



HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PRACTICES AND EMPLOYEE SERVICE DELIVERY IN THE COUNTY GOVERNMENT OF KITUI, KENYA

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GOVERNMENT OF KITUI, KENYA**

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ABSTRACT

The general objective of the study was to establish the effect of human resource management practices on employee service delivery in the County Government of Kitui, Kenya. The specific objectives of the study were to establish the effect of training and development practices, performance appraisal practices, compensation practices and recruitment and selection practices on employee service delivery in the County Government of Kitui, Kenya. Human capital theory, contingency theory, attraction-selection-attrition theory, and service quality theory served as the study's guiding theories. Descriptive research design was used for the study. The target population was 2300 employees comprising of the Kitui County Government's middle management, lower-level staff, and senior level management. The sample size was 340 employees. The study adopted a proportionate stratified sampling technique. The study was based on descriptive and inferential statistical analysis. Multiple linear regression was used to evaluate the co-relationships as well as the effect of each of the independent variables on human resource management practices. The changes of service delivery were influenced significantly by the changes in training practices. It was also established that there was a positive, a robust and noteworthy correlation between service delivery and performance appraisal. The study concludes that effective training ensures that employees possess the necessary skills, knowledge, and competencies to perform their roles efficiently. The study concludes that compensation alone does not play a decisive role in influencing the quality or effectiveness of service delivery. Lastly, the study concludes that Effective recruitment and selection practices ensure that the right individuals, with the necessary skills, experience, and cultural fit, are brought into the organization. The study recommends that the county government of Kitui should conduct regular training needs assessments to identify gaps in skills and knowledge. The County Government of Kitui should regularly monitor and evaluate performance of employees and the outcomes of recruitment and selection processes.

Key words: Training And Development Practices, Performance appraisal Practices, Compensation practices and Recruitment and Selection Practices

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INTRODUCTION

A more competitive business climate has resulted from evolving service delivery practices, which in turn has caused consumers to reevaluate their wants and requirements (Foster & Farr, 2022). How well a company manages its employees is a major component in how well it provides services. Owoeye, Kiiru and Muli (2020) state that a low turnover rate and the provision of excellent services are inevitable outcomes of an engaged and fulfilled workforce. Due to the highly competitive global business climate, several firms are compelled to invest significant effort in service delivery and optimize the use of their human resources. Their survival depends on it. As to Chukwu and Igwe (2024), the most common way that services are provided in the public sector is by meeting the specific needs of individual consumers by delivering the requested goods or services.

Several studies have shown that developed countries like China, the US, the UK, Canada, Korea, and Malaysia significantly keep their service delivery systems running smoothly (Economic Survey of Korea, 2019). More than 60% of companies have been successful in contrast to most industrialized countries because they have figured out how to handle human resources in a unique way, which has led to better service from customers. According to Charles and Muli (2021), companies that are committed to enhancing their service delivery must develop human resource management strategies to address the difficulties that accompany innovation deployment. It is feasible to accomplish this goal by planning and executing the necessary change efforts that would streamline their service deliveries. Businesses in developed nations may now more easily research human resource management and its effects on service delivery because to technological advancements.

Denisi and Griffins (2018) conducted research in the US and concluded that service delivery should revolve on improving customer satisfaction via meeting consumer expectations. Customers are

loyal to the brand because they have a strong desire for high-quality products. The result will be repeat customers and, who knows, maybe even some new ones brought in by word of mouth. Improving the quality-of-service delivery in public sector organizations is something that rising countries, especially those in Asia, Latin America, and Africa, have been striving to do, according to Chaudhry and Riaz (2021). Because of this, they have also begun applying strategies for managing human resources in the institutions that fall under their purview in the public sector. According to Owoeye, Kiiru and Muli (2020), the Australian government has switched its attention to a comprehensive government approach in order to provide terminal initiatives that are based on locations. Additionally, the government has consolidated services in order to enhance efficiency, prevent duplication, and provide frameworks that are designed according to departments.

The government of Botswana has launched a slew of programs and regulations meant to raise the bar on public service (Tshukudu, 2014). Dessler (2019) notes that public services in Tanzania have a variety of issues, some of which include the following: the waste of public funds, poor revenue collections, inadequate accountability, demotivated public officials, and performance defects in service delivery. [Gupta 2018] asserts that the implementation of HRM strategies is of utmost importance in the completion of corporate objectives. It has been shown that human resource management techniques have a direct connection to all managers and line personnel, and that these practices are enabled and supported by a human resource department that is both competent and efficient. In order for a company to be successful, it is necessary to have a diverse range of workers, each of whom should be managed in a manner that allows them to simultaneously accomplish their own goals and the goals of the business according to Flippo (2018).

In the Kenya context, the government sought to improve on service delivery through establishment of Huduma Centers with a view of achieving customer satisfaction (Government of Kenya, 2022). Foster and Farr (2016) made the observation that the Kenyan government developed the Huduma Centre in an attempt to address the challenges and criticisms that had been voiced by the residents in relation to the delivery of its services. Guest, (2018), indicated that poor resourcing process can have whole deal negative effects to an institution's delivery of services, it may specifically lead to rise of disciplinary issues, low profitability and high employees' turnover, resulting to customers dissatisfaction. Public service organizations in Kenya need to put in place effective and quantifiable accountability measures if the government is serious about providing good customer service. Additionally, they should work together harmoniously to establish procedures, rules, and regulations, ensuring that they are consistent in order to build integration, and consequently, they should make sure that customers are delighted with the services that are provided (Waititu, 2019).

Among the many public services that fall under the purview of the Kitui County Government are healthcare, elementary education, garbage collection, water and sanitation, land use and planning, housing, and the upkeep of drainage and sewerage systems (Radcliffe & Mitullah, 2020). Furthermore, they play a key role in driving economic expansion. County Kitui has given local governments a lot of power to make sure residents can easily get the services they need (Mutembei, Wanjiru, and Tirma, 2019). However, according to Wagana (2017), the county administration of Kitui has blamed inadequate human resource capabilities for the subpar quality of its services. Product and service delivery becomes less efficient and effective as a result of this. The HRM function has to keep becoming better if they want to keep being as productive as they are. This may be achieved by the effective implementation of strategies pertaining to human resource management, including

development and training, performance assessment, compensation, and selection and recruitment.

In accordance with the findings of Ghulam et al. (2023), service delivery may be evaluated in terms of the enhancement of economic infrastructure, the enhancement of efficiency and effectiveness, and the establishment of an environment that is conducive to business by lowering the costs associated with starting and operating a firm. In addition, Parasuraman (1985) developed the SERVQUAL model, which identifies five quality service metrics that are generally recognized. These measurements are responsiveness, empathy, dependability, assurance, and tangibles. These measurements will be used in the research. By using the SERVQUAL model, it is possible to accurately quantify service delivery. It is possible to assess the quality of service using a number of different instruments; nevertheless, the SERVQUAL scale is considered to be the most traditional scale for determining service quality (Kiilu, 2019). Every company makes it a priority to provide the most efficient delivery of fundamental services via the service delivery process. The provision of fundamental services may be related to the enhancement of the economic infrastructure, the enhancement of efficiency and effectiveness, and the establishment of an environment that is conducive to the successful operation of businesses by lowering the costs of starting and operating a firm.

According to Armstrong and Taylor (2021), human resource management procedures are measures used to oversee an organization's human resource pool and make sure that resources are being used to achieve goals. These actions are seen as part of the organization's daily routine. What an organization does to oversee its workers are known as human resource management techniques. The establishment of its own distinct relationships, the production of institutional knowledge to keep ahead of the competition, and the promotion of competency development that is necessary for the

institution are all examples of such behaviors (Appiah, 2024). Human resource management (HRM) strategies, on the other hand, are defined as methods by which HR professionals recruit, train, compensate, and inspire their workforce to provide their best performance (Muli, Muathe & Muchiri 2014). Aligning human capital with an organization's business plan is how human resource management units stay true to their companies' strategies. This is an example of the strategic nature of human resource practices.

The county government of Kitui has made attempts to improve service delivery, but the county still faces several challenges. The development of infrastructure is a responsibility that falls within the purview of the county government, and the successful completion of the projects demonstrates that the public is being served in an efficient manner. Over and over again, both internal and external customers of the county administration of Kitui have voiced their dissatisfaction with the manner in which the services are delivered (Kalava.2021). The public's concerns about lengthy lines, bogus service delivery, and poor physical facilities have an impact on the overall image as well as the quality of service that is delivered in the public sector (Kyalo & Evans, 2022). Victims of these problems have been vocal about their dissatisfaction with life, because they must often drive long distances to get even basic services.

Statement of the problem

Ogolodom et al. (2023) conducted a study on how human resource practices affect service performance in Chinese manufacturing firms. Service quality was shown to be significantly affected by employee relations and staff retention, according to the study. This study will shift the focus from employee relations and retention to development and training, performance management, selection and recruiting, and compensation, shifting the emphasis from earlier studies. This study shifted the emphasis from the Chinese industrial businesses to County Government of Kitui, as opposed to the earlier

research that concentrated on service delivery in that setting. Human resource practices have an effect on the success of MNCs in India, according to Bjorkman and Budhwar's (2023) study. The inquiry was built around regression analysis. The study shows that performance is positively correlated with human resource practices, and this link is statistically significant. Employee Service delivery was the center of attention in this study, in contrast to earlier research that focused on organizational performance. Therefore, both conceptual and contextual deficiencies are exposed by the aforementioned investigation. This study, however, took place in Kenya, while the one before it was in India.

The aforementioned studies have shed light on many knowledge gaps, including those in terms of theory, context, and methodology. Research has mostly focused on HR procedures and performance, with just a small number of studies delving into employee service delivery. It has been shown that there are methodological shortcomings related to the use of inferential statistics in the study, which limits the generalizability of the results. Ogolodom et al. (2023), Bjorkman and Budhwar (2023) and Plotner and Walters (2023) have all surveyed participants in different settings. However, the Kitui County administration cannot be assumed to have implemented the same policies as outlined in these studies. Consequently, this research intended to fill the identified information vacuum by exploring how human resource management strategies impact service delivery in Kenya's Kitui County Government.

Research Objectives

The general objective of this study was to determine the effect of human resource management practices on employee service delivery in the County Government of Kitui, Kenya. Specifically, the study's goals included:

- To establish the effect of training and development practices on employee service delivery in the County Government of Kitui, Kenya.

- To evaluate the effect of performance appraisal practices on employee service delivery in the County Government of Kitui, Kenya.
- To determine the effect of compensation practices on employee service delivery in the County Government of Kitui, Kenya.
- To examine the effect of recruitment and selection practices on employee service delivery in the County Government of Kitui, Kenya.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Human Capital Theory

Theodore (1961) was the one who first presented this hypothesis. The argument put out by the idea is that the expense of learning the job is only marginally related to the overall gain. Taking this into consideration, a number of economists have asserted that, all other things being equal, the level of personal income is directly proportional to the amount of money invested in education and training. Becker (1993) argues that this view supports the idea that businesses should put money into people so that workers may acquire the basic skills necessary for a prosperous economy. In human capital theory, the quantity and quality of an organization's knowledge, experience, and abilities are directly correlated to its capacity to accomplish its goals. The ability to achieve one's aims and make progress toward one's goals is what makes human resources an organization's most important asset, says Sweetland (1996). On the flip side, human resources need to be systematically hired, hand-picked, retained, inspired, assisted, and kept in top shape so that they can give their all to enhancing the organization's capabilities (Dessler, 2017).

This inquiry found the hypothesis valid since it is based on the premise that the County Government of Kitui would invest in their workers in order to increase the quality of their service delivery. Investing in people has the potential to boost productivity, if the Human Capital Theory (HCT) is to be believed (Dessler, 2017). Noe (2017) asserts that any business needs dedicated and enthusiastic employees who are also well-versed in their field

and have unique abilities if it wants to stay ahead of the competition. The County Government of Kitui can do a better job of providing services if it improves working conditions, guarantees employment security, and helps people pay for college. Human capital theory lends credence to performance evaluation and training variables since it describes how training is a major motivator for workers. Employees have a tendency to be more involved in their work when they have training or are provided with opportunity to receive training.

Contingency model

Fiedler (1964), who put a focus on optimal fit, introduced the notion. This theory proposes that each company's HR strategy should be unique, taking into consideration specifics like company culture, internal and external surroundings, and operational processes. It is the expectation of both the company and its workers that HR policies and procedures would address their concerns. Researching the connection between HRM and overall business strategy is, according to Ulrich and Brockbank (2005), best fit theory's beating heart. The compatibility of an organization's operational strategies with its HRM policies and procedures may be evaluated in several ways. According to Schuler et al. (2007), one way to get an advantage in human resource management is via vertical integration.

The truth is oversimplified by this approach, which is one of the most significant criticisms leveled against it. For the sole purpose of simplifying the connection between the variables in an organization, it is seen to postulate a linear relationship between those variables. According to Mintzberg and Zsolt (2012), this method has limitations since it is unable to recognize and classify variables, as well as to emphasize the relationships between them and the ways in which they influence one another. Finding a middle ground between employee needs, labor regulations, and societal standards is crucial for companies to thrive in today's cutthroat business climate, according to the available studies.

Ultimately, Mintzberg and Zsolt (2012) argue that companies and their workers need to find a happy medium, and one way to do this is to look for work arrangements where both parties can thrive.

Attraction-Selection-Attrition Theory

The idea was created by Schneider, Goldstein, and Smith (1995), who emphasized that an organization is better equipped to deal with uncertainty if it is able to identify and employ the appropriate persons who possess the appropriate learning, skills, and aptitudes in the appropriate quantities. Edwards (1994) is in agreement that the first stage of the development of workable systems involves the acquisition, storage, and production of assets at a certain level, and that these assets are tied to persons as assets. As pointed out by Vroom (1966), recruiting is a method of scouting qualified individuals who are interested in applying for a present position or who have just applied for a job. In addition, Vroom (1966) identifies the process of enrolling as being of essential importance. No action may be taken until the association decides on the kind of representatives that are necessary and the number of representatives that are required.

According to Malik, Aziz, and Hassan (2014), one of the criticisms leveled against the Attraction-Selection-Attrition Theory is that it is difficult to include many characteristics of leadership, which may result in confusion when attempting to understand the theory. On the other side, there is a failure to demonstrate flexibility. In light of the fact that natural leadership styles are unchangeable, Fiedler was of the opinion that the most efficient approach to deal with issues was to replace the leader. According to Serfontein (2010), the writers did not provide room for flexibility in the leadership roles. Furthermore, the theory has only received limited support from the various empirical studies that have been conducted to evaluate its validity. This is particularly true in terms of providing evidence for all four characteristics of leadership behavior individually and collectively. Additionally, the supportive leadership behavior of a leader has

an effect on the level of commitment that an employee has to the objectives of the company, and vice versa.

Service Quality Theory

Parasuraman et al. (1985) brought the service quality idea to a wider audience, however it was first proposed by Gronorooos (1982). Howard and Sheth's 1969 theory of customer behavior provides the theoretical basis for this. Various techniques, including psychodynamic, behavioral, cognitive, and humanistic perspectives, may be used to define the buyer decision-making process, according to this idea. One of the most important models in the field of service quality research is the SERVQUAL model, which states that the gap between what a client expects and what they get is the best indicator of service quality. The service is considered good when ES is less than PS; unacceptable when ES and PS are equal; and unsatisfactory when ES is more than PS.

The argument put forward is that quality is too subjective to be evaluated objectively as a technological factor. One of the arguments against the concept is this very thing. Customer evaluations of service quality are heavily influenced by function quality, say Chen and Ting (2002), and this evaluation may influence the final verdict. Since functional and technological aspects do not exist in a vacuum, the public's perception of the organization is just as important. A service provider's corporate image is critical as it shapes customers' perceptions of the company and its offerings in the context of buyer-seller interactions (Johns & Tyas, 1996). An organization's image is limited to the impressions that its target audience has of it. The notion of service quality is predicated on the idea that, to find service quality, one should take the ratings of customers' perceptions and subtract them from their scores of their expectations. Services, according to Chiu and Lin (2004), are intangible and best understood as an industry where the two sides of the coin are highly intertwined.

Empirical Literature Review

Training Practices and Service Delivery

American researchers Nama and Chikukwa (2022) looked at how training and development affected manufacturing companies that provided services. A qualitative technique was used to gather the necessary data, which included the use of an interview guide. Staff members' ability to provide excellent customer service was shown to be positively and statistically correlated with investment in training and development. The quality-of-service consumers obtain is strongly correlated with investments in employee training and development, according to research. The research also made use of oral interviews, which are prone to information distortion and, as a result, reveal a methodological gap. Given that the current study will be collecting data via the use of questionnaires, this gap is shown. This research aimed to fill these gaps by conducting a census-based investigation into the same connection in the Kitui County government. All of the study's top and middle-level managers were involved in this investigation.

Performance Appraisal Practices and Service Delivery

In their 2022 investigation, Nigussie and Tilahun analyze how the health of public organizations' service delivery is affected by systems for managing performance, focusing on Thika Level 5 Hospital in Kenya specifically. The study strongly suggests that effective performance management techniques are necessary to enhance the effectiveness and standard of healthcare delivery. Based on their findings from interviews, document analysis, and observations, Nigussie and Tilahun (2022) use a case study technique to examine how performance management systems improve service delivery. These systems cover aspects like performance appraisal, feedback, recognition, and improvement initiatives. The findings reveal that a well-designed and implemented performance management system positively influences service delivery by setting clear expectations, addressing performance

gaps, and motivating employees. A vacuum in the current body of information was brought to light as a result of the fact that the research solely envisioned performance management systems with reference to feedback, acknowledgment, and improvement activities. By defining performance assessment in terms of performance goal, techniques of performance appraisal, and feedback mechanisms, the present research attempted to bridge the conceptual gap that had been identified.

Compensation Practices and Service Delivery

Employee performance is positively correlated with the performance-based incentive plan, according to study by Sheridan (2022) on the effects of compensation on performance on workers at Namibia's motor vehicle accident fund. Overall, the plan was successful in raising productivity levels inside the company and among its personnel. Workers were aware of the demands put upon them, which led to an increase in performance. As a result, they concentrated their efforts on meeting the objectives that were established, understanding that good performance is rewarded with a bonus or high salary when it is achieved. Within the context of the County Government of Kitui, the research was intended to investigate a variety of different topics, including competitive remuneration and incentive programs for employees.

Using Kenyatta University as a case study, Ndungu (2019) investigated how financial pay and other incentives affected the productivity of public university workers. The 360 employees from Kenyatta University were recruited using stratified random sampling and intentional random sampling. Researchers used this descriptive approach. A positive and statistically significant relationship was found between employee performance and both wage and corporate incentives. Performance on the job was positively and significantly correlated with extrinsic incentives, monetary rewards, public acknowledgment, leadership styles, and intrinsic rewards. The research found that Kenyatta University's pay, perks, and job security were lacking, which led to employee discontent and low

performance. Additionally, there is a lack of engagement, communication, and teamwork among the members of the collective. It was determined that staff at Kenyatta University had a very low level of satisfaction with the duties they were given and the prospects for advancement that were available to them. The purpose of this research was to investigate the influences of pay and incentives on service delivery in order to address the contextual gap that had been identified. Additionally, it addressed a methodological deficiency by using a census approach that included all of the top and intermediate level managers into the research being conducted.

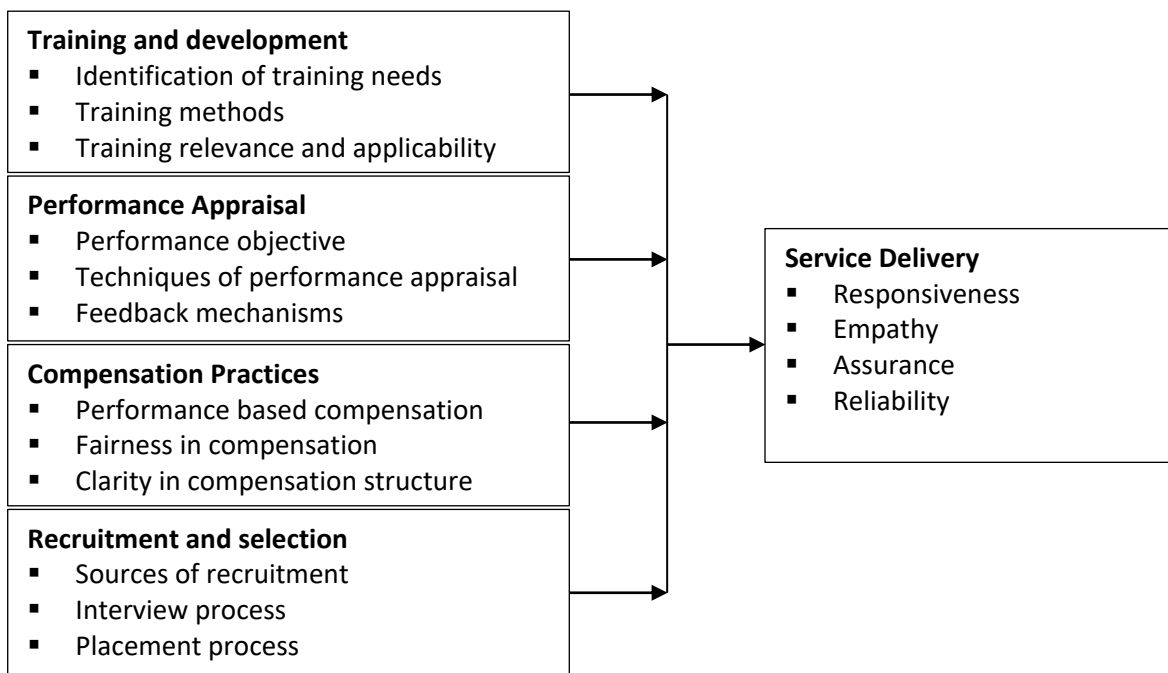
Recruitment and Selection Practices and Service Delivery

Researchers Omolo, Oginda, and Oso (2018) aimed to learn how hiring practices impacted the productivity of SMEs in the Kisumu region by sampling locals. SMEs in Kisumu Municipality averaged 60.71 percent output. A positive correlation of $\alpha=.01$ was observed between performance and the recruiting and selection processes. An excellent production of 81.90 percent was seen in the typical recruiting and selection process, while a middling output of roughly 67.94 percent was also recorded. Given the wide range of results shown in the recruiting and selection process (40.8% of the total), it is safe to say that

small and medium-sized businesses in Kisumu Municipality produced plenty. The fact that the research only looked at SMEs in the Kisumu region was a major caveat. Recruiting and selecting procedures were the primary focus of this research on service delivery.

Researchers Anyango, Walter, and Muya (2019) set out to examine the main campus of Kisii University in Kenya to find out how hiring decisions affect organizational performance. Two hundred and twenty-six faculty members and seven administrators participated in the study. The use of stratified random selection allowed for the selection of 144 teaching staff members. Purposive sampling was used in order to choose members of the management team. According to the study's findings, hiring standards are critical for a company's success in achieving its long-term objectives since they help identify and attract top talent. We arrived at this conclusion after reviewing the survey responses. A positive effect on company performance is a direct result of the selection and hiring criteria. Additionally, there have been discussions that demonstrate how a fairer hiring procedure increases the probability of recruiting top talent, which in turn boosts the company's success. This research concentrated on the manner in which the county administration of Kitui provides its services.

Conceptual Framework



Independent Variables

Dependent Variable

Figure 1: Conceptual framework

Source: (Author, 2024)

METHODOLOGY

The study adopted a descriptive cross-sectional design. The target population was 2300 employees comprising of senior level management, middle level management and lower-level employees at the county government of Kitui.

Data analysis revealed a 95% confidence interval and a 5% margin of error for the study. For the Yamane formula applied, a total sample size.

$$n = \frac{2300}{1 + 2300(0.05)^2}$$

$$n = \frac{2300}{1 + 2300 (0.0025)}$$

$$n = 340$$

The size of a sample determines how well it represents the whole cosmos. A proportional

stratified sampling approach was used for the research project. The correct total sample size and the proportional sample for each category was determined using this method.

Results from Bailey's (2018) study demonstrate that descriptive and explanatory research both benefit from the use of questionnaires. Researchers provided "closed-ended" surveys to participants in the study to collect their responses.

For the purpose of the pilot research, ten questionnaires was sent to respondents working for the County Government of Makeni. Due to ethical concerns, the researchers proposed moving the pilot project to a different county government, this time in Makeni, rather than Kitui, where the full-scale investigation would take place.

In order to determine the level of internal consistency and to enhance the reliability of the inter-correlations among the numerous test items, the study project employed the Cronbach's Alpha test.

Prior to entering the data into the SPSS Version 25 computer application, the survey data that has been obtained via questionnaires was edited and formatted. Graphical representations of the data's statistical results, such as charts and tables, aided in presentation, comprehension and discussion.

Data was collected in a quantitative style. Descriptive statistics included tables showing frequency and percentage distributions, indicators of central tendency like the mean and standard deviation, and measurements of variability like the variance. Using a variety of linear regression techniques, researcher analyzed the human resource management practices of the County Government of Kitui, Kenya, as well as their interrelationships and the impact of each independent variable.

Table 1: Training Practices and Service Delivery

	Mean	Std. Deviation
It is necessary to undertake a training requirements analysis prior to carrying out any training.	3.91	1.116
The organization invests in its new hires by providing them with training that will equip them to accomplish a good job.	2.96	1.235
The organization makes use of appropriate training approaches that are most appropriate for the particular training that has been provided.	4.05	.961
Training is imparted in a manner that makes it possible for employees to comprehend the training that is being provided.	3.86	.962
In the organization, the employee is only supplied with training that is relevant to the function that they are currently doing.	3.79	.967
Kitui County Government personnel are motivated to perform better as a result of the training that is offered to them during their employment.	4.09	.900
Average Mean	3.777	1.0235

Source: Field Data (2024)

Table 1 above, Kitui County Government personnel are motivated to perform better as a result of the training that is offered to them during their employment had the highest mean at 4.09, followed by the question on the organization makes use of appropriate training approaches that are most appropriate for the particular training that has been provided, workers had a better working relationship with their superiors with a view to promote service delivery, with a mean of 4.05. The

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

Response Rate

230 of the 340 employees who were the subject of the study fully completed the questionnaire. As a result, the 67% response rate was outstanding.

Descriptive Analysis

Training Practices and Service Delivery

The first objective of the study was to determine the influence of training and development strategies on the employee service delivery in the County Government of Kitui, Kenya. The analysis was done using SPSS. The Likert type responses were analyzed by use of Means and standard deviations. The outcomes are exhibited in Table 1.

question on if the employee is only supplied with training that is relevant to the function that they are currently doing, and if training is imparted in a manner that makes it possible for employees to comprehend the training that is being provided had a high mean of 3.79, 3.86 and 3.79 respectively.

The question on if organization invests in its new hires by providing them with training that will equip them to accomplish a good job., had the lowest

mean at 2.96. The overall aggregate mean score stands at 3.777 implying that a large number of respondents concur that training practices was aimed at improving service delivery. This agreed with Nekesa, (2020); Kirigia, (2017); Mutiso, (2013); Matui, (2017), Training workers is a very key practice within an institution geared towards improving employees' output as well as enhancing service delivery. It also concur with Muya (2021) that companies that put money into their employees' education and growth are better able to meet their service delivery responsibilities. It also concur with Ogbonnaya, Tillman, and Gonzalez

(2020) effective implementation requires planning, resource allocation, and scheduling to ensure minimal disruption to regular operations. HR coordinates with department heads to facilitate participation.

Performance Appraisal Practices and Service Delivery

Respondents of the study were required to indicate the extent to which they concur or don't concur with the statement in relation to effects of performance appraisal on employee service delivery and the findings were as shown in the table 2 below.

Table 2: Performance Appraisal Practices and Service Delivery

Statements	Mean	Std. Deviation
Each and every worker in the company is required to routinely fill out a performance and development agreement.	3.29	1.004
Evaluations of performance are carried out on a regular basis.	2.96	1.206
In any situation, there is always concentration on performance evaluation.	2.87	1.266
The evaluation of performance is considered a need assessment.	3.95	.942
The performance assessment is used to determine salary increases, bonuses, and other forms of compensation.	3.45	1.320
Management is responsible for conducting individual evaluations and assessments.	3.73	1.168
Average Mean	3.396	1.128

Source: Field Data (2024)

As depicted in Table 2, the study found out that the statement on the evaluation of performance is considered a need assessment had the highest mean at 3.95. The statement on, management is responsible for conducting individual evaluations and assessments, the future demand of employees are well determined by the employers to ensure continuity and promote service delivery and the performance assessment is used to determine salary increases, bonuses, and other forms of compensation, had a mean of 3.73, 3.52, and 3.45 respectively. The statement on; each and every worker in the company is required to routinely fill out a performance and development agreement and evaluations of performance are carried out on a regular basis, had a mean of 3.29

and 2.96, respectively. There is always concentration on performance evaluation, had the lowest mean at 2.87. The overall aggregate mean score stands at 3.396 implying that on average the respondents were neutral that performance appraisal was aimed at improving service delivery while the standard deviation was at 1.128 implied that there was no general consensus on the effects of performance appraisal to service delivery of employees in County Government of Kitui in Kenya.

The study agrees with Habib Rana, (2017) that performance appraisal must be done several times in a year. Shukat Malik and Shu (2017) Abdul H.A, (2018) made some strong recommendations, including convening a meeting between the management and the subordinate to evaluate the

past and work engagement. Further, Maaly et al., (2016) performance evaluation process influenced employee motivation, how much evaluators influenced employee motivation and the obstacles to the assessment of employee performance. Kariuki (2017) further, found that employee productivity has been increased via work satisfaction as a result of performance assessment procedures that include fair remuneration and managerial assistance, according to the research.

Compensation Practices and Service Delivery

The third objective of the study was to determine the influence of compensation practices on the employee service delivery in the County Government of Kitui, Kenya. The analysis was done using SPSS. The Likert type responses were analyzed by use of Means and standard deviations. The outcomes are exhibited in Table 3.

Table 3: Compensation Practices and Service Delivery

Statements	Mean	Std. Deviation
Compensation for workers is determined by how well they execute their jobs.	2.68	1.252
According to the minimum wage criteria that have been established for certain positions, the company pays its workers.	2.86	1.212
The Kitui County Government undertakes regular pay surveys in order to ensure that they are in line with the pay rates of the sector.	2.71	1.107
Fairness may be seen in the pay system that is used by the county administration of Kitui.	2.73	1.300
All workers are provided with a comprehensive explanation of the remuneration system that is used by the county government of Kitui.	3.25	1.031
All of the workers in the county administration of Kitui are aware of the remuneration structure that is taken into consideration.	2.45	1.190
Those who work for the county administration of Kitui are motivated to improve their performance because to the remuneration system that has been adopted.	2.39	1.155
Average Mean	2.724	1.178

Source: Survey data, 2024

As illustrated in Table 3, the study found out that on the statement of all workers are provided with a comprehensive explanation of the remuneration system that is used by the county government of Kitui had the highest mean of 3.25. The statement on minimum wage criteria that have been established for certain positions, the company pays its workers had a mean of 2.86, while the statement on fairness may be seen in the pay system that is used by the county administration of Kitui had a mean of 2.73. The statement on the Kitui County Government undertakes regular pay surveys in order to ensure that they are in line with the pay rates of the sector had a mean of 2.71, and the statement on compensation for workers is determined by how well they execute their jobs had a mean of 2.68. The statement on the all of the workers in the county administration of Kitui are

aware of the remuneration structure that is taken into consideration had a mean of 2.45, while the statement on the county administration of Kitui are motivated to improve their performance because to the remuneration system that has been adopted had the lowest mean at 2.39.

The overall aggregate mean score stands at 2.724 implying that on average the respondents were neutral that compensation was aimed at improving service delivery while the standard deviation was at 1.178 implying that there was no general consensus on the effects of compensation to employee service delivery of county government of Kitui this however, did not authoritatively confirm Ngotho, (2018), sentiments that wages and salaries offered to employees motivated them leading to improved levels of services rendered. On the other hand, the findings also established that some employees felt

that compensation policies had enhanced service delivery in the Huduma centres, thus concurring with Mmbusa, (2019), who established that compensation of workers significantly influenced their performance positively. Waruni (2016) further supported that the most essential and influential drivers of employee performance have been all independent elements, salary and recognition.

Recruitment/ Selection Practices and Service Delivery

Respondents of the study were required to indicate the extent to which they concur or don't concur with the statement in relation to effects of recruitment/ selection practices on employee service delivery and the findings were as shown in the table 4 below.

Table 4: Recruitment/ Selection Practices and Service Delivery

Statements	Mean	Std. Deviation
The county government of Kitui always advertises for all vacant positions	3.25	1.311
Previously employed individuals are given priority by the county administration of Kitui before they begin the process of hiring new staff members.	3.52	1.221
The process of shortlisting is carried out with the participation of all of the relevant stakeholders by the county administration of Kitui.	2.66	1.269
As far as the county administration of Kitui is concerned, the shortlisting procedure is fair.	3.02	1.213
The interview process is carried out with the participation of all of the relevant stakeholders by the county administration of Kitui.	2.64	1.407
In order to employ the best candidates, the Kitui County administration checks their references extensively.	3.36	1.299
Recruiting competent candidates ensures efficiency within the county government of Kitui.	2.89	1.289
The county government of Kitui is able to achieve greater cost efficiency via the use of external sourcing of staff inside the organization.	2.80	1.182
Tools for candidate selection and evaluation are used by the Kitui County Government in order to identify the most qualified individual for employment.	3.02	1.152
Average Mean	3.01	1.60

Source: Survey data, 2024

As illustrated in Table 4, Previously employed individuals are given priority by the county administration of Kitui before they begin the process of hiring new staff members with a mean of 3.52. Employ the best candidates, the Kitui County administration checks their references extensively with a mean of 3.36. The county government of Kitui always advertises for all vacant positions with a mean of 3.25.

County administration of Kitui is concerned, the shortlisting procedure is fair mean of 3.25. Recruiting competent candidates ensures efficiency within the county government of Kitui with a mean 2.89. The county government of Kitui is able to

achieve greater cost efficiency via the use of external sourcing of staff inside the organization with a mean of 2.80. The process of shortlisting is carried out with the participation of all of the relevant stakeholders by the county administration of Kitui with a mean of 2.66. The interview process is carried out with the participation of all of the relevant stakeholders by the county administration of Kitui with a mean of 2.64. The overall aggregate mean score stands at 3.01 implying that on average the respondents were neutral that recruitment/ selection practices was aimed at improving service delivery while the standard deviation was at 1.60 implied that there was no general consensus on the

effects of recruitment/ selection practices to service delivery of employees in County Government of Kitui in Kenya.

The findings is supported by Omolo, Oginda, and Oso (2018) by selecting candidates with the right competencies, organizations ensure that their employees can perform tasks effectively, leading to better service delivery. Čanković (2021) the findings demonstrated that businesses that carry out a selection process that is both fair and objective get better levels of overall financial success. Conversely, companies that refrain from interfering with the selection process tend to see more consistent annual sales growth. Research shows that greater

levels of organizational productivity are guaranteed by excellent selection. It also concurs with Anyango, Walter, and Muya (2019) effective recruitment practices can reduce the time and resources spent on training, as new hires are likely to already possess the necessary skills. Recruiting from a diverse talent pool brings in different perspectives and ideas, leading to innovation in how services are delivered (Amadu ,2019).

Service Delivery

The independent variable results (service delivery) were examined in the county government of Kitui. The results were summarized in the Table 5.

Table 5: Service Delivery

Statements	Mean	Std. Deviation
The staff members are content and ready to give assistance to the neighborhood residents.	3.86	.862
The workers are dedicated to providing services of the highest possible quality.	4.14	.724
Citizens are treated with courtesy by the staff members on a constant basis.	4.05	.862
The members of the staff have a genuine dedication to upholding ethical standards, and they actively promote ethical behavior all across the workplace.	3.79	1.091
The members of the staff have a genuine dedication to upholding ethical standards, and they actively promote ethical behavior all across the workplace.	3.79	.909
The manner in which employees conduct themselves inspires trust in the clients	3.54	1.078
Employees are reliable and well informed	3.77	.991
Average score	3.83	0.94

Source: Survey data, (2024)

As indicated in table 5, the study found out that the workers are dedicated to providing services of the highest possible quality with a mean of 4.14. Citizens are treated with courtesy by the staff members on a constant basis had a mean of 4.05 and 3.86 respectively. The members of the staff have a genuine dedication to upholding ethical standards, and they actively promote ethical behavior all across the workplace had a mean of 3.79. Employees are reliable and well informed had a mean of 3.77, while the question on, the manner in which employees conduct themselves inspires

trust in the clients, had a mean of 3.54. The overall cumulative mean score for this section stands at 3.83 and the standard deviation at 0.94. This indicates that the respondents agreed that the institution was focused on delivery of services to its citizens.

Inferential Analysis

Correlation Results

The correlation results present the strength and direction of relationship amongst the study variables.

Table 6: Correlation Results

		TP	PA	CP	RS	SD
	Pearson Correlation					
	Sig. (2-tailed)					
TP	N	230				
	Pearson	.305**				
PA	Correlation					
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.334				
	N	230	230			
	Pearson	.041	-.323**			
CP	Correlation					
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.707	.302			
	N	230	230	230		
	Pearson	.040	-.176	.901**		
RS	Correlation					
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.711	.103	.300		
	N	230	230	230	230	
	Pearson	.549**	.641**	.261*	.362**	
SD	Correlation					
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.015	.001	
	N	230	230	230	230	230

** . The correlation is significant at the two-tailed 0.01 level.

* . The correlation is significant at the two-tailed 0.05

The findings presented in Table 6 demonstrate a robust and statistically significant connection (P=549, sig=0.000) between training procedures and service delivery. Performance evaluation and service delivery had a favourable, substantial, and statistically significant link (P=0.641, sig=0.000). The association between service delivery and compensation practices was found to be both weak and significant (P=0.261, sig=0.015). Recruitment, selection, and service delivery showed a weak, positive, and statistically significant association (P=362, sig=0.001). The results were supported by Shuakat Malik and Shu (2017)

and Abdul (2018) that training, compensation practices, performance appraisal and recruitment and selection significantly affect service delivery.

Regression analysis Results

The independent and dependent variables' linear relationship is displayed in the regression findings. The dependent variable's change in magnitude and direction due to changes in the independent variables is displayed in the findings. Tables 7, 8, and 9 contained the findings for the correlation coefficient, coefficient of determination, overall model fitness, and beta coefficients.

Table 7: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.870 ^a	.757	.745	1.47785

a. Predictors: (Constant), TP, PA, PA, CP, RS

Source: Field Data(2024)

The results in the Table 7 presents that 74.5 % (Adjusted R2 = 0.745) variation in employee performance was explained by the variation in training practices, performance appraisal,

compensation practices, recruitment and selection. There was a strong correlation in the relationship between the dependent and independent variables(R=0.870).

Table 8: ANOVA^a

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	558.725	4	139.681	63.956	.000 ^b
	Residual	179.091	225	2.184		
	Total	737.816	229			

a. Dependent Variable: SD

b. Predictors: (Constant), CD, TR, PA, CR

Source: Field Data (2024)

The ANOVA table 8 findings show that the model was significant overall (sig=0.000) with a 95% confidence interval. The fact that the F calculated of 63.956 is higher than the F crucial (F4,82) = 2.986

serves as proof for this. This demonstrates how the linear relationship between variables can be displayed using the beta coefficient.

Table 9: Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	18.594	2.973		6.254	.000
	TP	.672	.119	.327	5.637	.000
	PA	1.215	.118	.660	10.331	.000
	CP	.353	.218	.221	1.615	.110
	ER	.432	.212	.266	2.032	.045

a. Dependent Variable: SD

Source: Field Data (2024)

The results of the study demonstrate that modifications to the dependent variable, service delivery, were significantly explained by four independent variables: recruitment and selection, performance appraisal, training procedures, and remuneration practices (Sig<0.05). The model

below was chosen with three independent variables;

$$EP=18.594+0.672TP+1.215PA +0.353+0.432ER+\epsilon$$

Training Practices and Service Delivery

The model interpretation was as follows. The model indicates that holding other factors constant the

value of service delivery would be 18.594 units. The changes of service delivery were influenced significantly by the changes in training practices ($\text{sig}=0.000<0.05$). The unit variation in training practices would result to 0.672-unit variation in service delivery. According to the results' interpretations, staff abilities can be improved by training procedures, which will result in more effective service delivery. Employees with the necessary training can do their jobs more effectively, which improves public services. The inference is that the County Government of Kitui can provide services more effectively by implementing contemporary training techniques. Employees that receive pertinent, ongoing training are more likely to carry out initiatives and policies successfully, which enhances local governance. These training techniques could be used by other Kenyan counties who are experiencing comparable difficulties with service delivery to improve their governance and service delivery frameworks.

Performance Appraisal and Service Delivery

The coefficient of regression results on the effect of performance appraisal on service delivery indicates that the two had a positive significant relationship ($\text{sig}=0.000<0.05$). Unit changes in performance appraisal result to significant 1.215 significant units changes in service delivery ($B=1.215$). According to the results' interpretation, performance reviews foster accountability by comparing worker output to predetermined targets. Employees are more likely to concentrate on providing high-quality services when they are aware that they are being evaluated. The results of the assessment have an impact on the county's capacity to meet public needs since they assist in determining training needs and guarantee that staff members possess the abilities required for effective service delivery. Performance reviews are a useful tool for hospitals and other healthcare facilities to assess employee productivity, which improves administrative and patient care.

Compensation Practices and Service Delivery

The regression results on compensation practices indicate that the variable was insignificant in explaining the units changes in service delivery ($\text{sig}=0.110>0.05$). The results clearly present that units change in compensation practices was insignificant in explaining the changes in service delivery. Competitive pay helps retain skilled people, lowering attrition and guaranteeing continuity in service delivery, according to the results' interpretations. Long-term service quality is improved when employees remain dedicated to their roles and believe they are being adequately compensated. The County Government of Kitui can increase employee performance and boost efficiency and service delivery by making improvements to its remuneration policies. These results can be used by colleges and universities to draw in and keep talented faculty members, improving the quality of education provided.

Recruitment and Selection and Service Delivery

The regression coefficient results present that recruitment and selection significantly affected service delivery ($\text{sig}=0.045$). The results indicate that a unit change in recruitment and selection results 0.452 units changes in service delivery. The quality of the workforce is directly impacted by recruitment and selection procedures. Good hiring practices guarantee that people with the appropriate abilities, credentials, and cultural fit are employed, which enhances the quality of services provided. The county may make service delivery more robust and future-proof by anticipating needs and hiring workers who can adjust to changes in regulations and public demands. Improved hiring procedures can help businesses in sectors like retail, IT, and banking draw in top people and improve customer service and overall corporate success.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the inferential findings from the correlation and regression analysis, conclusions were drawn. The changes of service delivery were influenced significantly by the changes in training practices. The study concludes that the correlation between training practices and service delivery

was strong and significant. Effective training ensures that employees possess the necessary skills, knowledge, and competencies to perform their roles efficiently, which directly enhances the quality of service delivered.

There was a positive, strong and significant relationship between performance appraisal and service delivery. Performance appraisals provide a structured way to assess employees' strengths, identify areas for improvement, and align their efforts with organizational goals. When conducted effectively, appraisals can motivate employees, clarify expectations, and enhance their ability to deliver superior service.

Compensation practices was insignificant in explaining the units changes in service delivery. The results clearly present that units change in compensation practices was insignificant in explaining the changes in service delivery. The study concludes that compensation alone does not play a decisive role in influencing the quality or effectiveness of service delivery. This indicates that other factors, such as employee training, organizational culture, or performance management, may have a more direct and impactful relationship with service delivery outcomes.

The recruitment and selection significantly affected Service delivery. The study concludes that Effective recruitment and selection practices ensure that the right individuals, with the necessary skills, experience, and cultural fit, are brought into the organization. This alignment directly influences the ability of employees to perform their roles effectively, leading to enhanced service delivery.

The county government of Kitui should conduct regular training needs assessments to identify gaps in skills and knowledge. This ensures that training programs remain relevant and aligned with the evolving demands of service delivery. On the other hand, the County Government of Kitui should ensure that performance appraisals are conducted regularly and follow a structured process. This will

provide consistent feedback to employees, helping them understand their strengths and areas for improvement, which in turn enhances service delivery.

The County Government of Kitui should explore non-monetary incentives, such as recognition programs, career development opportunities, and flexible work arrangements, to motivate employees and enhance their service delivery. The county government to invest in initiatives that boost employee engagement, such as creating a supportive work environment, involving employees in decision-making, and ensuring open communication channels. The county government should acknowledge high-performing employees who contribute positively to service delivery. This will motivate others and reinforce a culture of excellence.

The County Government of Kitui should regularly monitor and evaluate the outcomes of recruitment and selection processes. Track metrics such as employee performance, retention rates, and service delivery improvements to assess the effectiveness of these practices and make necessary adjustments. It should also use technology, such as applicant tracking systems (ATS) and online assessment tools, to streamline the recruitment process, reduce biases, and enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of candidate selection.

The study was limited to selected human resource practices which included training practices, performance appraisal, compensation practices, recruitment and selection which are not the only practices that influences service delivery in county Government of Kitui. This study recommends that other researchers should examine other human resources practices that may affect service delivery in county Government of Kitui. More similar studies to be done in other county governments offering services directly to citizens in order to compare and create room for generalization of findings on the effects of human resources management practices on service delivery at the county government.

It has also been proposed that future researchers may apply different philosophies and methods of conducting this research, especially at the wake of advancement in information technology that has made data collection a little friendly. Different data

analysis and reporting methods could also be applied. Future researches may also consider targeting a different population for the same study such as citizens of another county government instead of focusing on the employees.

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