



**International Journal of
Strategic Management, Accounting *and*
Human Resources Management**

Peer-Reviewed Academic Journal



Volume 1 | Issue No.3 | 2026 | ISSN: 1234-5678

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**MODERATING ROLE OF LEADERSHIP COMMITMENT IN THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN
RESULTS-BASED MANAGEMENT AND EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE IN THE COUNTY
GOVERNMENT OF TURKANA, KENYA**

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the moderating role of leadership commitment in the relationship between Results-Based Management (RBM) and employee performance in the County Government of Turkana, Kenya. Although RBM has been widely adopted as a public sector performance management approach, its effectiveness largely depends on organizational and leadership factors. Existing studies have primarily examined leadership commitment as an independent predictor of performance, with limited attention given to its moderating influence on the RBM–employee performance relationship. The study adopted a descriptive research design targeting 2,800 employees drawn from various ministries and departments within the County Government of Turkana. A sample of 350 respondents was selected using proportionate stratified random sampling, of which 280 questionnaires were successfully returned, representing an 80% response rate. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire whose validity and reliability were established through expert review, pilot testing, and Cronbach's alpha coefficients above the recommended threshold of 0.70. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and hierarchical regression analysis with the aid of SPSS. The findings revealed that leadership commitment significantly moderates the relationship between RBM practices and employee performance. Leadership practices characterized by teamwork, employee support, recognition of achievements, participatory decision-making, and effective coordination strengthened the positive influence of RBM practices on employee performance. The study concludes that leadership commitment is a critical organizational condition for successful implementation of RBM, as it reinforces accountability, motivation, and effective execution of performance management initiatives. It recommends that county governments strengthen leadership commitment through leadership development programmes, enhanced supervisory support, employee recognition, participatory management, and the promotion of a performance-oriented organizational culture to improve employee performance and service delivery in devolved public institutions.

Keywords: Results-Based Management, Leadership Commitment, Employee Performance, Moderating Effect, Performance Management.

1. BACKGROUND

Leadership commitment has increasingly been recognized in public administration literature as a critical determinant of the effectiveness of performance management reforms. Within Results-Based Management (RBM) systems, leadership commitment refers to the extent to which senior and middle-level managers actively support, resource, monitor, and reinforce results-oriented practices. Empirical studies indicate that leadership commitment strengthens strategic alignment, clarifies expectations, and enhances employee motivation, thereby shaping performance outcomes (Moynihan, 2020; Van Wart, 2017). In public sector settings, leaders play a pivotal role in translating formal RBM frameworks into operational routines that influence day-to-day employee behavior.

Empirical evidence suggests that leadership commitment significantly influences organizational performance

particularly in reform-oriented contexts. For instance, studies in public organizations demonstrate that transformational and participatory leadership styles enhance employee engagement and performance by fostering goal clarity, feedback mechanisms, and accountability systems (Andersen et al., 2020; Banks et al., 2021). In the Kenyan context, research on performance contracting and public sector reforms indicates that top management support and consistent monitoring are key drivers of successful implementation (Kihara & Wanyoike, 2019). However, many of these studies conceptualize leadership as an independent predictor of organizational performance rather than as a *moderating variable* that conditions the strength of relationships between management practices and employee performance. The moderating role of leadership commitment becomes particularly salient within RBM frameworks. RBM assumes rational

implementation supported by institutional capacity and managerial oversight. However, in devolved governance systems such as county governments, leadership variations may amplify or weaken the influence of RBM components, such as goal setting, strategic planning, and timely implementation, on employee performance. Empirical research in performance management highlights that reforms often fail not because of flawed design, but due to weak leadership ownership and inconsistent enforcement (George et al., 2019; Moynihan, 2020). This suggests that leadership commitment may strengthen the positive effects of RBM practices by reinforcing accountability and motivating employees to internalize performance targets.

Despite growing international scholarship, three critical empirical gaps persist. First, limited studies within Kenya's county governments explicitly test leadership commitment as a moderating variable between RBM practices and employee performance. Most studies treat leadership as either an independent or control variable without examining its interaction effects. Second, existing research often measures performance at the institutional level, overlooking employee-level productivity indicators such as efficiency, timeliness, service responsiveness, and output quality. Third, there is scarce evidence from marginalized counties such as Turkana, where leadership dynamics may significantly shape reform outcomes due to resource constraints and administrative capacity challenges. Consequently, this study advances methodological rigor by empirically testing leadership commitment as a moderating variable, thereby clarifying whether and to what extent it strengthens or weakens the influence of RBM practices on employee performance within the County Government of Turkana.

By integrating leadership commitment into the empirical model, this study enhances theoretical coherence across Chapter Two. While RBM provides the foundational framework explaining how results-oriented practices influence performance, leadership commitment offers a contextual mechanism that conditions this relationship. This integration ensures conceptual alignment between the theoretical framework (RBM Theory), the independent variables (goal setting, strategic planning, quick implementation), the moderating variable (leadership commitment), and the dependent variable (employee performance). The approach also strengthens methodological coherence by justifying the inclusion of interaction model, thereby enabling a more nuanced

interaction effects in the regression model, thereby enabling a more nuanced understanding of performance management dynamics in Kenya's devolved public sector.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Empirical scholarship consistently demonstrates that leadership-related factors shape employee attitudes and outcomes; however, limited attention has been given to leadership commitment as a moderating variable in results-oriented public management systems. For instance, Waris et al. (2018) examined the relationship between transformational leadership qualities; charisma, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, individualized consideration, and idealized influence, and employee job commitment in multi-project-based organizations. Using a quantitative design and regression analysis, the study established significant positive associations between leadership qualities and employee commitment. While the findings reinforce the importance of leadership in shaping employee outcomes, the study is limited in three key respects relevant to the present research. First, it focused on employee commitment rather than employee performance. Second, leadership qualities were treated as independent variables rather than as contingent or moderating influences. Third, the use of non-probability convenience sampling raises concerns about generalizability. Consequently, the study does not illuminate how leadership commitment may condition the effectiveness of Results-Based Management (RBM) systems in enhancing employee performance within devolved public sector contexts such as the County Government of Turkana.

Similarly, Hafiz (2017) investigated the relationship between organizational commitment and employee performance in Pakistan's banking sector, finding that affective, continuance, and normative commitment significantly predicted employee performance. Although methodologically robust through its use of multi-stage sampling and regression techniques, the study conceptualized commitment at the organizational level and positioned it as an independent predictor of performance. This conceptualization overlooks the leadership-driven dimension of commitment, particularly top management's strategic dedication to implementing performance management reforms. In RBM environments, leadership commitment is not merely an attitudinal construct but a governance

mechanism that shapes resource allocation, target setting, monitoring, and accountability structures (Bouckaert and Halligan, 2019; OECD, 2020).

Thus, while Hafiz (2017) confirms that commitment matters for performance, it does not examine how leadership commitment might strengthen or weaken the relationship between structured performance systems such as RBM and employee performance outcomes.

Kaiman (2013) examined the effects of leadership behavior and commitment on employee job satisfaction and performance in Indonesia's Department of Population and Civil Registration using Structural Equation Modeling. The findings indicated that transformational leadership behaviors significantly enhanced employee satisfaction and performance. Although the study contributes to understanding leadership-performance linkages, its contextual focus on a single Indonesian department limits external validity, particularly for African devolved governance systems characterized by political-administrative complexities and resource constraints. More importantly, leadership behavior was modeled as a direct determinant of performance rather than as a contextual moderator influencing the effectiveness of managerial reforms. Contemporary public management research suggests that leadership commitment may act as a catalytic or buffering mechanism that determines whether performance management tools translate into measurable employee outcomes (Van Dooren et al., 2021; World Bank, 2022). This interaction effect remains empirically underexplored in county governments in Kenya.

Negin et al. (2013) further established a positive relationship between organizational commitment and employee job performance in the banking sector using correlation and regression analyses. While their findings align with broader organizational behavior theory linking commitment and performance, the study conceptualized commitment as an employee-level psychological attachment rather than a leadership-level strategic orientation. In RBM systems, leadership commitment involves visible executive support, consistent communication of performance expectations, enforcement of accountability mechanisms, and alignment of incentives with results (OECD, 2020). The omission of this leadership dimension leaves a critical gap in understanding how performance management systems operate in public sector institutions. Collectively, these studies confirm that leadership and

commitment influence employee outcomes; however, they exhibit three empirical gaps directly addressed by the present study.

First, most studies examine direct relationships rather than moderating effects, thereby neglecting interaction dynamics between management systems and leadership variables. Second, commitment is predominantly conceptualized at the employee or organizational level rather than at the leadership level within performance reform frameworks. Third, there is limited evidence from devolved county governments in Kenya, particularly in resource-constrained and politically complex settings such as Turkana County. This study therefore extends the empirical literature by positioning leadership commitment as a moderating variable that conditions the strength and direction of the relationship between Results-Based Management and employee performance within the County Government of Turkana. In doing so, it advances theoretical coherence between RBM theory and leadership theory while addressing contextual and methodological limitations evident in prior scholarship. First, most studies examine direct relationships rather than moderating effects, thereby neglecting interaction dynamics between management systems and leadership variables. Second, commitment is predominantly conceptualized at the employee or organizational level rather than at the leadership level within performance reform frameworks. Third, there is limited evidence from devolved county governments in Kenya, particularly in resource-constrained and politically complex settings such as Turkana County. This study therefore extends the empirical literature by positioning leadership commitment as a moderating variable that conditions the strength and direction of the relationship between Results-Based Management and employee performance within the County Government of Turkana. In doing so, it advances theoretical coherence between RBM theory and leadership theory while addressing contextual and methodological limitations evident in prior scholarship.

3. METHODS AND MATERIALS

The study adopted a descriptive research design to examine the relationship between Results-Based Management (RBM) practices and employee performance in the County Government of Turkana. The target population comprised 2,800 employees drawn from various ministries and departments, with a sample of 350 respondents selected using proportionate stratified random sampling to ensure adequate representation

across all strata.

Data were collected using a structured questionnaire organized around the study variables, namely RBM practices, leadership commitment, and employee performance. A pilot study involving 10% of the sample was conducted to refine the instrument, while its validity was established through expert review and content validation, and reliability was confirmed using Cronbach's alpha with a minimum acceptable coefficient of 0.70.

Quantitative data were analyzed using SPSS through descriptive statistics and regression analysis, supported by diagnostic tests for normality, linearity, homoscedasticity, and multicollinearity. Regression models were used to examine the influence of RBM practices on employee performance and to determine the moderating role of leadership commitment. The study also upheld ethical principles by ensuring informed consent, voluntary participation, confidentiality, and participants' right to withdraw from the study at any time.

4. RESULTS

4.1 Response Rate

Out of 350 questionnaires which had been administered to the interviewees, 280 of them were returned for analysis. This translates to 80 percent return rate of the respondents. According to Mugenda & Mugenda (2003), a response rate of more than 80% is sufficient for a study. Table 4.1 shows the response rate.

4.2 Results of the Pilot Study

A pilot testing was carried out prior to implementation of the study to ensure that the research instrument measured what was intended in conformity with (Cooper and Schindler, 2010). During the pilot test phase of this research, Reliability Test was also performed; to this end, the Cronbach's Coefficient Alpha was employed. According to Fraenkel and Warren (2000); Sekaran (2003) if the reliability coefficient is more than 0.7 the data is taken as reliable. The items on each of the variables in the questionnaire were subjected to Cronbach's Coefficient Alpha test and all the items were found to be reliable for measurement because the reliability coefficient was found to be above the recommended threshold of 0.7. The findings are shown in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2 Reliability Test Statistics

Constructs	Cronbach's	No. of Items
Setting of Realistic Goals	.716	7
Strategic Planning	.943	8
Quick Implementation of Strategies	.766	12
Leadership Commitment	.713	6
Employee Performance	.798	8
Results-Based Management	.733	5

Source: Researcher 2026

4.3 Demographic Information of the Respondents

The respondents were requested to provide information on their gender, age bracket, level of education and work duration in the county government of Turkana.

4.3.1 Gender of the Respondents

Respondents were requested to indicate their gender and findings are as shown in Table 4.3.

Table 4.3: Gender of the Respondents

Category	Frequency	Percentage %
Male	168	60%
Female	112	40%
Total	280	100%

Source: Researcher (2026)

From the findings, the larger part of the respondents, 60% (168) were male while 40% (112) of the respondents were female. The results indicated a slightly larger percentage of men were involved in filling the questionnaires as compared to that of female thus insinuating that a large number of male working for Turkana County Government in Kenya participated in the study. This overrepresentation of male employees

is a clear indication of gender imbalance in staff distribution at Turkana County Government in Kenya which may have a negative impact on the effectiveness of results-based management.

4.3.2 Age Bracket of the Respondents

The respondents were requested to indicate their age bracket. Table 4.4 illustrates the findings.

Table 4.4: Age Bracket of the Respondents

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Less than 30 Years	75	26.79%
30 -39 years	110	39.29%
40 -49 years	80	28.57%
Above 50 years	15	5.36%
Total	280	100%

Source: Researcher (2026)

From the findings, most of the respondents, 39.29% (110), indicated that they were of age bracket 30-39 years. A sizeable number, 28.57% (80), indicated that they were between 40-49 years while 26.79% (4) and 5.36% (2) of the respondents indicated that they were of age less than 30 years and above 50 years respectively. The findings therefore reveal that majority of employees at Turkana County Government in Kenya are at their most productive age bracket and are mature people who are advantaged with knowledge in Result based management and thus can help in determining the performance of employees.

4.3.3 Work Duration of the Respondents

The respondents were requested to indicate how long they had been working at Turkana County Government in Kenya. The findings are illustrated in Table 4.5.

Table 4.5: Work Duration of the Respondents

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Less than 2 Years	75	26.79%
2 -5 years	150	53.57%
More than 5 years	55	19.64%
Total	280	100%

Source: Researcher (2026)

From the findings, greater part of the respondents, 53.57% (150) stated that they had worked at Turkana County Government in Kenya for a period of 2 – 5 years

followed by respondents whose time lagged less than 2 years these were 26.79% (75). Other respondents, 19.64% (55) stated they had worked for Turkana County Government for a period of more than 5 years.

4.3.4 Level of Education of the Respondents

The respondents were also requested to give information regarding their highest education level. Table 4.6 exemplifies the findings.

Table 4.6: Level of Education of the Respondents

Category	Frequency	Percentage
K.C.P.E	3	1.07%
K.C.S.E	10	3.57%
Diploma	55	19.64%
H. Diploma	70	25%
Bachelors	120	42.86%
Masters	20	7.14%
Phd	2	0.714%
Total	280	100%

Source: Researcher (2026)

From the findings, the larger part of the respondents, 42.86 % (120), indicated that they had achieved, while 25%(70) Higher Diploma, Bachelor's degree as their education level while 19.64% (55) indicated that they had attained Diploma level, 7.14% (20) represented those employees who had Masters level in their education, 3.57% (10) represented employees who had only attained K.C.S.E level in their education. 1.07% (3) and .714% (2) represented Employees who had attained K.C.P.E and PhD. Level of education respectively.

4.4 Descriptive Statistics

4.4.1 Role of leadership commitment on the influence of result-based management on employee performance

Furthermore, the study asked the respondents to indicate the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with the listed leadership practices in relation to employee performance. The responses were rated on a five-point Likert scale where: 5 – Strongly Agree, 4 – Agree, 3 – Not Sure, 2 – Disagree, and 1 – Strongly Disagree. The assessment sought to establish how leadership commitment was reflected through teamwork, joint decision-making, mutual support, recognition of team success, and celebration of achievements. These practices were considered important indicators of the extent to which leaders supported the implementation of results-based management within the organization. The findings therefore provided insight into whether

leadership commitment strengthened the influence of results-based management on employee performance.

Table 4.7 Role of leadership commitment on the influence of results-based management on employee performance

No.	STATEMENT	N	Mean	Standard Deviation
1.	Working together as a team	280	3.95	1.09
2.	Making decisions together	280	3.70	1.31
3.	Supporting one another	280	3.98	1.07
4.	Feeling successful of what the team does	280	3.57	1.367
5.	Celebrating team achievements	280	4.03	.084

Source: Researcher (2026)

The results presented in Table 4.7 examined the role of leadership commitment in influencing the effectiveness of results-based management on employee performance within the County Government of Turkana. The findings indicate that respondents generally perceived leadership practices that promote teamwork as important in enhancing performance. This is demonstrated by a mean score of 3.95 and a standard deviation of 1.09 for working together as a team. The relatively high mean suggests that employees acknowledge collaboration as a key leadership-driven factor supporting performance, while the moderate dispersion shows minor differences in employee experiences across work units. The study further revealed strong agreement among respondents that leadership commitment encourages mutual support among employees, as reflected by a mean of 3.98 and a standard deviation of 1.07. In addition, celebrating team achievements recorded the highest mean score of 4.03 with a very low standard deviation of 0.84, indicating widespread consensus among respondents that recognition of collective success plays a significant motivational role. The low variability in responses implies that most employees consistently experience appreciation of team accomplishments, highlighting the importance of leadership recognition in strengthening employee morale and productivity.

Moreover, respondents moderately agreed that participatory decision-making and shared team success contribute to employee performance, as shown by mean scores of 3.70 and 3.57 with standard deviations of 1.31 and 1.37 respectively. Although employees generally viewed involvement in decision-making positively, the relatively higher standard deviations suggest differing perceptions regarding the extent of inclusion and shared success within teams. Overall, the findings demonstrate

that leadership commitment, through collaboration, support, recognition, and participation, plays a meaningful role in reinforcing results-based management practices and improving employee performance in the County Government of Turkana.

4.4.2 Employee performance in the county government of Turkana

The respondents were requested to indicate the extent to which they agree or disagree with the following selected attributes concerning the measuring employee performance in the county government of Turkana. The responses were rated on a five-point Likert scale where: 5 – Strongly agree, 4 – Agree, 3 – Not sure, 2 – Disagree, 1 – Strongly disagree.

Table 4.8 Employee performance

No.	STATEMENT	N	Mean	Standard deviation
1.	Quality of service	280	3.70	1.11
2.	Customer satisfaction	280	3.46	1.44
3.	Timeliness of service	280	3.39	1.34
4.	Efficiency of employee output	280	3.53	1.16
5.	Effectiveness of work completed by the employees	280	4.04	1.37
Aggregate		280	3.62	1.28

Source: Researcher (2026)

The findings presented in Table 4.8 assessed employee performance within the County Government of Turkana using several performance indicators. The results indicate that respondents largely agreed that employee performance is reflected through the effectiveness of work completed, as demonstrated by the highest mean score of 4.04 and a standard deviation of 1.37. The high mean value suggests that employees consider successful completion of assigned tasks as a key indicator of performance. However, the relatively large standard deviation points to some variation in opinions, implying that perceptions of work effectiveness may differ across departments or job roles. The study further established that quality of service and efficiency of employee output are important measures of performance, with mean scores of 3.70 and 3.53 and standard deviations of 1.11 and 1.16 respectively. These results show general agreement among respondents that delivering quality services and maintaining efficient work output contribute positively to overall employee performance. The moderate spread in responses indicates fairly consistent views among employees, suggesting that these

performance dimensions are commonly experienced within the county government's operational environment. On the other hand, respondents expressed uncertainty regarding customer satisfaction and timeliness of service as measures of employee performance, as shown by mean scores of 3.46 and 3.39 with standard deviations of 1.44 and 1.34 respectively. The means close to the neutral scale reveal mixed perceptions among employees about the extent to which these aspects are emphasized in performance evaluation. The aggregate mean of 3.62 and standard deviation of 1.28 therefore indicate that employee performance in the County Government of Turkana is generally perceived to be moderate to high, with stronger emphasis placed on work effectiveness and service quality compared to customer-oriented and time-related performance indicators.

5. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The study examined the moderating effect of leadership commitment. Hierarchical regression analysis revealed that leadership commitment significantly altered the relationship between Results-Based Management practices and employee performance. The findings demonstrated that leadership support, coordination, and commitment strengthen the effectiveness of Results-Based Management practices in improving employee outcomes.

5.2 CONCLUSION

The study concludes that leadership commitment is an essential organizational condition for successful implementation of Results-Based Management systems. Leadership influences how management practices translate into performance outcomes through supervision, motivation, coordination, and institutional support. Without strong leadership commitment, even well-designed Results-Based Management strategies may not yield optimal employee performance. Consequently, leadership commitment acts as a reinforcing mechanism that determines the effectiveness of performance management initiatives within public sector institutions.

5.3 RECOMMENDATION

County leadership should demonstrate stronger commitment toward Results-Based Management through active supervision, performance support, and recognition of employee achievements. Leadership

Leadership training programs focusing on transformational and performance-oriented leadership styles should be prioritized to strengthen managerial capacity. Moreover, leaders should foster a supportive organizational culture that encourages teamwork, shared decision-making, and accountability. Strengthened leadership commitment enhance the successful translation of Results-Based Management practices into improved employee performance outcomes.

5.4 SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

Future studies may examine the influence of additional organizational factors such as organizational culture, employee motivation, technological adoption, and resource adequacy on the effectiveness of Results-Based Management systems in county governments. Such studies would provide broader understanding of performance determinants within devolved governance structures. Further research may also conduct comparative studies across different county governments in Kenya to determine whether Results-Based Management practices produce similar performance outcomes across varying administrative and socio-economic contexts. Longitudinal studies are equally recommended to assess long-term effects of Results-Based Management implementation on public sector performance and service delivery.

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