



INFLUENCE OF CONTRACT MANAGEMENT TECHNIQUES ON PERFORMANCE OF SKOL RWANDA LTD

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ABSTRACT

The aim of the study was to establish the influence of contract management techniques on performance of SKOL Rwanda Ltd. To address this objective, contract management was observed as the main independent variable while performance through nine items was considered as dependent variable. The study used a descriptive research design. The target population for this was 108 employees of SKOL Rwanda Limited. Primary data were collected using structured questionnaires. The responses from respondents were analyzed through SPSS version 21. Frequencies and percentages were used to describe the relationship between the variables. Majority of the respondents Strongly Agreed that procurement and other projects records were maintained for contract management purposes ($\bar{x}=4.03$). This was followed by a ($\bar{x}=3.98$) of respondents who agreed that setting of Service Level Agreements for contract monitoring was done. The researcher concluded that a significant effect between contract management techniques and procurement performance existed. The results of correlation was at 0.609 which meant that contract management techniques affect procurement performance at the level of 60.9% that proves a significant relationship between the contract management techniques and procurement performance. The managers of manufacturing firms in Rwanda especially the ones involved in the procurement processes of SKOL Rwanda Limited should adopt adequate contract management techniques by fostering open contract negotiation between procurement unit and the suppliers. Both parties involved in procurement process should enter into agreement after understanding the terms of contract and finally both parties involved in the procurement contract should put in place the mechanisms that help them to monitor contract compliance and establish mechanisms for disputes resolutions so that the relationship between the suppliers and manufacturing might be well managed.

Keywords: Contract management, Procurement performance, SKOL Rwanda Limited

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INTRODUCTION

In today's dynamic global business environment, firms are facing a cut-throat competition because focus has steadily increased on delivering value to the customers. Globalization, technological change and demanding customers make the marketplace more fiercely competitive than ever before. Consumers now impose increasing demands on manufacturers for variety, quick order fulfilment and fast delivery. Supplier relationship management has been identified as a purchasing strategy that influences procurement performance of organization. To support this assertion, Wachiuri, Waiganjo and Abdallah (2015) confirm that manufacturing firms have realized the importance of procurement performance in establishing and maintaining their competitive advantage. Supplier development has evolved as an important strategic instrument to improve buyer supplier relationships (Jouali & Chakor, 2013).

According to Perks and Oosthuizen, (2013) supplier relationship is a long-term cooperative effort between a buying firm and its suppliers to upgrade the supplier's technical, quality, delivery and cost capabilities and to foster ongoing improvements. Chartered Institute of Purchasing and Supply (Chartered Institute of Purchasing and Supply, 2016) defines supplier relationship as the process of working with certain suppliers on a one-to-one basis to improve their performance (and capabilities) for the benefit of the buying organization. Supplier relationship activities are defined as the most important effort that firms undertake not only to gain competitive advantage but to develop suppliers for long term partnership and relationship enhancement (Rajendra *et al.*, 2012). Wenli, et al., (2012) see supplier relationship as a kind of cooperation between a buyer and a supplier to seek continuous improvement in supplier performance and, at the same time, strengthen the buyer's competitive advantage.

Previous studies on supplier relationship have convergent opinions that supplier relationship is an

alternative paradigm to organization performance in term of cost reduction, customer satisfaction, quick order fulfilment and fast delivery (Khuram, Ilkka, Elina & Shpend, 2016). Firms are more eager in supplier relationship programs not only to continue long term relationship with their suppliers but also to develop strategically global competitive advantage (Loppacher, Cagliano, & Spina, 2011). Yeung, (2018) note that manufacturing firms have realized that procurement performance is crucial to their establishing and maintaining competitive advantage, supplier relationship has been a subject of considerable research in supply chain management (SCM). Equally, Rajendra et al., (2012) reiterate that cooperation with suppliers can make buyer more efficient and thus enable goods to be purchased at lower prices and also makes buyer to look for his core competency to remain more competitive.

Procurement performance refers to how well an organization achieves its market-oriented goals as well as its financial goals (Chegugu & Yusuf (2017). The short-term objectives of SRM are primarily to increase productivity and reduce inventory and cycle time, while long-term objectives are to increase market share and profits for all members of the supply chain. Any organizational initiative, including supply relations management, should ultimately lead to enhanced organizational performance (Kepher, Shalle & Oduma (2015). Today, purchasing is becoming a strategic function and a key factor in competitive positioning. With consolidation of firms within industries, supplier relationships are becoming more critical in the future. Firms have realized that collaborative business relationships improve a firm's ability to respond to the new business environment by allowing them to focus on their core businesses and reduce costs in business processes (Johnson, 2013). Supplier Relationship Management (SRM) plays an important role in the reduction of costs and the optimization of performance in industrial enterprises (Caeldries, 2011). Supplier Relationship Management is a comprehensive approach to

managing an organization's interactions with the firms that supply the products and services it uses. SRM is understood as the sourcing policy-based design of strategic and operational procurement processes as well as the configuration of the supplier management (Githui, 2012).

SKOL Brewery Ltd (SBL) is a subsidiary of UNIBRA, a Belgium-based, family owned company, having activities in the Brewery Industry, Real Estate and Financial Services. Unibra hold the usage rights for brand SKOL in Africa and is involved in the beer business for seven generations. SKOL, a brand created in 1964 by Unibra and three partners, is a very successful brand. SKOL is selling over 45,000,000 hectoliters internationally as one of the TOP 5 beer brands worldwide. Since its launch in Africa, in 1965, SKOL has been spreading its wings and currently is available in seven African countries. To learn more about Unibra and/or SKOL, click on "Corporate" in the menu.

Despite the fact that manufacturing firms in developing economies have acknowledged the significant role of supplier development in promoting organizational performance and contributes strategically to overall operational effectiveness, little research has empirically examined the impact of supplier relationship on procurement performance of organization in the manufacturing sector of Rwanda. This study intends to fill the gap in knowledge and providing insight to the manufacturing organizations in Rwanda on how they can leverage on supplier relationship management process to enhance procurement performance in manufacturing sector in Rwanda.

Statement of the Problem

Supplier relationship management and its impacts on procurement performance is an increasingly important area of interest in the academic and the business world today. Most of the established and successful companies focus strongly on the development of closer ties with other organizations in search of competitive advantage and improved

market positioning. This has triggered the need to develop better relationships with suppliers to enhance procurement performance. The value of this relationship therefore has been questioned with gains from this relationship hardly being quantifiable. SKOL Rwanda Ltd as a manufacturing company has been exposed to global competition with the liberalization of the East African regional markets that were key importers of the Rwanda products.

A number of studies have been done on Supplier Relationship Management and supply chain performance. Supplier relationship management is gaining momentum globally due to immense competition in the manufacturing industry. This has triggered the need to develop better relationships with suppliers to enhance Supply Chain Performance. Wachuma and Shalle (2016) suggested the need to redefine supply chain management relationships in order to enhance productivity in organizations. They argued that with better supplier relationship management organizations can reduce cycle times and reduce costs in supply chains.

Nzau (2014) on her study found that trust, communication, cooperation and power dependence with supply contracts had a positive relationship on supply chain performance in retail outlets in Kenya. Mwalie (2014) found that by exchanging product and supplier information with other hospitals, the purchasing department under study made the first move to establish strategic aspects of SRM. The availability of comprehensive and up-to-date product information could enhance the bargaining power of the hospital's purchasing department. Hospitals which had experience with ICT supported sourcing had sustainable cost reductions. Muriithi, (2013) found out one Communications Company relied only on one supplier, there were no professionals in the procurement department, no early supplier involvement, poor coordination and information sharing between supply chain partners, this caused

delays within the supply chain especially when the supplier took long to supply products and services.

Previous studies majorly focus on the last stage of the supply chain which is delivery of finished goods; however, this research aims to focus on Supplier Relationship Management from procurement of raw materials to delivery of finished goods. Although previous research has explored the effect of supplier relationships management (SRM) on performance of firms (Waithaka, & Waiganjo, 2015; O'Brien, 2014). Njeru, (2013) argued that the manufacturing company's plays a forward and backward linkage with other economic sectors hence playing a critical role as an indicator to the general economic conditions.

This study sought to answer the following research question: What is the influence of contract management techniques on performance of SKOL Rwanda Ltd?

Objective of the study

Generally, the study aimed to analyze the influence of contract management techniques on performance of SKOL Rwanda Ltd.

LITERATURE REVIEW

MacNeil's Relational Contracts Theory

Macneil's writings before 1968 centered on the specific problems specifically the deficiency of reality of the agreement secured by the rules of approval, agreement of remedies and hire purchase through which traditional law of contract was acutely manifested. The limited extent to which it is possible for folks to consent to all conditions of purchase even a relatively simple and incredibly discrete one soon faces the development of legal fictions expanding the scope of consent significantly beyond anything remotely near to what the parties thought of. This is the greatest aim theory of contract.

Building on the effort of Macaulay (2013), Macneil developed a set of best practice rules that determine the tendencies that do occur in relations,

must occur if relations are to continue, and hence ought to occur as long as their continuation is valued (Macneil, 2012). He defines contracts as no more with no less than the relations among parties to the process of projecting exchange into the future (Macneil, 2012). Macneil (2012) advanced his relational theory to the norms-based approach. He questioned lawyer's traditional premise that all contracts are mere transactions. In particular he stressed the role of norms in deciding the way in which commercial exchanges operate in practice and introduced the idea that specific transactions lie on array ranging from discrete to relational.

Macneil recognizes that contracts vary widely in the depth of the partnership to which they are applied. He argues that, some contracts, called here contractual relations are far more relational than others. They will lie towards one end of a relational continuum of contractual behaviour contrary from the non-relational end in which the discrete transaction is found (Macneil, 1983). Macneil's view is that, the reality given to these common contract norms differ in accordance to where an interaction lies on the contractual spectrum ranging from relational to discrete and indeed that a few of these best practice rules transform according to where they lie (Macneil, 2012).

Macneil details five basic aspects of deal/contract management; cooperation, monetary exchange, planning for the future, potential external sanctions, public control and manipulation (Macneil, 2012). He further appreciates that contracts belong to complex context of overall exchange relations (Berstrin, 2016). However, Macneil notes that some relations are much way more relational than others. According to relational term contract theory, there exists a long-range of relations from highly relational, such as long run contracts to under the radar contracts which concerns largely transacted relations such as hand to mouth purchases of goods and services.

Contract management and procurement performance

For a sound project contract management Ntayi et al. (2013) identifies some critical success factors which include; the ability to identify metrics relevant to the project, that is, a balanced set of performance indicators; capacity to generate accurate information; visibility to team members to enable every individual player/stakeholder to know what is being measured and have ready access to the information; ability to provide a basis for problem discovery and solution; the system should be in-built into the project plan right from the point of project planning stage; capacity to generate timely information for timely decision making and corrective action (Bhardwaj, 2015).

According to Govindan, Popiuc and Diabat (2013) for one to manage a contract effectively, each member of the contract administration team must understand the duties associated with his or her position on the team and must understand a number of basic issues that are common to better service delivery: customer satisfaction, timeliness and productivity. The contract management team must understand the importance of pre-performance conferences in laying the groundwork for efficient and effective performance and monitoring. Despite the care that has gone into the preparation of the contract documents, most contracts require amendments, and the team must understand when and how to issue them. To manage a contract effectively, the team must select appropriate measures of output or outcome, choose suitable monitoring methods, carefully document performance, and work cooperatively with the contractor (Basheka & Kabatereine, 2013).

Commitment among buyers and suppliers brings the desire to develop a stable relationship, a willingness to make short-term sacrifices to maintain the relationship, a confidence in the stability of the relationship, and investments in the relationship thus improving procurement

performance (Kanagaraj et al., 2014). Stanley, (2014) in his study argues that supplier quality commitment has become an important issue in supply chain integration because effective planning is based on information shared among partners that is an essential element for the successful integration making and high procurement performance. Sharing information in certain circumstances requires the disclosure of financial information protected and other operational partners who may be competitors in the market or in the future to become a competitor, with the expectation that supply chain partners do not misuse confidential information.

Mahmoud et al. (2014) notes that the key to effective contract management and monitoring is to identify and address all problems before they become unmanageable. Careful management and monitoring are necessary to make sure that the contractor meets expected results. When productivity falls below the established standard, the contract management team must act quickly to prevent further decline and to ensure that productivity is brought back to contract minimums. Eduardo et al. (2014) argued that most problems that arise with delivery of a service are based on poor performance on the part of individuals. It is important to be aware that when problems arise with a contractor, the attempt to resolve even simple issues can potentially result in a formal contract dispute. A contract manager's request to a contractor to correct a problem or perform a task may have little or no effect unless it is made clear to the contractor that there has been a breach of a specific term or condition of the contract or that the task is part of the contractor's obligations under the contract. If the contractor does not agree with the customers, the problem may eventually require resolution by the governing body or the courts. The contract management team should intervene to prevent problems or conflicts from developing into formal disputes.

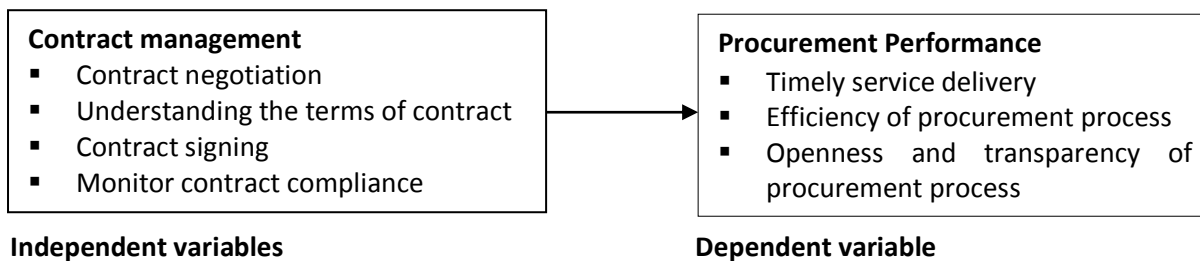


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

METHODOLOGY

The main purpose of this study was to gain deeper knowledge about the research problem but also describe and analyze the influence of contract management techniques on performance of SKOL Rwanda Ltd. The researcher used descriptive research design to investigate the relationship between contract management techniques and procurement performance. Both qualitative and quantitative data were collected. Qualitative data was obtained by using questionnaire. This research used quantitative data because the data gathered by using questionnaires and interpreted based on frequency and percentage. The target population for this study was 124 employees of SKOL Rwanda Limited. The sample size was derived from a population of 124 people being targeted in the study. The researcher used Slovin’s formula and a sample of 95 respondents was got. Data collected using the questionnaire was analyzed through SPSS (Statistical Packages of Social Sciences) version 21. Data was coded for analysis. Descriptive statistics such as mean and standard deviation was used to describe indicators of contract management

techniques on the procurement performance. Correlation analysis with one tailed significant test was used to test the correlation between individual indicators of contract management techniques and procurement performance. ANOVA test was conducted to test the statistical significance of the overall effect of contract management techniques on the procurement performance.

RESULTS AND FINDINGS

Analysis of the effect of contract management techniques

Generally sound contract management of any project revolves around the control of time, cost and quality (KISM, 2009). Further PPADA (2015) acknowledges contract management as very important integral of supply chain management that is ought not to be ignored so as to create value to meet the objectives of the procuring entity. For this study various aspects of contract management were assessed with the objective of determining their predictability role in project performance. The obtained results were summarized in the Table 1:

Table 1: Contract management techniques on procurement performance

Contract management	N	Mean	Std. Dev
In the procurement process of SKOL Rwanda Limited, there is open contract negotiation between the procurement unit and the suppliers	78	3.92	.871
In the procurement process of SKOL Rwanda Limited, both parties enter into agreement after understanding the terms of contract	78	4.03	.760
In the procurement process of SKOL Rwanda Limited, both parties sign the supply contract with mutual understanding	78	3.98	.746
In the procurement process of SKOL Rwanda Limited, both parties involved in the agreement monitor the contract compliance	78	3.92	.803
In the procurement process of SKOL Rwanda Limited, when one of the parties involved in the agreement fail to meet its obligations, there are measures to handle these non-compliance	78	3.60	1.141

From the results above, contract management techniques was highly embraced as a pre-requisite to success of projects in SKOL breweries. Majority of the respondents Strongly Agreed that procurement and other projects records were maintained for contract management purposes (\bar{x} =4.03). This was followed by a (\bar{x} =3.98) of respondents who agreed that, setting of Service Level Agreements for contract monitoring was done. The findings showed that most of the project managers complied to PPADA (2015) Sec (68) which requires maintenance of records for each procurement for at least six years after the resulting contract has been completed or, if no contract resulted after the procurement proceedings were terminated. Further the findings concurred with Brown and Hyer (2010) who stated that, for sound project contract monitoring, there

should be a control system that sets relevant projects metrics, provides accurate and timely information for decision making and corrective measures.

Correlations between contract management techniques and procurement performance

A correlation was done to Correlations between the contract management techniques and procurement performance. The Pearson Correlation coefficient between contract management techniques and procurement performance was computed and established as 0.609 (p-value=0.000). From Table 2 it could then be concluded that there is a moderate positive linear relationship between the two variables since the correlation coefficient was between 0.4 and 0.6 according to Dancey and Reidy's (2014) categorization.

Table 2: Correlations between contract management techniques and procurement performance

Variables		Contract management	Procurement performance
Contract management	Pearson Correlation	1	.609*
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	78	78
Procurement performance	Pearson Correlation	.609**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	78	78

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

The findings in the Table 2 illustrated that correlation was at 0.609 meant that contract management techniques affect procurement performance at the level of 60.9% that proves a significant relationship between the contract management techniques and procurement performance. There is therefore a significant relationship between them, due to the fact that their p – value (0.000) was statistically significant at 5% level of significance.

DISCUSSIONS

The findings revealed that the majority of the respondents agreed and strongly agreed that contract management techniques had enabled the SKOL breweries to take control of the risks that arise during contract execution together with the contractor. This was supported by Thai (2018) who

stressed that effective contract management has been proven that it may bring about decisions being taken at the proper time thus allowing potential risks to be managed properly.

These findings agreed with Hansson and Longva (2014) that effective contract relationship management involves creation and maintenance a positive relationship with the contractor; ensuring mutual trust between the organization and the contractor; ensuring mutual understanding between the organization and the contractors; regular communication between the organisation and the contractors and timely management of potential problems in the contract.

The study findings related to Cmén, Gottfridsson and Rundh (2012) who argued that appropriate

contract administration entails maintenance an updated form of the contract; controlling and management of contract variations; paying the contractor on time; regularly drafting reports and proper management of assets.

These findings concurred with Camén, Gottfridsson and Rundh (2012) that good dispute resolution entails use of appropriate procedures to resolve differences, allowing each party to freely express its concerns, as well as ensuring a win-win situation for both parties.

It was also revealed that majority of the respondents agreed and strongly agreed that contract management techniques had enabled the contractor's payment claims be processed faster and cleared after project completion and it has helped in protecting the reputation of the supplier and creates a good relationship with the procuring entity. This was in agreement with Gordon (2009) who constituted that contract management also involves building a good working relationship between the client and provider and the author. It continues throughout the life of the contract and involves managing proactively to anticipate future needs as well as reacting to situations that arise.

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CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The researcher concluded a significant effect between contract management techniques and procurement performance since the results of correlation was at 0.609 mean that contract management techniques affect procurement performance at the level of 60.9% that proves a significant relationship between the contract management techniques and procurement performance.

The managers of manufacturing firms in Rwanda especially the ones involved in the procurement processes of SKOL Rwanda Limited should adopt adequate contract management techniques by fostering open contract negotiation between the procurement unit and the suppliers. Both parties involved in procurement process should enter into agreement after understanding the terms of contract and finally both parties involved in the procurement contract should put in place the mechanisms that help them to monitor contract compliance and establish mechanisms for disputes resolutions so that the relationship between the suppliers and manufacturing might be well managed.

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