

Effects of Monitoring of Service Delivery of National Cereals and Produce Board in Kitale

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Abstract

Many corporate organizations develop projects with the objective of improving service delivery aimed at improving standards of living. Resources are allocated to these organizations and it is important to get value for these inputs. Organizations may have good plans for monitoring practice and for effectiveness of information and projects. The practice aims at comparing the way things are actually done against the original plan. State corporations may have good monitoring intents but the extent to which the practice is successfully implemented influences service delivery. The study sought to establish the effect of monitoring on service delivery of state corporations, specifically, National Cereals and Produce Board, Kitale. Studies have been conducted on factors influencing performance of monitoring and evaluation systems of non-governmental organizations, however, little information was available on monitoring practice and service delivery of such state corporations. Theory of change guided the study, and used descriptive survey design was employed. Data was collected from managers, supervisors and employees. The sample was selected through stratified, simple random technique. Both qualitative and quantitative data were collected. Self-administered structured questionnaires and interview guides were used. The instruments were tested for reliability and validity. Data analysis was done using descriptive and inferential statistics of simple regression coefficient analysis. Qualitative data was analysed using content analysis and presented in form of tables. Regression value indicated that monitoring practice was statistically significant and therefore influenced service delivery. The study recommends adoption of monitoring practice in order to ensure that there is improved service delivery.

Key words: *Monitoring practice, service delivery, state corporations*

Introduction

Many corporate organizations develop projects with an objective of improving service delivery aimed at enhance standards of living. Resources are allocated to these organizations and it is important to get the value. However, some state corporations do not recognise the need and usefulness of monitoring practice. Monitoring is an element of management by objective (Rist, Boily & Martin, 2011). Management by objectives involves deliberately gathering empirical evidence in order to establish the extent to which intended objectives are being achieved so that modifications to the plan and delivery of activities can be made to improve service delivery. Corporate organizations which adopt management by objectives need to have appropriate strategic planning (Mayne, 2007).

Many projects in state corporations fall short of successful completion due to inadequate understanding of the need for monitoring. The practice makes it possible to compare the way things are actually done with the way they were originally planned. Careful monitoring practice allows managers to make appropriate decisions on a day-to-day basis and ensures that projects and information are carried out as designed and modified when necessary.

Studies have been conducted on monitoring practice in Australia, in tourism sector and the findings showed that the practice is important for quality service delivery (Chen, Weiler & Young, 2018). In India Pepper (2019) used the theoretical perspective of Agency Theory to stress the importance of shareholders taking part in monitoring activities especially those targeting managers within the organizations' setting. Ali, Basu and Ware (2018) employed monitoring practice in Indian commercial hospitals to highlight the importance of SERVQUAL framework in defining aspect of quality service. Also, Muralidharan, Niehaus, Sukhtankar and Weaver (2018) highlighted the importance of monitoring in adoption of latest technology.

A survey conducted in Ghana by Scott and Enu-Kwesi (2018) lays emphasis on the fact that service delivery in organizations at some point can be influenced by various monitoring practices such as budgeting. In East Africa, studies conducted in countries such as Uganda have highlighted the critical issue of organizations ensuring that they have efficient monitoring policy with the view that these can lead to an improvement in the quality of the service to the clients (Atwebembeire, Musaazi, Sentamu & Malunda, 2018).

Locally, a study conducted on health sector in Nyandarua County by Njeru and Obwatho (2018) stressed the importance of using monitoring and evaluation in order to have improvement in service delivery to the clients. Nankoris and Gakuo (2018) also affirm that monitoring practice can contribute to service delivery. The linkage between monitoring practices and service delivery is also evidenced in Kenyan state corporations on how monitoring has been critical in improving organizations' performance (Shahrier, Ho & Gaur, 2018; Scott & Enu-Kwesi, 2018; Muchelule, 2018).

The National Cereals and Produce Board (NCPB) launched a Five Year Strategic Plan, 2015/16 to 2019/20 that aims at achieving their intended objectives of service delivery through effective monitoring and evaluation policy. The study therefore aimed at establishing how monitoring practice influences service delivery of Kitale National Cereal and Produce Board.

Statement of the Problem

Many corporate organizations develop projects with an objective of improving service delivery which is aimed at enhancing citizens' standards of living. However, some state corporations do not recognise the need and usefulness of monitoring practice which is an element of management by objectives (Rist, Boily & Martin, 2011).

Many projects in state corporations fail to be successfully completed due to inadequacy in understanding of monitoring practice which makes it possible to compare the way things are actually done with the way they the original plan.

Studies have been conducted on monitoring and evaluation and performance of organizations such as Shahrier, Ho and Gaur (2018) and the findings indicated that monitoring and evaluation improve service delivery. In Ghana a study by Scott and Enu-Kwesi (2018) on how monitoring and evaluation influences service delivery in organizations, the findings indicated that monitoring leads to improved organizational service delivery. In Uganda, studies have been conducted on policies on monitoring and evaluation of projects and information towards improvement of quality of service delivery among organizations (Atwebembeire, Musaazi, Sentamu & Malunda, 2018).

Locally, studies have been conducted on health sector in Nyandarua County by Njeru and Obwatho (2018) and the findings indicated that monitoring and evaluation was important in order to enhance service delivery. Nankoris and Gakuo (2018) in the study on monitoring and evaluation affirmed that monitoring practice can contribute to quality service delivery and customer satisfaction.

Such studies have also been conducted in Kenya, they were conducted in different contexts. Therefore, the current study endeavoured to address the influence of monitoring practice on service delivery of National Cereals and Produce Board in Kitale.

Research Objective

The objective of this study was to establish the effect of monitoring practice on service delivery of National Cereals and Produce Board in Kitale.

Research Hypothesis

H₀: Monitoring practice has no influence on service delivery at National Cereal and produce Board in Kitale.

Literature Review

Theoretical Review

The study was guided by Theory of Change. The Theory of change aims to provide a direction to strategy implementation in organizations by highlighting on the target results of the strategy and how this can be achieved. Breuer, Lee, De Silva & Lund, (2016) emphasized on the importance of utilization of theory of change which affects monitoring practice in organizational setting by determining the outcomes at every step of change process, assessing the strategic relevance and quality of the

monitoring design. Luttrell, Komarudin, Zrust, Pacheco, Limberg, Nurfatriani and Pirard (2019) also established that Theory of Change is important when carrying out monitoring process in organizations. Therefore the theory is important in establishing whether monitoring practice is embraced in the process of implementing the strategic plan of the National Cereals and Produce Board in Kitale.

National Cereals and Produce Board

This is a state corporation enacted by parliament to regulate and control the marketing and processing of maize, wheat and scheduled agricultural produce. The corporation's vision is to be a world class organization in agricultural commodity trade and grain management (Constitution of Kenya, 2010). The mission is to trade in quality grains, agricultural products and related services.

Service Delivery of National Cereals and Produce Board

Milliman, Gatling and Kim (2018) found out that service delivery in organizations can be guided by a model referred to as SERVQUAL which is an instrument that was designed by Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry (1988). Rezaei, Kothadiya, Tavasszy and Kroesen (2018) used the context of Airline Industries to emphasize on the importance of utilization of SERVQUAL model as a measure of quality of services offered to the clients.

In order to provide high levels of quality service/product and create value for the customers, organizations need to plan and ensure that monitoring practice leads to increased customer satisfaction, loyalty and therefore long-term profitability (Grönroos & Ravald, 2011P).

However, customers are faced with the challenge of purchasing agricultural produce and availing the produce to the citizens when needed. The study therefore focused on establishing whether monitoring practice influences service delivery of the National Cereals and Produce Board in Kitale.

Monitoring Practice and Service Delivery at National Cereals and Produce Board

Organizations' service delivery is determined by effective and efficient utilization of monitoring practice. Shahrier, Ho and Gaur (2018) highlighted the importance of monitoring by ensuring that top management such as board members take part in ensuring proper monitoring process is adhered to in organizations. In Portugal Ribeiro, Vasconcelos and Rocha (2019), conducted a study in hospital sector and pointed out the importance of ensuring that organizations have properly functioning monitoring indicators for performance. In education sector, studies have demonstrated the importance of carrying out performance monitoring and evaluation for performance improvement. Countries such as Uganda have

developed policies on performance of monitoring and evaluation (Atwebembeire, Musaazi, Sentamu & Malunda, 2018).

Bayo-Moriones, Galdon-Sanchez and Martinez-de-Morentin (2019) stressed the fact that monitoring is important in ensuring that employees in organizations were subjected to regular performance measurement appraisals. It is therefore important to appreciate how monitoring practice such as performance associated with service delivery in the selected context of the National Cereals and Produce Board in Kitale.

Methodology

Sequential triangulation mixed methods research design was employed. At first the questionnaires were distributed to the respondents and later, focus group discussions were conducted in order to capture more in-depth information on monitoring practice in the national cereals and produce board in Kitale.

Data was collected from 3 board members since they are the policy makers, 11 managers and 48 employees were chosen because they were the key implementers of the strategy of monitoring practice. However, 64 customers of the organizations were also chosen since they were the beneficiaries of the services and goods. The sample was selected through stratified, simple random technique. The process of data collection was done by use of key informant interviews and researcher-administered structured questionnaires were also used to capture in-depth information. A Pilot study was adopted for reliability test and it yielded correlation coefficient of 0.735. This was structured in line with the hypothesis of the study (Okpala, 2012). Validity was ascertained by use of content validity index which was computed in Stata software and was $CVI = .713$ which was within the threshold.

Findings

Quantitative Findings

The study sought to establish the effect of monitoring practice on service delivery of National Cereals and Produce Board in Kitale. To accomplish this, the following null hypothesis was tested;

H₀: Monitoring practice has no effect on service delivery of National Cereals and Produce Board in Kitale.

This was tested using simple regression analysis test. The findings are presented in Table 1.

Table 1
Model Summary

R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
.260^a	.068^b	.022	0.514432

^a. Predictors: (Constant), Monitoring practice

^b. Dependent Variable: Service delivery

From Table 1, it can be concluded that the value of r squared was 0.068, which indicates that 6.8% of the variations in the service delivery of National Cereals and Produce Board in Kitale, were caused by variations in the monitoring practice, while 93.2% was caused by other factors which is referred to as unexplained variation.

Analysis of Variance

The study sought to establish the effect of monitoring practice and service delivery of National Cereals and Produce Board in Kitale. The results are presented in Table 2.

Table 2
Analysis of Variance Table

Source	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	1.169	2	.5845	2.2037 ^a	.231 ^b
Residual	16.143	62	.265		
Total	17.312	64			

^a Dependent Variable: Service delivery

^b Predictors: (Constant): Monitoring practice

Table 2, shows that the F value was 2.204 while the P value was 0.231. This indicated that monitoring practice had an effect on service delivery at the National Cereals and Produce Board in Kitale.

Regression Coefficient Results

The study also sought to establish the influence of monitoring practice on service delivery at the National Cereals and Produce Board in Kitale. The findings are presented in Table 3.

Table 3
Coefficients of the Regression

Predictor	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	2.179	2.401		.907	.368
Monitoring Practice	.071 ^a	.154	.060	.465	.0444

a. Dependent Variable: Service delivery

From the table, the findings show that an increase in monitoring practice by one unit was associated with an increase in service delivery by 0.071 units. Therefore, the study concluded that monitoring practice has effect on service delivery and this led to the rejection of the null hypothesis which stated that;

H₀₁: Monitoring practice has no influence on service delivery of National Cereals and Produce Board in Kitale.

Qualitative Findings

The following was one of the responses in the interviews:

“As board we have been serious in our strategic plan especially focusing on various aspects of monitoring in the hope that we will have better service delivery to our clients”. This was also confirmed by another member focus group discussion participant who commented that: “We appreciate the importance of proper implementation of our strategic plan and we value aspects of these such as monitoring practices especially with the aim of ensuring that the overall services delivery to the people are of good quality”

The comments given by the participants therefore indicated that there is commitment from the management to ensure that monitoring practice is embraced in order to improve service delivery.

Thus, from both the quantitative and qualitative perspectives it can be concluded that monitoring practice plays an important role on service delivery at the National Cereals and Produce Board in Kitale.

The findings of this study corroborate with Shahrier, Ho and Gaur (2018) who gave the importance of the linkage that exist between monitoring and evaluation and service delivery. Ribeiro, Vasconcelos and Rocha (2019) also affirm that service delivery can always be improved with proper adoption of monitoring practice. Scott and Enu-Kwesi (2018) also corroborate this assertion that there is a linkage that exists between monitoring and service delivery.

Conclusions

Monitoring practice has a statistically significant effect on service delivery at the National Cereals and Produce Board in Kitale. Therefore, mechanisms to ensure that monitoring practice is effective in the organizations because it has a positive significant effect on service delivery. Additionally, boards of directors should strive to build customer focused culture that will enhance service delivery through monitoring practice at the National Cereals and Produce Board in Kitale.

Recommendations

Boards of directors need to ensure that strategic plan is adhered to during implementation since monitoring practice is an aspect in the strategic plan to ensuring that objectives are effectively and efficiently achieved. Additionally, involvement of stakeholders hold a very important position in focusing the organization towards customer focused culture that delivers service that gives them satisfaction.

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