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Promoting Accountability of Heads of Schools through Performance Contracts: The Case of Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education in Zimbabwe

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Dedicated to the late Mr Daniel Somane a brother and mentor who passed away before this paper was published. Your encouragement and wise words will forever be missed. RIP Daniel.

ABSTRACT: The purpose of this study was to explore the significance of performance contracts for heads of school and how these reforms will promote accountability. The introduction of performance contracts in the public sector is considered the most important strategy for efficient delivery of service and accountability. Despite the introduction of

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Results Based Management the performance and accountability of most ministries, departments and parastatals has been below public expectation resulting in poor service delivery. The study employed a mixed approach underpinned by a phenomenological research design. Data for the study was collected using desk research and in-depth interviews with key informants sampled from 30 primary and secondary schools in Harare province. Data was analysed using SPSS and Pearson's Correlation Coefficient. The findings of the study indicated that performance contracts of heads of school foster a high performance culture, enhance accountability good governance, ensure transparency and improve on service delivery as highlighted by the positive co-relationship between performance contracts and accountability. The study concludes that performance contracts should be extended to every serving member of the public service so as to produce a results-focussed workforce.

Keywords: *Accountability, School Heads, Performance Contracts, Results based Management*

Introduction

This study seeks to explore the significance of performance contracts for heads of school and how this will stimulate/promote accountability. The study also seeks to establish whether performance contracts foster a high-performance culture, promote good governance, ensure transparency and improve on service delivery and determine whether there is co-relationship between performance contracts and accountability.

Background to the problem

Since the 1980s, Zimbabwe like most developing countries embarked on a number of public sector management reforms as a way of removing inefficiencies and quality improvement in service provision (Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) 2003:2). Performance contracting is one of these fundamental reforms. Letangule and Letting (2012:29) argue that performance contracting as a public sector reform improves efficiency and effectiveness as well as reducing costs. The pressure for public institutions to attain higher results using available few resources that were being mismanaged (Zinyama et al. (2014:8) was one of the fundamental goals behind the introduction of performance contracts in the public sector in Zimbabwe (Zinyama et al. 2015:2). Notwithstanding

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offering poor services to the public In addition, public sector organisations were opaque, inaccessible and lacked transparency (Zinyama et al. 2014:9).

In responding to the problems of corruption, embezzlement of funds, moonlighting and underhand dealings the government responded through numerous policy interventions such as ZIMPREST and Performance Management but these failed to improve public sector performance while service delivery deteriorated rapidly (Mavhiki, Nyamwanza and Dhoro 2013:135). There was need for an effective management tool to address these challenges and RBM was seen as a panacea to these maladies whilst improving accountability and transparency of government operations (Bester, 2007).

Madhekeni (2012:122) notes that the success story of the RBM system in developed nations led to growing pressures for developing countries to adopt the new system as a way of improving performance and upholding accountability. Ibid (2012:123) observes that the Zimbabwean Government introduced RBM in 2005. According to the African Development Fund (2016), the Government of Zimbabwe adopted RBM in February 2005 in order to improve public accountability and service delivery. The Results Based Management (RBM) system in the public service in Zimbabwe was given effect by General Letter Number 6 of 2005 to all heads of ministries (Makumbe 1997:20). RBM shifts organizations from concentrating on processes to focusing on results and related issues of accountability and transparency (Mundondo, Chikoko and Chindanya 2019:144). This is supported by Zinyama et al (2014:13) who observe that accounting officers and heads of state enterprises were required to sign performance contracts and use the RBM approach to foster accountability. Dandira et al (2020: 391) note that it is a global trend to use Results Based Management to improve public sector performance. There is therefore an increasing need to improve efficiency and accountability for results not activities as has been the tradition.

In 2021 the Government of Zimbabwe introduced annual performance contracts under the Integrated Results-Based Management System for permanent secretaries and in 2022 this was extended to principal directors and directors in line ministries, CEOs of state –owned enterprises including state universities and CEOs of urban and rural local authorities. A statement from the OPC (The Herald 03 Feb 2022) noted that signing of performance contracts would be guided by the National Development Strategy 1 which is Zimbabwe's

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economic blueprint. Officials will be evaluated annually not just on implementation and delivery but also on critical components of management and efficacy. It must also be noted here that the country's constitution under Chapter 1 section 3.2g also obligates government to adopt and implement policies that promote efficiency, competence, accountability and transparency at every level of service delivery in government.

Statement of the Problem

Notwithstanding the introduction of Performance contracting in government, parastatals and local authorities in Zimbabwe there is dissatisfaction and continued outcry of poor service delivery, lack of transparency and accountability in these public entities. It is widely acknowledged that in the last two decades there has been poor performance in the public sector, and some of the contributing factors include unjustified political interference, mismanagement, embezzlement of public funds and corruption. This adversely affects the performance of the public sector and the management of public resources and in this light, the introduction of performance-based contracts will not only improve performance, accountability and transparency but will also expose inefficient and non-performers in public office. Performance-based agreements define accountability for specific ministerial and organizational goals and in the process assist managers to align strategic and daily operations and contribute to the organization's goals and objectives.

The corruption in parastatals, local authorities and government ministries and departments can only be curbed through accountability and annual evaluations through performance contracts. In the past, senior officials in government have not been accountable to government and the public as the employer in terms of performance. This study, therefore, seeks to interrogate the effectiveness of performance contracts in enhancing service delivery, accountability and transparency in government focusing on selected primary and secondary schools in Harare educational province.

Justification of the Study

The effectiveness of performance contracts in enhancing service delivery, accountability and transparency in government has not been documented in Zimbabwe. This study seeks to document how government can improve on transparency and accountability in performance contracting in relation to service delivery in schools. This will assist the

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government in improving the performance contract model in order to attain maximum benefits The study will also contribute to the available body of IRBM knowledge and improve on the performance contract system with a view to improve the level of service delivery. Moreover, this study moves away from pedantic to establish practical issues that affect the implementation of performance contracts which will inform future policy interventions and prescriptions.

LITERATURE REVIEW & THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The Concept of Performance and Accountability

In developing countries like Zimbabwe, many speakers especially President Munangagwa use the words performance and accountability jointly. As the government adopts certain public service assessment tools (the result-based management, budget reports), it is attempting to enhance accountability or improve performance. Performance is about whether resources have been used in the intended way in order to achieve greater efficiency, effectiveness and fairness (Brewer & Selden, 2000; Halachmi, 2000a). Accountability according to Bovens, 2005 is a social relationship in which an actor feels an obligation to explain and to justify his or her conducts to some significant other. Through these definitions, it is possible to see that even though performance is satisfactory, accountability expectations may not be met (Nguimfack & Kelly, 2018).

The purpose of the study is to understand accountability and performance of school heads for both primary and secondary schools in Harare Metropolitan and whether these school heads are accountable for the results produced. The determinants of performance and the focus of this study reminds us the importance of accountability as an independent variable within which school heads performance nexus for better organisation (Dubnick, 2005). However, it is seemingly difficulty for government departments in third world countries to adopt the outcome quickly and easily due to a number of factors and among them are the systems of public accountability in place that are weak since they emphasise inputs activities rather than outputs and outcomes (Asian Development Bank, 2006:17) and the human resources practices systems do not recognise merit and hence discourage an orientation towards outcome (Curristine 2005a:131, Amjad 2008:2). However, President Emmerson Munangagwa has said public officials who fail to perform according to the expectations of their performance contracts would be sanctioned while those who excel

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would be rewarded. The Government said the move was part of efforts to raise the bar on service delivery to citizens (The Herald February 21, 2021). According to of The Herald 21 February 2021, the Auditor-General; Mrs Chisi says “this will also ensure quality service delivery as the national objectives will be achieved with minimal loss of resources. In addition, we now have these performance contracts, I think this will also work as an incentive for people to work to work hard and to ensure that they excel in the areas in which they are going to be assessed,” Mrs Chiri (The Herald February 21, 2021). This means that when there are consequences spelt out, then chances are that people will work hard

Matunhu & Matunhu, 2014:64) had indicated that members of the public complained about general poor performance of the public service regarding accountability, service delivery and utilization of allocated resources. The same sentiments were once echoed by the 1989 Kavran Public Service Review Commission report which stated that public servants were wasteful, demotivated, lazy, indecisive, accountable and insensitive (World Bank 2012:5). The Kavran Public Service Review Commission was appointed by the government to assess operations of government ministries/departments in 1989 following a number of complaints from Zimbabwean citizenry on performance of public sector organisations (Matunhu & Matunhu 2014:64). In order to address this outcry, as well as to respond to the crisis through numerous policy interventions, Zimbabwe like many other countries in the world, adopted the use of Results-based Management by ministries to improve its service delivery to its citizenry.

Results-based Management

Results-based management (RBM) is defined as orienting all action and use of resources towards achieving clearly defined and demonstrable results. The United Nations’ RBM Handbook 2011defines RBM as a management strategy by all actors, contributing directly or indirectly to achieving a set of results, ensure that their processes, products and services contribute to achievement of desired results (output outcomes and higher level goals or impact). Rasappan, 2020:13 also defines RBM as a relatively new management system emphasizing the realisation of school results through strategic planning; systematic implementation and resource usage, performance monitoring, measurement and reporting as well as systematic utilization of performance information to improve policy decision

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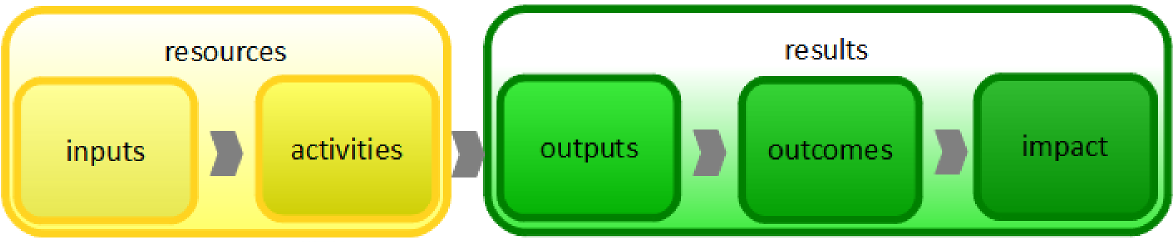
making. This means that RBM's thrust is to change the way organisations operate with achieving results. RBM propagates for an increase in transparency and accountability, allowing interventions to complement each other and avoid overlap and waste. However, the integration of all major performance components namely development planning, budgeting, personnel management, monitoring and evaluation and decision making (life-cycle approach) (Rasappan, 2021:13) is of significant value.

Life Cycle Approach



Adopted from CIDA, 2009

Results-based management is a life-cycle approach to management that integrates strategy, people, resources, processes, and measurements to improve decision making, transparency, and accountability (Canadian International Development Agency, 2009). The Ministry of Primary and Secondary School adopted the life-cycle approach which CIDA adopted from United Nations (which is providing a coherent framework for strategic planning and management based on learning and accountability in a decentralized environment (World Bank 1997). The aim is to improve management effectiveness and accountability by defining realistic expected results, monitoring progress toward the achievement of expected results, integrating lessons learned into management decisions and reporting on performance (CIDA 1999). However, because outcomes are not a result of one of one single actor's intervention, enforcing individual and personal accountability in respect of the substantive attainment of outcomes would be unreasonable – the attainment of outcomes is subject to shared accountability among partners such as teachers, suppliers, parents, creditors but to mention a few.

Even though the RBM was effected in the education system as a panacea to improve accountability and transparency of government operations (Bester, 2007), lack of incentives, culture, resources, performance indicators and bureaucratic resistance are

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challenges to the implementation of RBM in Zimbabwe public service ministries (Ole,2001). Further, the Zimbabwean civil service culture has been described as "business as usual" (Madhekeni, 2012) where employees are not moved by any sense of urgency, neither are they willing to change their way of operation to suit the new system. The RBM calls for a serious paradigm shift where school heads define their school targets, invest maximum efforts on results realisation, "measure performance regularly and objectively, learn from performance information, make adjustments and improve efficiency and effectiveness of school programmes (Madhekeni, 2012:123).

Accountability

Accountability is generally construed as the state of being responsible for one's actions and being able to give satisfactory reason for them when asked (McIntosh, 2013). According to a circular on guidelines on RBM, referred MW32/45 (Office of the President and Cabinet 2005), the Deputy Chief Secretary to the President and cabinet; Dr Ndhlukula asserts that the foundation of the RBM system is built on 3 basic types of public sector accountability (Office of the President and Cabinet, 2005). These are financial accountability, management accountability and programme accountability – the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education had to move from activity completion to results orientation programme (Matunhu & Matunhu, 2014). The concept accountability encompasses factors like transparency, liability, controllability and responsiveness (Koppel,) and at each level, thus, teachers, suppliers, parents and development partners, there is an expectation that an accountable party has the capacity to undertake its responsibilities to make contributions to the result.

Koppel's Concept of Accountability (2005)

Conception Accountability	**Key determination**
Transparency	Did the organisation reveal the facts of its performance?
Liability	Did the organisation face consequences for its performance
Controllability	Did the organisation do what the principal (Permanent Secretary/Minister) desired
Responsibility	Did the organisation follow rules
Responsiveness	Did the organisation fulfill the substantive expectation (demand/need)

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Adopted from Nguimfack & Kelly, 2018

The Education Development Fund (EDF) and Global Partnership for Education (GPE) have availed monitoring and evaluation funds for responsible authorities from the Head Office, provinces and districts and development partners to conduct joint monitoring visits to schools to ensure accountability to school resources (Duhoe, 2009). This means that accountability happens not in isolation but contributions from all actors, thus, decentralization brought government closer to its citizens and increases accountability.

Performance

Performance is associated with quality of output, timeliness of output, presence (attendance on the job), efficiency of the work completed, and effectiveness of work accomplished, (Jackson, 2009). Hauber (2002) defines performance as the contribution of specific systems (organisational units of differing sizes,) employees and processes to attain and validate the goals of a company. These definitions support the notion that performance management has become a salient item for governments all over the world. Organisations and individual supervisors as the literature indicates should make sure that high performers are rewarded and penalize poor performers when needed. As such, if performance is not handled appropriately it can have a terrible effect on the overall morale of the workforce. When the permanent secretary or the minister do not hold heads of schools for their behaviour, good performers may feel de-valued, which can lead to a decrease in the quantity or quality of work done, a loss of faith in the organisation and supervisor and the potential loss of performing employees (Nguimfack & Kelly, 2018).

Relationship between Accountability and Performance

Ossege, (2012) indicates that accountability may either enhance or hinder performance although the relationship may not be as clear as we want it to be, it is not any less important to reconsider the effect of accountability on performance, the so-called "pursuit of accountability (Dubrick & Yang, 2011) because accountability can be understood as an answer for performance" (Romzek & Dubrick 1998). When employees tend to perceive accountability positively, it will make them to be more responsible or answerable or accountable in their act which increase their performance.

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METHODOLOGY

Our methodology was premised on a literature study of authoritative publications, journals, books and official documents as primary sources to gather information as well as questionnaires and in-depth interviews with key informants. The population under study comprised of 40 primary schools and 29 secondary schools. A sample of 50% of the population or more is considered a true representation of the population and should be examined (Mugenda and Mugenda, 2014, Rajasekar, Chinnathambi and Philominathan, 2013 and Creswell, 2014). Simple random sampling was used to select 35 school heads who were interviewed and received questionnaires. The researchers chose this sampling technique because each member in the population had an equal chance of being included in the sample. The questionnaires were created by defining sub-research objectives to ensure that they covered all parts of the research investigation. The researchers created the questionnaire by deciding on the topic, wording, and length of the questions, defining the respondents, and selecting the methods for contacting them. A 5-point Likert scale was used to create the questionnaire. Following the pre-testing of the questionnaires, the final survey for the study was built.

In order to ensure that the instruments were reliable, the researchers prepared a pilot questionnaire. By conducting a pilot study, the researchers were able to establish validity (Bolarinwa, 2015). In addition, the researchers conducted a pilot study with a small number of volunteers to limit the likelihood of ambiguity, inconsistent results and misconceptions. The researchers triangulated qualitative and quantitative research approaches and thus were able to test the relationship between performance contracts and accountability within the education sector. The research demonstrated the validity of information when it came to data analysis because only relevant data was employed in this study. Cronbach's alpha is a value between 0 and 1 and this was used to measure the internal consistency of a test or scale (questionnaire).

Data analysis, according to Urquhart (2013), is a systematic method of applying logic to analyze obtained data and reach a conclusion. According to Creswell (2014), utilizing the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) computer program to examine consistency of data objects, sort, organize, and analyze raw data obtained in order to validate the accuracy of the anticipated vast amounts of data will speed up the research process. As a

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result, the researchers sorted, coded, and organized the obtained data using SPSS software. The analysis made use of tables, figures, graphs and pie charts to visually represent numerical data that will be expressed without the usage of written descriptions. The researchers employed a qualitative method to uncover issues related to the usage of computer data analysis.

DATA PRESENTATION, DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS

Response Rate

Out of 30 questionnaires administered, all were returned fully completed constituting a response rate of 100% however, all interviews (6) were held constituting a 100% response rate. The score therefore suggest an overall response rate of 100% which according to Amin (2005) is a good representation of a survey population in a given study as it is above a response rate of 50%.

Gender of the Respondents

The issue of gender was raised in order to give a fair representation of the respondents. The findings were 72% males with 28% women. This shows that male are dominant in school administration.

Age category of respondents

The findings indicate that 90% of the employees are above 45 years old implying that they have relevant experience as shown in table 1 below.

Table 1 Age category of respondents

Age of the respondents	Frequency(n)	Percentage (%)
Below 40	0	0
41- 45	3	10
46 - 50	4	13
51-55	10	33
55years and above	13	44

Source: Field Data

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Level of education of the respondents

The computed results are provided in Table 2 below.

Table 2: Education level of the Real East respondents

Education level	Frequency	Percentage
Diploma and certificate level	10	33
First Degree	14	47
Post graduate Qualification	6	20
Total	30	100.

Source: Field Data

47 % were first degree holders followed by 33% for diploma holders and 20% postgraduates. Thus, all the respondents have attained an appropriate tertiary level qualification necessary for policy interpretation.

Experience as a School Head

Table 3: shows responses on experience

Years	Frequency	Percentage
Below 5	5	17
5-10	10	33
11-15	2	7
16-20	3	10
Above 20	10	33

Source: Field Data

From the above it can be shown that most of the respondents do have a lot of experience in the education sector as school heads. This was a vital question as it determines the wealth of knowledge of the performance contract on the promotion of accountability by respondents thereby providing a wealth of data for the research. This implies that over 83% had an experience of five years or above which was considered appropriate for implementing government policy.

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Performance contract importance

The respondents were asked to respond to various statements about performance contract importance issues and results are presented in Table 4.

Table 4: Performance contract importance issues

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Unsure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Performance contracts system was communicated to you	53%	40%	0%	7%	0%
Prior training on performance contract system was done before implementation.	67%	30%	0%	3%	0%
Performance contracts promote accountability.	90%	10%	0%	0%	0%
Performance contracts increase service delivery in schools.	87%	13%	0%	0%	0%
Performance contracts promote corporate governance of schools.	83%	17%	0%	0%	0%
Performance contracts improve resource allocation and use in schools.	80%	10%	10%	0%	0%

Source: Field Data

When asked on whether communication on performance contract system was done prior to implementation, most of the respondents in the study agreed (40%). 53% strongly agreed to the statement. However, 7% of the respondents disagreed. On prior training of staff members, 97% of the respondents concurred that prior training was done whilst only 3% disagreed representing the few heads who were promoted after the implementation of the performance contract system in education. This shows there was prior communication and training of school heads on the system before implementation. 100% of the respondents agreed that performance contract system promotes accountability, increases service delivery and promotes corporate governance in schools. 90% agreed that performance contract improve resource allocation and use in schools whilst 10% were unsure. This was also contended by Okech (2017) that performance contracting positively influences performance, productivity and service delivery.

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Formulation of performance contract

Respondents were asked to indicate who formulate the performance contract system and responses show that most respondents in the study strongly disagreed (83%) that Head office staff formulate the performance contract system. 27% of the respondents thought that it was the Office of the President and Cabinet which was responsible for formulating the performance contract system, however 27% of the respondents were unsure if it was donor formulated or not. 80% of the respondents agreed that it is the Public Service commission that formulate it. Thus it is concluded that the Employer is the one responsible in crafting the performance contract system.

Key deliverables of Performance contract

The respondents were asked to indicate on the key deliverables of performance contract system and findings are presented below.

Table 5: Key deliverables of performance contract system

	Strongly agree	Agree	Unsure	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Measurables agreed by both supervisor and Head	83%	17%	0%	0%	0%
Termly evaluation of the performance by the Supervisor.	90%	10%	0%	0%	0%
Remedial training & workshops are in place	50%	17%	10%	23%	0%
Link of performance contracts system to reward system.	0%	23%	10%	37%	30%

Source: Field Data

100% of the respondents agreed that measurables are agreed by both the supervisor and the supervisee and termly evaluation of the performance is done by the Supervisor. 67% of the respondents pointed out that remedial training and workshops were in place whilst 10% and 23% were unsure and disagreed. Only 23% noted that performance contract system was linked to the reward system. The findings are in agreement with Kobia & Mohammed (2006) who carried out a similar study in Kenya and noted that seventy six percent (76%) of the respondents had not received any formal training on performance contracting while

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seventy four percent (74%) of those who had been trained argued that more training was need.

Implementation of performance contract system guidelines

The respondents were asked on whether there are guidelines in place over performance contract system implementation and responses are shown in Figure 1. As shown from the findings, majority of the respondents constituting 52.6% strongly agreed whilst 20.5% also agreed.

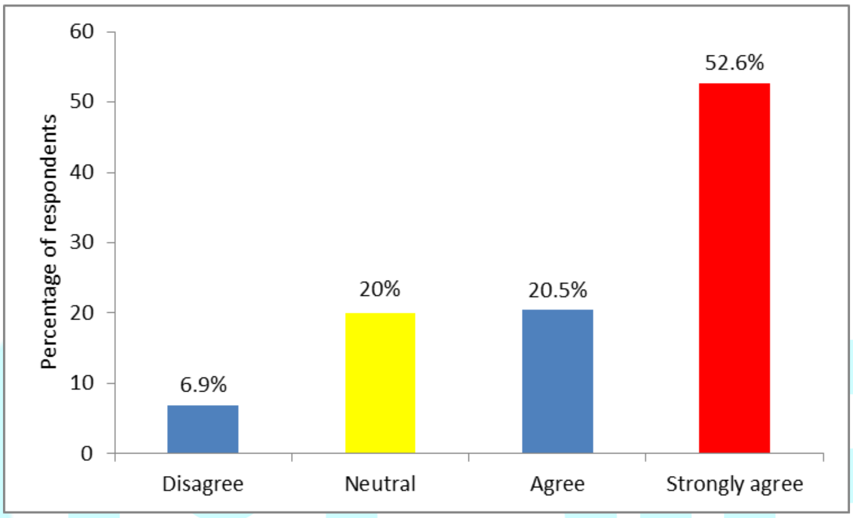

Fig 4.2: Guidelines in pricing policy implementation

Source: Field Data

76% of the respondents pointed out that the guidelines were effective and only 24% disagreed with that statement. On further probing it was discovered that those who disagreed were never trained on the performance contract system after they were promoted to the position of school head.

Table 6: Guidelines in performance contracts system implementation

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Unsure	Agree	Strongly Agree
Monitoring system	0%	12%	5%	59%	23%
Performance oriented organizational culture	0%	0%	10%	60%	30%
Qualified personnel who monitor performance contract system	0%	0%	27%	37%	36%
Effective objectives that promote accountability	12%	0%	0%	60%	28%

Source: Field Data

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88% of the respondents agreed that monitoring system is in place. However, 12% disagreed indicating there is no monitoring system in place. Muriu et al, (2013) advocated for effective and competent monitoring agency with vast skills and independent auditing together with other qualifications including rewards to boost performance in organizations. Thus the Ministry has monitoring system in place. Additionally, the majority of the 90% of the respondents supported that performance oriented organizational culture was in place.

The research also sought to determine whether the ministry had qualified personnel who monitor performance contract system and results confirm that the Ministry has qualified personnel, as shown by large percentages of 37% and 36% showing that bulk of the respondents agreed and strongly agreed respectively. However, 27% of the respondents were not sure. More so, there have been effective objectives that promote accountability since the greatest percentage of respondents (88%) agreed to this.

Personnel

Respondents thought that Personnel was adequate to implement guidelines over performance contract system with 72% supporting the statement. The 88% of the study respondents disagreed that the Personnel is suitably qualified to implement the guidelines. Furthermore, 87% of the respondents disagreed that the ministry has availed adequate resources to supervise the performance contract system. One of the respondents pointed out that " the ministry usually relied on the use of school buses to ferry Schools inspectors to various schools during school visits and inspections as the ministry was incapacitated". Another respondent said that their supervisor usually asks them to bring copies of their performance contract system to the District offices for supervision and as such the supervisor will not be able to actually check on the actual work on the ground. Thus, this compromises effective supervision as school heads will have an upper hand over their supervisors.

Officials responsible for crafting Performance objectives

Table 7: Personnel responsible for placing performance objectives

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Unsure	Agree	Strongly Agree
Head office management	60%	34%	6%	0%	0%
Provincial management	55%	27%	18%	0%	0%
District management team	57%	43%	0%	0%	0%
School head	40%	27%	13%	13%	7%
School head and the Supervisor	0%	3%	17%	25%	55%

Source: Field Data

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From the above responses it can be shown that objectives are crafted by both the School head and the Supervisor. This shows that the supervisee and supervisor agree on the performance objectives and these are not imposed on the supervisee. These findings are in unison with Prajapati (2010) who noted that target setting by the employees had a positive impact since it provides focus and direction to the employees. It can be deduced that involving employees in any decision pertaining to their work especially in target setting improves on performance.

Challenges faced in performance contract system implementation

In assessing the challenges, respondents were also asked to indicate whether various factors hindered effective implementation of performance contract system. Responses are presented in Table 8.

Table 8: Response to the challenges faced

ITEM	Strongly agree	Agree	Unsure	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Competence of staff	7%	5%	21%	55%	12%
Financial resources	0%	0%	26%	57%	17%
Effective supervision by the Ministry	0%	0%	24%	57%	19%
Long lines of communication	69%	31%	0%	0%	0%
Lack of realistic compensation in line with the performance contract	70%	30%	0%	0%	0%
One size fit all type of a performance contract	100%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Stifles out creativity and individualistic of staff	80%	20%	0%	0%	0%

Source: Field data

Research findings in Table 8 show that competence of staff is a major challenge in the Ministry as most of the respondents consisting of 55% disagreed and 12% strongly disagreed to the statement. Thus, the ministry still struggles with staff incompetence. This

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is also among the key factors influencing performance contract system as noted by Cant, Wiid and Sephapo (2016).

When asked whether financial resources is also a challenge, large percentages of 57% and 15% consisted of respondents who agreed and strongly agreed respectively. In addition, responses also show that effective supervision by the ministry is also a major challenge. This is shown by large percentages of 57% and 16% constituting respondents who agree and strongly agreed respectively. Maguigui et al. (2013) outlined lack of adequate working resources as one of the reasons that make performance contract system in the public sector less effective. They contended that resources such as financial resources are hardly enough to enable the desired target and goals to be achieved. Trivedi (2007) also noted poor rewarding system in the public sector to be contributing to or negatively affecting PCS resources as one of the reasons that make PCS in the public sector less effective. They contended that resources such as financial resources are hardly enough to enable the desired target and goals to be achieved.

When asked whether long lines of communication are also part of the challenges, most respondents (44%) strongly agreed whilst 28% also agreed. On the other hand, 16% remained neutral as they were not sure. Since majority agreed, it can be seen that there are long lines of communication in the Ministry. This slows down the process of policy implementation as more people have to be consulted. However, the long lines of communication can be useful as they may result in good decision making. Halligian (2013) noted that for activities to be executed as planned without distortion, communication must be effective as this helps to eliminate mistakes during implementation and avoid wastages.

Inferential Analysis

Correlation between Performance Contracting and Accountability

Findings indicate that performance contracting has a strong and positive Pearson Correlation Coefficient of 0.985 at a p value of 0.000. This implies that performance contracting is significant on accountability since the p-value of 0.000, is less than the threshold p-value of 0.05.

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Regression Analysis

Findings indicate that an R2 of 0.983 which implies that performance contracting explain 98.7% of productivity in the civil service. A high value of R2 suggests that the regression model explains the variation in the dependent variable well and the model can be used for predictive or forecasting purposes.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The research recommends the following:

- There is no gender balance in the appointment of school heads despite acknowledgement of the gender balance in the Constitution of Zimbabwe. Hence it is recommended that future appointments should result in more females being considered.
- There seem to be no succession plan in place as the majority of school heads are reaching the retirement age therefore more youthful teachers should be considered for headship positions.
- There is need for the Ministry to carry out training of newly appointed Heads on the performance contract system so that they acquire adequate knowledge and skills to drive the process, institutionalise an internal monitoring and evaluation system and linking performance contracting to the cycle of performance management.
- There is need for the Ministry to continually hold workshops on performance contract system in order to improve it.
- Given the economic constraints and poor salaries which are below the poverty datum line, the employer should utilize results of performance contract system in crafting the reward system in order to motivate and also reward performers
- There is need for the ministry to provide adequate resources for monitoring.
- There is need to break the long lines of communication in the Ministry, make it democratic, approachable and free from red tape.

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