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Digital Marketing Strategies and Performance of Technical and Vocational Education and Training Institutions in Kenya

[1*]Jacklyne Muthoni Murithi and [2]Dr. Scholastica Wamwayi

[1]Scholar, School of Business, College of Human Resource and Development (CoHRED), Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology, Kenya

[2]Senior Lecturer, Department of Business Administration, School of Business, College of Human Resource and Development (CoHRED), Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology, Kenya

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Abstract

Kenya's technical and vocational education and training institutions have experienced a rise in problems with performance. The purpose of this research is to ascertain how Kenyan technical and vocational education and training institutions' performance relates to their use of digital marketing strategies. It specifically aims to ascertain the correlation between search engine optimization and mobile marketing with institutional performance. This study was based on the technology acceptance model, the social cognitive theory and the diffusion of innovation theory. The study involved 349 TVETs in Meru, Nairobi and Machakos counties. The employees of these TVETs were involved as the respondents. The sampling frame was the comprehensive list of all the TVET institutions in Nairobi, Machakos and Meru counties. The list was obtained from the Ministry of Education. This study sampled 186 technical and vocational education and training institutions, calculated using the Yamane formula. The respondents were 372 center management staff in the TVETs issued a questionnaire. The data was analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistics. From the findings, SEO had a positive and statistically significant effect on Institutional performance (β=0.668, p = 0.000). In addition, mobile marketing showed the strongest positive effect (β = 0.870, p = 0.000). The study concluded that SEO and mobile marketing have a positive effect on institutional performance of TVETs in Kenya. Based on these results, the study recommended that institutions prioritize strategic implementation of SEO and mobile marketing to maximize engagement and institutional performance.

Keywords: *Digital marketing strategies, Mobile marketing, Search engine optimization (SEO), Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET), TVET performance*

INTRODUCTION

Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) has gained increasing global recognition as an important driver of education, skills development, and national economic growth (Marope et al., 2015). However, TVET institutions continue to face operational and performance challenges that limit their effectiveness. Globally, the COVID-19 pandemic significantly disrupted TVET operations, forcing institutions to close temporarily and adopt remote learning, which required investments in technology and digital infrastructure (Yusop et al., 2022). Studies from the United States and Indonesia identified major constraints, including inadequate funding, outdated curricula, limited access to modern technology, and weak collaboration between institutions and universities (Hanni, 2019; Purwanti, 2021).

In Sub-Saharan Africa, despite economic growth driven by foreign investment, commodity prices, and relative political stability, many countries still face shortages in technical skills required for sustained growth (Mgeni, 2022). TVET institutions in countries such as Nigeria and South Africa have encountered challenges, including low enrolment, inadequate funding, obsolete instructional facilities, weak industry linkages, poor management, and insufficient qualified staff (Idjawe, 2020; Nthutang, 2021).

In Kenya, although progress has been made in improving access, retention, and gender parity, the TVET sector continues to experience challenges such as insufficient trainers, limited industry participation, inadequate research support, and low student enrolment due to high training costs and low awareness (Osano, 2019). These issues negatively affect institutional performance and graduates' employability.

Digital marketing has emerged as an important strategy for improving institutional competitiveness and performance. Globally, digital advertising continues to grow rapidly due to increased internet use, smartphone adoption, and social media engagement. In Africa, internet usage rose significantly, creating new opportunities for digital marketing through mobile platforms, social media, and e-commerce (KPMG, 2022; Oyedeji, 2020). In Kenya, rising internet penetration and mobile payment systems such as M-Pesa have further strengthened digital marketing adoption (Communications Authority of Kenya, 2021; Tumbo, 2021). Consequently, Kenyan TVET institutions are increasingly adopting digital marketing strategies to attract tech-savvy students and remain competitive in a dynamic education environment (Kusumawati, 2019).

Statement of the Problem

In today's competitive environment, institutions must adopt innovative strategies to enhance performance and remain sustainable. Digital marketing has become an important tool for improving organizational visibility, customer engagement, and competitiveness through strategies such as social media marketing, websites, content marketing, and email marketing (Moses & Liu, 2023; Latchem, 2017). For educational institutions, these strategies provide opportunities to effectively attract and retain students.

Despite the growing importance of TVET institutions in Kenya's economic and skills development agenda, their performance remains constrained by several challenges. Although KUCCPS (2024) reported increased placement of 144,500 students into TVET institutions, enrolment remains comparatively lower than universities, with 452,277 students in TVETs compared to 562,066 in universities. Additionally, TVET institutions continue to face inadequate funding, rising tuition fees, and low completion rates, which negatively affect institutional performance.

Although previous studies have examined digital marketing and organizational performance, existing research presents methodological, conceptual, and contextual gaps. Studies by Kalei (2020) and Ngochi and Kihara (2019) focused on SMEs, while Kimani (2020) examined higher education institutions, limiting applicability to TVETs. Further, Purwanti (2021) found no significant effect of digital marketing on performance, while Eke (2022) reported a positive relationship, indicating inconsistent findings. This study therefore, seeks to examine the influence of digital marketing strategies on the performance of TVET institutions in Kenya.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical Foundation

Technology Acceptance Model

The Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), developed by Fred Davis (1989), explains users' adoption of technology based on two constructs: perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use. Perceived usefulness refers to the extent to which individuals believe that a technology enhances their performance, while perceived ease of use relates to how effortless the

technology is perceived to be (Hsieh, Wang & Lin, 2020; Zhou, Zhang & Zhu, 2020). In this study, TAM was relevant in explaining adoption of digital marketing tools within TVET institutions, particularly Search Engine Optimization (SEO). TVET institutions are more likely to adopt SEO strategies if they perceive them as useful in increasing online visibility, attracting students, and improving institutional performance, while also being easy to implement and manage.

Social Cognitive Theory

Social Cognitive Theory (SCT), developed by Albert Bandura (1989), explains behavior through reciprocal interaction between personal factors, behavior, and environmental influences (Bandura, 1999). The theory emphasizes observational learning and self-efficacy, where individuals learn by observing others and are motivated by confidence in their own abilities (Guo et al., 2019; Matsumoto & Yamauchi, 2019). In this study, SCT supported the relationship between SEO and institutional performance. TVET institutions can adopt SEO after observing successful campaigns from competitors, while staff confidence in managing SEO tools enhances campaign effectiveness and institutional visibility.

Diffusion of Innovation Theory

Diffusion of Innovation Theory, developed by Everett Rogers (1962), explains how innovations spread within a social system through adopter categories including innovators, early adopters, early majority, late majority, and laggards. The theory emphasizes innovation characteristics such as relative advantage, compatibility, and observability in influencing adoption. In this study, the theory supported the relationship between mobile marketing and institutional performance. The TVET institutions that adopt mobile marketing early may gain competitive advantages through wider reach, improved student engagement, and stronger institutional performance.

Digital Marketing Strategies and Institutional Performance

Digital marketing strategies have been found to drive institutional performance. Digital marketing strategies like search engine optimization and mobile marketing create digital access to customers which enhances the performance. However, empirical studies have shown ambiguity in the relationship. Ochola and Kavinda (2019) examined grand strategies and performance of private TVET colleges in Nairobi County, Kenya, using a descriptive quantitative design. Data was collected from 71 employees selected from a population of 536 using stratified and simple random sampling, and analyzed using SPSS. The study established that strategic approaches such as pricing and market focus strategies had a significant positive relationship with enrolment and overall institutional performance. Similarly, Kitetu (2022) investigated digital marketing communication tools and student enrolment in private hospitality colleges in Kenya using a descriptive positivist approach. The study revealed that while social media platforms were widely used, adoption of pay-per-click advertising and websites remained low. Regression results indicated that digital marketing tools explained 42% of the variations in student enrolment, confirming their influence on institutional performance.

Search Engine Optimization

Search Engine Optimization (SEO) is a digital marketing strategy aimed at improving website visibility and ranking on search engine results pages (Mladenović et al., 2022). In TVET institutions, SEO enhances online visibility through indicators such as search engine ranking, keyword ranking, and search queries. Higher search rankings increase organic traffic, making it easier for prospective students to discover programmes, thereby improving enrolment. Keyword optimization ensures that institutions attract students actively searching for relevant courses, increasing the likelihood of attracting motivated learners (Lewandowski & Schultheiß, 2023). Additionally, analysis of search queries enables institutions to tailor content to student needs, strengthening engagement and accessibility.

SEO also influences examination performance and completion rates by attracting students whose interests align with programme offerings. Such students are more likely to be engaged and academically motivated, leading to improved performance outcomes. Furthermore, SEO contributes to higher completion rates by ensuring students who enroll are well-informed and committed to their chosen programmes (Labausa et al., 2023). This alignment enhances persistence and reduces dropout rates, while improved online visibility supports smoother communication and access to institutional information.

Nuseir and Aljumah (2020) examined digital marketing and business performance among SMEs in the UAE using SMART-PLS analysis. The findings revealed that Search Engine Optimization (SEO) had no significant effect on business performance. In contrast, Djakasaputra et al. (2021) studied Indonesian SMEs using quantitative surveys and PLS-SEM analysis and found that digital marketing, including SEO, significantly improved sales performance. Similarly, Poturak et al. (2022) found that SEO positively influenced university performance in Sarajevo by increasing website traffic, engagement, and student enrolment. Erdmann and Ponzoa (2021) also confirmed that SEO significantly improved e-commerce performance across Europe and the USA. In Kenya, Kalei (2020) established that SEO had a significant positive effect on SME marketing performance, reinforcing its importance in digital strategy adoption.

Mobile Marketing

Mobile marketing includes mobile apps, SMS marketing, and location-based marketing, all of which enhance student engagement in TVET institutions. Mobile apps allow students to access course information, apply for programmes, and receive updates conveniently, improving enrolment processes (Zhang et al., 2024). SMS marketing supports timely communication on admissions, deadlines, and program updates, increasing awareness and application rates. Location-based marketing further enhances engagement by delivering targeted messages, such as open days and campus events based on students' proximity (Garcia, 2023).

Mobile marketing also improves examination performance and completion rates. SMS reminders, study tips, and exam notifications help students stay prepared and organized, enhancing academic outcomes. Mobile applications provide access to learning materials, quizzes, and resources that support continuous learning. Additionally, mobile platforms promote completion by offering flexible access to content and academic support, increasing motivation and persistence among learners (Neffati et al., 2021). Overall, mobile marketing strengthens enrolment, academic performance, and programme completion.

Sivakumar et al. (2020) studied digital marketing in Indian rural banks and found that mobile marketing enhanced customer reach and information sharing. However, Olusegun et al. (2020) reported a negative effect of mobile marketing on SME performance in Nigeria. In Kenya, Kawira et al. (2019) found that digital marketing, including mobile marketing, accounted for 38.8% of the variation in MSME performance, showing a strong positive relationship. Mwanja (2022) further confirmed that mobile marketing positively influenced SME performance in Kamukunji Market, Nairobi, through improved customer engagement and sales growth. These findings indicate that mobile marketing generally enhances performance, although outcomes may vary depending on context and implementation strategies.

Institutional Performance

Institutional performance in this study is measured in terms of student enrolment, examination performance, and completion rates. Digital marketing strategies such as SEO and mobile marketing significantly influence enrolment by improving visibility, communication, and targeted outreach. These strategies ensure that institutions attract

students who are actively seeking relevant programmes, thereby increasing enrolment levels (Puthussery, 2020).

Digital marketing also enhances examination performance and completion rates. The SEO attract motivated learners who are more likely to perform well academically, while mobile marketing provides continuous academic support through reminders, study materials, and engagement tools. These strategies improve student preparedness and reduce dropout rates, thereby increasing completion rates (Gutu et al., 2023).

Conceptual Model

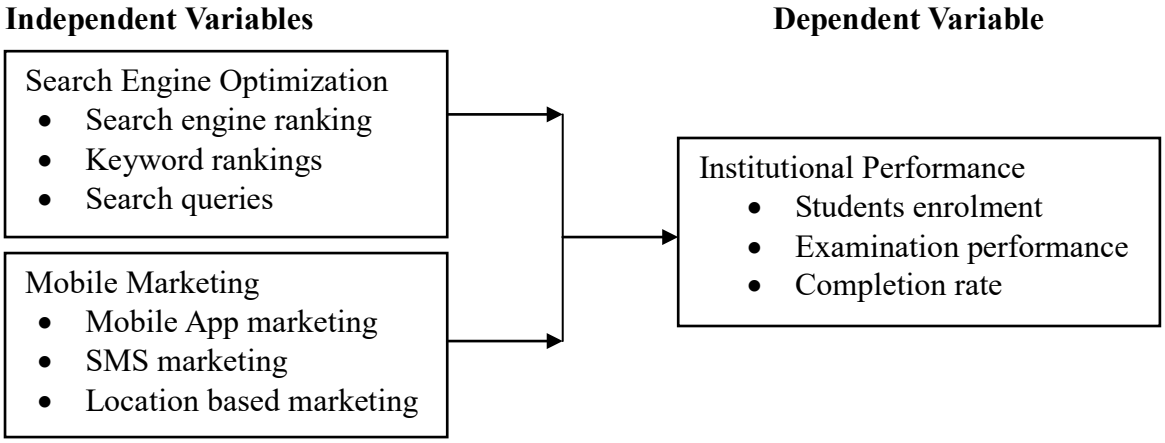

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study adopted a descriptive survey research design. The design enabled the researcher to collect and analyze data without manipulating variables, focusing on describing digital marketing strategies and their relationship with TVET performance in their natural setting. It was appropriate because it allowed data to be gathered from selected TVET institutions and used to establish relationships between variables.

Population

The target population comprised 349 TVET institutions in Nairobi, Machakos, and Meru counties in Kenya. These counties were selected due to their significant contribution to TVET development. The respondents included centre managers (chief principals and deputy principals) and members of boards of management within the institutions. The study sampled 186 TVET institutions using the Yamane formula, representing 53.4% of the population. A total of 372 respondents were selected, with two respondents (centre manager and board member) from each institution, which was adequate for analysis. The study used multistage sampling, combining stratified, proportionate, and purposive sampling techniques. TVET institutions were first stratified by county, after which proportionate sampling was used. Purposive sampling was then applied to select key respondents within institutions.

Data Collection

Data was collected using structured questionnaires consisting of closed-ended questions. The questionnaire was divided into sections covering demographic information, digital marketing strategies, and institutional performance. Research assistants helped in administering the questionnaires using the drop-and-pick method. Data collection began after obtaining approval from the supervisor and the NACOSTI permit. Permission was also sought from TVET institutions. Questionnaires were administered using the drop-and-pick method, with follow-ups through phone calls to improve response rates.

A pilot study involving 37 respondents (10% of the sample) was conducted to test the reliability and validity of the instruments. The pilot study helped identify errors, improve clarity, and ensure the questionnaire was suitable for the main study. Reliability was tested

using Cronbach's alpha to measure internal consistency. A threshold of 0.7 and above was considered acceptable. The results indicated that Search Engine Optimization recorded a Cronbach's alpha of 0.820, mobile marketing of 0.790 and institutional performance of 0.902. The overall average Cronbach's alpha was 0.837, which was above the recommended threshold, confirming that the questionnaire was reliable for the main study.

Validity was ensured through content and construct validity. Experts reviewed the questionnaire to ensure alignment with research objectives. Exploratory factor analysis was used to test construct validity, ensuring items measured the intended variables effectively. Face validity confirmed that the items were clear and appropriate for respondents after revisions were made. Construct validity was tested using Exploratory Factor Analysis, where the KMO value was 0.942 and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity was significant ($\chi^2 = 204.320$, $p < 0.001$), indicating suitability for factor analysis. The results confirmed that the instrument was both valid and reliable for data collection.

Data Analysis Techniques

Data was analyzed using descriptive statistics (mean, frequency, percentages, and standard deviation) and inferential statistics (correlation and multiple regression). The regression model was used to determine the effect of digital marketing strategies on TVET performance, and results were presented using tables for clarity. The multiple regression model used was specified as:

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \varepsilon$$

Where Y represented performance of TVET institutions, X_1 to X_2 represented the respective digital marketing strategies, β_0 was the constant, β_1 and β_2 were regression coefficients, and ε was the error term.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The researcher administered questionnaires to 372 center management staff. From the administered questionnaires, 303 were correctly filled, which gave a return rate of 81.5%. According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2003), a response rate of 50% is adequate for analysis and reporting; a rate of 60% is good and a response rate of 70% and over is excellent. The response rate for the study was therefore sufficient.

Reliability of the questionnaire was checked through calculation of the reliability index based on Cronbach alpha which measures internal consistency. It was preferred for this study as the researcher was adopting a questionnaire for data collection. The reliability results showed Cronbach alpha value for Search engine optimization as 0.820. In addition, mobile marketing showed a value of 0.790 while institutional performance had a value of 0.902. The average Cronbach alpha value was 0.837. This was more than 0.7 indicating that the questionnaire was reliable.

Construct validity in this study referred to the extent to which the questionnaire measured sustainability factors accurately (Messick, 2000). To assess this, the researcher used exploratory factor analysis (EFA) to determine whether questionnaire items grouped into factors consistent with the study's theoretical dimensions, with items loading below 0.4 considered for removal. Prior to analysis, the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity were conducted to confirm data suitability for factor analysis. Results showed a KMO value of 0.942, indicating excellent sampling adequacy, while Bartlett's Test was significant ($\chi^2 = 204.320$, df = 91, p = .000), confirming sufficient correlations among variables. Further, principal component analysis revealed that eight extracted components explained 56.42% of the total variance, which was acceptable in social science research.

The study established respondents' demographic characteristics, including gender, age, education level, and years of service. Findings showed that most respondents were male (213; 70.3%), aged between 46–55 years (126; 41.6%), indicating that centre managers in Kenyan

TVETs are largely experienced middle-aged professionals. In terms of education, the majority held a first degree (157; 51.8%), while 96 (31.7%) had postgraduate qualifications, suggesting a highly educated management workforce. Additionally, most respondents had served in their institutions for 6–10 years (122; 40.3%), implying substantial institutional experience and familiarity with management and digital marketing practices.

Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive analysis was done through mean and standard deviation. The findings indicated that TVET institutions had adopted various digital marketing strategies, including search engine optimization and mobile marketing, though the level and effectiveness of implementation varied.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics on Search Engine Optimization

Statement		SD	D	N	A	SA	Mean	Std. Deviation
My institution adopts search engine optimization in its digital marketing	F	0	69	20	190	24	3.5578	0.9292
	%	0	22.8	6.6	62.7	7.9		
My institution has a high level of search engine ranking	F	0	223	48	32	0	2.3696	0.6676
	%	0	73.6	15.8	10.6	0		
Keyword rankings is done in the digital marketing strategy	F	0	45	24	190	44	3.769	0.8762
	%	0	14.9	7.9	62.7	14.5		
Search queries are adopted in the search engine optimization	F	0	21	10	196	76	4.0792	0.7461
	%	0	6.9	3.3	64.7	25.1		

The respondents agreed on the statements relating to search engine optimization as per the findings in Table 1. However, they disagreed that their institutions had high levels of search engine ranking. The SEO practices, such as keyword ranking and search queries were commonly used, but they had not significantly improved search engine rankings. Therefore, although SEO adoption was widespread, its effectiveness in improving search engine ranking remained limited.

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics on Mobile Marketing

Statement		SD	D	N	A	SA	Mean	Std. Deviation
My institution adopts Mobile App marketing	F	0	18	12	205	68	4.066	0.7064
	%	0	5.9	4.0	67.7	22.4		
My institution adopts SMS in its marketing	F	0	18	18	225	42	3.9604	0.6599
	%	0	5.9	5.9	74.3	13.9		
Digital marketing in my institution is customized based on the geographical location	F	6	227	42	24	4	2.3168	0.7038
	%	2.0	74.9	13.9	7.9	1.3		
Mobile marketing enhances student engagement and persistence	F	14	210	57	19	3	1.9480	0.9900
	%	4.6	69.3	18.8	6.3	1.0		

From Table 2, the respondents agreed on adoption of mobile app and SMSs in marketing. However, they disagreed on customization of mobile marketing. They also disagreed that mobile marketing enhanced student engagement and persistence. Therefore, mobile

marketing tools like SMS and mobile applications were widely adopted, but advanced features such as geo-targeting were rarely used and did not strongly enhance student engagement. Despite adoption of digital marketing, its effectiveness is limited in TVETs in Kenya.

Table 3: Institutional Performance

Statement		SD	D	N	A	SA	Mean	Std. Deviation
My institution has a low level of student enrolment	F	6	27	12	208	50	3.8878	0.8539
	%	2.0	8.9	4.0	68.6	16.5		
In recent years, my institution has shown deteriorating examination performance	F	4	24	16	213	46	3.901	0.7953
	%	1.3	7.9	5.3	70.3	15.2		
My institution has low completion rates	F	4	16	14	231	38	3.934	0.7064
	%	1.3	5.3	4.6	76.2	12.5		
A large number of students in my institution complete their studies within the expected time	F	20	214	36	29	4	2.2838	0.7797
	%	6.6	70.6	11.9	9.6	1.3		

The study sought to establish the level of performance of Kenyan TVETs, with findings in Table 3 indicating that respondents agreed that student enrollment was low, examination performance had deteriorated and completion rates were low, highlighting challenges in institutional performance. Respondents also indicated that many students did not complete their studies within the expected time, suggesting delays in programme completion. To improve performance, respondents recommended strengthening digital marketing strategies through search engine optimization, mobile marketing and staff training in digital marketing practices. Despite widespread use of digital marketing tools, institutional performance remained challenged, suggesting that the effectiveness of these strategies in improving performance was still limited.

Correlation Analysis Results

Correlation analysis using Pearson's correlation coefficient was conducted to establish the relationship between digital marketing strategies and performance of TVETs in Kenya.

Table 4: Correlation Results

		Institutional performance	Search engine Optimization	mobile marketing
Institutional performance	Pearson Correlation	1		
	Sig. (2-tailed)			
	N	303		
Search engine Optimization	Pearson Correlation	.427**	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		
	N	303	303	
Mobile marketing	Pearson Correlation	.538**	.233**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	
	N	303	303	303

The results in Table 4 showed that search engine optimization (SEO) had a weak and statistically significant positive relationship with institutional performance ($r = 0.427$, $p = 0.000$). Further, mobile marketing showed a strong and significant positive relationship with

institutional performance (r = 0.538, p = 0.000), representing the strongest association among the variables.

Regression Analysis

Regression analysis was undertaken in this study to establish the effect of digital marketing strategies on the performance of TVETs in Kenya. The results were shown in the model summary, ANOVA model and regression coefficient table.

Table 5: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.638[a]	.407	.399	.61604

a. Predictors: (Constant), mobile marketing, SEO

The Model summary in Table 5 showed a correlation coefficient R of 0.638 indicating a strong relationship between digital marketing strategies and Institutional performance of TVETs. The R Square of 0.407 implies that 40.7% of the variance in institutional performance was explained by the digital marketing strategies included in the model (SEO and mobile marketing).

Table 6: Analysis of Variance Results

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	38.87	2	19.435	51.213	.000[b]
	Residual	114	300	.380		
	Total	152.87	302			

a. Dependent Variable: Institutional performance

b. Predictors: (Constant), mobile marketing, SEO

The ANOVA results in Table 6 showed that the regression model was statistically significant (F = 51.213, p = 0.000). This indicated that the set of digital marketing strategies jointly have a significant effect on Institutional performance. Since the $p < 0.05$, the null hypothesis that the regression model had no predictive value was rejected. Thus, digital marketing strategies significantly affected TVET performance.

Table 7: Regression Analysis Results

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	2.903	.299		9.725	.000
	Search engine Optimization	.668	.093	.332	7.212	.000
	Mobile marketing	.870	.088	.454	9.878	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Institutional performance

From the regression coefficients in Table 7,

$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \varepsilon$

was fitted into

$Y = 2.903 + 0.668X_1 + 0.870X_2$

The results showed that search engine optimization had a positive and statistically significant effect on institutional performance (β=0.668, p=0.000). Mobile marketing had the strongest positive and significant effect (β = 0.870, p=0.000).

Discussions

The results indicated that SEO and mobile marketing had positive and statistically significant effects on institutional performance. The strong positive effect of SEO aligns with findings by Poturak et al. (2022) and Erdmann and Ponzoa (2021), who established that SEO improves visibility, traffic, and institutional outcomes such as enrolment and engagement. Similarly, Kalei (2020) and Djakasaputra et al. (2021) also reported significant positive effects of SEO on marketing and sales performance, reinforcing the idea that SEO enhances institutional reach and competitiveness. However, the current finding contrasts with Nuseir and Aljumah

(2020), who found no significant effect of SEO on performance, suggesting that its effectiveness may depend on contextual factors such as implementation quality and sector characteristics.

The significant positive effect of mobile marketing is consistent with Kawira et al. (2019), Sivakumar et al. (2020), and Mwanja (2022), all of whom found that mobile-based strategies improve performance through enhanced communication, engagement, and accessibility. This supports the view that mobile marketing is particularly effective in contexts with high mobile phone penetration, such as Kenya. However, it contrasts with Olusegun et al. (2020), who reported a negative effect of mobile marketing on SME performance, suggesting that poor targeting or ineffective execution can reduce its impact. Overall, the consistency with most studies reinforces mobile marketing as a strong driver of institutional performance.

Conclusions, Recommendations and Future Directions

The study concludes that search engine optimization (SEO) positively influences the performance of TVET institutions in Kenya by improving online visibility, attracting prospective students, and strengthening institutional competitiveness. Mobile marketing emerged as the most influential strategy, enhancing engagement, communication, and access to institutional services through SMS and mobile applications. Digital marketing improves institutional performance but its impact is constrained by internal challenges such as low enrolment, poor academic outcomes, and low completion rates. These findings suggest that digital strategies must be complemented with institutional improvements to achieve meaningful results.

The study recommends that TVET institutions strengthen SEO practices through improved keyword optimization, quality content development, and proper website structuring, supported by continuous monitoring and analytics. Mobile marketing should be expanded using SMS and mobile applications, with improved geographic and demographic targeting and integration with other digital strategies. Institutions should also align digital marketing with broader reforms in teaching quality, administration, and student support systems. This integrated approach will enhance overall institutional performance and sustainability.

The study found that digital marketing strategies explained 40.7% of the variation in TVET institutional performance, leaving 59.3% unexplained. Future research should examine other factors such as governance, funding levels, infrastructure, student socio-economic background and teaching quality to provide a more comprehensive understanding. Further studies should also use alternative measures of digital marketing and institutional performance to validate and extend the findings. Comparative studies across universities and other tertiary institutions are recommended to broaden sectoral insights. In addition, future research should include other counties beyond Nairobi, Machakos, and Meru to improve generalizability.

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