Influence of Workforce Diversity on Team Cohesion of Employees in Kenyan Private Universities: Evidence from Kabarak University

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ABSTRACT: Workforce diversity provides an environment for employees to learn more from each other thus making an institution stronger in terms of tolerance, ideas, innovation and creativity. The changing demographics in workforce composition in Kenya not only increases the amount of diversity that institutions need to manage and integrate but also affects business operations and productivity that inevitably affects the overall well-being of the country. This study sought to determine the influence of workforce diversity on team cohesion of employees in Kenyan private universities: evidence from Kabarak University, and was anchored on four objectives; to examine the influence of gender diversity on team cohesion among employees at Kabarak University, to assess the influence of ethnic diversity on team cohesion among employees at Kabarak University, to determine the influence of age diversity on team cohesion among employees at Kabarak University and to assess the influence of religion diversity on team cohesion among employees at Kabarak University. The study was guided bythe Resource Based Theory of Diversity Management (RBT) and the Team Development Model of team development and cohesion. The study adopted a descriptive research design to give an understanding of workforce diversity and team cohesion. The researcher adopted a case study model. Stratified random sampling was used to draw a sample size of 149 from the target population of 167 teaching staff and 274 non-teaching staff. The Nassiuma (2000) equation was applied to calculate the appropriate sample. Primary data was collected using a structured questionnaire and was analyzed using both descriptive statistics and inferential statistics. Descriptive statistics, mainly, frequencies and percentages were used in this study and the findings were presented using tables and graphs while the inferential statistics was analyzed in the form of correlation and multiple linear regression. The Cronbach's alpha was employed to determine the internal consistency and average correlation of items in the case study to gauge the reliability of the tool that was piloted at St. Paul's University, Nakuru Campus.The researcher used Spearman's correlation coefficient, to measure the strength and direction of association between the ranked variables with the help of the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS).The results indicated that there were statistically significant influences with respect to gender, age, tribe and religion respectively and team cohesion. These findings suggest that Private Universities in Kenya as represented by Kabarak University do require on-going training and development of employees along with frequent surveys to determine how employees react to a heterogeneous workforce that would further enhance team cohesion. The study concluded that age diversity, ethnic diversity, religion diversity and gender diversity at Kabarak University were primary contributors to team cohesion. The findings of this study may help private institutions of higher learning to appreciate workforce diversity and learn how to overcome workforce diversity challenges amongst team members within the institution in order to improve team cohesion.

Key Words: *Age Diversity*, *Diversity, Ethnic Diversity, Gender Diversity, Religion Diversity, Team Cohesion, Workforce Diversity*

I.   Background of the Study

In current competitive and global situations, it is expected that institutions that practice diverse workforce perform better than those that do not. Workforce diversity not only expands an institutions talent pool but also allows each institution's members to draw information from the backgrounds, viewpoints and experiences of fellow team members.

Diversity makes the work force heterogeneous, (Scott & Byrd, 2012). Workforce diversity recognizes the certainty that individuals contrast in various means, observable or undetectable, primarily age, gender, spousal standing, societal standing, disability, sexual orientation, religion, personality, ethnicity and culture (Kossek, Lobel& Brown 2005).

A diverse workforce is a replication of a fluctuating world and marketplace and it means a mass of views, understandings, values and unique ways of observing the world in totality. Rapid internationalization and globalization has amplified the importance of work-force diversity in all categories of institutions, industries and organizations. Diverse work teams have brought high value to institutions and provide a larger pool of experience and skill. To be competent to entirely exploit the exceptional abilities and potential of a diverse workforce, an institution has to generate an all-inclusive atmosphere that is committed to appreciating diversity (Shen, Chanda, D'Netto&Monga 2009).

The challenge of engaging new employees, selecting and handling a diverse workforce is necessary for institutional survival (Grobler, Warnich, Carrell, Elbert & Hatfield, 2002). Diverse teams in institutions are more proactive, innovative and are able to solve problems with ease. The acknowledgement of different needs by institutions yield greater employee satisfaction, employer loyalty and in turn, lowers staff turnover and leads to greater productivity. Institutions that fail to manage diversity tend to expose themselves to risk through the inability to reap the benefits of an effective diverse workforce. Diversity in an institution plays an important role in assisting to preserve awareness, knowledge and experience, tackling skill shortages, widening recruitment base and accumulating profits by drawing more clients (Onrec, 2005). Diversity makes every single person feel more valued thereby making them give the best in their duties. Chatman andSpataro (2005) state that there are numeral events that an institution can participate in to manage the diversity of their workforce. It has been noted that institutions are becoming more gender sensitive by hiring more women and people from minority groups to ensure an environment that is all inclusive and diverse hence a workforce that mirrors the demographics of a given nation or region.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

All universities in Kenya operate under the oversight of the Commission for University Education to which they are accredited in order to promote, regulate, monitor and deal with all matters related to university education. Currently there are thirty one public universities and eighteen private universities that are fully accredited and operational in Kenya. (CUE, 2017).In spite of the Government of Kenya legislations that have been put in place to guarantee workforce diversity in public establishments, concerns on workforce diversity in private universities in Kenya still remain unresolved. In a report released by the National Cohesion and Integration Commission (2012), it indicated that most of the public universities in Kenya still have major issues relating to age, ethnic, regional, educational and racial inclusion. There is therefore need for these institutions to rapidly adopt workforce diversity management practices in the context of their organization culture to achieve this objective.

Kabarak University is a Private Christian University that is well known for its advocacy on Christian values as indicated in the University's mission, vision and moral values. This has opened up the university to align itself with requirements as inculcated in the Constitution of Kenya, the CUE and any other government body in Kenya. Team cohesion among the workforce brings about commitment in terms of loyalty and honesty and also brings about an equal mindset amongst members of a given team or department. A number of studies focusing on workforce diversity have tried to relate diversity with organizational performance, employee performance and performance in general (Kathimba, 2018; Busolo, 2017; Muasa, 2017; Muthoni, 2014; Baligasima, 2013; Kinyanjui, 2013). These studies however do not connect workforce diversity and team cohesion. This study is aimed at filling up knowledge gaps identified in previous studies by establishing the Influence of Workforce Diversity on Team Cohesion of Employees in Kenyan Private Universities: Evidence from Kabarak University.

1.3 Research Hypotheses

$H0_1$:   There is no significant influence of gender diversity on team cohesion among employees at Kabarak University.

$H0_2$: There is no significant influence of ethnic diversity on team cohesion among employeesat Kabarak University.

$H0_3$:   There is no significant influence of age diversity on team cohesion among employees at Kabarak University.

$H0_4$:   There is no significant influence of religion diversity on team cohesion among employees at Kabarak University.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.2 Theoretical Review

This study is guided by two theories, namely; the Resource Based theory of Diversity Management, developed by Penrose in 1959 and the Team Development Model, developed by Bruce Tuckman in 1965.

2.2.1 Resource Based Theory of Diversity Management (RBT)

The root of the resource based theory of diversity management was traced back to the work of Penrose (1959). Penrose conceptualized an institution as being more than an administrative unit; it was also an assortment of industrious resources, the disposal of which between different uses and over time was determined by managerial decisions. The RBT had, as its central focus, the exploitation of an institutions superior resources in order to gain sustainable competitive advantage that afforded the accrual of superior team cohesion and institutional performance (Barney,1991; Peteraf,1993; Wernerfelt,1984).

Resource Based Theory of Diversity Management focused on how the enactment of diversity would affect an institutions resource. There are four classifications of resources that institutions possess: physical capital, financial capital, human capital and corporate capital resources. These resources can moreover support or impede the operations of the institution. Institutions attempt to use these resources in ways that will contribute and improve business. From a business angle, institutions that are more diverse gain an advantage compared to institutions that are homogenous. Racial diversity within institutions increase their financial performance when progress or innovation strategy is used (Richard, 2000).

Yang and Konrad, (2011) found that institutions with more diversity administration practices in place, experienced lower levels of turnover and that diversity administration practices join forces positively with an innovation strategy may result in higher productivity and better market performance. Institutions that are diverse gain numerous advantages over institutions who fail to implement diversity policies. With a diverse workforce, RBT can be pragmatic specifically to employees for the purposes of exploiting their skills and knowledge for competitive advantage and through competence development. Clardy (2008) for example proposes that RBT can be the source for an institution to develop business competencies so that competencies are concentrated on achieving competitive advantage. These should then be cascaded down to employees and inform the nature of the competencies they are developed to achieve. In this way, leadership and general employee training and development platforms can be designed to skill people with the mindset and abilities to labor in ways that contributes to the institutions competitive advantage.

Hunt and Madhavaram (2012) pick up from Clardy by proposing that RBT frameworks can be practically applied to enable administrative actions and verdicts. They state that administrative activities are known to influence performance and provide examples of such actions including: attainment of clienteles; introduction of new products; commercial enlargement; entering into business partnerships and takeovers. All such activities and the verdicts that lie behind them would essentially be founded on experiences cultured through enlargement or experience. Therefore, worker experiences will forecast certain actions and decisions that, if well chosen, can influence diversity in an institution. The researcher has chosen to use this theory because it brought about the fact that RBT can be skillfully designed to work in ways that would contribute to an institutions competitive advantage by appreciating the human resource in the institution in terms of age diversity, gender diversity, ethnic diversity, religion diversity and team cohesion.

2.2.2 Team Development Model

The team development model was first established by Bruce Tuckman in 1965. This model centers on the way in which a team tackles a task from the initial creation of the team through to the accomplishment of a task that brings about team cohesion. Tuckman's model enlightens that as the team develops maturity and ability, relationships are established and the leader changes leadership style. This model is composed of the following phases: forming, storming, norming, performing and adjourning. (Tuckman,1965).

2.3 Conceptual Framework

This study seeks to establish the influence of workforce diversity on team cohesion of employees in private universities: evidence from Kabarak University, Kenya. The independent variable in this study is workforce diversity with reverence to gender diversity, ethnic diversity, age diversity and religion diversity while the dependent variable is team cohesion with reverence to task cohesion, social cohesion and attraction.
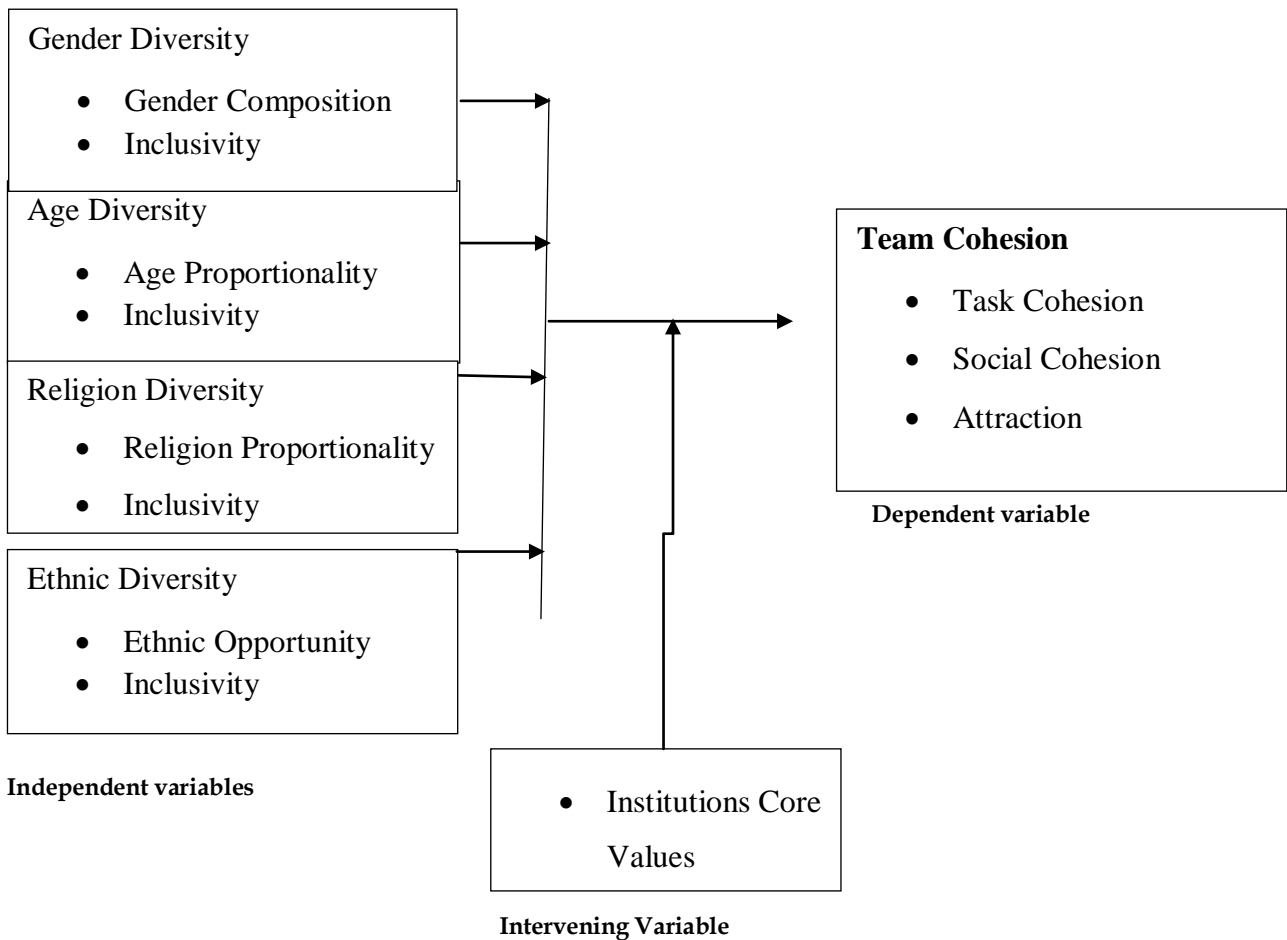
Workforce Diversity

Gender Diversity
- Gender Composition
- Inclusivity

Age Diversity
- Age Proportionality
- Inclusivity

Religion Diversity
- Religion Proportionality
- Inclusivity

Ethnic Diversity
- Ethnic Opportunity
- Inclusivity

Independent variables

Team Cohesion
- Task Cohesion
- Social Cohesion
- Attraction

Dependent variable

- Institutions Core Values

Intervening Variable

Figure 2.1 Conceptual Framework

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

According to Kothari (2004) research design is the conceptual structure within which the research is conducted; it constitutes the blue print for the collection, measurement and analysis of data. This study adopted the descriptive research design. This design was chosen to help describe the influence of workforce diversity on team cohesion considering the employees at Kabarak University. Robson (2002) points out that a descriptive study depicts a precise profile of individuals, proceedings or situations. The descriptive design, mainly frequencies, percentages and mode, helped to acquire facts concerning Kabarak University while describing what currently existed with respect to the different variables in this study.

In addition to descriptive research design, the researcher used a case study research which was an in-depth study of a particular research problem to help researchers answer how and why the contemporary events in the dependent and independent variables were related and the relevant behaviors of the two variables would not be manipulated. The case study research was narrowed down from a very broad field of research of private universities in Kenya into one researchable area of study which in this case was Kabarak University.

3.2 Location of the Study

The study was carried out at Kabarak University Main Campus and Nakuru town Campus in Nakuru County, Kenya. The Main Campus is located twenty kilometers from Nakuru town along the Nakuru – Eldama Ravine road while the Nakuru town Campus is located in Milimani Estate, opposite National Oil petrol station, along Nakuru – Kabarak road. Kabarak University is located at a longitude of 35.95213 and latitude of -0.179243.

3.3 Population of the Study

Population denotes a comprehensive assembly of persons, events, or things that the researcher desires to study (Sekaran & Bougie, 2013).The research was focused on the influence of workforce diversity on team cohesion with respect to the employees at Kabarak University. Kabarak University has a total of 167 teaching staff in its workforce and 274 of non-teaching staff that is evenly distributed amongst the various schools and departments in the institution. In total, the target population is 441 respondents.

3.4 Sampling Procedure and Sample Size
3.4.1 Sampling Procedure

Kothari and Garg (2014) define a sample design as a definite plan for obtaining a sample from a given population. Sampling methods are classified into two groups; probability sampling and non- probability sampling. The researcher used probability sampling method in this study because every item on earth has an equivalent coincident of being incorporated in a given sample.

The researcher used stratified random sampling technique for selecting the respondents. This technique was employed to assure a fairly equivalent representation of the variables for the study. The respondents were categorized into strata that comprised of schools / departments present at Kabarak University, then the subjects in each stratum were selected randomly.

3.4.2 Sample Size

According to Gupta (2005) a sample size should neither be too small nor too large. It should be optimum so as to fulfil the requirements of efficiency, representativeness, reliability and flexibility. The sample size formula recommended by Nassiuma (2000) was used to determine the sample size.

$$n = \frac{NC^2}{C^2 + (N-1)e^2}$$

Where

n = Sample size
N = Population size
C = Coefficient of variation
e = Standard margin of error.

Nassiuma (2000) recommends a margin error ranging between 2% - 5% and coefficient of variation ranging between 20% - 30%. For this study N = 441 respondents, C = 30% and e = 0.02 which gives a sample of 149

Hence:

$$n \quad = \quad \frac{441 \quad (0.3)^2}{0.3^2 + (441\text{-}1)0.02^2} \quad = \quad \frac{39.69}{0.09 + 0.176} \quad = \quad 149$$

The researcher allocated samples with a probability proportional to the strata size using the formula, $n_h = (\frac{n}{N})N_h$ where N_h = total population size of strata h, n_h = the sample size of stratum h. the resultant sample allocation was distributed as follows:

Table 1: Sample Distribution

Staff Type	Population	Sample $n_h = (\frac{n}{N})N_h$
Teaching Staff	167	56
Non – Teaching Staff	274	93
Total	**441**	**149**

Source: Kabarak University HR Department (2019)

3.5 Instrumentation

Data was collected using primary data collection techniques. The researcher collected primary data using a questionnaire. The questionnaire was alienated into numerous sections to sufficiently cover the objectives of the study. A five point Likert scale was used to rate the magnitude of agreements by the respondents from 5 – Strongly agree, 4 – Agree, 3 – Neutral, 2 – Disagree and 1 – Strongly disagree.

Questionnaires were deliberated for this study since they provide a high degree of data standardization that the researcher would moderately collect facts from the respondents fast and in a none-threatening way. Kombo & Tromp (2006) specified that a self-administered questionnaire is the solitary technique to prompt a report on people's opinion, attitudes, beliefs and values. Mugenda & Mugenda (2003) admits that questionnaires give a comprehensive response to compound problems.

3.5.1 Pilot Study

A pilot study was conducted at St. Paul's University, Nakuru Campus. The pilot study enabled the researcher to be familiar with the research and its administration procedure as well as identify concepts that would require modification. St. Paul's University, Nakuru Campus was used because it has similar characteristics with Kabarak University.

3.5.2 Validity of the Instrument

Kothari and Garg (2014) describe validity as the degree to which alterations found with a measuring instrument reflect true differences among those being tested. In order to ensure validity of the research instrument, content validity was established through expert opinion from the researchers' supervisors. The data collection tool which is a self-administered questionnaire was subjected to critique and discussion by peers and supervisors whose opinion were deemed to be sufficient.

3.5.3 Reliability of the Instrument

Reliability is the degree at which an assessment tool produces constant and consistent outcomes. Kothari and Garg (2014) explain that a measuring instrument is dependable if it provides consistent results. Sekaran&Bougie (2013) stated that the reliability of a measure indicates the magnitude to which it is without prejudice and guarantees consistent measurement across time and across the various items in the instrument. The researcher used Cronbach's alpha (α) to measure the internal reliability of the structured questionnaire. While the Cronbach alpha coefficient values range from 0 to 1 with a 0 implying no reliability and 1 implying perfect reliability (Sekaran & Bougie, 2011). The study used a cut off of 0.7 as a means of checking the internal reliability of the study. In this context, the study used Cronbach alpha statistical coefficients of 0.740.

3.6 Data Collection Procedure

The process of data collection started with seeking the approval of the University to be allowed to collect data in relation to the study. The Institute of Post Graduate studies issued a letter to the researcher to present to NACOSTI for the purpose of applying for a research permit. This was followed by applying for a research permit from The National Council of Science, Technology and innovation (NACOSTI). Upon the receipt of the permit, the researcher sought the consent of the management of Kabarak University and St. Paul's University that was surveyed both during the pilot and the main research. Data was collected by the researcher using self-administered questionnaires where the respondents were to enter the responses on the spaces provided. Quantitative data was collected using closed ended questions while qualitative data was entered on the spaces provided on the questionnaires by the respondents appropriately. Clarifications on particular questions were made as required by the respondents. The researcher sought to have the questionnaires filled on the spot and where it was not possible; respondents were given a maximum of three days after which the filled questionnaires were collected for analysis. Analysis was then done and a summary of the findings concluded.

3.7 Data Analysis Method and Presentation of Findings

The data obtained from the questionnaire in this research was used to identify a proportionate allocation in the study. Collected data was analyzed by using both descriptive and inferential statistics with the help of the statistical package for social science (SPSS). The researcher used Spearman's correlation coefficient, to measure the strength and direction of association between the two ranked variables with the help of the statistical package for social science (SPSS). Descriptive statistics, mainly, frequencies and percentages were used in this study and the findings were presented using tables and graphs while the inferential statistics was analyzed in the form of correlation and multiple linear

regression. The open-ended questions were analyzed through quantitative content analysis by the researcher with the goal of computing the developing characteristics and concepts. Data was presented using percentages, means and standard deviations.

This regression model guided the inferential analysis.
$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \beta_4 X_4 + \varepsilon$$

Where:

Y = represents team cohesion

β_0 = represents constant

X_1 = represents gender diversity

X_2 = represents age diversity

X_3 = represents religion diversity

X4= represents ethnic diversity

E = error term

IV. RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.1 Inferential Statistics
Inferential statistics are used to test hypotheses about the relationship between the independent and the dependent variables. The researcher used the following statistical tests: T-test, ANOVA, Correlation and Linear Regression.

4.1.1 Correlation Matrix
A correlation matrix shows correlations between two variables.

Table 2: Correlation Matrix

	Gender diversity Score	Age diversity score	Ethnic diversity score	Religion diversity score	Team Cohesion diversity
Gender diversity Score	1				
Age diversity score	.020	1			
Ethnic diversity score	.387**	-.021	1		
Religion diversity score	.269**	.207*	.525**	1	
Team Cohesion diversity	.365**	-.049	.418**	.301**	1

Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

This study found a positive and small correlation between Age diversity score and Gender diversity Score. There was also a positive moderate correlation between Ethnic diversity score and Ethnic diversity score. The study also found that ethnic diversity had a small and negative correlation with Age diversity score. There was a small but positive correlation

between Religion diversity score and Gender diversity Score. Similarly, Religion diversity score had a small and positive correlation with Age diversity score as well as Ethnic diversity score. The dependent variable team cohesion was positively correlated with Gender diversity Score, Ethnic diversity score and Religion diversity score. However, it was negatively correlated with Age diversity score.

4.2 Regression Analysis

Regression analysis is a statistical technique that is used to predict the value of an outcome or dependent variable based on one or more predictor (independent) variables. It is hence used to assess how much a change in a given explanatory variable causes or influences the outcome variable to change. This study sought to determine the influence of age diversity, gender diversity, ethnic diversity and religion diversity on team cohesion hence regression analysis was adopted. Simple regression model for each of the study hypothesis is given as:

$$Y = \beta_0 + B_i * X_i \qquad Where\ i=1,2,3,4$$

The Xi are the predictor variables (Independent Variable) as stated in each of the study objective.

The overall regression equation for predicting team cohesion as the dependent variable from the predictor variables (workforce diversity) is given as;

Team Cohesion = β_0 + B_1 Gender diversity + B_2*Age diversity + B_3* Ethnic diversity + B_4* Religion diversity + e*

*Whereby fitted value = intercept + (slope * Y)*

The intercept (constant) gives the value of the response or dependent variable whenYis at zero levels.

Table 3: Multiple Regressions

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.468[a]	.219	.198	2.12829	1.035

a. Predictors: (Constant), Religion diversity score, Age diversity score, Gender diversity Score, Ethnic diversity score

b. Dependent Variable: Team Cohesion diversity

The study also regressed workforce diversity (gender, age, ethnicity and religion) jointly on team cohesion. The study established that gender, age, ethnicity and religion jointly explained 21.9% variation in tem cohesion.

Table 4: ANOVA

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	183.184	4	45.796	10.110	.000[b]
	Residual	652.266	144	4.530		
	Total	835.450	148			

a. Dependent Variable: Team Cohesion diversity

b. Predictors: (Constant), Religion diversity score, Age diversity score, Gender diversity Score, Ethnic diversity score

The ANOVA test was used to test whether the coefficients of gender, age, ethnicity and religion were jointly significant. The study found that they were jointly significant (F=10.110, Sig <0.05).

Table 5: Multiple Regression Model

	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients			Collinearity Statistics	
	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.	Tolerance	VIF
(Constant)	14.861	1.272		11.681	.000		
Gender diversity Score	.187	.061	.245	3.061	.003	.844	1.184
Age diversity score	-.061	.060	-.077	-1.010	.314	.934	1.070
Ethnic diversity score	.087	.036	.220	2.400	.018	.645	1.551
Religion diversity score	.096	.064	.135	1.506	.134	.673	1.485

a. Dependent Variable: Team Cohesion diversity

The resulting regression model was as follows:

The study further found that gender significantly (t=11.681, Sig <0.05) influenced team cohesion while controlling theAge diversity score, Ethnic diversity score and Religion diversity score. Similarly, ethnic diversity significantly (t=2.4, Sig. <0.05) influenced team cohesion while controlling the Age diversity score, gender diversity score and Religion diversity score. However, while controlling the other variables, age diversity and religion diversity did not significantly influence team cohesion. The study also tested for multi-collinearity since the independent variables were found to be correlated. A Variance Inflation Factor was generated and none of the independent variables had a value greater than 10 indicating that inasmuch as the variables were correlated, there was no collinearity in the model.

Team Cohesion=14.861+0.187* Gender diversity Score-0.061* Age diversity score+0.087* Ethnic diversity score+0.096* Religion diversity score.

V. SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Summary of Findings
The general purpose of the study was to determine the influence of workforce diversity on team cohesion of employees in Kenyan private universities: evidence from Kabarak University. The study sought to realize four specific objectives, namely;to examine the influence of gender diversity on team cohesion of employees at Kabarak University, to assess the influence of ethnic diversity on team cohesion of employees at Kabarak University, to determine the influence of age diversity on team cohesion of employees at Kabarak University and to assess the influence of religion diversity on team cohesion of employees at Kabarak University.

5.1.1 Influence of Gender Diversity on Team Cohesion
The results of the study revealed that there was an imbalance in terms of gender among Kabarak University employees, with male employees dominating with 61.10% whereas female employees were at 38.9%. In general, Kabarak University employees had the perception that observing gender diversity at the workplace had an influence on team cohesion and stated that this influence existed at different levels in hierarchy at the institution. The overall perception of gender diversity indicated that gender diversity significantly influenced team cohesion among employees in Kabarak University.

5.1.2 Influence of Age Diversity on Team Cohesion

Age diversity at Kabarak University was observed with employees belonging to different age groups from different departments. Employee age groups were spread evenly across the age groups stated on the questionnaire. The senior positions within the institution were held by the older experienced staff while the younger generations were mainly working at entry and middle level management at the institution for both the teaching and none teaching staff respectively. Most employees believed that age diversity at the workplace affects team cohesion. Having age diversity at the workplace brings together different people of different ideas, innovativeness, decision making and problem solving skills. Such a mix in age diversification of employees can result in providing solutions to a myriad of problems and also enhance team cohesion.

5.1.3 Influence of Ethnic Diversity on Team Cohesion

Ethnic diversity has been determined to be a significant factor in team cohesion. This is especially true for institutions that operate in multi-ethnic societies like Kabarak University. The study obtained that despite the fact that there are 42 ethnic communities in Kenya, one ethnic community seemed to dominate at the University. This study showed that the dominant ethnic group at Kabarak University came from the Kalenjin community comprising of 60.4% of the employee population.

Institutions operating in ethically heterogenous societies, boardroom ethnic diversity is an indispensable internal resource for problem solving as people from different ethnic backgrounds provide a wider perspective of considering and conceiving a situation, which might result in more informed corporate decisions being made, or to finding proper and effective solutions to problems. Thus, ethnic diversity not only helps to boost the institutions competitive advantage over other institutions with a more ethnically homogenous workforce, but enhances employee satisfaction as they come to work with and appreciate other people and different ways of perceiving their assigned tasks. The study also found out that ethnic diversity significantly influenced the team cohesion among employees in Kabarak University. The null hypothesis was thus rejected and the hypothesis that there is significant influence of ethnic diversity on team cohesion among employees at Kabarak University, supported.

5.1.4 Influence of Religion Diversity on Team Cohesion

Religion diversity in the workplace can bring an institution many benefits in the form of different view-points in regards to handling various institutional matters, tolerance and acceptance of *religious* views as well as being able to accommodate those who may need extra time off or may have special needs that are dictated by their *religious* preference. Regression analysis indicated that the Pearson's' product moment correlation between religion diversity and team cohesion was ($r = .301^{**}$, $p = 0.000$). The results reveal a moderate and significant positive relationship between religion diversity and team cohesion among employees in Kabarak University. From the results, an increase in religion diversity will automatically lead to an increase in team cohesion. The strength of relationship is moderate and significant ($p < 0.05$), showing that religion diversity has a significant positive linear association with team cohesion.

Conclusion

Apart from age diversity, the other independent variables of this study namely, ethnic diversity, religion diversity and gender diversity significantly influenced team cohesion among the workforce at Kabarak University. Gender diversity is a vital element in institutional performance. This is because it has both internal and external principles that expedite institutional performance. Accomplishing gender diversity is not only imperative because it is the right thing to do in a society in which gender equality is a major issue, as it also has the prospects to expedite the accomplishment of internal and external corporate goals. This study sought to examine the influence of gender diversity on team cohesion of employees at Kabarak University as the researcher focused on the gender composition and inclusivity of employees. The researcher concluded that gender diversity significantly influenced team cohesion which brought about the value of gender diversity for intra-organizational decision-making and problem solving in this study.

The value of boardroom gender diversity in the corporate decision-making and the determination of a sustainable corporate strategy on team cohesion has also been found to be true. Additionally, the value of workforce gender diversity for creativity and innovativeness, quality of management, services and products has also been established in some studies. The inclusion of both women and men in the boardroom and management of the institution has been found to add to corporate reputation and job satisfaction, all of which are crucial for their value to overall corporate

performance. The knowledge gap in relation to the influence of gender diversity on team cohesion of employees at private universities has thus been achieved by this study.

An age diverse workforce creates an atmosphere in which each generation brings in a variety of skill sets that are equally important in problem solving and meeting of objectives. This study sought to determine the influence of age diversity on team cohesion of employees at Kabarak University as the researcher focused on age proportionality and inclusivity of employees at the institution. Age diversity of employees at Kabarak University was obtained to be diversified and therefore the institution reaps the benefits of that through improved team cohesion though in this study, the researcher concluded that there was a small relationship between age diversity and team cohesion though age diversity did not significantly influence team cohesion. The study reveals that the age diversity of the workforce at Kabarak University did not significantly impact team cohesion of employees. Thus it was concluded that the employees at Kabarak University neither admire nor criticize age diversity and they have shown a neutral perception about age diversity. It is believed that organization culture, human resource practices, the nature of work and the business strategy of institutions are different from each other and the differences are likely to mask the impact of variables on team cohesion in one institution with that observed in other institutions. A comparison of the effect of age diversity on similar or same institutions operating in different countries would improve the depth of knowledge especially on the interaction of organization culture and national, about the effect of age diversity further.

Ethnic diversity is of equal importance to an institution as it seeks to dispel negative stereotypes and personal biases amongst different ethnic groups in an institution. In addition it helps employees to recognize and respect the different cultures that are not necessarily their own that brings about unity, trust, respect and understanding of across cultures. This study sought to determine the influence of ethnic diversity on team cohesion of employees at Kabarak University as the researcher focused on ethnic opportunity and inclusivity of employees at the institution. Like gender, religion and age diversity, Kabarak University embraced ethnic diversity as a crucial resource for achieving the institutions marketing objective and for achieving team cohesion though it was obtained from the study that the Kalenjin ethnic group dominated at the institution making the institution less in inclusivity in terms of ethnic diversity. Furthermore, the management should appreciate the problem-solving value of ethnic diversity in the boardrooms. The value of ethnic diversity for employee productivity and team cohesion, as well as creativity and innovation should not escape the senior management of institutions.

This study sought to determine the influence of religion diversity on team cohesion of employees at Kabarak University as the researcher focused on religion proportionality and inclusivity of employees at the institution. Religion diversity in the workplace can bring an institution many benefits in the form of different view-points in regards to handling various institutional matters, tolerance and acceptance of *religious* views as well as being able to accommodate those who may need extra time off or may have special needs that are dictated by their *religious* preference that would lead to the enhancement of team cohesion.

Recommendations

Kabarak University management should focus on assigning tasks to employees possessing relevant skills and trainings to enhance team cohesion. The institution should organize team building activities to ensure that the staff is able to appreciate how age diversity, gender diversity, ethnic diversity and religion diversity influence team cohesion at their workplace both at a professional and a social level. Additionally, institutions especially those that operate in ethnically heterogeneous societies like Kenya must view attainment of ethnic diversity as key to attaining team cohesion within the institution and contributing towards the establishment of a stable external social environment in which the institution must exist.

Kabarak University has a diverse mixture of young and senior professionals that allows the institution to draw upon the past and present employees and create better client presentations, campaigns and team synergy. Kabarak University should have a written diversity policy, and give a copy to employees. Conduct sensitivity training and workshops for all employees. Participating in community outreach opportunities would also help educate employees on diversity.

Suggestions for further research

It is essential for additional research to examine why in theory it is proposed that diversity results in greater team cohesion but upon conducting research on this, one discovers the association to be inconclusive in respect to age diversity aspects. Imminent research should aim at focusing the study on the nature of association between a single aspect of team cohesion and a single form of diversity to provide a comprehensive appreciation of the nature of the association. This, in turn, would bring about the significance or non-significance of workforce diversity aspects on team

cohesion. According to this study, some aspects of workforce diversity affect like gender diversity and ethnic diversity jointly affect team cohesion. Future research should also attempt at creating a model for administrators to use to exploit the advantages offered by diversity for team cohesion.

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