



Optimizing Team Outcomes through Structuring for Results: Evidence from Kenyan Courier Companies

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Abstract

This study investigated the influence of structuring team for results on team performance among courier companies in Kenya. This study draws on the Hill Model for team leadership, specifically focusing on the internal leadership actions that follow a leader's top-down evaluation of their teams. The action of leaders in structuring for results comprises the elements of planning and visioning, creating a delivery oriented team, and monitoring and feedback. Guided by post-positivist philosophy and a descriptive research design, this study adopted a descriptive correlational design targeting 244 departmental team leaders from four key teams across 61 CAK-licensed international courier companies in Kenya. Through stratified random sampling, 166 leaders were selected, with 156 completing a self-administered electronic questionnaire, yielding a response rate of 94 %. Data were analyzed using IBM SPSS version 29, and the following statistical techniques were applied: descriptive statistics, frequency distributions, means and standard deviations, inferential statistics, correlation, chi-square tests, One-way ANOVA, and ordinal logistic regression. The results revealed that structuring for results significantly influenced team performance, as demonstrated by a Nagelkerke Pseudo R^2 , which indicated that 48.7% of the variance was explained by structuring the results ($R^2 = .487$), and parameter estimates showed that it significantly predicted team performance ($\beta = 1.135$, $p \leq .05$). These findings align with prior research that indicated that structured mechanisms improved goal alignment, whereas monitoring and feedback enhanced team cohesion and performance. The study recommended leveraging the ongoing digital transformation to create platforms that enhance feedback and transparency that can lead to a robust and cohesive team. Future studies could apply the model to other sectors such as transportation, healthcare, and education to test whether the findings are similar across different operational contexts.

Keywords: *Courier industry, Team Structures, Team Leadership, Monitoring and Feedback , Team performance.*

Introduction

Present-day work systems are increasingly relying on leadership capabilities to accomplish tasks and create a cohesive work environment (Benishek and Lazzara, 2019). Kenya's courier sector is among the many industries in which leadership plays a core role in structuring environments oriented towards service delivery. Stavrou et al. (2023) noted that team formation is naturally necessitated by the need to collaborate and work jointly. One of the ways to build teams, is through structuring for results, a task-focused leadership action within the Hill Model for Team Leadership that encompasses planning and visioning, creating delivery-oriented teams, and implementing monitoring and feedback systems to achieve optimal team performance. The courier industry, both internationally and domestically, has recently grown at a very fast rate because of digitization, changing customer tastes and preferences, and the expansion and availability of parcel delivery or fulfilment options (Dragendorf et al., 2019; Communication Authority, 2022).

The existing infrastructure, in terms of human resources and physical assets, is barely holding in the face of increasing competition and rapid change in service requirements. This has necessitated leaders to create effective organizational frameworks that match teams with the tasks at hand. Existing literature from other sectors indicates that clearly defined structures enhance coordination, role clarity, and accountability, resulting in improved performance (Iqbal et al., 2019; Koekemoer et al., 2021). Similarly, ambiguous frameworks can impede team performance and the overall company direction.

In an organizational setting, structured and coordinated interactions among team members cultivate collective comprehension of goals, improve coordination in task performance, and enhance team interdependence (Mayar et al., 2023; Juma et al., 2023). Additionally, predictable and known team structures bolster psychological safety, foster trust, and improve adaptability among team members in dynamic contexts (Gallo, 2023; Gersdorf-Van Den Berg et al., 2022). In the courier industry, where prompt service delivery and operational efficiency are key drivers of success, leadership that emphasizes established processes achieves better outcomes in client expectations and maintains a competitive edge. This study investigates the impact of results-oriented structuring on team performance in Kenya's courier companies.

Statement of the Problem

Notwithstanding the expansion of Kenya's courier sector, operators continue to face operational challenges, while customers decry subpar service performance, which results from disorganization in team collaboration (Communication Authority, 2022; Mbogani et al., 2023). Global and local studies on teams emphasize the efficacy of team-based solutions in enhancing performance, such as applying different leadership styles to assess courier company performance, case-in-point shared leadership, and team performance (Gu et al., 2021), and team structuring (H. Ji & Yan, 2020), and implementing information technology to improve team performance (Mohd et al., 2019; Omollo et al., 2017).

The Hill Model emphasizes structuring for results as a key team leadership internal action; notably, its effectiveness has been inadequately explored in fast-paced operational environments such as logistics and courier services. Northouse (2019) noted that by engaging in planning and visioning, creating delivery-oriented teams, and through monitoring and feedback, leaders may align duties and maintain performance, even when resources are limited. There is scant empirical research examining these ideas within the courier sector, especially

when information systems performance is considered. At the same time, M.Zhang and Cheah (2023) note that parcel volumes are going beyond the technical requirements, and infrastructural systems in place ,hence, exerting mounting pressure on operating capacity of

courier firms. This trend highlights the necessity to investigate how structuring for results could influence team performance in Kenya's courier firms.

Research Question

Does structuring for results influence team performance among courier companies in Kenya?

Hypothesis

Extant research indicates that structuring for results enhances team performance through improved clarity, coordination, and accountability (McGuier et al., 2023; H. Ji & Yan, 2020). Notwithstanding, research has shown that for resource-strained enterprises, inflexible structures may hinder flexibility and diminish performance in dynamic contexts (Cininta & Wisesa, 2023; Hayat et al., 2022). This inconsistency invites a researcher to establish the outcomes of structuring for results in a dynamic and technology-driven industry such as the courier.

H₀ Structuring for results does not significantly influence team performance among courier companies in Kenya

Literature Review

McGuier et al. (2023) contended that a notable disparity in performance exists between teams that adhere to a disciplined application of team-level principles and practices. Moreover, team complexity and dynamics can enhance team performance by optimizing the effectiveness in collaborative environments. Structures provide stability among teams that remains evident after individual departures or role changes. Abrahamsen et al. (2023) align with the existing literature regarding the significance of visioning in strategy formulation. Furthermore, they wanted to investigate how visioning influences leaders' engagement with their external environment, serving as a significant catalyst for internal change that can impact performance.

Beyond these findings, more recent studies emphasize that while structured teams tend to perform better, the outcomes are not always uniform. Arora and Chaudhary (2023) noted that clearly defined goals, roles, and hierarchies enhance cohesion and task completion, consistent with Gopinath and Saleem (2019). In contrast, Cininta and Wisesa (2023) cautioned that rigid or poorly designed structures may create room for role ambiguity and weaken performance when resources are inadequate. H. Ji and Yan (2020) confirmed that structure improves coordination and performance, noting effective feedback and adaptability as catalysts for team performance in these environments.

Theoretical and Empirical Review

This study is grounded in the Hill Model for Team Leadership, conceived by Susan Kogler Hill, and subsequently enhanced by Northouse (2019). The model outlines the procedure followed by team leadership from monitoring, making decisions to act, and most importantly, deciding the scope of the action (internal or external). Internal leader actions are categorized as task-oriented, focusing on goals, structuring for results, facilitating decision-making, training, and upholding standards—or relational, encompassing coaching, conflict management, and fostering commitment. This study focuses on the internal leadership action of structuring for results.

In a study conducted in India involving 110 professionals from various project teams in the Information Technology sector, Arora and Chaudhary (2023) emphasized the place of deliberate initiatives that build team cohesion to improve overall team performance. These initiatives included goal clarity, clearly defined team roles, established procedural guidelines, and interpersonal relationships. In a semi-experimental research design involving senior

learners and undergraduate students, Gopinath and Saleem (2019) found that teams with discernible structures such as a leadership hierarchy demonstrated enhanced performance in task completion and improved learning outcomes. This was attributed to strict adherence to the laid-down procedure and guided team decisions. In contrast, teams with ambiguous structures that lacked established operational procedures fluctuated over time without a clear strategy or action plan. Hence, they rarely achieved their objectives.

Chiguvu et al. (2023) analysed the insurance sector in Zimbabwe, focusing on four of the eleven life insurance companies registered with the Insurance and Pensions Commission (IPC), to explore the relationship between vision formulation and digital transformation. They found a statistically significant relationship between visualization and digital transformation. Regression analysis indicated that a one-unit increase in visioning corresponded to a 10.1% increase in digital transformation, provided that all other factors were held constant.

Across 72 teams from 20 manufacturing firms in China, H. Ji and Yan (2020) investigated the elements of team performance by evaluating feedback from supervisors and managers on aspects of team structure and coordination. Data were collected through questionnaires and in-person interviews. The results supported Hypothesis 1, demonstrating a substantial association between team structure and coordination, as indicated by the positive regression coefficient ($b=0.40$, $p<0.01$) of team structure on team coordination.

Park and Choi (2020) suggested that the relationship between feedback and individual performance is affected by the goal clarity. Using a government workforce as the research population, they found that goal clarity mediated the relationship between performance feedback and individual performance, while the level of autonomy in goal clarity also affected individual performance outcomes. The study's results primarily demonstrated that feedback is a useful tool for clarifying goal ambiguity and establishing clear and structured team roles.

Conceptual Framework

Burkholder (2020) asserted that conceptual frameworks demonstrate the interrelations among the constructs or concepts examined in a study, and correlate them with the evaluation or formulation of formal theories. The conceptual framework illustrates the significance of the study by demonstrating the connection between structuring for results and team performance.

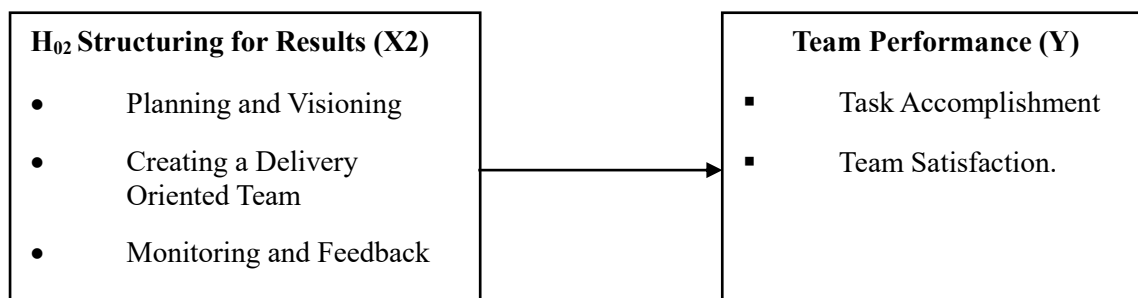


Figure 1.1 Conceptual Framework

Methodology

Data collection and Instrument Reliability

The data were collected using a self-administered online questionnaire. The items were self-developed and anchored in the Hill Model for Team Leadership theoretical dimensions with the following sub-variables: planning and visioning, creating delivery-oriented teams, and monitoring and feedback. A pilot test was conducted to establish reliability and validity, and Cronbach's alpha coefficient for each construct was computed. All the scales met or exceeded the 0.70 threshold, demonstrating acceptable internal consistency.

Ethical considerations

Prior to data collection, ethical clearance was obtained from the United States International University–Africa Institutional Ethics and Review Committee (IERC). The author also applied and granted a research permit from the National Commission for Science, Technology, and Innovation (NACOSTI), a Kenyan state body mandated to regulate research within Kenya. During data collection, due care to the respondents was adhered to by seeking permission from relevant courier companies before approaching the departmental team leaders. Participation in the study was voluntary, and informed consent was obtained after the objectives were explained in a clear and accessible language. The researcher assured the respondents of confidentiality, and their identities were anonymized. In addition, the study complied with the Kenyan Data Protection Act (2019), ensuring that all personal information was handled responsibly and in line with legal and ethical standards.

Research Design

This study adopted a post-positivist philosophical worldview. The research design used to examine the objectives was descriptive and correlational. The target population comprised 244 departmental team leaders drawn from four key teams in 61 international courier companies licensed and registered by the Communications Authority of Kenya (CAK) as of June 2024. Key departmental team leaders were drawn from local parcel shipping, international freight, operations security, and customer support teams. A stratified random sampling technique was applied to determine the sample size of the 166 departmental team leaders. The data were collected using a self-administered questionnaire. The Statistical analysis incorporated both descriptive and inferential statistical techniques. These included correlation analysis, chi-square tests, one-way ANOVA, and ordinal logistic regression to evaluate the relationship structuring for results and team performance. This approach ensured systematic data collection and analysis, thereby closely adhering to the tenets of the quantitative research methods.

Results

Descriptive Statistics

The findings revealed that 33% of participants concurred, while 24% strongly concurred that planning and visioning in structuring for results affects team performance. There was a comparable degree of consensus on all three latent variables: planning and visioning, team building, and monitoring and feedback, with respondents selecting "agree" at rates of 33%, 31%, and 36%, respectively. The average percentage of responders who disagreed with the statements varied from 10% to 17% across the three statements. These findings underscore the

need for a structured leadership style. Moreover, the implementation of structured elements for outcomes was demonstrated to markedly improve performance, as indicated by 67% cumulative agreement.

Inferential Statistics

Common Method Bias

The researcher conducted Harman's single-factor test by running an unrotated exploratory factor analysis (Principal Axis Factoring) on all the measurement items. The first factor accounted for 59.08% of the variance, exceeding the 50% benchmark, suggesting potential common method bias. In consideration of this, the researcher implemented procedural remedies (anonymity/confidentiality of the respondents, separating all constructs by structuring the questionnaire into sections and applying neutral wording). Finally, the results were interpreted cautiously.

Pearson's Correlation Analysis

Pearson's correlation analysis was performed to assess the relationship between the structuring for results and its relation to team performance variables. The results presented in Table 1.1 demonstrate a robust positive correlation ($r(156) = 0.706$, $p \leq .05$). The findings indicate that enhancements in structuring for results correlate with improvements in team performance.

Table 1.1

Correlation between Structuring for Results and Team Performance

	Assessment of Structuring for Results	Influence of Structuring for Results on Team Performance	
Assessment of Structuring for Results	Pearson Correlation	1	.706**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		<.001
	N	156	156
Influence of Structuring for Results on Team Performance	Pearson Correlation	.706**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	<.001	
	N	156	156

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

* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Chi-Square Analysis

A chi-square test was used to investigate the association between structuring for results and team performance. The data presented in Table 1.2, $\chi^2(264, N=156)=486.283$, $p \leq .05$, suggest a statistically significant association between structuring for results and team performance. This outcome substantiates the rejection of the null hypothesis.

Table 1.2***Chi-square test for Structuring for Results and Team Performance***

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	486.283 ^a	264	<.001
Likelihood Ratio	266.056	264	.453
Linear-by-Linear Association	77.193	1	<.001
N of Valid Cases	156		

Chi-square is significant at $p \leq .05$ (2-tailed)

Nagelkerke Pseudo-R Square

Table 1.3 presents the pseudo R-squared statistics. A Nagelkerke Pseudo value of 0.487 suggests that 48.7% of the variance in team performance can be attributed to the independent variable structuring for the results.

Table 1.3***Pseudo R-Square for Structuring for Results***

Cox and Snell	.461
Nagelkerke	.487
McFadden	.211

Link function: Logit.

Parameter Estimates for Structuring for Results

Parameter estimates derived from the ordinal logistic regression analysis were utilised to investigate how the predictor variable structuring for results related to the dependent variable of team performance. Ordinal logistic regression was used to determine the log-odds of the dependent variable (team performance) being within or below a specified performance category in relation to changes in the predictor variable.

The regression model utilized the cumulative logit function, represented as

$$\text{Logit}[P(Y \leq j)] = \alpha_j - \beta_2 X_2.$$

“Strongly Agree” for the independent variable was selected as the baseline reference (highest structuring) for comparison with all other lower response levels of the predictor being negative. The expectation here is that negative β values reduce the odds of team performance being in the same or higher category as the predictor variable. Consequently, all lower items on the structuring for results Likert scale had lower odds of being in a higher team performance category than the reference group.

Parameter estimates showed a statistically significant effect on team performance (Wald = 4.057, $p = .044$). For example, Agree vs. Strongly agree, the β coefficient was -1.135 , which corresponds to an odds ratio of 0.32—about 68% lower odds of being in a higher performance category compared with “Strongly agree.” This pattern across all the lower categories indicates that more structuring is associated with higher performance. The data

indicated that structuring for results significantly enhances team performance in courier companies in Kenya. Consequently, the null hypothesis (H_{02}), which stated that structuring for results does not significantly affect team performance, was rejected.

Table 1.4

Parameter Estimates for Structuring for Results

						95% Confidence Interval	
						Lower Bound	Upper Bound
		Estimate	Std. Error	Wald	dfSig.		
Threshold	[DV_SR_TP_Rec = 1.00]	-5.010	.553	82.120	1 <.001	-6.093	-3.926
	[DV_SR_TP_Rec = 2.00]	-4.216	.503	70.330	1 <.001	-5.202	-3.231
	[DV_SR_TP_Rec = 3.00]	-2.534	.419	36.554	1 <.001	-3.355	-1.712
	[DV_SR_TP_Rec = 4.00]	-.881	.332	7.022	1 .008	-1.532	-.229
Location	[totalScoreSR_Rec=1.00]	-5.317	.762	48.641	1 <.001	-6.811	-3.822
	[totalScoreSR_Rec=2.00]	-3.649	.606	36.229	1 <.001	-4.838	-2.461
	[totalScoreSR_Rec=3.00]	-2.732	.503	29.457	1 <.001	-3.718	-1.745
	[totalScoreSR_Rec=4.00]	-1.135	.564	4.057	1 .044	-2.240	-.031
	[totalScoreSR_Rec=5.00]	0 ^a	.	.	0 .	.	.

Link function: Logit.

- This parameter is set to zero because it is redundant.
- The significant negative coefficient for the predictor variable indicates that a move away from the 'Strongly Agree' category on structuring is associated with a decreased log-odds of higher team performance.

Theoretical Implications

This study makes a timely contribution to the Hill Model for Team Leadership by demonstrating that internal task-oriented team leader actions of structuring for results are strongly and positively associated with team performance. Empirical results show that deliberate planning, purposefully building a team, and, most importantly, implementing monitoring and feedback to keep all team members in check reinforces and catalyses a team's performance. At the same time, prior research has suggested that excessive structures can reduce adaptability, indicating boundary conditions. Overall, the results refine the Hill Model

by specifying when structuring is the most effective and underscoring the need to balance structure with flexibility.

Discussion and Conclusions

This study examined the influence of structuring for results on team performance among courier companies in Kenya. Structuring for results is an internal task-oriented leader action

that comprises planning and visioning, creating delivery-oriented structures, and implementing monitoring and feedback mechanisms.

The correlation results were statistically significant, indicating a robust positive link between structuring for results and team performance ($r = 0.706$, $p \leq .05$). This implies that this action enhances the team performance. This compared to results from past studies by McGuier et al. (2023), Zasa and Buganza (2022), and Arora and Chaudhary (2023) who found out that structured team had positive influence on team performance. By contrast, Hayat et al. (2022) cautioned against extreme adherence to fixed structures. Cininta and Wisesa (2023) noted that, in startups, fixed team structures may fail to address problems in a timely manner. The chi-square test indicated an association between the independent and dependent variables, χ^2 (264, $N = 156$) = 486.283, $p \leq .05$, consistent with Gopinath and Saleem (2019) and H. Ji and Yan (2020). A one-way ANOVA revealed significant differences related to team leaders' tenure, F (12, 156) = 1.995, $p < .05$, suggesting that seasoned leaders excel in creating performance-oriented frameworks (H. Ji & Yan, 2020; Zhai & Tian, 2022). Abrahamsen et al. (2023) cautioned against excessive dependence on established routines that may kill innovation.

Ordinal logistic regression indicated that structuring for results was a significant predictor ($\beta = -1.135$, $p \leq .05$). Further, the Nagelkerke Pseudo R-Squared indicated that it accounted for 48.7% of the variation in team performance. Hence, null hypothesis H_{02} was rejected. On one hand, supporting the literature (S. Park and Choi (2020), Van den Hout et al. (2019), Arora and Chaudhary (2023), and Deng (2022) have noted the need for structured feedback and clearly defined roles. On the other, H. Ji and Yan (2020) and Rabbani et al. (2023) noted that team members are likely to take longer to adapt to fixed structures, thereby causing a stressful work environment. The results affirm that team structuring for results is a crucial leadership instrument for improving team performance.

Recommendations

The results revealed that structuring for results significantly influenced team performance among courier companies in Kenya. At the basic level, team leaders ought to align an organization's structures with overarching company goals, while remaining flexible to operational changes. Given the significant influence of structuring for results on team performance, courier companies are encouraged to design team models that are delivery-oriented, paying attention to the clarity of role definition among team members so that each team player has a clear understanding of their duties and can make positive contributions. It is imperative for teams to have a self-improving mechanism that can be achieved through a feedback loop. A formal monitoring and feedback system enhances accountability among team members and enables real-time monitoring and performance adjustments.

Limitations and Future Research

This study has several limitations that may guide future research. First, the data were collected from a singular point in time and with the same instrument; therefore, common method bias is a concern. This is despite the implementation of procedural mitigations (assuring anonymity/confidentiality, sectioning the constructs in different questions, and using natural easy-to-understand language in the questions). The unrotated factor analysis, which included all scale items, revealed that the primary factor explained 59.1% of the variance. Therefore, caution should be exercised when interpreting these findings. Second, this study adopted a cross-sectional design. This approach does not support causality or eliminate it. Future studies should consider longitudinal and experimental approaches.

Generalizability is restricted to departmental team leaders in international courier companies in Kenya; a future study may be replicated on the other categories of courier companies or other industries such as logistics and healthcare. Notably, the questionnaire item was self-created, and reliability and validity tests confirmed satisfactory internal consistency. Future research should consider prevalidated measurement scales.

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