

**EFFECT OF STRATEGIC DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION ON
ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE OF MARSABIT COUNTY
GOVERNMENT, KENYA**

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DECLARATION AND RECOMMENDATION

Declaration

I declare this thesis is my original work and has not been presented in any other university.

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Recommendations

This thesis has been submitted for examination with our approval as university supervisors

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DEDICATION

This thesis is hereby dedicated to my wife, Josephine Jillo, my children (Bokayo, Biftu, Galgallo, Fayo and Sarah) and my mum Dimtu Boru.

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I am grateful to my supervisor, Dr. Nancy Rintari, PhD, and Fredrick Mutea for their masterclass supervision traits during the process of documenting this thesis. It is through their guidance that every part of the document was able to be articulately developed. Additionally, my family has also contributed immensely towards providing a peaceful environment that can spur critical thinking needed to take part in my master's degree coursework and now the thesis process. My sincere gratitude to Hon. Col (rtd) Dido Ali Rasso, whose unwavering moral support, encouragement, and guidance have been instrumental in my journey throughout this study. Furthermore, my colleagues and friends have become more like family through their positive criticisms on the accuracy of the information jotted down in each section of the document. They also took part in listening to me do a mock presentation for purposes of developing confidence and clarity when speaking. In addition, I am appreciative of the support provided by my course mates in updating me on various vital information, such as assignments issued, their deadlines, and proposal presentation dates, to avoid leaving me behind. Further, the support from the KeMU library staff, who took their time to offer services like plagiarism checks and APA checks, is not taken for granted. Other staff, such as lecturers and administrative staff, have been instrumental in ensuring that all my academic needs have been addressed with utmost professionalism and scholarly excellence.

ABSTRACT

Despite the establishment of strategic digital transformation processes in county governments in Kenya, weak policies, poor strategic decision-making and inflexible governance structure in Marsabit County, have resulted to low organizational performance. The purpose of the study was to determine the effect of strategic digital transformation on the organizational performance of the Marsabit County Government, Kenya. The specific objectives were to examine the effect of digitizing operations, institutional culture transformation, strategic leadership support, and strategic centrality on organizational performance of the Marsabit County Government, Kenya. Theory of Reasoned Action was the anchor theory on which the technology acceptance model is directly based. Other theories of the study were the upper echelon and stewardship theories. The study adopted descriptive research design and included 69 managers and 220 officers. The departmental managers answered both closed- and open-ended questionnaires, whereas the officers answered the closed-ended questionnaires. A pilot study was done in Samburu County government. Descriptive and inferential analyses were done through SPSS, whereby frequency, percentages, and mean represented descriptive analysis, while Pearson correlation, model summary, analysis of variance, and regression coefficients represented the inferential analysis. Digitizing operations ($R = 0.487$, $Sig = 0.003$), institutional culture ($R = 0.746$, $Sig = 0.002$), and strategic leadership support ($R = 0.638$, $Sig = 0.000$) had strong positive influences on organizational performance, while strategic centrality ($R = 0.304$, $Sig = 0.001$) showed a weak but positive correlation. The study recommends that the information and technology departmental managers should conduct sensitization to other county departments in Marsabit, explaining the relevance of data in decision-making. Furthermore, the county administrators are also recommended to ensure that there is a culture of support and empathy towards each other, across all departments.

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ASAL	Arid and Semi-Arid Land
CEC	County Executive Committee
EACC	Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission
ICT	Information Communication Technology
IRTC	Intergovernmental Relations Technical Committee
KeMU	Kenya Methodist University
KNBS	Kenya National Bureau of Statistics
NACOSTI	National Commission for Science, Technology & Innovation
NBAR	National Bureau of Asian Research
NIC	National Intelligence Council
SDT	Strategic Digital Transformation

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Technological advancement has sent most strategic management teams back to the drawing board to restructure how they can blend their operations to fit in this digital evolution. It is now clear that organizations need to realign their objectives towards the adoption of digital technologies due to increased effectiveness in performance. According to Bubenik et al. (2022), the contribution of the management towards the strategic management process evolves with changes in the business model, and failure to do so limits the interaction phase with beneficiaries and thus exposes the organization to closure.

In the public sector, governments appreciate that delivery of services to citizens requires adopting a strategic implementation plan that is efficient, cost-effective, and can be accessed easily by the beneficiaries. The Kenya National Digital Master Plan 2022-2032 was developed by the government as a blueprint on how the nation would achieve this objective (Ministry of ICT, Innovation and Youth Affairs, 2022). The same strategies were recommended by the national government to the county administrations. This was so that as the nation is moving to the digital age, similar strategies were to be applied across all spectrums of the public service to enhance organizational performance.

1.1.1 Organizational Performance

Organizational performance is defined by USAID (2021) as the provision of quality government services to citizens through using the available resources in an efficient

manner. According to Muthoka and Waswa (2021), proper usage of resources to achieve a desired objective constitutes organizational performance. Public organizations ensure that their performance is within the acceptable metrics since it defines the longevity of their operations in a particular context. That notwithstanding, public organizations struggle with ensuring that their performances, especially when digital transformation strategies have been implemented.

Globally, public organizations in Michigan state have experienced difficulties in improving their performances in the midst of digital transformations and shifting dynamics due to exposure to data privacy breach insecurities and cybersecurity issues (National Intelligence Council [NIC], 2021). Technological advancement requires robust firewalls and personnel that aim at protecting public data from unauthorized access. This is noted to be a challenge, particularly in Florida, due to a lack of qualified staff proficient in ICT.

In other developed nations such as England, the conservative nature of the political leaders towards royal traditions has affected the clarity of strategic planning and the level of support accorded towards the implementation of strategies that would bring about digital transformations. Further in Asia, excessive advancement of technology in a nation such as Hong Kong has led to public organizations neglecting strategic centrality, especially due to poor change management processes (Chen et al., 2021). This is majorly caused by rapid changes in citizen needs due to the availability of different technologically enabled transformations in private sectors. In Japan, lack of employee training has been revealed as a challenge that government-based organizations face in their strategic digital transformations (National Bureau of Asian Research [NBAR], 2023).

Regionally, poor regulatory compliance is noted in a nation such as South Africa, hence jeopardizing the sustainability of implemented digital transformations (Chiwawa & Wissink, 2024). Furthermore, complicated software needed to be used in dispensing public services was quoted by Ajayi et al. (2024) as the major reason for employee resistance in Nigeria. In Egypt, the high cost of implementation and operational challenges cause public organizations to fail to adopt various strategic digital transformation measures (Mousa & Tarek, 2023). In another regional nation, such as Uganda, rigid business models and lack of interest have adversely affected the public organizations' ability to implement strategies related to digitization. Organizational culture resistance is also another concern that has affected the nation of Tanzania and limited the improvement of public organizations (Pasape & Godson, 2022).

Locally, public organizations face the risk of limited funding to be in a position to acquire digital transformational infrastructure (Mutuku, 2021). This has resulted in most public offices using outdated systems that are marred with slow processing and hence not adequate to make quick strategic decisions. According to Mudany et al. (2021), the management of public organizations has failed to develop quality strategic plans on how to raise resources needed; hence, there is a general lack of direction due to shared vision. The long-term consequences have been disagreements in strategic teams in departments since there is a failure to come to terms on the best strategic resource-sharing formula (Mutie & Namusonge, 2020). This study addressed the ripple effect that different strategic digital transformations had caused in Marsabit County government's operations and overall performance. The study took into consideration the strategies established from the

perspective of digitizing operations, culture transformation, strategic leadership support, and strategic centrality.

1.1.2 Strategic Digital Transformation

Strategic Digital Transformation [SDT] is the process of adopting Information Communication Technology [ICT] to implement laid-down strategies and attain organizational goals, mission, and vision (African Union, 2020). The process of strategic digital transformation is beneficial to public organizations since the decisions made are anchored and driven by data to promote efficiency. Over time the experiences of citizens seeking various services are enhanced due to short turnaround time and better flexibility. According to Osemeike et al. (2022), data insights on various key concepts, such as the behavior of the citizens seeking the government services and the overall performance of the operations, are achieved due to strategic digital transformation.

This study considered various strategic digital transformational factors like digitizing operations, culture transformation, strategic leadership support, and strategic centrality. These factors have been named by the African Union (2020) and Amesho et al. (2022) as essential towards enhancing the overall performance in government-related organizations. Digitizing operations involves electronic methods in the administration of services for effectiveness in service delivery (Mutuku, 2021). This strategy increases the number of tasks accomplished by a county staff when dispensing various government services. This paperless method is considered critical since the various end users are not required to wait for long to get specific tasks accomplished. According to Latupeirissa et al. (2024), digitizing operations reduces stress levels in decision-making by public servants and promotes quick error correction of any concern noticed.

Institutional culture transformation entails changing the values, belief systems, and norms that organizational staff are used to so as to achieve a set objective in their roles (Mingaleva et al., 2022). The change, as deemed necessary by the management, requires adequate measures to implement changes in a logical and efficient manner. This is because institutional culture transformation interrupts the norm for a better call to performance. However, Ketemaw and Amente (2023) note that sufficient strategies should be implemented, such as training, involvement of staff representatives in strategic decision-making, and provision of resources necessary to promote transformations.

Strategic leadership is the act of providing guidance to the staff of an organization with an aim of improving efficiency and service delivery timelines (Ferede et al., 2024). Notably, any strategic changes require leadership to reduce wastage of time, offer general direction, and prioritize the implementation process of strategies. According to Mudany et al. (2021), strategic leadership sets a vision, makes necessary decisions, foresees challenges to resolve them, monitors strategic management budgets, and subsequently develops human capital required to implement digital transformations. These responsibilities make it possible for a strategy to be planned till it is executed for improved performance.

Strategic centricity is defined as the impression that an organization has on its respective customers while receiving a service from its staff (Rane et al., 2023). In the establishment of strategic digital transformation, the perception of the beneficiaries is considered focal to its success. If the introduced technology does not have an impression towards easing the burden of access to the government services, the goal has not yet been achieved. Therefore, customer relationship management and their satisfaction are priorities considered when

planning and implementing a digital strategy by the management. According to Muleya et al. (2022), quality digital infrastructure was assessed based on the user's satisfaction with the attained objective.

1.1.3 Marsabit County Government

A county in Kenya that is considered to be the second largest in terms of size (66,923.1 km²). Its neighboring counties include Turkana County, Isiolo, and Wajir counties in the west, south, and east, respectively. The county's estimated population was 459,785 (KNBS, 2019). According to Miriti (2022), a lack of adequate strategies for digital transformation in Marsabit County has caused an upsurge in corruption-related cases when the public seeks government services. Notably, Kibet and Makokha (2022) complained of the failure to invest in the right digital technologies due to poor strategic decision-making and inflexible governance structure in Marsabit County, which is considered a major strategic flaw negatively affecting its performance.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Establishment of a strategies management process at the county government's perspective should be aligned with the evolving digital innovations (KIPPRA, 2023). The leadership should develop clear strategic plans that incorporate digitalizing their operations to improve the experiences of the citizens seeking government services at the county government offices (Intergovernmental Relations Technical Committee [IRTC], 2021). Therefore, with adequate leadership support, implementing strategies to bring about digital transformation should complement the manual operations for quality delivery service. There should be sufficient provision of resources by the government to acquire digital

infrastructure and the establishment of robust organizational policies that seek to safeguard the integrity of the transformation process to improve the organizational performance (Miriti, 2022).

Despite the establishment of strategic digital transformation processes in county governments in Kenya, poor governing regulation policies have created loopholes for corruption and embezzlement of public funds to take place, resulting in low organizational performance (Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission [EACC], 2023; Muriithi & Wamiori, 2020). Individuals have crafted methods through the support of creative accounting to divert public funds to their personal accounts, hence denying the citizens the much-needed government services (Maina, 2021). Efforts have been established by the national government to promote the performance through digital transformational strategies that county governments should use as stipulated in the Kenya National Digital Master Plan 2022-2032 (Ministry of ICT, Innovation and Youth Affairs, 2022). Nevertheless, the challenge of system manipulation with fewer digital footprints weakens the implementation of the plan to fully support the operations of the county governments, such as in Marsabit County government (Miriti, 2022).

Therefore, the purpose of the study was to determine the effect of strategic digital transformation on service delivery in Marsabit County Government, Kenya. This is with a concentration on how the county has been digitizing its operations, promoting institutional culture transformation to adopt digitization, the strategic support given by leadership, and strategic centrality after interaction with digitalization transformations at the county government of Marsabit.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

To determine the effect of strategic digital transformation on organizational performance of Marsabit County Government, Kenya.

1.4 Specific Objectives

- i. To assess the effect of digitizing operations on organizational performance of Marsabit County Government, Kenya.
- ii. To explore the effect of institutional culture transformation on organizational performance of Marsabit County Government, Kenya.
- iii. To assess the effect of strategic leadership support on organizational performance of Marsabit County Government, Kenya.
- iv. To determine the effect of strategic centricity on organizational performance of Marsabit County Government, Kenya.

1.5 Research Hypothesis

H₀₁: Digitizing operations has no statistically significance influence on organizational performance of Marsabit County Government, Kenya.

H₀₂: Institutional culture transformation has no statistically significance influence on organizational performance of Marsabit County Government, Kenya.

H₀₃: Strategic leadership support has no statistically significance influence on organizational performance of Marsabit County Government, Kenya.

H₀₄: Strategic centricity has no statistically significance influence on organizational performance of Marsabit County Government, Kenya.

1.6 Significance of the Study

County government leadership would get adequate information on how digital transformation has been performing and notable areas of strategic policy weakness. This study would provide the justification needed to allocate more budget from the county revenue to equipping various departments with necessary digitalization infrastructure. Additionally, the need for constant development of policy infrastructure was needed to equip the county governments with necessary legal and operational guidelines to avoid work-related errors, facilitate training, and reduce resource wastage.

The staff recruited to work in various county government departments could use this study as a source of revealing some of the digital transformational concerns that had been affecting them. The information as provided through the data collection process would be used to streamline the identified areas needing improvement in the county government. Further on, the staff could also use the study to point out various milestones achieved through the digital transformational process in their respective departments.

The citizens and the general public in general could get some insights into what transformational steps are taken in the digitization of the county government operations. They could use the study to enlighten themselves, hence creating public confidence towards county leadership's management methods. Additionally, the public would use the recommendations identified in the study as ideas communicated to their respective county governments or nations, especially during the public participation forums.

The national government leadership would also find the study useful in the sense that various devolution concerns are related to the implementation of the Kenya National Digital Master Plan. This information would lead to further restructuring of the policy

regulations at a national level perspective. The restructuring process could involve strengthening the national digital transformation policies that have so far yielded desired results and eliminating ineffective policies.

The international community could also learn of the milestones that various county governments, such as Marsabit County, have made with regard to digital transformations. This information could enable them to consider seeking benchmarking opportunities from these counties to learn more about the strategic management processes involved in digital transformation.

The study would add new knowledge to the strategic management field when the effect of strategic digital transformation on service delivery in Marsabit County Government, Kenya, is revealed. Therefore, future researchers could use this study as a point of reference on the digital transformational strategies applied in Marsabit County and resultant performance.

1.7 Scope of the Study

The study determined the effect of strategic digital transformation on the organizational performance of the Marsabit County Government, Kenya. It considered various strategic digital transformational factors like digitizing operations, institutional culture transformation, strategic leadership support, and strategic centrality. Respondents were comprised of managers in various departments and respective officers. The departmental managers answered both closed- and open-ended questionnaires, whereas the officers answered the closed-ended questionnaires. The data collection process took approximately three months to complete.

1.8 Limitations of the Study

Despite the existence of a tarmacked road to access the Marsabit County government, insecurity concerns may be a limitation affecting the data collection team. This is due to banditry attacks on regular road users trying to access the Isiolo-Marsabit road. Therefore, this limitation may interfere with the timelines of data collection, particularly when the respondents require more time to either answer the questionnaires or be interviewed. Further on, due to low literacy levels in Marsabit County, some of the county's management positions may be headed tentatively by people who are much advanced in age (KIPPRRA, 2023). Therefore, some of them may be conventional on how the planning and implementation of digital strategies should be undertaken.

1.9 Delimitations of the Study

In resolving the insecurity challenge, the research team sought additional security services from the national police service to protect them from any potential banditry attack risks. On the second limitation, the interviewer ensured that the management's response was anchored on the county's policy and procedures to avoid bias in their responses. If the interviewer notices the opinions are rather conservative, they are to be tasked to explain the difference between the established policy guideline on strategic digital transformation processes and the decision-making on adopted strategies.

1.10 Assumptions of the Study

The main assumption of the study is that the Marsabit county government had already adopted the strategic digital transformation in its operations. Further, it was assumed that

there was a policy framework used by the strategic management team in the county government to make strategic decisions related to digital transformations.

1.11 Operational Definition of Terms

Strategic Centricity—This is the impression that an organization has on its respective customers while receiving a service from its staff.

Digitizing Operations—The process of incorporating electronic methods in the administration of services for effectiveness in service delivery.

Institutional Culture Transformation—Changing the values, belief systems, and norms that organizational staff are used to so as to achieve a set objective in their roles.

Organizational Performance—Provision of quality services to the citizens through using the available resources in an efficient manner.

Strategic Digital Transformation—The process of adopting information communication technology [ICT] to implement laid-down strategies and attain organizational goals, mission, and vision.

Strategic Leadership—The act of providing guidance to the staff of an organization with the aim of improving efficiency and service delivery timelines.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

A theoretical review is presented based on the technology acceptance model, upper echelon theory, and stewardship theory. They are provided in support of specific variables to enhance their relevance in the study. Thereafter, a literature review has been provided encompassing global, regional, and local studies on digitizing operations, institutional culture transformation, strategic leadership support, and strategic centrality. This paves the way for a summary of gaps, while the conceptual framework ends the chapter.

2.2 Theoretical Review

Theory of Reasoned Action was the anchor theory on which the technology acceptance model is directly based, while upper echelon theory and stewardship theory were the other theories of the study supporting different strategic digital transformation parameters. They are described more in sections 2.2.1 to 2.2.3.

2.2.1 Theory of Reasoned Action

Theory of reasoned action was the anchor theory on which the technology acceptance model is directly based, was developed by Devis (1986). TRA stated that the decision to use a specific technology was mainly anchored on its perceived ease of use and usefulness in a specific role. Therefore, when a certain technology was easy to use and directly related to the role intended, the behavior of the user was inclined towards using the technology. Devis (1986) noted that a technological advancement may be groundbreaking towards

ensuring efficiency as the developer created it, but as long as the user shared a similar perception, its application may not really be accepted to support various user-end functions.

TAM guided digitizing operations by specifying that the users needed to perceive its usefulness in the implementation of strategies (Mousa & Tarek, 2023). The users became surer of the digitized operations after assessing how processes were before and how the services had been optimized to enhance delivery of the service to the public. Furthermore, being able to articulate their goals and perceive how the digitization makes them even more achievable promoted the usefulness of a technology in place (Chen et al., 2021). Notably, other factors, such as the complexity of the digital tools, determined the user's willingness to use them. Additionally, since the public had a right for their data at the county databases to be protected from misuse, access to a technology that encourages this strategic goal (Ajibade, 2018). This was because it was essential to enable them to easily subscribe to its implementation and also towards addressing county government's strategies.

TAM was faulted for being specifically tailored towards personal use rather than corporate application (Ajibade, 2018). This means that TAM was mainly developed to guide individual decision-making processes on whether a pending technological advancement was viable or not. Nevertheless, this criticism did not affect the current study since the attention is mostly on the ability of end users like the staff, management, and the public to use specific digitization mechanisms (Latupeirissa et al., 2024). At the corporate level, the ICT implementation policy for the county governments in Kenya guided the incorporation of technology, which was not the focus of the current study.

2.2.2 The Strategic Leadership Theory

The strategic leadership theory was developed by Child (1972) and guided strategic leadership support and institutional culture transformation. The theory pointed out that strategic leaders were responsible for the establishment and restructuring of organizational structures to support their existence and for establishing a competitive advantage. This was through emphasizing staff commitment towards the organizational mission and vision for sustainability (Bubenik et al., 2022). Therefore, strategic leaders not only had to lead but also had to influence other staff below them accordingly. It was through their foresight that every person in the organization got redirected on the original purpose of their job role's existence in connection to the vision and mission.

In guiding the strategic leadership support, the theory laid the basic foundation for the commitment of the managers to the mission and vision. This commitment not only benefited them but also empowered the employees through clear communication structures that passed information from one department to the other (Muhire, 2020). Additionally, an open feedback mechanism was encouraged, particularly in the allocation of resources and tasks to the departments. Any conflicts based on sharing formulas were settled through the provision of timely feedback. Notably, the management had clear decision-making roles whose purpose was to benefit the organization through ensuring that all staff were articulated towards attainment of the mission and vision (Muthoka & Waswa, 2021).

In guiding institutional culture transformation, the theory provided that through the initiative of the strategic leaders, collaboration in decision-making was promoted among all levels of staff (Muriuki, 2024). This not only empowered the staff but also provided an environment to thrive and easily blend with strategic changes made within the scope of the

organizational operations. Notably, institutional culture transformation concerned itself with recognizing the potential of each staff member towards attaining strategic objectives (Mutuku, 2021). This was because strategic management objectives could not be attained individually but collectively through the establishment of a healthy working environment that promoted innovation and empathy.

The strategic leadership theory was criticized for over-relying on an individual vision that may not adapt to dynamic situations (O'Shannassy, 2021). However, this may not affect the current study since the County Government Act provided a collective vision for devolution whose role was delivering government services to the public from a closer perspective (Mutie & Namusonge, 2020). Therefore, this vision defined the reason for the existence of the county governments in Kenya, which meant that despite the changing situations, articulating the operations to this vision justifies every single strategic action by the management and general staff.

2.2.3 Stewardship Theory

Stewardship theory was developed by Davis et al. (1997) and guided strategic centrality. The theory specified the need for the strategic managers to portray responsibility in the management of public assets and resources on behalf of the citizens. Therefore, they used all possible means to ensure that these resources were managed in an efficient manner that sought to enhance strategic centrality (Haule & Mushi, 2024). Stewardship theory informed strategic centrality through providing public satisfaction, emotional management, and well-being.

The ability of the management to be stewards had a central role in ensuring that the public receiving government services was satisfied with the entire process. According to Ferede et al. (2024), service provision may at times be engulfed by system failures, which may frustrate the public seeking government services. Therefore, being stewards, the management's responsibility was managing their owners' (citizens) emotions till the required service was provided, prompting excellence in strategic centrality that fully supports their well-being (Kithama, 2022).

Stewardship theory had weaknesses since it did not articulately elaborate how monitoring and accountability of resources were done, particularly when the owners had minimal knowledge of the existence of these resources (Al Mamun et al., 2013). However, this weakness did not affect the study since the resources at county government are clearly documented and their market value ascertained. Additionally, there are institutions such as the EACC, which monitors the management of public resources on behalf of the public.

2.3 Empirical Review

2.3.1 Digitizing Operations and Organizational Performance

Globally, Latupeirissa et al. (2024) assessed the digitization efforts aimed at revolutionizing public service delivery. This study examined a collection of literature from many countries that demonstrates how governments have improved performance by digitizing their services. The literature review produced a number of important conclusions about digitalization efforts in the provision of public services. The study's conclusions demonstrated how implementing digital services in government streamlines procedures, lessens managerial workloads, improves accountability and openness, permits decisions to

be based on data, increases citizen utilization of services, and eventually lowers costs and boosts execution of services. However, Latupeirissa et al. (2024) only looked at previously published research; the findings might be biased. For this reason, the current study gathered primary data from a range of county employees and investigated further how digitizing county government operations had improved organizational performance.

Regionally, Shibambu (2024) examined the digital transformation of public sector services in South Africa. Notably, this study acquired data through virtual interviews, with study participants including heads of departments from various government offices and organizations. The outcomes of this study revealed that the majority of the staff working in government offices were aware of the ongoing digital transition. Furthermore, the study discovered that the use of ICT services improved work performance and service delivery by eliminating the need for the public to wait in line for long periods of time at government offices. Furthermore, Shibambu (2024) discovered that digitizing operations were hampered by inadequate infrastructure, unstable supply of electricity, inadequate finances, and lack of collaboration among staff, all factors impeding digitizing operations. However, Shibambu (2024) did not describe some of the laws and rules that the government implemented to guarantee that digital transformation was widely accepted in order to improve adherence and lower inefficiency.

Additionally, Nadkorokoum and Chakor (2024) investigated how digitization affected the performance and efficiency of African public services through the Moroccan health system. The study takes a combination of methods, analyzing quantitative data on the performance of the public sector before and after digital adoption, as well as qualitative data from case investigations in other African countries. The results indicate that the digitization of

government services in Africa improves overall managerial performance and efficiency, though the implications differ based on each nation's degree of technological advances and organizational ability to effectively incorporate technological innovations. Regarding the health system, technology adoption has improved public health services' performance and improved accessibility to care in Morocco, especially in rural and impoverished regions. However, Nadkorokoum and Chakor (2024) were primarily concerned with a health system framework and how it had digitized its healthcare operations; therefore, the current study looked into how the county of Marsabit had digitized its operations and the impact on performance.

Locally, Anguche et al. (2024) investigated how Nairobi County government performance was influenced by e-government services. The study used a descriptive research strategy. Notably, the sample size of three hundred and eighty-seven employees was selected to participate in the study through stratified simple random sampling techniques. According to this study, Nairobi County had implemented a variety of digital services, allowing the county government to succeed in its operations. Based on this study, Nairobi has introduced e-government for numerous public services, such as employment applications, parking spaces, company licenses, and land services, to increase collections of revenue. However, Anguche et al. (2024) presented a contextual gap where the study concentrated on how e-government services enhanced performance, whereas the current study focused on how digitizing operations influenced organizational performance.

Additionally, Obiero (2024) assessed how the county government of Kiambu's organizational performance was affected by e-procurement practices. The study applied a descriptive survey research design. Further, sixty-five participants were chosen through a

stratified random selection technique from a target population of two hundred and sixteen. The study found that online services improved procurement effectiveness and saved time for sellers and customers equally. The study also found out that online services lowered paperwork, hence saving on printing costs. Nonetheless, Obiero (2024) focused on e-procurement services in Kiambu County, which did not account for the entirety of how digitizing operations improved performance; therefore, the current study assessed in detail how the Marsabit County government had digitized its operations in all departments to improve performance.

2.3.2 Institutional Culture Transformation and Organizational Performance

Globally, Boufounou et al. (2024) examined how the Greek foreign affairs ministry's public administration incorporated organizational culture dynamics. The study adopted a quantitative methodology where data collection was done through the use of questionnaires. Moreover, the study determined that older employees preferred cultures that were goal-oriented so as to build an approach that is focused on delivering results. In addition, the study also revealed that new employees in the ministry brought enthusiasm and were more innovative compared to employees who had accumulated more time in the ministry and were already used to the organization's culture and norms. However, Boufounou et al. (2024) failed to show how institutional norms were established and how they altered the transformation of public sectors.

Additionally, Sulastri (2024) examined organizational performance and how it was affected by strategic talent management in Indonesia. The study adopted a comprehensive literature review methodology. The study involved combining findings from a variety of academic documents like journals, books, and reports. The study discovered that cultural practices

had a significant impact on the application and progress of strategies that managed talent. Nevertheless, the review of past literature studies exposed Sulastri (2024) to author biases. This was because some previous studies may be political in their results, hence subjecting the study to side with their political inclinations instead of being objective and impartial.

Regionally, Luhumbati and Mutarubukwa (2024) examined how Tanzania's public sector performance was influenced by the organizational culture. The study adopted a case study research design that sampled seventy-one respondents randomly and purposively. Questionnaires and interviews were some of the other methods used to collect data. The study determined the organization had employees that came from different localities and communities, and they all came together in delivering the organizational goals. Moreover, the study determined that employees had to be taught the importance of the organizational culture in the context of tax payment for the future development of the country. The study also revealed that there was a market culture in the organization, which enabled the firms to mainly concentrate on the goals of the organization, which was tax collection.

This type of culture brought about good behavior and also promoted unity in the organization. In addition, the study realized the organization had quite a number of organizational cultures, and different employees had different takes on them. Notably, the study also realized the management had to put into consideration better ways of communication in order to make organizational culture work and improve better styles of leadership. However, Luhumbati and Mutarubukwa (2024) failed to investigate how gender roles within the organizational culture affected the performance of employees, mostly those in leadership positions.

Further on, Abawari et al. (2024) examined how Oromia's public sectors' management change was influenced by organizational culture. The study sought to help public organizations come up with better change management strategies by establishing leadership styles required for positive changes in improving the organizations performance. The study adopted a quantitative approach in its methodology, where the researcher targeted sixteen public organizations in the regional state of Ethiopia. Managers, supervisors, and regular employees participated in the survey by filling in the questionnaires. Moreover, the study determined that better leadership styles help organizations in achieving the desired outcomes. Nevertheless, the study showed that changes in management initiatives would lead to negative results if the leaders used a leadership style that was authoritative. In addition, better leaders enhanced change in employees by providing support in terms of their behaviors and encouraging them to embrace commitment for change.

Moreover, the study determined that when leaders expressed what they imagined and their expectations, it helped in the structuring of organizational culture. In addition, the study determined that the culture of an organization had a significant impact on both change in management and the leadership method used. Effective improvement of leadership methods was needed in the public sector for a positive outcome in the change in the management. However, Abawari et al. (2024) failed to look into how different leadership styles impacted management of change.

Locally, Kamuri et al. (2025) explored how Kenya's state corporations were performing when aligned to organizational culture. The cross-sectional research design was used to sample the target population that included the chief executive officers and senior managers. This is because they were directly involved in the organization's day-to-day planning and

strategy. Out of two hundred and twenty-one state corporations that were targeted, only one hundred and forty-three corporations were sampled. The study used stratified random sampling to get the research components, which were state corporations. Moreover, questionnaires were used to collect primary data from the sampled respondents in state corporations.

Furthermore, Kamuri et al. (2025) determined that some leaders in certain organizations used various strategies to help improve performance within their teams. Moreover, the study realized that constant evaluation and supervision of employees by scheduling monthly meetings to review each employee's performance would help the organizations match their goals. In addition, the study determined that there was a need to recognize and reward employees whose performance was better than the rest by sending letters commending their work. This boosted their overall performance and encouraged other employees to do the same. However, Kamuri et al. (2025) failed to give evidence on how culture alignment affected state corporations that operated under different regulations and structures.

Muriuki (2024) explored how Meru County universities' performance was impacted by organizational culture. The study employed a descriptive research design where quantitative data was collected and analyzed to show to what extent organizational culture influenced performance in the universities. Six universities located in Meru County were selected to be the target population. The study sought to obtain opinions from the university administration, members of different departments, and staff members who had leadership experiences and were also involved in management performances of their institution. Moreover, structured surveys were used to collect quantitative data. The study determined that organizational culture had a positive impact on universities' organizational

performance management in Meru County. However, Muriuki (2024) failed to look into government policies and how they interacted with organizational culture to enhance organizational performance.

2.3.3 Strategic Leadership Support and Organizational Performance

Globally, Logan (2024) explored how organizational performance was impacted by strategic leadership styles in Canada. This study collected secondary data from published journals and reports. The study found that good managerial skills, including flexibility, vision, and alignment with corporate goals, resulted in improved performance across various institutions in Canada. Notably, this study discovered that leaders that stressed a harmonious, open, and dynamic approach were better positioned to flourish in dynamic business environments. Nonetheless, the use of secondary data by Logan (2024) may result in bias in the findings and conclusions, so the current study collected data from Marsabit County government employees to analyze how strategic leadership affects organizational performance.

Regionally, Haule and Mushi (2024) explored how Tanzania's Kigamboni Municipal Council public organizations performed in relation to strategic leadership practices. The study applied a quantitative cross-sectional research design during the data collection exercise of workers and councilors. Notably, questionnaires were used to gather information from sixty-one respondents who were selected through simple random sampling. The findings of this study indicated a future vision, mission statement, and strategic objectives were established. This was due to strategic leadership methods that involved defining a clear strategic direction. Additionally, this study found that proactive management techniques that emphasized the development of employee competency became essential for leaders and

had a major impact on organizational success. However, Haule and Mushi (2024) failed to pre-test the questionnaires on a different population who would ascertain their reliability in underpinning the study's objectives.

Additionally, Muhire (2020) examined how Rwanda's local governance performed due to the effect of competent leaders. Thirty mayors were included through a stratified sampling method whereby they were grouped within a jurisdiction of 30 districts as guided by cross-sectional survey research design. This enabled the study to collect primary data by questionnaires. Furthermore, the performance under consideration spanned a five-year period from 2015 to 2019. It was derived that different strategic management approaches like self-awareness, self-management, and relationship management directly and positively affected the Rwandan local government's performance. Notably, among the espoused aspects, self-awareness had the largest influence as compared to other aspects investigated. Nevertheless, Muhire (2020) did not specify the nature of relationship management, such as in resource allocation. This could have added value to the study in assessing how the leadership competence contributed towards relationships revolving around the allocation of resources.

Locally, Thuo et al. (2024) assessed how Kajiado County government's performance was influenced by the style of leadership in place. Founded on goal-setting theory, the study included two hundred and eighty staff through explanatory research design. Furthermore, a proportionate stratified method of sampling was used to select one hundred and sixty-five sample populations, who later answered the questionnaires. It was derived that leadership skills related to empowering staff, allowing the employees into the process of decision-making, were effective towards enhancing the performance of the county government.

Therefore, since there was great potential with the leadership, more training was recommended, taking the perspective of strategic visioning, culture of accountability, and adaptability to changing times. Regrettably, Thuo et al. (2024) chose to issue one questionnaire to the respondents with different management orientations. They could have interviewed the top management and administered the questionnaires to the middle-level staff to enhance the quality of information.

Further, Kithama (2022) explored how the Tharaka Nithi county government performed when there were practices of strategic leadership. A case study was adopted as a research design to facilitate the process of interviewing ten executives. The content analysis method was the technique adopted in the study to analyze the interview responses. There were strategic leadership practices such as frameworks for collaborations, ethical leadership, employee support, and strategic thinking. The number of the population interviewed by Kithama (2022) was below 30, hence interfering with the adequacy of data points to represent the larger population. Additionally, the study could have specified the specific departments the executives originated from.

2.3.4 Strategic Centricity and Organizational Performance

Globally, Asriana et al. (2024) conducted an analysis of the Makassar city population and civil registry service on how the community was satisfied with their public services. The study adopted a descriptive qualitative methodology to collect data and understand the factors that influence public satisfaction with public services. Primary data was collected through direct interviews with the leadership of the staff and four community members to assess satisfaction. Moreover, the study determined that in the analysis of public satisfaction in the Makassar city population, civil registration services were said to be quite good except

for the online procedures, which not everyone could understand. It was revealed that if members complied with regulations, the service provision process would be smooth. However, Asriana et al. (2024) failed to pay more attention to the public not educating them on digitalization, especially in terms of online registration. Additionally, the study used one interview guide to collect data from the leadership and the community members. A different approach could've been adopted, such as the use of researcher-administered questionnaires to the community members.

Additionally, Almidfa (2024) conducted a study in the UAE's public sector where quality of customer experience was measured. The study used the positivist philosophy together with a quantitative methodological approach. The study also used structured questionnaires to obtain opinions from the participants. The questionnaires used were short and brief to ensure that the respondents don't give out low-quality responses and become distracted. Additionally, the study revealed that understanding and including factors such as service design was crucial in providing good strategic centrality. The study also determined that customer satisfaction, emotions of the customer, and customer well-being impacted the quality of strategic centrality. However, since the study by Almidfa (2024) was conducted in the UAE, there was a need to extend it in the context of Kenya.

Regionally, Mbullo (2024) explored how the customer satisfaction of Tanzania's electric supply company was influenced by service quality offered. The study used a case study design in the collection of quantifiable data. The study targeted clients in the Kigoma region TANESCO offices. The study used a random sampling technique to select respondents that were interviewed and gave their opinions regarding customer satisfaction in their area. Moreover, five users in every region who used large amounts of power were also sampled

to give various views on services rendered. In addition, some of the customers were selected judgmentally because they had different perspectives concerning the services provided. The study determined that most employees were not adequately trained in customer care services, especially new and temporary employees. The review also revealed that the performance of employees in delivering services depended on the type of system chosen by the management to be used when serving customers. However, Mbullo (2024) failed to show how public services operated under budgetary and regulatory constraints, which had an effect on how services were delivered.

Furthermore, Makudza (2024) conducted a study on how the banking industry of Zimbabwe enhanced customer loyalty through customer management. The study adopted an explanatory research design so as to explain the relationship between the dependent and independent variables. The study targeted consumers of 11 banks in Zimbabwe. Moreover, the study used structured questionnaires to obtain quantitative data. The study discovered that the virtual, physical, and service environments had a significant impact on customer management. The study also revealed that customer management was a useful way of promoting loyalty behavior among customers. Further, it was noted that there was a need to improve customer-employee engagement for better delivery of services. Nevertheless, the choice by Makudza (2024) to use an explanatory research design exposed the study to bias in terms of responses, as participants may provide information that may incline to what they like, and the response may affect the reliability of the study.

Locally, Wachira and Kandiri (2024) explored how Kiambu Level Five Hospital utilized digitalization in enhancing service delivery in the public sector. The study adopted a descriptive research design that targeted employees at the top management level and

medical personnel, as these were the staff directly involved in digitally transforming the facility, and they also had experience with digital tools. One hundred and sixty-two out of two hundred and eighty-two respondents were sampled. The study determined that customer relationships had a positive impact on the delivery of services. Moreover, the review also revealed that Kiambu Level Five Hospital had used several digital technologies, which were mobile health apps, electronic health records, and patient portals. This improved service delivery in the facility as it reduced wait time and provided better ways to access healthcare services. However, Wachira and Kandiri (2024) failed to give the patients perspective on the issues affecting them related to service delivery, as it only considered employees at top management and the medical personnel in the facility.

Additionally, Njuguna et al. (2024) explored how Nakuru County government's customer service satisfaction rate was influenced by service level management. The study adopted a cross-sectional research design targeting customers seeking services at the Nakuru County government. Moreover, nine hundred and eighty-six customers were the sample population, as it was determined that on average the county headquarters served that number. The study also used the stratified random sampling method. Furthermore, the review used questionnaires to obtain primary data from the sampled customers. In addition, the study determined that there was not consistent delivery of services on time in the county government of Nakuru, which led to customer dissatisfaction. The review realized that the quality of services provided was the main factor that determined customer satisfaction. However, Njuguna et al. (2024) failed to look at other factors such as corruption and political interference, which could have also led to customer dissatisfaction.

2.4 Summary of Gaps

Table 2.1

Summary of Gaps-Digitizing Operations

Study	Gap
Latupeirissa et al. (2024)	Looked at previously published research; the findings might be biased. For this reason, the current study gathered primary data from a range of county employees and investigate further how digitizing county government operations has improved organizational performance.
Shibambu (2024)	Did not describe some of the laws and rules that the government implemented to guarantee that digital transformation was widely accepted in order to improve adherence and lower inefficiency.
Nadkorokoum and Chakor (2024)	Were primarily concerned with a health system framework and how it has digitized its healthcare operations; therefore, the current study looked into how the county of Marsabit has digitized its operations and the impact on performance.
Anguche et al. (2024)	Presented a contextual gap where the study concentrated on how e-government services enhanced performance, whereas the current study focused on how digitizing operations influences organizational performance
Obiero (2024)	Focused on e-procurement services in Kiambu County, which did not account for the entirety of how digitizing operations improved performance; therefore, the current study went into greater detail about how the Marsabit county government has digitized its operations in all departments to improve performance.

Table 2.2*Summary of Gaps-Organizational Culture*

Study	Gap
Boufounou et al. (2024)	Failed to show how institutional norms were established and how they altered the transformation of public sectors.
Luhumbati and Mutarubukwa (2024)	Failed to investigate how gender roles within the organizational culture affected the performance of employees, mostly those in leadership positions.
Sulastri (2024)	Reviewed past literature exposing the entire study to author biases
Abawari et al. (2024)	Failed to look into how different leadership styles impacted the management change.
Kamuri et al. (2025)	Failed to give evidence on how culture alignment affected state corporations that operated under different regulations and structures
Muriuki (2024)	Failed to look into government policies and how they interacted with organizational culture to enhance organizational performance

Table 2.3*Summary of Gaps-Strategic Leadership Support*

Study	Gap
Logan (2024)	The use of secondary data may result in bias in the findings and conclusions, so the current study collected primary data from Marsabit County government employees to analyze how strategic leadership affects organizational performance.
Haule and Mushi (2024)	Failed to pre-test the questionnaires on a different population who would ascertain their reliability in underpinning the study's objectives
Muhire (2020)	Did not specify the nature of relationship management, such as in resource allocation. This could have added value to the study in assessing how the leadership competence contributed towards relationships revolving around allocation of resources.
Thuo et al. (2024)	chose to issue one questionnaire to the respondents with different management orientations. They could have interviewed the top management and administered the questionnaires to the middle-level staff to enhance the quality of information.
Kithama (2022)	The number of the population interviewed was below 30, hence interfering with the adequacy of data points to represent the larger population. Additionally, the study could have specified the specific departments the executives originated from

Table 2.4*Summary of Gaps-Strategic Centricity*

Study	Gap
Asriana et al. (2024)	Failed to pay more attention to the public not educating them on digitalization, especially in terms of online registration. Additionally, the study used one interview guide to collect data from the leadership and the community members
Almidfa (2024)	The study by Almidfa (2024) was conducted in the UAE, there is a need to extend it in the context of Kenya.
Mbullo (2024)	Failed to show how public services operated under budgetary and regulatory constraints, which had an effect on how services were delivered.
Makudza (2024)	Used an explanatory research design that exposed the study to bias in terms of responses, as participants may provide information that may incline to what they like, and the response may affect the reliability of the study.
Wachira and Kandiri (2024)	failed to give the patients perspective on the issues affecting them related to service delivery, as it only considered employees at top management and the medical personnel in the facility.
Njuguna et al. (2024)	failed to look at other factors such as corruption and political interference, which could have also led to customer dissatisfaction.

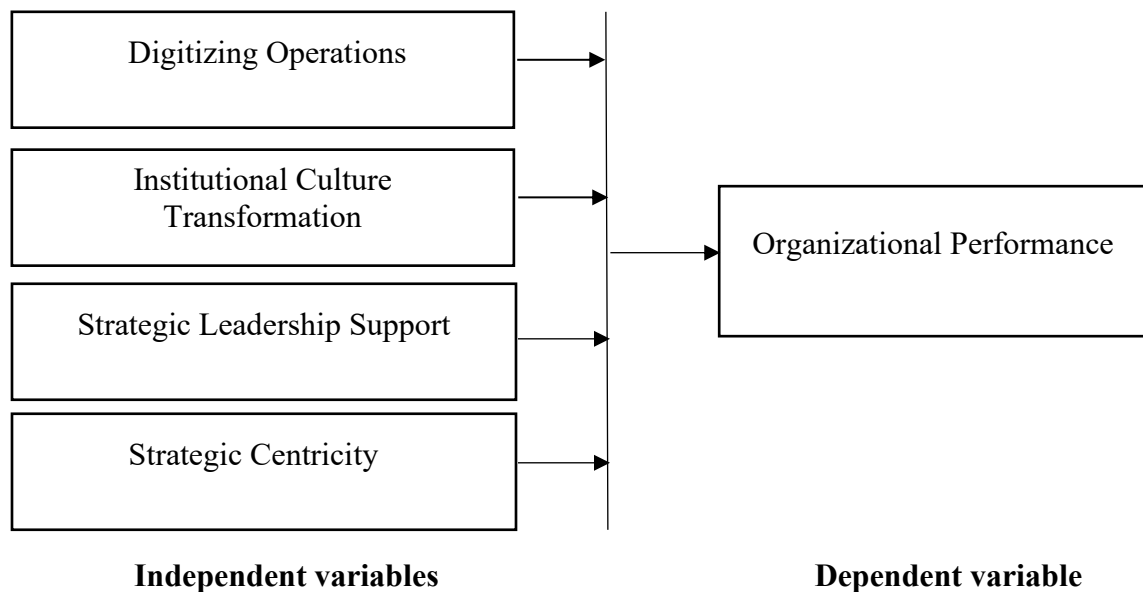
2.5 Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework provided in Figure 2.1 reveals that the dependent variable was the organizational performance. Its indicators were service delivery, internal processes, operational efficiency, sustainability, and social impact. The independent variables included digitizing operations, institutional culture transformation, strategic leadership support, and

strategic centrality. Digitizing operations had indicators like data-driven decision-making, definition of goals, digital tools, data security, and optimization of services. Institutional culture transformation had indicators such as collaboration in strategic decision-making, adaptability to strategic change, recognition of staff's attainment of strategic objectives, a healthy working environment, and innovation. Additionally, strategic leadership support had indicators like clarity in communication, alignment with the strategic objectives, commitment to the mission and vision, employee empowerment, and resource allocation. Strategic centrality had indicators such as customer satisfaction, customer feedback, and customer well-being. Figure 2.1 provides the conceptual framework.

Figure 2.1

Conceptual Framework



Source: Author (2025)

Figure 2.2

Operational Framework



CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

The chapter addresses various methodological aspects that comprise the research design, location of the study, target population, sampling techniques, sample size, data collection instruments, piloting, reliability, validity, data collection procedure, data analysis, and ethical considerations.

3.2 Research Design

A plan that a researcher uses to handle the research questions describes what a research design is all about (Khanday & Khanam, 2023). It was considered useful in the study since it enabled a study to be in a position to complete data collection exercises with fewer resources and within the required timelines. There are different research designs, such as descriptive, case study, correlational, cross-sectional, longitudinal, and experimental, among others. The research design that was specifically adopted in the study was descriptive research design, which was relevant in the process of describing strategic digital transformation and collecting data from the managers and officers without interfering with their activities (Ghanad, 2023). It was through this type of research design that the study inquired when digital operations were used, what types of institutional culture transformations existed, where strategic leadership support was commonly applied, and how strategic centrality was implemented to enhance the organizational performance of the Marsabit County Government.

3.3 Location of the Study

The location of the study was in Marsabit County, which is one of the Arid and Semi-Arid Land [ASAL] regions in Kenya (International Union for Conservation of Nature, 2023). It is considered the second largest county, which comes after Turkana, with a total area size of 71,597.8 km² and lies within the coordinates of 2°19'N 37°58'E. Ethiopia, Turkana County, Samburu County, and Wajir County borders Marsabit County to the north, west, south, and east, respectively. Marsabit County has four constituencies, which are Moyale, North Horr, Saku, and Laisamis. The county government leadership is mainly led by the governor, his deputy, the county secretary, and ten County Executive Committee [CEC] members (Marsabit County Government 2025a). There are also the county assembly members who also comprise the legislative arm accordingly.

3.4 Target Population

The nine departments of Marsabit County government were the unit of analysis of the study (Marsabit County Government, 2025b). Among them, the target population included 84 managers and 512 officers in the Marsabit County government. The managers were selected to provide details on how strategic digital transformations like digitization of operations, institutional culture transformation, strategic leadership support, and strategic centrality have affected the performance of the Marsabit County government. By allowing them to answer open-ended questionnaires, they provided clear information and also clarified various details that may be suitable in addressing the current status of regulation policies and various possible loopholes that they have noted to lead to corruption and embezzlement of public funds. The officers provided their opinion on how various

operations had been performing since they were directly involved in the implementation process of strategic digital transformations. The target population is indicated in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1

Target Population

	Departments	Managers	Officers	Totals
1.	Public service and administration	12	42	54
2.	Health Services	18	203	221
3.	Education, skills development, youth and sports	6	41	47
4.	Trade, tourism, industry and cooperative development	8	38	46
5.	Lands, energy, housing and urban development	6	46	52
6.	Agriculture, livestock and fisheries development	8	33	41
7.	Culture, gender and social services	6	38	44
8.	Roads, transport and public works	6	40	46
9.	Finance and economic planning	14	31	45
	Total	84	512	596

Source: Marsabit County Government

3.5 Sampling Procedure

The study used a simple random technique to identify and sample managers and officers in the study. This method was preferred to enable reduction of bias and enhance the chance of precision in generalizing the entire population and giving the respondents a chance to take part in the study.

3.5.2 Sample Size

In selecting the sample size, Almeda et al.'s (2010) formula was used, and thereafter the simple random sampling method was applied. This formula is as follows:

$$n = \frac{PZ^2}{Z^2 + 4Pe^2}$$

Where:

N= required sample size;

Z = the statistic, (Z = 1.96 at a confidence level of 95%)

P = expected value of the proportion of the target population

E = acceptable margin of error (0.05)

$$\frac{84 \times (1.96^2)}{1.96^2 + 4 \times 84 \times (0.05^2)}$$

$$\frac{69 \times (1.96^2)}{1.96^2 + 4 \times 69 \times (0.05^2)}$$

$$n = 220$$

The sample size, therefore, was 69 managers and 220 officers, which was a total of 289 officers. Table 3.2 indicates the sample population.

Table 3.2*Sampling Frame*

	Departments	Managers	Officers	Totals
1.	Public service and administration	10	21	31
2.	Health Services	16	57	73
3.	Education, skills development, youth and sports	4	23	27
4.	Trade, tourism, industry and cooperative development	6	19	25
5.	Lands, energy, housing and urban development	5	23	28
6.	Agriculture, livestock and fisheries development	6	16	22
7.	Culture, gender and social services	5	26	31
8.	Roads, transport and public works	4	20	24
9.	Finance and economic planning	13	15	28
	Total	69	220	289

3.6 Data Collection Instruments

Open-ended and closed-ended questionnaires were the main data collection instruments used in the study. The departmental managers answered both closed- and open-ended questionnaires, whereas the officers answered the closed-ended questionnaires. On the one hand, the closed- and open-ended questionnaires provided an opportunity to gain detailed information on a specific subject from the most experienced staff, who were the managers in a sampled population. On the other hand, the closed-ended questionnaire was considered an appropriate way of collecting data from a huge population of officers for purposes of collecting data in a cost-effective and time-efficient manner. Notably, the two sets of data collection instruments comprised a total of six sections, which were demographic, digitizing operations, institutional culture transformation, strategic leadership support, strategic centricity, and organizational performance. Both questionnaires had a total of five

questions in each section. The ordinal Likert scale, where 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neutral, 4 = agree, and 5 = strongly agree, was adopted as a measuring metric in the questionnaires.

3.7 Piloting of Research Questionnaire

A pilot study was done in Samburu County government, where 7 managers and 22 officers were included to take interviews and questionnaires, respectively. This is because it is 10% of the sample size which was the recommendation made by Mugenda and Mugenda (2003). Samburu County had faced numerous inefficiencies related to strategic digital transformations, hence resulting in manual implementation of recordkeeping. This has led to increased misappropriation of county funds due to poor record keeping. The population of the pilot study was ten percent of the sampled population, which was suggested by Kunselman (2024) to be an adequate proportion in a pilot study.

3.7.1 Validity

Validity is the process of ensuring that the instruments measure what they are purposed to. In this regard, the study examined content and criterion validity (Sürücü, 2020). In regard to content validity, the study measured the effect of digitizing operations, institutional culture transformation, strategic leadership support, and strategic centricity on organizational performance of the Marsabit County Government, Kenya. The accuracy of the questions through close guidance by the indicators of each variable was also used to measure the content validity. Further, the study measured criterion validity by comparing the findings with past findings (Cheung et al., 2023). This method was relevant in ensuring that the results are justified as what is already present as discovered by other respondents.

3.7.2 Reliability

This is the process of ensuring that a study's instruments could be used again. The results of the pilot study were examined through Cronbach alpha to determine their reliability (Suhartini et al., 2021). Cronbach alpha provides reliability examination through a range from 0-1 whereby on the one hand, any value from 0.7 to 1 is considered reliable (Sürücü, 2020). On the other hand, any value less than 0.7 is considered unreliable.

3.8 Methods of Data Collection

Data collection commenced by getting approvals such as introduction and ethical letters from KeMU and a data collection permit from NACOSTI. These letters enabled the study to get permission from the research manager in Marsabit County to collect data. Notably, one research assistant was incorporated into the process of data collection to deal with the issuance and collection of filled-in questionnaires from officers.

The researcher administered questionnaires to the managers for purposes of maintaining efficiency. When issuing questionnaires, the researcher and the research assistant met with the manager in charge of research and introduced the study to them. They also provided details on the purpose and specific objectives that the study sought to achieve. After that brief moment, they then requested to be allowed to issue questionnaires to the sampled respondents. The grant of permission and support to identify the respondents enabled the researcher and research assistant to meet with the respondents.

The process of introduction was done again, and their consent was sought through providing the consent letter (appendix I). After they agreed, different questionnaires were administered to them depending on their job roles. The process of issuing questionnaires to both the managers and officers was done simultaneously. After they completed filling

in the questionnaires, the researcher and research team thanked them for their time and information. Thereafter, the filled-in questionnaires were stored in a safe place, under lock and key.

3.9 Methods of Data Analysis

Filled-in questionnaires were sorted and separated from partially filled-in or unfilled questionnaires. Thereafter, the information was entered and coded in SPSS software version 25. Descriptive and inferential analyses were done, whereby frequency, percentages, and mean represented descriptive analysis, while Pearson correlation, model summary, analysis of variance, and regression coefficients represented the inferential analysis. The purpose of descriptive analysis was to provide the tally of how questionnaires were answered, while the inferential analysis was relevant in testing the hypothesis, general objective, and equating coefficient to the regression model. The model was as follows:

$$Y = C + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \beta_4 X_4 + e$$

Where:

Y = Organizational Performance

β_i = Coefficients to be estimated

C = Constant

X₁ = Digitizing Operations

X₂ = Institutional Culture Transformation

X₃ = Strategic Leadership Support

X₄ = Strategic Centricity

e = Error term

The results are hence expected to be presented using tables. When analyzing the open-ended questions, the study used the thematic method to be able to derive meaning from the opinions of the respondents. A thematic method used specifically developed headings that reflect a combination of participants ideas. This therefore means that with the headings, an explanation is provided on how different managers indicated in their feedback.

3.10 Diagnostic Tests

3.10.1 Normality Test

The first test that the study examined was the normality test, which was relevant in determining if the data that was to be analyzed had been drawn from a normally distributed population. This meant that the data could be divided in a symmetrical curve with the left side representing the negative responses while the right side represented the positive responses. The normality test was relevant to avoid any ambiguously provided data that was either skewed on the right or the left side of the normality curve. This meant that any responses that seemed to agree with everything or disagree with every question were discarded. This was because they did not represent the true opinion of the respondents; hence, maybe they hurriedly filled them out or just filled them out to hand over the questionnaire to the researcher. Therefore, such questions were eliminated since they caused the data to fail the normality test. According to Kwak (2023), when the significance value is more than 0.05, it shows that the data is normal, and when the significance value is less than 0.05, it indicates abnormal data.

3.10.2 Autocorrelation Test

An autocorrelation test was conducted to ensure that the independent variables had the capability of causing a change in the independent variable. That was strategic digital transformation, which was a combination of four elements that can enhance the organizational performance and not the vice versa. Through this test, the assurance of the independent variable being strong enough and having properties that can result in a change was ascertained. According to Uyanto (2022), the Durbin-Watson test was one of the ways that was relied on to test autocorrelation. Therefore, for a data set to be considered to be positively or negatively correlated, it had to be within 0-2 or 2-4, respectively. Through this test, it was possible for the study to get assurance the strategic digital transformation variables were strong enough to cause a significant change in organizational performance.

3.10.3 Multicollinearity Test

This is a test that enabled the study to ascertain if each of the independent variables, such as digitizing operations, institutional culture transformation, strategic leadership support, and strategic centrality, had the unique capability to remain firm and not be influenced by each other. This test was different from the autocorrelation since the latter assesses all independent variables in relation to the dependent variable. However, the multicollinearity test sought to assess if the chosen strategic digital transformation variables can be influenced by other independent variables. When such a situation is established, it means that the process of data analysis may be influenced by outliers; hence, the need to consider another stronger variable. To conduct a multicollinearity test, Kyriazos and Poga (2023) suggested that the tolerance level should be more than 0.2, while the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) should be less than 5.

3.10.4 Linearity Test

This is a test that was performed to assess if there was an existing relationship between each of the independent variables and the dependent variables. That is, whether digitizing operations had a relationship with organizational performance, institutional culture transformation had a relationship with organizational performance, strategic leadership support had a relationship with organizational performance, and strategic centrality had a relationship with organizational performance. Understanding the relationship enabled a study to ascertain that when the variables were subjected to inferential analysis like Pearson correlation, model summary, ANOVA, or chi-square for that matter, they did not fail the test. According to Lim et al. (2024), for a study to ascertain that the independent variables were linear, their significance values in regression analysis had to be more than 0.05.

3.10.5 Heteroskedasticity Test

It is expected that in any data set, outliers may be present or not, and hence one way of being sure of their absence is through a heteroskedasticity test. Outliers have a negative effect on a data set since they lower the quality of data and therefore may interfere with the accuracy of the data. Therefore, the heteroskedasticity test was examined by determining whether the residuals in a data set were equally distributed within a specific space. If they were, it meant that there were no outliers, but when they tended to cluster together, the presence of outliers was present, hence having the ability to interfere with the accuracy of the results.

3.11 Ethical Considerations

3.11.1 Voluntary Participation

The study ensured that every respondent, whether a manager or officer, was requested formally to take part in the study through a consent letter. After they agreed, they were issued a questionnaire, and if not, they were not engaged further.

3.11.2 Formal Authorization

Additionally, introduction and ethical clearance letters were obtained to enable the study to apply for a research permit from NACOSTI. Furthermore, the researcher and the research assistant maintained respectful language when communicating with the respondents.

3.11.3 Non-Fabrication of Data

There was no fabrication of previous data to claim that it was the current study's data; hence, expectations were that primary data were collected and analyzed accordingly.

3.11.4 Confidentiality

The study also ensured that personal details of the respondents were not requested from them to maintain confidentiality. Therefore, they were to tick or offer the opinion in writing without revealing their identities since the information they provided was relevant and not their personal details.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the results of the effect of strategic digital transformation on the organizational performance of the Marsabit County Government, Kenya. It covers response rate, reliability results, demographic information of the respondents, the results of both close-ended and open-ended questionnaires, Pearson correlation results, and inferential statistics results.

4.2 Response Rate

The study sampled 69 managers and 220 staff members working at Marsabit County Government. Managers answered both close- and open-ended questionnaires, while the staff answered close-ended questionnaires. The results are provided in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1

Response Rate

Respondents	Sampled	Response	Percentage
Managers	69	54	78%
Officers	220	183	83%
Total	289	237	82%

The data in Table 4.1 reveal that 54 (78%) of the managers responded to the study, while 183 (83%) of the officers responded. A total response rate of 237 (82%). From the results, it was clear that there was high engagement of the study with the respondents during the

process of data collection. When response rates are above 70%, they are mainly considered to be excellent and desirable for studies in public sectors, especially since it may prove hard to reach out to the managers (Fincham, 2020; Saunders et al., 2019).

4.3 Reliability Results

The study conducted a pilot test at the Samburu County government to test the reliability of study instruments. The reliability results are provided in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2

Reliability Results

Instrument	Cronbach's Alpha
Digitizing operations	0.945
Institutional culture	0.863
Strategic leadership support	0.852
Strategic centrality	0.972
Organizational performance	0.783
Average	0.883

The Cronbach Alpha Coefficient for digitizing operations is 0.945, institutional culture is 0.863, strategic leadership support is 0.852, strategic centrality is 0.972, and organizational performance is 0.783, as in Table 4.2. An average of 0.883 was a confirmation that the instruments used were reliable. Cronbach alpha provides reliability examination through a range from 0-1 whereby on the one hand, any value from 0.7 to 1 is considered reliable (Sürücü, 2020).

4.4 Demographic Information

4.4.1 Demographic Information of Officers

The study inquired from the respondents about the departments they work in, their educational background, and the length of service with Marsabit County Government.

Their responses are provided in Table 4.3.

Table 4.3

Demographic Information of Officers

Department N=183	Frequency	Percent
Public service and administration	18	10
Health Services	51	28
Education, skills development, youth and sports	19	10
Trade, tourism, industry and cooperative development	15	8
Lands, energy, housing and urban development	19	10
Agriculture, livestock and fisheries development	12	7
Culture, gender and social services	22	12
Roads, transport and public works	16	9
Finance and economic planning	11	6
Total	183	100
Education Qualification		
PhD	1	1
Master's Degree	4	2
Bachelor's Degree	92	50
Diploma	86	47
Total	183	100
Length of Service		
Over 21 years	12	7
11-20 years	52	28
5-10 years	74	40
Less than 5 years	45	25
Total	183	100

As per Table 4.3, the majority of the respondents, 51(28%), served in the health services department, followed by 22(12%) who served in the culture, gender, and social services department and 11(6%) who served in finance and economic planning. In regard to educational qualification, 92(50%) of the respondents had bachelor's degrees, followed by 86 (47%) who had diplomas, and only 1(1%) had PhDs. Further, in response to the length of service, 74 (40%) had worked in the county for 5 to 10 years, 52(28%) had worked for 11 to 20 years, and only 12 (7%) had worked for over 21 years. The findings revealed that most officers working in Marsabit County government had bachelor's degrees and diploma qualifications.

They had varying experiences ranging from 5 to 20 years, mostly in health services departments. Having staff members with diploma and degree qualification indicates that despite Marsabit County Government being located in ASAL, they had ensured that its workforce was adequately trained to implement strategic digital transformations in various departments. Furthermore, their terms of engagement with the county government operations were durable prompting easier implementation of digitizing operations. Furthermore, having worked for more than 5 years was an indication that their loyalty was not based on political inclinations but rather had created an institutional culture that was pegged towards adhering to the instructions of the strategic leadership in place in service delivery.

4.4.2 Demographic Information of Managers

Additionally, the study obtained the managers' demographic data, as shown in Table 4.4.

Table 4.4*Demographic Information of Managers*

Department N=54	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Public service and administration	8	15	15
Health Services	11	20	35
Education, skills development, youth and sports	3	6	41
Trade, tourism, industry and cooperative development	5	9	50
Lands, energy, housing and urban development	4	7	57
Agriculture, livestock and fisheries development	5	9	66
Culture, gender and social services	5	9	75
Roads, transport and public works	3	6	81
Finance and economic planning	10	19	100
Total	54	100	
Education Qualification			
PhD	2	3	3
Master's Degree	14	26	29
Bachelor's Degree	28	52	81
Diploma	10	19	100
Total	54	100	
Length of Service			
Over 21 years	4	7	7
11-20 years	21	39	46
5-10 years	19	35	81
Less than 5 years	10	19	100
Total	54	100	

According to Table 4.4, 11(20%) of the managers served in the health services department, followed by 10 (19%) who worked in the finance and economic planning department and 3(6%) who served in education, skills development, youth, and sports. In terms of their educational qualifications, 28(52%) had bachelor's degrees, 14(26%) had master's degrees, and 2(7%) had PhDs. Regarding the length of service at the county government, 21(39%) had worked for 11 to 20 years, followed by 19(35%) who had worked for 5 to 10 years, and only 4(7%) had worked for over 21 years.

As per the results, having managers from the health and finance was interpreted that the county government of Marsabit had shown effort towards incorporating strategic digital transformations in health and financial planning. Their experience level was also an indication that their ability to develop transformation strategies was based on consistent observation, skills and test of time. Therefore, their capabilities to provide strategic directions on digitizing operations, institutional culture, strategic leadership support and strategic centrality, was reliable.

4.5 Descriptive Statistics of Organizational Performance

Organizational performance was the dependent variable of the study, and indicators such as service delivery, internal processes, operational efficiency, sustainability, and social impact were measured. The ordinal Likert scale employed showed that 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neutral, 4 = agree, and 5 = strongly agree. The descriptive results for the staff are presented in Table 4.5, followed by the manager's results.

Table 4.5*Organizational Performance- Officers*

Statements N=183	1	2	3	4	5	Mean	SD
There is quality service delivery	44 (24%)	99 (54%)	11 (6%)	23 (13%)	6 (3%)	2.17	1.037
Internal processes have been efficient	1 (0%)	10 (6%)	143 (78%)	22 (12%)	7 (4%)	3.14	0.582
Operational efficiency is promoted	13 (7%)	7 (4%)	14 (8%)	39 (21%)	110 (60%)	4.23	1.193
Management and staff have been collaborating	6 (3%)	10 (5%)	3 (2%)	102 (56%)	62 (34%)	4.12	0.924
Strategic digital transformation has enhanced the organizational performance	2 (1%)	2 (1%)	165 (90%)	5 (3%)	9 (5%)	3.09	0.521

Table 4.5 shows that 110(60%) of the respondents strongly agreed, and 39(21%) agreed, with a mean of 4.23 and a standard deviation of 1.193, that operational efficiency was promoted through the incorporation of expertise from staff and technology. Additionally, 164 (90%) were in agreement, with a mean of 4.12 and a standard deviation of 0.924, that the management and staff had been collaborating to enhance the sustainability of the organizational performance of the county government. However, 44 (24%) of the

respondents strongly disagreed and 99 (54%) disagreed on a mean of 2.17 and an SD of 1.037 that quality service delivery improved organizational performance. The results were an indication of the greater commitment of Marsabit county towards blending human and ICT towards delivery of services. So far so good, it improved operational efficiency just as Koske (2023) echoed that whenever skilled workforce was allowed to use advanced technological system, the quality of their output was desirable. Further, in support of county operations, it was noted that the management and staff had deduced of working relation which involved team work initiatives to attain the desired departmental goals. However, much was still to be attained particularly within the context of quality services in comparison with other county governments in Kenya.

Further, the study provides the descriptive results for the closed- and open-ended questions for managers.

Table 4.6*Organizational Performance- Management*

Statements N=54	1	2	3	4	5	Mean	SD
County government has digitized most of its operations	0 (0%)	1 (2%)	44 (81%)	6 (11%)	3 (6%)	3.18	0.539
Visible social impact witnessed	2 (4%)	0 (0%)	3 (6%)	32 (59%)	17 (31%)	4.02	0.935
Management offers strategic leadership support	19 (35%)	25 (46%)	5 (9%)	2 (4%)	3 (6%)	2.04	1.017
Internal processes developed	5 (9%)	1 (2%)	2 (4%)	15 (28%)	31 (57%)	4.09	1.229

Table 4.6 shows that 31(57%) of the respondents strongly agreed and 15(28%) agreed on a mean of 4.09 and an SD of 1.229 that there were internal processes developed to resolve service delivery concerns in the shortest time possible. Other, 19(35%) strongly disagreed and 25(46%) disagreed on a mean of 2.04 and an SD of 1.017 that the management offered strategic leadership support to all departments to enhance operational efficiency. The managers attested that they had developed structures for quick response to issues affecting delivery of services but due various reasons such as departmental disintegration, and limited resources, leadership support was not effectively provided. Similarly, Kurere

(2022) suggested that strategic leadership was positively correlated with operational efficiency due to sufficient allocation of resources to departments.

There was an open question on how strategic digital transformation supported the sustainability of various services as dispensed by the county government. The managers noted that it had increased the delivery mechanism by digitalization of the administration operations, enhancing openness and provision of current data in a manner that makes it easy to be accessed anytime.

4.6 Descriptive Statistics of Digitizing Operations

Digitizing operations was the study's first independent variable, and indicators such as data-driven decision-making, definition of goals, digital tools, data security, and optimization of services were assessed. Table 4.7 provides the descriptive results. Thereafter, open-ended questions are provided.

Table 4.7*Digitizing Operations- Officers*

Statements N=183	1	2	3	4	5	Mean	SD
Driven decision making	6 (3%)	5 (3%)	7 (4%)	86 (47%)	79 (43%)	4.22	0.931
Definition of goals is easier to understand	7 (4%)	11 (6%)	13 (7%)	97 (53%)	55 (30%)	4.00	0.989
Availability of digital tools	7 (4%)	5 (3%)	135 (74%)	26 (14%)	10 (5%)	3.08	0.733
County data has been more secured from unauthorized access	54 (30%)	101 (55%)	10 (5%)	7 (4%)	11 (6%)	2.03	1.048
Services are optimized due to incorporation of ICT	5 (3%)	7 (4%)	129 (70%)	26 (14%)	17 (9%)	3.23	0.779

The statistics results in Table 4.7 indicate that 79(43%) of the respondents strongly agreed and 86(47%) agreed on a mean of 4.22 and a standard deviation of 0.931 that there had been data-driven decision-making due to digitizing operations. This being a positive outcome was interpreted that Marsabit County government was aligning its services with the Government Enterprise Architecture (GEA) framework to support services in a more efficient and effective manner. Additionally, 152 (83%) concurred with a mean of 4.00 and a standard deviation of 0.989 that the definition of goals was easier to understand. Being

supported through GEA framework, it was not a surprise that the staff were skilled and had easier data interpretation skills in the Marsabit county government. Mergel et al. (2019) indicated that whenever specific objectives were aligned with digitization, it led to efficient interpretation and execution of roles.

Nevertheless, 54(30%) strongly disagreed and 101(55%) disagreed on a mean of 2.03 and a standard deviation of 1.948 that the county data had been more secured from unauthorized access. This meant that sufficient cybersecurity frameworks were lacking, exposing the county government's data to potential infiltration from unauthorized access. Heeks (2018) noted that failure to dedicate investments to cybersecurity and necessary infrastructure increased cyber risks among the public institutions.

Further the managers also provided their responses in Table 4.8.

Table 4.8*Digitizing Operations- Managers*

Statements N=54	1	2	3	4	5	Mean	SD
Management takes evidence-based decision making seriously	0 (0%)	4 (7%)	41 (76%)	8 (15%)	1 (2%)	3.07	0.651
Management takes time to explain to the staff on specific goals	4 (7%)	2 (4%)	1 (2%)	32 (59%)	15 (28%)	4.04	0.963
We ensure there are safe ICT infrastructure	1 (2%)	3 (6%)	4 (7%)	44 (81%)	2 (4%)	3.81	0.667

Table 4.8 shows that 15(28%) of the respondents strongly agreed and 32(59%) agreed on a mean of 4.04 and a standard deviation of 0.963 that the management took time to explain to the staff the specific goals they were supposed to achieve. Nevertheless, on whether the management took evidence-based decision-making seriously to avoid biased opinion, 41 (76%) of the respondents were neutral; they neither agreed with the statement nor disagreed, with a mean of 3.07 and an SD of 0.651. From the major results highlighted, most management were committed to their strategic mandated, especially when needed to explain staff roles. However, cultural implications and perceptions were noted to be seriously intrigued in them, when it came to decision making. They management was noted to intentionally avoid data-based decisions in expressing what they needed implemented.

In simpler terms, the managers were complaining that some of the decision-making needs relied on organizational norms rather than being supported by facts, which could be a trace of data illiteracy and overshadowing of traditional practices on scientific evidence (Inguane et al., 2020).

There was an open question that was on the description of some of the laws and rules that the county government implements to guarantee that digital transformation is widely accepted. There are two- themes, which include the County Government Act of 2012, and Executive Order Number 1 of 2014. The County Government Act of 2012 provided the groundwork for devolution and power to implement digital policies in delivering the services to the public. There was also the executive order number 1 of 2014, which provided the guidelines to the ICT secretariat to supervise the laying down of ICT infrastructure in the county government's departments.

The other question was on the indication of some of the digital tools commonly used in the Marsabit County government. The respondents indicated computers (laptops and desktops), servers, projectors, television screens, CCTV, office phones and software. These tools made the flow of information from one department to another efficient, promoting a quicker decision-making process.

4.7 Descriptive Statistics of Institutional Culture

Institutional culture was the study's second independent variable, and the assessed indicators were collaboration in strategic decision-making, adaptability to strategic change, recognition of staff's attainment of strategic objectives, a healthy working environment,

and innovation. The descriptive results are provided in Table 4.9, and thereafter the open-ended questionnaire results are provided.

Table 4.9

Institutional Culture-Officers

Statements N=183	1	2	3	4	5	Mean	SD
Staff have been effectively collaborating in strategic decision making	48 (26%)	104 (57%)	11 (6%)	14 (8%)	6 (3%)	2.05	0.962
Staff training on how to adopt to strategic change	4 (2%)	7 (4%)	9 (5%)	91 (50%)	72 (39%)	4.20	0.869
Recognition of staff's attainment to strategic objectives is done	1 (0%)	31 (17%)	108 (59%)	27 (15%)	16 (9%)	3.14	0.820
There is a healthy working environment	15 (8%)	5 (3%)	130 (71%)	27 (15%)	6 (3%)	3.02	0.798
Innovation is encouraged through creative thinking	11 (6%)	7 (4%)	9 (5%)	94 (51%)	62 (34%)	4.03	1.043

As per Table 4.9, 72(39%) of the respondents strongly agreed and 91(50%) agreed on a mean of 4.20 and an SD of 0.869 that there was a healthy working environment in Marsabit

County Government. From the outcome, the institutional culture was effectively implemented and supported by the officers. This, therefore, led to increased perception towards a healthy working environment as a result of positive culture. Comparatively, Hakanen et al. (2022) noted that public organizations were able to enhance the quality of services through engagements with employees that created a conducive environment to work in.

Further, 62(34%) strongly agreed and 94(51%) agreed on a mean of 4.03 and an SD of 1.043 that innovation was encouraged through creative thinking and use of ICT to deliver services. This, therefore, was an indication that having the ability to think of probable solutions that have the lowest cost implications is a critical element practiced through digital transformation in Marsabit County government. In agreement, Birkinshaw et al. (2020) indicated that the ability of digital transformations to take place was based on the level of creativity within the organization. However, 48(26%) of the respondents strongly disagreed and 104 (57%) disagreed on a mean of 2.05 and an SD of 0.962 that the staff had been effectively collaborating in strategic decision-making.

A similar issue was raised by the study of Wang and Ahmed (2023), which noted that it was a persistent problem within the public sector institutions. The bureaucratic systems established through informal and formal structures limited the extent of collaborations between the various public servants.

Further, the first open-ended question was on highlighting how institutional norms are established in Marsabit County government. The feedback provided notes that institutional norms were put into place through official policies, direction from the leaders, and various interaction patterns among the county government's employees. The implementation of the

norms was made a reality through formal strategic plans such as the County Integrated Development Plans to ensure that there are clearly stipulated goals specified within a given timeline. There were other respondents who also noted that the establishment was made possible by gaining support from regulations guiding the public service and transparency. There were respondents who also said that training and performance evaluation enabled the staff to gain insights into what was expected of them by the management, leading to increased performance.

There was also the question of how gender roles within the organizational culture affected the performance of managers. The feedback noted that gender roles designed the managers' leadership styles and decision-making patterns. The women who were majorly limited by the traditions within the scope of Marsabit County interfered with their participation rates and personal development pace, lagging behind in terms of innovation and diversity.

The third question was on the description of how different leadership styles impact the management of change. It was noted that in Marsabit County, the transformational leadership enabled the departments to manage change through becoming innovative and becoming adaptable to suggested policies. Furthermore, the autocratic leadership noted allowed a centralized decision-making system that was at times faced with slower decision-making processes (Koske, 2023).

The fourth question was on the various government policies related to institutional culture in Marsabit County government. The findings are grouped in three themes, which include the integrity, gender and social protection policies, and participatory budget process. In regard to integrity, the management noted that there were capacity-building initiatives established to enhance ethics among various county staff. The repercussions of engaging

in malpractices were also explained, and awareness was raised within various departments. To this extent, the idea was to ensure that there were good governance practices within the operations of the Marsabit County government. The second theme of gender and social protection policies, the respondents noted, was that inequalities related to gender were discouraged through the provision of equal opportunities to the public despite gender orientation. Furthermore, the theme of allowing stakeholders into the budgetary process increased the transparency and allowed equitable resource allocation. Through this process, different community members, such as the women and the youths.

The last question was on the methods used to promote institutional culture between the management and the staff in the Marsabit County Government. The respondents mentioned that the staff underwent frequent training to equip them with knowledge of the institutional culture. There were also communication channels that allowed an open flow of information. This was encouraged by allowing feedback from the staff to the management, particularly within the context of setting departmental and individual professional goals. In support of the results, Ahmed and Murtaza (2020) noted that consistent appraisal of employee performance enabled the staff to gain shared values and accountability measures. Through such approaches, trust was cultivated, thereby improving the staff's motivation towards the attainment of departmental goals and the county's vision.

4.8 Descriptive Statistics of Strategic Leadership Support

Strategic leadership support was the study's third independent variable, and the measured indicators were clarity in communication, alignment with the strategic objectives, commitment to the mission and vision, employee empowerment, and resource allocation. The descriptive results are provided in Table 4.10.

Table 4.10*Strategic Leadership Support- Officers*

Statements N=183	1	2	3	4	5	Mean	SD
Communication is effectively clarified	53 (29%)	99 (54%)	9 (5%)	16 (9%)	6 (3%)	2.05	0.994
Alignment of different strategies	5 (3%)	6 (3%)	4 (2%)	117 (64%)	51 (28%)	4.10	0.815
Committed to attaining the set goals	0 (0%)	5 (3%)	7 (4%)	114 (62%)	57 (31%)	4.22	0.643
Employee empowerment programs offered to staff.	1 (0%)	8 (4%)	140 (77%)	20 (11%)	14 (8%)	3.20	0.661
Resource allocation is done based on the proposal submitted	2 (1%)	10 (5%)	129 (70%)	32 (17%)	10 (5%)	3.21	0.672

The data in Table 4.10 shows that 57 (31%) of the respondents strongly agreed and 114 (62%) agreed on a mean of 4.22 and an SD of 0.643 that the staff were committed to attaining the set goals as a way of aligning with the mission and vision. Moreover, 168 (92%) of the respondents, with a mean of 4.10 and an SD of 0.815, agreed that the strategic leadership had made efforts to align different strategies with issued objectives for staff. Nevertheless, 52 (29%) strongly disagreed and 99 (54%) disagreed on a mean of 2.05 and an SD of 0.994 that communication was effectively clarified by the management to avoid ambiguity when issuing instructions. The findings reveal a strong commitment of the

Marsabit County government towards ensuring that the departmental objectives have been not only attained but also aligned with the vision and mission of the entire county government to motivate its staff.

Therefore, effective strategic plans and overall guidance were the outcome generated from the alignment of the leadership's desire to have quality strategies that were guided by clear departmental goals. Similarly, Lee and Raschke (2021) noted that the performance of an organization was enhanced by ensuring that the staff were motivated by attainable goals aligned to the organizational vision and mission. That notwithstanding, the officers complained that the management was not effective with regard to clear instructions hindering effective execution due to delays or misunderstandings. In comparison, Men (2022) revealed that instructions were more effectively understood when the communication practices within the jurisdiction of the public sector were enhanced. Additionally, the study results of managers' questionnaire are presented in Table 4.11.

Table 4.11*Strategic Leadership Support- Managers*

Statements N=54	1	2	3	4	5	Mean	SD
Management allow feedback mechanism	1 (2%)	4 (7%)	5 (9%)	42 (78%)	2 (4%)	3.81	0.667
Management trains the staff on how to ensure their personal work target align with county's goals	0 (0%)	2 (4%)	1 (2%)	31 (57%)	20 (37%)	4.25	0.739
The employees through assigning them minor leadership roles	1 (2%)	2 (4%)	40 (74%)	7 (13%)	4 (7%)	3.25	0.662
Management is fair when allocating resources to various departments	14 (26%)	32 (59%)	1 (2%)	3 (6%)	4 (7%)	2.09	1.057

Table 4.11 shows that 20(37%) of the respondents strongly agreed and 31 (57%) agreed on a mean of 4.25 and an SD of 0.739 that the management trained the staff on how to ensure their personal work target aligned with the county's goals. Nevertheless, 14 (26%) strongly disagreed and 32(59%) disagreed on a mean of 2.09 and an SD of 1.057 that the management was fair when allocating resources to various departments. The deductions

derived from the results are that the Marsabit County government's leadership had developed training structures to enable the employees to align individual job roles to departmental goals, enhance strategic focus, and promote unity. This led to improved performance within the departments. That notwithstanding, the distribution of resources was noted to be unfair, causing massive dissatisfaction among various departments. This concern lowered the staff motivation, resulting in dismal performance despite the great efforts to ensure that they are aligned in their roles towards the vision and mission.

The study also required an explanation of the guidelines that are used when allocating resources in various departments in Marsabit County. It was noted that the guidelines in place gave priority to equity and the need for development objectives that the county government has in place. When making these kinds of decisions, the specific details that relate to the size of the population and the urgency of need, and that the departmental operations would benefit, are noted.

During the implementation, the managers indicated that the CIDP and annual development plan were the guidelines in place to support the entire process. Thereafter the departments allowed the public to provide their opinions on the implementation of a strategy within the locality. This allowed transparency and keen approaches to align the departmental objectives with the policies at a national scale. The final outcome was that various departments, such as health, education, infrastructure, and others, were able to gain effective projects and resources to support growth and development.

4.9 Descriptive Statistics of Strategic Centricity

Strategic centricity was the fourth independent variable of the study, and the indicators measured were customer satisfaction, customer feedback, customer well-being, timely delivery of services, and diversity in services. Table 4.12 shows the results.

Table 4.12

Strategic Centricity- Officers

Statements N=183	1	2	3	4	5	Mean	SD
Customer satisfaction is a priority	2 (1%)	8 (4%)	2 (1%)	111 (61%)	60 (33%)	4.19	0.757
Staff have been trained on how to manage the customer's emotions	11 (6%)	6 (3%)	119 (65%)	35 (19%)	12 (7%)	3.17	0.831
Customer well-being	9 (5%)	6 (3%)	147 (80%)	7 (4%)	14 (8%)	3.06	0.757
Services are delivered within the shortest time possible	40 (22%)	124 (68%)	4 (2%)	6 (3%)	9 (5%)	2.02	0.905
Diversity in services is provided	1 (1%)	8 (4%)	3 (2%)	44 (24%)	127 (69%)	4.56	0.823

Table 4.12 indicates that 127 (69%) of the respondents strongly agreed and 44 (24%) agreed on a mean of 4.56 and a standard deviation of 0.823 that diversity in services was provided to enable the public to get all possible government services. Additionally, 171

(94%) concurred with a mean of 4.19 and a standard deviation of 0.757 that customer satisfaction was a priority in Marsabit County Government. Nevertheless, 40 (22%) of the respondents strongly disagreed and 124 (68%) disagreed on a mean of 2.02 and a standard deviation of 0.905 that services were delivered within the shortest time possible. As per the results presented, Marsabit County was noted to offer a range of government services to the public, a point that was also emphasized by the Commission on Revenue Allocations (CRA, 2023) as a way of ensuring that marginalized counties such as Marsabit were able to decentralize services for the greater good of the public.

Additionally, the provision of these services was anchored on providing utmost customer satisfaction, which was also noted by a report from KIPPRA (2023b) on focusing on public-centric strategies within the devolved counties. That notwithstanding, the staff were dissatisfied with the speed at which services were being dispensed within a spectrum of time. That is, the turnaround time taken to serve the public was more than it was supposed to be. This could be as a result of a low number of public servants, bureaucracy, and inadequate infrastructure to support the operations. The finding underscores the relevance of Marsabit County being customer-focused within its service dispensation but with low operational efficiency.

Further, the managers were also required to answer their open-ended questionnaire, and their responses are presented in Tabel 4.13.

Table 4.13*Strategic Centricity- Managers*

Statements N=57	1	2	3	4	5	Mean	SD
Management ensures a solution is provided on any negative comments	1 (2%)	2 (4%)	4 (7%)	32 (59%)	15 (28%)	4.09	0.807
Any conflict that arises between the staff and the public, is amicably resolved	1 (2%)	0 (0%)	40 (74%)	9 (17%)	4 (7%)	3.17	0.541
We avoid any delayed service provision unless when it cannot be avoided	2 (4%)	4 (7%)	36 (67%)	8 (15%)	4 (7%)	3.11	0.769

According to Table 4.13, 15 (28%) of the respondents strongly agreed and 32 (59%) agreed on a mean of 4.09 and an SD of 0.807 that the management ensured a solution was provided for any negative comments from the public receiving services to enhance quality satisfaction. In regard to whether the managers avoided any delayed service provision unless when it could not be avoided, 36 (67%) were neutral in their responses, with a mean of 3.11 and an SD of 0.769. According to results in Table 4.13, the ability of the management within the Marsabit County Government to take the initiative for resolving public concerns was noted to result in a positive outcome.

The outcome in terms of service quality enabled the operations to swiftly align with the governmental policy structure that sought to decentralize its services to the local regions. In agreement, KIPPRA (2023b) found out that the public trust was enhanced through the delivery of services through a consistent resolution of customer feedback mechanisms. However, there was uncertainty about the efficiency of operations, as pointed out by neutral comments from the managers. Interestingly, this was discovered by a report from the Council of Governors (2023), which indicated that despite the existence of operational frameworks within counties, the tangibility of the customer response plans was mainly subdued by the low number of staff members, openness, and increased bureaucratic scenarios.

There was an open-ended question that sought to identify types of training conducted in the county government to educate the workers on digitalization, especially in terms of online registration. There was notable training on technology meant for the staff to support knowledge acquisition on online registration systems. These types of programs enabled the staff to have perquisite information on how online government platforms worked, methods of data management, and how electronic infrastructure can be used to deliver services. The training encompassed various aspects related to navigation of the systems, cybersecurity, and methods of troubleshooting to enhance work efficiency.

The entire purpose was to raise knowledge on how various public services could be delivered through digital tools for efficiency and transparency. The last question was on the challenges facing the delivery of the services in Marsabit County Government. There were various challenges related to inadequacy of infrastructure, limited financial resources,

and a low number of skilled employees working in the county departments. The study also noted that when the national treasury took longer to disburse the county allocation fund, it led to inefficiencies in project implementation.

Furthermore, lack of internet in most parts of Marsabit County negatively interfered with the technological pace needed to offset digital illiteracy within the county for positive perception in adopting e-services. There were other managers that complained of the harsh climate facing the county leading to a low number of public members that come to gain the county government's services. There were also insecurity issues that affected the quality of services and the entire satisfaction rate of the public.

4.10 Diagnostic Test

The various diagnostic tests carried out in the study included normality, autocorrelation, multicollinearity, linearity, and heteroskedasticity tests.

4.10.1 Normality Test

To determine whether the data used in the study was from a normally distributed population, a normality test was conducted. Table 4.14 shows the results.

Table 4.14*Normality Test*

		Organizational Performance	Digitizing Operations	Institutional Culture	Strategic Leadership Support	Strategic Centricity
N		183	183	183	183	183
Normal Parameters ^{a,b}	Mean	16.7541	14.5683	14.4044	14.6940	15.0109
	Std. Deviation	2.01087	2.92854	2.98722	3.10871	3.00364
Most Extreme Differences	Absolute	.150	.097	.104	.105	.088
	Positive	.109	.097	.104	.096	.087
	Negative	-.150	-.097	-.070	-.105	-.088
Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z		2.026	1.317	1.407	1.426	1.191
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)		.234	.162	.338	.134	.117

a. Test distribution is Normal.

b. Calculated from data.

The results in Table 4.14 demonstrate that the asymp. Sig values for organizational performance are 0.234, digitizing operations is 0.162, institutional culture is 0.338, strategic leadership support is 0.134, and strategic centricity is 0.117. Since the p-value for all the variables was above 0.05, it shows that the data used in this study had a normal distribution and hence was good for the study. Its implication being that there was no evidence noted to reject the null hypothesis, thereby an indication that the data set that was used in the study was considered adequate in content and valid for further statistical analysis.

4.10.2 Autocorrelation Test

An autocorrelation test was conducted to ensure that the strategic digital transformation variables had the capability of causing a change in the organizational performance. The results are provided in Table 4.15.

Table 4.15

Autocorrelation Test

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.875 ^a	.766	.521	2.01171	1.775

a. Predictors: (Constant), Strategic Centricity, Digitizing Operations, Institutional Culture, Strategic Leadership

b. Dependent Variable: Organizational Performance

Table 4.15 shows that the Durbin-Watson value is 1.775, indicating a positive correlation. This implied that there were no major concerns in terms of residues that would affect the regression results. Therefore, if the Durbin-Watson values are between 1.5 and 2.5, it is an indication that the regression residuals are independent towards encouraging reliability of the results.

4.10.3 Multicollinearity Test

The study used a multicollinearity test to determine whether the variables had the unique capability to remain firm and not be influenced by each other. The results are provided in Table 4.16.

Table 4.16*Multicollinearity Test*

Model	Collinearity Statistics	
	Tolerance	VIF
Digitizing operations	.496	2.016
Institutional culture	.986	1.014
Strategic leadership support	.975	1.026
Strategic centricity	.982	1.018

Table 4.16 shows that the tolerance value for digitizing operations is 0.496 and VIF is 2.016; institutional culture has a tolerance of 0.986 and a VIF of 1.014; strategic leadership support has a tolerance of 0.975 and a VIF of 1.026; and strategic centricity has a tolerance of 0.982 and a VIF of 1.018.

4.10.4 Linearity Test

The study conducted a linearity test to assess if there was an existing relationship between strategic digital transformation and organizational performance. The linearity results are provided in Table 4.17.

Table 4.17*Linearity Test*

			Sum of	Df	Mean	F	Sig.
			Squares		Square		
Organizational Performance * Digitizing Operations	Between Groups	(Combined)	49.644	13	3.819	.940	.513
		Linearity	1.968	1	1.968	.485	.487
		Deviation from Linearity	47.676	12	3.973	.978	.472
	Within Groups		686.290	170	4.061		
	Total		735.934	183			
Institutional Culture	Between Groups	(Combined)	30.608	14	2.186	.521	.919
		Linearity	1.527	1	1.527	.364	.547
		Deviation from Linearity	29.081	13	2.237	.533	.902
	Within Groups		705.326	169	4.198		
	Total		735.934	183			
Strategic Leadership Support	Between Groups	(Combined)	100.994	14	7.214	1.909	.309
		Linearity	5.712	1	5.712	1.511	.221
		Deviation from Linearity	95.283	13	7.329	1.939	.329
	Within Groups		634.940	169	3.779		
	Total		735.934	183			
Strategic Centricity	Between Groups	(Combined)	58.102	14	4.150	1.029	.427
		Linearity	7.983	1	7.983	1.979	.161
		Deviation from Linearity	50.119	13	3.855	.956	.497
	Within Groups		677.832	169	4.035		
	Total		735.934	183			

Table 4.17 shows that the p-value for digitizing operations is 0.472, institutional culture is 0.902, strategic leadership support is 0.329, and strategic centricity is 0.497. As a result,

all of the strategic digital transformation variables had significance values more than 0.05, showing a linear association with organizational performance.

4.10.5 Heteroskedasticity Test

The heteroskedasticity test was performed by analyzing if the residuals in a data set were evenly distributed across a specific space. Figure 4.1 shows the results.

Figure 4.1

Scatter Plot as a Test for Heteroskedasticity

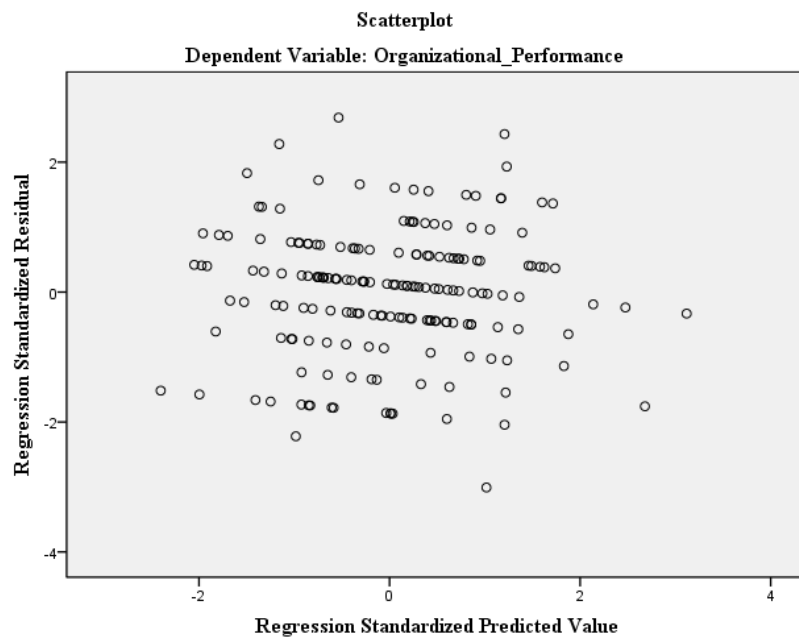


Figure 4.1 indicates that Figure 4.1 shows that a large number of residuals were not aggregated together, demonstrating that the data under review contained no outliers.

4.11 Correlation Analysis

Correlation analysis was employed in the study to examine the significant strength of digitizing operations, institutional culture, strategic leadership support, and strategic

centricity on organizational performance. The Pearson correlation results are provided in Table 4.18.

Table 4.18

Correlation Analysis of Digital Transformation on Organizational Performance

		Organizational Performance	Digitizing Operations	Institutional Culture	Strategic Leadership Support	Strategic Centricity
Organizational Performance	Pearson Correlation	1				
	Sig. (2- tailed)					
	N	183				
Digitizing Operations	Pearson Correlation	.487	1			
	Sig. (2- tailed)	.003				
	N	183	183			
Institutional Culture	Pearson Correlation	.746	.078	1		
	Sig. (2- tailed)	.002	.295			
	N	183	183	183		
Strategic Leadership Support	Pearson Correlation	.638	.085	.075	1	
	Sig. (2- tailed)	.000	.002	.001		
	N	183	183	183	183	
Strategic Centricity	Pearson Correlation	.304	.054	.054	.106	1
	Sig. (2- tailed)	.001	.004	.000	.004	
	N	183	183	183	183	183

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

The outcome noted in Table 4.18 reveals that the correlation coefficient for digitizing operations is 0.487 at $\alpha < 0.003$ at a 99% significance level. What this means is that digitizing operations had a moderate but positive influence on organizational performance. Furthermore, the results still presented in Table 4.18 indicate that the correlation for institutional culture is 0.746 at $\alpha < 0.002$ at a 99% significance level. This means that institutional culture had a very strong and positive influence on organizational performance. Its strength was considered highest in this study as compared to other strategic digital transformations, and consistent practices that promote governance.

Table 4.18 also notes that the correlational value for strategic leadership support is 0.638 at $\alpha < 0.000$ at a 99% significance level. This means that strategic leadership had a strong correlational influence towards improving organizational performance, since it lay between 0.64 and 0.73. Table 4.18 also indicates that the correlation of strategic centrality is 0.304 at $\alpha < 0.001$ at a 99% significance level. Therefore, despite having a positive influence, the correlation results imply a weak correlation towards improving the organizational performance.

4.12 Multiple Regression Analysis

The study conducted three multiple regression analyses, which included model summary, analyses of variance, and regression weights. Model Summary was conducted to ascertain the percentage influence of digital transformation on organizational performance, as shown in Table 4.19.

Table 4.19

Model Summary of the Influence of Digital Transformation on Organizational Performance

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.875 ^a	.766	.521	2.01171

a. Predictors: (Constant), Strategic Centricity, Digitizing Operations, Institutional Culture, Strategic Leadership Support

Table 4.19 indicates that R is 0.875 and R Square is 0.766, implying that digitizing operations, institutional culture, strategic leadership support, and strategic centricity had a 77% influence on the organizational performance of the Marsabit County government. The other 23% was due to factors not investigated in this study. These results imply that there was a strong influence that digital transformation had on enhancing organizational performance. Other studies, such as Mutua (2021), discovered that in Kenyan county governments, internal efficiencies and delivery of services were enhanced through digital transformations.

Further, Kamuri et al. (2025) posited that along the devolved units, strategic performance was enhanced through a culture of strong commitment to leadership as a determinant driver with the local government. Additionally, by aligning strategies towards digitization, the public trust improved due to consistent satisfaction they derived as well as the organizational agility (Nguyen et al., 2021). Therefore, the strong regression results derived in the current study are considered a great signal of how performance within the county government could be enhanced through practical approaches that could enhance strategic interpositions that are meant to increase effective service delivery as a responsibility within the public sector.

Further ANOVA was conducted to answer the general objective, which examined the effect of strategic digital transformation on organizational performance of Marsabit County Government, Kenya. Table 4.20 provides the results.

Table 4.20

ANOVA Results of the Influence of Digital Transformation on Organizational Performance

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	563.570	4	140.893	145.55	.002 ^b
	Residual	172.364	178	0.968		
	Total	735.934	183			

a. Dependent Variable: Organizational Performance

b. Predictors: (Constant), Strategic Centricity, Digitizing Operations, Institutional Culture, Strategic Leadership

According to Table 4.20, the significance value is 0.002 and the F statistic is 145.55, indicating that there is a positive influence of digital transformation on organizational performance. Therefore, when the significance value was less than 0.05, it was an indication that the chance that digital transformation not having an influence on organizational performance was low, hence concluding that it had a positive effect. In further support of the results, the F-statistics noted that the model was fit, and thus, being 843.25, predicted that digital transformation was positive and significantly relevant towards increasing organizational performance.

Further, the study had a model, $Y = C + \beta_1X_1 + \beta_2X_2 + \beta_3X_3 + \beta_4X_4 + e$

Where:

Y = Organizational Performance

β_i = Coefficients to be estimated

C= Constant

X1= Digitizing Operations

X2 = Institutional Culture Transformation

X3 = Strategic Leadership Support

X4 = Strategic Centricity

e = Error term

Regression analysis was conducted as provided in Table 4.21.

Table 4.21

Regression Coefficients of Digital Transformation and Organizational Performance

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	7.954	1.422		6.218	.000
Digitizing Operations	.133	.051	.148	2.653	.002
1 Institutional Culture	.114	.050	.122	2.390	.004
Strategic Leadership	.099	.049	.117	2.031	.001
Strategic Centricity	.110	.050	.119	3.257	.002

a. Dependent Variable: Organizational Performance

Table 4.21 shows that the coefficient for digitizing operations is 0.133, institutional culture is 0.114, strategic leadership support is 0.099, and strategic centricity is 0.110. Notably, all the variables have a significance that is less than 0.05. When equated in the equation $Y=15.954+0.133X1+0.114X2+0.099X3+0.168X4$. Therefore, the results note that all four elements had a significant influence since the significance values are more than 0.05, while

the t-statistics are more than 2. In simpler terms, a unit of organizational performance was increased by $15.954 + 0.133X_1 + 0.114X_2 + 0.099X_3 + 0.110X_4$ of digital operations, institutional culture, strategic leadership support, and strategic centrality, respectively.

Therefore, digitizing operations was noted to positively influence the organizational performance of the county government of Marsabit. This was from the perspective of enabling an environment that supports decision-making processes that are factual through scientific evidence/statistical data. This limits the chances of relying on personal opinions and feelings when making decisions that affect the operations of Marsabit County government. Furthermore, it also implies that departmental goals were effectively defined to ensure that every staff member was able to comprehend their expected outcome delivery metrics. This was also supported through the provision of digital infrastructure that made it easier for processes to flow. Less paperwork meant that data security required being strengthened through robust system checks and balances that were consistently monitored by qualified ICT staff. The long-term outcome included optimization of operations to offer the necessary services to the residents of Marsabit County Government.

In terms of institutional culture transformation, the study noted that its significance related to the ability of the county operations and staff to adapt towards implementing change. This was mainly anchored on innovation that is incorporated through ICT infrastructural development and systems, with an aim of creating a viable working environment. This, therefore, led to enhanced processes that support a healthy working environment that respects the rule of law and allows respectable sharing of ideas within various public offices in different departments. The study also noted that collaboration was supported by the management to enhance processes and reduce resource wastage. Such efforts were

governed through strategic decision-making that aimed at providing growth opportunities to all staff. Additionally, in the reduction of work tension and departmental conflicts, it was done through recognition of staff's attainment of strategic objectives.

The strategic leadership in place was also considered as a determinant of enhanced organizational performance. This was because it provided the overall direction on how commitment to mission and vision should begin and be steered. The leadership, being in charge of such an important responsibility, developed strategic objectives that were aligned with departmental goals and communicated through popular organizational channels. This, therefore, set the pace for information sharing, feedback mechanisms, and increased interactive patterns across various spectra within the Marsabit County's departments.

In addition, strategic leadership was also important in deciding the resource allocation and sharing formula. This was so as to resolve departmental needs and liabilities as incurred to empower the staff to attain the set goals. The implication of strategic centrality as an influencing factor towards organizational performance was that it led to frequent interactions between the Marsabit County staff and the public. The nature of interaction supported consistent feedback and the general well-being of the public. Notably, the mutual working engagement was a prevalent factor that supported improved customer satisfaction.

4.13 Hypotheses Results

Multiple regression analysis was employed in the study to test hypotheses that stated that digitizing operations had no statistically significant influence on organizational performance, institutional culture had no statistically significant influence on

organizational performance, strategic leadership support had no statistically significant influence on organizational performance, and strategic centrality had no statistically significant influence on organizational performance.

On the first hypothesis, the significant value for digitizing operations was 0.002 which meant that digitizing operations had a positive influence on organizational performance. This was because, the significance value was less than 1, enabling the study to reject the null hypothesis. Therefore, digitizing operations was considered one of the important factors towards the growth and development of Marsabit County. The results implied that the local government was able to ensure that there was transparency in its dealings, particularly within the auditing, procurement, and general financial management processes.

Additionally, the results also meant that the level of efficiency was within the required thresholds, particularly since the implementation of strategies was amicably done with fewer errors, hence reducing manual tasks. This brought about improved quality of services within the Marsabit county government. The quality was in terms of speed and accuracy. Previous studies, such as Odongo and Kazungu (2023), noted a coefficient of 0.589 in their assessment of how the Kakamega County government performed as a result of strategic procurement practices. Sifuna et al. (2023) noted that e-governance structures had a coefficient of 0.456 on ensuring that the Trans Nzoia County' service delivery was of required quality. Nyonje et al. (2018) found that Kajiado County's service delivery was enhanced when the local government was able to adopt the acquired ICT infrastructure.

On the second hypothesis, the significant value for institutional culture was 0.004 which meant that it had a positive influence on organizational performance. This was because, the significance value was less than 1, enabling the study to reject the null hypothesis. The

results implied that the Marsabit County's institutional culture was vital since it allowed consistent teamwork between departments and members, with most of the operations being fostered by innovation. It also implied that the county also encouraged accountability measures within the various departmental staff, with most of the activities guided by ethical guidelines of transparency. The results also implied that the county government had provided clear platforms that enabled sharing of institutional culture, such as through workshops, trainings, and consistent practices that promote governance.

Furthermore, having the greatest influence, the study noted that the county leadership ensured that as they aimed at improved performance, it was done according to the shared beliefs and practices that promote county cohesion and integration. Previous studies, such as from Lowalan et al. (2023), found out that Turkana County government's supply chain functions were influenced at a coefficient of 0.75 by the organizational culture. Another study in Meru found that in Kenyan county governments, the performance of staff was positively correlated at 0.5 with organizational culture. Furthermore, there was a meaningful alignment between the laid-down strategic plans as compared to the organizational culture in place, within the county government's perspective.

On the third hypothesis, the significant value for strategic leadership was 0.001 which meant that it had a positive influence on organizational performance. This was because, the significance value was less than 1, enabling the study to reject the null hypothesis. This implies that strategic leadership is critical within the county government set-up since it is through their decisions that strategies are formulated, resources distributed, stakeholders engaged, integrity improved, and any demands for change are effectively addressed. Therefore, such traits are desirable since they promote efficiency towards service delivery

in the devolved government in Marsabit. It is thus desirable that the county government of Marsabit invest in strategic leadership processes that aim to strengthen the nature of management towards attaining the county development goals. Furthermore, the strategic leadership in place is a considerable factor towards improving governance, a virtue that is desired within the environment of the county government.

According to Kurere (2022), he was also in agreement with the findings by noting that Baringo County's efficiency in operations was improved due to the influence of strategic leadership. Masungu et al. (2015) found a correlation of .725 between the strategic leadership in place and the Kakamega County Government's performance. Wanyama and Muluka (2024) established a statistically significant effect of strategic leadership and how Bungoma's county government managed change. Work ethics, management support, and general teamwork were considered strategic leadership practices that led to enhanced performance in the county government of Tharaka Nithi.

On the first hypothesis, the significant value for strategic centrality was 0.001 which meant that it had a positive influence on organizational performance. This was because, the significance value was less than 1, enabling the study to reject the null hypothesis. The results imply that despite their existence, they have low capacity to cause significant changes to organizational performance within the county setup. This, therefore, may lead to implementing them with other factors related to resources, management support, and organizational culture for a turnaround. In comparison, Ng'iroo and Osoro (2024), on how West Pokot County governments' performance was affected by strategic direction, noted a weak coefficient ranging within 0.3 to 0.4.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

The purpose of the study was to determine the effect of strategic digital transformation on organizational performance of the Marsabit County Government, Kenya. The specific objectives were to examine the effect of digitizing operations, institutional culture transformation, strategic leadership support, and strategic centrality on organizational performance of the Marsabit County Government, Kenya. The research design that was specifically adopted in the study was descriptive research design, which was relevant in the process of describing strategic digital transformation and collecting data from the managers and officers.

5.2 Summary of Results

A summary of from the responses from both the officers and the management are provided in section 5.2.1 to 5.2.5 as per the variables.

5.2.1 Digitizing Operations and Organizational Performance

There were two different questionnaires that were issued to both the officers and the managers. From the responses provided by the officers, 165(90%) agreed that there had been data-driven decision-making due to digitizing operations while 152(83%) concurred that the definition of goals was easier to understand. Nevertheless, 155(85%) disagreed that the county data had been more secured from unauthorized access. The responses from the managers, noted that 47(87%) agreed that the management took time to explain to the staff the specific goals they were supposed to achieve. Nevertheless, on whether the management

took evidence-based decision-making seriously to avoid biased opinion, 41(76%) of the respondents were neutral. The correlation coefficient for digitizing operations is 0.487 at $\alpha < 0.003$ at a 99% significance level. What this means is that digitizing operations had a moderate but positive influence on organizational performance.

5.2.2 Institutional Culture and Organizational Performance

163(89%) respondents agreed that there was a healthy working environment in Marsabit County Government. Further, 154(85%) participants also agreed that innovation was encouraged through creative thinking and use of ICT to deliver services. However, 152(83%) respondents were in disagreement that the staff had been effectively collaborating in strategic decision-making. The correlation for institutional culture is 0.746 at $\alpha < 0.002$ at a 99% significance level. This means that institutional culture had a very strong and positive influence on organizational performance.

5.2.3 Strategic Leadership Support and Organizational Performance

The responses provided by the officers noted that 171(93%) agreed that the staff were committed to attaining the set goals as a way of aligning with the mission and vision. Moreover, 168(92%) of the respondents, agreed that the strategic leadership had made efforts to align different strategies with issued objectives for staff. Nevertheless, 151(83%) disagreed that communication was effectively clarified by the management to avoid ambiguity when issuing instructions. 51(94%) management respondents agreed that they trained the staff on how to ensure their personal work target aligned with the county's goals. Nevertheless, 46 (85%) were not in agreement the management was fair when allocating resources to various departments. The correlational value for strategic leadership

support is 0.638 at $\alpha < 0.000$ at a 99% significance level. This means that strategic leadership had a strong correlational influence towards improving organizational performance.

5.2.4 Strategic Centricity Organizational Performance

171(93%) officers agreed that diversity in services was provided to enable the public to get all possible government services. Additionally, 171(93%) concurred that customer satisfaction was a priority in Marsabit County Government. Nevertheless, 164(90%) disagreed that services were delivered within the shortest time possible. With the managers, 47(87%) agreed that the management ensured a solution was provided for any negative comments from the public receiving services to enhance quality satisfaction. In regard to whether the managers avoided any delayed service provision unless when it could not be avoided, 36(67%) were neutral in their responses. The correlation of strategic centricity is 0.304 at $\alpha < 0.001$ at a 99% significance level. Therefore, despite having a positive influence, the correlation results imply a weak correlation towards improving the organizational performance.

5.2.5 Organizational Performance of Marsabit County Government

The feedback provided by officers on the performance was that 149(81%) affirmed operational efficiency was promoted through the incorporation of expertise from staff and technology. Additionally, 164(90%) were in agreement that the management and staff had been collaborating to enhance the sustainability of the organizational performance of the county government. However, 143(78%) disagreed that quality service delivery improved organizational performance. 85% of the management respondents noted that there were

internal processes developed to resolve service delivery concerns in the shortest time possible. However, 44(81%) disagreed that the management offered strategic leadership support to all departments to enhance operational efficiency.

5.3 Conclusions of the Study

5.3.1 Digitizing Operations and Organizational Performance

The process of transforming operations by incorporation of digitalization was seen as an improvement to decision-making processes through support of data. This data was sourced, prepared and reported through advanced ICT infrastructure in place. It therefore made it easy to define what was required, when and how it would be achieved. It was noted that the commitment level of the management was structured in a manner that they invested time and energy to communicate the decisions and goals on the direction the departments in the county government were headed. This improved flow of operations to an extent that the decision makers and implementors of strategies made consistent work-related milestones leading to improved performance. However, some management members still insisted of traditional approach of decision-making hence underutilizing the need for data to make decisions. Additionally, what also lacked was the absence of sufficient systems to secure the data stored in the digital space from unauthorized access, hence an indication that there were insufficient ICT infrastructure and low literacy of cyber security in the Marsabit County Government.

5.3.2 Institutional Culture and Organizational Performance

The institutional culture in place was considered healthy for the staff to delivery on their mandates in Marsabit County Government. The management and the staff were all

respectful to each other, shared resources and sharpened each other's skills in the process of service delivery. This form of interaction was also noted to extend toward creativity in formal and informal decision-making processes, particularly in use of ICT to deliver services. Therefore, the county staff and management were noted to be willing to learn and practice on suggested operational transformations that were taken place. It was noted that some of the staff were not working in harmony in realizing the objective of strategic decision making which was evidence for disintegrated departmental perspectives.

5.3.3 Strategic Leadership Support and Organizational Performance

The commitment level of the Marsabit County Government was noted to be high with most of them focused on attaining the respective goals which had been established by the strategic managers. The leadership was focused in training and providing specific tasks to individual staff, that were aligned with the county objectives, mission and vision. This was an indication that the support provided to the staff by the strategic leaders was nothing short of excellence and organizational oriented approach. Though, some of the management members lacked effective communication skills and were partial when allocating the tasks to the staff, causing confusion on implementation details.

5.3.4 Strategic Centricity Organizational Performance

The process of prioritizing the needs of the public when providing different government services was present in Marsabit County Government. It was not just a matter of extending government services but doing so in uttermost desire to satisfy the person seeking the services. Specifically, the management was keen in checking the level of satisfaction on most of the operations provided and quickly attended to negative comments from the public

in regards to the services. The attention involved listening to the complains and immediately providing the solution, if the county worker had the capacity to do so and if not, the issue was liaised with the necessary authority. This at times took longer than expected, affecting the service delivery timeline and the worrying bit was that, it was intentional, as most workers avoided direct confrontation with the departmental heads.

5.4 Recommendations of the Study

5.4.1 Digitizing Operations and Organizational Performance

The Information and Technology departmental managers are recommended to conduct sensitization to other county departments in Marsabit, explaining the relevance of data in decision-making. The leadership could improve on acquiring recent ICT tools that enables the departmental managers to trust the data generated. This could be approached from complimenting traditional approach and eventually replacing it. The policy framework on cyber security training should be reinforced across all departments by the administrators. There should actionable consequences implemented by unit supervisors to individual staff for neglecting their role in curbing cyber insecurity such as their work computers not having passwords or sharing passwords to sensitive county data to other colleagues.

5.4.2 Institutional Culture and Organizational Performance

The county administrators are thus recommended to ensure that there is a culture of support and empathy towards each other, across all departments. It may be incorporated through providing financial resources to develop counseling programs aimed at handling staff anxiety and other personal issues that may interfere with the workers. This should also be affirmed by unit supervisors that are sensitive on the staff mood in work environment, in

specific parts of the departments. Any conflicts are suggested to be resolved through the policies in place for continued working relations. Any disturbance to the workers by a specific colleague should be discouraged through observing work-related ethics to minimize disruptions.

5.4.3 Strategic Leadership Support and Organizational Performance

The study recommends that county executive should provide policies that seek to improve the communication skills among the management and the staff. It is suggested to be done in specific departments with attention mainly being on speech, listening skills and emotional intelligence. Furthermore, the administrators should emphasize on impartiality among the supervisors to reduce internal differences among the workers. Formulation of task allocation formulation could be implemented if absent or reinforced if present, to improve work satisfaction among the county government staff.

5.4.4 Strategic Centricity Organizational Performance

The key departmental decision makers such as supervisors and administrators are recommended to reduce the timeline taken when responding to the inquiries of the staff. Existence policies in regards to when a raised issue is supposed to be resolved is recommended to be provided. It is recommended that the staff working in specific service points could have an organized format of inquiring additional support from the management. This may begin by being respectful in their communication, clarity and patience after submitting the request. In line with this, the county administrators are recommended to always monitor the communication systems in departments to identify areas of improvement.

5.5 Suggestion for Future Studies

Future studies could consider assessing how digital transformations have been affecting service delivery especially in essential departments like health and education. There is the need to consider other strategies of digital transformation such as partnership strategies developed between county governments in Kenya or with corporate sector. A further extension of the study should be done in developed counties like Nairobi, Mombasa and Kisumu in assessment of how strategic digital transformation have affected the performance off these developed counties in comparison to the study's findings.

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APPENDICIES

Appendix I: Introduction Letter

Dear Participant,

My name is Boru Wako Kosi and I am a student at Kenya Methodist University (KeMU) pursuing a master's degree in Masters of Business Administration (Strategic Management). As part of learning, am conducting a study on effect of strategic digital transformation on organizational performance of Marsabit County Government, Kenya. In this regard the study has selected you to take part in answering questionnaires depending on your role in the county government.

Procedure to be followed

I'll need to ask some questions through either a questionnaire or an interview using the information you submit. You can opt out of this study if you don't want to take part. You will not be punished or harassed if you refuse to participate in the study, and your decision will not be used against you or have an influence on your job/health. Keep in mind that taking part in the study is completely voluntary. You are free to ask any questions you have about the study at any time. You have the right to refuse to answer any questions or to terminate an interview at any time. You are also free to exit the study at any moment without compromising the services you are already delivering.

Discomforts and risks

The nature of the queries you'll be asked will not be about personal information hence will not cause discomfort to you. You have the option of refusing to answer either way. You can also terminate the answering of the questions at any moment.

Benefits

County government leadership will get adequate information on how digital transformation has been performing and notable areas of strategic policy weakness. This study may provide the justification needed to allocate more budget from the county revenue on equipping various departments with necessary digitalization infrastructure. Additionally, the need for constant development of policy infrastructure is needed to equip the county governments with necessary legal and operational guidelines to avoid work related errors, facilitate training and reduce resource wastage.

The staff recruited to work in various county government departments may use this study as a source of revealing some of the digital transformational concerns that have been affecting them. This information as provided through the data collection process, may be used to streamline the identified areas needing improvement in the county government.

Further on, the staff may also use the study to point out various milestones achieved through the digital transformational process in their respective departments.

Rewards

Anyone who wishes to engage in the study will not be compensated.

Confidentiality

The data collection process will be held in a secure area at various secondary school's premises. The questionnaire or interview will not include your name and will be kept in a secure area at the University.

Contact Information:

If you have any questions, please contact the supervisors listed below:

Dr. Nancy Rintari, PhD
Postgraduate Director
Kenya Methodist University
Email Address: dr.nancy.rintari@kemu.ac.ke

Fredrick Mutea
Kenya Methodist University
Email Address: fredrick.mutea@kemu.ac.ke

Participant's Statement

The remark concerning my participation in the study that was made before is obvious to me. I was given the opportunity to ask questions, and all of my concerns were satisfactorily addressed. I am absolutely oblivious to the fact that I am taking part in this study. I understand that my information will be kept private and that I can withdraw from the study at any time. I understand that regardless of whether I stop the research or not, I will not be treated unfairly at work, and that my decision will have no bearing on how I am treated.

Participant Signature..... Date.....

Investigator's Statement

I, the undersigned, have explained the procedures to be followed in the study, as well as the risks and rewards associated, to the participant in a language he or she understands.

Name of Interviewer..... Boru Wako Kosi Date.....

Interviewer Signature.....

Appendix II: Questionnaires for Managers

Please tick where you feel your opinion lies in regards to various sections provided.

SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

1. Which department do you head?

- a) Public service and administration ()
- b) Health Services ()
- c) Education, skills development, youth and sports ()
- d) Trade, tourism, industry and cooperative development ()
- e) Lands, energy, housing and urban development ()
- f) Agriculture, livestock and fisheries development ()
- g) Culture, gender and social services ()
- h) Roads, transport and public works ()
- i) Finance and economic planning ()

2. What is your education qualification?

- a) PhD ()
- b) Master's Degree ()
- c) Bachelor's Degree ()
- d) Diploma ()

3. How long have you worked for the county government of Marsabit?

- a) Over 21 years ()
- b) 11-20 years ()
- c) 5-10 years ()
- d) Less than 5 years ()

SECTION B: DIGITIZING OPERATIONS AND ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE

There are questions related to effect of digitizing operations on organizational performance. Please tick as appropriate in the boxes. 1-strongly disagree, 2-disagree, 3-neutral, 4, agree, 5- strongly agree. Additionally provide the opinions in writing where necessary.

No	Statement	1	2	3	4	5
1.	The management takes evidence-based decision making seriously to avoid biased opinion					
2.	The management takes time to explain to the staff on specific goals they are supposed to achieve.					
3.	We ensure there are safe ICT infrastructure to store county's data					

4. Please describe some of the laws and rules that the county government implements to guarantee that digital transformation is widely accepted?

5. What are some of the digital tools are commonly used in this county government?

SECTION C: INSTITUTIONAL CULTURE TRANSFORMATION AND ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE

There are questions related to effect of institutional culture transformation on organizational performance. Please provide you opinion in the provided spaces

1. Highlight how institutional norms are established in Marsabit county government?

2. Explain how gender roles within the organizational culture affect the performance of managers?

3. Describe how different leadership styles impact management of change.

4. Elaborate the various government policies related to institutional culture in this county government?

5. Explain method used to promote institutional culture between the management and the staff in Marsabit County Government?

SECTION D: STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP SUPPORT AND ORGANIZATIONAL

There are questions related to effect of strategic leadership support on organizational performance. Please tick as appropriate in the boxes. 1-strongly disagree, 2-disagree, 3-neutral, 4, agree, 5- strongly agree.

No	Statement	1	2	3	4	5
1.	The management allow feedback mechanism from the staff on clarification on areas they have not understood					
2.	The management trains the staff on how to ensure their personal work target align with county's goals.					
3.	We empower the employees through assigning them minor leadership roles to exercise their decision-making skills					
4.	The management is fair when allocating resources to various departments.					

5. Explain the guidelines that are used when allocating resources in various departments?

SECTION E: STRATEGIC CENTRICITY AND ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE

There are questions related to effect of strategic centricity on organizational performance. Please tick as appropriate in the boxes. 1-strongly disagree, 2-disagree, 3-neutral, 4, agree, 5- strongly agree.

No	Statement	1	2	3	4	5
1.	The management ensures a solution is provided on any negative comments from the public receiving services to enhance quality satisfaction.					
2.	Any conflict that arises between the staff and the public, is amicably resolved through listening to each team's complains					
3.	We avoid any delayed service provision unless when it cannot be avoided.					

4. Highlight training is conducted in the county government to educate the workers on digitalization especially in terms of online registration.

5. Explain the issues affecting the service delivery.

SECTION F: ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE

There are questions related to organizational performance. Please tick as appropriate in the boxes. 1-strongly disagree, 2-disagree, 3-neutral, 4, agree, 5- strongly agree.

No	Statement	1	2	3	4	5
1.	The county government has digitized most of its operations to enhance service delivery.					
2.	There is visible social impact witnessed as a result of reliability of the county government.					

3.	The management offers strategic leadership support to all departments to enhance operational efficiency					
4.	There are internal processes developed to resolve service delivery concerns on the shortest time possible.					

5. Explain how strategic digital transformation has supported sustainability of various services as dispensed by the county government?

Appendix III: Questionnaires for Officers

Please tick where you feel your opinion lies in regards to various sections provided.

SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

1. Which department do you work in?

- j) Public service and administration ()
- k) Health Services ()
- l) Education, skills development, youth and sports ()
- m) Trade, tourism, industry and cooperative development ()
- n) Lands, energy, housing and urban development ()
- o) Agriculture, livestock and fisheries development ()
- p) Culture, gender and social services ()
- q) Roads, transport and public works ()
- r) Finance and economic planning ()

2. What is your education qualification?

- e) PhD ()
- f) Master's Degree ()
- g) Bachelor's Degree ()
- h) Diploma ()

3. How long have you worked for the county government of Marsabit?

- e) Over 21 years ()
- f) 11-20 years ()
- g) 5-10 years ()
- h) Less than 5 years ()

SECTION B: DIGITIZING OPERATIONS AND ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE

There are questions related to effect of digitizing operations on organizational performance. Please tick as appropriate in the boxes. 1-strongly disagree, 2-disagree, 3-neutral, 4, agree, 5- strongly agree.

No	Statement	1	2	3	4	5
1.	There have been data driven decision making due to digitizing operations					
2.	Definition of goals is easier to understand					
3.	There are digital tools such as computers and servers to store county information.					
4.	The county data has been more secured from unauthorized access.					
5.	Services are efficiently optimized due to incorporation of ICT to store and access data.					

SECTION C: INSTITUTIONAL CULTURE TRANSFORMATION AND ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE

There are questions related to effect of institutional culture transformation on organizational performance. Please tick as appropriate in the boxes. 1-strongly disagree, 2-disagree, 3-neutral, 4, agree, 5- strongly agree.

No	Statement	1	2	3	4	5
1.	The staff have been effectively collaborating in strategic decision making					
2.	There county workers have undergone training on how to adopt to strategic change					
3.	Recognition of staff's attainment to strategic objectives is done through reward system					
4.	There is a healthy working environment in Marsabit County Government.					
5.	Innovation is encouraged through creative thinking and use of ICT to deliver services.					

SECTION D: STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP SUPPORT AND ORGANIZATIONAL

There are questions related to effect of strategic leadership support on organizational performance. Please tick as appropriate in the boxes. 1-strongly disagree, 2-disagree, 3-neutral, 4, agree, 5- strongly agree.

No	Statement	1	2	3	4	5
1.	Communication is effectively clarified by the management to avoid ambiguity when issuing instructions					
2.	The strategic leadership have made efforts to align different strategies with issued objectives to staff.					
3.	The staff are committed to attaining the set goals as a way of aligning with the mission and vision					
4.	There have been employee empowerment programs offered to staff.					
5.	Resource allocation is done based on the proposal submitted to the departmental managers					

SECTION E: STRATEGIC CENTRICITY AND ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE

There are questions related to effect of strategic centricity on organizational performance. Please tick as appropriate in the boxes. 1-strongly disagree, 2-disagree, 3-neutral, 4, agree, 5- strongly agree.

No	Statement	1	2	3	4	5
1.	Customer satisfaction is a priority in Marsabit County Government					
2.	The staff have been trained on how to manage the customer's emotions					
3.	Customer well-being is promoted through showing empathy to their concerns					
4.	Services are delivered within the shortest time possible.					
5.	Diversity in services is provided to enable the public get all possible government services.					

SECTION F: ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE

There are questions related to organizational performance. Please tick as appropriate in the boxes. 1-strongly disagree, 2-disagree, 3-neutral, 4, agree, 5- strongly agree.

No	Statement	1	2	3	4	5
1.	Quality service delivery improves organizational performance					
2.	Internal processes have been efficient to support the organizational performance of the county government					
3.	Operational efficiency is promoted through incorporation of expertise from staff and technology.					
4.	The management and staff have been collaborating to enhance the sustainability on organizational performance of the county government.					
5.	Strategic digital transformation has enhanced the organizational performance to have a lasting social impact to the residents of Marsabit County Government					