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Strategy Implementation Practices and Performance of National
Referral Hospitals in Kenya



Strategy Implementation Practices and Performance of National Referral Hospitals in Kenya

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: The health sector is integral to society's well-being, addressing both acute and chronic conditions, advancing medical innovations, and responding to public health challenges like epidemics and health disparities. The general objective of the study is to examine the influence of strategy implementation practices on performance of National Referral Hospitals in Kenya. Specifically, the study sought to assess the influence of top management commitment on performance of National Referral Hospitals in Kenya and to explore the influence of individual commitment on performance of National Referral Hospitals in Kenya.

Methodology: This study used a descriptive research design. The target population was 627 management and non-management employees working in the five public national referral hospitals in Kenya. This study used stratified random sampling technique to select 244 respondents from the target population. The study's primary data was obtained using structured questionnaires. The pretesting sample was made of 24 respondents, representing 10% of the sample size. Quantitative data was generated from the closed-ended questionnaire. Inferential and descriptive statistics were employed for analysis of quantitative data with the assistance of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS version 25).

Findings: The study found that top management commitment has a positive and significant effect on performance of National Referral Hospitals in Kenya. In addition, the study found that individual commitment has a positive and significant effect on performance of National Referral Hospitals in Kenya.

Unique Contribution to Theory, Practice and Policy: Based on the findings, the study recommends that National Referral Hospitals in Kenya should institutionalize visible and sustained commitment to performance improvement by actively championing strategic initiatives, allocating adequate financial and human resources, and consistently monitoring outcomes through clear accountability frameworks.

Key Words: *Strategy Implementation Practices, Top Management Commitment, Individual Commitment, National Referral Hospitals*

Background of the Study

The health sector encompasses a broad range of services, professionals, and organizations dedicated to promoting, maintaining, and restoring health. It includes hospitals, clinics, medical practitioners, public health agencies, pharmaceuticals, and various other entities that work together to provide medical care, disease prevention, health education, and research (Ibrahim, *et al*, 2022). The sector is integral to society's well-being, addressing both acute and chronic conditions, advancing medical innovations, and responding to public health challenges like epidemics and health disparities (Iqbal, Gul & Ullah, 2022). It operates on local, national, and global levels, and its effectiveness hinges on the collaboration of healthcare workers, government policies, and the private sector, all aiming to improve overall health outcomes. National Referral Hospitals are specialized medical institutions that provide advanced healthcare services and treatment for complex or rare medical conditions that cannot be adequately addressed at regional or district-level healthcare facilities (Noranarttakun & Pharino, 2021).

National Referral Hospitals play a pivotal role in a country's healthcare system, functioning as the highest level of medical care within the national hierarchy. These hospitals provide specialized and advanced healthcare services that regional or district hospitals are typically not equipped to handle (Genc, 2023). They are designed to treat complex, serious, or rare medical conditions that require highly skilled medical professionals, advanced diagnostic tools, and state-of-the-art treatment options. As a result, National Referral Hospitals often become the last line of defense for patients facing life-threatening or intricate health issues. National Referral Hospitals are central to medical research and education (Piórkowska & Ryńca, 2020). They serve as hubs for medical innovation, where the latest treatments, technologies, and clinical practices are tested and implemented. In this capacity, they contribute to the advancement of healthcare knowledge, enabling the development of new therapies and improving overall health outcomes (Ali, Senaji & Awino, 2022). These hospitals also function as training centers for healthcare professionals, including doctors, nurses, and specialists, helping to build a skilled workforce capable of addressing a wide range of health challenges (Nuwagaba, *et al*, 2023).

Furthermore, National Referral Hospitals often serve as crucial support systems for lower-tier healthcare facilities. Regional and district hospitals frequently refer complex cases to these specialized institutions, ensuring that patients receive the appropriate level of care (Ahmed, 2025). This referral system helps alleviate the burden on smaller healthcare centers, enabling them to focus on more routine cases while ensuring that patients with advanced medical needs have access to expert care. In this way, National Referral Hospitals not only provide essential healthcare services but also contribute to the overall efficiency and effectiveness of the national health system (Ntakirutimana & Gitahi, 2023).

Strategy implementation practices refer to the processes and actions taken to turn a company's strategic plans into reality. These practices encompass a wide range of activities, including

setting clear goals, allocating resources effectively, and aligning the organization's structure and culture with the strategy (Gasela, 2021). Effective implementation involves strong leadership to guide the organization through change, as well as clear communication to ensure that all employees understand their roles in achieving strategic objectives. It also requires ongoing monitoring and evaluation to track progress, identify potential obstacles, and make necessary adjustments (Munala & Mwasiagi, 2023).

Top management commitment is crucial for the successful implementation of any strategy. When senior leaders actively support and endorse the strategy, it signals its importance to the entire organization (Diis & Kiiru, 2024). Their commitment involves allocating the necessary resources, setting a clear vision, and providing the leadership needed to drive the strategy forward. Top management's involvement ensures that the strategy remains a priority, even in the face of challenges (Makena & Rukia, 2022). Individual commitment from employees at all levels is essential for the success of the strategy. When individuals are motivated and understand how their work aligns with the broader objectives, they are more likely to take ownership of their responsibilities and contribute meaningfully (Muthuka, *et al*, 2024). This study sought to examine the influence of strategy implementation practices on performance of National Referral Hospitals in Kenya.

Kenya's National Referral Hospitals play a critical role in the country's healthcare system, providing specialized medical care, serving as teaching institutions, and conducting advanced research. These hospitals are strategically positioned to cater to the medical needs of the entire country, especially those requiring tertiary and specialized care (Munala & Mwasiagi, 2023). Kenyatta National Hospital, located in Nairobi, is Kenya's oldest and largest referral hospital. Established in 1901, KNH is the country's premier healthcare facility and serves as the national referral for specialized medical care in a wide range of disciplines, including surgery, cardiology, neurology, oncology, and pediatrics (Diis & Kiiru, 2024). The hospital has a significant role in providing tertiary care for patients from across the country and even neighboring regions, handling complex medical cases that cannot be managed at lower-tier health facilities. KNH also functions as a teaching hospital for medical students from the University of Nairobi's School of Medicine and other institutions, contributing to the training of future healthcare professionals (Makena & Rukia, 2022).

Mathari National Teaching and Referral Hospital, located in Nairobi, is Kenya's primary mental health referral hospital. It specializes in the treatment of mental health disorders and provides psychiatric care to patients from across the country (Karenye & Elishiba, 2020). Originally established as a mental health facility in 1910, Mathari has evolved into a comprehensive teaching and referral hospital dedicated to mental health services, including inpatient and outpatient care, rehabilitation, and psychological therapy (Muthuka, *et al*, 2024). As a national referral hospital, Mathari not only provides critical psychiatric care but also supports medical

research in mental health and trains healthcare professionals in psychiatry. The hospital is an essential institution in addressing the growing mental health needs of Kenya, offering both acute and long-term care for individuals with mental health challenges (Munala & Mwasiagi, 2023).

Kenyatta University Teaching, Referral & Research Hospital (KUTRRH), located in Kiambu County just outside Nairobi, is a relatively new addition to Kenya's national referral hospital network. Established in 2015, KUTRRH was designed to serve as both a high-level referral hospital and a research and teaching facility for Kenyatta University's medical programs (Diis & Kiiru, 2024). It offers a wide range of specialized medical services, including surgery, diagnostic imaging, cardiology, and oncology, and is focused on providing world-class healthcare while contributing to the training of future doctors, nurses, and medical researchers (Makena & Rukia, 2022). KUTRRH is particularly important in addressing the growing demand for healthcare in Nairobi and the central region, offering state-of-the-art facilities and equipment. Additionally, it has a strong focus on research and innovation in the medical field, aligning with Kenya's vision to improve health outcomes through evidence-based practices (Karenje & Elishiba, 2020). Although still in the process of full development, KUTRRH has the potential to significantly ease the pressure on other national referral hospitals like KNH and provide much-needed healthcare in the region (Muthuka, *et al*, 2024).

Statement of the Problem

National Referral Hospitals in Kenya are critical in providing specialized healthcare services to the population, but they face numerous challenges that hinder their overall performance. The quality of services at National Referral Hospitals in Kenya is severely impacted by resource constraints, staff shortages, and infrastructure limitations (Karenje & Elishiba, 2020). According to a 2023 report by the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (KNBS), Kenya's healthcare system is significantly underfunded, with only about 5% of the national budget allocated to the health sector (Muthuka, *et al*, 2024). This has resulted in a severe shortage of medical supplies, equipment, and trained personnel. Specifically, over 35% of healthcare facilities in Kenya, including referral hospitals, report a lack of basic medical supplies, and 40% of hospitals suffer from outdated medical equipment (Munala & Mwasiagi, 2023). In Kenyatta National Hospital (KNH), which serves as the country's largest referral center, a 2022 Ministry of Health survey revealed that 30% of patients had to wait longer than expected for diagnostic tests due to equipment failure or unavailability (Diis & Kiiru, 2024). Moreover, a Kenya Medical Association (KMA) survey in 2022 found that 50% of healthcare workers in referral hospitals felt that their training was insufficient to handle complex cases, which compromises the quality of service delivery. These challenges significantly reduce the hospitals' ability to meet international healthcare standards and negatively impact patient outcomes (Makena & Rukia, 2022).

A 2023 survey by the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (KNBS) found that the average waiting time for patients at Kenyatta National Hospital (KNH) is 6-8 hours, with some patients experiencing waits of up to 12 hours for consultations, especially in high-demand departments such as outpatient services (Muthuka, *et al*, 2024). This is exacerbated by overcrowding, as KNH serves as the referral hospital for the entire country, catering to a population of over 50 million people, but the hospital's outpatient department is staffed by just 200 medical officers (Muthuka, *et al*, 2024). This leads to a significantly high patient-to-doctor ratio, estimated at 1:17,000, which is far from the WHO-recommended 1:1,000 ratio (Munala & Mwasiagi, 2023). According to the Kenya Health Sector Strategic Plan, the lack of sufficient medical personnel is one of the key contributors to long waiting times in referral hospitals. Furthermore, a 2022 study by the World Health Organization (WHO) found that 60% of patients in Kenya's public hospitals reported waiting over 6 hours to see a doctor, compared to the global average of 30% (Diis & Kiiru, 2024). A 2019 World Health Organization (WHO) survey showed that 48% of patients were dissatisfied with the level of information provided about their medical conditions, contributing to frustration and a sense of neglect (Munala & Mwasiagi, 2023). Additionally, 2021 data from the Medical Kenya group indicated that 40% of patients experienced delays in receiving prescribed medicines, largely due to stockouts in hospital pharmacies. These factors directly impact patient satisfaction and are a significant barrier to improving the overall patient experience in referral hospitals (Diis & Kiiru, 2024).

The influence of strategy implementation practices on organizational performance is well-documented across various. Strategy implementation practices involve the translation of strategic plans into actionable steps, which requires proper alignment of resources, processes, and personnel (Karenye & Elishiba, 2020). Various studies have been conducted in different parts of the world on strategy implementation practices and organization performance. For instance, Munala and Mwasiagi (2023) researched on strategy implementation practices and organizational performance. Diis and Kiiru (2024) conducted a study on strategy implementation practices and performance of national transport and safety authority and Makena and Rukia (2022) investigated on strategy implementation practices and performance of aviation industry. However, none of these studies focused on top management commitment and individual commitment on performance of National Referral Hospitals in Kenya. To fill the highlighted gaps, the current study sought to examine the influence of strategy implementation practices (top management commitment and individual commitment) on performance of National Referral Hospitals in Kenya.

Objectives of the Study

General Objective

The general objective of the study is to examine the influence of strategy implementation practices on performance of National Referral Hospitals in Kenya.

Specific Objectives

- i. To assess the influence of top management commitment on performance of National Referral Hospitals in Kenya
- ii. To explore the influence of individual commitment on performance of National Referral Hospitals in Kenya

Theoretical Framework

Resource-Based View (RBV)

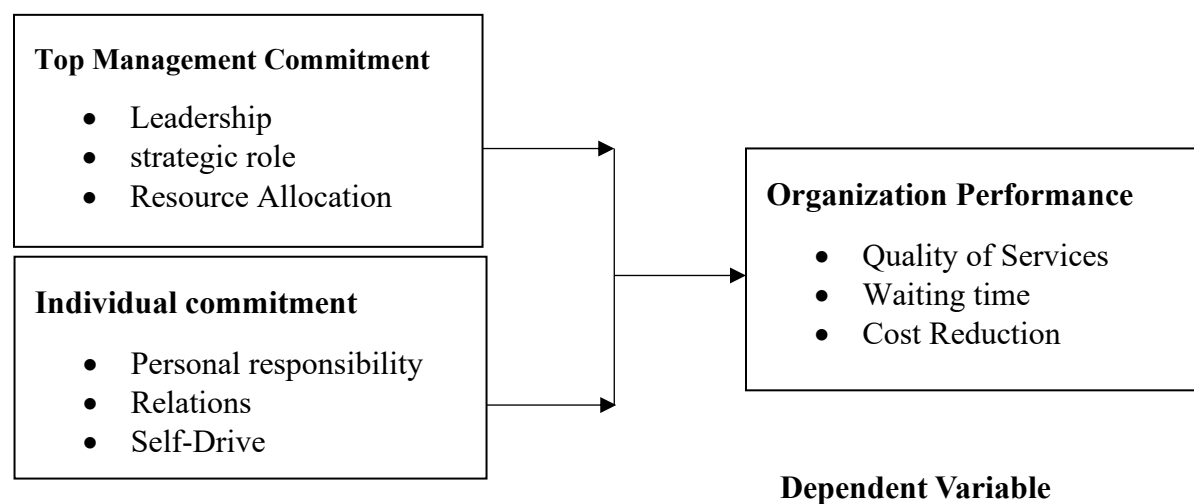
The Resource-Based View (RBV) theory founded by Barney (1991) is a strategic management framework that focuses on the internal resources and capabilities of a firm as sources of competitive advantage (Davoinea & Ravasia, 2020). At its core, RBV posits that a firm's unique bundle of resources and capabilities can enable it to achieve sustainable competitive advantage and superior performance in the marketplace (Ndiritu, Kidombo & Ndiritu, 2020). Unlike traditional strategic management approaches that primarily focus on external factors such as market dynamics and industry structure, RBV emphasizes the importance of internal factors in determining a firm's success (Ogben & Daud, 2021). RBV theory entails identifying and leveraging a firm's distinctive resources and capabilities to create value and achieve strategic objectives. Resources can include tangible assets such as physical infrastructure, financial capital, and technology, as well as intangible assets such as human capital, intellectual property, organizational culture, and reputation (Gachanja & Kinyua, 2021). These resources are considered valuable if they enable the firm to exploit opportunities or neutralize threats in the external environment. Capabilities, on the other hand, refer to the firm's ability to effectively deploy and utilize its resources to perform specific activities and achieve desired outcomes (Oruma, Mironga & Muma, 2020). This theory was used to assess the influence of top management commitment on performance of National Referral Hospitals in Kenya.

Self-Determination Theory (SDT)

Self-Determination Theory (SDT) is a well-established psychological framework that focuses on understanding human motivation and behavior. Developed by psychologists Edward Deci and Richard Ryan (1985), SDT posits that individuals are motivated by a set of innate psychological needs that drive their behavior, growth, and well-being (Sadaf, 2023). The theory primarily emphasizes three core needs: autonomy, competence, and relatedness. Autonomy refers to the desire to make choices and control one's own actions; competence is the need to feel capable and effective in one's activities; and relatedness reflects the desire for meaningful connections with others. SDT suggests that when these needs are met, individuals experience intrinsic motivation—engaging in activities for their inherent satisfaction—while their psychological well-being and performance improve (Niyongabo, 2021).

At the heart of SDT is the idea that there are two main types of motivation: intrinsic and extrinsic. Intrinsic motivation involves engaging in an activity because it is inherently enjoyable or interesting, while extrinsic motivation involves doing something to attain an external reward or avoid a punishment (Karanja, Kahuthia & Muraguri, 2020). SDT posits that people are more likely to thrive when they are intrinsically motivated, as this leads to greater creativity, persistence, and psychological well-being. However, extrinsic rewards, when they undermine an individual's autonomy or when they are perceived as controlling, can diminish intrinsic motivation and lead to negative outcomes, such as lower satisfaction and disengagement (Kimeto, 2023). SDT emphasizes that the social environment plays a crucial role in supporting or hindering the satisfaction of the three basic needs, influencing whether individuals experience intrinsic or extrinsic motivation (Akuku *et al*, 2023). This theory was used to explore the influence of individual commitment on performance of National Referral Hospitals in Kenya.

Conceptual Framework



Independent Variables

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

Empirical Review

Top Management Commitment and Organization Performance

Davoinea and Ravasia (2020) conducted a study on the relative stability of national career patterns in European top management commitment careers in the age of globalization: A comparative study in France/Germany/Great Britain and Switzerland. While top management career patterns are highly embedded in national institutional contexts, the phenomenon of globalization has recently called into question the future of these patterns. The study found that the data shows a certain erosion of national models due to the gradual arrival of non-national top managers, but this process occurs very slowly despite the strong international dimension of the

companies studied. The study concluded that by showing the increasing importance of international career steps and international MBAs in European top management characteristics, our study brings new evidence to the internationalization process of top management profiles of these four countries.

Ogben and Daud (2021) conducted a study on the effect of top management commitment: a strategy for enhancing operation of quality assurance system of Association of Professional Secretarial Staff of Nigeria. The study investigated top management commitment strategy employed by the Association of Professional Secretarial Staff of Nigeria to enhance the performance of their quality assurance system. A total of 54 respondents, made up of 38 field professionals and 16 senior management staff of APSSON form the population of the study. Since the population was small, all 54 purposively selected respondents constitute the population of the study. The study found that a 4-point Likert-scale of Very Highly Required (VHR), Highly Required (HR), Rarely Required (RR), and Not Required (NR) was used. The internal reliability of the instrument was measured using Cronbach Alpha and significance was examined applying t-test. Any item with a mean score equal or above 2.50 was considered highly required. Items below 2.50 were considered not required. From results, it was concluded that while certain quality assurance standards and practices may differ by company and industry, there is widespread consensus on the role of management leadership in the operation of quality assurance systems

Gachanja and Kinyua (2021) conducted a study on the effect of top management commitment and performance of County secondary schools in Nairobi City Kenya. This study used descriptive survey research design. The study focused on 30 County Secondary Schools in Nairobi City. The target population comprised of 270 participants. The study employed simple random sampling technique to establish a sample of 180 participants out of the target population. From the research findings, the study suggests that the top management of the secondary schools in Nairobi County should support change and ensure flexibility to improve performance. The research concludes that the commitment of top management has a significant as well as positive influence on the performance of Nairobi city county secondary schools

Oruma, Mironga and Muma (2020) conducted a study on the effect of top management commitment towards implementation of Total Quality Management (TQM) in construction companies in Nakuru County-Kenya. This study sought to determine the factors influencing implementation of TQM in construction companies in Nakuru County. Questionnaires and structured questionnaires involving the participation of over 15 construction companies were used as the main tools for this study. The findings of this study revealed that Top Management Commitment is a critical factor affecting the implementation of TQM in construction companies in Nakuru County. The study concluded that top management commitment is a critical factor in implementation of TQM in construction industry in Nakuru County

Ndiritu, Kidombo and Ndiritu (2020) conducted a study on the effect of top management commitment for successful small and medium-enterprises (SMEs) in Kenya: A hoax or a reality? The purpose of this study was to investigate the influence of top management commitment as a Total Quality Management (TQM) practice on performance of small and medium enterprises. The target population was 210 youth that were involved in youth group projects. The study established a positive relationship between top management and performance of SMEs. The study concluded that Studies have shown that leadership improves on operation and performance.

Individual Commitment and Organization Performance

Sadaf (2023) assessed individual commitment, organizational commitment and job performance in Pakistan. The study was restricted to university teachers in Quetta, Baluchistan. A questionnaire was adapted and administered on a sample of 358 faculty members. Consistent with the previous literature, the study found that individual commitment is a strong predictor of organizational performance as compared to organizational commitment. Therefore, the study concluded that academic institutions should organize seminars and workshops for enhancing individual intelligence.

Niyongabo (2021) determined employee commitment and organizational performance in selected private universities in Bujumbura, Burundi. The study adopted a descriptive survey design, with the study sample comprising of 104 respondents. Data was collected using questionnaires and the interview guide, and the data collected was analyzed using descriptive and regression analysis to determine the effect of employee commitment on organizational performance. The findings of the study revealed that the various types of employee commitment including individual commitment, continuance commitment and normative commitment have a positive and significant effect on organizational performance in selected private universities in Bujumbura, Burundi. The study concluded that whereas the three types of commitment are all beneficial to organizational performance, the most preferable was individual commitment since it inspires an emotional connection between employees and the organization, and is therefore better for the long term benefit of the organization.

Karanja, Kahuthia and Muraguri (2020) assessed the influence of individual commitment on performance of church owned primary schools in Kiambu County, Kenya. The study used a descriptive design. The study targeted 1 principal, 1 deputy principal and 1 church leader from all the 64 church-based primary schools operating within the county. The target population was therefore 192 respondents. The study used census method since the population was small. The researcher contracted research assistants to help in data collection using structured questionnaire that was tested to ensure it gave valid and reliable responses. The study established that individual commitment empowered their employees in improving their performance and that their senior management team was committed in training and rewarding our employees for their

service delivery. Based on the findings, the study concluded that individual commitment has significant effect on performance of church owned institutions.

Kimeto (2023) examined the influence of individualized commitment on organizational commitment in Commercial Banks in Kenya. The study adopted the positivist research philosophy and descriptive correlational design. A sample of 150 was drawn from a population of 240 senior managers of the 40 commercial banks of Kenya using stratified random sampling technique. The tool used to collect data was questionnaire. Out of 150 questionnaires that were administered, 139 responses were received from the senior managers. The results indicated that idealized influence significantly predicted organizational commitment and therefore the null hypothesis was rejected. In addition, Results of the regression indicated that individualized commitment significantly predicted organizational commitment. Based on the results the null hypothesis was rejected. Organizational culture showed a significant influence on the relationship between transformational leadership and organizational commitment as showed by the coefficients. The study concluded that individualized commitment significantly influenced organizational performance.

Akuku *et al* (2023) examined the influence of individualized commitment on organizational performance of the South Eastern Kenya Economic Bloc (SEKEB) counties. A descriptive research design was used. The target population was 408 with sample size of 289 respondents employed. Stratified random sampling technique was used for this study. Instrument of data collection was questionnaires. Research results indicated that there is a positive and significant influence of individualized commitment, inspirational motivation and idealized influence on organizational performance while intellectual stimulation attracted an insignificant influence on organizational performance. The study made the conclusion that idealized influence and individualized commitment dimensions of the leader made remarkable influence to organizational performance of county governments in South Eastern Kenya Economic Bloc.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study used a descriptive research design. Mugenda and Mugenda (2018) explained the descriptive design is a process of collecting data in order to test a hypothesis or to answer the questions of the current status of the subject under study. The unit of analysis in this study was the five public national referral hospitals in Kenya (MoH, 2023) while the unit of observation was management and non-management employees working in the five public national referral hospitals in Kenya. The employees were selected since they are in a position to provide the information need for the study. The target population was 627 management and non-management employees working in the five public national referral hospitals in Kenya (Ministry of Health 2024).

Table 1: Target Population

National Referral Hospitals	Target Population				
	Top Managers	Middle Managers	Lower Managers	Junior Employees	Total
Kenyatta National Hospital	31	52	68	89	240
Moi Teaching and Referral Hospital	18	25	28	49	120
Kenyatta University Teaching, Referral & Research Hospital	14	18	24	45	101
Mathari National Teaching and Referral Hospital	14	16	22	43	95
National Spinal Injury Referral Hospital	10	12	14	35	71
Total	87	123	156	261	627

Source: Ministry of Health (2023)

The sample frame for this study was compiled from 627 management and non-management employees working in the five public national referral hospitals in Kenya. This study made use of Slovin's Formula to determine the study's sample size. Therefore, the study made use of 95% confidence level and 0.05 margin of error.

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + NE^2}$$

$$=244$$

Table 2: Sample Size

National Referral Hospitals	Sample Size				Total
	Top Managers	Middle Managers	Lower Managers	Junior Employees	
Kenyatta National Hospital	12	20	26	35	79
Moi Teaching and Referral Hospital	7	10	11	19	37
Kenyatta University Teaching, Referral & Research Hospital	5	7	9	18	29
Mathari National Teaching and Referral Hospital	5	6	9	17	27
National Spinal Injury Referral Hospital	4	5	5	14	19
Total	33	48	60	103	244

Primary data was used in this study. A questionnaire which is a form of quantitative data collection tool was used to collect primary data. The study's primary data was obtained using structured questionnaires. The researcher carried out a pilot study to ensure the data collection tool is reliable and valid. The pilot test helped correct some of the challenges encountered before undertaking the final study. The pretesting sample was made of 24 respondents, representing 10% of the sample size. The pilot study was conducted in Kenyatta National Hospital. Those who participated in the pilot study were excluded from the main study to avoid biasness.

Quantitative data was generated from the closed-ended questionnaire. Before the data was analysed, the researcher ensured the data was checked for completeness, followed by data editing, data coding, data entry, and data cleaning. Inferential and descriptive statistics were employed for analysis of quantitative data with the assistance of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS version 25). T

Descriptive statistics such as frequency distribution, mean (measure of dispersion), standard deviation, and percentages were used. Inferential data analysis was conducted by use of Pearson correlation coefficient, and multiple regression analysis. The relationship between the study variables was tested using multivariate regression models. This study is to assess the influence of strategy implementation practices on performance of National Referral Hospitals in Kenya

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \varepsilon$$

Whereby;

Y = Performance of National Referral Hospitals in Kenya

β_0 = Constant

β_1, β_2 = Coefficients of determination

X_1 = Top management commitment

X_2 = Individual Commitment

ε = Error term

RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

Response Rate

The researcher sampled 244 respondents who were each administered with the questionnaires. From the 244 questionnaires 216 were completely filled and returned hence a response rate of 88.5%. The response rate was considered as suitable for making inferences from the data collected. As indicated by Ngechu (2018), a response rate that is above fifty percent is considered adequate for data analysis and reporting while a response rate that is above 70% is

classified as excellent. Hence, the response rate of this study was within the acceptable limits for drawing conclusions and making recommendations.

Descriptive Statistics

Top Management Commitment and Organization Performance

The first specific objective of the study was to assess the influence of top management commitment on performance of National Referral Hospitals in Kenya. The respondents were requested to indicate their level of agreement on various statements related to top management commitment and performance of National Referral Hospitals in Kenya. The results were as shown Table 3.

From the results, the respondents agreed that managers in their organizations encourage continuous improvement at all levels ($M=3.906$, $SD=0.714$). In addition, the respondents agreed that managers in their organizations communicate the importance of quality to all employees ($M=3.875$, $SD=0.850$). Further, the respondents agreed that their organization includes quality management in its long-term strategy ($M=3.852$, $SD=0.918$).

From the results, the respondents agreed that their organization links quality goals with overall business objectives ($M=3.803$, $SD=0.789$). In addition, the respondents agreed that their organization provides enough resources for quality initiatives ($M=3.785$, $SD=0.699$). Further, the respondents agreed that their organization ensures resources are available to meet quality goals ($M=3.740$, $SD=0.605$).

Table 3: Top Management Commitment and Organization Performance

	Mean	Std. Deviation
Managers in our organizations encourage continuous improvement at all levels.	3.906	0.714
Managers in our organizations communicate the importance of quality to all employees.	3.875	0.850
Our organization includes quality management in its long-term strategy.	3.852	0.918
Our organization links quality goals with overall business objectives.	3.803	0.789
Our organization provides enough resources for quality initiatives.	3.785	0.699
Our organization ensures resources are available to meet quality goals.	3.740	0.605
Aggregate	3.827	0.763

Individual Commitment and Organization Performance

The second specific objective of the study was to explore the influence of individual commitment on performance of National Referral Hospitals in Kenya. The respondents were requested to indicate their level of agreement on various statements related to individual

commitment and performance of National Referral Hospitals in Kenya. The results were as shown Table 4.

From the results, the respondents agreed that their organization encourages employees to take personal responsibility for their work and outcomes ($M=3.866$, $SD=0.817$). In addition, the respondents agreed that their organization expects individuals to be accountable for their tasks and results ($M=3.847$, $SD=0.738$). Further, the respondents agreed that their organization fosters positive relationships between employees to create a supportive work environment ($M=3.794$, $SD=0.696$).

From the results, the respondents agreed that their organization values building strong working relationships among team members ($M=3.786$, $SD=0.597$). In addition, the respondents agreed that their organization motivates employees to set and achieve their own goals ($M=3.703$, $SD=0.573$). Further, the respondents agreed that their organization encourages individuals to take initiative and drive their own success ($M=3.667$, $SD=0.685$).

Table 4: Individual Commitment and Organization Performance

	Mean	Std. Deviation
Our organization encourages employees to take personal responsibility for their work and outcomes.	3.866	0.817
Our organization expects individuals to be accountable for their tasks and results.	3.847	0.738
Our organization fosters positive relationships between employees to create a supportive work environment.	3.794	0.696
Our organization values building strong working relationships among team members.	3.786	0.597
Our organization motivates employees to set and achieve their own goals.	3.703	0.573
Our organization encourages individuals to take initiative and drive their own success.	3.667	0.685
Aggregate	3.777	0.684

Organization Performance

The respondents were requested to indicate their level of agreement on various statements related to performance of National Referral Hospitals in Kenya. The results were as shown Table 5.

From the results, the respondents agreed that their organization consistently delivers high-quality services to meet customer expectations ($M=3.817$, $SD=0.865$). In addition, the respondents agreed that their organization maintains high standards to ensure service quality in every interaction ($M=3.788$, $SD=0.768$). Further, the respondents agreed that their organization strives to minimize waiting times for customers ($M=3.764$, $SD=0.833$).

From the results, the respondents agreed that their organization works to reduce delays and improve service efficiency ($M=3.738$, $SD= 0.598$). In addition, the respondents agreed that their organization regularly measures customer satisfaction to ensure we meet their needs ($M=3.675$, $SD= 0.549$). Further, the respondents agreed that their organization focuses on improving customer satisfaction through continuous feedback and improvements ($M=3.648$, $SD=0.619$).

Table 5: Organization Performance

	Mean	Std. Deviation
Our organization consistently delivers high-quality services to meet customer expectations.	3.817	0.865
Our organization maintains high standards to ensure service quality in every interaction.	3.788	0.768
Our organization strives to minimize waiting times for customers.	3.764	0.833
Our organization works to reduce delays and improve service efficiency.	3.738	0.598
Our organization regularly measures customer satisfaction to ensure we meet their needs.	3.675	0.549
Our organization focuses on improving customer satisfaction through continuous feedback and improvements.	3.648	0.619
Aggregate	3.738	0.705

Inferential Statistics

Correlation Analysis

This research adopted Pearson correlation analysis determine how the dependent variable (performance of National Referral Hospitals in Kenya) relates with the independent variables (top management commitment and individual commitment).

Table 6: Correlation Coefficients

		Organization Performance	Top Management Commitment	Individual Commitment
Organization Performance	Pearson Correlation	1		
	Sig. (2-tailed)			
	N	216		
Top Management Commitment	Pearson Correlation	.840**	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		
	N	216	216	
Individual Commitment	Pearson Correlation	.828**	.422	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.003	.030	
	N	216	216	216

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

From the results, there was a very strong relationship between top management commitment and performance of National Referral Hospitals in Kenya ($r = 0.840$, $p \text{ value} = 0.000$). The relationship was significant since the $p \text{ value } 0.000$ was less than 0.05 (significant level). The findings are in line with the findings of Davoinea and Ravasia (2020) who indicated that there is a very strong relationship between top management commitment and organization performance.

The results also revealed that there was a very strong relationship between individual commitment and performance of National Referral Hospitals in Kenya ($r = 0.828$, $p \text{ value} = 0.001$). The relationship was significant since the $p \text{ value } 0.001$ was less than 0.05 (significant level). The findings are in line with the findings of Kimeto (2023) who indicated that there is a very strong relationship between individual commitment and organization performance.

Regression Analysis

Multivariate regression analysis was used to assess the relationship between independent variables (top management commitment and individual commitment) and the dependent variable (performance of National Referral Hospitals in Kenya).

Table 7: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.806	.650	.649	.10428

a. Predictors: (Constant), top management commitment and individual commitment

The model summary was used to explain the variation in the dependent variable that could be explained by the independent variables. The r -squared for the relationship between the independent variables and the dependent variable was 0.650 . This implied that 65% of the variation in the dependent variable (performance of National Referral Hospitals in Kenya) could be explained by independent variables (top management commitment and individual commitment).

Table 8: Analysis of Variance

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1 Regression	67.402	2	33.701	197.082	.002 ^b
Residual	36.351	213	.171		
Total	103.753	215			

a. Dependent Variable: performance of National Referral Hospitals in Kenya

b. Predictors: (Constant), top management commitment and individual commitment

The ANOVA was used to determine whether the model was a good fit for the data. F calculated was 197.082 while the F critical was 3.038 . The $p \text{ value}$ was 0.002 . Since the F -calculated was greater than the F -critical and the $p \text{ value } 0.002$ was less than 0.05 , the model was considered as a good fit for the data. Therefore, the model can be used to predict the influence of top

management commitment and individual commitment on performance of National Referral Hospitals in Kenya.

Table 9: Regression Coefficients

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	0.256	0.067		3.821	0.000
	top management commitment	0.360	0.093	0.361	3.871	0.000
	individual commitment	0.348	0.091	0.347	3.824	0.001

a Dependent Variable: performance of National Referral Hospitals in Kenya

The regression model was as follows:

$$Y = 0.256 + 0.360X_1 + 0.348X_4 + \varepsilon$$

According to the results, top management commitment has a significant effect on performance of National Referral Hospitals in Kenya ($\beta_1=0.360$, p value= 0.000). The relationship was considered significant since the p value 0.000 was less than the significant level of 0.05. The findings are in line with the findings of Davoinea and Ravasia (2020) who indicated that there is a very strong relationship between top management commitment and organization performance.

In addition, the results revealed that individual commitment has a significant effect on performance of National Referral Hospitals in Kenya ($\beta_1=0.348$, p value= 0.001). The relationship was considered significant since the p value 0.001 was less than the significant level of 0.05. The findings are in line with the findings of Kimeto (2023) who indicated that there is a very strong relationship between individual commitment and organization performance.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusions

The study concludes that top management commitment has a positive and significant effect on performance of National Referral Hospitals in Kenya. Findings revealed that leadership, strategic role and resource allocation influence performance of National Referral Hospitals in Kenya. The study concludes that individual commitment has a positive and significant effect on performance of National Referral Hospitals in Kenya. Findings revealed that personal responsibility, relations and self-drive influence performance of National Referral Hospitals in Kenya.

Recommendations

The study recommends that National Referral Hospitals in Kenya should institutionalize visible and sustained commitment to performance improvement by actively championing strategic initiatives, allocating adequate financial and human resources, and consistently monitoring outcomes through clear accountability frameworks. The study also recommends that National Referral Hospitals in Kenya should strengthen individual commitment by implementing performance management systems that clearly link personal goals to organizational objectives while recognizing and rewarding staff contributions. This can be achieved through regular performance appraisals, continuous professional development opportunities, and incentive structures that motivate employees to take ownership of their roles.

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