

## MODERATING ROLE OF PUBLIC SECTOR CULTURE ON RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN INTEGRATION CAPABILITY AND SERVICE DELIVERY IN SELECTED COUNTY GOVERNMENTS IN KENYA

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### ABSTRACT

**Purpose of the study:** This research assessed the moderating role of public sector culture on the relationship between integration capability and service delivery in selected County Governments in Kenya.

**Methodology:** The study employed both descriptive and explanatory research designs, guided by a pragmatic philosophical orientation to accommodate multiple perspectives and methods. The target population comprised 263 senior officers from Wajir, Mandera and Garissa Counties in Kenya. Owing to the accessibility of both the population and the geographic region, a census method was adopted to include all eligible respondents. Data collection was conducted using a semi-structured questionnaire, administered through the drop-and-pick method to ensure efficiency and timeliness. Quantitative data were analyzed using frequency distribution tables

for clear presentation of results. Qualitative data were subjected to thematic analysis and presented in a narrative format to capture key insights. To test the hypotheses, empirical models were estimated and Analysis of Variance was employed as the primary statistical technique.

**Findings:** The study findings indicated that the public sector culture was a significant explanatory variable in the relationship between integration capability and service delivery in the selected County Governments in Kenya.

**Conclusion:** The study concluded that County Governments should cultivate a robust public sector culture that prioritizes the development of integration capability in encouraging creativity and innovation.

**Recommendations:** The study recommends that County Governments should cultivate a robust public sector culture that prioritizes the development of integration capability in encouraging creativity and innovation. This research would assist County Governments in formalizing the mechanisms used to incorporate the outcomes of integration capability activities into management programs. It would also help policymakers develop future plans for enhancing effectiveness through the application of integration capability.

**Keywords:** *County Government, Integration Capability, Public Sector Culture, Service Delivery*

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## INTRODUCTION

The Kenyan Government has embarked on ambitious decentralization reforms aimed at mitigating socioeconomic disparities and achieving middle-income status by 2030 by bringing essential resources closer to grassroots populations (Oribu, 2020; Waribu, 2021). Service delivery has consequently emerged as the focal point for satisfying developmental objectives at the county level, encompassing the competent provision of public goods and services that fulfill citizen demands and expectations (Anshari, Hamdan, Ahmad & Ali, 2025; Kerubo & Muturi, 2019; Waikenda, Lewa, & Muchara, 2019). High-quality public service delivery serves as a cornerstone of the government-citizen relationship and a vital indicator of County Government performance, particularly given rising public awareness and evolving citizen expectations (Hassan, 2019).

Public sector service delivery thus carries a dual mandate, addressing the specific needs of

individual clients while concurrently fulfilling the broader obligations to the community. According to Devkota, Baral, Khanal and Adhikary (2023), effective public service delivery necessitates the identification of unmet needs, strategic prioritization of resources and a sustained commitment to accountability in decision-making and implementation. As noted by Abdulkadir (2023), excellence in service delivery is defined by the degree to which perceived services align with customer expectations. Consequently, organizations need to place a strategic emphasis on understanding these expectations and implementing measures to consistently meet or surpass them. Muwonge et al. (2023) affirm that exceptional service delivery stems from the alignment between client expectations and their perceptions of the service experience. Similarly, Nguyen and Moreira (2023) identify four critical determinants of customer expectations, emphasizing that perceived service quality emerges from the comparison between anticipated and actual service outcomes. .

In delivering these services, public sector entities need to focus on key concerns such as availability, accessibility, acceptability and affordability (Khan & Kisenge, 2024). The quality of public services has been widely researched, with Yarmak and Rollnik-Sadowska (2022) using the SERVQUAL model developed by Parasuraman *et al.* (2019) to assess the quality of healthcare services in a public university. In the context of the current study, service delivery was examined through the lens of public sector excellence, employing the SERVQUAL model indicators, access, assurance, reliability, responsiveness, tangibility and empathy, as a guiding framework, as suggested by Ebrahimi *et al.* (2023).

In an era marked by constant change and increasing uncertainty, there is a growing need for forward-thinking leadership through integration capability, which refers to the ability to deliver consistent service by combining and coordinating diverse organizational resources to facilitate effective service delivery through methodologies, processes and practices that enhance coordination, optimize data accuracy, improve service levels and foster trust (Taylor, 2023; Saukko, Aaltonen, & Haapasalo, 2022; Mustafid, Karimariza, & Jie, 2018; Cross et al., 2021; Zhe, Arunodaya & Sayedeh, 2023). Concurrently, public sector culture, understood as the collective views, values, attitudes and behaviours of public servants, plays a pivotal role in influencing service delivery outcomes and has been identified as a significant moderator in relational dynamics, with empirical research demonstrating that culture affects associations between organizational performance and strategic management practices, export performance

and organizational learning, and technology adoption intentions (Morshed, 2021; Kiiru, 2015; Escandon, Salas & Losada-Otalora, 2023; Zhang, Xia & Huang, 2022). Therefore, elements such as formality, meritocratic principles, control and accountability mechanisms and oversight of civil servants' conduct are crucial in operationalizing public sector culture to enhance service delivery effectiveness (Nishimura, Moreira, Sousa, & Au-Yong-Oliveira, 2021). Hence, the study examined the moderating role of public sector culture on the relationship between integration capability and service delivery in selected county governments in Kenya.

## **STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

The Counties of Garissa, Mandera and Wajir in North Eastern Kenya are facing significant service delivery challenges (Moses *et al.*, 2020). In Garissa County, the health department is unable to reliably deliver quality health services due to a shortage of staff. Currently, it has only 1,048 health workers (41.44%) against a required 2,529, resulting in a shortfall of 1,481 (58.56%) (Hassan, Njoroge, & Kimemia, 2021). In Mandera County, lack of empathy among health personnel has discouraged community members from seeking medical assistance at health facilities. As a result, 93.4% of women give birth at home (Interpeace Kenya Programme, 2021). This has contributed to an alarming maternal mortality rate of 3,795 per 100,000 live births, one of the highest in the world (Interpeace Kenya Programme, 2021). In Wajir County, residents face a severe shortage of clean water, with only 5.1% having access to a safe water source and just 1.4% connected to piped water (County Government of Wajir, 2022). As a result, water remains a critical concern for communities in the county. These persistent deficiencies in service delivery have led to continued hardships for the residents of these regions (Oribu, 2020; Cannon & Ali, 2018).

As a potential solution to these challenges, integration capability has gained increasing attention in empirical research and is now considered a critical area of study (Gordon *et al.*, 2020). However, existing literature remains fragmented and lacks a comprehensive understanding of how integration capability influences service delivery among selected County Governments in Kenya. This gap highlights the need for further research to enhance current knowledge (Buehring & Bishop, 2020). In response, the present study examined the moderating effect of public sector culture on the relationship between integration capability and service delivery in selected County Governments in Kenya.

## **RESEARCH OBJECTIVES**

The objectives of the study were;

- i. To establish the significant effect of integration capability on service delivery in selected County Governments in Kenya.
- ii. To assess the moderating role of public sector culture on relationship between strategic foresight and service delivery in selected County Governments in Kenya.

## **RESEARCH HYPOTHESES**

The hypotheses were;

H<sub>01</sub>: Integration capability does not significantly affect service delivery in selected County Governments in Kenya

H<sub>02</sub>: Public sector culture does not have a significant moderating role on relationship between integration capability and service delivery in selected County Governments in Kenya

## **THEORETICAL REVIEW**

### **Dynamic Capabilities Theory**

Originally articulated by Teece and Pisano in 1994, the Dynamic Capabilities Theory (DCT) asserts that the development of organization-specific capabilities ultimately influences operational outcomes (Teece, 2014). Heckmann, Steger and Dowling (2016) observe that although DCT is still in its developmental stages, the theory centers on a unique capability that enables organizations to initiate and manage change. This concept, which stems from managerial agency, illustrates the fundamental role of strategy in shaping dynamic capabilities (Kay, Leih, & Teece, 2018). In essence, DCT emphasizes the critical components that must be transformed to improve service delivery, particularly through integration capability. In the present study, DCT serves as the foundational framework, highlighting the pivotal relationship between integration capability and enhanced service delivery. In emphasizing the strategic capacity to integrate resources and adapt to changing demands, DCT demonstrates how organizations can optimize their service offerings.

### **Schein's Theory of Organizational Culture**

Edgar Schein presented the Theory of Organizational Culture in 1980, providing a comprehensive framework for understanding how culture influences organizational operations (Makumbe & Washaya, 2022). The theory emphasizes the different layers of culture, artifacts, shared values and underlying assumptions, which shape workplace behavior and foster a distinct sense of belonging within an organization (Akanji, Mordi, Ituma, Adisa, & Ajonbadi, 2020). Schein (1992) further argues that these cultural dimensions are critical in differentiating organizations, particularly in terms of effectiveness, a key factor in service delivery. According to Siehl and Martin (1984), organizational culture serves dual functions: fostering employee loyalty and affiliation as well as guiding appropriate behavior to ensure social stability within the organization. In this study, Schein's Theory of Organizational Culture provides a foundation for examining public sector culture and its influence on service delivery. Significant cultural elements such as formalism, meritocracy and control play an essential role in monitoring civil servant behavior and ensuring effective service delivery through collaboration, communication and commitment. The meritocratic aspect, in particular, underscores the importance of integration capability in enhancing service outcomes (Ahmadi *et al.*, 2023).

### **EMPIRICAL REVIEW**

Existing studies offer critical insights into how factors such as integration capability and public sector culture significantly influence the effectiveness and quality of service delivery.

#### **Integration Capability and Service Delivery**

In the study by Nabila, Mahendrawathi, Chen and Chen (2022), it was found that integrative work practices supported employee behavior. Gathaku and Gitari (2022) investigated customer integration strategies used in Kenya's health sector and found a significant correlation between customer integration and service delivery. Research by Malango (2019), which examined the impact of information technology integration on the performance of several Kenyan public hospitals, revealed that IT integration significantly enhanced service delivery by making it more effective, relevant and efficient. Singh, Charan and Chattopadhyay (2019) explored the relationship between dynamic capability and responsiveness as well as the moderating effects of organizational structures and environmental dynamism. Their findings showed that dynamic capability greatly improved responsiveness. The dimensions of sensing, learning, integration

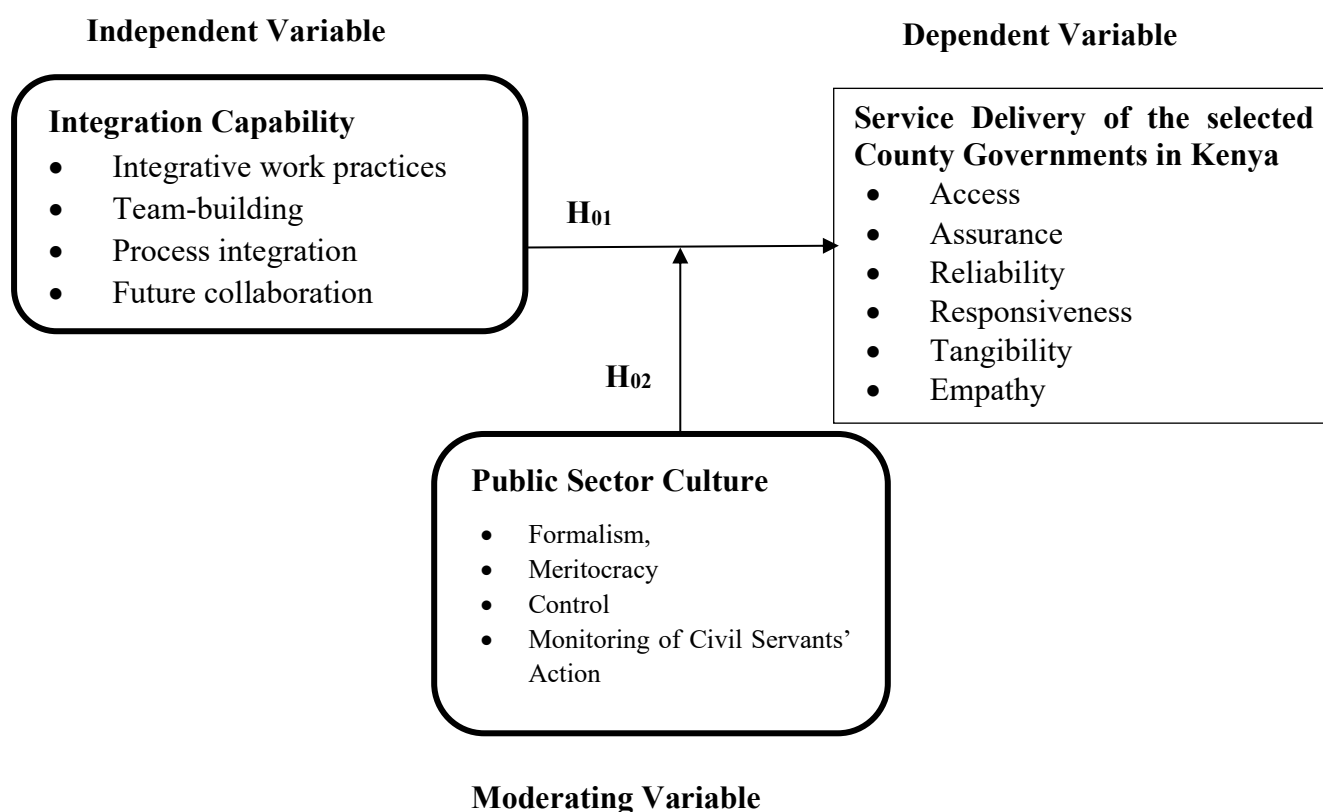
and reconfiguration were used to deliver services in Kenya's health sector. Yasir (2018) examined the relationship between the efficacy of organizational capabilities and service delivery (measured by responsiveness, tangibility, empathy and reliability). The findings indicated that organizational learning capability and the effectiveness of organizational capability were positively associated with improved service delivery.

### **Public Sector Culture and Service Delivery**

In the study conducted by Escandon et al. (2023), the findings confirmed a positive relationship between organizational innovation, entrepreneurial orientation and export performance. Additionally, public culture was found to play a moderating role in this relationship. Similarly, the study by Kaibung'a, Muchemi and Mwasiagi (2022) indicated that culture significantly moderated the relationship between knowledge transfer strategies and performance, yielding positive effects. Research by Gulali, Jairo, Ouma and Patrick (2021) emphasized that accounting for organizational culture enhanced the overall effect of Quality Management System (QMS) adoption on service delivery. In a cross-sectional study, Kiiru (2015) demonstrated that public sector culture significantly moderated the relationship between SHRM practices and organizational performance. Juma, Ayub and Ali (2023) confirmed that culture significantly impacted public health service delivery. Abidin, Ran, Qammar, Nadeem and Farhan (2020) explored the relationship between organizational culture and performance in the public sector in Jordan, with results indicating a significant positive association. Chepkonga and Nyaga (2019) also reported a positive and statistically significant relationship between leadership culture and service delivery.

### **CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK**

As demonstrated in Figure 1, the dependent variable in this study was the services delivery of selected County Governments in Kenya while the independent was integration capability while the relationship between integration capability and service delivery in selected County Governments in Kenya was further moderated by public sector culture.



**Figure 1: Conceptual Framework**

Source: Researcher (2024)

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study was anchored on pragmatic research philosophy which does not categorize research as purely qualitative or quantitative, thereby providing a balanced approach between deductive and inductive reasoning while emphasizing the practical utility of research in offering viable solutions and outcomes (Saunders et al., 2019; Maxcy, 2023). The study adopted both explanatory and descriptive research designs, with the descriptive design employed to accurately capture real-world phenomena and provide comprehensive insights into the research problem, while the explanatory design complemented this by deepening understanding of relationships between variables (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The target population consisted of 263 senior officers from Garissa, Mandera and Wajir Counties, with a census approach used to enhance accuracy, dependability and precision of findings, while primary data was collected through a semi-structured questionnaire comprising both open-ended and closed-ended questions utilizing a 5-point Likert scale (Kagerbauer & Magdolen, 2024). Quantitative data was analyzed using SPSS version 24.0 to generate descriptive statistics presented in frequency distribution



tables with detailed narrative explanations, while qualitative data underwent thematic analysis with the researcher identifying and interpreting key themes, and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was carried out using a significance level of 0.05 to predict the model (Ntinda, 2020; Jangir, Chahar, Lal, & Sharma, 2024).

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS**

The study administered a questionnaire to 263 respondents, of which 224 completed and returned the questionnaire, resulting in a response rate of 85.17%. According to Cleave (2020), this is considered a very good and desirable rate for ensuring the accuracy and reliability of the findings. Regarding the highest level of academic qualifications among respondents, a significant proportion, specifically 108 (48.21%), reported holding a university undergraduate degree. When examining the length of tenure within the counties, 71 (31.70%) indicated that they had served for a period ranging from seven to ten years. In terms of the duration spent in their current positions, a majority of 120 (53.57%) reported having held their roles for less than four years. These findings reflect the respondents' diverse educational backgrounds and varying levels of experience, contributing to a comprehensive understanding of their profiles within the selected County Governments in Kenya (Garrido-Cumbrera et al., 2022).

### **Descriptive Statistics**

The study precisely evaluated the service delivery within the selected County Governments in Kenya, focusing on various aspects of their service delivery. Through a comprehensive analysis, the study gathered relevant data, which was then processed and presented in Table 1. This table summarizes the findings, offering a detailed overview of the service delivery levels across the counties under investigation, providing insights into their strengths and areas that may require improvement.

**Table 1: Descriptive Statistics for Service Delivery in Selected County Governments**

<b>Service Delivery</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std. Dev.</b>
The service locations are readily accessible by everyone	223	3.108	0.986
There are sufficient employees to serve all citizens in each location	218	3.212	0.964
Services are delivered promptly	223	3.084	0.993
Every service is delivered as planned	221	3.061	0.970
Services are delivered by competent staff	222	3.262	0.963
The staff maintain a neat physical environment at the area of work	218	3.408	0.929
Employees give customers individual attention	222	3.236	0.925
The County ensures that services are available	218	3.220	0.888
The staff possess the necessary expertise and proficiency	221	3.384	0.902
We are always responsive to the public demands of the public	221	3.225	0.915
Staff are polite with customers	223	3.366	0.864
The public feels safe with service staff	219	3.305	0.925
The County Government always delivers adequate services	223	3.089	1.039
<b>Aggregate measures</b>	<b>221</b>	<b>3.228</b>	<b>0.943</b>

Source: Field data (2024)

The results demonstrated considerable uncertainty regarding the accessibility of service locations. This indicated a lack of clarity about whether service points were easily accessible to the public, raising concerns about potential barriers to accessing essential services. The uncertainty suggested possible infrastructural challenges that may have hindered the effective provision of services and affected the public's ability to engage with them efficiently. Concerns were also raised about the adequacy of staffing levels. Respondents appeared unsure whether the personnel available were sufficient to meet the diverse needs of the population. This implied that the workforce might have been inadequate to address service demands effectively, potentially resulting in delays or reduced service quality. Further findings revealed uncertainties surrounding the promptness of service delivery. Respondents questioned whether services were provided in a timely manner, which pointed to potential inefficiencies or delays in the service process. There were also doubts about the consistency of service delivery with established plans, suggesting that services might not have always been delivered in a predictable or reliable manner. While there was some recognition of staff competence,

uncertainty persisted regarding overall staff performance. This highlighted concerns about the consistency, reliability and quality of the services provided, indicating that while staff may have been seen as competent, their ability to consistently meet expectations remained in question.

It was acknowledged that staff generally maintained a neat and organized physical environment in their workplaces. However, uncertainty remained about the degree of individual attention given to customers, suggesting that while the physical setting supported service delivery, the quality of personalized customer interactions may not have consistently met expectations. Additionally, the results expressed uncertainty about the effectiveness of selected County Governments in ensuring consistent service availability. Doubts were also raised about the staff's knowledge and capability, as many were neutral about whether staff possessed the necessary expertise to effectively address public inquiries. County Governments and their staff were generally perceived as moderately responsive to public demands. Nevertheless, uncertainty remained regarding the politeness of staff interactions, as well as the overall sense of safety experienced during engagements with service personnel. These concerns indicated that while staff responsiveness was acknowledged, the manner and tone of interactions, along with public safety, remained areas of concern.

Ultimately, considerable uncertainty was expressed about whether the selected County Governments consistently delivered adequate services. This pattern of uncertainty underscored the need for further exploration into the underlying issues affecting service delivery. The findings pointed to a critical need for targeted strategies to improve the accessibility, effectiveness and overall quality of services offered by Kenyan County Governments. Service delivery in selected Kenyan County Governments was found to be moderate, reflecting mixed public perceptions and notable uncertainty about its effectiveness. This aligns with findings by Moses et al. (2020), who highlighted key service delivery challenges in Garissa, Mandera and Wajir counties, including limited access, inconsistent reliability, low responsiveness and lack of empathy. Hassan et al. (2021) added that these challenges contributed to increased workloads and pressure on staff, leading to a rise in staff turnover intentions. The study assessed integration capability in service delivery among selected County Governments in Kenya, producing the results presented in Table 2.

**Table 2: Descriptive Statistics for Integration Capability and Service Delivery**

<b>Integration capability</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std Dev.</b>
Work practices are well defined	220	3.571	0.784
There are integrative work practices to help support staff	216	3.556	0.805
Team-building is encouraged among the staff for mutual value	220	3.546	0.867
There is continuous training on team building	205	3.211	1.015
There services in the County are integrated	224	3.415	0.860
The processes are integrated	222	3.488	0.873
The County focuses on building future collaborations	221	3.498	0.808
The County uses future collaborations	222	3.523	0.797
Integration capability helps improve on service delivery	221	3.475	0.868
<b>Aggregate measures</b>	<b>219</b>	<b>3.476</b>	<b>0.853</b>

Source: Field Data (2024)

The study found that integration capability had a significantly positive effect on service delivery within the selected County Governments in Kenya. The Counties demonstrated a considerable level of integration capability, suggesting the presence of a robust framework for coordinating various functions and activities. Clearly defined work practices within the Counties enhanced employees' understanding of how to address similar events in the future, thereby promoting consistency and operational efficiency. Integrative work practices were observed to effectively support employee behavior, fostering a cohesive work environment and enhancing collaboration among staff. The importance of team-building initiatives was emphasized, with a general consensus that these Counties encouraged teamwork to promote mutual support. However, uncertainty remained regarding the availability of continuous training programs aimed at reinforcing team-building and cultivating a shared sense of belonging among employees, indicating potential gaps in ongoing professional development. Service delivery within the Counties appeared to be well-integrated, facilitating more effective resource utilization, an essential factor in improving both service quality and operational efficiency. The Counties also demonstrated a focus on building future collaborations, reflecting a strategic effort to foster partnerships that could further enhance service effectiveness. This proactive approach highlighted a commitment to monitoring environmental trends, ensuring the Counties remained informed about external changes that could affect service delivery.

Overall, there were evident efforts to leverage integration capability as a means of enhancing service delivery. Table 3 presents the results of the study's comprehensive evaluation of public sector culture within the selected Kenyan county government

**Table 3: Descriptive Statistics for Public Sector Culture and Service Delivery**

<b>Public sector culture</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std Dev.</b>
There are well-defined policies to adhere to	224	3.357	0.883
Adherence to established rules and procedures	222	3.308	0.960
Individual initiative was always rewarded	218	2.806	0.997
Staff were always motivated to do their best	219	2.785	0.996
The County had strict control measures	223	3.095	1.020
The operating decisions were made by top management only	220	3.405	0.996
There was frequent monitoring of civil servants' action	223	3.265	0.907
Monitoring on efficient utilization of public resources	222	3.099	0.986
Public sector culture moderated the direct relationship	222	3.305	0.922
<b>Aggregate measures</b>	<b>221</b>	<b>3.158</b>	<b>0.963</b>

Source: Field Data (2024)

The Counties exhibited a moderate level of adherence to public sector culture, reflecting efforts to align with established public sector norms while also revealing significant opportunities for improvement. Specifically, there was a moderate commitment to establishing formalism, meritocracy, and the control and monitoring of civil servants' actions. The Counties also demonstrated a moderate degree of compliance with established rules and procedures in decision-making. While the importance of procedural adherence was acknowledged, inconsistencies in implementation were evident. Uncertainty remained regarding the extent to which individual initiative was consistently recognized and rewarded, suggesting that employees may not have felt sufficiently incentivized to innovate or exceed standard expectations. Moreover, the findings indicated variability in staff motivation. While some employees appeared driven to perform at their best, others lacked comparable levels of enthusiasm or commitment. Uncertainty also surrounded the presence and effectiveness of strict control measures within the Counties. In contrast, operational decisions were found to be primarily centralized within top management. This limited the involvement of lower-level staff

in decision-making processes and may have constrained opportunities for innovation and the expression of individual initiative. There was a generally neutral stance regarding the frequency of monitoring civil servants' actions, accompanied by uncertainty about the oversight of efficient public resource utilization. This lack of clarity around monitoring practices potentially contributed to inefficiencies in service delivery.

## Hypotheses Testing

Composite indices were computed for each research variable based on their respective indicators (Hayes, 2023; Preacher & Hayes, 2022). These indices were constructed using the harmonic mean to ensure balanced representation across the components. Then regression analysis with two steps was used in statistical moderation analysis (Baron & Kenney, 1986).

Equation 1, which signifies the initial stage of the moderation analysis in this study was used to tests hypothesis H<sub>10</sub>.

$$\text{Service delivery} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 \text{ Integration Capability} + \varepsilon \dots\dots\dots 1$$

**Table 4: Regression on Integration Capability and Service Delivery**

	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	-0.001	0.004		-0.341	0.734
Integration Capability	0.519	0.057	0.523	9.154	0.000
ANOVA	0.000				
R Square	0.2740				

a. Dependent Variable: service delivery

Source: Field Data (2024)

The coefficient of determination (R<sup>2</sup>) was found to be 0.6634; indicating that 27.40% of the change in the service delivery in selected County Governments in Kenya could be attributed to integration capability. Results (p<0.01) show that p-value was less than 0.05 to imply that at 5% significance level; integration capability as useful in predicting the service delivery. This is supported by the F-statistics (F<sub>4,219</sub> = 107.855) which is greater than (F-critical<sub>4,219</sub> = 2.413). Thus at 5% significance level, integration capability has significantly positive effect on service

delivery. These findings align with the research conducted by Gathaku and Gitari (2022), which demonstrated a significant relationship between integration and service delivery. Their study highlighted that effective integration strategies play a crucial role in enhancing service delivery outcomes. Furthermore, the investigation by Singh, Charan and Chattopadhyay (2019) adds another layer of understanding to this relationship. Their research suggested that the service delivery within organizations was influenced by integration capability. In a related context, Yasir (2018) revealed that strong organizational learning capabilities related positively with improved service delivery. This underscores the importance of fostering a culture of continuous learning within organizations as a means of enhancing their inclusive capacity to deliver services. This means that improvements in integration capability were likely to lead to enhanced service delivery.

The estimated model fitted was

Service delivery in selected County Governments in Kenya =  $-0.002 + 0.519$  (integration capability) ..... 2

In the next stage of the moderation analysis process, the interaction term was added as captured in equation 3.

**Service delivery**=  $\beta_0 + \beta_1$  **Integration Capability** +  $\beta_2$  **Public sector culture** +  $\beta_3$  (**Integration Capability \* Public sector culture**) +  $\varepsilon$  .....3

Using that equation, the study tested hypothesis and results were captured in Table 5.

**Table 5: Moderating Role of Public Sector Culture**

	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	-.001	.004		-.308	.759
Integration capability	.514	.056	.518	9.141	.000
Public sector culture	-.145	.057	-.144	-2.544	.012
Integration capability * Public sector culture	.326	1.171	.016	.278	.781
ANOVA	0.000				
R Square	0.2952				

a. Dependent Variable: service delivery

Source: Field Data (2024)

Based on these results;

Service delivery in selected County Governments in Kenya =  $-0.001 + 0.514 (\text{integration capability}) - 0.145 (\text{Public sector culture}) + 0.326(\text{integration capability} * \text{public sector culture})$

The study found that the ANOVA results ( $p < 0.01$ ) indicate a p-value of less than 0.05, demonstrating that public sector culture significantly moderates the relationship between integration capability and service delivery within the selected County Governments in Kenya. Additionally, the analysis revealed that the p-value for the coefficient of public sector culture ( $p = 0.012$ ) was below the 0.05 threshold. However, the p-value for the interaction term representing the product of integration capability and public sector culture was not significant ( $p = 0.781$ ). These findings imply that although public sector culture independently influenced service delivery, its role as an interaction term was not statistically significant in moderating the relationship between integration capability and service delivery in this context.

These findings are consistent with the research by Kaibung'a et al. (2022), which illustrated that culture significantly modifies the relationship between information transfer strategies and organizational performance. Their results suggest that a favorable cultural context enhances the effectiveness of service delivery, underscoring the importance of understanding cultural dynamics when designing and implementing service-related strategies. Furthermore, Gulali et al. (2021) demonstrated that organizational culture plays a substantial role in influencing service delivery, acting as a moderating factor that strengthens the relationship between various service delivery indicators. This highlights the critical importance of a supportive culture in mitigating potential negative effects on service quality and ensuring consistent service standards.

In a related study, Kiiru (2015) found that public sector culture was instrumental in shaping the relationship between service delivery. The findings indicated that improving service delivery requires a collective commitment to shared principles and values. The present study determined that public sector culture significantly affects the strength or direction of the relationship between integration capability and service delivery in these counties. This approach allowed for a clearer understanding of how cultural factors within the public sector can either amplify or diminish the positive impact of integration capability on service delivery.



## **CONCLUSION**

The study concludes that counties with high integration capability excel in coordinating various functions, ensuring consistency and promoting efficiency, and these counties should focus on future collaborations supported by ongoing team-building training programs since integrated services lead to better resource utilization which is crucial for enhancing service delivery. Public sector culture significantly influences the effect of integration capability on service delivery in the selected County Governments in Kenya, and to effectively realize the impact of integration capability on service delivery, Counties should focus on upholding public sector norms by implementing clear policies to ensure staff adhere to prescribed attitudes and behaviours, ensuring strict compliance with established rules and procedures in decision-making, rewarding individual initiative, motivating staff to reach their full potential, enforcing stringent control measures, delegating decision-making to top management and regularly monitoring the actions of civil servants as well as the efficient use of public resources.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **Policy and Practical Recommendations**

Counties should strengthen integration capabilities by promoting a culture of continuous improvement and collaboration to enhance responsiveness and service effectiveness through better resource utilization and coordinated efforts across departments. The Counties should establish a strong public sector culture that promotes initiative, continuously acknowledges individual work and fortifies accountability in decision-making to improve service delivery. Counties should emphasize the importance of integration by refining work practices, promoting teamwork and encouraging cross-departmental collaboration, while ensuring that employees are regularly trained in team-building and integration to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of service delivery. Additionally, Counties should create a supportive environment for innovation by providing necessary tools, systems and time for employees to explore new solutions, and should work to strengthen public sector culture by promoting a meritocratic environment, recognizing individual achievements, ensuring consistent enforcement of policies, and decentralizing decision-making to involve lower-level staff.

### **Theoretical Contributions and Strategic Management Knowledge**

The study contributes significantly to strategic management knowledge by identifying integration capability as a positively significant factor in service delivery, offering important perspectives on the need for coordinated operations and resource optimization. The findings suggest that Counties with strong integration capacity can better adapt to changes in the external environment, highlighting the relevance of Dynamic Capabilities Theory and its focus on an organization's ability to integrate, build and reconfigure internal and external competencies. The research demonstrates that aligning public sector culture with strategic management practices is vital for achieving consistent and efficient service delivery, with the moderate adherence to formalism, meritocracy and control mechanisms in County Governments suggesting a need for more distinct and adaptive leadership styles that can balance traditional bureaucratic structures with demands for innovation and responsiveness.

### **Areas for Further Research**

The selected Kenyan County Governments deliver services at a moderate level characterized by uncertainty, which underscores the necessity for further research aimed at developing targeted initiatives to enhance service delivery within these Counties. While public sector culture plays a significant moderating role in the relationship between integration capability and service delivery, the negative coefficient and the insignificance of the moderation effect raise important questions about the nature of this relationship that should be explored further. Researchers should conduct deeper exploration of the factors contributing to the negative and insignificant influence of public sector culture on service delivery to inform future integration capability interventions and address existing gaps in optimizing overall service delivery.

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