

Diverse Attributes of Generation Z Workforce and Service Delivery in Selected Road Management Agencies in Western Region of Kenya

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Abstract

The road sector in Kenya has continued to attract criticism from its clients over unsatisfactory service delivery, characterized by delayed projects, unclear project timelines, poor records on project duration and limited digitization of services. This study sought to examine the effect of diverse attributes of Generation Z workforce on service delivery in selected road management agencies in the Western Region of Kenya. The study was anchored on the Theory of Generations and the SERVQUAL model. A descriptive and explanatory research design was adopted. The unit of analysis was the selected road management agencies in the Western Region of Kenya, namely Kenya National Highways Authority, Kenya Urban Roads Authority and Kenya Rural Roads Authority, while the unit of observation comprised 104 top-level managers, operational managers and site engineers, all of whom were included in the study through a census approach. Primary data were collected using a semi-structured questionnaire anchored on a five-point Likert scale. A pilot study involving ten respondents was carried out to confirm the suitability of the instrument; validity was addressed through content, criterion and construct checks, while reliability was tested using Cronbach's alpha against a 0.7 threshold. A response rate of 90.38% was achieved, and diagnostic tests confirmed that the data satisfied the assumptions underlying regression analysis. Descriptive results showed strong agreement that Generation Z attributes support service delivery (aggregate mean = 4.292). Correlation analysis revealed a positive and significant relationship between Generation Z attributes and service delivery ($r = .516, p < .05$), while regression analysis showed a positive and significant effect of Generation Z attributes on service delivery ($\beta = .294, p = .039$). The null hypothesis was therefore rejected. The study concluded that Generation Z's creativity, technological proficiency, collaboration and high standards significantly enhance road quality, adoption of digital monitoring tools and innovation in maintenance practices. The study recommends that road management agencies strategically leverage Generation Z's tech-savviness in digital mapping and road quality monitoring, institutionalize mentorship programs that pair older cohorts with Generation Z employees, and invest in continuous training to sustain efficient service delivery.

Keywords: Generation Z, Multigenerational Workforce, Service Delivery, Road Management Agencies, Western Kenya

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1. Introduction

Service delivery denotes the way an organization structures and executes its mission, strategy and goals for optimum output. In the public sector, service delivery entails the fulfilment of a policy or legal expectation to the public for deliverables, with internal processes triggered towards delivering services in a time-conscious, cost-effective and efficient manner. Service review charters of most public sector entities pursue the SERVQUAL model, which conceptualizes quality service along dimensions of reliability, responsiveness, assurance, empathy and tangibles (Parasuraman, Zeithaml & Berry, 1988). In the road sector, service delivery is reflected in road quality, adherence to project timelines, maintenance efficiency, accessibility and overall connectivity of the road network.

The road sector in Kenya has not escaped criticism from its clients for unsatisfactory service delivery. The sector has not been able to improve service accessibility to all citizens; digitization of services to curb fraud, create openness in tendering and enhance responsibility and accountability of officers appears to be lacking (Oguna,

2018). Citizens are also unable to lodge complaints, comments and compliments concerning the sector's services directly on the government portal. There are poor records on when road projects begin and end and the duration projects are supposed to take, and in some instances projects take too long to be completed, thereby failing to achieve the intended goals (Nyika, 2018; Waithera & Susan, 2020). In Kenya, the mandate of developing, maintaining and managing public roads is vested in road agencies, among them the Kenya National Highways Authority (KeNHA), the Kenya Urban Roads Authority (KURA) and the Kenya Rural Roads Authority (KeRRA), whose performance directly shapes citizens' experience of road infrastructure services (Kenya Roads Board, 2023).

At the same time, the contemporary workplace is composed of employees drawn from different generational cohorts, namely Baby Boomers, Generation X, Millennials and Generation Z, each carrying distinct attributes into the workplace (Baysal, 2022). Generation Z, comprising those born from the mid-1990s onwards, is the newest workforce cohort and is considered the first fully digital-native generation. Having grown up with technology, Generation Z employees rely heavily on digital tools, prefer tech-driven work environments and are accustomed to instant information access (Ozkan & Solmaz, 2015; Chillakuri, 2020). They value immediate feedback, flexible work arrangements and opportunities for growth, and tend to prioritize innovation, independence, personal fulfilment and social impact (Aggarwal, Sadhna, Gupta, Mittal & Rastogi, 2022; Pandita, Agarwal & Vapiwala, 2023). When road agencies understand and value the characteristics of this cohort, it becomes possible to incorporate this awareness into organizational development plans, foster better collaborative working relationships and increase the quality of service delivery to the public.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

Despite sustained public investment in road infrastructure, road management agencies in Kenya continue to be criticized for inefficiency, delayed completion of projects, poor project records and limited digitization of services (Nyika, 2018; Oguna, 2018). The duration of projects and their rate of completion are frequently unclear, and in some instances projects take too long to be completed, thereby failing to achieve their intended goals (Oloo, 2018; Waithera & Susan, 2020). These service delivery gaps persist at a time when the composition of the agencies' workforce is changing, with Generation Z employees progressively entering the sector.

Existing empirical work on Generation Z has largely been undertaken in foreign contexts such as Romania, Indonesia and the hospitality industry, has relied predominantly on qualitative approaches and systematic reviews, and has concentrated on employee performance rather than service delivery (Racolța-Paina & Irini, 2021; Wulur & Mandagi, 2023; Rampen, Pangemanan & Mandagi, 2023; Leung, Sun, Zhang & Ding, 2021). Consequently, it is not clear how the diverse attributes of the Generation Z workforce affect service delivery in road management agencies in the Western Region of Kenya. This study sought to fill this contextual, conceptual and methodological gap.

1.2 Objective of the Study

The objective of the study was to examine the effect of diverse attributes of Generation Z workforce on service delivery in selected road management agencies in Western Region of Kenya.

1.3 Research Hypothesis

The study tested the following null hypothesis:

H_{01} : There is no significant effect of Generation Z's workforce diverse attributes on service delivery in selected road management agencies in Western Region of Kenya.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Theoretical Review

The study was anchored on the Theory of Generations and the SERVQUAL model. The Theory of Generations, advanced by Mannheim (1952), posits that individuals born within the same historical and socio-cultural period develop shared consciousness, values and dispositions that distinguish them from other cohorts. The theory explains why Generation Z employees, having been socialized in an era of pervasive digital technology, exhibit distinct workplace attributes such as technological affinity, preference for digital communication, desire for immediate feedback and orientation toward innovation and social impact. The theory therefore provided the basis for treating Generation Z attributes as a distinct predictor of organizational outcomes.

The SERVQUAL model (Parasuraman *et al.*, 1988) conceptualizes service quality as the gap between customers' expectations and their perceptions of the service actually received, along the dimensions of reliability,

responsiveness, assurance, empathy and tangibles. In this study the model guided the operationalization of service delivery in road management agencies, expressed through indicators such as road quality, adherence to project timelines, maintenance efficiency, accessibility and road connectivity. Combining the two frameworks provided a practical and holistic method for evaluating the workforce and service outcomes in public sector organizations.

2.2 Empirical Review

Racolța-Paina and Irini (2021), in their study on Generation Z in the workplace through the lenses of human resource professionals in Romania, observed that organizations were ready to handle the changes brought by Generation Z. In companies comprising 50 to 700 employees, Generation Z made up between 11% and 58% of the workforce, and the effective management of the changes the cohort introduced depended on the knowledge and openness of both HR specialists and managers toward the new generation, which plays a critical role in improving overall service delivery. The study, however, adopted a qualitative approach and was conducted in Romania, presenting methodological and contextual gaps which the present study addressed.

Wulur and Mandagi (2023) examined the antecedents and consequences of Generation Z employee performance through a systematic literature review of studies held in major academic databases. The review singled out technological skill, work-life balance, an inclusive workplace and opportunities for career growth as leading influences on Generation Z performance, and considered how that performance feeds into outcomes such as productivity, organizational culture and staff retention. A conceptual gap is evident in that the study addressed employee and organizational performance, whereas the present study concentrated specifically on Generation Z's influence on service delivery.

Rampen, Pangemanan and Mandagi (2023) undertook a systematic review of the factors behind Generation Z employee performance, drawing on scholarly articles selected through a rigorous, detailed procedure. The review concluded that job satisfaction, leadership, motivation and organizational culture are pivotal influences on employee performance. The reliance on a review of prior literature, rather than primary data, presented a methodological gap addressed by the current study, which combined qualitative and quantitative primary data.

Studies in the hospitality and services industries have similarly underscored the growing weight of Generation Z in the workplace. Leung *et al.* (2021) applied social capital theory to explain how the hotel industry attracts Generation Z employees, while Yu, Shum, Alcorn, Sun and He (2022) established that Generation Z employees' awareness of technological change shapes their workplace attitudes and service behaviors. Tarigan, Cahya, Valentine, Hatane and Jie (2022) found that total reward systems and job satisfaction significantly influence the productivity of Indonesian Generation Z workers, ultimately affecting company performance. In the Kenyan road sector, however, empirical attention has concentrated on project-level constraints such as financing, cost overruns and timeliness (Mushori, Rambo & Wafula, 2020; Waithera & Susan, 2020), leaving the contribution of workforce generational attributes, and Generation Z attributes in particular, largely unexamined.

2.3 Conceptual Framework

The study conceptualized diverse attributes of the Generation Z workforce as the independent variable and service delivery as the dependent variable. Generation Z attributes were operationalized through reliance on modern technology, creativity and innovation, preference for teamwork and digital communication, desire for recognition and feedback, pursuit of attractive benefits and clear career growth guidelines, and inclination toward flexible work arrangements. Service delivery was operationalized through road quality, timeliness of project completion, maintenance efficiency, accessibility, reliability and road connectivity.

3. Methodology

The study adopted a combination of descriptive and explanatory research designs. The descriptive component helped in obtaining pertinent and precise information on the status of the variables, while the explanatory component was applied to establish the causal relationship between Generation Z workforce attributes and service delivery (Toyon, 2021). The designs were appropriate because the study sought both to profile the attributes of the workforce and to test hypothesized relationships.

The unit of analysis was the selected road management agencies in the Western Region of Kenya, namely Kenya National Highways Authority, Kenya Urban Roads Authority and Kenya Rural Roads Authority, covering roads provided between January 2022 and January 2026. The unit of observation comprised the top-level managers, operational managers and site engineers in the agencies, totalling 104 employees. Owing to the small and accessible population, a census approach was adopted and all 104 respondents were included in the study

(Mweshi & Sakyi, 2020).

Primary data were collected using a semi-structured questionnaire anchored on a five-point Likert scale, which captured both quantitative ratings and qualitative responses. A pilot exercise involving ten respondents was carried out to confirm that the instrument was suitable and appropriate for the main data collection. Validity was addressed through content, criterion and construct checks, while reliability was tested using Cronbach's alpha, with all constructs meeting the 0.7 benchmark. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics (means and standard deviations) and inferential statistics (Pearson correlation and regression analysis), while qualitative responses were examined through content analysis and reported in narrative form. Diagnostic tests for normality, linearity, multicollinearity, autocorrelation and heteroscedasticity established that the data satisfied the assumptions underlying regression analysis. The effect of Generation Z attributes on service delivery was estimated within a regression model of the form $Y = \beta_0 + \beta_i X_i + \varepsilon$, where Y is service delivery, X_i is Generation Z workforce attributes, β_0 is the constant, β_i the coefficient and ε the error term. Ethical clearance and research authorization were obtained before data collection, and respondents' informed consent, anonymity and confidentiality were upheld.

4. Findings

4.1 Response Rate

A total of 104 questionnaires were distributed to the identified respondents, out of which 94 were successfully filled and returned. The response rate is presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Response Rate

Response	Frequency	Percent
Returned	94	90.38%
Unreturned	10	9.62%
Total	104	100%

Source: Research Data (2026)

Table 1 shows that 90.38% of the administered questionnaires were successfully filled and returned. A response rate above 50% is regarded as sufficient for analysis and reporting; therefore, the achieved response rate of over 90% was highly satisfactory and adequate for drawing conclusions from the study.

4.2 Descriptive Statistics on Generation Z Attributes

Generation Z attributes were operationalized to address the study objective, which examined the effect of Generation Z workforce diverse attributes on service delivery in selected road management agencies in Western Region of Kenya. Respondents rated the statements on a five-point Likert scale, and the results are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics on Generation Z Attributes

Generation Z Attributes	Mean	Std. Dev
Generation Z anticipates using contemporary technologies in their professional lives, which drives innovation and increases efficiency in road infrastructure projects, improving service delivery.	4.2432	0.989
Generation Z frequently appreciates teamwork and encourages others to contribute their distinct viewpoints, fostering a collaborative environment that enhances problem-solving capabilities and efficiency of road construction teams.	4.1892	0.654
Generation Z's emphasis on attractive benefits and pay ensures higher job satisfaction and retention, directly improving employee engagement and, consequently, the timely delivery of road infrastructure services.	4.5946	0.821

Generation Z Attributes	Mean	Std. Dev
Generation Z anticipates that their opinions are valued and heard in the workplace, leading to increased engagement, innovation, and higher-quality contributions in road projects.	4.8378	0.864
Generation Z workers frequently look for positions that allow them to lead, innovate, contribute, and learn, which results in more proactive involvement in service delivery and improving road maintenance operations.	4.275	1.024
Generation Z is more interested in extra benefits like comprehensive healthcare coverage than in freebies like happy hours or free food, reflecting their focus on long-term stability and well-being, which enhances their overall job performance in road agencies.	3.896	0.871
Generation Z likes clear guidelines on how to succeed and grow in one's career, which leads to higher productivity, adherence to service standards, and enhanced service delivery in road construction and maintenance projects.	4.006	1.007
Aggregate	4.292	0.131

Source: Research Data (2026)

Table 2 shows that Generation Z attributes positively support service delivery, with an aggregate mean of 4.292 (SD = 0.131). Respondents agreed that Generation Z employees bring technological skills, collaboration and innovation to road projects. The highest-rated attribute was the desire for recognition of opinions (M = 4.8378, SD = 0.864), followed by the emphasis on attractive benefits (M = 4.5946, SD = 0.821) and the use of modern technologies (M = 4.2432, SD = 0.989). Respondents also affirmed that Generation Z employees value teamwork and proactive involvement in road projects. Slightly lower, though still positive, ratings were observed for the preference for extra benefits such as healthcare (M = 3.896, SD = 0.871) and the need for clear career guidelines (M = 4.006, SD = 1.007). These findings align with generational diversity literature, which highlights that younger employees contribute creativity, adaptability and advanced technological skills to organizations (Aggarwal *et al.*, 2022; Pandita *et al.*, 2023).

4.3 Descriptive Statistics on Service Delivery

The dependent variable, service delivery in selected road management agencies in Western Region of Kenya, was assessed using descriptive statistics. The results are summarized in Table 3.

Table 3. Descriptive Statistics on Service Delivery

Service Delivery	Mean	Std. Dev
The road sector demonstrates effective utilization of a multigenerational workforce to enhance service delivery in road projects, ensuring that diverse employee attributes are harnessed to improve efficiency and outcomes.	3.832	0.759
Clarity and understanding among employees regarding organizational practices supporting a multigenerational workforce foster engagement and coordination, which positively enhances the efficiency and quality of service delivery.	4.098	0.764
The sector encourages broad employee participation in project activities and decision-making processes, leading to increased involvement and improved effectiveness in the delivery of road infrastructure services.	4.224	0.921

Service Delivery	Mean	Std. Dev
Employees from different generations are actively engaged in project-related processes, creating a collaborative and inclusive working environment that improves the timeliness and efficiency of service delivery in road projects.	4.278	0.914
There are established channels through which employees can provide input and suggestions on workforce practices, contributing to continuous improvement and ensuring that service delivery is aligned with workforce capabilities and needs.	4.335	0.904
Effective utilization of a multigenerational workforce contributes to the timely completion of road projects, ensuring adherence to set deadlines and the delivery of quality infrastructure services.	3.896	0.901
Proper management and application of workforce diversity across generations enhances employee motivation, increases productivity, and supports the achievement of service delivery targets in road infrastructure projects.	4.326	1.007
Aggregate	4.141	0.895

Source: Research Data (2026)

Table 3 shows that respondents generally agreed that service delivery in the selected road management agencies is positively supported by the effective use of workforce diversity, with an aggregate mean of 4.141 (SD = 0.895). The strongest consensus concerned the presence of formalized avenues through which employees offer input and recommendations on workforce practices ($M = 4.335$, $SD = 0.904$), followed by the perception that good management of generational diversity improves motivation and productivity ($M = 4.326$, $SD = 1.007$). Relatively lower, though still positive, scores on the timely completion of road projects ($M = 3.896$, $SD = 0.901$) and the overall utilization of workforce diversity ($M = 3.832$, $SD = 0.759$) suggest inconsistencies in the operationalization of generational diversity across the agencies.

4.4 Correlation Analysis

Pearson correlation analysis was conducted to establish the relationship between Generation Z workforce attributes and service delivery. The results are presented in Table 4.

Table 4. Correlation between Generation Z Attributes and Service Delivery

Variable		Service Delivery
Generation Z Attributes	Pearson Correlation	.516**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	94

** Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed). Source: Research Data (2026)

Table 4 reveals a positive and significant relationship between Generation Z attributes and service delivery ($r = .516$, $p = .000$). This suggests that Generation Z's creativity, technological proficiency, flexibility and high standards contribute significantly to efficient service delivery, especially in road quality monitoring, connectivity and the integration of innovative technologies. These results corroborate Racolța-Paina and Irini (2021), who found that openness to the changes Generation Z brings to the workplace improves service outcomes, and Wulur and Mandagi (2023), who identified technological skill and an inclusive workplace as leading influences on Generation Z performance.

4.5 Regression Analysis and Hypothesis Testing

Regression analysis was conducted to determine the effect of Generation Z workforce attributes on service delivery. The coefficient for Generation Z attributes was estimated within the study's overall regression model,

which also controlled for the attributes of the other generational cohorts (Baby Boomers, Generation X and Millennials), the road regulatory framework and organizational internal policies. The model returned $R = .867$ and $R^2 = .752$, meaning the predictors jointly accounted for 75.2% of the variation in service delivery, and the model was statistically significant ($F = 57.12, p < .001$). The results for Generation Z attributes are presented in Table 5.

Table 5. Regression Coefficients

Predictor	B	Std. Error	β	t	Sig.
(Constant)	.627	.490		1.280	.207
Generation Z Attributes	.279	.131	.294	2.128	.039

Dependent Variable: Service Delivery. The model controlled for Baby Boomers, Generation X and Millennials attributes, road regulatory framework and organizational internal policies. Source: Research Data (2026)

Table 5 shows that Generation Z attributes had a positive and statistically significant effect on service delivery ($B = .279, \beta = .294, t = 2.128, p = .039$). Holding other factors constant, a unit improvement in Generation Z workforce attributes is associated with a 0.279 unit improvement in service delivery. Since $p < .05$, the null hypothesis (H_{01}), that there is no significant effect of Generation Z's workforce diverse attributes on service delivery in selected road management agencies in Western Region of Kenya, was rejected. The finding reflects the growing influence of Generation Z employees, particularly their digital skills and responsiveness, on organizational service outcomes. It is consistent with Rampen *et al.* (2023), who established that motivation, leadership and organizational culture channel Generation Z attributes into performance, and with Aggarwal *et al.* (2022), who demonstrated that appropriately restructured HR policies enable Generation Z employees to deliver superior task performance and commitment.

5. Conclusion, Recommendations and Suggestions for Further Research

5.1 Conclusion

The study concluded that the diverse attributes of the Generation Z workforce have a positive and statistically significant effect on service delivery in selected road management agencies in the Western Region of Kenya. Generation Z employees, recognized for creativity, flexibility, technological skills and high standards, demonstrated a significant positive effect on road quality, innovation in maintenance practices and the adoption of digital monitoring tools. Their effect was particularly notable in the introduction of technology-driven solutions that enhanced operational efficiency. The cohort's technological affinity, preference for collaboration, desire for recognition and orientation toward innovation significantly enhance road service delivery through improved timelines, quality and reliability of road projects.

5.2 Recommendations

Based on the findings, the study recommends that road management agencies such as Kenya National Highways Authority, Kenya Rural Roads Authority and Kenya Urban Roads Authority strategically leverage the unique strengths of Generation Z employees to enhance service delivery outcomes. In particular, Generation Z's tech-savviness and creativity should be deliberately utilized in digital mapping, road quality monitoring and innovation in service processes. Agencies should institutionalize regular workforce engagement strategies that recognize generational differences, including mentorship programs in which Baby Boomers and Generation X employees guide Generation Z employees, fostering knowledge transfer and skills development. Management should also establish clear career development pathways, recognition mechanisms and feedback channels, given the cohort's strong desire to have its opinions valued and to grow professionally. Finally, agencies should invest in continuous capacity-building programs, particularly in regulatory compliance, project management and technology utilization, to improve collaboration, reduce resistance to change and strengthen service delivery.

5.3 Suggestions for Further Research

This study focused on Generation Z attributes and service delivery in three road management agencies in the Western Region of Kenya. Future studies could replicate the study in other regions of Kenya and in other public sector agencies to allow comparison and generalization of the findings. Further research could also adopt longitudinal designs to track how the influence of Generation Z attributes on service delivery evolves as the

cohort matures in the workforce, and could examine the moderating role of the regulatory framework and the mediating role of organizational internal policies in the relationship between Generation Z attributes and service delivery. Qualitative studies involving in-depth interviews with Generation Z employees themselves would also enrich the understanding of the mechanisms through which their attributes translate into service outcomes.

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