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Entitled

TELECOMMUNICATIONS REGULATION IN THE UAE: THE INTERCONNECTEDNESS OF BETTER GOVERNANCE AND REGULATORY PERFORMANCE

by

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Abstract

This research focuses on Telecommunications Regulation in the UAE and studies the interrelationship of 'better public governance' and 'performance' of telecommunications regulation in the UAE. The work is a reexamination of the thesis that, "Countries with better (governance) institutions have better telecom regulators", and, "Private regulated firms achieve the same public interest goals as state-owned firms". The study analyzes public governance in the UAE using six internationally recognized criteria: 'voice accountability', 'political stability', 'government effectiveness', 'regulatory quality', 'rule of law' and 'control of corruption'. It analyzes the quality of regulatory governance by the Telecommunications Regulatory Authority (TRA) in the UAE in terms of four dimensions suggested in the literature: 'regulatory transparency'; 'regulatory independence'; 'resource availability', and the 'enforcement of licenses' and their subcomponents. The research is a qualitative study using both primary and secondary data. The primary information was collected via comprehensive discussions with six management level personnel from the TRA. The work uses laws, regulations, data analyses, and reports from the UAE government, other relevant government and organizational sources, the World Bank, the World Economic Forum, the World Justice Project, and Transparency International. This research proves that since the UAE has a high level of national public governance, it also has good quality telecommunications regulatory governance across all the relevant criteria. The results also indicated that the private service provider, Du, has done more than Etisalat to prove that the, "Private regulated firms achieve the same public interest goals as state-owned firms". Finally, the work provides recommendations, based on the shortcomings unearthed by the study, for improving telecommunications governance in the UAE, and for future research on telecommunications regulatory governance.

Keywords: Regulatory Governance, UAE National Governance, TRA, Regulation, Service Providers, Etisalat and Du.