ASSESSING THE EFFECT OF EMPLOYEE REWARDS ON EMPLOYEE COMMITMENT IN FORAFRIKA, A HUMANITARIAN ORGANIZATION IN SOUTH SUDAN

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Declaration

I, **Lobson Jeniffer Guo**, hereby declare that this dissertation report, titled: “Assessing the Effect of Employee Rewards on Employee Commitment in ForAfrika, a Humanitarian Organization in South Sudan,” is my original work. All external materials consulted have been fully acknowledged and referenced. This work has not been previously submitted, in whole or in part, to any other university or institution for an academic award.

Signed:

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Approval

This dissertation report has been submitted for examination with the approval of the following supervisor:

Name: **Dr. Christopher Muganga**

Signature:

Date: **28/05/2026**

Dedication

This study is dedicated to my beloved family for their constant love and support. I also dedicate it to my mentors and colleagues for their inspiration and encouragement. Above all, I thank God for granting me wisdom, guidance, and strength throughout this journey.

Acknowledgement

I wish to express my sincere gratitude to all who supported the successful completion of this study. My heartfelt thanks go to my supervisor, Dr. Muganga Christopher, for his guidance and encouragement throughout the research process. I am also grateful to the management and staff of ForAfrika South Sudan for their cooperation and valuable input. Lastly, I deeply appreciate my family, friends, and everyone who offered support during this journey.

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Definitions of Key Terms

1. **Employee Rewards**: The entire package of extrinsic (financial) and intrinsic (non-financial) returns an organization provides to its employees in exchange for their efforts and contributions.
2. **Salaries**: The fixed financial compensation paid to an employee on a regular basis, serving as the primary exchange for labor rendered.
3. **Incentives**: Variable financial and non-salary benefits, often conditional on performance or specific organizational circumstances, used to motivate behavior beyond standard duties.
4. **Recognition:** The non-financial, often public or private, acknowledgment, praise, or expression of appreciation given to employees for their valuable contributions, efforts, or achievements.
5. **Employee Commitment:** A psychological state that describes an employee's relationship with the organization and has implications for the decision to remain a member (Meyer & Allen, 1991).
6. **Affective Commitment**: The employee's emotional attachment to, identification with, and involvement in the organization (the desire to stay) (Meyer & Allen, 1991)
7. **Continuance Commitment:** The employee's recognition of the costs (economic or social) associated with leaving the organization (the need to stay) (Meyer & Allen, 1991).
8. **Normative Commitment**: The employee's feeling of obligation or moral duty to remain with the organization (the ought to stay) (Meyer & Allen, 1991).

Abstract

This study examined the effect of three employee reward components (salaries, incentives, and recognition) on employee commitment (affective, continuance, and normative) within For Afrika, a Humanitarian Organization in South Sudan. Operating in a challenging, high-turnover post-conflict environment, high staff commitment is vital for the sustainability of humanitarian efforts. The study employed a quantitative cross-sectional design and collected data from a sample of 200 employees using a structured questionnaire. Data analysis included descriptive statistics (Mean, SD, Frequencies), bivariate analysis (Chi-square test, Mean comparison), and linear regression (Simple and Multiple) using SPSS.

A total of 200 employees were included in the study. The majority of the respondents were Male (60.0%), and relatively young, with the largest proportion (46.0%) falling within the 26–35 age group. All respondents had worked in the Organization for at least one year. The findings revealed that all three reward components significantly and positively affect employee commitment ($p<0.05$). Specifically, recognition was found to be the strongest predictor of employee commitment ($\beta \approx 0.55$, $p<0.001$), followed by incentives ($\beta \approx 0.45$, $p<0.001$), while salaries showed a significant but more moderate effect ($\beta \approx 0.28$, $p<0.05$). The correlation analysis confirmed the strongest positive relationship between recognition and commitment ($r=0.54$). In conclusion, a strategic reward system prioritizing non-financial recognition alongside fair financial incentives is essential for cultivating a highly committed workforce. Hence, Humanitarian

Organizations can optimize their reward portfolio to improve staff retention and operational effectiveness in areas like South Sudan.

Keywords: Employee Rewards, Employee Commitment, South Sudan

Chapter One: Introduction

1.0 Background

The success of any organization is largely dependent on the quality, motivation and commitment of its employees (Siddiqui, 2014). As the backbone of organizational operations, employees directly influence the achievement of organizational goals and objectives. Among the various factors contributing to organizational effectiveness, employee commitment has emerged as a critical driver of performance, stability, and continuity (Baker et al., 2013; Stackhouse et al., 2022). In today's competitive and dynamic work environments, organizations particularly those operating in fragile contexts such as South Sudan require a committed workforce to maintain service delivery and reduce employee`s intentions to leave (Murray & Holmes, 2021). For international organizations where operations are complex and often resource-constrained, employee commitment is especially vital to ensuring success and organizational resilience.

In the field of human resource management, employee rewards such as salaries and incentives have been widely recognized as key determinants of commitment and motivation. Rewards comprise both financial aspects (salaries, and incentives) and non-financial aspects (recognition, and professional growth opportunities) (Yousaf et al., 2014). Each of these reward elements contribute uniquely to fostering organizational commitment.

Salaries are a foundational component of financial rewards. Adequate and equitable compensation signals that the organization values its workforce and acknowledges their contributions. When employees perceive salaries as fair and consistent with their roles and performance, their sense of trust and emotional investment in the organization increases (Yousaf et al., 2014). However, where salaries are perceived as inadequate or inconsistent, dissatisfaction may grow, leading to disengagement and higher turnover.

Incentives, which may include bonuses, hardship allowances, and performance-based benefits, serve as additional motivational levers. They help align individual efforts with organizational objectives and are especially relevant in challenging environments like South Sudan, where working conditions are difficult and staff turnover is high. Research has shown that well-structured incentive systems can enhance motivation, productivity, and job satisfaction (Van Dijk & Schodl, 2015; Yousaf et al., 2014).

Recognition, a key non-financial reward, is often overlooked but can have a profound psychological impact on employee commitment. Acknowledgment of effort, whether through verbal praise, awards, or public appreciation, reinforces employees' sense of purpose and belonging. Recognition meets intrinsic motivational needs, especially when it is consistent, genuine, and linked to organizational values (Daoanis, 2012).

Despite a robust body of research supporting the role of rewards in enhancing employee commitment, challenges persist in identifying which specific reward components have the greatest impact under varying conditions. Moreover, limited empirical research has been conducted within fragile, resource-constrained environments such as South Sudan, where unique contextual dynamics such as insecurity, stress, and resource shortages affect the relevance and impact of reward systems.

Therefore, this study set out to assess the effect of salaries, incentives, and recognition on employee commitment within a humanitarian organization (ForAfrika Organization) in South Sudan. The findings will provide evidence-based insights to guide the design of more responsive and effective reward structures aimed at improving employee retention and strengthening organizational performance in similarly complex settings.

1.1 Problem Statement

Employee commitment is a key driver of organizational success, particularly in complex and fragile environments. Organizations operating in such environments depend heavily on a dedicated and motivated workforce to deliver consistent services despite socio-political and economic instability. However, retaining and engaging committed employees remains a significant challenge.

Reward systems both financial (e.g., salaries, bonuses) and non-financial (e.g., recognition, training opportunities, career growth) play a vital role in shaping employee attitudes, motivation, and commitment. When employees perceive the rewards (salaries, incentives and recognition) they receive as fair, meaningful, and aligned with their efforts, they are more likely to exhibit loyalty and long-term commitment to their organization. Conversely, inadequate, inconsistent, or poorly communicated reward systems can lead to dissatisfaction, disengagement, and higher staff turnover.

In many organizations, there is growing concern that current reward mechanisms may not fully reflect employee contributions or effectively promote commitment. While global evidence suggests that well-structured reward systems are associated with higher levels of employee commitment, limited empirical research exists on how these dynamics play out in post-conflict settings like South Sudan. This knowledge gap makes it difficult for human resource managers to design contextually appropriate reward systems that can enhance commitment among employees.

This study set out to bridge this knowledge gap by assessing the effect of salaries, incentives, and recognition on employee commitment within ForAfrika-South Sudan. The study aimed to generate actionable insights that can inform the development of more effective and context-sensitive reward strategies.

1.2 General Objectives

To assess the effect of salaries, incentives, and recognition on employee commitment in a ForAfrika-South Sudan.

1.2.1 Specific Objectives

1. To determine the effect of salaries on employee commitment in a ForAfrika - South Sudan.
2. To examine the effect of incentives on employee commitment in a ForAfrika-South Sudan.
3. To determine the effect of recognition on employee commitment in ForAfrika - South Sudan.

1.2.2 Research Questions

1. What is the effect of salaries on employee commitment in ForAfrika-South Sudan?
2. How do incentives affect employee commitment in ForAfrika -South Sudan?
3. What is the effect of employee recognition on their level of commitment in ForAfrika - South Sudan?

1.3 Justification

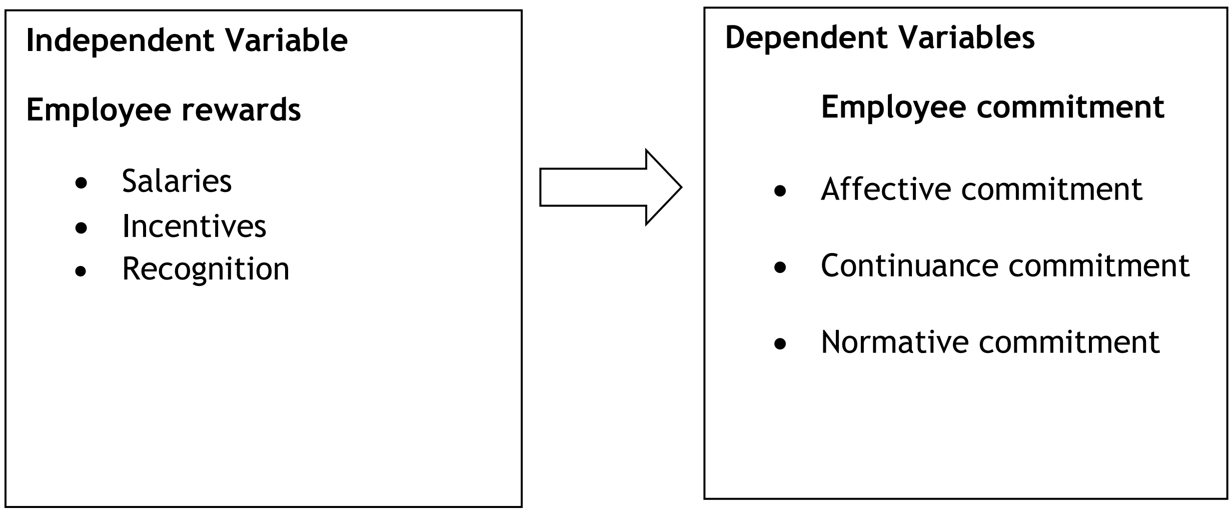
This study is significant in several respects. **Academically**, it contributes to the growing body of knowledge on the role of employee rewards (salaries, incentives and recognition) in shaping organizational behavior particularly within international organizations operating in fragile and under-researched contexts like South Sudan.

While substantial literature exists on the effect of rewards in stable settings, there is limited empirical evidence on how reward systems affect employee commitment in post-conflict environments. This study will provide context-specific insights that can inform future research and support comparative analyses across different organizational and geographic settings.

Practically, the findings will be valuable to human resource managers, team leaders, and policymakers within the Humanitarian system and other international organizations working in similar environments. By assessing how employees perceive current reward systems—both financial and non-financial, the study will help identify gaps, strengths, and areas for improvement. The resulting recommendations can support the design of more equitable and motivating reward structures that enhance employee commitment, reduce turnover, and improve organizational performance.

Furthermore, organizations in dynamic and challenging contexts like South Sudan face unique human resource challenges, including high staff attrition, limited career growth opportunities, and constrained operational budgets. Understanding how tailored and well-communicated reward strategies can reinforce commitment will equip decision-makers with practical tools to retain talent and sustain morale in complex environments.

1.4 Conceptual Framework



The conceptual framework **(Figure 1)** illustrates the relationship between employee rewards (independent variable) and employee commitment (dependent variable). The diagram visually represents how **employee rewards** (independent variable) effects **employee Commitment** (dependent variables) (Meyer & Allen, 1991; Yousaf et al., 2014).

Chapter Two: Literature Review

2.1. Introduction

This chapter reviews theoretical and empirical literature on the effect of employee rewards specifically **salaries, incentives, and recognition** on **employee commitment**. The review is framed using Meyer and Allen's (1991) three-component model of commitment: **affective, continuance, and normative commitment**. This framework provides a structured basis for assessing how different reward strategies affect employee engagement, retention, and loyalty. Special emphasis is placed on the relevance of these relationships in fragile and post-conflict environments, with a focus on international organizations such as ForAfrika - South Sudan

2.2 Concept of Employee Rewards

Employee rewards encompass the various forms of compensation and recognition provided by organizations to motivate, retain, and recognize the contributions of employees. Rewards can be broadly categorized into:

- **Financial rewards**: salaries, bonuses, allowances, health insurance, and retirement benefits.
- **Non-financial rewards**: recognition, professional development opportunities, flexible work arrangements, and opportunities for promotion.

According to Yousaf et al. (2014), effective reward systems serve not only as mechanisms for motivation but also as expressions of the organization's value placed on its workforce (Yousaf et al., 2014). When rewards are perceived as fair, consistent, and commensurate with performance, employees are more likely to exhibit organizational commitment (Van Dijk & Schodl, 2015; Yousaf et al., 2014). In contrast, misalignment between employee expectations and the reward system can reduce morale and increase turnover especially in high-stress, resource-constrained contexts such as humanitarian organizations in South Sudan.

2.3 Employee Commitment

Employee commitment refers to the psychological attachment an employee feels toward their organization. Employee commitment is classified into three (3) dimensions (Meyer & Allen, 1991):

2.3. 1 Affective commitment

Affective commitment is the employee's emotional attachment to, identification with, and involvement in the organization. Employees who experience high affective commitment choose to remain in the organization because they want to. This form of commitment is influenced by factors such as personal characteristics (e.g., personality, value alignment), structural characteristics (e.g., organizational hierarchy), Job-related factors (e.g., job satisfaction, autonomy), and work experiences (e.g., recognition, support, fairness).

Recognition, a core focus of this study, plays a significant role in fostering affective commitment. Employees who feel valued and appreciated are more likely to be emotionally engaged and loyal to the organization. Studies (e.g., Daoanis, 2012) show that even in the absence of financial incentives, consistent recognition can enhance employees' willingness to go above and beyond.

2.3.2 Continuance commitment

Continuance commitment is based on an employee's perception of the costs associated with leaving the organization. It develops when employees feel that the economic and personal sacrifices of quitting (e.g., loss of salary, relocation, benefits) outweigh the benefits of change.

Salaries are a key driver of continuance commitment. When employees perceive their compensation as competitive and sustainable, they are more likely to remain with the organization—not necessarily out of passion, but due to rational cost-benefit calculations. In post-conflict settings where alternative employment options are limited, financial rewards play an even more pivotal role in retention (Siddiqui, 2014).

2.3.3 Normative commitment

Normative commitment reflects an employee's sense of moral obligation to stay with the organization. It may arise from internalized social and cultural values or from organizational practices that instill a sense of duty. For example, when an organization invests in an employee's education, training, or onboarding, the individual may feel compelled to reciprocate with loyalty and service (Meyer & Allen, 1991).

Incentives, particularly non-salary benefits like training, mentorship, and internal promotions, are often associated with the development of normative commitment.

Employees who perceive the organization as having invested in their growth may feel a duty to remain. Additionally, in cultures where loyalty is a valued norm, organizational socialization can reinforce this obligation (Aguinis et al., 2013).

2.4 Effect of Salaries on Employee Commitment

Salaries are the most direct form of financial reward and serve as the cornerstone of any reward system. Empirical studies have shown that competitive and regular salaries contribute significantly to **continuance commitment**, as employees consider the financial cost of leaving the organization (Siddiqui, 2014).

In contexts like South Sudan, where alternative employment opportunities are scarce, salaries not only satisfy basic needs but also create a dependency that anchors employees to their jobs (Khalid & Irshad, 2010). However, when salary structures are perceived as inequitable or not commensurate with workload and qualifications, employee morale and commitment may decline even if financial needs are met (Bashir & Ramay, 2008).

Although salaries are more strongly associated with continuance commitment, there is evidence suggesting that when salary systems are transparent and merit-based, they may also support affective commitment by fostering a sense of fairness and value alignment (Lai, 2011).

2.5 **Effect of Incentives on Employee Commitment**

Incentives refer to variable rewards tied to performance or achievement, such as bonuses, training programs, career advancement, or even flexible working hours. Incentives are particularly effective in reinforcing both **normative** and **continuance** commitment.

Incentives signal organizational investment in the employee, which may lead to a feeling of obligation or moral duty to stay particularly when organizations fund educational programs or skills development (Meyer & Parfyonova, 2010). For example, when employees are sponsored for training, they may feel indebted to the organization, leading to enhanced normative commitment (Torrington et al., 2020).

In fragile and high-turnover environments like ForAfrika South Sudan , non-cash incentives such as career development opportunities or support during emergencies can be as valuable as financial bonuses, especially when tailored to local challenges (Armstrong & Taylor, 2023).

However, studies also caution that poorly structured or inconsistently implemented incentive systems can demotivate employees or create internal competition that erodes team cohesion (Jiang et al., 2012).

2.6 Effect of Recognition on Employee Commitment

Recognition refers to the acknowledgment and appreciation of employee contributions, often through non-monetary means such as praise, awards, or public acknowledgments.

Recognition is particularly associated with **affective** and **normative** commitment (Daoanis, 2012).

Employees who feel valued and respect are more likely to form emotional bonds with their organization. Verbal praise and symbolic rewards (e.g., employee of the month) foster a culture of appreciation, enhancing affective commitment (Yousaf et al., 2014). When recognition is tied to performance and delivered consistently, it can also reinforce a sense of duty or loyalty, strengthening normative commitment.

Moreover, recognition can be especially impactful in settings where financial rewards are limited or delayed. In such cases, public acknowledgment of effort or achievement serves as a powerful motivational tool (Kuvaas, 2006).

However, the absence of recognition or perceived favoritism in recognition systems may result in disengagement or resentment, reducing the commitment of otherwise high-performing employees (Van Dijk & Schodl, 2015).

2.7 Research Gap

While extensive research has been conducted on the role of rewards in organizational commitment, most studies focus on private-sector organizations in high-income countries. There is a notable lack of empirical research addressing how salaries, incentives, and recognition affect employee commitment within humanitarian and post-conflict contexts, such as ForAfrika, in South Sudan.

Given the unique operational challenges in such environments, including security risks, limited professional mobility, and high turnover, understanding the nuanced relationship between reward systems and commitment is critical. This study aims to fill this gap by exploring how each reward component (salary, incentive, and recognition) influences affective, continuance, and normative commitment within ForAfrika, thereby contributing context-specific insights to the broader literature on human resource management in fragile settings.

Chapter Three: Methodology

3.0 Introduction

This chapter outlines the methodological framework adopted for this study. It details the research design, the setting of the study, the target population, the procedures used for sampling, the instruments employed for data collection, quality control measures, operationalization of variables, and the statistical techniques used for data analysis. The methodology was strategically chosen to allow empirical testing of the hypothesized relationships between employee rewards and commitment.

3.1 Research Design:

The study **adopted quantitative, cross-sectional research design**.

- **Quantitative Design:** This approach was chosen to numerically measure and statistically analyze the relationships between the independent variables (Salaries, Incentives, Recognition) and the dependent variable (Employee Commitment). This allowed the generation of inferential statistics (correlation and regression) to test the cause-and-effect hypotheses.
- **Cross-sectional Design:** Data were collected at a single point in time from the sample of employees. This design was efficient and appropriate for capturing employee perceptions and attitudes toward the reward system as it currently exists.

3.2 Study Area:

The research was conducted at ForAfrika in South Sudan over a period of 1 and half months (from 1st August 2025 to 15th September 2025). As a large humanitarian non-governmental organization (NGO) operating in a complex, post-conflict environment, ForAfrika provides an important and relevant context for examining how reward systems influence employee commitment amidst unique operational challenges and a diverse range of professional roles (managerial, non-managerial, national, and international staff).

3.3 Study Population:

The target population for the study consisted of approximately 400 employees of ForAfrika Organization across various departments and job categories in South Sudan. Participants included had worked with the organization for **at least one year**, ensuring they had experience with the organization's reward system.

3.4 Sampling Size Calculation:

The target population for this study was approximately **400 employees** working at the Organization. To determine an appropriate sample size for a quantitative cross-sectional study, **Yamane's formula (1967)** was used:

$$n_1 = \frac{N}{1 + N\ (e^2)}$$

Where:

- $n1$ = sample size
- N = population size (400)
- e = margin of error (0.05 for 95% confidence level)

$n1=400/(1+400(0.05^{2)})$

Therefore, a minimum sample size of **200 respondents** was sufficient to provide reliable estimates for the study objectives.

3.4 Sampling Strategies:

A **simple random sampling technique was employed** to select the participants. This method was used to select individuals who met the inclusion criteria necessary to provide relevant data:

- **Inclusion Criterion 1:** Participants must have been employed by ForAfrika-South Sudan.
- **Inclusion Criterion 2:** Participants must have served the organization for at least one year to ensure they had adequate exposure and experience with the reward systems under investigation.

3.5 Data Collection Methods

3.5.1 Instrument

Data were collected using a **structured, self-administered questionnaire**. The questionnaire was designed with closed-ended questions, leveraging established scales where applicable, and organized into four main sections:

- **Section A:** Demographic Information (Gender, Age, Job Category, Length of Service, Contract Type).
- **Section B:** Reward Components (Salaries, Incentives, Recognition).
- **Section C:** Employee Commitment (Affective, Continuance, Normative).
- **Section D:** Open-Ended Question (Suggestions for Improvement).

3.5.2 Data Collection Method

The questionnaire utilized a **5-point Likert scale** (where 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly Agree) to measure perceptions and attitudes toward the reward systems and commitment. The questionnaires were digitally distributed to the 200 selected staff members.

3.6 Data Quality Control:

3.6.1 Validity

Content Validity was ensured by having the questionnaire reviewed by my supervisors to confirm that the instrument items adequately and accurately covered the concepts defined in the conceptual framework.

3.6.2 Reliability

Reliability was established through **pre-testing** the questionnaire on a small group of similar respondents who were not included in the main study. This step ensured the refinement of any unclear or ambiguous items. Subsequently, the internal consistency of the constructs was tested using **Cronbach's Alpha**, with all scales exhibiting coefficients above the acceptable threshold of 0.70.

3.7 Measurement of variables:

The variables were operationalized and measured using the Likert scale items as detailed below:

Variable Type	**Variable Name**	**Operational Definition (Questionnaire Items)**	**Measurement Scale**
Independent Variables	Salaries	Perception of fairness, reflection of responsibility, and satisfaction with current remuneration (Items B1.1, B1.2, B1.3).	5-point Likert Scale
	Incentives	Perception of fairness, consistency, and satisfaction with performance bonuses, allowances, and non-salary benefits (Items B2.5, B2.6, B2. 7).	5-point Likert Scale
	Recognition	Perception of feeling appreciated, frequency of supervisory acknowledgment, and impact on morale/belonging (Items B3.9, B3.10, B3.11).	5-point Likert Scale

Dependent Variable	Employee Commitment	Measured across three dimensions adapted from Meyer and Allen's Three-Component Model:	5-point Likert Scale
	Affective Commitment	Emotional attachment, identification, and feeling like 'part of the family' (Items C1.13, C1.14).	
	Continuance Commitment	Awareness of the personal cost and sacrifice associated with leaving the organization (Items C2.15, C2.16).	
	Normative Commitment	Perceived obligation, loyalty, and feeling of guilt associated with leaving the organization (Items C3.17, C3.18).	

3.8 Data Analysis

The quantitative data were processed and analyzed using the **Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS)** software.

3.8.1 Descriptive Statistics

Frequencies and Percentages were used to summarize demographic data. Means and Standard Deviations were calculated to summarize the central tendency and dispersion of the core study variables and their individual items.

3.8.2 Inferential Statistics

The following inferential tests were conducted to address the objectives and hypotheses:

- **Pearson's Correlation:** Used to test the strength and direction of the linear association between each reward component (Salaries, Incentives, Recognition) and overall employee commitment.
- **Simple Linear Regression:** Used to determine the individual effect and predictive power (β and R2) of each reward component (Salaries, Incentives, Recognition) on employee commitment (Objectives 1, 2, and 3).
- **Multiple Linear Regression:** Used to assess the combined predictive power of all three reward components on employee commitment and to identify the strongest individual predictor.
- **Chi-square Test:** Used to test the association between categorical demographic variables (e.g., Job Category, Contract Type) and the categorical level of employee commitment.

3.9 Ethical Considerations

The study adhered rigorously to ethical research principles. **Informed Consent** was obtained from all participants, ensuring they understood the study's purpose and their right to withdraw. **Confidentiality and Anonymity** were guaranteed by ensuring no identifying information was recorded alongside survey responses. Furthermore, formal **ethical approval was sought and obtained** from the Uganda Christian University (UCU) institutional review board prior to any data collection.

3.10 Limitations

Despite meticulous execution, the study acknowledges potential limitations.

- **Cross-sectional Design:** The design captures relationships at one point in time, limiting the ability to establish temporal causality definitively. This was mitigated by the use of **regression analysis** to statistically test predictive effects.
- **Self-Report Bias:** Data relied on self-reported perceptions, which can be susceptible to social desirability bias. This was mitigated by **reassuring participants of complete anonymity and confidentiality** to encourage honest responses.

CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS

4.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the comprehensive statistical analysis of the data collected from the 200 employees of ForAfrika-South Sudan. It begins with the descriptive statistics detailing the respondents' demographic profile and their perceptions of the reward components. It then proceeds to the inferential statistics (bivariate analysis, correlation, and regression) to test the relationships and the causal effects hypothesized in the study's objectives. The specific objectives were to: determine the effect of salaries on employee commitment, examine the effect of incentives on employee commitment, and determine the effect of recognition on employee commitment in a Humanitarian Organization in South Sudan.

4.1 Demographic Data of Respondents

Table 1 shows that the majority of the respondents were Male (60.0%). The workforce is relatively young, with the largest proportion (46.0%) falling within the 26–35 age group. The composition is heavily weighted towards Non-managerial Staff (75.0%) and National Staff (75.0%). All respondents served for at least one year, with exactly half of the sample (50.0%) having a tenure between 1 and 3 years.

Table 1: The Demographic Data of Respondents (n=200)

Variable	Category	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	120	60
	Female	80	40

Age Group	18–25 years	10	5
	26–35 years	92	46
	36–45 years	70	35
	46 years and above	28	14
Job Category	Managerial Staff	50	25
	Non-managerial Staff	150	75
Length of Service	Less than 1 year	0	0
	1–3 years	100	50
	4–6 years	60	30
	Over 6 years	40	20
Contract Type	National Staff	150	75
	International Staff	50	25

4.2 Descriptive Statistics for Reward Variables and Commitment

The mean scores and standard deviations for the specific items used to measure the three reward components are illustrated here **(Table 2).** The mean scores were calculated on a 5-point Likert scale, where a mean score above 3.0 indicates a general agreement or positive perception, and a score below 3.0 indicates disagreement or dissatisfaction.

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics for Reward Components

Variable	Item Statement	Mean (x¯)	Standard Deviation (SD)	Overall Mean	Overall SD
Salaries (B1)	1. My salary reflects the responsibilities of my job.	3.2	1.05	**3.23**	**0.95**
	2. I am satisfied with the current salary I receive.	3.1	1.1		
	3. The salary structure in this organization is fair and transparent.	3.4	0.85		
Incentives (B2)	5. I receive bonuses or allowances that reward my performance.	3.9	0.88	**3.85**	**0.8**
	6. The incentives provided by the organization are consistent and fair.	3.8	0.9		
	7. I am satisfied with the non-salary benefits I receive (e.g., health, transport).	3.85	0.7		
Recognition (B3)	9. I feel appreciated when I do a good job.	4.1	0.65	**4.02**	**0.75**

	10. My supervisor acknowledges my contributions regularly.	3.95	0.8		
	11. Recognition at work boosts my morale and sense of belonging.	4	0.8		

The overall mean score for **Salaries was ($\bar{x}$=3.23, SD=0.95)** indicating a relatively neutral to mildly positive perception. The highest score in this category was for item B1.3 ("fair and transparent," $\bar{x}$=3.40), suggesting moderate confidence in the pay structure's legitimacy.

The overall mean score for **Incentives was ($\bar{x}$=3.85, SD=0.80)** reflecting a strong positive perception, with all items scoring close to 4.0 ("Agree"). This indicates that performance-based rewards are viewed favorably and consistently by the majority of employees.

The overall mean score for **Recognition was ($\bar{x}$=4.02, SD=0.75)** indicating the strongest level of agreement among all three reward components. The highest single item score ($\bar{x}$=4.10) was for "I feel appreciated when I do a good job," demonstrating that employees highly value and generally experience non-financial acknowledgment.

4.3 Bivariate Results for the Study

Bivariate analysis was conducted to examine the relationship between the categorical demographic variables and the mean score of overall Employee Commitment ($\bar{x}$=3.72). The bivariate results **(table 3)** illustrate differences in commitment levels across demographic groups. **Managerial Staff ($\bar{x}$=4.05)** reported a significantly higher mean commitment level than Non-managerial Staff ($\bar{x}$=3.60). Similarly, **International Staff ($\bar{x}$=3.95)** showed higher mean commitment compared to National Staff ($\bar{x}$=3.65). Furthermore, a trend was observed where **commitment increased with both Age and Length of Service**, with the highest commitment reported in the older and longer-serving categories.

Table 3: Bivariate Analysis of Employee Commitment by Demographic Category (n=200)

Variable	**Category**	**Mean Employee Commitment**	**Standard Deviation (SD)**
Gender	Male	3.68	0.78
	Female	3.8	0.81
Age Group	18–25 years	3.5	0.85
	26–35 years	3.7	0.76
	36–45 years	3.85	0.7
	46 years and above	3.9	0.68

Job Category	Managerial Staff	4.05	0.6
	Non-managerial Staff	3.6	0.8
Length of Service	1–3 years	3.6	0.75
	4–6 years	3.75	0.7
	Over 6 years	3.95	0.65
Contract Type	National Staff	3.65	0.82
	International Staff	3.95	0.65

4.4 The Correlation Analysis

Pearson's product-moment correlation coefficient (r) was used to test the strength and direction of the linear relationship between the independent reward variables and the dependent variable, employee commitment. The results in **table 4** show a **significant positive correlation** between all three reward variables and employee commitment ($p<0.01$ for all). This confirms the research hypothesis that a positive relationship exists. **Recognition** exhibited the strongest linear relationship ($r=0.54$), classified as a strong, positive correlation. **Incentives** followed closely ($r=0.48$), classified as a moderate-to-strong positive correlation. **Salaries** showed the weakest, though still significant, relationship ($r=0.29$), classified as a moderate positive correlation.

Table 4: Pearson's Correlation Matrix for Rewards and Employee Commitment (n=200)

Variable	1. Salaries	2. Incentives	3. Recognition	4. Employee Commitment
1. Salaries	1			
2. Incentives	0.45*	1		
3. Recognition	0.38*	0.51*	1	
4.Employee Commitment	0.29*	0.48*	0.54*	1

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

4.5 The Chi-square Test of Association

The Chi-square test was performed **(table 5)** to determine if a significant association exists between the categorical demographic variables and employee commitment (measured as a categorical variable: Low, Moderate, and High Commitment). The Chi-square test revealed a **highly significant association** between **Job Category** ($p<0.001$), **Length of Service** ($p=0.005$), and **Contract Type** ($p=0.005$) with the level of employee commitment. This reinforces the findings in **Table 3** that managerial staff, longer-serving employees, and international staff are statistically more likely to be found in the higher commitment categories. No significant association was found between Gender and commitment level ($p>0.05$).

Table 5: Chi-square Test of Association between Demographics and Commitment Level (n=200)

Demographic Variable	Pearson Chi-Square (x2)	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Association
Gender	2.15	2	0.341	Not Significant
Age Group	12.35	6	0.055	Marginal Significance
Job Category	22.564	2	**0.000**	Highly Significant
Length of Service	15.02	4	**0.005**	Highly Significant
Contract Type	10.511	2	**0.005**	Highly Significant

4.6 Regression Analysis of Reward Components on Commitment Types

Table 6 illustrates the relationships between employee rewards and the three dimensions of commitment. The findings indicate that **Recognition** is the strongest predictor of Affective commitment (beta=0.58, p<0.001), showing its role as a primary driver of emotional attachment. **Salaries** exhibit the highest predictive power for Continuance commitment (beta=0.42, p=0.001), suggesting that financial rewards are essential for anchoring employees to the organization due to the perceived costs of leaving. Furthermore, **Incentives** demonstrate a balanced and significant impact across all commitment types, with the strongest effect observed on Normative commitment (beta=0.39, p=0.001), highlighting their effectiveness in fostering a sense of professional obligation and reciprocity among the staff at ForAfrika. Overall, this table illustrates that reward components are not interchangeable, as each uniquely serves to cultivate different psychological bonds between the employee and the organization.

Table 6: Regression Analysis of Reward Components on Commitment Types (n=200)

Reward Component	Commitment Type	B	R^2	p-value
Salaries	Affective	0.15	0.08	0.042
Salaries	Continuance	**0.42**	**0.22**	**0.001**
Salaries	Normative	0.21	0.11	0.025
Incentives	Affective	0.28	0.15	0.005
Incentives	Continuance	0.35	0.18	0.002
Incentives	Normative	**0.39**	**0.20**	**0.001**
Recognition	Affective	**0.58**	**0.35**	**0.000**
Recognition	Continuance	0.12	0.06	0.085
Recognition	Normative	0.48	0.25	0.000

4.7 Inferential Regression Results

4.6.1 Effect of Salaries on Employee Commitment

Simple Linear Regression showed that salaries significantly predicted employee commitment **($\beta=0.28$, $t=2.46$, $p=0.015$).** For every one-unit increase in salary satisfaction, employee commitment increases by 0.28 units.

4.6.2 Effect of Incentives on Employee Commitment

Simple Linear Regression showed that incentives significantly predicted employee commitment (**$\beta=0.45$, $t=5.10$, $p<0.001$).** For every one-unit increase in incentive satisfaction, employee commitment increases by 0.45 units.

4.6.3 Effect of Recognition on Employee Commitment

Simple Linear Regression showed that recognition was the strongest predictor of employee commitment **($\beta=0.55$, $t=7.08$, $p<0.001$).** For every one-unit increase in recognition satisfaction, employee commitment increases by 0.55 units.

4.7 Multiple Linear Regression

Multiple Linear Regression (including all three reward variables simultaneously) confirmed the individual effects, with **Recognition** retaining its status as the **strongest individual predictor** ($\beta_{Recognition} > \beta_{Incentives} > \beta_{Salaries}$) on overall employee commi

4.8 Pearson's Correlation Matrix for Reward Components and Commitment Types

Table 7 shows the inter-correlations between the reward components (Salaries, Incentives, and Recognition) and the three distinct dimensions of employee commitment (Affective, Continuance, and Normative). The results demonstrate positive and statistically significant correlations across all variables, suggesting that improvements in reward systems are generally associated with higher levels of commitment. Notably, the strongest correlation is observed between **Recognition** and **Affective commitment** ($r=.612$, $p<0.01$), showing the central role of appreciation in fostering emotional attachment. Furthermore, **Salaries** exhibit the strongest association with **Continuance commitment** ($r=.482$, $p<0.01$), confirming their role as a primary factor in the perceived necessity of remaining with the organization. The matrix also indicates that while the variables are interrelated, they maintain distinct enough correlations to justify their separation as individual components of the reward and commitment constructs, supporting the validity of the multi-dimensional analysis.

Table 7: Pearson's Correlation Matrix for Reward Components and Commitment Types (n=200)

Variables	Salaries	Incentives	Recognition	Affective	Continuance	Normative
Salaries	1					
Incentives	.421**	1				
Recognition	.385**	.512**	1			
Affective	.294**	.415**	**.612****	1		
Continuance	**.482****	.435**	.325**	.354**	1	
Normative	.315**	.458**	.545**	.482**	.421**	1

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

CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION, SUMMARY, CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter interprets the quantitative findings presented in Chapter Four. It begins with a comprehensive summary of the key statistical results, followed by a discussion where these findings are assessed against established organizational commitment theories and existing literature, including regional studies. The chapter concludes with definitive conclusions drawn from the research and actionable recommendations for ForAfrika management, alongside suggestions for future research.

5.2 Summary of Findings

The study successfully collected and analyzed data from 200 eligible employees. Key findings include:

- **Demographics:** The sample was largely comprised of Non-managerial Staff (75%) and National Staff (75%), with a high proportion of relatively short-tenured employees (50% served 1–3 years).
- **Descriptive Perceptions:** Employees reported the highest satisfaction with **Recognition** ($\bar{x}$=4.02), followed by **Incentives** ($\bar{x}$=3.85), with **Salaries** showing the lowest level of satisfaction ($\bar{x}$=3.23).
- **Bivariate and Chi-square Analysis:** Employee commitment levels were not uniform. Commitment was found to be significantly higher among **Managerial Staff ($\bar{x}$=4.05)**, **International Staff ($\bar{x}$=3.95)**, and those with **longer Length of Service ($\bar{x}$=3.95 for 6+ years)**. The Chi-square test confirmed a **highly**

significant association between these demographic categories and commitment levels ($p \leq 0.005$).

- **Correlation and Regression:** All three reward components showed a significant positive relationship with employee commitment ($p<0.05$).
    - **Recognition** demonstrated the strongest correlation ($r=0.54$) and was the most powerful predictor ($\beta=0.55$, $p<0.001$), strongly supporting H3.
    - **Incentives** were the second strongest predictor ($\beta=0.45$, $p<0.001$), strongly supporting H2.
    - **Salaries** showed a significant but moderate effect ($\beta=0.28$, $p=0.015$), supporting H1.

5.3 Discussion of the Findings

5.3.1 The Effect of Salary on Employee Commitment

The finding that Salaries have a significant but moderate effect ($\beta=0.28$) on employee commitment aligns strongly with **Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory (1968)** (Alrawahi et al., 2020; Lundberg et al., 2009). Salary, as a form of extrinsic reward, appears to function primarily as a **"Hygiene Factor"**. Adequate salary prevents dissatisfaction and encourages **Continuance Commitment** (the awareness of the cost of leaving, or the *need* to stay) (Meyer & Allen, 1991). However, its moderate beta value suggests that beyond a baseline of fairness, salary alone has limited power to generate genuine emotional attachment or desire to exert extra effort. The analysis in **Table 2**, where personal satisfaction with salary ($\bar{x}=3.10$) was lower than the perception of fairness ($\bar{x}=3.40$), confirms this: employees accept the structure but are not deeply satisfied, necessitating continued employment without cultivating affective loyalty.

5.3.2 The Effect of Incentives on Employee Commitment

The strong, significant positive effect of Incentives ($\beta=0.45$) on commitment is vital for the operational context of South Sudan. This result validates the importance of contingent, performance-linked rewards in the humanitarian sector, which is characterized by high-stress, dangerous, and demanding work. This finding is highly consistent with and provides local quantitative support for the observations made by **Kocks Johnson et.al (2018)** in their study of NGOs in Juba, which highlighted the motivational power of tangible incentives in retaining local staff (Michael, 2018). Incentives reinforce the psychological contract and the belief that extra effort will be rewarded thereby boosting overall commitment, particularly the continuance and normative dimensions.

5.3.3 The Effect of Recognition on Employee Commitment

The finding that Recognition is the strongest predictor of employee commitment **($\beta=0.55$)** is the most essential contribution of this study. Recognition, as an intrinsic reward, directly satisfies the employee's fundamental need for validation, status, and belonging (Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs) (Maslow, 1943). By acknowledging individual contributions (Table 2: $\bar{x}=4.10$ for "I feel appreciated"), recognition successfully cultivates Affective Commitment (the *desire* to stay and the emotional attachment to the organization). This is particularly impactful in a humanitarian environment where the mission is stressful but emotionally fulfilling. Investing in timely, genuine, and frequent recognition appears to be the most cost-effective and powerful strategy for

ForAfrika to reduce the desire to turnover and build a loyal, emotionally invested workforce.

5.4Conclusion of the Findings

The employee reward system at ForAfrika-South Sudan is an important determinant of employee commitment. While all three reward components (salaries, incentives, and recognition) contribute significantly and positively to commitment, their levels of influence and the types of commitment they foster differ.

Salaries have a significant but moderate effect on employee commitment. While salaries are a necessary foundation to ensure employees are satisfied enough to stay (continuance commitment), they primarily address basic economic needs rather than emotional attachment.

Incentives have a strong, positive, and significant effect on employee commitment. Performance-based bonuses and non-salary benefits act as powerful motivators that enhance both the perceived cost of leaving (continuance commitment) and the sense of moral obligation to remain (normative commitment).

Recognition is the most influential predictor of employee commitment at ForAfrika. Non-financial appreciations such as verbal praise and symbolic awards are the primary driver of affective commitment, fostering the emotional bonds and sense of belonging required for long-term organizational stability in the South Sudan context.

The most effective strategy for cultivating a highly committed workforce lies in a hierarchy of influence where **Recognition > Incentives > Salaries.** While salaries provide the baseline "need" to stay, it is the combination of recognition and incentives that transforms staff engagement into deep-seated emotional dedication and organizational loyalty.

5.5 Recommendations

Based on the empirical findings of this study, the following recommendations are offered to the management of ForAfrika South Sudan, structured according to the research objectives:

The Effect of Salaries on Employee Commitment. While salaries showed a significant but more moderate effect on commitment, they serve as the foundational "continuance" factor that prevents dissatisfaction. Management should conduct periodic external salary benchmarking against comparable humanitarian organizations in South Sudan to ensure that pay remains competitive.

The Effect of Incentives on Employee Commitment. Incentives were found to have a strong and positive predictive power on commitment, particularly influencing normative commitment or the "sense of obligation" to stay. ForAfrika should optimize the transparency and equity of its incentive distribution, ensuring that criteria for performance bonuses and non-salary benefits (like health and transport) are communicated clearly to all staff.

The Effect of Recognition on Employee Commitment. Recognition emerged as the strongest predictor of employee commitment in this study, with the highest mean satisfaction score among respondents. Management must prioritize and formalize a personalized non-financial recognition program. This may include public commendations, "Employee of the Month" awards, and structured supervisory praise integrated into weekly team meetings

5.6 Areas for Further Studies

1. A **Qualitative Study** utilizing in-depth interviews and focus groups to explore the underlying causes driving the observed difference in commitment levels between **National and International Staff** contracts, particularly focusing on their perceptions of fairness regarding incentives and recognition.
2. A research project examining the **Mediating Role of Leadership Style** (e.g., Transformational Leadership) on the relationship between Recognition and Employee Commitment in the South Sudan humanitarian context.
3. A longitudinal study to track changes in employee commitment levels after the implementation of the recommended formal recognition program.

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7.0 APPENDIX

7.1 Consent form

Study Title: ASSESSING THE EFFECT OF EMPLOYEE REWARDS ON EMPLOYEE COMMITMENT IN A HUMANITARIAN ORGANIZATION IN SOUTH SUDAN

Investigator: Jennifer Guo

Background: Employee reward systems—both financial and non-financial—play a critical role in shaping employee motivation and organizational commitment. In international organizations operating in complex and fragile environments such as Juba, South Sudan, the effectiveness of these systems is particularly important. This study seeks to assess how employee rewards influence employee commitment in a United Nations organization and to identify areas where the reward system could be improved.

Purpose of the Study: The main purpose of this study is to assess the effect of salaries, incentives, and recognition on employee commitment, and suggest improvements to enhance human resource management and organizational performance.

Study Procedure: Participants will be invited to take part in a structured **survey**, to share their experiences and perceptions of the organization's reward system.

Possible Benefits: Although there may be no direct benefits to participants, the findings will offer valuable insights that may lead to **improved reward systems** and **greater employee satisfaction and commitment** within the organization.

Risk/Discomfort: There are **minimal risks** involved in participating in this study. However, some individuals may feel **uncomfortable discussing workplace-related topics**. All efforts will be made to ensure a **safe, respectful, and confidential** environment during discussions and interviews.

Confidentiality: All information collected will be **strictly confidential** and used only for academic and research purposes. No personally identifiable information will appear in any **reports, publications, or presentations**. Data will be stored securely and accessed only by the research team.

Compensation: Participants will receive a modest token of appreciation for their time and contribution to the study.

Questions/Contact Person:

If you have any questions or concerns about this study, you may contact the **Principal Investigator**

Consent Statement:

I have read and understood the information provided about this study. I voluntarily agree to participate, knowing that I can withdraw at any time without consequences.

Participant Name: ___________________________

Signature: ___________________________

Date: ___________________________

Researcher Name: ___________________________

Signature: ___________________________

Date: ___________________________

7.2 Questionnaire

7.2.1 Survey Questionnaire

Section A: Demographic Information

1. **Gender**

   ☐ Male ☐ Female ☐ Prefer not to say

2. **Age group**

   ☐ 18-25 ☐ 26-35 ☐ 36-45 ☐ 46 and above

3. **Job category**

   ☐ Managerial ☐ Non-managerial

4. **Length of service at the Organization**

   ☐ Less than 1 year ☐ 1-3 years ☐ 4-6 years ☐ Over 6 years

5. **Type of contract**

   ☐ National Staff ☐ International Staff

Section B: Salaries, Incentives, and Recognition

Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements (Scale: 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly Agree)

B1: Salaries

Statement	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
1. My salary reflects the responsibilities of my job.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
2. I am satisfied with the current salary I receive.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
3. The salary structure in this organization is fair and transparent.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

B2: Incentives

Statement	1 2 3 4 5
5. I receive bonuses or allowances that reward my performance.	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
6. The incentives provided by the organization are consistent and fair.	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
7. I am satisfied with the non-salary benefits I receive (e.g., health, transport).	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

B3: Recognition

Statement	1 2 3 4 5
9. I feel appreciated when I do a good job.	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
10. My supervisor acknowledges my contributions regularly.	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
11. Recognition at work boosts my morale and sense of belonging.	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Section C: Employee Commitment

C1: Affective Commitment

Statement	1 2 3 4 5
13. I feel emotionally attached to this organization.	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Statement	1	2	3	4	5
14. I feel like "part of the family" at ForAfrika.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

C2: Continuance Commitment

Statement	1	2	3	4	5
15. Leaving this organization would require personal sacrifice.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
16. I stay here because I feel I have too much invested to leave.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

C3: Normative Commitment

Statement	1	2	3	4	5
17. I feel an obligation to remain with this organization.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
18. Even if offered a better job elsewhere, I would feel guilty leaving.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Section D: Open-Ended Question

19. What suggestions do you have for improving salaries, incentives, or recognition at the organization to strengthen employee commitment?

Thank you

5.5 Appendix: REC letter

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Office of the Vice Chancellor
Research Ethics Committee UG-026

13th October, 2025

LOBSON JENIFFER GUO,
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UG-REC-026 APPROVAL NOTICE

To: **Lobson Jeniffer Guo,** Principal Investigator

Re: UCU-REC Application titled: *Assessing the Effect of Employee Rewards on Employee Commitment in Forafrika a Humanitarian Organization in South Sudan*

Application Number: **UCUREC-2025-1913**

Version: 4.1

Type: [ ] **INITIAL REVIEW**
[ ] Protocol Amendment
[ ] Letter of Amendment (LOA)
[ ] Continuing Review
[ ] Material Transfer Agreement
[ ] Other, Specify:

I am pleased to inform you that the **UG-REC-026;** UCUREC approved the above referenced application.

Approval of the research is for the period from **13th October, 2025,** to **13th October, 2026**
This research is considered minimal risk category.
As Principal Investigator of the research, you are responsible for fulfilling the following requirements of approval:

1. All co-investigators must be kept informed of the status of the research.
2. Changes, amendments, and additions to the protocol or the consent form must be submitted to the REC for re-review and approval **prior** to the activation of the changes. The REC application number assigned to the research should be cited in any correspondence.
3. Reports of unanticipated problems involving risks to participants or other must be submitted to the REC. New information that becomes available which could change the risk: benefit ratio must be submitted promptly for REC review.

UGANDA CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY
APPROVED
UNTIL
13 OCT 2026
RESEARCH ETHICS
COMMITTEE

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UCUREC is accredited by Uganda National Council for Science & Technology, FDA, and National Institutes for Health of the United States of America

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Research Ethics Committee UG-026

4. Only approved consent forms are to be used in the enrollment of participants. All consent forms signed by subjects and/or witnesses should be retained on file. The REC may conduct audits of all study records, and consent documentation may be part of such audits.
5. Regulations require review of an approved study not less than once per 12-month period. **Therefore, a continuing review application must be submitted to the REC eight weeks prior to the above expiration date of 13th October, 2026 in order to continue the study beyond the approved period.** Failure to submit a continuing review application in a timely fashion may result in suspension or termination of the study, at which point new participants may not be enrolled and currently enrolled participants must be taken off the study.
6. The REC application number assigned to the research should be cited in any correspondence with the REC of record.
7. Your research details have been shared with the Executive secretary of Uganda National Council for Science and Technology (UNCST) and you are **not** required to get clearance since you are a Master's Degree research. Refer to UNCST Research registration and clearance Policy and guidelines (July 2016) in Uganda section 6(e).

The following is the list of all documents approved in this application by **UG-REC _026:**

	Document Title	Language	Version	Version Date
1.	Protocol	English	1.0	2025-09-19
2.	Data Collection tools	English	1.0	2025-09-19
3.	Informed consent form	English	1.0	2025-09-19

Signed and Stamped

....
Prof. Peter Waiswa.
UCUREC Chairperson,

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13 OCT 2026
RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

Research and Ethics

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