Digitization of Human Resource Functions and Employee Performance in County Governments in Kenya

Jane Chepkemoi[1*], Dr. Hellen W. Sang[2], Dr. Pius Chumba[3], Dr. Alfred Bett[4]

[1]PhD student, [2,4]Senior Lecturers, [3]Lecture, Department of Marketing, Management Science, Tourism and Hospitality, School of Business and Economics

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ABSTRACT

County Governments were established in Kenya to enable the delivery of services, projects, and resources to the public. The efficiency, quality, and satisfaction of the public are priorities; however, there are some counties that are registering low employee performance despite investment in digitization of human resource functions in the County Governments in Kenya. The study examined the effect of digitization of human resource functions on employee performance. The theoretical framework employed the diffusion of innovation theory. The study adopted cross-sectional and correlational research designs to collect quantitative data for testing hypothesis. From a target population of 470 County Executive Committees, a sample was 216 County Executive Committees was selected using stratified sampling techniques. Primary data were collected using a structured questionnaire. The validity of the instrument was achieved through interrogation by supervisors and experts. Twenty-two County Executive Committees, that were not part of the sample, were used for piloting. From the pilot data, a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.789 was produced, which was more than the threshold of 0.7, which indicated that the instrument was reliable. Data collected was summarized using descriptive statistics, that is, the mean and standard deviation. The hypothesis was tested using inferential statistics which included simple linear regression. Findings revealed that digitization of human resource functions positively and significantly influenced employee performance ($\beta = 0.340$, $P < 0.05$). This implied that an increase in digitization of human resource functions led to an increase of 28.0% in employee performance. The study concluded that effective digitization of human resource functions had positively impacted employee productivity. The study recommends that County Governments should invest in comprehensive training for employees to embrace digitization of human resource functions.

Keywords: Digitization of Human Resource Functions, Employee Performance, County Government, Diffusion of Innovation Theory, Cross-Sectional Design, Correlational Designs, Kenya.

INTRODUCTION

The digitization of human resource (HR) functions has emerged as a global phenomenon, significantly transforming HR management practices across sectors. Studies from various countries highlight that digitalization enhances operational efficiency, streamlines HR functions, and improves employee performance.

For instance, Al-Shameri and Omar (2022) noted that during the COVID-19 pandemic, highly digitalized firms effectively managed remote work environments, ensuring sustained productivity and resilience.

Fenech (2022) emphasized that digital transformation has led to the emergence of new roles and enhanced agility. In Bangladesh, Haque and Nishat (2022) found that digital HR practices such as e-compensation and e-career management positively influenced extra-role performance, while e-performance appraisal was significantly linked to in-role performance.

In Europe and the Middle East, studies also support the value of digital HR systems in enhancing organizational effectiveness. Alkaraeen and Al-Ashaab (2021) reported that structured learning programs like mentoring and coaching, facilitated through digital platforms, enhanced employee skills and service efficiency

in public institutions across seven countries. Uysal (2021) further argued that digital culture has reshaped organizational identity, requiring cultural adaptation to leverage performance improvements. Meanwhile, Martínez-Morán *et al.* (2021) observed that while Spanish firms leveraged digital tools for recruitment, they struggled with digital learning implementation, affecting employee development and retention. In the United States, Nwankpa and Roumani (2016) highlighted the importance of IT capabilities in driving innovation and performance, while Schwertner (2017) emphasized the role of cultural readiness and systems integration in successful digital transformations.

At the regional level, studies from developing economies underscore the transformative potential of HR digitization. Jayabalan *et al*. (2021) found a strong correlation between HR digitization and core HRM functions in Malaysia's automotive sector. In Nigeria, Nuhammed *et al*. (2021) demonstrated that digital HR practices enhanced employee performance indicators such as timeliness and innovation within the banking sector. Okoronkwo (2021) emphasized the critical role of robotics and HR information systems in enabling organizations to respond effectively to globalization and technological change.

In Kenya, the adoption of digital HR systems is increasingly gaining traction, especially within public sector institutions. Although global and regional literature highlight positive impacts, local empirical studies remain limited. Neeraj (2018), while focusing on India, emphasized how government initiatives promote transparency and efficiency through digital HRM. Similarly, Rana (2022) noted the shift to e-HRM systems which support data-driven decision-making. However, Kenyan County Governments still lag behind in systematically adopting these practices and evaluating their outcomes.

The current study seeks to fill this gap by analyzing how HR digitization impacts employee performance in County Governments, focusing on service quality, timeliness, and delivery effectiveness.

Since the formation of County Governments in Kenya following the 2010 constitutional reforms, there has been a push toward decentralization and localized service delivery. These 47 counties were tasked with improving public service access and governance. According to Maina and Kwasira (2015), strategic HR planning has shown positive correlations with employee performance in counties. However, political interference, nepotism, and self-interest have hampered effective HR practices and degraded service quality. Muthama, Olouch, and Wawudah (2021) echoed these findings, noting that poor service delivery remains a critical challenge in many counties due to inefficiencies in workforce management.

Recent surveys reinforce these concerns. According to Infotrak (2020), the overall performance of County Governments declined by 9.4% between 2015 and 2020—from 56.9% to 47.5%—indicating reduced employee output and diminishing service standards. As counties increasingly adopt digital tools, there is a growing need for investments in employee training and technological adaptation. Njagi and Ndavula (2020) observed that digitization in counties has helped streamline payroll, performance tracking, and employee records, but its effectiveness depends on adequate staff training and capacity-building.

Problem of Statement

Despite ongoing efforts by County Governments to digitize human resource (HR) functions as part of broader public service reforms, employee performance remains suboptimal. The digitization of HR processes such as recruitment, performance appraisal, payroll management, and training is intended to enhance efficiency, transparency, and responsiveness in the public sector. This initiative aligns with the goals of Kenya's Vision 2030, which emphasizes public sector transformation through the adoption of innovative and accountable systems. However, while empirical evidence from developed economies suggests that HR digitization enhances employee motivation, productivity, and accountability, the same outcomes are not consistently observed in Kenyan County Governments. There is a growing concern that the implementation of digital HR systems has not translated into measurable improvements in employee performance, raising questions about system integration, user adoption, capacity building, and organizational culture. This gap underscores the need for empirical investigation into how digital HR practices influence employee performance within the context of devolved governance.

Research Objective

Thus, this study aims to examine the relationship between the digitization of human resource functions and employee performance in County Governments in Kenya, with the goal of enhancing service delivery and realizing the full potential of devolution. This was tested using the following null hypothesis.

H_0: There is no statistically significant relationship between digitization of human resource functions and employee performance in County Governments in Kenya.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical review was anchored on diffusion of innovation was developed by Everett Rogers in 1962. According to Rodgers (1962) diffusion refers to the ability of innovation to be communicated through certain channels within a specific time frame. The Diffusion of Innovation Theory proposes that the adoption of new innovations is a social process that occurs over time as individuals and organizations learn about and adopt new technologies. The theory suggests that the adoption process is influenced by various factors such as the characteristics of the innovation, the adopters, and the communication channels used to spread information about the innovation which depends on social system, time, communication channels and innovation.

Rodgers (1962) asserted that there exist innovators, early adopters, early majority, late majority and laggards in any organizational transformation process. The innovators are characterized by high-risk takers with financial liquidity who are close to scientific source and interaction with other innovators. Early adopters according to Rodgers were characterized by high degree of opinion leadership within the adopter category. The early majority represents above average social status that seldom hold any position of opinion leadership. Late majority represents an average participant who is normally skeptic about the innovation. The last to adopt innovation (laggards) show little to no opinion leadership and are the lowest in financial liquidity. There exist five stages of adoption of process in any decision innovation process, these are; knowledge/awareness, persuasion, decision, implementation and confirmation of the innovation process. These steps are integrated in organizational transformation process which requires an organization to ensure that there is digitization of human resource functions, digital culture transformation and process transformation.

Steiber, Alange, Ghosh, and Goncalves (2020) supports in identifying weak and strong areas in organizational transformation process. The adoption of digital technologies is affected by external factors, that is, external work environment, technological factors, organizational innovativeness and environmental factors (Fairooz & Wickramasinghe, 2019). The organizational innovativeness supports the need for organizational transformation in terms of organizational culture, strategy and learning.

Early adopter and rigorous user of technology had to develop rigorous change in business model through adoption of innovative techniques. Therefore, the technology is disruptive; it requires quick diffusion of technology in the County Governments to enable digitization of human resource functions.

Empirical Literature Review

Digitization of human resource functions has been increasingly done to ensure high efficiency in human resource functions. According to Al-Shameri and Omar (2022), during COVID-19 pandemic, highly digitalized firms were able to achieve a lot in human resource management. This results in working from home environment with majority of workforce able to deliver efficiently despite the global crisis. This has shown that companies can be resilient to external influences through adoption of digital technology in human resource management. Fenech (2022) asserts that human resource management has leapfrogged in its practices with rise of digital age.

Some of the technologies pointed out by Jayabalan, Makhbul, Nair, Subramaniam, and Ramly (2021) are the use of information system, internet technology and electronic resources which have revolutionized the human

resource functions. Research done has shown that this technology has significant impact not only on how human resource functions but has improved performance of employees through innovativeness and timeliness in the duties (Nuhammed, Mihammed, Baballe, and Jimoh, 2021). In India the human resource digitization has enabled to human resource use technology reducing cost and increasing service delivery according to Neeraj (2018). Therefore, digitization of human resource functions is a crucial aspect in organizational transformation.

Al-Shameri and Omar (2022) evaluated human resource digitalization as a crucial human resource activity during COVID-19 for the enhancement of employee performance in Turkey. The primary objective of this study was to examine the notion of human resource digitalization, its benefits and drawbacks, and the barriers to implementing human resource digitalization. In addition, the study examined the impact of human resource digitization on employee job performance. The study utilized synthesis of empirical literature review. The analysis found that human resource digitization has transformed global human resource management through the use of social networking and internet websites in an effective and efficient manner.

Additionally, digitalization of human resource management is not a simple decision or procedure, as firms must evaluate numerous factors and characteristics and do extensive study and evaluation prior to successfully implementing digitalized systems. Moreover, digitalization of HR functions gives not only operational benefits but also relational benefits and boosts employee job performance. The current study focused on digitization of human resource functions in relation to employee performance.

Haque and Nishat, (2022) examined human resource management (HRM) digitalization influence on employee performance in Bangladesh. The aim of the study was to examine the impact of digitalized human resource management (HRM) practices on in-role and extra-role performance of employees in the ready-made garment (RMG) business in Bangladesh. The study analyzed the impact of various digitalized HRM practices, including e-recruitment and selection, e-training and development, e-performance appraisal and management, e-compensation management, e-complaints management, e-communication management, and e-career management. The findings suggested that while certain digitalized HRM practices, such as e-compensation management and e-career management, had a significant impact on extra-role performance, they contributed little to in-role performance. Conversely, e-performance appraisal management had a significant positive impact on in-role performance. The study recommended that RMG firms should consider digitalizing HRM procedures to improve both employee and organizational performance. The current study examined employee performance in terms of quality of the task, quantity of service, timeliness in service delivery and citizen satisfaction rather than extra-role and intra-role performance.

Fenech (2022) analyzed human resource management in the digital age from the perspective of the next generation of human resource managers in Abu Dabi, United Arab Emirates. As a result of the digitization of this function in enterprises, human resource management is capable of leapfrogging other support functions. This revolution is altering the view of the value added by human resource management and simultaneously expanding the function of human resource management within enterprises. This exploratory study determined how undergraduate students in human resource management view human resource management in the digital age. This study contributed to future generations of human resource managers regarding the emerging duties of human resource management in a digitally transformed workforce.

A qualitative research methodology involving two, two-hour focus groups with 20 participants per session was employed. The main conclusion of the study was that undergraduates in human resource management perceive human resource management in the digital era to carry out all the traditional roles of human resource management in a more effective, efficient, productive, and agile manner as a result of technology literacy and human analytics competence. The current study adopted cross-sectional and correlational research designs rather than an exploratory study used.

Jayabalan, Makhbul, Nair, Subramaniam, and Ramly (2021) evaluated the impact of digitalization on human resource management techniques in the automotive manufacturing sector in Malaysia. The purpose of this study is to examine the effect of digitalization technologies on HRM practices in the Malaysian automotive manufacturing business. Recruitment and selection, training and development, and performance appraisal and remuneration are the primary HRM practices identified as independent variables. A total of 203 employees in

the automobile manufacturing business in Pekan, Pahang, were selected to participate in an online survey. The findings demonstrate a significant correlation between digitalization technology and all human resource functions examined in this study, with the exception of pay. According to the study's findings, HRM practices have a significant relationship with digitalization technologies and, occasionally, with the current and future needs of industrial revolution in the manufacturing industry. The study examined the impact of digitalization on human resource management; however, the current study focused on digitization of human resource functions on employee performance.

According to Rana's, (2022), study of current trends in digitization of HR practices, the adoption of digital technology has revolutionized the traditional business model. This transformation is having a significant impact on human resource management (HRM) due to the increased use of employee-related software, mobile solutions, social networks, and IT-enabled HR functions. Organizations are introducing digital approaches to manage their human resource effectively. To remain competitive, it is crucial to continuously develop and innovate HR practices. Recent studies have revealed that organizations are implementing digitally-enabled employee-centric HR practices to enhance performance and confront market challenges. The upgrading of HR practices is necessary to deliver the best results in a competitive market.

Hence, technical advancements are continuously being made in the field of HR, and traditional HRM practices are being replaced with new and advanced ones. The study examined the adoption of digital devices in HR practice, specifically the shift from HRM to E-HRM, which refers to an integrated, organization-wide electronic network of HR information, services, devices, applications, and exchanges. However, the current study examined digitization of human resource functions in relation to employee performance.

Okoronkwo (2021) in the study of realities in digitization of HR practices asserts that robotics technology is also being used to perform tasks that cannot be done remotely. The results indicated that the impact of globalization and technological advancements has transformed organizations into knowledge-oriented entities, and there is a growing demand for the use of information systems in different functions and departments to achieve competitive advantage and success. This study examines the use of digitalized (IT) devices in HR practice, specifically the implementation of human resource information systems to improve HR functions and enhance organizational competitiveness, especially in the post-COVID-19 era. The research methodology for this paper is largely desk-based, involving a review of relevant literature. However, the current study deployed primary data collection techniques.

Nuhammed, Mihammed, Baballe, and Jimoh (2021) investigated the human resource digitization and employee performance of deposit money institutions in the Nigerian state of Bauchi. This study examined the connection between human resource digitization and employee performance among deposit money in banks in Bauchi State. The research employed a cross-sectional design which sampled 94 managers, supervisors, department leaders, and workers from two selected banks in the city of Bauchi. The entire target population was 120 employees from these particular deposit money banks. The findings proved the existence of a substantial positive correlation between human resource digitalization and employee performance. The study demonstrated a significant correlation between human resource digitization and employee performance in terms of timeliness and innovativeness. The study revealed that the digitization of human resources has a favorable and statistically significant association with employee performance. The current study focused on county government which is a public sector.

Neeraj (2018) studied digital human resource management in India. Digital technologies are dominating the global economy, culture, and society. The study assessed empirical studies and come with the following findings; These advances have created the "digital age" in human resource management, leading to workforce shifts and the use of technology to deliver HRM activities. Digital human resource management is the consequence of several technological advancements and government programs aimed at empowering India through improved governance, transparency, a rapid value delivery process, and the development of skills in an evolving world. These moves toward a digital India have put the Indian people in a competitive position with digitalized governments around the world. HR isn't one function but a group of specialists with unique aims, duties, and requirements, according to the Digital India project. HR must support strategic goals and prioritize value-adding tasks. Companies acknowledge the importance of combining HR and IT. The digital

revolution relies on cutting-edge information technology, including Internet-enabled HRISs, intranets, and portals. Rising competitiveness, the need to manage the workforce globally, improving HR service delivery, and reducing costs are the driving factors. Digitalization has made HR's work more efficient and cost-effective, as well as helping with hiring and training. The current study was done in County Governments in Kenya using primary data collected.

Summary of Literature Review and Research Gaps

Digitization of human resource practices were further examined by Rana (2022) whereas the current study examined digitalization of human resource functions in relation to employee performance. Okoronkwo (2021) which also examined digitization of human resource practices focused on robotics technology based on existing empirical literature. The current study examined digitization of human resource functions using primary data on employee performance. Nuhammed, Mihammed, Baballe, and Jimoh (2021) examine deposit taking institution in Nigeria while as the current study focused on public sector. Neeraj (2018) use empirical evidence to examine digital human resource management in India. The current study opted to collect primary data to assess the relationship between digitization of human resource functions and employee performance.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A positivism research philosophy was adopted for the study which supported the use cross-sectional and correlational research designs. The study adopted quantitative research approach which assisted in testing the hypothesis. The study was done in Kenya where forty-seven County Governments were targeted. The study threfore, targeted 470 County Executive Committees (CECs) from the 47 counties in Kenya. A sample size of 216 CECs was selected from 470 CECs in the 47 County Governments using stratified random sampling technique. The study collected primary data utilizing a structured questionnaire. Validity was achieved through interrogation of research instrument by supervisors and experts in human resource management. A pilot study was conducted to ascertain the reliability of the instrument where 22 CECs who were not part of the sample size were given questionnaires. The results indicated a Cronbach of 0.789 was obtain for 6 questions which was also above 0.7. Descriptive statistics were utilized to extract mean and standard deviation which assisted in summarizing the data collected. Inferential statistics were utilized to test hypothesis by adopting a simple linear regression model.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Digitization of human resource functions

The digitization of human resource functions was analyzed and presented in Table 1. The mean and standard deviation output were utilized in discussions of digitation of human resource functions.

Table 1: Digitization of Human Resource Functions

	SD	D	N	A	SA	Mean	Std. Deviation
The County Government utilizes digital recruitment systems that allow people to apply online.	0(0.0%)	5(2.3%)	33(15.3%)	167(77.3%)	11(5.1%)	3.8519	.52500
There is organizational transformation in both recruitment and	0(0.0%)	18(8.3%)	57(26.4%)	70(32.4%)	71(32.9%)	3.8981	.95907

selection process improving efficiency.							
The County government are transforming the training through digital meetings, conference and training programs.	0(0.0%)	11(5.1%)	43(19.9%)	133(61.6%)	29(13.4%)	3.8333	.71528
The county government has improved performance appraisal through adoption of digital based performance appraisal.	1(0.5%)	13(6.0%)	38(17.6%)	125(57.9%)	39(18.1%)	3.8704	.79056
The county has enhanced the information and communication to improve efficiency in the county operation.	2(0.9%)	14(6.5%)	35(16.2%)	130(60.2%)	35(16.2%)	3.8426	.80304
Leaves and management of workforce have been enhanced through introduction of digital human resource management systems.	0(0.0%)	12(5.6%)	37(17.1%)	149(69.0%)	18(8.3%)	3.8009	.66276
Aggregate						3.8495	.53784

Table 1 results indicated that 167(77.3%) of the respondents agreed that the County Government had utilized digital recruitment systems that allowed people to apply online. In the County Governments, adoption of digital recruitment systems is high and uniform across Kenya as indicated by a mean of 3.8519 and standard deviation of 0.52500. Subsequently, 70(32.4%) and 71(32.9%) of respondents strongly agreed and agreed respectively that the organizational transformation in both recruitment and selection processes improved efficiency. The mean of 3.8981 and standard deviation of 0.95907 revealed that recruitment and selection had improved efficiency especially through the introduction of online recruitment and selection systems.

A response of 133(61.6%) respondents agreed that the County Governments were transforming the training through digital meetings, conferences, and training programs. The mean of 3.8333 and standard deviation of 0.71528 implied that digital meetings, conferences, and training programs were used in transforming the training process.

There were 125(57.9%) respondents who agreed that there was an improvement in performance appraisal through adoption of digital-based performance appraisal in County Governments. As further indicated by mean of 3.8704 and standard deviation of 0.79056, the County Governments had utilized digital-based performance appraisal techniques in ensuring high performance management.

The findings also indicated that 130(60.2%) of the respondents agreed that the County Governments had enhanced information and communication to improve efficiency in their operations. The mean was 3.8426 and standard deviation of 0.80304, which implied that information and communication were enhanced in the County Governments. The study also indicated that leaves and management of the workforce had been enhanced through introduction of digital human resource management systems as revealed by 149(69.0%) respondents who agreed.

The mean of 3.8009 and standard deviation of 0.66276 implied that leaves and management of the workforce were digitized through adoption of human resource management systems in the County Governments.

An aggregate mean of 3.8495 with standard deviation of 0.53784 indicated that digital human resource function is widely adopted among the County Governments. This plays a crucial role in enhancing organizational transformation and improving service delivery.

Employee performance

The results in Table 2 highlight the perceptions of respondents regarding employee performance in the County Government, analyzed using frequency, percentage frequency, mean, and standard deviation.

Table 2: Employee Performance

	SD	D	N	A	SA	Mean	Std. Deviation
The County Government has improved the quality of employees' tasks through improvement in technology.	0(0.0%)	9(4.2%)	18(8.3%)	167(77.3%)	22(10.2%)	3.9352	.59099
The County Government has improved effectiveness in internal collaboration between employees.	1(0.5%)	0(0.0%)	32(14.8%)	109(50.5%)	74(34.3%)	4.1806	.70861
Adoption of digital technology in the county government has increased the quantity of tasks done.	0(0.0%)	7(3.2%)	24(11.1%)	148(68.5%)	37(17.1%)	3.9954	.64338
The County Government has enhanced the efficiency of service delivery through technology advancement.	0(0.0%)	7(3.2%)	24(11.1%)	148(68.5%)	37(17.1%)	4.0324	.59757
The County Government has	1(0.5%)	4(1.9%)	30(13.9%)	160(74.1%)	21(9.7%)	3.9074	.58726

received positive comments from the citizens that they are satisfied with the service delivery.							
The County Government has improved the timeliness in service delivery.	0(0.0%)	10(4.6%)	18(8.3%)	171(79.2%)	17(7.9%)	3.9028	.58253
Aggregate						3.9923	.41227

The findings show that 167 (77.3%) respondents agreed that the County Government has improved the quality of employees' tasks through advancements in technology. This is further supported by a mean of 3.9352 and a standard deviation of 0.59099, indicating consistency in leveraging technology to enhance task quality.

Findings also indicated that 109 (50.5%) respondents agreed and 74 (34.3%) strongly agreed that the County Government has improved effectiveness in internal collaboration between employees. This is reflected in a high mean of 4.1806 and a standard deviation of 0.70861, demonstrating a strong emphasis on fostering effective internal collaboration.

The adoption of digital technology in the County Government was reported to have increased the quantity of tasks done, as agreed by 148 (68.5%) respondents and strongly agreed by 37 (17.1%). This is indicated by a mean of 3.9954 and a standard deviation of 0.64338, showing the impact of digital technology on task output.

Furthermore, 148 (68.5%) respondents agreed that the County Government has enhanced the efficiency of service delivery through technology advancement. The mean value of 4.0324 and standard deviation of 0.59757 reflect the perceived improvements in service efficiency due to technology.

Regarding citizen satisfaction, 160 (74.1%) respondents agreed that the County Government has received positive comments from citizens about service delivery, supported by a mean of 3.9074 and a standard deviation of 0.58726. This suggests that citizens recognize improvements in service delivery. Finally, 171 (79.2%) respondents agreed that the County Government has improved the timeliness of service delivery, with a mean of 3.9028 and a standard deviation of 0.58253. This demonstrates a consistent focus on ensuring timely service delivery. The aggregate mean of employee performance was 3.9923 and the standard deviation was 0.41227, indicating that overall, employee performance in County Governments in Kenya was high.

Test of Hypothesis

H_0: There is no statistically significant relationship between digitization of human resource functions and employee performance in County Governments in Kenya.

The hypothesis above was examined using simple linear regression model where the outputs were summarized in terms of R, R Square, F-value, P-values, Beta coefficient and there significant. The results were discussed to bring out whether there was statically significant relationship between digitization of human resource functions and employee performance in County Government of Kenya. The summary model was given as follows;

Table 3: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.443[a]	.197	.193	.37039
a. Predictors: (Constant), X1				

The results in Table 3 revealed that digitization of human resource functions has a moderate positive relationship with employee performance, as indicated by the correlation coefficient (R = 0.443). The coefficient of determination (R^2 = 0.197) indicates that digitization of human resource functions explains 19.7% of the variation in employee performance, while the remaining 80.3% is attributable to other factors not captured in the model. The adjusted R^2 (0.193) aligns closely with R^2, confirming that the model appropriately accounts for the single predictor without overestimating its explanatory power. The standard error of the estimate (0.37039) suggests that the model has a reasonable level of precision in predicting employee performance.

Table 4: ANOVA

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	7.184	1	7.184	52.369	.000[b]
	Residual	29.358	214	.137		
	Total	36.543	215			
a. Dependent Variable: Y						
b. Predictors: (Constant), X1						

The ANOVA result in Table 4 tested the overall significance of the regression model. The F-statistic (F(1, 214) = 52.369) is significant at p = 0.000, which is far below the threshold of 0.05. This confirms that the regression model is statistically significant and that digitization of human resource functions has a meaningful impact on employee performance. The high F-value indicates that the predictor variable significantly explains the observed variation in employee performance.

Table 5: Coefficients

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	2.684	.183		14.703	.000
	X1	.340	.047	.443	7.237	.000
a. Dependent Variable: Y						

The coefficient Table 5 provides detailed insights into the specific contribution of digitization of human resource functions to employee performance.

The constant (B = 2.684, p = 0.000) represents the baseline level of employee performance when digitization of human resource functions is absent ($X_1 = 0$). The unstandardized coefficient for X_1 (B = 0.340, p = 0.000) indicates that a one-unit increase in digitization of human resource functions leads to a 0.340-unit (34.0%) increase in employee performance on average. The standardized coefficient (Beta = 0.443) confirms that digitization of human resource functions has a moderate positive effect on employee performance. The t-value (7.237) and the corresponding p-value (0.000) provide further evidence that the relationship between the predictor and the dependent variable is statistically significant.

The regression equation derived from the model is as follows:

$Y = 2.684 + 0.340X_1$

This equation implies that for every unit increase in digitization of human resource functions (X_1), employee performance (Y) increases by 0.340 units. The baseline level of employee performance, in the absence of digitization, is 2.684 units.

The results indicate that digitization of human resource functions has a statistically significant and positive relationship with employee performance in County Governments in Kenya. Digitization explains 19.7% of the variation in employee performance, highlighting its importance as a strategic focus area for improving organizational outcomes. These findings suggest that greater investment in the digitization of human resource functions can yield measurable improvements in employee performance. The p-values for the overall model and the coefficient of X_1 are below 0.05, leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis and acceptance of the alternative hypothesis.

The results of the current study, which show a statistically significant positive relationship between the digitization of human resource functions and employee performance in County Governments in Kenya, align with the findings of several empirical studies. Specifically, studies like those of Al-Shameri & Omar (2022) and Fenech (2022) demonstrate that digitization in human resource management (HRM) plays a critical role in enhancing employee performance by improving efficiency and adaptability. Al-Shameri & Omar highlight how organizations that adopted digital technologies during the COVID-19 pandemic managed to maintain high productivity even in remote working environments, suggesting that digitalized HR functions allow organizations to remain resilient in the face of challenges. Similarly, Fenech (2022) discusses how the digital age has revolutionized HRM, leading to more efficient, agile, and productive HR functions, which directly contribute to better employee performance.

Furthermore, the results of this study are consistent with research by Jayabalan *et al.*, (2021), who identify significant improvements in HR functions such as recruitment, training, and performance appraisal due to digitalization. This aligns with the current study's findings that digitization has a measurable impact on employee performance, as the technology used in HRM fosters innovation and timeliness in carrying out tasks, thus contributing to enhanced employee productivity. Additionally, studies such as those by Haque and Nishat (2022) suggest that digitalized HRM practices, particularly in areas like e-recruitment, e-performance appraisals, and e-training, have been shown to positively influence both in-role and extra-role employee performance. These findings further support the notion that digitization can enhance employee outcomes by optimizing HR processes.

However, while the general trend of the current study is consistent with global findings, it also brings to light the unique context of County Governments in Kenya, where the adoption of HR technology may face different challenges compared to private sector or international settings. The study by Nuhammed *et al.*, (2021) emphasizes the positive relationship between HR digitization and employee performance in Nigerian banks, while Neeraj (2018) draw attention to the importance of digital HRM in the public sector in India. These studies further confirm that while the digital transformation of HRM is beneficial globally, the specific impact on employee performance in a public sector context, such as County Governments, might require additional considerations regarding infrastructure, training, and digital literacy, which are particularly relevant in developing regions like Kenya.

In conclusion, the current study concurs with a growing body of empirical research that emphasizes the positive effects of digitizing HR functions on employee performance. This trend is evident across diverse sectors and regions, from the private sector's adaptability during crises like COVID-19 to the public sector's ongoing transformation. The findings highlight the importance of investing in HR digitization, not only for improving operational efficiency but also for driving employee performance. Future studies could explore the barriers to implementing digital HRM in public sector settings, particularly in developing countries, to understand how to overcome these challenges and maximize the benefits of HR technology.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary of Results

The study findings reveal that digitization of human resource functions in County Governments in Kenya has significantly enhanced efficiency and employee performance. The adoption of digital recruitment systems, performance appraisal platforms, and communication tools has streamlined HR operations, improved workforce management, and optimized service delivery. Statistical analysis confirms a strong and positive

relationship between digitization and employee performance, with regression results showing that digitization accounts for a substantial variation in performance outcomes. The results therefore rejected the null hypothesis and accepted the alternative hypothesis. This indicated that digitization of human resource functions had a positive and statistically significant relationship with employee performance ($B = 0.340$, $p = 0.000<0.05$). These findings emphasize the need for increased investment in digital HR systems to enhance efficiency and effectiveness in County Government operations.

Conclusions

The study concludes that the digitization of human resource functions has a significant and positive impact on employee performance in County Governments in Kenya. Digitization has streamlined key HR processes such as recruitment, training, performance appraisal, and workforce management, leading to greater efficiency and improved service delivery. The statistical analysis confirms that digital HR functions directly contribute to better employee performance, reinforcing the importance of investing in digital systems to enhance organizational productivity. Overall, the findings highlight that digitization is not just a technological enhancement but a critical enabler for higher performance standards in County Governments.

Recommendations

The study recommended that the County Governments in Kenya should invest in advanced digital HR systems and infrastructure to ensure seamless implementation across all HR functions. Continuous training and capacity-building programs should be introduced to equip employees with the necessary skills to use these systems effectively. Additionally, regular monitoring and evaluation should be conducted to assess the effectiveness of digital HR initiatives and align them with organizational goals. Fostering a digital-friendly culture will promote widespread adoption, while collaboration with technology providers can help tailor solutions to the specific needs of County Governments, ensuring long-term sustainability and improved performance outcomes.

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