERP implementation. Skilled project managers should be assigned to oversee the implementation, ensuring proper planning, resource allocation, risk management and timely completion of tasks.

ORGANISATIONAL CULTURE

Organisations should foster an adaptable and innovative culture that embraces change and continuous improvement. This culture will support the successful adoption and assimilation of ERP systems, as employees will be more open to change, collaboration, and learning.

USER INVOLVEMENT

Involving end-users in the ERP implementation process is key for their acceptance and effective utilisation of the system. Organisations should seek input from end-users, understand their needs, and

actively involve them in system design, configuration and testing to ensure the ERP system aligns with their requirements.

EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

Clear and transparent communication is essential throughout the ERP implementation process. Organisations should establish effective communication channels to keep stakeholders informed about the project's progress, benefits and expected changes. Regular and timely communication will help manage expectations, address concerns and maintain stakeholder engagement and support.

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