CHALLENGES OF IMPLEMENTING WORKFORCE DIVERSITY

POLICIES IN KENYAN PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES

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DECLARATION

This management research project is my original work and has not been presented for award of degree in any other university.

Signed ……………………… Date …………………………

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This management research project has been submitted for examination with my approval as the university supervisor.

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DEDICATION

This research project is dedicated to my son Tim and daughter Lily. May God inspire them in their endeavour to search for knowledge. Special dedication to my mom and siblings for their invaluable gift of my up-bringing and education.

ABSTRACT

Diversity management in multicultural workforce environment is increasingly becoming an important issue for most organizations in the era of globalization and increasing complexity of jobs arising from technology advancement. In other cases, ensuring workforce diversity has come about as government legislation in order to ensure equal employment opportunity for all diverse groups and more so in view of high unemployment levels. The study sought to establish the challenges of implementing workforce diversity policies in public universities in Kenya. Descriptive research design was used with the study population comprising all public universities in Kenya with heads of human resource departments as the respondents. Data analysis was by descriptive statistics through the use of the mean scores, standard deviation, frequency, percentages and content analysis. The study found out that public universities in Kenya have in place workforce diversity policies with laid down strategies for effective implementation. Despite this and in the course of policies implementation, challenges are emanating from both external forces outside the public universities and from within individual universities and more so with the need to comply with the NCI Act, (2008). However, most public universities in Kenya have laid down strategies in countering the challenges. The study recommended that empowering minority groups through affirmative action is imperative while consolidating all public universities under one administrative body to facilitate staff reorganization would offer a lasting solution to the challenges.

Key words: workforce diversity, diversity policies, public universities in Kenya

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

NCIC   National Cohesion and Integration Commission

KNHCR   Kenya National Commission for Human Rights

MOE   Ministry of Education

HRMs   Human Resource Managers

CUE   Commission of University Education

NCIP   National Cohesion and Integration Policy

HRM   Human Resource Management

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the study

In the recent years, workforce diversity has come to play a central role in organizational life due to increased globalization, growing technology and the increasing complexity of jobs (Williams and O' Reilly, 1998). In some countries, it has come about as government legislation in order to ensure equity in sharing of available employment due to high levels of unemployment. Carrell (2006) defines workforce diversity as the ways that people differ which can affect a task or relationship within an organization such as age, gender, race, education, religion, and culture. Theories and techniques of diversity management have been developed and enthusiastically supported by a growing number of chief executives, training specialists, diversity consultants and academics (Saji, 2004). Diversity can improve organizational effectiveness since organizations that develops experience and reputations for managing diversity will likely attract the best personnel (Carrel, et al, 2000).

According to Adler (2002), an organization that want to expand its perspective, strategy tactics or approach to reposition the organization, launch a new product, create a new idea, develop new marketing plan, design a new operation, or assess emerging trends from a new perspectives will reap a lot from diverse workforce. If diversity is well managed, an organization can benefit from both synergistic and culture specific advantages including enhanced creativity, flexibility, and problem solving skills (Zillar, 1972, Hayles and Robert, 1982). Rijamampianina and

Carmichael (2005) argue that diversity, if effectively managed, can be a source of competitive advantage for the organisation since only organisations that can anticipate and respond to change will be able to survive in today's business environment. A more diverse workforce will increase organizational effectiveness (Kulik and Roberson, 2008). It will lift morale, bring greater access to new segments of the market place and enhance productivity (Thomas and Ely, 1996).

Workforce diversity is encouraged mainly to further the availability equal opportunities in the workplace. This arose in order to eliminate the prejudices that may exist due to, cultural insensitivity and language differences, increasing numbers of women and disabled in the workforce thereby enabling equal opportunities for all. This equal opportunity philosophy is aimed at ensuring that the organizations make the most out of the differences from a diverse workforce rather than losing talent which might assist the organization to be more efficient and effective (Bryan, 1999). The effectiveness of an organization can be measured in different criteria (French, Wendell and Cecil, 1983) among them is productivity, profits, growth, turnover, stability and cohesion. The extent to which managers recognize diversity and its potential advantages and disadvantages defines organizations' approach to managing the diversity (Price, 1997). It is therefore evident that workforce diversity can be a competitive advantage because different viewpoints can facilitate unique and creative approaches to problem-solving, thereby increasing creativity and innovation which in turn, leads to better organizational performance (Allen et al, 2004).

1.1.1 Workforce Diversity

The term diversity has many interpretations. Different scholars have defined differently, for example, Cox (2001) defined diversity as the variation of social and cultural identities among people existing together in a defined employment or marketing setting. While, William and O'Reilly (1998) defined diversity as the degree of heterogeneity among team members on specified demographic dimensions, their theory aiming to explain how such heterogeneity affects team processes and performance. Thomas and Ely (1998) argue that diversity should be understood as the varied perspectives and approaches to work that members of different identity groups bring.

Diversity refers to the co-existence of employees from various social-cultural backgrounds within the company. It includes cultural factors such as race, gender, age, color, physical ability, ethnicity etc. The broader definition of diversity may include age, national origin religion, disability, sexual orientation, values, ethnic culture, education, language, lifestyle, beliefs, physical appearance and economic status (Wentling, and Palmarivas, 2000). Diversity requires a type of organizational culture in which each employee can pursue his or her career aspirations without being inhibited by gender, race, nationality, religion, physical ability or other factors that are irrelevant to performance (Bryan, 1999). Managing diversity means enabling the diverse workforce to perform at its full potential in an equitable work environment where no one group has an advantage or disadvantage (Torres and Bruxelles, 1992).

Employee diversity is therefore a concept that recognizes the benefits to be gained from differences. It differs from equal opportunity, which aims to legislate against discrimination, assumes that people should be assimilated into the organization, and often relies on affirmative action. Thus managing diversity means understanding its effects and implementing behaviours, work practices and policies that respond to them in an effective way (Cox, 2001).

1.1.2 Workforce Diversity Policies in Kenya

A policy is a predetermined course of action which is established to provide a guide towards accepted business strategies and objectives. While most European countries have a good track record in implementing gender equality policies (Murgia & Poggio, 2010) as a diversity measure, so many other diversity dimensions are slowly coming to the fore (Bruchhagen et al., 2010). Whereas workforce diversity policies are more beneficial to organizations, they also incorporate social responsibility while ensuring equal employment opportunities and workforce cohesion.

In Kenya, for example, the promulgation of the new Constitution in 2010 and the aftermath of the 2007/2008 post election violence, called for strict measures in improving workforce diversity in terms of tribe, ethnicity, gender, physical ability and age factors that are currently being implemented in the public service sector. This move was aimed at achieving equity in employment distribution among all communities. Deriving its powers from the constitution, the National Cohesion and Integration Commission (NCIC) developed a National Cohesion and Integration Policy to promote national cohesion and integration as well as ensuring fairness and

equal opportunities in sharing of the country's resources. The Constitution obliges the state to provide minorities and marginalized groups access to employment and special opportunities in educational and economic fields (KNHCR, 2011) aimed at diffusing the grievances of marginalized groups. This legal prescriptions regarding diversity requires organizations to appoint individuals of different tribal or ethnic backgrounds and gender and those with physical disabilities to public service positions.

A study on the impact of Kenya´s new constitution on the diversity of the public service sector by Mensi-Klarbach et al (2013) showed that diversity legislation in Kenya impacts on public service organizations and how human resource managers (HRMs) deal with new regulations such as the requirement to recruit staff from all tribes. The study thus concluded that the benefits of the changed recruitment practices speak for themselves and confirmed that recruiters are acting according to the legal framework. While the strategy of increasing diversity in the public service sector is clearly articulated in the Kenyan constitution, it is yet to be determined whether the planned strategy is being consistently executed by HRMs or whether there are any variations and unintended consequences (Mintzberg & Waters, 1985). This therefore shows that there is still a lot to be done in terms of the improvement of workforce diversity management strategies in the country.

1.1.3 Public Universities in Kenya

Public universities in Kenya are charged with the responsibility of providing higher education to all in the country on a competitive yet balanced basis accounting for

80% of the total university students' enrolment in the country (MOE, 2009). The universities were previously established under individual Acts of Parliament until the enactment of Universities Act No. 42 of 2012 which saw all individual Acts repealed and public universities re-accredited through charter award after institutional quality audits. All public universities in Kenya operate under the oversight of Commission for University Education (CUE) to which they are accredited a move aimed at promoting, regulating, monitoring and dealing with all matters related to university education. Currently there are 22 fully accredited public universities and 9 constituent colleges (CUE, 2013).

The public universities are in different geographical locations in the country and are autonomous in matters of management of their human resources. All public universities major funding is by the government their core activities being teaching, research and consultancy services and this therefore calls for recruitment of varied employees from skilled to unskilled, for example, lecturers, administrative staff as well as support staff. However, administrative and support staff forms the bulk of public universities staff. Being public establishments, public universities are also affected by legislations and government directives that are deemed to be of national interest and best human resource practices.

1.2 Research Problem

Managing diversity should be the concern of every organization as it is a requisite component that a company needs to be able to manage and utilize its diverse workplace effectively. It should be a part of the culture of the entire organization (Anderson, 2012).

Valuing and recognizing diversity is imperative in order to maintain competitive advantage, enhance productivity and effectiveness of its workforce since organizations that promote diversity attract and retain quality employees and increase customer loyalty (Cox, 1994). It is no surprise therefore that in the recent years, the issue of diversity in workforce has been given great attention with some organizations putting in place policies that protect diversified groups (Rachele, 2010). Human resource diversity management strategies have broadened beyond affirmative action and equal employment opportunity staffing efforts. Failure to manage diversity in terms of race, gender, level of education, profession, ethnic affiliation, religious affiliation often leads to differences in promotions, pay, training, turnover, mutual acceptance, job satisfaction and other forms of inequality (Merritt & Reskin, 2003). However, the focus on differences in individual characteristics leading to inequality has posed the challenge of achieving unity in diversity and harnessing that diversity.

Public universities in Kenya are supposed to portray a balanced diversity in their workforce ethnic composition, gender and minority groups for exampled disabled. While implementing diversity policy is a challenge both at strategic or even organizational level, organizations must continually improve to turn these challenges into opportunities. Despite government legislations that have been put in place to ensure workforce diversity in public establishments, questions have been raised regarding workforce diversity in public universities in Kenya. In a report released by the National Cohesion and Integration Commission (2012), it indicated that most of the public universities in Kenya either had more than one-third of their employees from one community which is against the constitution, had majority of their

employees from the local community in which the universities are located or had majority of their employees from the same ethnic group as the Vice-Chancellor/Principal or had more than one third of one community at the expense of other communities. There has also been a revelation of low involvement and participation by women in public universities especially in leadership positions which is below the one-third constitutional requirement an aspect that is against gender inclusion and empowerment policies.

Several studies have been conducted on the benefits of diversity to organizations. In a research on Workforce Diversity Management and Employee Performance in the Banking Sector in Kenya by Munjuri & Maina (2013), it was found out that cultural diversity management seems more sensitive in the Bank and served a pivotal role. It encourages better employee retention, increased productivity, better morale, an expanded market share and improved customer service while a study by Kundu (2001) in his research on Managing Cross Cultural Diversity concluded that organizations with high levels of well managed diversity are effective in steering corporate cultures that have new perspectives, pioneering capabilities and fresh ideas necessary to survive. Another study by Jerono (2012) on Women Participation in University leadership, showed that women involvement in leadership was below one-third of the constitutional requirement and was only concentrated in the lower hierarchy of university leadership. However, despite several studies that have been conducted on workplace diversity, there still exists a gap in determining extent of implementation of diversity policies in public universities and the challenges faced in their enforcement. What then is the extent of diversity policies enforcement and what

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are the challenges faced by public universities in Kenya in implementing the workforce diversity policies?

1.3 Research Objective

The objective of this study is to determine the challenges faced by public universities in the implementation of workforce diversity policies.

1.4 Value of the Study

The findings of the study will be of great significance in offering guidelines to address challenges in the implementation of the policies on workforce diversity in public universities in Kenya as well as other public establishments especially in the wake of the much needed organizational cohesion as well as availing equal employment opportunities. It will provide a reference in the formulation and review of current policies on managing employee diversity in public establishments.

The study will also enable human resource professionals in Kenyan public universities and other public sector institutions to tackle the challenges of ensuring employee diversity not just in compliance with the legal requirements but to also reap the benefits from the many benefits of diversity. It will erase the ambiguity in diversity management and provide a guide on putting in place programmes for managing workforce diversity as well as employing strategies for management of workforce diversity. To all employees not only in the public universities, the research is be beneficial in that proper diversity management can increase an employee's self esteem and feeling of belongingness to the organization especially if the employee is from a minority group not to mention the gains of learning from

varied differences including interpersonal relationships, mutual understanding and mutual acceptance of each other regardless of the various differences.

To the researchers, it will pose a challenge to be proactive in the search for solutions to ensure workforce diversity need not be a challenge any more due to the limited body of knowledge on workforce diversity. Despite having few previous researchers on employee diversity, this study brings uniqueness in that it unravels the challenges organizations face in fulfilling diversity requirements as well as the best practices to ensure well managed diversity strategies that are beneficial to organizations. This study will therefore provide a reference material in bridging the knowledge gap between human resource management and diversity management.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter covers the relevant literature touching on implementation, theoretical perspective, practices as well as challenges in implementation of workforce diversity policies. It brings to focus empirical studies regarding workforce diversity in order to give an insight into the topic of study.

2.2 Theoretical Foundation

Whereas diversity should be understood as the varied perspectives and approaches to work that members of different identity groups bring, most organizations still see diversity in terms of increasing racial, national, gender, or class representation, in other words, recruiting and retaining more people from traditionally underrepresented identity group (Thomas & Ely, 1996). Several theories have been advanced in an attempt to understand workforce diversity.

One such theory is the upper echelon theory (Hambrick & Mason, 1984) that argued that organizations wishing to attract, retain, and benefit from diverse talent are often advised to begin by increasing the diversity of their senior management (Cox, 1994; Gelfand et al, 2004). Doing so has been proposed to help not only because of the signal that it sends to diverse employees about their advancement potential, but because a diverse senior management team is more likely to be sensitive to the issues requiring attention for the retention and advancement of diverse employees. Thus, organizations with more diverse senior managers are expected to adopt diversity

initiatives, which help organizations, attract diverse talent and also facilitate organizational functioning through more careful attention to the needs of diverse employees.

According to Tajfel & Turner (1986) social identity theory, people tend to classify themselves and others into various categories such as organizational membership, religious affiliation, gender and age cohort. According to the theory, people may be classified in various categories and different individuals may utilize different categorization whereby categories are defined by prototypical characteristics abstracted from members. (Tajfel, 1982) cites that stereotyping, prejudice, and conflict are critical consequences of social identity and self-categorization. According to Korte (2007), social identity theory and self categorization theory are complementary theories explaining social identity, in term of its elements and processes. Through self categorization and group membership, individuals develop a social identity, which serves as a social cognitive schema for their group related behaviour whereby the perceiver is likely to see these characteristics as central to his or her own identity and use these characteristics to categorize others (Kulik & Bainbridge, 2006).

2.3 Dimensions of Workforce Diversity

Workforce diversity should be approached from all the dimensions. Gardenswartz and Rowe (2003) analyzed differences by four levels/dimensions of diversity and cited that an individual can belong to more than one category and that belonging to an identity group is not a permanent or unchangeable circumstance and each group is

heterogeneous. These dimensions are; personality detailing individual attributes, internal dimensions representing the classic dimensions (age, physical ability, gender, ethnic origin) while external dimensions are those that change throughout the life of a person-people eg. getting married, professional status etc., and organizational dimensions dealing with such aspects such as the functional or working environments etc.

Loden and Rosener (1991), in their study Managing Employee Diversity as a Vital Resource, outlined categorical differences between primary and secondary dimensions of diversity. Loden and Rosener (1991) defined primary dimensions of diversity as 'those immutable human differences that are inborn and/or that exert an important impact on our early socialization and ongoing impact throughout our lives' whereby primary dimensions of diversity would include age, ethnicity, gender, physical abilities/qualities, race and sexual orientation. Secondary dimensions of diversity were categorized as those elements of control and are things that can be changed such as educational background. Both dimensions carry significant weight in analyzing individual diversity and how each person defines their understanding of the world including how they socialize and react to others.

Thomas & Ely, (1996) came up with three paradigms of managing diversity namely discrimination and fairness, access and legitimacy and access and learning and effectiveness. Discrimination and fairness paradigm focuses on Equal Employment Opportunity as a form of compliance to laws by hiring people from diverse backgrounds in order for them to increase its numbers for minorities and women.

Access and legitimacy paradigm is used in order to identify with the consumer market and gain competitive advantage the emphasis being matching cultural differences with demographics as opposed to focusing on skills, beliefs, and practices. Thomas and Ely (1996)'s third paradigm was learning and effectiveness paradigm also known as the emerging paradigm that integrates the various differences that people bring to work. This promotes equal opportunity for all by acknowledging differences among employees, and recognizes the value in those differences. This study focus on diversity from the primary (internal) dimension Loden and Rosener (1991) and Jackson et al's (1995) perspectives, an approach that is also supported by Rijamampianina and Carmichael (2005) focusing on gender, race/ethnicity, religion, age and physical ability which will be related to Thomas and Ely (1996) discrimination and fairness paradigm.

Cultural and national diversity in organizations can be seen from a pessimistic view is derived from social identity (Tajfel,1982) and similarity-attraction (Byrne,1971) or a optimistic view contending that cultural diversity facilitates information processing, learning, and problem solving capacity (Cox et al., 1991; Ely & Thomas, 2001). While the logic for the positive and negative effects of cultural diversity is clear, the definition, measurement, and empirical examination of the effects of cultural diversity in organizations have been a real challenge (Barinaga, 2007).

Research on gender diversity prior to the 1990s focused largely on discrimination and bias resulting from being different from the majority. Research reporting negative effects for women regarding performance ratings (e.g., Tsui & O'Reilly,

1989) and pay discrimination (e.g., Bielby & Baron, 1986) built on the similarity-attraction paradigm (Byrne, 1971) and on the work of Kanter (1977) who posited that women experienced isolation and stereotyping. Gender diversity has also been found to have more negative effects on men than women in regards to outcomes, such as attachment to the organization (Tsui et al, 1992).

A review of the literature on age and work shows a clear theoretical emphasis on negative predictions. Several studies have examined the role of age perceptions including self-perceptions of age or perceived age relative to the work group or manager to which an underlying theme in these studies is that age discrimination or at least unfair treatment is likely to occur for older workers. The inherent assumption seems to be that when decisions are made about individuals (e.g., performance ratings, hiring decisions, and salary decisions), young employees are preferred over middle-aged or older employees. However, unlike race or gender diversity, organizations rarely undertake initiatives to increase age diversity. Traditional age distributions within organizational structures were derived from hiring employees at a young age and retaining them through most of their working lives.

Disabilities in the workplace include medical, moral, social, and post-modernist perspectives (Jaeger & Bowman, 2005). Disability is not explicitly portrayed as positive or negative, but rather propose variability in how people with disabilities deal with workplace situations and how co-workers respond. Prejudice, stereotyping, discrimination, and stigma typically portray disability as negative or problematic. Jones and Stone (1995) found that different disabilities evoked different attributions

or stereotypes, which may also apply to organizational treatment and outcomes e.g., hiring practices. While literature tends to view disability as negative management should realize that having an atmosphere of integration, attracting a diverse workforce, and promoting tolerance in the workplace is important.

In the organizational behavior and applied psychology literatures, sexual orientation involves relational demography, stereotyping, and stigma. Although these perspectives assume that co-workers' sexual orientation is apparent to all, this assumption may not be correct given that sexual orientation is an invisible characteristic and some homosexual individuals may hide their sexual orientation (Ragins & Wiethoff, 2005). Ragins et al (2003) also used the relational demography perspective to examine the impact of multiple group memberships (race and gender) on sexual orientation discrimination and disclosure of sexual orientation at work. The literature on sexual orientation diversity in organizations has been shaped by a heterosexism and discrimination focus and although these issues are important, more work is needed that focuses on sexual orientation from an inclusiveness perspective.

2.4 Diversity Management Practices

In today's fast-paced work environment a successful organization is one where diversity is the norm and not the exception (Lawrence, 2001) and all organizations must make efforts at managing diversity and embrace a culture that supports diversity (Carrel, 2006). According to Page and Scott (2007), effective managers are aware that certain skills are necessary for creating a successful, diverse workforce. First, managers must understand discrimination and its consequences. Second,

managers must recognize their own cultural biases and prejudices. Negative attitudes and behaviours can be barriers to organizational diversity because they can harm working relationships and damage morale and work productivity. Negative attitudes and behaviours in the workplace include prejudice, stereotyping, and discrimination, which should never be used by management for hiring, retention, and termination practices since it can lead to costly litigation. Diversity is beneficial to both associates and employers. Although associates are interdependent in the workplace, respecting individual differences can increase productivity.

Managing diversity means establishing a heterogeneous workforce to perform to its potential in an equitable work environment where no member or group of members has an advantage or a disadvantage (Torres and Bruxelles, 1992). It includes a process of creating and maintaining an environment that naturally allows all individuals to reach their full potential in pursuit of organisational objectives (Jenner, 1994). Diversity management emphasizes building specific skills, creating policies and drafting practices that get the best from every employee. Successful organisations can benefit from workforce diversity by creating an organisational environment which attracts people from diverse labour markets since it promotes competitive edge by recruiting the best people for the job, regardless of ethnicity, age, gender or other individual characteristics (Cornelius, 1999) and retaining them. To achieve the objectives of good diversity management practices, all human resource management processes must be based on organizational and job-relevant criteria without discrimination and biasness and managers who run these processes should be skilled in assessing the criteria (Kandola and Fullerton, 1994).

2.5 Challenges in Implementation of Workforce Diversity

Diversity has increasingly become a hot button issue in corporate, political and legal circles. For example, managing workforce diversity is one of the most difficult and pressing challenges of modern organizations. The world's increasing globalization requires more interaction among people from diverse cultures, beliefs, and backgrounds than ever before (Harvey et al, 2012). Globalization of business and unprecedented movement of labour across borders have created organizations that comprise a mixture of people from many different cultures making workplace diversity an important issue for management today. However, managing an organization with multicultural workforce brings with it challenges emerging from both internal forces within the organization, for example, management practices and externally from the labour market.

The demographic differences like sex, age were conventionally related to team level outcomes (Williams, and O'Reilly, 1998). Whereas diversity can improve organizational effectiveness as well as attract the best personnel (Carrel, et al, 2000), it can as well lead to loss of morale. Theories and techniques of diversity management have been developed and enthusiastically supported by a growing number of chief executives, training specialists, diversity consultants and academics (Saji, 2004). Managers in public and private organizations will have to understand, predict and manage this intriguing demographics nature. Diversity extends well beyond basic, obvious differences in people like race and ethnicity. Age, cultural heritage, family background, education and a variety of other factors also give people different perspectives on life, work, relationships, communication and more.

Each worker brings his own cultural perspective into the work environment. This affects the decisions workers make and the communication they have with others. Tompkins (2005) share an example in their diversity in the workplace article to show how employees treat different employees in different ways based on their cultural expectations and biases.

While many organizations have embraced diversity, others still consider it merely an issue of compliance with legal requirements. Effective diversity management has historically been used to provide a legally defensive position; that is, a firm with diverse workforce could argue that they were not guilty of discrimination because of the prima facie case based on their workforce demographics representing the demographics of the local community. Both leadership commitment and strategic planning are required to sustain lasting diversity changes (Howland, 2001). It is vital to manage communication since a diverse workforce calls for knowledge of differences and flexibility in conveying and receiving information. Difference in demographics leads to differences in languages and perceptions hence not all employees will be able to speak a common language of communication which could also present a major barrier to communication at workplace. Schneider and Northcraft (1999) argue that functional and social category diversities enhance creativity, adaptation and innovativeness. However, diversity staffing is often mistaken for affirmative action or even as reverse discrimination while others still think it as a myth that diversity staffing has never been proven to work.

Educational levels of some minorities which have been historically lower than other demographic groups have been another barrier. This creates a hurdle to the success of a diversity recruitment campaign since diversity is associated with professional qualifications, different jobs, for example, in studying minority ethnic students in higher education in Bangladeshi and Pakistani, Tyers, et al (2003) discovered that participation of minority ethnic groups differs by age and gender was low and hence recruiters get challenged to find enough people to fill certain positions.

Despite various trends towards a more diverse workplace, there are still barriers limiting progress. Though the advantages of diversity are well established, difficulties from a managerial and organizational structure perspective arise in regards to optimizing the incorporation of different cultures with some managers preferring to work with people from their ethnic origin. The upper echelon theory in which top managements has an impact on the composition of the general workforce is challenge to ensuring proper diversity. For organizations to profit from diversity, the people in those organizations must change how they interact since diversity's focus on changing human processes requires and defines HR's role in diversity management. With the implementation of a more diverse workforce, issues arise in both the assimilation of the majority to new cultures and the equality of wages and upper level opportunities across the spectrum of minorities.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the methodology of the study which comprises of the research design, population, data collection and analysis and also addresses the actual methodologies used in the research process. The role of both primary data and secondary data in the process of addressing the various research questions will be addressed and the manner in which data will be collected and later analyzed to reach a reliable conclusion will be discussed.

3.2 Research Design

This study will adopt a descriptive research design. The choice of this design is because data will be collected from personnel in the human resources department in the public universities in Kenya at one point in time.

3.3 The Population

The study will be conducted in all the public universities in Kenya. According to the Commission for University Education (2013), there are currently 22 fully accredited public universities. Since the population is small, the study will be a census (Keller, 1993).

3.4 Data Collection

This study will use structured questionnaire to collect primary data which will be administered through drop and pick method. The questionnaire will be divided into

two parts; A and B. Part A will address general information of the respondent in the public universities while part B will address workforce diversity issues. Questionnaires will be administered to the head of human resource departments of the participating universities.

3.5 Data analysis and Presentation

The data collected will be examined and checked for completeness, comprehensibility and relevance while relating it to the theoretical approaches. Descriptive statistics such as mean scores, standard deviation, frequency and percentages will be used to analyze the data. The results obtained will be compared against each other in order to get more revelation on the topic of study. The results will be presented in form of tables and charts and conclusions will then be made.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS, RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents data analysis results and discussions of the study findings guided by the objective of the study which was to establish the challenges of diversity policies implementation in public universities in Kenya with the respondents being the heads of human resource departments in public universities. The study was a census and targeted all the twenty two fully accredited public universities in Kenya but the researcher was able to obtain data from only 17 public universities forming a response rate of 77%. According to Cooper and Schindler (2005) a response rate of above 75% is sufficient for a social scientific study to proceed.

4.2. General Information on the Respondents and their Universities

This information is important in order to establish if the respondents were suited for the study. The respondents were the.   This section therefore captures the respondents' length of service at the university and the approximate employees' population in the respondent's universities.

4.2.1 Respondent's Length of University Service

The need to establish the respondent's length of university service was important in establishing whether the respondents had been at the university long enough to have knowledge on the research study questions.

Table 4.1: Respondents Length of University Service

Length of Service (Years)	Frequency	Percentage %
0-5	1	6
6-10	1	6
11-15	4	24
16-20	6	35
21-25	3	18
Above 25	2	12
Total	17	100

From the table 4.1 above, the study established that majority of respondents had served at the universities for a period of between 16-20 years representing 35%. Respondents who had served at the universities for a period of 11-15 years accounted for 25% of the respondents and those with service of between 21-25 years at 18%. Those with university service of above 25 years represented 12% of all the respondents. University service of between 0-5 and 6-10 years represented 6% in each category of the total number of respondents. The study therefore concludes that the respondents were qualified to participate in the study as their years' working in the university signifies they had enough knowledge and experience on the topical area of research.

4.2.2 Employees' Population

The need to establish number of employees was due to the reason that among the secondary data perused in the course of the study, employees statistics were heavily relied on. The data on the number of employees was therefore important in complementing the secondary data.

Table 4.2: Employees' Population

No. of Employees	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Below 500	3	18
501-1000	2	12
1001-1500	2	12
1501-2000	1	6
2001-2500	2	12
2501-3000	3	18
3000	4	24
Total	**17**	**100**

From the research findings in table 4.2 above, it shows varied employees numbers indicating that the universities had varied population size. Of the 17 universities that responded, 4 of them had had the highest number of employees at above 3000 representing 24% of the universities interviewed, 3 universities each with employees below 500 representing 18% and between 2501-3001 representing 18% of the respondents universities. University population ranging between 501-1000, 1001-1500 and 2001-2500 were represented by 2 universities each representing 12% each respectively while only one university that participated had between 1501-2000 employees representing 6%.

The variance in the university employees' population is attributed to the fact that some of the universities were operating as tertiary colleges until recently when they were elevated and accredited as public universities while other universities have been in existence for long.

4.3. Diversity Management

The study sought to establish the extent to which diversity policies were in use in public use in public universities and the extent of their implementation. The study of policies position in public universities was important in that it provided vital information which formed the basis of this research. Information sought included whether there were diversity policies in place, whether these policies were documented and awareness made, whether there was an oversight authority to ensure enforcement and also included the respondents' rating regarding the need for diversity policies for the universities and in the enforcement of diversity. The respondents were asked to rate the extent of diversity policies position at the universities in various dimensions on a scale of 1 to 3 (1; to no extent, 2; to a moderate extent and 3; to a large extent). For interpretation purposes means and standard deviation were established for policies existence, documentation of the policies and publicising of the policies in which a mean of <1.5 signifies non-existence while a mean of 1.5-2.5 signifies existence to a moderate extent. A mean of > 2.5 indicates existence to a large extent.

4.3.1 Existence of Diversity Policies

Respondents were asked to rate the existence of diversity policies in their universities and whether in their view, they were of any importance as this information formed a vital base to the study's main objective of determining the challenges of implementing the diversity policies.

Table 4.3: Existence and Documentation of Diversity Policies

	Mean	Std. Deviation
Do you have a policy on ethnicity/race guiding your HR processes?	2.59	.507
Do you have a policy on gender empowerment?	3.00	.000
Do you have a policy on disability involvement?	3.00	.000
Do you have a policy on age limit or desired age for employment?	3.00	.000
Are diversity policies documented?	2.82	.393
How operational are the diversity policies?	2.76	.437
In your opinion, is diversity of any value to the university?	2.88	.332
Are the policies of any value in ensuring equal employment opportunities?	2.94	.243

From analysis in the table 4.3 above, the respondents agreed to a large extent that all universities have policies on gender; disability and age with a maximum mean score of 3 respectively. The respondents also agreed to a large extent that the policies are of importance in ensuring equal employment opportunity and that diversity was of value to the universities with mean of 2.92 and 2.88 respectively. Majority of the respondents agreed to a large extent that diversity policies are documented with a mean of 2.82 and that the policies are operational with a mean of 2.76. The respondents also agreed to a large extent that they have ethnicity policies guiding their human resources processes with a mean of 2.59.

The study therefore concludes that majority of universities have policies guiding gender empowerment, disability and age composition. The universities also belief that diversity policies are vital in ensuring equal employment opportunity and that diversity policies are of importance to the universities. The universities also have their policies documented and are practically operational. Diversity policies guiding ethnic composition are also in existence in the public universities in Kenya.

4.3.2 Implementation of Diversity Policies

The respondents were asked to rate the extent of policies implementation through the measures that have been put into place to ensure effective implementation. This information was important since implementation strategies in place are key in determining effectiveness of the policies.

Table 4.4: Diversity Policies Implementation

	Mean	Std. Deviation
Is there an oversight strategy in place to ensure compliance with the said policies?	2.94	.243
Are there diversity awareness programmes in your university?	2.76	.437
Are the policies and their applications made public?	2.82	.393

From the findings in table 4.4 above, the respondents agreed to a large extent that there was an oversight authority in place to ensure compliance of the diversity policies with a mean 2.94 and also agreed that the policies and their applications were made public with a mean of 2.82. In creating awareness of the policies, the

respondents agreed to a large extent that there were awareness programs in the universities with a mean of 2.76.

The study therefore concludes that public universities in Kenya have oversight authorities to oversee the implementation of diversity policies and have ensured that diversity awareness is achieved. They have also publicised diversity policies and their applications.

4.3.3 Challenges of Diversity Policies Implementation

The study also sought to establish the challenges that public universities were facing in the course of implementing diversity policies. The researcher identified four primary dimensions of diversity namely; gender, ethnicity, age and disability which were used for the study. The respondents were asked to rate the level of challenges in relation to the dimensions as indicated below.

Table 4.5: Challenges of Diversity Policies Implementation

Nature of Challenge	Mean	Std. Deviation
Disability inclusion policy	2.65	0.493
Gender policy on ensuring 1/3 women	2.53	0.514
Ethnicity policy of not more than 1/3 from one ethnic community	2.53	0.514
Ensuring age diversity	1.06	0.243

From Table 4.5 above, majority of the respondents agreed to a large extent that implementing diversity policy on disability was a challenge with a mean of 2.65. The respondents also agreed that implementing gender policy of ensuring one-third

of women in workforce and ethnicity policy requiring not more than one-third workforce from one ethnic community was also challenging with a mean of 2.53 each respectively. Majority of the respondents did not find ensuring age diversity challenging with a mean of 1.06.

The study concluded that most public universities in Kenya faced challenges in the implementation of disability policy requiring inclusion of physically challenged in the workforce without discrimination. It was also challenging for universities to implement gender policy requiring inclusion of one-third of women in workforce as was ensuring not more than one-third of the workforce composition from one ethnic community majority of the universities did not find it challenging to implement age diversity policy.

4.3.4 Reasons for Policies Implementation Challenges

The study sought to establish the respondents' reasons behind the policies implementation challenges they were facing. On ethnic diversity, respondents cited historical ethnic imbalances as posing a major challenge at 70% of the respondents. They cited the fact previously there was no policy to guide workforce compositions in terms of ethnicity until recently. The respondents also indicated that having their locations in remote non-cosmopolitan areas presented challenges in the workforce composition as the readily available workforce was from the local communities. The issue of merit based versus ethnic based workforce was also cited by several respondents as presenting challenges due to conflicting objectives of merit ranking and ethnic ranking.

As regards disability policy, it was a challenge to attract physically challenged people with the requisite qualifications for certain jobs and that it was challenging for physically challenged to perform tasks that required lower qualifications like skilled jobs with 60% of the respondents indicating it as a challenge. The study concluded that the reason for the challenge in attracting the physically challenged in public universities was due to the nature and requirements for the jobs in terms of qualifications and/or performance.

On the challenge of implementing gender diversity, respondents indicated that it was indeed challenging to attract qualified women in the workforce especially in some professions and also leadership positions accounting for 40% of the total respondents. The respondents cited low education levels among women and the fact that some professions have been previously gender-linked for example, engineering was previously linked to men hence women were shying away from pursuing those professions leading to gender imbalances. The study concluded that with the low level of women having educational and professional qualifications, it posed a challenge in ensuring one-third of women in the workforce and more so in leadership positions. Age diversity was, however not much of a challenge as this was regulated by the stipulated employable age.

4.3.5 Strategies in Phasing out the Challenges

The respondents were also asked to cite the strategies that have been put in place to deal with the challenges. While majority of the respondents cited having put strategies to combat historical diversity imbalances by engaging targeted groups recruiting accounting for 48% of the respondents, universities in the remote locations indicated having in place strategies to correct ethnic imbalances by operating campuses in major towns and cities to attract a more diverse workforce with 26% while at the same time affirmative action to attract minority ethnic groups was cited by some universities as a strategy at 23%. The study concluded that targeted ethnic and affirmative action were key strategies set by public universities in ensuring ethnic balances.

Respondents indicated in countering diversity on disability, as a practice, preference is given to physically challenged on jobs that they can perform with ease as an attraction strategy which accounted for 50%. They also cited that there were ongoing strategies in which physically challenged employees are assigned an assistant to ease performance of their tasks at 20%. The study therefore concluded that there is a disability inclusion and attraction strategy in public universities in Kenya.

On gender policies of one-third of women in workforce, majority of the universities indicated having strategies in place to empower women through leadership positions especially in those professions linked to men so as to mentor a young woman which was at 40% of the total respondents. Respondents also indicated having strategies whereby priority employment consideration is given to women applicants which

accounted for 30% of the total respondents. From the findings, one can therefore conclude that there are strategies in public universities to empower women to leadership positions and also those that help them to achieve the one-third gender composition in workforce as per the Kenyan Constitution.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

The objective of this study was to determine the challenges faced by public universities in Kenya in their effort to implement workforce diversity policies. This chapter discusses the summary of the research findings, conclusion, recommendations, limitations of the study and also suggests areas for further research arising from research gaps in the course of the study.

5.2 Summary of Findings

The study had its respondents as the head of human resource departments in public universities with most of them having considerable length of university service qualifying them to participate due their knowledge on the topical area of study. The universities have varying population sizes. The study's main objective was to determine the challenges faced by public universities in Kenya in their efforts to implement diversity policies. The study found out that public universities in Kenya had diversity policies on gender empowerment, disability inclusion, age and ethnicity which are documented. It also found out the diversity policies are fully operational and the universities felt that the policies are important especially in ensuring equal employment opportunities to all diverse groups. To ensure effective implementation, the universities have oversight authorities and awareness programmes in place and have also made the policies public.

In the course of implementing these policies, the study found out that public universities are facing a lot of challenges. Firstly, although the universities did not discriminate against physically challenged and had strategies on attracting them, it was a challenge attracting them in to the workforce. Implementing gender diversity had been a challenge for a long time due to what was cited as historically low educational levels among women but which was indicated that with the ongoing women empowerment, this challenge would be overcome. Ensuring ethnic diversity was also a challenge which could only be overcome over time as there was already an imbalance in majority universities while majority felt that implementing age diversity policy was not challenging given the stipulated employment and retirement age. The study therefore concludes that public universities have laid down the necessary strategies in ensuring workforce diversity in terms of gender, disability, ethnicity and aged despite the drawbacks arising from the challenging implementation.

5.3 Conclusion

The study concludes that most public universities in Kenya have been in the fore-front in championing diversity cause through the diversity policies position in which the policies are not only in existence but are also fully operational with an awareness campaign and oversight authority to ensure full enforcement. This shows that public universities have put the necessary strategies for proper policy implementation and while the challenges of implementing the diversity policies are numerous, public universities must ensure that these challenges are overcome as there is immense benefit to be reaped. Proactive diversity management practices are therefore

essential to realize the true benefits. Every effort should be made to counter the challenges in order not only to correct imbalances but also to create a sense of belonging for all in the diversity groups while ensuring workforce cohesiveness. While it remains a challenge, it is hoped that this will be short-lived once diversity balances have been achieved and diversity policies continue to be implemented effectively and reviewed regularly to accommodate arising situations. While some researchers have claimed that managing diversity provides a less controversial alternative to affirmative action and others seeing it as complementary to a mandatory policy, from whichever perspective, the benefits of having a diverse workforce cannot be overlooked.

5.4 Recommendations

Given the challenges public universities in Kenya are facing in ensuring effective implementation of diversity policies, the study recommends that there is need to ensure that lasting solutions are worked out to contain the situation. Challenges like ethnic balancing can be solved by consolidating all public universities staff under a single management body to enable effective ethnic distribution of staff through deployment and transfers. While it is imperative to empower employees from minority groups like women and physically challenged through affirmative action it is of essence that consideration should be made to lower qualification requirements for minority groups and disabled to enable them access employment opportunities in the public universities. However, these recommendations can only be effective by mainstreaming the workforce diversity policies that already exists and ensuring thorough staff sensitization on diversity.

5.5 Limitations of the Study

Due to the varied geographical locations of the public universities, there was a challenge in the mode of data collection due to the time available for the study that made the study result to pick and drop questionnaires while it is believed other methods like personal interviewing or focus groups would have borne more precise and clear findings. There was also a limitation in that the respondents in this study were all part of the management team hence it is likely that their responses as to the policies position may have had a positive bias.

5.6 Suggestions for Further Research

In the course of the study, there arose some concerns which were found worth of further research to be able to address the diversity management issues in respect to public universities comprehensively. One such issue is that of ensuring that organizations recruit and retain employees not just as a display of diversity or compliance with regulations but as per the manpower needs to gain a competitive edge especially in the wake of globalization. This therefore leads to a gap in determining as to how well organizations can ensure equal opportunity diversity while ensuring that talent management practices and processes in organizations are merit based. This then leads to the need for further research on how organizations can integrate and effectively manage diversity in a merit based talent management.

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APPENDICES

Questionnaire

Please answer the following questions by ticking ☑ in the appropriate box or by giving the necessary details in the spaces provided.

Part A: General information about the respondent's University.

1. Length of service to the University _____

2. Approximate number of employees the University _____

3. Geographical location of the university_____

Part B: Diversity Management at the University

4. Workforce diversity is referred to as the differences or variations of employees in an organization in terms of gender, age, ethnicity/culture, religion, etc. In light of the above, please tick below as appropriate

	Little extent (1)	Moderate extent (2)	Large extent (3)
Do you have a policy on ethnicity/race guiding your HR processes?			
Do you have a policy on gender empowerment?			
Do you have a policy on disability involvement?			
Do you have a policy on age limit or desired age for employment?			
Are diversity policies documented?			
How operational are the diversity policies?			
In your opinion, is diversity of any value to the university?			
Are the policies of any value in ensuring equal employment opportunities?			
Is there an oversight strategy in place to ensure compliance with the said policies?			

Are there diversity awareness programmes in your university?			
Are the policies and their applications made public?			

5. Do you have any challenges in the implementation of the workforce diversity in your university as per the diversity dimensions below? Please tick as appropriate.

	Little extent (1)	Moderate extent (2)	Large extent (3)
Ensuring 1/3 gender policy on women employment.			
Ensuring not more than 1/3 from one ethnic community.			
Ensuring age diversity?			
Considering employees with disability.			
Others. Please list.			

6. Please list the challenges for the reasons faced in the questions above.

   _____

   _____

   _____

7. Are there any strategies that have been put in place to overcome these challenges? If so, please list them below:

   _____

   _____

Thank you for your response.

Introduction Letter

UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI
SCHOOL OF BUSINESS
MBA PROGRAMME

Telephone: 020-2059162 Telegrams: "Varsity", Nairobi Telex: 22095 Varsity	P.O. Box 30197 Nairobi, Kenya

DATE 9/9/2013

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

The bearer of this letter .... PURITY   W   NGUATA

Registration No. D61/67748/2011

is a bona fide continuing student in the Master of Business Administration (MBA) degree program in this University.

He/she is required to submit as part of his/her coursework assessment a research project report on a management problem. We would like the students to do their projects on real problems affecting firms in Kenya. We would, therefore, appreciate your assistance to enable him/her collect data in your organization.

The results of the report will be used solely for academic purposes and a copy of the same will be availed to the interviewed organizations on request.

Thank you.

PATRICK NYABUTO
MBA ADMINISTRATOR
SCHOOL OF BUSINESS

[Stamp: UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI, SCHOOL OF BUSINESS, 09 SEP 2013, P.O. Box 30197 – 00100, NAIROBI, MBA OFFICE]

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List of Public Universities in Kenya

1. University of Nairobi (UoN)
2. Moi University (MU)
3. Kenyatta University (KU)
4. Egerton University (EU)
5. Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology (JKUAT)
6. Maseno University (MSU)
7. Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology (MMUST)
8. Dedan Kimathi University of Technology (DKUT)
9. Chuka University (CU)
10. Technical University of Kenya (TUK)
11. Technical University of Mombasa (TUM)
12. Pwani University (PU)
13. Kisii University (EU)
14. University of Eldoret
15. Maasai Mara University
16. Jaramogi Oginga Odinga University of Science and Technology
17. Laikipia University
18. South Eastern Kenya University
19. Meru University of Science and Technology
20. Multimedia University of Kenya
21. University of Kabianga
22. Karatina University