# The Predictive Role of Transformational Capability on Service Delivery of Registered Water Service Providers in Nairobi City County, Kenya

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#### **ABSTRACT**

Service delivery has deteriorated in the recent past. This study, therefore focuses on examining how transformational capabilities influences service delivery in water service provision. The water service providers are part of the public sector, and they endeavor to provide their services in a practical, reliable, and customer-friendly way to boost their market presence. Service delivery is a vital aspect upon which the water service providers expect to build their brands. The service providers have unique features that they leverage to boost service delivery. Thus, the research sought after establishing how transformational capability affect the service delivery in the water service sector of Nairobi City, Kenya. Fundamentally, the research investigated how sensing, seizing, and transformational capability affect the provision of water services by water service providers in the county of Nairobi City, Kenya. The dynamic capability theory, the resource based view, and contingency theory are instrumental in analyzing how transformational capability influences delivery of water services by water services providers in Nairobi City. The research highlights the gaps in the previous research undertakings concerning service delivery and focuses specifically on service delivery of water service providers in Nairobi City County, Kenya. This research work utilized both descriptive and explanatory approach with 162 respondents from 12 water service providers in the County of Nairobi City as the target population. 90 participants were chosen from each institution's upper, middle, and lower management using a proportionate stratified and simple random selection technique. A survey was conducted through the use of questionnaire as the tool for collection of primary data. The validity of the research instrument was arrived at through expert opinion, and the reliability of the questionnaire was tested using a pilot study. Closed-ended questions yielded quantitative data which were analysed for descriptive characteristics and inferential statistics. The study revealed that transformational capability has a positive contribution to the level of service delivery. The recommendations drawing from this findings requires that policy be enacted to foster development and exploitation of transformational capability and thus derive even better outcomes in service delivery.

**Keywords:** Transformational Capability, Service Delivery and Service

#### 1.0 Introduction

Service delivery essentially describes how authorities interacts with its citizenry in handling their affairs, providing requisite data and fulfilling their mandates to them (Ondari-Okemwa & Smith, 2019). Further, service delivery can be classified into several fields such as planning, waste management, sanitation, amongst many others. In essence, this report focuses on the service delivery of water service providers in Nairobi City Count, Kenya. WASREB one of the major players in the water sector in Kenya has listed climate change, deficient infrastructure amongst other factors as the leading cause of the challenges affecting water service provision in Kenya and significantly so in Nairobi County. In Nairobi County, the current per capita volume is 647m<sup>3</sup> against a global benchmark of 1000m<sup>3</sup> thus signifying the depth of challenges affecting the service delivery of water in the County.

Transformational capability define the ability of an organization to reconfigure, create and integrate resources to bolster its performance in dynamic business environment (Hassan, 2016). The concept of transformational capability stem from the shortcomings of the Resource Based model that places emphasis on the connection between the firm's abilities and resources to adapt to the dynamic business environment (L. Breznik, 2016). The service providers' critical areas are operations and policy formulation and thus transformation capability focuses on addressing both resource deficits and management of the minimal resources available in these organizations (Warner & Wager, 2019).

Furthermore, transformational capability has been incorporated into conceptual models of research on service delivery by researches conducted by Kiiru (2017) hence forming the basis of its adoption in this study. The registered water service providers in Nairobi City County face multiple challenges in the mandate to provide water services due to lack of proper resource mobilization thus hampering their competitive position in the market. Thus, this study sought to establish how transformational capability affect service delivery for water service providers within Nairobi City County, Kenya and how transformational capability can help turn around the situation.

#### 2.0 Literature Review

#### 2.1.1 Resource-Based View

Wernerfelt is accredited as one of the founders of this model, whereby he propounded resource-based theory as a theory of competitive advantage in 1984. He further divulged that an organization's resource plays a critical role in establishing the company's competitive edge in that it describes the resource attribute as heterogeneity, valuable, in-imitable, non-substitutable and sustainability in its operations (Vidal & Mitchell, 2018). Under the RBV, the resources are classified as either tangible or intangible which defines the capacity or ability of a firm to manage its operations to steward it towards optimal levels and ascertain the attainment of its objectives (Pascual, 2014).

According to Barney et al., (2021), the tangible and intangible resources are crucial in bolstering performance and thus if well utilized can catapult the organization's performance to greater levels. Brahma & Haimanti (2017) established in their study that through the RBV approach, organizations are able create, allocate and utilize their internal resources effectively thus cementing the aspect of

continuously strengthening the internal resources and effective utilization to maintain competitive edge even in the wake of disturbances in the market.

The classification under RBV enumerates tangible resources as human capital, physical assets and technological resources while intangible resources include trademarks, brands and intellectual properties which are critical due to their rareness. These resources provide an organization with the competitive edge due to the internal resources the organization possesses. The use of RBV in this study is instrumental in showcasing the relationship between a firm's resources and capacity to improve performance such as service delivery of the water service providers. The study uses the theory to embed the significance of internal resources and help underscore its role in the management of water service providers in Nairobi City County and subsequently their service delivery.

## **2.1.2** Contingency Theory

The contingency theory was propounded by Fred Edward in 1964 and expounds on the organization structure and its alignment to the performance of the organization. The theory further espouses that there is no single excellent way to run an organization but focus on the optimal course of action anchored on internal and external situation at a given point in time (Laosirihongthong et al., 2014). The theory highlights the significance of leadership based on the organization structure and its pivotal role while handling different managerial issues at any given time. Furthermore, this theory builds on situational leadership theory and path-goal theory in decision making. It acknowledges the leadership role in accentuating the decision making process based on correspondence relation between leadership and capabilities (Breznik & Lahovnik, 2016).

Kováts (2018) concluded that for an organization to enhance service delivery, it is imperative to structure their leadership in line with capabilities in order to bolster decision-making process. Primarily, one of the major contributors in embracing transformational leadership which is a transformational capability through which bold decisions are made and competitive advantage are ascertained via established channels such as; human empowerment, effective use of the firm's resources, and innovations.

An organization that has embraced transformative leadership causes change in their human capital which catapults their performance to greater levels. Water service providers in Nairobi City County should focus on contingency approach whereby decisions are structured are from a situational point of view other than blanket approach which works against them mostly. Yulk (2011) asserts that placing leadership at the core of organizational structure plays a crucial role in enhancing decision making which translates to effective use of firm's resources and thus helping Water service providers bolster their service delivery.

# 2.1.3 Dynamic Capabilities Theory

Dynamic capabilities (DC) theory is an improvement of the RBV theory whereby it focuses on the use company's internal resources to develop competitive advantage. The theory diverges from the RBV trajectory where it narrows down the analysis of internal resources of an organization to specific capacities which can be directly utilized to gain competitive edge in the business

environment (Gupta, 2021). Dynamic capabilities theory views competition as a continuous situation where organizations either develop new combinations or copy competencies of deemed of high regard as a way of remaining afloat. As an improvement of RBV, the theory goes over and beyond classifying internal resources as valuable, rare, inimitable and non-substitutable (VRIN) to entrenching the concept of consolidating competencies which impact service delivery (Pisano, 2017). Thus, dynamic capabilities aspect of reconfiguration of strategic resources within a firm is instrumental in developing and maintaining the competitive edge in a business environment.

The challenges facing water service providers are also dynamic since they evolve as the time changes. The role of utilizing dynamic capability theory in this study stems from the fact that water service providers need to up their game on matters service delivery even in the constraints of reduced resources and increasing challenges. As such, an evolutionary approach that stimulates innovation in problem-solving activities and decision-making process remain the fundamental approach that can help these water service providers achieve their mandate. Therefore, the applicability of the theory in this study is the determination and effective utilization of internal resources possessed by these water service providers to bolster their service delivery to the residents of Nairobi City County.

## 2.2 Empirical Literature Review

Cui & Jiao (2019) analyze the relationship between strategic alliances of sensing capability in boosting an organization's competitive advantage. The study investigates the role of sensing capability in realizing corporate responsibility. This study centers on corporate responsibility and not necessarily the subject of service delivery (Cui & Jiao, 2019). Kindstrom, Kowalkowski & Sandberg (2013) researched the role of sensing dynamic capability in enabling service innovation for organizations. Using the analogy-based approach, the study concludes a connection between the functions of sensing capability and service innovation. Conversely, this study is theoretical and lacks empirical backing due to the lack of tests conducted.

Matysiak, Rugman & Bausch (2018) conducted a study to unearth the dominant logic behind sensing capability for multinational organizations worldwide. The study adopted a case study to analyse primary and secondary data collected from 15 interviews. The research findings indicate that international companies are exposed to dynamism where sensing capability is critical in boosting their competitive advantage. This research's basis is global entities whose scope is significantly different from water service providers in the County of Nairobi City here in Kenya.

In their study, Oliver & Holzinger (2008) investigate the framework of transformational capability such as the transformational capability in effecting strategic political management. The study focuses on the effectiveness of the political strategies as the firm's dynamic management capability. The study results indicate that the framework of transformational capability affects political-strategic management. However, the study is quite broad and does not significantly address transformational capability concerning service delivery.

Similarly, Ellonen, Jantunen & Kuivalainen (2019) assesses the role of seizing capability in developing innovation-related capacities for organizations. The study's focus is a single case in the publishing industry where the findings indicate that seizing capability acts as a catalyst to spark off

operation capacities development. However, their research work failed to show the inter-linkage between seizing capability and service delivery. Secondly, their research work concentrated on the publishing industry, and its results might not apply to the water service industry.

Kump et al. (2019) investigated the scale of measuring seizing capability in creating a competitive advantage for organizations. The study focuses on measuring the organization's capacity to relate the seizing capability and competitive advantage. The study's findings show no standard scale for measuring seizing capability, thus limiting the comparability of empirical results. Moreover, the contextual setup of the study is different from that of the current one.

Based on the reviewed literature, this study has generated the following conceptual framework.

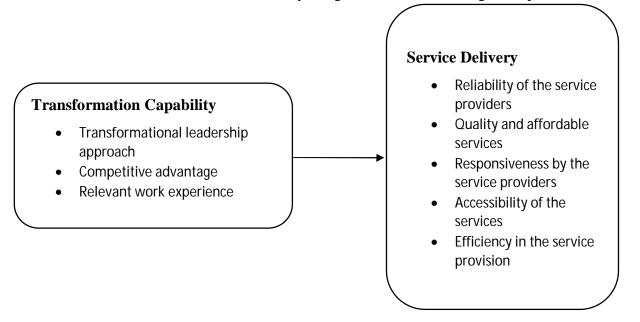


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework Source: Literature Review (2021)

## 3.0 Research Methodology

This study utilized both explanatory and descriptive research designs in this chapter. Descriptive research as espoused by Lambert & Lambert is vital in aiding the assessment of an identified variable. This approach is appropriate in this study since it examines how transformational capability can enhance service delivery of water service providers in Nairobi City County, Kenya. Past studies in the service sector have successfully used these two research design to analyze cause effect relationship between diverse organizational phenomena (Kinyua, 2015; Njiru, & Kinyua, 2022; Nzomo, Kinyua & Mwasiaji, 2023)

The target population for this study is the registered water service providers in Nairobi City County where a sample is picked to aid in the collection of data (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003). The target

population was made up of the twelve registered water service providers who were represented by 162 employees at different levels of management

Through stratified sampling, a population sample was derived through division of the target population into strata before selecting samples randomly from each of the strata. Parsons (2014) established that for a sample size to meet adequate requirements for observation and in making references, it is imperative to encompass 10% of the target population. Similarly, Kothari (2007) also established that a sample should comprise at least 30 elements. Based on these two arguments a sampling factor of 0.55 was used.

**Table 1: Sampling Frame** 

Level of	Population	<b>Multiplier Factor</b>	Sample	
Management		(55%)		
Top-level	34	0.55	19	
Mid-level	56	0.55	31	
Lower level	72	0.55	40	
Total	162		90	

Source: Survey Data (2021)

Table 1 illustrates that lower-level management has the most representation followed by middle-level. Top-level management had the least number of participants in this study owing to their availability for this activity. Questionnaires are the primary data collection instrument for this study which relied on both open-ended and close-ended question. In-depth responses are obtained through the close-ended questions while the well-structured responses were obtained from the open-ended questions.

A pilot study was undertaken to test the reliability and validity of the data collection instrument. The guidance of experts like my able supervisor played a critical role in ascertaining the validity through content validity test approach. The test and retest method was used to crosscheck the reliability of the instrument during the pilot study. A questionnaire was given to a respondent twice and the results cross-checked to ensure internal consistency. Ultimately, the internal consistency was measured using the Cronbach's alpha index that established the items were within a scale measure and research construct. A coefficient extending above 0.6 illustrates that the instrument being measured is reliable and valid as enumerated by Payanides (2013). By applying SPSS the Cronbach's alpha index was determined. This deduced standard quantifiable items and the correlation.

**Table 2: Reliability Test** 

Reliability Results Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	Remark
Transformational Capability	.872	Reliable
Service Delivery	.856	Reliable
Overall	.834	Reliable

Source: Survey Data (2021)

The data acquired was gleaned through code modification and presented in tabular format o aid in identifying responses type of responses. Data analysis was conducted suing the SPSS software, where descriptive techniques such as mean, median and standard deviation were calculated for the quantitative aspects of the data to aid meaningful explanations of the outcomes as espoused by Rowley, (2014). Responses from the questionnaire are scored between 1 and 5 to convert descriptive data to quantitative form and thereafter multiple regression analysis through the SPSS software.

Similarly, content analysis was used in examining the qualitative data whose outcomes are tabulated and presented in text format. Themes imbedded from the collected data formed the basis of the inferential analysis done through multiple regression. The use of multiple regression helps in predicting current independent variable using two or three factors and thus ascertain the interconnection between dependent and independent variables. The equation below represents the multiple regression model adopted for this research.

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \epsilon$$

Where:

**Y** = Service delivery of water service providers in Nairobi City County.

 $X_1$ = Transformation Capability  $\beta_1$ , = Variable coefficients  $\epsilon$  = error term

The SPSS software was utilized for multiple regression analysis. The candidate used the coefficient of determination (R<sup>2</sup>) to test the model significance to find out the service delivery due to transformational capabilities. In addition, the researcher calculates the F-statistic at a 95% confidence level to establish a substantial correlation between the service delivery and transformation capability of the water service provider.

As for the open ended questions, content analysis was utilized to analyze qualitative data collected from the research instrument. Prior to the data collection process, a permit from NACOSTI was obtained as an adherence to providing requisite information regarding the objective of the study, procedures undertaken, and the credibility of the researcher on how collected information will be utilized. Furthermore, respondents are assured of their privacy through the use of codes in classifying sensitive (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003)

#### 4.0 Research Findings and Discussion

A total of 72 questionnaires were filled and returned out of 90 that were distributed. This constituted 80% response rate which was sufficient for the research as per Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) recommendation of a response rate of 50% being satisfactory. The response rate of 80% increased demographic representation and also improved the accuracy of the findings of this study.

# **4.1 Descriptive Statistics**

The objective of the study was to establish the effect of transformation capability on the service delivery of water service providers in Nairobi City County. The metrics employed for this analysis include mean, standards deviation and coefficient of variation to explore the responses gathered from the participants.

**Table 3 Descriptive Statistics for Transformational Capability** 

Descriptive Statement	n	Mean	Standard Dev.	Coefficie nt of Variatio n
The company has highly skilled labor, essential in building a competitive advantage.	72	4.164	.791	19
The firm's transformational leadership approach facilitates an enabling environment	72	3.624	.856	18
Our company has invested in policies to enable sustaining of competitive advantage over rivals	72	4.134	.742	26
The company's leadership is visionary and inspirational towards achieving organizational objectives	72	3.945	.878	17
Our company empowers the workforce through innovation and idealized influence	72	4.012	.782	21
The company aligns its core competencies with market demands to promote its competitiveness	72	4.231	.739	23
Aggregate		4.02	0.798	20.6

Source: Survey Data (2021)

The aggregate for transformational capability computed 4.02 which falls under the agreeable limits of Likert scale. Standard deviation and coefficient variation was computed to be 0.798 and 0.206 respectively. The diverse management employees from the 12 water service providers were close to the mean since the level of variability was 20.6%. Further, the responses by the 72 participants regarding aspects of transformational capability ranging from 3.624 and 4.231 was computed. Similarly, the individual aspects range on variation was between 17% and 26% and thus anchoring the reliability of the responses. The narrow variability indicates stability and reliability of the collected data a capable of drawing requisite conclusions.

The findings illustrate that for water service providers to achieve competitiveness, they should continuously leverage core competencies such as skilled labor and innovation. Thus, as the need to improve service delivery grows by the day in the rapidly changing business environment, there is a need for the water service providers to tap into their core competencies and deploy visionary leadership for them to actualize their objectives

The researcher also conducted analysis of sample measures using the data on responses to the statement relating to Service Delivery. Five metrics were used to assess the service delivery of the water service providers in Nairobi City County with the results indicated in the table below.

Table 4: Descriptive Statistics on Service Delivery for water service providers.

<b>Descriptive Statement</b>	n	Mean	Std. Dev.	Coefficient of Variation
Quality	72	3.821	0.763	12
Affordable	72	3.671	0.654	18
Reliable	72	3.687	0.741	15
Accessible	72	3.800	.818	16
Responsive	72	3.961	.676	20
Efficiency Level	72	3.948	.812	17
Aggregate				
		3.81	0.744	15.7

Source: Survey Data (2021)

The findings on Table 4 illustrate a mean score of 3.81 as an aggregate of five measures of service delivery for water service providers which confirmed the five point Likert scale that this study adopted. In principal, the aggregate of coefficient of variation at 15.7% clearly suggest that response mean score of low variability. The sample mean was a stable estimator of the true mean of this research since the concentration of the management representatives responses' oscillated around the aggregate mean and thus showing a narrow variability.

## 4.2 Test of Research Objective

Simple linear regression to establish the effect of transformational capability on service delivery of water service providers in Nairobi City County. Table 5 shows the summary of the regression equation.

**Table 5: Model Summary** 

Model	R	R2	Adjusted Square	R	Standard Error of the Estimate
1	0.786	0.618	0.596		0.433

Table 5 shows that coefficient of correlation was 0.786 which is an indication that the study variable significantly influenced the service delivery of water service providers in Nairobi City County. Coefficient of adjusted determination was 0.596 which translates to 59.6%. Further, the variation in dependent variable was explained by the transformational capability variable with the residual explained by other aspects outside the scope of this research.

Table 6: ANOVA

Model	Sum of	df	Mean	F	Sig.
	squares		Square		
Regression	504.11	1	63.01	4.62	0.0001
Residual	655.16	70	13.64		
Total	1159.28	71			

a. Response Variable: Service Delivery

b. **Predictors:** (Constant), Transformational Capability

Source: Survey Data (2021)

The inference from the ANOVA analysis showed that the model had a level of significance standing at 0.1%. The collected data provided basis to the assumptions on parameters of the population as the (p-value) was less than 5%. The computed value of the dependent variable was more significant compared to the Critical value (4.62>2.72), therefore indicating that transformational capability statistically impact service delivery by the water service providers in the County of Nairobi City.

The study conducted a regression coefficient analysis of the predictor variable and result shown in Table 7.

**Table 7: Regression Coefficients** 

Model	Unstandardized coefficients		Std coefficients	t	Sig
	β	Standard Error	beta		
Constant	1.432	.564		2.491	1.651
Transformational Capability	0.591	0.139	0.328	2.946	0.007

Dependent variable: Service Delivery

Source: Survey Data (2021)

From the SPSS generated table, the estimated equation is:

 $Y = 1.432 + 0.591X_1$ 

Where Y = Service Delivery $X_1 = Transformational Capability$ 

From the illustration of Table 7 above which showcases a regression analysis illustration that significance for operational capability was at  $\beta$ =0.1.432; t = 2.491; p = .007. These figures illustrates a 95% confidence level of transformational capability influence on service delivery of water service providers in Nairobi City County. The result depicted that a unit increment in transformational capability would increase service provision of water services providers in the County of Nairobi City by 0.591.

These outcomes support conclusions derived by Liang et al. (2020), which demonstrated a favorable correlation between visionary leadership, organizational culture, and an empowered human resource to drive transformational capability. Additionally, the results of this study provide evidence for the Resource-based perspective theory, whose theoretical basis views resources as the crucial aspects of a firm's performance, thus allowing the water service providers to manage their resources effectively, enabling them to retain sustainable competitive lead resulting in enhanced service delivery.

## 5.0 Conclusion and Policy Implication

Service delivery is a significant measure of the water service provider's performance in public sector and thus this study sought to investigate how transformational capability affects the service delivery of these organizations. The findings drawn from both quantitative and qualitative data analyses made it feasible for the study to make appropriate determinations. Statistical analysis results demonstrated how transformational capability affects service delivery. The analysis of standard deviation, variation coefficient and the average-mean confirmed these practices are regarded as transformational capability. The regression analysis showed that transformational capability positively affects the service provision of water services providers. Therefore, the study concludes that transformational leadership positively affects the service delivery of water service providers in Nairobi City County, Kenya.

# 7.0 Suggestions for Further Research

Restrictions to water service providers in Nairobi City County provides ground for future researchers to focus on a more extensive geographical scope to ascertain if similar outcomes would be obtained. In addition, the study focuses on water service providers in Nairobi City County. Therefore, future researchers should consider other segments of the service industry to validate the inferences made in this study. Ultimately, future researchers may also need to explore how other variables affect the relationship between transformational capability and service provision by providers of water.

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