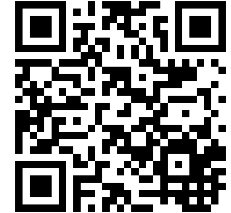


Generational Diversity and Performance of Employees in County Governments: A Case of County Government of Nyeri



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ABSTRACT: This study sought to determine the influence of generational diversity on employee performance in the county government of Nyeri. A descriptive research design was adopted, targeting the 3800 employees of the Nyeri County administration. Data was collected from a sample of 362 employees using a self-administered questionnaire. With the use of SPSS, data analysis techniques included descriptive, correlation and regression analysis. Tables were used to display the results. There was a significant variation in age within the County government of Nyeri. There was a strong positive correlation between generational diversity and employee performance, $r(344)=.811$ $p<.001$. Regression analysis also revealed that generational diversity is a significant ($p<.001$) predictor of employee performance, accounting for a substantial proportion (65.7%) of the variance in performance and demonstrating a strong positive effect. It was concluded that generational diversity in the county administration of Nyeri has a notable and favourable impact on their performance. There is therefore a need for equal opportunities for career growth and development across all age categories within county government of Nyeri.

KEYWORDS: Employee diversity, workforce diversity, generational diversity, age diversity, employee performance.

INTRODUCTION

The concept of employee performance refers to the extent to which an individual effectively carries out their assigned work tasks and fulfils their associated obligations. The concept of role performance encompasses an individual's behavioural patterns, competencies, proficiencies, and cognitive understanding, all of which contribute to the successful attainment of objectives (Diamantidis & Chatzoglou, 2019). The measurement of employee performance encompasses several aspects, including the amount and quality of work executed, as well as the individual's effectiveness, efficiency, and productivity. According to Eregae et al. (2019), an employee's performance may also be assessed based on their ability to meet organisational goals, complete tasks, and significantly contribute to the successes of their team or department. One of the most important factors in determining a company's success is employee performance. The phenomenon has a significant effect on the culture and reputation of the organisation, while also exerting influence on staff retention rates, work satisfaction, and productivity. According to Atatsi et al. (2019), the organisation stands to gain many advantages when its personnel demonstrate high levels of performance. These benefits include enhanced efficiency, better customer satisfaction, and improved profitability.

A number of factors may influence how well employees perform inside a company. According to Shields et al. (2015), a variety of variables have a significant impact on employee performance, including organisational culture, knowledge management, information and communication technology, employee empowerment, and innovation and creativity. Pradhan and Jena (2017) assert that a variety of factors, such as corporate culture, employee engagement, and training and development, have a big impact on worker performance. Management researchers have recently discovered some noteworthy information about the impact of workplace diversity on worker performance. The concept of workplace diversity encompasses the many distinctions among persons within a professional setting, such as their racial and ethnic backgrounds, genders, ages, sexual orientations, religious affiliations, physical capabilities, educational attainments, financial statuses, and other relevant factors (Grissom, 2018). The concept entails establishing a professional setting where persons from diverse backgrounds may collaborate in a cohesive and efficient manner.

Diversity in the workplace may impact an organization's and its workers' performance in both positive and negative ways (Makhdoomi & Nika, 2017). Studies have shown that the inclusion of diverse individuals in a work environment may lead to

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increased levels of creativity, innovation, and problem-solving skills. Furthermore, research has shown that a wide range of educational backgrounds has a major impact on workers' performance. Numerous studies' conclusions suggest that workplace diversity significantly affects workers' performance (Gomez & Bernet, 2019). Rasul and Rogger (2015) believe that the use of effective communication strategies may provide many benefits, including enhanced interpersonal interactions, heightened levels of consumer contentment, and heightened organisational allegiance. Moreover, the inclusion of a heterogeneous workforce may contribute to a broader spectrum of competencies and backgrounds, hence facilitating the generation of inventive resolutions to intricate challenges and augmenting the overall calibre of services provided (Tamunomiebi & John-Eke, 2020). Nevertheless, variety may also have adverse effects on social cohesiveness, communication, and conflict levels (Khan et al., 2019; Selvaraj, 2015). The concept of generational diversity in the workplace pertains to the presence of diverse generational groups in the workforce. People from different generational cohorts—from Baby Boomers to Generation Z and everyone in between—are included in Hunt et al.'s (2018) study. Generational diversity has a statistically significant effect on organisational effectiveness, according to Turi et al. (2022). According to a research by Karwal and Tandon (2022), staff performance was impacted by generational diversity. According to a Malik (2022) research, staff performance in a Pakistani small- to medium-sized business was positively correlated with generational diversity. Generational diversity and employee performance have a favourable and substantial link, according to a 2019 research by Jayawardana and Priyashantha. Maqsoom et al. (2023) discovered that the construction site's remote location had an adverse effect on elderly labourers. When working remotely, the younger staff members showed the greatest preference for vacations. A related research conducted in 2019 by Khan et al. demonstrated a favourable correlation between the dependent variable (employee performance) and generational diversity. It was discovered that generational diversity in Nigeria had no discernible impact on workers' performance inside the company (Ngalo et al., 2023). According to a 2019 research conducted in Ghana by Andoh et al., generational diversity significantly affected worker performance. According to a 2019 research conducted in Kenya by Barang'a and Maende, baby boomers were the generation most happy with web-based learning; they also liked utilising technology for learning and were generally less satisfied with we-based learning than earlier generations. According to a recent study by Laboso (2022), there was an aver generational relationship between employee performance and intergenerational work attitude; employee performance was strongly positively impacted by intergenerational work habits; and employee performance was strongly positively impacted by intergenerational social competences.

Available evidence shows poor performance of the county government of Nyeri. Nyeri county (USD 3,493M) lags behind Nyandarua County (\$ 4,896M) , Meru County (\$ 4,896M) as well as Bungoma (\$3,664M) and Kakamega(\$3,645M) counties in terms of contribution to GDP (Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (KNBS), 2017). Nyeri County ranked 15th out of 47 counties in terms of total Gross County Product (GCP) in 2023 (KNBS, 2023).A report by Controller of Budget (CoB) (2023) showed that Nyeri County did not meet its collection targets as compared to the same period last financial year (2021/2022).The county government also ranks poorly in the country. According to the CountyTrak Performance Index report by Infotrak Research (2023), Nyeri County was ranked 16th out of the 47 counties in Kenya . This study sought to determine the influence of generational diversity on employee performance in the county government of Nyeri.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Research Design

The research used a descriptive research design. This investigation primarily concentrated on the impact of generational diversity on worker performance. Descriptive surveys can be utilized to effectively capture and analyze the relationships between these factors and the dependent variable.

Target Population

The Nyeri County Government personnel were the focus of this investigation. 3,800 people work for the county (County government of Nyeri, 2023). The Nyeri county government served as the study's unit of analysis, while its workers served as the unit of observation.

Sampling

The sample size was determined using Slovin's formula.

$$n = N / (1 + N e^2)$$

where: n is the sample size, N is the population size (3,800) and e is the margin of error (0.05)

Therefore, $n = 3,800 / (1 + 3,800 * 0.05^2) = 361.9$

The research included a sample of 362 workers. Table1 illustrates how the sample was allocated among the several departments of the Nyeri county government using stratified random sampling.

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Table 1. Distribution of Sample by Departments

Department	Sample
Education & Sports	55
Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries	49
County Public Service & Solid Waste Management	24
Health Services	91
Transport, Public Works, Infrastructure and Energy	31
Lands, Physical Planning, Housing and Urban Development	33
Finance and Economic Planning	14
Water, Irrigation, Environment and Climate Change	25
Gender, Youth and Social Services	21
Trade, Tourism, Culture and Cooperative Development	18
Total	361

The researcher obtained a list of all the 3,800 employees of the county government of Nyeri and assign them numbers from 1 to 3,800 in Microsoft excel. The researcher then used the random function of Microsoft excel to randomly pick 362 numbers of the 3,800. The new list of 362 were the respondents in the study.

Data Collection

The study relied on primary data. A pilot study was conducted to ascertain the feasibility of the instrument in terms of validity and reliability. The pilot study was carried out among 36 employees in county government of Murang'a which was 10% of the sample in the main study. Data was collected electronically whereby the questionnaire was developed using Google Forms and the link sent to the respondents through email and other applications such as WhatsApp.

Data Analysis and Presentation

This research used descriptive statistics, correlation and regression analysis techniques to evaluate data, using the software SPSS for assistance. Results on employee performance and workplace diversity were summarised using descriptive statistics. After that, a regression study was carried out to determine how workplace diversity affected worker performance. To carry out regression analysis, the following model was used.

$$Y = C + \beta_1 X_1$$

Where: **Y** = Employee Performance, **C** = Constant, **B₁** = Co-efficient, **X₁**= Generational diversity.

Results were presented in form of tables.

RESULTS

A total of 344 respondents returned their questionnaires filled and fit for analysis. This response is deemed sufficient to justify generalisation of the research findings of the study because it is well above the 70% recommended by Kothari (2017).

Table 2. Response Rate

Department	Sample	Respondents	Response rate (%)
Education & Sports	55	53	96.4
Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries	49	45	91.8
County Public Service & Solid Waste Management	24	22	91.7
Health Services	91	89	97.8
Transport, Public Works, Infrastructure and Energy	31	30	96.8
Lands, Physical Planning, Housing and Urban Development	33	33	100.0
Finance and Economic Planning	14	14	100.0
Water, Irrigation, Environment and Climate Change	25	23	92.0
Gender, Youth and Social Services	21	20	95.2
Trade, Tourism, Culture and Cooperative Development	18	15	83.3
Total	361	344	95.3

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The survey found that the male respondents constituted a majority, accounting for 66% of the total participants. According to the data shown in Table 3, 50.6% of the participants were between the ages of 31 and 40, while 31.1% of the sample fell into the 41 to 50 age range. All of the participants had received formal education, with 32.8% having completed secondary school and 22.7% having obtained a diploma as their greatest degree of education. Approximately 41.9% of individuals were employed in the business management field, while 33.7% were employed in the accounting field. Just over half (51.2%) of the participants had a job experience ranging from 1 to 3 years, while 27.3% had a work experience ranging from 4 to 6 years.

Table 3. Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

		N	%
Gender	Male	227	66.0%
	Female	117	34.0%
Age	21-30	44	12.8%
	31-40	174	50.6%
	41-50	107	31.1%
	>51	19	5.5%
Education	Secondary school	113	32.8%
	College certificate	35	10.2%
	College diploma	78	22.7%
	Higher diploma	15	4.4%
	Bachelor's degree	43	12.5%
	Postgraduate degree	60	17.4%
Profession	Business management	144	41.9%
	Accounting	116	33.7%
	Health	50	14.5%
	Records	34	9.9%
Working experience	1-3	176	51.2%
	4-6	94	27.3%
	7-9	50	14.5%
	10+	24	7.0%

Generational Diversity

In order to determine the influence of generational diversity on employee performance, the researcher sought to first describe age diversity in the county government of Nyeri. This was achieved by posing 8 Likert scale statements to the respondents covering age distribution, average age and age representation in the county government. The respondents then indicated their agreement or lack thereof. Data was then analysed using descriptive statistics and the results are summarised in Table 4. According to the majority of respondents (81.1%), there is a notable representation of staff members from different age groups in the Nyeri county government. This perception had a mean score of 4.1 and a standard deviation of 1.092. Roughly half of the participants had the opinion that the Nyeri County government employs and retains employees from different generations on a regular basis ($M=3.5$, $SD=1.448$). Nonetheless, a significant majority of respondents (69.5%) disagreed that the Nyeri county administration offers equal opportunities for professional growth and development for all age groups. The mean score of 2.2, with a standard deviation of 1.495, represented this emotion. The County administration of Nyeri aggressively promotes a culture of tolerance and acceptance for varied generational opinions and ideas, according to the replies of 86.3% of the participants. This facet had a mean score of 4.2 and a standard deviation of 0.927. Furthermore, a sizable majority of participants—68.1%—said that the Nyeri County administration actively promotes and enables communication and collaboration amongst workers of various generations.

A mean score of 3.8 and a standard deviation of 1.127 were used to quantify this. On the other hand, 47.1% of participants were unsure of how much the Nyeri County government values the skills and knowledge of employees of all ages ($M=3.2$, $SD=1.179$). The County government of Nyeri efficiently utilises the unique talents and experiences brought in by personnel of different age groups, as acknowledged by the majority (71.5%) of the respondents ($M=4.0$, $SD=1.162$). According to the data shown in table 4.6, 46.2% of respondents agreed, while 34.6% were unclear about whether age diversity in the County government of Nyeri has led

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to an improvement in staff performance (mean=3.5, standard deviation=1.093). The mean of the items in table 4.6, which is calculated by adding 3.56 and 1.190 and then dividing by the total number of items, indicates a strong consensus among most of the respondents. This indicates a significant variation in age within the County government of Nyeri. Woodward et al. (2015) also found that most empirical studies support the presence of generational diversity, emphasising the need for future research to examine the unique needs and characteristics of each generation as they collaborate and work in organisations.

Table 4. Descriptive Results of Generational Diversity

	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree	M	SD
There is a noticeable representation of employees from diverse age groups in county government of Nyeri	81.1%	4.9%	14.0%	4.1	1.092
County government of Nyeri actively recruits and retains employees from diverse generational backgrounds.	58.4%	4.4%	37.2%	3.5	1.448
There are equal opportunities for career growth and development across all age categories within county government of Nyeri	25.3%	5.2%	69.5%	2.2	1.495
County government of Nyeri promotes a culture of respect and tolerance for different generational perspectives and ideas.	86.3%	7.6%	6.1%	4.2	0.927
County government of Nyeri actively promotes intergenerational collaboration and knowledge sharing among employees.	68.1%	20.3%	11.6%	3.8	1.127
County government of Nyeri values the skills and experience of all generations of employees.	32.2%	47.1%	20.6%	3.2	1.179
County government of Nyeri effectively utilizes the diverse skills and experiences brought in by employees of different age groups.	71.5%	13.4%	15.1%	4.0	1.162
Age diversity in County government of Nyeri has increased employee performance	46.2%	34.6%	19.2%	3.5	1.093

Employee Performance

Regarding the County government of Nyeri's capacity to consistently maintain high standards in the services it provides, a sizable majority of respondents (66.9%) disagreed (M=2.1, SD=1.245). Table 5 displays the data indicating that 68% of the respondents thought the Nyeri County government was effective in providing services that met the diverse needs of our customers (M=3.7, SD=1.41). However, the majority of 60.7% disagreed with the statement that the Nyeri County administration successfully ensures timely service delivery to meet consumer expectations (M=2.7, SD=1.683). With a mean score of 3.0 and a standard deviation of 1.494, slightly more than half (50.9%) of the respondents said they generally thought that the services provided by the Nyeri county government were satisfactory to its clients. The majority of respondents (81.1%) believe that the Nyeri County administration is successful in meeting the various needs and expectations of its patrons. This performance had an average rating of 4.1, with a standard deviation of 1.03. A mean score of 3.8 and a standard deviation of 1.466 further indicate that a sizable majority of 66.5% indicated their trust in the County administration of Nyeri's capacity to consistently and reliably offer services. Table 4.9 reveals a low degree of agreement, as shown by the average mean (3.23+1.388). These results suggest that workers in Nyeri County's administration performed, at most, mediocly.

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Table 5. Employee Performance

	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree	M	SD
The services provided by County government of Nyeri consistently meet high-quality standards.	13.4%	19.8%	66.9%	2.1	1.245
County government of Nyeri is effective in delivering services that address the diverse needs of our clients.	68.0%	7.3%	24.7%	3.7	1.41
County government of Nyeri ensures that services are provided in a timely manner to meet client expectations.	34.3%	4.9%	60.7%	2.7	1.683
I believe that clients are generally satisfied with the services provided by county government of Nyeri	50.9%	7.3%	41.9%	3.0	1.494
County government of Nyeri is successful in meeting the diverse needs and expectations of its clients.	81.1%	7.3%	11.6%	4.1	1.03
County government of Nyeri can be relied upon to provide consistent and dependable services.	66.5%	9.3%	24.1%	3.8	1.466

Effect of Generational Diversity on Employee Performance

Correlation Analysis

Correlation analysis was conducted between scores of generational diversity and employee performance. The results of the analysis as displayed in Table 6 indicated a strong positive correlation between generational diversity and employee performance, $r(344)=.811$ $p<.001$. This suggests that higher levels of generational diversity are associated with higher levels of employee performance.

Table 6. Correlation Results

	Value	Asymptotic Standard Error ^a	Approximate T ^b	Approximate Significance
Interval by Interval Pearson's R	.811	.022	25.600	.000 ^c
Ordinal by Ordinal Spearman Correlation	.649	.037	15.775	.000 ^c
N of Valid Cases	344			

- a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.
- b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.
- c. Based on normal approximation.

Regression Analysis

Regression analysis was also conducted between scores of generational diversity and employee performance. The results in Table 7 indicate that generational diversity is a significant predictor of employee performance, $R=.811$, $R^2 = .657$. This implies that approximately 65.7% of the variance in employee performance can be explained by generational diversity. The adjusted R^2 value of .656 suggests a minimal shrinkage, indicating that the model is a good fit for the data.

Table 7. Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.811 ^a	.657	.656	1.37686

a. Predictors: (Constant), Gen_Diversity

The ANOVA results in Table 8 indicate that the regression model significantly predicts employee performance, $F(1,342)=655.372$ $p<.001$. This high F-value and the significance level demonstrate that generational diversity is a significant predictor of employee performance, and the regression model provides a good fit for the data.

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Table 8. ANOVA

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	1242.419	1	1242.419	655.372	.000 ^b
	Residual	648.345	342	1.896		
	Total	1890.765	343			

a. Dependent Variable: Performance

b. Predictors: (Constant), Gen_Diversity

The t-value of 25.600 and the significance level ($p < .001$) indicate that the effect of generational diversity on employee performance is statistically significant. The unstandardized coefficient for generational diversity is .363, indicating that for each unit increase in generational diversity, employee performance is expected to increase by .363 units, holding all other variables constant. The standardized coefficient of .811 suggests a strong positive relationship between generational diversity and employee performance.

Table 9. Table of Coefficients

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.030	.811		1.270	.403
	Gen_Diversity	.363	.014	.811	25.600	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Performance

DISCUSSION

Employee performance in the Nyeri County Government was therefore positively impacted by generational diversity. The findings are consistent with those of Andoh et al. (2019), Karwal and Tandon (2022), Khan et al. (2019), Laboso (2022), Malik (2022), and Turi et al. (2022), all of which show that age diversity influences organisational performance in a statistically meaningful way. However, the result differs with Ngalo et al. (2023) where staff performance within the organisation was not significantly impacted by age diversity. This finding suggests that a diverse workforce, encompassing multiple generations, can enhance overall employee performance. The rationale behind this may stem from the complementary skills and perspectives that different generations bring to the workplace. Older employees often contribute extensive experience and institutional knowledge, while younger employees may introduce fresh ideas and familiarity with new technologies. This blend of generational traits can foster a more innovative and adaptable work environment, leading to improved problem-solving and productivity. Moreover, a diverse generational workforce can better understand and cater to a diverse customer base, enhancing customer satisfaction and organizational performance. This synergy highlights the importance of fostering an inclusive workplace that leverages the strengths of all generational cohorts to achieve superior performance outcomes.

CONCLUSION

Generational diversity in the county administration of Nyeri has a notable and favourable impact on their performance. The county administration of Nyeri has a conspicuous presence of staff from various age groups. The county government aggressively seeks and maintains a workforce that includes individuals from various generational backgrounds. Crucially, there was a society characterised by reverence and acceptance for diverse generational viewpoints and concepts. The varied abilities and experiences contributed by personnel from various age groups were effectively exploited, resulting in enhanced performance. The implication of this finding is that organizations should actively promote and manage generational diversity to enhance employee performance. This might involve implementing policies and practices that encourage intergenerational collaboration, such as mentoring programs, cross-generational team projects, and continuous learning opportunities that cater to all age groups. Ultimately, leveraging generational diversity can provide a competitive advantage, driving better business performance and long-term success. There is therefore a need for equal opportunities for career growth and development across all age categories within county government of Nyeri.

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