

## ABSTRACT

Institutionalization of information security management practices (ISMPs) in public organisations motivated the researcher to conduct this study. The main objective was to investigate the institutionalization of ISMPs in public organisations in Uganda. Specific objectives included: (i) ascertain current state of ISMPs and challenges, (ii) establish institutionalization processes followed, (iii) identify the requirements, (iv) design framework to support ISMPs, (v) validate the framework. Research on ISMPs has acknowledged that lack of established formal controls and guidelines as deterrents to their implementation. This was evidenced by some studies conducted on existing frameworks in the Uganda that focused on technological controls and marginalized managerial controls. To fill this gap required designing an appropriate ISMP framework to support institutionalisation of ISMPs at different managerial levels. A mixture of quantitative and qualitative approaches was used to collect data. Findings indicated that ISMPs had challenges that obstruct their institutionalisation. Broadly, the study found that institutionalization process of ISMPs in public organisations specifically universities still had gaps that needed to be addressed. Thus, an ISMP framework that combined information security governance, physical security controls and technical measures, personnel security areas was designed and validated. The study recommends (a) establishing positions of responsibilities in organizational structures as starting point towards formal institutionalization of ISMPs, (b) adopting the proposed ISMP framework as a mechanism to improve management of information security, (c) using the recommended guidelines to check implementation of ISMPs, (d) involvement of all users and stakeholders in the implementation of security controls, (e) enforce penalties in accordance with established laws to non-compliant staff. Future work should aim at establishing the relationships between constructs based on Gregor's theory on information security and institution theory with regard to institutionalization of ISMPs in public organisations.

**Keywords:** *information security, information security framework, information security management practices, institutionalization, securing information, public organisations*