

The Effect of Performance Contract Implementation on Service Delivery in Provincial Administration

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Abstract

In order for the Provincial Administration department in Kenya to deliver its mandate, it needs efficient and proper service delivery. The implementation of performance contracting was aimed at addressing quality of service delivery. Despite these reforms, there remain some challenges in terms of quality of service delivery. The study sought to evaluate the effect of implementing performance contract on service delivery in provincial administration and also evaluate the effectiveness of Performance Contracting in improving efficiency in service. The study used descriptive survey research design. Primary data was collected from a sample size of 147 drawn from a target population of 490 consisting of 90 employees of Provincial Administration and 400 members of the public. Both stratified random sampling and purposive sampling were used for Provincial Administration staff and members of the public respectively to pick the respondents. The data was gathered by use of a questionnaire that had both open and closed ended questions. Descriptive statistics was used to analyze data in form of frequencies and percentages, and presented in tables. The study revealed that the implementation of Performance Contracting was effective in improving efficiency in service delivery by the department.

Keywords: Performance contract, competent, effectiveness, quality service delivery.

1. Introduction

The major goal for any country is to achieve high standards of quality of life for its citizens. As part of performance management, performance contracting is a central element of new public management, which is a global movement reflecting liberation management and market-driven management. The public service and in particular civil service plays an indispensable role in the effective delivery of public services that are key to the functioning of a state economy. Once the delivery of services is constrained, it affects the quality of life of the people and the nation's development process. Public services in many African countries are confronted with many challenges, which constrain their delivery capacities (Lienert, 2003). They include the human resource factor, relating to shortage of the manpower in terms of numbers and key competencies; lack of appropriate mind sets, and social psychological dispositions, and low rate of remuneration. There is also perennial problem of shortage of financial and material logistics that are necessary to support effective service delivery. On the other hand, the gradual erosion of the ethics and accountability has continued to bedevil the public sector in delivery of services to the people effectively.

To address the above challenges the government in conjunction with development partners has from time to time put in place public sector reforms meant to improve service delivery to its citizens (AAPAM, 2005). The main concern has been to improve external accountability and increase internal efficiency and effectiveness at the same time. In particular, performance contracting is seen as a tool for improving public budgeting, promoting a better reporting system and modernising public management while enhancing efficiency in resource use and effectiveness in service delivery (Greiling, 2006). The Kenya government responded to the public service delivery challenges by formulating and implementing Public Sector Reforms (PSR) way back in 1993. In order to achieve the efficient public service delivery, this called for fundamental changes in the way the sector operates in institutional organization and relationships and in the individual and collective behavior of those serving in the sector thus the government adopted Performance Contracting (PC) in public service as a strategy in improving service delivery to Kenyans (Kobia & Nura, KIA 2006). Performance contracts are defined as legally binding contractual obligations that tie an organization or individual to undertaking specified tasks at predetermined levels of performance within a given period of time. Performance contracts clarify the goals and objectives of public agencies, including their obligations and responsibilities and measure the extent of achievement of each objective.

As from the 2005/2006 Financial Year all government ministries and state corporations were targeted and started operating under Performance Contracts. The Ministry of Provincial Administration and Internal Security which is key in coordination of government activities and dissemination of government policies in the field was paramount to achieving the Government Reform Agenda. In 2006 the department implemented Performance Contract up to the level of the District Commissioner, while the other lower level officers including the Assistant Chiefs began to operate on Work plans which cascade the targets in Performance Contract of the department. As a strategy to accelerate the attainment of the targets of the Performance Contract, the department has

implemented three phases of Rapid Results Initiatives (RRI) in 2006, 2009 and 2010. It is therefore important to evaluate the effectiveness of Performance contracts on the efficiency of delivery of service by the department.

1.2 Objective of the study

The aim of the study is to evaluate the effectiveness of Performance contracting in improving efficiency in service delivery by provincial administrative department. and also to evaluate the level of implementation of performance contract component of service delivery.

2. Performance

The word performance means different things depending on the context in which it is used. According to Business Dictionary.com, it refers to accomplishment of a given task measured against present standards of accuracy, completeness, cost and speed. Performance also means successful execution of a contract, or fulfillment of an obligation, in a manner that releases the performer from all liabilities under the contract. It provides a framework for organizing, automating and analyzing business methodologies, metrics, processes and systems that drive business performance. Performance provides Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) that help companies monitor efficiency and projects and employees against operational targets. Various methodologies are used in implementing performance management. The discipline gives the organization/companies a top down framework by which to align planning and execution, strategy and tactics and business unit and enterprise objectives. Reactions may include the balanced score card, total quality management and integrated strategic measurement. Managers have tended to be judged on their performance in one of the three principal ways; In terms of business outcomes (turnover, profits, return on investments etc) in cases where they are Directors or Senior Managers. Secondly, in terms of their agreed departmental or unit objectives as agreed under some system of management by objectives.

2.1 Management by Objectives (MBO)

The concept was first coined by Peter Drucker in the 1950s. In his classic book “The Practice of Management”, he viewed it as a principle of harmonizing individual manager goals with those of the organization. Management by Objective is now widely practiced around the world. The definition and application of MBO differ widely. Some people think it is an appraisal tool; others see it as a motivational technique; still others consider MBO a planning and control device. Heinz et al (1993) define MBO as a comprehensive managerial system that integrates many key managerial activities in a systematic manner and is consciously directed towards the effective and efficient achievement of organizational and individual objectives. Besides being used for performance appraisal as an instrument in motivating individuals, and strategic planning there are still other managerial sub-systems that can be intergraded into MBO. They include Human resource planning and development (staffing), career planning (building on personal strength and overcoming weaknesses), the reward system (paying for performance) and other managerial activities important for a specific position.

2.2 What is Performance Contract?

Performance Contracts are legally binding contractual obligations that tie an organization or individual to undertaking specified tasks at predetermined levels of performance within a given period of time (A Strategy for Performance Improvement in the Public Service, 2001). Performance Contract system originated in France in the late 1960s. It was later developed with great deal of elaboration in Pakistan and Korea and thereafter introduced to India (OECD, 1997). This practice was counterproductive as managers who were implementers of the strategic plans were not involved at the formulation stage. Aosa (2000) supports this view when he argues in his study that due to increased environmental turbulence in the early 1970’s, especially 1973 top executives were forced to recast the way they looked at their business for survival. It has been adopted in developing countries in Africa, including Nigeria, Gambia, and Ghana and now Kenya .The definition of Performance Contracts itself has been a subject of considerable debate among the scholars and human resource practitioners. Performance Contracting is a branch of management science referred to as Management Control Systems. A Performance Contract is freely negotiated performance agreement between Government, organization and individual on one hand and the agency itself (Kenya Sensitization Training Manual (KSTM, 2004). The main purpose of performance contracting according to Armstrong and Baron (2004) is to ensure delivery of quality service to the public in a transparent manner for the survival of the organization. Performance contracts clearly spell out the desired end results expected of the contractor or officers who have signed the contracts. The manner in which the work is to be done is left up to the officer who is given as much freedom as possible in figuring out how best to meet the organization’s performance objective. In this section the author looks at the performance contracting management process, its implementation, evaluation and monitoring and finally its impact evaluation on service delivery

2.3 Genesis of Performance Contracting in Kenya

The concept of Performance Contracting was first introduced in the management of State Corporation in 1989. A Parastatal Reform Strategy Paper, which was approved by cabinet in 1991, was the first official recognition of the concept of Performance Contracting as it was part of the following policies that were recommended to

streamline and improve the performance of State Corporations; Divestiture or Liquidation on non-strategic Parastatals, contracting out Commercial activities to the private sector, permitting private sector competition for existing state monopolies, and the improvement in the enabling environment of all strategic parastatals including removal of potentially conflicting objectives. Performance Contracts, where applicable will be used to make transparent the cost of social services and to compensate the parastatal for their net costs. The first two parastatals to be on Performance Contracting were Kenya Railways Corporation and the National Cereals and Produce Board. Kenya Railways signed Performance Contracts in April 1989 and National Cereals and Produce Board in November 1990 (Kobia & Nura, KIA 2006).

2.4 The Contract Plan Experience in Africa

In little more than a decade, Ghana has transformed the structure and strategy of its rural water supply sector. By 2000, district assemblies and communities played a significant role in planning supplies. The new policy and structure has attracted extra funds, and work is accelerating. This reform process started with an extended dialogue with the major stakeholders in the sector, out of which a new rural water and sanitation policy was developed. The policy was then implemented in several large pilot projects, supported by a number of external agencies, and finally the lessons from those projects were incorporated into the national and international NGOs which were contracted to build the capacity of local-level NGOs and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs). The Community Water Supply Agency (CWSA) was created as a facilitating agency rather than an implementer CWSA, as a semi-autonomous public sector agency, signs an Annual Performance contract with the State Enterprise Commission. It is committed to staying efficient and runs, below a 200 size staff, and highly decentralized to its ten regional offices (World Bank, 2002).

2.5 Efforts towards Improvement of Service Delivery in Provincial Administration

The core functions of Provincial Administration include the promotion of statehood and nationhood, maintenance of law and order, and; dissemination and interpretation of Government policies, peace building and conflict resolution, management of National Disaster Operational and coordination of disaster response. Between 2004-2005, the Kenya Anti-corruption Commission (KACC) conducted a Corruption Perception Survey whose findings reflected Office of the President as the most corrupt Ministry (Office of the President 2006). Following the KACC report, the political, policy and technical leadership from all Ministries in Office of the President met on 24th July, 2006 and promised Kenyans that more comprehensive Service Improvement Action Plans and Anti-Corruption Strategies would be developed and implemented to address the challenge. The Strategic Action Plans with targeted Thematic Areas were launched within the 100 Days Rapid Results Initiative which commenced on 6th September, 2006 whose theme was “Huduma Bora ni Haki Yako.” The launch was preceded by identification of key service points, corruption prone areas and interventions, and devising strategies and techniques for rendering ethical and quality services and results to the customers. The Office of the President which then comprised of five Ministries namely Provincial Administration and Internal Security, Immigration and Registration of Persons, Cabinet Office, Public Service and Special Programmes identified the RRI approach as one of the most effective tool of changing the poor public perception through improved service delivery and adherence to work ethics in service delivery to the Ministry’s customers. The focus therefore was on quality and ethical services because majority of Kenyans affected by the corruption perception are those seeking various services from the offices down to the grass root level. During these 100 RRI days the Ministry of State for Provincial Administration and Internal Security not only identified the challenge areas but also the corruption prone areas. In this respect the Ministry adopted the theme “Huduma Bora ni Haki” to rally Kenyans to demand for efficient and timely services from all offices from the national to the village level. The challenge areas include; Customer Care and Image Reinventing, Development and Implementation of Service Charter and Introduction of Community Policing; Development of Information, Education and Communication Strategy, Development of Anti-Corruption Strategy to address corruption and Introduction of Performance Appraisal System to serving officers (O.O.P, RRI, 2009).

2.6 Performance Contracting in Kenya as a Strategy for Performance Improvement in the Public Service

In order to move the implementation of the Public Service Reforms Program (PSRP) forward, the Government of Kenya developed and launched the Performance Improvement Strategy in the Public Service in 2001. The Strategy sought to increase productivity and improve service delivery. It outlined the actions that were necessary to imbed long lasting and sustainable change in the way public services are offered. Underpinning this strategy was the Results Oriented Management (ROM) approach, which makes it necessary to adjust operations to respond to predetermined objectives, outputs and results. The adoption of this approach therefore demanded a paradigm shift in Government. This called for a transformation from a passive, inward-looking bureaucracy to one which is pro-active, outward looking and results oriented, one that seeks ‘customer satisfaction’ and ‘value for money’. Consequently, the ministries and all departments were required to develop strategic plans which reflected their objectives derived from the 9th National Development Plan, the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper and based on the Medium Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF), Sectoral Priorities and Millennium Development Goals (Kobia & Nura, KIA 2006).

3. Subjects and Methods

The study was carried out in Teso North District of Western Province, Kenya. This area was purposively selected because Performance Contract concepts were implemented in the District from 2006 when the strategy was adopted in all the districts across the country. A total of 90 Provincial Administration staff and 400 members of public formed the target population. The study used multi stage sampling technique. Purposive sampling was applied to select respondents from the members of the public. Stratified random sampling was used to pick respondents from employees of provincial administration. The study was based on a sample size of 30% of the target population that is 147 respondents. Gay L.R. (1981) asserts that for descriptive surveys, at least 10% of the target population is enough for analysis. Proportionate sampling was used in determining the sample size of members of public and Provincial Administration respondents. The study used both primary and secondary data. Primary data was gathered directly from respondents by use of a questionnaire that consisted of both open and closed ended questions. The questionnaire had three sections; A, B and C. Section A targeted all respondents and covered personal information of the respondents including designation, age, education level and period of residence in the District of study. The Validity and reliability of the questionnaire was established through test-retest technique on 20 respondents who were not part of the sample study. The Spearman's Rank Order Correlation Coefficient (r) was used to establish reliability of the questionnaire. Secondary data was collected from official documents in the offices of the District Commissioner, District Officers, Chiefs and Assistant Chiefs. Data collected from the field were sorted and coded for analysis. Descriptive statistics was used to analyze data particularly in summarizing the response data in terms of proportions, frequencies and percentages. Bell (1993) maintains that when making the results known to a variety of readers, simple descriptive statistics such as percentage have a considerable advantage over more complex statistics, since they are easily understood. The results of data analysis were presented in tables where a Likert scale of 1 to 5 was used.

4. Results and Discussion

In the study 147 questionnaires were distributed to the respondents who were categorized into two strata, that is members of public and the Provincial Administration staff. In total 112 questionnaires were returned representing 76.19% response rate. This rate represented 78.57% members of public and 21.43% Provincial Administration staff. There were 75.89% and 24.11 % male and female respondents respectively. According to the research, a District Commissioner, one District Officer, five Chiefs, twelve Assistant Chiefs, a District Clerk, a Procurement Officer, one Human Resource Officer, four Clerical Officers and a driver were targeted as a result of stratification sampling

4.1 Frequency of visits to Provincial Administration Offices for service delivery

In relation to frequency of visits to Provincial Administration offices by respondents, a Likert scale of 1-5 was used in the research, where 1 represented the least weight and 5 the highest weight of frequency of visits respectively, while 2, 3, and 4 lie in their middle. The table 1 shows the frequency of visits to various offices.

4.2 Degree of Improvement in Service Delivery.

Regarding the degree of improvement on service delivery on a scale of 1-5, where 1, represent the least weight of improvement and 5 the highest weight of improvement in efficiency of service delivery and the others 2, 3, 4 lie in their middle, the following as shown in table 3 was noted from the results.

The respondents noted at a rating of 3.675 a very improved service delivery. Therefore according to the scale used above, Provincial Administration is very efficient in service delivery.

4.3 Frequency of use of service delivery tools by Provincial

On being asked how often they use service delivery tools, the responses were often varied. As shown in table 4, it was noted that Work Plans, Service Register and Customer Care Desk were very often used with a mean rating of 4.250, 4.238 and 4.111 respectively. Service Charter had a mean rating of 4.050 while most of the other tools were often used. Disaster Preparedness and Management Strategy and Monitoring and Evaluation recorded the least mean rating of 3.000. With regard to Work Plan, a comparison with respect to frequency of training, importance of training, frequency of participation in its preparation and frequency of its use, the research revealed an interesting pattern in consistency of responses with 3. A further analysis (Table 4) revealed that 60.71% of the respondents agreed that efficiency of service delivery has improved. This was followed by 34.82% of the respondents who strongly agreed that there is improvement in efficiency of service delivery by Provincial Administration.

In regard to effectiveness of performance contracting in improving efficiency in service delivery, respondents agreed with a rating of 4.295 and by a majority (99.10%) of respondents, as shown on Table 2. On being asked to compare between their previous visit and current visit in regard to efficiency of service delivery the majority of respondents, 92.86% noted improvement and only 7.14% indicated that they had not noted improvement in efficiency in service delivery. The respondents were asked to suggest ways to further improve efficiency of service delivery and their responses were as follows; frequent training and re-training of staff, use of incentives

particularly salary increments, rewards and promotions. They also suggested effective time management, effective communication with the public, and availing adequate and timely resources and equipment. Other suggestions included eradication of corruption loopholes, regular transfers of staff, recruitment of qualified staff and provision of offices to the Chiefs and the Assistant Chiefs. In regards to the effectiveness of various channels of communication in disseminating of government policies the responses were as summarized in the table 5 on a Likert scale of 1-5. It can be noted that the respondents considered Baraza as the most effective channel of transmission of government information to the public with a mean rating of 4.420 followed by radio at 3.411 and public notice board at 2.850, television was least rated at 2.240.

The study attempts to evaluate the effect of implementing performance contract on service delivery in provincial administration. Our other objective was to evaluate the effectiveness of Performance Contracting in improving efficiency in service. According to the study, the implementation of Performance contracting has been effective in improving efficiency in service delivery by Provincial Administration department and an organization's purpose defines the ways in which it relates to its environment. If this purpose is fulfilled, the organization will survive and prosper (Luo & Peng, 1999). This study supports the work of Armstrong and Baron (2004) who concluded that the work of performance contracting is to ensure delivery of quality service to the public in a transparent manner for the survival of the organization. The overall rating of efficiency in service delivery of Provincial Administration offices was 3.625 aggregate which translates to very efficient service delivery. From the analysis it was noted that the service aspect that was ranked one was staff courtesy and eagerness to serve. This was followed by reliability of services provided and third was staff competency in addressing issues. These three service aspects thus were all rated to be very efficient as per the Likert scale. The results agrees with the work of Gore (1996), he recognizes the importance of performance contracting when he admits that in the United States federal government, performance contracts are in one way or the other changing the way many staff do their jobs. Gore believes that many staff have changed their attitude towards workers which in turn has encouraged good customer service. In regards to time taken in solving issues, the study found that most provincial administration staff take minimum time in solving the public issues, besides that they have a slight sense of responsibility. This might be due to the performance contract that is put in place. We also found that cleanliness and tidiness of compounds and offices was not given much attention. The study further recommended that there is need to improve on cleanliness and tidiness of compounds and offices as well as staff sense of responsibility. Generally the degree of improvement on service delivery was found to have improved. Both the members of Provincial Administration staff and the public agreed that performance contracting has significantly improved efficiency in service delivery in Provincial Administration department. In comparison between the public respondent's previous visit and current visit in regard to efficiency of service delivery the majority of respondents, noted improvement and only an insignificant number indicated that they had not noted improvement in efficiency in service delivery. This confirms that the public has faith in the provincial administrative staff and because of the improved services they are delighted to revisit the offices. The respondents were asked to suggest ways to further improve efficiency of service delivery and their responses were as follows; frequent training and re-training of staff, use of incentives particularly salary increments, rewards and promotions. They also suggested effective time management, effective communication with the public, and availing adequate and timely resources and equipment. Other suggestions included eradication of corruption loopholes, regular transfers of staff, recruitment of qualified staff and provision of offices to the Chiefs and the Assistant Chiefs. The work prescribes effective performance contract to improve on the service delivery.

5. Conclusion

The implementation of Performance contracting by Provincial Administration department has been effective in improving efficiency in service delivery. The level of implementation of performance contracting is high as revealed by the frequent participation in both preparation and use of performance contract tools by the Provincial Administration staff. The level of competence of staff was high as reflected by both frequent trainings and high level of customer satisfaction. However, the study revealed that there was need to improve cleanliness and tidiness of compounds and sense of responsibility of staff among service. Also some key elements of an effective performance contracting system were shown not to be properly implemented. The study suggested that there should be effective time management, effective communication with the public, and availing adequate and timely resources and equipment. Other suggestions included eradication of corruption loopholes, regular transfers of staff, recruitment of qualified staff and provision of offices to the Chiefs and the Assistant Chiefs. The work prescribes effective performance contract to improve on the service delivery. Performance Contracting is an important and effective part of the public service reform prescription aimed at improved service delivery to the public. It is recommended that its application in the public service be strengthened and broadened to cover every part of the public service. In order to ensure successful implementation and realization of its benefits together with intended objectives, there is need for strengthening an effective training programme for all staff,

regular monitoring and evaluation and a fair reward system. Addressing identified challenges and intervening factors is also paramount to ensure that attainment of set targets is not compromised.

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Tables

Table 1. Respondents' rating of frequency of visits to Provincial Administration Offices for service delivery

Office visited for services	Most frequent 5	Very frequent 4	Frequent 3	Fairly frequent 2	Not frequent 1	Total score	Mean	Rank
Assistant chief's	35	6	16	21	17	306	3.22	1
Chief's	24	21	19	23	14	321	3.17	2
District officer's	7	16	31	22	15	251	2.75	4
DC's	19	10	15	25	24	278	2.99	3

Source: Field Survey 2011

Table 2: The Effectiveness of Performance Contracting in Improving Service Delivery

Degree of Agreement	Frequency $\sum f_i$	Weight w_i	$f_i w_i$	% Response
Strongly agree	39	5	195	34.82
Agree	68	4	272	60.71
Least agree	4	3	12	3.57
Disagree	1	2	2	0.90
Strongly disagree	0	1	0	0
	$\sum f_i = 112$		$\sum f_i w_i = 481$	100

$$\text{Aggregate is } \frac{481}{112} = 4.295$$

Source: Field Survey 2011

Table 3: Degree of Improvement in Service Delivery

	f_i	w_i	fw_i
Most improved	21	5	105
Very improved	44	4	176
Improved	33	3	99
Fairly improved	7	2	14
Least improved	3	1	3
Total	108		397

$$\bar{X} = \frac{397}{108} = 3.675$$

Source: Field Survey 2011

Table 4: Frequency of use of service delivery tools by Provincial Administration staff

Service tools	Most often 5	Very often 4	Often 3	Fairly often 2	Least often 1	Total score	Mean score	Rank
Work plan	11	5	2	2	0	85	4.250	1
Service register	11	6	2	2	0	89	4.238	2
Service charter	8	7	3	2	0	81	4.050	4
Core values	6	6	5	2	0	73	3.842	5
Customer care desk	7	9	0	1	1	74	4.111	3
Suggestion box	4	8	2	3	4	68	3.238	9
Information. Education & communication	1	5	7	4	1	55	3.056	11
Crime prevention strategy	5	3	8	2	2	67	3.350	8
Prevention of drugs and substance abuse strategy	7	5	1	4	3	69	3.450	7
Corruption prevention plan	6	7	5	1	1	76	3.800	6
Disaster preparedness & management strategy	3	4	7	4	3	63	3.000	12
Monitoring and evaluation	3	4	4	4	3	54	3.000	12
Customer satisfaction survey	3	5	5	6	1	63	3.150	10
Total							46.535	

Aggregate mean is 3.580

Source: Field Survey 2011

Table 5: Respondents' ratings of effectiveness of communication channels

Channels of Comm	Most effective 5	Very effective 4	Effective 3	Fairly effective 2	Least effective 1	Total score	Mean	Std	C.V. %
Baraza	72	15	14	5	1	473	4.420	0.952	21.52
Radio	27	13	24	10	11	290	3.411	1.383	40.55
Newspapers	10	13	34	26	19	275	2.696	1.200	44.51
Notice Boards	11	13	39	24	13	285	2.850	1.149	40.32
Television	2	11	27	30	31	226	2.240	1.069	47.72
Circular	14	9	24	18	26	240	2.640	1.395	52.84

Source: Field Survey 2011

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