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INFLUENCE OF PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT PRACTICES ON STRATEGIC PLAN IMPLEMENTATION AT OLD MUTUAL INSURANCE PLC, RWANDA

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ABSTRACT

This study determined the influence of performance management practices on strategic plan implementation at Old Mutual Insurance PLC, Rwanda. A mixed-methods case study with a descriptive and correlational design was used. Data were collected from senior managers and middle-management staff through structured questionnaires, semi-structured interviews, and document review. Of the 77 questionnaires distributed, 75 were returned, giving a response rate of 97.4%. The instruments were valid (Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin = 0.798; Bartlett's test $p < .001$) and reliable (Cronbach's alpha = 0.963 for performance management and 0.874 for strategic plan implementation). Respondents rated performance management moderately high (composite mean = 3.37), with the recognition and incentivization of strategic contributors rated lowest (mean = 3.08). Performance management was strongly and significantly correlated with strategic plan implementation ($r = .781$, $p < .001$). In a multiple regression that controlled for recruitment and selection and for training and development, performance management was the strongest predictor of strategic plan implementation ($B = 0.368$, $\beta = .809$, $t = 7.302$, $p < .001$), and the model was statistically significant, $F(3, 73) = 31.837$, $p < .001$, explaining 59.4% of the variation in strategic plan implementation. The null hypothesis of no significant effect was therefore rejected. The study concludes that performance management is the most influential human resource coordination practice for turning strategy into results in the insurer, and that its effect depends on how consistently goals are cascaded, feedback is given, and rewards are tied to strategic milestones. It recommends that management cascade the strategic plan into individual key performance indicators through the balanced scorecard, institutionalize quarterly feedback, apply reward and recognition systems consistently against strategic milestones, and build line managers' capacity to hold strategy-focused performance conversations.

Keywords: *Performance Management, Strategic Plan Implementation, Human Resource Coordination, Insurance, Old Mutual Insurance PLC, Rwanda*

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BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Strategic plans often fail in implementation rather than in formulation, and human resource management has therefore moved from an administrative support function to a strategic partner in executing organizational goals (Armstrong & Taylor, 2023). Among the human resource practices that support execution, performance management is the one that most directly links individual effort to organizational strategy. It is the continuous process of cascading performance expectations, monitoring outcomes, giving feedback, and rewarding employees so that daily work stays aligned with strategic objectives (Aguinis, Joo, & Gottfredson, 2021). Armstrong and Taylor (2023) report that organizations using agile performance management frameworks with quarterly strategic check-ins achieve 45% higher strategy completion rates than those relying on annual reviews, and Cascio and Boudreau (2021) show that performance metrics linked explicitly to strategic key performance indicators (KPIs) create clearer accountability and let managers detect and close execution gaps in real time rather than after implementation.

In Sub-Saharan Africa, performance management has to be adapted to local conditions if it is to support strategy. Horwitz and Budhwar (2021) observe that performance systems in the region often need to accommodate collective cultural values and relational workplace dynamics, which affect how feedback is given and received, while Jackson and Schuler (2022) note that multinational corporations in emerging markets frequently add community-based indicators to traditional business metrics. In East Africa, Mwaura and Nyambegera (2022) report that Kenyan financial institutions are prioritizing performance management systems that are tightly coupled with strategic growth targets in order to win market share, and Mbwambo and Hussein (2024) found that culturally adapted performance systems significantly predicted strategy implementation in Tanzanian financial institutions.

In Rwanda, Vision 2050 and the economic reforms that accompany it require financial-sector firms, including insurers such as Old Mutual, to align their strategies with national development goals. Mukama and Ngarambe (2023) note that Rwandan firms are adopting balanced scorecard approaches that integrate financial, customer, internal process, and learning measures to give a fuller view of strategic progress. The Rwanda Insurance Supervisory Commission (2023) reports that insurers with transparent, strategy-linked performance management systems record higher compliance and customer satisfaction. Even so, the World Bank (2024) highlights a persistent challenge: many firms struggle to link employee performance metrics directly to their overarching strategic plans.

Old Mutual Insurance PLC is a licensed insurance provider in Rwanda and a subsidiary of the African-focused Old Mutual Limited financial services group. It operates in a heavily regulated and rapidly digitizing market in which the execution of its strategic plan depends on how well the objectives of senior management are translated into the targets, feedback, and rewards experienced by middle-management staff and their teams. The company therefore offers a practical case for examining how performance management affects strategic plan implementation at firm level. This study investigated the influence of performance management practices on strategic plan implementation at Old Mutual Insurance PLC, Rwanda.

Statement of the Research Problem

Poor coordination of human capital is a major reason why strategies fail. Globally, McKinsey (2023) reports that 67% of organizations fail to implement their strategies fully, with significant revenue losses. In Sub-Saharan Africa, only 34% of financial firms effectively align their performance systems with strategic goals (International Labour Organization [ILO], 2022). In Rwanda, the National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda (2024) reports that human resource misalignment drives milestone delays in 58% of private enterprises, and the Rwanda Insurance Supervisory Commission (2023) reveals that insurers with fragmented human resource practices achieve only 61% of targeted market growth, compared with 89% for insurers whose human resource and strategy functions are integrated.

Performance management is recognized as an important driver of strategy execution (Armstrong & Taylor, 2023; Cascio & Boudreau, 2021). However, most existing evidence comes from Western, Asian, or other African settings. Armstrong and Taylor (2023) focus on Western contexts, which limits their applicability to Africa; Mwaura and Nyambegera (2022) study Kenyan finance, which differs from Rwanda's institutional environment; and Mukama and Ngarambe (2023) analyze Rwandan human capital in general without insurance-specific dynamics. Little empirical evidence exists on whether performance management improves strategic plan implementation in Rwanda's insurance sector, and none has tested the effect at Old Mutual Insurance PLC. This gap leaves managers and regulators without evidence-based guidance on whether to invest in strengthening performance management systems. This study therefore sought to determine the influence of performance management practices on strategic plan implementation at Old Mutual Insurance PLC, Rwanda.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Empirical Review - Performance Management and Strategic Plan Implementation

Evidence from several settings shows that performance management is positively associated with strategy implementation outcomes such as goal attainment, milestone completion, and stakeholder support. In Brazil, Silva and Santos (2023) surveyed 276 human resource managers and strategic planners in listed multinational corporations and analyzed the data using structural equation modelling. Organizations that used agile performance management systems with quarterly strategic check-ins achieved 39% higher goal attainment, and real-time performance analytics had the strongest predictive validity for successful execution ($\beta = 0.61$, $p < 0.001$). The authors concluded that continuous performance dialogue should be embedded in strategic workflows.

In Sweden, Andersson, Lindqvist, and Bergström (2022) used a mixed-methods explanatory sequential design, surveying 164 senior executives and interviewing 21 participants across the technology, pharmaceutical, and renewable energy sectors. Collaborative performance practices fully mediated the relationship between sustainability-linked metrics and strategy implementation success, and interviewees reported that consensus-based goal setting and transparent dialogue improved cross-functional coordination. In China, Zhang, Li, and Wang (2024) tracked 198 strategic business units of state-owned enterprises over 18 months. Units that integrated digital performance platforms with institutional oversight completed strategic milestones 34% faster, and real-time feedback had a significant positive effect on implementation agility ($\beta = 0.44$, $p < 0.01$).

In Africa, Mwila and Chanda (2023) used a qualitative multiple case study of four organizations in Zambia and found that adding community development metrics to commercial indicators strengthened the legitimacy of strategy implementation and local stakeholder support. In East Africa, Mbwambo and Hussein (2024) surveyed 213 human resource managers and strategic planners across 45 licensed financial institutions in Tanzania. Culturally adapted performance management systems significantly predicted implementation success ($\beta = 0.49$, $p < 0.01$), and mobile-enabled feedback mechanisms partially mediated the relationship.

In Rwanda and Kenya, the evidence is less direct. Mukama and Ngarambe (2023) found that Rwandan firms are adopting balanced scorecards and that the link between human resource investment and strategic implementation is inconsistent because of contextual factors such as regulatory demands and talent scarcity, while Mwaura and Nyambegera (2022) reported that Kenyan financial institutions achieve variable strategic success depending on leadership mediation and informal coordination routines. Niyonzima and Uwimana (2024) showed that digital platforms improve data visibility but do not by themselves improve strategic adaptation. Taken together, these studies suggest that performance management improves strategy implementation, but most were conducted in large multi-firm samples or outside Rwanda, and none examined a Rwandan insurer, which is the gap this study addresses.

Theoretical Literature on Performance Management

Performance management is a deliberate and continuous process in which an organization sets performance expectations, monitors results, provides feedback, and rewards contributions so that individual behavior supports organizational objectives (Aguinis et al., 2021). Its main components are goal setting and the cascading of strategic objectives into individual KPIs, communication of expectations, regular appraisal and feedback, and recognition and reward linked to performance. Rather than being an annual appraisal event, it has shifted globally toward continuous, strategy-focused feedback in which individual objectives are aligned with strategic priorities to produce cohesive organizational effort (Armstrong & Taylor, 2023).

The literature stresses that the quality of implementation matters as much as the existence of a system. Employees' experience of performance management varies with the clarity, consistency, and transparency with which it is applied (Bamberger & Meshoulam, 2022), and communication is a critical component of systems that deliver strategic alignment (Gupta & Sharma, 2023). Where performance metrics are tied to strategic KPIs, accountability is clearer and execution gaps can be identified while there is still time to correct them (Cascio & Boudreau, 2021). In Rwanda's regulated insurance market, strategy-linked and transparent systems are associated with higher compliance and customer satisfaction (Rwanda Insurance Supervisory Commission, 2023).

Performance management must also be adapted to context. In Sub-Saharan Africa, feedback and rewards have to take account of collective cultural values and relational dynamics (Horwitz & Budhwar, 2021), and multinational subsidiaries often add locally relevant indicators to global metrics (Jackson & Schuler, 2022). In this study, performance management is therefore treated not merely as an appraisal tool but as a coordination mechanism that connects the strategic plan of Old Mutual Insurance PLC to the daily work of its managers and staff.

Dynamic Capabilities Theory

Dynamic Capabilities Theory was proposed by Teece, Pisano, and Shuen (1997) to explain how firms adapt their competencies to changing environments. It identifies three micro-foundations: sensing opportunities and threats, seizing them by mobilizing resources, and transforming the organization to remain aligned with its environment. The theory holds that competitive advantage comes not from resources alone but from the organizational routines through which those resources are continually reconfigured (Teece, 2021).

The theory is directly relevant to the objective of this study. Performance management practices function as routines that enable all three micro-foundations. Performance metrics and feedback allow management to sense misalignments and environmental shifts, goal setting and rewards help the organization seize priorities by aligning effort with strategy, and learning systems and cross-functional coordination support transformation (Teece, 2021; Helfat & Peteraf, 2021). Barreto (2021) adds that these practices must be calibrated to the volatility of the environment. For Old Mutual Insurance PLC, the theory implies that a performance management system that cascades the strategic plan into individual targets, monitors progress regularly, and adjusts feedback and rewards as conditions change should improve the execution of that plan.

The theory also has limitations. Priem, Butler, and Li (2021) argue that it suffers from conceptual vagueness that limits its predictive precision, and Farndale (2023) notes that its micro-foundations pay too little attention to power dynamics, informal coordination routines, and regulatory pressures that mediate the link between performance systems and strategy in African financial sectors. Nevertheless, it offers a process-oriented lens for explaining why performance management may improve strategy execution in a regulation-intensive and fast-changing setting such as Rwanda's insurance industry, and it justifies the focus of this study on the routines of goal alignment, communication, feedback, and reward.

Conceptual Framework

This study is anchored in a conceptual framework that treats performance management practices as the independent variable and strategic plan implementation as the dependent variable (Boxall & Purcell, 2022). Performance management is operationalized through four dimensions: the alignment of performance targets and KPIs with strategic goals, the communication of strategic goals and performance expectations, appraisal and feedback, and recognition and rewards for contributions to strategic goals. Strategic plan implementation refers to the execution of the organization's strategic objectives through the achievement of strategic milestones, coordinated action, resource allocation, and continuous monitoring. The framework posits that when performance expectations are clearly cascaded, communicated, monitored, and rewarded, employees' daily activities are better aligned with strategic priorities, which improves coordination and accountability and leads to more successful implementation of the strategic plan. Figure 1 illustrates the hypothesized relationship.

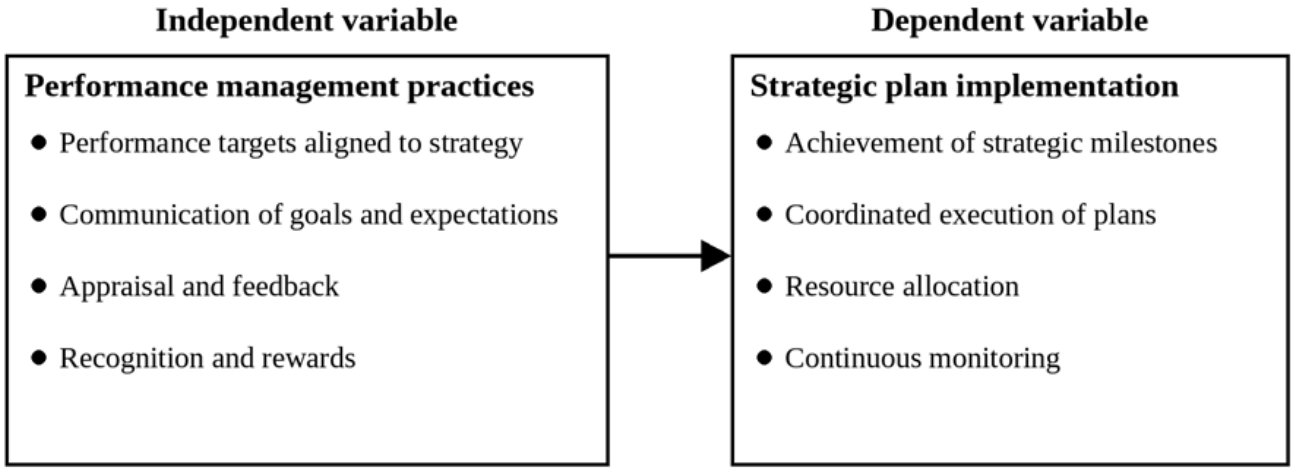


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework
Source: Researcher, 2026

Following dynamic capabilities theory, the relationship is expected to depend on the operating context of Old Mutual Insurance PLC, including its regulatory environment and the pace of digital change. The other human resource coordination practices, namely recruitment and selection and training and development, are also expected to influence strategic plan implementation, and they were therefore included as control variables in the regression analysis so that the specific effect of performance management could be isolated.

METHODOLOGY

This study employed a mixed-methods case study approach with a descriptive and correlational design to determine the influence of performance management practices on strategic plan implementation at Old Mutual Insurance PLC, Rwanda (Creswell & Creswell, 2023). Performance management was measured through the quality of current practices, alignment with strategic goals, communication of goals and expectations, and recognition and incentivization of strategic contributions, while strategic plan implementation was measured through respondents' perceptions of the execution of the organization's strategic objectives. The target population comprised 95 managers from the head office and branches in Kigali, namely 7 senior managers and 88 middle-management staff who were directly involved in strategic and human resource activities. Using Yamane's (1967) formula at a 5% margin of error, a sample of 77 respondents (6 senior managers and 71 middle-management staff) was determined and selected through purposive sampling, which targets key informants with sufficient knowledge of the study variables (Etikan, Musa, & Alkassim, 2021; Taherdoost, 2022). Data were collected using structured questionnaires with closed-ended and five-point Likert items (1 =

Strongly Disagree, 5 = Strongly Agree), interview guides for senior managers and human resource officers, and a review of organizational documents including human resource policies, strategic plan reports, and performance evaluation records. The instruments were pilot-tested on about 8 respondents at Britam Insurance Limited, which was outside the main study. Face and content validity were established through expert review, and construct validity was supported by the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy (0.798) and Bartlett's test of sphericity ($\chi^2 = 117.566$, df = 6, $p < .001$). Internal consistency was confirmed through Cronbach's alpha ($\alpha = 0.963$ for performance management and $\alpha = 0.874$ for strategic plan implementation), both above the 0.70 threshold (Field, 2022). Quantitative data were analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 25 through descriptive statistics, Pearson correlation, and multiple regression with recruitment and selection and training and development as control variables, while interview responses were analyzed qualitatively to corroborate the statistical results. Ethical protocols, including access permission, informed consent, confidentiality, anonymity, voluntary participation, freedom from coercion, and secure storage of data, were strictly observed throughout the study.

RESULTS AND FINDINGS

Descriptive Results on Performance Management Practices

Of the 77 questionnaires distributed, 75 were returned and usable, which represents a response rate of 97.4% and provides a sound basis for analysis. Of the respondents, 53.0% were male and 47.0% were female; 37.3% were aged 41 to 50 years; 34.7% held a postgraduate qualification and 26.7% a bachelor's degree; and 36.3% had 4 to 7 years of working experience, 28.8% had 7 to 10 years, and 15.0% had more than 10 years, which suggests that most respondents had the education and experience needed to give informed views on performance management and strategy implementation.

This section presents respondents' views on performance management practices at Old Mutual Insurance PLC. Table 1 summarizes the responses on a five-point Likert scale (SD = Strongly Disagree, D = Disagree, NS = Not Sure, A = Agree, SA = Strongly Agree).

Table 1: Respondents' views on Performance Management

Statement on Performance Management	SD	D	NS	A	SA	Mean	Std Dev.
Performance management practices currently in place in the organization are good.	12.0%	17.0%	17.0%	20.0%	33.0%	3.46	1.417
Performance management practices align with the strategic goals and objectives of the organization.	13.0%	18.0%	17.0%	21.0%	34.0%	3.46	1.417
Strategic goals and performance expectations are communicated throughout the organization.	9.3%	18.0%	22.0%	17.0%	32.0%	3.44	1.350
Performers who contribute significantly to strategic goals are acknowledged and incentivized.	16.0%	21.0%	21.0%	21.0%	20.0%	3.08	1.370
Business alignment with strategy cannot be managed without the human resource function.	12.0%	20.0%	14.0%	22.0%	30.0%	3.40	1.440
Composite mean / Composite Std Dev.						**3.37**	**1.308**

Source: **Study data** (2025).

Respondents were moderately positive about performance management at Old Mutual Insurance PLC. About half agreed that current practices are good (53.0% Agree and Strongly Agree; Mean = 3.46, SD = 1.417) and that they align with the strategic goals and objectives of the organization (55.0%; Mean = 3.46, SD = 1.417), and these two statements recorded the highest means. Communication of strategic goals and performance expectations was rated slightly lower (49.0% agreement; Mean = 3.44, SD = 1.350), with 22.0% of respondents unsure, which suggests that cascading strategic priorities is not yet uniform across the

organization. These results are consistent with the observation that employees' experience of performance management varies with the clarity and consistency of its application (Bamberger & Meshoulam, 2022; Gupta & Sharma, 2023).

The recognition and incentivization of performers who contribute significantly to strategic goals recorded the lowest mean (3.08, SD = 1.370), with only 41.0% agreement and 37.0% disagreement, which indicates that reward and acknowledgment systems are not consistently linked to strategic contributions. At the same time, 52.0% agreed that business alignment with strategy cannot be managed without the human resource function (Mean = 3.40, SD = 1.440), which shows that respondents see human resources as central to translating strategy into performance. The composite mean of 3.37 and composite standard deviation of 1.308 indicate that performance management is operational and moderately effective but that opinions differ widely, so there is room for improvement, particularly in rewards and communication (Armstrong & Taylor, 2023).

Correlation and Regression Results for Performance Management and Strategic Plan Implementation

Pearson's correlation coefficient was first used to establish the strength and direction of the relationship between performance management and strategic plan implementation. Table 2 shows that the relationship was positive, strong, and statistically significant ($r = .781$, $p < .001$). Performance management recorded the strongest correlation with strategic plan implementation among the three human resource coordination practices studied (recruitment and selection $r = .396$, training and development $r = .612$). Performance management alone therefore accounts for about 61.0% of the variation in strategic plan implementation ($r^2 = .610$). Performance management was moderately related to recruitment and selection ($r = .273$, $p = .018$) and strongly related to training and development ($r = .767$, $p < .001$), which indicates that the three practices operate together.

Table 2: Correlation between Performance Management and Strategic Plan Implementation

Variables	Pearson r	Sig. (2-tailed)	N
Performance Management and Strategic Plan Implementation	.781**	.000	75

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

Source: **Study data** (2025).

Multiple regression analysis was then conducted to determine the effect of performance management on strategic plan implementation while controlling for recruitment and selection and training and development. The Durbin-Watson statistic of 2.020 indicates no significant autocorrelation in the residuals. Table 3 shows that the model produced an R value of 0.771, indicating a strong positive relationship between the predictors and strategic plan implementation. The R Square of 0.594 shows that approximately 59.4% of the variation in strategic plan implementation is explained by the model, and the Adjusted R Square of 0.575 confirms its explanatory power after accounting for the number of predictors. The remaining 40.6% may be attributed to factors not included in the model, such as leadership, organizational culture, and resource availability.

Table 3: Model Summary for Performance Management and Control Variables

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.771a	.594	.575	.22828	2.020

a. Predictors: (Constant), Performance management, Recruitment and selection, Training and development.

b. Dependent variable: Strategic plan implementation.

Source: **Study data** (2025).

The ANOVA results in Table 4 confirm that the regression model is statistically significant, $F(3, 73) = 31.837$, $p < .001$, which means that performance management and the control variables jointly predict

variation in strategic plan implementation. The regression sum of squares (6.636) is larger than the residual sum of squares (4.534), which is consistent with the high R Square.

Table 4: ANOVA results

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	6.636	3	1.659	31.837	.000b
	Residual	4.534	73	.052		
	Total	11.170	76			

a. Dependent variable: Strategic plan implementation.
b. Predictors: (Constant), Performance management, Recruitment and selection, Training and development.
Source: **Study data** (2025).

Table 5 presents the regression coefficients. Performance management had a positive and statistically significant effect on strategic plan implementation (B = 0.368, SE = 0.050, β = .809, t = 7.302, p < .001). Holding recruitment and selection and training and development constant, a one-unit increase in performance management is associated with a 0.368-unit increase in strategic plan implementation. Performance management had the strongest standardized effect among the three predictors, well ahead of recruitment and selection (β = .232, p = .005), while training and development had a negative but non-significant effect (β = −.119, p = .330). Because the p-value (< .001) is below the 0.05 significance level, the null hypothesis that performance management practices have no significant effect on strategic plan implementation at Old Mutual Insurance PLC, Rwanda was rejected.

Table 5: Coefficient results

Model		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)	1.267	.551		2.299	.024
	Performance management	.368	.050	.809	7.302	.000
	Recruitment and selection	.134	.047	.232	2.869	.005
	Training and development	−.060	.061	−.119	−.980	.330

a. Dependent variable: Strategic plan implementation.
Source: **Study data** (2025).

The overall regression equation can be represented as:

Strategic Plan Implementation = 1.267 + 0.368 Performance Management + 0.134 Recruitment and Selection − 0.060 Training and Development

The equation shows that, with the other practices held constant, each additional unit of performance management adds 0.368 units to the strategic plan implementation score. The constant of 1.267 represents the predicted level of strategic plan implementation when all three practices score zero, a situation that is theoretically unlikely in practice. These findings indicate that strengthening performance management, in particular by cascading strategic goals into individual targets, communicating expectations, giving regular feedback, and rewarding strategic contributions, is associated with better execution of the strategic plan at Old Mutual Insurance PLC.

Discussion of the Findings - Performance Management and Strategic Plan Implementation

The findings confirm that performance management has a significant positive influence on strategic plan implementation at Old Mutual Insurance PLC, Rwanda. Performance management was rated moderately high

(composite mean = 3.37), correlated strongly with strategic plan implementation ($r = .781$, $p < .001$), and was the strongest predictor of implementation in the regression model ($\beta = .809$, $p < .001$). The null hypothesis was therefore rejected. The result is consistent with the earlier evidence reviewed in this study. Silva and Santos (2023) found that agile performance management with continuous feedback was associated with higher goal attainment in Brazilian multinationals, Zhang et al. (2024) reported faster milestone completion where real-time feedback was integrated into performance systems, and Mbwambo and Hussein (2024) found that performance systems significantly predicted strategy implementation in Tanzanian financial institutions. The present study extends this evidence to a Rwandan insurer.

Qualitative evidence from interviews supports the statistical results. A Strategic Planning Manager explained, *"We utilize a balanced scorecard approach to cascade organizational strategic goals into individual Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). We conduct quarterly feedback sessions and regular appraisals to monitor progress, ensuring that daily employee activities are directly aligned with and incentivized toward our broader strategic targets."* This account shows the mechanism through which performance management supports implementation: strategic goals are translated into individual targets, progress is monitored at regular intervals, and corrective feedback is given while the plan is still being executed, which is the quarterly check-in practice that Armstrong and Taylor (2023) link to higher strategy completion rates. In dynamic capabilities terms, metrics and feedback help the organization sense misalignments, goal setting and rewards help it seize strategic priorities, and regular review supports transformation (Teece, 2021; Helfat & Peteraf, 2021).

The interviews also explain the lower ratings recorded for rewards and communication. A Senior Executive noted, *"The primary challenge is the inconsistent application of reward systems and occasional resource constraints that hinder optimal performance management."* This agrees with the lowest mean in Table 1, for the recognition and incentivization of strategic contributors (Mean = 3.08), and with the finding that 22.0% of respondents were unsure whether goals and expectations are communicated throughout the organization. It also supports the view that the value of a performance system depends on how consistently it is applied (Bamberger & Meshoulam, 2022; Gupta & Sharma, 2023) and that, in the Rwandan insurance sector, transparent, strategy-linked systems are the ones associated with better results (Rwanda Insurance Supervisory Commission, 2023). The finding is also consistent with Mwaura and Nyambegera (2022), who observed that Kenyan financial institutions achieve better strategic results when performance management systems are tightly coupled with strategic growth targets.

Two points call for caution. First, performance management was very strongly correlated with training and development ($r = .767$), and the interviews show why: an HR Development Officer explained that training needs are identified through performance appraisals and strategic gap analyses. Because the two practices overlap, the negative and non-significant coefficient for training and development ($\beta = -.119$, $p = .330$) should not be read as evidence that training is unimportant, but rather as a sign that much of its contribution may already be captured through performance management; it suggests that training works best when it is explicitly linked to appraisal outcomes and strategic milestones. Second, the sample was small (75 respondents), purposively selected, and drawn from a single organization, and the data are based on respondents' perceptions. The explained variation (59.4%) is also high for a perception-based model, and the results should be read as evidence of association at Old Mutual Insurance PLC rather than as proof of causation or a basis for generalizing to the whole sector.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study establishes that performance management practices have a significant positive influence on strategic plan implementation at Old Mutual Insurance PLC, Rwanda. Respondents reported that performance management practices are in place, are aligned with strategic goals, and are moderately well communicated, although recognition and incentivization of strategic contributors was rated lowest. Performance management was strongly and significantly correlated with strategic plan implementation ($r = .781$, $p < .001$) and was the

strongest predictor of implementation among the three human resource coordination practices examined (B = 0.368, β = .809, $p < .001$), even after controlling for recruitment and selection and training and development.

The study therefore concludes that performance management is the most influential human resource coordination practice for the execution of the strategic plan. Cascading strategic goals into individual targets, communicating expectations, giving regular feedback, and rewarding strategic contributions allows management to keep daily work aligned with the plan and to correct deviations early. However, performance management works alongside other human resource practices and contextual factors rather than in isolation, and its benefits depend on how consistently it is applied.

It was recommended that the management of Old Mutual Insurance PLC Rwanda strengthen and institutionalize performance management as the main mechanism for executing the strategic plan. The balanced scorecard should be applied consistently to cascade the strategic plan into measurable KPIs for every manager and team, quarterly feedback sessions should be held and documented for all staff, and progress against strategic milestones should be reviewed at each session. Because strategic goals and expectations were not equally well communicated across the organization, management should use regular briefings and team meetings to make sure that every employee understands how their targets contribute to the strategic plan.

Reward, recognition, and promotion decisions should be tied explicitly and consistently to the achievement of strategic milestones, because the recognition and incentivization of strategic contributors was the lowest-rated aspect of performance management and was identified in the interviews as inconsistently applied. The human resource function should develop a clear policy on performance-linked rewards and review it periodically so that it reflects changing strategic priorities and market conditions. Line managers should be trained in setting fair KPIs, giving constructive feedback, and holding strategy-focused performance conversations, and training and development programs should be designed from appraisal results so that learning is directed at the competencies needed to achieve strategic milestones. Finally, the Rwanda Insurance Supervisory Commission and industry associations may use these findings to encourage insurers to adopt transparent, strategy-linked performance management systems.

Suggestions for Further Studies

Performance management, recruitment and selection, and training and development together explained 59.4% of the variation in strategic plan implementation, leaving 40.6% attributable to other factors. Further research should therefore examine variables such as leadership style, organizational culture, employee engagement, succession planning, compensation, and technology adoption. Comparative studies across insurers and across other sectors in Rwanda, such as banking, would show whether the influence of performance management varies with organizational and institutional characteristics.

Longitudinal studies could assess how performance management influences strategic plan implementation over successive planning cycles, and studies that use objective records, such as the actual achievement of strategic milestones from internal strategic plan reports, would complement the perception-based data used in this study. Future studies should also test the separate and joint effects of performance management and training and development, given how strongly the two are correlated, and examine mediating and moderating variables such as employee motivation and leadership support. Finally, qualitative or mixed-methods studies involving a wider range of employees could provide deeper explanations of how feedback and reward systems work in practice.

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