



Organizational Cohesion, Generational Diversity and Performance of County Governments in Kenya

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the relationship between generational diversity and the organizational performance of county governments in Kenya, and tested whether organizational cohesion moderates that relationship. The study was anchored on Generational Cohort Theory and Social Identity Theory and adopted a positivist philosophy and an explanatory correlational design. The target population comprised 1,645 employees drawn from the Chief Executive Committee Member, Chief Officer, and Director/Departmental Head cadres across Kenya's 47 county governments, from which a sample of 384 respondents was drawn using Fisher's formula and stratified random sampling with proportionate allocation. A structured questionnaire was administered, and 307 usable responses were returned, representing a 79.9% response rate. The generational diversity and organizational cohesion constructs recorded Cronbach's alpha coefficients of 0.797 and 0.857, respectively, confirming acceptable internal consistency. Data were analysed using descriptive statistics, Pearson correlation, and hierarchical multiple regression. The findings revealed a strong, positive, and statistically significant relationship between generational diversity and organizational performance ($r = 0.609$, $p < 0.01$; $R = 0.615$, Adjusted $R^2 = 0.372$, $F(3, 303) = 61.337$, $p < 0.001$), with age distribution, career expectations, and cohort membership all emerging as significant predictors. Organizational cohesion itself had a significant positive direct effect on performance and, together with employee diversity, explained a significant share of the variance in performance. However, the specific interaction between generational diversity and organizational cohesion was not statistically significant ($\beta = -0.171$, $t = -1.871$, $p = 0.062$), indicating that, unlike tenure diversity, the benefits of generational diversity for county government performance in this study were not significantly amplified by organizational cohesion. The study recommends that county governments treat generational diversity as a strategic resource in its own right, through structured career-progression frameworks, mentorship, and mixed-generation teams, while pursuing organizational cohesion as an independent driver of performance.

Keywords: generational diversity, organizational cohesion, moderation, organizational performance, county governments, Kenya

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

Public and private sector workforces worldwide are becoming increasingly age-diverse as up to five generations - from the Silent Generation and Baby Boomers to Generation X, Millennials, and Generation Z - work alongside one another (Gabrielova & Buchko, 2021). In the United States, the United Kingdom, and other OECD public sectors, rising retirement ages and delayed workforce exit have combined with the entry of digitally native younger cohorts to make generational diversity a defining feature of public administration (Hamidullah, 2023). Public organizations in Korea and other Asian civil services have similarly reported that generational differences in work values shape organizational commitment, teamwork preferences, and ultimately performance (Park & Park, 2024).



Across Africa, devolution and public-sector reform have brought together long-serving officers with institutional memory and a growing cohort of younger, more recently recruited staff, creating both an opportunity and a management challenge for public institutions (Mustafa et al., 2022). In Kenya, the promulgation of the 2010 Constitution and the creation of 47 county governments accelerated public-sector recruitment, drawing employees from markedly different age cohorts into shared departments and leadership teams. The Public Service Commission (2023) reports that county governments employ a workforce that spans multiple generations, with younger employees (below 35 years) comprising only about 18% of staff against 75% of the national population in that age bracket (Kenya National Bureau of Statistics [KNBS], 2019), while a substantial share of officers have served for over a decade. The Commission on Revenue Allocation (2022) further notes that this generational imbalance is uneven across counties, with implications for how effectively institutional knowledge is transferred to younger officers and how well younger officers' innovations and digital competencies are absorbed into service delivery.

Generational diversity alone, however, does not automatically translate into improved organizational performance. Scholars increasingly argue that the benefits of a multigenerational workforce depend on the extent to which the organization can integrate employees across age cohorts through teamwork, shared goals, and open communication conditions collectively described as organizational cohesion (Grossman et al., 2022; Li, Choi, & Kim, 2025). Where generational differences translate into fault lines rather than complementary strengths, diversity can just as easily depress collaboration and performance as enhance it (Ifeanyi et al., 2024). This possibility that organizational cohesion may condition, or moderate, the relationship between generational diversity and performance motivates the present study, which examines both the direct relationship between generational diversity and the performance of Kenyan county governments and the moderating role of organizational cohesion in that relationship.

Statement of the Problem

County governments in Kenya are constitutionally mandated to deliver services efficiently and to implement infrastructural development that meets citizens' needs. Achieving this mandate depends substantially on how effectively counties manage an increasingly age-diverse workforce. Yet the available evidence on generational diversity in Kenyan public institutions is limited and largely descriptive, with few empirical studies directly linking generational diversity to measurable performance outcomes in devolved government. Where such evidence exists, it is often confined to a single county or department (see, for example, Wanyoike, Mugambi, and Gachuru's (2022) study of Laikipia County), leaving open the question of whether generational diversity is associated with performance across county governments more broadly.

A further gap concerns the conditions under which generational diversity translates into performance gains. Organizational cohesion has been proposed as one such condition in general management literature (Grossman et al., 2022; Ifeanyi et al., 2024), yet its moderating role has rarely been tested empirically within Kenyan county governments, and no identified study has tested it specifically for the relationship between generational diversity and performance in this context. Without this evidence, county governments risk investing in cohesion-building initiatives - team-building, communication platforms, shared-values programmes without knowing whether such investments meaningfully strengthen the performance returns to a multigenerational workforce, or whether they matter more for other workforce differences than for generational diversity specifically. This study addresses that gap by examining both the direct relationship between generational diversity and county government performance and the moderating effect of organizational cohesion on that relationship.

Objectives of the Study

The general objective of the study was to examine the moderating effect of organizational cohesion on the relationship between generational diversity and the performance of county governments in Kenya. The study was guided by two specific objectives:



- (i) to determine the relationship between generational diversity and the performance of county governments in Kenya; and
- (ii) to establish the moderating effect of organizational cohesion on the relationship between generational diversity and the performance of county governments in Kenya.

Correspondingly, the study tested the following null hypotheses:

H01 - Generational diversity has no significant relationship with the performance of county governments in Kenya.

H02 - Organizational cohesion has no significant moderating effect on the relationship between generational diversity and the performance of county governments in Kenya.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical Review

The study was anchored on Generational Cohort Theory, originally advanced by Mannheim (1952), which holds that individuals who come of age during the same historical and social period develop broadly similar values, attitudes, and work preferences that persist into their working lives (Dey, Ratilla, Tuckova, & Hung, 2020). Applied to the workplace, the theory suggests that younger employees often bring digital fluency, adaptability, and openness to innovation, while older employees contribute institutional memory, procedural knowledge, and stability (Gabrielova & Buchko, 2021). The theory has, however, been criticised for assuming that individuals within the same generational cohort are more homogeneous than they actually are, and for understating within-cohort variation (Bristow, 2024; Stark & Poppler, 2018). Within Kenya's county governments, where rigid bureaucratic structures can limit informal interaction across cadres, the theory nonetheless offers a useful lens for understanding why age-based differences in work values and expectations may shape collaboration and, ultimately, performance (Mustafa et al., 2022). Generational Cohort Theory therefore informs the study's first objective, on the direct relationship between generational diversity and performance.

The study was further anchored on Social Identity Theory, developed by Tajfel and Turner (2004), which holds that individuals derive part of their self-concept from membership in social groups, including age-based generational groups, and that this group identification shapes how individuals relate to colleagues inside and outside their group. Applied to a multigenerational county government workforce, the theory suggests that strong overarching organizational identity built through shared values, inclusive leadership, and effective communication can offset the tendency of employees to sort into generational in-groups, encouraging cooperation and collective performance across age cohorts (Epstein & Knight, 2022; Raimi, Tariq, & Kah, 2022). The theory has been criticised for oversimplifying the process of identity formation and for underestimating the layered, sometimes competing identities (political, ethnic, professional, and generational) that shape workplace relationships in contexts such as the Kenyan public sector (Allen, 2023; Jekelle, 2021). Even so, Social Identity Theory is directly relevant to the study's second objective, since it provides a theoretical basis for expecting organizational cohesion as a mechanism that strengthens shared organizational identity to moderate the relationship between generational diversity and performance.

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework hypothesizes generational diversity - comprising age distribution, career expectations, and cohort membership as the independent variable influencing the performance of county governments, measured through service delivery and infrastructural development. Organizational cohesion comprising teamwork, shared values and goals, and open communication - is conceptualized as a moderating variable that may strengthen or weaken the relationship between generational diversity and performance. Figure 1 presents this framework.

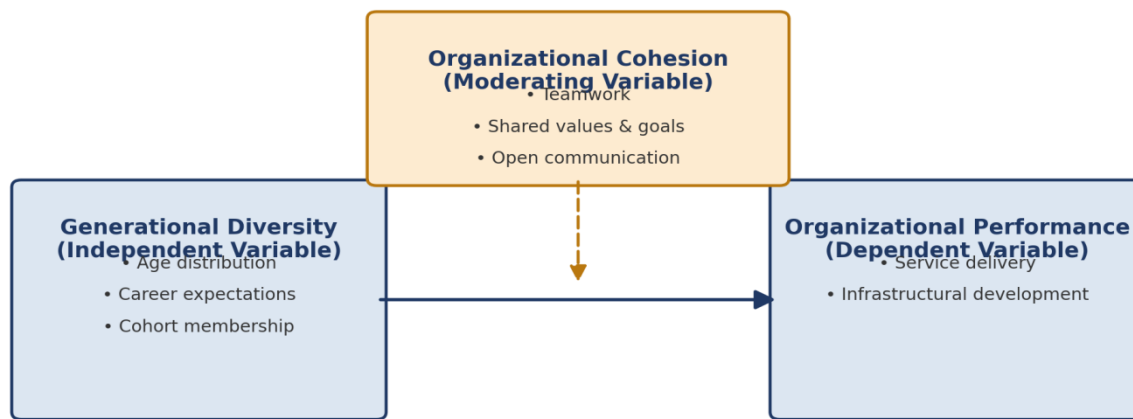


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

Empirical Review

Hamidullah (2023) examined generational differences in Western public-sector workforces. He found that as the workforce ages and undergoes generational transition, organizations that manage this transition deliberately through succession planning and cross-generational knowledge transfer sustain institutional performance more effectively than those that do not; the study, however, was conducted outside the African public sector and did not test any moderating variable. Park and Park (2024), studying the Korean government sector, found that generational differences in work values shaped teamwork, organizational commitment, and, indirectly, performance, with younger cohorts reporting less institutional loyalty but greater innovation orientation than older cohorts; the study was similarly located outside Africa and focused on work values rather than county-level service-delivery outcomes. Wanyoike, Mugambi, and Gachuru (2022) examined the effect of generational diversity management on employee performance in the County Government of Laikipia and found that generational diversity positively influenced innovation, creativity, and productivity; the study, being confined to a single county, leaves open the question of whether the relationship holds across county governments more broadly, and it did not examine organizational cohesion as a moderating variable.

On organizational cohesion, Li, Choi, and Kim (2025), studying 189 organizations, found that cohesion-related capability and knowledge sharing strengthened the link between organizational systems and creativity, while Grossman, Nolan, Rosch, Mazer, and Salas (2022), in a meta-analysis of team cohesion research, established a consistent positive association between team cohesion and task performance across a wide range of organizational settings. Ifeanyi et al. (2024), studying Imo State University in Nigeria, found that interpersonal attraction and social integration - core components of cohesion - enhanced collaboration, creativity, and performance. None of these studies, however, examined organizational cohesion as a moderator of the relationship between generational diversity and performance, and none was conducted within a Kenyan county government context.

Taken together, the reviewed literature demonstrates that generational diversity is associated with organizational outcomes and that organizational cohesion is independently associated with performance, but it leaves two gaps that this study addresses: first, limited empirical evidence linking generational diversity to performance across (rather than within a single) Kenyan county government; and second, no identified empirical test of whether organizational cohesion moderates the generational diversity-performance relationship specifically, as opposed to workforce diversity in general.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Philosophy and Design

The study adopted a positivist research philosophy, consistent with its aim of testing pre-specified hypotheses using quantitative, objectively measurable data (Mary et al., 2023; Gogia et al., 2024; Obeng et al., 2025). An



explanatory correlational research design was employed to examine both the relationship between generational diversity and performance and the moderating effect of organizational cohesion on that relationship (Tjimuku & Atiku, 2024).

Population and Sampling

The target population comprised 1,645 employees drawn from three cadres across Kenya's 47 county governments, as shown in Table 1.

Cadre	Population	Percentage
Chief Executive Committee Members (CECMs)	470	28.60%
Chief Officers	470	28.60%
Directors / Departmental Heads	705	42.80%
Total	1,645	100.00%

Table 1: Target Population of the Study

Source: Council of Governors (2025).

A sample of 384 respondents was determined using the sample-size formula for known populations at a 95% confidence level and a 0.05 margin of error (Fisher, Laing, Stoeckel, & Townsend, 1991). Stratified random sampling with proportionate allocation was then used to select respondents from each cadre, ensuring that each stratum was represented in proportion to its share of the target population, as shown in Table 2.

Cadre	Population	Sample Size
Chief Executive Committee Members (CECMs)	470	110
Chief Officers	470	110
Directors / Departmental Heads	705	164
Total	1,645	384

Table 2: Sample Size Distribution

Operational Definitions and Measurement

Consistent with reviewer guidance seeking greater conceptual precision, this study operationalized generational diversity as employees' perceptions of the presence, integration, and management of distinct age-based generational cohorts within their county government, rather than as an objective demographic index computed from human resource records (such as an age-variance or Blau's index of age heterogeneity). Perception-based measurement was chosen because the study's theoretical interest, drawn from Generational Cohort Theory and Social Identity Theory, lies in how employees experience and respond to generational differences in the workplace, a construct more directly captured through self-report than through raw age-composition statistics, though the two are related.

Generational diversity was measured through three empirically derived sub-dimensions: age distribution (employees' perceptions of the breadth and integration of different age groups within their department), career expectations (perceived differences in career aspirations and progression expectations across age groups), and cohort membership (perceived presence and integration of distinct generational cohorts - for example, Baby Boomers, Generation X, Millennials, and Generation Z - following the generational boundaries implied by Mannheim's (1952) original formulation). These three sub-dimensions were not assumed a priori to represent a single construct: their coherence was tested empirically through Principal Component Analysis, which found that the eight items spanning all three sub-dimensions loaded onto a single underlying component explaining

41.7% of the variance (Table 6), providing empirical support for treating them as dimensions of one generational diversity construct rather than as conceptually separate variables. Organizational cohesion was measured on the same logic, through items on teamwork, shared values and goals, and open communication, adapted from Kundu, Mor, Kumar, and Bansal (2020) and likewise reduced to a single component (Table 6). Organizational performance was measured through employees' perceptions of their county government's service delivery and infrastructural development, using items derived from established public-sector performance measures; as with generational diversity, this is a perception-based measure of performance rather than an objective, administratively recorded indicator, a choice discussed further as a limitation in Section 5.0. Items for the generational diversity sub-dimensions were adapted from Shrestha and Parajuli (2021), and all constructs were assessed on a 5-point Likert scale (Suleiman & Abdulkadir, 2022). The instrument was pre-tested with 38 respondents (approximately 10% of the sample), drawn from staff outside the main study, to refine item clarity and assess validity and reliability before the main survey (Rukmana, 2024).

Validity and Reliability

Validity was assessed through face, content, and construct validity, the last using Principal Component Analysis (PCA) supported by the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy (≥ 0.60) and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity ($p < 0.05$), with items retained at factor loadings of at least 0.50 and components retained at eigenvalues above 1.0 (Taherdoost, 2022; Fang, Susanti, Dlamini, Miao, & Chung, 2022; Zhang, Sangsawang, Vipahasna, & Pigultong, 2024). Reliability was assessed using Cronbach's alpha, with a threshold of 0.70 considered acceptable (Markov & Marchev, 2025), and was examined for every construct measured in the underlying instrument not only generational diversity and organizational cohesion, but also the educational, functional, and tenure diversity dimensions that entered the hierarchical regression model as covariates (Section 3.5) so that the internal consistency of the full measurement instrument, not only its two focal constructs, could be evaluated (Table 3). Data were collected using the drop-and-pick-later method following approval from NACOSTI and an authorization letter from the researcher's university, and analysed in SPSS using descriptive statistics, Pearson correlation, and hierarchical multiple regression.

Data Analysis and Model Specification

To test the direct relationship between generational diversity and performance (H01), the following model was estimated: $P = \beta_0 + \beta_1GD + \varepsilon$, where P is organizational performance, and GD is generational diversity. To test the moderating effect of organizational cohesion (H02), generational diversity was assessed as part of a broader hierarchical regression that simultaneously modelled all four dimensions of employee diversity examined in the parent study (educational, generational, functional, and tenure diversity), their interaction terms with organizational cohesion, and organizational cohesion itself, following the sequence: Model 1 - employee diversity dimensions only; Model 2 - employee diversity dimensions plus organizational cohesion; Model 3 - employee diversity dimensions, organizational cohesion, and the diversity $\times$ cohesion interaction terms, including Generational Diversity $\times$ Organizational Cohesion. This study's interpretation focuses specifically on the generational diversity terms within that model; the coefficients for educational, functional, and tenure diversity and their respective interaction terms are reported for completeness but fall outside the present study's scope. Before interpreting the regression results, diagnostic tests were conducted for normality (Kolmogorov-Smirnov test), multicollinearity (Variance Inflation Factor and tolerance), linearity (scatterplots), heteroscedasticity (Breusch-Pagan test), and autocorrelation (Durbin-Watson statistic), consistent with standard regression assumptions; the numerical outputs of these diagnostic tests are addressed in Section 4.6.

RESULTS AND FINDINGS

Response Rate and Reliability

Of the 384 questionnaires administered, 307 were completed and returned, yielding a response rate of 79.9%, which exceeds the 70% threshold generally considered adequate for statistical inference (Babbie, 2021). As set out in Section 3.4, reliability was assessed for every construct in the underlying instrument, not only for generational diversity and organizational cohesion. All five constructs recorded Cronbach's alpha coefficients



above the 0.70 threshold, ranging from 0.793 (educational diversity) to 0.857 (organizational cohesion), with an average of 0.823 across constructs (Table 3). This study's two focal constructs generational diversity and organizational cohesion, recorded alphas of 0.797 (across eight items) and 0.857 (across nine items), respectively, confirming acceptable internal consistency; the remaining three constructs, entered as covariates in the hierarchical regression model (Section 3.5), were equally reliable. A separate Cronbach's alpha for organizational performance, the dependent variable, was not computed in the underlying dataset; its construct validity is instead evidenced through the KMO, Bartlett's, and Principal Component Analysis results reported in Table 6.

Construct	Number of Items	Cronbach's Alpha
Educational Diversity	8	0.793
Generational Diversity	8	0.797
Functional Diversity	8	0.818
Tenure Diversity	8	0.821
Organizational Cohesion	9	0.857
Average Reliability	-	0.823

Table 3: Reliability Statistics for All Constructs in the Measurement Instrument

Descriptive Statistics

Respondents generally agreed that generational diversity contributes to county government performance. As shown in Table 4, the highest-rated statement was that effective integration of younger and older employees strengthens operational efficiency (mean = 4.319, SD = 0.725), followed by the view that generational diversity promotes innovative and balanced approaches to infrastructure development (mean = 4.296, SD = 0.723) and that multiple age groups improve the quality of public service delivery (mean = 4.287, SD = 0.751). The lowest-rated, though still favourable, statement was that representation of different age cohorts in county leadership improves alignment of services with citizen expectations (mean = 4.134, SD = 0.770).

Statement	Mean	Std. Dev.
Generational diversity enhances accountability and responsiveness to public needs.	4.238	0.812
Multiple age groups improve the quality of public service delivery.	4.287	0.751
Generational diversity promotes innovative, balanced infrastructure development.	4.296	0.723
Integration of younger and older employees strengthens operational efficiency.	4.319	0.725
Managing age-diverse workforces improves implementation of development projects.	4.215	0.758
Combining older and younger employees' perspectives enhances decision-making.	4.202	0.779
Representation of different age cohorts improves alignment with citizen expectations.	4.134	0.77
Knowledge transfer between older and younger staff raises trust and satisfaction.	4.202	0.744

Table 4: Descriptive Statistics for Generational Diversity

Respondents also rated organizational cohesion favourably (Table 5). The highest-rated item was that regular cross-departmental communication enhances coordination in infrastructure development (mean = 4.404, SD =



0.718), followed by interdepartmental teamwork contributing to higher citizen satisfaction (mean = 4.371, SD = 0.804) and shared values and goals leading to more consistent service delivery (mean = 4.362, SD = 0.693).

Statement	Mean	Std. Dev.
Effective teamwork has improved service delivery.	4.264	0.881
Interdepartmental teamwork has contributed to higher citizen satisfaction.	4.371	0.804
Strong teamwork has enhanced infrastructural project implementation.	4.28	0.878
Employees are satisfied with overall county government performance.	4.326	0.799
Shared values and goals lead to more consistent, reliable service delivery.	4.362	0.693
Alignment with organizational goals increases citizen satisfaction.	4.362	0.794
A unified vision supports infrastructure development project success.	4.314	0.864
Open communication improves the efficiency and quality of service delivery.	4.316	0.845
Regular cross-departmental communication enhances coordination.	4.404	0.718

Table 5: Descriptive Statistics for Organizational Cohesion

Sampling Adequacy and Construct Validity

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin and Bartlett's tests confirmed that the data were suitable for factor analysis for all three constructs central to this study. Principal Component Analysis extracted a single component for each construct, consistent with a unidimensional structure, as summarized in Table 6.

Construct	KMO	Bartlett's $\chi^2(df)$	Sig.	Eigenvalue	% Variance
Generational Diversity	0.834	600.297 (28)	0	3.334	41.70%
Organizational Cohesion	0.844	955.058 (36)	0	4.227	47.00%
Organizational Performance	0.869	1033.551 (28)	0	4.258	53.20%

Table 6: KMO and Bartlett's Test of Sampling Adequacy

Correlation Analysis

Pearson correlation analysis revealed a strong, positive, and statistically significant relationship between generational diversity and organizational performance ($r = 0.609$, $p < 0.01$, $N = 307$), indicating that county governments with greater generational diversity in their workforce tended to report higher levels of organizational performance.

Generational Diversity and Organizational Performance

Multiple regression analysis was used to test H01. The model produced $R = 0.615$ and an Adjusted R^2 of 0.372, indicating that age distribution, career expectations, and cohort membership jointly explained 37.2% of the variation in organizational performance. The model was statistically significant, $F(3, 303) = 61.337$, $p < 0.001$, and H01 was therefore rejected.

In response to reviewer guidance, the relationship between the bivariate correlation reported in Section 4.4 and the regression statistics reported here is clarified as follows. The bivariate Pearson correlation ($r = 0.609$) is the simple, two-variable association between organizational performance and the single composite generational-diversity score derived from Principal Component Analysis (Table 6). $R = 0.615$ and Adjusted $R^2 = 0.372$, by contrast, come from the multiple regression model summarised in Table 7, in which the three constituent sub-dimensions of generational diversity age distribution, career expectations, and cohort membership were entered simultaneously as separate predictors rather than as a single composite score. Because these three sub-



dimensions are themselves moderately intercorrelated but not identical, decomposing the composite into its parts and modelling them jointly captures marginally more of the shared and unique variance in performance than the single bivariate composite does, which is why the multiple R (0.615) is slightly larger than the simple bivariate r (0.609). Adjusted R² (0.372) further corrects the unadjusted R² (0.378) for the number of predictors (three) relative to the sample size, and is reported in preference to the unadjusted value to avoid overstating the variance explained.

Predictor	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
(Constant)	0.838	0.252	-	3.322	0.001
Age Distribution	0.411	0.068	0.351	6.022	0
Career Expectation	0.235	0.07	0.213	3.371	0.001
Cohort Membership	0.155	0.06	0.154	2.588	0.01

Table 7: Regression Results - Generational Diversity and Organizational Performance

All three dimensions of generational diversity were positive and statistically significant predictors of organizational performance, with age distribution recording the largest standardized coefficient ($\beta = 0.351$), followed by career expectation ($\beta = 0.213$) and cohort membership ($\beta = 0.154$). These findings are consistent with Wanyoike, Mugambi, and Gachuru (2022), who found that generational diversity improved employee performance in Laikipia County through the integration of diverse experiences and perspectives, and with Park and Park (2024), who found that generational differences in work values shaped public-sector performance in Korea.

Moderating Effect of Organizational Cohesion

A three-step hierarchical regression was used to test H02. Model 1, comprising the four employee diversity dimensions, produced $R^2 = 0.471$ (Adjusted $R^2 = 0.464$), $F(4, 302) = 67.197$, $p < 0.001$. Model 2 added organizational cohesion, raising R^2 to 0.485 (Adjusted $R^2 = 0.477$), an increase of 1.4 percentage points, $F(5, 301) = 56.755$, $p < 0.001$. Model 3 added the diversity x cohesion interaction terms, raising R^2 to 0.515 (Adjusted $R^2 = 0.500$), an increase of 3.0 percentage points, $F(9, 297) = 35.088$, $p < 0.001$. Table 8 summarizes the three models.

Model	R	R ²	Adj. R ²	F	Sig.
1: Diversity dimensions	0.686	0.471	0.464	67.197	0
2: + Organizational Cohesion	0.697	0.485	0.477	56.755	0
3: + Interaction terms	0.718	0.515	0.5	35.088	0

Table 8: Hierarchical Regression Model Summary - Moderating Effect of Organizational Cohesion

The significant increase in explained variance from Model 2 to Model 3 indicates that the interaction terms collectively added explanatory power to the model; however, statistical significance of the moderating effect for any single diversity dimension is determined by the significance of its own interaction coefficient, not by the overall change in R^2 . Table 9 presents the coefficients from Model 3 for the terms most relevant to this study - generational diversity, organizational cohesion, and their interaction.

Predictor	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
Generational Diversity	0.116	0.104	0.09	1.119	0.264
Organizational Cohesion	0.189	0.077	0.166	2.455	0.015
Generational Diversity x Organizational	-0.172	0.092	-0.171	-1.871	0.062



Cohesion					
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Table 9: Model 3 Regression Coefficients - Generational Diversity, Organizational Cohesion, and Their Interaction

In Model 3, generational diversity remained positively associated with organizational performance but was no longer statistically significant on its own ($\beta = 0.090$, $t = 1.119$, $p = 0.264$), while organizational cohesion remained a significant positive predictor ($\beta = 0.166$, $t = 2.455$, $p = 0.015$). Critically, the interaction term between generational diversity and organizational cohesion was negative and not statistically significant ($\beta = -0.171$, $t = -1.871$, $p = 0.062$). Because the p-value exceeds the conventional 0.05 threshold, there is insufficient statistical evidence to conclude that organizational cohesion moderates the relationship between generational diversity and organizational performance in this study. H02 was therefore not rejected for generational diversity specifically, even though the broader hierarchical model within which it was tested was itself statistically significant, and even though the same model found a significant positive moderating effect of organizational cohesion for tenure diversity.

DISCUSSION

Discussion of Findings

The finding that generational diversity has a positive and statistically significant direct relationship with organizational performance is consistent with the theoretical expectation, drawn from Generational Cohort Theory, that employees from different age cohorts bring complementary strengths institutional memory and procedural knowledge from older employees, and digital fluency and innovation orientation from younger employees (Gabrielova & Buchko, 2021) into county government operations. The result also aligns with Wanyoike, Mugambi, and Gachuru's (2022) finding, in a single-county setting, that generational diversity improves innovation, creativity, and productivity, and extends that finding across a broader sample of county governments. That age distribution emerged as the strongest predictor, ahead of career expectations and cohort membership, suggests that it is specifically the presence of a broad spread of ages rather than shared cohort identity or aligned career expectations alone that drives the performance benefit, a nuance consistent with Park and Park's (2024) observation that generational effects on performance operate substantially through differences in work values rather than age per se.

The non-significant moderating effect of organizational cohesion on the generational diversity-performance relationship is a more novel finding, and one this study did not set out to produce but which the data support. One plausible explanation, drawn from Social Identity Theory, is that generational identity may function differently from tenure-based identity within county government workplaces. Tenure differences are primarily experiential; they separate employees by what they know about the organization, and organizational cohesion mechanisms such as teamwork and open communication directly address that separation by creating channels for knowledge transfer between longer- and shorter-serving staff. Generational differences, by contrast, are bound up with broader social identities, values, and expectations that general cohesion-building activities (shared goals, team-building, communication platforms) may not directly target (Allen, 2023; Jekelle, 2021). If so, generic organizational cohesion interventions may be a less precise lever for unlocking the performance benefits of generational diversity specifically, even though, as this study also found, organizational cohesion has a significant positive effect on performance in its own right. A second, more methodological explanation is that the interaction coefficient ($p = 0.062$) fell only narrowly short of conventional significance, and a larger or differently distributed sample might detect a moderating effect that this study, with 307 respondents, was underpowered to confirm; this possibility is discussed further as an area for future research.

Methodological Limitations

Two measurement limitations, raised in peer review, merit explicit acknowledgement. First, generational diversity, organizational cohesion, and organizational performance were all measured as employee perceptions captured through the same self-administered questionnaire, from the same respondents, at the same point in



time. This cross-sectional, single-source design raises the possibility that common-method variance inflated the observed associations, including the direct relationship between generational diversity and performance and the direct effect of organizational cohesion, beyond their true magnitude. Standard procedural safeguards were applied during instrument design (validated Likert-type scales, respondent anonymity, and item development informed by prior validated measures), but no statistical test for common-method bias, such as Harman's single-factor test, was reported for this dataset, and none could be reconstructed retrospectively from the data available for this analysis. Second, organizational performance was measured through employee perceptions of service delivery and infrastructural development rather than through independent or archival performance indicators (for example, audited service-delivery statistics or project-completion records), which limits the extent to which the reported relationships can be interpreted as effects on objectively verified performance outcomes rather than on employees' subjective assessments of it. Future research should triangulate self-reported diversity and cohesion perceptions with objective workforce-composition data drawn from county human resource records, and should pair employee-perception measures of performance with independent administrative indicators, to establish whether the relationships reported here hold when common-method variance is more directly addressed.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study concludes that generational diversity has a positive and statistically significant relationship with the performance of county governments in Kenya, driven primarily by diversity in age distribution, and secondarily by differences in career expectations and cohort membership. The study further concludes that, although organizational cohesion independently and significantly contributes to organizational performance, the evidence from this study does not support the conclusion that organizational cohesion significantly strengthens the relationship between generational diversity and performance; this moderating role was empirically confirmed only for tenure diversity within the same model, not for generational, educational, or functional diversity.

County governments should therefore continue to treat generational diversity as a strategic workforce resource, implementing structured career-progression frameworks, mentorship, coaching, and job-rotation programmes, and encouraging mixed-generation project teams to combine institutional experience with newer skills and perspectives. County governments should likewise continue to invest in organizational cohesion through inclusive leadership, team-building, and open communication platforms given its independent contribution to performance, while recognizing that, on the evidence available, such investments should not be marketed specifically as a way to amplify the returns to generational diversity. Given how close the interaction term came to conventional statistical significance, future research should revisit this relationship with larger and more geographically representative samples, and should consider whether alternative, more targeted measures of intergenerational integration (as distinct from general organizational cohesion) moderate the generational diversity-performance relationship more strongly than the broad cohesion construct used in this study.

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