

Diversity Management and Work Engagement of Academic Staff of Kyambogo University, Uganda

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Abstract

This study examined the influence of diversity management and work engagement of the academic staff of Kyambogo University in Uganda. Specifically, the study examined the influence of diversity management policies, diversity management programmes and diversity management climate on the workplace engagement of academic staff of Kyambogo University in Uganda. The study employed the correlational research design, hence adopted the quantitative approach. The sample comprised 188 academic staff of Kyambogo University. Data was collected using a self-administered questionnaire. The data was analysed using descriptive and Partial Least Squares Structural Equation modelling (PL-SEM) using SmartPLS. Descriptive results revealed that the workplace engagement of academic staff, diversity management policies, diversity management programmes, and the diversity management climate of the university were moderate. SEM results showed that while diversity management policies had a positive and significant influence on workplace engagement, diversity management programmes had a positive but insignificant influence on workplace engagement, and the diversity management climate had a negative and insignificant influence on workplace engagement. Therefore, it was concluded that diversity management policies are vital for the workplace engagement of academic staff, inadequate diversity management programmes hinder workplace engagement, and a low-level diversity management climate impedes the workplace engagement of academic staff. Thus, it was recommended that universities should adopt diversity management policies, leaders of universities should implement adequate diversity management programmes to enhance workplace engagement, and leaders of universities should promote a climate that favours diversity.

Keywords: *Engagement; Climate; Diversity; Management; Policies; Programmes.*

Introduction

In the contemporary work environment, the idea of work engagement has gained enormous popularity as it is seen as the silver bullet, a secret element for improving employee performance (Khusanova et al., 2021). This is due to the fact that engaged employees are considered to be psychologically connected to their workplaces, hence work hard for the success of the organisation (Osborne & Hammoud, 2017). Work engagement is vital for the performance of organisations and has been advanced as being critical to the success of organisations by enhancing the competitive advantage (Al Mehrzi & Singh, 2016). Therefore, employee work engagement enhances employee productivity in organisations. This is because the energy and focus inherent as a consequence of being engaged pushes individuals to achieve to the best of their abilities, which improves the quality of their job performance (Abun et al., 2020; Sonnentag, 2017). Therefore, work engagement is important for the effectiveness of organisations such as universities.

Work engagement is defined as the immersion of individuals in their job obligations exhibited by intense desire, vigilance and readiness to exert an extra effort to enable the organisation to realise its goals and objectives (Khusanova et al., 2021). The concept emerged in the last decade of the 21st century. The Gallup Research Group advanced the concept in the 1990s after 25 years of studying workers and managers in organisations (Bailey et al., 2017). Kahn (1990) conducted the first study on the concept, describing it as employee dedication, vigour and absorption (Motyka, 2018). Dedication is the extra effort expended to complete a task while experiencing a sense of challenge, pride and motivation (Extremera et al., 2018). Absorption is the situation in which the worker is gladly immersed in and committed to work, and vigour denotes the willingness of the worker to persist despite impediments encountered or the drive to continue putting an effort into a job even when difficulties emerge (Vallières et al., 2017). While the notion of work engagement emerged in management theory during the 1990s, it became widespread in the 2000s (Graffigna, 2017). Its popularity stemmed from the fact that it was regarded as a positive work behaviour related to high work output (Green Jr et al., 2017). The premise was that actively engaged employees are affectively and mentally adjoined to their tasks and are physically present at work (Osborne & Hammoud, 2017). Therefore, engaged employees concentrate exclusively on their tasks, leading to successful performance of the organisation (Abun et al. 2020; Sonnentag, 2017).

While work engagement of academic staff is very important, it remains a challenge to organisations worldwide. For instance, in the USA, education institutions are faced with a challenge of low work engagement with very many academic staff not dedicated to the profession, hence leaving the field to pursue other endeavours. Approximately 20 per cent of academics in USA public universities exhibit low dedication by leaving their positions annually (Albaqami, 2016). This trend is reflected in European countries such as Italy where, also, 20 per cent of academic staff left public universities between 2008 and 2015 (Ha, 2018). In Africa, especially in sub-Saharan countries, work engagement of academic staff is also low. For instance in South Africa, in 2012 it was reported that on average in different educational institution, those involved in teaching were absent from work for 19.7 days each year, and that the situation had not changed significantly by 2017. There was also the challenge of extreme late coming (Vermooten et al., 2020). Similar problems were prevalent in Kenyan universities, with academic staff wasting time on strikes, second job activities and late-coming, and with many of them never being punctual and being frequently absent (Arungo & Kipkebut, 2021; Ongwae et al., 2018).

In Ugandan universities, low engagement of academic staff is also prevalent. Dedication and vigour for work are low, with academic staff not making an effort to plan and prepare for lectures, hence using inappropriate teaching methods that do not involve students (Muganga & Ssenkusu, 2019). In many universities in Uganda, students are occupied for only about a half of the expected contact hours due to absenteeism (Atwebembeire et al., 2018). There is also lack of commitment to excellence, characterised by failure to properly mark examinations, hence the forging of marks and cheating of examinations for learners. Some lecturers do not plan but, instead, depend on plagiarised online content (Kasule et al., 2022). Dedication to research and publication is also poor, with the highest level being that of Makerere University at two articles on average per staff member every 10 years compared to South Africa at five

articles (Cloete et al., 2018). Also, an exceptionally low number of academics engage in community service (Kasule et al., 2022). This low work engagement of academics demanded for further research on how to enhance it.

Studies (Aboramadan et al., 2020; Aman et al., 2022; Angundaru et al., 2016; Ganji et al., 2021; Mugizi et al., 2020; Mugizi et al., 2022; Rattanapun et al., 2022) suggest that in educational institutions, factors influencing the engagement of academic staff include human resource management practices (Aboramadan et al., 2020; Angundaru et al., 2016; Akanji et al., 2018; Aman et al., 2022; Mugizi et al., 2020), leadership styles (Akanji et al., 2018), communication, pay rewards and incentives, support, recognition and growth opportunities (Aman et al., 2022; Mugizi et al., 2020), diversity management (Ganji et al., 2021), talent management (Mugizi et al., 2022), workplace environment, organisational culture, leadership behaviour, promotion, leadership and employee rights (Rattanapun et al., 2022). However, as the studies suggest, limited studies had related diversity management to employee engagement in comparison to the other predictors. Particularly, literature showed a lack of studies relating diversity management to the work management of employees in the context of educational institutions in Uganda. This called for this study, which was carried out at Kyambogo University in Uganda.

Contextual evidence showed that academic staff at Kyambogo University had low levels of work engagement in all three of their job categories, namely teaching, research and community service. For instance, a number of academic staff demonstrated a lack of commitment to their work by failing to mark and return coursework scripts on time, being consistently absent, and being ineffective in the delivery of lectures (Rwothumio et al., 2016). According to Nagunya et al. (2018), academic staff members also demonstrated low vigour and absorption, as evidenced by their low level of innovation in lecture delivery, poor supervision of postgraduate students, and low level of community engagement. Furthermore, the majority of academic staff members showed low engagement in research, hence were unable to secure funding for projects (Kasule et al., 2022). Nonetheless, the 2014 Human Resource Manual of the University demonstrates the institution's dedication to diversity management. The manual stipulates that recruitment should consider diversity and follow transparency and fairness to maximise the diversity of applicants. Also, the approved criteria and guidelines for the appointment and promotion of academic staff approved by the Council at its 90th meeting held on 15 October 2021, have diversity and inclusiveness as one of the core values. However, while the contextual evidence above shows that the university policies provided for the promotion of diversity management, engagement of the academic staff of the university was low. Thus, the empirical question that emerged was whether the diversity management practices of the university had an influence on the work engagement of academic staff. This study examined how diversity management of the university influenced the work engagement of academic staff members.

Literature Review

This section is an analysis of existing literature on the study variables. The literature reviewed was on the theory and review of related literature. The theory reviewed was institutional theory while the literature review related diversity management to work engagement, showing gaps that emerged that were covered by this study.

Theoretical review

Institutional theory by Meyer and Rowan (1977), which posits that organisations adapt their structures and behaviours to reflect the values, customs and prospects of their environment (Birken et al., 2017), underpinned this study. Institutional theory asserts that an organisation's behaviour and frameworks are inextricably linked to awareness of its social context. Therefore, organisations are driven to match their structures and actions to the standards, expectations and values their surroundings uphold (Birken et al., 2017). Pressures that are coercive, mimetic and normative isomorphism or arrangements in other organisations (Birken et al., 2017) influence organisational changes such as diversity management, including policies, programmes and management climate (Otake-Ebe, 2018). Coercive isomorphism

emerged from formal and informal forces of regulative organisations that offer supervision and establish society's cultural expectations. Mimetic isomorphism is a consequence of uncertainty that inspires the organisation to model its activities deliberately or otherwise on more legitimate or successful competitors (Roszkowska-Menkes et al., 2017).

Normative isomorphism originates from professionalisation and is a result of pressure from similar professionals, and it is strengthened by interactions in the professional networks into which new models integrate rapidly (Roszkowska-Menkes et al., 2017). More importantly, by adopting structures conforming to organisational mandates, organisations demonstrate their adherence to societal standards and gain legitimacy for their activities, which has an impact on the actors within them (Yang & Konrad, 2011) such as work engagement of employees because of conformity. Thence, it can be hypothesised that organisations adopt diversity management structures, i.e. policies, programmes and management climate, that are likely to enhance the work engagement of their employees. Therefore, institutional theory informed the examination of the influence of diversity management in terms of policies, programmes and management climate on work engagement of employees. The following hypotheses were tested:

- H1: Diversity management policies have a significant influence on workplace engagement of academic staff.
- H2: Diversity management programmes have a significant influence on workplace engagement of academic staff.
- H3: The diversity management climate has a significant influence on the workplace engagement of academic staff.

Diversity management

Diversity management is a concept that has its roots in North America a measure to address stereotypical and equal employment challenges. The concept emerged as an alternative to earlier affirmative action programmes that existed up to the 1980s to primarily promote employment and career development for Blacks (Köllen, 2021). Since then, the concept has attracted the focus of scholars and practitioners in workplaces, mainly due to changes in workforce profiles, societal demands for equality and multiculturalism (Bacouel-Jentjens & Yang, 2019). The aim of diversity management is to embrace and leverage variations of employees for the benefit of the organisation (Otaye-Ebede, 2018). Diversity management denotes a wide range of human resource policies seeking to make workplaces highly tolerant and inclusive (Park & Liang, 2020). Diversity in organisations includes job-oriented and relations-oriented characteristics (Yadav & Lenka, 2020). Job-oriented characteristics include surface-level diversity in terms of organisational tenure, team tenure, educational background and occupational background, and deep-level diversity, including knowledge skills, experience and abilities. Relations-oriented attributes also include surface-level diversity including sex, age, nationality and religion, and deep-level diversity such as values, personality, social status and attitude (Hussain & Farooquie, 2021). Otaye-Ebe (2018) indicates that diversity management covers diversity management policies, diversity management programmes and diversity management climate. These diversity management measures were studied in relation to the work engagement of academic staff.

Diversity management policies and workplace engagement. Organisations are formal establishments with well-defined policies that determine how activities are carried out (Makau & Muna, 2020). Therefore, diversity management policies determine how diversity is handled in an organisation. In a study involving workers from the manufacturing sector in the Kingdom of Bahrain, Alzyoud (2018) reported the existence of a significant relationship between the human resources management policies and employee work engagement. In a review, Chiemeké et al. (2018) established that organisational policy had a significant influence on employee engagement. In their study in the health sector in the USA, Downey et al. (2015) found that diversity practices positively led to employee engagement. In a study involving university workers in Iran, Ganji et al. (2021) indicated that diversity management policies predicted employee engagement. In a study involving a chemical workers company in Indonesia, Indrayani and Yasa (2021) reported that company policies had a direct but insignificant effect on employee engagement.

Nonetheless, in a study in Vietnam involving employees and their managers in a variety of manufacturing industries, Luu et al. (2019) found that diversity-focused human resources practices and workers' work engagement were positively correlated. However, while the literature above shows the existence of a strong link between diversity management policies and workplace engagement, empirical and knowledge gaps surfaced. First, the studies indicated that all the studies were skewed outside the local context, hence the need for empirical studies in the same context. With respect to the knowledge gap, Indrayani and Yasa (2021) indicated that company policies had a direct insignificant influence on the engagement of employees, contrary to the views of other scholars. This suggested that each study requires to be considered on its own, hence this study.

Diversity management programmes and workplace engagement. Diversity programmes denote schemes implemented to ensure equal representation of the different categories of employees and effective management to enhance individual satisfaction and productivity (Otake-Ebede, 2018). These programmes include employee development (Pinnington et al., 2022), diversity training, internal communications (Otake-Ebede, 2018), inclusion programmes, and team-building affirmative action programmes (Pitts, 2010). Studies on diversity management programmes and employee workplace engagement include the study by Alshaabani et al. (2021) that involved employees in Hungarian companies and by Mistry et al. (2021) done in the hospitality sector in the USA. Their findings indicated that diversity training programmes had a positive significant effect on employee engagement. Relatedly, Ganji et al. (2021) reported that diversity management training predicted employee engagement. In a study on IT professionals working in India, Gupta and Gomathi (2022) found that diversity management practices and employee engagement had a significant impact on employee engagement.

In a study involving sales representatives in Southern Korea, Kang and Sung (2017) indicated that effective internal communication management has a significant association with employee engagement being high. Relatedly, Mbhele and De Beer (2021), in a study in South African firms, revealed that internal communication contributed to the achievement of employee engagement. On their part, Verčič and Men (2023), in a study involving workers in Croatian firms, reported that internal communication had a significant influence on employee engagement. In a review, Jayashree et al. (2019) established the existence of a significant positive relationship between team-building teamwork programmes and work engagement. Finally, in a study involving employees of small and medium enterprises in India, Ravikumar (2013) found that teamwork had a meaningful positive association with employee engagement. Nonetheless, while the studies suggest that diversity management programmes have a significant influence on employee engagement, all the studies were done in contexts outside Uganda and only one study Ganji et al. (2021) was done in a university context, yet different dynamics according to context exist. This, thus, gave rise to the need for this study.

Diversity management climate and workplace engagement. A diversity climate is a distinctive organisational atmosphere that values and accepts individual variations. Openness and appreciation are the aspects that indicate the diversity climate in an organisation (McCallaghan et al., 2019). In a study involving academics and other workers in the Philippines, Abun et al. (2021) reported the existence of a significant relationship between organisational climate and work engagement. Relatedly, in a study involving employees working in different organisations in Australia, Albrecht et al. (2018) found that the organisational engagement climate was positively associated with employee engagement. On his part, Higgins (2020), in a study involving different professionals in the USA, indicated that diversity climate perceptions were associated with employee work engagement. Also, in a longitudinal study involving academics, staff and graduate students in universities across the USA, Jenkins (2019) established that a climate of inclusion led to positive work-related outcomes such as employee work engagement.

Further, Mangkang and Chutima (2022), in a study done in Thailand using the staff of an international oil and gas company, found that organisational climate and employee engagement were highly linked. In the same vein, using employees of an Australian manufacturing organisation, Mansoor et al. (2021) reported that the organisational diversity climate had a significant effect on employee outcomes. Similarly, in a study involving various employees from companies in Gauteng Province in South Africa, McCallaghan

et al. (2019) revealed that the diversity climate predicted organisational employee outcomes. Also, Rožman and Štrukelj (2021), in a study that used workers in medium-sized businesses in Slovenia, found that the organisational climate promoted work engagement. Nevertheless, while the above literature indicated high covariance between diversity management climate and worker engagement, empirical gaps emerged. This is because the studies revealed a lack of empirical studies in the context of organisations in Africa, except for one study in South Africa which, however, had a unique diversity climate because of its past apartheid history. Therefore, it remained imperative that this study be carried out.

Methodology

The methodology segment of this study comprises the strategies that were followed to conduct the study's investigations. These include the research design and the associated approaches, study sample, instrument and data analysis.

Research design

The correlational research design was followed in carrying out this study because it enabled establishing the association between variables. The design helped to determine whether the independent variable had a significant influence on the dependent variable. Thus, the quantitative approach, which entailed collecting quantitative data for numerical analysis to support or disprove alternative knowledge claims, was employed (Apuke, 2017). The approach helped to produce data showing how the respondents rated diversity management and employee engagement at the university and the predictive power of the determinant variable on the criterion variable. The sample comprised 199 academic staff from a population of 406 full-time academic staff of Kyambogo University. The sample was sufficient, hence provided data that enabled inferential analysis.

Instrument

The instrument used to collect data was a self-administered questionnaire. The dependent variable of work engagement, which was the dependent variable, was measured in terms of dedication, absorption and vigour, with indicators adapted from Vallières et al. (2017). The indicators for the measures of diversity management, namely diversity management policies, programmes and management climate, were adapted from Otaye-Ebede (2018). The self-administered questionnaire contained closed-ended question items (indicators) with anchors based on a five-point agreement Likert scale (1= strongly disagree; 2= disagree; 3= not sure; 4= agree; and 5 strongly agree). The measures of the different variables were tested for validity and reliability. Validity tests involved convergent and discriminant validity tests (Tables 2 and 3) and confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) (Figure 1) using SmartPLS 4. While convergence validity established if the measures appropriately measured the constructs, discriminant validity established if they were independent. Convergent validity was attained at above 0.50 while discriminant validity was ensured by ensuring that the ratio correlations were below 0.90. For CFA, only indicators with loadings above 0.4 were considered valid (Hair Jr et al., 2020).

Reliability involved ascertaining the existence of internal consistency among the indicators using Chronbach's alpha and composite reliability. Nonetheless, because of Cronbach's alpha limitation of presuming that all indicator features should be similar in the population, which lowers reliability values, composite reliability was also tested. This was because, unlike Chronbach's alpha, composite reliability is liberal hence less sensitive, which makes it tolerant to external characteristics, which increases the internal consistency of the indicators with a high number of them attaining reliability. Reliability values were considered at above 0.70 (Kalnins, 2018). Further, the value inflation factor (VIF), which helps to establish the existence (correlation) or non-existence of collinearity (independence) between measures of the independent variables, was calculated and attained at below 5, which is the maximum (Table 2). The VIF test was necessary to ascertain whether each construct of the independent variable predicted the dependent variable.

Data analysis

The analysis of data involved calculating descriptives, specifically the means to show how academic staff rated diversity management and work engagement. Partial Least Squares Structural Equation modelling (PLS-SEM) was also carried out using SmartPLS 4. PLS-SEM showed the casual links between diversity management and work engagement. This enabled the presentation of structural models and path estimates that were the basis for making inferences.

Findings

The findings about diversity management and the work engagement of academic staff include demographic profiles, measurement and structural models and path estimates. The findings were analysed and interpreted, leading to a discussion.

Demographic profiles

The results in Table 1 are for the demographic profiles of academics that provided responses. The profiles captured were the gender, age, education and experience of academics that provided responses.

Table 1: Demographic profiles of academic staff

Variables	Categories	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	129	68.6
	Female	59	31.4
	Total	188	100.0
Age groups	Up to 30 years	4	2.1
	30 but below 40	72	38.3
	40 and above	112	59.6
	Total	188	100.0
Highest level of education	Bachelor's degree	14	7.4
	Postgraduate diploma	94	50.0
	Master's degree	80	42.6
	Total	188	100.0
Work experience	Less than 2 years	8	4.3
	2 to 5 years	78	41.5
	5 to 10 years	66	35.1
	10 years and above	36	19.1
	Total	188	100.0

The results on gender (Table 1) showed that the majority percentage (68.6%) represented males and that the females were 31.4%. The larger percentage (59.6%) was of those above 40 years old, followed by 38.3% who were aged between 30 and 40, and the least (2.1%) were those up to 30 years of age. The larger percentage (50.0%) had master's degrees, 42.6% had PhDs, and 7.4% had bachelor's degrees. The largest percentage (41.5%) had worked for three to five years, 35.1% for six to nine years, 19.1% for 10 years and above, and the least group (4.3%) had worked for less than two years. These results indicated that academic staff of various profiles had participated in the study. Therefore, the findings were representative of various academic staff of the university.

Measurement model 1

Model 1 presents results that include descriptive statistics, specifically the means and validity results in terms of average variance extracted (AVE) for convergent validity and Heterotrait-Monotrait (HTMT) ratio correlations for discriminant validity. The descriptive statistics show how the academic staff rated their work engagement and diversity management in the university, while the validity results (Table 2) show whether the measures actually measure the variables.

Table 2: AVE and Heterotrait-Monotrait (HTMT) ratio correlations for discriminant validity

Measures	Means	AVE	Engagement	Absorption	Dedication	Vigour
Engagement	3.45					
Absorption	2.93	0.585	0.407			
Dedication	3.86	0.654	0.796	0.749		
Vigour	3.56	0.611	0.475	0.572	0.876	
Measures	Means	AVE	DM	DMC	DMP	DP
DM	3.06	0.835				
DMC	3.40	0.568	0.893			
DMP	2.95	0.867	0.570	0.483		
DP	2.82	0.835	0.894	0.612	0.576	

Key: DCM = Diversity Management Climate, DM = Diversity Management DMP = Diversity Management Policies, DP = Diversity Management Programmes.

The means (Table 2) show that the engagement of the academic staff was moderate (mean = 3.45) because the mean was close to code three for “not sure”, which is the average. This means that the engagement of academic staff was just fair. Regarding the measure of absorption, it was rated moderate (mean = 2.93) but dedication and vigour (mean = 3.56) were rated high because their means were close to code four, which implied “agreed” or high. The mean (mean = 3.06) for diversity management (independent) indicated that it was moderate. This was also reflected for all its measures, namely diversity management climate (mean = 3.40), diversity management policies (mean = 2.95) and diversity programmes (mean = 2.82). This means that diversity management in the university was still low. The AVE values were greater than the minimum of 0.5, confirming convergent validity. The HTMT ratio of correlations also showed that the measures met the conditions for discriminant validity because they were all below the maximum of 0.90. Therefore, the measures of the different variables were appropriate.

Measurement model 2

Model 2 presents reliability results in terms of Chronbach’s alpha (α) and composite reliability (CR). The reliability results established whether the indicators used to measure the different constructs were interrelated. The results in the model (Table 3) also indicate the VIF results for collinearity determining whether the variables were independent.

Table 3: Reliability and collinearity values

Measures	α	CR	VIF
Absorption	0.773	0.828	1.172
Dedication	0.816	0.842	1.375
Vigour	0.864	0.880	1.480
Diversity Management Climate	0.901	0.903	1.539
Diversity Management Policies	0.892	0.911	1.512
Diversity Management Programmes	0.949	0.950	1.775

Cronbach’s alpha and CR results demonstrate that all of the values were above 0.70. This indicated a sufficient degree of reliability for the items that measured the different constructs. The VIF values also showed that there was no collinearity because the values were below 5, which is the maximum (Hair Jr et al., 2021). Hence the measures were reliable and the independent variables separately predicted the dependent variable.

Structural model for diversity management and work engagement of academic staff

To establish the influence of diversity management on the work engagement of academic staff, a structural equation model (Figure 1) was constructed. The model presents the linkages between the different variables.

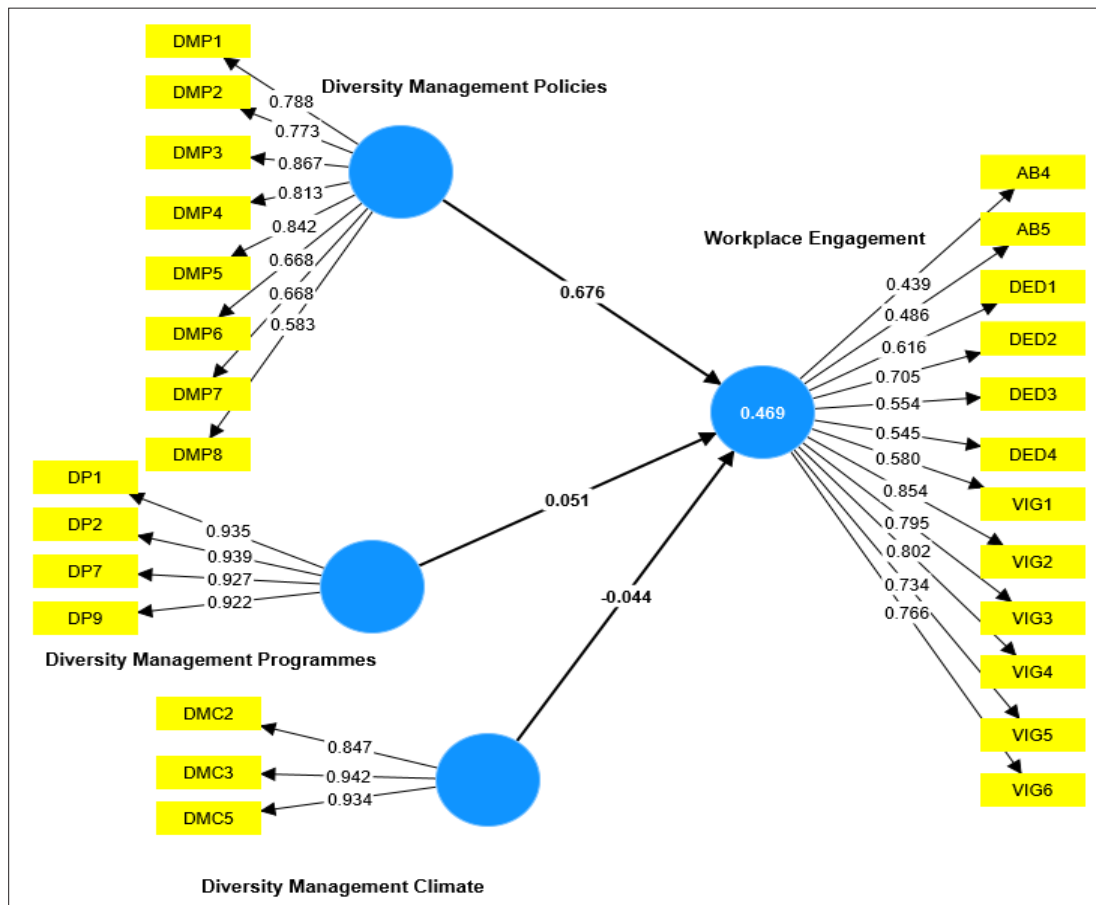


Figure 1: Structural model for diversity management and workplace engagement

The model (Figure 1) indicates that diversity management measures were policies, programmes and climate. The model also shows that work engagement was in terms absorption, dedication and vigour. Considering factor analysis (FA) loadings, for absorption (AB), only two indicators out of six were retained, for dedication (DED), four indicators out of five were retained, and for vigour (VIG) all the six indicators were retained. Therefore, work engagement was affirmed as a multi-dimensional concept comprised of three constructs. For diversity management policies (DMP), all the eight indicators were retained, for diversity management programmes (DP) only four indicators out of 12 were retained, and for diversity management climate (DMC), only three out of nine were retained. Nonetheless, the model shows that diversity management was indicated by the three measures. The model shows that three hypotheses to the effect that diversity management policies (H1), programmes (H2) and climate (H3) have a significant influence on workplace engagement were tested. The results for the same are also indicated in Table 4 and the explanation follows after the table.

Table 4: Structural equation model for diversity management and workplace engagement

Path Estimates	β	t	p
Diversity Management Policies → Workplace Engagement	0.676	8.822	0.000
Diversity Management Programmes → Workplace Engagement	0.051	0.491	0.624
Diversity Management Climate → Workplace Engagement	-0.044	0.553	0.580
R ² = 0.469			
Adjusted R ² = 0.460			

The structural equation model estimates (Table 4) suggest that diversity management policies ($\beta = 0.676$, $t = 8.822$, $p = 0.000 < 0.05$) had a positive and significant influence on workplace engagement. However,

diversity management programmes ($\beta = 0.051$, $t = 0.491$, $p = 0.624 > 0.05$) had a positive but insignificant influence on workplace engagement, while diversity management climate ($\beta = -0.044$, $t = 0.553$, $p = 0.580 > 0.05$) had a negative and insignificant one. The coefficients of determination R^2 suggested that the three diversity management practices explained 46.9% ($R^2 = 0.469$) of the variation in the workplace engagement of academic staff but adjusted R^2 showed that the only significant practice explained 46.0% (adjusted $R^2 = 0.460$). Therefore, while hypothesis one was supported, hypotheses two and three were rejected.

Discussion

The results of the first hypothesis to the effect that diversity management policies have a significant influence on the workplace engagement of academic staff showed that the hypothesis was supported. Therefore, diversity management policies had a significant influence on the workplace engagement of academic staff. This finding was consistent with the finding by previous scholars (Alzyoud, 2018; Chiemekwe et al., 2018; Downey et al., 2015; Ganji et al., 2021; Indrayani & Yasa, 2021; Luu et al., 2019; Rainaye, 2012), who indicated the existence of an appositive significant influence. Nonetheless, the finding was inconsistent with that by Indrayani and Yasa (2021), who reported that company policies had a direct but insignificant effect on work engagement. However, with the finding of the study being consistent with the findings of most studies, it can be affirmed that diversity management policies have a significant influence on the workplace engagement of academic staff.

The results for hypothesis two to the effect that diversity management programmes have a significant influence on the workplace engagement of academic staff showed that the hypothesis was rejected. This finding was inconsistent with the findings of previous scholars (Alshaabani et al., 2021; Ganji et al., 2021; Gupta & Gomathi, 2022; Jayashree et al., 2019; Kang & Sung, 2017; Mbhele & De Beer, 2021; Mistry et al., 2021; Ravikumar, 2013; Verčič & Men, 2023), who indicated that employee engagement was positively influenced by diversity management programmes. However, the diversity programmes had a significant influence on work engagement because the descriptive results revealed that the programmes were given less prominence in the university. The descriptive results on the same were lowly moderate.

The results for hypothesis three to the effect that the diversity management climate has a significant influence on the workplace engagement of academic staff showed that the hypothesis was rejected. The findings were in disagreement with previous scholars (Abun et al., 2021; Albrecht et al., 2018; Higgins, 2020; Jenkins, 2019; Mangkang & Chutima, 2022; Mansoor et al., 2021; McCallaghan et al., 2019; Rožman & Štrukelj, 2021), who found that organisational climate influenced work engagement. With the finding of the study in disagreement with the finding by all previous scholars, it can be surmised that the diversity management climate of the university had an insignificant influence on the workplace engagement of academic staff. However, this was largely because, compared to workplace engagement, the academic staff rated the university diversity climate to be somehow low. This means the diversity management climate of the universe was minimal.

Conclusion

The study concluded that diversity management policies are vital for the workplace engagement of academic staff. This is when recruitment policies favour every candidate, policies and procedures apply fairly to all staff, and the university supports diversity-related efforts and adheres to the organisation's recruitment and equal employment opportunity policies. Also, this is when remuneration policies follow the principle of equity and equality, the university offers equal opportunities for career growth, staff have access to policy information regarding diversity management practices, emphasis is put on having a diverse workforce, and practices offer equal recognition of all kinds of staff. However, inadequate diversity management programmes hinder workplace engagement. This especially occurs when there is limited effort to equip staff with skills for co-existence, co-existence is not communicated about, there is no sharing of diversity management-related issues/memos with staff, and internal communication

is not made about diversity issues. Also, a low-level diversity management climate impedes workplace engagement of academic staff. This is when there is limited effort to promote cooperation among staff from diverse work groups, staff have limited access to the diversity materials used, and training is not offered to make work more attractive to different kinds of workers.

Recommendations

The study recommends that universities should adopt diversity management policies. These should include recruitment policies that favour every candidate, policies and procedures that apply fairly to all staff, and the university supporting diversity-related efforts and adhering to recruitment and equal employment opportunity policies. In addition, remuneration policies should follow the principle of equity and equality, the universities should offer equal opportunities for career growth, staff should have access to policy information regarding diversity management practices, emphasis should be put on having a diverse workforce, and practices should offer equal recognition of all kinds of staff. The study also recommends that university leaders should implement adequate diversity management programmes to enhance workplace engagement. This should involve equipping staff with skills for co-existence, communicating about co-existence, sharing diversity management-related issues/memos with staff, and making internal communication about diversity issues. Further, university leaders should promote a climate that favours diversity. This should involve the promotion of cooperation among staff from diverse work groups, ensuring access by staff to the diversity materials used, and offering them training to make work more attractive to different kinds of workers.

Limitations and Suggested Area of Further Research

This research makes a substantial contribution in showing how diversity management contributes to workplace wellbeing. However, limitations that create the need for further research emerge. For instance, contrary to what was conjectured and findings of previous scholars, as indicated in the related literature above, the second and third hypotheses were rejected (Table 4). This calls for further testing of the hypotheses in different contexts. In addition, this study was done in one university. Therefore, future studies should be carried out in more universities.

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