Nexus between resources and acceptance of performance contracting in Kenyan secondary schools

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Accepted 12th January, 2014

The study sought to determine to what extent resources influence acceptance of performance contracting by employees in Kenyan Secondary schools. This is because the idea by the government of Kenya to introduce performance contracting to teachers has been met with a lot of resistance by teaching fraternity with even the Central Organization of Trade Union (COTU), threatening to call a national teachers strike wide strike (Kenya Daily Nation 11th August 2008). The study employed descriptive research design. The target population was all the government employed teachers in public secondary schools in Meru District. A sample size of 73 teachers was selected randomly from all the 21 secondary schools. The study used structured questionnaire to collect primary data and where need arose, clarification was sought. Document were analysed, to verify some information, such as strategic plans, and observation was also done, such as library resources. Information was sorted, coded and input into the statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) for production of graphs, tables, descriptive statistics and inferential statistics. Results indicated that there was scarcity of resources in Kenyan secondary schools. Specifically, secondary schools had financial challenges; there was need for financial support in order to improve performance and organizational resources were an important element in organizational and individual performance. Results further indicated that there was need for the government to increase the number of teachers in the school to be able to achieve our performance target, the school had not sufficiently equipped laboratories for effective learning and there wasn’t sufficient supply of stationary for both students and teachers for effective learning. From the study findings it can be deduced that there was insufficient of resources in the secondary schools. These resources include financial, physical, human and organizational resources. The study concludes that there is a positive and significant relationship between resources and acceptance of performance contracting in schools. These findings imply that resources are statistically significant in explaining acceptance of performance contracting of secondary schools in Kenya. From the study conclusions, there were scarce resources in the Kenyan secondary schools. The study recommends that the government should improve on distribution of resources to all public schools. To government should also increase the number of teachers being employed per school this is to ensure that the student to teacher ratio is minimized. Performance appraisals that are supported by rewards should be introduced so as to improve the staff morale.

Key words: Performance contracting, organization resources, secondary schools

INTRODUCTION

Background and research gap
Performance can be regarded as any behaviour which is directed towards task or goal accomplishment. Performance management is a comprehensive, continuous and flexible approach to management of organizations’, teams’ and individuals’ performance (Armstrong and Baron, 2007). The overall purpose of performance management is to contribute to the high performance of the organization and its people. Different organization use different tools in managing performance.
One of such tool commonly used by public as well as private institution is performance contracting. Performance contract is a management tool for measuring performance against negotiated target (ROK, 2007).

According to the World Bank (WB), Ghana is one of the African countries which have successfully implemented performance contracting (WB, 2002). The WB also reveals that the reforms to implement performance contract in Ghana begun with dialogue, which involved major stakeholders including general public communities and government officials. The dialogue resulted into a policy. To ensure the success of the policy several large pilot projects from different part of the country was carried out. Lessons learnt from the pilot study were incorporated into the national performance contracts program aimed at ensuring project success.

The session paper No. 1 of the government of (ROK) (2003, p 44) indicates that secondary education has been characterized by poor performance in national examination, high pupil-text book shortage in mathematics, a shortage of science teachers, overburdened curriculum, and teachers promotion based on qualification rather than performance. This scenario totally de-motivates teachers’ hence poor performance. Kalajainen (2007) did a research on "effectively implementing a performance system and in his research he noted that one of the key factors that contributes to successful implementation of performance measurement is the availability of adequate and appropriate resources.

Kobia and Mohammed (2006) carried out a research focusing on the civil servants who had already started implementing the performance contracts. Their main focus was the challenges and successes in the implementation of performance contracts in Kenya. Out of the two hundred and eighty (280) sample from senior public service participants at Kenya Institute of administration (KIA), one hundred and seventy four (62.1%) of respondents indicated that they did not have adequate resources to meet their targets. This posed a big challenge in the implementation of performance contracts. The research indicates that stability of resources enhances the motivating effect of the contract. When resources are not available or are availed late, the staff involved gets frustrated. The majority of respondents in the public service expressed this view (Kobia and Mohammed, 2006).

However this issue of performance contracting for teachers and in general in learning institutions in Kenya has dominated public discourse and requires sober examination. For instance, in Kenya’s seven public universities, the Vice Chancellors were among the first public service employees to sign five year performance contract, however the academic university academic staff union (UASU) objected (Nafukho, Kobia and Nura, 2009). When the Teachers’ Service Commission (TSC), a government organization responsible for employment of teachers serving in the public schools wanted to introduce performance contracting in 2007, the Kenya National Union of Teachers (KNUT), strongly objected and the decision was shelved (Nafukho et al., 2009). Cheruiyot (2008) also quoted KNUT saying that it would resist attempt to subject teachers to the performance contracting policy and consequently told its members, teachers, not to sign performance contract document that may be brought their way. Nyamu (2007) pointed out that when KNUT declares publicly that it will not accept the publicly acclaimed performance contracting strategy, many professionals are baffled as to whether the teaching fraternity appreciates the seriousness of their open confrontation with the public policy declaration.

Ndirangu and Oduto (2011), notes that overcrowding lecture rooms and inadequate teaching resources, are likely to impact negatively on teachers and pupils performance. Herman (2009) argues that employees may perform differently puts in different situation hence different results. When the result of employees’ performance is beyond his control then it makes no sense to use the same performance indicator to evaluate the performance of an employee. Lee (2006) contends that an effect performance management system is one that takes a holistic approach, not over emphasising one aspect at the expense of the other.

In 2003, the government of Kenya introduced performance contracting in the public sector as part of the broader public sector reforms. Teachers being workers in the public sector are obliged to accept performance contract. However this idea has been met with a lot of resistance by the teaching fraternity. The union’s Secretary General Francis Ng’ang’a said, Teachers are permanent and pensionable and they should reject any persuasion put on them (Kenya Standard Newspaper May 28th 2008). Boniface Tenai was reported by Kenya daily Nation dated 15th July 2008 as having said that “teachers should keep and honour the eleventh commandment- that they should never ever agree to work under performance contracts as demanded by the government.”

Kenya daily nation dated 11th August 2008, reported “thorny issues have emerged in the countries educational sector with the implementation of performance contracting for teachers and a fresh battle looms now between the government and KNUT with the Central Organization of the Trade Union (COTU) threatening to call a national wide teachers strike. To this end secondary school teachers have not signed the performance contract as evidenced the Kenya daily Newspaper dated 3rd February 2012 "union against proposal to put school managers on contracts that will be reviewed on performance". The renewed pressure piling on teachers to yield to individual monitoring of performance comes from Parliament, and it is anticipated
a showdown looms between the Legislature and the educators (The Kenyan Standard Newspaper May 14th 2012, pp.1).

Odhiambo (2009) in his study “implementation of performance contracting in Kenya” concluded that factors such as, performance indicators, organizational strategic plan as well as organisational resource influences acceptance of performance contracting by employees. Waal de (2008) also found out that lack of clear and understanding the strategy, lack of clear understandable goals may bring rejection of performance contracting. Therefore the study endeavours to analyse these factors to establish to what extent they influence teachers to accept performance contracting. The study will focus on all public secondary school teachers in Meru Central District, specifically the teachers who are employed by the government.

Research objective
To investigate to what extent do resources influence acceptance of performance contracting by employees in Kenyan Secondary schools.

METHODOLOGY
The study employed descriptive research design to analyse whether resources influence acceptance of performance contracting by teachers. Descriptive research describes data and characteristics about a population of a phenomenon. According to Torochim, (2006); Winter, (2000) and Sekaran (2006), descriptive research aims at producing accurate representation of persons, events and situations. The study gave a complete description of the situation and ensured that there was minimum bias in the collection of data. This helped the study establish the determinants of teachers’ resistance to accepting performance contracts in Kenya. Mugenda and Mugenda, (2003) and Hyndman, (2008) refers to a population as an entire group of individuals, events or objectives having a common observable characteristics, meaning that it is an aggregate of all that conforms to a given specification. The study locale was Meru Central District, specifically focusing on all public secondary schools in the entire district which are twenty one (21) in number. The target population comprised of all the teachers teaching in those schools and employed by the government as at that time. Statistics available from ROK, ministry of education, there were two hundred and thirty nine (239) government employed teachers from the entire district (MOEST 2011). A sample size of 73 respondents was selected through random sampling in all the secondary schools.

Primary data was collected by using the questionnaire as the main research instrument. Since this study involved relationships between variables, the study utilized correlation and regression analysis to determine the relationship between acceptance of performance contracts and resources. To address the research question, the study checked whether the regression coefficient of resources ($\beta_1$) was positive (+) and significant (p value of < .05) in line with theory and study expectations.

The data collected was analyzed using descriptive statistics such as mode, median, mean, standard deviation. Inferential statistics such as multiple regression modeling were employed to study the causal relationships among all the variables in the model. In order to identify whether significant differences in responses to factors exist among the respondents, Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was used. These measures were calculated using statistical package for social sciences (SPSS 20) software. The findings were presented in form of bar graphs, pie charts, and tabulated reports.

The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) was used to effectively process the data collected. The relationship in the research questions was determined using the following regression model.

$$ Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \mu $$

Where

$ Y = $ Acceptance of Performance Contracting  $ X_1 = $ Organizational resources

In the model, $\beta_0$ = the constant term while the coefficient $\beta_1 = 1,\ldots,4$ was used to measure the sensitivity of the dependent variables (Y) to unit change in the predictor variables. $\mu$ is the error term which captures the unexplained variations in the model.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION
The objective of the study was to establish the extent to which resources influence the acceptance of performance contracting by employees in Kenyan Secondary schools. Results showed that 94% of the respondents agreed that organizational resources were an important element in organizational and individual performance, 97% agreed that financial resources was a challenge in the schools, 69% agreed that there was need of financial support for improved performance to be achieved and 92% agreed that availability of finances influence performance of teachers.

Eighty one percent of the respondents agreed that sufficient number of teachers with the appropriate skills was important for effective performance, 91% agreed that student teacher ratio was beyond the recommended number by the ministry of education, 65% agreed that a big class in terms of number of student compromises the performance of individual teachers and 88% agreed that there was need for the government to increase the number of teachers in our school to be able to achieve our performance target. In addition, 90% of the respondents agreed that the school has a library with relevant books which can be said to be sufficient, 73%

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Table 1: Relationship between resources and acceptance of performance contracting

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Performance contracting</th>
<th>Resources</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.655</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Agreed that the school had not sufficiently equipped laboratories for effective learning and 70% agreed that there was sufficient supply of stationary for both students and teachers for effective learning. The mean score for this section was 4.12 which indicates that majority of the respondents agreed that availability of resources influenced acceptance of performance contracting.

The findings concur with those in Kalajainen (2007) who did a research on “effectively implementing a performance system and in his research he noted that one of the key factors that contributes to successful implementation of performance measurement is the availability of adequate and appropriate resources. Results too agree with those in Kobia and Mohammed (2006) who carried out a research focusing on the civil servants who had already started implementing the performance contracts and concluded that stability of resources enhances the motivating effect of the contract. When resources are not available or are availed late, the staff involved gets frustrated.

The findings are consistent with those in Odhiambo (2009) who carried out study on implementing of performance contracting in Kenya and concluded that in organization where performance measurement system are already established, and adequate resources are already devoted to providing credible performance, performance contracting is fully accepted.

The study sought to establish whether the respondents’ school required additional resources from the government to accept performance contracting. The study findings indicated that 69% of the respondents indicated that their schools required additional resources from the government to accept performance contracting.

In addition the researcher wanted to know the type of resources / input the respondents required for acceptance of performance contract to take place in their schools. Among the resources the researcher wanted to find out if they were required included; financial resources, human resources, learning resources, physical resources or all the above resources. Results revealed that all the resources, that is; financial resources, human resources, learning resources and physical resources were required for acceptance of performance contract to take place in the respondents’ schools as indicated by a majority of 46.2% of the respondents.

Table 1 displays the results of correlation test analysis between the dependent variable (acceptance of performance contracting) and resources. Results on Table 1 show that acceptance of performance contracting was positively correlated with resources. This reveals that any positive change in resources led to increased acceptance of performance contracting.

Regression analysis was conducted to empirically determine whether resources were a significant determinant of acceptance of performance contracting by employees in Kenyan secondary schools. Regression results in table 2 indicate the goodness of fit for the regression between resources and acceptance of performance contracting was satisfactory. An R squared of 0.429 indicates that 42.9% of the variances in the acceptance of performance contracting by teachers in secondary schools are explained by the variances in the resources. The correlation coefficient of 65.5% indicates that the combined effect of the predictor variables have a strong and positive correlation with acceptance of performance contracting.

The overall model significance was presented in table 3. An F statistic of 47.312 indicated that the overall model was significant. This was supported by a probability value of (0.000). The reported probability of (0.000) is less than the conventional probability of (0.05). The probability of (0.000) indicated that there was a very low probability that the statement “overall model was insignificant” was true and it was therefore possible to conclude that the statement was untrue.

Table 4 displays the regression coefficients of the independent variable (resources). The results reveal that resources were statistically significant in explaining acceptance of performance contracting by employees in secondary schools.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS
The study sought to establish the extent which resources influence the acceptance of performance contracting by employees in Kenyan Secondary schools. The type of
analysis used includes descriptive statistics, regression analysis and parametric analysis. Results indicated that there was scarcity of resources in Kenyan secondary schools. Specifically, secondary schools had financial challenges; there was need for financial support in order to improve performance and organizational resources were an important element in organizational and individual performance. Results further indicated that there was need for the government to increase the number of teachers in the school to be able to achieve our performance target, the school had not sufficiently equipped laboratories for effective learning and there wasn’t sufficient supply of stationary for both students and teachers for effective learning.

From the study findings it can be deduced that there was insufficient of resources in the secondary schools. These resources include financial, physical, human and organizational resources. The study concludes that there is a positive and significant relationship between resources and acceptance of performance contracting in schools. These findings imply that resources are statistically significant in explaining acceptance of performance contracting of secondary schools in Kenya.

From the study conclusions, there were scarce resources in the Kenyan secondary schools. The study recommends that the government should improve on distribution of resources to all public schools. To government should also increase the number of teachers being employed per school this is to ensure that the student to teacher ratio is minimized. Performance appraisals that are supported by rewards should be introduced so as to improve the staff morale.

REFERENCES

Table 3: ANOVA for resources

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Sum of Squares</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Mean Square</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Regression</td>
<td>13.743</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>13.743</td>
<td>47.312</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residual</td>
<td>18.301</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>0.29</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>32.044</td>
<td>64</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</table>

Table 4: Regression coefficient for resources

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Beta</th>
<th>Std. Error</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>0.911</td>
<td>0.443</td>
<td>2.058</td>
<td>0.044</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resources</td>
<td>0.730</td>
<td>0.106</td>
<td>6.878</td>
<td>0.000</td>
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Available: http://www.nova.edu/sss/QR/QR4-3/ winter