AN EVALUATION OF THE ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE OF THE DEPARTMENT OF NATIONAL PARKS AND WILDLIFE USING THE BALANCE SCORE CARD MODEL

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Abstract: **Public organisations play a key role in fostering national development, protecting national assets and facilitating business for the private sector to operate hence generate a lot of public interest. This study was motivated by concerns raised by stakeholders including its own employees on the performance of the Department of National Parks and Wildlife (DNPW) with respect to its mandated functions of generating revenue, protecting wildlife and its habitats and facilitating community participation. DNPW's share of the tourism market stands at 4% thus it only generates a measly USD 146/Km^2 compared to USD878-1,028/Km^2 by private sector and the neighbouring countries. The purpose of this study was to evaluate the organisational performance of the Department and to identify the key problem factors affecting its performance. A quantitative method design was used in the study. The target population was the entire Department. Purposive sampling was used to select 120 respondents for administering the questionnaire. Data was analysed in Microsoft Excel using descriptive and inferential statistics to test the influence of the Independent variables on the dependent. Using the Balance Scorecard model, the study analysed the performance of the Department from 2016 to 2021. The overall performance of the Department was measured and the factors that affected its performance identified using the four perspectives of the Balance Scorecard. The study also measured the influence of each problem factor on the overall performance of the Department using Pearson's Chi-square. The study found that the overall performance of the Department was between average to below average. Poorly set revenue targets, lack of innovation, low corporate image, inefficient internal processing systems and low human capital were identified as the main problem factors that contributed to the poor performance of the institution. The study concluded that the Department was not effective in executing its functions of protecting wildlife, generating revenue, controlling and managing habitats, issuing of licenses or in conducting research. The study identified improving goal setting, increasing staff numbers, automating systems and reviewing the Wildlife Act to enhance decision making, among the solutions to its poor performance.**

Keywords: **Balance Scorecard, Department of National Parks and Wildlife, Organisational performance, Performance Management, Performance Measurement.**

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

The Department of National Parks and Wildlife (DNPW) is a government department established under the Zambia Wildlife Act no 14 of 2015. The Department at the time of the study was under the Ministry of Tourism and Arts. DNPW is responsible of the managing the wildlife estate in the entire country and its functions are prescribed in section 5(2) of the Zambia Wildlife Act. For the purpose of the study, the functions of DNPW are summarised as follows:-

1) Collecting revenue from National Parks (NP) and Game Management Areas (GMAs);

2) Granting licenses, permits and concessions in Game Management Areas;

3) Physically protecting wild animals in National Parks and GMAs;

4) Controlling, managing, conserving wildlife habitats in protected areas.

5) Controlling, managing, conserving wildlife populations including breeding, population control;

6) Facilitating community participation in management in Game Management Areas;

7) Conducting Research on wildlife.

DNPW has 2,130 employees spread across all the 10 provinces of Zambia (DNPW, 2021). The bulk of the employees in the entire department are paramilitary-trained Wildlife Police Officers totalling 1,400 while the rest comprise civilian staff members who are not trained. All the 2,130 are recruited as Civil Servants through the Civil Service Commission.

Department generated revenue on average about K168-185 million annually between years 2016 to 2022 mainly from photographic and hunting tourism activities (Government of Zambia, 2021). Statistics gathered from the World Tourism Organization (2022), indicate that an average of 1,06 million tourists visit the country every year of which 33,776 to 100,498 visited National parks between 2016 and 2019 (pre Covid19) compared to an average of over 2,0 million in Botswana, Mozambique and Zimbabwe and over 4.0 million tourists in South Africa (World Tourism Organisation, 2023). Half of the revenue generated from hunting was shared with local communities living in Game Management Areas through Community Resource Boards established under the Zambia Wildlife Act No 14 of 2015 to co-manage GMAs and share proceeds from hunting with the DNPW.

The Department of National Parks and Wildlife is also in charge of protecting Zambia's wildlife estate which comprise 20 National Parks, bird and Wildlife Sanctuaries and 36 Game Management Area whose combined size totals over 231,033 Square Kilometers. A large part of these protected areas are intact and in pristine conditions. However, Lindsey, Nyirenda, Barnes, Becker, McRobb, et al. (2014) and Mabeta, Mweemba and Mwitwa (2017) report that parts of some national parks and game managements areas are lost and still being encroached onto by illegal settlers at a rate of 0.5 to 2.1 % per annum. They attribute this loss of biodiversity to human population growth and the lack of capacity by DNPW to effectively police the areas (Lindsey, et al., 2014). The loss of biodiversity has been observed in wild animals where the population of species such as elephant, buffalo, leopard, lion, wildebeest and zebra that are key to tourism had declined (Mabeta, et al., 2017; DNPW, 2022).

1.2 Statement of Problem

There has been an outcry from both the members of staff and external clients that the newly established Department of National Parks and Wildlife was inefficient and not effective in performing its functions of managing wildlife estates. In particular, the concerns were over the failure to generate adequate revenue, loss of biodiversity, deteriorating national parks and unsatisfied clients among others. The Department of National Parks and Wildlife spends over K200 million on operations while it only generates about K168-185 million annually (DNPW, 2023). The amount of revenue generated by DNPW since its establishment is less than what the government spends on running the Department and far less than what it can potentially earn. DNPW's earnings per km^2 from trophy hunting and photographic safaris have remained at US\$291±116/km^2 and USD146/km^2 respectively while the private sector within Zambia generates around USD878±226 from the same size of land. The public wildlife sector in other SADC countries such as Zimbabwe earns USD1, 028/km^2; Tanzania – USD424/km^2; Namibia – USD378/km^2 much higher than Zambia. ((Lindsey, et al., 2014; Mabeta, et al., 2017). Only five national parks out of twenty attract tourists and contribute to revenue (Mabeta, et al., 2017). Mabeta, *et al* (2017) cites revenue leakages and mere failure to collect revenue as some of the reasons why DNPW did not collect adequate revenue from its national parks and GMAs. DNPW fails to attract enough tourists to generate adequate revenue hence occupy a very small share of the national and global tourism market as it only attract an average of 73,900 tourists to its national parks and GMAs from the 2-10 million that visit the sub region. Connected to the low number of tourists, is the decreasing biodiversity. The Department's inability to curtail biodiversity loss in national parks has resulted into poor sighting of wild animals in national parks and consequently poor customer retention (Mabeta, et al., 2017). According to DNPW (2020) survey reports, the stocking density of key ungulates such as elephant, buffalo, eland, giraffe, lechwe,

wildebeest were below 30% of total stocking capacity of parks. Mabeta, *et al* (2017) reveals that this could be one of the reasons causing client's dissatisfaction and resulting into low revenue generation.

This study was designed to help fill the gap in documented information on DNPW's performance which information is critical to among other users, policy makers to ascertain the effectiveness of the institution to meet public's demand for improved performance.

1.3 Purpose of Study.

The purpose of this study was to assess the organisational performance problems faced by the Department of National Parks and Wildlife and to identify the factors behind the performance problems using the Balance Scorecard. The study suggests possible solutions to the identified problems.

1.4 Research Objectives.

1) To assess the performance of DNPW since establishment in 2016.

2) To identify the organisational problems faced by DNPW based on the Balance Scorecard model.

3) To determine the level of influence of the problem factors on performance.

4) To identify solutions to organisational problems based on the Balance Scorecard.

1.5 Research Questions.

1) How has DNPW performed its mandate in the last 5 years?

2) What factors contributes to the perceived poor overall performance of DNPW?

3) To what extent has DNPW's organisational performance been affected by the revenue, customer, internal process and Organisational Capacity problems?

4) What are the possible solutions to DNPW's organisational performance problems?

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Management Theories

As with definitions, there are several theories postulating performance management. Salaman, Storey and Billsberry (2005) revealed that there are two theories underlying the concept of performance management namely, The Goal Setting theory and the Expectancy theory. The Expectancy theory looks at employee's expectation and motivation which is not the focus of this study thus will not be used. However, the Goal Setting theory and the, Systems theory were seen to more applicable to the study given their relevance to the Balance Scorecard are explained below.

2.2 Goal Setting Theory

The Goal setting theory was proposed by Edwin Locke in the year 1968. This goal-setting theory states that specific and challenging goals with appropriate feedback contribute to improved performance (Salaman, et al., 2005). Locke's theory posits that goals direct the employee to perform their jobs. This theory refers to the effects of setting goals on subsequent performance. Researcher Edwin Locke found that individuals who set specific, difficult goals performed better than those who set general, easy goals (Chetty, 2019).This theory suggests that the individual goals established by an employee play an important role in motivating that employee to performance in a superior manner (Chetty, 2019). According to the theory, goal setting and task performance share a direct relation. The specific and challenging goals along with appropriate feedback contribute to higher and better task performance. The main source of job motivation according to the theory comes from the willingness of employees to work towards the attainment of the set goal. Chetty (2019) further explains that goal setting facilitates the employees in understanding the number of efforts required to put in and the employees keep following their goals. If these goals are not achieved, employees either improve their performance or modify the goals and make them more realistic. This results in performance improves it will result in achievement of the performance management system aims (Salaman, et al., 2005).

Given that the Balanced Scorecard enables managers in an organization to convert the organisational mission, vision, and strategy into specific and measurable goals, with action plans to achieve those goals. The goal setting theory is used in the study to explain performance management at DNPW using the BSC. This study explored whether or not the DNPW's mandate had been successfully converted into specific and measurable goals that its employees understood and if this has had any impact on performance of the institution as explained by the goal-setting theory. The fact that the Department did not have an approved strategic plan, the goal setting theory was used in the study to help in explaining some of the findings affecting performance of the Department.
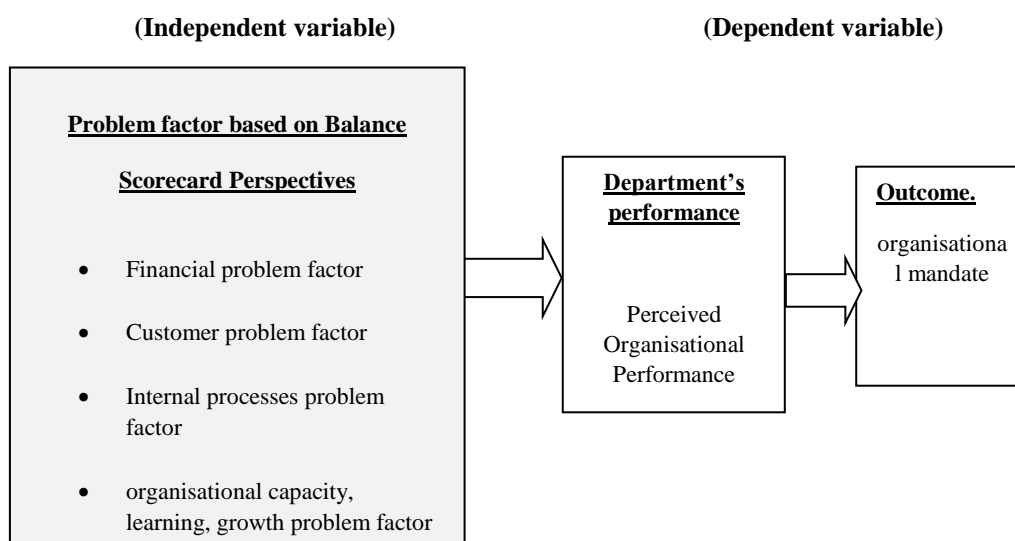
2.3 Systems Theory

The Systems Theory or The Systems Approach is a creation of Ludwig von Bertalanffy (1901-1972) a biologist who founded the general systems theory (GST) in an attempt to refute reductionism and revive the unity of science thus is had nothing to do with business management and everything to do with biology. (Agarwal, 2011.). The premise of the general systems theory is that a system is composed of interacting elements that are affected by their environment. Because of this interaction, the system as a whole can evolve (develop new properties) and self-regulate (correct itself). When applied to business, experts shorten "general systems theory" to just Systems Theory. Systems Theory encourages organizations to realize that their business is a system and is governed by the same laws and behaviours that affect every other biological organization (Agarwal, 2011.).

The Balance scorecard framework has four perspective whose objectives are interlinked to culminate into one common goal thereby facilitating the department to work as a system in implementing its mandate. DNPW has huge workforce and is made up of 13 different business units operating in all 10 provinces in Zambia. Since the BSC is meant to not only link a department's **business strategy** to its measurable goals, but to aligns employee efforts and business processes to those objectives, the systems theory was used to best explain this relationship or the lack of it. This study investigated the linkage of each department's **mandate** to it overall performance. Such an examination was helpful in explaining the divergence or successes in the performance of the department to its mandate.

3.   CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

This study conceptualizes the implementation of the Balance Scorecard with is components (perspectives) as the independent variable while the organizational performance of the Department as the dependent variable. Several researchers consider performance as a dependent variable influenced by the implementation of the Balance Scorecard strategies (Rafiq, et al., 2020).

A modified conceptual framework was adopted for this study as presented as Figure 1 below which took into account the fact that DNPW did not have any strategic plan at the time of the study.

(Independent variable)   **(Dependent variable)**

Problem factor based on Balance

Scorecard Perspectives

- Financial problem factor

- Customer problem factor

- Internal processes problem factor

- organisational capacity, learning, growth problem factor

Department's performance

Perceived Organisational Performance

Outcome.

organisational mandate

Figure 1: Schematic presentation of the working conceptual framework

Adopted and Modified from Rafiq *et al* (2020).

In this study, the researcher conceptualizes that the overall organisational performance of a DNPW as the dependent variable, which is influenced by characteristics of the independent variable the Balance Scorecard (financial, customer, internal processes and organisational capacity performance problem factor). Failure to implement financial, customer, internal processes and organisational capacity as in the Balance Scorecard negatively contribute to the Department's poor performance and consequently to the failure to effectively achieve its mandate. The conceptual framework used by Rafiq, et al (2020) was modified to exclude the feedback mechanism found in the ideal framework. This is in line with the theoretical framework above in particularly the Systems Theory that posits the need for different business units to work together to enhance organisational performance. The working conceptual framework, does not have a feedback mechanism simply because the organisation does not have strategic plan to provide monitoring and give feedback on. Four sets of hypotheses indicated below were generated for testing from the conceptual framework.

Financial and Overall Performance

- **Ha$_1$***: There is a signficant association between low financial targets and the overall performance*;

- **Ho$_1$***: There is no signficant association between low financial targets and the overall performance.*

Customer and Overall Performance

- **Ha$_2$***: There is a signficant association between low Customer Satisfcation and the overall performance*;

- **Ho$_2$***: There is no signficant association between low Customer Satisfcation and the eoverall performance.*

Operational efficiency and Overall Performance

- **Ha$_3$***: There is a signficant association between low operational efficiency and the overall performance*;

- **Ho$_3$***: There is no signficant association between low operational efficiency and the overall performance.*

Organizational Capacity and Overall Performance

- **Ha$_4$***: There is a signficant association between low Organizational Capacity and the overall performance*;

- **Ho$_4$***: There is no signficant association between low Organizational Capacity and the overall performance.*

Details of how thestudy was conducted and hypothesis tested are explained in the methodology below.

4. METHODOLOGY

4.1 Research Design

The research design used in the study is that of a quantitative method for generating quantitative data as described in Creswell (2014). The approach was found to appropriate to this study because of its inherent strengths and minimise the weaknesses of qualitative research approaches (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004). It allows the researcher to use inferential statistics to quantify the results of the study as typical of quantitative research. (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004) (Creswell, 2014).

4.2 Study Area

The study was conducted within the Zambia at the Department of National Parks and Wildlife and its regional offices in provincial centres. This is because the Department is large with several offices across the country.

4.3 Study Population

The entire department formed the study population. The department has about 2,130 employees represented in each province of Zambia and 59 partner organisations.

4.4 Sampling and Sample Size

The study targeted the DNPW employees from each section and support unit at its Head Office and in regional offices to represent the population. It was important that information was collected from all the sections so that the results of the study

was more representative of the entire department. Further, information was collected from clients that interacted with the DNPW.

The sample size was determined by using the Slovin's formula as described by Yamane, (1967) in Israel, (2003):

$$n = \frac{N}{1+N(e^2)} \ldots\ldots\ldots\ldots\ldots (1)$$

Where n is the sample size, N is the population and e is the level of precision (Israel, 2003).

Based on 10% precision level, and N=2189 which included 2130 employees and 59 partner organisations, a sample size of 96 was determined. 120 questionnaires were distributed through the department and to some of the clients. According to Israel (2003), a sampling levels of 10%, 5% and 1% are recommended because this level is the probability that the amount of margin of error will include the 'true' percentage or the representation of the target population hence choosing the 10% level in this study. At 10%, non-responsiveness is therefore accommodated.

4.5 Sampling Technique

Availability sampling was used to identify interviewee subjects from each section and from partner organisations. The clients included individual clients such as hunters, outfitters, tour operators and non-governmental organisation that accessed services or interacted with the DNPW in one way or another. Availability sampling technique was used to select the subjects because it was the most practical. It was the most appropriate sampling technique since the study needed to ensure that views from each management level and region was represented. This type of sampling is ideal for this kind study because of the small sample size used and the fact that the researcher needs to collect detailed information to achieve the purpose of the study (Chimtengo, et al., 2017). The other reason is that the operations of DNPW and its partner organisations are mostly conducted in remote areas some of which was not accessible. The other reason was due to COVID -19 restricts were some offices are either closed or working on rotational basis hence availability sampling was the most practical.

4.6 Data Collection Process

The process of data collection started by first testing the questionnaires in order to ensure validity of the research instrument. The piloting was done in the first week before the main study with a small number of respondents in the same department that were part of the sample. Testing the data collection instruments helps to assess and enhance its validity, reliability, practicability of the study (Taherdoost, 2016).

Thereafter, the data collection exercise was undertaken over a period of four weeks in the Department and with clients across the country. Face-to-face or online interviews to administer the questionnaire were used to collect data from senior officers at head office and for stakeholders based outside Lusaka. The researcher recognised the restrictions caused by COVID-19 therefore, respondents were given a choice to administer the questionnaire in person or online.

The questionnaire adapted a 5-point Likert Scale with a nominal scale and ordinal scale to measure the rating (Saunders, et al., 2009). The researcher conducted interviews going from one region to another starting at Head office before to moving regional offices to share self-administered questionnaires with staff based in field based offices. In view of this, data was collected from various categories of sources of information as a triangulation technique to enhance validity and reliability of data.

4.7 Data Analysis

Quantitative data was analysed in Microsoft excel. Chi-square test analysis was used to assess the relationship between the different perspectives (independent variables). For example, customer perspective and the performance measures (dependent variables) as in the conceptual framework. Chi-square test is a nonparametric statistic that measures the strength of association between two variables and to can be used for cross-tabulated table data where both variables are dichotomous. This analysis helped to assess the influence of each identified problem (independent variables) on the overall performance (dependent variable) of the department as envisaged in the working conceptual framework.

5. RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

A total of 120 questionnaires were distributed to employees at the Department of National Parks and Wildlife at Headquarters and Regional offices across the country. The questionnaires were also shared with DNPW's stakeholders that

included 18 non-governmental organisations, 7 Safari outfitters and 3 cooperating partners (multilateral institutions). A total of 106 completed questionnaires were received which was above the targeted minimum of 96, achieving a 88.33% response rate.

Out of the 106 respondents, males comprised 67.8% while females 31.2%. The majority (39%) of the respondents where within the age category of 31-40 years old, followed by 21% in the 41-50 category, then 19% in the 21-30 category. Only 3% were found to be within the 51-60 age group, while less than 1% in the 60+ age group and none were in the 20 and below age group.

53% and 42% of the respondents respectively indicated that they had 'very good' or 'good' knowledge about DNPW. Only one respondent indicated 'very poor' knowledge of the Department. The high level of knowledge about the Department could be attributed to the fact that many of the respondents were either employees (63%) or stakeholders who had interacted frequently with the DNPW for a longtime.

DNPW employees constituted the highest number of respondents largely because they were the most available and easy to access compared to resident hunters, safari outfitters and community partners. Resident hunters and safari outfitters at the time of the data collection were not fully operational due the Covid - 19 travel restrictions that had affected their business operations.

5.1 Evaluation of Overall Performance

The results of the study shows that the overall performance of DNPW in the last five years was just below average. When evaluated against its mandate, the Department's performance was found to be below average in 5 out of 7 of its mandated functions as indicated in Table1 below.

Table 1: Summary of all the Scores on Performance of DNPW against its Mandate

DNPW Functions/Objectives	score	Very Poor	Poor	Average	Good	Very Good	Mean Score	Standard Deviation
		1	2	3	4	5		
Generating Revenue	Frequency	30	31	3	34	8	2.6	1.38
	Percentage	28.3	29.2	2.8	32.1	7.5		
Issuing licenses and Quotas	Frequency	0	22	46	35	3	3.2	0.79
	Percentage	0.0	20.8	43.4	33.0	2.8		
Protecting wildlife	Frequency	13	38	28	22	5	2.1	1.08
	Percentage	12.3	35.8	26.4	20.8	4.7		
Controlling and Managing Habitats	Frequency	8	25	46	27	0	2.9	0.88
	Percentage	7.5	23.6	43.4	25.5	0.0		
Controlling and Managing Wild animal populations	Frequency	4	24	46	26	6	3.1	0.92
	Percentage	3.8	22.6	43.4	24.5	5.7		
Facilitating community Participation	Frequency	7	17	53	25	4	3.0	0.9
	Percentage	6.6	16.0	50.0	23.6	3.8		
Conducting Wildlife Research	Frequency	3	35	42	19	7	2.9	0.94
	Percentage	2.8	33.0	39.6	17.9	6.6		
Overall Performance	Frequency	8	28	47	17	6	2.8	0.82
	Percentage	7.5	26.4	44.3	16.0	5.7		

Source: Field data, 2023

A further analysis using a Two-tailed Z-test was conducted to test the equality of the population mean of responses on performance the employees (sub-sample 1) to that of external stakeholders (sub-sample 2) under the following was the hypothesis:-

Null hypothesis (H_0): *The population mean score on DNPWs' overall performance by employees (μ_1) was equal to that of stakeholders (μ_2).*

Alternate hypothesis (H_1): *The population mean score on DNPWs' overall performance by employees (μ_1) was not equal to that of stakeholders (μ_2).*

The results of the Two-tailed Z-test shown in Table 2 were as follows:-

Table 2: Results of a Z-Test on two sub-samples on overall DNPW's performance

Z-Test: Two Sample for Means		
	Sub-sample 1	Sub-sample 2
Mean	2.895522388	2.794871795
Known Variance	0.701040253	1.377867746
Observations	67	39
Hypothesized Mean Difference	0	
z	0.470344102	
P(Z<=z) one-tail	0.319054597	
z Critical one-tail	1.644853627	
P(Z<=z) two-tail	0.638109194	
z Critical two-tail	1.959963985	

The results indicate that the calculated P value of 0.6381 was larger than the critical value 0.05 used, therefore we failed to reject the null hypotheses and concluded that the population mean score rating of DNPWs performance between employees and stakeholders was the same. Therefore, both employees and stakeholders of the Department were in agreement on the performance of the institution.

The 5 areas were DNPW did not perform well included generating revenue, protecting wildlife, lssueing of licenses and quotas, controlling and managing habitats and in conducting research. Ironically, amougst the 5, the Department's worst performance was in the area of protecting wildlife which was its main funtion. DNPW's best perfomance of average was in 'faciliating commuity participation in wildlife management' and in 'controlling and managing wild animal populations'.

One of the findings of the study as a solution, was the need to set a goal that was both business and conservation oriented as opposed to conservation focused only. For an organisation that comprised nine different business units each with a specific function, its failure to have a single set goal meant that they did not work as a whole according to the 'System Theory' which could explain the below average performance. Therefore, setting a single goal that is both business and conservation oriented will allow the different units within the Department to work together as a whole.

5.2 Identification of Problem Factors, their effect on Organisational performance and possible Solutions

The study further identified problem factors that affected DNPW's performance using the Balance Scorecard framework and are presented below under each perspective.

5.2.1 Financial Perspective

From the financial perspective, the study revealed that the major factor identified by 78% of the respondents was the 'lack of innovation in raising revenue' by DNPW. The Department's revenue streams were mostly traditional park entry, animal and concession fees only. The second factor identified was the 'lack of capacity to collect revenue' from existing revenue streams. The third factor within financial perspective was the 'setting of very low annual revenue targets. A test on influence of financial perspective represented by the low financial targets on performance was tested using the hypothesis below:-

Ha₁: *There is a signficant association between low financial targets and overall performance*;

Ho₁: *There is no signficant association between low financial targets and overall performance.*

The correlation analysis revealed that setting of very low annual revenue targets had a significance effect on the overall performance on the Department (Chi-Square of 64.85, p-value =0.0000027 at significance level =0.005). DNPW's annual financial records indicate the revenue target since 2016 of K95-110 million was set below the organisational total operational expenditure of over K200 million per annum. Applying Locke's Goal-setting theory described by Salaman *et al* 2005, which states that setting of specific and challenging goals with appropriate feedback contributes to improved performance, the lack of a challenging revenue target can be said to have contributed to the below average performance of the Department.

These results also implies that the Department was not utilising its full potential to generate the kind of revenue that it potentially can generate if it was innovative enough and set its target much higher. This seems to be a common problem among public institutions as seen in Masiati, (2015), Mariwa, (2015) and Komba, (2018). The implication of this is that the Department will always have to rely on government to subsidise its operations making it more unlikely for it to improve its performance in implementing its mandate. If seen from the optimist's point of view, the implication of these results are that the weakness of the Department from the financial perspective have been identified thus can be cured. As explained by Chetty (2019), employees find motivation and willingness to work towards the attainment of a set goal. Therefore, the Department needed to set annual financial goals that were above its operational cost of K200 million per annum to motivate employee performance.

5.2.2 Customer Perspective

With regards to customer perspective, 'poor corporate image' was considered by most (51.9%) respondents as the major factor contributing to the Department's poor organisational performance. It can be explained from the study results that the poor corporate image and customer satisfaction were themselves negatively affected by three things namely the bureaucratic and complicated licensing system, the absence of well-developed tourist facilities and suspicions of corruption. Further investigations conducted by testing the hypothesis:-

Ha$_2$: *There is a signficant association between low Customer Satisfcation and over the overall performance*;

Ho$_2$: *There is no signficant association between low Customer Satisfcation and over the overall performance.*

The study showed a strong association (calculated Chi-value of 47.36 is greater than the critical Chi-Square value of 9.488) between low customer satisfaction and overall performance. This result confirmed that low customer satisfaction had a significant effect on the overall performance of the Department. However, as explained by Van de Walle (2018) and Richard Boyle (2020), customer satisfaction alone cannot account for organizational performance in public services as it requires blending customer expectations, experiences, values and prior attitudes.

Nonetheless, these results have helped to show that the Department's below average performance can partly be explained by its poor cooperate image and low customer satisfaction. If not cured, the DNPW will not be able to attract adequate number of tourists, subsequently it will fail to generate adequate revenue to support its operations. If it fails to support its operations, the Department will not be able to perform its other functions of protecting wildlife, controlling and managing habitats and wildlife populations, facilitating community participation in conservation well as conducting research.

To address the problem of low customer satisfaction, the study identified solutions that could be considered very suitable. For instance, shortening the processing time for licenses as identified by most respondents would be critical to improving customer satisfaction as well as the Department's corporate image. The second solution to low customer satisfaction identified was that of 'Developing and implementing a quality management system'. The third solution identified 'Developing and implementing a communication strategy' asna solution related to the problem of 'poor corporate image'. Improving communication should not only be with external stakeholders but with employees as well. Improving communication with employees can result into improved performance according to Elton Mayo's Human Relations Theory which stated that employees are more motivated by social factors such as personal attention than external factors such as enumeration.

5.2.3 Internal Processes Perspective

Using the Balance Scorecard model, four issues related to operation efficient were identified as 'Poor enforcement of General Management Plans' (69.23%), 'Director's limited authority' (65.4%), 'Licensing processes are too bureaucratic' (52.8%) and 'Inadequate internal controls on issuance of land in GMAs'(50%). Both the lack of strategies to ensure enforcement of General Management Plans and the lack of internal controls on issuance of land in GMAs' directly affected the implementation of the Department's function of 'controlling and managing habitats' hence a below average performance was recorded in this area. Equally, the lack of strategies to implement an efficient license processes system was found not only to affect operational efficiency, but contributed to poor cooperate image and suspicions of corruption as described under customer perspective.

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The following hypothesis was tested to examine the relationship between low operational efficiency and the overall performance for DNPW.

Ha₃: *There is a signficant association between low operational efficiency and the overall performance*;

Ho₃: *There is no signficant association between low operational efficiency and the overall performance.*

The calculated value of 74.09 (df=4,N=106, p<0.05) was greater than the critical Chi-Square value of 9.488, thus there was strong evidence to reject the null hypothesis (Ho₃). Therefore, it was infered that there was a significant association between 'poor Operational efficiency' and 'overall performance'**.** The effect of the lack of strategies to implement internal processes was statiscally proven by the result showing a significant association between the poor operational efficiency and poor overall performance of the Department. Peronja (2017) explains that studies have found a strong correlation between organisational performance and Internal Business Process. Gieske, *et al* (2020) has also explained that Internal Business Processes help to define the form and type of organization thus giving it a significant competitive advantage. The results therefore suggested leadership problems in both decision-making and implementation of plans probably emanating from structural problems in the design of the Department and its processes. It means that the problem of inefeciency in performance could be as a result of the way the Department was set up. The head of the institution and the processes used were not set up to react swiftly to the demands of the Department's clients or to fulfilling its manadate as a conservation organisation. Some of these processes are inherent government bearucratic proceses not specific to the Department alone but had to be followed and so there was very little that management at DNPW can do.

However, a few processes such as issueing of some licenses and giving feedback were still within the relm of the Department's control. The implication of this resuls is that internal processes are a major contributor to the Department's below average perfomance and so if no changes at structural and operational level are made, DNPW will continue to under perform. Gieske, et al (2020)'s advise that the concept Business Process Management (BPM) can be used to improve the entire range of organizational activities and Peronja (2017) also reviewed that process-oriented organizations achieved better non-financial performances. DNPW will need to improve its processing systems if it had to improve its organisational performance.

The idenitfied solution of 'Reviewing the Zambia Wildlife Act to increase Director's power on operation decisions' was seen as the best option to improving operational efficiency. As indicated earlier, the Department's Director had no power to issue licenses but this was done through a committee which lengthened the processing time thereby causing dissatifaction among clients. A decentralised decision-making process can enhance organizational effectiveness. Better performance is produced from an organizational structure only if it improves its ability to make and execute key decisions in a better and quicker manner than its competitors (Awadallah & Allam, 2015). The study also identified 'implementing a result-based performance management system' to address problems relatated to licensing and implementation of General Management Plans. A result-based performance management system such as the Balance Scorecard will be critical to improving the performance of employees at the Department. Agbanu *et al* (2016) suggests that organisations that implemnt proper performance measures can avoid failures of meeting customer expectations.

5.2.4 Organisational Capacity Perspective

Further, the use of the BSC model revealed problems related to organisational capacity and learning perspective. Mainly two factors were identified namely, inadequate manpower and poor working conditions for Wildlife Police Officers who formed the majority of the workforce at DNPW. This explains the recorded dismal organisational performance in executing the mandate on protecting animals which was mostly done by the Wildlife Police Officers. The low capacity of the Department to implement its functions was mainly attributed to low staff numbers. The study showed that the low capacity significantly affected the overall performance of Department. The following hypothesis was tested.

Ha₄: *There is a signficant association between low Organizational Capacity and the overall performance*.

Ho₄: *There is no signficant association between low Organizational Capacity and the overall performance.*

The Results of a test of independence comparing low organizational capacity with the overall performance revealed a statistically significant association between the independent and dependent variables (Chi square 146.85, df=4,N=106, p<0.05).

The study indicated that low numbers of employees and lack of motivation among Wildlife Police Officers were the main factors leading to below average performance. Issues of levels of skills and lack of recognition as a security organisation were not seen to have much effect on DNPW's capacity to perform, implying that all the Department needed to do to improve its capacity to perform was to increase the number of employees to the recommended levels.

The study (77.8%) revealed that doubling the number of employees would be the best solution to increasing the Department's capacity to implement its mandate function of protecting wildlife. Further, a large number of respondents (85.2%) agreed that in order to improve its capacity to implement its functions, DNPW needed to be officially recognised by government has a security service. This correlated with the proposed solution of increasing the Director's decision-making powers. For an organization to have a good performance, the challenge is to structure the organization in such a way that its managers can make decisions which are better and more innovative (Awadallah & Allam, 2015). Hence transforming the Department into a security service was seen as the best solution to better decision making leading to better organisational performance.

The other solutions selected by most respondents were 'Developing and implementing a result-based performance management system and a 'quality management system'. These two solutions are critical to enhancing the capacity of the Department to provide high quality services and products to its clients. According to Crosnan (2003) who explained Chris Argyris and Donald Schon's Theory of Organisational as a learning systems which is about 'detecting and correcting error'. This theory posits that institutions are organised into subsystems (units) that can only function smoothly and efficiently if the units are working smoothly and efficiently within themselves and with each other. Implementing a result-based performance and a quality management system will help the Department to achieve efficiency in its operations through learning and behaviour change.

6. CONCLUSION

Overall, the study showed organisational performance of DNPW as average to below average. DNPW's performance was found to be ineffective in executing its functions in protecting wildlife, controlling and managing habitats, issuing of licenses and quotas, conducting research and in generating of revenue. Its best performance was in facilitating community participation in wildlife management and in managing wildlife populations. Dryly, DNPW's worst performance was in protecting of wildlife, its core function.

Financial related problem factors that influenced the overall performance was 'setting of low revenue targets', 'lack of innovation' and 'loss of revenue through leakages'. With regards to customer perspective, the study was able to identify 'low customer satisfaction' and 'poor corporate image' as the major problems that influenced the observed below average organisational performance.

The Department was found to be operationally inefficient due to poorly structured decision-making processes were the head of the Department did not have the necessary powers to make operational decisions. Additionally, the licensing process was found to be too lengthy and complicated thereby contributing to dissatisfaction among the Department's clients and stakeholders.

DNPW lacked adequate capacity to implement its functions owing to low manpower and the inadequate decision making power of its Director. Low capacity significantly contributed to the poor overall performance of the Department. It was established that in order to improve the overall performance of the Department, there was need to set an overall goal that was focused on both the financial and conservation aspects for the Department to operate as a whole when implementing its strategic objectives.

Improving its internal processes in issuances of licenses as well as improving communication with stakeholders was identified as solutions to achieving high customer satisfaction while reducing suspicions on corruption.

Classifying the Department as a security service would increase the Director's powers to make and implement operational decisions quickly.

Therefore, it can be said that this study demonstrated that the Balance Scorecard can effectively be used in evaluating the performance of public institution even if that organisation did not have a strategic plan.

7. LIMITATIONS OF STUDY

While the study was able to identify problem factors that affected the overall performance of the Department, it did not go into detail to examine the root causes of those problems.

Secondly the study did not exam the causal relationship between independent variables (problem factors) to establish the effect of the identified problems or on the suggested solutions.

Thirdly, the study did not use numerical data but only ordinal data from the 5 point Likert's scale thus had limited options in statistical and financial analysis which would have strengthened the findings of the study.

Lastly, the study did not capture views from members of the general public because data collection was done at the height of the COVID 19 pandemic. Data was only collected from a small sample of employees and a few key stakeholders that had direct interactions with the Department, thus the results may not be easily generalised.

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