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Antecedents for Effective Management of Public Enterprise Restructuring in Zimbabwe: An Organizational Culture Perspective

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Abstract:
In Zimbabwe, the process of restructuring of public enterprises has encompassed a number of strategies such as commercialization, privatization, downsizing, management contracts and joint ventures. Despite these efforts, no significant improvement in performance of these enterprises has been observed. Recent studies elsewhere seem to suggest that culture is an important tool in organizational performance. The purpose of this research was to determine whether organizational culture can be used to create leverage for the performance of these public enterprises. A descriptive survey research design was used to collect data from restructured Public Enterprises using the culture assessment instruments. Results show that organizational culture is critical in improving performance of these entities. There is need for government to encourage a clan culture in which there is continual dialogue between all stakeholders of the system.

Keywords: Public Enterprises in Zimbabwe, restructuring, organizational culture

1. Introduction

Zimbabwe has 78 public enterprises which are diverse in terms of objectives. These enterprises can be put into 3 categories according to the objectives they pursue (Godana and Hlatshwayo, 1999). Some are strategic like Grain Marketing Board (GMB), Zimbabwe Defence Industries (ZDI), and the Zimbabwe Electricity Supply Authority (ZESA). Others are purely developmental and promotional like Agricultural and Rural Development Authority (ARDA) and Agribank. The third group is the largest, is comprised of those that are predominantly for commercial purposes like the Zimbabwe Steel Company (ZIMSTEEL), National Railways of Zimbabwe (NRZ), Air Zimbabwe, Minerals Marketing Company of Zimbabwe (MMCZ) and most of the subsidiaries to Zimbabwe Minerals Development Company (ZMDC). Put together, these enterprises have a capacity to contribute 40% to the country's Gross Domestic Product if fully operational. Many of these enterprises are monopolies in their sectors and would be expected to convert the monopolies they enjoy into a stream of fiscal revenues. However most of these public enterprises share one thing in common; they have benefited from government subsidies extended to cover the costs resulting from their loss-making and inefficiencies (Sikwila, 2012). Both civil and civic society is concerned with the huge losses being made by some of these public enterprises despite the intentions of their creators for them to make profit. Government has set up commissions of inquiry on their underperformance but these efforts have not yielded much (Zhou, 2012; Sikwila, 2012). There is no clear way forward for these entities; little wonder the pace of restructuring has been agonizingly slow despite the heavy subsidies to these public enterprises that are a major drain on the already weak fiscus.

The resulting fiscal burden has thus continued to sabotage macroeconomic stability. The poor performance of public enterprises in Zimbabwe contrasts sharply with certain other public enterprises which are effectively used as "cash cows" by their national treasuries. In such economies, public enterprises contribute significantly towards GDP. A case in point is the success story in China and the rest of the BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa). The Chinese economy is run through state-

owned enterprises that are viable, well-managed and have adequate capacities (Capobianco and Christiansen, 2011). This unsatisfactory performance has led the Government to adopt restructuring of these enterprises. The restructuring programme has also encompassed a number of strategies which include privatization, commercialization, management contracts, Public Private Partnerships and joint ventures among others. However there has been no significant improvement to their fortunes (Moyo, 2011).

Name of SEP	2009	2010	2011	2012
Air Zimbabwe	12	13	14.6	14.1
National Railways of Zimbabwe (NRZ)	8.7	6.6	9.6	9.1
United Passenger Company (ZUPCO)	4.2	8.1	7.1	7.5
Agribank	4.5	4.0	2.8	3.2
NetOne	2.5	3.2	2.8	2.9
TelOne	7.3	6.8	6.3	5.7
Grain Marketing Board	4.8	5.3	4.5	3.4
National Oil Company of Zimbabwe (NOCZIM)	13.9	12.8	11.0	11.5

Table 1: Losses incurred by selected public enterprises in Zimbabwe (in millions of US$) since 2009

Studies have been done on what reforms need to be instituted in the public enterprises to try and transform their performance (Dewenter and Malatesta, 2001; Aivazian, Ge and Qiu, 2005). Such studies have tended to focus on 3 main issues of Public Enterprises; i.e. the challenges of Political and Agency Costs that Public Enterprises suffer from (Xu et al (2005); the need for corporatization of Public Enterprises (Aivazian, Ge and Qiu,2005) and the Call for Privatization of Public Enterprises (Omran, 2004; Smith and Trebilcock 2001).

However organizational scholars now recognize that organizational culture has a powerful effect on the performance and long-term effectiveness of organizations, it is most probable that the success of public enterprises in Zimbabwe could have been affected by the environment including the culture inherent within them. According to Jung, et al, (2007), culture is one of many metaphors that can be used to explore and understand organisations. The central issue being investigated here is about the organizational culture of the public enterprises and its linkage with organizational performance.

The study was guided by the following objectives:
- To profile the dominant culture types as perceived by their personnel.
- To compare the performance of the individual privatized enterprises.
- To assess the relationship between the culture and the performance in each organization.

The hypothesis in this research was that there is a relationship between organizational culture and organizational performance of the privatized entities in Zimbabwe.

2. Literature Review

2.1. History of Restructurings in Zimbabwe

As observed by Zhou (2011) the public enterprise sector in Zimbabwe has over the past three decades gone through various phases of restructurings, each decade reflecting a distinct restructuring approach as follows:
- Public enterprise restructurings. These were state-initiated and expansionary, fundamentally concerned with reconstituting public enterprises into majority-interest-driven entities.
- Restructuring through liberalization, deregulation, commercialization and privatization. This was partly driven by external forces e.g. the Economic Structural Adjustment Programme (ESAP) as witnessed in Zimbabwe.
- Public enterprise restructuring opted for the unbundling route whereby targeted parastatals were broken into smaller business oriented units under a 100% state-owned holding company. The state monopolies were broken into small, business-oriented entities e.g. the National Oil Company of Zimbabwe (NOCZIM) has recently been unbundled into two companies:-PetroTrade and National Oil Infrastructure Company of Zimbabwe.

However, three decades down the line, the public enterprises in Zimbabwe remain a sad tale of loss making and debt-ridden entities with a voracious appetite for fiscal support. The pace of public enterprise restructuring in Zimbabwe lags behind policy pronouncements. In particular the State attitude towards privatization measures reflects caution and suspicion-a general trend since the 1990s.

"Policy emphasis was on restructuring rather than privatization, because the former retained state ownership which was consistent with the economic indigenization rhetoric in the air while the latter by transferring company ownership was now perceived as posing latent threats to national economic sovereignty" (Zhou, 2012:179).

Of the 78 public enterprises, only a few companies, e.g. the Cotton Company (Cottco), Dairibord Zimbabwe Ltd and Commercial Bank of Zimbabwe (CBZ) have been privatized. The rest have been exposed to various commercialization and unbundling processes. Emerging policy positions since 2000 suggest that the unbundling route is more prioritized over privatization. Despite

the launch of the corporate governance framework document in 2010, legislation is yet to be put in place while jurisdictional areas among the key players in the public restructuring process are not clearly delineated.

As part of these efforts the Government approved procedures for the public enterprises reform process which subsequently led to the identification of ten (10) major public enterprises that have been prioritized as first candidates for restructuring on a case by case basis after Cabinet approval. Among those that have been marked for restructuring and possible privatisation are ZimSteel, Noczim, Agribank, Zimbabwe Power Company, Grain Marketing Board (GMB), Air Zimbabwe, TelOne, National Railways of Zimbabwe (NRZ) and NetOne. As can be observed, these entities, though targeted for restructuring, are the most dominant in the sectors they are operating in. In some sectors e.g. energy and power generation, steel production, beef processing, banking, petroleum/ infrastructure and distribution, grain distribution, rail, air and telecommunications, they are the sole operators there.

2.2. Understanding organizational culture

It was not until the beginning of the 1980s that organizational scholars began paying attention to the concept of culture (Cameron and Quinn, 1999). Perhaps the reason organizational culture was ignored as an important factor in accounting for organizational change is that it refers to the taken-for-granted values, underlying assumptions, expectations, and definitions present in an organization. Literature shows a numbers of studies done in the area of organizational culture. While there is some convergence on what constitutes culture, there is no common view of how it influences organizational effectiveness in general and organizational change in particular.

Desson, (2004) views organizational culture as a system of shared values, assumptions, beliefs, and norms that was learned by a group as it solved its problems of external adaptation and internal integration, that has worked well enough to be considered valid and, therefore, to be taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think, and feel in relation to those problems. This has a bearing on what becomes the shared understanding of the organization's vision, mission and the values that guide decision-making and activity. It shapes how the organization conducts its day-to-day business. Organizational culture reflects employees' views about "the way things are done around here." It also reflects the type of employees hired and retained by the company. Culture represents the prevailing ideology that people carry inside their heads and this affects the way organization members think, feel, and behave (Detert, Schroeder and Mauriel, 2000). Organizational culture therefore refers to the ways in which the organisation, including its stakeholders, use to act and think; it is the personality of an organization: the way people deal with one another, the values and beliefs that exist within the organization.

LaGuardia, (2008) says the anatomy of an organization's culture can strongly influence that organization's potential for success or failure including the ability of that organization to cope with change and encourage innovation. He argues that among the several functions performed by organizational culture is the fact of implementation support for the organization's strategy. If strategy and culture reinforce each other, employees find it natural to be committed to the strategy. This means that organization culture can facilitate or inhibit change in an organization. Where the current culture hinders the attainment of corporate goals, a firm must attempt to change organizational culture.

2.3. Why Organizational Culture Matters

While not always easy to define, culture is a powerful force in any organization as it has the potential to guide individual decisions and actions at the unconscious level. As a result, culture can have a potent effect on a company's well being and success. According to Onwuchekwa (2010) culture creates a common ground for team members; it reduces uncertainty by offering a language for interpreting events and issues. By so doing, it provides a sense of order so that all team members know what is expected of them. Culture contributes to a sense of continuity and unity as it offers a vision around which a company can rally.

Since the norms stemming from these shared beliefs, expectations and actions shape the behaviours of individuals and groups within the organization, culture gives identity. Just like our personal culture affects how we marry, how we raise our children, how we celebrate events and how we mourn death, organizational culture permeates the way employees go about the business on a day to day basis and sets the expectations, inertia or habits for that organization. Desson, (2004) argues that organizational culture matters because it affects 6 important issues of the organization i.e.

- What the organization considers to be the right decisions,
- The attitudes of stakeholders to the organization,
- What individuals consider to be appropriate behaviours and how they interact with each other within the organization,
- How individuals, work groups and the organization as a whole deal with work assigned to them,
- The speed and efficiency with which things get done and more importantly
- The organization's capacity for and receptiveness to change .

The sum total of these factors is a distinctive organizational personality.

Although culture is mainly the implicit set of forces that determine human behaviour; it is a powerful web of tacit understandings, boundaries, common language, and shared expectations maintained over time by the members (Smith and Trebilcock 2001). Schein (2004) explains that culture remains as the most vital thing when introducing change in Public Enterprises, because culture might be below the surface, but it exerts tremendous power and must be understood.

Because culture is a contextual factor that affects readiness for change, Weiner (2009) argues that leaders must be aware of and decipher the culture of the organization and groups at the various levels of artefacts, espoused beliefs and values, and basic underlying assumptions. Dunphy et al (2003) supports Schein (2004) by describing organizational culture as the glue or the (way we do business round here), providing the creation and continuity of meaning for members. According to this therefore, one of the most powerful ways to create change is to confront, develop or re-mould core cultural values so that members experience a

profound change in understanding purpose and therefore act differently. Public enterprises may also need to confront their clients and re-mould their core cultural values as a way of reigning in organizational change effectively.

Weiner (2009) concludes his argument by highlighting that organizational culture could amplify or dampen the change valence associated with a specific organizational change, depending on whether the change effort fits or conflicts with cultural values. He reiterates that organizational policies and procedures could positively or negatively affect organizational members' appraisals of task demands, resource availability and situational factors. It can then be beneficial to management of public enterprises to be aware of the essence of organizational policies and procedures, as well as organizational culture in influencing the outcome of change programmes such as enhancing performance of public enterprises.

2.4. Using the competing Values Framework for profiling the organizational culture
Cameron and Quinn (1999) have developed an organizational culture framework built upon a theoretical model called the "Competing Values Framework." This framework refers to whether an organization has a predominant internal or external focus and whether it strives for flexibility and individuality or stability and control. The framework is also based on six organizational culture dimensions and four dominant culture types (i.e., clan, adhocracy, market, and hierarchy). The competing values framework can be used in constructing an organizational culture profile.

The values that characterize the organization	The loyalty of employees	Orientations towards development	Formalism	Guidance towards results
Who leads	A "family" member	An entrepreneur	A manager	An expert
Values which are at the base of its members cohesion	The membership at the system of values	Innovation, creativity	Respecting the rules	Exemplary fulfilment of tasks
Values that motivate the employees	Social cohesion, moral	The expansion of business	Establishment of job seats	Competitiveness

Table 2: Interpretations of the organizational cultures proposed by Cameron and Quinn (1999)

The model focuses on the tensions and the inherent conflicts in the life of an organization. The two dimensions on which the model is based are further explained as:
- The control axis – flexibility, which highlights the contradictory expectations between control, stability, order, and flexibility, initiative and adaptability to change.
- The oriented axis to the intern environment - oriented to external environment, which illustrates the contradictory expectations, while maintaining the management system and company's organization and its orientation towards competition, adaptation and interaction with the company's external environment.

The interactions between these two dimensions lead to the identifications of four types of organizational cultures: the Clan type culture, Adhocracy (innovating) culture, Market culture and hierarchical culture as shown in the figure below:
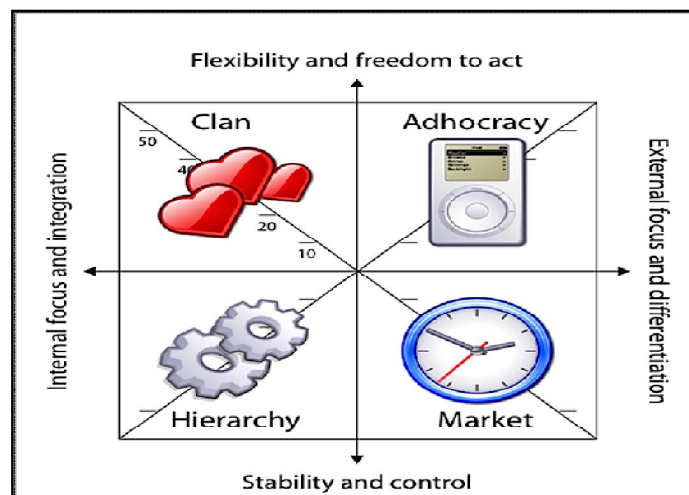

Figure 1: The typology of organizational cultures in Quinn's vision

- **The Clan Culture**
  It focuses on belonging to the family with the main values espoused being of motivation, social cohesion, participatory management style, encouraging interaction between members of the organization and promoting teamwork and loyalty of employees.
- **Adhocracy**
  This is a setup that focuses on external positioning with a high degree of flexibility and individuality. The values espoused are mainly on dynamism and adaptability, creativity and an enterprising spirit. The style of management must be able to take risks to develop the business.
- **Market Culture**
  Given the fact that it has an external focus and a need for stability and control, the culture emphasizes competitiveness and market superiority. There are specific performance standards and the manager is expected to be versatile in all fields.
- **Hierarchical Culture**
  This culture focuses on internal maintenance with a need for stability and control. As a result there is emphasis on the application of rules and procedures. Discipline, order and continuous assessment of activities are always expected. In this situation the manager seeks to minimize any risk and therefore is the administrator of all the activities.

In addition to the framework, the authors generated an 'Organizational Culture Assessment Instrument (OCAI)' which is used to identify the organizational culture profile based on the core values, assumptions, interpretations, and approaches that characterize organizations (Cameron and Quinn, 1999). Through the use of the OCAI, an organizational culture profile can be drawn by establishing the organization's dominant culture type characteristics.

3. Methodology

A descriptive survey research design was used to collect data from restructured public enterprises. Data collection was done in two parts; profiling the culture of the organizations and determining the corresponding performance of the organizations. The target and accessible population was the group of employees in each of the now privatized public enterprises in Zimbabwe who were already in the organizations at the time the enterprise was privatized. This was to ensure that the respondents fully understand and appreciate the culture and other issues during the restructuring. A sample was drawn from this population using the snowball technique. The questionnaire used to gather data from the sample consisted of a modified version of the "Organizational Culture Assessment Instrument" (OCAI) developed by Cameron and Quinn (1999). The OCAI was adapted and, based on the competing values framework, was used to describe the organizational culture type exhibited by each of the public enterprise. Each culture was later correlated with the performance of the respective entity.

To estimate instrument validity and reliability, first all the outliers were screened out then Cronbach's alpha test was used. A coefficient of internal consistency was calculated. The results are shown in the table below.

Culture Type	Reliability Coefficients obtained				
	DAIRIBORD	**CSC**	**CBZ**	**COTTCO**	***Comparison Reliability Coefficients**
A. Clan	.68	.77	.83	.68	.82
B. Adhocracy	.71	.69	.71	.81	.83
C. Market	.68	.57	.73	.68	.67
D. Hierarchy	.69	.72	.69	.82	.78

Table 3: Coefficients of Internal Consistency Using Cronbach's Alpha Methodology
* Reliability coefficients reported by Cameron & Quinn (1999)

The same sample was also subjected to the Kolmogorov-Smirnov normality test and failed the test. This meant that for the assessment of correlations between the culture types and the performance, the analysis technique would have to use non-parametric Spearman rho.

4. Results

4.1. Culture Type Description
The table below shows the dominant culture types for each of the enterprises that were part of the study population. The table also depicts the highest mean scores of the culture types for the current situation in each of the privatized entities.

Organization	Sample size	Highest Mean Score	S.D.	Dominant Culture
Dairibord	43	33	9.33	Clan
Commercial Bank of Zimbabwe	65	33	8.99	Clan
Cold Storage Commission	67	41	12.05	Hierarchy
Cotton Company of Zimbabwe	60	25	9.80	Market
*Zimbabwe Reinsurance Company	3	-	-	-

Table 4: Highest Mean Scores for different enterprises

Zimbabwe Reinsurance Company, the last enterprise in the table above, was discounted because it provided only 3 respondents eligible to answer the questionnaire.
The following are graphical representations of the culture types found in each of the privatized entities.
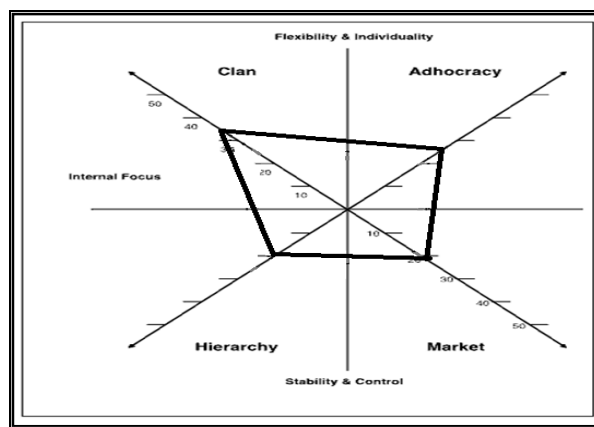

Figure 2: Culture Topology for Dairibord

The figure depicts a Clan type of culture as dominant for Dairibord. This means that the organization concentrates on internal maintenance with flexibility, concern for people, and sensitivity for customers.
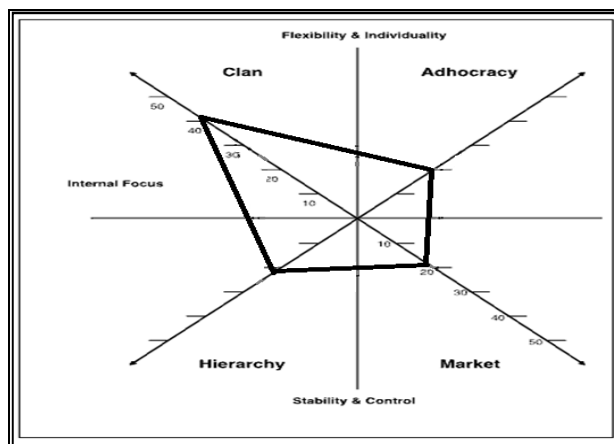

Figure 3: Culture topology for Commercial Bank of Zimbabwe (CBZ)

Like the Dairibord, the dominant culture for Commercial Bank of Zimbabwe (CBZ) is Clan type. However this one shows a greater degree of internal maintenance with flexibility, concern for people, and sensitivity for customers.
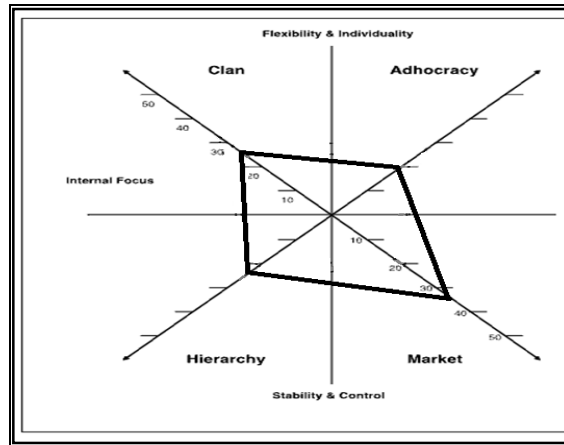
Figure 4: Culture topology for Cotton Company of Zimbabwe (COTTCO)

The figure depicts a dominant market type of culture for the Cotton Company of Zimbabwe (COTTCO). This means that the organization focuses on external maintenance with a need for stability and control.
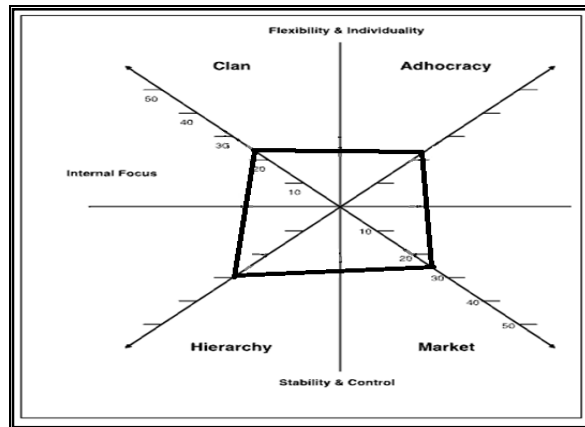

Figure 5: Culture topology for Cold Storage Commission (CSC)

This figure depicts a dominant culture topology called hierarchy and shows that the organization focuses on internal maintenance with a need for stability and control.
The table below shows Spearman's correlation coefficient obtained for the various entities

Spearman's rho					Combined (average) scores	
	Dairibord (n=43)	Clan	0.733			
		Adhocracy	0.695			
		Market	0.544			
		Hierarchy	0.499			
	CBZ (n=65)	Clan	0.672			
		Adhocracy	0.655			
		Market	0.522		Clan	0.759
		Hierarchy	0.518		Adhocracy	0.645
	COTTCO (n=67)	Clan	0.775		Market	0.542
		Adhocracy	0.645		Hierarchy	0.513
		Market	0.588			
		Hierarchy	0.511			
	CSC (n=60)	Clan	0.856			
		Adhocracy	0.585			
		Market	0.513			
		Hierarchy	0.525			

Table 5: Spearman's correlation coefficient for the various entities

The table below summaries the results found and presented under the culture charts 15 and 16 above plus the performance rating.

Organization	Dominant culture	Culture Strength	Performance Rating
Dairibord	Clan	moderate	4
Commercial Bank of Zimbabwe (CBZ)	Clan	strong	4
Cotton Company of Zimbabwe (COTTCO)	Market	moderate	3
Cold Storage Company (CSC)	Hierarchy	moderate	2

1	2	3	4	5
Heavily supported	struggling to survive	Low	Moderate	Good performance
Guiding Scale for performance for the performance				

Table 6

The Clan type was found to have the biggest influence while hierarchy was the least. The research findings prove the main hypothesis which claims there is a relationship between organizational culture and organizational performance of the privatized entities in Zimbabwe.

This result supports earlier findings by Ahmadi, Salamzadeh, Daraei and Akbari, (2012) that all topologies of culture have some influence on organizational wellbeing but that degree of influence varies from organization to organization.

5. Discussion

For the Dairibord and CBZ, the dominant culture exhibited in the current situation is the Clan type. The performance of both these enterprises were considered moderate to strong. Since the Clan culture emphasizes individual development, morale, teamwork, participation and consensus, the organization becomes a friendly place to work in; there is a tradition of loyalty and a high level of commitment among its members as supported by Berrio, (2003).

For Cottco and CSC, the culture types were different with the former being market and the latter being hierarchy. The performance of these organizations was noted to be low and could best be described as needing rescue; a situation that defeats the purpose of their creation and need for privatization. Both the market and hierarchy types of cultures are not inherently inferior but may not be the best for the circumstances obtaining in Zimbabwe now. The characteristics of both the market and hierarch culture are explained in the literature review section of this study.

Each culture type represents a suit of features a company could use to operate. None of the culture types; clan, adhocracy, hierarchy and market is inherently better than another just as no culture is necessarily better than another. But, some cultures types might be more appropriate in certain contexts than others. As many other researchers have found out, the key to using culture to improve performance lies in matching culture or its attributes to organizational goals.

What this means is that for now the culture type that seems to favour the growth and performance of the public enterprises is the clan culture which fosters commitment and participation. Given the fact that the Zimbabwean business environment is currently full of challenges caused by the liquidity crunch, sanctions from the West and political uncertainty among others; there is greater need for all members of the organization to work as a team. This is a concept often referred to as strategic regeneration and leads to organizational renewal as it encourages the client to search for ways to innovate, create change and implement within their organizations.

This finding is in agreement with what research has revealed about business organizations that possess clan cultures; they are associated with having homogeneity of effort, clear focus, and higher performance in environments where unity and common vision are required (Cameron & Quinn, 1999; Ahmadi et al, (2012).

A study of US companies by Cameron, (2004), also revealed that the major distinguishing feature in the top 5 companies, their most important competitive advantage and the factor that they all highlighted as a key ingredient in their success, was their organizational culture. The sustained success of these firms had less to do with market forces than company values; less to do with competitive positioning than personal beliefs; less to do with resource advantages than vision. Successful companies seem to have developed something special that supersedes corporate strategy, market presence or technological advantages. This is a force that emanates from a unique corporate culture. Similar studies by Latta, (2009) and Agin and Gibson (2010) corroborated these findings.

6. Conclusion and Recommendations

It is evident from this and many other researches that organizational culture plays a very critical role in determining especially long term performance of the entity. This study seems to point out the current situation in Zimbabwe favours a Clan type culture. To improve performance in public enterprises therefore, government should institute governance systems that place a premium on

teamwork, participation and consensus. The organization should be an open and friendly place to work where people share a lot of themselves; like an extended family.

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