
**INFLUENCE OF SERVICE RELIABILITY ON CUSTOMER SATISFACTION AT THE
HUDUMA CENTRE IN KISUMU COUNTY**

^{1*}Eileen Atieno Omungo & ²Dr. Kennedy Okemwa Nyariki

^{1*}Scholar, Mount Kenya University, Kenya

²Senior Lecturer, Mount Kenya University, Kenya

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ABSTRACT

The needs of citizens and the services they require from their respective governments keep changing, Kenya included. These changes are compounded by the limited resources required to implement them amidst competing needs. This study assessed the influence of service reliability on customer satisfaction at the Huduma Centre in Kisumu County. The study made use of Douglas McGregor Theory X and Theory Y. Kisumu Huduma Centre was used with the primary data collected using questionnaires. The study population constituted individual citizens using Huduma services and the centre managers as key informants. The study used simple purposive and convenience sampling to select respondents. The tools for data assemblage were questionnaires and in-depth interview guides for the key informants. Descriptive statistics was used and presentations was in the form tables and graphs obtained from data analysis. The study established that to some extent the citizens visiting the Huduma Centre in Kisumu were satisfied with the quality of service offered albeit with very many areas of concern like among others long waiting times, late opening of the centre and the need to improve internet connection which puts a strain on most activities carried out at the centre. The findings also revealed that there is need for the government to put in more effort in terms of governance, administration and finance into these Centres so as to properly carry out services to the citizens.

Keywords: *Service Reliability, Customer Satisfaction, Huduma Centre*

INTRODUCTION

According to Aarons, Ehrhart, Farahnak, and Hurlburt (2015), leveraging technology inside the company, educating people, and transformational management are all examples of transformational leadership actions that encourage organizational success. The Commonwealth Working Group on Public Administration (CWGPA) said in 2014 that the increased demand for better quality and more responsive public services has increased the need for them, which has forced governments to expand programs that provide outcomes for planning and delivery. The main objective is to allow better service delivery and "value for money" (Commonwealth Secretariat 2016).

Regional research by Abu Orabi and Tareq (2016) in Oman confirms that transformative leadership is seen as the primary force behind organizational effectiveness in this abrasive business environment. According to Abu Orabi and Tareq (2016) in Jordan, adopting transformational management is a necessary action for legitimate competitiveness in order for the firm to survive the challenging business environment.

Since the first computers were invented in the 1970s, e-government in Africa has made great strides. Spreading the authority's purview has been prioritized in order to affect the population as a whole. Many governments recognize e-governance as a crucial tool for improving the quality of government services provided to their citizens because it increases transparency, reduces subjectivity and corruption, lowers the cost of living for its citizens, and, in the end, improves accessibility to the government itself. The Huduma Kenya initiative is only one of the numerous innovations made to speed up the delivery of Kenya's notoriously rigid and complex bureaucracy. As a result, accessing public services has been a nightmare for quite some time. Corruption and incompetence significantly compromised the nation's ability to offer services.

Governments are operating in more complicated contexts as a result of this transformation, which is made worse by the limited resources available to meet conflicting demands for services. In Kenya, the adoption of the 2010 Constitution of Kenya and the mandate to provide quality services from both public and private institutions have thrust the importance of government service quality to the fore and forced the government to deliver more services to the people more effectively. Research conducted by Muganda (2008) explains how some nations, like Canada, Sweden, and South Korea, have successfully adapted to the use of e-government, how other nations have encountered difficulties implementing e-government, and how it has been beneficial for a small segment of the population in other nations.

Since its start, the Huduma program's main goal has been to improve people's experiences working for the government. In Swahili, the word "Huduma" means "service." The majority of Huduma Centers are housed in government-owned post offices. On an average day, busy centers handle up to 5,000 transactions, while other Centers in less populated zones could handle 50. Every day, 30,000 transactions are conducted nationally on average.

Statement of the Problem

Many public service initiatives in Kenya, including specifically Huduma Centers in Kenya, have been recognized to have shown a reduction in performance in terms of dependability of service, raising concerns from the general public and policy officials. This is true despite the acknowledged positive substantial association between e-governance and the quality of services provided (KPMG, 2016). Under the Bill of Rights, the Kenyan Constitution provides a provision that guarantees reasonable dependability of services. This research aimed to determine if services at the Huduma Center in Kisumu County were of a suitable standard. Aspects of inefficiency, bad door policies, and bureaucracy that plague the official delivery of public services have led to individuals who need assistance to essentially beg for assistance from the few government workers who are present in the offices.

Citizens who use public services often lament how difficult they may be, with delays leading to unethical behaviors like bribes of officials or other quick payments. The formation of Huduma Centers, which attempts to solve the issues that have been restricting services to a few connected residents, was made possible since all the characteristics of contemporary public service delivery have been lacking.

Since relatively few studies have evaluated the customer satisfaction of the service quality supplied inside the centers, particularly from the point of view of the residents, there is little

focus on the evaluation of the condition of these programs in Kenya. Based on this assumption, this research aimed to close the knowledge gap by measuring the degree of citizen satisfaction with service quality and investigating the impact of Huduma centers on public service delivery. The study included recommendations for strategies that can help Kenyan e-government projects succeed more quickly. Additionally, it is necessary to take into account their comments and suggestions when developing service standards and, eventually, when formulating policies to guarantee the quality of services provided to residents in accordance with the 2010 Constitution of Kenya's Bill of Rights.

Purpose of the Study

The key objective of this study was to assess the influence of service reliability on customer satisfaction at the Huduma Centre in Kisumu County.

Justification of the Study

Customer satisfaction is a critical component of service delivery and it entails meeting customers' expectations. It is by satisfying their expectations that organizations and governments achieve their objectives. The government has been obligated to see citizens as customers of their public services given the competitive politics and the necessity to win the approval of the public. It is for this reason that both private and public are progressively aiming in the direction of customer-oriented service provision to achieve customer fulfilment. It is on this basis that Huduma Kenya was established, to safeguard customer-centered service delivery by the government. Customer-centered service provision was at the heart of enhancing service quality. It is on this premise that this study sought to improve the body of knowledge by filling this gap by assessing the level of satisfaction with the quality of service and examining the effect of Huduma Centres on the delivery of services to the public.

Theoretical Framework

Douglas McGregor Theory X and Theory Y

In 1960, Douglas McGregor formulated Theory X and Theory Y suggesting two aspects of human behavior at work, or in other words, two different views of individuals (employees): one of which is negative, called as Theory X and the other is positive, so-called as Theory Y. According to McGregor, the perception of managers on the nature of individuals is based on various assumptions.

Assumptions of Theory X

McGregor's theory X is underpinned on the following assumptions that an average employee inherently does not like to work and therefore makes many attempts to escape the work whenever possible. He further states that since these employees do not like to work, they must be persuaded, compelled or warned with severe punishment so as to meet the organizational goal. This theory also suggests that close monitoring and supervision is required on the part of managers. This theory is underpinned on the assumption of authoritarian type of rule in the organization.

Assumptions of Theory Y

McGregor's theory Y is underpinned on the following assumptions. That employees consider their job an integral part of their well-being and therefore have a tendency to self-direct and self-control themselves within the work environment. This theory assumes that employees consider their job as relaxing and normal and therefore only requiring the proper amount of physical and mental effort in their jobs. This theory further assumes that if the job is rewarding and satisfying, then it will result in employees' loyalty and commitment to an organization. Generally, this theory assumes that employees have skills and capabilities that ought to be fully utilized and

hence innovative potentiality of the employees can be fully utilized to solve organizational problems.

In evaluating both of these theories it is worthy to note that many organizations using Theory Y methods get more output from employees which results to better returns. Motivated employees are eager to get the job done and this results in greater customer satisfaction because of the service quality rendered to them by these highly motivated employees. Such employees under Theory Y require minimum supervision because they are able to manage themselves.

Huduma Centre offices ought to be opened from 8am. Highly motivated employees who love their job and who require minimum supervision will take it upon themselves to start work at that time and are eager to assist the customers who come to these centres seeking their services.

This will in turn lead to excellent customer satisfaction based on the service quality offered given that the services will be delivered in a timely, responsive and reliable manner. The highly motivated employees will also give assurance to the customers that their request or the assistance they are seeking will be done in a proper way.

METHODOLOGY

The study adopted a descriptive research design. This involved the gathering of unbiased information from sample obtained from self-report (Orodho & Tromp, 2006). Descriptive survey is suitable for research whose aim is to present a situation that paints a clear picture on the beliefs of the people, the activities of people at that particular moment and so on (Baumgartner, Strong and Hensley, 2002) with zero control of the variables under examination which is a restriction. This design is appropriate as it called for a thorough study of the influence of service quality based on customer satisfaction at the Huduma Centres in Kisumu County.

The entire number of individuals, elements, units or objects with similar noticeable characteristics for study is deemed to be the target population according to (Fisher, 2010). According to Huduma Center database, since its inception in 2013, Huduma Centre in Kisumu has been serving an average of 200 customers daily as documented by the Kisumu Huduma Centre Manager. The study intended populace was customers evaluating several services at Huduma centre on a random day. The researcher proposes to interview 103 individuals composed mostly of citizens accessing services in Huduma Center in Kisumu.

A sample of 103 respondents were obtained through simple random sampling method. Nassium (2000) equation for ascertaining test measure n from a populace N was used.

$n = \frac{NC^2}{C^2 + (N-1)e^2}$ where n is sample size, N is study population, C is coefficient of variation and e is error margin

Taking N as 200 derived from simple random sampling, C as 0.32, e as 0.022 and replacing such qualities in the condition the projected sample size (n) was $n = \frac{200 * 0.1024}{0.1024 + (200 - 1)0.000484} = \frac{20.48}{0.1028} = 103$

The study sample size was 103 respondents

The qualitative data was sorted, coded, edited, and entered in Microsoft Excel. Statistical package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 24 computer software was used for analysing qualitative information obtained from the questionnaires. SPSS generated expressive and illustrative data.

Illustrative data via reversion of coefficient was also applied to analyse the connection of the dependent variable; perceived citizen satisfaction and independent variable which was reliability. In terms of qualitative data, the responses were grouped into thematic areas based on the interview guide in reference to the objectives of the study

Response Rate

The study administered 103 questionnaires to the citizens seeking services at Huduma Centre Kisumu. The questionnaire return rate results are shown in Table 1 below was 103 and 103 questionnaires were properly filled and returned. This represented an overall successful response rate of 100% as shown on Table 1.

Table 1: Response Rate

| Response | Frequency | Percent |
|-----------------|------------------|----------------|
| Returned | 103 | 103 |
| Unreturned | 0 | 0 |
| Total | 103 | 100 |

Source: Author (2022)

From the study, 103 out of 103 target respondents filled in and returned the questionnaire contributing to 100%. This commendable response rate can be attributed to the data collection procedure where the researcher personally administered questionnaires and waited for respondents to fill in the questionnaires and picked the questionnaires once fully filled. The response rate demonstrates a willingness of the respondents to participate in the study. This response rate was good and representative and conforms to Mugenda & Mugenda, (2003) stipulation that a response rate of 50% is adequate for analysis and reporting; a rate of 60% is good and a response rate of 70% and over is excellent.

Descriptive Statistics for the Study Variables

In order to identify the reliability factors of service quality at the Huduma Centers in Kisumu County, respondents were asked to rate the factors on a scale of 1 to 5; (1; strongly agree, 2; agree, 3; neutral, 4; disagree, 5; strongly disagree). The majority (67.9%) of the respondents agreed with the assertion that the service sought was provided in reasonable time. 73.7% of the respondents agreed that the records at the Huduma Centre relating to the service they wanted were accurate. 66.0% of the respondents agreed that they felt that the staff cared about their problem and wanted to assist them. 75.7% percent of the respondents agreed that they can depend on the Huduma Centre to deliver the service required and 6.1% of the respondents agreed that the service was offered right the first time as indicated in table 2.

Table 2: Reliability

| Statement | Agree | Neutral | Disagree |
|---|--------------|----------------|-----------------|
| The service sought was provided in reasonable time | 70 | 12 | 21 |
| The records at the Huduma centre relating to the service I wanted were accurate | 76 | 20 | 7 |
| I felt that the staff cared about my problem and wanted to assist me resolve it | 68 | 28 | 7 |
| I can depend on the Huduma Centre to deliver the service required | 78 | 21 | 4 |
| The service was offered right the first time | 62 | 4 | 37 |

Source: Author (2022)

Summary of Findings

This dimension aims to assess the reliability of the service offered and whether it was delivered correctly the first time. The general public believed that services were delivered in a timely manner and correctly the first time. Although satisfied, the citizens expressed concern about the Huduma Centers' turnaround time for services and suggested adding more counters to the service options. According to the literature review (Daglio, 2014) highlights that public innovation is used to streamline government operations. The goal of implementing E-government as a public

innovation is to change how services are provided, save time and money for both service providers and citizens, streamline processes, and improve accuracy (Otieno & Omwenga, 2016). The foundation and fiber of the implementation of e-government is the reliability of government services.

CONCLUSIONS

Citizens believe that the actual service received is better than they expected based on word of mouth and external communications from the HKP and government agencies, and they concur that the service quality is reasonable as measured by the service dimensions. They are satisfied with the service reliability at the Huduma Centres. The study's conclusions point to an imbalance between citizen demand for Huduma Centers and supply (government organizations), which puts pressure on those who deliver government services.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The study suggests that in order to relieve pressure on physical facilities—citizen numbers having been identified as the main contributor to service delays—HKP should give priority to the rollout of service delivery channels that almost immediately reroute citizens away from Huduma Centres to those channels. Utilizing mobile and internet-based channels would be the most productive in the short term due to the high adoption of these technologies in the nation. HKP can benefit from the Pasha internet provisioning system in remote areas (Otieno & Omwenga, 2016). However, it is necessary to address and assure the systems' reliability and usability for citizens if these channels are to achieve demand redistribution and, more importantly, service reliability.

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