

EFFECT OF ELECTRONIC CASE MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS ON ADMINISTRATION OF JUDICIAL JUSTICE IN KENYA

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Abstract

The administration of justice is a cornerstone of social order and development, ensuring fairness, accountability, and the rule of law. However, judicial systems globally face challenges that impede their effectiveness. In Kenya, these challenges include case backlogs, corruption, limited infrastructure, and high legal representation costs. Kenya introduced the Electronic Case Management System (ECMS) in 2020 to transform judicial processes by improving efficiency, accessibility, and transparency. This study explored the effect of ECMS on the key aspects of administration of justice at Milimani Law Courts. The study was anchored on the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) and John Rawls' Theory of Justice. Using a descriptive survey research design, the study utilized a mixed-methods approach with a target population of 90 key stakeholders at Milimani High Court in Nairobi, and the response rate was 88.9%. The study collected primary data using questionnaires and analyzed them using descriptive statistics and inferential analysis. The study found that electronic filing had a positive and significant effect on judicial administration ($\beta=.308$, $p<0.032$); electronic case search was the strongest predictor ($\beta=.436$, $p=0.01$), while electronic requests and extraction of orders ($\beta=.257$, $p=.004$) and electronic payment and receipting ($\beta=.208$, $p=0.000$) also had positive and significant effects. The study concluded that with a good implementation environment, ECCMS significantly improved judicial administration. The study recommends strengthening internet and backup power, timely updating and indexing of case records, providing assisted digital-service desks and continuous user training, promptly uploading court orders, and improving payment reconciliation and receipt-generation mechanisms.

Keywords: *Administration of Judicial Justice, E-filing, Electronic search, E-requests for extraction orders, Electronic payment and receipting in Kenya.*

1. INTRODUCTION

Over the years, the court has been described as a place of justice and law. Beyond interpreting and enforcing the law, courts play a vital role in upholding constitutionalism and legitimacy (Frankel, 2020). Judicial performance varies across countries, shaped by resources, institutional frameworks, and societal challenges. Courts in different countries have largely adopted technology and information and communication technologies to enhance the effectiveness of the administration of justice (Chikomba et al., 2020; Elliot et al., 2024; Poshai & Doorgapersad, 2023). In the United Kingdom, Chatfield and Reddick (2018) observed that digital tools such as e-filing systems, virtual hearings, and electronic case management have modernized legal proceedings. Similarly, India's eCourts Mission Mode Project has digitized court records, improving accessibility and transparency (Verma, 2018). The South African judiciary introduced digital solutions to address court backlogs and improve efficiency, but limited infrastructure hinders these efforts (Asaju & Kayode, 2022). This widespread adoption of technology and digital solutions in the administration of justice across countries reflects a

deliberate response to the complex challenges judicial systems face, as well as a pursuit of improved efficiency, accessibility, and transparency.

In Kenya, courts serve as a platform for the fair resolution of disputes, thereby safeguarding the rule of law and protecting human rights as enshrined in the Constitution. The administration of justice in Kenya faces several significant challenges that hinder its effectiveness. One of the foremost issues is the persistent backlog of cases, which has plagued Kenya's judiciary for years despite various court reforms (Meru & Kinoti, 2022). The Judiciary of Kenya formally introduced the Electronic Case Management System (ECMS) through Gazette Notice No. 2357 of 2020. This system was designed to offer several new dimensions for accessing and delivering justice. While the Judiciary had been gradually adopting technology, the COVID-19 pandemic heightened the urgency of full implementation. The main objective was to reduce physical interactions between litigants and court employees, thereby supporting access to justice during the pandemic.

Despite the system's launch, the ECCMS is still in its infancy. This study focuses on electronic filing, electronic search, electronic request for extraction orders, and electronic payment and receipt, as they are most likely to affect the end-user in the administration of justice (Akpuokwe et al., 2024). Despite the benefits of the electronic system, stakeholders have encountered several challenges, primarily infrastructural or technical rather than issues with the system itself. These challenges include limited access to appropriate computers, inadequate training, and poor internet connectivity (Akpuokwe et al., 2024).

1.1 Problem Statement

The administration of justice is the cornerstone of social order and development, ensuring fairness, accountability, and the rule of law. According to the World Bank report, significant barriers to timely, fair, and affordable justice persist (Ramos-Masqueda, 2026). Systemic procedural inefficiencies, case backlogs, corruption, limited infrastructure, and high costs of legal representation, which disproportionately affect marginalized populations (Dotto & Mwantimwa, 2022). Consequently, Kenya ranked 102nd out of 142 countries in the 2024 World Justice Project Rule of Law Index, indicating that public confidence in Kenya's justice system is very low.

The introduction of the Electronic Court Case Management System (ECCMS) in Kenya in 2020 was envisioned as a transformative solution to enhance the efficiency, accessibility, and transparency of judicial processes (Mbugua, 2022). Kenya has implemented the electronic court system for the past four years. However, since its implementation, few studies have examined the electronic court case management system.

This empirical study is needed because of ongoing issues in the judicial system, including case delays, the need for improved service delivery, and the necessity of restoring public confidence in the judiciary. The effectiveness of the ECCMS in addressing these challenges directly affects the administration of justice and the court system's overall functioning. Additionally, because the system has been in place for several years, timely analysis is essential to identify shortcomings and propose improvements.

1.2 Research Questions

The specific research questions were:

- i. How does the electronic filing system affect the administration of judicial justice in Kenya?

- ii. What is the effect of electronic search of cases on the administration of judicial justice in Kenya?
- iii. What is the effect of electronic requests for extraction orders on the administration of judicial justice in Kenya?
- iv. What effect does electronic payment and receipting have on the administration of judicial justice in Kenya?

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

This section reviews two theories that explain the research problem and anchor the study variables. They include the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) and John Rawls's Theory of Justice. The Technology Acceptance Model explains ECCMS adoption, while John Rawls's Theory of Justice explains the administration of justice and provides the conceptual link between ECCMS variables and the administration of justice. Together, the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) and John Rawls's Theory of Justice provide a comprehensive theoretical foundation for this study. TAM addresses the adoption of Electronic Case Management Systems (ECCMS) by focusing on users' perceptions of usefulness and ease of use, which directly affect their willingness to embrace technological innovations in the judiciary. On the other hand, Rawls's Theory of Justice underpins the dependent variable, administration of judicial justice, by emphasizing fairness, equity, and accessibility in legal processes. It provides a moral and social rationale for evaluating whether ECCMS enhances justice delivery, especially for marginalized populations. Together, these theories link technology adoption with equitable justice outcomes.

3. MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study utilized a combination of qualitative and quantitative research approaches, commonly referred to as the mixed-methods approach. According to Sloane-Seale (2020), methodological triangulation strengthens the validity of research findings, provides richer data, enhances credibility, and supports a more comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon under investigation. In this study, the quantitative approach was used to measure and analyse variables, while the qualitative approach complemented these findings by offering insights from participants' perspectives, thereby providing context and depth to the quantitative results.

The study population comprised 90 key stakeholders at Milimani High Court in Nairobi, including Judges, Judicial Officers, and Court Staff. Specifically, the study targeted Judges, Registrars, Deputy Registrars, Court Administrators, and personnel from the Directorate of Planning and Organizational Performance and the Customer Service Center at Milimani High Court.

Primary data for this study were collected using a questionnaire, which, as noted by Harrell and Bradley (2020), is an efficient and cost-effective data-collection tool. The questionnaire has both open- and closed-ended questions. The questionnaires were administered online using Google Forms, and follow-up was conducted via phone calls. After collecting the fully completed questionnaires, the data were cleaned and coded in Microsoft Excel.

Descriptive statistics provided an overview of the respondents' demographic characteristics and responses to the Likert-scale items in the questionnaire (Mishra et al., 2019). The key descriptive statistics calculated were frequencies and percentages, mean, and standard deviation. Additionally, the researcher used correlational analysis to explore the relationships between the independent variables and the dependent variable. Pearson's correlation coefficient (r) was used to quantify the strength and direction of linear relationships between these variables (Cohen, 2013). To further investigate the nature and strength of the relationships

between ECCMS variables and judicial outcomes, multiple linear regression analysis was used. Regression analysis examines the extent to which the independent variables collectively explain variation in the dependent variable, administration of judicial justice. The following model guided the regression analysis;

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \beta_4 X_4 + \epsilon \dots \dots \dots (3.1)$$

Where: Y represents the dependent variable, administration of judicial justice,

β_0 is the constant or intercept term,

$\beta_1 \dots \beta_4$ are the coefficients for the independent variables,

X1 is electronic filing,

X2 is electronic search of cases,

X3 is electronic requests for extraction of orders,

X4 is electronic payment and receipting,

ϵ is the error term.

We used R-squared (R^2) to assess how well the independent variables explain the variance in the dependent variable. Additionally, p-values tested the statistical significance of each predictor at the 0.05 confidence level, and β coefficients indicated the direction and magnitude of each ECCMS component's effect on judicial outcomes. ANOVA (F-test) was applied to determine the overall significance of the regression model.

To ensure the validity of the regression results, we conducted several diagnostic tests to assess the assumptions of Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) regression. We tested linearity by examining scatterplots of residuals versus predicted values; a random, patternless distribution indicates a linear relationship. We assessed residual normality using the Shapiro-Wilk test. Multicollinearity was checked using the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF); a VIF below 10 indicates acceptable levels, while values above 10 suggest problematic multicollinearity among predictors. These tests collectively ensure that the regression model is robust, reliable, and suitable for drawing valid inferences (Seber, 2013).

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

A total of 90 questionnaires were distributed, of which 80 were properly completed and returned, representing a response rate of 88.9%. This response rate was considered adequate because Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) indicate that 50% is adequate, 60% is good, and 70% and above is very good for analysis and reporting.

4.1 Diagnostic Tests

4.1.1 Linearity Test

We assessed linearity using the ANOVA test for linearity and a scatterplot of standardized residuals against standardized predicted values, and the findings are shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Linearity Test Results

Relationship	Linearity F	Linearity Sig.	Deviation F	Deviation Sig.
Administration of Judicial Justice and Electronic Filing	166.607	.000	110.861	.342
Administration of Judicial Justice and Electronic case search	171.968	.000	.879	.600
Administration of Judicial Justice and Electronic requests and extraction of orders	144.749	.000	1.461	.135
Administration of Judicial Justice and Electronic payment and receipting	23.759	.000	.491	.902
Administration of Judicial Justice and ECCMS implementation challenges	205.128	.000	.897	.575

As shown in Table 1, electronic case search had a statistically significant linear relationship with the administration of judicial justice ($F = 171.968$, $p < .001$). Its deviation from linearity was not significant ($F=.879$, $p=.600$), demonstrating that the relationship did not depart significantly from a straight line. Therefore, the linearity assumption was satisfied for electronic case search.

Electronic requests and extraction of orders also had a significant linear component ($F=144.749$, $p<.001$). The deviation from linearity was statistically insignificant ($F=1.461$, $p=.135$). Since the deviation probability exceeded .05, the relationship between electronic requests and extraction of orders and the administration of judicial justice was adequately linear.

Similarly, electronic payment and receipting had a significant linear relationship with the administration of judicial justice ($F=23.759$, $p<.001$). Its deviation from linearity was not significant ($F=.491$, $p=.902$), providing strong evidence that a linear model could represent the relationship. Challenges affecting ECCMS implementation also demonstrated a significant linear component ($F=205.128$, $p<.001$) and a non-significant deviation from linearity ($F=.897$, $p=.575$). The linearity assumption was consequently satisfied for these variables.

4.1.2 Multicollinearity Tests

Multicollinearity was assessed using tolerance and Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) statistics. A tolerance value greater than .10 and a VIF below 10 indicated no problematic multicollinearity among the predictor variables. Table 2 presents the findings.

Table 2: Variance Inflation Factors

Variable	Tolerance	VIF	Decision
Electronic filing (EF)	.741	1.350	No problematic multicollinearity
Electronic case search (ESC)	.198	5.056	Moderate overlap; acceptable under VIF < 10
Electronic requests and extraction of orders (ERE)	.269	3.712	No problematic multicollinearity
Electronic payment and receipting (EPR)	.865	1.156	No problematic multicollinearity
ECCMS implementation challenges (C)	.293	3.414	No problematic multicollinearity

Table 2 shows that the tolerance values ranged from .198 to .865, with all values exceeding the minimum acceptable threshold of .10. The VIF values ranged from 1.156 to 5.056, and the average VIF was approximately 2.94. Since none of the variables had a VIF above 10, the results indicate that the regression model did not suffer from severe multicollinearity.

4.2 Inferential Analysis

Inferential analysis was conducted to determine the relationships between the components of the Electronic Court Case Management System and the administration of judicial justice. Pearson's correlation analysis was first used to establish the direction and strength of the bivariate relationships between electronic filing, electronic case search, electronic requests and extraction of orders, electronic payment and receipting, and the administration of judicial justice. Multiple linear regression analysis was subsequently conducted to determine the individual and collective effects of the ECCMS components on the administration of judicial justice.

4.2.1 Correlation Analysis between Administration of Judicial Justice and Electronic Case Management System

Pearson's product-moment correlation analysis was conducted to establish the direction and strength of the relationship between each ECCMS component and the administration of judicial justice, and the findings are presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Correlation between Administration of Judicial Justice and Electronic Case Management System

Variable	AJJ	EF	ESC	ERE	EPR	C
Administration of judicial justice (AJJ)	1.000					
Electronic filing (EF)	.576**	1.000				
Electronic case search (ESC)	.835**	.359**	1.000			
Electronic requests and extraction of orders (ERE)	.791**	.316**	.855**	1.000		
Electronic payment and receipting (EPR)	.500**	.201	.340**	.307**	1.000	
ECCMS implementation challenges (C)	-.854**	-.462**	-.791**	-.706**	-.351**	1.000

****Correlation is significant at the .01 level (two-tailed). Pairwise N=80.**

Electronic filing had a positive and statistically significant relationship with the administration of judicial justice ($r=.576$, $p<.05$). Electronic case search had a strong positive and statistically significant relationship with the administration of judicial justice ($r=.835$, $p<.05$). Electronic requests and extraction of orders also had a strong positive and statistically significant relationship with the administration of judicial justice ($r=.791$, $p<.05$). Electronic payment and receipting had a positive and statistically significant relationship with the administration of judicial justice ($r=.500$, $p<.05$). The coefficient indicates a moderate positive relationship, meaning that improvements in electronic payments and receipt issuance were associated with better judicial administration.

Challenges affecting ECCMS implementation had a strong, negative and statistically significant relationship with the administration of judicial justice ($r=-.854$, $p<.05$). Thus, increases in infrastructural, connectivity, equipment, power-supply and user-capacity challenges were associated with deterioration in the effective administration of judicial justice.

4.2.2 Effect of Electronic Case Management System (ECMS) on Administration of Judicial Justice

Multiple regression analysis was conducted to determine the combined and individual effects of electronic filing, electronic case search, electronic requests and extraction of orders, and electronic payment and receipting on the administration of judicial justice. The model summary and ANOVA results present the collective explanatory power and overall statistical significance of the four ECCMS components.

Table 4: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.923a	0.851	0.843	0.286259

a Predictors: (Constant), EPR, EF, ERE, ESC

b Dependent Variable: AJJ

Table 4 shows that the regression model recorded a multiple correlation coefficient of $R=.923$, indicating a strong collective relationship between the four ECCMS components and the administration of judicial justice. The coefficient of determination was $R^2=.851$, meaning that electronic filing, electronic case search, electronic requests and extraction of orders, and electronic payment and receipting jointly explained 85.1% of the variation in the administration of judicial justice. The remaining 14.9% was attributable to factors not included in the model and random variation. The adjusted coefficient of determination was .843, indicating that the four predictors explained approximately 84.3% of the variation in judicial administration after adjusting for the sample size and number of predictors.

Table 5: ANOVA

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	34.241	4	8.56	104.464	.000b
	Residual	5.982	73	0.082		
	Total	40.223	77			

a Dependent Variable: AJJ

b Predictors: (Constant), EPR, EF, ERE, ESC

Table 5 shows that the regression model was statistically significant, $F(4,73)=104.464$. Therefore, the four ECCMS components jointly provided a statistically significant prediction of the administration of judicial justice. This result means the model with the ECCMS

components fit the observed data significantly better than an intercept-only model. Consequently, the overall null hypothesis that all four regression coefficients were simultaneously equal to zero was rejected.

Table 6: Regression Coefficients

	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	-0.462	0.31		-1.491	0.14
Electronic Filing (EF)	0.438	0.069	0.308	6.36	0.032
Electronic Case Search (ESC)	0.309	0.063	0.436	4.939	0.001
Electronic Requests and Extraction (ERE)	0.197	0.066	0.257	2.976	0.004
Electronic Payment and Receipting (EPR)	0.205	0.048	0.208	4.315	0.000

Based on the unstandardized coefficients, the estimated regression model was:

$$Ajj = -0.462 + 0.438EF + 0.309 ESC + 0.197ERE + 0.205EPR + \varepsilon$$

The constant was negative but statistically insignificant ($B = -.462$). This means the predicted administration of judicial justice, when all four ECCMS components equal zero, was not statistically different from zero. Because zero falls outside the observed five-point composite scale, the constant has limited practical meaning and mainly positions the regression line.

Electronic filing had a positive and statistically significant effect on the administration of judicial justice ($B = .438$, $\beta = .308$, $t = 6.360$, $p < .05$). Holding the other ECCMS components constant, a one-unit increase in electronic filing was associated with a .438-unit increase in the administration of judicial justice.

Electronic case search had a positive and statistically significant effect on the administration of judicial justice ($B = .309$, $\beta = .436$, $t = 4.939$, $p < .05$). A one-unit improvement in electronic case search was associated with a .309-unit increase in judicial administration, holding the other predictors constant. Its standardized coefficient of .436 was the largest in the model, showing that electronic case search made the strongest unique contribution to judicial administration.

Electronic requests and extraction of orders also had a positive and statistically significant effect on the administration of judicial justice ($B = .197$, $\beta = .257$, $t = 2.976$, $p = .05$). Holding other predictors constant, a one-unit increase in the effectiveness of electronic requests and extraction of orders was associated with a .197 unit increase in judicial administration.

Electronic payment and receipting had a positive and statistically significant effect on the administration of judicial justice ($B = .205$, $\beta = .208$, $t = 4.315$, $p < .05$). A one-unit increase in electronic payment and receipting was associated with a .205-unit increase in judicial administration, holding the other ECCMS components constant.

Based on the standardized coefficients, electronic case search had the strongest unique contribution to the administration of judicial justice ($\beta = .436$), followed by electronic filing ($\beta = .308$), electronic requests and extraction of orders ($\beta = .257$), and electronic payment and receipting ($\beta = .208$). All four predictors remained statistically significant when entered simultaneously. Therefore, the results show that each ECCMS component contributed distinctly to judicial administration at Milimani Law Courts.

5. CONCLUSION

First, the study concludes that electronic filing has a positive and statistically significant effect on the administration of judicial justice at Milimani Law Courts in Kenya. By allowing documents to be submitted remotely and more quickly, electronic filing reduces physical travel, accelerates document transmission, and makes court processes more accessible and efficient. Secondly, the study concludes that electronic case search has a positive and statistically significant effect on the administration of judicial justice. It was the strongest unique ECCMS predictor because it enabled rapid retrieval of case details, dashboard-based tracking, and remote access to information required for case management.

Thirdly, it is concluded that electronic requests and extraction of orders have a positive and statistically significant effect on the administration of judicial justice. Electronic processing improves the speed, accuracy, security and traceability with which court orders are requested and extracted, thereby reducing delays associated with manual workflows. Lastly, the study concludes that electronic payment and receipting have a positive and statistically significant effect on the administration of judicial justice.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Judiciary of Kenya, through the Milimani Law Courts administration and the Directorate of Information and Communication Technology, should strengthen the reliability and accessibility of electronic filing. This should include redundant internet connections, dependable backup power, routine system-availability monitoring, and defined response times for resolving filing interruptions. The registry should provide digital service desks for litigants with limited computer literacy and offer practical filing guides in simple language. Registry officers should consistently index electronic documents and undertake routine data-quality checks to ensure that filed materials can be retrieved without delay.

Registry officers should adopt and enforce a same-day case-information updating standard for hearing dates, rulings, orders and changes in case status. The Judiciary's Directorate of Information and Communication Technology should ensure the electronic dashboard provides complete, user-friendly search filters by case number, party name, case type, date, and status, and includes audit trails showing when information was entered or changed. Registry supervisors should periodically identify and correct incomplete, duplicated, or outdated records. Appropriate access controls should also protect confidential information without preventing authorized users from retrieving information required for case management.

Milimani Law Courts administration should establish clear turnaround standards for approving and uploading court orders. The Directorate of Information and Communication Technology should introduce automated notifications informing applicants when requests are received, approved, rejected, or ready for extraction. The court administration should also establish an escalation mechanism for orders remaining pending beyond the prescribed period. Judges, registrars and ICT officers should provide regular sensitization and practical training to court staff, advocates and litigants on submitting requests and extracting orders through ECCMS.

The Judiciary of Kenya should integrate electronic court payments with reliable payment gateways and automated reconciliation procedures. Every successful transaction should generate an immediate and verifiable receipt. The Judiciary's finance and ICT departments should enable users to track payments using unique reference numbers and provide clear information concerning court fees, transaction charges, and payment status.

Areas for Further Research

Further studies should examine ECCMS implementation across several court stations and levels of the Kenyan judiciary to determine whether findings from Milimani Law Courts apply to courts with different caseloads, infrastructure, and geographical conditions. Longitudinal research should assess whether improvements in electronic judicial services translate into sustained reductions in case-processing time, pending cases, and backlogs. Future studies should also incorporate the experiences of litigants, advocates, and other external court users and combine perception data with objective administrative records, including filing times, system downtime, payment failures, and order-processing durations. Additional research could examine digital literacy, organizational readiness and technical support as mediating or moderating mechanisms. The nonlinear relationship identified for electronic filing should also be investigated using alternative model specifications and larger samples.

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