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The Moderating Effect of Change Management Adoption on Senior Management Support and Customer Service Delivery for IT Projects in the Public Sector

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Abstract

The implementation of Information Technology (IT) projects in the public sector continues to face significant challenges, primarily due to a lack of senior management support and resistance to change (Ahmed & Lodhi, 2022). Due to the limited research in this domain coupled with the high failure rates of public sector IT projects, the discussion still continues on the impact of senior management support on the successful implementation of IT projects (Ahmed et al., 2021). This research, therefore, sought to examine the relationship between senior management support for major IT projects, change management adoption, and the benefits realized from the IT projects in the form of customer service delivery within the public sector in Kenya. The research adopted the quantitative research methodology. Primary data was collected from 309 public organizations in Kenya and analyzed. The Pearson bi-variate correlation results revealed that senior management support and customer service delivery had a significant, moderate positive correlation. Additionally, change management and customer service delivery after an IT project implementation had a significant, strong positive correlation. Furthermore, there was a statistically significant positive correlation between senior management support and change management adoption. The regression analysis results revealed that change management moderated the effect of senior management support on customer delivery service as a realized benefit from IT investments. These results were consistent with findings from related previous research work done by others. The research also found the moderating effect of change management adoption on senior management support with the resultant improvement on service delivery to customers. Arising from this therefore, most public sector organizations (96.7%) having been identified as customer service driven stood to benefit immensely from these research findings through incorporation of senior management and change management practices in all IT project implementations within the public sector. The research therefore recommends the implementation and adoption of change management policies by

senior management to enable realization of benefits for IT investments in the public sector.

Keywords: Moderating effect; Senior management support; Change management adoption; Customer service delivery; IT benefits

1. Introduction

Information Technology (IT) driven digital transformation has been a key anchor for the Kenya government's bottom-up economic transformation agenda. Arising from this, IT-related initiatives continue to receive substantial financial support from the government, which recognizes the importance of IT as an economic enabler in service delivery to citizens (Mwangi, 2021). Major public sector IT projects implemented under the Public Sector Development Program (PSDP) continue to suffer from both implementation delays and cost overruns arising mainly from inadequate senior management support (Ahmed & Lodhi, 2021). Even though public sector entities have begun examining issues around IT project management competencies including lack of senior management support, this area still remains a subject of research (Irfan et al., 2021).

Senior management support refers to the positive attitude and behavior of the organization's top executives toward the IT project during and after system implementation (Hsu et al., 2019). Executive buy-in has been viewed as a major success element for IT initiatives and is critical to the overall IT project success. Having a positive attitude and expressing support for IT systems are some examples of senior management support, according to Sabherwal et al. (2006). Even in groups with a high level of task dependency, top management support was found to be similarly beneficial (Hwang & Schmidt, 2011).

Change management is the practice of ensuring that changes in an institution are effected in a structured manner and with the anticipated benefits realized through management of the people aspects of the change. The process of change management involves organizational processes, technology, and people (Al-Ashmoery et al., 2020). Organizations describe and implement change in their internal and external processes through a strategic change management process (Rodrguez-Pérez, 2021). They prepare and support employees, identify important change procedures, and evaluate pre-and-post-change activities to ensure successful implementation of these changes. Even the most important organizational change can be challenging. As a result, many levels of cooperation are sometimes required, and various cadres of staff within an organization may be involved as well. In order to ensure a smooth transition and minimize disruption, a well-planned change strategy is needed (Rodrguez-Pérez, 2021).

Improvement in customer service delivery is a measure of benefits realized from IT project implementation since 96.7% of government organizations in Kenya are categorized as customer service driven. The main objective of this research therefore was to examine the relationship between senior management support for major IT projects, change management adoption, and the benefits realized from the IT project in the form of customer service delivery within the public sector in Kenya. The null hypothesis tested stated that there was no significant relationship between senior management support for an IT project, change management adoption and customer service delivery, a benefit resulting from the IT project implementation.

2. Review of literature

While the Kenyan government struggled to achieve its goal of digitalizing all the citizen facing services, there had been a resultant increase in the use of advanced state of the art digital technologies leading to improved service delivery to the public (Enang et al., 2020). The major achievement of digitalization was that apart from increasing operational efficiency, it also re-engineered the public sector administration including the government's interactions with the citizens, the private sector, and all other stakeholders (Haug, 2019). According to Fischer et al. (2021), the public sector focuses on how digital technologies deliver benefits to the citizens in the form of e-services more efficiently and effectively.

According to Gupta and Singh (2014), senior management drives the mission, vision, strategies, and goals for organizational projects and is an important success factor on public sector IT projects. The senior management must therefore adopt and adapt leadership roles to ensure both involvement and commitment of all stakeholders during the implementation of public sector IT projects. The dimensions of senior management support in the research includes representation of IT at the Board level through the existence of Board IT Committee, assessment of the level of senior management support for IT projects through allocation of adequate budget and inclusion of IT at the senior management level within the organization.

Haug et al. (2024) carried out research using PRISMA methodology on digitally induced change within the public sector in Finland. They sampled public sector organizations on digitally induced change and provided evidence for their drivers, operational processes and results. The study found that incremental customer service delivery benefits occurred in public organizations that had embraced digital technologies with the resultant cumulative digital transformational benefits felt by the community in its entirety. This research contributed in supporting customer service delivery, a sub-variable indicator for IT benefits realization as an intangible benefit arising from digitalization of public services.

Samar et al. (2025) carried out empirical research to examine how senior management support affected the performance of project management and benefits management in IT projects within the public sector. They developed a theoretical model and investigated how senior management support affected the relationship between project management, benefits management, and project success. From regression analysis, they found the existence of a significant and positive impact of project management and benefits management on the success of IT projects. Further, courtesy of hierarchical regression the study found that senior management support strengthened the relationship between IT project management and IT project success, emphasizing the significant role of senior management in the IT Project management. Further , the data analysis results revealed an insignificant relationship between benefits management and the success of IT projects in the presence of senior management support. This research however failed to test the moderating effect of change management adoption on senior management support and related IT benefits realized.

Ali et al. (2021) carried out an empirical study to investigate the impact of humble leadership on IT project success within the public sector. They found that support from senior management was positively and significantly related to IT project success and further that team-building partially mediated the relationship between senior management support and IT project success. They confirmed that senior management support had a moderating effect on the direct and indirect link between leadership and project success. The research did not however assess the benefits realization variable as well as the moderating effect of change management adoption on senior management support for IT project implementations in the public sector.

Kemei, Oboko and Kidombo (2018) examined the impact of senior management support on the relationship between project management competences and ERP system project performance in the Kenyan public sector. Several Kenyan public State corporations that dealt with energy issues provided data for the study. The research findings revealed a significant positive effect of senior management support on the relationship between Project management skills and ERP implementation project performance. The study however was more targeted to the energy sector state corporations and needed to address other IT related benefits realization variables and their relationships.

Bagga et al. (2023) examined the mediating role of organizational culture, change management and transformational leadership in remote work groups. The research explored the relationship between transformational leadership, organizational culture, and change management among remote work groups and further investigated the mediating role of organizational culture on the relationship between transformational leadership and change management amongst the remote work groups. The study found that transformational leadership and organizational culture were positively and significantly related to change management and that organizational culture partially mediated the relationship between transformational leadership and change management among remote group workers. This research however failed to explore the moderating impact of change management on senior management support for IT Project implementation.

Sung and Kim (2021) carried out empirical research on the effect of organizational IT related change management on enterprise-wide innovation through innovative behavior in the public sector. The independent variables were the 4 elements of change management namely education and training, transformational leadership, participation and communication, and organizational goal. While the dependent variable was organizational innovation, and the mediating variable was the innovative behavior of the team. The study revealed that change management factors had a significant and positive effect on innovation culture and organizational innovation. Further, the public officer's innovative behavior had a mediating role between change management and organizational innovation. The research confirmed that amongst the aspects of change management, participation and communication had the uppermost effect on innovative behavior and organizational innovation.

Onyango and Ondiek (2021) evaluated the benefits of IT driven digitalization and integration of SDGs in the

public sector in Kenya. They mapped the role of internet connectivity, digital innovations, ICT and skills of system users against the implementation processes of SDGs within public entities in Kenya. The study found that organizational culture and change management predisposed public institutions to change resistance thereby constraining integration of SDG goals in public entities. The research failed to test the relationship between change management adoption and senior management support for IT projects and related benefits resulting thereof.

2.1 Theoretical Literature

The study adopted the upper echelons theory which was developed by Hambrick and Mason (1984), as a management model. The theory states that the senior management team's managerial traits partially predict organizational outcomes. According to the theory, managerial qualities are correlated with organizational outcomes. The theory emphasizes that in management, it is significant to understand how strategic decision making enables one organization to outperform another. That it is an expensive mistake to separate an organization's strategy from the individuals who make strategic decisions. That the primary function of an organization's top management is to set the organization's course.

According to the theory, the quality of an organization's leadership is directly related to the quality of its significant choices. An organization's top management team consists of a group of senior-level managers and directors who are experts in specific fields and can help the company make well-informed decisions (Finkelstein and Hambrick, 1996). This competence encompasses an individual's tangible and intangible knowledge and qualities. Individual qualities and cognitions are formed by prior experience, education, and personal ideals. This impact senior managers' cognitions, which influence how they analyze and respond to situations, as well as the strategy they choose for the organization (Kaplan, 2005). The main dimension of this theory namely senior management support for organization's projects was adopted in the research.

Conceptual Framework for senior management support and change management benefits realization

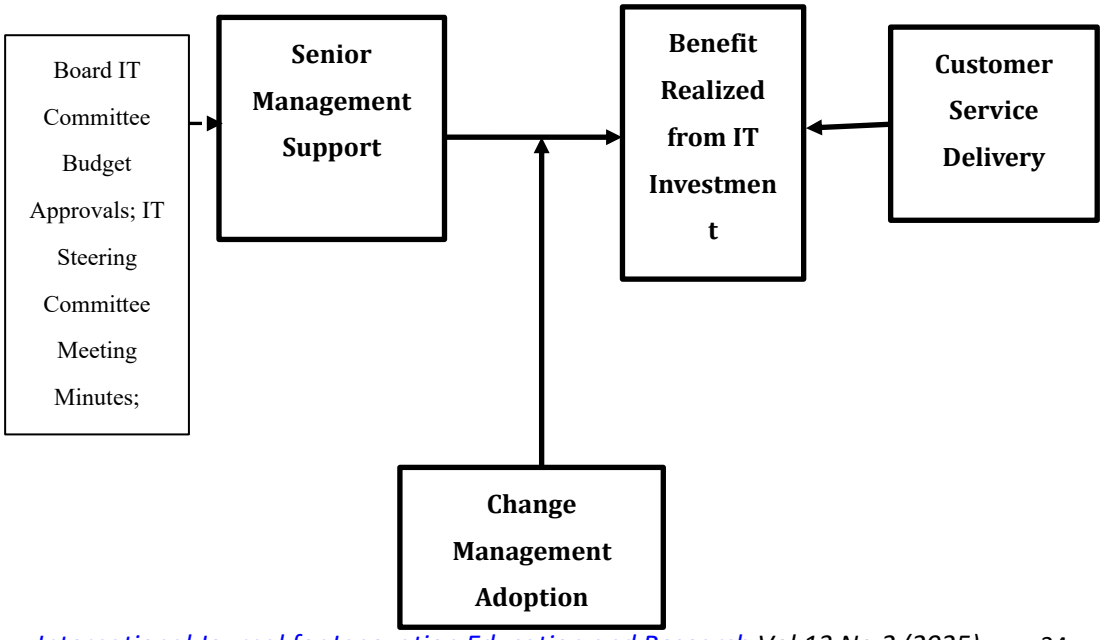

Figure 1. Conceptual Framework for senior management support and change management benefits realization

The conceptual framework detailed the relationship between the various variables in the study. It captures the independent variable senior management support for IT investment and explains its relationship with the dependent variable benefits realization in terms of level of customer service delivery. The conceptual framework sought to establish the relationship between the independent variable senior management support for IT project implementation and the benefits realized from the IT project implementation in the form of customer service delivery. The framework also captures the moderating variable change management and how it moderates the relationship between senior management support and benefits realization from IT investments in the form of customer service delivery. Senior management support is the independent variable representing senior management support for an IT project and was verified through the presence of the IT project steering committee, IT board committee and the amount of funds availed by the executive team for IT related innovation in terms of budgets. Change management is the moderating variable moderating the relationship between the independent variable senior management support and the dependent variable benefits realization in the form of customer service delivery. Service delivery to customers is the sub-variable indicator of the dependent variable benefits realization. For purposes of the research, it was assessed based on the number of closed customer service requests, reduction in customer service time and expanded number of services available to customers

3. Research Methodology

The research adopted a quantitative research methodology where primary data was collected from heads of IT with the public sector within Kenya. This was then subjected to both descriptive and inferential tests and hypothesis testing of the dependent, independent and moderating variables.

Quantitative Method Population and Sample Size Calculation

The population for the quantitative phase were all public sector organizations within the Republic of Kenya. Tiwari, Arya and Bansal (2017) defined population as the gathering of components to be employed by a study. Data from the National Treasury Annual Consolidated Financial Statements Report (2019) showed that there were 517 public entities in Kenya. (National Treasury Annual Consolidated Financial Statements Report, 2019). Each public entity had at least one IT system running its operations. The sample size for the quantitative research was calculated using the following formula;

$$n = \frac{Z^2 \times P(1 - P)}{d^2}$$

Where n was the required sample size, Z the Level of Confidence at 95%, P the expected level of IT implementation in the public sector at 50% and d the margin of error or desired precision at 5%. Based on the above assumptions, the calculated sample size was 221. That notwithstanding and in order to achieve more accurate results, there was an oversampling and the total sample obtained was 309 representing 60% of all the

public entities in Kenya. The research objective was to determine the relationship between senior management support for major IT project, change management adoption and the benefits realized from the IT project in terms of customer service delivery within the public sector in Kenya. The null hypothesis tested stated that;
H_{01}: There was no significant relationship between senior management support for an IT project implementation, change management adoption and the benefits realized in terms of customer service delivery.

4. Results and Findings

4.1 Descriptive Analysis Results

Table 1: Response Rate

Questionnaires	**Number**	**Percentage**
Filled	309	88.29%
Non -response	41	11.71%
Total	**350**	**100%**

The targeted number of respondents for the research was 350 and the actual number of responses received was 309. This represented a total of 88.29% response rate. According to Mugenda & Mugenda (2003), a response rate of 70 percent is acceptable as a good representation of a targeted population. Therefore, a response rate of 88.29% was higher than the recommended threshold of 70%.

Age of the Respondents

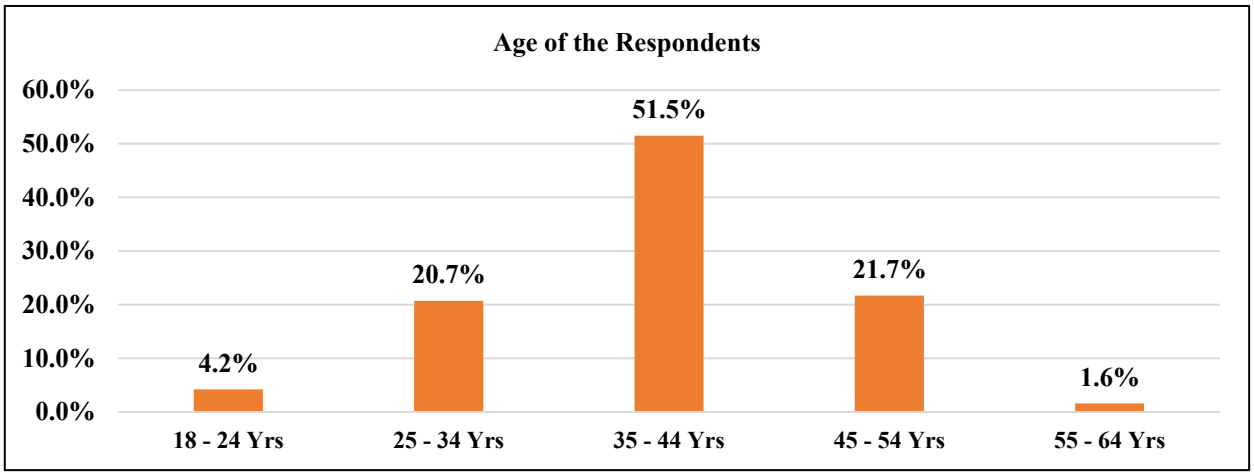

Figure 2. Age of Respondents

Figure 2 showed that the majority of the respondents (51.5%) were of the age bracket between 35-44 years. The age distribution analysis further showed that the majority of the IT practitioners who responded at 76.4% were 44 years and below. The results mirror those of Blažič and Blažič (2020) who held that older workers often struggle to adapt to roles that require digital skills mainly due to low exposure compared to young people.

Table 2: Category of the Public Entity

	Frequency	**Percent**
Agency	27	8.7%
Commission	5	1.6%
County Government	10	3.2%
Department	20	6.5%
Educational Institution	14	4.5%
Ministry	17	5.5%
Others	20	6.5%
Public Funds	3	1.0%
Semi-Autonomous-Government-Agency (SAGA's)	24	7.8%
State Corporation	169	54.7%
Total	**309**	**100%**

Data analyzed from table 2 showed that the majority of the respondents were state corporations at 54.7% followed by Agencies at 8.7% and Semi-Autonomous-Government-Agencies **(**SAGAs) at 7.8% among others. All categories of government bodies were represented, thus meeting the research objective on scope, coverage and distribution.

Table 3: Primary Mandate of the Public Organization

Primary Mandate of Organization	**Column N %**
Both Service Delivery & Revenue Generation	34.6%
Service Delivery	62.1%
Revenue Generation	3.2%
Total	100.0%

The primary mandate of most of the public sector organizations where the respondents were drawn from was service delivery at 62.1%. And a substantial proportion were both service delivery and revenue generation at 34.6%. In total 96.7% of the public sector organizations were service driven with only 3.3% being revenue generation public entities.

Table 4: Descriptive Results on Senior Management Support for IT Projects

	Strongly Disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Neither agree/ disagree (3)	Agree (4)	Strongly agree (5)	Agree & Strongly agree
Existence of IT project steering committee	3.9%	3.9%	8.4%	42.1 %	41.7%	83.8%
The IT Project Steering Committee regularly prepares Project status update	4.2%	5.5%	14.2%	39.2 %	36.9%	76.1%
Board approves budgets for IT project implementation & reviews progress	3.2%	5.2%	11.0%	43.4 %	37.2%	80.6%
IT Steering Committee holds regular meeting to discuss implementation of IT projects	4.2%	7.1%	14.6%	42.4 %	31.7%	74.1%
There is a high Level of commitment of Senior management towards allocation of resources for IT projects	4.9%	3.2%	17.2%	39.5 %	35.3%	74.8%
There is high Level of commitment by Senior management on implementation	2.9%	5.2%	14.9%	43.7 %	33.3%	77.0%
There is high Level of supervision by senior management towards implementation	2.9%	8.1%	15.9%	44.0 %	29.1%	73.1%

The results in table 4 showed the extent to which senior management of the public entities supported implementation of IT projects. This was done through a number of activities such as existence and effectiveness of IT project steering committee (83.8%), preparation of IT project status update reports by the steering committee (76.1%), Board approval for IT project implementation budget and review of progress (80.6%), regular reviews of the IT projects status by the steering committees (74.1%) and high commitment of the senior management towards allocation of resources towards the IT projects (74.8%). Other aspects on support of the IT projects by the management were demonstrated in implementation and in supervision of the projects. The results showed that many senior managements in public entities provided support to the IT projects being implemented apart from a few (8.1%) which highlighted that senior management allocation of resources towards implementation of IT investments was low.

Table 5: Customer Service Delivery as a Realized Benefit

	Not at all (1)	Low extent (2)	Moderate extent (3)	Large Extent (4)	Very large extent (5)	Total (Large and Very Large extent)
Reduction of the time taken to serve a customer	2.9 %	1.3%	13.6%	38.5%	43.7%	82.2%
Increased convenience of customers while getting served	3.2 %	2.6%	10.0%	37.5%	46.6%	84.1%
Increased the number of customer requests served in a unit time e.g day	3.6 %	3.9%	12.9%	41.4%	38.2%	79.6%
Reduction in number of customers complaints	2.9 %	4.5%	17.8%	45.0%	29.8%	74.8%
Increased the level of customer satisfaction	1.9 %	2.3%	12.3%	44.0%	39.5%	83.5%
Expanded the number of services accessible by the customers through the system	3.9 %	2.3%	12.6%	36.2%	45.0%	81.2%
Increased number of external customer requests successfully closed	4.9 %	1.9%	15.2%	38.8%	39.2%	78.0%

The sub-variable indicator used to assess and measure benefits from an IT project was the outcome of IT intervention on the delivery of services to the customers. From the study, 82.2% of the respondents confirmed that the usage of the IT system had led to a reduction in time taken to serve customers by a very large extent and large extent respectively. Further 84.1% confirmed that the use of IT systems increased the convenience of the customers while getting served (37.5% to a large extent and 46.6% to a very large extent). 79.6% of the respondents confirmed that the number of customer requests processed increased per day (41.4% to a large extent and 38.2% to a very large extent) while 74.8% of the respondents indicated that there was a reduction in the number of customer complaints (45.0% to a large extent and 29.8% to a very large extent). The results showed that the implementation of the IT systems had a positive impact on the quality of services extended to the customers. Table 28 also showed that the 83.5% of the respondents indicated that there was an increased level of satisfaction among the customers after implementation of the new IT system, 81.2% indicated that the

use of the system expanded the number of services provided to customers and 78.0% indicated that the implementation of the IT systems increased the number of external customer requests closed.

4.2 Correlation and Regression Analysis.

The research examined the relationship between management support, change management and level of service delivery as a realized benefit of IT projects and sought to test the hypothesis that.

H_{010}: There was no significant relationship between senior management support for an IT project, change management adoption and the level of service delivery.

The following equations were used to test the effect of management support on the level of service delivery and the moderation effect of change management on the relationship between management support and the level of service delivery after IT investments. The following equation represents the steps used to test moderation as suggested by Baron and Kenny (1986).

- Step 1: Relationship between X and Y was to be statistically significant.
- Step 2: Determine whether or not the moderator Z altered the robustness of the causal association between X and Y
- Step 3: Moderating effect occurred if the relationship between X and Y was significant and the interaction term was statistically significant $p<0.05$.

The following equation was therefore tested.

$$SD = \beta_0 + \beta_1 mngt\_support + \varepsilon \quad \text{.....010a}$$

$$SD = \beta_0 + \beta_1 mngt\_support + \beta_2 change\_mngt + \beta_3 mngt\_support * change\_mngt + \varepsilon \quad \text{.....010b}$$

$$Where, SD = Level\ of\ Service\ Delivery$$
$$mngt\_support = Management\ support$$
$$change\_mngt = change\ management\ support$$
$$\varepsilon = error\ term$$

a) Linearity test for senior management support, change management adoption and customer service delivery

A Wald test was done to check whether there was a linear relationship between the independent variables and the dependent variable. The resulting test results showed a level of significance (p value) was p=0.0000 for equation 010a and p=0.0000 for equation 010b. In both equations, the value of p was less than 0.05 ($p<0.05$). This meant that the coefficients of the two models were statistically different from zero (0) implying that they had a linear relationship with the dependent variable (level of service delivery).

b) Homoscedasticity test for senior management support, change management adoption and customer service delivery

Homoscedasticity test was done to determine if the variance of errors were similar in all observations. The results indicated a p-value of 0.0000 in both equations 010a and 010b. Since the p value was less than 0.05 (p

<0.05) for both equations, it meant that the variance of the residuals was not constant, and that the distribution of the variables was heteroskedastic. To address this, the research employed the variance covariance estimates (VCE) robust option, which adjusts the standard errors to account for the heteroscedasticity present in the data.

c) Relationship between Senior Management, Change Management and Level of Service Delivery

Table 6. Pearson Correlation Between Senior management support, change management and service delivery

Variables	(1)	(2)	(3)
(1) ln_service_del~y	1.000		
(2) ln_Mngt_support	0.396*	1.000	
(3) ln_change_mngt	0.540*	0.552*	1.000
*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1			

Table 6 showed the Pearson bi-variate correlation results between senior management, change management and extent of service delivery. From the results, senior management support and customer service delivery had significant positive moderate correlation (r= 0.396, p<0.05). Similarly, the change management and service delivery after an IT investment had significant positive strong correlation (r= 0.540, p<0.05). Further, there was a significant and strong positive correlation between management support and the change management (r=0.552, p<0.05).

i. Equation 010a: Effect of Management Support on Level of Customer Service Delivery

Table 7. Linear Regression Results on the Effect of Management Support on level of Customer Service Delivery

ln_service_delivery	Coef.	St.Err.	t-value	p-value	[95% Conf	Interval]	Sig
ln_Mngt_support	.36	.092	3.91	0	.179	.542	***
Constant	.899	.131	6.89	0	.642	1.156	***
Mean dependent var	1.385	SD dependent var	0.271				
R-squared	0.156	Number of obs	309				
F-test	15.316	Prob > F	0.000				
*** p<.01, ** p<.05, * p<.1							

A regression test was done to establish the effect of senior management support for IT project on the level of customer service delivery. From the results in table 7, the value of R squared (R^2) was 0.156 indicating that management support influenced the variation of the service delivery by 15.6%. The F statistic for the model was given as F (1,308)=0.15.316, p<0.05 indicating that management support had significant influence on the level of service delivery.

The resulting regression test results were as shown.

$$SD = 0.899 + 0.36\ ln\_Mngt\_support \ldots\ldots\ldots\ldots\ldots\ldots\ldots\ldots\ldots\ldots\ldots\ldots\ldots\ldots 010a$$

$$Where, CS = Log\ of\ number\ of\ customers\ served$$

$$ln\_mngt\_support = log\ log\ of\ Management\ support$$

The results in table 7 showed the level of customer service delivery on a scale of 1-5 was 0.899 when no intervention was taken (holding other factors constant). A unit increase in the management support on IT investments had a significant increase on service delivery by 0.36 units ($p=0.000$, $p<0.05$). Since the p-value was less than 0.05, it meant that increase in support of the management on IT investments increased the extent of service delivery. Therefore, the null hypothesis for equation 010a was rejected and the alternative hypothesis adopted that there was a significant relationship between senior management support and the level of customer service delivery.

ii. *Equation 010b: Moderation of the effect of Management Support on Service Delivery by Change Management*

Table 8. Moderation of the effect of Management Support on Service Delivery by Change Management

ln_service_delivery	Coef.	St.Err.	t-value	p-value	[95% Conf	Interval]	Sig
ln_Mngt_support	.655	.163	4.02	0	.335	.976	***
ln_change_mngt	1.114	.175	6.38	0	.77	1.458	***
mngt_support*change_mngt	-.486	.127	-3.81	0	-.737	-.235	***
Constant	-.062	.208	-0.30	.768	-.472	.349	

Mean dependent var	1.385	SD dependent var	0.271
R-squared	0.349	Number of obs	309
F-test	37.310	Prob > F	0.000

*** p<.01, ** p<.05, * p<.1

A regression test was done to establish the moderating effect of management support on the level of delivery service. From the results in table 8, the value of R squared (R^2) was 0.349 indicating that management support, change management and the interaction term influenced the variation of the number of customers by 34.9%. The F statistics for the model was given as $F(1,308)=37.31$, $p=0.000$ ($p<0.05$) indicating that the model had at least one independent variable with significant effect on the service delivery.

The moderation steps followed were summarized as shown:

- Step 1: Relationship between X and Y was to be statistically significant.
- Step 2: Determine whether the moderator Z altered the robustness of the causal association between X

and Y

- Step 3: Moderating effect occurred if the relationship between X and Y was significant, and the interaction term was statistically significant p<0.05.

The results were as follows:

$SD = 0.899 + 0.36\ ln\_Mngt\_support$……..…….010a

$SD = -0.062 + 0.655\ mngt_{support} + 1.114 change_{mngt} - 0.486 mngt\_support * change\_mngt$ …….010b

$$Where, SD = Level\ of\ Customer\ Service\ Delivery$$
$$mngt\_support = Management\ support$$
$$change\_mngt = Change\ Management\ support$$

Using the 3 steps as given by Baron and Kenny (1986). Step (1), the effect of X on Y was supposed to be statistically significant. In this case, the effect of management support on the level of service delivery was significant (coef= 0.36, p=0.000, p<0.05) with a standard error of 0.092. This met condition 1 for moderation according to Baron and Kenny (1986)

In step (2), after considering the moderating variable in the equation, the standard error changed from 0.092 to 0.163 indicating that the moderator variable had altered the robustness of the causal effect of X on Y. Thus condition 2 was met.

In step (3), the effect of X on Y was to be significant and the interaction term was also to be significant. In this case, the effect of management support on the level of customer delivery was significant (p=0.0000, i.e p<0.05). The interaction term (management support and change adoption) had a significant effect on the delivery service (p=0.000 i.e p<0.05). This showed that condition 3 requiring the effect of X on Y to be significant and condition 4 requiring the interaction term to have significant effect were equally met.
The results showed that change management moderated the effect of management support on the delivery service. Consequently, the study rejected the null hypothesis and adopted the alternative hypothesis that there was a significant relationship between senior management support for an IT project, change management adoption and service delivery.

5. Discussions of results

The null hypothesis tested in this study stated that; there was no significant relationship between senior management support for an IT project implementation, change management adoption and the level of customer service delivery as a realized benefit.

The Pearson bi-variate correlation results revealed that senior management support and customer service delivery had significant positive moderate correlation (r= 0.396, p<0.05). Similarly, change management and customer service delivery after an IT project implementation had significant positive strong correlation (r=

0.540, $p<0.05$) and further, there was a significant and strong positive correlation between senior management support and the change management ($r=0.552$, $p<0.05$).

The regression test was done in two steps with the first test examining the effect of senior management support on the level of customer service delivery. The study found that management support influenced the variation of the service delivery by 15.6%. The F statistic for the model was given as $F(1,308)=0.15.316$, $p<0.05$ indicating that senior management support had a significant impact on the level of customer service delivery. The results revealed that the level of service delivery on a scale of 1-5 was 0.899 when no intervention was taken, that a unit increase in the senior management support on IT investments had a significant increase on service delivery by 0.36 units ($p=0.000$, $p<0.05$). Since the p-value was less than 0.05, this meant that increase in senior management support on IT investments increased the extent of customer service delivery. Therefore, the research failed to accept the null hypothesis for equation 10a and instead adopted the alternative hypothesis that there was a significant relationship between management support and the level of customer service deliver.

The second part of the regression test examined the moderating effect of senior management support on service delivery by change management. The research found that change management moderated the effect of senior management support on the customer service delivery. Therefore, the study failed to accept the null hypothesis and adopted the alternative hypothesis that there was a significant relationship between senior management support for an IT project, change management adoption and customer service delivery.

These results were consistent with those of previous researchers (Ahmed & Philbin, 2022; Bagga et al., 2023; Samar et al., 2025; Kemei, Oboko & Kidombo 2018). For instance, Ahmed and Philbin (2022) investigated the importance of senior management support for successful public sector IT projects. They found the existence of a significant impact of senior management support on the success of public sector projects in terms of customer service delivery and further demonstrated the existence of significant moderating effects of senior management support qualities including communication and change management. Bagga et al. (2023) examined the mediating role of organizational culture, change management on senior management transformational leadership. They found that transformational leadership and organizational culture were positively and significantly related to change management and delivered improved customer service as a realized benefit.

Samar et al. (2025) examined how senior management support affected the performance of project management and benefits management in IT projects within the public sector. They found the existence of a significant and positive impact of project management and benefits realized in terms of improved customer service delivery on the success of IT projects. Further, courtesy of hierarchical regression the study found that senior management support strengthened the relationship between IT project management and IT project success, emphasizing the significant role of senior management in the IT Project management. Kemei, Oboko

and Kidombo (2018) evaluated the impact of senior management support on the relationship between project management competences and ERP system project performance in the public sector. Their findings revealed a significant positive effect of senior management support on the relationship between Project management skills and ERP implementation project performance.

The results were also consistent with the findings of Mughal et al. (2019) which revealed the existence of a significant and positive relationship between senior management support and IT project success. The support from the top managers and senior leadership sets the tone and influences the rest of the people to adopt and adapt technology. In terms of moderation, the study found that adoption of change management moderated the effect of senior management support on the quality of service delivered. The moderating effect of managing change among the stakeholders aligned with the findings of Agbeko et al. (2021) who examined the stakeholder theory and found that failure to address stakeholder needs affected the benefits realized from the public sector digitally driven transformational initiatives. Therefore, this demonstrated that although senior management support influenced the value of IT investments, stakeholder needs could not be isolated and ignored. A wholistic approach was therefore needed when implementing IT projects to achieve better and higher quality return on the investment.

6. Conclusion and recommendations

The overall objective of this research was to examine the relationship between senior management support for major IT project implementation, change management adoption and the benefits realized from the IT project in terms of customer service delivery within the public sector in Kenya. In order to achieve this objective, the study employed the use of quantitative research methodology. Data on IT projects implemented within the public institutions in Kenya was collected using online google platform, cleansed and subjected to both descriptive and inferential statistical analysis. The study attracted 309 responses from a sample size of 350 which was a response rate of 88.29%. The study found that senior management support had a significant positive effect on customer service delivery. The study further found that the impact of senior management support on service delivery was significantly moderated by the change management adoption within the public sector.

The study therefore concluded that the support of senior management determined the quality of customer service delivery within the public sector. This was because of the senior management's role in managing, resourcing, training, decision making, and strategic interventions needed for successful implementation of the IT projects. Further the relationship between senior management support and the quality-of-service delivery was moderated by adoption of change management which was an aspect of people engagement. Therefore, for successful implementation of an IT project, the aspect of people engagement initiatives was critical to realize the desired IT project benefits. Most public sector organizations (96.7%) having been identified as customer service driven stood to benefit immensely from these research findings through adoption of the proposed senior management support and change management benefits realization conceptual framework.

The study highlighted the importance of senior management support on IT project implementation as a key factor which ensures successful IT project implementation resulting in improved quality of services delivered to customers. The research also revealed the moderating effect of change management on senior management support with the resultant improvement on service delivery to customers. Based on this therefore, the senior leadership within the public sector must embrace technology and innovation and support the implementation of the same by providing both financial resources and leadership in change management initiatives in order to realize the associated IT project benefits. In addition, the senior management needs to put in place and ensure adoption and usage of the change management policy to enable public sector organizations realize benefits from the IT investments. The principles of IT governance underscore the need for both board level and senior management support for IT projects to ensure successful implementation. This research therefore recommends the implementation of both senior management support and change management policies in the public sector to improve customer service delivery to the citizens. These findings were consistent with those of the ongoing PhD research work.

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