



Research Article

Influence of age diversity on organization performance at Kenya urban roads authority

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ABSTRACT

The aim of the study was to investigate the influence of age diversity on organization performance at the Kenya Urban Roads Authority. The study was conducted at Kenya Urban Roads Authority (KURA) Headquarters, in Nairobi and the target population was all categories of employees of KURA. A descriptive research design was used in this study. The method employed was stratified random sampling. The population of the study was 150 and the sample size was 30% of the population which translated to 45 respondents. In order to collect data, structured questionnaires were issued to respondents. A pilot test was done to determine the questionnaire's validity and reliability. Data was analyzed through descriptive and inferential analysis. The multiple regression results showed that age diversity account for up to 41.3% of the variation in organizational performance of KURA. As a result, the study recommends the HR department of KURA to improve age diversity in the organization by increasing the rate of adoption of such practices as mixing the youthful employees' skill with high-tech instruments in order to assist older employees in improving their knowledge of current technologies encouraging the younger employees to take risks in order to contribute to the success of the authority and encouraging the older employees to mentor young employees in acquiring job skills.

Keywords: Age; Diversity Management; Organization Performance

1. INTRODUCTION

As globalization increases in the world, there is a need for people to interact with those from diverse backgrounds in order to compete in the global framework. This need has forced organizations to be more diverse in order to be competitive enough. As a result, focusing more on workforce diversity more so age diversity is critical in ensuring that the work force is competitive (Green et al., 2012). Diversity also refers to the differences in people's characteristics, which show how they differ from one another and necessitate different management techniques (Carstens & Kock, 2017). There are several indications of diversity, but the most important in terms of style dimensions are age, competition, gender, and national supply. Age diversity highlights the differences in work force teams inside a corporation that have completely diverse features. Many students contemplate age as a supply of assorted processes and its effects on the organization's performance (Kunze et al., 2013), and staff of different age teams behave otherwise in an operating relationship (Bal & Smit, 2012).

The concept of workforce diversity is well documented in USA and Europe. In the USA for instance, where racial and ethnic minorities are making up on the larger dominant white race, as well as women and people living with disabilities also seeking active employment, workforce diversity is well grounded in organizations in USA (Burns et al, 2012; Skaggs & Ditomoso, 2014).

In the African context, South Africa has experienced massive globalization which has brought in cultural differences, language differences as well as racial and gender differences. Countries are forced to adopt workforce diversity in order to cope with these changes (Bennett, 2011). The government however has come up with affirmative action to ensure that workforce diversity is embraced as a result the style of management is changing (Bennett, 2009).

The National Cohesion and Integration Act, 2008 was additionally introduced in Republic of Kenya to make sure that there's no discrimination supported ethical backgrounds, age, racial or gender discrimination or based on nationality. Diversity also refers to the differences in people's characteristics, which show how they differ from one another and necessitate different management techniques (Carstens & Kock, 2017). There are several indications of diversity, but the most important in terms of style dimensions are age, competition, gender, and national supply. Age diversity highlights the differences in work force teams inside a corporation that have completely diverse features. On the other hand, employees of all ages can complement and learn from one another, facilitating knowledge integration and adding value to the internal social capital. For example, older workers could transfer their accumulated data, skills, and attitudes to younger workers through work and mentoring, and supply younger workers wisely on how to deal with social conflict and stress (Burmeister & Deller, 2016; Isaacowitz & Blanchard-Fields, 2012). Younger personnel have more fluid intellectual talents and more adaptable information structures, allowing them to operate efficiently in dynamic, ambiguous, and complex contexts (Bugg et al., 2006; Mannucci & Yong, 2018). Older personnel, on the other hand, have more crystallized intellectual talents and are more likely to apply their previous expertise to address new problems (Rietzschel et al., 2016; Wang et al., 2013). Employees of varying ages complement one another, resulting in a more comprehensive and varied collection of knowledge, abilities, and attitudes that can meet a wider range of jobs and situations. Furthermore, because of the differences in objective prime concern between younger and older employees in terms of data acquisition vs. positive socio-emotional experiences, employees from vastly different age groups may seek out distinct forms of social interactions.

1.1. PROBLEM STATEMENT

The Kenya Urban Roads Authority is an important player in the infrastructure sector. Successful age management is the result of a combination of the most pressing global issues confronting leaders and policymakers. Age diversity in the workforce does not seem to be a passing trend, and its consequences are exacerbated by many global trends such as increased immigration, worker mobility, and gender and ethnic disparities. Studies on the impact of workforce diversity on organizational performance have been

reviewed in the past. Kiprop and Egessa (2017) performed a research on the effects of age diversity on organizational performance in Elgeyo Marakwet County, Kenya, and found that age diversity had a beneficial impact on organizational performance. Elsaid (2012) demonstrated that there is no link between age diversity and employee performance in the same setting. Similarly, age diversity isn't linked to employee performance, according to Kyalo and Gachunga (2015) and Selvaraj (2015). Stakeholders in both the business and non-profit sectors may be concerned about organizational performance. Several researchers have looked at the link between an age-diverse workforce and company success. However, the results are still unpredictable (Ilmakunnas & Ilmakunnas, 2011). Furthermore, there is no clear agreement on whether age diversity has an overall good or negative impact on these different aspects and levels of study, and there is no literature on KURA, necessitating this research.

1.2. OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

This study sought to analyse the influence of age diversity on organization performance at Kenya Urban Roads Authority.

1.3. VALUE OF THE RESEARCH

The goal of this research was to get insight into what we know about the impact of age diversity on organizational performance. The research will help to close a gap in the body of information about Kenya Urban Roads Authority's procedures and operations. The goal of the research is to discover whether there is a connection between age diversity and organizational performance, specifically customer service delivery. This should not only guarantee that those who place their trust in the Kenya Urban Roads Authority to provide services continue to benefit. The study may also benefit future public-sector researchers by assisting in their theoretical growth, in addition to being an important contribution to Kenyan research.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. THEORETICAL FOUNDATION OF THE RESEARCH

2.1.1. Resource based view theory

The critical time in the emergency of the resource-based view theory is often cited as the firm's resources and maintained competitive advantage (RBV). Prahalad and Hamel (2006) said that by doing so, the company would focus on those unique skills such as cultural, gender age and education levels, that would take rivals a long time to duplicate. According to Madhani (2013), the concept analyzes and interprets human diversity by using the organization's strategy and internal resource pool and skills to achieve competitive advantage and improved performance.

2.2. EMPIRICAL LITERATURE REVIEW

2.2.1. Age Diversity on Organization Performance

According to a research by Zaidi et al., (2010), age variety is important in improving performance in the contemporary world. Older workers were valuable assets to a company because of their expertise and insight. This is very helpful when making decisions.

According to Uschiand and Veen (2013), age diversity improves company production by bringing flexibility and expertise to issue resolution. The research also found a connection between age diversity and creative levels. The research found that senior management with greater expertise and advanced age made the best choices. On the other side, Gellner and Veen (2009) believed that age diversity had little impact on individual performance. It was shown that for regular activities, age diversity provides no significant benefits when contrasted to the significant losses incurred as a consequence of age-related productivity decrease.

Furthermore, (Darwin, 2014) backed up the claim that advancing in age enhances value to the company performance. Different values were introduced onto the boards as a result of the age variety, which complement each other and enhance performance. Age diversity rings around agreement when making important choices, according to Tolbize (2008); Deszo and Ross (2012).

2.3. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Figure 1 shows a schematic representation of the researcher's likely view of the existing connection between the variables. The model suggests that there is a link between age diversity as an independent variable and organizational performance as a dependent variable, which is affected by gender diversity.

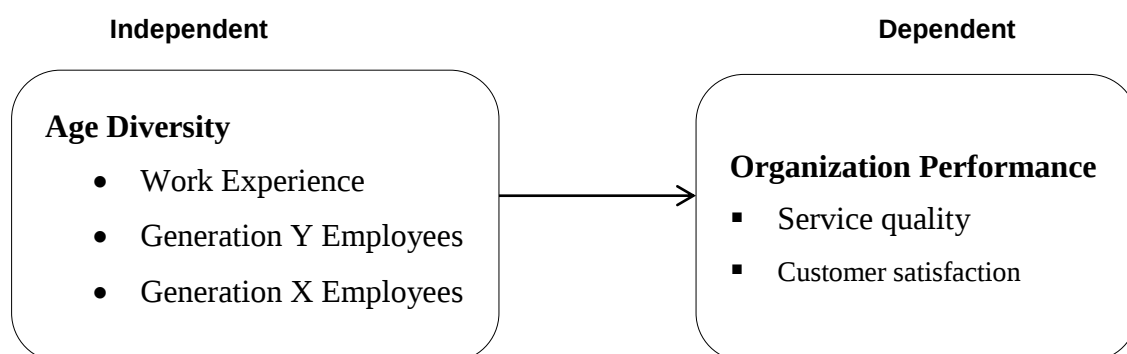


Fig. 1. A Conceptual Model showing perceived Age Diversity and Organization performance.

Source Researchers (2020)

Although the connection shown in Figure 1 was expected to exist in companies, the application of various age diversity has been shown to have an impact on organizational performance. Gender diversity influences organizational performance by incorporating work experience, generation Y or X workers in recruiting and firing.

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1. RESEARCH DESIGN

Because the study was documenting age diversity and drawing generalized generalizations, the researcher employed a descriptive research approach, which is deemed acceptable. As Kothari and Garg (2016) point out, it was also deemed appropriate for research requiring relationship analysis, which was the subject of this work.

3.2. POPULATION OF THE STUDY

All workers at KURA's Nairobi headquarters were included in the target population. According to the human resource department, there are a total of 150 of them in 2021.

3.3. SAMPLE POPULATION

Kothari and Garg (2016) states that the sample size should be optimal, meaning it should be sufficient, representative, trustworthy, and flexible. The sample size for this study was 45 workers, which represents 30% of the target population of 150 KURA employees. The researcher used a stratified sampling strategy.

3.4. DATA COLLECTION

Primary data was collected using a structured questionnaire. Questioners, according to Olatokun and Gbinedion (2009), are simple to use and may be used to collect information from any target group. The researchers requested permission to gather data from the National Council for Science, Technology, and Innovation (NACOSTI).

3.5. TEST OF VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY

A pilot study was performed at the Kenya National Highways Authority on 10% of the sample size on a population that was not included in the main survey to ensure the reliability and validity of the research instrument utilized in this study. The responses were entered into SPSS and then Cronbach Alpha was used to determine the reliability of the findings. The Cronbach Alpha values for the age diversity utilized in the research were over 0.7, according to the findings in Table 1. Based on Robert's rationale, the research instrument was deemed trustworthy and sufficient for the main survey (2016).

Table 1. Reliability Test Results

Scale	Cronbach's Alpha	Number of Items	Comment
Age Diversity	0.746	10	Reliable
Organizational Performance	0.812	7	Reliable

3.6. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

3.6.1 Response Rate

A total of 45 questionnaires were distributed to the Middle Level Managers, Subordinate Staff, and Top Managers of KURA at the Head Quarters in Nairobi, Kenya, in order to

accomplish the study's goals. Only one respondent did not complete the questionnaire, resulting in a response rate of 98 percent. The non-response rate was 2%, which supports Kothari and Garg's (2016) assertion that a survey's ideal response rate should be more than 50%.

3.6.2. Demographic Characteristics

Table 2 shows the demographic characteristics of the respondents at the Kenya Urban Roads Authority, including their gender, job experience, and level of education, as well as their category.

Table 2. Respondent's Demographic Characteristics

Demographic Characteristics	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	25	57
	Female	19	43
Work Experience	Less than 2 Years	9	20
	2 to 10 Years	16	36
	11 to 20 Years	15	34
	More than 20 Years	4	10
Level of Education	KCPE / KCSE	6	14
	Certificate / Diploma	20	45
	Degree	18	41

Table 2 summarizes the findings. It has been verified that male workers make up up to 57 percent of KURA's workforce, while female employees make up just 43 percent. The Kenyan constitution, on the other hand, allows for a gender mix, stating that no more than a third of workers in a company should be of one gender.

According to the findings, up to 36% of KURA workers have worked for the company for two to ten years, 34% have worked for the company for eleven to twenty years, and 20% have worked for the company for less than two years, with just 2% having worked for the company for more than twenty years. The findings in HR indicate that the work experience at KURA is diverse. It also indicates that there is a significant turnover rate in the previous 20 years of employment, and that the company participates in recruiting on a regular basis, the most recent being within the last two years.

According to the data, up to 45 percent of KURA workers have a diploma or certificate as their highest level of education, 41 percent have a bachelor's degree or above, and 14 percent have a KCPE or KCSE certificate. This indicates that the workers' educational backgrounds are diverse, and that the company considers individuals with a variety of educational backgrounds for a variety of jobs. Furthermore, it is arguable that the workers are literate.

3.7. DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

3.7.1. Descriptive Findings of Age Diversity.

The respondents rated five-point Likert scale questions on age diversity and the findings are indicated in Table 3.

Table 3. Descriptive Findings of Age Diversity

Statement	Mean	Standard Deviation
The young employee's expertise on high-tech tools aid in helping the generation X employees to improve their knowledge on the current technologies.	4.25	0.69
The risk taken by generation Y employees contributed to the success of the Authority	4.27	0.59
Mentorship that generation Y employees get from older employees helped the m in acquiring job skills	4.32	0.67
The friction among the young is mitigated by generation X employees in the authority which promoted team cohesiveness at the Authority	4.43	0.70
The status difference among the old and young employees doesn't cause emotional conflict and anxiety in the Authority.	3.05	0.81
Because of diversity in ages within the Authority I have not experienced stress issues in past 12 months.	2.93	0.73
Age diversity on creativity and innovation within the Authority has been positive	3.89	0.81
Would you say age diversity informs decision-making in the Authority easier	3.25	0.78
Age diversity leads to enhanced improvement of product and service quality due to multiplicity of perspectives and knowledge in the Authority	3.87	0.62
Age diversity made it easier and faster to communicate within the Authority	3.11	0.78
Average	3.74	0.72

The respondents rated statements on age diversity on a scale of 1 to 5 as shown in Table 3. The results established an agreement that the young employees with high tech tools would aid older employees to enhance their knowledge of modern technologies with a mean of 4.25 and standard deviation of 0.69, by taking risk, young employees made their contribution to the Authority's success with a mean of 4.27 and standard deviation of 0.59, young employees gained from the older employees mentorship to acquire job skills with a mean of 4.32 and standard deviation 0.67, the friction that would have occurred among young employees in the Authority was mitigated by older employees thus promoting cohesiveness and team work with a mean of 4.43 and standard deviation of 0.70, diversity on ages as well as creativity together with innovation at the Authority remained positive with a mean of 3.89 and standard deviation of 0.81, and diversity in age brings about enhancement in service and product quality because of multiplicity in perspectives as well as knowledge within the Authority with a mean of 3.87 and standard deviation of 0.62.

The respondents on the other hand neither agreed nor disagreed on whether there is absence of emotional conflicts as well as anxiety in the Authority because of difference in status of old and young employees with a mean of 3.05 and standard deviation of 0.81, they never experienced stress with the past 12 months because of their diversity in ages at the work place with a mean of 2.93 and standard deviation of 0.73, it can be said that with diversity in ages the easier decision making in the Authority with a mean of 3.25 and standard deviation of 0.78, as well as on whether communication was made easier by age diversity within the Authority with a mean of 3.11 and standard deviation of 0.78. On average, there was a strong indication that there was age diversity at KURA with a mean of 3.74, based on the standard deviation, there was less variation.

3.7.2. Descriptive Findings of Organization Performance

The respondents rated five-point Likert scale questions on organization performance and the findings are indicated in Table 4.

Table 4. Descriptive Findings of Organization Performance

Statement	Mean	Standard Deviation
KURA avails relevant training programs for its employees	3.16	0.86
KURA avails client survey index on customer satisfaction	4.50	0.51
KURA allows high-quality operation and maintenance of physical infrastructure for service delivery	4.43	0.50
Enhanced regulation of Service Providers/ agents is made by Kenya Urban Roads Authority periodically	4.41	0.50
The management style of the top managers of KURA is conducive for employees to perform in all Directorates and Divisions.	4.55	0.50
There are continuous phases of expansion of service coverage by KURA	3.75	0.84
Commercialization of KURA services have led to high customer service	3.30	1.00
KURA avails relevant training programs for its employees	3.23	0.83
KURA avails client survey index on customer satisfaction	3.36	0.92
Average	3.85	0.72

The respondents rated statements on organization performance on a five-point Likert scale shown in Table 4. The respondents agreed that KURA avails client survey index on customer satisfaction with a mean of 4.50 and standard deviation of 0.51, KURA allows high-quality operation and maintenance of physical infrastructure for service delivery with a mean of 4.43 and standard deviation of 0.50, enhanced regulation of Service Providers/ agents is made by Kenya Urban Roads Authority periodically with a mean of 4.41 and standard deviation of 0.50, the management style of the top managers of KURA is conducive for employees to perform in all Directorates and Divisions with a mean of 4.55 and standard deviation of 0.50 and that there are continuous phases of expansion of service coverage by KURA with a mean of 3.75 and standard deviation of 0.84.

The results also showed that the respondents neither agreed nor disagreed that KURA avails relevant training programs for its employees with a mean of 3.16 and standard deviation of 0.86, commercialization of KURA services have led to high customer service with a mean of 3.30 and standard deviation of 1.00, KURA avails relevant training programs for its employees with a mean of 3.23 standard deviation of 0.83 and that KURA avails client survey index on customer satisfaction with a mean of 3.36 and standard deviation of 0.92. On Average, there was an agreement that KURA performs well with a mean of 3.85 as also shown by the small variation in opinions standard deviation of 0.72.

Table 5. Influence of Age Diversity on Organization Performance

Model summary					
R	R Square		Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	
.643	0.413		0.369	0.2169	
ANOVA					
Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	1.326	3	0.442	9.389	.000
Residual	1.882	40	0.047		
Total	3.208	43			

Coefficients ^a					
Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	-0.619	0.845		-0.733	0.468
Age Diversity	0.346	0.124	0.34	2.783	0.008

Dependent Variable: Organization Performance

a. Predictors: (Constant), Gender Diversity

b. Dependent Variable: Organization Performance

Table 5 displays the coefficient of determination, also known as the R-square, which indicates how much of the variance in the dependent variable is accounted for by the independent variable. The coefficient of determination (R Square) was 0.413, according to the findings. This means that KURA's organizational performance is influenced by age diversity to the tune of 41.3 percent.

The regression model fitness was also established. The ANOVA results are important in demonstrating whether the regression model established was a good fit. The results also indicate that the F statistic value of 9.389 was significant (P-Value < 0.05). This implies that the regression model linking Age diversity to organizational performance of KURA was a good fit.

It was also demonstrated that age diversity has a positive and significant influence on organizational performance of KURA ($\beta = 0.346$; P-value < 0.05). This was also the second most significant form of workforce diversity ($t = 2.783$). The findings imply that a unit increase in age diversity would lead to a significant increase in organizational performance of KURA by 0.346 units. The study findings are unswerving with the results of a study by Zaidi, *et al*, (2010) who convened that in the modern scenario, age diversity is critical in enhancing performance.

The descriptive results indicated a strong indication that there was age diversity at KURA. The correlation findings showed that age diversity has a positive and significant influence on organizational performance. The regression findings showed that age diversity has a positive and significant influence on organizational performance of KURA. This implies that the higher the age diversity, the better the organizational performance of KURA.

3.8. SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS

3.8.1. Age diversity

The descriptive results indicated a strong indication that there was age diversity at KURA. The regression findings showed that age diversity has a positive and significant influence on organizational performance of KURA. This implies that the higher the age diversity, the better the organizational performance of KURA.

4. CONCLUSION

Availability of age diversity practices such as mixing the expertise and few years of experience of the young employees with high tech tools in order to assist staff to boost their knowledge on latest technologies, encouraging the younger employees to take risks in order to contribute to the success of the Kenya urban roads authority and encouraging

the older employees to mentor young staff in exploiting job skills would considerably improve organizational performance.

4.1. RECOMMENDATION

Since it was established that age diversity has a positive influence on organizational performance, the study recommends the human resource departments to improve age diversity in the organization by increasing the rate of adoption of such practices as mixing the expertise of generation Y employees and encouraging the generation X employees to mentor and share their knowledge with young employees in acquiring job skills.

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