

Relationship between target setting and service delivery in the National Water and Sewerage Corporation of Kamwenge. A cross-sectional study.

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Page | 1

Abstract

Background:

The study aims to assess the relationship between target setting and service delivery in the National Water and Sewerage Corporation of Kamwenge.

Methodology:

The study adopted a cross-sectional survey design using both quantitative and qualitative approaches. The study employed simple random and purposive sampling to select the respondents from the 5 branches of the Kamwenge area.

Results:

The majority of the respondents (45.8%) have worked for NWSC between 0 and 5 years. A positive (.646*) statistically significant relationship existed between Target Setting and Service delivery with a (41.2%) effect or variation on service delivery. 78.3% of the respondents agreed that Key Performance Indicators (KPI's) are clearly known by all KW staff and 94.2% of the respondents have clear understanding of the set performance targets for the branches, 90% of the respondents agreed that targets for groups (territories) are made known to all group members and 85.8% are aware of the targets of their tgroups. 98.4% of the respondents agreed that branch performance targets are SMART, and this may be the reason why 98.4% of the respondents agreed that targets at KW are ambitiously set, because 69.2% of the respondents still disagreed that staff members in branches participate in the setting of the SMART targets.

Conclusions:

Management should put in place a mechanism to utilise feedback and ideas generated by the hands-on staff in target setting, as it significantly affects service delivery.

Recommendations:

NWSC should continue setting targets because there is absolutely no downside to doing so, and it's important to show employees that a particular target makes a contribution to the organisation's success, and the organisation's interest and support should be clearly portrayed to the staff.

Keywords: Target setting, Service delivery, National Water and Sewerage Corporation

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Background

The prime axiom of goal-setting theory is that specific, difficult goals lead to higher performance than when people strive to simply do their best (Heslin et al, 2009). Goal-setting theory states that challenging, specific, and concrete goals (i.e., subordinate goals) are powerful motivators and boost performance in goal pursuit more than vague or abstract goals (Bettina, 2018). The theory of Goal-setting focuses on single, short-term goals rather than long-term challenges (Bettina, 2018). Specific goals boost motivation and performance by leading employees to focus their attention on specific objectives, increase their efforts to achieve those objectives, persist in the face of setbacks, and

develop new strategies to better deal with complex challenges to goal achievement (Latham et al, 2009).

Companies that want to achieve long-term growth and operational efficiency must be able to set clear, achievable goals (Nwabuatu et al, 2025). By setting goals, companies can allocate resources, prioritise initiatives, and monitor their progress toward methodically achieving their objectives (Nwabuatu et al, 2025). For people to perform highly, high standards of performance should be set, allowing the employees to know precisely why they figure in the payment list, what is expected from them, and what makes a high performance (Xhavit et al, 2018). The study aims to assess the relationship between target setting and service delivery in the National Water and Sewerage Corporation of Kamwenge.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The study will adopt a cross-sectional survey design using both quantitative and qualitative approaches to look at the way Performance contracting and, in particular, leadership affect the service delivery of NWSC (case study Kamwenge Water). The purpose of the Cross-sectional study was to gain a better understanding of the relationship between Performance contracting and service delivery.

Target Population

The study covered a total of 5 branches of the Kamwenge area, including Kamwenge main branch, Kahungye branch, Ishongororo branch, Kataryeba branch, and Kabunga branch. A total population of 196 respondents were considered, including Branch Managers, Branch Engineers, Finance and Administration Officers, Commercial Officers, Territorial Leaders, Marketing Assistants, Stores Assistants, and Plumbers.

Sample Size and Selection

The study employed simple random and purposive sampling to select the respondents from the 5 branches of the Kamwenge area.

Table 1: Showing a sample size and selection methods:

Category	Target population	Sample size	Sampling techniques
Branch Managers	3	3	Purposive sampling
Branch Engineers/ Technical supervisors	3	3	Purposive sampling
Quality control Officers	15	14	Simple random sampling
Billing Officers	9	9	Simple random sampling
Political Leaders	28	26	Simple random sampling
Marketing Assistants	60	52	Simple random sampling
Plumbers	60	52	Simple random sampling
Inventory Assistants	9	9	Simple random sampling
Surveyors	9	9	Simple random sampling
Totals	196	177	

Sampling Techniques

The research employed purposive and simple random sampling. Purposive sampling entailed the selection of specific persons, respondents with key information that is being researched. This sampling strategy helped the researcher in selecting the key informants as they are thought to be dependable and knowledgeable on the study topic, thus they will give reliable and comprehensive information. Simple random sampling is a sampling technique that makes sure that every element of the study population has an equal chance of being selected. Simple random sampling was employed in choosing employees in the five branches of the National Water and Sewerage Corporation to participate in this study.

Data Collection Tools

The data collection methods that the study employed to collect data include: Questionnaires and an Interview guide. Data collection methods were triangulated to ensure that the results from one method collaborate to provide insights into the different levels of analysis.

Questionnaire Survey

The questionnaire survey method was used because it has the advantage of covering a large number of respondents, and it is less expensive. With it, data was collected in a short time. It is also preferred because the researcher was dealing mostly with a literate population.

Interview Guide

Interview schedules were used to complement the information gained from the quantitative source.

Methods and Instruments of Data Collection

Data collection methods and instruments that were used include the following:

Self - Self-Administered Questionnaire

A uniform self-administered questionnaire encompassing background information, performance contracting, and service delivery was used, scored on a point Likert scale ranging from 1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=not sure,4=agree, and 5=strongly agree.

Interview schedule

The interview schedule consisted of a set of questions that were posed to the Branch Manager and Branch Engineers.

Data Quality Control Validity

Drafts of questionnaires were discussed with the supervisor. In order to ensure accuracy and meaningfulness of inferences, the instruments of the study were first assessed to ascertain their effectiveness in collecting accurate data. Thereafter, content validity was employed to ascertain the extent to which the content of the instrument corresponds to the concept it was designed to measure. This was determined by expert judgment of the two research supervisors, where each selected item seen to be relevant was summed up, and the total was divided by the total number of all items of the instrument.

For the instruments to be considered valid, Basheka (2010) said that the Content Validity Index (CVI) must be within the accepted statistical range of 0.5 to 1.

$$CVI = \frac{\text{No. of items rated valid by all judges}}{\text{Total no. of items in the instrument}}$$

$$= \frac{39}{40} = 0.975$$

Table 2: Content Validity Index (CVI) for the instruments

<i>Variable</i>	<i>Original no of items</i>	<i>No. items retained</i>	<i>CVI</i>
Leadership	13	13	1.000
Target setting	8	8	1.000
Incentives	8	8	1.00
Service delivery	11	10	0.909
The entire data collection tool	40	39	0.975

Source: Primary Data

Table 2 shows the Content Validity Index (CVI) for each instrument; the number of items rated valid was divided by the total number of items in the instrument. Since the computed CVI of 0.975 is within the accepted statistical range, the instrument was considered valid.

Reliability

To establish reliability, the instruments were pilot-tested twice on the same subjects at a time interval of four weeks. The results from the pre-test were used to modify the items in the instruments.

To ensure the reliability of quantitative data, the Cronbach's Alpha Reliability Coefficient for Likert-Type Scales test was performed. In statistics, Cronbach's alpha is a coefficient of reliability. It is commonly used as a measure of the internal consistency or reliability of a psychometric test score for a sample of examinees. Upon performing the test, the results should be 0.7 and above to be considered reliable. Below are the values of Cronbach's alpha for each variable and for the entire instrument. The orange of 0.7 and above indicates the reliability of research instruments as asserted by Amin (2005).

Table 3: Reliability Analysis (Alpha Cronbach's coefficients computed using SPSS)

Variable	+++Alpha coefficient Cronbach's	No. items retained
Leadership	0.702	13
Target setting	0.739	8
Incentives	0.850	8
Service delivery	0.876	10
The entire data collection tool	0.853	39

Source: Primary Data

Table 3 shows a Cronbach alpha of 0.702 for Leadership, 0.739 for Target Setting, 0.850 for Incentives, 0.876 for Service Delivery, and 0.853 for all the variables under study. The tool therefore passed the test of reliability for each of the variables and for all the variables since they were all greater than 0.7, given that the level of Cronbach's alpha that is adequate is any value equal to or greater than 0.7 (Amin, 2005). The instruments were therefore suitable for data collection

Ethical considerations

Permission to do the study was sought from the University School of Post-Graduate Studies and Research. The researcher also sought the respondent's consent to use their information in the study. Strict confidentiality was

observed. The names of the study participants were not recorded on the questionnaires and interview guides. The filled questionnaires were kept safely under lock and key to enhance confidentiality.

Results

Response Rate

The study targeted a total of 196 respondents and a sample of 177 respondents, but not all the targeted respondents responded; only 120 respondents responded and returned their questionnaires. All the intended respondents (6) for the interviews were met.

Table 4: Response rate

Category		Sample size	Actual size	Percent
Branch Managers		3	3	100.0
Branch Engineers/ supervisors	Technical	3	3	100.0
Commercial Officers		14	9	64.3
Billing Officers		9	6	66.7

Territorial Leaders		26	18	69.2
Marketing Assistants		52	34	65.4
Plumbers		52	41	78.8
Inventory Assistants		9	6	66.7
Surveyors		9	6	66.7
Totals		177	126	67.8

Source: Primary data from field study

Table 4 shows an intended response rate of 71.1%, but not all responded. 67.8% response rate was realized, and according to Mugenda & Mugenda (2003), a response rate of 50% is adequate for analysis and reporting; a rate of 60% is good, and a response rate of 70% and over is excellent. The fact that 67.8% is above the rated 60% of Mugenda & Mugenda shows that data was collected from a reasonable number of respondents; hence, the collected data and findings from it can be relied on.

Demographic Information of Respondents

The quantified demographics of respondents included: Age of the respondents, Level of Education and years in service in the NWSC of the respondents in the study. This information was presumed to be very vital to the study because these characteristics could influence one's decision to either perform or not in the study.

Age of the Respondents

Respondents were requested to indicate the age bracket in which they fell as per Table 7.

Table 5. Age of the Respondents

Age	Frequency	Percent
18 - 30 years	52	43.3
31 - 40 years	34	22.3
41- 50 years	34	28.3
Total	120	100.0

Source: Primary Data

Findings as reflected in Table 5 revealed that the majority of the respondents, 71.6% (n=86), were 40 years and below, while 28.3% (n=34) were 41 years and above. This age distribution enabled the researcher to have fairly balanced

opinions on performance contracting over different age brackets. A balanced age staff composition facilitates the sharing and transferring of knowledge between the older and younger staff, which sustainably improves performance.

Education Level of the Respondents

Table 6: Education Level of the Respondents

Education	Frequency	Percent
Masters	8	6.6
Postgraduate	8	6.6
Bachelor's Degrees	72	60
Diploma	4	3.3
Certificate	30	25
Total	120	100

Source: Primary data from the field

Table 6 shows that the majority of the respondents (73.2%) had obtained a bachelor's degree or above, followed by Certificate holders (25%), and the least obtained a Diploma (3.3%). Although there were differences in education levels, it can be concluded that the sample was fairly selected since all education levels were captured in the sample.

Respondent's years in Service

The respondents were requested to reveal their years of service in NWSC. This was intended to find out whether a sample was fairly selected in terms of services from the intended population.

Table 7 Respondents' years in service.

Period	Frequency	Percent
Below one year	38	31.7
0 - 5 years	55	45.8
6 - 10 years	25	20.8
11 years and above	2	1.7
Total	120	100.0

Source: Primary data from field study)

Table 7 shows that the majority of the respondents (45.8%) have worked for NWSC between 0 and 5 years, followed by those who have worked between 6-10 years (20.8%), and the least had worked for 10 years (1.7%) and above. Since

all the years' categories in services were captured in the sample, it can be concluded that the sample was fairly selected from the population for the findings to be relied upon.

Empirical Findings

Findings on service delivery in NWSC

Table 8: Views of respondents on service delivery in NWSC

Statements measuring service delivery	SA(%)	A(%)	NS(%)	D(%)	SD(%)	Mean	S.D.
NWSC water supply is reliable	0.0	0.0	0.0	62.5	37.5	1.63	0.486
NWSC water supply is regular	0.0	0.0	0.0	66.7	33.3	1.67	0.473
NWSC regularly reminds customers of their arrears	79.2	7.5	8.3	5.0	0.0	4.61	0.843
NWSC staff clearly explains to the customers before the supply is disconnected	0.0	0.0	10.0	50.0	40.0	1.55	0.495
NWSC disconnects water supplies after a fair period of warning	0.0	0.0	5.0	61.7	33.3	1.72	0.500
NWSC responds in a timely manner whenever a complaint is logged in	25.0	44.2	29.2	1.7	0.0	3.93	0.78
NWSC involves customers in their programmes	0.0	0.0	3.3	71.7	25.0	1.77	0.530
Revenue collection targets are regularly achieved	8.3	18.3	3.3	45.0	25.0	1.78	0.488
Customer care at the branch is good	54.2	34.2	11.7	0.0	0.0	4.43	0.694
Performance at the branch has been improving over time	48.3	45.0	5.0	1.7	0.0	4.40	0.67

Source: Primary data from field study

Table 8 shows that the majority of the respondents expressed dissatisfaction with some of the statements put to them. This is shown by the mean less than (3) and Standard Deviation close to (0), 100% disagreed that NWSC water supply is reliable, 100% disagreed that NWSC water supply is regular, 90% disagreed that NWSC staff clearly explains to the customers before supply is disconnected, 95% disagreed that NWSC disconnects water supplies after a fair period of warning, 96.7% disagreed that NWSC involves customers in their programmes and 88.4% disagreed that revenue collection targets are regularly achieved. It was revealed from the findings that NWSC hasn't embraced Stakeholder management to enable its stakeholders to understand and appreciate its programmes for easy implementation. It was

also found out that targets for revenue collection are high, and thus achieving them has forced staff to disconnect customers with meager balances, thus affecting customer care.

“It was further noted by one of the respondents that because of competition among branches and territories, especially on the parameter of revenue collection, some staff end up disconnecting customers without giving attention to the customers' explanations. He further noted that disconnections are given more attention compared to reconnections after the customers have cleared their bills, which is not a good indicator of service delivery”.

It was more revealed from the study findings that not all customers in KW enjoy NWSC services reliably and

regularly, with the highest disagreement of 100%. This was still confirmed through an interview with one of the respondents, who said, “The truth on the ground is that demand for water supply is higher than supply, and this makes it hard for NWSC to satisfy all customers because they don’t get water regularly, and at times when it comes, it is too little to be shared by all. This irritates some customers, and they have ended up blaming NWSC, which affects service delivery. Some areas in KW are termed as dry zones, meaning that water supply cannot reach such areas because of the pressure levels.”

However, some of the respondents agreed with some of the statements put to them. This is shown by the mean greater than (3) and the standard deviation of close to (1). 86.7% agreed that NWSC regularly reminds its customers of their arrears, 69.2% also agreed that NWSC responds in time whenever a complaint is logged in, 88.4% Customers Care at the branch is good, and 93.3% agreed that Performance at the branch has been improving over time. Findings revealed

that Performance contracting is increasingly becoming a key driver of improved service delivery. Findings from the study also revealed that NWSC has put in place measures to ensure that enough information is passed to a customer before the water supply is disconnected through SMS’s, use of megaphones in the field, and use of Local Council meetings, among others, are geared towards improved service delivery.

“One of the respondents had this to say, “Customers’ demands and feedback are by far the best way of gauging the efficacy of services offered by utility enterprises. A customer is the real reason why any service utility must exist, and thus improved service delivery is the only solution for the success of any organization, and that’s why NWSC has put a lot of emphasis on giving feedback to customers”.

Target setting on service delivery improvement in NWSC;

Table 9: Views of respondents on target setting

Statements setting measuring target	SA(%)	A(%)	NS(%)	D(%)	SD(%)	Mean	S.D.
Key performance indicators (KPI’s) are clearly known by all KW staff	42.5	35.8	21.7	0.0	0.0	4.21	0.77
I have a clear understanding of the set performance targets for the branch	77.5	16.7	5.8	0.0	0.0	4.72	0.57
Staff members in branches participate in the setting of the SMART targets	15.0	14.2	1.7	39.2	30.0	2.45	0.492
Branches have an input in their targets from KW	0.0	14.2	1.7	52.5	0.0	1.98	0.435
Targets for groups (Territories) are made known to all group members	30.8	59.2	10.0	0.0	0.0	4.21	0.62
I am aware of the targets of my group (territory)	55.8	30.0	11.7	2.5	0	4.39	0.79

Branch performance targets are specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and time-bound (SMART)	0.0	0.0	1.7	59.2	39.2	1.63	0.446
Targets at KW are ambitiously set	77.5	16.7	5.8	0.0	0.0	4.72	0.57

Source: Primary data from field study

Table 9 shows that the majority of the respondents agreed with most of the statements put to them. This is shown by the mean greater than (3) and the standard deviation of close to (1). 78.3% agreed that key performance indicators (KPI's) are clearly known by all KW staff, 94.2% agreed that they have clear understanding of the set performance targets for the branch, 90.0% agreed that targets for groups (territories) are made known to all group members, 85.8% agreed that they were aware of the targets of their group (territory) and 98.3% agreed that targets at KW are ambitiously set. It was revealed from the findings that there is good communication in NWSC because almost all staff are made aware of target setting and actual targets given to them in their respective branches/territories. Findings further revealed that NWSC is always focused on achieving its objectives because key performance indicators are made known to almost all staff.

However, some of the respondents expressed dissatisfaction with some of the statements put to them. This is shown by the mean being less than (3) and the standard deviation close to (0).

66.7% disagreed that branches have an input in their targets from KW, 98.4%. Branch performance targets are specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and time-bound (SMART).

88.4% disagreed that staff members in branches participate in setting the SMART targets. Findings revealed that

information is just passed on to the lower cadres without their input. This implies that lower cadres, who are the staff on the ground, just implement what is given to them by their supervisors without putting in a lot of reasoning, and thus affecting service delivery. This may be the reason why a good percentage agreed that targets are not SMART because enough information is not shared when setting these targets, and thus, management ends up setting ambitious targets. NWSC has to work towards ensuring that staff's ideas at all levels are considered in decision making of target setting to enable them to appreciate the setup of performance targets.

Hypothesis Testing

The researcher went ahead to statistically assess the effectiveness of target setting on service delivery improvement in NWSC. The researcher was guided by the following hypotheses:

Alternative Hypothesis: Target setting has a significant positive effect on service delivery in NWSC.

Null Hypothesis: Target setting does not have a significant positive effect on service delivery in NWSC

The hypothesis was tested at a 95% level of significance (two-tailed) using Pearson's product-moment correlation coefficient, which measured the degree and direction between target setting and service delivery in NWSC. The results are shown in Table 14.

Table 10: Correlation matrix for target setting and service delivery in NWSC
Correlations

Variables		Target Setting	Service Delivery
Target Setting	Pearson Correlation	1	.646*
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	120	120
Service Delivery	Pearson Correlation	.646*	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	120	120

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Source: Primary data from the field.

Table 10 shows that there is a moderate positive relationship between Target Setting and Service Delivery ($r=0.646$, $p<0.05$). The relationship is statistically significant at 95% confidence level. However, the analysis does not point out

the extent of the relationship. In order to find out the degree of relationship, the coefficient of determination was computed using regression analysis.

Table 11: Model Summary

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R-Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.646	.417	.412	.16717

Table 15 shows that the coefficient of determination (Adjusted R Square) is 0.417. This implies that target setting accounts for 41.7% of the variance in service delivery in NWSC, which means that a

unit change of 41.7% in target setting under performance contracting affects service delivery.

Table 12: Analysis of Variables (ANOVA)
ANOVA^b

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1 Regression	2.361	1	2.361	84.498	.000 ^a
Residual	3.297	118	.028		
Total	5.659	119			

a. Predictors: (Constant), Target Setting

b. Dependent Variable: Service Delivery

In determining whether a model is significant, the decision rule is that the calculated p -value (level of significance) must be less than or equal to 0.05. Since the calculated p -value of 0.000 is less than 0.05, the model was found to be statistically significant ($F=84.498$, $df = 1$, $p<0.05$ ($=0.000$)).

Discussion

The study noted that target setting has a significant positive relationship with service delivery, which is in line with Verbeeten et al (2009), who used multiple linear regression and found that target setting was sensitive to service delivery. Target setting has enabled staff to be focused during their operations, and this has made NWSC improve its performance. It's vital to set targets because they keep an organisation's performance at its best. This is in line with Gakure et al (2003), who said that performance targets are powerful management tools that can help an organisation to

This means that target setting has a significant effect on service delivery. Therefore, the alternative hypothesis that stated that target setting has a significant positive effect on service delivery in NWSC was accepted.

deliver the kind of strategic changes that many growing businesses need to make. It was further revealed from the study that targets must be Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, and Time-bound (SMART); otherwise, ambitious targets end up demotivating implementers because attaining them becomes a challenge or just a nightmare. A number of respondents disagreed that staff members participate in the setting of targets, and thus, little is known of how targets are set. This leaves them out of the game and thus makes them not own these targets. This is contrary to some scholars like Jude (2003), who made it clear that the "rules of the game" should be made known to everyone and should not be changed arbitrarily. Targets need to be accepted by all the

stakeholders in order to yield the intended results. Moreover, Bandura (1997) further explained that some individuals may reject imposed targets, but if they have self-efficacy, they may still maintain high personal targets to accomplish the imposed targets, which is in line with the study findings. It is always vital to set targets together and celebrate victories as a team. In order to increase motivation, employees need to be allowed to participate in the target-setting process.

Conclusions

Management should put in place a mechanism to utilise feedback and ideas generated by the hands-on staff in target setting, as it significantly affects service delivery.

Recommendations

NWSC should continue setting targets because there is absolutely no downside to doing so, and it's important to show employees that a particular target makes a contribution to the organisation's success, and the organisation's interest and support should be clearly portrayed to the staff.

When setting targets, it's vital to ensure that everyone understands what the prize is and what they are working towards because it provides greater rationale for the decisions made and also eliminates a lot of the uncertainty that goes with not understanding the targets of the organisation.

Supervisors need to recognise staff achievements, praise them for the job well done, give them awards or certificates of merit, public applause, guide them through support supervision, listen to workers' concerns, and acknowledge their contributions.

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the wisdom, knowledge, and understanding to complete this project.

List of abbreviations

NWSC: National Water and Sewerage Corporation
SMART: Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, and Time-bound
CVI: Content Validity Index

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The study was not funded.

Conflict of interest

The author did not declare any conflict of interest.

Data availability

Data is available upon request.

Author contribution

Rolland Twinamasiko collected data and drafted the manuscript of the study
Dr. Muhammad Ssendagi supervised the study

Author biography

Rolland Twinamasiko is a student of a master's degree in public administration and management at Team University.
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