



Relationship between Functional Diversity and The Performance of County Governments in Kenya

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Research Article

Abstract

Purpose: Despite the goals of decentralization, county governments in Kenya continue to face performance disparities largely linked to poor management of employee diversity. Underutilized functional diversity negatively affects service delivery, innovation, and strategic planning. This study examined the relationship between functional diversity and the organizational performance of county governments in Kenya.

Method: The study was anchored in Contingency Theory and adopted a descriptive correlational research design. The target population comprised 1,645 county government employees drawn from 47 counties, encompassing management and technical staff across key departments. We determined a sample size of 384 using Fisher's (1970) formula, with stratified random sampling and proportionate allocation ensuring representation across job categories. We collected data using a structured questionnaire with closed-ended, five-point Likert-scale items. We analyzed quantitative data using descriptive statistics and inferential techniques, including correlation and multiple regression analysis. We used F- and t-tests to test hypotheses at $p < 0.05$.

Results: Functional diversity had a positive and statistically significant relationship with organizational performance in Kenyan county governments. However, occupational diversity drove this overall effect. It had a positive, statistically significant effect on organizational performance, while job role diversity and departmental affiliation showed positive but statistically non-significant relationships.

Implications: County government management should prioritize strengthening occupational diversity by recruiting and retaining employees with varied professional and occupational backgrounds, as this dimension has the most meaningful impact on organizational performance, while continuing to pursue job-role and departmental integration as longer-term, complementary investments.

Originality/Value: Existing workforce-diversity studies in Kenya's devolved system have not adequately disentangled the distinct contribution of functional diversity's individual dimensions to organizational performance. By decomposing functional diversity into occupational diversity, job role diversity, and departmental affiliation and testing each dimension's contribution, this study offers more granular, actionable evidence than prior county-level diversity research.

Keywords: Functional Diversity, Organizational Performance, Service Delivery, Occupational Background, Affiliation, Infrastructure Development

1. Introduction

In the public sector, employee diversity plays a critical role in improving organizational performance, strengthening inclusive service delivery, and stimulating innovation in both policy formulation and implementation (Ali, Appana, & Narayan, 2023). Employees with varied educational qualifications, generational experiences, functional skills, and tenure levels bring a wide range of perspectives, knowledge bases, and analytical approaches essential to addressing complex and changing public service demands (Riccucci, 2021). In decentralized governance systems, this diversity enhances representativeness by aligning public institutions more closely with the communities they serve, promoting equity, trust, and greater citizen participation (Hofhuis, 2022). In addition, heterogeneous teams can better manage socio-political complexity, improve decision-making, and adapt to local conditions, ultimately enhancing service delivery quality and overall institutional effectiveness (Ishaq & Hussain, 2022). Employee diversity includes generational, functional, tenure, and educational diversity; this study, however, focuses specifically on functional diversity.

Functional diversity, where employees come from various departmental or professional backgrounds, encourages collaborative governance and more holistic policy implementation (Ishaq & Hussain, 2022). It enables organizations to draw on a wide range of expertise and perspectives, improving problem-solving and decision-making. Integrating knowledge from different functional areas allows organizations to conduct comprehensive assessments of public and organizational challenges and develop multi-faceted solutions that enhance policy outcomes and operational efficiency (Alang, Stanton, & Rose, 2022). This diversity also fosters innovation and adaptability through cross-departmental knowledge exchange. Consequently, functional diversity strengthens teamwork, improves service delivery, and supports more effective strategy implementation in complex environments (Ekejiuba et al., 2023).

Globally, functional diversity is increasingly recognized as a key driver of public sector performance, particularly in complex governance environments that require coordinated and multidisciplinary responses (Ali et al., 2023). In countries such as the United States and Canada, public institutions deliberately integrate professionals from diverse functional backgrounds to strengthen policy formulation and implementation (Riccucci, 2021). In African countries such as Nigeria and Ghana, collaboration across ministries enhances policy coordination and improves responses to complex governance challenges, although functional silos and capacity gaps sometimes limit effectiveness (Asare Obeng et al., 2025). In Southern Africa, nations like South Africa and Botswana demonstrate how cross-ministerial task forces and multidisciplinary teams improve service delivery and policy outcomes in areas such as climate change and urban development (Tjimuku & Atiku, 2024). Conversely, Zimbabwe's limited investment in workforce development has constrained functional balance, affecting innovation and efficiency (Budeli & Kamwimbi, 2022).

In Kenya, functional diversity within the public sector plays a central role in strengthening performance under the devolved system of government. Counties benefit from multidisciplinary teams drawn from sectors such as health, agriculture, education, finance, and urban planning, enabling more coordinated and context-specific service delivery (Lemunen, 2022). This integration of diverse professional expertise strengthens county governments' ability to address complex local development challenges, including budgeting, infrastructure development, and healthcare provision (Nguta & Omuya, 2024). Functional diversity also improves cross-sectoral collaboration, which is essential for implementing county development plans effectively and responding to citizen needs (Kerubo, 2023). Despite this promise, county governments continue to experience performance disparities linked to how functional diversity is structured and utilized (Koech & Korir, 2025): many counties exhibit an imbalance in staffing that favors administrative personnel over technical experts such as engineers, urban planners, economists, and public health specialists (Mutoka & Njoroge, 2025; Muhula et al., 2025), constraining interdisciplinary collaboration and weakening counties' ability to design and implement integrated development projects. As

a result, service delivery in key sectors such as infrastructure, health, and urban planning is often fragmented and less responsive to local needs, and underutilizing functional diversity reduces innovation, slows project implementation, and undermines accountability in cross-departmental initiatives.

While existing studies have explored workforce diversity and public sector efficiency, limited empirical evidence exists specifically on how functional diversity influences the performance of county governments in Kenya's devolved system. Studies such as Ali et al. (2023), Koech and Korir (2025), and Muhula et al. (2025) highlight general human resource and governance challenges within counties but do not adequately disentangle the distinct role of functional diversity in shaping performance outcomes such as service delivery and infrastructure development. Similarly, research by Mutoka and Njoroge (2025), Ekejiuba et al. (2023), and Mary et al. (2023) examines county performance broadly but fails to integrate functional diversity, reflected in the mix of technical, administrative, and professional roles, as a central explanatory variable, limiting understanding of how cross-functional collaboration and skill integration influence organizational effectiveness. This study addresses that gap. Its objective was to examine the relationship between functional diversity, decomposed into occupational diversity, job role diversity, and departmental affiliation, and the organizational performance of county governments in Kenya. In doing so, the study contributes dimension-level empirical evidence that existing county-level diversity research has not provided, evidence intended to inform more targeted, evidence-based workforce planning by county public service boards.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Theoretical Review

This study is anchored on Contingency Theory to examine the relationship between functional diversity and the organizational performance of county governments in Kenya. Contingency Theory, developed by scholars such as Burns and Stalker (1961) and later advanced by Fiedler (1964), posits that there is no single best way to organize or lead an institution; rather, organizational effectiveness is achieved when there is a good fit between structure, environment, and the internal and external contextual demands an organization faces (Otenyo, 2023; Chen et al., 2019; Liu, 2020). In this study, functional diversity is viewed as a contextual variable that influences how county governments structure teams, coordinate tasks, and deliver services. Because employees from diverse functional areas, such as health, finance, engineering, and planning, must coordinate their activities across distinct operational environments, including urban versus rural contexts and well-resourced versus resource-constrained regions (Liu & Zhang, 2024), the theory helps explain why differences in functional composition across counties may lead to variations in performance outcomes within Kenya's devolved governance system.

In the context of county governments in Kenya, functional diversity, where employees have different departmental roles, such as health, finance, engineering, or planning, requires tailored coordination mechanisms to ensure performance goals are achieved (da Silva et al., 2023). When organizations align these functional differences with situational needs, they can enhance task specialization, interdepartmental learning, and integrated service delivery (Turkulainen, 2022). Contingency Theory thus provides a lens through which to assess how functional diversity contributes to county government performance depending on organizational design and operational context, emphasizing that different environments, such as urban versus rural counties, or resource-rich versus marginalized areas, necessitate different structural and functional alignments for optimal performance (Samuel & Sibindi, 2019). Counties with well-aligned teams across diverse functions are better positioned to implement multi-sectoral projects, such as combining health interventions with water infrastructure or integrating finance and procurement in public works (Mark & Erude, 2023). Functional diversity improves decision-making by incorporating multiple perspectives,

thus enhancing problem-solving and policy development tailored to specific county challenges (Felix, Tochi, & Daniels, 2020).

2.2. Empirical Literature

Abiew, Okyere-Kwakye, and Ellis (2022) established a positive relationship between functional diversity and team innovation in research institutions in Ghana, highlighting that such diversity enhances innovation, particularly when moderated by cultural dimensions like low uncertainty avoidance, femininity, and low power distance. While the findings contribute to understanding functional diversity in research settings, a gap remains in exploring this relationship within public institutions such as Kenya's county governments. Therefore, further research is needed to determine the effect of functional diversity on employee performance in Kenya's county governments, considering the unique context of the public sector.

Homan et al. (2020) developed the Leading Diversity (LeaD) model to address the lack of a comprehensive theory on how leadership interacts with team diversity to influence outcomes. Their integrative framework emphasizes that leaders must understand both the positive and negative effects of diversity, apply task- and person-focused leadership behaviors accordingly, and accurately assess team needs to manage diverse teams effectively. The study underscores the importance of functional leadership in leveraging diversity to enhance team performance and innovation. While the model offers valuable insights into managing diversity in general organizational settings, a contextual gap remains in understanding how functional diversity leadership applies within public institutions such as county governments in Kenya.

Zhou et al. (2023) examined the relationship between functional diversity in top management teams (TMTs) and firm performance in Chinese SMEs using a social network perspective. They distinguished between intrapersonal functional diversity (IFD) and dominant functional diversity (DFD) and found that both positively influence firm performance. Additionally, internal network density and external bridging ties within TMTs moderated this relationship, with stronger internal connections and external relationships enhancing diversity's positive effects. While the study highlights how different dimensions of functional diversity can be leveraged to improve organizational outcomes, it leaves a contextual gap concerning how such diversity functions in public institutions like county governments in Kenya.

Consistent with the theoretical and empirical review above, the study tested the following hypothesis.

H1: *Functional diversity has a significant positive relationship with the performance of county governments in Kenya.*

3. Conceptual Framework

A conceptual framework is a structured system of concepts, assumptions, expectations, beliefs, and theories that supports and informs a research study. Figure 1 shows the hypothesized relationship between the independent and dependent variables. In this study, the independent variable was functional diversity, and the dependent variable was county governments' organizational performance.

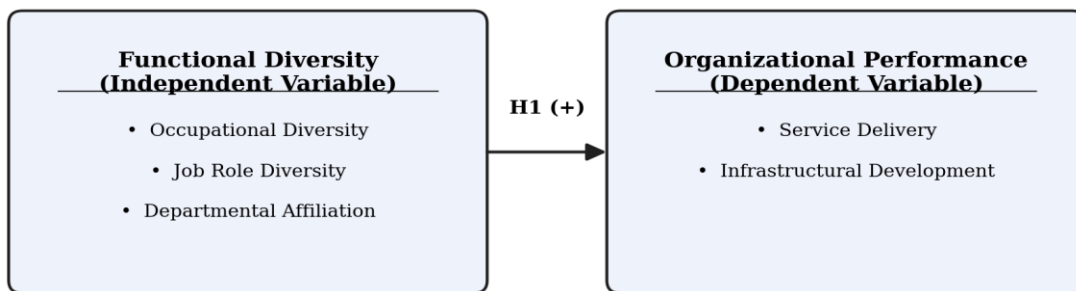


Fig. 1: Conceptual Framework

4. Research Methodology

4.1. Research Design and Sample

The study adopted a positivist research philosophy and utilized a descriptive correlational research design. The target population comprised approximately 1,645 employees drawn from various departments across the 47 county governments in Kenya. These respondents included officers directly involved in implementing diversity-related policies and those engaged in core administrative and technical functions that contribute to organizational performance. Each county has 10 administrative departments, each headed by a County Executive Committee (CEC) member, led by the Governor and Deputy Governor. These include: Health Services, Finance and Economic Planning; Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries; Education, ICT, Culture and Social Services; Youth Affairs, Sports and Communications; Trade, Industry, Tourism and Cooperative Development; Roads, Transport, Public Works and Utilities; Water, Environment and Natural Resources; Lands, Housing and Physical Planning; Administration and Public Service.

Accordingly, the study used a sample size of 384 participants, determined using the sample size calculation formula proposed by Fisher (1970), as recommended by Martin et al. (2021). Appendix A presents the formula, variable definitions, and worked calculation.

Table 1: Sample Size

Category	Target Population	Sample Size
County Executive Committee Members (CECMs)	470	110
Chief Officers	470	110
Directors/Departmental Heads	705	164
Total	1645	384

The study used a stratified random sampling design, with proportionate allocation across the three job cadres shown in Table 1, to select the sample from the target population. This design was appropriate because it ensured that each cadre, County Executive Committee Members, Chief Officers, and Directors/Departmental Heads, was represented in the sample in proportion to its size in the target population, reducing selection bias while still reaching county government employees in management and supervisory positions who possess direct knowledge and experience of functional diversity and organizational performance. Within each cadre, respondents were then selected at random, ensuring every eligible employee had a known, non-zero probability of selection.

4.2. Research Instrument, Validity, and Reliability

The study relied on primary data collected through a structured questionnaire of closed-ended items. This instrument was chosen due to its cost-effectiveness, ease of administration to large samples, and ability to reduce interviewer bias. The questionnaire was structured into sections measuring functional diversity through its three dimensions of occupational diversity, job role diversity, and departmental affiliation, and organizational performance, with each item rated on a five-point Likert scale where 5 represented Strongly Agree (SA), 4 Agree (A), 3 Neutral (N), 2 Disagree (D), and 1 Strongly Disagree (SD).

The researcher's supervisors reviewed the draft questionnaire for content validity, assessing each item for clarity, relevance, and alignment with the study's constructs before piloting. The researcher conducted a pilot study among selected county government employees to assess the instrument's validity and reliability. According to Rukmana (2024), a pilot study should involve approximately 10 percent of the sample size. Therefore, the pilot group comprised 10 percent of the sample size (38 respondents). The pilot study helped identify ambiguous or unclear questions and facilitated questionnaire refinement before the main survey. Internal consistency reliability was subsequently assessed using Cronbach's alpha, with a coefficient of 0.70 or above conventionally regarded as indicating acceptable reliability. The functional diversity construct

recorded a Cronbach's alpha of 0.818, exceeding this threshold and confirming acceptable internal consistency among its items.

The dependent variable, organizational performance, was assessed for internal validity using the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity, followed by Principal Component Analysis (PCA), rather than Cronbach's alpha, since it was treated as a single outcome scale rather than a multi-item predictor construct.

Table 2: KMO and Bartlett's Test of Organizational Performance

KMO and Bartlett's Test		Organizational Performance
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy		0.869
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	1033.551
	Df	28
	Sig.	.000

The KMO value of 0.869 exceeded the recommended threshold of 0.50, indicating good sampling adequacy, and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity was significant ($\chi^2 = 1033.551$, $df = 28$, $p < .001$), confirming that the eight organizational-performance items were sufficiently correlated to support Principal Component Analysis. All eight items loaded onto a single retained component (eigenvalue = 4.258), which explained 53.226% of the total variance, with item loadings ranging from 0.672 to 0.783, confirming organizational performance as a unidimensional construct suitable for use as a single scale in the correlation and regression analyses below.

Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics (frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations) and inferential statistics (correlation and regression analysis). The results were presented in tables and figures. The regression model was as follows;

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1$$

Whereby, **Y** = Performance of county governments; β_0 = Constant; β_1 = Coefficient of determination; **X₁** = Functional diversity.

5. Results and Discussions

The study targeted 384 respondents drawn from county governments across Kenya to examine the influence of functional diversity on county government performance. A total of 307 completed questionnaires were successfully returned, representing a response rate of 79.9 percent, while 77 questionnaires were not returned, accounting for 20.1 percent of the targeted sample. Table 3 shows the response rate.

Table 3: Questionnaires' Response Rate

Response Rate	Frequency	Percentage
Complete	307	79.9%
Never Returned	77	20.1%
Total	384	100%

5.1. Functional Diversity

The study examined how functional diversity influences county government performance in Kenya. Respondents indicated their level of agreement with various statements. Table 4 shows that respondents generally perceived functional diversity as a critical factor influencing county government performance. The statement with the highest mean score was that functional diversity among county staff leads to more effective problem-solving in service delivery ($M = 4.00$, $SD = 0.9466$). This finding suggests that employees with diverse functional expertise contribute different perspectives, skills, and approaches to addressing

service delivery challenges, thereby enhancing the effectiveness of county operations. Similarly, respondents agreed that a wide range of job roles within county teams enhances efficiency in delivering public services ($M = 3.98$, $SD = 0.8917$), and that county governments with employees from varied occupational backgrounds are better equipped to meet citizen needs ($M = 3.91$, $SD = 0.9234$).

In addition, respondents moderately agreed that functional diversity in county governments promotes innovation in policy and service design ($M = 3.63$, $SD = 1.007$), that cross-departmental collaboration driven by functional diversity improves the quality of infrastructure development projects ($M = 3.62$, $SD = 0.8672$), and that varied occupational expertise among employees increases adaptability and responsiveness in county operations ($M = 3.60$, $SD = 0.9999$). Furthermore, respondents moderately agreed that county governments with a high degree of job role variety show improved overall performance and citizen satisfaction ($M = 3.45$, $SD = 1.2351$). The statement that recorded the lowest mean score was that diverse departmental affiliations among staff contribute to more comprehensive and inclusive decision-making processes ($M = 3.26$, $SD = 1.2394$); despite receiving the lowest rating, respondents still generally agreed with the statement, though the comparatively high standard deviation on this and the preceding item indicates more varied opinions than on the higher-scoring statements.

Table 4: Functional Diversity

Statements	D	N	A	Mean	S.D.
Functional diversity among county staff leads to more effective problem-solving in service delivery.	6%	10%	84%	4.00	0.9466
County governments with employees from varied occupational backgrounds are better equipped to meet citizen needs.	5%	13%	81%	3.91	0.9234
A wide range of job roles within county teams enhances efficiency in delivering public services.	5%	13%	83%	3.98	0.8917
Cross-departmental collaboration driven by functional diversity improves the quality of infrastructure development projects.	8%	15%	78%	3.62	0.8672
Functional diversity in county governments promotes innovation in policy and service design.	6%	20%	74%	3.63	1.007
Diverse departmental affiliations among staff contribute to more comprehensive and inclusive decision-making processes.	20%	13%	68%	3.26	1.2394
Varied occupational expertise among employees increases adaptability and responsiveness in county operations.	8%	20%	72%	3.60	0.9999
County governments with a high degree of job role variety show improved overall performance and citizen satisfaction.	12%	19%	69%	3.45	1.2351

5.2. Correlation Analysis

Pearson correlation analysis examined the relationship between functional diversity and organizational performance in the county government, as presented in Table 5. The results indicate a strong positive and statistically significant relationship between functional diversity and organizational performance ($r = 0.762$, $p < 0.01$). This implies that higher functional diversity is associated with improved organizational performance, suggesting that integrating employees with varied functional expertise enhances effectiveness, decision-making, and service delivery within the county government. The correlation coefficient exceeds the 0.5 threshold, confirming a strong association between the two variables. These findings agree with Abiew, Okyere-Kwakye, and Ellis (2022), who established that functional diversity positively influences team innovation in research institutions in Ghana, particularly by enhancing creativity and problem-solving capacity. They also concur with Zhou et al. (2023), who found that functional diversity

in top management teams significantly improves firm performance in Chinese SMEs through improved internal and external network structures that facilitate knowledge sharing and coordination.

Table 5: Correlation Results

Organizational Performance		Functional Diversity
Organizational Performance	Pearson Correlation	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	
	N	307
Functional Diversity	Pearson Correlation	.762**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	307

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

5.3. Regression Analysis

Linear regression analysis was conducted to determine the effect of functional diversity on county government performance in Kenya. The model results in Table 6 indicate that functional diversity explains 57.6% of the variation in county government performance ($R^2 = 0.576$). This suggests that functional diversity has a substantial and statistically meaningful influence on performance outcomes within county governments. However, the model does not explain the remaining 42.4% of the variation, implying that other factors beyond departmental affiliation, occupational diversity, and job role diversity also contribute to performance. These may include additional organizational, structural, or environmental factors, which future studies should consider to better understand the determinants of county government performance in Kenya.

Table 6: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.762a	.581	.576	.29397

a. Predictors: (Constant), Departmental affiliation, Occupational diversity, Job role diversity.

The study used analysis of variance to test the statistical significance of the regression model examining the relationship between functional diversity and county government performance. The ANOVA results (Table 7) showed a positive relationship between functional diversity and county government performance, with a probability value of 0.000, which is below the acceptable level of significance. Furthermore, the calculated F-statistic of 139.834 exceeded the critical F value of 2.60 at the 95% confidence level, indicating that the model was statistically fit and significant. These results support H1, confirming that functional diversity has a significant positive relationship with county government performance in Kenya.

Table 7: Analysis of Variance

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	36.254	3	12.085	139.834	.000b
	Residual	26.186	303	.086		
	Total	62.439	306			

Note: a. Dependent Variable: Performance. b. Predictors: (Constant), Departmental affiliation, Occupational diversity, Job role diversity.

From the unstandardized coefficients, the regression results produced the following model:

Performance = 1.644 + 0.538 Occupational Diversity + 0.018 Job Role Diversity + 0.025 Departmental Affiliation.

Table 8 presents the regression coefficients showing that occupational diversity has a statistically significant positive relationship with county government performance, as indicated by a p-value of 0.000, which is below the 0.05 significance level. Occupational diversity had a strong, significant positive effect on performance ($t = 19.403$, $p = 0.000$). The coefficient ($\beta = 0.538$) implies that a one-unit increase in occupational diversity leads to a 0.538 improvement in county government performance, holding other factors constant. In contrast, job role diversity showed a positive but statistically insignificant relationship with performance ($\beta = 0.018$, $t = 1.088$, $p = 0.277$), indicating that variations in job roles do not significantly influence performance outcomes in county governments. Similarly, departmental affiliation showed a positive but statistically insignificant relationship with performance ($\beta = 0.025$, $t = 0.736$, $p = 0.463$), suggesting that differences in departmental membership have no meaningful effect on performance when controlling for other variables.

Table 8: Regression Coefficients

Model	Predictor	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)	1.644	.125		13.161	.000
1	Occupational diversity	.538	.028	.741	19.403	.000
1	Job role diversity	.018	.016	.051	1.088	.277
1	Departmental affiliation	.025	.034	.034	.736	.463

Note: Dependent Variable: Performance.

Based on these findings, only occupational diversity has a statistically significant effect on county government performance, while job role diversity and departmental affiliation do not significantly influence performance. This implies that H1 is only partially supported: one component of functional diversity is significant, while the others are not, suggesting that occupational diversity is the key functional diversity dimension influencing performance in Kenyan county governments. The findings show that occupational diversity plays a critical role in enhancing county government performance, likely because it brings a broad range of skills, experiences, and professional perspectives into the organization. However, the limited influence of job role diversity and departmental affiliation suggests that structural differences within roles and departments may not substantially translate into improved performance outcomes in the public sector context.

The findings align with Abiew, Okyere-Kwakye, and Ellis (2022), who found that functional diversity enhances innovation in research institutions, particularly when supported by enabling contextual factors. The current results similarly show that occupational diversity contributes positively to organizational performance, though its effect is more pronounced than other dimensions of functional diversity. The findings also resonate with Homan et al. (2020), who argued through the LeaD model that diversity effectiveness depends on how leadership manages and leverages it, suggesting that not all forms of diversity automatically translate into improved outcomes. Likewise, the results are consistent with Zhou et al. (2023), who found that functional diversity in top management teams positively influences firm performance, especially when supported by strong internal and external networks.

6. Conclusions and Recommendations

The study concludes that functional diversity had a positive and significant relationship with the organizational performance of county governments in Kenya. However, the findings show that occupational diversity has a positive and statistically significant effect on organizational performance, while job role diversity and departmental affiliation exhibit positive but statistically insignificant relationships. This

implies that not all dimensions of functional diversity equally influence performance outcomes within county governments. Overall, the results suggest that improvements in occupational diversity are likely to enhance organizational performance, whereas changes in job role diversity and departmental affiliation alone may not lead to meaningful performance gains.

The research found a mixed relationship between functional diversity and the organizational performance of county governments in Kenya: occupational diversity showed a positive and significant effect, while job role diversity and departmental affiliation were positive but not statistically significant. Based on these findings, the study recommends that county government management should prioritize strengthening occupational diversity by recruiting and retaining employees with varied professional and occupational backgrounds, as this dimension has the most meaningful impact on organizational performance.

In addition, although job role diversity did not show a significant effect, county governments should still consider implementing structured job rotation, cross-functional assignments, and role enrichment programs to gradually enhance employees' exposure to different tasks and improve overall organizational flexibility and competence. Furthermore, management should promote effective collaboration among employees with diverse occupational expertise to maximize the benefits of functional diversity in service delivery and decision-making.

County governments should also encourage continuous interaction and knowledge sharing across departments to strengthen coordination and improve problem-solving capacity, even though departmental affiliation was not statistically significant. Finally, human resource policies should integrate diverse functional perspectives into decision-making to ensure effective use of skills and expertise, supporting efficiency, adaptability, and long-term organizational performance.

7. Limitations of the Study

This study has multiple limitations. First, its cross-sectional, correlational design identifies statistically significant associations rather than causal effects; reverse causality and omitted variables such as leadership quality, fiscal resource availability, and political stability cannot be ruled out. Second, the study measured organizational performance through a perceptual, survey-based index of service delivery and infrastructural development rather than objective administrative or fiscal outcome data. Third, the study examined only functional diversity in isolation; it did not account for other dimensions of employee diversity, educational, generational, or tenure diversity, that may jointly influence organizational performance alongside functional diversity, nor for organizational conditions, such as leadership or organizational cohesion, that other studies suggest can moderate diversity's effects on performance. Fourth, the study was limited to county governments in Kenya, so the findings cannot be generalized to other public sector organizations such as parastatals, state corporations, national government ministries, and independent commissions, or to devolved systems in other countries.

8. Areas for Further Research

The study examined the relationship between functional diversity and organizational performance of county governments in Kenya. Given the limitations above, the study suggests further studies on the relationship between functional diversity and organizational performance in other public sector organizations and institutions in Kenya. The study found that occupational diversity, job role variety, and departmental affiliation explained 57.6% of the organizational performance of county governments in Kenya. Therefore, further studies should examine other factors influencing the organizational performance of county governments in Kenya, including other dimensions of employee diversity and the organizational conditions noted above, and, where possible, use longitudinal designs and objective performance data to strengthen causal inference.

Authors' Contribution: Mohamed Abdi Sheikh did the actual work defining the research problem, designing the methodology, collecting and analyzing the data, and writing the thesis. Dr. James M. Gitari and Dr. Daniel K. Langat provided advisory oversight, shaped the research direction, identified methodological flaws, critiqued drafts, and certified that the work meets standards.

Conflicts of Interest: The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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Appendix

Sample Size Determination

The sample size was determined using the formula proposed by Fisher (1970):

$$n = Z^2 P(1 - P) / d^2$$

Where **n** = required sample size; **Z** = standard normal deviation corresponding to the desired confidence level (1.96 for a 95% confidence level); **P** = estimated proportion of the target population possessing the characteristic of interest; **(1 - P)** = proportion of the population not possessing the characteristic of interest; and **d** = margin of error, set at 0.05.

$$n = (1.96)^2 \times 0.5(1 - 0.5) / (0.05)^2$$

$$n = 384$$

Sample Questionnaire

Section A: Functional Diversity

Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements regarding functional diversity in your county government. Use the following scale: **1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Agree, and 5 = Strongly Agree.**

Statements	1	2	3	4	5
Functional diversity among county staff leads to more effective problem-solving in service delivery.					
County governments with employees from varied occupational backgrounds are better equipped to meet citizen needs.					
A wide range of job roles within county teams enhances efficiency in delivering public services.					
Cross-departmental collaboration driven by functional diversity improves the quality of infrastructure development projects.					
Functional diversity in county governments promotes innovation in policy and service design.					
Diverse departmental affiliations among staff support more comprehensive and inclusive decision-making.					
Varied occupational expertise among employees increases adaptability and responsiveness in county operations.					
County governments with a high degree of job role variety show improved overall performance and citizen satisfaction					

Section B: Organizational Performance

Statements	1	2	3	4	5
County government services are delivered in a timely and efficient manner.					
The quality of public services offered by the county meets community expectations.					
County staff demonstrates professionalism and effectiveness in addressing service requests.					
I am satisfied with my county government's overall performance.					
The county government communicates effectively and engages citizens in decision-making.					
The county government handles citizens' complaints and feedback promptly and satisfactorily.					
My county has made significant progress in developing roads, health facilities, and other infrastructure.					
Infrastructure projects in the county are completed on time and meet quality standards					
County government services are delivered in a timely and efficient manner.					