

Performance Contracting And Performance Of Research Projects In Selected Public Universities In Coast Region, Kenya

Hamisi J. Mwanguni

PhD Scholar, PhD Project Planning and Management
(Monitoring & Evaluation Option), Masters of Arts in
Project Planning and Management, University of Nairobi,
Bachelor of Arts in Development Studies, Kampala
International University, Technical University of Mombasa,
Mombasa

Prof. Charles Rambo

Associate Professor, University of Nairobi
PhD degree in Financing Distance Education,
MBA Degree in Finance of Newport University, California,
BBA Degree with a major in Finance and a minor in
Accounting of Newport University, California USA.
Nairobi

Dr. John Mbugua

Senior Lecturer, University of Nairobi, Doctor of
Philosophy (Distance Education), Master of Education,
Bachelor of Education (Arts), Nairobi

Abstract: The rapid growth of higher education has largely occurred at the expense of poor performance of research projects as more emphasis is put on teaching. This coupled with failure by universities to comply with the Universities Act of 2012 and the Universities Standards and Guidelines of 2014 has hindered performance of research projects in public universities. The purpose of this paper is to determine the influence of Performance Contracting on the performance of research projects in public universities in the Coast Region of Kenya. The study used a pragmatism paradigm. A sample of 285; consisting of 173 from Technical University of Mombasa and 112 from Pwani University was employed through proportionate and simple random sampling to obtain a representative sample. Data analysis was by inferential and descriptive statistics; mean, frequencies, percentages and standard deviation. Shapiro-Wilk Test. An average mean of 3.96 and standard deviation of 0.717 confirmed that performance contracting influences performance of research projects in public universities. The study recommends Ministry of Education and Commission for University Education should adopt common performance targets for all public universities in Kenya, continual use of Performance Contracting as well as enhancing human capacity for Performance Contracting.

Keywords: Performance contracting; performance; research projects, public universities, pragmatism

I. INTRODUCTION

Performance in public universities in Africa and much of the developing world has been declining in the past due to limited government finance, support and lack of some sort of reward for the academic staff. This scenario has led to brain-drain, occasioned by migration of professionals to Europe in pursuit of improved remuneration and compensation that are not offered in African countries.

The Performance contracting concept formally started in Kenya in the year 2003 with an aim of achieving; enhancing performance, reduction of government finance, improved openness in utilization and operations of resource, enhanced accountability, creation of accurate and fair performance impression, performance based reward system, little confusion occasioned from a wealth of goals, apportionment of responsibility, enhancement in the association in planning and implementation, attainment of better independence and creation of supporting regulatory and legal environment

(GOK, 2001). Performance contracting implementation began in 2004 in all state institutions. This resulted in the signing the Performance Contract's by December 2004 by all sixteen State Corporations. Selecting of experimental institutions comprised of representation from various divisions and organizations with Strategic plans. Successful executing the performance contracts in state corporations resulted in extending Performance Contracting to the Public Service. The government of Kenya made a decision to engage all Local Authorities on Performance Contracts.

Performance Contracting introduction in all public Universities Kenya aimed at enhancing quality of higher education through assessing performance of lecturer on routine activities; attending lectures, and setting, making and moderating of exams. The aim was to enhance excellence of higher education in public institutes of higher learning. These contracts specified the mutual performance responsibilities, intents and duties of the two parties; the government and the universities (GoK, 2007). This put more emphasis on results/outputs instead of inputs, rules; enhance the process of target-setting and follow-up. Performance contracts represented a devolved, and flexible means of making government bodies more accountable, responsible, and cost-conscious. Like other management structures, performance contract used financial indicators for performance measurement (GoK, 2007). The targets given in the Performance Contract guidelines include; curricula development/review, research publications, research proposals submitted, research projects funded, expenditure on research and development, innovation and extension (innovations) and collaborative research linkages (GoK, 2016). This introduction was cognizant by the present worldwide trend to employ and appraise employees through the engagement of performance contracts (Kobia and Mohammed, 2006).

A. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Public and private institution of higher education are faced with challenges in growth, growth of curricula, and inadequate funding which has adversely affected performance of research projects in Kenyan Universities. The country's economic situation together with Government policies to cut public-sector spending but escalating guideline, present both a shortfall on student enrollment rates and a competitive market place. This has adversely affected performance of research projects in this sector as universities have resorted to concentrate more on teaching than research thus not following the set guidelines; (Universities Standards and Guidelines 2014 and Universities Act 2012). Funding in research has dropped from 15% to 8% hence affecting performance of research projects in public universities.

Lack of strong performance contracting structures in the managing of public Universities as highlighted in policy citations as one of the factors negatively influencing performance of research projects in public Universities. Studies carried out in developed and developing countries further affirm that M&E system remain a key challenge and its adoption is slow for national government but more so to other sectors, including education (UNICEF, 2013; Duguay, 2010; Mackay, 2007; Arild, 2001).

B. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- ✓ Signing performance contracts influences performance of research projects in public universities
- ✓ Setting performance targets influences performance of research projects in public universities
- ✓ Service delivery training of staff influences performance of research projects in public universities
- ✓ Number of employees trained in performance contracting influences performance of research projects in public universities

H_0 : Performance Contracting has no significant influences on performance of research projects in public universities

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

University education is known to plays a key part in the development of a national (Republic of Kenya, Session paper 1 of 2005). Higher education is a key pillar in human growth and development in the world. It does not only provide skills, but is also key in training for essential personnel in different fields. Performance improvement is as a concept of the institutional change where management and the governing entity of the University puts measures to manage a several projects so as to establish the level of performance of the University on a continuous basis and then generates ideas for adapting University behaviors and structure in order to attain better output. The main goals of University are to advance research so as to enhance the capability of the University to offer its services and flourish in the niche where the University strives (Ramarapu, and Lado, 1997).

The resolution to institute performance contracts in management in government was taken at Economic Recovery Strategy for Wealth and Employment Creation (2003-2007). Kenya's Vision 2030 blue print acknowledged performance contracting as one of the crucial policies to reinforce service delivery and public administration. The approaches focused on enhancing the application of citizen service delivery charters entrenching as a crucial performance indicator and as one of the accountability tools, practice in the Public Service (Kenya Vision 2030).

The Performance Contracting structure highlights commitment of the governments' to provide resources so as to enhance performance in management and governance of the public service by introduction of recent performance management techniques. The institution of performance contracts in all state institutions including public universities has elicited mixed reactions. The institution of the performance contracts in public universities in Kenyan was informed by the present-day universal trends to engage workers the basis of performance contracts (Kobia and Mohammed, 2006).

Performance contracts are founded on the statement that what is done is quantified (Kobia and Mohammed, 2006). This has been prompted world over because, Governments view PC as a valuable vehicle for expressing clearer objective definition, promoting a new structure of control methods and management-monitoring and leaving daily running of the functions to the mangers (AAPAM, 2005). In Kenya, public

universities, the use performance contracting is intended at improve lecturer performance assessment based on routine activities like; moderating, attendance of lectures, setting and moderation of exams as well as making. The purposes of PC is to shed light on the objectives of service in an organization, affiliation with the government and to enable performance evaluation founded on outcomes instead of conformism with administrative regulations and rules which have destroyed revolution, creativity and thinking in government (Hitt, Nickson, Clifford and Coyne,1999). A Performance Contracts identify the shared performance commitments, responsibilities and intentions of which a government needs management of public organizations or public officials convene a meeting over a specified time frame (Hope, 2001).

In analyzing the issues affecting implementation of PC in state corporations in Kenya specifically in Kenya Civil Aviation Authority (KCAA) Gathai, Ngugi, Waithaka and Kamingi (2012) descriptive research design which targeted staff of KCAA that had signed Performance Contracts between 2008/09 to 2011/12. The study concluded that targets are negotiated and are in tandem the institutions goals; measures of performance are employed to, improve, control and evaluate process so as to guarantee that the institutions realizes its objectives; institutions avails required resources essential for implementation of strategy and finally, that implementation strategy revolves either from a winning group process pledges through a collective decision making form, or as an outcome coalitional participation of implementation employees through a strong business culture.

In their descriptive research design study Letangule and Letting (2012) studied of Performance Contract effect on performance of organization: Given the influence of performance contracting on the effectiveness and operation of public sectors in Kenya, it is essential that all workers are included in the signing of the performance contract. Data was analyzed descriptively to ascertain the association amongst the variables using regression analysis. The findings showed PC affected quality of service, efficiency, and consistency and workers innovativeness at Ministry of Education at a great degree.

In a study on changing performance of Kenyan public service in through performance contracting by Wanyama (2013), the study benchmarked applications that can be embraced in public sector, the emerging constraints/challenges, hybrid approaches to performance management, and lessons learnt. The study sort to establish whether performance contract had reinvented the government organs in Kenya; from its evolution to whether it has increased efficiency, effectiveness, transparency and accountability to validate allocations of resources in future. These traced the history of public sector transformation in Kenya and its rationale and implementation of different types of reform interventions to its Ministries, Public Universities, and Local Authorities, State Corporations, and Tertiary institutions for efficient, effective, moral services delivery to the public.

Independent Variable

Dependent Variable

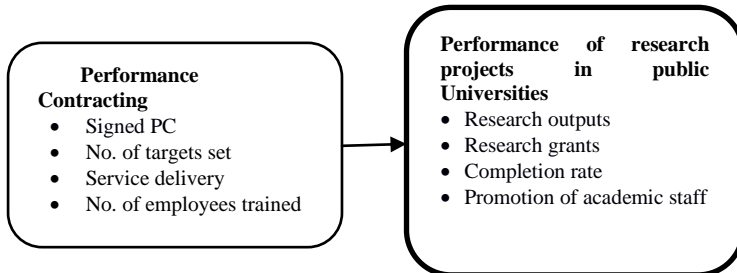


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework showing Performance Contracting and performance of research projects in public universities

A. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This theory denotes that performance and motivation is higher when people set specific goals, which at times may be problematic but acceptable and there is constant response on how employees perform (Armstrong, 2005). Goal-setting theory proposes that employee evaluation is based on the attainment of set objectives or goals (Saleemi, 2006). The theory emphasizes workers should discuss the targets together with their line managers within a specified period of time (Saleemi, 2006). The harder the goals, the harder to attain them and this in term leads to higher performance and rewards once the goals have been attained. (Latham and Locke 2002). The harder the goals, the higher the performance as opposed to easy goals/targets (Latham and Locke, 2009).

Employees are supposed to participation in setting goal as this is vital to agreeing between the employees and their managers (Armstrong, 2005). The theory can best be applied in utilization of the performance contracting and various monitoring and evaluation tools when employees set targets and negotiate for their respective areas of operation with management. This is further cascaded down at lower levels within the institution where workers negotiate their specific targets with their section heads.

The literature review has shown that the application of Performance Contracting influence performance of research projects in public universities. The performance of research projects in public universities can be enhanced implementation of Performance Contracting.

III. METHODOLOGY

This study adopted the positivism paradigm. This philosophy states that positive knowledge is based on natural phenomena, properties and how they relate to each other. Information is derived from sensory experience, which is later interpreted through a series of reason and logic, thereby forming a source of authoritative knowledge (Cooper and Schindler, 2006). Under the paradigm, data was collected from large samples of university employees; hypotheses were tested and conclusions were derived from data to explain the influence of utilization of M&E tools on performance of research projects in public universities.

A. RESEARCH DESIGN

The study adopted a descriptive correlation and survey research design since it describes the state of affairs as it is. Orodho (2003) defines research design as the scheme, outline or plan that is used to generate answers to research problems. Descriptive design is used when collecting information about people’s attitudes, opinions, habits and other possible behavior (Orodho and Kombo, 2005). This is appropriate as it permits information collection from dependent and independent variables using questionnaires and interviews (Orodho, 2003).

B. TARGET POPULATION

A population is defined as events or objects or entire group of individuals which have a common characteristics and observe to a given description (Mugenda and Mugenda, 2003). The target population of this study was all the academic and non-academic staff working in Technical University of Mombasa and Pwani University. The target population was therefore be 1110 comprising of academic, and administrative staff members from both the Technical University of Mombasa and Pwani University. The total target population is 1110 from which a sample will be drawn.

Individuals	TUM	PU	Total
Academic			
Professors	5	10	15
Associate	4	7	11
Professors Senior	20	40	60
Lecturers	92	81	173
Lecturers	140	80	220
Tutorial Fellows			
Administration	40	21	61
Heads of	95	51	146
Departments	173	63	236
Sections heads	105	83	188
Administrative			
Asst.			
Technicians			
Total	674	436	1110

Table 1: Target population

SAMPLE SIZE AND SAMPLING PROCEDURES

A sample size must be big enough to be a representative of the universal population (Mugenda and Mugenda, 2003). A researcher should choose a sample size which is able to provide sufficient information about the population and can be analyzed with ease (Kothari, 2004).

The sample size that was employed in this study was guided by Fishers formula (Fisher, Laing and Stroker, 2003). This aided in obtaining a paradigmatic sample from the target population used in the study. The target population was 1110 drawn from the two universities. The sample size was obtained using the formula given by the following equation.

$$n = \frac{z^2 pq}{d^2} \dots\dots\dots (3.1)$$

n = Anticipated sample size (if the target population is > 10,000).

z = Standard normal deviate at the required confidence level.

p = Proportion in the target population approximated to have characteristics in the study. If it is unknown, then 0% will be used.

$$q = 1 - 0.32 = 0.68.$$

d = Level of statistical significance set = 0.05

z = Assuming 95% confidence interval *Z* = 1.96

$$n = \frac{1.96^2 0.5 * 0.5}{0.05^2} \dots\dots\dots (3.2)$$

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For a population that is less than 10,000, modification will be prepared using Cochran’s correction formula (Cochran, 2011);

$$nf = \frac{n}{1(n/N)} \dots\dots\dots (3.3)$$

Where;

nf = Final sample size, when population is less than 10,000

n = Sample for populations of 10,000 or more

N = Size of the total population from which the sample is drawn

$$nf = \frac{384}{1(384/1110)} \dots\dots\dots (3.4)$$

$$nf = 285.31 \text{ Therefore}$$

$$nf = 285$$

Therefore, the sample was 285 drawn from the target population of 1110 using fisher’s formula of 2003.

The study employed proportionate and simple random sampling. This aided to obtaining a representative sample. In random sampling, every sample size in the population giving equal chance for every sample to be chosen (Mugenda and Mugenda, 2003). This allowed generalization for a bigger populace with a margin of error that can statistically be determinable.

Therefore, the sample used for this study was 285 people from both universities from each category of staff. This method of determining the sample size was used based on the strength of each category and to avoid biasness.

RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS

The instrument that was used for data collect were an open-ended questionnaire and interview guide. They were employed for data collection from the selected samples from both universities; Technical University of Mombasa and Pwani University. The study employed the use of open-ended questionnaires for data collection from academic and non-academic employees of both Technical University of Mombasa and Pwani University. The questionnaires encompassed open ended questions. Questionnaires have an advantage of being cost efficient particularly from a large group (Kothari, 2004).

DATA ANALYSIS TECHNIQUES

Data analysis was done using both qualitative and quantitative approaches. Data collection instruments were first checked and this involved elimination of unacceptable questionnaires. This process involved elimination of incomplete, little variance. Data editing followed to check whether they have ambiguous answers, incomplete, inconsistent or/and illegible (Ngechu, 2004). The third step was data coding. A codebook for the dissimilar variables was prepared on the numbering structure of the questionnaires. This study used Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS version 25). The fourth step involved entry of figures into a computer program. The fifth step was cleaning data to check for stability. Instability may come from out of range, extreme values or faulty logic. The sixth step was carrying out diagnostic tests using the Shapiro-Wilk Test to decide if data was normally distributed. Durbin Watson method to test autocorrelation of the variables was also employed (Greener, 2008).

IV. FINDINGS

The questionnaire return rate was 87.72%, demographically, 57.7 were male while 42.3 were female. 12.5% had PhD's, 36.1% had Masters, 25% had Bachelors, 4.2 % had Higher Diplomas, 20.8% Diploma and 1.4% Certificates. On length of service, 52.9% served for 6-10 years, 28.6% served from 1-5 years, 11.4% 11-15 years and 7.1% above 15 years. The age of respondents ranged from 52.9% ranged between 30-39 years, 28.6% 40-49 years, 11.4% 50-59 years and 7.1% above 60 years.

The objective was set out to establish how Performance Contracting influences performance of research projects in public universities. Therefore, the participants were asked to state their agreement or disagreement levels with the following statements on a likert scale of 1 – 5 where 1=Strongly Disagree; 2= Disagree; Agree; 3= Neutral; 4=Agree; 5=Strongly Agree). The findings are presented in Table 2.

S/No	Statement	1 %	2 %	3 %	4 %	5 %	M	S.D
1.	Signing of performance contracts influences performance of research projects in public universities	14 (5.6%)	28 (11.1%)	38 (15.3%)	118 (47.2%)	52 (20.8%)	3.67	1.01
2.	Setting performance targets influences performance of research projects in public universities	7 (2.8%)	14 (5.6%)	18 (7%)	134 (53.6%)	77 (31%)	4.04	0.933
3.	Service delivery influences performance of research projects in public universities	11 (4.2%)	14 (5.6%)	4 (1.4%)	133 (53.4%)	88 (35.4%)	4.10	0.988
4.	Number of employees trained in PC	18 (7%)	18 (7%)	42 (16.9%)	98 (39.4%)	74 (29.7%)	3.77	1.161

influences performance of research projects in public universities								
Composite Mean and Standard Deviation							3.96	0.71780

Table 2: Performance Contracting and Performance of Research Projects in Public Universities

The first statement, signing of performance contracts influences performance of research projects in public universities. Out of 250 participants, 118 (47.2%) agreed, 52 (20.8%), strongly agreed, 38 (15.3%) neutral, 28 (11.1%), while 14 (5.6%) strongly disagreed. This line item had an average mean of 3.67 and a standard deviation of 1.01 being lesser than composite mean but greater than the standard deviation of 0.717. This implies that this line item positively influences performance of research projects in public universities. This is supported by descriptive research design study Letangule and Letting (2012) which studied the influence of Performance Contract on performance of organization: Given the influence of performance contracting on the effectiveness and operation of public sectors in Kenya, it is essential that all workers are included in the signing of the performance contract.

The second statement, setting performance targets influences performance of research projects in public universities. Out of 250 participants, 134 (53.4%) agreed, 78 (31%) strongly agreed, 18 (5.6%) neutral, 14 (5.6%) disagreed while 7 (2.8%) strongly disagreed. This line item had an average mean of 4.04 and standard deviation of 0.933 being greater than composite mean of 3.96 and standard deviation of 0.717. This implies that this line item has a positive influence on performance of research projects in public universities. This is supported by studies done by Gathai, Ngugi, Waithaka and Kamingi (2012) descriptive research design which targeted staff of Kenya Civil Aviation Authority that had signed Performance Contracts between 2008/09 to 2011/12. The study concluded that targets are negotiated and are in tandem the institutions goals; measures of performance are adopted to, improve, control and evaluate process in order to guarantee that the institutions realizes its objectives; institutions avails required resources essential for implementation of strategy and finally, that implementation strategy revolves either from a winning group process pledges through a collective decision making form, or as an outcome coalitional participation of implementation employees through a strong business culture.

The third statement, service delivery influences performance of research projects in public universities. Out of 250 participants, 133 (53.4% agreed, 88 (35.4%) strongly agreed, 14 (5.6%) disagreed, 11 (4.2%) strongly disagreed while 4 (1.4%) were neutral. This line item had an average mean of 4.10 and standard deviation of 0.988 being is greater than composite mean of 3.96 and standard deviation of 0.717. This implies that this line item positively influences on performance of research projects in public universities. This is supported by study by Akaranga (2008) which discovered that all government state corporations and ministries in Kenya officially implemented performance contracts showed clear indication of increment in income over expenditure and

service delivery in the government ministries and state corporations.

The fourth statement, number of employees trained in PC influences performance of research projects in public universities. Out of 250 participants, 98 (39.4%) agreed, 74 (29.7%) strongly agreed, 42 (16.9%) neutral, 18 (7%) strongly disagreed while 18 (7%) disagreed. This line item had an average mean of 3.77 and standard deviation of 0.717. The average mean was lower than composite mean while the standard deviation was greater than 0.717. This implies that this line item positively influences performance of research projects in public universities.

Data collected from KII showed that most academic staff do not view performance contracting as an important tool. "It does not help us achieve promotions at our place of work. There is also little sensitization on its importance. Lack of management commitment has also lowered staff morale on its implementation." Administrative staff on the other hand noted that. "It only focuses on a portion of the work that is done overall in the institutions."

A. CORRELATION ON PERFORMANCE CONTRACTING AND PERFORMANCE OF RESEARCH PROJECTS IN PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES

The results show a positive statistical influence performance contracting and performance of research projects in public universities. The correlation coefficient is 0.00 with a p value of 0.05.

		Performance Contracting	Performances of research projects in public universities
Performance Contracting	Pearson Correlation	1	0.708**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.000
	N	250	250
Performances of research projects in public universities	Pearson Correlation	0.708**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	
	N	250	250

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 3: Correlations on Performance Contracting and Performance of Research Projects in Public Universities

B. REGRESSION ON PERFORMANCE CONTRACTING AND PERFORMANCE OF RESEARCH PROJECTS IN PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES

The relationship between performance and performance of research projects in public universities in Kenya explains 50.1% of all the variations in performance. Other factors not in the model accounts for 50.7% of all the variation

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	0.708 ^a	0.501	0.493	0.23080

a. Predictors: (Constant), performance contracting

Table 4: Model Summary on Performance Contracting and Performance of Research Projects in Public Universities

Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1 Regression	3.738	1	3.738	248.59860	0.000 ^b
Residual	3.729	248	0.015		
Total	7.466	249			

a. Dependent Variable: performances of research projects in public universities

b. Predictors: (Constant), performance contracting

Table 5: ANOVA^a on Performance Contracting and Performance of Research Projects in Public Universities

Model		Un standardized Coefficients	Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	
		B	Std. Error			Beta
1	(Constant)	0.714	0.141		5.082	0.000
	contracting	0.307	0.037	0.708	8.376	0.000

a. Dependent Variable: performance of research projects in public universities

Table 6: Coefficients^a on Performance Contracting and Performance of Research Projects in Public Universities

There exists a significant relationship between performance contracting and performance of research projects in public universities since the p value is >0.05. This is justified by the large size of the F test which is 248.5986 where p value (0.00) is lower than the specified significance level of 0.05.

C. TEST FOR HYPOTHESIS

The null hypothesis states "performance contracting has no significant influence on performance of research projects in public universities". It accounts for 50.1% of all variations in performance of research projects. Additionally, this is supported by findings in Table 5 which shows there is a significant relationship between performance contracting and performance of research projects in public universities. The F test has a large value of 248.5986% and a p value of 0.00 being lower than 0.05. Table 6 illustrates performance contracting significantly influences performance of research projects since the p value and the f test is lower than 0.05. The null hypothesis is therefore rejected.

V. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The relationship between performance contracting and performance of research projects in public universities in Kenya explains 50.1% of all the variations in performance. Other factors not in the model accounts for 50.7% of all the variations. There exists a significant relationship between performance contracting and performance of research projects in public universities since the p value is 0.00 which is less than 0.05. The null hypothesis states "performance contracting has no significant influence on performance of research projects in public universities" is rejected.

Public universities need to put more emphasis on the use of Performance Contracting through continuous training and sensitization, providing incentives so as to enhance improvement in service delivery thereby having a positive

influence on performance of research projects in public universities. The Government should come up with incentives to encourage and promote the continuous use of Performance Contracting in public universities.

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