

INFLUENCE OF MANAGEMENT COMMITMENT ON THE PERFORMANCE OF KENYA CIVIL AVIATION AUTHORITY IN NAIROBI CITY COUNTY, KENYA

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Abstract: The Kenya's aviation sector has encountered a number of obstacles which has it establish systems and procedures that promote effective governance and administration. However, the organization faces several challenges that have prevented it from achieving its desired goals and objectives. Therefore, this study investigated the influence of management commitment on the performance of Kenya Civil Aviation Authority in Nairobi City County, Kenya. This research employed an explanatory research design. The focus of the study was the Kenya Civil Aviation Authority. The target population comprised 173 individuals, which included senior executives, middle management, and junior operational staff at the Kenya Civil Aviation Authority headquarters. In this particular research, participants were classified based on their affiliations with different firms. The sample size consisted of 120 respondents. Primary data was collected using a semi-structured questionnaire. Additionally, the study involved 19 participants in a preliminary investigation carried out at the Kenya Airports Authority. A validation test for both construct and content was conducted to assess the validity of the questionnaire. The reliability of the instrument was evaluated through internal consistency using Cronbach's alpha. Descriptive statistics were utilized to analyze quantitative data. Inferential statistics, including correlation analysis and regression analysis methods, were employed to ascertain the relationship between variables. Data was gathered through surveys and examined using basic statistics such as mean and variance. Tables were used to present the findings derived from the quantitative data. The study demonstrated a significant positive impact of management commitment on performance. It concludes that a committed management team ensures that the Kenya Civil Aviation Authority adheres to international safety standards and regulations, thereby reducing the likelihood of accidents and incidents. Furthermore, the study recommends that the organization should conduct regular training workshops for management to enhance their leadership skills, focusing on strategic planning, decision-making, and performance management.

Keywords: Management commitment, Organizational Capability, performance.

1. INTRODUCTION

The performance of the firm is critically significant, especially considering the environmental challenges it faces. Additionally, the operational performance of an organization acts as a measure of its ability to achieve its strategic goals (Cania, 2018). Bin-Nashwan, Abdullah, and Obaid (2022) argue that organizations with robust capabilities are better equipped to react to external pressures, improve their opportunities, and overcome obstacles, which ultimately results in improved performance and increased competitiveness. Therefore, enhancing organizational capacity can lead to greater effectiveness and long-lasting sustainable success for these entities.

Rehman, Mohamed, and Ayoup (2019) argue that a strong organizational capacity greatly enhances a firm's ability to plan, implement, and evaluate its initiatives, leading to improved performance results. Organizations that possess skilled personnel, efficient processes, and sufficient financial resources are more likely to achieve their strategic objectives.

Hindasah and Nuryakin (2020) highlight that organizational capability has a significant impact on decision-making, innovation, and adaptability, enabling organizations to successfully manage external changes and challenges, which ultimately leads to better performance indicators.

The aviation industry occupies a vital role in the economic structure of Pakistan, significantly promoting improvements in transportation and communication systems. Since the deregulation of civil aviation, there has been a remarkable growth in domestic air travel, marked by an increase in fleet size and passenger numbers, thus improving access to remote areas (Saleem, Zahra & Yaseen, 2021). However, Qasim (2023) argues that although deregulation has led to lower fare prices, it has also resulted in a deterioration of service quality. In spite of the rise in passenger traffic, new market entrants face financial challenges, leading to economic losses and bankruptcies. Therefore, it is essential for Pakistani airlines to adopt innovative strategies and enhance their service offerings and operational efficiencies.

The aviation sector in Nigeria plays a crucial role in the socio-economic advancement of the country, accounting for roughly 0.14% of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in 2019. In spite of the various benefits it presents—such as boosting trade, tourism, innovation, and job creation—the sector is still considerably underdeveloped when compared to its peers in other African countries. Al-Kwif, Frankwick, and Ahmed (2020) highlight that while Africa has more than 800 airports, only a small fraction offers regular scheduled flights, and many intra-African routes are poorly serviced. This issue is further aggravated by the presence of landlocked nations, which limits the sector's growth potential despite the continent's large population.

Numerous organizations operating within the Kenyan context face considerable challenges in effectively executing their strategic frameworks, raising national concerns. The aviation sector has been particularly affected, experiencing a notable drop in passenger traffic from 14.7% to 11.3% between 2017 and 2020 (Odula & Chege, 2023). Once envisioned as the leading aviation hub in Africa, Kenya is now struggling against competitive pressures, as indicated by a decrease in cargo volumes from 17.2% to 9.4% and a decline in service quality from 19.3% to 11.9% by 2021 (KCAA Report, 2021). Moreover, the sector is contending with a variety of implementation challenges that jeopardize the sustainability of airlines, influenced by factors such as intense competition, high operational costs, changing consumer preferences, regulatory complexities, technological barriers, security risks, political instability, human resource limitations, and reduced demand (Njoroge & Maina, 2021). In response to these challenges, the Kenyan aviation industry has adopted survival strategies, which encompass product differentiation, financial restructuring, and cost-cutting measures (Farah, Munga, & Mbebe, 2018). However, airlines continue to encounter significant hurdles related to poorly executed boarding procedures, which negatively impact overall performance (Mungai and Bula, 2018).

The firm's performance is gauged by its ability to successfully reach its goals and objectives. This covers elements like productivity, efficiency, profitability, customer satisfaction, employee engagement, and overall success in the market (Owen, Mundy, Guild & Guild, 2021). Ajila and Abiola (2023) suggest that Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) are commonly used to assess different aspects of organizational operations and results in order to gauge organizational performance. Hence, by concentrating on enhancing organizational performance, businesses can boost their competitiveness, stimulate growth, and attain lasting success.

Organizational capabilities related to organizational knowledge entail the effective utilization of resources to achieve specific goals, thereby enhancing an organization's ability to complete tasks and increase productivity (Kabirlyants, Obeidat, Alshurideh & Masadeh 2021). To achieve effective corporate performance, it is essential to have strong organizational efficiency, advancements in technology, and a proactive approach to managing the constantly changing external environment. Rehman et al. (2019) describe organizational capabilities as the ability of an organization to improve performance through the effective use of both tangible and intangible resources. These capabilities encompass operational components, stakeholder relations, and strategic management. In a similar vein, Trivellato, Martini, and Cavenago (2021) observed that organizations do not inherently possess capabilities; instead, they concentrate on developing them when they recognize that doing so is more advantageous than merely addressing immediate concerns. Therefore, internal factors such as organizational structure and managerial decisions are pivotal in shaping an organization's capabilities. It is imperative to reassess and reorganize skills, assets, and capabilities to respond effectively to the dynamic nature of the current environment.

Đorđević and Milanovic (2020) indicate that the commitment from the management of the firm is key to achieving success because when senior leadership is fully dedicated to the organization's goals and objectives, it serves as a positive model for employees to emulate which fosters a culture of responsibility and commitment within the organization, resulting in

improved productivity and overall success. According to Nasomboon (2022), if management is dedicated to assisting and enhancing their employees, it leads to a workforce that is more engaged and motivated, resulting in enhanced organizational performance. In general, the degree of dedication exhibited by leaders has a direct influence on the prosperity and efficiency of a company.

The Kenya Civil Aviation Authority (KCAA) is government entity that is mandated to oversight the Country's civil aviation. It's role is to ensure that air travel within the country is safe and efficient, as well as regulating aviation activities to meet international standards. Its headquarters in Nairobi City County is where key decisions and policies are made to promote the growth and development of the sector. KCAA is tasked with the responsibility of ensuring the safe and efficient operation of civil aviation activities within the country which involves carrying out airline inspections and auditing and other facilities to make sure that they comply with the set safety guidelines and standards. The KCAA also issues licenses and certificates to aviation staff including the pilot, air traffic controllers and engineers maintaining the aircraft to ensure that they have the required qualifications and training standards. Additionally, the KCAA works closely with international aviation bodies to ensure that Kenya's aviation industry meets global safety and security standards.

2. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Organizations within aviation sector often face numerous challenges such as regulatory challenges, the aviation industry often operate with limited budgets, subject to political interference and challenges related to outdated or inadequate infrastructure (Cherop, 2019). Sylva and Amah (2021) observe that some of the key challenges faced by the aviation sector in terms of organizational capability include shortage of skilled workers in the aviation industry, particularly in areas such as air traffic control, maintenance, and pilot training, the aviation industry is heavily regulated, with strict safety and security requirements that must be adhered to and that the aviation industry is highly competitive, with airlines and airports competing for passengers and routes. Therefore, addressing these challenges and enhancing organizational capability in the aviation sector is very important maintaining the continuity and sustainability of public sector organizations within the industry.

The Kenya Civil Aviation Authority (KCAA) faces significant challenges in ensuring safe and efficient air travel. Key issues include safety compliance, where lapses in adherence to regulations can lead to accidents and loss of public trust, necessitating a strong monitoring framework for airlines and service providers. Additionally, the KCAA contends with intense competition from low-cost carriers, pressuring traditional airlines to lower fares and improve service quality. This competitive landscape complicates the KCAA's role in maintaining safety and service standards. Operational inefficiencies, stemming from outdated processes and inadequate technology, further hinder the KCAA's effectiveness, resulting in service delays and increased costs. To address these challenges, the KCAA must enhance process management, streamline operations, and leverage technology, such as advanced data analytics, to improve efficiency.

Statistical data indicates that the Kenya Civil Aviation Authority in Nairobi City County, Kenya has been underperforming in various key areas. This includes issues such as delays in flight schedules, lack of proper maintenance of airport facilities, and inadequate safety measures in place. The data also shows a decrease in the number of flights operating out of Nairobi, which has had a negative impact on the local economy and tourism industry. Furthermore, the statistics reveal that the Kenya Civil Aviation Authority has been struggling to meet international standards and regulations which raise questions on how safe and secure the staff and passengers are. This underperformance has also affected the reputation of Nairobi as a major aviation hub in East Africa. Efforts are being made to address these issues and improve the performance of the Kenya Civil Aviation Authority, including implementing new safety protocols, investing in infrastructure upgrades, and enhancing training programs for staff. However, it is clear that more work needs to be done to bring the authority up to par with international standards and ensure the smooth operation of air travel in Nairobi City County (KCAA, 2023).

3. LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical Literature Review

Balance Scorecard Model

The Balanced Scorecard Model developed by Kaplan and Norton (1996), is a tool for management of organizational strategies designed to facilitate the measurement and management of organizational performance in a balanced and comprehensive manner. The model provide an organized way in an organization can align their objectives, measures, targets, and other strategies that cut different perspectives, including financial, customer, internal processes, and learning

and growth. According to Kaplan and Norton (1996), this model is capable to provide organizations with a holistic perspective on their performance. By incorporating multiple viewpoints, organizations can sidestep the limitations of focusing exclusively on financial metrics, which may not fully encapsulate the complexity of their performance. The Balanced Scorecard Model empowers organizations to evaluate their performance from diverse angles, thereby ensuring that critical aspects of their operations are not overlooked.

Burtseva and Chausow (2018) have noted that the balanced scorecard model gives organizations an opportunity to transform their strategic plans into operational objectives and metrics. It offers a structured approach to establishing targets and monitoring progress towards strategic objectives. Bostan and Grosu (2021) further suggest that the balanced scorecard model enhances communication and alignment within the organization. Consequently, by providing a shared language and framework for performance measurement, the balanced scorecard model aids in fostering communication and comprehension across various departments and hierarchical levels within the organization.

This model holds significant relevance to the research because it can be used to assess the performance of KCAA in across multiple perspectives, including financial, customer, internal processes, and learning and growth. By implementing the balanced scorecard, KCAA can align its operational activities with its strategic objectives. In the aviation sector, customer satisfaction is paramount. The balanced scorecard encourages a culture of continuous improvement within KCAA.

Empirical Literature Review

Research conducted by Sirma, Misoi, and Omillo (2019) investigated the impact of top management support on the operational performance of commercial banks in Nandi County, Kenya. Employing an ex-post facto research strategy, the study focused on 177 employees from regional banks, choosing a sample of 123 via simple random sampling. Information was gathered through a survey. Findings indicated that support from top management was prevalent, demonstrated by the regular implementation of Quality Management Systems (QMS) enabled through effective communication and frequent evaluations. Correlation analysis showed a noteworthy positive association ($p < 0.05$) between management backing and operational performance. Nonetheless, the ex-post facto design poses a methodological constraint.

Lowalan, Mutiiria, and Gichunge (2023) performed a study to evaluate the impact of top management commitment on the performance of the supply chain in Turkana County Government. A descriptive research methodology was employed, focusing on a population of 137 individuals, which comprised 10 Chief Officers, 18 County Public Service Board members, 41 County Executive Committee members, and 52 Directors. The final sample comprised 102 participants, with data gathered through a structured questionnaire. Descriptive statistics examined the survey data, while regression and correlation analyses evaluated the hypotheses. The research revealed a notable positive relationship between the commitment of top management and the efficiency of the supply chain in Turkana County, although these findings are particular to this setting.

Zekeri, Rahman, and Abubakar (2023) performed research to assess top management's dedication to the performance of specific restaurants in Ilorin, Nigeria. They employed a cross-sectional survey method and simple random sampling to choose six registered dining establishments. The research utilized both descriptive and inferential statistical methods, testing hypotheses via regression analysis with PLs4 software. The findings indicated a strong relationship between management commitment and restaurant performance. Nevertheless, the cross-sectional approach might present a methodological gap.

4. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research employed an explanatory research design. The focus of the study was the Kenya Civil Aviation Authority. The target population comprised 173 individuals, which included senior executives, middle management, and junior operational staff at the KCAA headquarters. In this particular research, participants were classified based on their affiliations with different firms. The sample size consisted of 120 respondents. Primary data was collected using a semi-structured questionnaire. Additionally, the study involved 19 participants in a preliminary investigation carried out at the Kenya Airports Authority. A validation test for both construct and content was conducted to assess the validity of the questionnaire. The reliability of the instrument was evaluated through internal consistency using Cronbach's alpha. Descriptive statistics were utilized to analyze quantitative data. Inferential statistics, including correlation analysis and regression analysis methods, were employed to ascertain the relationship between variables. Data was gathered through surveys and examined using basic statistics such as mean and variance. Tables were used to present the findings derived from the quantitative data.

5. FINDINGS

The descriptive statistics results on management commitment are presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Management Commitment

Statement	M	SD
Planning allow organizations foresee events that are most probable and to prepare accordingly.	4.11	0.89
Effective learning equips leaders with the necessary roadmap to align the organization's functional activities with the achievement of established goals.	4.67	0.33
An organized structure enhances business efficiency and contributes to the reduction of waste.	4.24	0.76
An organized structure aligns the individual goals of employees with the overarching objectives of the firm.	4.59	0.41
Employee motivation significantly influences the quality of work and enhances performance within an organization.	4.51	0.49
An increase in motivation results in improved performance and efficiency, thereby making employees more satisfied with their current position and the organization as a whole.	4.53	0.47
Overall score	4.44	0.56

Source: Research Data (2025)

The statements strongly agreed were; effective learning equips leaders with the necessary roadmap to align the organization's functional activities with the achievement of established goals ($M=4.67$, $SD=0.33$), an organized structure aligns the individual goals of employees with the overarching objectives of the firm ($M=4.59$, $SD=0.41$), employee motivation significantly influences the quality of work and enhances performance within an organization ($M=4.51$, $SD=0.49$), an increase in motivation results in improved performance and efficiency, thereby making employees more satisfied with their current position and the organization as a whole ($M=4.53$, $SD=0.47$). The findings underscore the critical role of effective learning, goal alignment, and employee motivation in driving organizational success. The finding agrees with Đorđević and Milanovic (2020) research that advocates for a holistic approach to leadership and management, emphasizing the interconnectedness of employee engagement, motivation, and organizational effectiveness.

The respondents agreed that; planning enables organizations to foresee events that are most probable and to prepare accordingly ($M=4.11$, $SD=0.89$) and an organized structure enhances business efficiency and contributes to the reduction of waste ($M=4.24$, $SD=0.76$). Generally, the finding implies that effective planning and a well-structured organization are integral to enhancing operational efficiency and minimizing waste. These results align with Nasomboon (2022), research that observe that strategic foresight and organizational design are critical in achieving optimal performance.

The finding also indicate that there was a general agreement from the respondents on all the statements regarding the commitment of KCAA management and its performance ($M=4.44$, $SD=0.56$). The result shows the significance of management commitment as a key driver of organizational performance within the Kenya Civil Aviation Authority, suggesting that continued focus on this area could yield substantial benefits for the organization and its stakeholders. This finding aligns with Sirma, Misoi, and Omillo (2019), research observation that when management is actively engaged and committed to their organization's goals enables the employees to be accountable and motivated.

The study sought responses from the respondents on how the commitment of KCAA's management had influenced its performance. The responses given are provided as follows;

'The way the KCAA management was dedicated had improved effectiveness of the organization. Nurturing the way employees were accountable and excellent, management drives improvements in various operational processes, leading to better service delivery and compliance with aviation standards. The dedicated leadership inspires staff, promote teamwork, and facilitate the implementation of strategic initiatives that align with the authority's goals, ultimately leading to the growth and development of the sector.

Regression Analysis Results**Table 2: Model Summary**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.869	.755	.719	1.0524

Source: Research Data (2025)

The results indicate and R value of 0.869 which imply the variables are positively related. This implies that performance is likely to be improved by increased by management commitment. The model's strength is further supported by R square (adjusted) value of 0.719 (71.9%), indicating that even after controlling for the predictor variable, a sizable amount of performance variance is still explained. This indicates that 28.1% is explained by other relevant variables that were not examined. Reliability is indicated by the estimate's standard error of 1.0524, which indicates that the model's forecasts and real values are approximately aligned

Table 3: Regression Coefficients

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	0.608	0.315		1.930	0.003
	Management commitment	0.759	0.229	0.0321	3.314	0.002

Source: Research Data (2025)

It was observed that the KCAA has a performance level of 0.608, assuming no changes in management commitment. This suggests significant areas for improvement, as the current framework is insufficient for higher performance. The regression coefficients also indicate that an improvement on management commitment would improve the performance of KCAA by 0.759 leading to the following regression equation.

$$\text{Performance} = 0.608 + 0.759(\text{management commitment})$$

The findings indicate that management commitment significantly influences the performance of KCAA, with a beta coefficient of ($\beta=0.0321$), $t=3.314$, and $p=0.002$ suggesting a positive relationship, where increased management commitment correlates with improved performance. The finding agree with Zekeri, Rahman, and Abubakar (2023) research observation that enhancing management practices to foster commitment is essential for improving operational efficiency and service delivery within the aviation sector.

6. CONCLUSIONS

The study concludes that a dedicated management team guarantees the KCAA complies with global safety standards and regulations, minimizing the likelihood of accidents and incidents. Efficient management guarantees that resources are distributed effectively, reducing waste and enhancing productivity. Management can establish systems to gather and act on customer feedback, leading to continuous improvement in services offered. A commitment to operational effectiveness often includes investing in staff training and development, resulting in a workforce that is more skilled and knowledgeable.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

The organization ought to conduct frequent training sessions for management to improve their leadership abilities, emphasizing strategic planning and decision-making, and performance management. Implement a structured performance review process that holds management accountable for achieving targets, encouraging a results-oriented culture. Foster open lines of communication with stakeholders, including government agencies, airlines, and the public, to gather feedback and build trust. Allocate resources for modernizing technology and infrastructure, which can enhance operational efficiency and service delivery.

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