


**MAKERERE UNIVERSITY**

**MAKERERE UNIVERSITY BUSINESS SCHOOL**

# WORKFORCE DIVERSITY MANAGEMENT, STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT AND PROJECT EXECUTION: A CASE OF THE YOUTH LIVELIHOOD PROJECTS IN KAMPALA METROPOLITAN AREA

**BY**

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**PLAN A**

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## DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this research proposal is my original work and it has never been submitted to any other institution of higher learning for any award.

**DATE**.....15/11/2023..... **SIGNATURE**.....

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## APPROVAL

This is to certify that this research dissertation has been submitted with our approval as research supervisors.

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## DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to the people who supported me morally and materially during the study. Thank you for making me see this adventure throughout.

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## ABSTRACT

The purpose of the study was to examine the relationship between Workforce diversity management, stakeholder engagement and Project Execution. The research problem was that project execution has remained a problem manifest in reports that only 25% of planned youth projects progressed past the execution stage in 2020 and this number fell to 17% in 2021. This means that the vast majority of projects are never executed, which is a cause for concern as it led to loss of government funds. Hence the study objectives were: to examine the relationship between workforce diversity management and project execution, to examine the relationship between stakeholder engagement and project execution and to examine the combined effect of workforce diversity management and stakeholder engagement on project execution.

The study took a cross sectional approach and a sample of 108 projects was chosen from 150, using a simple random sampling technique. A questionnaire was used to collect data. Results show that there is a positive relationship between workforce diversity management and project execution, there is a significant positive relationship between stakeholder engagement and project execution, and that workforce diversity management which accounts for a small part of project execution has a significant influence on project execution. The addition of stakeholder engagement reveals almost a third of variability in project execution. The model results also show that stakeholder engagement significantly influences or predicts project execution.

In conclusion, the findings of this study underscore the significant effect of workforce diversity management and stakeholder engagement on the execution of projects, with specific emphasis on Youth Livelihood Projects in the Kampala Metropolitan Area. Therefore, it was recommended that an investment in diversity training is imperative, these projects should actively strive to create inclusive project teams, ensuring representation from different ethnicities, genders, educational backgrounds, and experiences. It was also recommended that coordinators and managers should prioritize the development and implementation of comprehensive stakeholder engagement strategies, initiatives should be taken to provide stakeholders with capacity building opportunities and that project managers of Youth Livelihood Projects in the Kampala Metropolitan Area prioritize the development and implementation of robust stakeholder engagement strategies.

# CHAPTER ONE

# INTRODUCTION

## 1.0 Introduction

This chapter of the study provides the background to the study, statement of the problem, objectives of the study and the research hypothesis of the study. It also highlights the significance of the study and conceptual framework.

## 1.1 Background to the Study

Globally, it is acknowledged that project execution is vital to achievement of strategic objectives. This is because it is considered the central factor of all industries, and plays a critical role in achieving strategic objectives, fostering innovation, and driving economic development (PMI, 2020) even in Africa. Project execution is an integral part of civilization, underscoring the organization, planning, and allocation of resources for successful completion of complex tasks (Morris, 2013). The modern principles of project execution, however, began to take form during the mid-20th century, primarily driven by large, complex defense and aerospace projects (Kerzner, 2009). Hence, project Execution is the phase in the project life cycle when the managers ensure that the work is performed, and everything in the project plan is put into action (Jung, 2019; Zita, 2020; Rehman, 2022). As a result, work progresses as planned, costs are controlled, quality is maintained, and risks are mitigated, thereby increasing the likelihood of project success (Kerzner, 2017). Project Execution is comprised of a number of indicators which include clarity on the project deliverables (O'Connor, O'Brien & Choi, 2016), change management (Hornstein, 2015) and ongoing needs identification (O'Connor et al., 2016).

Unfortunately, many project executions do not go according to plan in Uganda. For instance in one study, executive leaders said that only 60% of their strategic initiatives had the project deliverables clear, were effective at managing change and had ongoing needs identification initiatives in

place. There are numerous potential causes of execution gaps, such as goals and timelines that are too ambitious, little to no clarity about the vision or goals for the project, and even lack of buy-in from key players (PMI, 2017).

A case in point is the Youth Livelihood Programme (YLP). The YLP is a Rolling Government of Uganda Programme, targeting the poor and unemployed youth in the country. The purpose of the YLP was to empower youth in Uganda to harness their socioeconomic potential, increase self-employment opportunities and income levels (MGLSD 2013). Since 2013 to date, government has injected about Ugx 68.42bn into the program. It has been reported that only 25% of planned youth projects progressed past the execution stage in 2020 and this number fell to 17% in 2021 according to the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development Report (2021). This means that the vast majority of projects are never executed, which is a cause for concern. It could be due to reports that many of the projects lacked clear deliverables or even contingencies to manage change, which is critical for execution.

Stakeholder theory, which will underlie this study, assumes that organizations are accountable to a larger set of institutions or actors. From the above, it is evident that a number of stakeholders are engaged in the YLP projects. According to Joslin and Müller, (2015) for a project to be executed well, managers should ensure engagement of the stakeholders to increase their involvement in the activities of the project. The purpose of stakeholder engagement is to ensure that project decisions and actions are based on informed understanding, leading to better project outcomes (Sharma & Kearins, 2021). Within the context of this study on project execution, stakeholder engagement entails participation (Blok, 2019), consultation (Shackleton et al., 2019) as well as open communication (Silvius & Schipper, 2019) among the stakeholders. In another study, it was revealed that workforce diversity should be given attention in any project. Workforce diversity management is directly related to project execution (Heinecken & Soeters, 2018). Workforce

diversity is the collective mixture of employees' differences and similarities and it entails cohesiveness (Nowak, 2021), valuing differences.

Therefore, given the linkage between project execution and workforce diversity management as well as stakeholder engagement, this study intends to find the impact they have on youth project execution.

## 1.2 Statement of the Problem

Projects execution enables achievement of pre-set goals and objectives. The YLP was executed in different phases with a keenness on ensuring that the goals and objectives were attained and that projects would be executed as planned. However, project execution has remained a problem manifest in reports that only 25% of planned youth projects progressed past the execution stage in 2020 and this number fell to 17% in 2021 according to the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development Report (2021). Reports indicate that more than 50% of projects are never executed, and leads to loss of government funds which were invested in the preliminary phases and also the high opportunity costs associated with lack of execution (MGLSD, 2022). The challenge could be attributed to failure to embrace and manage a diverse workforce and lack of stakeholder engagement. This study therefore intends to find the impact of a diverse workforce and stakeholder engagement on project execution of YLP in Kampala Metropolitan Area.

## 1.3 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study is to examine the relationship between Workforce diversity management, stakeholder engagement and Project Execution.

## 1.4 Objectives of the Study

(i) To examine the relationship between workforce diversity management and project execution

(ii) To examine the relationship between stakeholder engagement and project execution

(iii) To examine the combined effect of workforce diversity management and stakeholder engagement on project execution.

## 1.5 Research Questions

(i) What is the relationship between workforce diversity management and project execution?

(ii) What is the relationship between stakeholder engagement and project execution?

(iii) What is the combined effect of workforce diversity management and stakeholder engagement on project execution?

## 1.6 Scope of the Study

This includes the conceptual, geographical and time scope as detailed below.

### 1.6.1 Conceptual Scope

The study focused on workforce diversity management and stakeholder engagement as the independent variables and project execution as a dependent variable.

### 1.6.2 Geographical Scope

The study considered Youth Livelihood projects in Kampala Metropolitan Area. The area covers the districts of Kampala, Wakiso and Mukono. This is because it is a major area in Uganda where the YPL projects are being executed. It has over 48% of the projects being executed in the whole of Uganda. According to the Ministry of Gender Labour and Social Development (2022), the projects in Kampala are the most numerous given the high concentration of the youth in the urban areas.

## 1.7 Significance of the study

The findings from this study are anticipated to hold significant implications across policy, management, and academia in the following ways:

**i) Policy Implications:** This study offers nuanced guidance to policy-makers, particularly those overseeing Youth Livelihood Programs (YLPs) in the Kampala Metropolitan Area. It aims to demonstrate how effective workforce diversity management and stakeholder engagement can significantly influence project execution and, ultimately, the success of YLPs. By quantifying the

impacts of these management practices on project outcomes, the study provides a data-backed foundation for revising or reformulating existing policies that govern the allocation and oversight of government funds designated for improving youth livelihoods in Uganda.

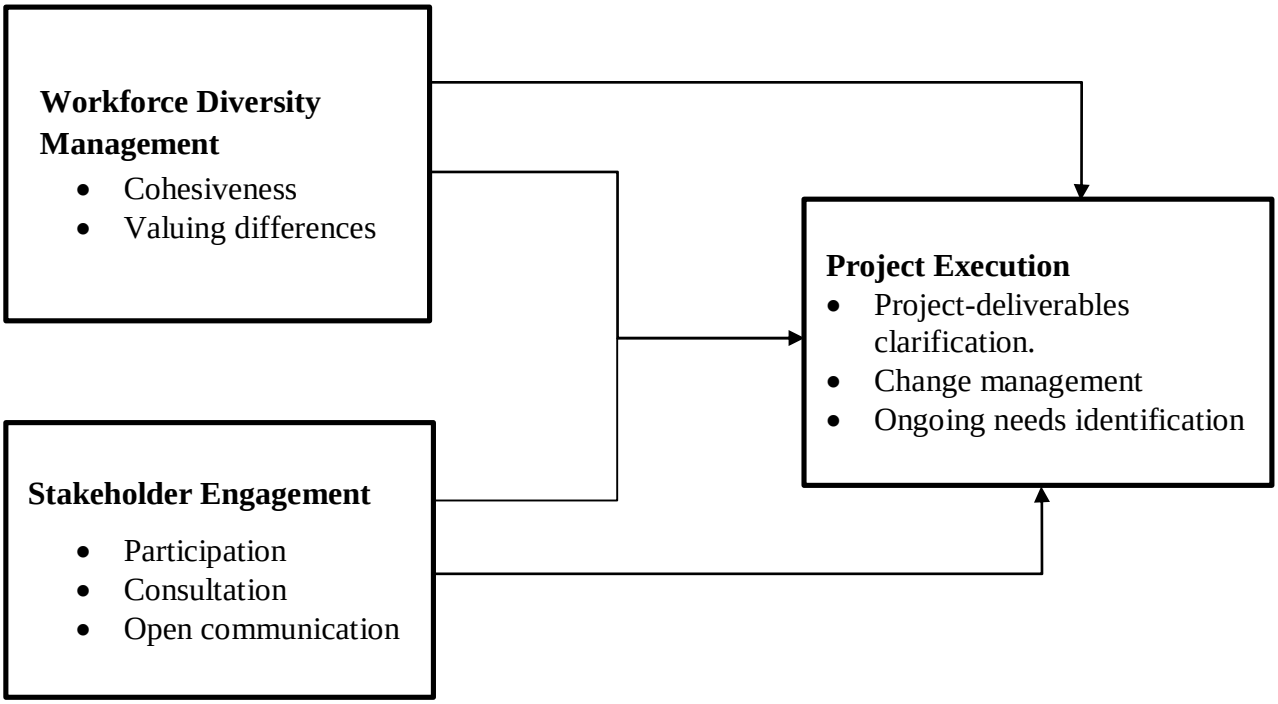
**ii) Management Implications**: Specifically targeted at those managing YLPs, this research will identify the strengths and weaknesses of current diversity management and stakeholder engagement practices within the public sector of Uganda. The study will unveil potential gaps in project execution, presenting actionable strategies that can be immediately applied to enhance project efficiency and stakeholder satisfaction. In effect, it will serve as a tailored blueprint for elevating the quality of project management, not just in YLPs but also more broadly within Uganda's public-sector projects.

**iii) Academia:** Going beyond expected contributions, this study will add a targeted layer of understanding to the academic discourse on project execution, particularly within the framework of Ugandan public-sector projects aimed at youth livelihoods. It will dissect the roles of workforce diversity management and stakeholder engagement as key determinants of successful project execution in this specific context. The research findings are expected to catalyze further scholarly inquiries into the complexities of managing public projects within the socio-economic environment of Uganda.

Through these three aspects, the study holds potential to shape policy, guide management practices, and enrich academic understanding of project execution in the context of YLPs.

## 1.8 Conceptual Framework

**Figure 1: Conceptual Framework**




*Source: adapted from the review of literature by Redlein, et al., (2020), Baker et al., (2021) as well as Ng & Sears (2020).*

The conceptual framework in Figure 1 shows that workforce diversity management, stakeholder engagement influence project execution. The framework indicates that there is a relationship between workforce diversity management and project execution. It also indicates a relationship between stakeholder engagement and project execution. Furthermore, there is a combined effect of workforce diversity management and stakeholder engagement on project execution.

# CHAPTER TWO

# LITERATURE REVIEW

## 2.0 Introduction

The review of the existing literature covers studies relevant to the research topic. Areas of review include; the relevant theories, workforce diversity management, stakeholder engagement and project execution.

## 2.1 Theoretical Review

### 2.1.1 Stakeholder Theory

Stakeholder theory assumes that organizations are accountable to a larger set of institutions or actors. Stakeholder theory was first described by Edward Freeman, as an offshoot of the shareholder perspective that was held by most businesses at the time. Freeman (1984) posited that shareholders are merely one of many stakeholders in a company. The stakeholder theory presupposes the existence of a stakeholder network that involves anyone or any entity invested and involved in, or affected by, the company or an organization. These include internal groups like management staff, business owners and employees, and external parties including government and its regulatory bodies, the general public, customers, competitors, civil society organizations and many other entities. Freeman's theory suggests that organizational success lies in identifying the needs and interests of these stakeholders and making an effort to satisfy or meet them. The theory advocates for efforts that exceed the simplistic profit motive, to ability to assist its stakeholders achieve their individual goals (Freeman, Martin, & Parmar, 2007). According to Freeman et al. (2010), the theory developed at the height of drastic changes in the business world, and the life of organizations, with the unprecedented rise of globalization, the dominance of information technology, the liberalization of states, mostly characterized by the demise of centralized state planning and ownership of industry, and inevitable increased societal awareness of the impact of businesses and organizations on communities and nations. This theory is an alternative perspective

of understanding how companies, organizations and people can create value and trade with each other in an environment that has multiple players (Freeman, Harrison, & Zyglidopoulos, 2018). Majority of stakeholder theorists (Strand & Freeman, 2015; Bosse, & Phillips, 2016; Freeman et al., 2010) usually focus on managing the inherent conflict between stakeholders, their competing interests and its influence on organizational success. In so doing, observes that organizations should ensure that conflicts between players are minimized, and underline the fact that the needs and aspirations of competing stakeholders are all important and must be paid sufficient attention to, if organizations are to achieve their overall goals. Overall, the key role of managers and organizational leaders are to represent key stakeholders, to facilitate negotiation, to resolve potentially conflicting interests, and to ensure that management acts in the interest of these stakeholders (Axelsson et al., 2013; Butt, Naaranoja, & Savolainen, 2016; Davis, 2014).

Stakeholder Theory, as articulated by Edward Freeman, offers a framework for understanding how workforce diversity management, stakeholder engagement, and project execution are interconnected and critical for success. According to the theory, both employees and external entities are key stakeholders whose interests and needs must be balanced for organizational success. This perspective lends support to the study's findings that effective workforce diversity management and stakeholder engagement are significant predictors of project execution. Specifically, in the context of Youth Livelihood Projects in Kampala, this theory emphasizes the importance of strategically engaging a diverse range of stakeholders—including the youth, local government, and community organizations—to ensure that projects are both well-executed and beneficial to all involved parties. Thus, the Stakeholder Theory not only validates the study's empirical findings but also adds a theoretical lens through which to view the complex dynamics of project management in a diverse and multi-stakeholder environment.

## 2.2 Review of the Variables

### 2.2.1 Workforce Diversity Management

Workforce diversity management involves creating and maintaining a diverse workforce within an organization (Seliverstova & Pierog, 2021; Lee & Kim, 2020). This involves identifying and removing barriers to equal employment opportunities, promoting diversity and creating a culture that values and respects differences among employees. It has become an important aspect of human resource management as organizations recognize the benefits of having a diverse workforce in terms of creativity, innovation, and business success. It has also been found that companies in the top quartile for gender diversity are 21% more likely to have above-average profitability, while companies in the top quartile for racial and ethnic diversity are 33% more likely to have above-average profitability (Hunt, Layton, & Prince, 2015). Similarly, diverse teams are better at problem-solving, more innovative, and better able to attract and retain top talent (Rock & Grant, 2016).

Furthermore, it has been found that companies that prioritize diversity and equity (DEI) in their workplaces are more likely to attract and retain top talent, achieve better financial performance, and foster innovation and creativity (Deloitte, 2021). Another study found that companies that prioritize diversity in their hiring practices and employee development programs are more likely to have employees who feel included, which leads to greater job satisfaction, higher performance, and increased retention (Roberson & Kulik, 2020). It has been reported that job seekers are increasingly prioritizing diversity and inclusion when considering potential employers, with 76% of surveyed job seekers saying that a diverse workforce is important to them when evaluating job offers (Glassdoor, 2020). Hence companies with more diverse workforces are more likely to outperform their less diverse peers in terms of financial performance, particularly in industries such as healthcare, financial services, and technology (Hunt, Layton, & Prince, 2021). The above studies confirm the importance of workforce diversity management for organizations looking to attract and retain top talent, improve financial performance, and foster innovation and creativity. By

prioritizing diversity in their workplaces, companies can create more effective project teams, resulting in better outcomes and increased employee satisfaction.

Workforce diversity management has evolved into a critical aspect of human resource management, taking center stage in organizational effectiveness and performance discussions (Nishii & Özbilgin, 2020). The diversified workforce is now viewed as a strategic asset, helping organizations adapt to the evolving global business environment (Horwitz & Horwitz, 2017). Studies have suggested that a diverse workforce can foster innovation, creativity, and adaptability in a rapidly changing environment (Richard et al., 2019). However, managing workforce diversity is a complex process that involves the integration of different cultures, genders, ages, and backgrounds, and requires an inclusive organizational culture and effective leadership (Mor Barak, 2016).

While the literature presents mixed views on the impact of diversity on team cohesiveness, a recent study by Schippers, et al. (2020) suggests that effective diversity management can enhance team cohesiveness. The study highlights the importance of leveraging diversity as an asset, fostering inclusiveness and encouraging mutual respect among team members, which can increase cohesiveness and overall team performance.

Valuing differences is another key construct in diversity management. According to a study by Homan et al. (2019), when organizations genuinely value and respect the differences among employees, it leads to increased employee satisfaction, commitment, and performance. The researchers argue that this approach transforms diversity from a challenge to an asset, fostering an inclusive work environment where all employees feel valued and are more likely to contribute their unique perspectives and skills.

### 2.2.2 Stakeholder Engagement

Stakeholder engagement is the process of involving stakeholders in project planning, decision-making, and execution (Rehman, 2022). It is a critical component of successful project management, as engaging stakeholders can help project teams to understand stakeholder needs, expectations, and concerns, which can inform project decisions and lead to better outcomes.

According to the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2), stakeholder engagement is "the process by which an organization involves people who may be affected by the decisions it makes or can influence the implementation of its decisions" (IAP2, 2018). The IAP2 identifies five levels of stakeholder engagement, ranging from informing stakeholders to involving them in decision-making. The Project Management Institute (PMI) defines stakeholder engagement as "the systematic identification, analysis, planning, and implementation of actions designed to engage with stakeholders" (PMI, 2017). The PMI notes that effective stakeholder engagement involves understanding stakeholder needs, managing stakeholder expectations, and communicating with stakeholders throughout the project lifecycle.

The Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) defines stakeholder engagement as "the process used by organizations to engage with stakeholders for the purpose of understanding their perspectives and needs, and to gain input and feedback on organizational actions and decisions" (GRI, 2021). The GRI notes that effective stakeholder engagement involves identifying and prioritizing stakeholders, developing a stakeholder engagement plan, and evaluating the results of stakeholder engagement activities. Another perspective is that stakeholder engagement is a strategic approach for organizations to involve relevant individuals, groups, or organizations that may affect or be affected by the decisions made by the organization (Freeman, Harrison, & Zyglidopoulos, 2018). It has been acknowledged as a critical factor in organizational success, ensuring the alignment of business practices with societal needs and expectations (Heikkinen, Sarkki, & Nuttall, 2020). Stakeholder

engagement can lead to better decision making, improved relationships, and enhanced reputation for organizations (Yang, Kassing, & Miller, 2020). It fosters transparency, accountability, and mutual understanding among different stakeholders, which is crucial in navigating complex business environments (Reed, Vella, Challies, de Vente, & Frewer, 2018).

Participation is a key construct in stakeholder engagement. Studies suggest that when stakeholders are actively involved in organizational processes, they are more likely to support the organization's decisions and actions (Owen & Kemp, 2019). Participation enables stakeholders to express their views and concerns, enhancing their sense of ownership and commitment towards the organization (Maon, Lindgreen, & Swaen, 2017).

Consultation, another important construct, involves seeking opinions and feedback from stakeholders. It enables organizations to incorporate diverse perspectives into their decision-making processes, leading to more robust and inclusive outcomes (Morsing & Schultz, 2019). Consultation can help prevent potential conflicts, foster trust, and improve relationships with stakeholders (Yin, Wu, Tsai, & Gu, 2018).

Open communication, a crucial component of stakeholder engagement, fosters mutual understanding, trust, and collaboration. Open communication involves not only disseminating information but also listening to stakeholders' concerns and feedback (Fletcher, Guthrie, Steane, Roos, & Pike, 2020). It enables stakeholders to understand the organization's goals and actions, while the organization gains valuable insights from stakeholders. This two-way communication enhances transparency and accountability, contributing to the organization's credibility and trustworthiness (Burchell & Cook, 2013).

### 2.2.3 Project Execution

Project execution refers to the implementation of project plans and the completion of project tasks to achieve project objectives (Gupta & Parnell, 2020). It involves carrying out project activities, managing project resources and monitoring project progress to ensure that the project is delivered on time, within budget, and to the required quality standards (Quintero & Rios, 2022. The Project Management Institute (PMI) posits that project execution is "the phase of the project life cycle that involves the application of resources to carry out the activities necessary to produce the deliverables" (PMI, 2017). The PMI notes that project execution involves managing project scope, schedule, budget, quality, and resources to achieve project objectives (Espinoza & Presbitero, 2022).

Project execution is also defined as "the process of performing the planned project activities in accordance with the project plan, while monitoring and controlling the project parameters such as time, cost, quality, and scope". Effective project execution requires effective communication, stakeholder management, and risk management (Narula et al., 2021). More to that, project execution is "the most critical phase of any project" (Gupta & Parnell, 2020). It involves managing project risks, adapting to changing circumstances, and ensuring that project tasks are completed on time and within budget.

Project execution is a critical phase in the project management lifecycle, where the project team works to complete the tasks and deliverables defined in the project plan (Mulyadi & Novani, 2023). It involves turning the planned activities into tangible results while managing risks and challenges that may emerge. Recent literature has highlighted key measures that play a crucial role in successful project execution, such as project-deliverables clarification, change management, and ongoing needs identification (Kerzner, 2020; Müller et al., 2020; Chan & Park, 2021).

Clearly defining and communicating project deliverables is essential for ensuring that all stakeholders have a shared understanding of the project's objectives and expected outcomes (Kerzner, 2020). This involves creating detailed specifications for each deliverable, setting performance criteria, and establishing a clear scope to guide the project team throughout the execution phase (Müller et al., 2020).

Project execution often involves dealing with uncertainties and changes in project requirements, scope, or constraints (Chan & Park, 2021). Effective change management processes ensure that the project can adapt to these changes while minimizing disruptions and maintaining alignment with the project's objectives (Chan & Park, 2021). Change management includes tracking and documenting changes, assessing their impacts, obtaining approval for changes, and updating project plans accordingly (Kerzner, 2020).

Continuously identifying and addressing the evolving needs of stakeholders is critical for ensuring project success (Müller et al., 2020). This involves regularly engaging with stakeholders, gathering feedback, and adjusting project plans and deliverables to better meet their needs and expectations (Chan & Park, 2021). Ongoing needs identification helps to maintain stakeholder engagement, manage risks, and ensure that the project remains relevant and valuable to its intended beneficiaries.

## 2.3 Relationships between the variables

### 2.3.1 Workforce Diversity Management and Project Execution

Workforce diversity management is directly related to project execution in several ways. Having a diverse team can bring different perspectives and ideas to a project, leading to more creative and innovative solutions (McKinsey & Company, 2020). This can result in better project outcomes and improved business success. Secondly, a diverse team can be better equipped to handle complex projects that involve different cultures, languages, and perspectives. This can help ensure that the project is executed smoothly and effectively (Roberson & Kulik, 2020). Thirdly, workforce

diversity management can help to create a more inclusive workplace culture, which can lead to increased employee satisfaction and engagement. This can improve morale and productivity, resulting in better project outcomes (Wilbur et al., 2020).

Diversity management practices positively impact the performance of project teams, including project execution outcomes. Practices such as diversity training, mentoring programs, and networking events can help project teams leverage the strengths of a diverse workforce and overcome challenges associated with cultural differences and communication barriers (Tariq et al., 2018). It has also been found that team diversity positively affects project performance, particularly in terms of creativity and problem-solving abilities. Diversity can bring a variety of perspectives and ideas to a project team, leading to more innovative solutions and improved project outcomes (Dahmani & Paton, 2015).

Furthermore, diversity and inclusion are important factors in project team performance, with 80% of survey respondents indicating that diversity can improve project outcomes (PMI, 2018). The survey also found that diversity and inclusion training, mentoring programs, and employee resource groups are effective strategies for managing a diverse project team and improving project execution outcomes.

Overall, these studies demonstrate the relationship between workforce diversity management and project execution outcomes, highlighting the benefits of leveraging a diverse workforce in project teams. By implementing diversity management practices, project managers can improve team performance, enhance creativity and innovation, and achieve better project execution.

However, managing a diverse team also presents some challenges, such as communication barriers, and potential biases. Effective project managers must be aware of these challenges and take steps to address them, such as providing training on diversity and inclusion, establishing clear

communication protocols, and fostering a culture of respect and collaboration. Overall, workforce diversity management is an important aspect of project execution, as it can lead to better outcomes, improved team performance, and increased employee satisfaction. By recognizing and valuing diversity, project managers can create a more effective project team.

### 2.3.2 Stakeholder Engagement and Project Execution

Stakeholder engagement is a systematic process of involving various individuals and groups who have an interest in or can be affected by a project's outcomes (Reed et al., 2020). Numerous studies have established the positive impact of stakeholder engagement on project success. For instance, a study by Olander and Landin (2021) found that projects with a higher level of stakeholder engagement were more likely to meet their objectives and deliver better outcomes. Additionally, Gatti et al. (2020) demonstrated that stakeholder engagement increased the likelihood of project completion on time and within budget.

Stakeholder engagement is a proactive process of involving individuals, organizations, or entities that may be affected by a project or can influence its outcome (Freeman et al., 2018). Yang, Kassing, and Miller (2020) emphasize that effective stakeholder engagement strategies can reduce project risks, enhance project acceptance, and improve overall project outcomes. They argue that stakeholder engagement must be strategically integrated into the project management process for successful project execution.

On the other hand, project execution refers to the actual implementation of project activities that lead to the completion of the project (Kerzner, 2017). Reed et al. (2018) underscore that stakeholder engagement plays a pivotal role in project execution by facilitating effective decision-making, reducing resistance to change, and enhancing project adaptability.

A review of studies conducted in various sectors provides empirical evidence supporting the beneficial relationship between stakeholder engagement and project execution. For instance, Yin, Wu, Tsai, and Gu (2018) found in their study on infrastructure projects in Africa that effective stakeholder engagement led to improved project execution and success. Similarly, Owen and Kemp (2019) reported that mining projects that adopted robust stakeholder engagement strategies had a higher probability of successful execution.

Despite the general agreement about the positive impact of stakeholder engagement on project execution, some authors have noted potential challenges. For instance, Maon, Lindgreen, and Swaen (2017) warn that stakeholder engagement might be time-consuming and can lead to project delays if not properly managed. Morsing and Schultz (2019) highlight potential conflicts of interest among stakeholders, which can complicate the project execution process.

### 2.3.3 Workforce Diversity Management, Stakeholder Engagement and Project Execution

When project teams engage with diverse stakeholders and understand their needs and expectations, they can make more informed decisions and develop project plans that are more likely to succeed. Additionally, diverse project teams may bring a wider range of perspectives and expertise to project execution, which can lead to more innovative solutions and better project outcomes (Redlein, Hohenberger & Turnbull, 2020; Reed et al., 2020).

Effective project execution can support workforce diversity and stakeholder engagement (Tariq et al., 2018). When projects are executed successfully, stakeholders are more likely to be satisfied with the project outcomes, and project teams may be more likely to continue engaging with diverse stakeholders in future projects. Additionally, successful project execution can help to build a reputation for diversity and inclusion, which may help to attract and retain diverse talent in the future (Baker, French & Ali, 2021).

Overall, these concepts are closely interconnected and can have significant impacts on each other. Effective stakeholder engagement, workforce diversity, and project execution are all critical components of successful project management. By understanding these linkages and prioritizing these concepts in project planning and execution, project teams can achieve better project outcomes and create a more inclusive and diverse workplace culture (Ng & Sears, 2020).

## 2.4 Conclusion

Based on the literature review in your dissertation, several gaps can be identified. While there is substantial research on the individual components of workforce diversity management, stakeholder engagement, and project execution, the interplay between these three elements, especially in the context of Youth Livelihood Projects in the Kampala Metropolitan Area, is less explored. This presents a unique area for further investigation.

The literature predominantly discusses these topics in isolation or in pairs, without fully exploring the synergistic effect of all three combined. For example, while studies by Redlein, Hohenberger, and Turnbull (2020), and Reed et al. (2020) acknowledge the impact of diverse teams and stakeholder engagement on project outcomes, they do not comprehensively address how these elements interact in a real-world setting, particularly in the context of youth-focused initiatives in developing countries.

Furthermore, the literature often focuses on the benefits of diversity and stakeholder engagement without thoroughly examining the practical challenges and strategies for integrating these aspects into project execution. For instance, while authors like Maon, Lindgreen, and Swaen (2017), and Morsing and Schultz (2019) highlight potential drawbacks and conflicts inherent in stakeholder engagement, there is a need for more detailed research on overcoming these challenges, especially in diverse and multicultural project environments.

In conclusion, while existing studies lay a solid foundation, there is a clear opportunity for future research to delve deeper into how workforce diversity management and stakeholder engagement synergistically influence project execution, particularly in specific socio-economic and cultural contexts like the Kampala Metropolitan Area. This gap presents an opportunity to develop a more nuanced understanding of how these elements can be effectively integrated to optimize project outcomes in similar settings.

# CHAPTER THREE

# RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

## 3.0 Introduction

This chapter reviews the methodology that was used to conduct this research. It specifically covers the research design, study population and sample size, data sources, research instrument, reliability and validity of research instruments, measurement of research variables and data processing, analysis and the ethical considerations.

## 3.1 Research Design

The study adopted a cross sectional survey and quantitative research design (Saunders et al., 2019). Cross-sectional design refers to a research method where data is collected at a single point in time from a sample population. This design is widely used in various fields, including business research, due to its cost-effectiveness, simplicity, and the ability to provide a snapshot of the situation at the time of data collection. Quantitative data was collected to provide objective, measurable evidence that can be analyzed statistically to support or refute hypotheses, thus enabling researchers to draw conclusions about relationships, differences, or trends within the data (Sekaran, 2003).

## 3.2 Study Population

According to the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development, there were approximately 150 active Youth Livelihood projects in Kampala Metropolitan Area. These comprised the study population. According to available records, these include; metal fabrication program, bakery, motor mechanics, carpentry program, tailoring program, shoe making program and Hair Dressing program (MSLGD, 2022). These are the predominant YLP programs being undertaken in this area. The unit of analysis were the projects and the unit of enquiry were the senior staff in the projects who included the project managers, mobilizers and recruitment supervisors.

### 3.3 Sample Size and Sampling Design

A sample of 108 projects was determined from the population using the (Krejcie & Morgan, 1970) table of sample size determination. The projects were selected using a simple random sampling technique. Simple random sample advantages include ease of use and minimization of bias (Dhivyadeepa, 2015). The selection procedure involved generating random numbers to the projects from the first to last, until 108 projects were represented.

### 3.4 Data Sources and Instruments

The study employed primary sources of data. Primary data was obtained directly from the sample of 108 projects using semi-structured questionnaires. A self-administered questionnaire based on a five Likert scale ranging from strongly Disagree (1) to Strongly Agree (5) was used to collect quantitative data. A 5-point Likert scale was used in research because it is simple, provides a neutral midpoint, offers a balanced set of response options, has sufficient granularity to capture variations in opinions, and is widely accepted and familiar to both researchers and respondents (Ellerby, Wagner & Broomell, 2021).

Questionnaires are used in research because they offer an efficient and cost-effective way to collect data from a large number of respondents. They can be used to gather information on various topics and can be tailored to meet specific research objectives. According to Saunders et al. (2016), questionnaires are particularly useful for descriptive and explanatory research purposes, enabling researchers to "collect data from a sizeable population in a highly economical way" (p. 387).

### 3.5 Validity and Reliability of the instrument

#### 3.5.1 Validity of the Instrument

Validity refers to the extent to which a questionnaire measures what it intends to measure. It ensures that the data collected from the questionnaire is accurate and relevant to the research objectives (Babbie, 2016; Field, 2009). To ensure validity, the questionnaire was subjected to a content validity index where five experts were requested to rate the relevance of the questions set

against the study variables using the scale of relevant and not relevant. The results for CVI are shown in table 3.1 below:

**Table 3.1: Content Validity Index (CVI Results)**

| Expert | CVI Score |
|---|---|
| Expert 1 | 0.744 |
| Expert 2 | 0.828 |
| Expert 3 | 0.704 |
| Expert 4 | 0.841 |
| Global CVI | 0.779 |

*Source: primary data*

As seen in the table above, the results for CVI were above the threshold of 0.7 which indicates content validity of items in the tool used.

### 3.5.2 Reliability of the Instrument

The evaluation of questionnaire reliability- internal consistency is possible by Cronbach's alpha (Cronbach, 1951), which is considered to be the most important reliability index and is based on the number of the variables/items of the questionnaire, as well as on the correlations between the variables (Nunnally, 1978). Generally, an alpha level of 0.7 and above is considered acceptable for most research contexts, although there are exceptions depending on the discipline and type of study. For instance, a study by Hair et al. (2010) in the field of marketing suggested that an alpha level of 0.7 and above is suitable for establishing reliability.

In contrast, some studies in exploratory research settings, such as Nunnally's work in 1967 on psychometric theory, have argued that an alpha level as low as 0.5 can be considered "acceptable" under certain conditions, such as when the scale or questionnaire is being used for exploratory purposes rather than making precise claims. It should be noted, however, that a lower alpha level like 0.5 would typically necessitate further refinement of the scale for it to be considered reliable for

more conclusive research. This study went with the higher threshold of 0.7 and above (Nunnally, 1978). Results for reliability are shown in the table 3.2 below:

**Table 3.2: Cronbach Alpha Reliability Results**

| Variable | No of Items | Alpha Reliability Score |
|---|---|---|
| Workforce Diversity Management | 16 | .815 |
| Stakeholder Engagement | 24 | .891 |
| Project Execution | 24 | .888 |

*Source: primary data*

Since all Alpha scores were above the threshold of 0.7, one can conclude that the results were reliable.

### 3.6 Data collection procedure

The questionnaires were distributed physically by the researcher. The respondents were given two weeks to respond to the questionnaire. The researcher sent the respondents reminders after every four days. If any respondent didn't respond in that specified time, it was deemed that s/he was not interested in filling the questionnaire.

### 3.7 Data Processing, Analysis and Presentation

Data was summarized, edited and coded. Inferential statistics were used to analyze the data collected. Descriptive statistics involve computation of mean, standard deviation, percentage and frequencies while inferential statistics were used to determine the relationship between independent and dependent variables. This involved Pearson correlation (R) and multiple linear regressions. This was done using SPSS version 26.

Pearson Correlation analysis which enabled the researcher determine whether there is a relationship between variables while multiple linear regression enabled the researcher establish the extent to which the independent variables affect project execution at 95.0% confidence level and 0.05 significance level. Thereafter, data was presented in the form of tables and charts.

## 3.8 Measurement of the Variables

**Table 3.3; Measurement of the Variables**

| Variable | Measures | Supporting scholars |
|---|---|---|
| Workforce Diversity Management | • Cohesiveness<br>• Valuing differences | Nishii & Özbilgin, 2020<br>Horwitz & Horwitz, 2017<br>Homan et al., 2019. |
| Stakeholder Engagement | • Participation<br>• Consultation<br>• Open communication | Rehman, 2022<br>GRI, 2021<br>Freeman, Harrison, & Zyglidopoulos, 2018<br>Yin, Wu, Tsai, & Gu, 2018 |
| Project Execution | • Project-deliverables clarification.<br>• Change management<br>• Ongoing needs identification | Kerzner, 2020<br>Müller et al.,<br>2020; Chan & Park, 2021 |

## 3.9 Ethical Consideration

An introduction letter from the Graduate and Research Center of the University was presented to the respondents so that they would further be comfortable with the purpose of the study (see appendix III). Authorization was also obtained from the officials at the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development to undertake the study.

Potential respondents were requested to take part in the study voluntarily and one was free to withdraw at any stage. Participants were approached and the purpose of the study explained. No remuneration was offered.

Although the variables have been researched on by a number of scholars including academicians and writers; this research is an original writing with reference to secondary documents like reports, journals, and text book study. The dissertation is not a duplication of any writer or scholar's work. Any work that is another writer was reviewed, adopted and adapted to fit into context.

The information provided by participants was not shared without their will and there was no intrusion of their privacy as anonymity was upheld. Participants were assured of confidentiality verbally and in the written consent form.

# CHAPTER FOUR

# PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF FINDINGS

## 4.0 Introduction

This chapter contains presentation, interpretation and analysis of the findings of the study following the study objectives. The presentation in this chapter shows the findings according to the objectives of the study which were: to examine the relationship between workforce diversity management and project execution, to examine the relationship between stakeholder engagement and project execution and to examine the combined effect of workforce diversity management and stakeholder engagement on project execution.

## 4.1 Response Rate

The researcher distributed questionnaires to staff in 108 projects. However, not all the targeted respondents provided information. Out of 108 questionnaires distributed, 89 questionnaires were responded to. This represents a response rate of 82.4 percent. According to Mugenda and Mugenda (1999) and Sejjaaka (2010), a response rate of above 60% is considered sufficient for analysis in studies. Hence a response rate of 82.4% was sufficient for this study.

## 4.2 Characteristics of the Respondents

The study also sought information on the characteristics of respondents that participated in the study that included gender, marital status, age, and education level, how long they had worked with the respective projects. Results on the characteristics of the respondents are summarized in table 3 below:

**Table 4.1: Characteristics of the Respondents**

| Parameter | Variable | Frequency | % |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Gender** | Male | 45 | 50.6 |
| | Female | 44 | 49.4 |
| | **Total** | **89** | **100.0** |
| **Marital Status** | Single | 53 | 59.6 |
| | Married | 32 | 36.0 |
| | Divorced | 4 | 4.5 |
| | **Total** | **89** | **100.0** |
| **Age of Respondents** | 24 years and below | 14 | 15.7 |
| | 25-34 | 17 | 19.1 |
| | 35-44 | 28 | 31.5 |
| | 45 years and above | 30 | 33.7 |
| | **Total** | **89** | **100.0** |
| **Education Level of Respondents** | | | |
| | Diploma | 42 | 47.2 |
| | Bachelor's Degree | 20 | 22.5 |
| | Professional Qualification | 11 | 12.4 |
| | Master's Degree | 16 | 18.0 |
| | **Total** | **89** | **100.0** |
| **How long have they been in the project?** | Less than 3 years | 43 | 48.3 |
| | 3-6 years | 29 | 32.6 |
| | 7-10 years | 17 | 19.1 |
| | **Total** | **89** | **100.0** |

*Source: primary data*

**Gender:** As indicated in table 4.1, the gender distribution among the respondents was equal participation of both genders, with 50.6% (45 respondents) identifying as male, and 49.4% (44 respondents) identifying as female. This balance in gender representation allows the research results to accurately reflect both male and female perspectives, contributing to the validity of the study. The gender balance in the suggests that both males and females are diverse as regards gender which also indicates almost open and equal participation in the project's execution. Hence, future project execution strategies can be designed to cater to the needs of both genders equally.

**Marital Status:** As indicated in table 4.1, a majority of the respondents (59.6%) were single, 36% were married, and only 4.5% were divorced. This distribution suggests a predominantly unmarried

workforce in the project execution which implies how differences are valued. This also implies diversity in regard to marital status and different stakeholders engaged in execution of the projects.

**Age of Respondents:** As indicated in table 4.1, most respondents were aged 35 years and above (65.2%), with the largest segment falling within the 45 years and above category (33.7%).The dominance of older respondents suggests that the project workforce comprises experienced individuals. Experience, as indicated by Walker (2007), plays a significant role in project execution as it affects decision-making, problem-solving, and overall project efficiency.

**Education Level of Respondents:** As indicated in table 4.1, most respondents (47.2%) held a diploma, followed by those with a bachelor's degree (22.5%), a Master's degree (18%), and a professional qualification (12.4%).This distribution indicates a highly educated project workforce. High education levels can improve technical skills, increase understanding of complex tasks, and enhance problem-solving abilities, thereby contributing to more effective project execution.

**Duration in the Project:** As indicated in table 4.1, nearly half of the respondents (48.3%) had been in the project for less than 3 years, followed by those with 3-6 years (32.6%), and 7-10 years (19.1%).This indicates a mix of relatively new and more experienced project members. A mix of fresh perspectives (from new members) and experience (from longer-serving members) can lead to innovative solutions and effective problem-solving, thereby enhancing project execution.

### 4.3 Information on the projects

The study sought information on the projects. Results are shown below in table 4.2:

**Table 3: Information on the projects**

| Parameter | Frequency | % |
|---|---|---|
| **Project Type** | | |
| Skills Development | 40 | 44.9 |
| Livelihood Support | 35 | 39.3 |
| Institutional Support | 14 | 15.7 |
| **Total** | **89** | **100.0** |
| **Period for which the Project has been Operational** | | |
| less than 2 years | 27 | 30.3 |
| 2-5 years | 35 | 39.3 |
| 6-8 years | 22 | 24.7 |
| More than 8 years | 5 | 5.6 |
| Total | 89 | 100.0 |

*Source: Primary Data*

**Project Type:** The types of projects the respondents are involved in are categorized into three groups: Skills Development, Livelihood Support, and Institutional Support. The most common project type is Skills Development, which accounts for 44.9% of respondents. This is followed by Livelihood Support at 39.3%, and lastly, Institutional Support at 15.7%. The dominance of skills development projects suggests an emphasis on improving the capacity of the beneficiaries, which, according to Nelson (2005), can have significant long-term benefits. However, the relatively lower representation of institutional support projects indicates that there may be a potential gap in the areas of capacity-building and resource provision for institutions involved in project implementation.

**Period for which the Project has been Operational:** The most common project duration is between 2-5 years, involving 39.3% of respondents, followed by those operational for less than 2 years at 30.3%. Projects operational for 6-8 years and more than 8 years represented 24.7% and 5.6% respectively. The majority of projects falling within the 2-5-year range indicates that these projects are at a stage where they are maturing and beginning to produce visible impacts. The

limited number of projects with a duration of more than 8 years might suggest a trend towards shorter-term projects, which could be due to a variety of reasons, including funding cycles or the nature of the projects themselves.

### 4.4 Pearson's Correlation Results

The first two objectives of the study concerned relationships between the variables as well as their indicators. In order to achieve this, the Pearson (r) correlation coefficient was computed given the interval nature of the data and the need to test the direction and strength of this relationship. The Table 5 below shows the Pearson Correlation Coefficients for the variables under study.

**Table 4: Pearson's Correlation Coefficient (N=89)**

| **Variable**/Construct | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Cohesiveness | 1 | | | | | | | |
| 2. Valuing Differences | .576** | 1 | | | | | | |
| **3. Workforce Diversity Management** | **.894**** | **.881**** | **1** | | | | | |
| 4. Participation | .658** | .599** | .709** | 1 | | | | |
| 5. Consultation | .585** | .686** | .714** | .641** | 1 | | | |
| 6. Open Communication | .580** | .544** | .633** | .511** | .590** | 1 | | |
| **7. Stakeholder Engagement** | **.712**** | **.718**** | **.805**** | **.828**** | **.883**** | **.835**** | **1** | |
| **8. Project Execution** | **.202** | **.439**** | **.357**** | **.452**** | **.492**** | **.374**** | **.517**** | **1** |

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

*Source: primary data*

### 4.4.1 Workforce Diversity Management and Project Execution

Pursuant to the first objective of this study, the results in the table 5 show that there is a positive relationship between workforce diversity management and project execution (r =.357**, p<.01). These results imply that a unit change in workforce diversity management accounts for .357 change in project execution.

### 4.4.2 Stakeholder Engagement and Project Execution

The second objective was concerned with establishing the relationship between stakeholder engagement and project execution.

The results in table 5 show that there is a significant positive relationship between stakeholder engagement and project execution (r =.517**, p<.01). These results imply that a unit change in stakeholder engagement accounts for .517 change in project execution.

## 4.5 Regression Results

In order to ascertain the predictive effect of the independent variables on the dependent variable, a regression model was run. Regression analysis is a quantitative research method which is used when the study involves modelling and analyzing several variables, where the relationship includes a dependent variable and one or more independent variables. The results are shown in table 6:

**Table 5: Hierarchical Regression Results**

*Hierarchical Regression Analysis*

| Variable | Model 1 | | Model 2 | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **Beta** | **Std Err.** | **Beta** | **Std Err.** |
| **Constant** | 2.102 | .455 | 1.508 | .440 |
| **Workforce Diversity Management** | .416 | .117 | .197 | .180 |
| **Stakeholder Engagement** | | | .770 | .182 |
| **R** | .357 | | .526 | |
| **R Square** | .127 | | .277 | |
| **R Square Change** | .127 | | .150 | |
| **Adjusted R Square** | .117 | | .260 | |
| **Std Error of the Estimate** | .61368 | | .56180 | |
| **F** | 12.703 | | 16.484 | |
| **Sig.** | .000 | | .000 | |

*Source: primary data*

From the table 6 above, Model 1 indicates that workforce diversity management which accounts for 12.7% of project execution ($R^2$= .127; p<.05) has a significant influence on project execution (β= .416; p<.05).

The addition of stakeholder engagement into Model 2, reveals 27.7% of variability in project execution ($R^2$=.277) which represents an addition of 15% ($R^2$ Δ =.150). The model results also show that stakeholder engagement significantly influences or predicts project execution (β= .770; p<.05).

# CHAPTER FIVE

# DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

## 5.0 Introduction

This chapter discusses findings conclusions and recommendations. It has five sections. Section one deals with discussion in of the findings. The second section is the conclusions while the third section presents recommendations. Section four is limitations to the study and section five covers areas for further research.

## 5.1 Discussion of Findings

This section discusses the findings according to the study objectives as laid out in the first chapter of this dissertation.

### 5.1.1 Relationship between Workforce Diversity Management and Project Execution

The first objective of this research was to understand the relationship between workforce diversity management and project execution. The regression findings show workforce diversity management to be a significant predictor of project execution. The correlation results from this study also demonstrated a positive relationship between these variables. For example, when the organization actively fosters a sense of unity and belonging among employees with diverse backgrounds, project execution process will be flexible enough to accommodate evolving needs and requirements.

Comparing these results to the existing literature corroborates the importance of workforce diversity management in project execution. As McKinsey & Company (2020), Roberson & Kulik (2020), and Wilbur et al., (2020) noted, the diversity within a team can indeed bring forth different perspectives, leading to creative and innovative solutions. Furthermore, they suggested that diverse teams, if managed well, are more adept at tackling complex projects involving

different cultures, languages, and perspectives, enhancing project execution efficiency. This aligns with the findings of this research, emphasizing the significant role of workforce diversity in the effective execution of a project.

Tariq et al., (2018) and Dahmani & Paton, (2015) findings also support the results. They found that diversity management practices could positively impact project execution outcomes by bringing in a variety of perspectives, leading to innovative solutions. Likewise, a survey by the Project Management Institute (2018) emphasized the importance of diversity and inclusion in project team performance, aligning with the correlations we found.

Freeman's stakeholder theory (1984) adds another layer of understanding to these findings. As Freeman postulated, the success of an organization or a project hinges on the satisfaction of all its stakeholders. In this context, diversity management can ensure all stakeholders, i.e., the diverse workforce, feel valued and heard, ultimately driving project execution and success.

Despite the strong correlations between workforce diversity and project execution, challenges such as communication barriers and potential biases, as identified by Nishii & Özbilgin (2020), were also present. They emphasized the need for diversity training, clear communication protocols, and a culture of respect and collaboration, further validating the findings of this study.

Therefore, the findings reinforce existing scholarly research, offering further empirical evidence that effective workforce diversity management plays a critical role in successful project execution. The study also suggests potential areas for future research, particularly in exploring ways to overcome the challenges associated with managing a diverse workforce.

### 5.1.2 Relationship between Stakeholder Engagement and Project Execution

The second objective of this research was to investigate the relationship between stakeholder engagement and project execution, particularly for Youth Livelihood Projects in the Kampala Metropolitan Area. The regression findings show stakeholder engagement to be a significant predictor of project execution. The research findings underscore a positive correlation between these two elements. Such correlation is a clear manifestation of the consequential role stakeholder engagement plays in the successful execution of projects. For example, when the stakeholders actively participate in decision-making processes, project team will be proactive in addressing potential risks and issues that may arise.

This research's findings echo the assertions of Reed et al. (2020) and Olander and Landin (2021) in their respective studies. Both found that a heightened level of stakeholder engagement often resulted in a higher likelihood of projects meeting their objectives and delivering superior outcomes. Similarly, Gatti et al. (2020) found that effective stakeholder engagement increased the probability of project completion within the set timeframe and budget, reaffirming the positive relationship between stakeholder engagement and project execution.

Turning to the stakeholder theory, as explained by Freeman et al. (2018), it underlines the need for the strategic integration of stakeholder engagement within the project management process to ensure the successful execution of projects. The theory aligns seamlessly with the findings of this study, accentuating the importance of proactive and thoughtful stakeholder engagement strategies to the project execution process.

Moreover, the study conducted by Yin, Wu, Tsai, and Gu (2018) demonstrated that effective stakeholder engagement led to improved project execution and success in the context of infrastructure projects in Africa. This finding further reinforces the conclusion about the positive

relationship between stakeholder engagement and project execution, extending its relevance beyond the confines of Youth Livelihood Projects in the Kampala Metropolitan Area.

Nevertheless, it's crucial to remember that while stakeholder engagement tends to have a positive impact on project execution, it can present its unique set of challenges. For instance, Maon, Lindgreen, and Swaen (2017), and Morsing and Schultz (2019) warn of potential conflicts of interest among stakeholders and the time-consuming nature of stakeholder engagement processes. Although these challenges were not a focus in this study, they provide valuable insight into potential barriers that could hinder the efficacy of stakeholder engagement, highlighting areas for future research.

### 5.1.3 Workforce Diversity Management, Stakeholder Engagement and Project Execution

The third objective of the study was to ascertain the combined effect of workforce diversity management and stakeholder engagement on project execution, particularly in the context of Youth Livelihood Projects in the Kampala Metropolitan Area. Based on the results, it's clear that both workforce diversity management and stakeholder engagement contribute significantly to project execution, accounting for an impressive variance in the outcomes. This underscores the synergistic effect these two elements can exert on project execution. However, it's notable that stakeholder engagement demonstrated a greater predictive power, suggesting that it holds a slightly more crucial role in driving successful project execution.

The reviewed literature largely concurs with these findings. Scholars like Redlein, Hohenberger, and Turnbull (2020) have highlighted the synergistic benefits of diverse workforce and stakeholder engagement. They point out that the diversity of thoughts, ideas, and perspectives brought forth by a diverse workforce can lead to more innovative solutions, enhancing project execution. Simultaneously, engaging a wide array of stakeholders allows for better

understanding of their needs and expectations, thereby making project decisions and plans more informed and effective.

Similarly, Baker, French, and Ali (2021) emphasize the positive feedback loop created by successful project execution, stakeholder satisfaction, and a reputation for diversity and inclusion. According to their research, when projects are executed successfully, not only are stakeholders more likely to be satisfied with the outcomes, but project teams are also more likely to continue engaging with diverse stakeholders in future endeavors. This satisfaction and ongoing engagement can help build an organization's reputation for diversity and inclusion, thereby attracting and retaining diverse talent in the future.

However, it's worth noting the unexplained variance in project execution, suggesting the presence of other influencing factors not accounted for in the current study. This might be areas like project funding, governance structure, external environmental factors, among others, which could have a tangible impact on project execution.

In the context of Youth Livelihood Projects in the Kampala Metropolitan Area, these findings provide valuable insights. It's apparent that fostering diversity in project teams and robustly engaging stakeholders are crucial for successful project execution. Given the sociocultural diversity and the multitude of interested parties in such projects, investing in workforce diversity management and stakeholder engagement strategies can markedly improve project outcomes. However, it's also necessary to ensure a balanced approach, recognizing the slightly more prominent role of stakeholder engagement.

Applying stakeholder theory to this context (Freeman, 1984), we recognize that stakeholder engagement aids in aligning the project objectives with the interests and expectations of those who can affect or be affected by the project.

## 5.2 Conclusions

The examination of the first objective, the relationship between workforce diversity management and project execution, confirms the fundamental role diversity plays in the successful implementation of projects. This study underscores the importance of harnessing the unique strengths, perspectives, and experiences of a diverse workforce to stimulate creativity, innovation, and efficiency in project execution, particularly within Youth Livelihood Projects in the Kampala Metropolitan Area.

The research findings convincingly illustrate a positive relationship between stakeholder engagement and project execution in Youth Livelihood Projects in the Kampala Metropolitan Area. The importance of stakeholder engagement in the successful execution of projects cannot be overstated, with every unit increase in engagement translating to a big improvement in project execution. This underlines the significant role of stakeholder involvement in shaping project outcomes.

In conclusion, the findings of this study underscore the significant combined effect of workforce diversity management and stakeholder engagement on the execution of projects, with specific emphasis on Youth Livelihood Projects in the Kampala Metropolitan Area. It is clear that both these elements contribute meaningfully to project outcomes, fostering innovation, enhancing decision-making, and aligning project objectives with stakeholder interests. While both variables are significant, stakeholder engagement has been found to hold slightly more predictive power over successful project execution.

## 5.3 Recommendations

Building on these findings, two specific recommendations for Youth Livelihood Projects are as follows:

1. Firstly, an investment in diversity training is imperative. This is to enable projects embrace working in diverse teams that present more diverse skills and innovations needed for better implementation of the project activities. This could be implemented through workshops or seminars designed to highlight the benefits of a diverse workforce, improve communication, and address unconscious biases.

2. Secondly, these projects should actively strive to create inclusive project teams, ensuring representation from different ethnicities, genders, educational backgrounds, and experiences. This creates a sense of belongingness and thus togetherness and commitment. This could be achieved by setting inclusive hiring practices and implementing team-building activities to foster understanding and cooperation among diverse team members. These practices will not only contribute to project success but also foster a culture of inclusivity and respect, providing sustainable benefits for future projects.

3. Project coordinators and managers should prioritize the development and implementation of comprehensive stakeholder engagement strategies. This helps to minimize and converge the stakeholders' diverse perspectives so as to enhance project execution. This could be achieved through regular stakeholder meetings, transparent communication, and inclusion of stakeholder input in decision-making processes and thus minimizing communication barriers.

4. To further enhance project execution, initiatives should be taken to provide stakeholders with capacity building opportunities. By equipping them with the relevant skills and knowledge, stakeholders can contribute more effectively to the project's objectives, leading to improved execution and overall project success.

5. Recognizing the slightly more significant role of stakeholder engagement, it is recommended that project managers of Youth Livelihood Projects in the Kampala Metropolitan Area prioritize the development and implementation of robust stakeholder engagement strategies. This could involve conducting thorough stakeholder analysis to understand their needs, interests, and influence; creating clear communication channels to facilitate continuous and constructive dialogue; and establishing mechanisms to integrate stakeholder feedback into project plans and activities so as to enhance collective project execution. While doing so, the importance of maintaining workforce diversity should not be overlooked, as it is a significant contributor to project success.

## 5.4 Limitations

This study used a cross sectional research design approach, which has some limitation regarding historical trends in the variables. Poor project execution today do not necessarily mean that the trend has been the same over the past years hence the results can be misleading.

The study is specifically within the context of YLP projects. It's important to consider whether the findings can be generalized to other sectors or regions.

There was the possibility that respondents were not completely truthful or forthcoming and provided incomplete or misleading information in the questionnaires which would wrongly bias the results of this study. Many project senior staff tend to guard information jealously and hence this was a very literal limitation to the study.

Lack of cooperation from the respondents was faced by the researcher as many were guarded on this sensitive project execution matter. However, the researcher labored to inform them of the

confidential and academic nature of this effort and this made many of them comfortable enough to participate.

## 5.5 Areas for Further Study

Drawing from the methodology portion of this research, it is clear that a cross-sectional design was employed in this study with quantitative approach, assessing the impact of a diverse workforce and stakeholder engagement on youth project execution in the Kampala Metropolitan Area at a specific point in time. However, this approach presents a limitation as it only captures a snapshot of the variables' behaviors. For a more comprehensive view of these factors over time, future research could benefit from a longitudinal design to juxtapose with the findings of this study. The future studies should also take a qualitative or mixed-methods approach.

Additionally, based on the regression results, this study recommends considering other independent variables not included in this research that might influence project execution in youth programs in Uganda. The findings from the regression analysis indicate that the current independent variables account for the majority of the levels of project execution. Thus, other factors could play a role.

Furthermore, it would be beneficial to expand the research scope beyond youth programs. Investigating similar variables in different contexts such as government agencies, educational institutions, healthcare facilities, or even the private sector might provide further insights into whether the observed relationships hold true in these various settings.

Finally, rather than focusing solely on general youth programs, future studies could examine specific types of initiatives, like those focusing on skills development or livelihood support. This targeted research could provide more nuanced insights and further enhance our

understanding of the influence of workforce diversity and stakeholder engagement on project execution.

Future studies should include a variety of stakeholders as respondents and not only the staff within the projects.

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## APPENDIX I: QUESTIONNAIRE

## MAKERERE UNIVERSITY BUSINESS SCHOOL

**Dear Respondent,**

You are requested to participate in this study, entitled: **WORKFORCE DIVERSITY MANAGEMENT, STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT AND PROJECT EXECUTION: A CASE OF THE YOUTH LIVELIHOOD PROJECTS IN KAMPALA METROPOLITAN AREA**. The study is purely academic and any information provided will be treated with Utmost confidentiality.

**SECTION: BACKGROUND INFORMATION (Please tick as appropriate).**

1. **Project type:** Skills Devt ☐ Livelihood support ☐ Institutional Support ☐

2. **Period for which the project has been operational:** Less than 2 yrs ☐
   2-5years ☐ 6-8 years ☐ More than 8 years ☐

3. **Years of service:** For how long have you been involved in the projects?
   Less than 3yrs ☐ 3-6yrs ☐ 7-10 yrs ☐ More than 10 yrs ☐

4. **Age Group**
   24 yrs and below ☐ 25-34 yrs ☐ 35-44 yrs ☐ 45 yrs & above ☐

5. **Gender:** Male ☐ Female ☐

6. **Marital status:** Single ☐ Married ☐ Divorced ☐ Others (Specify).....

7. **Highest education attained:** Diploma ☐ Degree ☐ Professional ☐ Masters ☐
   Others (Specify)……

**SECTION B WORKFORCE DIVERSITY MANAGEMENT**

| | With reference to the project you are involved in, Please evaluate each statement by ticking in the appropriate box. Tick once for each statement. Use the scale; **1= strongly disagree, 2= I disagree, am not sure, 4= I Agree and 5= I strongly agree.** | ***Strongly Disagree*** | ***Disagree*** | ***Not sure*** | ***Agree*** | ***Strongly Agree*** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **Cohesiveness** | | | | | |
| CO1 | Our organization actively fosters a sense of unity and belonging among employees with diverse backgrounds. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| CO2 | Team members from different backgrounds collaborate effectively in our organization. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| CO3 | In our workplace, employees are encouraged to share their unique perspectives and ideas. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| CO4 | Our organization promotes team-building activities that enhance understanding among employees from diverse backgrounds. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| CO5 | The management in our organization supports the development of strong relationships among employees of different cultural backgrounds. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| CO6 | Employees in our organization are comfortable working in teams that include people from diverse backgrounds. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| CO7 | Our organization has a strong sense of community and inclusivity among its diverse workforce. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| CO8 | In our workplace, the unique strengths and abilities of employees from different backgrounds are recognized and celebrated. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| | **Valuing Differences** | | | | | |
| VD1 | Our organization values the diverse skills and perspectives that employees from different backgrounds bring to the workplace. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| VD2 | Employees in our organization are encouraged to learn from the experiences and viewpoints of their colleagues from diverse backgrounds. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| VD3 | Our organization actively seeks to incorporate diverse perspectives into decision-making processes. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| VD4 | Management in our organization acknowledges the importance of valuing differences in order to create a more innovative and dynamic work environment. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| VD5 | In our workplace, employees from diverse backgrounds are provided with equal opportunities for growth and development. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| VD6 | Our organization's policies and practices reflect a commitment to valuing diversity in the workforce. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| VD7 | Employees in our organization feel appreciated and respected for their unique backgrounds and experiences. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| VD8 | Our organization promotes open communication and dialogue to better understand and appreciate the diversity of its workforce. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

| | **SECTION C**<br>**STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT** | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **Participation** | ***Strongly Disagree*** | ***Disagree*** | ***Uncertain*** | ***Agree*** | ***Strongly Agree*** |
| PA1 | Stakeholders actively participate in decision-making processes. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| PA2 | The organization provides various opportunities for stakeholders to be involved. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| PA3 | Stakeholders feel empowered to voice their opinions during meetings and events. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| PA4 | The organization encourages stakeholder involvement at all levels. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| PA5 | Stakeholders are regularly informed about opportunities to participate. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| PA6 | The organization values diverse perspectives from all stakeholder groups. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| PA7 | Stakeholders feel their participation leads to meaningful outcomes. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| PA8 | The organization recognizes and rewards stakeholder contributions. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| | **Consultation** | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| CS1 | The organization regularly consults with stakeholders on key decisions. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| CS2 | Stakeholders are invited to provide input on organizational policies and strategies. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| CS3 | Consultation processes are transparent and well-documented. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| CS4 | Stakeholders feel their feedback is genuinely considered during consultations. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| CS5 | The organization uses various methods to consult with stakeholders (e.g., surveys, focus groups, interviews). | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| CS6 | The organization consults with stakeholders on both short-term and long-term initiatives. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| CS7 | Stakeholders feel well-informed about the purpose and goals of consultations. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| CS8 | Consultation outcomes are shared with stakeholders in a timely manner. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| | **Open Communication** | | | | | |
| OC1 | The organization fosters an open and honest communication culture. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| OC2 | Stakeholders feel comfortable sharing their ideas and concerns with the organization. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| OC3 | The organization regularly updates stakeholders on its progress and challenges. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| OC4 | Stakeholders have access to relevant information and resources. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| OC5 | The organization actively listens to stakeholder feedback and addresses their concerns. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| OC6 | Communication channels between the organization and | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | stakeholders are clear and horizontal | | | | | |
| OC7 | Stakeholders trust the organization to communicate openly about both successes and failures. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| OC8 | The organization maintains an ongoing dialogue with stakeholders to ensure their needs are met. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

| | **SECTION D: PROJECT EXECUTION** | ***Strongly Disagree*** | ***Disagree*** | ***Uncertai*** | ***Agree*** | ***Strongly Agree*** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **Project Deliverables Clarification** | | | | | |
| PDC1 | I clearly understand the expected outcomes of the project. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| PDC2 | The project deliverables are well-defined and specific. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| PDC3 | The project team consistently communicates the deliverables throughout the project. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| PDC4 | The project's scope, requirements, and deliverables are easily accessible to me. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| PDC5 | The project deliverables are updated to accommodate any necessary changes. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| PDC6 | I am regularly informed of any adjustments to project deliverables. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| PDC7 | The project deliverables are realistic and achievable. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| PDC8 | I feel confident in my ability to deliver on the project's expectations. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| | **Change Management** | | | | | |
| CM1 | Changes that need to be done in the project are often identified with their root cause. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| CM2 | There is a well-established process for managing changes in the project. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| CM3 | Project stakeholders are kept informed and consulted about any changes that impact the project. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| CM4 | The Project team is always trained in case of new processes. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| CM5 | Changes are always implemented according to the plan and the progress monitored. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| CM6 | The project's change management process encourages collaboration and communication. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| CM7 | I feel confident in the project team's ability to adapt to change. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| CM8 | The change management process minimizes any negative impacts on the project. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| | **Ongoing Needs Identification** | | | | | |
| ONI1 | The project team actively assesses and addresses any ongoing needs throughout the project. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| ONI2 | The ongoing needs are evaluated and their impact on the project assessed | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| ONI3 | The project team frequently reviews and updates the project's goals and objectives. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| ONI4 | The project team effectively gathers and incorporates stakeholder feedback. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| ONI5 | There is a continuous improvement process in place to identify and address ongoing needs. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| ONI6 | The project team is proactive in addressing potential risks and issues that may arise. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| ONI7 | I am comfortable discussing my ongoing needs and concerns with the project team. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| ONI8 | The project execution process is flexible enough to accommodate evolving needs and requirements. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

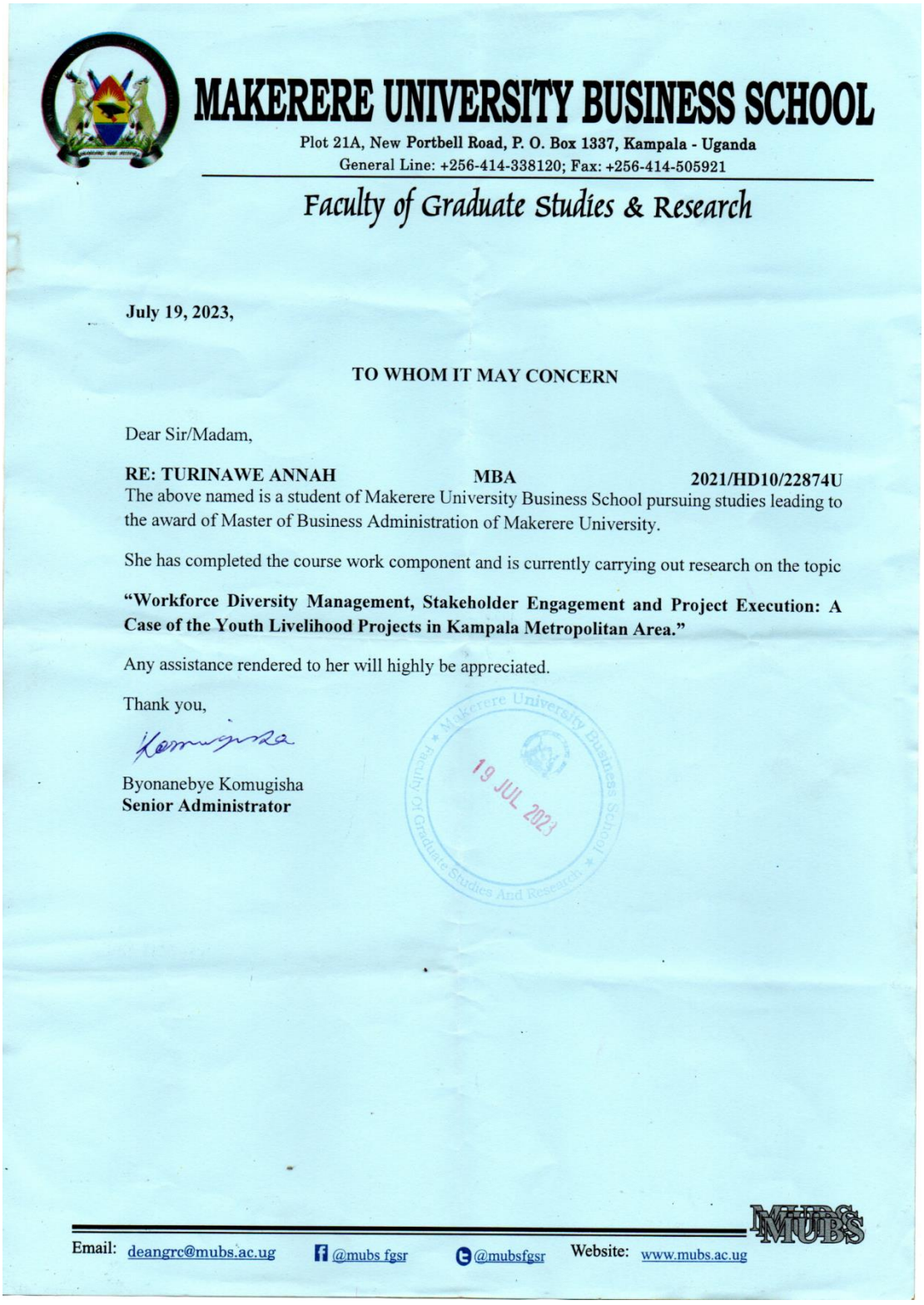
**Thank you for your time**

**APPENDIX II: TABLE FOR DETERMINING SAMPLE SIZE FROM A GIVEN POPULATION**

| *N* | *S* | *N* | *S* | *N* | *S* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 10 | 10 | 220 | 140 | 1200 | 291 |
| 15 | 14 | 230 | 144 | 1300 | 297 |
| 20 | 19 | 240 | 148 | 1400 | 302 |
| 25 | 24 | 250 | 152 | 1500 | 306 |
| 30 | 28 | 260 | 155 | 1600 | 310 |
| 35 | 32 | 270 | 159 | 1700 | 313 |
| 40 | 36 | 280 | 162 | 1800 | 317 |
| 45 | 40 | 290 | 165 | 1900 | 320 |
| 50 | 44 | 300 | 169 | 2000 | 322 |
| 55 | 48 | 320 | 175 | 2200 | 327 |
| 60 | 52 | 340 | 181 | 2400 | 331 |
| 65 | 56 | 360 | 186 | 2600 | 335 |
| 70 | 59 | 380 | 191 | 2800 | 338 |
| 75 | 63 | 400 | 196 | 3000 | 341 |
| 80 | 66 | 420 | 201 | 3500 | 346 |
| 85 | 70 | 440 | 205 | 4000 | 351 |
| 90 | 73 | 460 | 210 | 4500 | 354 |
| 95 | 76 | 480 | 214 | 5000 | 357 |
| 100 | 80 | 500 | 217 | 6000 | 361 |
| 110 | 86 | 550 | 226 | 7000 | 364 |
| 120 | 92 | 600 | 234 | 8000 | 367 |
| 130 | 97 | 650 | 242 | 9000 | 368 |
| 140 | 103 | 700 | 248 | 10000 | 370 |
| 150 | 108 | 750 | 254 | 15000 | 375 |
| 160 | 113 | 800 | 260 | 20000 | 377 |
| 170 | 118 | 850 | 265 | 30000 | 379 |
| 180 | 123 | 900 | 269 | 40000 | 380 |
| 190 | 127 | 950 | 274 | 50000 | 381 |
| 200 | 132 | 1000 | 278 | 75000 | 382 |
| 210 | 136 | 1100 | 285 | 1000000 | 384 |

Note.—*N* is population size. *S* is sample size.

## APPENDIX III: INTRODUCTION LETTER TO RESPONDENTS



**MAKERERE UNIVERSITY BUSINESS SCHOOL**

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*Faculty of Graduate Studies & Research*

**July 19, 2023,**

**TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN**

Dear Sir/Madam,

**RE: TURINAWE ANNAH** **MBA** **2021/HD10/22874U**
The above named is a student of Makerere University Business School pursuing studies leading to the award of Master of Business Administration of Makerere University.

She has completed the course work component and is currently carrying out research on the topic

**"Workforce Diversity Management, Stakeholder Engagement and Project Execution: A Case of the Youth Livelihood Projects in Kampala Metropolitan Area."**

Any assistance rendered to her will highly be appreciated.

Thank you,

Byonanebye Komugisha
**Senior Administrator**

Makerere University Business School * Faculty Of Graduate Studies And Research * 19 JUL 2023

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