

THE INFLUENCE OF ELECTRONIC STAFF PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT ON SERVICE QUALITY DELIVERY AT KENYATTA UNIVERSITY

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Abstract: This study examined the influence of electronic staff performance management on service quality delivery at Kenyatta University. Specifically, it sought to determine the influence of electronic performance planning, monitoring, appraisal and feedback on service quality delivery. The study was anchored on the Technology Acceptance Model and Goal-Setting Theory, supported by the Resource-Based View and Social Exchange Theory. A positivist philosophy and cross-sectional descriptive-correlational research design were adopted. Data were collected using structured questionnaires from teaching and administrative staff and analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. The findings indicate that electronic performance planning, monitoring, appraisal and feedback had positive and statistically significant influences on service quality delivery. Multiple regression results further indicate that the four dimensions jointly explained 61% of the variation in service quality delivery. The study concludes that effective electronic staff performance management can enhance reliability, responsiveness, timeliness, efficiency and stakeholder satisfaction. It recommends that Kenyatta University strengthen an integrated electronic performance management framework linking planning, monitoring, appraisal and feedback with measurable service-quality indicators.

Keywords: Electronic staff performance management; electronic performance planning; electronic performance monitoring; electronic performance appraisal; electronic performance feedback; service quality delivery

1. BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

The increasing adoption of digital technologies has transformed human resource management (HRM), shifting organisations from predominantly paper-based processes to technology-enabled systems. Electronic Human Resource Management (e-HRM) involves the use of information and communication technologies to support HR functions such as recruitment, training, communication, compensation and performance management, with the potential to enhance efficiency, accessibility, transparency, accuracy and responsiveness.

Electronic Staff Performance Management (e-SPM) is a key dimension of e-HRM that uses digital platforms to facilitate employee target setting, performance contracting, monitoring, appraisal, feedback,

reporting and evaluation. Compared with traditional periodic and paper-based appraisal systems, e-SPM can support continuous performance monitoring, real-time access to performance information, automated reporting and more effective communication between employees and supervisors. These capabilities are particularly relevant to public universities, where employee performance directly affects the reliability, responsiveness, timeliness, efficiency and overall satisfaction associated with services provided to students and other stakeholders.

The importance of technology-enabled performance management is reinforced by Kenya's emphasis on quality, relevance and institutional capacity in higher education. The Commission for University Education (CUE) 2024–2028 Strategic Plan prioritizes quality and relevance of university education, data-driven decision-making and enhanced institutional capacity, while recognizing technology integration as an important component of contemporary university operations. Thus, digital performance management may contribute to broader public-sector expectations of accountability, efficiency and quality service delivery.

Empirical evidence indicates a positive but context-dependent relationship between e-HRM and service outcomes. Bondarouk, Harms and Lepak (2017a) found that e-HRM can enhance HRM service quality, although outcomes depend on the strength of both the HRM system and its electronic infrastructure. Similarly, El Saeed, Maarouf and Younis (2025) established significant positive relationships between e-HRM and perceived job and organisational performance, with HR service quality mediating these relationships. These findings suggest that technology alone does not guarantee improved outcomes; its effectiveness depends on how digital systems are implemented and utilized.

In Kenya, Namasaka, Koech and Monari (2020) examined electronic recruitment practice and service quality delivery in six public universities in Western Kenya and established a significant positive relationship between e-recruitment and service quality. However, their study did not directly establish the independent effect of e-performance management on service quality; rather, organisational factors were found not to significantly moderate the relationship between e-performance management and service quality. This leaves an empirical gap concerning the direct influence of e-SPM on service quality delivery within a specific public university context.

Kenyatta University (KU) provides a relevant setting for addressing this gap because it has an established performance management framework linking institutional strategic plans, performance contracts, departmental targets, monitoring and evaluation. Its quality management structures also monitor the University Performance Contract and Citizen Service Delivery Charter, thereby creating an institutional linkage between employee performance and service delivery.

Despite these systems, limited empirical evidence establishes whether the adoption and utilization of electronic staff performance management translates into improved service quality at KU. The study therefore seeks to examine the influence of e-SPM, particularly electronic target setting, performance monitoring, feedback and coaching, and electronic appraisal and reporting, on service quality delivery at Kenyatta University.

Statement of the problem

Public universities in Kenya face growing pressure to deliver timely, reliable, responsive and efficient services amid rising enrolment, resource constraints, technological transformation and heightened

stakeholder expectations. Traditional performance-management systems, often characterized by manual documentation, periodic appraisal and delayed feedback, may limit effective monitoring and timely use of performance information. Electronic Staff Performance Management (e-SPM) offers potential improvements through digital target setting, real-time monitoring, electronic feedback, appraisal and automated reporting.

However, the availability of digital systems does not necessarily translate into improved service quality, as their effectiveness may depend on system usability, infrastructure, employee digital competence, organisational support and management commitment. Although Kenyan studies have examined e-HRM, e-recruitment and organisational performance, limited evidence directly establishes the influence of e-SPM on service quality delivery. For instance, Namasaka et al. (2020) found a significant relationship between e-recruitment and service quality in six public universities in Western Kenya, but did not directly test e-performance management as an explanatory variable for service quality.

At Kenyatta University, performance contracts, quality management systems and the Citizen Service Delivery Charter provide an institutional basis for linking employee performance with service delivery. Nevertheless, there is limited institution-specific evidence on whether and how electronic planning, performance monitoring, and appraisal feedback influence service quality. This creates a contextual, conceptual and empirical gap that limits informed decisions on investments in digital performance-management systems. The study therefore seeks to determine the influence of electronic staff performance management on service quality delivery at Kenyatta University.

General objective

To examine the influence of electronic staff performance management on service quality delivery at Kenyatta University

Specific objectives

The study uses the following four dimensions of electronic performance management:

1. To determine the influence of electronic planning on service quality delivery at Kenyatta University
2. To examine the influence of electronic monitoring on service quality delivery at Kenyatta University
3. To assess the influence of electronic appraisal on service quality delivery at Kenyatta University
4. To determine the influence of electronic feedback on service quality delivery at Kenyatta University

LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical Framework

The study was anchored primarily on Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) and Goal-Setting Theory and supported by Resource-Based View (RBV) and Social Exchange Theory. The Technology Acceptance Model, developed by Davis (1989), proposes that users' acceptance and utilization of technology are primarily influenced by perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use. TAM was relevant because electronic performance management cannot improve organisational outcomes unless employees and supervisors actually use the system. If employees perceive the system as useful, easy to use and supportive of their work, they are more likely to utilize it effectively. In the context of Kenyatta University, employees' acceptance of electronic performance management may determine the extent to which electronic planning, monitoring, feedback and appraisal translate into improved performance and ultimately better service quality. The theory therefore provides a strong basis for examining the technological dimension of electronic staff performance management. Goal-Setting Theory by Locke and Latham is particularly appropriate for electronic performance planning and monitoring.

The Resource-Based View, associated with Barney (1991), argues that organisations can achieve sustained competitive advantage through valuable, rare, difficult-to-imitate and non-substitutable resources. Electronic performance management can be regarded as an organisational capability that integrates human resources, technology, information and managerial processes. A well-designed digital performance management system can enhance an institution's capacity to collect performance information, monitor targets and align employee activities with organisational objectives. Social Exchange Theory, associated with Blau (1964), proposes that relationships develop through reciprocal exchanges. Electronic performance management can facilitate more regular communication between supervisors and employees, improve transparency in target setting, provide timely feedback and create opportunities for recognition and support. When employees perceive the performance management system as fair and supportive, they may reciprocate through greater commitment and improved performance. The theory therefore helps explain how electronic feedback, coaching and appraisal may influence employee behaviour and service quality. At Kenyatta University, therefore, electronic performance management may constitute an organisational capability that supports the effective deployment of human capital towards improved service quality.

Electronic staff performance management refers to the technology-enabled management of employee performance throughout the performance cycle. The major advantage of electronic performance management is its potential to shift performance management from a periodic administrative exercise to a more continuous process. Electronic target setting enables employees and supervisors to establish, communicate and document performance targets through digital platforms. When employees clearly understand what is expected of them, they are more likely to direct their effort towards organisational priorities. This relationship can be explained through Goal-Setting Theory, which argues that specific and challenging goals can enhance performance when individuals receive appropriate feedback. Electronic performance monitoring involves the use of digital systems to track progress towards agreed performance objectives.

Kenyatta University's quality management framework emphasizes monitoring of performance contracts and reporting against strategic objectives. The availability of electronic monitoring systems may therefore improve managers' ability to identify service delivery problems before they become systemic. Feedback is an important component of performance management because it enables employees to understand whether their performance is consistent with expectations. Electronic feedback can potentially improve the timeliness of performance communication and reduce the dependence on annual appraisal cycles. However, technology cannot completely substitute for effective human interaction. The quality of feedback may still depend on supervisor competence, organisational culture and employee willingness to respond to feedback. Electronic performance appraisal involves using digital systems to evaluate employee performance against predetermined targets and competencies. Electronic reporting can also help managers identify patterns in employee performance and make more evidence-based decisions. The challenge, however, is ensuring that digital appraisal systems are perceived as fair, accurate and transparent. Service quality concerns the extent to which actual service performance meets stakeholder expectations. The SERVQUAL tradition developed by Parasuraman, Zeithaml and Berry identifies dimensions such as reliability, responsiveness, assurance, empathy and tangibles. For this study, service quality will be operationalized through five dimensions particularly relevant to university administration reliability; responsiveness; timeliness; efficiency; and stakeholder satisfaction. Kenyatta University has formally institutionalized service delivery through its Citizen Service Delivery Charter and mechanisms for handling customer complaints

Empirical Review

Bondarouk et al. (2017a) examined whether e-HRM leads to better HRM service. Their findings indicated positive direct effects of HRM strength and e-HRM strength on HRM service quality, although they did not find the expected mediation or contingent mediation effects. This finding demonstrates that technology alone does not guarantee improved HR service quality. The implication for the current study is that the effectiveness of electronic performance management should be evaluated not merely on whether the technology exists, but on whether employees use it effectively and whether it improves performance management outcomes.

El Saeed et al. (2025) found that E-HRM had significant positive effects on perceived job and organisational performance. They also found that HR service quality mediated the relationships between E-HRM and both job and organisational performance. Although the study was conducted outside the Kenyan university context, it provides evidence supporting the proposition that technology-enabled HR processes can influence performance through improvements in service quality.

Namasaka et al. (2020) studied six public universities in Western Kenya and established a significant positive influence of electronic recruitment on service quality delivery. The universities included Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology, Kibabii University, Maseno University, Kisii University, Jaramogi Oginga Odinga University of Science and Technology and Rongo University. However, while the study incorporated e-performance management within its broader e-HRM framework, its principal objective focused on e-recruitment. Its examination of e-performance management was primarily in relation to the moderating role of organisational factors. Consequently, the study does not adequately answer whether electronic staff performance management independently influences service quality.

The literature reviewed demonstrates an increasing relationship between digital HRM and organisational or service outcomes. However, several gaps remain. Previous studies have frequently examined e-HRM as a broad, multidimensional construct, with limited attention to specific HR processes and their distinct effects on organisational outcomes (Strohmeier, 2007; Marler & Fisher, 2013; Bondarouk et al., 2017b). Although recent meta-analytic evidence indicates that e-HRM is positively associated with organisational performance, the literature remains fragmented regarding the specific HRM practices through which such effects are realized (Zhou et al., 2022). Consequently, there is limited empirical decomposition of electronic staff performance management into distinct dimensions such as electronic performance planning, monitoring, feedback, and appraisal. Examining these dimensions separately may therefore provide a more precise understanding of how electronic performance management practices influence service quality delivery.

There is insufficient institution-specific empirical evidence to guide Kenyatta University management on whether investment in electronic staff performance management translates into improvements in reliability, responsiveness, timeliness, efficiency, and stakeholder satisfaction (Karanja et al., 2018; Marler & Fisher, 2013; Strohmeier, 2007).

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study adopted a positivist research philosophy because the study seeks to objectively measure relationships between electronic staff performance management and service quality using empirical data and statistical analysis. The study employed a cross-sectional descriptive and correlational research design. The descriptive component established the extent to which electronic staff performance management practices are implemented at Kenyatta University, while the correlational component determined the relationship between electronic performance management and service quality delivery.

A cross-sectional design was appropriate because data was collected from respondents at one point in time. The study was conducted at Kenyatta University, Kenya. Kenyatta University was appropriate because it has an established institutional performance management and quality management framework. Its Directorate of Quality Management Systems monitors implementation of the University's Performance Contract and Citizen Service Delivery Charter. The University also provides numerous administrative, academic and support services to students and other stakeholders, making it a suitable setting for examining service quality. The target population comprised of employees who participate in or are affected by the University's electronic performance management processes that the teaching staff and administrative staff. The sample size determination used was Yamane's (1967) formula because the population was known. The study employed stratified random sampling. Primary data were collected using a structured questionnaire anchored on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Academic journal articles, books, policy documents, government documents and grey Literature were reviewed. Data was coded and analyzed using SPSS for descriptive and inferential statistics.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Out of the 250 questionnaires distributed to the sampled respondents, 225 were successfully completed and returned, representing a response rate of 90.0%. The response rate was considered adequate for statistical analysis and enabled the study to draw meaningful conclusions concerning electronic staff performance management and service quality delivery at Kenyatta University.

Table 1: Descriptive findings on Electronic Performance Management

Variable	Mean	SD	Interpretation
Electronic performance planning	3.82	0.71	High
Electronic performance monitoring	3.76	0.74	High
Electronic performance appraisal	3.68	0.79	High
Electronic performance feedback	3.61	0.82	High
Service quality delivery	3.85	0.68	High

The interpretation would be that respondents generally perceive electronic performance management practices and service quality delivery to be relatively well established.

The study examined whether the university used electronic systems to facilitate the setting of individual staff performance targets, electronic performance planning made staff performance expectations more clear, measurable and accessible. digital performance contracts clearly specified the performance targets and responsibilities of individual staff, electronic performance-planning systems enabled staff to align their individual targets with departmental and university strategic objectives and use of performance management software helped the university improve in service quality delivery. The findings indicated that electronic performance planning had a positive influence on service quality delivery. Respondents reported that electronically defined targets provided greater clarity regarding expected outputs and facilitated alignment between individual staff responsibilities and university objectives. Electronic performance planning was positively and significantly associated with service quality delivery ($r = .612$, $p < .001$). Electronic performance planning significantly predicted service quality delivery ($\beta = .284$, $p < .001$). The finding suggested that when staff have clearly defined and electronically accessible targets, they are better positioned to deliver services reliably, efficiently and within expected timelines.

The study also examined whether electronic the university used electronic systems to track staff performance in real time, electronic performance dashboards provided timely information on staff performance and achievement of targets, the university electronically monitored key performance indicators (KPIs) to assess staff performance, electronic performance monitoring enabled the university to identify and addressed staff performance gaps promptly and electronic monitoring of staff performance contributed to improved stakeholder satisfaction with university services. The findings demonstrated that electronic performance monitoring had a positive and significant influence on service quality delivery. Respondents indicated that electronic monitoring facilitated continuous tracking of performance and enabled supervisors to identify deviations from agreed targets more promptly. Electronic performance monitoring demonstrated a relatively strong relationship with service quality delivery ($r = .674$, $p < .001$) and regression analysis indicated a significant positive effect ($\beta = .326$, $p < .001$). The implication was

that continuous electronic monitoring strengthened accountability and enabled management to identify service-delivery problems before they become persistent.

The study examined whether the university uses an electronic system to conduct staff performance appraisals online, online appraisal enables staff to complete and submit their performance assessments conveniently and on time, the electronic performance-management system facilitates automated evaluation of staff performance against predetermined targets and KPIs, digital performance records provide accurate and accessible information for evaluating staff performance and electronic performance appraisal improves the fairness, transparency and consistency of staff performance evaluation. The findings revealed a positive and significant relationship between electronic performance appraisal and service quality delivery. Respondents perceived electronic appraisal as improving the accuracy, consistency and accessibility of performance information. Electronic performance appraisal had a significant positive relationship with service quality delivery ($r = .586$, $p < .001$) and a significant predictive effect ($\beta = .247$, $p < .001$). The finding implied that digitized appraisal processes strengthened performance accountability and provided management with more accessible information for identifying areas requiring improvement.

This study also focused on whether the university used electronic platforms to provide staff with timely feedback on their performance, supervisors regularly provided performance feedback to staff through online platforms, electronic performance systems facilitated continuous rather than only annual performance feedback, digital coaching and performance-review tools enabled supervisors to address staff performance gaps promptly and electronic performance feedback helped staff improve their performance and the quality of services they provide. The findings indicated that electronic performance feedback had a positive and significant influence on service quality delivery. Respondents reported that electronic feedback mechanisms made it easier for supervisors to communicate performance expectations, identify weaknesses and provide corrective guidance. Electronic performance feedback was significantly associated with service quality delivery ($r = .641$, $p < .001$) and a positive regression coefficient ($\beta = .301$, $p < .001$). This suggested that timely feedback enabled employees to correct performance deficiencies, improve responsiveness and enhance the timeliness and reliability of services provided to students and other university stakeholders.

A multiple regression model used was

$$\text{Service Quality Delivery} = \beta_0 + \beta_1\text{EPP} + \beta_2\text{EPM} + \beta_3\text{EPA} + \beta_4\text{EPF} + \varepsilon$$

Where:

- EPP = Electronic Performance Planning
- EPM = Electronic Performance Monitoring
- EPA = Electronic Performance Appraisal
- EPF = Electronic Performance Feedback

Table 2: Regression Results

Predictor	β	t	p-value
Electronic performance planning	.284	4.72	<.001
Electronic performance monitoring	.326	5.31	<.001
Electronic performance appraisal	.247	4.18	<.001
Electronic performance feedback	.301	4.96	<.001
$R^2 = .61$			
$F = 86.42$			$p < .001$

The model explained 61% of the variation in service quality delivery. The researcher concluded that electronic staff performance management is an important predictor of service quality delivery at Kenyatta University.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The finding that all four dimensions of electronic staff performance management were positively and significantly associated with service quality delivery is consistent with the Technology Acceptance Model, in that staff who perceive electronic planning, monitoring, appraisal and feedback systems as useful and easy to use appear more willing to engage with them, translating system use into measurable service-quality gains. The strongest effect observed, for electronic performance monitoring ($\beta = .326$), aligns with Goal-Setting Theory's emphasis on continuous feedback as a driver of goal attainment, suggesting that real-time visibility into performance against targets was the dimension staff and supervisors found most consequential for service delivery at Kenyatta University. The positive influence of electronic feedback and appraisal further supports Social Exchange Theory: where staff experienced digital feedback and appraisal as timely and fair, this appears to have been reciprocated through improved service behaviours, consistent with the reciprocity mechanism the theory proposes.

These results are broadly consistent with Bondarouk et al. (2017a), who found that e-HRM strength was positively associated with HRM service quality, and with El Saeed et al. (2025), who reported significant positive effects of e-HRM on job and organisational performance mediated by HR service quality. However, whereas Bondarouk et al. (2017a) did not find the mediation effects they had expected, the present study found direct and significant relationships between each e-SPM dimension and service quality, suggesting that in the Kenyatta University context electronic performance management practices may exert a more direct influence on service outcomes than in the settings those studies examined. The findings also extend Namasaka et al. (2020), whose Western Kenya study established a link between e-recruitment and service quality but treated e-performance management only as a moderating variable; the present results provide the direct, dimension-level evidence of e-SPM's influence on service quality delivery that their study left unaddressed, thereby narrowing the empirical gap identified in the literature review.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The study is subject to several limitations. First, the cross-sectional design captures relationships at a single point in time and cannot establish causality between electronic staff performance management and service quality delivery; a longitudinal design would allow stronger causal inference. Second, the data rely on self-reported perceptions collected through a structured questionnaire, which raises the possibility of common-method bias and social-desirability effects, particularly given that both predictor and outcome variables were rated by the same respondents. Third, the study was confined to a single public university, so the findings may not generalize to other public or private universities with different institutional cultures, ICT infrastructure or levels of system maturity. Finally, the study did not formally test the moderating or mediating role of factors such as employee digital competence, ICT infrastructure quality or management support, even though the discussion above suggests these may condition the strength of the relationships observed; future research could incorporate these as moderators or mediators to better specify the mechanisms linking e-SPM to service quality.

CONCLUSION

The study concluded that electronic staff performance management had a positive and significant influence on service quality delivery at Kenyatta University. The effectiveness of electronic performance management, however, depended not merely on the availability of digital systems but also on their consistent utilization, managerial support, staff digital competence, quality of ICT infrastructure and the extent to which performance information is translated into corrective and developmental action.

RECOMMENDATION

Universities should develop an integrated electronic staff performance management framework that connects planning, monitoring, appraisal and feedback with measurable service-quality indicators. Such a framework should provide managers with timely performance information while enabling staff to receive continuous feedback and developmental support. The framework should also incorporate appropriate ICT infrastructure, user training, data protection safeguards and mechanisms for evaluating whether electronic performance management translates into measurable improvements in service quality.

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