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Effect of Recruitment and Selection on Employee Commitment Among Foreign Academic Staff in Private Universities in Uganda

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ABSTRACT

The recruitment and selection process is crucial for organizations in planning for future employees (Varmazyar & Nouri, 2014). This study investigated the effect of recruitment and selection on employee commitment (EC) among foreign academic staff in a selected private Universities in Kampala Metropolitan Area, Uganda. A total of 208 foreign academic staff completed a questionnaire survey. The findings of the study revealed that EC was fair or moderate as well and recruitment and selection. Regression analysis revealed that recruitment and selection had a positive and significant influence on EC Therefore, it concluded that recruitment and selection practices can significantly influence commitment of foreign academic staff in private universities, Uganda. Thus, an improvement in these practices of an organization will likely increase commitment among the foreign academic staff. It was thus recommended that university management should employ external recruitment and selection approaches, such as University staff exchange programs, external agents, headhunting for specific skills and unsolicited applicant or walk-ins. These will be more effective in bringing more committed academic staff, mainly those from abroad.

Key words: Recruitment, selection, employee Commitment, foreign academic staff.

Introduction

Recruitment and selection are crucial components of the human resources (HR) process, playing a pivotal role in shaping an organization's workforce. The effectiveness of these processes can significantly impact the overall success and performance of a company. According to scholars such as Cascio (2018). recruitment involves attracting and identifying potential candidates for job positions, while selection focuses on assessing and choosing the most suitable individuals for those roles. Cascio (2018) emphasizes that successful recruitment and selection contribute to organizational efficiency by ensuring that the right talent is placed in the right positions. These processes are not only about finding individuals with the necessary skills and qualifications but also about aligning the organizational culture and values with those of the prospective employees. In the context of employee commitment, Meyer and Allen (1991) introduced the widely recognized Three-Component Model, which includes affective, normative, and continuance commitment. Affective commitment refers to an employee's emotional attachment to and identification with the organization, normative commitment involves a sense of obligation or moral responsibility to remain with the organization, and continuance commitment is based on perceived costs associated with leaving. Ensuring that candidates align with the organization's goals and culture during this process of recruitment and selection can have a significant impact on their subsequent commitment to the organization. Properly treating employees during the selection period increases the likelihood of their commitment to the organization. The relationship between recruitment, selection, and employee commitment has been explored by various researchers. For instance, Chapman et al. (2005) found that a positive recruitment experience can enhance an employee's affective commitment by creating a favorable initial impression of the organization. Additionally, the alignment of employee values with the organization during the selection process can positively impact long-term commitment (Kristof-Brown et al., 2005).

Literature review

Recruitment and Selection

The recruitment and selection processes are all intimately related to finding the best candidate for the open position at hand as well as the organization and team as a whole (Leda, 2021). In order to make the recruiting process as efficient as possible and produce the best outcomes, a company approaches it through its human resources strategy and executes it through the proper policies and procedures (Foot & Hook, 2011). If a company offers a permanent contract, which is a contract without a defined expiration date, it is in their best interest for the chosen candidate to work there for a long time and not have any immediate plans to quit (Mussie et al. 2022). Clear goals established by the organization from the start of the hiring process help the candidate make an informed choice on whether they are suitable for the position in question as well as whether the company and job are the perfect fit for them. Senior leaders in particular are becoming increasingly conscious of the critical role that human resources play in the performance of their firms (Al-

Hawary & Shdefat, 2016). In order to maximize the outcomes of matching the right individuals to the correct requirements of the company and the specific job in question, the affectivity of the recruitment process can be adjusted based on the values of the organization (Armstrong, 2006).

Internal Recruitment and Selection

McCarthy and Goffin (2020) define internal recruitment and selection as the process of identifying and assessing internal employees who have the necessary skills, knowledge, and experience to fill a job vacancy. Organizations can benefit from internal recruitment and selection because it allows them to tap into the knowledge, skills, and experience of their current employees. This can lead to increased productivity and performance, as current employees are already familiar with the organization's culture, processes, and expectations. Additionally, internal recruitment and selection can provide a sense of job security and stability for employees, as they have the opportunity to advance within the organization (Varmazyar & Nouri, 2014). This approach allows organizations to utilize their existing talent pool and provide opportunities for career growth and development to current employees. These processes involve identifying key positions within the organization and determining the qualifications and skills required for each position. The organization then advertises these positions internally, giving current employees the opportunity to apply.

External Recruitment and Selection

External recruitment and selection refer to the process of hiring individuals from outside the organization to fill job positions. According to a study by Ryan and Tippins (2010), external recruitment is defined as the process of seeking and attracting job candidates from outside the organization, while external selection involves evaluating and choosing the best candidates among the pool of external applicants. Boswell and Boudreau (2016) defined as the process of identifying and attracting potential job candidates from outside the organization and external selection is the process of assessing and choosing the best candidate for the job among external applicants. Furthermore, Taylor et al. (2018), external recruitment and selection can be seen as a strategic tool for organizations to bring in new skills, ideas and perspectives that may not be present within the current workforce. Other authors, such as Schneider (2017), emphasize the importance of properly aligning external recruitment and selection strategies with the organization's overall business strategy to ensure the recruitment of the most suitable candidates.

Employee Commitment

According to Rafiei et al. (2014), The term "continuance commitment" refers to a commitment that is founded on the concept of investments and is coupled to expenses that employees perceive are associated with leaving the company. According to Somers (2009), normative commitment is devotion based on mutually agreed-upon standards of obligation between employees and their employers. According, to Okyere-kwakye and Otibu (2016), organizational commitment refers to employees' enthusiasm for their jobs and advancing the success of the company. According to Enginyurt et al. (2016), organizational commitment is defined as a firm belief in the organization's objectives and core values as well as the willingness to exert effort on its behalf. They concluded that organizational loyalty is not passive but rather involves effort (Enginyurt et al. 2016). According to positivistic research, the concept of commitment is multifaceted and distinct (McKenna, 2005). According to Thornhill et al. (1996), commitment is essentially a multi-dimensional notion that may be examined from various angles that is affective (AC), continuance (CC) and normative (NC). As a person spends a lot of time in an organization, they grow attached to it and feel obligated to continue working for its objectives. This mindset of wishes is known as affective commitment (Allen & Meyer, 1993). Nehmeh (2009), noted that a particular organization's success is greatly influenced by its organizational commitment. He claims that highly dedicated employees exhibit organizational citizenship behavior because they identify with the organization's goals and values and feel strongly like members of the group. Sheng (2014) also highlights how crucial organizational commitment to worker success is.

Recruitment and Selection and Employee Commitment

Bhatnagar and Srivastava (2017) investigated the relationship between recruitment and selection practices and employee commitment in the Indian banking sector, finding revealed that positive perceptions of recruitment and selection practices led to higher levels of employee commitment. Similarly, Yusoff et al. (2015) examined the relationship between recruitment and selection methods and employee commitment in the Malaysian public sector and found that the use of multiple selection methods led to higher levels of employee commitment. Another, study by Özbağ and Çalışkan (2016) found that a transparent and objective recruitment process increased employee commitment in the Turkish hospitality industry. Furthermore, Gerhart and Fang (2014) examined the relationship between recruitment and selection practices and employee commitment and found that effective recruitment and selection practices led to higher levels of employee commitment. Another study by Tsai (2010) found that job seekers who had a positive recruitment experience were more likely to have higher levels of organizational commitment. Similarly, Cable and Turban (2011) found that recruitment practices that emphasized realistic job previews led to greater commitment among new employees. More still, Liu et al. (2019) examined the impact of recruitment and selection on employee commitment in Chinese state-owned enterprises. The study found that effective recruitment and selection practices within Chinese state-owned enterprises positively influenced employee commitment. These practices, when well-designed and implemented, helped attract and select employees who were more likely to be committed to the organization. Another study by Islam et al. (2018) investigated the relationship between recruitment and selection practices and employee commitment in the hospitality industry in Bangladesh. They discovered a positive relationship between recruitment and selection practices and employee commitment in the hospitality industry in Bangladesh. Their study indicated that organizations that implemented robust and fair recruitment and selection processes were more likely to have employees who exhibited higher levels of commitment to their jobs and the organization. Additionally, a study by Jafri et al. (2020) examined the impact of recruitment and selection practices on employee commitment in the Pakistani banking sector. They found that effective recruitment and selection processes positively influenced employee commitment. Organizations that employed rigorous and fair selection procedures were more likely to have committed employees. However, a contextual gap emerged as many earlier studies have been carried out in the context of the western world such as a study by Özbağ and Çalışkan (2016) carried out in Turkey and several studies conducted in Asia like Islam et al. (2018) done in Bangladesh; Jafri et al. (2020) done in Pakistan, Liu et al. (2019) carried out in China and Bhatnagar

and Srivastava (2017) done in India. This contextual gap called for further research on the effect of recruitment & selection and employee commitment in other contexts such as the developing countries such as Uganda. These contextual made it necessary for this study to evaluate whether in the context of a private university in Uganda, the following hypothesis held:

H₀: Recruitment and selection has no significant effect on employee commitment.

Methods

This study largely employed a descriptive cross-sectional and correlational survey, utilizing a mixed method approach. Within the descriptive cross-sectional survey, the researcher collected data on the appropriateness of recruitment and selection practices and extent of employee commitment from a sample of 208 foreign academic staff, once and within a short period of time (Bordens & Abbott, 2011). Within the correlational design, the researcher correlated the responses on appropriateness of recruitment and selection with those on extent of employee commitment. Within the mixed method approach, both quantitative and qualitative data were collected and analyzed to acquire in-depth understanding of the effect of recruitment and selection practices on employee commitment. Data collection was done using a questionnaire adapted from Rich *et al.* (2010) based on Kahn's (1990), Meyer and Smith (1993) and Allen and Meyer (1997). The items measuring the variables were based on a five-point Likert scale, with the following response modes; 1 = Strongly Disagree 2 = Disagree 3 = Undecided 4 = Agree 5 = Strongly Agree. In addition, an interview guide was used as a supplementary tool for qualitative data. The questionnaire was tested for validity through content, face, construct, confirmatory and exploratory factor analysis as well as reliability tests using Cronbach Alpha Coefficient. The data collected was coded and entered into the computer using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) and analyzed using frequency counts, means and standard deviations at a univariate level. At a bivariate and multivariate, the dependent variable (DV), employee commitment was correlated with the independent variables (IV), namely recruitment and selection using Pearson's Linear Correlation Coefficient and Hierarchical multivariate linear regression.

Study area

The study was conducted among private chartered universities in the Kampala Metropolitan Area (KMA), which is comprised of Kampala capital city authority and the surrounding districts of Mpigi, Wakiso, and Mukono. The universities found here are 11, out of these eight were selected including Kampala International University (KIU), Islamic University in Uganda (IUIU), Kampala University (KU), Ndejje University (NU), Nkumba University (NUU), International University of East Africa (IUEA), Uganda Christian University (UCU), and Uganda Martyrs University (UMU). These universities were selected basing on the study context since the study was carried out in KMA, all districts were accounted for. Also, because they are fully recognized by MOES, National council for higher Education and employ a big number of foreign staffs from different parts of the world.

Results

Demographic Characteristics

The data on demographic characteristics of the respondents in the study in Table 1 show that the modal percentage (57.7%) of the respondents was of those that were between 20 to 39 years, male (69.2%); master's degree (53.8%), worked 5-9 years (37.5%) and 1 but less than 5 years (28.8%), nationality (36.5%) were from Nigeria followed by (28.4%) from Kenya, (35.1%) were from KIU, (31.7%) of the foreign academic staff were at the level of assistant lecturer, followed by (29.3%) at the lecturer level. Differences in the totals of the sample were as a result of missing data. The results on demographic characteristics are presented in Table 1.1

Table 1. 1: Descriptive profile for Gender, Education Level, Age, Working Experience, Nationality, University Name and Job Position

Gender	Frequency	Percent	Education Level	Frequency	Percent
Male	144	69.2	Degree	9	4.3
Female	64	30.8	Masters	112	53.8
Total	208	100.0	PhD	87	41.8
			Total	**208**	**100.0**
Age	Frequency	Percent	**Working Experience**	Frequency	Percent
20-39	120	57.7	Below 5	60	28.8
40-59	81	38.9	5-9 years	78	37.5
60 Above	7	3.4	10-14 years	48	23.1
Total	208	100.0	Over 15 years	22	10.6
			Total	208	100.0
Nationality	Frequency	Percent	University Name	Frequency	Percent
Kenyan	59	28.4	KIU	73	35.1
Tanzanian	36	17.3	KU	21	10.1
Nigerian	76	36.5	NUU	20	9.6
Indian	16	7.7	IUEA	15	7.2

Rwandese	12	5.8	NU	18	8.7
Korean	7	3.4	UCU	21	10.1
Burundian	2	1.0	UMU	26	12.5
Total	**208**	**100.0**	IUIU	14	6.7
			Total	**208**	**100.0**

Job Position		
	Frequency	**Percent**
Teaching Assistant	9	4.3
Assistant Lecturer	66	31.7
Lecturer	61	29.3
Senior Lecturer	45	21.6
Associate Professor	20	9.6
Professor	7	3.4
Total	208	100.0

CFA Measurement Model for Recruitment and Selection

Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) is a special form of factor analysis that is used to test whether measures of a construct are consistent with a researcher's understanding of the nature of that construct. Confirmatory factor analysis is a way of testing how well measured variables represent a smaller number of constructs, which confirm pre-specified relationship (Hair *et al*., 2016). confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was used to establish whether the manifest variables loaded well with the underlying latent variables using data collected from the main study. The Confirmatory Factor Analysis was further used to measure whether measures of the constructs were consistent with the researcher's understanding of the nature of the constructs based on the collected data.

One dimension was confirmed external converging with Average Variance Explained (AVE)= 0.314199 with four items or indicators significantly loading to the dimension. External with four items RER 2, RER3, R4R 4 and RER 6. Therefore, four items were confirmed to measure recruitment and selection.
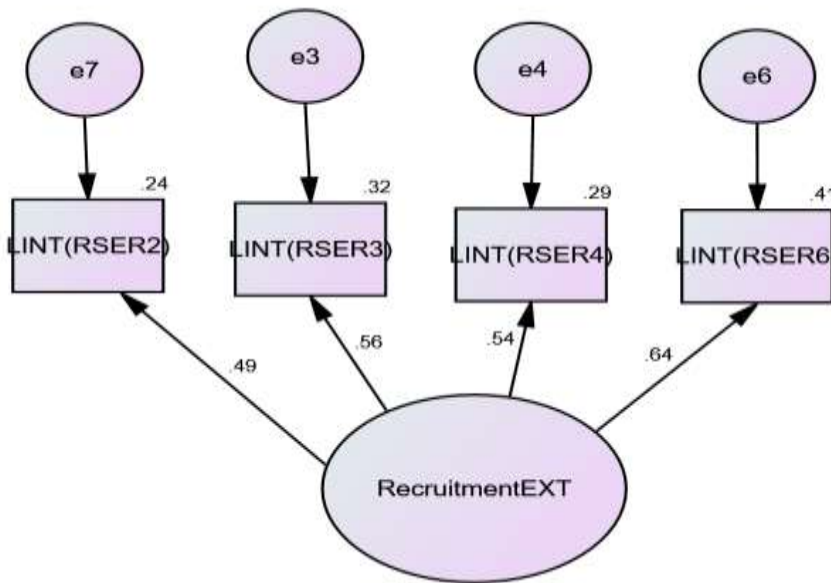

Figure 1.1: CFA Measurement Model for Recruitment and Selection

Table 1.2: Convergent validity and Composite Reliability for Recruitment and Selection

		Estimate (Λ)	$Λ^2$	$Ɛ=1-Λ^2$	AVE	CR
RSER2_1	Recruitment	0.491	0.241081	0.758919	0.314199	0.644894
RSER3_1	Recruitment	0.565	0.319225	0.680775		
RSER4_1	Recruitment	0.538	0.289444	0.710556		
RSER6_1	Recruitment	0.638	0.407044	0.592956		
	Total	2.232	1.256794	2.743206		

Table 1.3: Regression Weights and Model fit summary for Recruitment and Selection

Regression Weights

			B	Beta	S.E.	C.R.	P
RSER3_1	<---	RecruitmentEXT	1.205	.565	.266	4.535	***
RSER4_1	<---	RecruitmentEXT	.924	.538	.208	4.453	***
RSER6_1	<---	RecruitmentEXT	1.245	.638	.269	4.638	***
RSER2_1	<---	RecruitmentEXT	1.000	.491			

Model Fit Summary

NPAR	CMIN	DF	P	CMIN/DF
8	5.504	2	.064	2.752
RMR	**GFI**	**AGFI**	**PGFI**	
.046	.987	.936	.197	
NFI	**RFI**	**IFI**	**TLI**	**CFI**
.946	.838	.965	.891	.964
RMSEA				
.092				

The goodness of fit index GFI= 0.987, Adjusted goodness of fit index AGFI= 0.936, NFI= 0.946, RFI= 0.838, IFI= 0.965, TLI= 0.891, CFI= 0.964 with RMSEA of 0.092 and probability greater than 0.05 an indication that the measurement model was fit.

CFA Measurement Model for Employee Commitment

Two dimensions were confirmed Affective and Continuance converging, Average Variance Explained (AVE)= 0.5457and AVE=0.5505 with five items or indicators significantly loading to the two dimensions. Affective was discriminated SQRT of AVE = 0.7387 with three items AC 2, AC 3 and AC 4 while continuance SQRT of AVE = 0.7419 greater than the correlation between Affective and Continuance (r = 0.5100) with two items CC 2 and CC 3 as shown in the figure and tables. Therefore, five items were confirmed to measure employee commitment with two for Continuance and three for Affective.
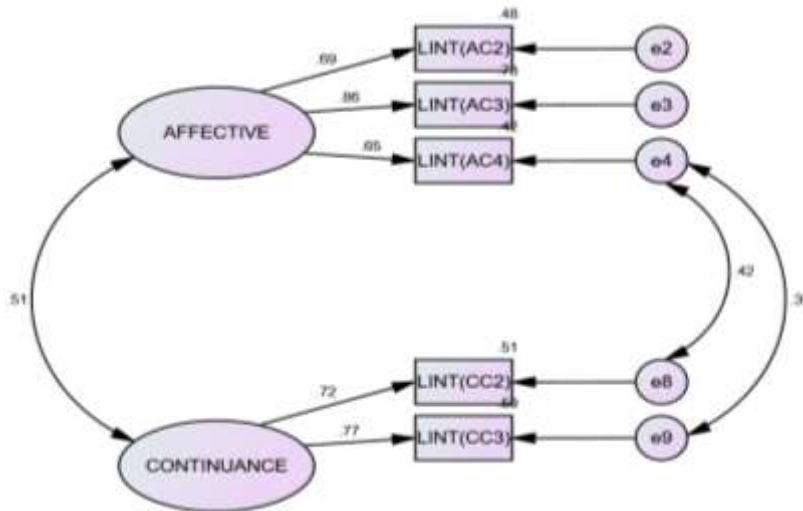

Figure 1.2: CFA Measurement Model for Employee Commitment

Table 1.4: **Convergent validity and Composite Reliability for Employee Commitment**

		Estimate	λ^2	$\varepsilon=1-\lambda^2$	AVE	CR	SQRT(AVE)
AC2_1	AFFECTIVE	0.695	0.4830	0.5170	0.5457	0.7802	0.7387
AC3_1	AFFECTIVE	0.856	0.7327	0.2672			
AC4_1	AFFECTIVE	0.649	0.4212	0.5788			
TOTAL		2.2	1.6370	1.3630			
CC2_1	CONTINUANCE	0.716	0.5127	0.4873	0.5505	0.7099	0.7419
CC3_1	CONTINUANCE	0.767	0.5883	0.4117			
TOTAL		1.483	1.1009	0.8991			

Discriminant Validity

	AFFECTIVE	CONTINUANCE

AFFECTIVE	**0.7387**	
CONTINUANCE	0.5100	**0.7420**

Table 1.5: Regression Weights and Model Summary for Employee Commitment

Regression Weights

			B	Beta	S.E.	C.R.	P
AC2_1	<---	AFFECTIVE	.639	.695	.081	7.928	***
AC3_1	<---	AFFECTIVE	1.000	.856			
AC4_1	<---	AFFECTIVE	.753	.649	.098	7.655	***
CC2_1	<---	CONTINUANCE	.900	.716	.178	5.065	***
CC3_1	<---	CONTINUANCE	1.000	.767			

Model fit summary

NPAR	**CMIN**	**DF**	**P**	**CMIN/DF**
13	1.348	2	.510	.674
RMR	**GFI**	**AGFI**	**PGFI**	
.012	.997	.981	.133	
NFI	**RFI**	**IFI**	**TLI**	**CFI**
.996	.979	1.002	1.011	1.000
RMSEA				
.000				

The goodness of fit index GFI= 0.997, Adjusted goodness of fit index AGFI= 0.981, NFI= 0.996, RFI= 0.979, IFI= 1.002, TLI= 1.011, CFI= 1.000 with RMSEA of 0.000 and probability greater than 0.05 an indication that the measurement model was a good fit.

Descriptive Statistics for Recruitment and Selection

The descriptive statistics on recruitment and selection were generated to ascertain the extent to which the selected private universities adhere to the expected standard practices. The foreign academic staff perceptions were collected to provide evidences for this assessment, based on a five-point Likert scale instrument. Means and standard deviations were used to analyse the ratings of these foreign academic staff. The results are presented in table 1.2. The following scale was employed in interpretation of the means;

Mean ranges	*Response Modes*	*Interpretation*
4.21 - 5.00	Strongly agree	Very effective
3.41 - 4.20	Agree	Effective
2.61 - 3.40	Undecided	Fairly effective
1.81 - 2.60	Disagree	Ineffective
1.00 - 1.80	Strongly disagree	Very ineffective

Table 1.6: Descriptive Statistics for Recruitment and Selection

Items on external recruitment and selection	Mean	SD	Rank
University staff exchange programs are usually used to bring in employees in the university	3.04	1.173	2
External agents are sometimes used to identify and attract employees to this university	3.03	1.227	3
Headhunting for specific skills is sometimes used in staff recruitment	3.60	.989	4
Unsolicited applicant or walk-ins are sometimes used in the recruitment process.	2.97	1.124	6
Average Mean	**3.16**	**.785**	

Results in Table 1.6 indicate that on the overall, recruitment and selection practices were rated to be fairly effective by the foreign academic staff, with an average mean of 3.16 with a relatively low standard deviation of 0.785, indicating that the responses are less dispersed. These results however, show that on average, the foreign academic staff perceived these recruitment practices to be effective on Headhunting (mean = 3.60: SD = 0.989). The results suggest that the selected universities are good on (1) some recruitment practices and fairly effective on others (3), implying that they have both strength and weaknesses in their recruitment and selection practices.

Descriptive Statistics for Employee Commitment

Table 1.7: Descriptive Statistics for Employee Commitment

Affective Commitment	Mean	SD	Rank
I feel emotionally attached to this University	3.58	1.005	2
I feel a strong sense of belonging to this University	3.27	1.278	3
The University has a great deal of personal meaning to me	2.85	1.269	4
Average Mean	**3.23**	**.985**	

Continuance Commitment			
I feel that there are too few options to consider leaving this University.	2.81	1.176	2
One of the major reasons I continue to work for this University is that leaving would require considerable personal sacrifice	2.80	1.219	3
Average Mean	**2.80**	**1.054**	
Grand Mean Employee Commitment	**3.06**	**.876**	

Results in Table 1.7 indicate an overall mean of 3.06, with a standard deviation of 0.876, which shows that on average, the foreign academic staff reported the level of their commitment to be generally fairly high, with less deviations.

Results indicate that, regarding affective commitment, out of the three items, one was rated high and only two were rated to be fairly high. Results indicated that out of two common measures of employee commitment (affective and continuance) were rated to be fairly effective, with affective commitment (average mean = 3.23) being rated as the highest, and continuance commitment, with (average mean rating of 2.80). This finding reveals that the commitment for the foreign academic staff to continue serving their respective institutions is generally fair not high, which brings out the fact that since they are on a foreign land, any time they expect to go back to their home countries. On the other hand, their affective commitment is high, indicating that they like their job but also like to go back to their home countries, may be after some time.

Correlation

Hair *et al*., (2014) observe that correlation is a measure of the linear relationship between two or more variables. The two variables could be positively related, negatively related, or not related at all. Field (2005) suggests that bivariate correlation can be performed by running Pearson's product–moment correlation coefficient, Spearman's rho correlation coefficients, and Kendall's tau correlations coefficients. However, Field (2005) recommends Pearson's correlation coefficients because it can test studies using both directional and non-directional hypotheses. The Pearson's correlations results generated from the data indicated that all study variables were positively related. The correlations result as presented in tables 1.8, indicate that correlations among the main study variables are positive.

Table 1.8: Pearson Linear Correlations between recruitment and Selection and Employee Commitment

Variables correlated	R-value	Sig.
Recruitment and Selection Vs Affective commitment	.376**	.001
Recruitment and Selection Vs Continuance Commitment	.324**	.001
Recruitment and Selection Vs Overall Employee Commitment	.410**	.001

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

Table 1.8 indicated that recruitment and selection had a positive and significant relationship with employee commitment (r=0.410, p<0.01). Recruitment and selection also had a positive and significant relationship with affective commitment (r=0.376, p<0.01) and continuance commitment (r = 0.324, p<0.01). This implied that an improvement in recruitment and selection practices increases staff commitment in terms of affective and continuance of foreign academic staff.

Regression Analysis

Field and Hole (2003) argue that regression analysis is one way of predicting outcome from one or more predictor variables. The regression analysis is used to predict the values of the dependent variable (DV) from independent variables (IV). Field (2005) observes that simple regression predicts an outcome variable from a single predictor variable while multiple regressions predict an outcome from several predictors. Therefore, when running regression analysis, a bad model will have a regression coefficient of zero, which implies that a unit change in the predictor variable results will have no change on the predicted value of outcomes. Consequently, it logically follows that if a variable significantly predicts an outcome, then it should have a Beta (*b*-value) significantly different from zero (Field & Hole, 2003; Field, 2005). The coefficient of determination denoted by *R* is used to explain by how much the predictor variable(s) explain the predicted value of outcome (Field & Hole, 2003; Field, 2005).

Table 1.9 Hierarchical Multiple Linear regression of Recruitment and Selection and Employee Commitment.

Variable	Model 1		Model 2	
	B	Beta	B	Beta
Constant	4.005**		2.136**	
Gender	-.237	-.125	-.137	-.073
Age	-.133	-.086	-.109	-.070
Education	-.327	-.212	-.109	-.071
Experience	.071	.078	.092	.101
Position	.086	.109	-.032	-.041
R&S			.441**	.395**
R^2	0.043		0.187	
Adj R^2	0.020		0.163	
R^2 change	0.043		0.144	
F change	1.831		35.573	

Sig. F change	0.108	0.000
F	1.831	7.716
Sig.	.108	.001

Dependent variable: Employee Commitment

** Regression coefficient is significant at the 0.01 level (2 tailed)

Model 1

When the control or confounding variables of Gender, Age, Education, Experience and Position were entered into model one (or equation one), the model yielded non-significant results accounting for only 4.3 percent of the variation in employee commitment (Adjusted R-square = 0.020), with FΔ = 1.831, p>0.05. Out of these confounding variables, education level (beta =- .327; p<0.05) proved to have some significant positive effect on employee commitment.

Model 2

In model two, recruitment and selection was entered or added into the equation and it accounted for an extra 14.4 percent (R-square change of 0.144) variability in employee commitment, pushing the total explanatory power to 18.7 percent (R-Square of 0.187). Recruitment and selection proved to have a significant positive effect on employee commitment (beta =0.395; p<0.01). This finding does not support the hypothesis that **H$_{01}$:** Recruitment and selection has no significant effect on employee commitment.

Overall, the model explains or accounts for 18.7 percent (R-Square of 0.187) of the variation in employee commitment of foreign staff. But going by the adjusted R-square, the model explains or accounts for 16.3 percent of the variation in employee commitment (adjusted R-square of 0.163). Thus, this means that the remaining 83.7 percent variability in employee commitment is explained by factors not considered under this study.

Discussions

This study's findings revealed a positive significant effect for recruitment and selection on employee commitment among foreign academic staff. Thus, the null hypothesis that recruitment and selection has no significant effect on employee commitment was not supported. The recruitment and selection practices were rated by the responding foreign academic staff to be fairly effective, while commitment was rated to be moderately high. The results from regression analysis logically support the descriptive finding. It is logical to believe in the finding that due to fair recruitment and selection practices; the commitment of these academic staff is also moderate. This gives an implication of a linear connection, that an improvement in recruitment and selection practices will positively increase employee commitment among these foreign academic staff. The findings from some key informants support this argument, suggesting the aspects where the sampled universities are doing well and where they do not. In one of the views of a key informant, it was revealed that;

p1; "*The recruitment committee was able to carry out background checks on my academics and my previous work place, which is a very good practice to verify qualifications and credentials; The recruitment team was able to carry out multiple assessment methods including interviews, tests and reference checks for a holistic view; There was a detailed job description attached to the advert that outlined the roles, responsibilities, qualifications and expectations; There was transparent communication, which kept me informed through the hiring process*"

p.1 The university advertised for a specific skill which I possessed and this made me considered for this post. This university was looking for a candidate with a PhD in microbiology and had ever served in managerial positions. This opened up a door for me through headhunting and this made me more committed with my job given the fact that I was able to fit in the job.

This finding suggests that any plans to increase employee's commitment in Ugandan private universities must address issues of recruitment and selection practices. Based on these results, it may be logical to argue that the low levels of employee commitment reported in the Ugandan private universities (Angulo & Walubiri, 2013; Namirimu, 2018) has a strong connection to ineffective and unfair recruitment and selection practices. Evidences of fair recruitment and selection practices reported in this study are an indication for some of the possible sources of this problem (low employee commitment) and other consequent problems these universities are facing, such as low enrolment, poor revenues, poor quality of graduates, among others. From qualitative data, it was indicated that the recruitment processes of many private universities have several loopholes, hindering selection of the best qualified staff. It came out from one of the interviewees that vetting documents to ascertain the best qualified candidate is given slim attention in some universities;

p2; …*Sometimes they bring in people when their documents are not vetted for the university to ascertain whether they are fake or not, especially the foreign academic staff, most of their papers have to be checked with the universities where they studied such that they ascertain or prove whether their documents are right or not.*

When staff perceive the recruitment and selection procedures to be unfair and inefficient, their belief and confidence in that organization reduces, which may be the reason for the low levels of commitment in these private universities. Given that the study dealt with foreign academic staff, they need much security in the recruitment and selection procedures for them to get committed to the job. From one of the participants, it was reported that some staff are not oriented after being given the job, something which lowers their confidence;

p4. I was not oriented and inducted for the position that I hold, whatever I learnt I learnt it by getting a challenge and ask a colleague, how to do this, how to go about this, so the colleague helped me but I was not helped by the HR department, I was not given someone to induct me or orient, I just found my way to the head of department to a colleague in the department and they would really help me out.

p2. Our university normally advertise in new papers and on the website for every new opportunity or opening with in the university. This makes most the internal employee dissatisfied because it shows as if they lack the necessary skills in order to be considered. This has affected on their level of commitment to their work.

These views suggest that, the interviewed participants also believed that where recruitment and selection procedures are effectively adhered to, the commitment of staff will be high and vice versa. This agrees with the social exchange theory (Homans, 1958) which asserts that what you give is what you get in return. Thus, employees who are recruited through fair adherence to recruitment and selection practices, give back a moderate level of commitment in return. The implication to organisations is that an improvement in recruitment and selection practices/procedures will increase the level of employee commitment and vice versa.

The findings of this study agree with several other findings of previous researchers; for example, the findings by Wanous *et al*. (2017) indicated that employees who went through effective recruitment and selection procedures, had higher affective and normative commitment; a study by Chambel and Castanheira (2016) found out that effective recruitment and selection practices positively affected affective commitment among staff; Heslin and Vandewalle (2015) also found a positive link between recruitment and selection practices and employee commitment; Cable and Turban (2018) presented similar findings, revealing that when employees perceive the process of recruitment and selection to be fair, their levels of affective commitment will be high and vice versa. Similar findings were presented by Bauer *et al*. (2019); Weiting *et al*. (2022); Jafri *et al*. (2020); Kamila (2022); Paudel and Thapa (2022); Islam *et al*. (2018); Jafri *et al*. (2020); Liu *et al*. (2019).

Some previous studies do not agree with the findings of this study. For example, Bell and Villado (2017) did not believe in the findings of this study, contending that some recruitment and selection practices may result into bringing in employees who do not fit, but just because they went through paper screening, which does not guarantee good performance. As a result, such practices may bring in employees with low levels of affective commitment. Others like Baldwin *et al*. (2017); Nkomo *et al*. (2018), argued that if the employees perceived perceive the recruitment and selection processes to be unfair or discriminatory, their levels of commitment will be lower and vice versa. This thus suggest that the organisation may stick to recruitment and selection practices, but if employees see the process as unfair, their commitment levels may be negatively affected. This implies that it is important to convince the employees being recruited that the process is fair.

Even though most of the previous empirical findings, just like the current one, tend to suggest that effective implementation of HRM practices boosts employees' performance and therefore their level of commitment, they do not agree on the list of the best HRM practices organisations should stick to. These studies come out with different practices, making implementation difficult. Even though this study examined a set of two recruitment and selection practices, results indicated that internal recruitment has a stronger influence which is similar to some of the previous studies and not similar to others.

Most of the previous studies support the finding that internal recruitment positively and significantly influences employee commitment for those newly recruited and the existing ones. Among those findings, we have Lu *et al*. (2018); Fernández-Méndez *et al*. (2020); Sun *et al*. (2021); de Melo *et al*. (2019) and so on. These scholars have tried to explain why internal recruitment and select has a significant effect on commitment. For example, Lu *et al*. (2018) explained that internal recruitment increases employees' perception of justice, which increases their affective commitment. Fernández-Méndez *et al*. (2020) argued that effective internal recruitment practices foster a sense of identification with the organization, which also increases affective commitment. Similarly, Sun *et al*. (2021) explained that fair and transparent internal recruitments practices enhance employees' trust in the organization, which increases their affective commitment.

Other studies which indicate that that internal recruitment and selection is more important in enhancing employee commitment as compared to external include; Zhang *et al*. (2022), who showed that, through internal recruitment and selection practices, existing employees are involved in the selection process, so they will perceive the process to be fair hence increasing their commitment; Collins and Smith (2010) also showed that internal promotions and job rotation programs increase employee commitment since they provide an opportunity for career development and growth. Conway *et al.* (2014) explained that through internal recruitment, existing employees get a feedback from their bosses that they trust them and can continue to do so with even more or additional responsibilities, promotions and growth. Fakhar *et al.* (2019) talked about one form of internal recruitment called job posting, which involves advertising open positions to current employees and calling them to apply, showing that it opens up opportunities for career advancement and skill development, which increases commitment. Jaskyte *et al.* (2018) explained that employee referrals increase a sense of social support, job satisfaction and commitment. On the other hand, studies have provided an indirect implication that organisations should prefer using internal recruitment than external. For example, de Melo *et al*. (2019) explained that, external recruitments where the internal employees are not given chance to participate, are viewed as lacking transparency and trust and this can result into negative emotions, which eventually reduces affective commitment among employees.

Conclusion

The findings showed that recruitment and selection practices can significantly influence commitment of foreign academic staff in private universities Kampala Uganda. Thus, an improvement in these practices of an organization will likely increase commitment among the foreign academic staff. External recruitment selection practices such as headhunting, external agents, university exchange programs and unsolicited applicants has a stronger effect on commitment of foreign academic staff because it is what most of them go through to be recruited.

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