

# **THE EFFECT OF PERFORMANCE BENCHMARKS ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SERVICE QUALITY DIMENSIONS AND CUSTOMER SATISFACTION AT ELDORET LAW COURTS**

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## **Abstract**

*Kenya has undertaken a number of judicial reforms specifically to realize an effective justice system considered a fundamental right to all its citizens in addition to reinforcing confidence in the legal system. This study aimed at testing a Performance benchmarks namely performance appraisals and quality management systems if they had any significant relationship with customer performance in Eldoret law courts. The current study represents an initial effort to describe results of a performance measurement that can suggest some challenges in developing comprehensive performance measurement tools for courts. The study was based on the previous finding where the service quality dimensions could only explained 2 % of the customer satisfaction in Eldoret Law Courts. Data was collected from a stratified sample from a population of 1815 respondents composed of convicts, remandees, advocates and child*

*convicts. The study established that when the employee performance benchmarks were introduced in the model, dimensions of service quality namely reliability, empathy, responsiveness, assurance, and tangibles improved and were able to explain 4.6% from the previous 2% of customer satisfaction at the Eldoret Law Courts. There was however, a significant relationship between service quality dimensions and customer satisfaction as a result. These findings provide some useful and interesting insight into the achievements of judicial reforms and more specifically the importance of performance benchmarks (performance measures) in the judiciary.*

*Keywords: Service Quality Dimensions, Customer Satisfaction, Justice, Performance Appraisal, Rater, Quality Management Systems*

## **INTRODUCTION**

Throughout the country questions that called for judicial reforms revolved around trust in judicial administration, quality of service, independence of courts and efficiency in the delivery of justice. Judicial reforms experiences are an indication that more information is required to assess and evaluate trends among the different courts in the country making judicial decisions. However, in effect little is known about the trends in the performance of each court throughout the country. This study therefore addressed the service quality dimensions of court performance based on the performance measurement tools such as performance appraisal and quality management systems in place. These measures assessed the effectiveness and efficiency of Eldoret Law courts as critical issues in the judicial reform agenda.

Performance benchmarks are designed to measure systems service quality dimensions. Data to be measured is defined into specific measurable elements provided by an organization parameter to measure the quality of its service. Through performance measurement, a process by which an organization monitors important aspects of its programs, systems, and processes in used. In this context, performance measurement includes the operational processes used to collect data necessary for the performance measures. Performance management is a forward-looking process used to set goals and regularly check progress toward achieving those goals. In practice, an organization sets goals, looks at the actual data for its performance measures, and acts on results to improve the performance toward its goals.

The Judiciary's performance measures and indicators are aimed at streamlining internal processes and systems, improving efficiency and effectiveness, meeting stipulated timelines, increasing accountability and productivity of judges and judicial officers and staff and promoting

quality service. The key performance benchmarks used include the Judiciary Strategic Plans, Annual Work Plans, Performance Management and Measurement Understanding (PMMU), Citizens Service Delivery Charters and Standards, Quality Management Standards, Performance Appraisals, Performance reporting performance benchmarks and court user and employee satisfaction surveys. This study used the performance appraisal and quality management standards because of the availability of information that is quantifiable.

Management theory and practice have long established a link between effective performance measures and effective management (Drucker, 1995). The effectiveness of any given performance measure in the judicial system depends on how it will be used. For performance measures to have meaning and provide useful information, it is necessary to make comparisons, evaluate progress in achieving given goals or targets, assess trends in performance over time, or weigh the performance of one organization against another (Poister, 2003).

Performance benchmarks are used as a management tool and require to be broadened to include inputs and process multiple measures of its programs from the different perspectives of customer, employee, process, and finance (Kaplan, 1996 and Poister, 2003).

### **Performance Appraisals**

Organizations can only compete with their rivals by being innovative and organizations can be innovative only when they manage their human resources well. The human resource system can become more effective when there is a valid, effective and accurate appraisal system to rating employee performances of the employees (Yalçın, 2002).

In Kenya, performance appraisal system became a new paradigm in the public service including the judiciary as from was introduced by the government alongside the new financial year from 1st July 2006. The purpose was to improve performance of employees in public sectors. This is a process requires work planning and target setting by employees and the aim of performance appraisals is to encourage team work, better designation of responsibilities, improved information sharing in organizations, connecting employee performance to the organizations strategic plans, entrenching continuous assessment of performance and motivating employees through mutual discussions, setting and reviewing of targets (Obongo, 2009)

The performance appraisal has numerous purposes, but the main objective is to get better organizations overall performance. Fisher (1995) posited that performance appraisal is serves an indirectly as a basis for disciplinary action on employees who do not maintain discipline as one of the goals of a multipurpose scheme. In addition, through performance

appraisals, employees recognize their pay and chance of being promoted depending on the outcome of the appraisal process (Rees and Porter, 2001). Finally performance appraisal enables employees to work hard so that the employer can justify the costs of an employee's training and developmental needs. The study used performance appraisals to establish the effect employee training that is undertaken by the judiciary expected to help improve the performance of such employees.

### **Quality Management Systems**

Quality management (QM) refers to the application of a quality management system in managing a procedure to realize utmost customer satisfaction at the lowest overall cost to the organization while continuing to improve the process. Nelsen and Daniels (2007) posit that a quality management system (QMS) must be an official system with a documented organization's responsibilities and procedures that each employee will require to achieve effective quality management.

Organizations use quality management programs usually instituted from the executive management down to the lowest level employee bearing in mind that each particular task within an organization requires quality processes modelled after its own unique requirements. The study expects that the Kenyan courts individually have quality processes designed and established based on the values of the overall quality management program. In management, are different quality management programs, which include total quality management (TQM), kaizen based programs, and Six Sigma. Beinhocker and Kaplan (2002) argue that any organization's quality management program acts as a chief factor in its strategic planning practice because the executive management requires not only to achieve quality management but also requires achieving its listed objectives, have a creative management and be innovative. The current study investigated the quality management variable in order to establish whether the Eldoret law courts were innovative enough to deal with the increasing complaint levels.

### **Customer Satisfaction in Judiciary**

Kenya's Judiciary discharges its mandate through the Judicial Service Commission with the power and authority highly centralized. The judiciary's complaints hinge on accountability mechanisms considered weak, inadequate resources, diminishing public confidence, deficiency in employee integrity, weak public support and literally incapacitated ability to deliver justice (*National Council for Law Reporting*, 2016). The new 2010 Constitution decentralized judiciary services with the Supreme Court and the Court of Appeal having their own Presidents and the High Court now has a Principal Judge as head of the respective Institutions.

The Kenyan Judiciary has institutionalized Performance Contracting (PC) by establishing a fully fledged directorate of performance management where performance appraisals are applied. The PC is Result-Based Management (RBM) methodology that has been implemented by the Executive Arm of the Government. RBM is a participatory team based approach designed to achieve defined results by improving programme and management efficiency, effectiveness, accountability and transparency. Performance based management practices are now applicable to both judicial and administrative staff. In order to promote sound management practices, the judiciary has also established Transformation Steering Committee where all stakeholders in the judicial system are represented. An Ombudsperson was appointed purposely to receive and respond to complaints by staff and the public while the Chief of Staff was appointed to oversee the establishment of the Executive Office of the Chief Justice and facilitate the CJ's numerous roles.

Kenya's judiciary has an effective model where it envisages a vision of success through a management approach centered on quality delivery of services where each employee is expected to participate with one of the objective being customer satisfaction and to society by being ISO certified entity. It is the coordination of efforts directed at improving customer satisfaction, increasing employee participation, strengthening supplier partnerships, and facilitating an organisational atmosphere of continuous quality improvement (Pride, Hughes, and Kapoor, 2009)

### **Statement of the Problem**

The new 2010 Constitution decentralized judicial services and in effect taking services closer to the people. The Judiciary continuously monitors its service through the performance benchmarks and the Office of the Judiciary Ombudsperson (OJO) which is an accelerated grievance/feedback management mechanism established in August 2011 under the Office of the Chief Justice. The Office of the Ombudsperson has registered 9,776 complaints in 2011/2012 and 9,093 complaints in 2012/2013 against the judiciary. These complaints manifest within the realm of annual training of its employees for culture change, workshops, training on technology and its applications purposely to eliminate or substantially reduce number of complaints in the judicial service.

This study therefore sought to assess why the judiciary has numerous complaints of customer dissatisfaction about the quality of services offered by the Judiciary amidst performance benchmarks (such as performance appraisals and quality management systems in place) and training. Hence, the study investigated the relationship between service quality

dimensions, performance benchmarks and customer satisfaction in Eldoret Law Courts in Kenya.

## **THEORETICAL BACKGROUND**

This study applied three theories namely the assimilation – contrast theory as proposed by Anderson (1973) which suggested organizations should perform until its performance is deemed as acceptable. The theory was used to explain the relationships among the service quality and customer satisfaction dimensions (variables) in the conception model. It was also used in the study to understand the growing public complaints and in effect to assess the theory robustness.

Contrast Theory was also used as proposed by Hovland, C., Harvey, O., Sherif (1957). It defines the cause of discrepancy between one's own attitudes and the attitudes represented by opinion statements. The theory was critical in interpreting the results on service quality dimensions and on customer satisfaction.

Equity theory is built upon the argument by Stouffer et al.(1949) that man's rewards in exchange with others should be proportional to investments. This theory was used to address the customer satisfaction variable within the context of legal reforms in the country. The major short coming of this theory is that in the handful of studies that have examined the effect of equity on customer satisfaction, equity appears to have a moderate effect on customer satisfaction and post - purchase communication behaviour.

### **Research objectives**

To investigate the moderating effects of performance benchmarks on the relationship between service quality dimensions and customer satisfaction at Eldoret Law Courts

### **Research Hypotheses**

H<sub>0</sub>: There are no significant moderating effects of performance benchmarks on the relationship between service quality dimensions and customer satisfaction at Eldoret Law Courts.

### **Performance Benchmarks (Performance Appraisals) and Quality Management Systems on the Relationship between Service Quality Dimensions and Customer Satisfaction**

Manani *et al.*, (2013) explored the key determinants of customer satisfaction for passenger sat Kenya Airways. The study used a descriptive survey design. Data was collected from one hundred (100) passengers and was analysed by use of means, frequency, percentage and Factor Analysis. The SERVQUAL dimensions, reliability, assurance, tangibles empathy, and

responsiveness were used to measure the gap between customers' expectation for excellence and their perception of actual service delivered.

The study findings revealed that the SERVQUAL/RATER dimensions tangibility, reliability, responsiveness, assurance and empathy had a significant relationship with customer satisfaction. The results also revealed that luggage security and safety, proper communication with customers to update them on status of their flights and provision of food variety, weather conditions prevailing at the destination and compassion by airline crew toward any disabled persons on-board in a form of quality management system significantly increased customer satisfaction. The study found that consumers perceive service quality and being able to measure service quality through a quality management system can benefit management of service organizations. The study shows that measuring service quality together a quality management system can help management secure reliable data that can be used to monitor and maintain improved service quality.

Martey and Frempong (2014) also conducted a study in the airline industry using the SERVQUAL/RATER model to examine the impact of perceived service quality dimensions on customer satisfaction in the airline industry in Ghana. Data was collected using self-administered questionnaires and interviews on a sample of 353 of international airline passengers. Data was analysed using descriptive analysis, correlation analysis and reliability and validity analysis. The findings revealed that all five dimensions of perceived service quality, namely responsiveness, reliability, empathy, assurance, and tangibles had a significant and positive relationship with customer satisfaction. These results indicate that service quality is indeed a significant predictor of customer satisfaction in the airline industry and that improved airline service quality would result in higher passenger satisfaction. This study was carried out on international airline passengers and improvement of service delivery improved aided by the improved management quality systems in airline services. The similar results however were found by Manani *et al.*, (2013) that the improvements of airline service quality results were high to airline passenger satisfaction with the help of service charter.

Mbuthia *et al.*, (2013) used the hotel service quality to study perceptions and satisfaction among domestic guests in Kenya. Descriptive survey design was adopted for the study and cluster sampling was applied to select the hotels from which customers were derived. Questionnaires were self-administered to 182 guests and 26 items were used to measure perceived service quality using a seven-point Likert-type scale. The study established that tangibility as a service is rated highly while confidence and communication dimensions of quality had a low rating. The study recommended that service delivery capacity of employees be improved in the said hotels so that customers can feel that their needs are addressed, better

communication is achieved and employees become more responsive as well as reliable. The study also suggested that the management of hotels ought to pursue other motivating strategies including quality management systems to improve service quality.

Okibo and Ogwe (2013) conducted an assessment of the effect of staff training, accessible customer care centres, organisation customer care policies and guideline, agility supply chain of products and service on quality customer care factors affecting quality customer care services in Telkom Kenya. The questionnaire reliability was pilot - tested on 4500 respondents. Open-ended and close-ended questionnaires were administered on 9100 employees. Collected data was analysed using multiple linear regression to determine the mean score, standard deviation, frequency and percentage of occurrences and the results were presented on frequency distribution tables, pie charts and bar charts. The study revealed that customer care training equips employees with customer care knowledge skills in order to boost their customer handling ability thus attracting more customers and increased organizational performance.

Researches carried out in the banking industry agree that service quality enhances customer satisfaction and more particularly customer loyalty. Auka (2012) investigated the relationship between service quality, satisfaction, perceived value and loyalty among customers in commercial banks in Nakuru Municipality, Kenya. To achieve this purpose, data were collected using a questionnaire administered on 381 respondents who were selected through stratified random and systematic sampling procedures. The overall reliability test using Cronbach's test of the questionnaire had an alpha coefficient of 0.911. Data analysis was done through Pearson correlation and regression. The findings revealed that there was a positive and significant relationship between the five dimensions of service quality with customer satisfaction and customer value, and customer loyalty. This study also found that performance appraisal in service quality enhanced customer value and satisfactions which therefore are critical success factors that influence the competitiveness of an organization. It is therefore recommended that banks adopt the model consisting of the three constructs to create and maintain customer loyalty so as to improve performance and create competitive advantage.

Satir (2006) posted that character of a firm cannot be explained by only one experience dimension by the targeted consumers rather reputation contains sub dimensions such as trust and service quality in addition to instances of a repeat purchase. If the corporate personality of a service firm is accepted to the customers then it can be used to build a strong corporate image. Above and beyond, corporate identity refers the ideal self-image of a service firm where the ideal self-image explains how customers recognize the service firm in their mind (Worcester, 1986). In view of the above, this study sought a relationship between service quality and final



service delivery by the country's justice service system unlike in the above case where a corporate is a supplier of good.

Auka *et al* (2013) conducted a study in the banking industry on perceived service quality and customer loyalty in retail banking in Kenya. Cronbach's coefficient alpha test of reliability and internal consistency the quality of the questionnaire returned results of 0.918 which was higher than the recommended 0.7 threshold. The questionnaire on the five dimensions of service delivery: tangibility, reliability, responsiveness, assurance and empathy were administered on a sample of 384 current customers of commercial banks. The results of Pearson's Correlation; Multiple regression and regression coefficients analyses indicated that the five dimensions of service quality have a positive and significant influence on customer loyalty in retail banking. The results also revealed that customers are satisfied with the services provided by banks and are confident that banks will fulfil the promised terms and conditions.

Another survey on the banking industry was conducted by Makori and Mwirigi (2013) who examined the determinants of corporate customers' loyalty to corporate banking services in commercial banks. The study adopted the descriptive survey research design and used stratified sampling to obtain a representative sample of 9 commercial banks from all the 43 commercial banks in Mombasa. The research questionnaire on customer perceptions of the three independent variables corporate banking services, corporate image, and relationship banking were evaluated on a 7 point Likert scale. The reliability of the questionnaire items was determined using the Cronbach alpha coefficient and pre-tested data on a sample of 10 corporate service respondents from 2 commercial banks that were not part of the actual study sample yielded an inter-item reliability of Cronbach alpha coefficient of 0.929. One hundred and two (102) corporate customers' questionnaires out of the 120 that had been administered were returned representing a response rate of 85%. Data analysis was conducted with the aid of the Statistical Package for Social Scientists (SPSS) and the Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (PPMC) was used to determine the relationships between the independent and dependent variables of the study and the findings were presented in tables. The results evoked by this survey indicated that there are positive correlations between customer loyalty, high quality products and service on one hand and improved customer satisfaction on the other hand. The reliability level in the studies by Auka (2012), Auka *et al.*, (2013) and Makori & Mwirigi (2013) were determined using the Cronbach test and all had an alpha coefficient of over 0.9 which was higher than the recommended 0.7 threshold. This confirms that Cronbach test is a reliable scale of internal consistency. The three aforementioned studies used Pearson's Correlation and Multiple regression and returned comparable results that there is a link between service quality and customer satisfaction in creating customer loyalty in commercial banks. The

results support the position that Pearson's Correlation and Multiple regression analyses are consistent tools in determining customer satisfaction.

Regan (2009) posits that clients in any legal system always match their needs with a particular type of service provider and lawyers should consider all aspects of a corporate client's complex matters through quality management systems. He emphasized that even the legal staff may not be in a position to appreciate fully the implications of their client's needs or be in a position to advise how to modify them if they believe such conduct does not accord with broader societal interests, or duties to the court. This indicated the importance of a measure that can be used to rate one's performance.

Major law firms are placed under increasing pressure to redefine their missions, roles and their worth to both their corporate and non corporate clients. Services to corporate clients which is different from non corporate has witnessed cases where law firms demand lower fee rates in addition to offering value-added services and specialist expertise from firms, to ensure that corporate demands for greater efficiencies are met (Hughes 2010).

Chang and Yeh (2002) suggested that one way to measure service quality is to define a number of distinctive attributes to measure based on the expected and perceived services separately and in such a way identify the service gaps'

Studies done in the airline industry found that the way to deliver superior service quality is by understanding customer expectations which is a key for success and survival in very hectic and competitive environment (Gilbert and Wong, 2003; Chen and Chang, 2005). On the other hand a high level of service quality is vital if organizations if they are to acquire and retain loyal customers through reexamination of its benchmarks (Chang & Yeh, 2002). One way to measure service quality is to define a number of distinctive attributes where each is assigned service quality value that must be attained or modified based on similar attributes found in those articles (Chen and Chang, 2005; Chang and Yeh, 2002; Park et al., 2004 and Gilbert and Wong, 2003).

Empirical literature indicates that an effective performance appraisal system brings with it benefits to the appraisee, the appraiser and the organization (Anderson, 1993; Fisher, 1995; Corcoran, 2006). The appraisee is likely to have such benefits as a greater understanding of the results expected of them, a precise and constructive feedback on past performance, greater knowledge of strengths and weaknesses, the development of plans from which future improvement on performance can be undertaken after building on strengths and minimizing as far as possible weaknesses, opportunities to communicate upwards views and feelings about the job and the utilization of the appraisee's skills in the job and increased motivation and job satisfaction (Fisher, 1995; Corcoran, 2006).

On the other hand organizations benefit from performance appraisal through better communication, generally increased motivation of employees, greater harmonization of objectives and enhancement of overall corporate performance (Corcoran, 2006).

Performance Appraisal system when properly used can explain the source of problems, objectives and plans of the organization. According to Longenecker et al (1988), posit that when employed well and effectively PA can be a communication instrument and a vehicle to boost top-down relationship. Fisher (1995) suggested that organizations should conduct the PA twice in a year or at least annually and if there is any more meetings are necessary should leave it to the manager/ rater to decide based on the performance results.

Muturi and Mbiti (2015) studied the experience and impact of implementing the Quality Management Systems of ISO 9001: 2008 Standard at the University of Nairobi, in relation to effectiveness on service delivery, operational performance, automation, implementation challenges and related emerging issues. Using a case study design approach based on qualitative analysis (of internal audit reports, internal surveys and feedback and surveillance audits conducted by the certifying body, and rankings by external bodies, over a period of seven years) this study found successes in quality delivery at the university. Significant achievements have been realized at the University of Nairobi with regard to institutionalization of quality into the university processes, work environment, documentation and record management, customer satisfaction, infrastructure and facilities, use of ICT as a prime mover of performance improvement, and ranking of the university.

## **METHODOLOGY**

The study used a descriptive design and covered customers served at Eldoret Law Court within Uasin Gishu County in the Rift Valley part of Kenya. This court serves Uasin Gishu County and parts of Kakamega, Trans Nzoia and Elgeyo/Marakwet Counties. The study focused on accused persons who are in prison custody, remandees; advocates and parties who have pending children cases. The population of this study is 1815 respondents who comprise of 775 convicts 460 remandees and 450 parties with pending children cases and 130 advocates registered and practicing in Eldoret town for the last the five years. The above population was selected because they were easily accessible and represented a large and growing number of convicts in prisons. In addition, they have a good understanding of service quality dimensions provided by the judiciary. Stratified random sampling was used to select 328 respondents ensuring that the 4 categories of respondents were adequately sampled to facilitate comparison among the groups using the Yamane method (Yamane, 1967). Data was collected at the point of service delivery using an on-the-spot-administered questionnaire.

A one way ANOVA was used to simultaneously test the effect of each of the service quality dimension (independent variables), and performance measures on the dependent variable (customer satisfaction) so as to identify any interaction effect at both 95% and 99% level of confidence.

A correlation analysis was used in this study to identify the degree of association between service quality dimensions and customer satisfaction. To test if service quality dimensions still predict customer satisfaction when moderating variables are in the model a regression was run for a final model  $Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1X + \beta_2Z + \epsilon$ . Where: X represents the service quality dimensions, Z represents the effects of the moderating variable and Y represent customer satisfaction.

The study used the F test to establish if independent variables assisted in predicting the dependent variable. ANOVA R-square was used to establish measures of the proportion of the variation in the dependent variable that was explained by variations in the independent variables. The results are presented in tables to show the relationship between service quality dimensions and customer satisfaction.

## ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

Based on the results of the first objective, the study introduced performance benchmarks to namely performance appraisals and quality management systems to modify and test the form or strength of the relationship between service quality dimensions and a customer satisfaction.

The performance benchmarks were not part of a causal sequence but were used to qualify or not to qualify the relation between service quality dimensions and the customer satisfaction. In general, performance benchmarks and these were critical for understanding the generalizability of a study finding in relation to service quality dimensions.

Table 1: Performance appraisal on the relationship between Service Quality Dimensions and Customer Satisfaction Correlations

	Customer Satisfaction	Reliability	Assurance	Tangibility	Empathy	Responsiveness	Perf. App.	
Pearson Correlation	Satisfied	1.000	.					
	Reliability	.009	1.000					
	Assurance	.009	.532	1.000				
	Tangibility	.017	.010	.022	1.000			
	Empathy	.047	.081	.087	.031	1.000		
	Responsiveness	-.001	.013	.045	.029	.163	1.000	
	Performance Appraisal	-.208	.007	.007	.031	.020	.129	1.000

Sig. (1-tailed)	Satisfied	.							
	Reliability	.341							
	Assurance	.341	.000						
	Tangibility	.216	.316	.152					
	Empathy	.016	.000	.000	.079				
	Responsiveness	.483	.270	.020	.094	.000			
	Performance	.000	.376	.375	.079	.184	.000		
	Appraisal								

A high correlation (0.532\*\*) was established between reliability and assurance with significance level of ( $p = .000$ ) which is less than (.05) implying that it was very significant. On the other hand there is a negative correlation between customer satisfaction and performance appraisal (-0.208) with a significance level of ( $p = .000$ ) which is less than (.05) implying that it was very significant. Customer satisfaction and responsiveness reported a negative correlation of (-0.001) with a significance level of (0.483) which is greater than (.05) implying that it was very not significant.

From table 1 above, the correlations between performance appraisal and the service quality dimensions namely reliability, assurance, tangibility, empathy and responsiveness were (0.007), (0.007), (0.031), (0.020) and (0.129) respectively. These were low correlations but the Pearsons correlations coefficient had significant values of  $p = (0.376)$ , (0.375), (0.079), (0.184) and (0.000) respectively. The correlations were only statistically significant for responsive dimension where the  $p$ -value=0.000 which was less than (0.05). The rest of the service dimensions had significant relationships. This finding was consistent with that of Cavana et al. (2007) found empathy reliability, assurance and tangibility service quality dimensions had strong relationship with customer satisfaction.

Table 2: Regression of service quality dimensions and customer satisfaction analysis Model Summary<sup>b</sup>

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.050 <sup>a</sup>	.003	.000	.118	.003	1.069	5	2115	.375

a. Predictors: (Constant), Responsiveness, Reliability, Tangibility, Empathy, Assurance

b. Dependent Variable: Satisfied

Table 2 presents the table with service quality dimensions before the introduction of the performance measures namely the performance appraisal where the service quality dimensions could only explain 0.3% of the customer satisfaction. The study therefore introduction the

performance appraisal variable of performance measurement and a new regression model was run.

Table 3: Regression Model of Service Quality Dimensions, Performance Appraisal and Customer Satisfaction Analysis; Model Summary<sup>b</sup>

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.216 <sup>a</sup>	.046	.044	.116	.046	17.163	6	2114	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Satisfied

b. Predictors: (Constant), Performance Appraisal, Reliability, Tangibility, Empathy, Responsiveness, Assurance

Table 3 presents the relationships between service quality dimensions, performance appraisal and customer satisfaction and the results indicate that ( $R^2$ ) was 0.046 which meant that the service quality dimensions explained 4.6% of the variation in service quality dimensions with customer satisfaction with 95.4% of the variations remaining unexplained. The p-value = 0.000 which was less than 0.05 therefore implied that the study rejected the null hypothesis and accepted the alternate hypothesis. Therefore with the introduction of performance appraisals in the service quality dimensions improved the results and there was a significant relationship between service quality dimensions and customer satisfaction in judicial service at the Eldoret law courts.

These findings were inconsistent with those of Lai (2004); Manani *et al.*, (2013); Auka *et al.*, (2013); Karitu & Oloo (2014); Nyangweso *et al.*, (2014) and Martey and Frempong (2014) who found a significantly positive relationship between service quality dimensions and customer satisfaction. In cases where performance measures were recommended, these findings were consistent with those of Mbuthia *et al.*, (2013) for the hotel industry in Kenya, Okibo and Ogwe (2013) in Telkom Kenya, Makori and Mwirigi (2013) for Kenya's commercial banks.

On matters specific to performance appraisals, the findings are consistent with that of Longenecker *et al* (1988), and Fisher (1995) suggested that organizations should conduct the performance appraisals twice in a year or at least annually for improvement in the organizations performance results.

ANOVA was used to assess the significance of the regression model after the introduction of the performance measures namely the performance appraisal. The overall objective of the Performance Appraisal System is to manage and improve performance of the

Public Service by enabling a higher level of staff participation and involvement in planning, delivery and evaluation of work performance

Table 4: ANOVA<sup>a</sup> Service Quality Dimensions, performance appraisal and Customer Satisfaction

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	1.376	6	.229	17.163	.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	28.242	2114	.013		
	Total	29.618	2120			

a. Dependent Variable: Satisfied

b. Predictors: (Constant), Performance Appraisal, Reliability, Tangibility, Empathy, Responsiveness, Assurance

ANOVA was used to assess the significance of the regression model when performance appraisal was introduced. In model 1 in table 4 ( $F = 17.163$ ,  $p = .000$ ). This implies that the independent variables (service quality dimensions) of reliability, responsiveness, assurance, tangibility, empathy, and moderating effects of performance appraisal had an effect on customer satisfaction. Performance appraisal improved the results and significantly in explained customer satisfaction as measured by the service quality dimensions. The study failed to reject the null hypothesis and accepted the alternative hypothesis. It can therefore be concluded that there are significant relationships between service quality dimensions, performance appraisal and customer satisfaction at Eldoret Law Courts. These findings were consistent with those of Lai (2004); Manani *et al.*, (2013); Auka *et al.*, (2013); Karitu & Oloo (2014); Nyangweso *et al.*, (2014) and Martey and Frempong (2014), Mbuthia *et al.*, (2013) for the hotel industry in Kenya, Okibo and Ogwe (2013) in Telkom Kenya, Makori and Mwirigi (2013) for Kenya's commercial banks who found a significantly positive relationship between service quality dimensions and customer satisfaction. These results are also consistent with the findings of Longenecker *et al* (1988), and Fisher (1995) suggested that organizations should conduct the performance appraisals twice in a year or at least annually for improvement in the organizations performance results.

The study tested the Quality Management Systems Because in an organization in any line of business requires a quality management program or some sort of quality program that is instituted from executive management down to the lowest level employee.

Table 5: Quality management systems on the relationship between Service Quality Dimensions and Customer Satisfaction Correlations

		Satisfied	Reliability	Assurance	Tangibility	Empathy	Responsiveness	QMS
Pearson Correlation	Satisfied	1.000						
	Reliability	.009	1.000					
	Assurance	.009	.532	1.000				
	Tangibility	.017	.010	.022	1.000			
	Empathy	.047	.081	.087	.031	1.000		
	Responsiveness	-.001	.013	.045	.029	.163	1.000	
	QMS	-.206	.009	.009	.031	.017	.126	1.000
Sig. (1-tailed)	Satisfied	.						
	Reliability	.341	.					
	Assurance	.341	.000	.				
	Tangibility	.216	.316	.152	.			
	Empathy	.016	.000	.000	.079	.		
	Responsiveness	.483	.270	.020	.094	.000	.	.
	QMS	.000	.341	.341	.074	.211	.000	.

When the quality management systems were introduced in the study, a high correlation (0.532) was established between reliability and assurance with significance level of ( $p = .000$ ) which is less than (.05) implying that it was very significant. On the other hand there is a negative correlation between customer satisfaction and performance appraisal (-0.206) with a significance level of ( $p = .000$ ) which is less than (.05) implying that it was very significant. Customer satisfaction and responsiveness reported a negative correlation of (-0.001) with a significance level of (0.483) which is greater than (.05) implying that it was very not significant. The same negative correlation was also established between quality management systems and customer satisfaction as a moderating variable.

From table 5 above, the correlations between performance appraisal and the service quality dimensions namely reliability, assurance, tangibility, empathy and responsiveness were (0.009), (0.009), (0.031), (0.017) and (0.126) respectively. These were low correlations but the Pearson's correlations coefficient had significant values of  $p = (0.341)$ ,  $(0.341)$ ,  $(0.074)$ ,  $(0.211)$  and  $(0.000)$  respectively. The correlations were only statistically significant for responsive dimension where the  $p\text{-value}=0.000$  which was less than (0.05). The rest of the service dimensions had significant relationships. This finding was consistent with that of Cavana et al. (2007) found empathy reliability, assurance and tangibility service quality dimensions had strong relationship with customer satisfaction.



Table 6: Regression Model of Service Quality Dimensions, Quality Management Systems and Customer Satisfaction Analysis; Model Summary<sup>b</sup>

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.214 <sup>a</sup>	.046	.043	.116	.046	16.943	6	2114	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Satisfied

b. Predictors: (Constant), QMS, Reliability, Tangibility, Empathy, Responsiveness, Assurance

Table 6 presents the relationships between service quality dimensions, performance appraisal and customer satisfaction and the results indicate that ( $R^2$ ) was 0.046 which meant that the service quality dimensions explained 4.6% of the variation in service quality dimensions with customer satisfaction with 95.4% of the variations remaining unexplained. The p-value = 0.000 which was less than 0.05 therefore implied that the study rejected the null hypothesis and accepted the alternate hypothesis. Therefore with the introduction of quality management systems in the service quality dimensions improved the results and there was a significant relationship between service quality dimensions and customer satisfaction in judicial service at the Eldoret law courts.

These findings were inconsistent with those of (Pride, Hughes, and Kapoor, 2009), Beinhocker and Kaplan (2002), Nelsen and Daniels (2007) posit that a quality management system (QMS) must be an official system with a documented organization's responsibilities and procedures that each employee will require to achieve effective quality management. Based on the quality management systems, these findings were consistent with that of Muturi and Mbiti (2015) who found that implementing the Quality Management Systems of ISO 9001: 2008 resulted into effectiveness on service delivery, operational performance, automation, implementation challenges and related emerging issues.

Table 7: ANOVA<sup>a</sup> Service Quality Dimensions, Quality Management Systems and Customer Satisfaction

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	1.359	6	.226	16.943	.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	28.259	2114	.013		
	Total	29.618	2120			

a. Dependent Variable: Satisfied

b. Predictors: (Constant), QMS, Reliability, Tangibility, Empathy, Responsiveness, Assurance

ANOVA was used to assess the significance of the regression model when quality management systems were introduced. In model 1 in table 7 ( $F = 16.943$ ,  $p = .000$ ). This implies that the independent variables (service quality dimensions) of reliability, responsiveness, assurance, tangibility, empathy, and moderating effects of quality management systems had an effect on customer satisfaction. Performance appraisal improved the results and significantly in explained customer satisfaction as measured by the service quality dimensions. The study failed to reject the null hypothesis and accepted the alternative hypothesis. It can therefore be concluded that there are significant relationships between service quality dimensions, quality management systems and customer satisfaction at Eldoret Law Courts. These findings were consistent with those of Lai (2004); Manani *et al.*, (2013); Auka *et al.*, (2013); Karitu & Oloo (2014); Nyangweso *et al.*, (2014) and Martey and Frempong (2014), Mbuthia *et al.*, (2013) for the hotel industry in Kenya, Okibo and Ogwe (2013) in Telkom Kenya, Makori and Mwirigi (2013) for Kenya's commercial banks who found a significantly positive relationship between service quality dimensions and customer satisfaction. These results are also consistent with the findings of Longenecker *et al* (1988), and Fisher (1995) suggested that organizations should conduct the performance appraisals twice in a year or at least annually for improvement in the organizations performance results. The findings are also consistent with that of Muturi and Mbiti (2015) who found that implementing the Quality Management Systems of ISO 9001: 2008 Standard at the University of Nairobi, improved service delivery, operational performance, automation, implementation challenges and related emerging issues at the university.

## SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The performance benchmarks were not part of a causal sequence but were used to qualify or not to qualify the relation between service quality dimensions and the customer satisfaction. In general, performance benchmarks and these were critical for understanding the generalizability of a study finding in relation to service quality dimensions

The study established that before the introduction of the performance benchmarks namely the performance appraisal and quality management systems, the service quality dimensions and customer satisfaction model provided the service quality dimension was able to explain 0.3% of the variation in customer satisfaction with 99.7% remained unexplained. However, with the introduction of performance appraisal the results improved to ( $R^2$ ) was 0.046 which meant that the service quality dimensions was now able to explain 4.6% of the variation in service quality dimensions with customer satisfaction with 95.4% only unexplained. The p-value = 0.000 which was less than 0.05 therefore the study rejected the null hypothesis and accepted the alternate hypothesis. There was a significant relationship between service quality

dimensions, performance appraisals and customer satisfaction in judicial service at the Eldoret law courts.

When another moderating variable namely the quality management system was introduced into the model, ( $R^2$ ) remained 0.046 which meant that the model explained 4.6% of the variation in service quality dimensions with customer satisfaction with 95.4% of the variations remaining unexplained. The p-value = 0.000 which was less than 0.05. These results therefore rejected the null hypothesis and accepted the alternate hypothesis that there is a significant relationship between service quality dimensions, quality management systems and customer satisfaction in judicial service at the Eldoret law courts.

The above findings show that that Judiciary needs to enhance its tools of performance measurement with the aim of streamlining internal processes and systems and improving efficiency and effectiveness. This will enable the Eldoret Law court to reduce customer complaints, meet stipulated timelines and promoting quality service.

## **CONCLUSION**

The study assessed the moderating effects of performance measures (i.e. performance appraisal and quality service systems) on quality of service dimensions and customer satisfaction at Eldoret law courts. Generally, the responses to service quality dimensions as moderated by performance measures improved performance of the court services at Eldoret law courts. It can be concluded from the analysis that customers' satisfaction can be improved and complaints can be reduced significantly.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

This study recommended that Eldoret law courts should identify areas of customer dissatisfaction and improve such area by continuous implementation of performance appraisals and quality management systems. This will enable the Eldoret law courts to align their practice(s) with the judicial reforms as determined by the Judicial Service and the court administration to improve performance in addressing subjectivities in the system

This study had some limitations in that only one court that is Eldoret Law Courts was the only court studied; secondly most of the respondents did not understand the role of performance measures such as performance appraisal and quality management systems. Lastly, the litigants with pending criminal cases and were either out on bond or had pending civil cases were important respondents for this study but were not studied and their satisfaction level could not be assessed.

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