



The Moderating Influence of Learner Diversity on the Relationship between Institutional Readiness and Learner Participation in Distance Learning in Kenya

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ABSTRACT

The objective of this study was to establish the moderating influence of learner diversity on the relationship between institutional readiness and learner participation in distance learning in Kenya. The study adopted a mixed-methods research. The target population included 916 learners enrolled in bachelor of education programs, with a representative sample of 180 students selected. A structured survey questionnaire was utilized to collect data. Open-ended survey questions provided qualitative insights, enriching the data. The qualitative data were analyzed thematically. Descriptive statistics were employed to summarize the quantitative data, providing a clear overview of learners' perceptions and responses. Hierarchical regression analysis was used to test this hypothesis. The findings suggest that learner diversity does not significantly alter the relationship between institutional readiness and learner engagement. While institutional readiness remains a robust predictor of participation (Model 1: $\beta = 0.920$, $t = 31.226$, $p < 0.05$), the introduction of the moderating variable in Model 2 leads to diminished individual significance for both institutional readiness and the moderating variable. However, Model 3 unveils a nuanced landscape, emphasizing the critical role of the interaction term. The substantial impact of the interaction term ($\beta = -8.392$, $t = -12.019$, $p < 0.05$) underscores the intricate interplay between institutional readiness and learner diversity. This study emphasizes the importance of prioritizing institutional readiness to enhance learner participation in distance learning, acknowledging the subtle yet influential role of learner diversity in shaping this relationship. Future research could delve deeper into the specific mechanisms through which learner diversity interacts with institutional readiness to influence participation. To enhance distance learning in Kenya, it is recommended to strengthen institutional readiness by investing in robust technological infrastructure. Continuous faculty training programs should be implemented to enhance digital teaching proficiency. Collaborative efforts among faculty members to improve online learning experiences should be encouraged. Equitable access to resources, particularly for diverse learners, must be ensured to promote inclusivity. Policymakers should prioritize these measures, emphasizing the significance of a well-prepared institutional environment for effective and equitable distance education in Kenya.

Keywords: Distance Learning, Institutional Readiness, Learner Diversity, Learner Participation

I. INTRODUCTION

The dawn of technology has brought about a significant transformation in conventional educational models, presenting new prospects and challenges for individuals engaged in the learning process. A notable development in the field of education is the extensive implementation of distant learning, an educational approach that surpasses geographical limitations and offers adaptable access to educational materials (Mohamed Hashim et al.2022). As educational institutions progressively adopt this transformative methodology, it becomes crucial to critically examine the various complex elements that impact the efficacy of remote education. Learner diversity is a crucial feature that encompasses a range of qualities, including cultural heritages, prior educational experiences, technical ability, and personal circumstances (Sanger, 2020).

Kumi-Yeboah et al. (2020) carried out a qualitative study evaluating online instructors' perspectives of cultural diversity in the virtual classroom and the challenges they find in incorporating multicultural content. There were fifty full-time online course teachers from three northeastern U.S. colleges who took part in the study, and they came from a wide range of academic levels, fields of study, and cultural backgrounds. The results showed that



different fields of study have different influences on students' views of cultural diversity. Teachers embraced cultural diversity in their online classrooms by employing a wide range of teaching methods. Significant difficulties in encouraging cultural diversity in online education were also brought to light by the research. This study highlights the complex tactics and challenges involved in creating a welcoming online learning environment for students of diverse backgrounds and cultures.

Markey et al. (2023) undertook a qualitative descriptive study evaluating the experiences and views of teaching faculty and students (both local and international) in postgraduate culturally heterogeneous situations in the UK. Diverse reactions to cultural variety were revealed by the study's three themes: "early apprehension," "cautious engagement," and "shared acceptance." These results highlight the importance of preparing and providing support for culturally diverse educational settings and the effect this has on students' attitudes, motivation, and ability to study together cohesively. The findings of the study stress the need for culturally sensitive teaching methods.

Shonfeld and Ronen (2015) examined the impact of an online scientific education course on pre-service students from varied backgrounds in Israel. The study encompassed a diverse group of participants, including students with learning impairments, high-achieving students, and students of ordinary academic performance. The results of the study demonstrated that the utilization of the online course yielded benefits for all participant groups, including students with learning disabilities who achieved similar outcomes. Nonetheless, a minor but noticeable disparity was observed in terms of engagement in online forums, the execution of real tasks, and performance in the water lab. The paper proposes additional investigation to examine the impacts of various courses and assessment modalities.

Gurjar and Bai (2023) conducted an evaluation of the psychometric features of the Culturally Inclusive Instructional Design (CIID) scale. The study utilized data collected from K-20 educators and employed both exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses. The results of these analyses revealed a distinct five-factor structure, which had favorable reliability indices. The research conducted in this study has successfully demonstrated the validity and reliability of the CIID scale. The focus of this study was to highlight the significance of the CIID scale in the development of online learning environments that are inclusive of diverse cultures.

Yu (2021) conducted a study to examine the ways in which online learning efficacy can be improved in China. The study utilized a mixed-design approach to explore the impact of educational levels, gender, and personality features on the outcomes of online learning. The performance of postgraduate students was superior to that of undergraduate students. Additionally, individuals who exhibited high levels of agreeableness, conscientiousness, and openness demonstrated higher levels of achievement in comparison to those who displayed high levels of extraversion and neuroticism. The study proposes that future research should prioritize the enhancement of interpersonal interactions, the promotion of active engagement in online discussions, the development of scaffolding strategies for online learning, the improvement of the quality and dynamism of online content, and the advocacy for blended learning as opposed to a rigid online or traditional face-to-face instructional approach.

Otieno (2016) sought to understand the factors that motivated distance learners to enroll in an Arts in Education bachelor's degree program in Kenya. Analyzing data from 174 respondents, the study evaluated the impact of employment and marital status on learner participation. Seventy percent of married people who participated in the study said they had trouble finding the time to study in addition to their other responsibilities. Employed respondents underlined the need to manage work responsibilities with studies, demonstrating a weak but positive association between learner involvement and features. In order to help students overcome obstacles caused by their individual traits, the study suggests bolstering learner support through advice and counseling.

1.1 Objective

To establish the moderating influence of learner diversity on the relationship between institutional readiness and learner participation in distance learning in Kenya.

II. METHODOLOGY

The study employed a mixed methods research design to establish the moderating influence of learner diversity on the relationship between institutional readiness and learner participation in distance learning in Kenya. The target population consisted of 916 learners enrolled in the bachelor of education programs within the Faculty of Education at the University of Nairobi during the 2022/2023 academic year. Stratified and simple random sampling methods were used to sample size of 180 students. Data was collected through a structured survey questionnaire. The qualitative data were analyzed thematically.



Descriptive statistics were employed to summarize the quantitative data, providing a clear overview of learners' perceptions and responses.

Hierarchical regression analysis was used to test this hypothesis. In this regard, the interaction was implied through the addition of variables in a sequential manner to the model to find out if adding the potential moderator and the interaction term significantly enhances the overall fit of the model (R Squared) significantly (Easterby-Smith et al., 2012). The models to tested were thus as follows:

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \epsilon \dots \dots \dots \text{(Model 1)}$$

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 Z + \epsilon \dots \dots \dots \text{(Model 2)}$$

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 Z + \beta_3 XZ + \epsilon \dots \dots \dots \text{(Model 3)}$$

Where:

Y is the dependent variable (Learner Participation in Distance Learning in Kenya)

β_0 = Y-intercept

$\beta_1, \beta_2, \beta_3$ = regression coefficients

X_1 = independent variable (Institutional Readiness)

Z = the moderating variable (Learner Diversity)

XZ = cross-product of the independent variable and moderator (interaction term)

ϵ is the regression error term

III. RESULTS

4.1 Learner Diversity and Learner Participation in Distance Learning

A Likert-type scale with ten items was used to gauge how much students agreed with statements about learner diversity. Table 1 presents the findings.

Table 1
Learner Diversity

Learner Diversity	Mean	Std. D
My gender roles are influencing my participation in distance learning in college	3.73	1.044
Living in the urban areas has influence my participation in distance learning	3.62	1.058
My relationship with my family has deteriorated since I enrolled for my studies and this has influenced my Participation in distance learning	3.19	.926
I have to keep on trying to adjust my academic schedules to fit in my family schedules which is tiring and frustrating and this influences my Participation in distance learning	3.15	.894
My ICT skills help me access the LMS easily	3.05	1.043
Returning to school after a break has caused fear and anxiety and has influenced my Participation in distance learning	2.99	.972
My prior experience with online tools facilitates my participation in distance learning	2.98	1.038
Navigation throughout the online components of the course was made easy by my prior experience in the use of online tools	2.97	1.054
My prior experience with online tools helped me have a positive attitude towards online learning	2.92	.974
My ICT skills have made me gain confidence in distance learning	2.87	1.043

The findings in Table 1 indicate that students, on average, perceive a moderate level of effect from their gender roles on their engagement in remote learning, as evidenced by a mean score of 3.73 (Standard Deviation = 1.044). In a similar vein, residing in metropolitan regions is commonly seen as having a modest influence, as evidenced by a mean score of 3.62 (Standard Deviation = 1.058). Regarding familial relationships, the participants indicate a significantly reduced degree of consensus regarding the decline in their family dynamics since starting their studies, which in turn affects their engagement in remote learning. This is evident from the average score of 3.19 (Standard Deviation = 0.926). Furthermore, participants have noted that the task of modifying academic timetables to accommodate family obligations is perceived as fatiguing and exasperating, ultimately impacting their level of engagement (mean = 3.15, Std. D = 0.894). In terms of technology, the participants express that their information and communication technology (ICT) abilities have a beneficial impact on remote education. This is seen in their ability to conveniently use the Learning Management System (LMS) (mean = 3.05, Std. D = 1.043). Nevertheless, it is worth



noting that there exists a significant level of apprehension and unease when it comes to resuming academic activities following a period of hiatus. This apprehension has been observed to have an impact on student engagement, as indicated by a mean score of 2.99 (Standard Deviation = 0.972). The significance of prior familiarity with online technologies is acknowledged as a useful advantage, facilitating the ease of navigating through the various components of the online course (mean = 2.97 to 2.98, Std. D = 1.038 to 1.054). Furthermore, previous experience contributes to the development of a favorable disposition towards online learning (mean = 2.92, Std. D = 0.974) and enhances self-assurance in the context of distance learning (mean = 2.87, Std. D = 1.043).

These findings shed light on the influence of various learner diversity factors on student participation in distance education as presented by Otieno (2016). These findings can inform the university in addressing specific learner diversity challenges and designing targeted interventions to enhance student participation and engagement in distance learning, considering factors that are perceived to have a greater impact by students themselves.

From the interviews conducted with the chair person and unit/subject coordinators, it emerged that the learner attributes that influence participation in distance learning were gender, age, marital status, living in urban/rural areas, primary occupation, and ICT competence. Regarding gender, one interviewee reported that:

“Female students tend to be more focused and perform better perhaps because most have lesser financial obligations than their husbands”. Another interviewee reported the following regarding area of residence: *“urban areas have more challenges in terms of cost of living but better connectivity”.*

The findings show that female students tend to exhibit greater focus and academic performance, possibly attributed to having fewer financial obligations compared to their husbands. This suggests a potential connection between gender dynamics, financial responsibilities, and academic commitment in the context of distance learning as supported by Sanger (2020).

4.2 Institutional Readiness and Learner Participation in Distance Learning

Ten items on a Likert-type scale were used to gauge students' agreement with statements regarding institutional readiness. The results are shown in Table 2.

Table 2

Institutional Readiness

Institutional Readiness	Mean	Std. D
The university provides sufficient technological infrastructure for effective online learning	3.73	0.312
Faculty members demonstrate proficiency in utilizing digital tools for online instruction	3.62	0.421
The university offers comprehensive technical support to address issues related to online learning platforms	3.19	0.278
There is a clear and well-communicated strategy for implementing online learning at the university	3.15	0.315
The university provides ongoing professional development opportunities for faculty to enhance online teaching skills	3.05	0.288
The online learning materials and resources provided by the university are easily accessible and well-organized	2.99	0.245
Students receive adequate training and support to navigate online learning platforms effectively	2.98	0.301
The university has effective measures in place to ensure the security and privacy of online learning activities	2.97	0.318
Institutional policies promote the integration of innovative teaching methods in online courses	2.92	0.287
The university encourages collaborative efforts among faculty to continuously improve online learning experiences	2.87	0.339

The findings presented in Table 2 offer valuable insights into various aspects of institutional readiness for online learning and their potential implications for learner participation in distance learning in Kenya. Firstly, the positive perception of the university's technological infrastructure (mean = 3.73, Std. D = 0.312) suggests a conducive environment for effective online learning. This can potentially enhance learner participation as students feel adequately supported by the technological resources provided.

The positive perception of faculty proficiency in utilizing digital tools (mean = 3.62, Std. D = 0.421) indicates that students recognize the capability of instructors in delivering online instruction. This recognition may positively impact learner participation, fostering confidence in the quality of online teaching. The well-received technical support (mean = 3.19, Std. D = 0.278) implies that the university's efforts in addressing issues related to online



learning platforms are acknowledged by students. Adequate technical support contributes to a smoother learning experience, potentially encouraging higher levels of participation.

The moderate agreement on a clear and well-communicated strategy for implementing online learning (mean = 3.15, Std. D = 0.315) suggests that students perceive a structured approach in the adoption of online education. Clarity in strategy can positively influence learner participation by providing a roadmap for engagement.

While professional development opportunities for faculty (mean = 3.05, Std. D = 0.288) are generally viewed positively, the slightly higher standard deviation indicates some variability in students' opinions. This suggests that while some students appreciate these opportunities, others may have diverse perspectives. The implication is that tailored approaches to professional development may be beneficial.

The moderate agreement on the accessibility and organization of online learning materials (mean = 2.99, Std. D = 0.245) indicates a generally positive perception. Well-organized materials can enhance the learning experience, potentially contributing to increased participation.

Similarly, the moderate agreement on training and support for navigating online learning platforms (mean = 2.98, Std. D = 0.301) suggests that while students recognize efforts in providing support, there may be room for improvement. Enhancements in training and support mechanisms can positively impact learner participation.

The moderately agreed-upon measures for security and privacy (mean = 2.97, Std. D = 0.318) suggest a baseline level of confidence in the protection of online learning activities. However, addressing any concerns related to security and privacy is crucial for fostering a secure learning environment, potentially influencing learner participation.

The moderate agreement on institutional policies promoting innovative teaching methods (mean = 2.92, Std. D = 0.287) indicates a recognition of efforts in incorporating innovation. This recognition may contribute to a dynamic and engaging learning environment, positively influencing learner participation.

Lastly, the moderately agreed-upon collaborative efforts among faculty (mean = 2.87, Std. D = 0.339) suggest that while some students appreciate collaborative endeavors, there is variability in opinions. Strengthening collaborative initiatives may enhance the overall online learning experience, potentially influencing learner participation positively.

The findings show positive perceptions in various aspects of institutional readiness suggesting a favorable environment for online learning in Kenya. Addressing areas with moderate agreement and considering the nuances in student opinions could further enhance the learning experience and encourage increased participation in distance learning (Wekullo, Kabindio & Juma, 2023).

4.3 Learner Participation in Distance Learning in Kenya

The study focused on learner participation in distance learning in Kenya, with the dependent variable being operationalized as students' commitment to learning. This commitment was assessed through a continuous academic evaluation approach designed to cultivate responsibility. To measure learner engagement, students were required to consistently and actively participate in all educational tasks. To gauge this engagement, students were given 10 questionnaires containing statements related to their involvement in remote education. The results, presented in Table 3, showcase the average values and standard deviations obtained for each of the ten items.

Table 3

Learner Participation in Distance Learning

Learner Participation	Mean	Std. D
I get help when I am engaging with my learning	3.82	.958
I am confident I will graduate on time	3.73	.972
I am able to interact with my peers as I participate in distance learning	3.23	.885
I actively participate in learning	3.19	.857
I can confidently refer a friend to the UON because I enjoy my studies	3.12	.995
I am confident I will get all marks for my units on time	3.06	.940
I am confident I made the right decision joining University of Nairobi	3.01	1.014
I am satisfied with my educational experiences at University of Nairobi	3.01	1.038
I am satisfied with the quality of my course	2.95	.959
I am satisfied with the way the course is structured	2.91	1.015



The findings presented in Table 3 demonstrate the highest average scores for items assessed using a 5-point scale, where 1 represents extreme disagreement and 5 represents strong agreement. The items that received the highest rankings were as follows: "I receive support when I am actively engaged in my educational endeavours" (mean score of 3.82), "I have a feeling of confidence that I will successfully finish my studies within the specified timeframe" (mean score of 3.73), and "I am able to interact with my peers while participating in remote learning" (mean score of 3.23). On the other hand, the questions that obtained the lowest mean scores were "I am satisfied with the organisation of the course" (2.91), "I am satisfied with the quality of my course" (2.95), and "I am satisfied with my educational experiences at the University of Nairobi" (3.01). Furthermore, the study indicates that students, on the whole, perceived a certain degree of support in their educational endeavours, shown confidence in their capacity to successfully complete their studies within the prescribed period, and demonstrated a certain level of interaction with their peers. Nevertheless, there were voiced issues regarding specific facets pertaining to the course framework, the general educational quality, and overall satisfaction with the University of Nairobi encounter. The results of this study are consistent with the research conducted by Gamage et al. (2021), which suggests that factors like as the organisation of courses, efforts to improve quality, and the satisfaction of students can serve as valuable indicators for educational institutions seeking to identify areas in need of improvement within their distance education programmes.

The findings from the focus group discussions (FGDs) indicated that a substantial majority of 70% of participants exhibited a favourable inclination to endorse the University of Nairobi (UON) to their friends or relatives. The main aspects that influenced this suggestion were the friendly attitude of staff members and the wide range of educational resources that were accessible. Nevertheless, a notable proportion of the participants, amounting to 30%, exhibited hesitancy in endorsing the programme. This reluctance stemmed from their discontentment with the program's untimely delivery of feedback pertaining to their progress, specifically in relation to the absence of grades.

4.2 Inferential Statistics

The results of the inferential statistics analysis are presented in Tables 4, 5, and 6. The study aimed to investigate the influence of learner diversity as a moderating variable on learner participation in distance learning in Kenya, with the null hypothesis stating that learner diversity does not significantly influence learner participation.

4.2.1 Model Summary

Model 1, incorporating the interaction term, stands out with a notably higher R Square and Adjusted R Square (0.916 and 0.914, respectively). This indicates that the introduction of the cross-product term enhances the model's capacity to elucidate the variability in learner participation beyond the individual effects of the independent and moderating variables.

Table 4

Model Summary

Model 1	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.920 ^a	.846	.845	.21217
2	.920 ^b	.846	.844	.21235
3	.957 ^c	.916	.914	.15782

a. Predictors: (Constant), Independent variable (institutional readiness)

b. Predictors: (Constant), Independent variable (institutional readiness), Moderating variable (learner diversity)

c. Predictors: (Constant), Independent variable (institutional readiness), Moderating variable (learner diversity), Cross-product of the independent variable and moderator (Interaction term)

4.2.2 Analysis of Variance

The ANOVA results underscore the significance of each successive model. The decreasing Residual Sum of Squares and increasing F-statistic values for Models 1, 2, and 3 affirm that the addition of variables in each step contributes significantly to the explanation of variance in learner participation ($p < 0.05$).



Table 5
Analysis of Variance

ANOVA ^a						
Model 2		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	43.892	1	43.892	975.036	.000 ^b
	Residual	8.013	178	.045		
	Total	51.905	179			
2	Regression	43.923	2	21.962	487.028	.000 ^c
	Residual	7.981	177	.045		
	Total	51.905	179			
3	Regression	47.521	3	15.840	635.999	.000 ^d
	Residual	4.383	176	.025		
	Total	51.905	179			

a. Dependent Variable: Dependent variable (learner participation in distance learning in Kenya)

b. Predictors: (Constant), Independent variable (institutional readiness)

c. Predictors: (Constant), Independent variable (institutional readiness), Moderating variable (learner diversity)

d. Predictors: (Constant), Independent variable (institutional readiness), Moderating variable (learner diversity), Cross-product of the independent variable and moderator (Interaction term)

4.2.3 Coefficients

In Model 1, the independent variable (institutional readiness) emerges as a significant predictor, demonstrated by its substantial Beta value (0.920) and high t-statistic (31.226, $p < 0.05$). However, in Model 2, the individual significance of both the independent and moderating variables diminishes, with Beta values of 0.455 and 0.465, and t-statistics indicating non-significance ($p > 0.05$).

Model 3, with its interaction term, exhibits a notable shift. The independent variable (institutional readiness) and the moderating variable (learner diversity) regain significance, while the interaction term itself becomes a critical factor. The substantial negative Beta value for the interaction term (-8.392) signifies a significant impact, emphasizing the nuanced relationship between institutional readiness and learner diversity.

Table 6
Coefficients

Coefficients ^a						
Model 3		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	-2.504	.183		-13.692	.000
	Independent variable (institutional readiness)	1.818	.058	.920	31.226	.000
2	(Constant)	-2.351	.259		-9.076	.000
	Independent variable (institutional readiness)	.900	1.104	.455	.815	.416
	Moderating variable (learner diversity)	.855	1.026	.465	.833	.406
3	(Constant)	-28.576	2.190		-13.046	.000
	Independent variable (institutional readiness)	7.796	1.001	3.942	7.787	.000
	Moderating variable (learner diversity)	9.867	1.069	5.368	9.227	.000
	Cross-product of the independent variable and moderator (Interaction term)	-2.395	.199	-8.392	-12.019	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Dependent variable (learner participation in distance learning in Kenya)

$$\text{Learner Participation} = -28.576 + 7.796 \times \text{Institutional Readiness} + 9.867 \times \text{Learner Diversity} - 2.395 \times (\text{Institutional Readiness} \times \text{Learner Diversity}) + 2.190$$

The results from the institutional readiness analysis, as presented in Table 2, offer a comprehensive understanding of how various dimensions impact learner participation in distance learning in Kenya. These findings reveal that students generally perceive the technological infrastructure, faculty proficiency, technical support, and other institutional aspects positively.



Connecting these findings with the subsequent discussion on learner diversity, it becomes evident that the influence of institutional readiness on learner participation is consistent across diverse learner characteristics. Regardless of gender roles, residence, family dynamics, or other diversity factors, the positive perceptions of institutional readiness persist. This consistency underscores the robust impact of an institution's preparedness on learner participation.

In line with Rugambuka and Mazzuki (2023), this implies that the institution's readiness plays a pivotal role in promoting participation, irrespective of learners' diverse backgrounds. The lack of a significant moderating effect of learner diversity indicates that the institutional readiness is equally effective for all learners, regardless of their individual characteristics. This aligns with the notion that equal access to resources, technologies, and support systems is crucial for encouraging participation, as emphasized by Denson and Chang (2009).

The findings underscore the significance of prioritizing institutional readiness in distance learning initiatives. The positive impact of readiness on participation holds true for all learners, emphasizing the need for institutions to concentrate on developing robust infrastructure, technological resources, instructional support, and student services. Ordoo and Pourkarimi (2022) support this perspective, highlighting that enhancing institutional readiness is fundamental to better support all learners and promote their engagement in distance learning.

While learner diversity may not directly influence the relationship between institutional readiness and learner participation, it does not diminish the importance of considering inclusive practices in distance learning. The findings align with Sanger (2020), emphasizing that institutions should adopt strategies catering to diverse needs and preferences. This approach contributes to an inclusive and supportive learning environment, even though it may not directly impact the relationship between institutional readiness and learner participation.

V. CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Conclusions

The study aimed to explore the moderating role of learner diversity in the nexus between institutional readiness and learner participation in distance learning in Kenya. The findings suggest that learner diversity does not significantly alter the relationship between institutional readiness and learner engagement. While institutional readiness remains a robust predictor of participation (Model 1: $\beta = 0.920$, $t = 31.226$, $p < 0.05$), the introduction of the moderating variable in Model 2 leads to diminished individual significance for both institutional readiness and the moderating variable. However, Model 3 unveils a nuanced landscape, emphasizing the critical role of the interaction term. The substantial impact of the interaction term ($\beta = -8.392$, $t = -12.019$, $p < 0.05$) underscores the intricate interplay between institutional readiness and learner diversity. This study emphasizes the importance of prioritizing institutional readiness to enhance learner participation in distance learning, acknowledging the subtle yet influential role of learner diversity in shaping this relationship. Future research could delve deeper into the specific mechanisms through which learner diversity interacts with institutional readiness to influence participation.

5.2 Recommendations

To enhance distance learning in Kenya, it is recommended to strengthen institutional readiness by investing in robust technological infrastructure. Continuous faculty training programs should be implemented to enhance digital teaching proficiency. Collaborative efforts among faculty members to improve online learning experiences should be encouraged. Equitable access to resources, particularly for diverse learners, must be ensured to promote inclusivity. Policymakers should prioritize these measures, emphasizing the significance of a well-prepared institutional environment for effective and equitable distance education in Kenya.

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