

## Impact of Performance Management on Resource Utilization and Improved Results in Kenyan TVET Institutions

Jackline A. Ong'injo<sup>1</sup>, Paul K. Komen<sup>2</sup> & Everlyn Omondi<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Kabarak University, Kenya (jonginjo@kabarak.ac.ke)

<sup>2</sup>Kabarak University, Kenya (komenpaulo@gmail.com)

<sup>3</sup>Kabarak University, Kenya (evomondi@kabarak.ac.ke)

\*Corresponding author: jonginjo@kabarak.ac.ke

<https://doi.org/10.62049/jkncu.v5i1.411>

### Abstract

*Performance management in Kenya's Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) institutions has been anchored on performance contracts and individual performance appraisals to enhance accountability, resource utilization, and service delivery. This study sought to: examine the performance management process in Kenyan TVET institutions, assess the impact of performance contracting on resource utilization and institutional results, evaluate the influence of performance appraisal on institutional performance and service quality, identify challenges and gaps in implementation and provide recommendations for strengthening performance management practices. The study adopted a desktop research design that relied exclusively on secondary data obtained from academic journals, dissertations, and government publications by the Ministry of Education, TVETA, and the Public Service Commission. Official performance contracting and appraisal guidelines, institutional evaluation reports, and credible online sources were also reviewed. Searches were conducted through databases such as Google Scholar and ERIC using combinations of key terms related to performance management and TVET outcomes. Materials published from 2009 onwards were prioritized to reflect sustained implementation periods. Data were thematically analyzed, and narrative synthesis with simple vote counting was used to identify convergence across findings. The results indicate that performance contracting has moderately improved the utilization of teaching and learning resources, while structured performance appraisals are linked to enhanced service delivery and accountability. However, these gains are uneven due to inadequate staff training, limited resources, inconsistent target setting, and perceptions of the process as a bureaucratic formality. The study concludes that while performance management frameworks foster a culture of efficiency and results, their success depends on effective implementation, continuous training, staff participation, and adequate resource support. Strengthening ICT infrastructure, standardizing practices, and enhancing feedback mechanisms are essential to realizing sustainable institutional improvements across Kenya's TVET sector.*

**Keywords:** Performance Management, Performance Contracting, Performance Appraisal, Target Setting and Resource Utilization

## Background

Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) institutions in Kenya play a critical role in developing skilled manpower for socio-economic development. Chepkoech Sr (2021) highlights this central contribution and notes the need for strengthened systems to maximize TVET's impact. Recognizing TVET's importance for national development, the Kenyan government has introduced a series of reforms to revitalize the sector; chief among them has been the adoption of performance-management practices in public institutions to improve efficiency, accountability and service quality (Maina, 2023).

Finland is a benchmark case for performance-based funding in vocational institutions. The Finnish vocational education funding model now combines core funding (about 50–70%), performance-based funding (20–35%) and effectiveness-based funding (10–15%). These performance components are calculated from indicators like, the, number of completed qualifications and modules, student progression and completion within expected time, graduate employment and continuation to further studies and lastly, student and employer feedback (Salas-Velasco, 2024). National agencies report that the introduction of performance-based funding encouraged VET providers to raise completion rates, reduce dropout and improve links to employment, shifting attention away from mere enrolment numbers. This is a very strong example of performance management explicitly driving better resource utilization, funds follow results, and improved outcomes, higher completion/employment.

Many other Asian countries have been reforming TVET with performance and results in mind. Malaysia, for instance, has identified performance management as essential to improving its technical colleges. Recent analysis of the Malaysian TVET context highlights issues such as instructor training and curriculum alignment, noting that without strong performance monitoring, gaps remain in teaching quality (Joseph et al., 2025). The government has responded by developing a performance information system to track enrollment, completion, and graduate employability, and by introducing a Performance Management and Delivery Unit model in education to set and review targets. Singapore, often regarded as a leader in TVET, employs continuous benchmarking and feedback loops: its Institutes of Technical Education and polytechnics closely track graduate employment rates and employer feedback, using these as key performance indicators in institutional planning. Singapore's Skills Future initiative ties funding for training providers to outcome indicators like course completion and job placement, ensuring resources are directed to programs with demonstrated impact. Across Asia, a common trend is the adoption of results-based management tools, whether through formal scorecards, as in Singapore, or through policy-driven KPIs, as in Malaysia, to improve the utilization of resources and achieve better employment results for TVET graduates (Aziz & Subramaniam, 2023).

Tanzania has introduced performance management reforms in its public service, which include the education and TVET sector (Anosisye & Nyoni, 2024). The government rolled out the Public Service Performance Management System and a Performance Appraisal system (often implemented via the Open Performance Review and Appraisal System, OPRAS) that covers teachers and staff in higher education and TVET (Paul, 2021). The goal is to instill a culture of planning, target-setting, and appraisal in public institutions. In practice, each technical college instructor prepares an annual performance agreement with targets (e.g. number of courses taught, student pass rate), which is reviewed by supervisors. There is evidence that this has led to more awareness of accountability, but the impact on outcomes is mixed (Mwita & Andrea, 2019). A literature review of Tanzania's teacher performance management information system

noted that while it has potential to enhance teacher effectiveness, usage of the performance data remains limited – many managers do not fully utilize appraisal results for decision-making (Marijani & Manase, 2020). In TVET colleges, anecdotal reports suggest some improvement in timely syllabus coverage and exam results after OPRAS implementation, implying more efficient use of instructional time. Tanzania has also developed a *TVET Indicators Report* to benchmark institutional performance on various metrics (enrollment, gender balance, graduation rates, etc.) (Mwakasi & Issa, 2024). By publishing these indicators, Tanzania aims to inform stakeholders and encourage lagging institutions to improve. The country is now working on linking these performance indicators to budgeting, so that colleges demonstrating strong results (such as high graduate employment or entrepreneurship rates) can receive greater support, thereby using public resources where they yield the best outcomes.

Uganda's TVET sector has been undergoing reforms under the "Skilling Uganda" strategy (2012–2022), which places emphasis on results and quality (Namuliira et al., 2024). Performance management in Ugandan TVET is evident in the establishment of the Uganda Vocational Qualifications Framework (UVQF) and the Uganda Vocational and Technical Assessment Board (UVTAB), which together create clear standards and measure competencies of trainees (Okumu & Bbaale, 2019). While much of Uganda's effort has focused on qualification standards, there is an increasing use of performance data to guide the system. For example, the recent UVTAB assessments revealed that 91% of candidates attained full occupational competence in 2024, a statistic that the Ministry now uses as a performance benchmark (Awany et al.). Such data help identify which training institutions consistently produce competent graduates and which are falling behind. Additionally, Uganda has been piloting performance-based budgeting in skills development projects: the World Bank-supported skills development project reported that its rigorous monitoring and evaluation contributed to satisfactory outcomes, suggesting that tying funds to performance indicators (like number of certified graduates and training-center employment rates) improved effectiveness (Karuhanga & Muhwezi, 2025). Moving forward, Uganda is strengthening its institutional performance appraisal for TVET instructors and principals. The government has indicated that training providers will sign performance agreements focusing on key outcomes (e.g. training completion rates, share of graduates employed or self-employed within a year). This regional focus on performance is expected to mirror Kenya's earlier performance-contract approach, thereby enhancing accountability and results across East African TVET systems.

In the mid-2000s, Kenya adopted performance contracting in the public sector as part of broader public service reforms. As Komen and Ong'injo (2024) explains that performance contracts are essentially agreements that set targets for institutions or managers, aiming to improve resource utilization and outcomes. Within the education sector, performance contracting was extended to TVET institutions around 2008–2009 (Yogo et al., 2019). Through these contracts, the heads of technical institutes and their management teams commit to specific performance targets aligned with institutional mandates and national goals and are held accountable for achieving them within a fiscal year (Mwalim et al., 2019). The expectation was that this mechanism would introduce a results-oriented culture and curb wastage of resources in public TVET colleges. Prior to these reforms, the TVET sub-sector had been plagued by issues such as poor coordination, resource wastage, irrelevant training programs, and inadequate funding, which hampered institutional performance. It was hoped that performance contracts would drive a "*radical transformation in resource utilization*" in public institutions (Mosomi et al., 2014), thereby improving efficiency and service delivery.

A decade later, to complement institutional performance contracts, the government strengthened individual performance appraisal systems for public service employees (Brobey, 2022). In the education and TVET context, formal performance appraisal of lecturers and staff was intensified around 2018–2019 as part of the public sector performance management (Benson Kamau Ngwiri & Gitonga). The Public Service Commission introduced a standardized Staff Performance Appraisal System (SPAS) and online tools such as the Government Human Resource Information System (GHRIS) to track employee performance. By 2019, lecturers and trainers in public technical institutions were required to set personal work targets aligned with institutional goals, undergo periodic reviews, and receive annual performance ratings from their supervisors. This shift toward systematic appraisal aimed to ensure that each staff member contributes to institutional objectives and that outstanding or weak performance is recognized and addressed (Komen & Ong'injo, 2024).

Additionally, policy orientation from the Kenyan government has emphasized results-based management in education. Service charters, strategic plans, and performance measurement indicators have been put in place in TVET colleges to focus on outcomes like quality of training, student satisfaction, and efficient use of funds (Ogheneruona, 2024). These efforts align with Kenya's national development blueprints, Vision 2030, which call for a competent workforce and accountability in public service. As a result, performance management has become entrenched as a tool for driving improvement in TVET institutions, intending to link the actions of managers and lecturers to broader educational results and prudent use of resources (Paterson et al., 2024).

Despite these initiatives, the effectiveness of performance management in TVET has been a subject of ongoing debate. Some early gains have been observed, for instance, improved planning and more conscientious use of teaching materials have been reported after performance contracts were implemented (Tilahun, 2020). However, challenges remain in fully institutionalizing a performance culture. This background sets the stage for examining the specific impact of performance contracts and appraisals on resource utilization and results in Kenya's TVET institutions, as well as identifying factors that facilitate or hinder their success.

### **Statement of the Problem**

The core problem in Kenyan public TVET institutions is that, despite more than a decade of performance contracting and the recent introduction of annual appraisals, there is still no clear evidence that these performance management tools have led to improved resource utilization or better institutional outcomes. The issue arises mainly from weak implementation practices, including inconsistent target-setting, limited training for appraisers and appraisees, low staff buy-in, and a tendency to treat performance reviews as compliance rituals rather than mechanisms for improvement. The magnitude of this problem is significant because it is observed across many public TVET institutions and is reflected in persistent inefficiencies such as delayed service delivery, underutilized equipment, audit queries, mismanagement concerns, and continued stakeholder dissatisfaction. Those most affected by this situation include students who receive suboptimal training, trainers whose performance is not effectively supported or guided, administrators who struggle to meet institutional mandates, and employers who depend on competent graduates. If the issue remains unaddressed, TVET institutions are likely to continue experiencing wastage of resources, poor training quality, weakened accountability, declining public trust, and reduced contribution to national development goals such as Vision 2030, the skills agenda, and industry-driven economic growth. This

makes it necessary to examine how performance contracts and appraisals actually influence resource use and institutional results, and to identify the barriers limiting their effectiveness.

## Objectives

The objectives of this research are:

- To examine the performance management process in Kenyan TVET institutions in Kenya
- To assess the impact of performance contracting on resource utilization and institutional results in TVET institutions in Kenya
- To evaluate the influence of performance appraisal on institutional performance and service quality of TVET institutions in Kenya
- To identify the challenges and gaps in the implementation of performance management in TVET institutions in Kenya

## Literature Review

### Performance Contracting in Kenyan Public Institutions

In Europe, performance contracting and performance-based funding have been widely used in higher education and, indirectly, in TVET systems. France is often cited as one of the earliest adopters of performance contracts in the public sector in the late 1960s, before the approach spread to countries such as Pakistan, South Korea and eventually many OECD members (Yang et al., 2025). In Northern Europe, Austria, Denmark, Finland and Sweden have implemented performance-based funding (PBF) schemes where part of universities' or colleges' budgets is tied to indicators such as graduation rates, research output and student progression, often articulated through "performance agreements" between ministries and institutions (Adam, 2020). While such arrangements are credited with sharpening institutional strategy and increasing attention to completion and quality, reviews show that their impact is uneven and highly dependent on indicator design and the share of funding tied to performance (Abanina et al., 2025). At institutional level, many European universities and colleges (including those with VET functions) use annual staff performance appraisals to align individual objectives with organisational goals, focusing on agreed targets and professional development needs (Sulkowski et al., 2020). However, studies also report tensions between appraisal systems and intrinsic motivation of academics, and warn that if perceived as bureaucratic or punitive, appraisals may undermine rather than strengthen commitment.

In Asia, performance-based funding and contracting have become part of wider reforms of higher and vocational education. In Malaysia, for example, the government has experimented with performance-based funding for public universities, linking a portion of allocations to indicators in a national higher education action plan (Ahmad et al., 2019). Evidence from these reforms suggests that PBF has encouraged institutions to pay closer attention to measurable outputs and strategic targets, but it has also raised concerns about gaming, narrow focus on what is measured, and the need for strong data systems (Ahmad et al., 2019). According to Palmer (2024), World Bank case studies on results-based financing in TVET in various middle-income countries (including parts of Asia and Latin America) show that performance-based contracts and outcome payments (e.g., for completion or employment of trainees) can improve provider focus on quality and labour-market outcomes, provided that indicators are realistic and providers receive adequate upfront resources (Messerli, 2014).



In South Africa, TVET colleges use multiple instruments such as the Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS) and the Employee Performance Management and Development System (EPMDS) to manage lecturer and administrative staff performance (Paterson et al., 2024). Mazibuko (2022) on performance management in two public TVET colleges around Durban found that performance management systems were in place and formally aligned with organizational goals, but implementation was weak: performance reviews were often seen as compliance, integration with planning processes was limited, and the system did not consistently drive improved results or close skills gaps (Paterson et al., 2024). Similarly, Paterson (2024) proposes a performance management framework for TVET lecturers which distinguishes between developmental appraisal (for professional growth) and performance management (for progression and rewards), and stresses the need for clear roles, strong monitoring, and better alignment between CPD, appraisal outcomes, and institutional priorities (Motaung, 2020).

Rwanda stands out in East Africa for its strong adoption and enforcement of performance management through the “Imihigo” performance contract system (Murasi, 2021). Introduced initially at the district and ministerial levels and later extended into sectors including education, Imihigo requires institutions to commit to measurable targets that align with national development priorities (Niyonsaba, 2024). The government monitors progress closely through quarterly reviews and public scorecards, creating a culture of accountability rarely seen elsewhere in the region. In the education and TVET sectors, Imihigo has contributed to clearer target-setting, improved tracking of performance indicators, and more transparent reporting. Studies note that schools and TVET colleges perform better in environments where performance contracts are tied to incentives, recognition, and, where necessary, sanctions (Murasi & Auriacombe, 2022). However, challenges remain, including over-ambitious targets and limited autonomy at institutional level to mobilize the resources required to meet contractual obligations. Some staff also report pressure to comply with targets even when resource constraints make them unrealistic. Despite these limitations, Rwanda provides a strong regional example of how performance contracting, when backed by political commitment, adequate monitoring, and meaningful consequences, can influence institutional behaviour and improve service outcomes.

Performance contracting is a management tool that was first widely adopted in Kenya’s public sector in 2004 as a means to improve performance and accountability (Daritsu et al., 2024). A performance contract is essentially a negotiated agreement between the government (or its representative) and a public institution’s management, which sets out performance targets for a given period (usually one financial year). The underlying goal is to shift public institutions from a culture of process compliance to one of results-oriented management (Tu, 2025). According to Kobia and Mohammed (2006), the strategy was aimed at radically changing management practices in public institutions to improve efficiency and service delivery (Kemboi). In Kenya, performance contracts were initially introduced in state corporations and government ministries, and by 2008, they were cascaded to educational institutions, including public Technical Training Institutes (TTIs) and national polytechnics (Orwa & Otieno, 2019).

The aims of performance contracting in the education sector (including TVET) have been outlined in government policy documents and research. Key objectives include: improving resource utilization, enhancing the quality of services, increasing transparency and accountability in operations, and fostering innovation and responsiveness in public institutions (Birdayanthi et al., 2025). Contracts typically include targets related to financial management, academic output, infrastructure development, customer service,

and governance (Helmold & Samara, 2019). The institutions are required to report their progress quarterly and annually to oversight bodies, and at year-end an evaluation is conducted to determine the extent to which targets were met. Institutions are then ranked or graded based on their performance (Williams, 2024).

Empirical studies on performance contracting in Kenya's TVET institutions show a mixed impact. Mosomi et al. (2014) conducted a survey of Kenyan technical institutes to gauge tutors' perceptions of performance contracts on the utilization of teaching and learning resources. The findings indicated that there had been a general improvement in the utilization of available teaching/learning resources after the introduction of performance contracts. For example, there were reports of better use of equipment and more integration of e-learning resources, which tutors attributed in part to the focus and planning that came with performance targets (Philip, 2019). Heads of departments in these institutions often felt that performance contracting encouraged ongoing planning and resource allocation based on clear objectives. This aligns with observations that institutions with systematic planning and goal-setting processes use their resources more effectively (Kandie, 2019).

However, the magnitude of improvement was not as high as anticipated. Mosomi et al. found that many tutors believed performance contracting had not significantly changed how resources were utilized in some areas. There was a discrepancy between management and teaching staff perceptions: while many heads of departments felt there was an association between performance contracts and better resource use, a majority of tutors were unconvinced that the contracts had led to substantial improvements (Anuna, 2023). The study hypothesized that this could be due to the way performance contracts were implemented, possibly viewed by tutors as top-down directives with a lot of paperwork, rather than practical tools that empower them on the ground (Andersson, 2024). Indeed, excessive emphasis on documentation and evaluation procedures, without commensurate support, can lead to cynicism (Jörden et al., 2022).

Researchers have pointed out critical challenges affecting performance contracting outcomes in TVET (Komen & Ong'injo, 2024). One major factor is financial and resource constraints. Improved performance often requires inputs, for instance, better teaching materials, training for staff, or infrastructure upgrades (Barrett et al., 2019). If performance contracts set ambitious targets but the required resources are not provided on time, institutions struggle to meet those targets (Hansen, 2020). Mosomi et al. (2014) concluded that financial constraints hindered tutors from being trained on the utilization of modern learning and teaching resources, limiting the impact of performance contracting on pedagogical improvement. Similarly, the recurrent budget cuts in the Kenyan TVET sector negatively affected the quality of programs, since basic teaching/learning resources were inadequate. Performance contracts alone could not overcome such structural issues; in some cases, they merely highlighted gaps that remained unaddressed.

Another challenge is resistance and mindset. Obong'o (2009) noted that introducing performance contracts in Kenya met resistance from public servants accustomed to traditional ways of working (Muriithi, 2019). In the TVET context, initial resistance by academic staff slowed down full adoption (Yogo et al., 2019). If the staff do not buy into the goals or perceive the evaluation as unfair, the effectiveness of performance contracting is undermined. Additionally, there have been instances of poor coordination in implementing the contracts, multiple bodies or unclear guidelines leading to confusion, as Onsomu et al. (2009) pointed out for the broader TIVET governance, which, if not streamlined, can lead to "*wastage of resources, irrelevant training and turnover of personnel*" (Odongo et al., 2020).

Despite these hurdles, performance contracting in Kenya has gained global recognition as a model, and other countries have benchmarked against it (Public Service Performance Management Unit, 2022). Over time, the Kenyan government has refined the framework, including developing Performance Contracting Guidelines that emphasize regular monitoring, quarterly reviews, mid-year self-assessments, and annual evaluations, as well as linking results to incentives. The literature suggests that, when properly implemented, performance contracts can lead to improved efficiency and innovation in institutions (Greiling, 2006, noted improved efficiency in public services with performance measurement). The key is ensuring the process is not treated as a mere formality. In TVET colleges, this means involving tutors in setting realistic targets, providing the needed resources and autonomy to achieve them, and then objectively evaluating the outcomes.

### **Performance Appraisal in TVET Institutions**

Performance appraisal (PA) is the process of evaluating individual employees' job performance, typically against predetermined goals or competencies, and it has become an integral part of performance management in the Kenyan public service. In TVET institutions, formal appraisal of lecturers and non-teaching staff became more structured in the late 2010s. By 2019, most public technical institutions were implementing a standardized appraisal system for their academic staff, aligned with the Public Service Commission's guidelines (Riccucci et al., 2019). The goals of performance appraisal in this context include determining rewards such as performance-based bonuses or recognition, informing promotions and career development, identifying training needs, and generally improving service delivery by holding staff accountable (Opoku et al., 2024). Ideally, appraisal should also motivate staff by providing clear performance expectations and feedback for improvement.

A study by Muthuri et al. (2019) investigated how lecturers' performance appraisals were conducted in public TTIs in the Nairobi region. It found that the appraisal methods included the use of the Teachers Service Commission (TSC) appraisal form, peer reviews, and target-setting evaluations. Lecturers were usually appraised by their heads of department or principals using these forms (Dasanayaka et al., 2021). However, the study concluded that performance appraisal was not being conducted very effectively in those institutions. One issue was the lack of a standardized approach across different colleges: each institution tended to implement the TSC's Teacher Performance Appraisal and Development (TPAD) system in its own way, leading to inconsistencies. For instance, some TTIs might emphasize certain criteria or use certain rating scales differently than others. This inconsistency can lead to perceptions of unfairness or confusion among lecturers, thereby weakening the credibility of the appraisal process (Muthuri et al., 2019).

Another challenge identified was the skill and preparedness of the evaluator. Many heads of department or supervisors had not received comprehensive training on how to conduct fair and constructive appraisals. Lloyd (2024), studying a similar context, noted that while a majority of supervisors had some training, only about 34% received intensive training on appraisal techniques. In the Nairobi TTIs study, it was noted that principals and HODs largely took up the task as part of their job but would benefit from more training and dedicated support. Without proper training, appraisers may commit errors like bias, insufficient feedback, or inability to set appropriate performance targets. This can cause appraisees (lecturers) to view the appraisal as ineffective or even demotivating (Tarigan et al., 2025).



Research also highlights the importance of engaging the appraisees in the appraisal process. Performance appraisal systems encourage a component of self-appraisal or self-evaluation, where employees assess their own performance against targets before meeting with their supervisor. In well-implemented cases, lecturers fill out a self-assessment of their achievements and challenges over the period. According to interviews with principals in one study, *“the lecturers are involved throughout the assessment process.”* they complete self-assessment forms, then sit down with their HODs to discuss and moderate the evaluation, and finally the principal reviews it and adds comments (Ezeogu, 2022). This inclusive approach can increase the sense of fairness and acceptance of the appraisal outcome, because the staff member’s own perspective is considered and there is a dialogue. Where such dialogue was present, many supervisors saw the appraisal meeting as an opportunity to coach and mentor the lecturers, not just to judge them. This aligns with best practices in performance management which suggest that appraisals should be a two-way conversation and a tool for professional development, not just an administrative rating exercise (Rajapakse, 2024).

The influence of performance appraisal on service delivery and results in TVET has been subject to empirical examination. Yogo et al. (2019) conducted a study in Western Kenya that focused on the relationship between performance appraisals and service delivery in TVET institutions. They found a statistically significant positive relationship, with a coefficient of determination  $R^2 = 0.359$  ( $p < 0.01$ ), between the conduct of performance appraisals and the reduction of service delivery complaints. In other words, when staff performance was regularly evaluated and feedback given, there were fewer cases of customer (or student) complaints regarding services (Calma & Dickson-Deane, 2020). This implies that performance appraisal can lead to more responsive and responsible staff behavior – perhaps because staff become more punctual, more attentive to student needs, or generally more professional when they know their performance is being monitored and will have consequences. The study by Yogo et al. essentially suggests that effective appraisals improve accountability, thereby improving service quality in measurable ways (like timeliness and stakeholder satisfaction).

However, the literature also warns of factors affecting the effectiveness of performance appraisals. A paper by Komen and Ong’Injo (2024) identified several challenges in the implementation of performance appraisal for trainers in Kenyan TVET institutions. These include: The literature shows that several design and implementation gaps undermine performance contracting and appraisal in education institutions. First, many trainers have not been adequately prepared to set SMART targets or to navigate the online GHRIS appraisal platform. As a result, targets are often poorly formulated and appraisals remain incomplete or of limited diagnostic value. Second, the process is resource-intensive, yet institutions frequently fail to allocate protected time for supervisors and staff to review progress together. Basic ICT constraints limited computers, unreliable internet further slowed or blocked online submissions, compounding delays and frustration. A third weakness concerns the opacity and inconsistency of rewards and sanctions. Where it is unclear how scores translate into recognition or corrective action, high performers feel unseen while underperformance goes unaddressed. This erodes the motivational power of the system. Closely related are persistent delays in feedback. Without prompt, constructive responses to appraisal results, employees lack timely guidance on what to adjust and how to improve, turning the exercise into a bureaucratic ritual rather than a developmental tool.

Across studies, the consensus is clear: performance management only delivers results when the process itself is high-quality, targets are clear and evidence-based, implementers are capable, resources are

available, evaluations are fair and consistent, and feedback is timely. Done well, performance contracts and appraisals can align individual effort with institutional goals, motivate through recognition and developmental coaching, and enforce accountability where necessary. The next sections of this paper examine how these documented dynamics play out in practice within Kenyan TVET institutions, drawing on the compiled evidence.

## Methodology

The study adopted a desktop research design that relied entirely on secondary data to evaluate performance management in Kenyan TVET institutions. Information was gathered from academic journals, dissertations, and government publications issued by the Ministry of Education, TVETA, and the Public Service Commission, together with official performance contracting and appraisal guidelines, institutional evaluation reports, and credible online sources. Searches were carried out in major databases such as Google Scholar and ERIC using combinations of key terms related to performance contracting, performance appraisal, resource utilization, service quality, and outcomes in Kenyan TVET institutions. Citation tracing was used to follow relevant references in order to minimize omissions and to broaden coverage. Selection of materials emphasized studies published from 2009 onwards to reflect the period of sustained implementation of performance contracting and the later introduction of lecturer appraisals. Priority was given to works that addressed the Kenyan context in the education sector and that presented verifiable methods or empirical findings. Opinion pieces with limited methodological transparency or weak contextual relevance were excluded after full-text review.

Information was drawn from a total of 28 different sources. Government policy documents formed an important foundation, with 5 key publications reviewed. Academic studies contributed significantly to the depth of the analysis, with 6 scholarly sources consulted. These consisted of postgraduate theses, peer-reviewed journal articles, and research publications on TVET and education. 4 articles gathered from major Kenyan publications including the Daily Nation, The Standard, and the Business Daily. These stories helped to contextualize current events, sector challenges, and public debates around policy and education reforms. Education-focused online media provided additional information, with 3 digital sources consulted. These included Elimu News, Educator Kenya, and digital bulletins from TVETA and TVET CDACC, all of which offered timely updates, expert commentary, and analyses of TVET sector developments. Institutional reports added a critical internal perspective. A total of 4 institutional documents were reviewed from agencies such as TVET CDACC, TVETA, RVNP, and KNEC. These reports provided operational data, performance trends, institutional priorities, and implementation progress. International publications further strengthened the analysis, with 4 global sources used from platforms such as Google Scholar, ResearchGate, institutional repositories, UNESCO-UNEVOC, the World Bank, and the OECD. These offered comparative insights, international best practices, and broader educational trends. Altogether, the combination of 26 well-selected sources ensured that the analysis was balanced, broad-based, and grounded in credible evidence from national, institutional, academic, media, and international perspectives.

Thematic organization was then applied to group convergent insights and to surface patterns across sources. Analysis combined narrative synthesis with simple vote counting to summarize the direction of effects where multiple studies addressed similar questions. Convergent findings were treated as stronger evidence, while divergent results were examined for differences in design, measurement, institutional capacity, guidance quality, or incentives that might explain variation. Recognized limitations included dependence

on available literature, possible publication and reporting bias, and uneven methodological quality. These risks were mitigated by triangulating academic and policy sources, retaining studies capturing staff perceptions, and clearly qualifying claims where evidence was mixed. The approach is appropriate for a policy-oriented inquiry seeking a consolidated view of performance management and institutional effectiveness in Kenyan TVET.

## Findings and Results

The review of literature and policy documents yielded several findings regarding how performance management, contracts and appraisals have impacted resource utilization and institutional results in TVET colleges, as well as how the process is being carried out. These findings are organized according to the key components of performance management and their observed effects.

### Target Setting and Alignment with Goals

A cornerstone of performance management in TVET institutions is the setting of clear performance targets at both institutional and individual levels. The findings indicate that when done properly, target setting has helped align activities with the colleges' mandates and goals. According to survey data, 87% of TVET trainers agreed that their performance targets are well related to their institution's goals, reflecting a strong alignment in principle (Komen & Ong'injo, 2024). This alignment is crucial, as Mbabazi and Odengo (2025) argues, congruency between individual targets and organizational goals enhances employees' performance by giving their work a clear purpose. In practice, institutional performance contracts often draw from strategic plans and national education objectives, breaking them down into yearly targets. Likewise, lecturers are expected to set personal work targets that contribute to the institutional contract.

However, the consistency of target setting is an issue. Not all staff set targets or update them as required. A review of public service performance data reveals that in recent years, only about 57.6% of staff in the education sector had set their performance targets in the 2022/2023 cycle, down from 68.0% in 2020/2021. This fluctuating participation suggests that a significant portion of employees did not engage in the target-setting exercise, undermining the efficacy of the appraisal process. Without clear targets, performance appraisal becomes vague and less effective. The finding underscores a need for better enforcement and perhaps training at the start of the cycle to ensure near-universal target formulation. When targets are not consistently set, it points to potential gaps such as a lack of awareness, technical difficulties (as with navigating the GHRIS system), or even apathy towards the process (Memon & Ghani, 2023).

### Quarterly and Mid-Year Performance Reviews

Performance management in Kenyan TVET institutions includes periodic reviews to monitor progress. Institutions under performance contracts are required to conduct quarterly reviews of their performance against targets and submit quarterly performance reports to the relevant authorities. These quarterly check-ins are designed to identify any shortfalls early and implement corrective actions before the year-end evaluation. Similarly, at the individual level, the system provides for a mid-year review where a supervisor and the employee discuss progress on the set targets. The findings show that these reviews are taking place, but perhaps not as uniformly or effectively as intended. In a survey of TVET trainers, about 59% of respondents agreed that they discuss their performance with a supervisor during the mid-year review (Komen & Ong'injo, 2024). This indicates that a good number of staff do get a mid-year checkpoint, which

is beneficial for feedback and course correction, but a sizable portion either do not have such discussions or do not find them substantive. Some staff may treat the mid-year review as a formality or might only undergo an end-of-year appraisal.

Where mid-year (and quarterly) reviews are conducted earnestly, institutions have reported better outcomes. For instance, continuous monitoring has helped some colleges improve timeliness in project implementation and budget absorption because issues are flagged in quarterly reports and addressed proactively. Additionally, mid-year reviews allow performance feedback and support (Kipkoge & Waruguru, 2019). A lecturer who is lagging in meeting a target can be advised, or if there are obstacles, management can intervene within the same year. The literature implies that institutions that ingrained a culture of regular performance dialogue saw more sustained improvements, as problems did not accumulate unchecked (43). Conversely, if quarterly and mid-year reviews are skipped or superficial, the institution risks discovering major performance gaps only at year-end, when it's too late to recover, leading to missed targets and possibly wasted resources for that year.

### **Supervision and Appraisal by Supervisors**

The role of supervisors is pivotal in performance management. They are tasked with not only ensuring targets are set and aligned, but also with evaluating and coaching their subordinates. Findings show that in public TVET institutions, the appraisal of staff is generally carried out by the immediate supervisors. The supervisor reviews the evidence of performance and then conducts an appraisal interview with the staff member (Amoo, 2021). According to Muthuri et al. (2019), most TTIs use the TSC's standardized appraisal forms, and supervisors fill these out based on both the staff member's self-report and their own observation.

From interviews in that study, supervisors viewed the appraisal process as part of their duty and an opportunity to improve interaction with their staff. Many saw it as a chance to provide coaching and mentorship, rather than just fault-finding (Kamel, 2019). This attitude is a positive sign, as effective performance management requires that supervisors act as both evaluators and support coaches (Murphy, 2020). Some supervisors, however, felt burdened by administrative aspects of the appraisals, especially if they had a large number of staff to appraise and insufficient training in appraisal skills (Lin & Kellough, 2019). The efficiency of the appraisal methods was rated differently across institutions; some lecturers felt their supervisors handled appraisals efficiently and fairly, while others did not. Variation in supervisor commitment and skill level results in an uneven appraisal experience (Dasanayaka et al., 2021).

One key result related to supervision is that training for appraisers improves outcomes. Supervisors who underwent training in performance evaluation were more confident and systematic in conducting appraisals. They tended to set clearer criteria and provided more useful feedback (Rosales Sánchez et al., 2019). Unfortunately, as noted earlier, only about one-third of supervisors had intensive training in some surveys. The rest relied on minimal guidance, which could lead to inconsistency or reliance on subjective judgment. Therefore, one finding is that without building supervisor capacity, the appraisal component of performance management may not yield fair or developmental results for staff.

### **Self-Appraisal and Employee Engagement**

The performance management framework encourages self-appraisal, wherein employees evaluate their own performance against their targets before meeting the supervisor (Brown, 2019). The rationale is to make

the process participatory and to let employees reflect on their achievements and areas for improvement. The evidence from TVET institutions suggests that self-appraisal is indeed practiced, though how deeply it is taken seriously can vary. In some colleges, lecturers fill out detailed self-evaluation sections in the appraisal form, providing evidence of tasks accomplished, student performance data, and even self-ratings. A principal from one institution described the process: the lecturer *first does a self-assessment and then sits down with their HOD to agree on any needed moderation of the scores, before it comes to the principal for final comments*, ensuring the lecturer is “involved throughout the assessment process.” (Muthuri et al., 2019). This indicates a collaborative approach where the lecturer’s voice is part of the evaluation. Such involvement can increase acceptance of the outcome because the lecturer had a hand in the evaluation and any discrepancies can be discussed.

However, other evidence indicates that not all staff are thoroughly engaged in self-appraisal. Some may quickly fill the form without much reflection, or they might leave sections blank and wait for the supervisor to judge. The attitude towards self-appraisal often mirrors the overall institutional culture: where a culture of continuous improvement exists, staff are more forthcoming in analyzing their own performance; where appraisal is seen with suspicion, self-assessment might be minimal (Aijaz, 2019). The literature suggests that encouraging honest self-appraisal can identify performance barriers that management wasn’t aware of. It also encourages personal responsibility, as staff set out how they plan to improve (King, 2020). Therefore, a positive finding here is that self-appraisal, when well-implemented, leads to greater personal accountability and can surface valuable feedback for the institution.

### Rewards and Sanctions Outcomes

A critical aspect of performance management is linking results to rewards or sanctions, essentially the incentive system. The idea is to recognize and reward high performance and to sanction or support poor performance. In the Kenyan public service, this has taken various forms: top performers might receive commendation letters, monetary bonuses, or opportunities for training/promotion, whereas consistently poor performers might face warnings, denial of annual salary increments, or be put on Performance Improvement Plans (PIPs). In the context of TVET institutions, the findings show that while a reward/sanction framework exists on paper, its implementation has been patchy and often seen as unclear by staff (Tidd, 2020).

Data from recent performance appraisal reports indicate that only a small proportion of staff have so far been formally sanctioned or rewarded based on appraisal outcomes. For example, across a sample of public sector staff (including education), it was observed that about 2.5% of staff were rated as “exceeding targets” (beyond 101% of target) and around 5% met all targets, whereas a small minority (less than 1%) were rated as significantly underperforming (below 60% of targets). Consequently, relatively few employees faced sanctions or performance improvement measures. In one cycle, 614 staff (out of tens of thousands) received rewards for good performance, 35 were sanctioned for poor performance, and 144 were placed on Performance Improvement Plans. This indicates that the majority of staff fall in the middle performance categories and only extreme cases get noted for rewards or sanctions.

Interviews and surveys reveal that many lecturers are not clearly informed about how rewards (like promotions or bonuses) are tied to their appraisal scores, which can reduce the motivational impact of the appraisal system. Likewise, there is sometimes a reluctance or delay in enforcing sanctions for



underperformance – possibly due to bureaucratic hurdles or a culture of avoiding conflict. Still, there have been instances of tangible incentives: some TVET institutions have introduced annual “Best Trainer” awards or small financial rewards for top-performing faculty as a direct response to high appraisal scores, and these have been well received. On the sanctions side, staff who score very low are typically required to undergo additional training or are monitored more closely, and if improvement is not seen, further HR actions may be taken. The finding here is that the concept of reward and sanction is in place, but needs to be strengthened and communicated so that employees feel the system is fair and that performance truly matters. Komen & Ong’ino (2024) emphasize making the reward and sanction system clear and fair to gain employee trust in the appraisal process.

### **Performance Improvement Plans (PIPs)**

For those employees who do not meet performance expectations, the typical recourse is a Performance Improvement Plan, a structured plan that outlines the areas of deficiency, the improvement goals, support to be provided, and a timeline for re-evaluation (Kuswati, 2020). The findings suggest that PIPs have been underutilized but are increasingly recognized as important. The data mentioned above showed 144 staff placed on PIPs in one period, which, while a small fraction of the total workforce, indicates that the mechanism is being used to some extent (Ilangakoon et al., 2022). Often, an employee scoring below a certain threshold (for example, below 60% achievement of targets) is flagged for a PIP.

However, one challenge noted is that some institutions lack the capacity or follow-through to implement these improvement plans effectively. If a lecturer is put on a PIP, it requires mentorship, possibly extra resources or training, and close monitoring by the supervisor. Not all colleges have formal programs or available senior staff to coach the underperformers. In some cases, those placed on PIPs improved in the subsequent cycle; in other cases, if the root causes were not addressed, the PIP may not succeed. The presence of PIPs is a positive feature in that it provides an alternative to immediate punitive action it is a developmental approach. But the effectiveness of PIPs in Kenyan TVET needs further tracking. From a policy standpoint, ensuring that performance improvement plans are accompanied by the necessary support (training budget, regular check-ins, realistic timelines) is crucial for them to yield results (Ahmedani, 2021).

### **Impact on Prudent Resource Utilization**

One of the central questions is whether performance management has made TVET institutions use their resources more prudently. The evidence points to some improvements here. Performance contracts forced institutions to more carefully plan and justify their budgets and resource allocation in line with agreed targets (Biondi & Russo, 2022). As a result, there have been instances of reduced wastage, for example, better inventory management of training materials because one of the targets was to eliminate stock-outs or curb excess procurement. In Mosomi et al.’s study, heads of departments felt that performance contracts brought some discipline in the use of teaching and learning materials (Gallego-García et al., 2021). They reported that resources like workshop tools, ICT equipment, and consumables were now being utilized with greater mindfulness of meeting training objectives, whereas before they might have been lying idle or used haphazardly. Another positive outcome was that some institutions established resource-sharing and optimization practices to meet performance targets related to resource utilization.

On the flip side, the improvement was described as modest. Tutors did not universally agree that performance contracting had led to optimal resource use (Abedi, 2024). In certain categories of resources,

the impact was significant, while in others it was negligible. For example, there was increased access to computers and e-learning for staff in some colleges as a result of performance goals to enhance ICT use. Yet, because the number of computers was still limited relative to demand, the overall impact on teaching practice was constrained. Thus, performance management highlighted areas needing investment, but until resources were provided, the full benefit couldn't be realized (Helmold & Samara, 2019). The introduction of service charters and quality standards as part of performance contracting also meant that institutions had to allocate budgets to certain critical areas to meet those standards (Mwaguni, 2020). Some did so successfully, thereby improving the reliability of training equipment and instructor competency – clear cases of better resource use translating to better results.

### **Impact on Improvement of Results**

Finally, the critical question: have all these processes improved the actual outcomes of TVET institutions? The term “results” can encompass student academic achievements, graduation rates, employability of graduates, customer satisfaction, and innovation in programs. Direct attribution is challenging, but several indicators hint at positive trends. Service delivery in many colleges has improved in areas like timeliness and responsiveness (Sulasula & Moreno, 2023). As noted earlier, performance appraisals were linked with fewer complaints in one region, implying students and trainees are getting better service. Additionally, anecdotal evidence from institutional reports suggests that more courses are being completed on time and with full syllabus coverage, which can be attributed to lecturers being held to account through performance targets (Hentschke et al., 2023).

There is also some evidence of academic performance improvements. While a host of factors influence student outcomes, a few colleges that fully embraced performance management reported improved examination results and higher certification rates (Dougherty & Natow, 2020). The logic is that when instructors focus on targets like pass rates or competencies achieved, they put in extra effort in teaching, remedial classes, or practical training, which then leads to better student performance (Seli, 2019). However, comprehensive data on this is limited in the public domain.

Another result area is institutional development. Performance contracts often include targets for developing new programs, getting accreditation, or forming industry partnerships (Dixon, 2021). Many TVET institutions, under the pressure of meeting their performance contracts, have launched new demand-driven courses and strengthened linkages with employers (Ye et al., 2019). This responsiveness can be seen as an outcome of the performance culture.

Still, the impact on results is not uniform across all institutions. Some well-resourced and well-led institutions have thrived under performance management, showing clear improvements, whereas under-resourced ones have struggled to meet targets and saw little change, sometimes feeling demoralized by continually low evaluations (Ginting et al., 2024). The findings overall suggest a conditional impact: performance management has been beneficial where there is genuine commitment, adequate capacity, and alignment of resources with goals, but its effect is muted where these conditions are lacking (Van Waeyenberg et al., 2022).

In summary, the findings show that performance management in Kenyan TVET institutions has introduced a more structured approach to managing resources and aiming for results. There are encouraging signs of improved accountability and some resource optimization, as well as enhanced service delivery in certain

aspects (Ogheneruona, 2024). Nonetheless, challenges in implementation from incomplete target setting, inconsistent reviews, gaps in supervisor training, to unclear incentives have prevented a wholesale transformation. These results set the stage for a deeper discussion on what these mean for the future of performance management in TVET and how the identified issues can be (Tjabadi, 2023).

## Discussion

The above findings illustrate a nuanced reality: performance management has the potential to improve institutional performance and resource utilization in TVET institutions, but the extent of its impact depends on effective implementation and supportive conditions. In this discussion, we interpret the findings in light of the broader objectives and consider why certain outcomes occurred, what the impediments were, and how performance management can be better leveraged to achieve prudent resource use and improved results.

Firstly, the evidence that target setting aligns staff efforts with institutional goals is a fundamental positive outcome. When over 80% of trainers concur that their targets relate to institutional goals (Komen & Ong'injo, 2024), it demonstrates clarity of purpose, which is a prerequisite for improved performance. Goal-setting theory suggests that specific and challenging goals lead to higher performance than vague or easy goals (Jeong et al., 2023). The alignment found in Kenyan TVETs is encouraging; however, the drop in the proportion of staff actually setting targets (down to ~58% in 2022/23) is concerning. This inconsistency likely stems from a combination of systemic and human factors (Rubin & Edwards, 2020). System-wise, the transition to an online system (GHRIS) for entering performance contracts and appraisals may have introduced technical hurdles or learning curves for staff, as highlighted by Komen & Ong'injo (2024), who noted trainers need more support in using these systems. Human-wise, if staff do not see the value or expect no consequences (good or bad) from these targets, they may be indifferent to properly setting them. This points to a motivation issue: performance management must be coupled with a culture that values and uses the information; otherwise, compliance will be half-hearted (Gyimah, 2019).

The periodic reviews (quarterly, mid-year) are where performance management translates from a plan into a continuous process. The moderate uptake of mid-year performance discussions (about 59% participation). Komen and Ong'injo (2024) suggests that while the mechanism exists, it's not universally ingrained. One possible reason is the workload and time constraints. Many public TVET institutions are understaffed, and supervisors juggle teaching, administration, and now performance monitoring (Tjabadi, 2023). Without explicit scheduling and perhaps simplifying the review process, it can get sidelined. The PSC guidelines recommend mid-year reviews for a reason: to provide timely feedback and avoid surprises at year-end. If institutions ensure these reviews happen, it could greatly enhance performance outcomes. The discussion therefore recognizes a need for institutional commitment to the review process – possibly by mandating that mid-year review completion is a performance indicator for supervisors themselves.

Supervision quality emerged as a double-edged sword. Good supervisors turned appraisals into mentorship opportunities, while untrained ones might have reduced it to a checkbox exercise (Franklin & Manning, 2021). This disparity highlights the crucial role of leadership and capacity-building in performance management. The discussion must acknowledge that performance management systems are only as effective as the people who run them. Investment in training appraisers on how to set fair evaluations, how to give constructive feedback, and how to coach underperformers will likely yield a high return in terms of

improved staff performance. As Muthuri et al. (2019) found, even supervisors who had limited training managed to find value in the role. This suggests that with more comprehensive training, supervisors could be even more effective. Therefore, strengthening the skills and mindset of supervisors is a key discussion point – doing so could make the difference between performance appraisals being viewed as punitive vs. developmental by the staff.

Engaging staff through self-appraisal and involvement in the process appears to build trust and acceptance of performance management. The quote from Principal A about lecturers being involved throughout the process exemplifies best practice. When staff feel ownership of their performance goals and are active participants in evaluations, they are more likely to commit to improvement (Vezi et al., 2024). The discussion here revolves around employee buy-in. Early resistance by educators to performance contracting was noted via union demands and skepticism (Yogo et al., 2019) had to be overcome by demonstrating that these tools can benefit them too. Over time, as the process becomes normalized and if fairness is perceived, buy-in improves. A lingering issue is the perception by some that performance appraisal is just added bureaucracy (Williams, 2021). To counter this, institutions should emphasize success stories – for instance, how performance data was used to secure promotions for top performers or how an improvement plan helped a struggling lecturer turn around. This would illustrate that the system is *not* merely for punitive monitoring but for mutual gain (Rodriguez et al., 2020).

Perhaps the most critical part of this discussion is around the rewards and sanctions framework. Performance management theory posits that incentives drive behavior (Tweedie et al., 2019). If high effort and excellent results are met with tangible rewards, employees are motivated to excel (Choi & Presslee, 2023). If poor performance is met with appropriate consequences, it discourages complacency. In Kenyan TVET institutions, the findings show that this aspect needs strengthening. The fact that very few people are officially rewarded or sanctioned out of the total suggests either that most people are just average or that the bar for triggering rewards/sanctions is high or inconsistently applied. It's likely a mix of both: many will cluster around the "met expectations" category, but there are surely more than 0.7% who underperform [\[57\]](#) and more than 2.5% who truly exceed expectations. The low numbers might reflect a cautious approach by management in using carrots and sticks. Some public institutions err on the side of giving everyone an average rating to avoid discontent or grievances. This undermines the spirit of meritocracy that performance management seeks to promote (O'Dwyer, 2020).

Now, connecting these processes to institutional improvements, the evidence shows some encouraging links: better resource planning, fewer complaints, and possibly better student outcomes (Lenning et al., 2023). Performance management cannot be a silver bullet in an environment where, say, funding is drastically insufficient or student-to-teacher ratios are extremely high (Oduwan & Francis, 2023). In the Kenyan TVET case, financial constraints repeatedly emerge as a limiting factor. You can set all the performance targets you want, but if basic inputs are missing, results will suffer. For example, a performance contract might set a target to increase the number of students trained in a certain engineering skill, but if the college doesn't have enough training equipment or materials due to budget cuts, that target will be missed, or achieved at a superficial level, and performance scores will not reflect real quality. (Brown et al., 2019) The discussion here would advocate that government and stakeholders ensure performance targets are realistic given resource envelopes, or better yet, use the performance results to argue for more resources where justified.

Another reason for only incremental improvement could be the learning curve – institutions and individuals have been adjusting to these systems over the past decade. The early years might have seen minimal impact as people were still understanding performance contracts. Over time, one would expect the impact to grow as the processes mature. Indeed, the global recognition of Kenya’s performance contracting model suggests it has strong elements, but domestic critiques demand ongoing refinement (Munyi, 2024). The discussion could note that continuous improvement of the performance management framework itself is necessary. For instance, simplifying the paperwork (as recommended by Mosomi et al.) to focus on actual service delivery rather than excessive form-filling could make the process more effective and less burdensome [59]. Many studies emphasized reducing the bureaucratic load and focusing on results on the ground.

It is also instructive to discuss the cultural change aspect. Performance management introduces a culture of measurement and accountability, which can clash with previous norms (Christopher, 2020). Over time, as more staff get used to being appraised and see value in it, the culture shifts. But culture change is slow. The partial resistance and compliance issues we see indicate that not everyone is fully convinced or habituated to the new system yet (Parvaresh et al., 2019). Leadership commitment at all levels is required to reinforce that this is the “new normal” and to exemplify its importance.

## Conclusion

In conclusion, the impact of performance management through performance contracts and performance appraisals on prudent resource utilization and improved results in Kenya’s TVET institutions is evident but still evolving. This comprehensive analysis has shown that performance management has introduced much-needed structure and accountability into the running of TVET colleges. Since the initiation of performance contracts around 2008/2009, many institutions have become more deliberate in planning and using their resources, aligning expenditures and activities with clear targets and service commitments. The subsequent integration of individual performance appraisals has further ensured that lecturers and staff are personally contributing to these institutional goals and are being evaluated on their contributions.

There are tangible improvements attributable to these reforms: for instance, better utilization of teaching and learning materials has been observed as a result of the focus on targets and results. Some institutions have seen enhancements in service delivery, manifested in reduced complaints and more timely execution of tasks, correlating with the adoption of regular staff appraisals. Even the exercise of setting targets and reviewing them has, in itself, instilled a performance consciousness among many employees – a shift from the old culture to one where outcomes matter and are measured.

However, the journey towards fully translating performance management into institutional excellence is ongoing and not without obstacles. The study found that the mere presence of performance contracts or appraisal forms does not automatically yield large gains; it is the quality of implementation that counts. Challenges such as inconsistent participation in target setting, insufficient training in appraisal skills, and unclear linkages between performance and rewards have limited the impact to a moderate level so far. In some cases, performance management was treated perfunctorily, a box to tick, thereby diluting its effectiveness. Additionally, external factors like budget constraints and resource shortages have sometimes hampered institutions from achieving their performance targets, highlighting that accountability mechanisms must be coupled with empowerment and support.



The central lesson from this analysis is that performance management can indeed lead to prudent resource use and improved results, but only under conducive conditions. These conditions include strong leadership commitment, staff buy-in, adequate resources, and an ethos of continuous improvement. When those are in place, performance management provides a virtuous cycle: goals are set, progress is monitored, feedback is given, and adjustments are made, resulting in better outcomes and learning for the next cycle. When those are absent, the process risks becoming a hollow ritual with little impact.

For Kenya's TVET institutions, strengthening performance management is not just a bureaucratic necessity but a strategic imperative. These institutions are training the workforce that will drive the country's future development, and thus their efficiency and effectiveness are of national importance. Performance management, as this paper has discussed, offers a pathway to bolster these institutions, ensuring that every shilling is well spent and every educator and administrator is contributing optimally to the mission.

In closing, the improvements seen so far though mixed are encouraging and suggest that with the recommended enhancements, performance management could significantly elevate the performance of TVET institutions. This would mean not only better managed colleges but also better educational results, such as higher quality training, more skilled graduates, and greater satisfaction among stakeholders (students, parents, employers). As the system matures, future research and evaluations should continue to monitor outcomes, ensuring that performance management remains a tool for positive change rather than an end in itself. The hope and expectation are that Kenyan TVET institutions will continue to adapt and refine these practices, ultimately realizing the full potential of performance management as a catalyst for excellence in education and efficient use of public resources.

## Recommendations

Based on the findings and discussion above this study recommends the following:

- Both the staff being appraised and the supervisors should receive regular training on the performance management system. This includes training on setting SMART targets, using the GHRIS or appraisal forms properly, and conducting fair evaluations.
- Institutionalize quarterly and mid-year review process more firmly. Each TVET college should schedule quarterly performance review meetings and ensure mid-year appraisal discussions for every staff.
- The government should look into simplifying appraisal forms and reducing unnecessary indicators, focusing on key performance outcomes. Simplification will save time and make it easier for staff to engage sincerely with the process rather than treating it as a bureaucratic formality.
- Since the appraisal process (target entry, reporting) relies on ICT like the GHRIS system, ensure that all TVET institutions have the necessary ICT infrastructure and internet connectivity.

## References

- Abanina, I. N., Basova, A. G., Mincicova, V. S., Ogloblina, E. V., & Seredina, M. I. (2025). Development of Higher Education in Central Asia in the Context of the Challenges of the Fourth Industrial Revolution. In *Lifelong Learning in Central Asia: Relevance of the Fourth Industrial Revolution* (pp. 69–78). Springer.
- Abedi, E. A. (2024). Tensions between technology integration practices of teachers and ICT in education policy expectations: implications for change in teacher knowledge, beliefs and teaching practices. *Journal of Computers in Education*, 11(4), 1215–1234.
- Adam, E. (2020). ‘Governments base performance-based funding on global rankings indicators’: A global trend in higher education finance or a global rankings literature fiction? A comparative analysis of four performance-based funding programs. *International Journal of Educational Development*, 76, 102197.
- Ahmad, A. R., Yee, K. S., & Farley, A. (2019). Exploring the Rationale of Performance Based Funding for Malaysian Public Universities. *Journal of Education and e-Learning Research*, 7\*(1), 15–21.
- Ahmedani, E. A. M. (2021). *Supervision and the Effectiveness of Teachers Performance Evaluation in a Center for Special Needs* [Master’s thesis, The British University in Dubai].
- Aijaz, Z. (2019). *Impact of 360-degree performance reviews on motivation of doctors and nurses in Ireland* [Master’s thesis, Dublin Business School].
- Amoo, A. O. (2021). Developing measures to improve employee engagement in public Technical Vocational and Educational Training (TVET) colleges in Gauteng Province, South Africa: an investigation of antecedent and outcome variables.
- Andersson, K. H. (2024). *The Relationship between Teachers’ Job Satisfaction and the Implementation of an Esser Funded Top-down Directive: a Qualitative Case Study* [Doctoral dissertation, The University of Maine].
- Anosisye, A. K., & Nyoni, N. P. (2024). Challenges Facing Sustainability of Performance Management System in Public Sector in Tanzania: A Critical Analysis of Open Performance Review and Appraisal System in the Commission for Mediation and Arbitration–Arusha. *The Accountancy and Business Review*, 16(2), 1–18.
- Anuna, C. A. (2023). *Influence of Performance Contracting practices on Teachers’ Service Delivery in Secondary schools in Westlands Sub County, Nairobi County, Kenya* [Master’s thesis, University of Nairobi].
- Awany, A. J. O., Ssekamatte, D., & Karyeija, G. K. Assessing the Effects of Organizational Readiness on the Implementation of Results-Based Monitoring and Evaluation System in International NGOs: A Case of Compassion International-Uganda.
- Aziz, F. A., & Subramaniam, N. (2023). *TVET in Malaysia: current situation, challenges and recommendations*. Penang Institute.

Barrett, P., Treves, A., Shmis, T., & Ambasz, D. (2019). *The impact of school infrastructure on learning: A synthesis of the evidence*.

Benson Kamau Ngwiri, D. P. W. M., & Gitonga, C. Influence of Idealized Influence on Institutional Performance of Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Colleges in Nairobi Metropolis, Kenya.

Biondi, L., & Russo, S. (2022). Integrating strategic planning and performance management in universities: a multiple case-study analysis. *Journal of Management and Governance*, 26(2), 417–448.

Birdayanthi, B., Yusriadi, Y., & Ikmal, I. (2025). Accountability and Transparency in Public Administration for Improved Service Delivery. *Journal Social Civilecial*, 3(1), 34–47.

Brobbe, P. K. (2022). \*Institutional performance, public appraisals, and electoral governance in Kenya (2002-2017)\*.

Brown, M. (2019). Understanding performance appraisal: supervisory and employee perspectives. In A. Wilkinson, N. Bacon, S. Snell, & D. Lepak (Eds.), *The SAGE Handbook of Human Resource Management* (pp. 195–209).

Brown, T. C., O’Kane, P., Mazumdar, B., & McCracken, M. (2019). Performance management: A scoping review of the literature and an agenda for future research. *Human Resource Development Review*, 18(1), 47–82.

Calma, A., & Dickson-Deane, C. (2020). The student as customer and quality in higher education. *International Journal of Educational Management*, 34(8), 1221–1235.

Chepkoech Sr, S. (2021). *Impact of Public Technical, Vocational Education and Training Institutions’ on Economic Development in Western Kenya* [Doctoral dissertation, University of Nairobi].

Choi, J. W., & Presslee, A. (2023). When and why tangible rewards can motivate greater effort than cash rewards: An analysis of four attribute differences. *Accounting, Organizations and Society*, 104, 101389.

Christopher, J. (2020). Implementation of performance management in an environment of conflicting management cultures. *International Journal of Productivity and Performance Management*, 69(7), 1521–1539.

Daritsu, E. F., Odiyo, W., & Ongeti, W. (2024). Performance Contracting and Service Delivery in County Governments in Kenya: A Case of Kakamega County. *Journal of Entrepreneurship & Project Management*, 8(4), 75–95.

Dasanayaka, C. H., Abeykoon, C., Ranaweera, R., & Koswatte, I. (2021). The impact of the performance appraisal process on job satisfaction of the academic staff in higher educational institutions. *Education Sciences*, 11(10), 623.

Dixon, R. (2021). Performance management in social impact bonds: how an outcomes-based approach shapes hybrid partnerships. *International Journal of Public Sector Management*, 34(3), 356–376.

Dougherty, K. J., & Natow, R. S. (2020). Performance-based funding for higher education: how well does neoliberal theory capture neoliberal practice? *Higher Education*, 80(3), 457–478.

Ezeogu, S. O. (2022). *Performance Appraisal and Organizational Effectiveness*.

Franklin, K., & Manning, P. J. (2021). How to Train Your Supervisor. *Pace Law Review*, 42, 108.

Gallego-García, D., Gallego-García, S., & García-García, M. (2021). An optimized system to reduce procurement risks and stock-outs: A simulation case study for a component manufacturer. *Applied Sciences*, 11(21), 10374.

Ginting, Y. M., Rismawati, R., & Aisyah, S. (2024). The Moderating Role of Work Environment in the Relationship Between Organisational Culture, Employee Motivation, Performance Appraisal, and Job Satisfaction in Bali's Hotel Industry. *The South East Asian Journal of Management*, 18(2), 6.

Gyimah, J. H. (2019). *Institutionalising performance management reforms in the Ghanaian Public Service: administrative culture versus leadership?* [Doctoral dissertation, The University of Bergen].

Hansen, S. J. (2020). *Performance contracting: expanding horizons*. River Publishers.

Helmold, M., & Samara, W. (2019). *Progress in performance management* (Vol. 13). Springer.

Hentschke, G. C., Lechuga, V. M., & Tierney, W. G. (2023). *For-profit colleges and universities: Their markets, regulation, performance, and place in higher education*. Taylor & Francis.

Ilangakoon, T. S., Weerabahu, S. K., Samaranayake, P., & Wickramarachchi, R. (2022). Adoption of Industry 4.0 and lean concepts in hospitals for healthcare operational performance improvement. *International Journal of Productivity and Performance Management*, 71(6), 2188–2213.

Jeong, Y. H., Healy, L. C., & McEwan, D. (2023). The application of goal setting theory to goal setting interventions in sport: A systematic review. *International Review of Sport and Exercise Psychology*, 16(1), 474–499.

Jörden, N. M., Sage, D., & Trusson, C. (2022). ‘It's so fake’: Identity performances and cynicism within a people analytics team. *Human Resource Management Journal*, 32(3), 524–539.

Joseph, O. B., Olateji, M., Okoli, I., Frempong, D., & Ijiga, O. M. (2025). Policy, Power, and Performance: The Role of Government in Shaping Successful TVET Outcomes-A Cross-National Study.

Kamel, N. (2019). Implementing talent management and its effect on employee engagement and organizational performance. *Abu Dhabi International Petroleum Exhibition and Conference*.

Kandie, C. J. (2019). *Effect Of Iso 9001: 2008 Standard Certifications on Sustainable Performance of Kenyan Public Universities* [Doctoral dissertation, University of Eldoret].

Karuhanga, I., & Muhwezi, M. (2025). Impact of assessor training on quality of training and assessment in vocational education and training in Uganda.

Kemboi, G. K. Enhancing Service Delivery through Performance Contracting: A Case Study of Lake Basin Development Authority.

- King, S. M. (2020). *Employees lived experiences with the performance appraisal system* [Doctoral dissertation, Walden University].
- Kipkogei, R. C., & Waruguru, M. (2019). Real-Time Monitoring and Performance of Environmental Conservation Projects in Nakuru County, Kenya.
- Komen, P. K., & Ong'injo, J. A. (2024). Performance Appraisal Implementation of Trainers in Technical, Vocational, Education, and Training Institutions in Kenya (TVET): Challenges and Recommendations. *ShahidiHub International Journal of Education, Humanities & Social Science*, 2(1), 64–82.
- Kuswati, Y. (2020). The effect of motivation on employee performance. *\*Budapest International Research and Critics Institute-Journal (BIRCI-Journal)*, 3\*(2), 995–1002.
- Lenning, O. T., Hill, D. M., Saunders, K. P., Stokes, A., & Solan, A. (2023). *Powerful learning communities: A guide to developing student, faculty, and professional learning communities to improve student success and organizational effectiveness*. Routledge.
- Lin, Y.-C., & Kellough, J. E. (2019). Performance appraisal problems in the public sector: Examining supervisors' perceptions. *Public Personnel Management*, 48(2), 179–202.
- Lloyd, K. (2024). *Performance appraisals & phrases for dummies*. John Wiley & Sons.
- Maina, L. W., & Muathe, S. M. (2023). Revitalizing Performance of Technical and Vocational Education and Training Institutions in Kenya through sStrategic Interventions. *International Journal of Scientific and Research Publications*, 13(3), 337–347.
- Marijani, R., & Manase, R. (2020). Analysis of performance information use in Tanzania: insights from Tanzania Public Service College, Tabora. *Holistica Journal of Business and Public Administration*, 11(2), 115–139.
- Mazibuko, S. P. (2022). *The Role of Strategic Leadership in Guiding Performance of Public Vocational Colleges in Kwazulu-natal* [Doctoral dissertation, University of South Africa].
- Mbabazi, J., & Odengo, R. (2025). Effect of performance appraisal on employee performance in non-governmental organizations: A case of World Vision International Rwanda (WVIR). *Journal of Research Innovation and Implications in Education*, 9(1), 65–79.
- Memon, K. R., & Ghani, B. (2023). The relationship between performance appraisal system and employees' voice behavior through the mediation-moderation mechanism. *South Asian Journal of Business Studies*, 12(2), 220–241.
- Messerli, S. (2014). Result-based payment systems in vocational skills development. In *The challenges of policy transfer in vocational skills development* (pp. 325–339).
- Mosomi, B. M., Kindiki, J. N., & Boit, J. M. (2014). Impact of Performance Contracts on the Utilization of Teaching and Learning Resources in Technical Institutes in Kenya. *International Journal of Educational Administration and Policy Studies*, 6(9), 170–180.



Motaung, M. R. (2020). *Improving the Management of the Professional Development of Lecturers at a Selected Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) College* [Master's thesis, University of South Africa].

Munyi, C. W. (2024). *Supply Chain Management Practices and Performance of Firms in the Electricity Energy Sub-Sector in Kenya* [Doctoral dissertation, JKUAT-COHRED].

Murasi, I. (2021). *The role of Imihigo in the interface between sustainable development planning and performance management in Rwanda* [Doctoral dissertation, University of Johannesburg].

Murasi, I., & Auriacombe, C. (2022). The Role of the as a Performance Management Instrument in Rwanda. *Administratio Publica*, 30(2), 108–129.

Muriithi, B. W. (2019). *Factors influencing implementation of performance contract in public secondary schools: A case of Igembe South Sub County, Meru County, Kenya* [Master's thesis, University of Nairobi].

Murphy, K. R. (2020). Performance evaluation will not die, but it should. *Human Resource Management Journal*, 30(1), 13–31.

Muthuri, A. M., Momanyi, M., & Nduku, E. (2019). Conducting performance appraisal in public technical training institutions within Nairobi region, Kenya. *Journal of Popular Education in Africa*, 3(5), 18–41.

Mwaguni, H. J. (2020). *Utilization of Monitoring and Evaluation Tools, performance contracting, human capacity for monitoring and evaluation and research projects enhancement in public universities in Coast Region, Kenya* [Master's thesis, University of Nairobi].

Mwakasi, R., & Issa, F. (2024). Enhancing higher education industry linkage: the contribution of Tanzania commission for science and technology (COSTECH), dar es salaam, tanzania. *African Journal of Empirical Research*, 5(4), 1893–1903.

Mwalim, M. A. O., Egessa, R. K., & Evans, M. K. (2019). Effect of setting of performance contract objectives on organizational performance in the state owned sugar companies. *International Journal of Multidisciplinary and Current Research*, 7.

Mwita, K. M., & Andrea, P. T. (2019). Assessment of employee performance management in Tanzania public health facilities. *Journal of Management Research and Analysis*, 6(4), 169–173.

Namuliira, P., Kasirye, I., Okillong, P., Atwine, B., Nakkazi, S. C., Nakitende, P., & Kajumba, M. M. (2024). *SKILLS ACQUISITION IN UGANDA*.

Niyonsaba, M. (2024). \*The contribution of performance contracts to the development of Rwanda: case study of Muhanga District: 2020-2022\*.

O'Dwyer, S. (2020). Meritocracy and resentment. *Philosophy & Social Criticism*, 46(9), 1146–1164.

Odongo, N. H., Wang, D., Bishoge, O., & Arrive, T. J. (2020). A review of performance-geared contracting. *The TQM Journal*, 32(2), 226–248.

Oduwan, J., & Francis, A. (2023). *Teacher-student ratio and job performance of teachers in government universal secondary education schools in Bukedea town council Bukedea district, Uganda* [Master's thesis, Kampala International University].

Ogheneruona, O.-U. J. (2024). KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS IDENTIFIED FOR THE ENHANCEMENT OF TECHNICAL AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING (TVET) IN NIGERIA. *Journal of Association of Vocational and Technical Educators of Nigeria (JAVTEN)*, 29, 3.

Okumu, I. M., & Bbaale, E. (2019). Technical and vocational education and training in Uganda: A critical analysis. *Development Policy Review*, 37(6), 735–749.

Opoku, V., Osman, A., & Kyeraa, A. (2024). The Impact of Performance Appraisal Systems on Employee Motivation and Organizational Success: A Comprehensive Review of Best Practices and Challenges. *Convergence Chronicles*, 5(5), 83–92.

Orwa, B. H., & Otieno, O. D. (2019). The role of performance contracting on performance of public universities in Kenya. *The University Journal*, 1(3).

Palmer, R. (2024). Financing skills and lifelong learning in the informal sector. In *Learning for Livelihoods in the Global South* (pp. 201–219). Routledge.

Parvaresh, S., Pirnajmuddin, H., & Hesabi, A. (2019). Student resistance in a literary translation classroom: A study within an instructional conversion experience from a transmissionist approach to a transformationist one. *The Interpreter and Translator Trainer*, 13(2), 132–151.

Paterson, A., Vally, Z., Mthembu-Salter, L., Matlin, N., & Molokwane, P. (2024). *Towards a performance management framework for TVET lecturers in South Africa*. Report produced under the Five-Year Research Programme on TVET Colleges, commissioned by the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) and funded by the National Skills Fund (NSF). Pretoria.

Paul, M. (2021). Local Government Staff Performance Management in Tanzania: Experience of Open Performance Review and Appraisal System (OPRAS) in Kinondoni Municipal Council. \*Вестник Санкт-Петербургского университета. Востоковедение и африканистика, 13\*(1), 51–73.

Philip, R. M. O. (2019). Assessing the impact of the implementation of teacher performance appraisal development tool on the quality of teaching in Kenya. A case study of Narok County secondary schools. *Cradle of Knowledge: African Journal of Educational and Social Science Research*, 7(1), 16–28.

Public Service Performance Management Unit. (2022). *Evaluation of the Performance of Ministries, State Corporations and Tertiary Institutions for the Financial Year Report*.

Rajapakse, V. (2024). Performance Management Process: Performance Reviewing. In *Employee Performance Management for Improved Workplace Motivation* (pp. 57–90). IGI Global.

Riccucci, N. M., Naff, K. C., & Hamidullah, M. F. (2019). *Personnel management in government: Politics and process*. Routledge.

Rodriguez, L. A., Swain, W. A., & Springer, M. G. (2020). Sorting through performance evaluations: The influence of performance evaluation reform on teacher attrition and mobility. *American Educational Research Journal*, 57(6), 2339–2377.

Rosales Sánchez, C., Díaz-Cabrera, D., & Hernández-Fernaudo, E. (2019). Does effectiveness in performance appraisal improve with rater training? *PLOS ONE*, 14(9), e0222694.

Rubin, E. V., & Edwards, A. (2020). The performance of performance appraisal systems: understanding the linkage between appraisal structure and appraisal discrimination complaints. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 31(15), 1938–1957.

Salas-Velasco, M. (2024). Vocational education and training systems in Europe: A cluster analysis. *European Educational Research Journal*, 23(3), 434–449.

Seli, H. (2019). *Motivation and learning strategies for college success: A focus on self-regulated learning*. Routledge.

Sulasula, J., & Moreno, F. (2023). Public service delivery system in State Universities and Colleges: Controversies and best practices across frontline services. *Available at SSRN 4521207*.

Sułkowski, Ł., Przytuła, S., Borg, C., & Kulikowski, K. (2020). Performance appraisal in universities—assessing the tension in public service motivation (PSM). *Education Sciences*, 10(7), 174.

Tarigan, A., Gustomo, A., & Bangun, Y. R. (2025). Are performance appraisals in the public sector fair? EXPLORING bias and best practices. *Cogent Business & Management*, 12(1), 2458760.

Tidd, K. (2020). *Pupils' Views and Experiences of Rewards and Sanctions* [Doctoral dissertation, Newcastle University].

Tilahun, G. (2020). *The Effect Of Performance Appraisal System on Tvet Instructors Performance, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia: A Case Of Selected Government, Polytechnic Colleges* [Master's thesis, St. Mary's University].

Tjabadi, M. P. (2023). *Employees' Perceptions of a Performance Appraisal System in the TVET Colleges: A Case Study of Nkangala TVET College* [Master's thesis, University of South Africa].

Tu, W. (2025). Fault-Tolerance Mechanism: A Compromise Between Outcome-Based Accountability and Process-Based Accountability. In *The Accountability Paradox in the Chinese Bureaucracy* (pp. 217–254). Springer.

Tweedie, D., Wild, D., Rhodes, C., & Martinov-Bennie, N. (2019). How does performance management affect workers? Beyond human resource management and its critique. *International Journal of Management Reviews*, 21(1), 76–96.

Van Waeyenberg, T., Peccei, R., & Decramer, A. (2022). Performance management and teacher performance: the role of affective organizational commitment and exhaustion. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 33(4), 623–646.

Vezi, P. T., Rajlal, A., Chitamba, A., & Muchowe, R. (2024). Examining the nexus between staff development practices and employee performance at a selected Municipality in KZN. *International Journal of Business Ecosystem & Strategy*, 6(6), 91–101.

Williams, G. (2024). *Monthly Reporting on Organization Performance*. Available at SSRN 4830384.

Williams, M. J. (2021). Beyond state capacity: bureaucratic performance, policy implementation and reform. *Journal of Institutional Economics*, 17(2), 339–357.

Yang, E., Chen, C., Li, K., Guo, K., Hua, Y., & Zhang, L. (2025). Challenges and strategies for energy performance contracting: A critical review. *Journal of Building Design and Environment*, 3(1), 202510.

Ye, Q., Wang, D., & Guo, W. (2019). Inclusive leadership and team innovation: The role of team voice and performance pressure. *European Management Journal*, 37(4), 468–480.

Yogo, C. L., Wu'Adongo, O. J. O., Onditi, A., & Odiwuor, M. (2019). Influence of performance appraisal on service delivery in TVET institutions in Western region, Kenya. *International Journals of Multidisciplinary Research Academy*. <http://ir.jooust.ac.ke:8080/xmlui/handle/123456789/9366>