Effect of Organizational Culture on Workplace Diversity in Public Universities in Kenya.

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Abstract

The main objective of this paper is to study the effect of organizational culture on workplace diversity in public universities in Kenya from the perspective of the senior administrators or managers of the administrative departments and the schools/faculties in order to provide empirical insights on the disparity in the workforce, which has been a challenge for the public universities' as they need to benefit from talented people with diverse backgrounds. The study adopted a research design being a descriptive cross sectional survey design. The sampling frame was the 22 chartered public universities out of which a sample size of 245 managers surveyed. The sampling technique used was purposive sampling. Correlation and regression analysis was used to determine relationships between the independent and the dependent variable. The study established that organizational culture significantly affects workplace diversity.

Keywords Organizational culture, Workplace diversity, Public universities in Kenya, Human Resource Management.

1.   Introduction

The effective management of human resources is critical in the successful management and development of organizations and several studies have documented the problems and challenges that are affecting most organizations in Africa (Kamoche, 2004; Tessema and Soeters, 2006). Some of these challenges include inappropriate management practices, weak and inefficient decision making, political patronage and governmental interference, inability to fire people, inadequate and non-competitive rewards, particularistic recruitment procedures that includes nepotism and other forms of favouritism among other factors (Mulinge, 2001; Kamoche ,2004; Tessema and Soeters, 2006).

As a result of these challenges, most organizations, especially the public sector in Africa have been unable to attract, motivate and retain diverse employees resulting in high turnover and 'brain drain' as most trained employees seek greener pastures in other countries in Africa or overseas (Kamoche, 2004; Tetty, 2006). In order for the African public sector to move away from this culture of failure and managerial ineptitude, it is crucial that it strengthens the human resource function, which is often lowly regarded in organizations (Kamoche, 1997),

In Kenya, the issue of diversity has received a lot of attention since 2007 after the General elections which led to ethnic clashes and the enactment of the National Cohesion and Integration Act, (2008). Discrimination in the public service has reached a level of concern as one of the major challenges facing universities with existence of negative ethnicity and intolerance from university administrators (Kibaji, 2010; NCIC, 2012). While contemplating people as the most important asset of every organization, it is equally important for HR strategists to recognize human inequalities, otherwise called workplace diversity and manage these effectively (Barbosa, 2007). Particularly, in the context of expansion where interactions among socially and culturally differing people is desired and also inevitable,   managers could increase individual and group commitment to organizational goals by creating conducive diversity climate (Cox 1993). As strategic partners, managers translate the business strategy into action (Ulrich, 2012). So it is also reasonable to infer that effective cultures and diversity management practices contribute to improve the overall organizational performance which in turn is pivotal for sustaining competitive strength.

Workplace Diversity

Diversity consists of visible and non-visible differences and diversity management seeks to harness those differences in the pursuit of more productive work environments (Shena, 2009). Workplace diversity includes several dimensions starting from the legal aspect, equal opportunity, and non-discrimination to other valued people's identities and perspectives (Marquis, 2008). Diversity is based on informational differences reflecting a person's education, experience, and generational differences from the differences that exist within the workplace (Kerby & Burns, 2012; Douglas, 2010).

Diversity is advantageous to both the organization and its staff. A diverse workforce improves an organization's performance and boosts its bottom line (Ozbilgin & Tatli, 2008). The employers receive the most skilled and the most qualified candidates as building blocks of their company when they hire the employees belonging to different cultural thoughts and varied backgrounds. The chances to hire the best and brightest from labor market also amplify after the workers are trained by diversity management trainers (Kerby & Burns, 2012). Diversity thus embraces difference of opinions and of ideologies (Llopis, 2011) and welcomes individuals to adopt each other's peculiarities while observing a better understanding of the workplace (Llopis, 2011). It helps organizations to develop their own mirrors to reflect global demographic trends which may affect global market (Kwak, 2002; Rahim, 2003). The presence of multiple generations in the workplace will not only help in information transformation but will promote cultural and social cohesiveness (Douglas, 2010). This social phenomenon affects so much the traditional practices of human resource management necessitating a modification in the practice of managing the workforce. Diversity is managed to minimize inter-group conflicts and eliminate institutional bias in their human resource systems (Cox 2001: Ozbilgin & Tatli, 2008).

2. Statement of the Problem

The current demographic trends indicate that the composition of the workforce is changing in Kenya (Census 2009). The need for better management and utilization of diversity in the workforce has been identified by the National Cohesion and Integration Commission (NCIC, 2012&2016), as one of the challenges facing public sector organisations and affecting their performance, development and effectiveness. Further, a report on lack of ethnic diversity in civil service and public universities in Kenya showed a highly skewed workforce pattern (NCIC, 2012&2016). The lack of diversity has been highlighted in both the reports. Research studies show that the efficient use of diverse human resources at the training level can reap the benefits of knowledge, skills and change in attitude and consequently a higher growth rate can be achieved. As the Kenyan universities are expanding at a fast pace requiring them to recruit more employees, there is a need to have an understanding of people of different cultures who bring frameworks of knowledge and understanding to the work place thus leading to greater productivity and improved performance (Seymen, 2006; Trenka, 2006). However in Kenya, workplace diversity status in the universities are the most inappropriate. Organizational culture has been on the forefront of the study of workplace diversity and various authors have demonstrated that there is a link between organizational culture and a firm's productivity (Darajat, 2012). Going by the above analysis, Kenya's growth target is seemingly ambitious and cannot be realized and sustained without serious human resource management reforms (KIPPRA, 2012). According to Omolo, (2010), the gap between Kenya's economy and those of the high performing Asian tigers has widened tremendously since the country's independence in

1963 with Kenya recording low GDP compared to the Asian tiger countries. This is because developed countries and the Asian tigers, have over the years emphasized on diversity of human resources leading to increased productivity and to improve G.D.P as well as raised standards of living. According to Lankeu and Maket (2012), there is a need to look at the Organizational culture in Kenya that ensures maximum utilization of human resources at the workplace. While the trend of emphasis in workplace diversity is picking up internationally, the situation in Kenya, particularly in the public sector is far from the reality of the trends (Kibaji, 2010). There is therefore a dearth of information on how the organizational culture influences workplace diversity in Kenya. This study therefore examines the effect of organizational culture on workplace diversity in Public Universities in Kenya. In the light of the above discussions, the following alternative hypotheses have been formulated: **H$_a$:** Organizational Culture has a significant effect on Workplace Diversity.

Organizational Culture and Workplace Diversity

Since, it became prominent in the management field in 1980s, organizational culture is regarded as a powerful and original tool to understand and analyze the human behavior in the workplace (Noe, 2007). Organizational culture can be defined as the set of taken-for-granted values, beliefs, practices, and norms that indicate to its members the appropriate behaviours in each specific circumstance (Louis, 1985; Schein, 1985). To be accepted in the work place, newcomers are encouraged to adopt the current organizational values and artefacts (Garibaldi de Hilal, 2009; Lai, 2007), whereas existing members tend to distrust, fear, and dislike people with other ideas (Garibaldi de Hilal, 2009). Organizations tend to attract and retain individuals from similar social and demographic backgrounds and to discriminate dissimilar ones in recruitment, selection, career development, and informal integration (Lai, 2007).

Organizational culture works as a mechanism of social control that promotes behavioural uniformity and the assimilation of the dominant values. Such demand originates high levels of stress in people from minority cultural backgrounds that want to preserve their identity (Lai, 2007). Therefore, cultural barriers may prevent members from minority identity groups from developing their full potential (Gupta, 2013). These barriers can be tangible like the stairs that limit the mobility of people in wheelchairs, or more subtle like the refusal to pay attention to someone's suggestions and opinions because he or she is a member of a minority group (Barbosa, 2007).

Strong cultures in particular demand workers to develop unilateral efforts to fit into the existing norms and values (Gupta, 2013). In academic settings, members of strong academic cultures share ideologies, values, and quality judgments, and those who seem to contradict these common cultural elements risk to be penalized (Barbosa, 2007). For that purpose, Cox (1994) recommends a socialization process in which members of the dominant culture and members of the alternative cultures are invited to share some important values and norms while keeping their own cultural identity, hoping to facilitate both the full structural integration of minorities that is the presence of minorities at all organization levels and their integration in the informal networks.

In the particular case of academic institutions, a culture that appreciates innovation, cooperation, teamwork, and mutual trust must be encouraged in order to promote and respect diversity (Gavino, 2010). In sum, an organizational culture that is sympathetic to diversity and promotes diversity is a key factor for the success of any diversity management strategy. Cultural diversity is no longer

experienced as radical differences, as separation, as superiority over others. It is not a source of fragmentation and partitioning (Gavino, 2010). Understanding of organizational culture is fundamental to examine what goes on in organizations, how to run them and how to improve them (Schein, 1992).In other words, organizational culture is a product of the diversity factors prevalent in that particular organization in a specific society.

3.　　Methodology

The study used both quantitative and qualitative data. The data obtained through questionnaires was established by calculating response rate, and descriptive statistics such as mean, standard deviation, and frequency distributions for the observed variables. These measures help to tell us the point about which items have a tendency to cluster (Kothari, 2004). Second, data collected on each of variables under study was analyzed using factor analysis and descriptive statistics.　Lastly, correlation and regression analysis was used to analyze the data. The entire hypothesis was tested at 95% confidence level.

4.　　Data Analysis and Presentation

This study used the percentages to present the study findings on factors used in examining the effect of Hiring practices on workplace diversity in public universities in Kenya The purpose of descriptive analysis is to enable the study to meaningfully describe a distribution of scores of measurements using indices or statistics.

Construct Organizational Culture

Organizational culture is a critical component of the human resource management function. An organization with the right culture will be able to attract employees needed to perform various functions in the universities, thus enhance the performance. The respondents were provided with a likert scale questionnaire ranging between1 to 5 and asked to provide objective opinions that best describe their responses. The results of these findings are presented in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1 Descriptive results on Organizational Culture

	N	Strongly Agree	Agree	Un decided	Disagree	Strongly disagree
My manager is willing to share decision making power with employees	196	18.9%	39.8%	15.3%	18.4%	7.7%
I have freedom to make important decisions regarding my work	196	21.4%	40.8%	14.3%	16.3%	7.1%
My organization communicates effectively and in a timely manner to its employees	196	20.9%	40.3%	12.8%	15.3%	10.7%
There is a two way communication between employer and employees	196	17.3%	40.3%	14.3%	20.4%	7.4%

I feel that my organization values my opinions	196	14.3%	16.3%	16.8%	39.3%	11.7%
Everyone's contribution is noted and respected by the organization	196	12.2%	26.5%	25.0%	22.4%	13.8%
There is good team work and cooperation in my organization	196	17.3%	36.7%	17.3%	20.9%	7.7%
I am recognized and respected by my teammates	196	22.4%	49.5%	14.3%	9.2%	4.6%
All the information is shared equally in my department	194	17.9%	40.3%	14.8%	21.9%	8.1%
Individual differences are respected(Age, Gender, Education, Tribe)	194	16.8%	24%	11.2%	36.2%	10.7%
I have clear understanding of the goals and objectives of my organization	196	29.6%	47.4%	13.3%	7.1%	2.6%
I am encouraged to develop new and more efficient ways to do my work	196	23.0%	42.3%	17.3%	11.2%	6.1%
My job/responsibility is clearly described	196	24.5%	43.9%	13.8%	12.2%	5.6%
Employee recognition programs are regularly followed	196	15.3%	23.5%	14.3%	34.5%	12.8%
My organization will promote from within before looking for employees externally	196	14.3%	37.8%	17.9%	18.9%	11.2%
There is great opportunity to learn and for career growth	196	18.9%	11.7%	10.7%	52%	6.6%
My job gives me professional growth and advancement in future	196	30.6%	7.7%	11.7%	44.9%	5.1%

The study finding showed that a responded rate of 57.8% agreed that my manager is willing to share decision making power with employees while a rate of 62.2% agree that I have freedom to make important decisions regarding my work. My organization communicates effectively and in a timely manner to its employees had a respondent rate of 61.2% agreeing. There is a two way communication between employer and employees had a response rate of 57.6% whereas a rate of 53.6% agreed that my organization values my opinions. Everyone's contribution is noted and respected by the organization had a respondent rate of 61.3% disagreeing whereas a rate of 54% agreed that there is good team work and cooperation in my organization. I am recognized and respected by my teammates had a respondent rate of 71.9% agreeing while all the information is shared equally in my department had a response rate of 58.2% agreeing. Individual differences are respected (Age, Gender, Education and Tribe) had

a response rate of 53%. I have clear understanding of the goals and objectives of my organization had a response rate of 77%. A respondent rate of 65.3% agreed that I am encouraged to develop new and more efficient ways to do my work, while a rate of 68.4% agreed that my job/responsibility is clearly described. Employee recognition programs are regularly followed had a response rate of 49.5% agreeing with the majority of 50.5% disagreeing. My organization will promote from within before looking for employees externally had a response rate of 52.1% in agreement. There is great opportunity to learn and for career growth had a respondent rate of 70.9% in agreement while a rate of 75.5% agreed on my job gives me professional growth and advancement in future.

Organizational cultures, like people's personalities, are elusive, complex and paradoxical. Understanding culture means understanding the difference between the formal and the informal rules, the espoused way of doing things and the real way. To survive and thrive in an organization, one must evaluate and operate within the hidden cultural expectations and rule. Understanding of organizational culture is fundamental to examine what goes on in organizations, how to run them and how to improve them (Schein, 1992).The findings in this construct enable us to know the culture practices at the universities.

Construct Workplace Diversity
Workplace diversity in public universities in Kenya is very critical because it determines whether they achieve their objectives or not. Workplace diversity also tends to enhance their image in the public sector. The study, therefore, sought to measures the extent of the indicators of workplace diversity in public universities. The results are presented in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2 Descriptive results on Workplace Diversity

	N	Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
The workforce profile is equally represented in the organization	196	11.2%	25.5%	13.3%	42.9%	9.2%
All groups are equally represented in the workforce	196	15.3%	25.5%	14.3%	35.7%	9.2%
The organization is broadening the pool of applicants by extended outreach efforts	196	12.7%	23.5%	18.4%	38.8%	7.7%
Employees among affirmative action groups are paid the same as dominant counterparts or those in similar positions	196	18.9%	37.2%	18.4%	20.4%	4.1%
Men and women are given equal pay for equal work in the same establishment	196	30.6%	41.3%	11.2%	10.7%	6.1%

Promotion rates for men, women and other affected are the same	196	21.4%	19.4%	15.8%	37.2%	6.1%
Voluntary and involuntary turnover by demographic category is reviewed annually	196	6.6%	18.4%	32.7%	28.6%	13.8%

The study sought to establish the extent of workplace diversity in the public universities. The data on table 4.2 shows responses on statements regarding the determinants of workplace diversity in public universities in Kenya. The data shows 36.7% of the respondents agree on the workforce profile are equally represented in the organization while 63.3% are do not agree or do not know. Also 40.8% respondents agree that all groups are equally represented in the workforce while 59.2% do not agree or were undecided. The respondents 64.9% disagree that the organization is broadening the pool of applicants by extended outreach effort. Of the respondents 56.1% agree that employees among affirmative action groups are paid the same as dominant counterparts or those in similar positions. Men and women are given equal pay for equal work in the same establishment with a response rate of 71.9%, while a response rate of 40.8% agree on promotion rates for men, women and other affected are the same but 59.2% disagreed. Of the respondents 64.9% disagreed or did not know whether the Voluntary and involuntary turnover by demographic category is reviewed annually while 35.1% agreed.

The results concur with Mathews (1998), that diversity has been characterized as a function of human resource management and the policies and programs that constitute the diversity management function vary substantially among organizations, including mentoring opportunities, training programs, minority policies, and advocacy groups (Kellough & Naff, 2004).

Correlation analysis for construct Organizational Culture
Based on the results in table 4.3 the correlation coefficient (P) between the organizational culture and workplace diversity was found to be $r (196) = .742$, $p < 0.01$, two tailed. These results indicate that according to the study, there was a significant linear correlation between the two variables (organizational culture and workplace diversity). This implies that the relationship between the two variables is very close.

Table 4.3 Correlations analysis for construct Organizational Culture

		Organizational Culture	Workplace Diversity
Organizational Culture	Pearson Correlation	1	.742[**]
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	196	196
Workplace Diversity	Pearson Correlation	.742[**]	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	196	196

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

The organizational culture had a strong linear relationship to workplace diversity at .742. This indicates with the right environment employees are able to work in harmony from diverse backgrounds. Organizational culture must be binding on all members of the organization as this will encourage uniformity among members and thus enhance commitment and group efficiency (Ojo, 2009)

Regression Analysis

In interpreting the results of multiple regression analysis, the R squared was used to check how well the model fitted the data. Therefore, it is interesting to know if the independent variables (hiring practices, performance appraisal, employee compensation, training and development and organizational culture), relate to the dependent (workplace diversity). The coefficient of determination R^2 was used to measure how well the regression line represents the data. If the regression line passes exactly through every point on the scatter plot, it would be able to explain all of the variation. The further the line is away from the points, the less it is able to explain. The p - values were used to measures the hypotheses of the study. The coefficient of determination is the ratio of the explained variation to the total variation. The coefficient of determination is such that $0 < r^2 < 1$, and denotes the strength of the linear association between x and y.

The results showed that organizational culture had moderate explanatory power on workplace diversity as it accounted for 40.7%, with the coefficient of determination R^2 = .550 and R = .742 at significant level of 0.05. The results shown indicate that an increase in organizational culture tends to increase the workplace diversity in the public universities by 55% and the remaining 45% can be explained by other factors.

Regression results for OC and workplace diversity

To assess the effect of OC on workplace diversity in public universities in Kenya the study had the following alternative hypothesis: **H$_a$**: Organizational culture has a significant effect on workplace diversity. The results showed that organizational culture had moderate explanatory power on workplace diversity as it accounted for 40.7%, with the coefficient of determination R^2 = .550 and R = .742 at significant level of 0.05. The results shown indicate that an increase

in organizational culture tends to increase the workplace diversity in the public universities by 55% and the remaining 45% can be explained by other factors. The individual regression results reveal statistically significant positive linear relationship between OC and workplace diversity ($\beta = 0.720$, P-value 0.000) as shown in table 4.37. Hence, H_{a5} is accepted as there is a significant relationship between organization culture and workplace diversity since $\beta \neq 0$ and P-value < 0.05.

Table 4.4 Regression coefficient

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.742[e]	.550	.548	.544

a. Predictors: (Constant), Organization Culture

The findings of this study reveal that organizational culture influences workplace diversity as set of individual, group or organizational factors interact to influence a set of individual outcomes that in turn influence organizational outcomes. It also shows that if an individual feels valued by the organization they will contribute more to meeting the goals of the organization. Universities should be profoundly interested in preventing dysfunctional work behavior as such behavior can be very costly and damaging to the organization. Lastly, as the environment is changing, the culture also has to change but the institutions are concentrating on routine things they perform rather than adjust systems for the better.

The findings concur with Klein (2008) study on organization culture as a competitive advantage which found that cultural norms appear to have a fairly consistent impact on quality. Ravasi and Schultz, (2006) study also revealed that organizational culture is a set of shared assumptions that guide what happens in organizations by defining appropriate behaviors for various situations. Rajasekar (2014) identified that all types of organizational cultures have significant relationship with the implementation process but the extent of the culture influences varies from the most effective culture to the least effective. Ahmadi, (2012) concluded that there is sufficient evidence linking cultural traits and organizational effectiveness. The findings also agree with the study of Abok (2013) on organizational culture affect the implementation of plans. They study of Muthoni (2013) contradicted the findings as the culture in the banking sector is different from the universities as they uphold culture of dynamism, entrepreneurship and creativity at work, keeping in mind the dynamic work environment. Lastly, Nyariki (2012) concurs with the findings as the central goal of understanding organizational culture is to minimize the occurrence and consequences of cultural conflicts and use it to build competitive advantaged.

The results concur with Schein's (1985) model of organizational culture which consists of three domains: basic underlying assumptions, espoused values, and artifacts. He distinguishes between observable and unobservable elements of culture. Visible behavior influences and is influenced by unobservable assumptions through rules, standards, and prohibitions. According

to Schein (1992), culture is the most difficult organizational attribute to change, outlasting organizational products, services, founders and leadership and all other physical attributes of the organization. The diverse workplace needs to enhance the visible behavior to create harmony in the organization.

The ANOVA was done to test the significance of the independent variable in table 4.5 which was OC. The analysis results revealed that the significance of F statistics is 0.000 which is less than 0.05. This implies that there is a significant relationship between human resource management practices and workplace diversity as seen in table 4.5.

Table 4.5 Anova

<table>
<tr><td colspan="7" align="center">ANOVA[a]</td></tr>
<tr><td>Model</td><td>Sum of Squares</td><td>df</td><td>Mean Square</td><td>F</td><td>Sig.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Regression</td><td>70.345</td><td>1</td><td>70.345</td><td>78.429</td><td>.000[b]</td></tr>
<tr><td>1　Residual</td><td>57.478</td><td>194</td><td>.296</td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>Total</td><td>127.824</td><td>195</td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr>
</table>

a.　Dependent Variable: WD
b.　Predictors: (Constant), OC

ANOVA test results on OC revealed F statistic of 78.429 which was significant at 0.05 (p <0.05). This means that 78.43% of the change in workplace diversity was influenced by OC measures.

5. Summary of findings

The study sought to find out the effect of organizational culture on workplace diversity and to test the research hypothesis that organizational culture significantly influences workplace diversity. From the descriptive analysis majority of the respondents felt that the organization does not value my opinions (51%) while majority of the respondents disagreed that everyone's contribution is noted and respected by the organization (61.2%). On the issue of individual differences are not respected (58.1%) was the response, whereas majority disagreed (61.6 %) on the employee recognition programs regularly followed. Majority of the respondent also disagreed on whether there is great opportunity to learn and for career growth (69.3%) while the respondent (61.7%) disagreed on my job gives me professional growth and advancement in future in public universities in Kenya.

The computed Cronbach's Alpha of the items of Organizational culture was 0.930; this meant a high reliability of the study instrument and data. The inferential analysis and findings showed that there is a positive significant linear relationship between Organizational culture and workplace diversity, with a Pearson correlation coefficient of 0.772 and a p- value of 0.000 and an R Square value of 0.550. This means that Organizational culture contributes 55% to workplace diversity and is significantly positively correlated to workplace diversity.

This implies that an improvement in Organizational culture leads to an increase in workplace diversity.

These findings indicate that organizational culture influences workplace diversity and enhances a diverse workforce. A diverse workforce brings different people together, with different views, ideas, experiences and perspectives which can bring real benefits to an organization. It is important to make the employees feel that they are comfortable in the university culture despite their differences in age, sex, tribe/race and their contribution is valued irrespective of their demographic attributes. This culture when right, enhances diversity and thus knowledge can be shared among the intellects, the university gain employees from all walks of life ready to share their knowledge and skills promoting the universities to became centers of excellence Therefore, the study concludes that organizational culture plays a significant role in influencing workplace diversity, and accepts the alternative hypothesis since the p- value for the Pearson correlation coefficient was less than 0.05.

6. Conclusions and Recommendations

The conclusions were based on the objective of the study that aimed at establishing the effect of organizational culture on the workplace diversity in public universities in Kenya. The results established that Organizational Culture practices were found to significantly and positively influence workplace diversity. The findings of the study revealed that public universities in Kenya should undertake to inculcate cultures which are aimed at helping them to achieve their goals. The organizational culture was found to be influential in predicting workplace diversity in public universities Kenya. Nonetheless, they do appreciate the fact that they cannot be able to achieve their desired objective if the leadership is biased and does not put effective HRM practices in place. In adopting the best HRM practices, they aim to attract and retain the most qualified employees, continuously develop them and motivate them to achieve a university with diversity and attain their visions to be centers of excellence. They should also be able to compete with other leading universities in Africa and the world.

Organizational culture play a key role in affecting workplace diversity, it is therefore crucial for public universities in Kenya to adopt human resource management practices that favour diversity. This is by ensuring that all human resource personnel and administrative managers at the public universities are trained on human resource management skills whereas the HR department plays a strategic role as in training and implementing diversity policies and practices.

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