

**PERCEPTIONS OF ACADEMIC STAFF ON RETENTION APPROACHES IN  
CHURCH FOUNDED UNIVERSITIES IN UGANDA**

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**RM/17P02/002**

**A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO THE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION IN PARTIAL  
FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF THE DEGREE OF  
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY IN EDUCATION ADMINISTRATION AND MANAGEMENT OF  
UGANDA CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY**

**September, 2025**

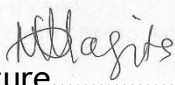


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## DECLARATION

I, Nagita Margaret Rose, do hereby declare that this Thesis on a study titled “Perceptions of Academic Staff on Retention Approaches in Church-Founded Universities in Uganda: A Qualitative Study” is my original work and is not plagiarized to the best of my knowledge. This kind of study has not been published or submitted for any other degree award to any other university.

  
Signature.....

Date: 28<sup>th</sup> August, 2025

Nagita Margaret Rose

## APPROVAL

This is to certify that this research, titled “Perceptions of Academic Staff on Retention Approaches in Church-Founded Universities in Uganda: A Qualitative Study,” was done under my supervision and is now ready for submission.

Signature



Date **01st September, 2025**

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Signature



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## ABSTRACT

Universities are increasingly facing challenges in attracting and retaining academic staff, whose expertise is crucial for enhancing institutional reputation and promoting student success. However, evidence regarding the effectiveness of retention approaches in faith-based African universities remains limited. This qualitative, multiple-case study examined the perceptions of academic staff regarding retention strategies within two Church-founded Universities in central Uganda. The choice of universities was motivated by the fact that these institutions are continuously losing their academic staff, yet, given their foundation and nature, they should be able to attract and retain their academic staff. Guided by Social Exchange Theory, Human Capital Theory, Equity Theory, and Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory, the study employed semi-structured interviews with 48 academic staff members, ranging from professors to teaching assistants, who were engaged in focus group discussions. Data were analyzed thematically using a framework matrix, ensuring credibility through triangulation of interviews, document reviews, and member checks.

The findings highlight a complex landscape of retention practices ranging from strong spiritual support and opportunities for external consultancy to boost commitment, to unclear promotion processes, limited research funding, and unequal workload distribution that reduce morale. Participants expressed a preference for an integrated retention model that combines transparent career paths, competitive and performance-based rewards, research facilitation, and family-friendly policies, all rooted in a Christian ethos. This study introduces the Academic Staff Retention Integrated Model (ASRIM) to guide policy and practice. The implementation of this model in CFHIs and other institutions can lead to improved perceptions of fairness, development, and motivation, leading to better retention in universities and similar institutions in Uganda and beyond.

## DEDICATION

I dedicate this thesis to the cherished memory of my late father, Sylvester Gitta, and my beloved mother, Deborah Nakinde Gitta. Their unwavering support and dedication set the foundation for my education, allowing me to succeed and pursue this journey.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

First and foremost, I thank the Almighty God for guiding me through this PhD journey; nothing would have been possible without His blessings.

I extend my heartfelt gratitude to my supervisors, Dr. Joel Masagazi Yawe and Dr. Wilson Eduan, for their invaluable guidance and support throughout my studies. Your dedication and investment of time have been instrumental in my success, and I am deeply grateful.

To my beloved children, Sylvester Johnathan Galabuzi, Solomon Muyiza Sempangi, Martha Precious Nakandi, and Marie Priscilla Nakate, you have been my companions on this journey toward achieving my dream. Your unwavering prayers and encouragement have helped me reach this milestone. I am very proud to be your mother, and I hope this accomplishment inspires you to pursue your goals regardless of any challenges you may encounter.

I sincerely thank my dear husband, Steven Kiwanuka Lukoda, for your steadfast support throughout this doctoral journey, which has been truly invaluable. Thank you for your love and patience; you are a key reason for my success.

To the administration of Uganda Christian University, I acknowledge the financial support that made this journey possible. I am truly grateful for your assistance.

Special thanks go to the academic staff from both institutions who participated in this study. Your feedback has been crucial in shaping this thesis and helping me achieve my Ph.D.

Lastly, to my siblings, nieces, and nephews, your prayers and support have been a constant source of encouragement. May God bless you all.

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ASR - Academic Staff Retention

ASP - Academic Staff Perceptions

CU - Church of Uganda

CFHEIs - Church-founded Higher Education Institutions

ET - Equity

HEI - Higher education institution

HEIs - Higher education institutions

HR - Human Resource

HRM - Human Resource Management

HCT - Human Capital Theory

KI - Key informants

NCHE - National Council for Higher Education

NDU - Ndejje University

SET - Social Exchange Theory

SAHE - South African Higher Education

QA - Quality Assurance

UCU - Uganda Christian University

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## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Introduction

Retaining employees is one of the greatest challenges for organisations in the current competitive business environment (Gallardo-Gallardo et al., 2020), including educational institutions. Hence, staff retention is a global issue that is becoming increasingly hard to maintain. According to the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), 4.25 million people quit their jobs in January 2022, and up to 3.3 million did so in 2021. In the United States, about 7.7% of full-time academic staff left their institutions within one academic year from 1997 to 1998; of these, only 29% were retired staff, and roughly 40% of them had considered changing jobs (U.S. Bureau of Statistics, 2022).

Several Universities worldwide have been experiencing an increasing rate of academic staff turnover (Ochumbo & Matimbwa, 2019a). Hence, retaining academic staff has become essential, especially in developing countries in sub-Saharan Africa (Lata & Chaudhary, 2021). Hence, staff retention is one of the most significant challenges facing African public and private institutions, driven by globalization, increased competition, and the mobility of highly skilled employees (Amegatsey, Odoom, & Okyere, 2018; Ng'ethe, Iravo, & Namusonge, 2012). In particular, the issue of academic staff retention (ASR) has become a major concern for universities (Bakkabulindi & Amutuhaire, 2020). Retaining academic staff helps to enhance institutional reputation and supports student success (Mather & Bam, 2025).

Scholars such as Selesho and Naile (2014) argue that employee retention remains a vital issue due to high turnover rates in academic institutions. Universities need to identify, recruit, and keep high-quality staff, especially academic personnel (Bushe, Chiwira, & Chawawa, 2012). The lack of staff retention results in negative outcomes, such as disrupted curriculum delivery and decreased staff morale and productivity (Liu, Mitchell, & Hinkin, 2012; Gialuisi & Coetzer, 2013). The problem of retaining academic staff has been identified in many institutions in Africa, such as Mount Kenya University and Greta University in Kenya (Mugo & Siagi, 2024), Makerere University in Uganda (Bakkabulindi & Amutuhair, 2020). This, therefore, calls for a suitable understanding of employees' perceptions of the institution's retention approaches.

Retention approaches aim to ensure that competent employees stay at an institution for some time to prevent negative effects on productivity and service delivery. In this case, academic staff perceptions (ASP) on retention strategies are crucial in shaping policies to improve retention in Church-founded Universities, enhancing institutional reputation, student success, and meeting staff ratio requirements set by the NCFHE. Studies such as (Amutuhair, 2010; Bakkabulindi & Amutuhair, 2020; Ssali, Onen, Musoke, 2019) suggested that retaining talented academic staff boosts institutional reputation and student achievement. Likewise, other scholars have emphasized the negative impact of staff turnover on costs, including recruiting, interviewing, orientation, training, and the time involved. These factors impact curriculum delivery and academic staff morale, underscoring the need for enhanced staff retention strategies. (Guilding, Lamminmaki, & Mcmanus, 2014). These also affect curriculum delivery, academic staff morale.

Furthermore, retaining academic staff helps to safeguard customer satisfaction, gratified coworkers, effective succession planning, and contributes to a deeply rooted organizational knowledge and learning (Bakkabulindi & Amutuhaire, 2020). However, regrettably, studies have indicated that there is low job retention among academic staff in Universities in Uganda (Bakkabulindi & Amutuhaire, 2020; Tibelius Amutuhaire, 2010). It is therefore essential for universities to address the challenge of retaining academic staff.

This study explored retention approaches used in Church-founded Universities, the perceptions of academic staff on retention approaches used and the expectations of academic staff for their retention in these Universities in Uganda. The study identified various retention approaches used in the Universities, established the views of academic staff on the approaches used to retain them, and aired their expectations for their retention in universities. The study provided insights for improving and enhancing staff retention in Universities in Uganda and beyond.

## **1.2 Background to the Study**

University teaching positions are widely regarded as prestigious, competitive, and financially rewarding the world over (Guilding et al., 2014). However, the issue of retaining academic staff in Universities has drawn attention from researchers, especially in African universities (Bakkabulindi & Amutuhaire, 2020). Though staff retention challenges are not new (Tanwar & Prasad, 2016), the problem of academic staff retention is increasingly prevalent in higher education across countries (Mather & Bam, 2025; Ng'ethe, Iravo, & Namusonge, 2012; Ng'ethe, Namusonge, & Iravo, 2012). Studies observed that in Australian universities, a turnover rate as high as 68%

among academic staff within a short timeframe was reported (Ibrahim, Kassa, & Tasisa 2017; Ng'ethe, 2014). Low staff retention is a growing issue in Africa, where qualified academic professionals migrate annually in search of better working conditions and other employment opportunities in Europe and America (Adesote & Osunkoya, 2018).

Locally, the growth of the private university sector in Uganda has transformed the higher education landscape, highlighting the importance of staff retention for institutional stability, academic consistency, and a supportive environment for faculty and students (Ssali et al., 2019). The departure rate of academic staff from HEIs in pursuit of other job opportunities has become a concern for scholars studying the retention problem (Bakkabulindi & Amutuhaire, 2020; Onen & Genza, 2020). Yet, traditionally, teaching at a university was seen as an esteemed achievement for many, but recent studies indicate a shift in this perception (Ssali et al., 2019).

The failure to retain academic staff may hinder institutions from fulfilling their educational missions (Chiboiwa et al., 2010). Similarly, universities in Uganda struggle to attract and retain highly qualified individuals for teaching roles, resulting in a severe shortage of academic staff (Mushemeza, 2016). The study examines various retention approaches used by the Universities in Uganda to keep academic staff, as well as the perceptions and expectations of academic staff regarding their retention in Universities in Uganda. Therefore, the study provides evidence-based and actionable strategies for improving staff retention in higher education institutions.

### 1.3 University Education in Uganda

Higher education in Uganda is provided through universities and tertiary institutions and is regulated by the Uganda National Council for Higher Education (NCHE), a government body that works on behalf of the government to regulate education in Uganda (Kasozi, 2017). NCHE works on behalf of the Government to regulate and oversee all university programs. Universities in Uganda are grouped into categories such as Government Universities, Religious-affiliated Universities, and Private Secular Universities (Kasozi, 2017). The State-owned or government-owned institutions are those that receive support from the government and are sometimes referred to as government-aided universities. On the other hand, the private institutions are those owned by individuals or organizations, and such institutions heavily depend on student tuition.

In Uganda, there are over 50 universities that are recognized and accredited by the National Council for Higher Education (NCHE), and out of these, about eleven (11) are government-aided universities, the rest are private (UBTEB, 2016) and of these, about six (6) universities were founded by the Church, and of these, about three (3) institutions with constituent colleges belong to the Church of Uganda. However, given the increase in the number of universities in Uganda, the challenge of retaining academic staff has been observed by several scholars (Bakkabulindi & Amutuhaire, 2020; Ssali et al., 2019). Hence, retaining their academic staff is paramount.

#### 1.4 Conceptual Background

Staff retention is a deliberate strategy to minimize voluntary turnover and encourage staff to remain with the organization for some time, thereby reducing turnover (Patgar & Vijayakumar, 2014). Staff retention refers to the way institutions value and listens to their staff to avoid turnover (Ng'ethe, 2014; Saif & Al-Qarshoubi, 2020a; Towns, 2019). Retention is a way institutions strive to prevent workers from leaving, as their departure could negatively impact the institution's productivity and profitability (Chiboiwa et al., 2010; Kuuyelleh, Elqahtani, Akanpaadgi, & Kuuyelleh, 2022; Towns, 2019). The main goal of staff retention is to ensure that competent staff do not leave the institution using various retention approaches (Ng'ethe, 2014; Towns, 2019).

When staff feel that they belong and uphold the mission and values of the institution, they are most likely to stay. Hence, staff retention can be viewed as acceptance of the organization's vision, mission, values, and policies by the staff to stay with the institution (Bushe, 2012; Walker, 2017). In this case, the institution's vision, mission, values, and policies are among the employee retention approaches. This is because when a staff member chooses the institution, they are aware of the values it holds and are more likely to subscribe to the mission, vision and policies of the institution. In the study, staff retention refers to the motivation for staff to stay with their institution for some time. Studies indicated that employees who value their organization are less likely to seek other job opportunities (Sunder, Kumar, & Maurer, 2017). Hence, retention approaches embedded in the various values held by the institution encourage staff to remain in their positions for a prolonged period. Retention approaches also involve the different steps taken by institutions to foster staff loyalty and longevity (Kunene, 2019; Nyanjom, 2013; Towns, 2019; Walker,

2017). In the study, retention approaches refer to the various initiatives, policies, and practices used to prevent academic staff from leaving the institution. Various supportive and conducive environments encourage academic staff to stay for an extended period (Akila, 2012; Yusliza & Faezah, 2021). However, the concept of staff retention tends to consider the institutional environment rather than the individual, creating a gap for individual perceptions, which is addressed by the study.

### **1.5 Private Universities in Uganda**

In Uganda, private universities started after the 1990s when the government decided to privatize education. Before the late 1990s, Uganda's university education was owned by the government and there was no private university in the country, as the case is now. Private universities in Uganda are categorized into religious-affiliated universities and secular universities with no affiliation. The religiously affiliated universities are also known as Faith-based universities and follow the religion or religious affiliations under which they were founded, such as Catholic, Islamic, Anglican Church of Uganda, Seventh-day Adventists, and Pentecostal institutions. Among the faith-based universities are Church founded institutions categorized as not-for-profit, while others are profit-making institutions.

In Uganda, there are over fifteen (15) private chartered universities (NCHE, 2023), and of these, about five (5) are Private faith-based universities, while others are private secular universities and are privately owned by individuals or a group of people and are mainly profit-making. These universities are independent and are not attached to any religious affiliation, but are regulated by the government

through NCHE. Faith-based institutions are privately owned religious institutions in Uganda, which include the Church of Uganda-founded institutions.

Among the Church of Uganda-founded institutions is Christian University (UCU), which is one of the oldest universities belonging to the Church of Uganda. UCU was founded by the Province of Uganda in 1997 (UCU Annual Report, 2018) and obtained a charter in 2004, granted by the National Council for Higher Education after meeting the requirements for accreditation (NCHE, 2011). UCU is a well-established private Christian institution with a main campus located in Mukono along the Kampala-Jinja highway, with two constituent colleges, namely Bishop Barham University College, Kabale, in western Uganda, and Mbale University College in the east, and has two Study Centres in Arua and Kampala, the capital city of Uganda.

Another Church of Uganda-founded higher education institution is Ndejje University (NDU). Established in 1992, NDU obtained a license in 1995. This institution was initially under the ownership of the Anglican Diocese of Luwero. Later in 2002, the ownership of NDU was extended to six Church of Uganda Dioceses that are found in the central region, namely, Namirembe, Central Buganda, West Buganda, Mityana and Luwero Diocese. NDU was chartered in 2009 and has its main campus located in Luwero with Study Centres in Kampala.

The above two institutions are among the institutions that are classified as Christian-founded higher education institutions under the Church of Uganda and operating in Uganda and were selected for the study.

## 1.6 Historical Background

To understand the importance of ASR, the researcher explored the history of staff retention in higher education institutions. The historical context provides insights into the origins and evolution of staff retention and progression in academia and traces the origin of academic staff retention.

The problem of staff retention dates back to the early 1900s when industrial engineers attempted to identify why employees leave work organizations (Tanwar & Prasad, 2016).

Debates on employee retention stem from the 1900s when scholars and psychologists began recognizing the reasons for employees' levels of interest and retention (Abrahamson, 2004). This situation has not been different in the higher education field, where scholars (Ssali et al., 2019) point out that the problem of academic staff retention has been part and parcel of the transition that has taken place in universities.

In education, the concept of staff retention dates back to ancient times when educational institutions prioritized the continuity and stability of their teaching staff. In the book "The History of Western Education" Peter & Denis (2019) highlight the role of staff retention in ancient Greek and Roman schools. These institutions recognized the significance of experienced and knowledgeable teachers in ensuring the quality of education. It is important to mention that it was during the Renaissance that educational institutions developed approaches to retain their academic staff. At that time, European universities began implementing formal contracts and tenure systems to secure talented professors (Mark & Peter, 2022). These measures aimed to provide job security and intellectual freedom, which

fosters long-term commitment from faculty members. While staff retention approaches have evolved, the challenges of retaining academic staff have persisted in the modern era (Kotelana, 2021).

Today, the increasing incidence of job mobility, changing expectations, and the perceptions of academic staff on retention approaches are some of the issues that require attention (Kotelana, 2021). As a result of the critical labour shortage facing institutions, there has been a lot of competition among institutions to keep highly skilled, experienced, and committed staff for their competitive advantage (Busan & Korea, 2009; de Haan, 2015). With the growing competition for scarce resources, a lot of pressure has been placed on many organizations, including universities, emphasizing the need to maintain their competitive advantage and manage their human assets (Kotelana, 2021).

In Uganda, the roots of academic staff turnover date back to the tumultuous year of 1971, when General Idi Amin's regime ushered in a period of dictatorship and economic turmoil (Kyaligonza & Kamagara, 2017). Again, the period 1971 to 1979 witnessed widespread mismanagement of the country's economy and oppressive governance. Faced with unbearable hardships, academic staff, unwilling to endure the challenging circumstances at the time, sought refuge elsewhere, triggering a reduction of intellectual resources within Uganda (Kyaligonza & Kamagara, 2017). Hence, the legacy of high turnover among academic staff in Ugandan universities can be traced back to the turbulent 1970s. Similarly, Nabawanuka (2011) echoed this sentiment, highlighting that the political unrest and conflicts in Uganda during the early 1970s and 1980s contributed to the migration of Uganda's qualified academic staff. These periods of instability disrupted higher education, compelling the local and expatriate staff to flee the country (Nabawanuka, 2011).

Consequently, retaining academic staff in the contemporary era necessitates careful attention. This, therefore, requires Church-founded Universities to adopt strategies that align with the evolving needs and expectations of academic staff. Hence, there is a pressing need to understand academic staff perceptions on retention approaches, which can help to enhance the effectiveness of the retention approaches used to retain academic staff in Church-founded Universities in Uganda and contribute to their improvement.

Following the historical background, the theories to which the study was anchored are discussed in the following paragraphs.

## **1.7 Theoretical Background**

The study is anchored on four theories, namely: the Social Exchange Theory postulated by Blau (1964), the Human Capital Theory by Theodore Schultz, Jacob Mincer, and Becker (1960), the Equity Theory by Adams (1963), and Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory of Motivation (Herzberg et al., 1959)

While several studies on staff retention were based on theories such as Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs (1943), Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory of Motivation (Herzberg et al., 1959), and Vroom's Expectancy Theory (1964), the researcher chose the above-mentioned four theories to guide this study because they speak more to people's perceptions and behaviors in a given relationship.

### **(a) Social Exchange Theory**

The Social Exchange Theory (SET) was originally proposed by Homans in 1958 and later reviewed by Blau in 1964. Blau (1964) explored the factors that influence social

behavior through the lens of exchanges, which involve both material and non-material things. Blau posited that social exchange serves as a fundamental component of social life, deeply embedded within social structures (Cropanzano, Anthony, Daniels, & Hall, 2017a; Xuecheng, Iqbal, & Saina, 2022a). The SET posits the existence of two types of transactions: economic exchanges and social exchanges, which are characterized by individual self-interest and the expectation of quick repayment, more open-ended, and longer-term (Abrutyn & McCaffree, 2021).

Blau examined the exchange process as a micro-foundation for larger macro-sociological phenomena. He observed that organizations that invest heavily in their staff—for example, through training, often receive substantial returns in the form of enhanced job performance. This dynamic establishes a reciprocal relationship where staff feel compelled to reciprocate the investment made by their employers, striving for superior performance aligned with set targets.

Furthermore, SET assumes that reciprocal obligations emerge from social relationships and interactions, as individuals engage in mutually beneficial and rewarding connections. This mutual exchange fosters a sense of obligation and commitment within social bonds (Cropanzano, et al., 2017b). According to SET, individuals who benefit from others feel obligated to reciprocate through positive behaviors and dedication (Korsgaard & Meglino, 2010).

The theory emphasizes the emergence of mutual bonds and obligations to reciprocate in social interactions. It assumes that all social behavior and relationships are rooted in an exchange process where individuals weigh the risks and rewards. SET assumes that, if the risks in the exchange outweigh the rewards, the individuals involved may end the relationship. The theory suggests that

employees perform better when they receive support and perceive value from their employers.

SET was used in this study to explore employer-employee relationships, particularly in academic staff retention. From the SET perspective, academic staff retention can be encouraged by providing training and development opportunities, which enable mutual benefits and create reciprocated obligations (Mohd, Raihan & Abdullah, 2012). Staff may perceive a responsibility to repay their employers by maintaining a conducive work environment, which can manifest in increased loyalty, commitment, and retention (Patience, 2023). The basic principle of SET is that staff view satisfying human resource management (HRM) retention approaches as the institution's commitment to them, leading to positive reciprocal behaviors (Patience, 2023).

SET also suggests that individuals evaluate the potential for career growth and advancement when deciding whether to remain in their current position. Academic staff who perceive ample opportunities for professional development can stay, while those lacking career advancement prospects may experience frustration and job dissatisfaction (Hermawan, 2022). Thus, staff retention is a key component of SET, as it influences an individual's perception of the rewards and costs of their position. Hence, Social exchange theory has become recognized as the dominant framework for understanding how justice and fairness impact attitudes and behaviors in the workplace (Colquitt & Zipay, 2015).

#### **(b) Equity Theory**

Equity Theory (ET) was introduced by John Stacey Adams in 1965. It examines individuals' perceptions of fairness in treatment compared to others. The ET is a theory of motivation that suggests employee motivation at work is driven largely by

their sense of fairness. The basic principles of equity theory highlight how employees compare themselves with others, taking into account both input (effort) and outcomes (rewards). This theory posits that employees strive to maintain a balance between their inputs—such as education, time, experience, commitment, and effort—and the outcomes they receive, including promotion, recognition, and increased pay.

The theory suggests that individuals who perceive themselves as either under-rewarded or over-rewarded may experience distress, prompting efforts to restore equity within the organization. A failure to achieve this sense of equity may lead to detrimental behaviors to the organization, such as employee turnover. The departure of academic staff can significantly impact the institution's productivity and diminish its competitive advantage, particularly since many of these staff often join competing institutions (Chiboiwa et al., 2010). Hence, Equity theory focuses on the values of fairness and social justice in which educational resources and opportunities are allocated. It advocates for the elimination of all forms of discrimination based on gender, socio-economic status, geography, ability, sexual orientation, religion, age, and many other forms of discrimination (Ochwa-Echel, 2016).

Considering higher education institutions, this theory posits that academic staff assess their job outcomes, such as salary, bonuses, promotions, and recognition, against their job inputs, such as hours worked, education, experience, and performance. Academic staff may therefore make comparisons with peers in similar roles or different positions, similar professions, or even against their own past experiences, and may need to be motivated (Diefendorff & Chandler, 2011). This

may determine the staff's perception and decision to stay or leave the institution (Bushe, 2012). Equity theory considers an exchange where the individual gives and gets something in return. The theory assumes that what the individual gives may be viewed as inputs to, or investments in, the relationship (Bushe, 2012).

The theory is based on three main assumptions:

- I. People form beliefs about what constitutes a fair return for their contributions to the job.
- II. Individuals tend to compare their perceived exchanges with their employers.
- III. When individuals feel that their treatment is inequitable compared to others' exchanges, they are motivated to take appropriate actions.

The equity theory brings out the academic staff's feelings about their treatment by their institutions compared to others within and outside their institutions. As Adams (1965) postulated, employees seek to maintain equity between the input they bring into their work (education, time, experience, commitment, and effort (Attiah, 2015)). The outcomes they receive from their work may include promotion, recognition, increased pay, sponsorship for study, and others. Academic staff in HEIs compared all this against the perceived inputs and outcomes of other staff in the same institution and others. According to the study, Equity theory suggests that the staff members who perceive themselves as either under-rewarded or over-rewarded experience pain or happiness, which may be a determinant of their actions. When the staff fails to find equity, they behave in ways that harm the institution, such as quitting. Yet, if a staff member leaves the institution, there is a loss of talent, and most likely to her competitors (Chiboiwa et al., 2010).

### **(c) Human Capital Theory**

Human capital theory (HCT) was advanced by Theodore Schultz, Jacob Mincer, and Becker in the 1950s and 1960s. The theory suggests that people are as important as other resources within the organization, so investment in academic staff skills and knowledge can lead to higher productivity and institutional success (Ng'ethe, 2014). This theory aligns with the idea that retention, like continuous learning, increases the value of academic staff, productivity, and retention, and investing in human capital benefits individuals, organizations, and societies (Becker, 1960). The HCT theory is important because it guides institutional managers in developing their human capital by investing in their training and developing programs. Institutions can therefore choose to invest in their academic staff and create a high-level human capital aligned with core positions and sustainability.

The concept of human capital is entrenched in economic literature (Becker & Tomes, 1996). Human capital is neither physical nor financial, but is defined as the individual's knowledge, skill, creativity, and health (Pasban & Nojede, 2016). In the context of retaining academic staff, the human capital theory stipulates that institutions that focus on enhancing the skills and knowledge of their staff through training, professional development, and career advancement opportunities are more effective in retaining academic staff (Saif & Al-Qarshoubi, 2020a).

Academic staff recognize the value of their positions and are motivated to stay with the institution due to the enhanced skills and knowledge gained after professional development and career advancement (Wuttaphan, 2017).

#### **(d) Herzberg's Two Factor Theory**

Motivation-hygiene theory, also known as Herzberg's two-factor theory or Herzberg's dual-factor theory, was developed in 1959. The foundation of this theory is the differentiation between motivation and hygiene factors, which impact job satisfaction. Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory identifies two categories of factors contributing to job satisfaction in a workplace to avoid dissatisfaction among staff.

The first category is known as hygiene factors and encompasses elements such as salary, job security, and the overall working environment. The second category is the motivating factors, which include recognition, greater responsibilities, and a sense of personal achievement. In the study, the importance of both factors in fostering a positive work experience leading to staff retention depends on their perceptions of the approaches used to retain them. The hygiene factors relate to avoiding unpleasant circumstances in the workplace and are reflected in aspects like salary, workplace safety, and company policies. In contrast, motivation factors are essential for fostering job satisfaction (Miah & Hasan, 2022). They are associated with an individual's need for self-growth and self-actualization and include opportunities for advancement, recognition, and the nature of the work itself.

Herzberg's dual-factor theory has been widely recognized in job satisfaction studies, as noted by various scholars (Dikbaş, Çavuş, & Asiltürk, 2023; Twum, 2024). Many studies have employed this theoretical framework to examine job satisfaction among staff (Bushe, 2012; Mugo & Siagi, 2024). The researcher used this theory to effectively identify and elucidate the phenomena associated with academic staff retention in Universities in Uganda.

Based on the above theories, the study provided valuable insights into academic staff perceptions of retention within higher education institutions. The theory provided a basis for the researcher to investigate academic staff perceptions of the retention approaches, and their expectations for their retention were established. The theories assumed staff retention depended on the exchange between them and the institution, motivation, equity, and career advancement and development through approaches like training and development, promotions, welfare support, and equal treatment. Hence, fulfilling academic staff expectations required strategic interventions embedded in the four theories used in this study as mentioned above. Academic staff view satisfying retention approaches as the institution's commitment to them, and, in turn, they reciprocate with positive behaviors. When academic staff perceive their institution as caring and supportive, they feel obliged to return this support by staying for some time.

The theoretical framework centered on the concept of human resource management, reciprocity, equity, motivation, and contribution to the staff perceptions, which suggested that academic staff are more inclined to remain or leave the institution due to their management and feelings that develop into a sense of reciprocal obligation (Bakker & Woerkom, 2017). When equity or inequity is felt, academic staff can decide to stay or leave (Chiboiwa et al., 2010; Pieters, van Zyl, & Nel, 2022). When linked, the theories selected to underpin this study suggested that academic staff assess the rewards and costs associated with their current employment situation and the environment under which they are subjected, and compare them to the potential rewards and costs within or alternative institutions. This implies that if the staff perceive that the rewards for staying in the current institution outweigh the potential rewards of leaving, they will stay, or if they

observe any inequalities or feel not cared for by the institution, they are likely to quit.

After examining the theories, the researcher considered the context for the study as discussed in the following paragraph.

## **1.8 Contextual Background**

Retention approaches are critical for sustaining staff in HEIs; however, staff retention has been a critical concern for universities in the various academic institutions in Africa (Amegatsey et al., 2018; Muyigwa, 2020; Onen & Genza, 2020). Yet, several retention approaches are used in universities to attract and retain academic staff, as highlighted by the various scholars (Budiharso & Tarman, 2020; Ochumbo & Matimbwa, 2019a; Pieters et al., 2022). However, several studies have established that most private universities struggle with the problem of losing talented staff (Butt, Lodhi, Shahzad, 2020). A Staff Association Report (07/03/2011), for Kampala International University General Senior Staff Association Meeting, reported a high turnover rate of academic staff (Besigye, 2011). Similarly, at Uganda Christian University, the Human Resources records (2018) highlighted the problem of academic staff turnover. The same problem was reported in public universities (Ng'ethe, Iravo, et al., 2012). In Uganda, Makerere University, a public institution, experienced the departure of over 50 senior academic staff members in 2010, who moved to other universities (Nabawanuka, 2011). Public institutions such as Makerere University and Mbarara University of Science and Technology struggled to retain high-profile lecturers (Matongolo, Kasekende, et al., 2018a).

Preliminary investigations conducted by the researcher in private institutions, mainly the Church-founded Universities in Uganda, established that the problem of academic staff retention remains a challenge and a concern to HEIs, as observed by other scholars (Besigye, 2011; Kimanje, 2021; Nabawanuka, 2011; Tettey, 2006).

The study “Perceptions of Academic Staff on Retention Approaches in Church-Founded Universities in Uganda” was therefore meant to address the retention challenges faced by HEIs and particularly Universities by exploring the perceptions of academic staff on the approaches and their expectations for their retention.

## **1.9 Problem Statement**

Higher education institutions are considered the hub of knowledge; however, the retention of knowledge-workers, the academics, has become a crucial issue (Mubarak, Wahab, & Khan, 2012, p. 66). The retention of academic staff is a major challenge for universities, as noted by Szromek and Wolniak (2020). Research indicates that losing skilled staff incurs significant costs, with recruitment and training expenses for new employees ranging from 25% to 500% of their salaries (Ballinger et al., 2011). In Uganda, the National Council for Higher Education (NCHE) reported a 3.7% decrease in academic staff, dropping from 12,659 in 2018/19 to 12,187 in 2019/20 (NCHE, 2022). This decline was partly due to the COVID-19 lockdown, which negatively affected staff payments and contributed to higher turnover. However, other factors may also influence academic staff retention and warrant further investigation.

In Uganda, academic staff retention has worsened because of the rapid growth of universities. The sharp rise in private universities has not been matched by an

adequate increase in academic staff (Ssali et al., 2019; NCHE, 2022). Additionally, the creation of universities known for excellence across various academic programs highlights the importance of retaining qualified faculty members (Matongolo et al., 2018a). According to NCHE, in 2023, Ugandan universities reportedly spent about UGX 12 billion (roughly USD 3 million) on advertising, recruitment, and onboarding of new academic staff, highlighting the urgent need for effective retention strategies. Similarly, the Borderless report (2012) noted the demand for skilled academic staff, as Ugandan universities enrolled around 200,000 students, including about 16,000 international students. This evidence emphasizes the critical need for HEIs to develop strategies to attract and retain academic staff to meet the increasing demand for higher education in the country.

The study, therefore, aimed to explore academic staff perceptions of retention strategies used in universities and to develop practical approaches for retaining academic staff based on real-life experiences, to enhance staff retention in Universities in Uganda.

### **1.10 Purpose of the Study**

Recognizing the importance of sustaining human capital for institutional performance and development, the study's primary purpose was to explore academic staff retention strategies in Church-founded Universities in Uganda to address the retention dilemma faced by these institutions.

To accomplish this purpose, the study was guided by the following objectives:

### **1.11 Study Objectives**

The objectives of this study were:

- I. To explore academic staff retention approaches in Church-founded universities in Uganda.
- II. To discover the views of academic staff on retention approaches in Church of Uganda-founded universities in Uganda.
- III. To ascertain the expectations of academic staff for their retention in Church-founded universities.

### **1.12 Research Questions**

To achieve the preceding research objectives, the researcher used the following research questions:

- i. What approaches are in place for retaining academic staff in the university?
- ii. What are the views of academic staff on retention approaches used in the university?
- iii. What are the expectations of academic staff for their retention in the university?

### **1.13 Scope of the study**

This study's scope was divided into three parts: content, geographical, and periodical scope.

### **1.13.1 Content Scope**

The content scope for this study was limited to staff retention as the independent variable and perceptions of academic staff as the dependent variable. In particular, staff retention was restricted to approaches used by institutions to retain academic staff, such as compensation, training, and promotion, among others. The perceptions were the determinants of staff retention, which were the views of academic staff on the retention approaches used by their institutions. The view centered on academic staff's personal beliefs, judgments, and opinions regarding current or potential retention approaches. Staff perceptions were explored, considering their strengths, weaknesses, and influence on academic staff. This helped the researcher to gain a comprehensive understanding of the perceptions of academic staff on retention approaches. The study also explored academic staff expectations for retention and provided recommendations to enhance the current retention approaches used in universities.

### **1.13.2 Geographical Scope**

The study was conducted in Church-founded universities in Central Uganda. The researcher chose this region because it houses the oldest/first Church-founded Universities accredited by the National Council for Higher Education (NCHE), a government regulatory body in charge of higher education in Uganda. In particular, the region selected for the study, as well as the institutions, were among the first private institutions to offer higher education in Uganda. Additionally, it is in this region where the researcher carried out preliminary investigations on staff retention, which provided valuable insight into the problem of academic staff retention and motivated the researcher to carry out this study. Furthermore, the

study was carried out in the selected region because the literature review indicated that most of the studies done on academic staff retention in this region focused more on public universities, while other studies addressed topics such as turnover, lecturer commitment, and motivation (Kyaligonza & Kamagara, 2017; Mugizi, Nuwatuhaire, & Turyamureeba, 2019; Ssali et al., 2019).

Another crucial factor in choosing this region was the time and resources required for this type of study outside the selected region.

### **1.13.3 Periodical Scope**

The study focused on universities that have existed for more than ten years and considered only academic staff who have worked in the Universities for five years or more. The researcher considered five years or more as enough for academic staff to understand the approaches used by their institutions for retention. The research also thought that this period was enough for academic staff to develop their opinion on the retention approaches used to influence their decision to stay or leave the institution. Furthermore, academic staff who had spent five years or more working in the institution had more information regarding retention approaches and had a lot of information required for this study.

### **1.14 Study justification**

Although several studies were done on academic staff retention in Uganda, there was still scanty information on perceptions of academic staff on retention approaches used in Church of Uganda-founded universities in Uganda. Yet, according to Uganda Christian University Directorate of Human Resource and

Administration records, thirty-three (33) academic staff left the institution between February 2015 and May 2021. Similarly, Ndejje University Human Resource Audit (2020), indicates that the institution had retention challenges. There is little evidence of studies done to address this challenge much as the issue of academic staff retention has been mentioned in several studies. However, there is evidence that the Universities have tried to address the issue of academic staff retention as depicted by the UCU strategic plan 2019-2023 and NDU Strategic plan 2017/2018-2026/2027, both of which are CFHEIs where the problem of academic staff retention is still rampant. Besides, there has been little evidence of studies done to address this problem, specifically studies focusing on academic staff perceptions of retention approaches. This study, therefore, explored the perceptions of academic staff on retention approaches in Church founded universities in Uganda. The study brought to light the academic staff's state of mind regarding academic staff retention in universities. It highlighted the approaches that need to be addressed and reinforced by universities to address the problem of academic staff retention.

### **1.15 Significance of the Study**

The reviewed literature indicated no similar study in Uganda on perceptions of academic staff retention in universities. The study provides an understanding of academic staff perceptions of retention approaches based on the generated data that can inform evidence-based decision-making on retention approaches of academic staff in universities. The findings can enhance the current understanding of staff retention approaches in universities and offer practical recommendations for administrators to improve the retention of academic staff.

The results of this study may be used by university administrators in private and public universities to improve retention approaches for academic staff. The study provides valuable information on academic staff perceptions of retention approaches, which can help institutions gain a broader perspective on retention dynamics and knowledge to develop tailored retention approaches. Again, from the study, Human Resource (HR) officers can generate information on best practices to aid them in policy formulation and improvement that may help institutions retain their academic staff.

Furthermore, policymakers can use the information gained from this study to promote staff retention strategies that help institutions in Uganda attract and keep highly talented and skilled academic staff, and to manage them effectively. Additionally, the study provides new insights and identifies areas for further research and innovation, where other scholars, both locally and globally, can utilize the information generated to enhance retention approaches and develop effective retention policies.

Finally, the findings from this study generate and provide rich information that can contribute to the existing literature on human resource management (HRM) to be used as a point of reference for future research on similar topics by scholars. The recommendations derived from this study can serve as a valuable guide for scholars interested in conducting similar research in different contexts.

## CHAPTER TWO

### LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter synthesizes key themes relevant to academic staff retention, focusing on financial incentives, career structures, work-life supports, and scholarly capital. Unlike a mere summary of studies, it integrates findings to illuminate the conceptual gap within Church-founded Universities in Uganda.

#### 2.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the researcher reviewed related literature on staff retention approaches. The literature review was organized following the study's objectives related to staff retention approaches, staff attitudes towards the retention approaches, and staff expectations for their retention in academic institutions. The literature review critically examined existing research and identified the gap that the current study addressed. The researcher reviewed, summarized, analyzed, and interpreted existing research related to the study. This provided a framework for establishing the importance of this study and a benchmark for comparing the results with other study findings recommended by Creswell (Ishtiaq, 2019). In this chapter, the researcher presented the reviews of related literature and highlighted the various studies that have been done on academic staff retention in higher education institutions. The review exemplified the existing knowledge on academic staff retention and pointed out the research gap while avoiding critiquing past scholars but addressed the research questions for the current study. In this chapter, the researcher has provided a summary of the research done by various scholars on academic staff retention. This offered the current study's potential contribution to

the field of knowledge and the justification for the contextual and methodological approach selected for this study. The literature review is organized based on the theoretical context underpinning the study's objectives of: discovering the staff retention approaches implemented in universities, exploring the views of academic staff on retention approaches, and exploring academic staff expectations for their retention in universities.

## **2.2 Theoretical Framework**

Employee retention encompasses being sensitive to staff needs and involves various approaches to meeting them (Ashraf, Joarder, & Masum, 2008; Brefo-Manuh, 2017; Hermawan, 2022; Matongolo et al., 2018b; Ng'ethe, 2014; Xuecheng et al., 2022a, 2022b). Staff needs are rooted in the claims of the relevant motivation theories. In this case, the study was based on four theories: the Social Exchange theory (Blau, 1964), the Human Capital theory (Becker, 1960), the Equity theory (Adams, 1963), and Herzberg's Two Factor theory. The researcher felt that the theories are relevant to this study of employee perceptions of retention approaches because they align with employee motivation, as highlighted in the following paragraphs.

### **2.2.1 Social Exchange Theory and Employee Retention**

The Social Exchange Theory (SET) is rooted in economic exchange theory and offers a valuable insight into human interactions within social settings (Blau, 1964). This theory posits that individuals participate in acts of kindness with the expectation of receiving some reward in the future, although the timing of these rewards may be unpredictable (Blau, 1964). As a result, SET implies the presence of long-term

relationships that are influenced by intrinsic and extrinsic rewards (Blau, 1964). In a workplace environment like higher education institutions, employees typically maintain a long-term view of social exchange relationships, anticipating advantages from these interactions (Liden, Wayne, Liao, & Meuser, 2014).

Social Exchange Theory is grounded in several key principles that influence how staff interact within social relationships and reciprocate. These principles are; equity, reciprocity, and trust (Liden et al., 2014). However, there is a limitation in human capital theory's understanding of the relations between education and work, concerning work, earnings, and higher education (Marginson, 2019).

#### **(a) Equity**

This relates to the belief in fairness concerning the distribution of resources among individuals. The principle of equity aims for equality in staff connections, in search of a fair balance between their contributions and what they gain in exchange from the institution for their work. If staff perceive equity, they may be inspired to restore balance by adjusting their inputs or expectations (Blau, 1964; Liden et al., 2014).

#### **(b) Reciprocity**

Another important aspect of the Social Exchange Theory is reciprocity. SET emphasizes that individuals are expected to return favors and actions in social interactions (Dube & Ndofirepi, 2024). When staff receive anything that motivates them from the institution, they feel a sense of commitment to reciprocate with a positive action. Reciprocity influences the relationships between the staff and the institution. Reciprocity is built on trust, a vital component of Social Exchange Theory, as it affects staff willingness to participate in social exchanges. When

persons trust each other, they are more likely to engage in reciprocally useful interactions and feel contented to rely on one another.

### **2.2.2 Human capital theory and employee retention**

The human capital theory (HCT) was postulated in the 1960s (Mincer, 1958; Theodore, 1961) and later further advanced by Gary Becker (1964). The theorists posit that in the labor market, people bring different levels of education, knowledge, skill, abilities, and expectancy to the workplace (Wuttaphan, 2017). The theory indicates that an educated and better-trained person can supply a greater quantity of productive effort than one with less education and training (Wuttaphan, 2017). When applied to this study, Human capital theory indicates that the value of human capital contributes to increasing the institution's performance, thereby increasing the institution's reliance on the staff's skills and knowledge. Investing in human capital by providing education and training contributes to a diverse level of salaries, whereby the more knowledge, skill, and ability possessed by the staff, the more likely to get a better job (Kuzminov, Sorokin, & Froumin 2019). The HCT implication is that institutions need to invest in human capital by providing education, training, and health for them to reciprocate as suggested by Blau in the SET.

### **2.2.3 Equity theory and employee retention**

The Equity theory, introduced by Adams in 1965, focuses on employees' perceptions of their treatment by their peers. According to this theory, individuals strive to balance their contributions to their work—such as education, time, experience, commitment, and effort—and the rewards they receive, which may include

promotions, recognition, and increased pay. Adams posited that employees evaluate their inputs and outcomes against those of other employees. When staff perceive themselves as under-rewarded or over-rewarded, they may experience happiness or distress. This distress often prompts them to take action to restore a sense of equity within the workplace. Thus, equity theory emphasizes the importance of fairness and balance in staff experiences, contributing to overall organizational health. Failing to find equity may make the staff behave in ways that are harmful to the institution; for example, they may quit or stay but may not benefit the institution. When high performers leave, the institution loses its productive talent and the capacity to gain a competitive advantage since these staff leave their institutions to join competitors (Chiboiwa et al., 2010)

The major strength of the Equity theory is that it recognizes that individual input, such as education, experience, and effort, should be recognized to ensure that equity is achieved. It also shows that individual employees are part of the larger system. Equity theory is based on three main assumptions (Attiah, 2015). Staff form beliefs about what constitutes a fair return for their contributions to their jobs; staff tend to compare their perceived exchanges with their employers, and when staff feel their treatment is inequitable compared to others' exchanges, they are motivated to take appropriate actions (Blau, 1964).

This theory guided the researcher in understanding what influences academic staff to stay or leave the Universities in Uganda. A notable strength of Equity Theory is its recognition that individual inputs—such as education, experience, and effort—should be acknowledged to achieve equity. Although the researcher used this theory, there was awareness of its weakness. A significant weakness of this theory lies in the subjectivity inherent in the comparison process. Human nature often leads

individuals to distort their perceptions of inputs, particularly regarding effort, resulting in biased comparisons (Ng'ethe, 2014). This is because there is a tendency in human nature to distort their inputs, especially concerning effort, and hence become subjective when comparing (Beardwell & Claydon, 2007).

#### **2.2.4 Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory of Motivation**

The theory was introduced in 1966 by Herzberg, bringing forth a new perspective on motivation through the Two-Factor Theory. This theory divides needs into two distinct categories: hygiene factors and motivators. Herzberg suggested that hygiene factors can lead to dissatisfaction if individuals perceive them as insufficient or unfair. However, even if these hygiene factors are adequate, they do not solely enhance motivation (Dartey-Baah, Amoako, & Amoako, 2011). While adequate hygiene factors can eliminate dissatisfaction, they do not ensure motivation; hence, a separate set of factors, known as motivators, is necessary for true motivation.

Hygiene factors often known as extrinsic factors, include company policies, supervision, salary, job security, interpersonal relationships, and working conditions (Miah & Hasan, 2022; Thant & Chang, 2021). These aspects are crucial for maintaining a baseline level of satisfaction in the workplace. Conversely, motivators, or intrinsic factors, encompass elements like a sense of achievement, recognition, increased responsibilities, and opportunities for personal growth and development. These factors inspire individuals to perform at their best and provide a deeper sense of satisfaction in their work.

However, the researcher was mindful of the shortcomings of this theory because it is too simplistic and views employee motivation by separating factors into distinct categories without considering their complexities and individual differences.

### **2.3 Approaches to retaining academic staff in universities**

Retention approaches are the various means institutions use to create an environment that encourages staff to stay longer (Khalid & Nawab, 2018). Approaches for retaining academic staff are vital for universities, as they help maintain continuity and excellence in teaching, learning, and research activities. Studies have revealed that the average cost of recruiting and training employees to replace a departing employee is about 60% of the departing employee's annual salary (Sepahvand & Khodashahri, 2020). Approaches for retaining staff are necessary for the success of many institutions, to contribute to institutional stability, academic excellence, and student success (Ng'ethe, Namusonge, et al., 2012).

Several scholars proposed different approaches to retaining academic staff in universities. Their research studies provide valuable insights into effective retention approaches for academic staff: In a research study titled "*Factors Influencing Employee Retention*" conducted by Mutiria, Rukangu & Kubaison (2015) at Meru University of Science and Technology, the scholars identified key approaches that influence employee retention. These approaches include training and development, performance appraisal, welfare benefits, and career advancement programs. In their study findings, the scholars highlighted the impact of welfare benefits on employee retention, followed by career growth, with training and development ranking lower in influence. Performance appraisal was noted to have the least

impact on retaining employees. Similarly in another study on the perceptions of academic staff in a Chartered private university in Uganda, the scholar looked at performance appraisals in the Church of Uganda-founded institutions and revealed that staff were dissatisfied with how performance appraisals were conducted (Kimanje, 2021). In a separate study by Kipkebut (2010) within public universities in Kenya, scholars identified that Human Resource Management (HRM) practices such as competitive compensation packages and strong corporate governance are effective approaches for retaining academic staff.

Approaches to retaining academic staff in universities have been a subject of considerable scholarly inquiry due to the impact turnover can have on institutional effectiveness and quality (Mamun & Hasan, 2017). Research by other scholars Salau, Worlu, Osibanjo, Adeniji, Falola, Olokundun, Ibidunni, Atolagbe, Dirisu, & Ogueyungbo, 2020), delved into the multifaceted nature of staff retention and highlighted the importance of professional development opportunities. Their studies emphasized the role of leadership in fostering a supportive work environment and cultivating a culture of appreciation and recognition, which are crucial factors in retaining academic talent. Furthermore, scholars (Saif & Al-Qarshoubi, 2020b), argued that universities must prioritize efforts to address the unique needs and aspirations of academic staff, including opportunities for research collaboration, teaching innovation, and career advancement, to enhance retention and promote long-term commitment.

Other researchers (Otache & Inekwe, 2022a) examined the relationship between faculty compensation, job satisfaction, and turnover intentions, highlighting the importance of competitive salary structures and comprehensive benefits packages in attracting and retaining top academic talent. Research done by other scholars

(Purba & Ruslan, 2020), underscored the need for institutions to regularly benchmark their compensation and training policies against industry standards and adjust salary scales to reflect market trends and faculty contributions. Moreover, scholars (Dardar et al., 2012; Hassan et al., 2013a, 2013b) emphasized the importance of offering supplementary incentives like training stipends, research grants, sabbatical opportunities, and flexible work arrangements to encourage staff retention and cultivating harmonious equilibrium between work and personal life. Hence, there is a need for strategic human resource management approaches to enhance job satisfaction and contribute to the overall well-being of employees and retention through human capital development (Hamadamin & Atan, 2019). However, there was limited evidence from Universities in Uganda to confirm if such approaches are provided and their contribution to staff retention needed to be investigated, which necessitated a deeper exploration.

Other scholars (Mubanda Muyiggwa et al., 2020; Muyiggwa et al., 2020), suggested that fostering a vibrant academic community and promoting opportunities for professional growth and career advancement are essential for retaining academic staff in universities. Scholars (Obeng-Ofori & Oppong, 2021), explored the role of alumni in higher education institutions' growth and emphasized the importance of creating inclusive and supportive academic environments where staff members feel valued, respected, and empowered to pursue their scholarly interests following training sessions. Furthermore, Szromek and Wolniak (2020) highlight the role of mentorship in facilitating career progression and enhancing job satisfaction among early-career faculty members. They affirmed that by investing in mentoring programs, networking opportunities, and leadership development initiatives, universities can cultivate a culture of continuous learning and professional growth,

thereby strengthening faculty retention and institutional resilience in the face of evolving challenges in higher education. However, their findings do not provide a typical outlay of the situation in Church founded Universities thus calling for an in-depth investigation into the same.

In the research by Abu-Rumman (2021) titled, "*Transformational Leadership and Human Capital within the Disruptive Business Environment of Academia*," training approaches for academic staff are explored within the context of a disruptive academic landscape. The author discusses the importance of transformational leadership in fostering human capital development and organizational resilience amidst rapid technological advancements and changing educational paradigms. Training approaches are presented as integral components of transformational leadership approaches aimed at enhancing faculty competencies, adaptability, and innovation capabilities as prerequisites for increasing employee retention. Abu-Rumman emphasizes the need for universities to invest in continuous professional development programs, technology integration initiatives, and interdisciplinary collaborations to equip academic staff with the skills and knowledge required to navigate the complexities of the modern institutional environment. Furthermore, Abu-Rumman (2021) underscores the role of transformational leaders in inspiring and empowering faculty members to embrace lifelong learning, embrace change, and drive institutional excellence in teaching, research, and service. This would promote staff retention in their respective roles. However, the current trend of training requirements comes with a huge cost to procure advanced technological equipment and software which if not harnessed may negate the capacity-building efforts envisaged.

The study conducted by Reedy, Pfitzner, Rook, & Ellis, (2021), investigated academic integrity perceptions during the transition to online exams amid the COVID-19 pandemic in Australian universities. While the study focused on perceptions of academic integrity, the authors touched on training approaches for academic staff in adapting to the online exam format. They highlighted the importance of providing comprehensive training and support to academic staff to ensure a smooth transition to online assessment methods. Their findings align with the assertions by Singh and Dixit (2011) emphasizing the need for training on the use of online proctoring tools, designing secure exam formats suitable for online delivery, and communicating academic integrity expectations to students. The study suggested that effective training approaches for academic staff are crucial in maintaining the integrity of online exams and fostering a culture of academic honesty amidst the challenges posed by the pandemic-induced shift to remote learning and assessment. Ugandan universities like other universities across the globe were affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. In this case, lecturing approaches were influenced by the guidelines and restrictions that called for online sessions and in a way aimed at retaining academic staff. Despite its shortcomings, there has been no study on the perceptions of academic staff.

In another study, Mwesigwa, Tusiime, and Ssekiziyivu (2020) explored training approaches for academic staff in public universities, particularly regarding leadership styles, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment. The research identified training as vital for enhancing job satisfaction and organizational commitment among academic staff. It emphasized the importance of providing professional development opportunities tailored to the needs of faculty members, including workshops, seminars, and mentorship programs.

Additionally, Mwesigwa, et al., (2020) highlighted the significance of leadership styles in shaping the effectiveness of training initiatives, suggesting that training approaches characterized by inspiration, intellectual stimulation, and individualized support are conducive to fostering a culture of continuous learning and professional growth. Their findings underscored the critical role of training approaches in nurturing a motivated and committed academic workforce within public universities, thereby contributing to organizational effectiveness and institutional resilience. This study justifies Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory of Motivation. However, their findings were silent on the perceptions of academic staff on the retention approaches implemented by the Church founded higher education institutions.

In the book *"The Relationship Between Knowledge Management and Organizational Learning with Academic Staff Readiness for Education"* by Ishak and Mansor (2020), training approaches for academic staff are discussed within the context of preparing them for education. The book emphasizes integrating knowledge management and organizational learning initiatives to enhance academic staff readiness for the evolving educational landscape. Training approaches outlined in the book include professional development programs to equip faculty with the necessary skills and competencies to effectively leverage technology, foster innovative teaching methods, and adapt to changing pedagogical paradigms associated with education. Furthermore, in their book Ishak and Mansor (2020), explore approaches for promoting a culture of continuous learning and collaboration among academic staff, facilitating knowledge-sharing and co-creation opportunities to enhance institutional resilience and responsiveness to education demands.

The study by Afrianty, Artatanaya, and Burgess (2022) focused on the effectiveness of working from home among university staff in Indonesia during the Covid-19

pandemic. While the study primarily examines remote work arrangements, it touches upon the training approaches for academic staff in this context. The researchers noted that universities implemented various training programs and workshops to equip academic staff with the necessary skills and tools for remote teaching and research. However, while these training initiatives aimed to familiarize faculty members with online teaching platforms, digital collaboration tools, and effective communication approaches for remote work environments, a great deal of low capacity was identified. Additionally, the study highlights the importance of ongoing support and professional development opportunities to ensure the successful transition to remote work and maintain academic productivity amidst the challenges posed by the pandemic. However, the findings by Sepahvand and Khodashahri (2021) highlighted challenging situations related to costs associated with organizing training sessions. Their findings do not reveal the opinions on employee retention despite the training efforts in the context of employee retention approaches.

In another study by Szromek and Wolniak (2020) on "*Job Satisfaction and Problems Among Academic Staff in Higher Education*", the scholars discussed various training approaches that aim at enhancing job satisfaction and addressing challenges faced by academic staff in higher education. The scholars emphasized the importance of providing professional development opportunities tailored to unique academic staff's needs and aspirations. These training initiatives encompass workshops, seminars, conferences, and mentorship programs to foster teaching effectiveness, research productivity, and career advancement. Szromek and Wolniak advocate for a holistic approach to training that integrates pedagogical innovations, technological advancements, and best practices in academic leadership to support faculty

members in navigating the complexities of contemporary higher education environments. Furthermore, scholars underscore the role of training in promoting job satisfaction, reducing burnout, and enhancing overall well-being among academic staff, ultimately contributing to institutional resilience and sustainability in the face of evolving challenges in the higher education landscape. However, this study does not provide adequate evidence on academic staff perceptions of the retention approaches.

In another study, Eringfeld (2021) discussed various training approaches for academic staff within the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, highlighting the necessity for universities to adapt their training approaches to meet the evolving needs and challenges posed by the pandemic. His findings emphasized the importance of providing professional development opportunities focused on remote teaching methods, digital pedagogy, and online course design to support academic staff transitioning to virtual learning environments. Additionally, Eringfeld explored the role of mentorship programs and peer support networks in facilitating knowledge-sharing and collaboration among faculty members as they navigate the complexities of remote teaching and learning. He underscored the essence of training as a prerequisite for employee retention and the significance of ongoing training and support initiatives for academic staff to ensure resilience and innovation in higher education amidst unprecedented disruptions caused by the pandemic. However, there is no evidence that the perceptions of academic staff on the training approaches were explored.

In their study, Arokiasamy and Tat (2020) examined the influence of transformational leadership on work engagement and workplace spirituality among academic employees in private Universities in Malaysia. The scholars discovered that

transformational leadership, characterized by inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, individualized consideration, and idealized influence, positively impacts work engagement and workplace spirituality among academic employees. These findings align with the postulations by Afrianty, Artatanaya, and Burgess, (2022), suggesting that leadership practices emphasizing empowerment, innovation, and a sense of purpose can foster a conducive work environment conducive to professional growth and employee retention. Hence, investing in leadership development programs that cultivate transformational leadership skills among academic leaders may indirectly contribute to the enhancement of training approaches for academic staff by promoting their engagement and well-being in the workplace, and can contribute to improvement in employee retention. While the focus of the study was not specifically on training approaches for academic staff, the findings may indirectly shed light on potential approaches for enhancing faculty retention in Church founded Universities in Uganda.

A study by Budiharso and Tarman (2020) emphasized the importance of providing ongoing professional development opportunities to faculty members to improve their teaching effectiveness and research capabilities. Their findings supported the postulations by O'Meara, Bennett, and Neihaus (2016), advocating for a multifaceted approach to training, including workshops, seminars, conferences, and online courses, tailored to academic staff-specific needs and interests. Similarly, Mohammed (2020) underscored the significance of mentorship programs and collaborative research projects in fostering a culture of continuous learning and innovation among academic staff. However, the MUBS Annual Report (2017) highlighted three distinctive mentorship programs namely; faculty mentorship, graduate student mentorship, and peer mentorship programs. By investing in

comprehensive training approaches, universities can empower academic staff to stay abreast of advancements in their fields, adopt innovative teaching methodologies, and contribute to the improvement of educational quality within academic institutions. However, much as the studies indicate training approaches empower academic staff, they did not establish the perspectives of academic staff, which is the focus of the current study, in Church-founded private universities in Uganda.

From a South African perspective, Mashile, Munyeka, and Ndlovu (2021) explored the relationship between organizational culture and turnover intentions among academic staff. However, their study also discussed the specific training approaches for academic staff and professional development programs. They aligned their assertions on the notion that employee retention affirms that employee training fosters a positive organizational culture and mitigates turnover intentions among academic staff. In the same way, Maphalala and Adigun (2021) identified training approaches as workshops, seminars, mentorship programs, and opportunities for skill enhancement and career advancement. Consequently, Pitan and Muller (2020) highlighted that by investing in comprehensive training initiatives tailored to the needs and aspirations of academic staff, universities can create a supportive work environment, enhance job satisfaction, and promote long-term commitment among academic staff, ultimately reducing turnover intentions and strengthening institutional resilience.

The reviewed literature highlighted the importance of organizational culture as a pivotal retention approach within institutions, which directly impacted their success or downfall, which was acknowledged (Rawashdeh et al., 2015). In literature, Armstrong (2009) defined organizational culture as the pattern of values, norms, beliefs, attitudes, and assumptions that shape behaviors within an organization, and

often guide how things are accomplished. In the same way, Liden et al. (2014), suggested that employees are energized when organizational culture aligns with their higher ideals and values. Notably, the culture and values embodied by an organization are respected approaches that profoundly influence staff retention, nurture engagement, and loyalty, and ultimately contribute to enhanced retention rates across institutions. Studies by Al Damen, (2024), emphasized that organizations fostering a strong culture aligned with employee values tend to exhibit higher retention rates.

The findings by Butt, et al., (2020) revealed that staff retention in the higher education sector of Pakistan underscored training approaches for academic staff as a means to enhance retention and foster sustainable competitive advantage. The study emphasized the importance of investing in instructors' continuous professional development and training programs tailored to the specific needs and aspirations of academic staff in HEIs. By providing opportunities for skill enhancement, pedagogical training, and research capacity building, universities can empower faculty members to stay abreast of emerging trends and technologies in their fields and increase job satisfaction and commitment. However, while the study highlighted the role of mentorship and coaching programs in facilitating knowledge transfer, career advancement, and organizational integration, it was silent on early-career academic staff development. Likewise, Musso, Hernández, & Cascalla, (2020) assert the significance of strategic investments in training and development initiatives as a means to promote staff retention and institutional excellence in the higher education sector of South Africa.

A qualitative study in South Africa by Maphalala and Adigun (2021) on "*Academics' Experience of Implementing E-Learning in a South African Higher Education*

*Institution*" revealed that training approaches for academic staff regarding e-learning implementation were discussed. Like their study, the findings by Budiharso and Tarman (2020) also highlighted the importance of providing comprehensive training and support to academic staff to effectively integrate e-learning technologies into their teaching practices in response to the circumstances. The literature emphasized the need for tailored training programs that address specific needs and concerns such as technical skills development, pedagogical training, and ongoing support mechanisms.

Furthermore, Chacha (2021) stressed the significance of promoting a culture of continuous learning and professional development among academic staff to enhance their confidence and proficiency in utilizing e-learning tools and platforms in today's global village as a precondition for employee retention. The crucial role of training approaches in facilitating the successful implementation of e-learning initiatives within higher education institutions, particularly in the South African context, would be mirrored in the Ugandan context, but this lacks evidence-based information.

From the reflections on teaching and learning during COVID-19 in a South African university by Motala and Menon (2020), the challenges faced by academic staff in adapting to remote teaching and learning modalities necessitated by the pandemic restrictions were discussed, highlighting the need for training approaches. The study emphasized the importance of providing comprehensive training and support to academic staff and effectively transitioning to online instruction. The literature underscores the need for tailored professional development programs focusing on digital pedagogy, instructional design, and technology integration to equip faculty with the necessary skills and competencies for successful online teaching.

Furthermore, Motala and Menon highlight the significance of ongoing support mechanisms, such as peer mentoring and coaching, to facilitate continuous learning and improvement among academic staff amidst the evolving landscape of higher education brought about by the pandemic. The current study explored the various training approaches employed within Church of Uganda-founded institutions as a key retention approach that aligns with Christian values and culture.

The study by Arokiasamy and Tat (2020) affirmed the impact of transformational leadership on work engagement, citing that despite its primary emphasis on the effects of leadership styles, it inferentially addressed training approaches for academic staff. They further stated that transformational leadership involves inspiring and empowering personnel, and facilitating their professional growth through mentoring and training initiatives. However, Chacha (2021) stated that while transformational leaders could overwhelmingly influence work engagement and workplace spirituality among academic staff, they remain vital in providing opportunities for skill development, lifelong learning, and career advancement. Subsequently, both studies underscore the significance of training approaches that could foster an atmosphere conducive to academic staff members' engagement, inspiration, and the fulfillment of their spiritual requirements within private Universities in Church of Uganda-founded institutions.

Literature suggests that an effective strategy for retaining staff is through successful induction processes, although these can be limited (Meizlish et al., 2017). Despite being advocated for in literature as a method for staff retention, academic induction often fails to address the unique needs of new hires (Saltmarsh & Swirski, 2010). A study by Walker (2017) on international academic staff in the United Kingdom revealed that induction might not align with their cultural expectations. The finding

is supported by O'Meara et al. (2016), who highlighted a potential discrepancy in expectations between staff and Universities during recruitment. Consequently, scholars argue that the current induction processes may not effectively tackle academic staff retention issues (O'meara et al., 2015; Saltmarsh & Swirski, 2010; Walker, 2017). The researcher also needed to investigate whether orientation is recognized as a viable retention approach in Church-founded private universities in Uganda and to explore the academic staff perspectives.

Again, Pitan and Muller (2020) examined various training methods designed to support academic staff and improve students' employability. The scholars echoed the significance of providing staff with the requisite abilities and proficiencies that efficiently facilitate students' assimilation into the professional world. Likewise, Khan, Buhari, Tsaramirsis & Rasheed (2021), recommended that training initiatives prioritize curriculum development, pedagogical approaches, career counseling, and involvement with the industry, as this would enhance staff retention. In addition, while Pitan and Muller propose that academic programs incorporate experiential learning opportunities—including internships, work placements, and industry projects to facilitate the transition from theoretical knowledge to practical application, situations in various institutions for higher learning seem different and unique in their jurisdiction. Studies revealed that in South Africa, Universities can enhance graduate preparedness for the complexities of the contemporary job market by equipping academic staff with the necessary tools and resources to augment their comprehension of industry demands and trends (Maphalala & Adigun, 2020). The Church-founded Universities in Uganda could also yield variedly from the various training methodologies designed to support academic personnel; however, this lacked empirical evidence, necessitating the researcher to carry out this study.

In a quantitative study by Bolton (2018), the issue of organizations struggling to retain Millennials beyond the initial two years of employment was addressed. It was observed that when organizational values fail to align with the work values of certain staff members, retention becomes challenging. The current study, therefore, explores whether the deeply rooted culture within Church-founded Universities is also revered as a key retention approach for the academic staff, particularly considering the alignment with Christian values and culture on which these institutions were established.

The examination of training approaches for academic staff, specifically women in Kenyan universities, as explored by Chacha (2021), highlights the importance of specialized training initiatives designed to address gender inequalities and promote the advancement of women in scholarly fields. Chacha underscored the criticality of comprehensive training programs that provide opportunities for mentorship, skill enhancement, and skill development, all of which are specifically designed to address the unique challenges faced by female academicians. Research by Amon (2017) emphasized the significance of education in enabling women to surmount glass ceiling obstacles, gender discrimination, and restricted opportunities for professional growth. According to Kipkoskgei (2019), Kenyan universities have the potential to advance gender equality, cultivate inclusive academic environments, and bolster professional growth opportunities and retention of female scholars through the implementation of focused training approaches. Similarly, Nabawanuka (2023) suggested training as a retention approach. However, there was limited evidence of the situation among the Church -founded institutions.

From the assertions by Wanjohi (2020) on academic staff training approaches in Kenya, offering customized training initiatives and opportunities for professional

growth was emphasized to augment the efficiency and job contentment of adjunct staff members. Wanjohi emphasizes the significance of technology integration sessions, pedagogical training, and subject-specific seminars as integral components of adjunct faculty development programs. However, Reedy et al. (2021) emphasized that while technology was a key factor in the significance of mentorship, collaborative peer work, and continuous support in promoting the academic community integration and professional development of adjunct faculty members, it came at a huge cost that not all institutions could bear to invest in. Hence, it is not clear whether Church-founded Universities in Uganda could have the ability to enhance the academic experience, positively impact student learning outcomes, and empower adjunct academic staff to excel in their teaching responsibilities, given the limited evidence on the implementation of comprehensive training approaches, which calls for an in-depth investigation.

Various studies highlighted the significance of training and development in retaining academic staff within universities. In another study by Ng'ethe et al. (2012), the scholars asserted that providing opportunities for training and development is crucial to ensure the retention of employees. This sentiment was also echoed by Grossman and Salas (2011), who emphasized the utilization of training programs as a strategic method for retaining staff. In a study by Mohammed (2020), he identified five approaches that can help reduce employee turnover in organizations. These included creating flexible working hours, consistency, offering training, incentivizing results, and communication. Studies have highlighted that in today's competitive job market, where the retention of talented staff is a pressing challenge for institutions, training and development play a pivotal role (Saif & Al-Qarshoubi, 2020a). Training equips employees with essential information, skills, and attitudes contributing to improved

performance. Despite these benefits, some research diverges on the effectiveness of training and development as retention approaches among academic staff. For example, the MUBS Annual Report (2017), documented the case of Makerere University Business School sponsoring academic staff for Masters and PhD programs with the expectation of enhancing staff motivation and retention. However, the outcomes were mixed, as the MUBS report indicated that some graduates left the institution shortly after completing their programs. This underscored the complexity of the relationship between training initiatives and staff retention.

Chacha and Botha (2021), in their article "*Factors influencing intention to leave of younger employees in an academic institution*," revealed contextual findings on the factors that influence the intention of younger employees to leave academic institutions. Their research underscored the significance of training programs and professional development opportunities in augmenting job satisfaction and retention rates among junior academic personnel as this would double the retention footprint. Similarly, Motala and Menon (2020) underscored the necessity for academic institutions to allocate resources toward customized training programs that cater to the particular requirements and professional ambitions of academic staff members. However, research by Mashile et al. (2021) emphasized the significance of mentorship initiatives and collaborative research prospects in furnishing early-career scholars with invaluable assistance and direction, which comes at a certain varied cost. Although academic institutions can effectively cultivate a climate of ongoing learning, professional growth, and employee involvement, Ishak and Mansor (2020) asserted that mitigating attrition intentions and bolstering the retention of younger personnel within the academic domain called for deeper consideration.

Within the framework for improving academic staff job satisfaction, training methodologies were highlighted by Khan et al. (2021). One of the theories discussed here is Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory of Job Satisfaction, suggesting that professional development opportunities and training play a great role in creating a satisfying work environment, but do not guarantee the utmost staff retention. However, Reedy et al. (2021) examined the impact of various training approaches during the COVID-19 pandemic period based on staff motivation, performance, and overall well-being, suggesting approaches to promote employee job satisfaction in higher education institutes based on training activities that enhance teaching skills, research capabilities, and administrative competencies. Mashile et al. (2021) revealed that to create a positive work atmosphere and increase job satisfaction among academic staff, there is a need to invest in training and professional development programs customized to their specific requirements and goals. There was a vacuum of evidence regarding the training approaches employed in Church-founded institutions.

A study by Nsanzumuhire, Wim, & Masengesho (2021) examined the dynamics of academia-industry interactions in Rwanda. While the study's main emphasis is on partnerships between academia and industry, it does touch on how academic personnel are trained in Church-founded institutions. The scholars recommended that academic staff in Rwanda be trained in a way relevant to their respective sectors to foster collaboration across disciplines and focus on practical skills. The scholars contended that graduates' employability and knowledge transfer needed to be improved by bringing academic training in line with industry needs and strengthening links between academia and industry as mirrored in the postulations by Maphalala and Adigun (2021). This highlighted the need for training programs that

give staff the skills needed to work effectively with businesses, spark new ideas, and boost performance.

Another study by Uwamwezi (2020) suggested several ways that academic staff at the University of Rwanda libraries were trained including online and conventional approaches. As part of this process, the importance of providing the academic staff with opportunities to grow professionally through programs like continuing education, seminars, and workshops was affirmed. Chivandire (2019) stated that given the dynamic nature of university libraries and other organizational changes like mergers, had pros and cons of training at different times. Furthermore, Rawashdeh, Al-Saraireh, & Obeidat (2015) and Armstrong (2014) reflected that to ensure that resources are being used effectively to promote staff development, there was a need to create an environment where learning and creativity are valued and match training methods with institutional values and goals. The literature by Brenyah and Tetteh (2016) sheds light on how training can help academic institutions create a workforce that is competent enough and resilient to adapt to the changing industry and less likely to quit.

Academic staff training methods are addressed in the context of implementing innovative mass higher education in Africa and other parts of the world. Mzyece, Soumonni, and Townsend (2021) revealed that academia at African Leadership University (ALU) presents its specific problems but underscores the significance of delivering thorough training programs adapted to those particular needs. Charlene-Bolton (2018) also explored ways to make lessons more efficient, get students more involved, and encourage new approaches to lesson planning and delivery but this was only suited to their context. ALU's mentorship programs aligned with the collaborative learning communities made up of professional development initiatives

that helped the university's staff members advance in their careers. The institution can better equip its teachers to respond to students' ever-changing needs by innovating mass higher education and adapting to new paradigms in the field by funding opportunities for ongoing professional development and capacity building. Despite the relevance of the literature, this study considered the Church-founded institutions to bridge the research gap.

Various studies underscored the positive correlation between organizational culture, job satisfaction, staff performance commitment, and retention rates (Rawashdeh et al., 2015; Shahzad, 2014; Sabri, Ilyas, & Amjad, 2011). Studies by Holtbrugge, Friedman, and Puck (2010) recommended the replacement of low performers with new staff possessing diverse skills and strong abilities, and understanding factors specific to their institutions is crucial for university management and effectively retaining staff. The reviewed literature also indicated that employees are inclined to remain in organizations that cultivate a culture promoting a positive work environment, emphasizing feelings of value and support among staff members. These were recognized as a core element in ensuring organizational triumph, organizational culture is paramount (Arnold & Randall, 2010). Brenyah and Tetteh (2016) spotlighted organizational culture as a retention strategy among private universities in Ghana, affirming its positive impact on retention rates. However, there was no evidence of whether similar approaches influenced staff retention in universities.

#### **2.4 Views of academic staff on the retention approaches in universities**

Academic staff are pivotal to the success of universities. Therefore, it is crucial to investigate their perspectives on the retention approaches practiced within these

higher education institutions. Research studies that were conducted to explore how academic staff perceive the retention approaches shed light on their expectations and preferences. The existing body of literature provides valuable insights into the viewpoints of academic staff, aiming to enhance the support and retention of these key individuals.

Many institutions use career growth and development to retain their academic staff. Findings from studies by Kasozi (2009), Ddungu (2013), and Sithole, Chiyaka, & Kibirige (2017) revealed that while institutions may view career growth and development as effective retention approaches, academic staff often see them as mere stepping stones to new opportunities elsewhere. These academics tend to depart from their current institutions after training, seeking career advancement. Observations from Kasozi (2009), Ddungu (2013), and Sithole et al. (2017) are further corroborated by Okello and Lamaro (2015), who highlight that several highly skilled academic staff members left Makerere University, a renowned institution in Uganda, between 2009 and 2013. Even when the institution invested in training and capacity development, the senior academic staff sought better prospects elsewhere.

Scholars such as Kasozi (2009) and Okello and Lamaro (2015) indicated that many institutions invest in training staff and think that the trained staff will hold on to their institutions after attaining advancement in their careers and will stay for some time, and contribute to the institutional growth. However, other studies discovered that academic staff perceive training and development as a stepping stone to more opportunities (Ddungu, 2009). Since the reviewed literature included studies carried out in institutions different from those targeted for this study, there was a need to explore the perceptions of academic staff towards training as a retention approach

used by selected institutions for this study. Since the staff trained are expected to reciprocate as advanced by the SET, the study was to ascertain whether staff perceived training as a benefit that necessitates their commitment and retention in universities.

Again, in literature, several scholars emphasized the importance of rewards and recognition in influencing academic staff tenure and attitudes toward incentives. According to Anderson (2019), Smith (2020), and Bakker and Van-Woerkom (2017), academic staff consider rewards and recognition as crucial factors in staff retention. Armstrong (2020) highlighted the significance of satisfactory compensation, pay, and career advancement opportunities in staff retention. However, scholars cautioned against blanket retention policies and suggested that segmented and appealing policies are more effective (Vaiman, Scullion, & Collings, 2012). Similarly, Sinha (2012) added that what works for retention in one institution may not apply to another.

Research done in a corporate setting revealed that employees who value their organization are less likely to seek other job opportunities (Sunder, Kumar, & Maurer, 2017). Another study by Chih and Lin (2019), demonstrated how employees' perceptions influence HR practices and emphasized the importance of effective HR approaches for fostering stronger interpersonal connections. Furthermore, Chih & Lin (2019) established a positive relationship between work-life flexibility, employee attendance, job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and self-value perception. Various factors affecting staff retention in academic institutions are cited, showing differences across institutions, such as mental health, which fosters workplace wellbeing (Gelencsér, Szabó-Szentgróti, Kőműves, & Hollósy-Vadász, 2023).

In their study, Aslan, Lee, Yaman, & Aksu, (2023), the scholars highlighted the significance of organizational culture, performance perceptions, and aligning individual values with organizational values for enhanced member performance. Yang and Yu (2019), Katsikea, Theodosiou, & Morgan (2015) emphasized the link between retention rates and organizational culture. Overall, the literature suggested that organizations should monitor their culture consistently to align with individual values and create a supportive work environment. The views of the staff regarding the institution's cultural values and their influence on academic staff retention in Universities in Uganda needed to be explored to fill the existing knowledge gap.

The article by Korantwi-Barimah (2017) discussed different perspectives on approaches for retaining academic staff in a Ghanaian technical university. His views highlighted several elements that affect the retention of academic staff, such as organizational support, salary, job happiness, and possibilities for professional growth. Though his study was informative, it lacked a strong strand regarding the precise techniques and interventions required to improve academic staff retention in the Ghanaian higher education setting. The assertions by Mzyece, Soumonni, Townsend (2021) also emphasized the necessity for additional empirical research and theoretical advancement to recognize and execute evidence-based retention tactics customized to the distinct needs and obstacles of academic staff in HEIs.

Considering the views of King, Roed, and Wilson (2018) after exploring the significance of practice-based approaches to academic staff induction and retention; the scholars emphasized the importance of providing comprehensive onboarding programs that familiarize new faculty members with the institutional culture, expectations, and support systems (Bell & Administrator, 2021). Additionally, their

views highlighted the role of mentorship and peer support networks in facilitating the transition of new academic staff into their roles and promoting job satisfaction and retention. However, the authors cited the associated costs for ongoing professional development opportunities and career advancement pathways that would negatively influence the engagement and retention of academic staff over the long term. Meanwhile, Nsanzumuhire et al. (2021) posited that by addressing the unique needs and challenges of academic staff through practice-based induction and retention approaches, universities can cultivate a supportive work environment conducive to faculty success and institutional effectiveness, thereby justifying the research gap in this critical area in the realm of Universities in Uganda.

The study by Kuuyelleh, Alqahtani, and Akanpaadgi (2022) explored academic staff retention approaches, particularly focusing on various views regarding the effectiveness of retention approaches for academic staff within Ghanaian technical universities. Their views justified the research gap and highlighted the limited empirical evidence and scholarly attention dedicated to understanding the challenges and dynamics of retaining academic talent in technical universities in Ghana. Similarly, Motala and Menon (2020) revealed that while existing literature offers insights into general retention approaches in higher education contexts, there was a need for more targeted research that considered the unique contextual factors and institutional characteristics of higher education institutions. The study aimed to provide valuable insights by focusing on Universities in Uganda, to contribute to knowledge advancement and best practices in human resource management within this higher education sector.

The postulations by Chivandire (2019) on the views of academic staff retention approaches in universities were explored within the Zimbabwean context, justifying

the research gap by highlighting the limited existing literature on factors influencing academic staff retention, specifically in local universities, particularly within the Matabeleland Region. Chivandire's (2019) views presented insights into the perceptions, experiences, and preferences of academic staff regarding retention approaches. It also sheds light on unique challenges and opportunities universities face in retaining their academic staff. Ntuli (2017) revealed that examining approaches such as compensation, job satisfaction, career advancement opportunities, and organizational support was relevant. The study provides valuable insights for policymakers, university administrators, and stakeholders seeking to develop effective retention approaches tailored to the needs of academic staff.

The study by Whatmore and Wiklef (2020) on worker retention at the Zimbabwe Revenue Authority (Zinara) offers insights into retention approaches that can be applied in several sectors, particularly addressing difficulties related to retaining academic personnel in universities. Their study provides evidence on the general retention procedures, although it does not include the intricate dynamics and specific incentives of academic personnel. Academic environments vary greatly from corporate or governmental settings, with unique elements affecting employment satisfaction, career advancement, and organizational loyalty. King, Roed, and Wilson (2018) affirmed the necessity for research that focuses on the complexities of retaining academic staff, investigating aspects like tenure policies, research opportunities, and institutional culture. This research vacuum may be due to the lack of emphasis on variables particular to academics that contribute to staff turnover and retention tactics. Addressing this gap was to provide evidence-based initiatives customized for academic staff, ultimately improving retention rates and fostering institutional success in Universities in Uganda.

Academic staff retention techniques in the article by Bigirimana, Sibanda, and Masengu (2016) in connection to the challenges faced by African universities shed light on the relationship between academic staff turnover and working conditions, including pay, workload, possibilities for professional growth, and organizational support. Likewise, views from Mzyece et al. (2021) provide an impression that poor working conditions might give rise to worries about inadequate rewards, little chances for professional advancement, and job dissatisfaction among academic staff, which would lead to high turnover rates. Universities can improve their institutional effectiveness and quality, as well as promote long-term commitment and increase teacher satisfaction, if they address the deficiencies that have been previously identified in retention approaches (Korantwi-Barimah, 2017). The study findings may reinforce the need for more research into effective retention approaches tailored to the unique needs and circumstances of academic staff.

Again, Matongolo, Kasekende, and Mafabi (2018) analyzed retention approaches in universities with a core focus on academic staff perceptions beyond employer branding and provided insights into how organizational culture, career advancement, work-life balance, and recognition influence faculty decisions to stay or leave. Chaacha and Botha (2021), and Matongolo et al. (2018) uncovered discrepancies between existing retention methods and staff expectations, urging the universities to refine their approaches to retain talent better and cultivate supportive work environments. Through the examination of the perspectives of academic staff, this study reveals subtle issues and possibilities that are specific to Universities in Ugandan. This would pave the way for individualized retention approaches to improve job satisfaction and loyalty among academic staff in universities Uganda.

A Conceptual Paper by Nabunya, Tusiime, and Kyaligonza (2018) explored how professional development practices can improve the service delivery of academic staff at universities in Uganda. Nabunya, et al., (2018), revealed that investing in professional development options, such as training workshops, conferences, and mentorship programs, can improve the retention of academic staff by promoting their growth, job satisfaction, and career progression. The scholars also pointed out the lack of a study to comprehend the distinct professional development requirements and preferences of academic staff in Ugandan universities based on their foundational bodies and historical establishments. Further empirical research was needed to investigate the effectiveness of various retention approaches and professional development practices. This justified the necessity for additional studies to develop evidence-based retention approaches in Ugandan higher education institutions.

Views provided by Rwothumio, Mbirithi, and Itolondo (2021), presented the importance of training on improving academic staff performance at public institutions in Uganda. With emphasis on the strong connection between training opportunities and academic staff performance, their study underscores the significance of professional development in providing staff with the information, skills, and competencies needed for effective teaching, research, and service. Graham and Regan (2016), affirm the essence of investigating how training affects job satisfaction, motivation, and retention among academic staff, emphasizing the importance of continuous learning and capacity-building programs in enhancing employee engagement and commitment which aligns with Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory of Motivation. A gap was pointed out regarding retention approaches in HEIs

to keep academic staff, highlighting the need for more research to improve retention approaches and boost organizational effectiveness.

The difficulties encountered in retaining academic staff in HEIs, such as restricted career progression prospects, insufficient professional growth assistance, and non-competitive compensation plans, affect their growth index (Ng'ethe, 2014). Kuuyelleh, Alqahtani, and Akanpaadgi (2022) offered insights into the opinions and attitudes of academic staff on retention methods in Ghanaian technical universities, affirming the need for tailored capacity to meet institutional needs. The studies emphasized the need for building sound organizational culture, leadership, and work-life balance as prerequisites for faculty retention. This validates the study gap in the literature that emphasizes the significance of comprehending the distinct requirements and inclinations of academic staff to create successful retention approaches by examining their experiences and viewpoints.

In a study by Ntuli (2017), the scholar discussed opinions on retention approaches for academic staff at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, emphasizing the challenges of keeping academic staff in the university setting. His exploration of the different aspects affecting the retention of academic staff encompassed job satisfaction, organizational support, salary, professional development opportunities, and work-life balance. According to Anderson (2019), the difficulties encountered by academic staff, such as substantial workloads, restricted opportunities for career progression, and issues related to institutional culture, if not addressed, may result in employee turnover. However, Okello and Lamaro (2015) emphasized the necessity of empirical evidence and thorough analysis to assess the efficacy of current retention approaches and pinpoint areas for enhancement.

While different literature provided useful insights into academic staff retention in higher education institutions, Chih and Lin (2019) stated that various stakeholders have different experiences and opinions on staff retention. Their opinion set the foundation for this study, and the findings may be used to shape future retention programs and policy decisions.

In Nigeria, Abubakar, Oluwade, and Ibrahim (2022), examined different perspectives on approaches for retaining academic staff in universities to address research deficits. They suggested that although there is an increasing amount of literature on human capital development and retention in different organizational settings, there was a gap for a study that specifically addresses the distinct difficulties and dynamics experienced by academic staff. Rwothumio et al. (2021) and Mzyece et al. (2021), observed that academic staff face unique circumstances that affect their retention, such as academic freedom, research opportunities, and institutional culture, requiring specific retention tactics (Ishola, & Abdylkareem, 2020). The necessity for additional empirical studies to investigate the efficacy of retention approaches customized to the unique requirements and goals of academic staff was also emphasized by Whatmore and Wiklef (2020). This enhances the comprehension of human capital theory and staff retention in the academic field.

The views of Mampuru, Mokoena, and Isabirye (2024) on approaches for retaining academic staff at universities emphasized the importance of investing in training and development programs to improve job satisfaction, loyalty, and retention among academic personnel. Their findings were echoed in the study findings of Ravina-Pradhan (2022) and Nzimande, Qwatekana, and Sithole (2023), suggesting that academic staff retention is affected by elements including opportunities for professional development, acknowledgment of accomplishments, and conducive

work conditions. Likewise, Motala and Menon (2020) highlighted the importance of institutions customizing retention methods for academic staff based on individual criteria like research interests, teaching duties, and career goals. Soliciting the views of academic staff on how training and development programs influenced their retention helped to identify effective approaches for keeping academic staff and address the research gap that existed in Universities in Uganda.

The revelations by Chrysikos and Catterall (2020) on student retention factors in a learning community setting mirrored the retention of academic staff. This was in line with what Afrianty et al. (2022) and Eringfeld (2021) revealed, justifying a study vacuum in understanding the viewpoints on retention approaches for academic staff in HEIs. As observed by the MUBS Annual Report (2017) and Wanjohi (2020), student retention is important, but retaining academic personnel is equally critical for institutional performance and academic excellence. In his study, Ntuli (2017) revealed that academic staff retention approaches involve organizational support, professional development opportunities, and work-life balance programs to enhance job satisfaction and ensure long-term commitment. However, little has been known about Universities in Uganda regarding retention approaches and academic staff perceptions. Yet, HEIs can improve retention rates, create a healthy work environment, and support performance and sustainability by meeting the specific needs and goals of academic staff but this requires concerted efforts according to Aslan et al. (2021).

The views from Al-Qarshoubi, (2020), doctoral dissertation, provided insights into the opinions and experiences of academic staff regarding retention approaches in universities, including perceptions. The efficacy of current incentive programs and retention tactics used by Oman's Universities was disclosed. Mirroring the

dissertation are the sentiments of Butt et al. (2020) and Khan et al. (2021) who demonstrated a need for additional research by pointing out differences between the perceived value of incentives and their actual effect on the retention of academic personnel through qualitative or quantitative analysis. Reedy et al. (2021), Mwesigwa et al. (2020), and Afrianty et al. (2022) drew attention to elements that lead to academic staff attrition, like low pay, few chances for professional growth, and unwelcoming work environments, yet staff see them as alternative retention approaches that are more in line with their requirements and expectations in the higher education sector.

Experience from Australia and the UK by Graham and Regan (2016) revealed that focus was laid on professional staff rather than academic staff in the quest for improving student outcomes. Literature by scholars such as Budiharso and Tarman (2020), Musso et al. (2020), Arokiasamy and Tat (2020), and Wanjohi (2020) revealed that the contributions of professional staff are undoubtedly valuable to the functioning of universities, but suggested separate research focusing specifically on the retention approaches for academic staff. The assertions by Yameen, Bharadwaj, and Ahmad (2021) and Nzimande et al. (2023) potentially justified a research gap in the specific examination of retention approaches for academic staff in universities citing variabilities in different contexts. Eather, Mavilidi, and Parkes (2022) examined the role of professional staff in supporting student outcomes, such as academic success, retention, and overall student satisfaction. The studies discovered that academic staff often have unique needs, responsibilities, and challenges, including research expectations, teaching loads, and career advancement opportunities. Therefore, a dedicated study on retention approaches tailored to academic staff was conducted to help address this research gap.

The perspectives of academic staff on retention approaches in universities, as examined by Chen (2024), provided an illumination on the integration of foreign faculty at Japanese universities, revealing different viewpoints of foreign faculty members on the different retention tactics used by institutions, like work-life balance efforts, professional development chances, and organizational support. Likewise, Mampuru et al. (2024) provided light on the difficulties faced by foreign professors in integrating into the academic community, pursuing opportunities for career promotion, and feeling satisfied with their jobs in general. Examining these viewpoints indicated a knowledge gap on retention approaches' efficacy from the viewpoint of foreign faculty members, drawing particular insights from the institutional and cultural setting of Japanese universities. In focus, Bakker and Van-Woerkom (2017) suggested building more focused measures to improve the integration and retention of foreign academic staff in HEIs. A better understanding of the perceptions of the academic staff on retention approaches was therefore necessary. Promotion in HEIs occurs in various contexts characterized by two main aspects that include the financial benefits associated with the new position and the advancement from a lower to a higher rank within the institutional hierarchy. The primary objective of promotion is to enhance employee motivation, which in turn contributes to the achievement of organizational goals. When employees feel motivated, their morale improves, leading to heightened performance and productivity. This increase in individual performance contributes to the overall effectiveness and success of the organization and, in the long run, contributes to retention (Abdulmumini, 2021)

The viewpoints and opinions on retention approaches in HEIs were explored by Kuuyelleh, Alqahtani, and Akanpaadgi (2022). They cited elements that affect

academic retention choices, such as pay, work-life balance, professional development opportunities, organizational support, and job satisfaction. From their analysis of academic staff experiences and perspectives in the setting of Ghanaian technical universities, the study determined what works and what does not when it comes to retention approaches at that level. Their assertions echoed what Abubakar et al. (2022) and Al-Qarshoubi's (2020) revealed highlighting the necessity of empirical data and thorough analysis to guide the creation and execution of customized retention plans that cater to the unique requirements and difficulties encountered by academic staff in universities. Given this revelation, this study was intended to address this vacuum, but focused on Universities in Uganda.

The viewpoints of academic staff regarding retention approaches in universities vary in context, with different ideas (Saif & Al-Qarshoubi 2020a). In this case, people's opinions of how well work-life balance programs, professional development opportunities, pay packages, and organizational support affected their decisions to stay or quit their jobs are very important. Studies by Kuuyelleh et al. (2022) and Ntuli (2017), revealed the need for a thorough analysis of the different viewpoints and the disparities between university preferences and institutional efforts. Their study pointed out possible areas where retention approaches needed to be strengthened. To create focused retention interventions that meet the interests and goals of academic staff, it is important to understand their views (Matongolo et al., 2018b).

A study by Ros and Oleksiyenko (2018) provided insights into academic staff opinions on retention approaches in HEIs, indicating several retention-related issues that Cambodian university lecturers had to deal with. These issues identified included low pay, few opportunities for professional growth, and a lack of acknowledgment

and assistance from institutional leadership. These opinions revealed a major research vacuum in the variables influencing staff retention in developing nations, including Uganda, and the complications for higher education policy and practice. Similarly, Bigirimana et al. (2016), findings offered important insights into the difficulties of staff retention and the necessity for focused interventions to meet the particular academic staff retention challenges in developing nations. This shed light on the situation in Uganda, indicating the gap for this study.

Similarly, Dimé's (2018) study on PhD programs and research in Sub-Saharan Africa, done in Senegal, shed light on the difficulties academic staff encounter related to retention approaches in higher education. This study suggests several issues that academic employees frequently deal with when deciding whether to continue with their jobs or leave, including a lack of career promotion opportunities, low pay, and a lack of resources for professional growth. The postulations by Reedy et al. (2021), Mwesigwa et al. (2020), and Eringfeld (2021) also draw attention to how critical it is to address these issues with retention approaches that support academic success and build institutional capability. However, Dimé's (2018) findings highlight the necessity for additional research on successful retention tactics catering to the particular circumstances of Sub-Saharan African universities, which perhaps justifies the research gap. In the same way, Bigirimana et al. (2016) and Abubakar et al. (2022) asserted that policymakers and university administrators can create focused interventions to improve retention rates and foster a friendly and accommodating work environment for faculty members by learning about the viewpoints and experiences of academic staff. This information provided light on exploring the situation in Church-founded Universities in Uganda.

The viewpoints on academic staff retention approaches were examined within the University of Technology by Kotelana (2021). The views highlighted the difficulties academic staff at these institutions encountered, such as work-life balance, career growth possibilities, and job satisfaction. A study by Pitan and Muller (2020) affirms the importance of identifying areas for improvement and exposing gaps in current approaches to staff retention by exploring their experiences and perceptions on a routine basis. This further highlighted the need for a more methodical and comprehensive approach to address the retention of academic staff with PhD qualifications and considered elements like institutional culture, leadership support, professional development opportunities, and the alignment of organizational goals with individual aspirations. Kotelana's study lays the foundation to justify the research gap in the context of Church founded Universities in Uganda, necessitating further investigation into the problem of staff retention.

In another study, Pradhan and Choudhary (2022) solicited opinions on retention approaches for academic staff in universities, aiming to show the intricate interaction of elements impacting staff retention. He revealed how important it is to comprehend the viewpoints and experiences of academic staff when creating retention approaches. Chivandire (2019) and Rwothumio et al. (2021) made the case that although there are several approaches for staff retention available, there existed a research gap when it came to fully addressing the complex requirements and motivations of academic staff because people's opinions vary profoundly, as mirrored by Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory of Motivation. To learn more about how staff members perceive work-life balance, professional development opportunities, organizational support, and job satisfaction, Ravian-Pradhan's study stressed the value of conducting empirical research. Focusing on CFHEI in Uganda, the study

identifies retention approaches and staff perceptions on retention initiatives that promote a culture of academic excellence and institutional stability to bridge the knowledge gap.

The article by Yameen, Bharadwaj, et al. (2021) offered deep insights into how academic staff see retention approaches in higher education, clarifying how academic staff view the efficacy of the retention tactics used. The study pointed out potential areas for development. The revelation by Musso et al. (2020) and Budiharso and Tarman (2020), indicated that work-life balance, leadership support, and chances for professional growth stood out among the approaches that influenced the decisions about academic staff retention. The article by Yameen, et al., (2021) draws attention to any inconsistencies or gaps between staff expectations and institutional practices. Kuuyelleh et al. (2022) emphasized the need to consider the views of academic staff, which supported the in-depth investigation for this study. This study provided suggestions for improving retention approaches based on the knowledge obtained from academic staff, adding to the body of knowledge on employee retention in universities.

A study by Nzimande, Qwatekana, Sithole, (2023) explored the complex relationship between motivation and tenure for academic staff, particularly in the setting of Extended Curricular Programs (ECPs), and their effects on staff retention. The scholars unearthed the problems that academic staff in ECPs experience, such as the demands of their workloads, the lack of prospects for career advancement, and possible pay differences from regular academic employment. Similarly, a study by Whatmore and Wiklef (2020) justified a notable research void in the literature by emphasizing the distinct dynamics at work in universities and their influence on university staff retention tactics.

A study by Arokiasamy and Tat (2020) stressed that customized retention approaches cater to the unique requirements and incentives of academic staff in non-traditional academic roles. Hence, this study provided insights into the larger conversation on staff retention in higher education institutions. It shed light on the intricacies of tenure and motivation of academic staff in Universities in Uganda.

## **2.5 Expectations of academic staff for their retention in universities**

Academic staff retention in universities is a critical aspect that impacts the overall quality of education and research. Understanding the factors that contributed to professors and lecturers staying in their positions for an extended period was essential for universities to create a supportive and motivating environment as an affirmation of the Social Exchange Theory (SET) and the Human Capital theory. Several studies have investigated the expectations of academic staff regarding their retention within the university setting, but not in the Church-founded universities in Uganda, where this study took place.

In the scholarly work by Perez-Campdesuner, De-Miguel-Guzmán, Martínez-Vivar (2018), Chen (2022), as well as Johnson (2023), the expectations of academic staff for their continued presence in the university setting were explored. The findings consistently underscored the work environment's pivotal role in influencing academic staff's decision to either stay or leave the university. The study by Johnson (2023) recommended that universities prioritize establishing a supportive and inclusive work culture that fosters collaboration, provides access to essential resources, and promotes success in their professional roles. Research conducted by Kipkebut (2010) on employees in Kenyan universities, the researcher highlighted the

significance of factors such as role conflict, promotional opportunities, and age in determining employees' intentions to stay or leave the institution.

In another study conducted at Makerere University, Amutuhaire (2010) revealed that remuneration and job security impacted academic staff retention. Competitive salaries and job security were identified as crucial factors in retaining lecturers and professors dedicated to teaching and research activities. The study by Ng'ethe et al. (2012) underscored the significance that academic staff attribute to competitive salaries and benefits in bolstering job satisfaction and mitigating turnover rates. Additionally, it highlighted the pivotal role of opportunities for career progression, encompassing clear pathways for professional advancement via promotions and leadership responsibilities, as crucial factors in retaining academic staff within universities. These findings suggest that a comprehensive approach to addressing staff retention in universities should include approaches that enhance compensation packages and provide avenues for career development and growth.

Previous studies on staff retention have highlighted the diverse expectations among staff members regarding their retention approaches (Johnson & Anderson, 2023). These expectations encompassed various factors such as competitive compensation and benefits, such as attractive salary packages, opportunities for professional development through workshops, conferences, mentoring programs, initiatives promoting work-life balance, and recognition and rewards for their contributions. A study by Matimbwa and Ochumbo (2019) focused on turnover and retention concerning senior academics in South African higher education institutions. The research utilized a survey research method and a quantitative design, collecting primary data from 255 senior academic staff across 10 universities in South Africa through a self-administered questionnaire. The study investigated the influence of

specific job attributes on academic staff retention. The results indicated that most staff prioritized challenging work, interpersonal relationships, access to research resources, and job stability for their retention.

Studies have also highlighted the importance of collegiality in staff retention. Studies indicated that collegiality is a core value and a unifying factor in academic staff work and culture. A study by Haviland, Alleman, and Cliburn (2017) observed that collegiality, open communication, access to meetings, and working as a team all contribute to academic staff motivation and desire to work. Collegiality encompasses respect, having a voice in decision-making, and a commitment to the common good to contribute to academic governance and culture. When staff feel respected, they develop a sense of belonging, which contributes to their stay (Ishola et al., 2020; Shah, 2012)

In another study, met expectations, trust, work satisfaction, and dedication are the main aspects examined by Ababneh's (2020) study on faculty turnover intentions in the UAE. According to his findings, academic staff retention is greatly affected by their expectations, which is a different case in other educational settings. Other studies mentioned that trust, job satisfaction, and institutional commitment positively correlate with faculty members' perceptions. Having their expectations fulfilled in terms of job duties, work environment, and possibilities for professional growth, academic staff can stay for some time (Hilliger, Ortiz-Rojas, Pesántez-Cabrera, Scheihing, Tsai, Muñoz-Merino, Broos, Whitelock-Wainwright, & Pérez-Sanagustín, 2020). On the flip side, academic staff are more likely to consider leaving if their expectations are not met (Martínez-Valdivia, Pegalajar-Palomino, Burgos-García, 2020). However, Ababneh (2020) highlighted the need for universities to improve their retention efforts by ensuring that organizational policies and

practices meet academic staff expectations. Again, this recommendation needed more evidence and further exploration. While this can be said that academic staff retention can be achieved through open and honest communication, leadership that supports, opportunities for professional growth and advancement, the need for further research to explore the various expectations that influence staff retention cannot be overlooked.

A study by Salau (2022) revealed that by creating a positive work environment, universities can increase academic staff retention. However, the expectations of academic staff on staff retention in Church founded Universities in Uganda remain unknown, which necessitated a deeper investigation.

With a focus on Pakistan's higher education system, the study by Butt et al. (2020) investigated academic staff expectations regarding their retention at universities. The study revealed that competitive compensation, professional growth prospects, supportive work cultures, and recognition of academic achievements as some of the important elements that fervently influence staff retention.

University staff expect to receive attractive salaries commensurate with their experience, education, and research (Kuuyelleh et al., 2022). Their findings corroborated the assertions by Szromek and Wolniak (2020), Abubakar et al. (2022), and et al. (2021), who mentioned that opportunities for research assistance, professional development, and inclusion in institutional decision-making are highly valued by academic staff and fosters their retention. In addition, Li et al. (2021) affirmed that staff in academic institutions look for an environment where they may work together in an atmosphere of mutual respect and appreciation. A study by Ng'ethe et al. (2012), revealed that satisfying the expectations of academic staff

may be overstretching, though critical for universities to increase staff retention, promote institutional stability, and maintain a competitive edge.

According to Naylor and Mifsud (2020), the expectations for retention in universities within the context of structural inequality are critical, but are considered a requirement to meet the needs of the key stakeholders. The study further highlighted that fair treatment is an important aspect in retention. The revelations by Naylor and Mifsud support Adam's Equity theory, which was featured as vital in retention. Notably, Szromek and Wolniak (2020) argued that these expectations are often undermined by structural barriers within HEIs, including inequitable distribution of resources, limited support for professional development, and inadequate recognition of teaching and research excellence. The postulations by Martínez-Valdivia and Burgos-Garcia (2020) suggested that addressing the structural inequalities is essential for enhancing academic staff retention and promoting inclusive academic environments where all staff members feel valued and supported in their roles. Although the findings by Hilliger et al. (2020) affirmed that prioritizing equity, diversity, and inclusion initiatives, universities can create conditions that foster faculty satisfaction, engagement, and long-term commitment, and ultimately contribute to student success and institutional excellence. However, these findings could not be generalized to the situation in Church-founded Universities in Uganda and this necessitated a study to bridge this research gap.

In their study, Collard, Scammell, and Tee (2020) stated that the expectations of academic staff for their retention in universities depend on several key factors influencing academic staff retention, including job satisfaction, opportunities for professional development, supportive work environments, and recognition of their contributions. Again, Ros and Oleksiyenko (2018) revealed that academic staff

expressed the need for clear career pathways, mentorship programs, and opportunities for scholarly advancement are likely to enhance their job satisfaction and commitment to the institution, which may increase their chances of staying with the institution. Moreover, Kuuyelleh et al. (2022) emphasized the importance of supportive leadership, collaborative work cultures, and effective communication channels in fostering a positive academic environment conducive to academic staff retention. Their findings echo the tenets of the SET of reciprocation. By addressing the expectations and investing in approaches to support academic staff development and well-being, universities can enhance retention rates and promote a sustainable academic workforce. Similar findings may apply to the Universities in Uganda, but lacked empirical evidence, which this study tried to address.

A study by Szromek & Wolniak (2020) indicated that academic staff anticipate institutions to offer sufficient infrastructure and resources for teaching remotely, as well as chances for professional growth and acknowledgment for their efforts. Comprehending these anticipations is pivotal for academic institutions to execute efficacious retention tactics and foster a constructive and accommodating work milieu for academic staff, amongst the obstacles presented by the COVID-19 outbreak, where the Universities faced the same hardships to deliver their mandate. This, therefore, necessitated a deeper investigation to explore the expectations of academic staff for their retention in the Universities.

From the Ugandan perspective, Mwesigwa, Tusiime and Ssekiziyivu (2020) investigated the retention considerations that academic staff have in mind regarding their employment at universities. They revealed the significance of leadership styles in cultivating organizational commitment and job satisfaction among academic personnel. A study by Mgaiwa (2021) and Sirili, Simba, and Tetui (2022) highlighted

the anticipations of academic staff for their retention. The scholars established that the leadership that is supportive and recognizes the worth of academic staff contributions, offers avenues for career development, and cultivates a favorable workplace atmosphere. Furthermore, Martinez and Garcia (2020) underscored the importance of equitable and transparent policies, competitive remuneration, and acknowledgment of scholarly accomplishments as critical factors in staff retention. In general, their findings indicated that to maintain a motivated and engaged faculty workforce and improve university retention, it is vital to fulfill the goals of academic staff concerning job satisfaction, leadership, and organizational commitment. The literature presented mirrored the situation in academic institutions, including Universities, but needed to be confirmed by carrying out this study.

In the context of digital technology adoption, Polly, Martin, and Guilbaud (2021), examined the expectations of academic staff regarding their retention in universities. Their findings affirmed the significance of the viewpoints of academic staff. Their study revealed the obstacles and preferred assistance associated with promoting greater adoption of digital technologies by academic staff in higher education environments. Although the study did not provide explicit details regarding retention expectations, it can be deduced that academic staff anticipate sufficient resources and support from their institutions to utilize digital tools for teaching and research purposes (Mather & Bam, 2025). In line with the aforementioned assertions, Sirili et al. (2022) observed that the provisions for accessing opportunities for professional development, technological infrastructure, and administrative support effectively navigated the obstacles that arose during digital technologies adoption. In efforts to cater to these anticipations, academic institutions need to improve faculty engagement, satisfaction, and ultimately,

retention; this may be accomplished by harmonizing institutional approaches with the changing demands and inclinations of academic staff in this era of digitalization, thus creating room for this study in universities in Uganda.

A study by Hilliger et al. (2020) examined the retention expectations of academic staff at universities and cited that academic staff place a high value on institutional support, opportunities for professional development, and acknowledgement of their contributions. The study by Pérez-Campdesuñer, De-Miguel-Guzmán, and Martínez-Vivar (2018) emphasized the criticality of furnishing academic staff with the necessary resources and training to effectively incorporate learning analytics into their teaching methodologies, with the ultimate goal of augmenting their engagement and satisfaction. The literature by Kariuki (2020), and Martinez and Garcia (2020) revealed that academic staff articulated a preference for environments that foster open and honest communication, cooperative approaches to making decisions, and prospects for professional growth in order to encourage their continued employment in academic environments. While their study presented sentiments, it emphasized the importance for academic institutions to support and include their diverse academic staff in order to cultivate a positive and welcoming workplace atmosphere. This would promote staff retention and overall success in HEIs but needed to be explored in the context of Universities in Uganda.

In Tanzania's higher education, Mgaiwa (2021) revealed that staff expectations were vital elements in their retention in universities. The scholars mentioned that academic staff hold distinct expectations which, if not met, may negatively influence their retention. Perceived quality of the work environment, including leadership support, organizational culture, and opportunities for professional development, was revealed as approaches that impact academic staff expectations

(Ros & Oleksiyenko, 2018). According to Mzyece et al. (2021) and Clark (2023), academic staff highly regard leadership that is supportive in nature and cultivates an environment that values collaboration, autonomy, and recognition. Furthermore, Kariuki (2020) stated that academic staff anticipate having access to facilities and resources that are conducive to their teaching and research endeavors. Likewise, career advancement opportunities, including but not limited to tenure-track positions, promotion pathways, and involvement in decision-making processes, were also mentioned as vital in fostering academic staff retention and satisfaction (Kotelana, 2021). It is critical to address academic staff expectations and enhance the perceived work environment in universities in Uganda to increase academic staff retention and nurture a thriving academic community, but this requires evidence, which is addressed by this study.

A study by Sirili et al. (2022) discussed a range of elements that contribute to the job satisfaction and professional fulfillment of academic staff in universities, including fulfilling the staff's expectations. Academic staff can anticipate career progression prospects, such as access to funding for research, participation in professional development initiatives, and mentoring prospects (Collard et al., 2020). Again, Sirili et al. (2022) asserted that enriching the benefits and remuneration increases that are competitive in nature are essential for retaining academic talent. Similarly, Mwesigwa et al. (2020) further mentioned that academic staff desire a conducive workplace atmosphere distinguished by proficient leadership, open lines of communication, and acknowledgment of their valuable contributions to the institution. A study by Yameen et al. (2021) emphasized that academic staff anticipate an academic environment that fosters collaboration, promotes diversity, and encourages inventive approaches to both instruction and investigation but this

may not be a total guarantee. By responding to these expectations, Universities in Uganda may increase the retention of academic staff but this lacks empirical evidence, which prompted a deeper investigation.

In another study conducted by Kayombo (2020) in Tanzania, the researcher examined the retention expectations of academic staff within universities. The findings illuminated the viewpoints of early career academics (ECAs) concerning the determinants that influence their continued employment in the academic sphere. themes came to light, encompassing the value of mentorship, opportunities for professional development, and a nurturing work environment. Similarly, Martínez-Valdivia and Burgos-Garcia (2020) articulated a need for substantial mentorship connections that furnish academic staff with direction, assistance, and professional counsel to proficiently traverse the academic terrain. In their study, Samuel and Chipunza (2013) placed great importance on opportunities that provide ongoing learning and skill development in order to augment their academic and professional proficiencies. However, the scholars mentioned that this required commitment by the HEIs. In another study, Kuuyelleh et al. (2022), considered prioritizing the establishment of a favorable organizational climate marked by mutual regard, acknowledgment of efforts, and constructive criticism that meets the academic staff expectations. In its entirety, the studies emphasized the significance of attending to these anticipations to foster the retention and professional contentment of early career scholars. The findings of the reviewed literature applied to Universities in Uganda but needed to be verified by this study.

Academic staff expect universities to establish a working environment that is conducive to professional growth, innovation, and collaboration (Maphalala & Adigun, 2020). Matongolo et al. (2018) revealed that academic staff actively pursue

prospects for collaborative research, resource acquisition, and assistance in their scholarly pursuits. Mzyece et al. (2021) and Nsanzumuhire et al. (2021) revealed that prioritizing initiatives that address the expectations and aspirations of academic staff improve retention and job satisfaction. According to Ntuli (2017), universities can foster a productive and engaging workplace atmosphere that advances the academic staff's wellbeing and career development by comprehending and fulfilling their expectations. The failure for academic staff to ultimately contribute to the success of the institution and the pursuit of excellence affirms meeting their expectations (Otache & Inekwe, 2022b), but this needed further investigation.

The study by Nabunya (2021) on professional development practices and teaching service delivery of academic staff at Kampala International University shed light on the expectations of academic staff for their retention in universities. Her research highlighted the expectation of professional development opportunities as a precondition for job satisfaction and promoting staff retention. A study by Al-Qarshoubi (2020) and Bigirimana et al. (2016), revealed that academic staff value access to training workshops, conferences, and seminars to stay updated with the latest pedagogical approaches and disciplinary advancements. Nevertheless, while Nabunya emphasized the importance of mentorship programs, collaborative research opportunities, and career advancement prospects in retaining academic talent, she affirmed that situations differ contextually. In Kenyan universities, academic staff expect universities to invest in supportive work environments, where their contributions are recognized, and they have opportunities for personal and professional growth (Chacha, 2021). The findings from the different institutions may also apply to Church-founded Universities, but this was to be confirmed by this study to secure adequate evidence.

A study conducted by Iftin (2021) on academic staff retention at Jig-Jiga University in Somali Regional State, Ethiopia discovered a number of expectations from academic staff. The scholar identified that academic staff regard their continued employment in the university for their retention. The study also emphasized the connotation of competitive compensation and benefits, which encompass prospects for research funding and professional growth, as critical approaches influencing academic staff retention. The importance of a supportive work environment, effective leadership, and acknowledgment of their contributions to the institution was underscored by the academic staff in contributing to their retention (Clark, 2024). In a study by Kipkoskgei (2019) and Mashile et al. (2021), the scholars mentioned the need for academic institutions to meet staff expectations by implementing strategic human resource management procedures, such as fostering open and honest communication, ensuring fair allocation of workloads, and providing avenues for professional growth. However, Ntuli (2017) affirmed that universities' failure to bolster staff morale, job satisfaction, and dedication creates difficulties in fulfilling these requirements. If implemented, the expectations of academic staff may in turn help to decrease retention rates, crippling the overall success of the institution in its pursuit of academic excellence.

At African Leadership University, Mzyece et al. (2021) affirmed that staff expectations include job satisfaction and academic achievement. In particular, the study emphasized the influence of intrinsic motivation and job engagement on the productivity and efficacy of staff and enticing them to stay in their respective positions. Kiiza's study highlighted the factors that impact the retention of academic staff. However, while their findings pinpointed improving labor conditions and job contentment, fostering the sustained dedication and effectiveness of academic

staff, there remained a vacuum that needed to be addressed; thus, the current study was carried out, but in a different context.

As stated by Nabunya, Mukwenda, and Kyaligonza (2020) in their article "*Professional Development Practices and Teaching Service Delivery of Academic Staff at Kyambogo University*," the retention expectations of academic staff in universities were examined. The study identified professional development opportunities in preserving academic talent, as staff members express a profound interest in ongoing education and the improvement of their skills. The academic staff at the University of Rwanda underscored the significance of obtaining opportunities to participate in workshops, seminars, and conferences as a means to remain informed about the latest developments and trends in their respective disciplines (Uwamwezi, 2020). The research by Ros and Oleksiyenko (2018) in Cambodia highlighted the criticality of institutional backing for scholarly endeavors, financial assistance, guidance, and prospects for collaboration, to promote scholarly development and professional progression. Other staff expectations for their retention include requirements of academic personnel for their professional development, and the university's potential to improve academic staff retention, job satisfaction, and the overall provision of teaching services (Afrianty et al., 2022). These approaches would ultimately contribute to the institution's standing and scholarly distinction even among the Universities, but this required an in-depth investigation.

Evidence from public universities in Kenya examining staff expectations for their retention in universities revealed several approaches, which included job satisfaction, opportunities for professional development, and organizational support (Kara et al., 2020). Academic staff frequently hold the expectation for their universities to establish a favorable work milieu that permits them to partake in

research endeavors, be acknowledged for their contributions, and obtain resources that support their professional development (Saif & Al-Qarshoubi, 2020a). In addition, postulations of Bigirimana et al. (2016) and Chrysikos and Catterall (2020) underscore the importance of competitive benefits and compensation packages in satisfying the demands of academic staff and their retention in HEIs. This information affirmed the critical nature of incorporating academic staff expectations into retention approaches in HEIs.

Although the expectations of academic staff for their retention in universities are explicitly emphasized, Kariuki's (2020) study on the motivation and retention of teachers in private secondary schools in Kenya provided specific insights into the expectations of staff for their retention in their institutions. Although these findings were from secondary schools, they reflected what might happen at universities. The study revealed the approaches influencing teacher motivation and retention, such as salary levels, job satisfaction, career advancement opportunities, and working conditions. This form of arrangement depicts an interface with SET. While not directly applicable to universities, the study's insights offered valuable perspectives on the wider landscape of staff retention challenges within higher education. Understanding factors such as compensation, career advancement, and job satisfaction provided information on approaches to retain academic staff and foster a supportive work environment in universities.

The review of literature provided valuable insights into the expectations of academic staff for their retention in universities; however, there are varying opinions addressing key factors such as the work environment, remuneration, job security, and opportunities for career advancement used by universities to enhance staff retention rates and cultivate an environment conducive to academic excellence and

growth. Distinct from other studies reviewed (Chen et al., 2021; Covella et al., 2017; Ochumbo & Matimbwa, 2019b), this study served as a foundational piece crucial for supporting investigations on the retention expectations of academic staff. This study's focus was on universities in Uganda, a scope that the identified literature had not explored.

## **2.6 Literature gap**

In the literature reviewed, there appeared to be a gap in understanding specific perceptions and experiences of academic staff regarding retention approaches within Church-founded Universities in Uganda. While several studies explored the factors influencing employee retention in universities, such as compensation, professional development, leadership, and work-life balance, there is limited evidence on retention approaches implemented by Church-founded Universities in Uganda. Existing research primarily focused on academic staff retention within the broader context of higher education institutions, with insights drawn from studies conducted in diverse geographical and institutional settings. While these studies offered valuable insights into effective approaches for retaining academic staff, the unique organizational dynamics, cultural contexts, and institutional missions of Church-founded Universities were not addressed. This necessitates tailored retention approaches to address the specific needs and aspirations of academic staff in Uganda, which this study addressed.

While some studies touched upon training approaches for academic staff within the context of professional development and adaptation to changing educational landscapes, there is a lack of specific evidence on the perceptions and effectiveness of such training initiatives within universities in Uganda. Understanding how

approaches such as training programs are designed, implemented, and perceived by academic staff highlighted their role in enhancing job satisfaction and contributing to academic staff retention. Overall, the need for further study to specifically investigate the retention approaches employed by Universities in Uganda and their influence on academic staff satisfaction, commitment, and retention was identified. By addressing this gap, valuable insights into the effectiveness of retention approaches tailored to the unique organizational contexts and missions of universities were explored.

The reviewed literature revealed several gaps in understanding the challenges and dynamics of retaining academic staff in universities, particularly within the context of Church-founded Universities in Uganda. particularly, while existing studies provided valuable insights into general retention approaches, such as career growth, rewards, and recognition, there was a notable absence of research focusing specifically on the perceptions and preferences of academic staff in these institutions regarding retention approaches. Consequently, the need for empirical evidence to understand how factors like training, rewards, and organizational culture influence academic staff retention within the unique context of Universities in Uganda was identified. Furthermore, the literature highlighted the limited scholarly attention dedicated to understanding the specific challenges and dynamics of retaining academic staff in universities. Studies focusing on broader retention approaches in higher education contexts in Uganda did not adequately address the distinct needs and perceptions of academic staff in universities. Thus, a gap was identified that called for this study to explore the perceptions of academic staff on retention approaches tailored to the unique contextual factors and institutional characteristics of universities in Uganda.

The literature suggested a lack of emphasis on variables particular to academic staff that contribute to retention tactics. While some studies provided insights into general retention procedures, they did not capture the intricate dynamics and specific incentives relevant to academic staff in Universities in Uganda. Addressing this gap required a study that delves deeper into the complexities of retaining academic staff, considering tenure policies, staff development opportunities, and institutional culture to develop evidence-based initiatives customized to academic staff in universities in Uganda. The literature underscored the need for a more targeted study to explore perceptions, experiences, and preferences for academic staff retention within the context of universities in Uganda. By addressing these gaps, institution-tailored retention approaches to improve job satisfaction, loyalty, and institutional effectiveness in universities settings were explored.

The literature review revealed several gaps in understanding academic staff retention. While numerous studies explored the expectations of academic staff regarding their retention (Butt et al., 2020; Marozva et al., 2024; Mather & Bam, 2025), there was a lack of comprehensive research that synthesizes these findings across different contexts, including perceptions of academic staff on retention approaches. Moreover, most studies focused on specific factors influencing retention, such as compensation, career advancement opportunities, and supportive work environments, without providing a holistic view of the interplay between these factors. Additionally, many studies are limited in scope, focusing on particular geographic regions or types of higher education institutions, which may not capture the full range of factors influencing retention across diverse settings. Furthermore, the reviewed literature revealed limited research on the effectiveness of retention approaches implemented by universities and their alignment with the expectations

of academic staff. While some studies suggested potential approaches, such as improving compensation packages, enhancing career development opportunities, and fostering supportive leadership, there is a lack of empirical evidence on their influence on retention rates (Butt et al., 2020; Gelencsér et al., 2023; Minh & Nwachukwu, 2020; Xuecheng et al., 2022a). Additionally, the literature exposed the need for research examining the role of organizational culture, communication, and leadership styles in influencing retention, as these factors are likely to vary across institutions and may impact academic staff satisfaction and commitment.

Moreover, a dearth of research on the retention expectations of academic staff in specific institutional contexts, such as Universities in Uganda was identified. While some studies examined retention expectations in general higher education settings, there is limited evidence on how these expectations differed in religiously affiliated institutions and how they can be effectively addressed. Understanding the unique challenges and opportunities faced by academic staff in these institutions is essential for developing targeted retention approaches that align with their expectations to promote institutional stability and success. Overall, the literature gap highlighted the need for more comprehensive and contextually sensitive research on academic staff retention. Recommendations for future studies that adopt a multi-dimensional approach that considers the interplay of various factors influencing retention and explores the effectiveness of different retention approaches across diverse institutional contexts were identified.

Additionally, the study aimed to capture the perspectives of academic staff, to ensure that their voices and experiences are central to efforts to enhance retention and promote a thriving academic workforce in HEIs.

## **2.7 Summary of literature review**

The literature reviewed underscored the need for tailored retention approaches within Church-founded Universities in Uganda. While existing studies offered valuable insights into general retention approaches, a notable gap in understanding academic staff-specific perceptions and experiences in these institutions was revealed. Additionally, the literature revealed the dearth of research on the challenges and dynamics of retaining academic talent in higher institutions. Studies focusing on broader retention approaches did not adequately address the distinct needs of academic staff in universities. Addressing these gaps necessitated comprehensive research to consider the unique contexts and institutional characteristics of universities. Moreover, the need for a comprehensive study that synthesizes findings across different contexts and explores the effectiveness of retention approaches aligned with academic staff expectations was identified. A study adopting a multi-dimensional approach that considered the interplay of various approaches influencing retention and captured the perspectives of academic staff to ensure that their voices are central to efforts to enhance retention and promote institutional stability and success was needed. The researcher acknowledges that while the information presented was relevant, it was sourced from different authors whose methodologies and geographical locations differed, and the context also differed. The researcher, therefore, identified methodological, geographical, and contextual gaps regarding the perceptions of academic staff on the retention approaches.

## CHAPTER THREE

### METHODOLOGY

#### 3.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the researcher presents and discusses the study's philosophical underpinnings, research approach, research design, data collection methods, data analysis, trustworthiness and rigor, credibility, dependability, transferability, confirmability, and ethical considerations.

#### 3.2 Philosophical underpinning

The study followed the interpretivism research philosophy, an approach that seeks to bring out experiences, understandings, and perceptions of individuals and to discover reality (Thanh & Thanh, 2015). Interpretivism philosophy focuses on understanding individuals' subjective meanings and experiences within their social and cultural settings (Ryan, 2018). This philosophy helped the researcher to understand the participants' views and consider their perceptions (Pham, 2018). The philosophy also assisted the researcher in exploring academic staff's opinions and lived experiences on retention approaches used in Church-Founded Universities in Uganda. This helped to suspend the researcher's assumptions and to explore the phenomena based on the participants' experiences in the study (Pilarska, 2021).

The interpretive research paradigm helped the researcher to ensure that the study remained unbiased and represented the views of academic staff as observed. This also enabled the researcher to explore the perceptions of academic staff on retention approaches in universities, understand their perceptions, and gain valuable insights into the effectiveness and potential improvements of the retention

approaches as suggested by the academic staff. The interpretivism research paradigm helped the researcher to understand the participants' views and consider their insights (Alharahsheh & Pius, 2020). This again helped the researcher gain further in-depth data through their experiences and observations of retention approaches used in Church-founded Universities in Uganda.

Epistemologically, the researcher's assumption of perceptions about retention approaches focused on understanding each participant's lived experiences through interpretation. Perception of retention approaches was not measured because it is not a given; hence, the world is meaningless unless people give it meaning (Goldkuhl, 2012). Individuals with varied backgrounds, assumptions, and experiences contributed to the meaning of the existing reality and their perceptions through social interactions. In this case, the issues under study were best understood by interpreting and analyzing social, cultural, and institutional practices (Potrac, Jones & Nelson, 2014).

Ontologically, the assertions by Gay and Airasian (2003) that meaning is situated within a specific perspective guided the researcher to make interpretations of reality. Ontology refers to the philosophical study of being. Since reality is individually constructed, the researcher expected as many realities as individuals in the study. Hence, there was no generalizable objective truth about realities. This is supported by other studies that emphasize interpreting situations to make sense of them, which is referred to as relative ontology (Amis, 2011).

Hence, the researcher suspended her assumptions and explored the phenomena directly as they were experienced by the participants in the study.

### 3.3 Research Design

In the study, the researcher used the qualitative research method, using the case study research design described by Lewis (2015). In the same way, Yin (2018) described case study research design as appropriate when the researcher's goal is to gain an in-depth understanding of the phenomena in one or more specific and confined environments. Based on the principle that the world consists of multiple realities and that individuals experience these realities in uniquely diverse ways (Gay, & Airasian, 2003), this study was best suited to the qualitative research method. The qualitative research approach helped the researcher develop concepts related to social phenomena in real settings through the meanings, experiences, and views of participants in the study (Indu & Vidhukumar, 2020).

The was suitable for a qualitative study because it required a deeper understanding of human experiences that were common to the group (Lewis, 2015). The researcher chose this design as suitable for this study because it involved exploring participants' feelings about the retention approaches. This involved engaging participants in interviews and discussions to explore the in-depth essence of the academic staff's experiences and their meanings without imposing preconceived theories and interpretations. The design helped the researcher to describe and interpret the feelings, perceptions, and beliefs of the study participants to clarify the essence of the phenomenon under investigation (Darke, Shanks, & Pacific, 2002).

Again, the approach helped the researcher respect the participants' views and experiences during the study because the case study method focuses on studying the phenomena that have impacted the individual. Additionally, the researcher explored individual perceptions of staff retention approaches using their lived experiences

(Cresswell, 2018). The researcher generated information from the participants that may inform other HEIs in the country. As participants described their experiences, the researcher was able to understand and derive meaning from the individual experiences and insights that centered on the participants' motivations and actions (Algozzine & Algozzine, 2016; Cresswell, 2018)

The qualitative research approach also helped the researcher reflect on the participants' description of the retention approaches using the lenses of the SET theory, Human Capital theory, Adams' Equity theory, and Herzberg's Two-factor theory. Focusing on the experiences and building a good rapport with the study participants helped the researcher to get their lived experiences and explain the relationship between the participants lived experiences and the theories used in this study.

### **3.4 Study Area**

The study focused on academic staff retention in universities, and the researcher selected two chartered private universities affiliated with the Church, specifically Church of Uganda-founded higher education institutions, as case studies. Additionally, the researcher considered the oldest HEIs established by the Church of Uganda that were among the first to be accredited by NCHE and granted a Charter to operate in Uganda. Preliminary investigations on the issue of academic staff retention were conducted at these institutions. The study sites were located in Central Uganda.

### **3.5 Study Population**

Determining the appropriate population is a critical part of any research project. Selecting the population increases the likelihood of the study's generalizability, along with its trustworthiness and validity (Yin, 2014). In this study, although only university academic staff were targeted, the study population included full-time academic staff, both male and female, who had served the university for more than five years from the date of employment. This group consisted of Teaching Assistants, Lecturers, Senior Lecturers, and Professors who met the study's criteria. The researcher focused on full-time academic staff because part-time staff were temporary employees who might have had other permanent jobs elsewhere and were hired for short periods, making their retention difficult to assess. The selected participants were referred to as the "study samples," as described by Kombo and Tromp (2009). The participants were chosen based on the information needed for this study. The number of participants was determined by ensuring no new information was received from them, reaching a point called saturation. Saturation is a criterion that is used for stopping data collection in qualitative research (Saunders et al., 2018), which guided the researcher in deciding the final number of participants for the study.

### **3.6 Sampling**

Selecting the right sampling method helps to meet the researcher's goals (Acharya et al., 2013). In the study, the researcher employed a non-probability purposive sampling method to select participants with direct experience in retention approaches used in the selected institutions.

Purposive sampling is one of the most widely used methods (Acharya et al., 2013). This sampling method was used to select participants with a purpose and not randomly (Acharya et al., 2013). The researcher used this sampling method to select participants from the participating institutions with a purpose.

The study participants included a diverse range of full-time academic staff members at various levels, including teaching assistants, lecturers, senior lecturers, and professors. The selection of the different academic staff helped the researcher to capture information from academic staff at all levels.

Using the non-probabilistic technique helped the researcher select participants with various experiences as key informants who possessed the information and knowledge required for the study. The non-probability sampling procedure as described by Palinkas, Horwitz, Green, Wisdom, Duan, and Hoagwood (2015), helped the researcher select and determine suitable respondents for the study.

Purposive sampling enabled the researcher to select male and female academic staff who met the study criteria. The sampling technique facilitated the researcher in ensuring that only the targeted respondents with the required information were selected from the entire population eligible to participate in the study. The study participants were regarded as “key informants (KI)” who directly gave the information required by the researcher.

To ensure that all schools and faculties were involved in the study, the researcher applied Biglan’s (1973) classification to ensure that the samples were taken from the different Faculties and Schools under the various disciplines (hard-applied, soft-applied, hard-pure & soft-pure disciplinary dimensions). This is where the researcher

was able to collect information from academic staff from the various disciplines and departments.

Since the study was qualitative, it did not have a pre-determined, definite number of participants, so the emphasis was on the expression of human experiences and not on the number of study participants (Yazan, 2015). In the study, the researcher considered the study population for qualitative studies expressed by Creswell (2014) and Yin (2015), that the appropriate sample size for a qualitative study adequately answers the research question, and there is no formula for defining the number of participants. The researcher, therefore, based on this notion, determined the sample size of forty-eight (48) participants for the study.

The number of participants for the study (forty-eight) was determined by the level of saturation. Saturation meant that all the required information for this study had been captured, and no new information was generated from any additional participants included in the study. The sample frame was based on the participants meeting the desired criteria and their availability to participate in this study.

### **3.7 Site selection**

The sites for this study were the various Schools and Faculties within the selected higher education institutions. The details below demonstrate the site details from which the participants for this study were selected.

**Table 1: University Details**

<b>University Name</b>	<b>University type</b>	<b>Classification</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>No. of students</b>	<b>No of Full-time Teaching staff</b>
Uganda Christian University (UCU)	Private	Chartered	Central Uganda	1300	189
Ndejje University (NDU)	Private	Chartered	Central Uganda	5486	145

*Sources: Uganda Christian University - Human Resource Office  
Ndejje University - Accounts and Registry Department*

The researcher used codes to categorize the participants in the study. The use of codes helped the researcher to easily identify the categories in the study.

**Table 2: Codes the researcher used to categorize participants**

<b>CATEGORY</b>	<b>CODE</b>
<b>Schools/ Faculties</b>	FAC A; FAC B, FAC C, FAC D, FAC E, FAC F, FAC G; FAC H
<b>Teaching Assistants</b>	TA1, TA2, TA3, TA4, TA5 ..... Teaching Assistants from each of the participating Schools or Faculties
<b>Lecturers</b>	LE1, LE2, LE3, LE4, LE5, LE6, LE7, LE8..... Lectures from the participating Faculties
<b>Senior Lecturers</b>	SLE1, SLE2, SLE3, SLE4, SLE5, SLE6, SLE7..... Lectures from the participating Faculties
<b>Professors</b>	PRO1, PRO 2, PRO3, PRO 4, PRO5, PRO6,..... Professors from the participating Faculties

### **3.8 Data Collection Procedure**

To ensure a well-coordinated data collection process, the researcher first obtained clearance from the Research Ethical Committee (UCUREC) and the Uganda National Council for Science and Technology (UNCST) (*see clearances attached*), which is a government requirement for conducting research in Uganda. An introductory letter

was obtained from the UCU School of Research and Postgraduate Studies, which helped the researcher to obtain permission from the various universities where the study was conducted. This helped the researcher to access the study participants easily and saved time for carrying out the study. Using these documents, the researcher was able to access the target group and collect the required data confidently. Consent was obtained from the participants by signing a consent form, which indicated their acceptance and willingness to participate in the study.

During data collection, the researcher employed interviews, observations, and focus group discussions, which helped to provide the information needed to prove some facts. The various data collection methods enabled the researcher to acquire primary data (Kothari, 2011).

The data collection methods used by the researcher involved the following;

### **3.8.1 Individual Interviews**

In the study, the researcher used the interview method to collect data. An interview is a powerful tool used to get to know people's experiences (Sutton, 2015). Since the study was purely qualitative, the researcher used individual in-depth interviews to prob respondents to share their personal experiences. The researcher conducted individual interviews with the participants during the study. The interviews targeted university Professors, Senior academic staff, and lecturers, while assistant lecturers were engaged in focus group discussions (FGDs). These were scheduled at agreed-upon times and places within the selected institutions. Since the participants were academicians, the researcher used English as the language during the interviews.

The researcher chose to use individual interviews because this enhanced the rapport and engagement of the participants in the study to share their lived experiences and feelings. The researcher explored the unexpected insights through observation and interactions with the various study participants (Minhat, 2015). Face-to-face interviews were held with the participants by the researcher during data collection. These helped to observe non-verbal communication and body language analysis, which created flexibility.

The Individual interviews helped the researcher explore the phenomenon and discover individual experiences (Bayeck, 2021). The in-depth interviews were used by the researcher to ask participants questions for the study and to probe them to generate data for the study. These interviews probed the participants to explain their situation, experiences, emotions, opinions, and perceptions on retention in their own words and to share their views on how they understood and interpreted the phenomenon under study.

The number of individuals interviewed was determined based on the information required by the researcher. This was based on the level of saturation, which means that no new information was generated from the interviews; the data collection process no longer offered any new or relevant data, or where the same information was being generated from various participants in the study (Mason,2010).

Hence, if no new information was generated, the researcher anticipated that a level known as saturation had been reached, where no new information was being generated from the interviews. This also signified that the data collection process no longer offered any new or relevant data, as the same information was being generated from the different participants in the study (Mason, 2010).

### **3.8.2 Focus Group Interviews**

The researcher also employed focus group discussions (FDGs) to collect data and to complement the data collected from individual interviews. A focus group composed of 6-12 participants, conducted by the researcher as an interviewer, asking questions about the phenomenon under study. The focus groups were in-depth interviews that employed relatively homogenous groups to provide information about topics specified by the researchers (Guest et al., 2017).

During the focus group discussions (FDGs), the researcher conducted four group interviews with two groups in each of the participating institutions. The FDGs involved physical interaction with the Teaching Assistants, who met the selection criteria, were interested in participating in the study, and had time to participate in the study. This helped the researcher minimize the time for the study (Guest et al., 2017). As suggested by Ritchie and Lewis (2003), if groups are smaller than four, they can lose some of the qualities of being a group; the researcher ensured that the group interactions and discussions were composed of four (4) to six (6) respondents. This helped the researcher to generate information for the study from a homogeneous group of individuals selected and assigned to the different groups that participated in this study.

### **3.8.3 Document Analysis**

The researcher used the documents obtained from the human resource offices in the selected institutions to generate the secondary data. The researcher reviewed the available documents like human resource management documents such as policies, handbook manuals, staff exit forms, research done by other scholars that highlight staff benefits and staff retention approaches like training, healthcare, sick time,

leave time, and any other incentives put in place by the selected Universities including any other written materials on the subject of staff retention. This helped the researcher investigate the similarities and differences in information found in the documents reviewed and the responses given by the respondents in the study (Yilmaz, 2013).

The document review helped the researcher verify and support the data collected during the study. Reviewing documents assisted the researcher in thoroughly and systematically analyzing the data collected and critically assessing the information found and used as a reliable source to support the study. The documents reviewed also helped the researcher verify the data collected from the participants in the study.

### **3.9 Data Collection Instruments**

The Data Collection instruments were the tools the researcher used to collect the data for the study. The researcher, who conducted the study, served as the main instrument for collecting data (Kimberlin & Winterstein, 2008). In this case, the researcher served as the primary instrument in taking data on the participants' experiences and perspectives on the phenomenon in a way that added meaning (Chan, Fung, & Chien, 2013).

The researcher used several tools to obtain data from the respondents, as highlighted in the following paragraphs;

#### **3.9.1 Interview guide**

The researcher used an interview guide during the individual interviews to collect the data. An interview guide is an instrument that was developed by the researcher

and used during the interviews. This helped to get information related to the study from the participants. The interview guide helped the researcher to investigate and generate information from the respondents' responses to the questions for this study, as suggested by Van Rijnsoever (2017). Again, the interview responses were followed up by probing questions from the researcher, which helped to generate purposeful responses from the participants.

The interview guide consisted of in-depth interview questions that the researcher used to engage in oral face-to-face interviews with the selected participants (Naz et al., 2022), and the researcher referred to them as the "respondents" or "key informants (KIs)" in the study. Through the in-depth inquiries, the researcher generated the information required for this study, which involved interactions with the key informant, namely, academic staff. The interview guide consisted of open-ended questions and semi-structured questions that the researcher used to probe the respondents (see Appendix II). This helped the researcher to inquire and generate detailed information from the respondents relating to their experiences and perspectives on the area investigated by the researcher (Naz et al., 2022). The use of semi-structured interviews that were contained in the interview guide provided the researcher with an opportunity to gain insight and detect any social indications through probing, listening, and observing the participants during the interviews (Peesker, Ryals, Rich, & Boehnke, 2019).

During the interview sessions, the researcher used an already-generated interview guide as a tool to gather the required information from the respondents systematically. The interview guide was one of the instruments (Appendix II), that contained the questions that helped the researcher to get information from the respondent related to the number of years in the institutions, discipline category,

retention approaches known by the respondent as used by the institution, attitude towards the retention approaches used by the institution and any other related information, which helped the researcher to generate themes for the study during data analysis. The interview guide helped the researcher focus on the various variables under which the study was categorized according to the objectives of the study.

### **3.9.2 Voice Recorder**

An audio recorder is an instrument that records and keeps information for later use. During the time of carrying out the interviews (Tessier, 2012), the researcher used an audio recorder as one of the data collection instruments. The use of a recorder helped the researcher to back up the information generated during the interview which was later retrieved and used when analyzing the collected data. The recordings assisted the researcher in verifying the generated information for clarity and accuracy. Since the researcher was not able to remember every detail of the interview especially responses to the open-ended questions when probing the respondents, the recordings helped to capture and retrieve the desired information after the interviews were conducted.

### **3.9.3 Field notes**

The researcher also used paper and pen to write field notes to capture some of the non-verbal responses about the interviewee and other expressions. These helped the researcher to note some information about the researcher's actions during the interviews and were later retrieved during data analysis.

### **3.9.4 Document Checklist**

The researcher generated a document checklist as an instrument that was used to record the documents that were reviewed during the study. The checklist contained

all documents read by the researcher for the study (Tong et al., 2007). The checklist also helped the researcher to keep a record of the documents reviewed and used by the researcher to enrich the data collected from the respondents in the study. The checklist included documents such as policies and reports, plus any other documents relevant to the study, which the researcher used to gather more information related to the study.

The information gathered from the documents also helped the researcher to ensure the authenticity of the information gathered from the respondents. The researcher used the information from the documents and compared it with the information gathered from respondents, which is referred to as triangulation (Helle-Valle & Borchgrevink, 2018). This helped the researcher to develop a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon. Hence, the researcher used both the documents and interviews to gather data on the same topic. Triangulation is where the researcher compares the data that was generated from the documents that were reviewed and that of the respondents (Leech & Onwuegbuzie, 2007); this too helped the researcher to generate more data because it involved the use of more than one kind of data collection method to study the phenomenon (Tan, 2019).

### **3.10 Data Collection, Analysis, and Interpretation**

The use of a qualitative approach in the study permitted the researcher to discover the perceptions of the academic staff through sharing their lived experience. The researcher, therefore, did not statistically test the validity and reliability of the questions but relied on trustworthiness, of the participants in the study. The data for the study was collected using an interview guide with open-ended questions and

triangulation as recommended for qualitative studies to test the authenticity. Triangulation is where the researcher uses more than one method to study the phenomenon (Tan, 2019). This helped the researcher to authenticate the information gathered from the participants and that from the reviewed documents. Carrying out in-depth interviews, using observation, and reviewing the various documents helped the researcher ensure the credibility of the data (Anney, 2015). During the interviews, the researcher kept probing the respondents, which contributed to the validation of the data, and compared the data sources to ascertain the validity. All the aforementioned processes helped the researcher to ensure extensiveness and to validate the research findings through the merging of information from the different sources (Heesen et al., 2019a). The gathering of information to check the credibility of the information helped the researcher in triangulation. This also contributed to the development of a complete understanding of the phenomenon (Helle-Valle & Borchgrevink, 2018) and established completeness, which helped to verify the research findings. All this permitted the researcher to examine the likenesses and differences in the study and other research.

The use of open-ended questions during the interviews also helped to promote consistency, objectivity, and dependability. In this case, therefore, the researcher used a standard set of questions and pre-selected interview questions to ensure reliability when collecting data for the study (Flick, 2017). However, before the real study, the researcher carried out a field test of the instruments, which helped to identify the problems that the respondents might have experienced during the actual study. The field test helped the researcher review the interview questions

and ensure credibility, dependability, and validity by improving the interview questions that were used in the main study.

### **3.11 Data Processing, Analysis, and Presentation**

The data was collected using various questioning techniques and interviews to permit the respondents to bring out their views (Flick, 2017; Tetnowski, 2015). The researcher carried out data processing and utilized the research instruments that were used during data collection, such as audio recordings of the face-to-face interviews, written field notes, to retrieve the collected data. The audios that were recorded during the interviews helped the researcher generate information obtained during the interviews. The retrieved information provided the researcher with the information that was used during data analysis to provide the data for the study. As described by Cronin and George (2020), the generated data from the interviews helped the researcher to explore staff experiences, perceptions, and insights on staff retention approaches used by the selected HEIs in Uganda. The researcher used the compiled notes generated during personal encounters and observations with the respondents to gain a deeper understanding of the phenomenon under study. These were all used by the researcher during data analysis.

Again, during data analysis, the researcher carried out thematic analysis where codes were identified from the interview schedules and themes were generated from the codes. These later formed broad categories, the researcher used to explain the approaches applied by institutions to retain academic staff and their perceptions of the retention approaches and expectations. In more detail, the collected interview data were transcribed verbatim and subjected to thematic analysis, this is because

Qualitative research uses all sorts of data (Braun & Clarke, 2019). The analysis, therefore, involved identifying patterns, themes, and categories within the data that was collected. The identified themes were compared and contrasted with existing literature on staff retention approaches in higher education institutions. This allowed for a comprehensive understanding of the perceptions of academic staff on the various retention approaches.

The researcher made use of the data collected, considering the date, participant, place, and nature of the interaction. The researcher used basic qualitative description and interpretation as guided by Clarke and Braun (2013), which involves using traditional ways to explain the participants' lived experiences, like quoting some of their own words. The researcher used a computer-assisted Data Analysis Software called NVivo during data analysis. The use of the software helped in coding, text search, annotation, and visualization, which enabled the researcher to organize and analyze the qualitative data effectively. By using NVivo, the researcher efficiently analyzed and presented the data, contributing to a better understanding of the subject matter and presenting the findings in a report form after data processing, analysis, and interpretation.

During the study, the researcher ensured that collecting the required data was done with trustworthiness and rigor, following the various processes as described in the paragraph that follows. This helped the researcher to make conclusions regarding the perceptions of academic staff on retention approaches used in Church of Uganda-founded HEIs and recommendations for further research.

### **3.11.1 Trustworthiness and Rigor**

In the study, the researcher ensured that data collection was conducted with trustworthiness and rigor (Ghafouri & Ofoghi, 2016a). The researcher safeguarded

the quality, authenticity, and truthfulness of findings meant for qualitative research suggested by Ghafouri and Ofoghi (2016). The collection of data was completed with consistency, and the researcher ensured that the collected data was exact. The researcher carefully collected the data with precision and considered its quality and accuracy. Since the study took the qualitative approach, the researcher was able to explore the perceptions of academic staff on retention approaches used in universities, where academic staff from the selected universities shared their lived experiences. The researcher, therefore, did not statistically test the validity and reliability of the questions due to the nature of the study. During data collection, the researcher used an interview guide with open-ended questions and also reviewed documents related to the research phenomenon, which helped in the triangulation of the collected data.

Triangulation involved using the various related data sources and data collection methods, which helped to reduce the inherent bias associated with a single source and method (Ghafouri & Ofoghi, 2016b). It is whereby the researcher used more than one method to study the phenomenon (Tan, 2019). This was done by verifying the data gathered from the interviews with the information from the reviewed documents. Triangulation is a widely used method to ensure the credibility and confirmability of qualitative studies. This helped the researcher to ascertain the credibility of the interpretations derived from multiple data sources (Hadi & José Closs, 2016).

Through carrying out in-depth interviews, use of observation, and review of the various documents, the researcher ensured credibility, dependability, confirmability, and transferability of the data as explained in the following paragraphs;

### **3.11.2 Credibility**

The researcher ensured that there was credibility during the study. Credibility refers to authenticity and accuracy, where the researcher ensures that data and findings are reliable (Lietz & Zayas, 2010). Credibility helped to ensure that the data collected was authentic and accurate, and that confidence was placed in the truth of the research findings (Anney, 2015). The researcher ensured that the findings contained information drawn from the participants' original data and represented as a correct interpretation of the participants' original views. During the study, the researcher ensured that interview questions were piloted with a small sample of the selected academic staff and appropriate changes were made in the final interview guide used to collect data.

During data collection, the researcher ensured consistency of the inquiry and implemented credibility approaches such as prolonged engagement interview technique and persistent observation, immersion, time selection, kept a field journal, triangulation, and allowed peer checks, which helped to correct any inconsistencies (Lietz & Zayas, 2010). The prolonged involvement of the continued observation or immersion method helped the researcher to make good relationships with the participants. The researcher established authority and ensured structural coherence to reduce the impact of any biases as much as possible, increasing the trustworthiness of findings using triangulation.

Triangulation also means that the researcher used several diverse methods, sources, and theories to obtain supporting evidence (Donkoh, 2023). This helped the researcher to overcome any intrinsic bias and to cross-examine the integrity of participants' responses during and after data collection.

### **3.11.3 Dependability**

To achieve dependability, the researcher ensured that the research process was logical, traceable, and documented (Thyer, 2010). This may allow others to observe the research process and judge its dependability. In this case, the researcher used open-ended questions during the interviews to promote consistency, objectivity, and dependability. The researcher used a standard set of questions and pre-selected interview questions (Flick, 2017), and this ensured dependability during data collection. However, before the real study, the researcher carried out a field test of the instruments and this helped to identify problems the respondents would have experienced during the actual study. The field test helped the researcher to review the interview questions and improve on the interview questions used in the main study which helped to ensure credibility and dependability (Hadi & José Closs, 2016). The researcher also consulted with her supervisors in this research study who helped to her to improve on the interview guide.

### **3.11.4 Transferability**

Transferability implies that the findings in the research were the same as findings in the same situations and are suitable for use in the future and have the same findings in various situations (Ghafouri & Ofoghi, 2016a). Transferability was meant to help generalize the inquiry if the researcher wished to transfer the findings; compressed descriptions were provided during the interviews, and the researcher kept probing the respondents, which contributed to the authentication of the data and compared the data sources to ascertain credibility. The researcher ensured the extensiveness of the interviews to authenticate the research findings (Helle-Valle & Borchgrevink,

2018; Jespersen & Wallace, 2017). The gathered information was checked for credibility by triangulation to develop a complete understanding of the phenomenon (Helle-Valle & Borchgrevink, 2018) and establish completeness to verify the research findings. By merging the information from different sources, the researcher examined the likenesses and differences in the study and other research (Heesen et al., 2019b).

#### **3.11.5 Confirmability**

Confirmability is establishing that data and interpretations of the findings are not derived from the data generated. Confirmability was ensured by the researcher to ensure that the findings emerge from the data through carrying out audit trails and reflexivity. The researcher, therefore, ensured that interpretations of the data were carefully done to guarantee that the findings were generated from the data. This necessitated the researcher to demonstrate how conclusions and interpretations were reached (Ghafouri & Ofoghi, 2016b). Confirmability refers to the objectivity and neutrality of the researcher and how much others confirm the research findings by having the same findings at various times (Ghafouri & Ofoghi, 2016b) According to Guba and Lincoln (1989), confirmability is established when credibility, transferability, and dependability are all achieved, which the researcher followed.

#### **3.12 Ethical Consideration**

Research ethics are essential to any research as they define and shape the research processes from the beginning. They are the code on which academics rely as a guiding practice in the field (Head, 2020).

To carry out the study, the researcher sought ethical approval from the Uganda Christian University Research Ethical Committee (UCUREC) before conducting the study since it involved human beings. Similarly, the researcher sought clearance and registration with the Uganda National Council for Science and Technology by submitting the research proposal with details about the ethics to be followed during the study. All this helped to ensure that the researcher followed the ethics and norms governing research involving humans, since the issue under study was sensitive (Head, 2020).

The researcher acknowledged all the information and ideas acquired from any other sources for this study.

The researcher also ensured that there was informed consent from the participants, voluntary participation, anonymity, and confidentiality as described in the paragraphs that follow.

### **3.12.1 Informed Consent**

Informed consent is an ethical and legal requirement for research that involves human participants (Nnebue, 2010). It is one of the most important ethical rules governing research on humans, where participants in the study must give their informed consent before taking part. Informed consent was, therefore, a vital part of the research process, and as such entailed more than obtaining a signature on a form (Nnebue, 2010). The researcher therefore endeavored to explain verbally to the study participants the objective and purpose of the study. The researcher ensured that informed verbal consent was obtained from all participants before the interviews, which indicated their willingness to participate in the study. The

participants were informed about all aspects of the study, which enabled them to make informed decisions after understanding all aspects of the study as observed by Nijhawan, Janodia, Muddukrishna, Bhat, Bairy, Udupa, & Musmade, (2013). Obtaining consent involved informing every participant about his or her rights, the purpose of the study, procedures to be undertaken, potential risks, benefits of participation, the extent of confidentiality of personal identification, demographic data, expected duration of the study, and that the participation in the study was entirely voluntary (Cameron & Murphy, 2007). Each participant had to voluntarily confirm his or her willingness to participate in the study by signing a consent form as proof of consent.

### **3.12.2 Voluntary participation**

In the study, voluntary participation meant that when the research was being conducted in institutional settings, the fundamental ethical challenge of ensuring the voluntariness of research participation (Cameron & Murphy, 2007; Manti & Licari, 2018) was followed. This is considered a choice or an action without binding external influences or individuals. Volunteering in research ethics is a very strong element that directly affects the consistency and rationality of research especially in social science research (Lidz, & Klitzman, 2009). The researcher therefore ensured that every participant consented by signing a form to participate in the study voluntarily. In the study, the participants were free to voluntarily choose to or not to participate or drop out of the study at any time they wished without being influenced or forced. This helped to ensure that the data collected by the researcher was reliable and credible, as it had no strings attached to the respondents.

### **3.12.3 Anonymity and Confidentiality**

Anonymity has been used interchangeably with confidentiality (Tolich, 2023). However, confidentiality meant that identifiable information about individuals collected during the study was not to be disclosed without permission, as recommended by Wiles, Crow, & Charles (2008). In the study, anonymity was observed by the researcher and the persons who participated in the study were not traceable from the data presented about them (Saunders, Kitzinger, & Kitzinger, 2015). Since the study was very sensitive, the researcher ensured that the participants' anonymity and confidentiality were emphasized, which gave the participants self-assurance to participate in the study (Badampudi, Fotrousi, & Usmanet, 2022). In the study, the findings were described in ways that individuals could not be identified and there were no discussions about the information provided by an individual with others (Saunders et al., 2015).

The research adhered to ethical guidelines and regulations governing research involving human participants (Saunders et al., 2015). The anonymity and confidentiality of the participants ensured the de-identifying of personal identity in all the collected data (Myers, Long, & Polasek, 2020). During data analysis and reporting, the identities of the participants were anonymized by the researcher to maintain confidentiality. In this case, the researcher ensured that scenarios that would jeopardize the study were prevented using the interview guide to elicit responses from the participants (Saunders et al., 2015). During the study, the researcher did not ask participants for their names or any other information related to their bio-data or any other information. During the interviews, all the information that was collected was safeguarded using technology and use of passwords to prevent anyone else from accessing it apart from the researcher (Myers et al., 2020).

### **3.13 Delimitations of the Study**

These were the weaknesses of the study that remained beyond the researcher's control (Theofanidis & Fountouki, 2018). The researcher found it difficult to generalize the results of this study because it used a qualitative research approach and did not require a large sample size. This is because the researcher considered that if no new information was generated, then data collection had reached the level of saturation. This signified that no new information was being generated during the interviews, then the number of people involved in the study did not matter, and the result of the study was never generalized (Liping, Lidong, & Bo, 2022).

Since the researcher used a non-probability sampling procedure, this might have limited the varying experiences of academics who were eliminated from participating in the study. However, the researcher reviewed documents that helped during the triangulation (Helle-Valle & Borchgrevink, 2018). This is where the researcher compared the generated data with the information found in the various documents reviewed to bridge the study gap.

The researcher also faced the problem of limited cooperation from some respondents who kept changing their interview appointments. However, the researcher exercised flexibility, adhered to the changes, and continued with the study. Since this study only targeted academic staff who had stayed with the institutions for over five years, there were enough participants in the target group. Hence, the participants were given the liberty to participate without being forced by the researcher. The researcher explained to respondents the purpose of the study and was able to influence them to participate by explaining to them the reasons for their participation.

Another problem faced during the study was the time constraint; the researcher minimized the time by only considering academic staff who had served in the selected institutions for five years or more and only considering two Church founded Universities in central Uganda were considered for the study.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### DATA ANALYSIS, PRESENTATION, AND INTERPRETATION OF FINDINGS

#### 4.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the researcher presents a comprehensive analysis, presentation, and interpretation of findings from the qualitative data collected from interviews conducted in two Church-founded Universities in central Uganda.

The interviews, which lasted approximately 1 hour and 45 minutes each, were conducted with professors, senior lecturers, and lecturers. In addition, four focus group interviews, each lasting one hour, were conducted with the Teaching Assistants.

The face-to-face interviews with professors, senior lecturers, and lecturers were conducted in mutually agreed-upon locations, often during breaks or evenings at the participants' workplaces. The researcher, with the participants' consent, audio-recorded the interviews and then transcribed the collected information verbatim. The transcribed data were then analyzed to identify recurring themes and categories.

The themes and categories are presented in detail in Tables 3 and 4.

The analysis aligns with the research objectives and questions outlined in Chapter One. This Chapter provides a detailed exploration of the findings, contributing to the scholarly discourse on Church-founded Universities in Uganda.

**Table 3: Participants and Interview Type**

<b>PARTICIPANTS</b>	<b>VENUE</b>	<b>INTERVIEW TYPE</b>
Professor	Office Work Station	Individual
Senior Lecturer	On-Campus Staff Room	Individual
Lecturer	On Campus	Individual
Teaching Assistant	On Campus	Focus group

**Table 4: Participants and their codes as used in the Study**

<b>PARTICIPANT CATEGORY</b>	<b>INSTITUTION</b>	<b>CODE</b>
UNIVERSITY X	NDU	UNIX
UNIVERSITY Y	UCU	UNIY
PROF	Participant 1 Participant 2 Participant 3 Participant 4	PROX1 PROX2 PROX3 PROX4
PROF	Participant 1 Participant 2 Participant 3 Participant 4	PROY1 PROY2 PROY3 PROY4
SENIOR LECTURER	Participant 1 Participant 2 Participant 3 Participant 4 Participant 5 Participant 6	SLEX1 SLEX2 SLEX3 SLEX4 SLEX5 SLEX6
SENIOR LECTURER	Participant 1 Participant 2	SLEY1 SLEY2

	Participant 3 Participant 4 Participant 5 Participant 6	SLEY3 SLEY4 SLEY5 SLEY6
LECTURER	Participant 1 Participant 2 Participant 3 Participant 4 Participant 5 Participant 6	LEX1 LEX2 LEX3 LEX4 LEX5 LEX6
LECTURER	Participant 1 Participant 2 Participant 3 Participant 4 Participant 5 Participant 6	LEY1 LEY2 LEY3 LEY4 LEY5 LEY6
TEACHING ASSISTANT	Participant 1 Participant 2 Participant 3 Participant 4 Participant 5 Participant 6 Participant 7 Participant 8	TAX1 TAX2 TAX3 TAX4 TAX5 TAX6 TAX7 TAX8
TEACHING ASSISTANT	Participant 1 Participant 2 Participant 3 Participant 4 Participant 5 Participant 6 Participant 7 Participant 8	TAY1 TAY2 TAY3 TAY4 TAY5 TAY6 TAY7 TAY8

## **4.2 Presentation of Data**

The presentation data follows the developed themes and sub-themes discussed in the next paragraph.

### **4.2.1 Development of Themes and Sub-Themes**

In this section, the researcher presented a thorough analysis of the results, focusing on the key themes and sub-themes that emerged from the literature review, theoretical framework, and interviews. The data trends were systematically identified, analyzed, and documented using qualitative analysis techniques, including thematic analysis and theoretical evaluation, known for their ability to handle complex and in-depth data (Braun & Clarke, 2019; Nowell et al., 2017). These methods allowed for a structured interpretation of findings, offering detailed insights and multiple layers of analysis. This approach ensures a rich and subtle understanding of the research data, revealing intricate patterns and relationships between the themes.

The three major themes that developed from the data were as follows:

- i. Staff retention approaches applied by COU-founded universities
- ii. Academic Staff Views on the retention approaches in COU-founded universities.
- iii. Expectations of academic staff for their retention in Church of Uganda-founded universities

An outline of the major themes and sub-themes that developed from the literature, theoretical review, and interview transcripts is indicated in Table 5.

**Table 5: Themes and Sub-themes from the Study**

<b>THEME 1</b>	<b>4.3.1 Staff retention approaches applied by COU-founded universities.</b>
<b>Sub-themes</b>	a) Continuous Learning and Training Programs
	b) Support for Advanced Studies
	c) Supportive Environment
	d) Spiritual and Emotional Support
	e) Recognition Programs
	f) Performance-Based Incentives
	g) Competitive Salary and Benefits Package
	h) Opportunities for Extra Income
	i) Clear Career Path and Promotion Opportunities
	j) Leadership Development Programs
	k) Flexible Working Arrangements
	l) Family-Friendly Policies
<b>THEME 2</b>	<b>4.3.2 Academic Staff Views regarding retention approaches in COU-founded universities.</b>
<b>Sub-theme</b>	a) Compensation and Benefits

	b) Professional Development opportunities,
	c) Work Environment and collegial support,
	d) Work-life balance and flexibility
	e) Recognition/Promotion Prospects
	f) Workload Distribution and Balance
	g) Opportunities for Career Progression
	h) Sense of Community and Collegiality
	i) Ethical Leadership and Governance
	j) Alignment with Institutional Mission and Values
	k) Access to Further Studies and Academic Growth
<b>THEME 3</b>	<b>4.3.3 Expectations of academic staff for their retention in Church of Uganda-founded universities.</b>
<b>Theme Category</b>	<i>4.3.3.1 Specific retention approaches recommended for academic staff</i>
<b>Sub-theme</b>	a) Fair Compensation and Benefits
	b) Opportunities for Career Advancement and Promotion
	c) Work Environment and Collegiality

	d) Supportive Institutional Culture and Leadership
	<i>4.3.3.2 Initiatives from other universities to improve staff retention</i>
	a) Professional Development Programs
	b) Research Support and Funding Programs
	c) Work-Life Balance and Wellness Programs
	d) Recognition and Reward Systems
	e) Collaborative Networks and Global Partnerships
	<i>4.3.3.3 Staff retention approaches that need improvement</i>
	a) Compensation and benefits
	b) Promotion and Career Advancement
	c) Workload and work-life balance
	d) Academic Development Support

#### **4.2.2 Objective One**

**To explore the staff retention approaches employed by church-founded universities in Uganda.**

**Research Question: What approaches are in place for retaining academic staff in the university?**

The first objective sought to identify the retention approaches applied by Church-founded Universities in Uganda. This section presents data highlighting the specific strategies used by institutions to attract and maintain academic staff within a faith-based educational context. The analysis reveals a range of initiatives, including training programs, recognition systems, compensation packages, and family-friendly policies. These approaches are examined in relation to their effectiveness and alignment with institutional goals. By presenting these findings, the section provides insights into how retention practices are structured and experienced in church-founded higher education institutions.

This objective offers an in-depth exploration of the specific retention approaches used in universities. It sought to uncover the unique insights that emerged from the intersection of religious values, academic environment, and retention practices. Among the retention approaches revealed were the following;

##### **a) Continuous Learning and Training Programs**

Continuous learning, as indicated by the participants, is an approach where the university invests in training and educating its staff. In the study, participants mentioned that their university used continuous learning and training programs as a critical approach to retaining academic staff. Several staff members recognized the

university's efforts in organizing regular workshops, seminars, and conferences, which were considered valuable for professional development approaches to academic staff retention.

*This university regularly organizes workshops, seminars, and conferences to help staff enhance their teaching skills and stay updated with the latest developments in their fields. For example, last year, we had a three-day workshop on research methodology, which was highly beneficial to both new and experienced staff members. TAX4*

Other participants mentioned the use of specialized, targeted training programs in motivating staff and fostering retention, particularly when aligned with department-specific needs.

*“... Regular workshops, seminars, and training sessions tailored to the specific needs of different departments help keep staff engaged and updated with the latest teaching and research practices. For example, the university recently hosted a specialized training program on digital pedagogy, which equipped us with new tools for online teaching. This initiative was particularly timely and useful, enhancing our skills and keeping us motivated to remain with the institution.” LEX6*

Similarly, the participants mentioned that the university applies specialized workshops provided to staff members with innovative and applicable teaching techniques, as they directly contribute to their professional satisfaction and job retention, as indicated in one of the participants' responses.

*“The targeted workshops and specialized training programs offered by the university are some of the approaches used in retaining staff. These*

*programs are designed to meet the unique needs of different departments, ensuring relevance and practical value. For example, the tailored training sessions on innovative teaching methods for the Faculty of Education last semester were highly effective. They provided us with new pedagogical techniques that we could immediately apply in our classrooms, which enhanced both our teaching skills and job satisfaction. The practical nature of these programs makes them particularly impactful.” TAY3*

Several participants mentioned that the university’s investment in specialized training programs is a way of creating a sense of professional growth, especially when these programs are facilitated by external experts, leading to increased motivation and a greater understanding of value among the academic staff. This was expressed by one of the participants.

*“I have personally benefited from the university’s investment in continuous learning through regular workshops and training sessions. Last year, the university organized a series of workshops on advanced research methodologies tailored for the Faculty of Social Sciences. The workshops were facilitated by renowned international scholars, who provided us with new insights and skills directly applicable to our research work. This initiative not only enhanced our research capacity but also created a sense of professional growth and development. Many of my colleagues and I felt more valued and motivated to stay with the institution because of these opportunities for continuous improvement.” TAY5*

## **b) Support for Advanced Studies**

In the study, participants expressed how financial support for further studies plays a role in retaining academic staff. The university's provision of scholarships and flexible arrangements is seen as a key motivator for professional growth and commitment. According to participant LEY6;

*“The university provides partial scholarships for staff members pursuing further studies, such as Master's or Ph.D. programs. I, for example, received partial funding for my Ph.D. program, which has motivated me to stay with the institution and continue contributing to its academic excellence.”*

Additionally, the university's support in covering costs for professional development activities, such as attending conferences and workshops, is another approach used, as it allows staff to stay updated in their fields.

*“This University has been supportive of my professional growth. They have covered the costs of attending a conference recently and workshops previously, which have helped me stay updated in my field.”* PROX1

Finally, the combination of partial scholarships and flexible work arrangements was also noted as a factor in staff retention, as it enabled academic staff to balance their professional and personal development goals more effectively.

*“I have seen several colleagues, including myself, take advantage of the university's support for advanced studies. The institution offers partial scholarships and flexible work schedules to staff pursuing a Master's program. For example, I received a scholarship to help fund my Ph.D. studies, and I was also given the flexibility to adjust my teaching load during crucial periods of my research. This support was instrumental in helping me balance my academic*

*responsibilities and personal development goals, making me more committed to remaining with the university.” TAX6*

### **c) Collegial and Supportive Environment**

In the study, participants frequently emphasized how the university's efforts to create a collegial and supportive work environment contributed to staff retention. The organization of informal gatherings and team-building activities plays a crucial role in fostering a sense of community, as mentioned by one of the participants

*“The university fosters a collaborative work environment. Departments often organize informal meetups and team-building activities, which strengthen the sense of community among staff. I recall a recent team-building retreat where we shared experiences and ideas, enhancing our teamwork and morale.” PROX3*

On the other hand, several participants reflected on how successful the university's team-building activities and retreats had been in creating a positive work culture. Open discussions during these events foster collaboration and mutual support, making staff feel valued and improving retention.

*“The university's efforts to create a supportive work environment have been very successful in retaining staff. Regular team-building activities, faculty retreats, and departmental meetups foster a sense of belonging and community. I remember a recent faculty retreat where we had open discussions about challenges in our teaching roles and brainstormed solutions collectively. This level of collaboration and mutual support has contributed to a positive work culture, making staff feel valued and supported.” TAX5*

In addition to team-building activities, mentorship programs for new staff were cited as approaches used in creating a supportive environment for retaining academic staff. Pairing new lecturers with experienced mentors helped them integrate into the university, which enhanced their sense of belonging and commitment. This aspect was brought to light by participants *LEX4* and *TAX6*, respectively.

*“The establishment of mentorship programs for new staff has been one of the retention approaches, particularly that helps in creating a collegial and supportive environment. New lecturers are paired with experienced mentors who guide them through the transition period, providing both professional and personal support. I remember how beneficial it was to have a mentor when I first joined the university. This not only made me feel welcomed and supported but also helped me integrate more quickly into the university community. Such mentorship has been key to retaining new staff by fostering a sense of belonging.”*

#### **d) Spiritual and Emotional Support**

Participants further emphasized various initiatives that focus on spiritual and emotional support to enhance staff well-being and retention. Spiritual nourishment, particularly through fellowship meetings, is an aspect that plays a vital role in addressing the personal and emotional needs of staff. In line with this argument, Participant *LEY1* indicated that;

*“Being a church-founded institution, there is a strong emphasis on spiritual growth and emotional well-being. The university chaplaincy offers regular fellowship meetings, prayer sessions, and counseling services. Personally, the*

*weekly fellowship meetings have been a source of spiritual nourishment and encouragement."*

For many staff members, the alignment between the university's mission and their values has been crucial in fostering a sense of purpose, contributing to retention.

*"This University's mission aligns closely with my values. This sense of purpose has been a major factor in my decision to stay." LEY3*

In a similar argument, the supportive environment, reinforced by spiritual activities, enhances the sense of belonging among the staff, further aiding retention. This was revealed by TAY7

*"The supportive and collaborative environment at Uganda Christian University has made me feel valued and appreciated."*

Despite the strong emphasis on spiritual support, it is acknowledged that not all staff members benefit from these activities, particularly those with different belief systems. This reflects a potential limitation in the approach to spiritual and emotional well-being.

*"The provision of spiritual support, such as fellowship meetings and counseling services, is a unique feature of our institution. However, these initiatives may not resonate with all staff members, particularly those who do not share the same religious beliefs or who prefer more secular forms of support. I have noticed that some colleagues rarely attend the fellowship meetings, feeling that their personal or professional concerns are not addressed adequately in such settings. As a result, this approach does not contribute to their retention." PROY3*

The spiritual support provided by the Universities, such as prayer sessions and fellowship meetings, remains an important aspect of emotional and spiritual fulfillment for staff who embrace the university's faith-based values.

*"The spiritual support offered by the university, such as regular fellowship meetings, is highly valued by many staff members. As a church-founded institution, these activities provide a sense of spiritual fulfillment and emotional well-being. Personally, attending weekly prayer sessions has helped me feel connected to the broader mission of the institution, and I find comfort in the shared values and sense of community it fosters among staff." LEY5*

#### **e) Awards and Recognition Programs**

As demonstrated in LEY3's account, the university's annual awards ceremony, particularly held during the Christmas party, was a key motivational factor for staff, recognizing their achievements in teaching, research, and service.

*"The university has an annual awards ceremony where outstanding academic staff are recognized for their achievements, usually at a Christmas party, such as excellence in teaching, research, or community service. I was honored to receive an award, which motivated me to continue my efforts."*

In a similar argument, LEX2 emphasized how public awards ceremonies at the end of the year positively impacted morale and job satisfaction, making them an essential component in staff retention strategies.

*"This university recognizes outstanding contributions through public awards and ceremonies at the end of the year. This recognition boosts morale and job satisfaction."*

In a similar vein, TAY6 shared an example of how recognition through promotion contributed to staff retention, as one colleague who had been considering leaving the university decided to stay after receiving recognition for their hard work.

*"I have witnessed how the annual "Excellence in Teaching" awards program has successfully retained staff by recognizing their hard work and dedication. Two years ago, one of my colleagues, who was considering leaving the university, was recognized with a promotion to the rank of Associate professor. This recognition not only boosted her morale but also made her feel appreciated and valued by the institution. She ultimately decided to stay and continue contributing to the university."*

#### **f) Performance-Based Incentives**

In addressing the approaches for retaining academic staff at the university, participant LEY6 expressed how the university's performance-based bonuses, particularly those linked to obtaining research grants, motivated academic staff to increase their research output.

*"To encourage productivity, the institution provides performance-based bonuses and incentives. For example, lecturers who obtain research grants receive additional financial rewards that come with the grants. This strategy has encouraged me to focus on my research output."*

To further support this understanding, LEY1 pointed out that while performance-based incentives are beneficial, they tend to disproportionately favor staff in certain disciplines, leading to feelings of inequality among those whose fields do not receive similar recognition.

*"The incentives, such as research grants, tend to favor those in specific disciplines or with particular skills. For example, staff in departments with fewer opportunities for external funding, like the humanities, often feel left out of these incentives. I have colleagues in the arts who feel undervalued because their contributions, which may not result in tangible research outputs, are not equally rewarded. This approach can inadvertently create divisions and feelings of inequality among staff."*

Participant *PROY1* in a related argument shared how performance-based bonuses tied to research output, such as publications in high-impact journals, motivate staff by directly rewarding their achievements and fostering a culture of excellence.

*"Performance-based incentives, such as bonuses for research publications, grants, and teaching excellence, have been instrumental in retaining staff. For example, the additional financial rewards I received for publishing in high-impact journals provided both recognition and financial motivation. These incentives encourage a culture of excellence and make staff feel that their efforts are directly rewarded."*

Participants *PROX1* and *PROX4* emphasized the role of performance-based research grants in retaining staff by encouraging continuous academic contributions and recognizing high-performing researchers, which motivates long-term commitment to the university.

*"The provision of additional research grants for staff who consistently publish in reputable journals has been very effective. This approach not only rewards high-performing staff but also encourages a culture of academic excellence. For example, I received a research grant after publishing in a high-impact*

*journal, which allowed me to further my research and gain recognition in my field. This financial support for research activities reinforces the importance of academic contributions and encourages staff to remain committed to the university." PROX1*

Similarly, PROX4 highlighted how the university's performance-based bonuses for research publications have been a key retention strategy by offering financial rewards for staff who contribute to the institution's research output.

*"The university's policy of offering performance-based incentives, such as bonuses for research publications and grants, has been a successful retention strategy. For example, after publishing several articles in peer-reviewed journals, I received a financial bonus that recognized my contributions to the university's research output. This recognition motivated me to continue my research efforts and remain with the institution, knowing that my hard work was acknowledged and rewarded."*

#### **g) Competitive Salary and Benefits Package**

TAY8 and TAY1 highlighted the significance of competitive salaries in attracting and retaining academic staff. These participants emphasized that the university's salary structure aligned with market rates, providing a decent standard of living for employees.

*"The university offers health benefits, pension schemes, and housing allowances. These financial incentives make the institution an attractive place to work and stay long-term." TAY8*

*"The competitive salaries offered by this University have been a major factor in my decision to stay. They align with the market rate and provide a decent standard of living."*

LEY4 further underscored the importance of a comprehensive benefits package, including health insurance, annual bonuses, and housing allowances. These perks were seen as contributors to job satisfaction and overall employee well-being.

*"Our benefits package is quite attractive. It includes health insurance, annual bonus contributions, and a housing allowance. These perks enhance job satisfaction."*

In a contrasting perspective, though with a similar thought, participant TAX4 noted that while the university aimed to provide competitive salaries, the adjustments often did not keep pace with inflation or rising living costs. This led to dissatisfaction among colleagues who felt their compensation was not commensurate with their workload or economic realities.

*"Although the university strives to offer a competitive salary, the increments and adjustments do not always keep pace with inflation or the rising cost of living. For example, while salaries are reviewed periodically, the adjustments are often minimal and do not adequately reflect market conditions. This has been a common grievance among my colleagues, who feel that their compensation is not commensurate with their workload or the economic realities they face".*

Other participants who strengthened this ideology included LEY2 and LEX5; accordingly, both emphasized the crucial role of regular salary reviews and adjustments in retaining staff. By ensuring that compensation remains competitive,

the university demonstrates its commitment to fair treatment and financial security for its employees.

*“Offering a competitive salary and comprehensive benefits package has been crucial for retaining staff. Regular salary reviews and adjustments help ensure that our compensation remains competitive with other institutions. Additionally, benefits such as health insurance, pension schemes, and housing allowances provide a sense of financial security. Knowing that the university is committed to maintaining fair compensation has been a factor in my decision to stay.”*

Similarly, Participant SLEY5 argued that:

*“The provision of comprehensive health insurance, including coverage for family members, helps in retaining staff. This benefit provides peace of mind, knowing that both staff and their families are protected. For example, when my spouse needed medical care, the insurance coverage provided by the university was invaluable, saving us from a financial burden. This comprehensive approach to employee welfare greatly enhances job satisfaction and loyalty.”*

Then, LEX5 highlighted a recent salary adjustment to match inflation and market rates, noting that the salary review contributed to the retention of staff who felt their financial needs were being addressed;

*“A notable example of a successful retention approach is the university’s regular review and adjustment of salaries to remain competitive with other institutions. Recently, the university implemented a salary increase across all levels of academic staff to match inflation and market rates. This adjustment was well-received, and I observed that several colleagues who*

*were considering leaving decided to stay because they felt that their financial needs were being taken seriously. This commitment to fair compensation has been key in retaining staff.”*

#### **h) Opportunities for Extra Income**

One participant emphasized the benefits of engaging in consultancy projects organized by the university, noting how these experiences supplemented income and fostered professional growth. This sentiment is reflected in the words of participant PROX4.

*“The university allows academic staff to engage in consultancy work, provide additional tutoring services for extra pay. For example, I have been involved in consulting projects organized by the university, which have supplemented my income and provided professional growth opportunities.”*

Another participant SLEY5, pointed out the limitations surrounding additional tutoring opportunities, stating that these were often concentrated among senior lecturers, creating frustration among junior staff. She noted:

*“The opportunities for extra income through additional tutoring are limited and not accessible to all staff. Often, these opportunities are concentrated in certain departments or are offered to a select few. For example, in my department, only a handful of senior lecturers receive extra load opportunities, while junior staff members rarely have the chance. This uneven distribution can create frustration and a sense of inequity, reducing the effectiveness of this retention strategy.”*

A different perspective was offered by a participant, SLEX2, who highlighted the overall effectiveness of extra income opportunities in retaining staff. The participant stated:

*"Allowing staff to earn extra income through consultancy work, research projects, and additional teaching has been effective in retaining staff. I have had the opportunity to engage in several consultancy projects coordinated by the university in a memorandum, which has not only supplemented my income but also provided professional development opportunities."*

Furthermore, one participant remarked on the advantages of taking on external consultancy work, detailing how it not only provided financial benefits but also enhanced professional development. PROY4 expressed:

*"The policy of allowing academic staff to take on external consultancy work through university-facilitated channels is highly effective. This approach not only provides additional income but also enhances professional development. I have participated in several consultancy projects that were coordinated by the university, which allowed me to apply my academic knowledge to real-world problems while earning extra income."*

Finally, another participant SLEX4 reflected on the importance of external collaborations in fostering engagement and commitment among staff, noting:

*"The university allows staff to engage in external collaborations that are facilitated through the university's network. I have participated in several consultancy projects, which provided additional income and helped me apply my academic expertise to practical problems. These opportunities not only*

*supplement our income but also enhance our professional development, making us feel more engaged and committed to the institution."*

#### **i) Clear Career Path and Promotion Opportunities**

One participant expressed the benefits of the transparent promotion policy, noting how clearly outlined criteria had positively impacted their career. SLEX 2 stated:

*"The institution has a transparent promotion policy, where criteria for promotion are clearly outlined. Staff members are aware of the benchmarks required for promotion to higher academic ranks, such as Lecturer to senior lecturer or professor. I have personally benefited from this policy, having been promoted to senior lecturer last year based on my academic output and service."*

Conversely, another participant, SLEY4, shared concerns about the practical challenges of the promotion process, highlighting delays that could lead to staff demotivation. They remarked:

*"The promotion policy, while transparent in theory, can be slow and cumbersome in practice. For example, the process for promotion involves multiple layers of approval and can take years, even for deserving candidates. I know colleagues who have been waiting for promotions for over three years, which has led to demotivation and a feeling that their contributions are not being adequately recognized in a timely manner."*

Another perspective was offered by a participant LEY2 who emphasized the motivational impact of a well-defined promotion process. He noted that:

*"Having a clear and transparent career path with well-defined promotion criteria has been highly effective in retaining staff. Staff members know*

*what is required to advance to higher academic ranks, and promotions are based on merit, which motivates us to work harder. I was promoted to Senior Lecturer after meeting the research and teaching criteria, which was a milestone in my career and reinforced my commitment to the institution."*

Additionally, one participant highlighted the importance of regular communication and clarity in the promotion criteria, which helped them set achievable goals.

Participant SLEX1 stated:

*"The establishment of a transparent and streamlined promotion process with clear criteria has been particularly effective. The university's policy of regularly reviewing promotion criteria and communicating them clearly to all staff ensures that everyone knows what is expected for career advancement. For example, after attending a workshop on the promotion process, I knew exactly what was required to advance to the next level, which motivated me to achieve those goals. This clarity and fairness in promotion encourage staff to stay and grow with the institution."*

Lastly, another participant, SLEY 3 reinforced the positive impact of the promotion process on staff retention, sharing their own successful experience. The participant said:

*"The university's clear and transparent promotion process has been particularly effective in retaining staff. For example, I was recently promoted to Senior Lecturer after meeting the specific criteria for research, teaching, and service. The process was straightforward and based on merit, which made me feel that my hard work was recognized."*

## j) Leadership Development Programs

Participants *SLEY1*, *LEY2*, and *SLEY6*, described their positive experience with a leadership development workshop that equipped them with essential skills for future administrative roles. Participants such as *SLEY1* stated:

*"The university offers leadership development programs aimed at grooming staff for administrative roles. For example, I participated in a leadership workshop last semester that equipped me with skills in academic management and strategic planning, preparing me for potential future leadership roles."*

Another Interviewee acknowledged the benefits of the leadership development programs but noted their limitations in addressing the diverse interests of all staff members. The interviewee explained that:

*"Although leadership development programs are offered, they are not always sufficient to meet the needs of all staff. For example, these programs tend to focus on administrative leadership, which may not appeal to academic staff whose primary interest lies in research and teaching. I have seen colleagues who are excellent researchers but uninterested in administrative roles feeling left out of these opportunities, which reduces the overall effectiveness of this approach in retaining them."*(*LEY2*)

Conversely, a participant emphasized the effectiveness of targeted leadership development programs designed specifically for academic staff. The interviewee noted that:

*"Leadership development programs designed specifically for academic staff interested in administrative roles have been very effective. These programs*

*provide tailored training sessions, mentoring by senior administrators, and opportunities for shadowing in leadership roles. For example, I participated in a leadership training workshop that focused on strategic decision-making and conflict resolution, which prepared me for potential future administrative roles. This targeted approach ensures that academic staff with leadership aspirations are adequately prepared and motivated to remain with the university." (SLEY6)*

Additionally, another participant shared how leadership development programs have contributed to staff retention by fostering growth opportunities, remarking that:

*"I have seen how the university's leadership development programs have successfully retained staff by preparing them for administrative roles. For example, one of my colleagues participated in a leadership program that included mentorship, workshops, and shadowing opportunities. She gained valuable skills and eventually became a department head. This growth opportunity made her more committed to staying with the university, as she felt that her leadership potential was recognized and nurtured." (PROY3)*

#### **k) Flexible Working Arrangements**

One participant LEY 6 noted the benefits of flexible working hours and remote work options, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic, which facilitated a healthier work-life balance. The participant stated that:

*"The university offers flexible working hours and options for remote work when necessary. During the COVID-19 pandemic, we were allowed to work from home, which helped maintain a healthy work-life balance. This*

*flexibility has continued to some extent, allowing staff to manage personal and professional responsibilities effectively."*

Another participant with a similar reflection emphasized the value of hybrid teaching formats, which allowed them to balance their academic responsibilities with personal commitments. Participant LEY3 expressed that:

*"This university offers flexible work arrangements; some lectures are physical while others are online allowing me to balance my teaching responsibilities with personal commitments."*

Additionally, participant TAY4 highlighted the wellness programs offered by the university that support a healthy work-life balance, further underscoring the institution's commitment to staff well-being. This one noted that:

*"The university's wellness programs, such as counseling services, availability of staff fellowships and available gym services have helped me maintain a healthy work-life balance."*

However, another perspective revealed challenges in the consistent application of flexible arrangements across departments. This participant SLEX6 mentioned:

*"The flexible working arrangements, such as remote work options, are not consistently applied across all departments. In some cases, staff in certain departments are expected to be on campus more frequently than others, leading to feelings of inequality. I have heard complaints from colleagues in the sciences who feel that their presence is more strictly monitored compared to those in humanities or social sciences, which can affect their sense of autonomy and job satisfaction."*

Despite these inconsistencies, participant SLEY4 affirmed the overall effectiveness of flexible arrangements in retaining staff, particularly during the pandemic. The participant explained that:

*"The university's flexible working arrangements, including options for remote work and flexible hours, have been very effective in retaining staff. For example, during the recent pandemic, we were allowed to work from home, which helped maintain a healthy work-life balance. The flexibility to manage both personal and professional responsibilities has been crucial in retaining staff who might otherwise have left due to rigid schedules."*

Another participant, PROY3 described the benefits of a hybrid working model, which allowed them to balance work and family commitments effectively. The participant stated that:

*"The implementation of a hybrid working model, which combines on-campus and remote work options, has been particularly effective in ensuring staff retention. This model allows staff to manage their professional and personal responsibilities more effectively. For example, I have benefited from the flexibility to work remotely two days a week, which has helped me balance my academic responsibilities with family commitments. This flexibility has reduced burnout and increased job satisfaction."*

Finally, an additional participant with similar views to the above SLEX2 shared a positive experience with flexible arrangements during the pandemic, emphasizing the reduction of commuting stress and improved time management. The participant had this to say:

*"During the COVID-19 pandemic, the university implemented flexible working arrangements, allowing staff to work remotely or on a hybrid schedule. This flexibility was crucial in helping staff balance work and personal responsibilities, especially for those with families. For example, I was able to work from home three days a week, which reduced my commuting stress and allowed me to manage my time better. This approach demonstrated the university's commitment to staff well-being and has been highly effective in retaining staff during challenging times."*

Participant PROY3 highlighted the positive impact of the hybrid working model, noting that it facilitated a balance between professional and personal responsibilities. The participant stated that:

*"The implementation of a hybrid working model, which combines on-campus and remote work options, has been particularly effective in ensuring staff retention. This model allows staff to manage their professional and personal responsibilities more effectively. For example, I have benefited from the flexibility to work remotely two days a week, which has helped me balance my academic responsibilities with family commitments. This flexibility has reduced burnout and increased job satisfaction."*

Participant SLEX2 reinforced this perspective by discussing the broader implementation of flexible working arrangements during the pandemic and observed that:

*"During the COVID-19 pandemic, the university implemented flexible working arrangements, allowing staff to work remotely or on a hybrid schedule. This*

*flexibility was crucial in helping staff balance work and personal responsibilities, especially for those with families. For example, I was able to work from home three days a week, which reduced my commuting stress and allowed me to manage my time better. This approach demonstrated the university's commitment to staff well-being and has been highly effective in retaining staff during challenging times."*

### **l) Family-Friendly Policies**

Participant SLEX3 shared a positive experience with the institution's parental leave policy, which allowed staff to focus on family during a crucial time. The participant noted that:

*"The institution provides parental leave, on-campus childcare facilities, and support for family-related needs. I benefited from the parental leave policy after the birth of my child, which allowed me to focus on my family without worrying about job security."*

However, an additional participant LEX3 pointed out the limitations of the available family-friendly policies, emphasizing that the duration and scope of leave might not meet the needs of all staff members. The interviewee mentioned that:

*"While the institution does provide family-friendly policies, such as annual leave, these are often limited in duration or scope. For example, the leave provided may not be sufficient for those with family responsibilities, hence not beneficial to them."*

Despite these limitations, an interviewee SLEX5 highlighted the effectiveness of the institution's family-friendly policies in retaining staff, particularly those with young families. The interviewee expounded that:

*"The institution's family-friendly policies, such as parental leave and on-campus childcare, have been very effective in retaining staff, particularly those with young families. For example, I was able to take parental leave without worrying about job security, and the availability of on-campus childcare has been a great help. These policies show that the university cares about the well-being of staff members and their families, which fosters loyalty and retention."*

Additionally, participant TAY4 emphasized the value of on-campus child daycare facilities, describing how they helped in managing work-life balance effectively. They remarked:

*"The provision of on-campus discounted day care facilities with qualified staff has been highly effective. This is particularly valuable for staff with young children, as it allows them to focus on their work without worrying about childcare. I have personally benefited from the on-campus daycare services, which have been a great support in managing my work-life balance. This thoughtful approach demonstrates the university's commitment to staff welfare and greatly contributes to staff retention."*

### **4.2.3 Objective Two**

**To discover the views of academic staff on retention approaches in Church of Uganda-founded universities in Uganda.**

**Research Question: What are the views of academic staff on retention approaches used in the university?**

The second research objective explored the views of academic staff regarding the retention approaches in their institutions. This part of the chapter presents qualitative insights into staff perceptions, judgments, and opinions about current practices. It highlights areas where staff feel supported, as well as gaps where improvements are needed to strengthen retention. The findings bring out subjective experiences that reflect both appreciation and dissatisfaction with existing policies. Such views offer critical feedback for institutional leaders on how retention approaches are perceived at the ground level.

This objective focuses on the personal beliefs, judgments, and opinions of academic staff about the current retention approaches. The objective offers qualitative insights into what academic staff think about the retention practices implemented by their institutions without necessarily implying that staff have specific standards or anticipated actions for these approaches. Hence, the researcher intended to capture a range of subjective opinions and feedback for improvement, which varied widely depending on individual experiences and perspectives.

#### **a) Compensation and benefits**

The academic staff interviewed expressed various perspectives on the university's compensation and benefits. Though distinct, the views of Participants *TAX3*, *TAX5*,

YEY4, LEX7, SLEY1, and SLEY6 shared common concerns about financial recognition and long-term security as key factors in retention approaches.

Participant TAX3 pointed out that while the base salary for junior staff was modest, providing basic allowances, such as transport and housing, helped alleviate financial pressures and made a notable difference in their retention experience. In her words:

*"I believe one of the effective practices is the provision of basic allowances alongside our salaries. While the base pay could be better, the additional stipends, like transport or housing allowances, make a difference. It helps us manage some of the financial pressures we face as junior staff."*

Similarly, TAX5 emphasized the challenge of low compensation, particularly for Teaching Assistants, and expressed concerns about the pay not reflecting the workload or the effort to further their education. The participant stressed that salary progression opportunities would enhance motivation and retention.

*"In my opinion, the compensation for Teaching Assistants is quite low, particularly when considering the workload we handle. It's especially challenging when you're trying to further your education, and it feels like the pay doesn't reflect that additional effort. I think it would be more motivating if there were clear opportunities for salary increments as we progress in our careers."*

Interviewee LEY4 built on this point by agreeing that salary supplements, like annual bonuses or increments for academic achievements such as publishing, were encouraging, even though the base salary remained less competitive. These extra benefits contributed to a sense of retention effort by the university.

*"I think salary supplements, such as annual bonuses or small increments for academic promotions are quite encouraging. Even though the salary itself might not be very competitive, these extra benefits give a sense that the university is trying to retain us."*

Expanding on this concern, Participant *LEX7* highlighted the slow salary progression for Lecturers and noted that despite completing advanced qualifications like a PhD, the financial incentives were not competitive compared to other universities. This lack of recognition was seen as a drawback in the university's retention approaches.

*"The salary progression is slow. As a Lecturer, it sometimes feels like we are putting in a lot of work, but the financial incentives aren't quite competitive with other universities. We all need better recognition for our qualifications, especially once you've completed your PhD. The current retention approach doesn't do enough to keep us financially satisfied."*

Shifting focus to senior staff, *SLEY1* emphasized the importance of long-term benefits, such as staff retirement benefits plans, which provided a sense of job security and contributed to their decision to stay with the institution.

*"From a senior staff perspective, long-term benefits like the staff retirement plan are essential and effective. The idea that we have a pension plan provides security and encourages us to remain with the institution for the long haul."*

Concluding the discussion, Participant *SLEY6* echoed the importance of long-term benefits but added that the current systems for retirement and medical insurance needed improvement to better secure job satisfaction and retention, particularly for senior staff.

*“For me, beyond the salary, long-term benefits like retirement plans and medical insurance are very important. At my level, job security is critical, and these are things the university could improve to keep senior staff from leaving. Right now, I don’t see a strong system in place for these benefits, which affects how we perceive the retention strategies.”*

#### **b) Professional Development Opportunities**

In exploring the Professional Development Opportunities at the university, the academic staff, such as TAX3; TAX8; TAX5; TAY2; TAY8; LEY4; and LEY8, provided a range of perspectives that underscored both the existing strengths and areas needing improvement. These insights collectively highlight the significance of continuous skill-building and career advancement in fostering staff retention.

TAX3 initially noted the presence of an internal program offering short professional courses and workshops, which she believed was effective in keeping staff engaged and promoting career growth.

*“There’s an internal program that allows staff members to take short professional courses or workshops. I think this is very effective in keeping us engaged and helping us build the skills we need for career growth.”*

However, not all staff members felt equally supported, as some pointed out the limited availability of scholarships and the intense competition for the limited slots, which can lead to frustration and discourage staff from staying. In the words of LEX3;

*“While financial support or partial scholarships for further studies are offered, they often come with stringent conditions or limited availability. For example, the number of scholarships provided is very small compared to the demand, and staff members have to compete intensely to qualify. In my*

*case, I applied for funding to pursue a Ph.D. but was turned down due to limited slots. This creates a sense of frustration and discouragement among those who do not receive the support, potentially driving them to seek opportunities elsewhere.”*

Despite these challenges, staff members highlighted the effectiveness of partial scholarships in fostering loyalty and reducing financial burdens, which strengthened their connection to the university. Participant TAX2 revealed that;

*“The provision of financial support and partial scholarships for staff pursuing advanced degrees, such as a Master's program, has been highly effective. This support demonstrates the institution's investment in our growth. For example, I received a partial scholarship to pursue my master's, which not only alleviated my financial burden but also deepened my commitment to the university. Knowing that the institution values and supports our academic advancement fosters a strong sense of loyalty among staff.”*

Some of the participants mentioned that the provision of sabbatical leave to staff is a professional development opportunity for academic staff, as this is seen as an additional form of support, allowing the staff to focus on their studies without the pressure of work, thus fostering a sense of loyalty to the institution.

*“The university's provision of sabbatical leave for pursuing advanced studies is especially effective. This approach not only provides financial support but also offers time off to focus on academic growth. For example, I was granted a one-year sabbatical to complete my Ph.D. research, which ly reduced the stress of balancing work and study commitments. Knowing that the*

*institution supports our academic ambitions in such a tangible way encourages many of us to stay and contribute to its growth.” SLEY3*

In contrast, TAX8 highlighted the lack of opportunities for Teaching Assistants to attend workshops or conferences, noting the absence of a structured mentorship program and study opportunities. The participant expressed the need for more investment in helping them transition to Lecturer roles.

*“I don’t see many opportunities for Teaching Assistants to attend workshops or conferences. There’s also no structured mentorship program. We’re often left to figure things out on our own. I’d like to see more investment in helping us transition to becoming Lecturers.”*

TAX5 pointed out that the university's focus on holistic development, encompassing both professional and spiritual growth, was an important aspect of retention, and this comprehensive approach motivated them to see a long-term future at the institution:

*“The university’s values include a focus on holistic development, which I think is important for staff retention. The institution supports our personal growth, both professionally and spiritually. This comprehensive approach makes it easier for me to see a long-term future here.”*

However, TAY2 expressed concern that Teaching Assistants had limited access to research funding and development resources, suggesting that retention strategies focusing on these areas were less relevant without more opportunities tailored to their roles:

*“Since Teaching Assistants don’t typically have access to research funding or development resources, the retention approaches that focus on these areas*

*seem less relevant to us. If there were more development opportunities specific to our roles, I think the retention strategies would be more effective."*

Similarly, TAY8 expressed frustration over the limited access to professional development workshops and internal training programs, stating that a lack of opportunities for skill enhancement could influence academic staff's decision to leave the university:

*"I've noticed that access to professional development workshops or internal training programs is quite limited, which can be frustrating. If I don't see chances to improve my teaching skills or advance within the institution, it could be a factor in leaving."*

In the same way, some participants voiced concerns about the generic nature of certain training programs, which were not always tailored to the specific needs of the faculties or departments, reducing their overall impact.

*Despite the institution's efforts to provide workshops and seminars, these are often poorly tailored to the actual needs of the academic staff. For example, many of the training sessions are generic and do not always align with the specific demands of different faculties or departments. I have attended workshops where the content was repetitive, failing to add value to my professional development. As a result, these programs sometimes feel like a mere formality rather than a genuine investment in our growth. SLEX4*

Shifting to Lecturers, LEY4 emphasized that the ability to apply for study leave and pursue higher degrees with partial financial support from the university was a key retention strategy that motivated them to stay and advance academically.

*"For me, the ability to apply for study leave and pursue higher degrees with partial financial support from the university is a key retention strategy. Knowing that the university encourages academic advancement is motivating."*

In line with this, LEY8 acknowledged the importance of academic and professional growth but noted the limited opportunities to attend international conferences and access research grants. The participant suggested that more avenues for growth were needed to strengthen retention strategies.

*"As a Lecturer, I want to know that the university is interested in helping me advance academically and professionally. Right now, opportunities to attend international conferences or access research grants are limited and there is a lot of politics. We need more avenues for growth."*

Also, LEX7 appreciated that the university valued the personal and professional development of its staff, which aligned with their professional goals and motivated them to stay and grow within the institution.

*"I appreciate that the university's values extend to the personal development of staff, not just students. The fact that the institution promotes continuous learning and development as part of its mission aligns with my professional goals. This motivates me to stay and grow within the university."*

Likewise, LEX2 stressed that research funding and professional development opportunities were essential for retention. The participant explained that access to

such resources helped them develop as academics and increased their commitment to the university.

*"As a Lecturer, research funding and professional development opportunities are essential for my retention. When these resources are available, it helps me develop as an academic and increases my commitment to the university. Without access to such support, retention approaches feel less effective, especially since research is a big part of my role."*

From a senior staff perspective, SLEY6 appreciated the limited research grants provided by the university, which supported their publishing and research efforts. This access to resources contributed to their decision to remain at the institution.

*"As a senior staff member, I appreciate the research grants the university provides. While limited, these grants help with publishing and conducting research, which is vital for career development. This support makes it easier to remain at the university, knowing there are some resources for growth."*

However, SLEX1 noted that senior staff faced challenges in accessing support for postdoctoral studies or research funding and suggested that the retention strategy should focus more on creating pathways for continuous academic growth.

*"Senior staff also face similar challenges. There's little support for postdoctoral studies or funding for research. I think the retention strategy should focus more on creating pathways for continuous academic growth. This would motivate many of us to stay longer."*

SLEX3 agreed that professional development, particularly leadership training, was crucial for senior staff. The participant believed that the university's investment in

staff development showed a commitment to their growth and future, making them more inclined to stay.

*"For senior staff, the value placed on professional development, especially leadership training, is critical. When the university invests in the development of its staff, it shows that they care about our growth and future, making us more inclined to remain committed to the institution."*

Further expanding on this, LEY4 emphasized the importance of investing in staff development through regular training in teaching methodologies, research skills, and leadership. The participant noted that a lack of such investment could lead to demotivation and a consideration of other options.

*Professional development is key. If the university doesn't invest in upskilling its staff, particularly through regular training on teaching methodologies, research skills, and even leadership development, it shows that there's little room for career growth. This can be demotivating and may push me to consider other options.*

Finally, SLEX1 and SLEY2 both emphasized that having access to capacity development programs, adequate research resources, grants, and leadership development programs was critical for senior staff retention. The participants noted that the absence of these opportunities could make the university's retention approaches seem ineffective, especially in comparison to other institutions.

*"For Senior Lecturers, having access to adequate research resources, grants, and development programs is crucial for retention. These opportunities allow me to grow in my career and contribute meaningfully to the academic community. The lack of such support can make retention strategies seem*

*ineffective, especially when compared to opportunities at other institutions."*

Participant SLEY2 revealed the role of professional development in providing leadership opportunities, making the university a more attractive place to stay:

*"For me, professional development includes not only skill-building but also leadership roles within the institution. If the university provides training for academic management positions, it makes it more attractive to stay. However, if such opportunities are lacking, it could make us look elsewhere for career advancement."*

### **c) Work Environment and Collegial Support**

The academic staff shared their views on the work environment and collegial support at the university, touching on both positive and negative aspects. Their perspectives highlighted the significance of mentorship, community, and institutional support in creating a conducive work environment. TAY3 began by expressing appreciation for the informal mentorship system among colleagues, where senior staff offered guidance that aided in professional development. This created a positive and supportive work environment for them.

*"One of the things I appreciate is the support from colleagues. There's an informal mentorship system where senior staff often offer guidance, and this helps with professional development. It creates a positive environment."*

In contrast, TAX6 pointed out that while some departments were supportive, there was an overall lack of mentorship, which led to feelings of isolation. The participant

believed that the absence of formal guidance affected academic staff comfort at the university.

*"The work environment here is mixed. Some departments are supportive, but overall, there's not much guidance for us. I think the lack of mentorship affects how comfortable we feel working here. It's a bit isolating, to be honest."*

LEX4 agreed with the importance of collegiality, noting that while the university didn't formally recognize all efforts, the sense of community among staff made the work environment more bearable. This informal support was seen as an effective retention practice.

*"The sense of community is important. Even though the university doesn't formally recognize all efforts, the collegiality among staff makes the workplace more bearable. This informal support is an effective retention practice in itself."*

Building on this, LEX1 highlighted the challenges of maintaining a balance between teaching and research due to a heavy workload and insufficient administrative support. The participant expressed that the institution didn't fully recognize the extent of the staff's efforts.

*"I agree. The workload is heavy, and the balance between teaching and research is hard to maintain. I often feel stretched thin, and there's not enough administrative support. Sometimes, it feels like the institution doesn't recognize how much we do."*

From a broader perspective, LEY1 emphasized that the Christian values of the university shaped a positive work environment, fostering collaboration and ethical

practices. This ethos made the institution a place where long-term work felt sustainable.

*"For me, the fact that the university's values, especially its Christian ethos, shape the work environment makes it a positive place to stay. The university encourages collaboration and ethical practices, which makes the environment conducive for long-term work."*

Furthermore, participants appreciated the university's efforts to build a strong sense of community through regular social and professional gatherings. These events provided opportunities to share ideas and celebrate achievements, which helped staff feel more connected to the institution and one another. As indicated in Participant TAX6's revelation;

*"The university has cultivated a strong sense of community among the academic staff through regular social and professional gatherings. For example, we have monthly "Faculty Connect" events where faculty members from different departments come together to share ideas, discuss challenges, and celebrate achievements. These events help build relationships and foster a supportive environment. I have personally experienced the benefits of these gatherings, as they have helped me feel more integrated into the university community and more connected with my colleagues, which has strengthened my commitment to the institution."*

Lastly, SLEY2 echoed the importance of the university's Christian values in creating a positive culture but noted that senior staff were often excluded from decision-

making processes. The participant felt that greater involvement in these processes would enhance the collaborative nature of the work environment.

*As a Senior Lecturer, I think the management could do better in terms of involving us in decision-making processes. Right now, it feels like we're just going along with policies, but our input isn't always valued. The university's Christian values do help create a positive culture, but more could be done to ensure a collaborative environment.*

#### **d) Work-Life Balance and Flexibility**

The academic staff shared their views on work-life balance and flexibility at the university, presenting both supportive and critical perspectives. Their experiences highlighted how flexibility in workload, schedules, and personal growth opportunities contributed to their retention or dissatisfaction.

TAX2 reflected on how flexibility in handling personal commitments, such as pursuing further studies, was an effective practice for retention. This one appreciated the understanding from management when balancing work and personal matters:

*"One effective practice I've noticed is the flexibility offered when it comes to handling personal commitments. For instance, when pursuing personal matters, there's some level of understanding from management."*

Conversely, TAX1 expressed dissatisfaction with the lack of flexibility in managing personal commitments. The high workload, coupled with studying, made it difficult to balance responsibilities, impacting both academic staff work and studies:

*"Not really. Our workload is high, and since I'm still studying as well, it's difficult to find time for personal matters. There's not much flexibility with schedules, and that impacts both my work and my studies."*

Participant TAY5 emphasized the importance of balancing work responsibilities with personal development. He stated that flexible schedules and study leave would encourage retention, while the absence of such opportunities could lead to considering other options.

*"Balancing work responsibilities with personal development is critical. If the university allows flexibility in schedules to accommodate personal growth or study leave, it makes it more likely that I'll stay. However, if work takes up all of my time with no room for personal development, it becomes a reason to consider leaving."*

Adding to the conversation, TAY3 shared that the university's focus on well-being contributed to retention. He felt that the institution understood the importance of work-life balance, which made the workload manageable and the environment more supportive.

*"The university's emphasis on well-being as part of its values helps a lot with retention. I feel like there's an understanding of work-life balance, which is something I don't take for granted. It makes the workload manageable and the working environment supportive."*

TAX6 discussed the significance of flexibility for Teaching Assistants, especially in terms of scheduling. He pointed out that the equitable application of flexible retention strategies was crucial, as inconsistency in their implementation negatively affected retention.

*"Work-life balance is important at all levels, but as a Teaching Assistant, flexibility in scheduling is key. Retention strategies that offer flexibility in work hours or time off for personal development make it easier for me to stay. However, if these approaches are not applied equitably, especially for those in lower-ranking roles, it affects their effectiveness."*

LEY3 agreed that flexible working hours helped staff manage research, teaching, and personal life more effectively, which enhanced their commitment to the institution.

*"Yes, I'd say the university's flexible working hours are helpful. They allow us to manage our research, teaching, and personal life more effectively, which makes it easier to stay committed to the institution."*

Similarly, LEY6 highlighted the overwhelming teaching load and the lack of time for research and personal life. She expressed that more approaches should be put in place by the university to help staff achieve a better balance.

*"I can relate. The teaching load is overwhelming at times, and it leaves little room for research or personal time. I feel like the university could do more to help us achieve a better balance."*

LEY4 reiterated the importance of policies supporting work-life balance, such as flexible teaching hours and reduced workloads during critical periods. These policies encouraged staff to remain committed, while their absence could be overwhelming.

*"I find that the university's support for work-life balance, such as allowing flexible teaching hours or reduced workloads during critical personal or professional periods, is important. When these policies are in place, they*

*encourage me to stay. Without them, the demands of the job can become overwhelming, making it harder to remain committed."*

LEX2 stressed that the university's values around well-being and balance made them feel valued as both an employee and a person. This focus on holistic well-being was seen as a key factor in retention.

*"I think the organizational values around well-being and balance are essential. The university supports staff in finding a balance between work and personal life, and this focus on holistic well-being makes me feel valued not just as an employee, but as a person."*

LEX5 discussed how Lecturers faced challenges balancing teaching, research, and personal life. He believed retention approaches were more effective when offering flexibility, such as reduced teaching loads during research periods or sabbaticals.

*"For Lecturers, balancing teaching, research, and personal life is challenging. I find that retention approaches are more effective when they provide flexibility, such as reduced teaching loads during research periods or opportunities for sabbaticals. Without these, the pressures of academic life can become overwhelming, reducing the impact of retention efforts."*

SLEX3 appreciated the institution's consideration for leave and reduced administrative duties when necessary. He believed this helped prevent burnout and encouraged long-term commitment to the university.

*"As a senior staff member, I also appreciate the consideration for leave and reduced administrative duties when necessary. This helps prevent burnout and makes it easier to continue working at the university."*

SLEX1 reflected on the challenges faced by senior staff in balancing administrative, teaching, and research duties with personal development. she felt that offering flexibility in administrative roles and recognizing personal growth outside of work would foster a more supportive environment.

*"For senior staff, balancing administrative, teaching, and research responsibilities with personal development can be challenging. If the university offers flexibility in administrative roles or recognizes the need for personal growth outside of work, it creates a supportive environment. A lack of attention to this balance could result in senior staff looking for better opportunities elsewhere."*

Finally, PROY2 affirmed that the university's commitment to employee well-being was reflected in its policies and practices, such as flexible work arrangements. This demonstrated concern for personal lives, making the institution an attractive long-term workplace.

*"As a Senior Lecturer, I've noticed that the university's commitment to employee well-being is not just talk—it's reflected in policies and practices, like providing flexible work arrangements. This concern for our personal lives makes the institution a more attractive place to work long-term."*

PROY3 added that balancing administrative duties, research, and personal commitments was critical for academic staff. The participant believed that retention strategies involving flexible workloads and reduced teaching hours were essential for encouraging senior staff to stay, as a lack of flexibility diminished the effectiveness of these approaches.

*"As a Senior Lecturer, managing a balance between administrative duties, research, and personal commitments is critical. Retention strategies that include flexible workloads, administrative support, or reduced teaching hours can make a big difference in encouraging senior staff to stay. Without this flexibility, the effectiveness of retention approaches is diminished."*

#### **e) Recognition and Promotion Prospects**

The views of academic staff on recognition and promotion prospects were diverse, reflecting both the strengths and gaps in the university's retention strategies. The following statements highlight how different participants such as *TAX1*; *TAY3*; *TAX4*; *LEY2*; *LEX5*; *LEX4*; *SLEX1*; *PROX2*; and *PROX1* experienced these approaches within the institution, shedding light on how recognition and promotion impacted their motivation and long-term commitment.

*TAX1* expressed that having a clear path for promotion, even if it took time, was an effective retention practice. The participants believed that the structure for advancing from Teaching Assistant to Lecturer motivated them to work harder and stay committed.

*"I think the clear path for promotion is an effective practice. While it may take time, knowing that there's a structure for moving from Teaching Assistant to Lecturer motivates us to stay and work hard."*

Additionally, *LEX1* reflected on the challenges within the awards and recognition programs, specifically highlighting how a lack of transparency in the selection process sometimes led to feelings of bias or favoritism, as the participant observes;

*"The awards and recognition programs, while well-intentioned, can sometimes be perceived as lacking transparency. For example, there have been examples where the criteria for awards were not communicated, leading to feelings of bias or favoritism. I remember a time when a colleague was overlooked for an award despite having an outstanding record, which caused discontent and a sense that the recognition process is not always fair or objective."*

To strengthen this argument, LEX6 described the personal impact of the awards program, noting that being recognized for contributions to mentoring students increased their motivation to contribute further to the university's mission.

*"The annual awards and recognition programs have been highly effective in boosting morale and encouraging long-term commitment. Recognizing and celebrating staff achievements, whether in teaching, research, or service, helps create a positive work environment. Last year, I was recognized for my contributions to student mentoring, and this acknowledgment greatly increased my motivation to continue contributing to the university's mission."*

Moreover, SLEY2 explained how peer-nominated awards had effectively enhanced transparency and credibility in the recognition process, fostering a strong sense of community among staff.

*"The implementation of peer-nominated awards has been particularly effective in recognizing and rewarding staff. These awards allow staff members to nominate their colleagues for recognition, which enhances transparency and credibility. This peer-based recognition fosters a sense of*

*community and mutual respect, which is highly motivating and encouraging for staff retention."*

In contrast, TAY3 voiced concerns about job security as a Teaching Assistant, citing the absence of a clear promotion path. The participant felt that a lack of visibility in career progression made it difficult to see themselves as long-term employees and highlighted the need for more investment in junior staff roles.

*"I worry about job security as a Teaching Assistant. There's no clear path to move up to a Lecturer position, and sometimes it feels like we're not seen as long-term employees. It would be reassuring to know there are chances for promotion and that we're being invested in."*

TAX4 further emphasized the lack of recognition for Teaching Assistants, noting that retention policies seemed to focus more on senior staff. The insufficient recognition of their contributions left them feeling less motivated and diminished the effectiveness of retention strategies in their role.

*"As a Teaching Assistant, I don't always feel like my contributions are recognized, which affects my perception of the effectiveness of retention strategies. The retention policies tend to focus more on senior staff, and there's less emphasis on rewarding those in supporting academic roles. This lack of recognition can make it harder to stay motivated."*

Meanwhile, LEY2 appreciated the promotion system in place for Lecturers, which was based on academic performance, research, and university contributions. The participants acknowledged the competitive nature of the process but felt it was fair, encouraging them to stay at the university.

*"Yes, for Lecturers, there's a system in place where promotions are based on academic performance, research publications, and contributions to the university. Even though it's competitive, it feels fair, and that encourages us to stay."*

On the other hand, *LEX5* found the promotion process to be slow and unclear, which affected their motivation. The participant felt that achievements were not always recognized, suggesting that the university could do more to acknowledge academic milestones and provide clearer opportunities and pathways.

*"Yes, the promotion process can be slow and unclear. As a Lecturer, I don't always feel recognized for my achievements. I think the university could do more in terms of acknowledging academic milestones and ensuring fair opportunities for promotion."*

*LEX2* shared a similar sentiment, explaining that recognition for their work—whether through rewards or promotions—was essential for making retention strategies effective. When these contributions went unnoticed, the participant found it harder to remain committed to the university.

*"Lecturers often juggle teaching, research, and departmental service, and when there's recognition for our work through rewards or promotions, I feel that the retention strategies are effective. However, when these contributions go unnoticed, retention approaches seem less impactful, and it's harder to remain committed to the university."*

*SLEX1* highlighted how being involved in leadership or decision-making processes at the university made them feel valued. Academic staff considered this recognition of their input to be a key factor in why she remained committed to the institution.

*“For me, being part of the leadership teams or decision-making processes within the university is rewarding. It feels like the university values my input, which contributes to my sense of fulfillment. This recognition is a key part of why I remain here.”*

Participant PROX2 echoed this, as she desired more leadership opportunities. As a Senior Lecturer, they were satisfied with the university’s mission but believed that retention strategies needed to offer more avenues for academic and leadership growth to retain their interest.

*“I share the same concerns. As a Senior Lecturer, I’m looking for more leadership opportunities, but these are not always available. I’m satisfied with the mission of the university, but I think the retention strategies need to focus on giving us more room to grow, both academically and in leadership roles.”*

Finally, PROX1 stressed the importance of recognition at the senior level for retention. He felt that promotions, awards, or additional responsibilities were critical for acknowledging their contributions to research, teaching, and administrative roles. Without this recognition, he found it difficult to view the retention strategies as effective.

*“Recognition at the senior level is crucial for retention. If my contributions to research, teaching, or administrative roles are acknowledged through promotions, awards, or additional responsibilities, I’m more likely to stay. On the other hand, if these efforts are overlooked, it becomes difficult to feel that the retention strategies are truly effective.”*

#### f) Workload Distribution and Balance

The academic staff (*TAX1*; *LEY1*; *SLEX4*) had varied perspectives on how workload distribution and balance impact the effectiveness of retention approaches at the university. The following participant responses illustrate how these approaches affected academic staff differently.

Participant *TAX1* reflected on their experience as a Teaching Assistant, noting that much of their workload focused on routine tasks like Tutoring. The participant felt that this limited their exposure to retention strategies such as research funding, which are typically aimed at faculty with more substantial academic responsibilities. This made the retention approaches less effective for them.

*"As a Teaching Assistant, I feel that my workload is often focused on routine tasks such as tutoring, which sometimes makes the retention strategies less effective. Since I have limited teaching and research responsibilities, I don't always benefit from retention practices like research funding aimed at faculty with heavier academic workloads."*

From the perspective of a Lecturer, participant *LEY1* described their workload as more varied, involving teaching, research, and service. The participant believed that retention approaches were more effective when there was support for both research and teaching, particularly when workloads were managed fairly. For them, the availability of resources to balance these responsibilities played a crucial role in the success of retention strategies.

*"For Lecturers, the workload tends to be more varied, involving teaching, research, and service. I feel that retention approaches, like providing support for research and balancing teaching hours, are effective for those of*

*us with multiple responsibilities. When workload is managed fairly and resources are available to support both teaching and research, retention strategies work better."*

Participant *SLEX4*, a Senior Lecturer, explained that their workload included not only teaching and research but also leadership and administrative duties. They found that effective retention strategies for senior staff often involved reducing the administrative burden through additional support or offering leadership development opportunities. Without such strategies, they felt more likely to experience burnout, which could influence their decision to stay or leave the institution.

*"For Senior Lecturers, the workload includes not just teaching and research, but also leadership and administrative duties. Effective retention approaches for us often involve reducing these burdens through administrative support or offering leadership development opportunities. However, if these strategies are not in place, it's easier to feel overwhelmed, which can influence decisions to stay or leave."*

#### **g) Opportunities for Career Progression**

The academic staff shared their insights on the significance of opportunities for career progression as a retention strategy at the university. Their perspectives highlighted the varying needs and aspirations of teaching staff regarding career advancement.

Interviewee *TAX5* expressed concerns that retention approaches often overlook the career advancement needs of Teaching Assistants. They noted that while the

university might offer professional development opportunities, these were primarily geared toward higher-ranking staff, making them less relevant for Teaching Assistants. The lack of a clear career path for advancement diminished the effectiveness of retention strategies at their level.

*"I think the retention approaches don't always consider the fact that Teaching Assistants often don't have a clear path for career advancement. While the university might offer professional development opportunities, they're more focused on higher-ranking staff, which makes the retention approaches less relevant for us at this level."*

Highlighting the importance of mentorship, TAX3 mentioned that access to guidance from senior academic staff impacts Teaching Assistants. They emphasized that a structured mentorship program would aid in their professional and personal development. The absence of such guidance made it challenging for them to envision a future within the university, ultimately affecting their commitment.

*"Having access to mentorship from senior academic staff is a big factor for us, Teaching Assistants. If there is a structured mentorship program in place, it helps me develop both professionally and personally. The lack of such guidance makes it difficult to see a future within the university."*

For LEX2, the potential for advancement to Senior Lecturer or higher roles was crucial in shaping their view on retention strategies. The Participant acknowledged that when the university offered support for research or academic leadership roles, it increased their likelihood of staying:

*"As a Lecturer, the ability to advance to Senior Lecturer or higher positions is a key factor in my perception of retention strategies. If the university*

*provides opportunities for promotion, such as support for research or academic leadership roles, it makes me more likely to stay. Without these opportunities, the effectiveness of retention approaches is limited."*

Similarly, LEY1 emphasized the role of mentorship in their career progression as a Lecturer. They noted that having senior colleagues available for advice on research and career pathways encouraged them to remain at the university:

*"As a Lecturer, mentorship is also important, especially as I look to transition into more senior roles. Knowing that senior colleagues are there to offer advice on both research and career pathways encourages me to stay. A lack of mentorship or guidance makes it harder to navigate my career within the university, which could lead me to explore opportunities elsewhere."*

From the perspective of a Senior Lecturer, SLEY3 remarked that retention strategies focusing on academic growth and leadership opportunities were more effective.

*"For Senior Lecturers, retention strategies that focus on academic growth and leadership opportunities are more effective. When I see potential to move into management or other senior roles, I feel more committed. Without this pathway for career progression, I might feel that the retention strategies are not as relevant to my role."*

Finally, SLEX2 pointed out that mentorship should also encompass peer collaboration and guidance. Academic staff according to the participant valued the opportunity to mentor younger staff while continuing to learn from experienced colleagues, as this contributed to their sense of fulfillment:

*"For us, mentorship is about guiding the next generation, but we also benefit from peer mentorship and collaboration. The opportunity to guide younger*

*staff while also continuing to learn from experienced colleagues is key to my sense of fulfillment. If the university doesn't promote this culture of mentoring, it could make the academic environment less appealing."*

#### **h) Sense of Community and Collegiality**

The academic staff (*TAX2; LEX1; SLEX1*) expressed a strong connection between the sense of community and collegiality at the university and their willingness to remain, highlighting the importance of organizational values that foster cooperation and support.

Participant *TAX2* reflected that the sense of community within the university played a role in their decision to stay. They noted that the organizational values, which emphasize cooperation and mutual support among staff, create a welcoming work environment. Being part of a team where they feel valued made it easier to commit to staying at the institution.

*"The sense of community here is one of the strongest factors for retention. The organizational values emphasize cooperation and support among staff, and I think this builds a very welcoming work environment. It's easier to stay in a place where you feel valued as part of a team."*

Similarly, *LEX1* emphasized the importance of collegiality in their work environment. The participant observed that the university's encouragement of teamwork and mutual support fosters a positive atmosphere:

*"The value placed on collegiality is important. The university encourages teamwork and mutual support, which creates a positive atmosphere. Knowing that the institution values our collective well-being keeps me committed, and I think this helps retain many staff members."*

Participant *SLEX1* provided further insight from a senior staff perspective, highlighting that the collaborative spirit, which stems from the university's values of service and community, plays a crucial role in retention. The participant shared that working together towards a shared mission fosters a sense of unity and builds a strong professional network. This atmosphere of collaboration was a motivating factor that contributed to their desire to remain at the university.

*"For senior staff, the collaborative spirit that stems from the university's values of service and community makes a big difference. It's about working together towards a shared mission, and that sense of unity is motivating. It fosters a strong professional network that makes me want to stay."*

However, some participants expressed concerns about some of the community activities, which have limited frequency and impact, noting that they did not always address deeper interpersonal issues or foster genuine inclusivity within departments. An example of this is observed within the feelings of participant *TAY7* below;

*"While efforts are made to foster a collegial environment, this approach can sometimes feel shallow. For example, team-building activities are infrequent and do not always address deeper issues of interpersonal conflicts or departmental politics. In my experience, some staff members still feel isolated or undervalued, particularly if they are not part of the inner circles within departments. This can lead to dissatisfaction and a sense that the environment is not genuinely inclusive or supportive."*

#### **i) Ethical Leadership and Governance**

The academic staff reflected on the crucial role of ethical leadership and governance in influencing academic staff as a retention strategy at the university.

participant insights emphasized how transparency, integrity, and fairness in leadership fostered a positive work environment.

Interviewee *LEY1* emphasized that the university's commitment to ethical leadership impacted their decision to stay. The participant pointed out that the leadership's transparency and approachability made them feel respected. In the actual words of the interviewee;

*"I believe the university's commitment to ethical leadership is a major retention factor. The leadership is transparent and approachable, which makes me feel respected. Knowing that the university values fairness and transparency reassures me about my future here."*

Building on this perspective, *LEY3* shared that ethical governance involves making decisions with integrity while prioritizing staff welfare. The participant highlighted that:

*"Ethical governance means that decisions are made with integrity and that the staff's welfare is a priority. When leadership upholds these values, it creates a sense of trust in the institution. This trust, in turn, contributes to my desire to remain here."*

Similarly, *SLEX2* noted that ethical leadership not only cultivates trust but also creates a stable working environment for staff. The participant explained that:

*"As a Senior Lecturer, I've noticed that ethical leadership not only builds trust but also establishes a stable working environment. Staff are more likely to stay when they feel secure in their positions, knowing that decisions affecting their careers are made fairly and in line with the university's values."*

## j) Alignment with Institutional Mission and Values

The academic staff (*LEY2*; *LEY1*; *SLEX4*) discussed how their alignment with the university's Christian foundation and values impacts their decision to stay, noting that the institution's mission resonated deeply with their personal beliefs.

Participant *LEY2* emphasized that the university's Christian foundation played a pivotal role in their retention, particularly for those who share similar values. They explained that the focus on ethical behavior and community engagement gave them a sense of being part of something larger. This feeling of belonging motivated them to remain committed to the institution.

*"I feel that the university's Christian foundation plays a role in retention, especially for those of us who share similar values. The emphasis on ethical behavior and community engagement makes me feel like I'm part of something bigger. This sense of belonging motivates me to stay."*

Similarly, *LEY1* agreed that the university's prioritization of not only academic excellence but also moral and spiritual development was a key retention factor for staff who identified with those values. The participant shared that when the institution's mission aligned with their personal beliefs, it made them more likely to commit to the university for the long term.

*"The fact that the university prioritizes not just academic excellence but also moral and spiritual development is a huge factor for staff who identify with those values. When the institution's mission aligns with my values, I'm more inclined to commit to the university long-term."*

Participant *SLEX4*, speaking as a senior staff member, echoed these sentiments, stating that the alignment between their personal beliefs and the university's

mission reinforced their loyalty. They appreciated the institution's focus on values such as integrity, service to the community, and faith, which provided a strong sense of purpose. For them, staying at the university was about more than just a paycheck; it was about being part of an organization that reflected their core values.

*"As a senior staff member, I find that the alignment between my personal beliefs and the university's mission contributes to my loyalty. The institution's focus on values such as integrity, service to the community, and faith helps create a strong sense of purpose. It's not just about a paycheck—it's about being part of an institution that reflects what I stand for."*

Retreats and reflective sessions strengthen the connection between staff and the institution, allowing for spiritual renewal and a sense of shared mission.

*"The regular inclusion of spiritual retreats and reflection sessions tailored to staff needs has been particularly effective. These retreats provide a unique opportunity for spiritual renewal and fellowship, which aligns with the university's values as a church-founded institution. For example, the annual spiritual retreat offers a break from the daily routine and a chance to reconnect with our faith and mission. This focus on spiritual well-being is crucial for staff who share the university's faith-based values, fostering a deeper commitment to the institution." SLEX2*

The spiritual and emotional support systems have not only contributed to personal growth but have also fostered stronger professional relationships, leading to greater loyalty and retention among staff.

*"Being a church-founded institution, the university places a strong emphasis on spiritual support, which has been particularly effective for staff*

*retention. I regularly attend the weekly prayer meetings and spiritual reflection sessions organized for staff. These gatherings provide a unique opportunity to connect with colleagues on a spiritual level, share personal challenges, and find collective encouragement. For example, during a particularly stressful period in my personal life, the support I received through these sessions was invaluable. It made me feel cared for and supported beyond my professional role, which deepened my loyalty to the university." PROY2*

#### **k) Access to Further Studies and Academic Growth**

The academic staff shared how access to further studies and growth opportunities was a crucial factor in their decisions to remain at the university, emphasizing the importance of institutional support for their continued professional development.

Participant TAX6 expressed that as a Teaching Assistant, his decision to stay was heavily influenced by the availability of opportunities to pursue a Master's degree. He noted that when the university provides support through partial funding, it signals that the institution values their academic growth, which encourages them to remain committed.

*"As a Teaching Assistant, I feel that access to further studies, especially opportunities to pursue a Master's, greatly influences my decision to stay. If the university supports these efforts by offering study leave or partial funding, it sends a clear message that it values my academic growth."*

Similarly, LAX3 shared that for Lecturers, pursuing a PhD was essential for career progression. She highlighted that the university's willingness to offer study leave and financial assistance played a role in her retention. Without this support, the participant mentioned that he might consider seeking opportunities at other institutions that provide better academic advancement.

*"For Lecturers like me, pursuing a PhD is crucial. The university's willingness to offer study leave, and perhaps financial aid, plays a big role in my commitment to stay. Without such support, it would be tempting to look for institutions that provide better opportunities."*

Interviewee PROY2, representing the perspective of senior staff, pointed out that their retention was influenced by opportunities for continuous learning rather than obtaining higher qualifications alone. He emphasized the importance of attending professional conferences and participating in collaborative research projects. If such opportunities for academic growth were lacking, he suggested that senior staff might be more inclined to leave for institutions that offer better platforms for professional development.

*"For senior staff, it's not just about obtaining higher qualifications, but also about continuous learning. The opportunity to attend professional conferences or participate in collaborative research projects is important. The absence of these opportunities might push some to leave, especially if other institutions offer better platforms for academic advancement."*

#### **4.2.4 Objective Three:**

**To ascertain the expectations of academic staff for their retention in Church-founded universities.**

**Research Question: What are the expectations of academic staff for their retention in the university?**

The third research objective examined the expectations of academic staff concerning their retention in Church-founded universities. This section presents data on what staff believe should be prioritized to enhance their commitment and job satisfaction. Expectations ranged from fair compensation and professional growth opportunities to supportive work environments and transparent promotion systems. These insights illuminate the aspirations of academic staff and highlight the areas where institutional policies need to evolve. By capturing these expectations, the study provides a foundation for designing context-sensitive retention strategies.

This objective emphasizes the anticipated standards that academic staff hold for their retention. These are the specific approaches they believe should be in place to support their continued employment in universities. In this case, 'expectations' implies a level of predictive stance where academic staff might have specific conditions they feel are necessary for their retention. Hence, the study brought out the conditions that academic staff expect to be met by their institutions to ensure their satisfaction and retention, aligning more with the predefined standards rather than open-ended opinions.

The specific retention approaches recommended for academic staff are therefore highlighted as follows.

**a) Fair compensation and benefits**

Participant *TAY1* noted that fair compensation was a critical expectation for their continued commitment to the university, explaining,

*"I expect fair compensation that reflects the workload we carry. The current salaries do not match the hours we put in, and it's hard to see a future at the university unless this is addressed."*

The above sentiment underscores the dissatisfaction with the pay structure with workload.

Similarly, *TAX4* emphasized that improved benefits such as health insurance and housing allowances would contribute to retention. The interviewee remarked:

*"Improved benefits such as health insurance, housing allowances, or transport stipends would make us feel more valued. These benefits are critical in ensuring that teaching assistants feel supported and motivated to stay."*

Interviewee *TAY2* further stressed that regular salary adjustments are crucial for retention, particularly in light of inflation. This participant explained that:

*"My expectation is that the university will review and adjust salaries periodically to match inflation and the cost of living. If we don't see regular improvements in our financial situation, retention will be difficult."*

This comment highlights the financial challenges faced by staff and their expectation for proactive measures by the institution.

TAY3 emphasized that the current salary structure was a major factor contributing to staff turnover, stating:

*"If I had the power to introduce one change, I would focus on improving the salary structure. Ensuring that salaries are competitive within the sector and reflective of the workload would enhance retention. Many teaching assistants leave because of low pay."*

The participant underscored how competitive salaries would help retain teaching staff.

In agreement with this view, TAX2 suggested tying salary increases to performance and experience, remarking that:

*"I would advocate for salary increases that are tied to performance and experience. This would incentivize teaching staff to stay longer, knowing that they are rewarded for their contributions."*

This approach could ensure that staff feel valued for their work, contributing to long-term commitment.

Similarly, TAY1 highlighted the importance of adjusting compensation packages in response to rising living costs, noting,

*"A key change would be to regularly review compensation packages to ensure they are in line with the cost of living. This would reduce financial stress and increase staff commitment to the university."*

Regular reviews of salaries would help the institution retain its staff by mitigating the financial pressures faced by the employees.

Moving to more senior staff perspectives, LEX4 echoed the importance of fair compensation and emphasized that the university must offer competitive salaries and comprehensive benefits packages for retention. They shared:

*"My expectation for retention starts with fair compensation. As a Lecturer, I believe that salary and benefits should reflect the effort we put into teaching, research, and service. Competitive salaries, health benefits, and retirement plans are important for my long-term commitment to the university."*

Expanding on the need for competitive compensation, LEY3 stated that:

*"If I had the power to introduce one change, I would improve the compensation and benefits package. Many of us feel that the current salary structure doesn't reflect our efforts, especially with the increasing cost of living. Offering competitive salaries and benefits like healthcare and housing allowances would motivate staff to stay."*

This participant emphasized the importance of benefits that reflect the true effort of academic staff.

Senior Lecturers like SLEY5 broadened the conversation beyond salary, focusing on benefits that support overall well-being. Participant SLEY5 stated:

*"For me, compensation isn't just about the salary—it's also about access to benefits like health insurance, housing allowances, and family support. These financial and non-financial benefits influence my decision to stay, as they contribute to my overall well-being and security."*

SLEX2 reinforced the importance of comprehensive benefits, remarking,

*"My change would focus on comprehensive benefits—healthcare, and housing allowances. These financial incentives are crucial for long-term retention because they address staff's basic needs and create a sense of stability, making us less likely to seek opportunities elsewhere."*

This view underscored the role of benefits in creating a stable and supportive environment for employees.

From the perspective of Professors, compensation and benefits are extended opportunities for academic advancement. Interviewee *Prox1* shared:

*"As a Professor, I expect the university to offer a comprehensive compensation package that includes not only salary but also research grants, travel allowances for conferences, and academic rewards. Retention is directly tied to how the university recognizes and compensates the contributions of senior academic staff."*

This remark indicates that for senior faculty, retention is linked to a more comprehensive package that includes academic recognition and opportunities for professional growth.

Finally, *PROY4* focused on the senior academic perspective, stating,

*"Improving compensation, especially through performance-based bonuses and research grants, would be my key change. Senior academics need tangible rewards for their contributions to research, teaching, and administration. Offering such incentives would ensure that experienced professors remain engaged and committed to the university."*

This perspective highlighted the need for senior academics to receive adequate recognition and support for their roles, ensuring their continued engagement with the institution.

#### **b) Opportunities for Career Advancement and Promotion**

Academic staff expressed strong expectations for career advancement opportunities as part of the retention strategy. For instance, TAX1 stated:

*"I expect the university to provide clear professional development opportunities, such as workshops, seminars, and scholarships for further studies. These opportunities will allow us to advance our careers and not feel stagnant in our roles."*

This highlights the critical need for professional development as part of retention efforts. Again, TAX2 built on this by emphasizing the value of structured mentorship programs. The interviewee said:

*"The expectation is to have access to mentorship programs where experienced faculty members guide us on career progression and academic development. Such support would make me feel that the university is invested in my growth, encouraging me to stay longer."*

Mentorship is seen as vital for growth, especially for early-career staff.

Similarly, TAX3 stressed the need for a structured career path for Teaching Assistants. The interviewee noted,

*"There should be structured career paths for teaching assistants, with clear criteria for promotion to higher academic ranks. Knowing how and when we can advance in our careers would motivate us to remain at the university."*

In the same way, LEY3, a Lecturer, echoed these sentiments, calling for transparent promotion systems. The participant remarked:

*"I expect clear pathways for career advancement. I would like to see a transparent promotion system where Lecturers can advance to Senior Lecturer or other leadership positions based on merit, research output, and teaching performance. Knowing that there's room to grow keeps me motivated."*

For senior academic staff, career progression remains crucial. SLEX2 shared:

*"Career progression is crucial for retention. I expect the university to provide clear guidelines for promotion to Associate Professor or higher roles. Professional development programs, mentorship, and leadership training should be part of the retention strategy to ensure that staff at my level can continue to grow."*

Lastly, Prox1, a professor, emphasized the importance of senior staff having opportunities to take on leadership roles within the institution. The interviewee explained that:

*"For Professors, promotion may not be as immediate, but I expect the university to offer opportunities to take on leadership roles, such as deanships or participation in university governance. These roles allow for continued professional growth and intellectual engagement, which is key to my retention."*

### c) Work Environment and Collegiality

Participants like TAX5; further emphasized the importance of a positive working atmosphere for staff retention at the university. Despite varying individual expressions, these participants all convey a shared belief that improving the work environment and fostering collegiality will positively impact retention.

TAX5 noted the expectation that the university should manage the workload more effectively to prevent staff burnout. The participant explained,

*"I expect the university to manage our workload more effectively. Currently, we are often assigned too many teaching hours, which leaves little time for personal life or academic development. If workload management is improved, retention will improve as well."*

This statement reflects a broad concern that balancing teaching responsibilities with personal and professional growth is crucial for staff to feel supported and remain engaged.

In alignment with this, TAX6 emphasized the importance of a healthy work-life balance for retention. The participant remarked,

*"My expectation is that the university will support a better work-life balance by ensuring that teaching responsibilities don't overwhelm us. Overburdened staff are more likely to leave, so addressing this issue is crucial for retention."*

This expectation highlights how the university's role in managing workload influences staff well-being and long-term commitment.

In the same way, TAX2 also pointed out the significance of equitable task distribution, stressing that a fair workload is necessary to avoid burnout. The respondent expressed,

*"There needs to be a fair distribution of tasks among staff to avoid burnout. Ensuring that we are not overloaded with duties would improve job satisfaction and, in turn, encourage us to stay."*

This statement reinforces the need for balanced work responsibilities as part of a comprehensive retention strategy.

Again, LEY6 echoed the sentiment that collegiality and a positive work environment are essential for job satisfaction. The participant explained,

*"I expect a supportive and collaborative work environment where my contributions are valued. Collegiality and positive working relationships with other academic staff are important for my job satisfaction. If the work environment becomes hostile or overly competitive, I might consider leaving."*

This expectation illustrates how strong professional relationships contribute to overall morale and retention.

Similarly, SLEY5 highlighted the importance of mutual respect and collaboration among academic staff. The interviewee shared:

*"For me, a healthy work environment is key to retention. I expect the university to foster a culture of mutual respect and collaboration among staff. If there's ongoing conflict or lack of teamwork, it negatively impacts my morale and makes it harder to stay committed."*

This statement reinforces the idea that having a cooperative and respectful work environment is necessary for staff engagement and retention.

Lastly, PROX3, speaking from a senior academic perspective, emphasized the value of intellectual freedom and a positive work culture. The participant expressed:

*"As a senior academic, I expect to work in an environment where intellectual freedom and collegiality are respected. The university should promote open dialogue, mutual respect, and a sense of shared mission among its staff. Without a positive work environment, retention becomes difficult, even at the senior level."*

The expectation above underscores the importance of creating an environment that fosters open communication and shared goals, particularly for senior staff.

#### **d) Supportive Institutional Culture and Leadership**

Although the participants express these expectations differently, the underlying themes focus on communication, inclusion, and engagement as critical factors in fostering staff retention. The expectations collectively point toward the need for a leadership style that is more participatory, responsive, and supportive in addressing academic staff concerns.

Interviewee TAX6 noted that clear communication was lacking, stating:

*"There is a lack of clear communication between the university administration and teaching staff. We often feel left out of important decision-making processes, and this contributes to a sense of disconnection from the institution."*

This reflects the need for more transparent communication channels between leadership and staff to avoid feelings of disconnection.

In line with this, TAX4 also highlighted the importance of staff support systems, expressing that:

*"Improving the support systems for staff would go a long way. For example, having a dedicated office or staff that deals with career counseling and professional advice could provide the guidance we need to navigate our roles better."*

This emphasizes the expectation for more structured support services to help staff grow in their roles and feel more connected to the institution.

However, TAX1 raised concerns about leadership's responsiveness, explaining:

*"The university leadership needs to be more proactive in addressing staff concerns. Currently, there is little feedback from the administration regarding our complaints or suggestions for improvement, which affects morale and makes staff feel unheard."*

This reveals the expectation for leadership to actively engage with staff feedback and act to boost morale and retention.

Equally, SLEX1 also discussed inclusive communication, stating,

*"There is a lack of open communication between the administration and academic staff. Often, decisions are made without our input, which creates a sense of disconnection. Improving communication channels and fostering a more inclusive institutional culture would make staff feel more valued and likely to stay."*

This underscores the need for a leadership culture that incorporates staff perspectives in decision-making processes.

Participant *SLEY3* echoed the desire for more engaged leadership, noting that: `

*"Leadership needs to be more engaged with academic staff. There is a perception that the administration is distant, and decisions about staffing, promotions, and workload are made without considering our feedback. A more participatory leadership style would improve staff morale and retention."*

The sentiment above points to the expectation for leadership to be more approachable and engaged with staff needs.

Finally, *PROX2* highlighted the need for strategic involvement of senior academics, stating,

*"At the senior level, we expect leadership to take a more strategic approach to staff retention. This includes involving senior academics in decision-making processes and offering us roles where we can contribute to shaping the university's future. Leadership that recognizes and involves its senior staff will find it easier to retain them."*

This underscores the expectation for leadership to tap into the expertise of senior staff as part of a long-term retention strategy.

**e) Benchmarks for initiatives from other universities to improve staff retention**

**i) Professional Development Programs**

Although participants expressed their thoughts differently, the common expectation is that structured mentorship and development initiatives would enhance job satisfaction and promote staff retention by providing professional growth and career advancement opportunities. Participants such as TAX1 emphasized the potential benefits of structured mentorship, stating that;

*"I've observed that other institutions have robust mentorship programs for early-career academic staff. These programs combine teaching assistants with senior faculty members for guidance on academic and professional growth. Adapting such a program here would make us feel supported and more confident in our roles, which would improve retention."*

This highlights the need for mentorship programs to help early-career staff navigate their roles effectively.

Building on the same issue, TAX2 also noted the importance of teaching certifications, stating,

*"At some universities, they offer teaching certification programs alongside academic work to improve teaching skills. Implementing a similar program here would provide teaching assistants with valuable skills and career advancement opportunities, increasing their commitment to stay."*

This aligns with the expectation for programs that enhance teaching abilities, which would contribute to long-term retention.

In addition, TAY1 stressed the importance of a well-structured induction process, explaining that,

*"Incorporating a structured induction and training program for new teaching staff, as seen in other institutions, would help us transition more smoothly into our roles. A well-supported start in the university would definitely improve retention."*

This reveals the expectation for induction programs that would help new staff acclimate more easily to their roles and foster commitment to the institution.

Similarly, LEY2 supported the idea of mentorship, mentioning that

*"I have seen mentorship programs at some universities where new staff are paired with experienced colleagues who provide guidance on research, teaching, and career development. If our university adopted a similar mentorship program, it would help integrate new staff into the academic community, increase job satisfaction, and likely improve retention."*

This reinforces the expectation that mentorship programs would positively impact job satisfaction and retention through professional guidance.

In the same way, SLEY4 highlighted the need for professional development opportunities, stating that,

*"At another institution, they offer structured professional development programs, including leadership training and workshops on pedagogy. If we could adapt such initiatives here, it would not only enhance staff skills but also demonstrate that the university is investing in our long-term career growth. This kind of support could improve retention."*

This reveals the expectation for continuous professional development that would boost staff morale and their sense of value within the institution.

Finally, *PROX3* pointed out the importance of mentorship for senior academics, explaining that

*"Some universities have formal mentorship programs for senior academics as well, focusing on leadership development and strategic planning for research projects. Incorporating this into our institution would give senior staff opportunities to grow and could be key in retaining more experienced faculty members."*

The revelation above demonstrates the expectation for advanced mentorship programs aimed at leadership and research development, particularly for senior staff.

## **ii) Research Support and Funding Programs**

Although these expectations are articulated differently, they converge on the idea that access to research opportunities and funding can influence retention by fostering academic development and engagement without discrimination.

Interviewee *TAX5* highlighted the value of collaborative research, observing that,

*"At other institutions, teaching assistants are often included in larger research projects led by senior faculty. This collaborative research approach could be adopted here to give us valuable experience and access to funding, making us more inclined to stay."*

The expectation was that greater collaboration between senior faculty and teaching assistants would provide essential experience and financial resources, which would enhance retention.

Similarly, TAY2 noted the importance of research funding for early-career academics, stating,

*"I've seen universities offer seed funding and research grants writing specifically for early-career academics, helping them initiate their research projects. Implementing such a program at our university would greatly support our academic development and influence retention."*

The introduction of seed funding would encourage early-career academics to pursue research and contribute to retention by supporting their professional growth.

Expanding on the theme of collaboration, TAX6 emphasized the value of interdisciplinary research, saying,

*"Other institutions encourage interdisciplinary research, where teaching assistants from different fields collaborate. By providing opportunities for us to work across departments on research, our university could create a more dynamic academic environment, leading to better retention."*

This expectation underlined the potential of interdisciplinary research to foster a collaborative academic atmosphere that would enhance engagement and retention.

In addition, LEY2 stressed the importance of dedicated funding for research, stating,

*"I've seen institutions that provide dedicated funding for early-career researchers. If our university introduced similar programs, offering small grants or seed funding for research projects, it would make a big difference"*

*in retaining Lecturers like myself who need resources to establish our research profiles."*

This perspective reinforced the idea that accessible research funding is crucial for early-career researchers seeking to build their academic careers and stay at the institution.

Building on this, *SLEX4* expressed the need for logistical support in research, remarking,

*"Some institutions have research centers that provide logistical and administrative support for grant writing and project management. If we could implement something similar, it would help relieve the administrative burden on academic staff, allowing us to focus more on our research and less on paperwork, which would improve job satisfaction and retention."*

This expectation called for institutional infrastructure to facilitate research administration, reducing workload and increasing staff satisfaction.

Finally, *PROY3* pointed to the value of large-scale collaborative research, explaining,

*"At some universities, there are collaborative research initiatives where multiple departments work together on interdisciplinary projects with ample funding. Introducing such a program here, where staff from different disciplines collaborate on large-scale research projects, could be a powerful way to enhance staff engagement and retention."*

The idea of interdisciplinary collaboration was seen as a way to invigorate the research culture and improve retention.

### iii) Work-Life Balance and Wellness Programs

While each participant expresses his/her views differently, they share a common ideology—that fostering a healthy work-life balance and providing wellness support would improve staff retention. TAX2 emphasized the need for flexible work arrangements, noting,

*"Some universities offer more flexible work arrangements, such as the option to work remotely or to have flexible hours, especially for staff balancing academic work and personal life. Implementing such policies here would help reduce burnout and improve retention."*

The participant expected that introducing remote work options and flexible hours could reduce staff burnout, leading to better retention. Building on this, TAX5 highlighted the importance of mental health support, saying,

*"I've noticed that in other institutions, staff have access to mental health support programs and counseling services to help manage stress. Introducing similar support here would ensure that teaching assistants maintain a healthy work-life balance, encouraging them to stay."*

The participant stressed that mental health support services would contribute to a more balanced and healthy work environment, which could lead to higher retention rates. Similarly, TAX4 emphasized workload management as a crucial factor, stating,

*"Institutions that offer structured workload management programs, where tasks are more evenly distributed, tend to have higher staff retention. If our university adopted this model, it would help prevent burnout and lead to better staff retention."*

The expectation was that better task distribution and workload management could reduce staff burnout and improve retention.

In line with this, LEY4 suggested that flexible schedules and wellness programs are beneficial, remarking,

*"I know of universities that offer flexible teaching schedules and wellness programs, including mental health support services. Adapting these practices would improve the work-life balance for staff here, reducing burnout and making it easier to retain talented staff."*

This perspective reinforced the idea that flexible scheduling and wellness initiatives could enhance the work-life balance and contribute to higher retention.

Furthermore, SLEX2 underscored the significance of wellness programs, sharing,

*"Some institutions offer on-campus wellness programs, such as gyms, counseling services, and regular workshops on stress management. If our university could implement similar wellness initiatives, it would show that the administration cares about the holistic well-being of staff, which would positively impact retention."*

This participant believed that wellness initiatives would demonstrate the university's commitment to staff well-being, ultimately improving retention.

Finally, PROY1 drew attention to the need for flexibility in senior staff roles, stating,

*"In some universities, there are programs that allow senior staff to take sabbaticals or reduced teaching loads for a semester to focus on research or personal development. Adapting this kind of flexibility here would be crucial"*

*for retaining senior academics who may otherwise feel overwhelmed by balancing teaching, research, and administrative responsibilities."*

The expectation was that offering sabbaticals or reduced teaching loads would help retain senior staff by allowing them to focus on personal and professional development.

#### **iv) Recognition and Reward Systems**

Participants emphasized the value of recognition and rewards for motivating staff and promoting retention, with different expressions reflecting the same underlying ideology.

TAX3 emphasized the potential impact of performance-based incentives, noting,

*"I know of universities that have introduced performance-based incentives, where teaching assistants receive bonuses or other rewards for achieving set goals in teaching, research, or student engagement. Adopting such an initiative here would motivate staff and encourage them to stay."*

This participant suggested that performance-based rewards could serve as an effective motivator for staff, improving both morale and retention.

Similarly, TAX4 recognized the importance of institutional acknowledgment, sharing,

*"Some institutions have award systems that recognize teaching assistants for their contributions, whether in research, teaching, or service. Recognizing excellence not only builds morale but also creates a sense of belonging, which is key for retention."*

The participant stressed that acknowledging staff efforts in various areas would foster a stronger sense of belonging, thus increasing staff commitment to the university.

Building on this, TAY3 proposed the implementation of a formal staff recognition system, stating,

*"Introducing a formal staff recognition program, like those in other universities, would help teaching assistants feel valued for their work. When staff feel appreciated, they're more likely to commit to staying in the institution long term."*

The participant underscored that feeling appreciated would enhance staff loyalty and long-term commitment to the institution.

In the same vein, LEX2 suggested that formal awards could contribute to a motivating work environment, commenting,

*"I've seen institutions where teaching excellence awards are given annually, alongside research grants. If our university adopted a formal system to recognize outstanding teaching or research, it would create a more motivating work environment and help retain talented staff by acknowledging their contributions."*

This view echoed earlier sentiments that recognition programs boost motivation and retention by validating staff achievements.

Furthermore, SLEY4 discussed the importance of transparency in promotion systems, remarking;

*"Some universities have promotion systems that are transparent and based on clear metrics, including teaching, research, and service. If we could adopt such a model, with clear criteria for promotions and rewards, staff would feel more motivated to stay and work toward career advancement within the institution."*

The participant highlighted that clear, transparent promotion criteria could enhance motivation and foster a sense of purpose, leading to greater retention.

Lastly, *PROX4* pointed to the value of prestigious recognition opportunities for senior staff, noting:

*"Institutions elsewhere offer prestigious fellowships or chair positions that come with additional research funding and reduced teaching loads. Introducing similar high-profile recognition systems in our university would encourage senior staff to stay by offering both status and practical benefits."*

This participant emphasized that high-profile recognitions would provide senior academics with incentives to remain engaged and committed to the institution.

#### **v) Collaborative Networks and Global Partnerships**

Participants reflected on the benefits of collaborative environments, global exposure, and interdisciplinary work as approaches that would make their university more appealing to staff. Hence, *TAX5* noted the advantages of involving teaching assistants in larger research projects, stating,

*"At other institutions, teaching assistants are often included in larger research projects led by senior faculty. This collaborative research approach*

*could be adopted here to give us valuable experience and access to funding, making us more inclined to stay."*

The participant highlighted how collaborative research involving junior faculty would build their experience and increase retention through opportunities for professional growth.

Building on this, TAY2 emphasized the importance of supporting early-career academics with funding, stating,

*"I've seen universities offer seed funding and research grants specifically for early-career academics, helping them initiate their research projects. Implementing such a program at our university would greatly support our academic development and influence retention."*

The availability of seed funding for new researchers was seen as a critical support mechanism for fostering retention by facilitating the initiation of independent research projects.

Similarly, TAX6 advocated for interdisciplinary research collaboration, remarking,

*"Other institutions encourage interdisciplinary research, where teaching assistants from different fields collaborate. By providing opportunities for us to work across departments on research, our university could create a more dynamic academic environment, leading to better retention."*

The participant argued that fostering interdisciplinary collaboration would enhance the academic environment, thereby improving retention through a more stimulating and supportive work atmosphere.

Furthermore, *LEX2* introduced the idea of global exposure through exchange programs, sharing,

*"I've seen some universities create exchange programs that allow staff to visit partner institutions for research collaborations or teaching experiences abroad. If our university could adapt such a program, it would give us global exposure and new opportunities, which would make us more inclined to stay."*

This statement highlighted how international exchanges could enhance academic development and provide staff with enriching global experiences, encouraging them to remain with the institution.

Participant *SLEX4* also emphasized the value of international networks, stating,

*"Other institutions are part of international research networks, where academics can collaborate with colleagues from around the world on joint projects. If we could establish or join such networks, it would not only enhance our research output but also make this university more attractive as a place to build a career."*

The participant suggested that participation in international research networks would increase research output and make the university a more attractive workplace.

Finally, *PROY5* reflected on the broader potential of formal partnerships with global institutions, explaining,

*"Some universities have formal partnerships with global institutions that allow faculty exchanges, collaborative research, and joint degree programs. Implementing similar partnerships here would open up numerous*

*opportunities for staff development and international exposure, making the institution a more attractive and engaging place to work."*

Establishing formal global partnerships was seen as a way to enhance staff development and international engagement, contributing to higher retention rates.

### **4.3 Document analysis**

During the document analysis, the researcher discovered the various approaches used by universities to retain academic staff, as highlighted below.

#### **a) Continuous Learning and Training Programs**

Regarding the body below selected from the Internal memorandum, '*Invitation to Attend A Training Workshop on Performance-Based Evaluation*,' the author of the memorandum from the university code-named UNIY, the memo issued by the Directorate of Human Resource and Administration, highlights an upcoming university-wide training initiative on performance-based evaluation. This initiative, set to commence in January 2022, aimed to standardize performance metrics across staff and integrate performance-based rewards, aligning with the broader objectives discussed in focus group discussions and individual interviews. In line with the analysis below, the human capital theory emphasizes investing in the development of employees to enhance their skills, productivity, and contributions to organizational success (Rothomi & Rafid, 2023, p.27; Mabilia, Linskiy, Amirova, Afonaso, & Bogomolova, 2023; Rothomi & Rafid, 2023). By implementing a performance-based evaluation system, the university's Directorate of Human Resource and Administration is effectively applying the principles of human capital theory. This system aims to measure staff performance and reward high achievers,

thereby fostering motivation and encouraging continuous skill enhancement (Aslam, Masih, Mukhtar, 2024; Rothomi & Rafid, 2023). Such a framework supports the development of individual competencies and enhances the institution's overall value through a skilled and high-performing workforce, aligning with human capital theory's focus on viewing employees as assets whose growth directly benefits the organization.

*“The Directorate of Human Resources and Administration is organizing a university-wide training on performance-based evaluation that will enable management to measure the performance of staff and reward them accordingly. This framework will be fully adopted starting next year January 2022.” UNiy (20.10.2021)*

The analysis above is further supported by an observation from the “*Statute on Staff Development 2019, page 14*” of the university code, UNiy. The statute argues that assistant lecturers and teaching assistants are in training roles and can pursue further training as opportunities become available. Additionally, staff members are encouraged to request additional training through their deans or department heads, with priority given to requests that are directly related to improving job performance.

*“The positions of assistant lecturer and teaching assistant are training grades. Staff in these positions shall, therefore be permitted to undertake further appropriate training as soon as training opportunities are available.” Staff members are encouraged, however, to approach the deans and heads of department at any time if they feel they have a particular need. Priority*

*will be given to requests which relate to skills or knowledge required for the staff members' performance of their duties.” UNIY (02.08.2019)*

#### **b) Family-Friendly Policies**

Further, the analysis of documents entails an extract from the “*Children Fees Waiver and Staff Tuition Fees Waiver Policy*,” which was used to complement qualitative insights obtained from focus group discussions and individual interviews. This policy outlined the university's commitment to enhancing access to education by providing tuition and fee waivers for up to two children of full-time employees at Uganda Christian University, contingent on an active employment contract.

*“...It is the University’s intention to improve/increase access to further education; as such the University has made provision for children tuition and other fees waiver for a maximum of two (2) children at the University per full-time employee with an existing employment contract regardless of rank. This policy covers children who have been fully admitted at the university.”*  
*UNIY (02.08.2019)*

Consistent with the above understanding, the *Human Capital Theory* most appropriately aligns with the family-friendly policy outlined in the transcript above. Human Capital Theory suggests that investing in the education and well-being of employees or their dependents enhances overall organizational value by promoting loyalty, reducing turnover, and increasing motivation (Rothomi & Rafid, 2023; Mabila, et al. 2023). By providing a tuition waiver for employees' children, the university demonstrates its commitment to supporting employees' family needs, which is an investment in human capital (Cappelli, Ridolfi, & Vasta 2023). This initiative, according to Rafid (2023), not only improves access to education but also

likely enhances employees' satisfaction and commitment to the university, fostering a more motivated and dedicated workforce, which ultimately benefits the institution's performance and reputation.

### **c) Support for Advanced Studies**

The *Human Capital Theory* best explains the support for advanced studies outlined in the Staff Tuition Fee Waiver benefit program. This theory posits that investments in employees' education and skills development benefit the organization by enhancing employees' knowledge and competencies, which ultimately contribute to organizational performance and growth (Mabiala et al., 2023).

*“The Staff Tuition Fees Waiver benefit program provides an opportunity for eligible staff members to have the tuition waived for up to two (2) Postgraduate or Professional courses during their working life at the University. It also allows an eligible staff member to waive the tuition for up to two (2) short courses taken ... per academic year. UNİY (02.08.2019)*

The program aligns with Human Capital Theory by waiving tuition for eligible staff members to pursue postgraduate or professional courses, as well as short courses, directly investing in their professional growth (Aslam, et al 2024; Cappelli, et al 2023). This not only boosts the individual's expertise but also increases the university's overall intellectual capital (Nandini & Latif 2024). By supporting advanced education, the university likely increases employee motivation, loyalty, and productivity, strengthening its organizational capacity and competitive edge.

*A staff member may have tuition waived for up to two (2) long study courses Postgraduate/Professional courses taken at any of the university campuses or colleges during one's service at the university, provided that such*

*enrolment does not interfere with their normal employment obligations. The staff member therefore shall be expected to carry their full workload. The staff member shall use their annual leave to sit for their exams. UNIX (2017).*

#### **d) Competitive Benefits and Recognition Package**

The following passage, which is taken from the Performance-Based Rewards circular, emphasizes how staff performance affects their eligibility for particular perks, such as the tuition waiver. Highlighting accountability and merit in the university's incentive system, and showing how performance evaluation affects access to prizes, this transcript enhances the qualitative information acquired through focus groups and interviews.

*A staff member's job performance will be a determinant in accessing the tuition waiver. A staff member who has been on a Performance Improvement Plan in the last one (1) year will not be eligible for the waiver. UNIX (2017)*

The above extract highlights Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory of Motivation, which emphasizes how both internal and external influences affect worker satisfaction and motivation (Miah & Hasan, 2022; Ibrahim, Ghazali, Syed, Abdullah, N. Hamid & Aisyah, 2023). Academic staff retention in Church-founded Universities is heavily reliant on intrinsic motivators, including accomplishment, recognition, and personal development. Policies that reward high-performing employees, such as tuition waivers, can be effective motivators by increasing their sense of recognition and providing them with prospects for advancement (Ibrahim et al., 2023). Institutions encourage achievement and foster a merit-based culture that is consistent with Herzberg's motivators by linking eligibility for tuition waivers to work performance (Wesley, 2024).

On the other hand, the exclusion of employees from a performance improvement plan emphasizes how important hygienic factors like responsibility and performance quality are in averting discontent (Thant & Chang, 2021). To create a dedicated and driven academic workforce, performance-linked retention techniques consider both intrinsic motivators and hygienic aspects, as demonstrated by this application of Herzberg's theory (Rai, Thekkekara, & Kanhare, 2021; Buyukbeşe et al., 2023). It also demonstrates the strategic goal of organizations established by churches to strike a balance between performance excellence and their core principles of responsibility and service.

#### **d) Competitive Benefits Package**

The following excerpt is drawn from the Competitive Benefits Package part of the Administrative Staff Handbook and sheds light on the institutional policies on employee compensation and benefits. Emphasizing the structured financial incentives accessible to employees enhances the qualitative information gathered from focus groups and interviews.

*“Employees will receive an annual year-end bonus in December of each year, pro-rated to the number of months in employment, which shall be paid by December 20<sup>th</sup> of every year but subjected to all statutory deductions.”* UNIY (02.08.2019)

A yearly year-end bonus as part of the "Competitive Benefits Package," as described in the document excerpt, is in keeping with social exchange theory. The dynamics of reciprocal exchanges between people and organizations where workers provide

their time and effort in return for incentives and benefits are the main emphasis of this theory (Bordogna, 2023, p.130).

According to Social Exchange Theory, people evaluate costs and benefits in relationships, including those at work, to maximize benefits and minimize expenses (Ahmad, Nawaz, Ishaq, Khan & Ashraf 2023; Bordogna, 2023, p.178.). The organization is providing a material, extrinsic incentive in the form of the annual year-end bonus to recognize the contributions and hard work of staff members all year long (Marquina, Le Dain, Joly, I., & Zwolinski 2024; Huo, B., Liu, & Li, 2023). A direct form of payment for the workers' labor, the bonus strengthens the bond between the business and employees and fosters a sense of reciprocity. As a result, workers are likely to feel that their work is recognized and appreciated, which can motivate them to further their contributions and create a great work atmosphere (Hyder, Malik, Hussain, & Saqib 2024).

A sense of justice and reciprocity in the workplace are fostered by the bonus structure described in the document, which can be seen as an illustration of social exchange in which the employee's time and effort are rewarded (Ahmad, et al., 2023). This is because employees are encouraged to maintain a high level of commitment in exchange for anticipated incentives, this reciprocal exchange fosters trust and boosts employee loyalty (Hyder, et al 2024).

#### **e) Work-life balance and wellness**

The University Health and Safety Policy's provisions for health benefits provided to full-time employees and their qualified family members are highlighted in the following excerpt. This transcript describes the extent of the university's

hospitalization and healthcare coverage policies, which supports the qualitative information from focus groups and interviews.

*“All full-time staff members working at UCU are entitled with eligible family members to university-sponsored health benefits. Eligible persons include: i) All full-time staff members; ii) One spouse (wife or husband) per employee, validated by marriage certificate; iii) Four (4) biological or adopted children, who are unmarried, under the age of twenty-one (21) years, validated by birth certificates or certified adoption papers...Staff and registered family members may be hospitalized in the general ward. The limitation of hospital coverage is that UCU will pay for hospitalization of staff and eligible covered persons at a general ward bed at government or mission hospitals, and accompanying procedures and treatments delivered while the patient is admitted in the hospital. UNIY (02.08.2019)*

Human Capital Theory is most closely aligned with the document extract's content, which describes the university-sponsored health benefits for full-time employees and their qualified family members. This approach highlights the importance of investing in employees' talents, growth, and well-being because they are an asset to the company (Becker, 1964; Mabilia, Linskiy, Amirova, Afonaso, & Bogomolova, 2023; Rothomi & Rafid, 2023, p.27).

According to human capital theory, businesses gain from investments in the health and well-being of their staff members since happy, safe workers are more dedicated, productive, and efficient (Aslam, Mudassir, Ghouse, & Farooq, 2024).

The university is directly investing in the health of its employees by offering health benefits, including coverage for staff members and their qualified family members. In addition to increasing employee loyalty and happiness, this guarantees that workers may give their best work without being sidetracked or burdened by health-related issues (Aslam, Mudassir, Ghouse & Farooq 2024). Offering health benefits is consistent with the idea that businesses should make investments in their workforce to maximize retention and productivity Aslam, et al, 2024).

Additionally, the institution acknowledges the larger social and economic background of workers' lives by providing these benefits to family members, so reaffirming the notion that an investment in human capital benefits not only individual workers but also their families (Rothomi & Rafid, 2023; Mabilia, et al, 2023). This also implies an awareness of the need of social support for workers' well-being, improving work-life balance generally, and lowering pressures that could impair productivity.

The following paragraph describes the personal accident insurance coverage offered to staff members is taken from the Administrative Staff Handbook's Insurance Policy Brief-Insurance (Group-Personal Accidents Risk Cover) section. The scope, eligibility, and procedures related to the insurance policy for university workers are further explained in this transcript, which complements the qualitative information obtained from focus groups and interviews.

*“All employees ... are insured against personal accidents. The insurance covers all staff for 24 hours. Please note that it does not include cover for sickness or disease. In case of an accident e.g. a road accident or an accident at home, collect insurance forms from the Directorate of Human Resource and Administration and submit the forms within one month from the time of*

*occurrence for you to get a refund.” This insurance covers Staff when they have an accident in Uganda and anywhere around the world. It covers the following categories of Staff; Full-time staff, Part time staff, Casual staff and Temporary staff. It covers staff up to 70 years of age. UNIX (2017)*

Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory of Motivation is most closely aligned with the content of the document extract, which describes the personal accident insurance coverage for all University employees. Herzberg's approach makes a distinction between motivators—which promote job pleasure and improved performance—and hygiene considerations, which avert discontent (Thant & Chang, 2021). The extract's description of personal accident insurance falls mainly within the category of hygiene factors.

Herzberg contends that while hygienic considerations like job security, benefits, and working conditions are necessary to avoid employee discontent, they do not always inspire workers (Wesley, 2024). A fundamental requirement for security and safety is met when all employees are given insurance coverage, guaranteeing their financial stability in the event of an accident (Ibrahim, et al, 2023). By assuring workers that their well-being will be taken care of in the event of an accident, these perks may not actively encourage them to perform better, but they do lessen the likelihood of discontent. The coverage's inclusion of temporary, casual, and part-time workers reinforces the notion that all workers should have fundamental security and fairness, which promotes a stable workplace. Herzberg's concept of hygiene elements, which are required to establish an atmosphere that supports job satisfaction but isn't always a direct driver of improved performance or engagement, is in line with this emphasis on employee well-being through thorough coverage (Miah & Hasan, 2022).

#### **j) Clear Career Path and Promotion Opportunities**

The following passage, which is taken from UCU's 2018 Statute on Academic Promotions, demonstrates the university's dedication to encouraging excellence through a methodical promotion procedure. By highlighting the significance of open and merit-based academic promotions in accomplishing institutional strategic goals and acknowledging individual accomplishments in research, teaching, and service, this transcript adds to the qualitative data from focus groups and interviews.

*“The ability to attract and retain key academic staff is one of the important components of the university’s ability to achieve its strategic goals. A transparent and consistent robust process of promotion, which is based upon meritorious performance in the areas of research, teaching and service, recognizes and rewards academic work according to its quality and impact. At an individual level, academics at the university, will through a review process that impacts on the core of their potential lives, be assured of the quality of their own work and professional standing in the national and international environment.” UNİY (22.11.2018)*

Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory of Motivation is most closely aligned with the content of the document excerpt, which talks about the University's promotion procedure for academic staff based on merit in research, teaching, and service (Twum, & Ayitey 2024). According to Herzberg's theory, hygiene factors are extrinsic elements that prevent dissatisfaction but do not by themselves increase motivation, whereas motivators are intrinsic factors that lead to job satisfaction and higher performance (Miah & Hasan, 2022).

According to Herzberg's theory, the promotion procedure that is discussed in the excerpt is a prime illustration of a motivator. Herzberg's concept of motivators,

which are connected to professional growth, personal achievement, and recognition, is in line with the chance for advancement and recognition based on performance in important areas like research, teaching, and service (Mugizi, Kato, Kyoziira, Ariyo, & Bamusibule, 2024, p.302). An open and transparent promotion procedure boosts intrinsic motivation and job satisfaction by giving workers a sense of justice and assisting them in coordinating their efforts with organizational objectives.

The extract emphasizes how academic staff members will be guaranteed both their professional status on a national and worldwide scale and the caliber of their job (Mugizi, et al 2024). One of the main motivators for academic personnel is the intrinsic gratification that comes from being recognized and moving up in one's specialty. Furthermore, the focus on a clear and uniform procedure guarantees that the promotion system serves as a tool for engagement and professional growth in addition to being a motivator.

#### **k) Workload and Work-life Balance**

The workload expectations for academic staff at various levels within the university are described in the following excerpt, taken from the circular on Academic Staff Teaching Load (UCU). By offering comprehensive insights on the minimum and maximum teaching hours allotted to faculty, this transcript bolsters the qualitative data collected from focus groups and interviews, reflecting on the institution's strategy for striking a balance between workload and academic obligations.

*Academic staff are expected to carry a minimum full load of 16 hours for, tutorial assistants, assistant lecturers, lecturers, and senior lecturers per semester, with an option of a maximum extra load of 14 hours, while*

*Associate professors and professors are expected to carry a minimum load of 12 hours and a maximum of 8 hours as extra load. UNİY (01.02.2024)*

Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory distinguishes between motivators (factors that lead to satisfaction) and hygiene factors (factors that prevent dissatisfaction) (Twum et al., 2024). The workload allocation described in the extract primarily addresses hygiene factors, as it outlines clear expectations regarding the minimum and maximum teaching hours for academic staff at different levels (O'Meara et al., 2019). These guidelines are designed to prevent dissatisfaction by ensuring fairness, consistency, and clarity in workload distribution.

The university reduces the possibility of employee discontent resulting from unclear or unfair work assignments by implementing a clear workload policy. Even while they might not directly inspire employees, hygiene factors—like working conditions, organizational policies, and workload fairness—are essential in preventing discontent (Twum et al., 2024). Even if the policy is primarily concerned with hygienic considerations, the opportunity for employees to work more hours could act as a motivation by providing chances for extra money or professional involvement, which would be in line with intrinsic motivators like success and recognition.

### **l) Research Support and Funding Programs**

The circular on the University Strategic Direction 2026/27, from which the following excerpt is taken, describes the university's dedication to supporting research through organized financial and policy frameworks. The financial assistance and policies in place to encourage staff and student research are described in this transcript, which

supports the qualitative information gathered from focus groups and interviews and reflects the institution's strategic emphasis on academic achievement and innovation.

*“The University funds staff research through a competitive process. A total sum of 100 million Uganda shillings is allocated for the purpose every academic year. There is a Research Policy to guide research at the University together with relevant research guidelines for staff, Masters’ and undergraduate research.” UNIX (2917)*

According to human capital theory, spending on professional development, education, and training improves people's productivity, knowledge, and abilities, which eventually helps the company and its members (Rothomi & Rafid, 2023; Nandini & Latif 2024, p.48). The university has consciously invested in the academic staff's professional and intellectual growth by setting aside money for staff research and creating a research strategy and guidelines (Rafid, 2023). The university is giving its employees improved skills, encouraging creativity, and raising their academic and professional value by offering funding and a well-organized framework for research.

One of human capital theory's main principles is staff growth, exemplified by funding research projects (Aslam et al., 2024). These efforts are anticipated to pay off through better instruction, creative research products, and an improved school reputation.

The analysis of the document indicates the study findings align with the documents reviewed by the researcher. This helped the researcher to triangulate and authenticate some of the data collected from the study participants.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### DISCUSSION OF STUDY FINDINGS

#### 5.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the study's findings based on the research objectives and theoretical frameworks. It shows how each theme helps understand the effectiveness of retention strategies in Church-founded Universities in Uganda, compares the results with previous studies, and describes practical implications. This discussion analyzes the findings, interpreting and linking them to existing literature and broader theoretical frameworks.

In this chapter, the researcher presents the data and conducts a deeper analysis of the implications of the results. It provides context, explains patterns, and suggests potential interventions related to academic staff retention in HEIs. It interprets the meaning of the results by clarifying the patterns and offering insights into approaches used for retaining academic staff. The chapter reveals how the findings relate to existing literature, indicating whether they align with or contradict previous studies, and discusses their contribution to the current body of knowledge.

The theoretical frameworks employed in the study are revisited to assess how well the findings support or challenge these frameworks, along with recommendations for future research. Therefore, the chapter highlights limitations and proposes potential strategies or interventions to improve academic staff retention.

## 5.2 Study discussion

The discussion follows the developed themes and theme categories as described in the previous chapters. The discussion is based on the findings generated from the forty-eight individual interviews and FGDs that were conducted, each lasting approximately one hour and forty-five minutes, including findings from professors, senior lecturers, and lecturers. In this chapter, the discussion is also based on the findings. There were four focus group discussions, composed of 6-12 participants, which were held with Teaching Assistants, each lasting one hour. These interviews and discussions were scheduled at mutually agreed-upon times and convenient places as indicated in 'Table 6'.

**Table 6: Participants and their Interview Type**

<b>PARTICIPANTS</b>	<b>VENUE</b>	<b>INTERVIEW TYPE</b>
Professor	Office Work Station	Individual
Senior Lecturer	On-Campus Staff Room	Individual
Lecturer	On Campus	individual
Teaching Assistant	On Campus	Focus group

### 5.3 Objective One:

**To establish the staff retention approaches applied by Church- founded universities in Uganda**

The findings of the first objective reveal some unique approaches used by Church- founded universities to retain academic staff in Uganda, much as there are approaches similar to those that were highlighted in the revealed literature, as discussed in the paragraphs that follow.

The financial rewards and other performance-based incentives are approaches used by universities to retain academic staff. Several participants observed that Universities use competitive salary structures, performance-based incentives, opportunities for extra income to motivate academic staff, and other non-financial benefits packages to motivate staff to stay. The findings support the assertions made by Mutiria, Rukangu & Kubaison (2015), Miah & Hasan, (2022), Ibrahim, Ghazali, Syed, Abdullah, Hamid & Aisyah, (2023), maintaining that monetary rewards, as well as non-monetary incentives, are approaches used to retain staff. Several participants pointed out that annual salary increments, bonuses, additional pay for extra workload, and rewards for exceptional performance and research output are incentives their institutions use to motivate staff to stay. This is consistent with Otache and Inekwe (2022), who mentioned that competitive salary structures and comprehensive benefits packages are approaches that attract and retain top academic talent.

Similarly, Purba & Ruslan (2020) maintain that institutions that regularly carry out benchmarking to improve their compensation policies against industry standards and

salary scale adjustments to reflect market trends and academic staff contributions use these approaches to retain staff.

Participants mentioned that other motivations, such as supplementary incentives in the form of training stipends, research grants, and sabbatical opportunities, are retention approaches that motivate academic staff to stay in universities. Similarly, Dardar, Jusoh, Rasli, (2012) and Hassan, Razi, Suhail (2013) observe that approaches, such as on-the-job training, facilitate staff retention. This emphasizes the importance of offering an effective incentive program that encourages loyalty and makes staff feel valued, and have a desire to stay with the institution for some time. The use of financial rewards to retain staff is one of the approaches mentioned by participants that Universities use to motivate academic staff to stay. Similar approaches are also mentioned by Bhatt, Sharma, & Review (2020) and Khalid & Nawab (2018) as staff retention approaches.

The findings also revealed other non-financial rewards that were approaches used to retain academic staff. Some participants mentioned the non-financial rewards, such as training and growth opportunities, recognition for performance, and promotion. This suggests that universities use a combination of both financial and non-financial incentives are approaches to retain academic staff. The findings align with the observations made by Arnold et al. (2021) Mutiria, Rukangu & Kubaison (2015), that approaches such as opportunities for professional growth and career advancement are non-financial approaches that are used by institutions to retain staff.

The study also identified career advancement as another approach for academic staff retention in universities in Uganda. Similar to the revelation by Salau et al.

(2020), who observed that professional development opportunities support the retention of staff. Correspondingly, Saif & Al-Quarshoubi (2020) emphasize efforts such as opportunities for research collaboration, teaching innovation, and career advancement to address academic staff needs and promote long-term commitment. The study reveals that universities use staff development and career progression, and development as approaches that enhance academic staff retention. These approaches foster long-term commitment through the signing of agreements that bond the staff to the institution. The findings are consistent with Mubanda, Kasujja, and Ongodia, (2020), Szromek & Wolniak (2020), and Motala and Menon (2020), who advocate for staff training to meet staff needs, which fosters academic staff retention.

In addition to staff development opportunities, other retention approaches, such as targeted training opportunities, were mentioned by participants as approaches for staff retention that open doors for academic staff professional growth and advancement, promotional opportunities, and leadership responsibilities, all of which were seen as retention approaches for academic staff. Similarly, Szromek and Wolniak (2020), highlighting approaches such as mentorship that facilitate career progression and enhance job satisfaction among early-career academic staff members as approaches used to retain academic staff. Additionally, Ssekiziyivu, (2020), Szromek and Wolniak (2020) observe that professional advancement is closely related to career progression and leadership advancement, used as staff retention approaches in institutions.

Furthermore, the regular workshops, seminars, and conferences offered by universities were also seen as retention approaches. These, too, were considered

for professional development and leadership opportunities, all of which motivate academic staff to stay longer in their institutions. These institutions regularly organize workshops, seminars, and conferences to help staff enhance their teaching skills and stay updated in their fields. This means that staff are allowed to update their skills, which makes them stay with the institution. This aligns with Abu-Rumman (2021), who views continuous learning and training programs, academic advancement, and leadership opportunities as approaches for academic staff retention.

The findings suggest that academic staff consider continuous learning and training as retention approaches used by their institutions to retain them. Participants mentioned that career development and training opportunities influence their decisions to stay and work for the institution for some time. Similarly, Oyagi & Kembu (2014), Ng'ethe (2013), Hong et al. (2012), and Mwesigwa, Tusiime, & Ssekiziyivu (2020) considered continuous learning as a retention approach for academic staff. In divergence, some participants did not consider training opportunities as a staff retention approach unless it is a specialized and targeted approach to staff needs. In contrast, the study discovered that the regular workshops, seminars, and training sessions that are not tailored to the specific needs of the different staff were not seen as retention approaches by academic staff because they do not keep staff engaged and updated with the latest teaching and research practices in their respective disciplines. A similar observation made by Grossman and Salas (2011) emphasizes that training may have no practical implications and so may not contribute to staff retention.

Additionally, approaches such as specialized workshops organized by universities are seen as retention approaches that offer practical value by providing academic

staff with pedagogical skills and innovative teaching techniques that are directly linked to their professional satisfaction and career. However, if these are not targeted workshops and specialized training programs, they are not approaches for staff retention but mere training opportunities that do not motivate them to stay. This is similar to the observations made by Novita Wahyu Setyawati, Woelandari, and Rianto (2022), and Szromek & Wolniak (2020), emphasizing career development as a retention approach.

The findings indicate that staff financial support is a motivational tool for academic staff's stay, and a retention approach applied by universities. Such support given to staff to pursue further studies is a motivation for their stay. The university's support through scholarship opportunities and support for further studies within the institution and outside is among the retention approaches considered by academic staff. In addition, the university's provision of partial scholarships for staff members to pursue further studies, such as Master's or Ph.D. programs, is a motivating factor for academic staff to stay, making this support a retention approach. This supports the human capital theory that emphasizes capacity development for staff to motivate them, leading to their retention. Again, this aligns with Selasho's (2014:297), who mentions institutional support for staff development, a motivation for them to stay. This was another approach that not only fosters loyalty and reduces financial burdens but also strengthens staff connection to the university. The support extended to staff as a retention approach demonstrates the institution's investment in staff growth and aligns with the human capital theory that emphasizes staff growth and demonstrates the SET motivating them to stay. Similar observations are made by Budiharso & Tarman (2020), Eringfeld (2021), Budiharso and Tarman (2020), who emphasize that investing in staff education is a retention approach.

The study further revealed that a supportive work environment and collegiality are staff retention approaches used by universities. A supportive work environment and collegiality generated from the institutional culture, such as informal gatherings and team-building activities, foster a sense of community relationships, motivating staff to stay. This is similar to observations made by Alshamrani (2023), that organizational culture, such as regular social and professional gatherings, is a staff retention approach. A collegial and supportive work environment enables academic staff to remain with the institution for some time, as observed by Osibanjo, Abiodun, and Adeniji (2013), Salau et al. (2020), and Sarode & Shirsath (2014).

Similarly, the spiritual and emotional support is another retention approach revealed by the study. This approach enhances staff well-being and fosters academic staff retention. Spiritual nourishment, predominantly offered through fellowship meetings and community worship, a culture maintained by universities, offers a platform for staff to address their personal and emotional needs, which eventually results in their retention. The findings align with the ideologies of Arokiasamy and Tat (2020), emphasizing spirituality as a staff retention approach in private higher education institutions.

The study findings showed that recognition through public awards ceremonies is another retention approach used by universities. This approach creates morale and job satisfaction, leading to staff retention. The findings align with observations made by Anderson, & Smith (2019), Bakker & Van-Woerkom (2017), and Matongolo, Kasekende, and Mafabi (2018), emphasizing approaches like recognition used in retaining staff. Recognition of academic staff is an approach that motivates academic staff to stay, as it makes the staff feel valued and appreciated by the institution. This approach involves staff recognition through performance-based

bonuses, which motivates academic staff to stay. This approach aligns with the social exchange theory (Blau, 1963), which emphasizes social exchange as an approach for retaining academic staff.

The findings further revealed the targeted leadership development programs as approaches used by universities to retain academic staff. Similarly, Kuuyelleh et al. (2022), mention leadership, collaborative work cultures, and effective communication as approaches for retaining staff. These approaches foster a positive academic environment conducive to academic staff retention. A similar emphasis was also made by Arokiasamy & Tat (2020), and Chacha (2021).

Another approach revealed by the study is the flexible working arrangements, such as remote work options, which facilitate a healthier work-life balance for academic staff. A similar observation is made by Motala and Menonsi (2020), emphasizing remote working as a retention approach.

In addition, the University Health and Safety Policy provisions were other retention approaches revealed by the study. These were approaches that support work-life balance and consider staff welfare without discrimination. This aligns with Herzberg's two-factor theory, which considers both motivators and hygiene factors as staff retention approaches.

The university's investment in employees' talents, growth, and well-being is another staff retention approach revealed by the study. Similarly, other scholars such as Becker, 1964; Mabilia, et al., (2023), Rothomi & Rafid, (2023, p.27) view these interventions as staff retention approaches that motivate staff to stay. The findings align with the human capital theory that encourages institutions to invest in staff

health and well-being, indicating that happy, safe workers are more dedicated (Aslam, Mudassir, Ghouse, & Farooq, 2024).

The study further revealed that Universities use family-friendly policies as retention approaches. Policies such as parental leave and on-campus childcare facilities are motivators for staff to stay with universities, especially when they act as motivators for the young academic staff with families. The findings reveal the commitment to family-friendly policies as approaches that foster loyalty and retention. Similar observations in support of a family-friendly as approaches for staff retention. Similar retention approaches are mentioned by Rothomi & Rafid (2023), Mabilia et al (2023), and Rafid (2023).

The study findings for objective one, therefore, illustrate that the multi-layered staff retention approach is employed by Church-founded universities in Uganda. The findings reveal that financial support, continuous professional development, support for advanced studies, family-friendly policies, a collegial environment, and various benefits are collectively used by universities as staff retention approaches.

#### **5.4 Objective Two:**

**To analyze the views of academic staff towards the staff retention approaches applied in Church of Uganda-founded universities in Uganda.**

The findings of the second objective revealed that academic staff require clearly defined and equitable approaches for their retention. Having retention approaches that put staff priorities with clearly well-defined goals and objectives was highlighted. Approaches that consider equity, staff development, and well-being, and a supportive environment for staff retention were emphasized. These emphasize

the principles of equity, social exchange and reciprocation, human capital development, and motivation depicted in the theories of social exchange, equity, human capital development, and Herzberg's motivation-hygiene theory of motivation discussed in Chapter One.

The findings revealed the need for well-defined policies and procedures in implementing staff approaches to ensure that they align with staff needs. Similar recommendations are made by Maphalala and Adigun (2021). Having well-articulated policies aligned to staff needs is an important approach to retaining academic staff as this eliminates dissatisfaction as revealed by the study. The findings indicated the need to align retention approaches to staff needs that are highlighted in the human capital theory and call for appropriate investment in human capital (Cappelli, Ridolfi, & Vasta, 2023).

The findings further revealed the importance of non-financial incentives such as staff promotions, recognition, and a supportive environment. Academic staff expressed that receiving public acknowledgment or awards for their achievements boosted their morale. The findings are consistent with Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory of Motivation, which emphasizes how both internal and external influences affect worker satisfaction and motivation (Miah & Hasan, 2022; Ibrahim, Ghazali, Syed, Abdullah, Hamid, & Aisyah, 2023). Hence, formal recognition of academic staff dedication and the time invested in the institution fosters a sense of loyalty and belonging, leading to their longer stay with the institution.

Additionally, the findings underscored the importance of incentives that mitigate financial pressures and lead to staff progression opportunities. The incentives mentioned by academic staff include training and development, and scholarship and

support given to staff to attend local and international conferences were strongly advocated. Academic staff feel valued and motivated when the institution supports their financial needs, they feel the obligation to stay for some time. The findings align with the social exchange reciprocation aspect, indicating that when staff receive such incentives as financial support, they reciprocate by staying with the institution. Similarly, Herzberg's motivation-hygiene theory of motivation is highlighted in the reciprocation process. The same idea is supported by Ali (2013), Anderson (2019), Smith (2020), Bakker & Van-Woerkom (2017), and Armstrong (2020), who emphasized the role of social exchange and motivation-hygiene factors in motivating staff.

The findings revealed that uncompetitive base salaries and slow salary progression for academic staff do not adequately reflect their qualifications or contributions to the institution, leading to exits. The findings suggested that salary supplements, like annual bonuses given to staff in December and other bonuses or increments, motivate academic staff to stay in universities. The findings align with the principle of reciprocation advanced by the Social Exchange Theory. A similar belief is advanced by Herzberg's Two Factor Theory of motivation, exposing that staff appreciate the recognition by their institution when they are acknowledged for their long-term service and contribution to the institution

The existence of a retirement system and medical insurance is an important retention approach that requires improvement to enhance job satisfaction and promote retention, particularly for senior staff. This serves as another way of recognizing staff contributions to the institution. Consistent with this finding, Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory distinguishes between motivators (factors that lead to job satisfaction) and hygiene factors (factors that can cause dissatisfaction if

absent but do not necessarily motivate when present). The findings underscored the significance of long-term benefits such as retirement plans and job security, and when provided by the institution, staff are motivated to serve the institution longer. In this context, such recognition and awards are clear examples of motivators, as they provide academic staff with a sense of accomplishment and pride, directly boosting morale and desire to stay with the institution.

The findings revealed that professional development opportunities greatly motivate academic staff retention. The study underscored the importance of continuous skill-building in fostering staff retention. Participants highlighted the effectiveness of internal programs offered by their institution, such as short professional courses and workshops, which contribute to staff engagement and career growth. The importance of structured mentorship programs for capacity building, especially targeting the various levels of academic staff, was expressed. This emphasized the importance of staff development opportunities in academic staff retention, which resonates with the beliefs of human capital theory and social exchange theory. The theories emphasized the importance of motivation expressed by Herzberg and reciprocity highlighted by Bleau's (1964) social exchange theory.

In terms of motivation to stay, the study revealed that academic staff in universities valued opportunities to take on leadership roles and responsibilities. Staff promotional opportunities and career growth were seen as a sign of valuing staff and recognition for leadership advancement. Participants also suggested mentorship opportunities for junior staff and researchers by the senior staff and mentorship programs by management. The findings highlight the importance of professional development, career advancement, and empowering academic staff for leadership

opportunities and other responsibilities. The study findings support Szromek and Wolniak (2020).

Similarly, the study highlighted the importance of investing in academic staff by providing them with full and partial scholarships to engage in further studies, which in the same way contribute to their satisfaction and desire to stay. Similarly, the findings support the assertions made by Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory of Motivation, emphasizing the contribution of both internal and external influences towards staff satisfaction and motivation (Miah & Hasan, 2022; Ibrahim, Ghazali, Syed, Abdullah, Hamid, & Aisyah, 2023).

Academic staff expressed that institutional support for their research, through funding and other resources, indicated a commitment to excellence. The support given to academic staff to carry out research fosters a sense of purpose and pride in their contributions to scholarly works, ultimately boosting morale to remain with the institution. Moreover, academic staff valued incentives related to collaborative research projects and grants. Such opportunities offer them opportunities to work with colleagues in and outside their institutions on meaningful initiatives, fostering a sense of teamwork and shared achievements. This collaborative and supportive environment positively contributes to academic staff morale by creating a sense of belonging and shared purpose. The findings imply that incorporating research and publication support, including incentives for collaboration, into academic staff retention approaches can enhance morale within Universities in Uganda. This finding aligns well with Herzberg's two-factor theory, which emphasizes the importance of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation on staff retention. The support given to staff by the institution in the form of research funding, resources, and support for collaborative projects, aligns with the motivation theory advanced by Herzberg's

(1959) dual-factor theory. The institutional backing is valued by academic staff and fosters pride and a sense of purpose, fulfilling the need for their stay. This also nurtures social bonds and teamwork work creating a sense of collegiality among academic staff advocated by the social exchange theory where building relationships is emphasized. The same approach speaks to the human capital theory that encourages staff growth, exemplified by the provision of funding for research projects and support (Aslam et al., 2024).

During the study, some discoveries were highlighted regarding approaches that were discriminative. These approaches included recognition incentives, favoring certain disciplines more than others. It was revealed that such gaps in retention approaches lead to feelings of inequality among staff in the different fields of study, and staff maintain that these were demotivators to staff retention. This aligns with Adam's equity theory (1966). Nonetheless, the study also revealed that these performance-based incentives encourage a culture of excellent performance.

However, the findings further revealed that there is limited access to research funding, especially for Teaching Assistants in universities causing frustration and disappointment. This highlighted the inequalities in accessing research funds that needed to be addressed by Church-founded Universities in Uganda. This finding aligns with Adam's Equity theory that calls for equal opportunities and emphasizing equity.

Synonymous with the above, the importance of academic and professional growth was overemphasized. Academic staff valued the prospect of attending conferences and workshops sponsored by the institution. This indicates the institution's commitment to continuous learning and growth. Equally, academic staff appreciated

the opportunities offered by their institutions for career advancement linked to staff development policy. Academic staff pointed out that such opportunities as attending international conferences were essential to their career growth. Similarly, Mzyece, Soumonni, and Townsend (2021), underscored the significance of professional growth delivered through training programs. According to the social exchange perspective, when institutions invest in training and development for their staff, they feel more valued and encouraged to stay, which also improves service delivery (Nabunya, Tusiime, and Kyaligonza (2018).

Similarly, the findings align with the views advanced by Rwothumio, Mbirithi, and Itolondo (2021), emphasizing the importance of training in improving academic staff performance and leading to retention. This emphasized the strong connection between training opportunities and academic staff retention. The findings underscored the significance of professional development in providing staff with the information, skills, and competencies needed for effective teaching, research, and service to foster academic staff retention. The study findings align with Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory of motivation, the social exchange theory, the Human Capital theory, and Herzberg's dual theory. This implies the importance of applying the principles of the four theories in academic staff retention approaches in CoUFHEIs. Finally, the findings emphasized the importance of investing in staff development to enhance their skills, productivity, and contributions to the institution, similar to the argument by Rothomi & Rafid, 2023, p.27, Mabila, et al (2023).

Work environment and collegial support influenced retention. The findings revealed that staff appreciated the work environment surrounded by spiritual nurturing and, an informal mentorship system among colleagues, recognizing the sense of community as a motivator for academic staff retention. The findings highlighted the

value of networking and professionalism among staff. These occasions allowed academic staff to share insights, learn from colleagues, and stay updated on educational trends, ultimately leading to motivation and the desire to stay. The participants commended the positive environment offered by CoUFHEIs surrounded by spiritual nurturing and fostered a sense of ethical and moral support. Participants appreciated the supportive environment that helped them to address their ethical concerns and get spiritual nourishment. This offered confidence to academic staff to deal with challenging situations confidently and to ensure positive moral support and service delivery leading to their retention. The findings align with the observation made by Arokiasamy and Tat (2020), emphasizing the role of spirituality and Transformational leadership in inspiring and motivating academic staff which positively impacts their work engagement and workplace. Hence, these findings suggest that fostering a spiritually collaborative, and supportive work environment is crucial for enhancing academic staff retention in Universities in Uganda.

Furthermore, the findings highlighted the importance of academic staff involvement in decision-making processes enhancing a collaborative work environment. This involvement fosters a sense of belonging and encourages academic staff retention. Academic staff described how a positive work environment, characterized by supportive colleagues, spiritual and emotional support, effective communication, and a culture of appreciation, influences their motivation to stay in universities. This, in turn, translated into a more enthusiastic and dedicated approach to diligently render their services to the institution. The findings align well with the social exchange theory emphasizing the importance of relationships in staff retention.

Flexibility in managing personal commitments emerged as a crucial factor in retention. Participants acknowledged the benefits of flexible work schedules in staff retention. Staff dissatisfaction with the high workload limits their flexibility and desire to stay with the institution. Participants emphasized that accommodating personal development through flexible schedules encourages retention. The findings align with Matongolo, Kasekende, and Mafabi (2018), urging universities to focus on organizational culture, career advancement, work-life balance, and recognition to influence academic staff to stay other than employee branding alone. Participants recognized that the university's focus on well-being contributed to a supportive environment and described the university-sponsored health benefits as an approach for their retention. This aligns with the human capital theory, indicating that institutions that invest in their staff's health and well-being contribute to their being happy, highlighting that safe workers are more dedicated, productive, and efficient (Aslam, Mudassir, Ghouse, & Farooq, 2024) all of which lead to their retention. Furthermore, investing in employees' well-being, talents, and growth was viewed as an important factor because they are an asset to the institution (Becker, 1964; Mabilia, Linskiy, Amirova, Afonaso, & Bogomolova, 2023; Rothomi & Rafid, 2023, p.27).

The study findings further revealed that workload distribution influences academic decisions to stay. Participants noted that effective support for research and teaching is crucial for a balanced workload. The challenge of balancing administrative duties alongside teaching and research was highlighted by participants who suggested reducing administrative burdens. This aligns with Herzberg, who contends that while hygienic considerations like job security, benefits, and working conditions are necessary to avoid employee discontent, they

do not always inspire workers (Wesley, 2024). CoUFHEIs, therefore need to align their approaches to cater for a well-balanced work distribution.

Academic staff viewed recognition and promotion prospects, and rewards as vital for their stay in universities. Participants expressed that a clear path for promotion motivated them to remain committed. Furthermore, participants voiced concerns about job security and the lack of visibility in career progression especially for Teaching Assistants. Participants highlighted that the slow process and unclear policies frustrate academic staff and contribute to their desire to leave. The participants highlighted the importance of the promotional system for Lecturers based on performance and contributions. The importance of involvement in leadership and decision-making processes fosters a sense of fulfillment and commitment to stay. Similarly, Chaacha and Botha (2021), highlighted the discrepancies between the retention methods and staff expectations, urging universities to refine their retention approaches and cultivate supportive work environments.

The significance of career progression opportunities was evident in the academic staff's responses. Participants highlighted that retention approaches often overlooked the career advancement needs of Teaching Assistants. Hence, participants emphasized the importance of mentorship in supporting Teaching Assistants' professional development. The potential for advancement to higher roles was crucial for academic staff commitment. Approaches focusing on academic staff growth and leadership opportunities were more regarded as effective in fostering a sense of loyalty to the institution and leading to academic staff stay. This finding aligns with the human capital theory, which suggests investing in staff development. Similarly, Butt et al. (2020), highlight the influence of competitive compensation,

professional growth prospects, supportive work cultures, and recognition on academic achievements which fervently influence staff retention.

Similarly, participants viewed community and collegiality as influencing their retention. Participants reflected on the organizational values emphasizing cooperation, which created a welcoming work environment. The importance of collegiality in fostering a positive atmosphere and a collaborative spirit among senior staff was a great motivating factor for retention. Ethical leadership and governance were highlighted as essential retention approaches that foster a positive work environment. Participants noted that transparency and approachability in leadership cultivated trust. The findings align with Salau et al. (2020), who emphasized the role of leadership in fostering a supportive work environment and cultivating a culture of appreciation and recognition for staff. Participants viewed community cooperation, collegiality, and ethical governance prioritizing staff welfare as contributors to staff retention.

The study further revealed that aligning personal beliefs with the university's Christian foundation influenced staff retention. Some participants echoed that having shared values fostered a sense of belonging, motivating them to remain committed. The study also revealed that spirituality influenced leadership in the universities. The alignment of staff personal beliefs and the university's mission creates loyalty and motivates staff to stay in CFHEIs.

Additionally, some staff view the Christian values and mission as contributing to a sense of community that is highly valued and influences staff to stay. Similarly, Manish Gupta and Mikkilineni (2018) mentioned that Spirituality helps employees find meaning and purpose in life, focusing on intrinsic values, experiencing

wholeness, and believing in the community. This aligns with Herzberg's belief that intrinsic incentives motivate staff, and spirituality is not exceptional. The academic staff in Universities in Uganda view spirituality as an important driver of their overall well-being.

Similarly, the study participants viewed the spiritual aspect as an approach that allowed them to access further studies and professional growth. Participants mentioned that opportunities given to staff to study in other institutions with similar beliefs and values are crucial for their retention.

### **5.5 Objective Three:**

**To discover the expectations of academic staff for their retention in Church-founded universities in Uganda.**

Academic staff expressed a strong expectation for fair compensation that reflects their workload. The participants emphasized that the salary given to them by the institution does not correspond to the hours worked. They therefore expect fair compensation to reflect the workload we carry. This sentiment demonstrates a widespread dissatisfaction with the existing pay structure in universities, with many academic staff feeling undervalued. This emphasized the social exchange theory principle of reciprocation and called on the Universities to pay more attention to staff salaries and financial incentives. The findings highlighted the dynamics of reciprocal exchanges between staff and the institution, where staff provided their time and effort in return for incentives and benefits (Bordogna, 2023, p.130).

Similarly, participants emphasized the importance of improved benefits, such as health insurance and housing allowances, in contributing to retention. The findings

revealed that regular salary adjustments are essential, particularly given the inflation in the country today. The study findings underscored staff turnover as largely influenced by salary structure, advocating for competitive pay aligned with the workload. Participants suggested linking salary increases to performance and experience, which can enhance motivation among staff. Additionally, participants further echoed the need for regular reviews of compensation packages to correspond with rising living costs, indicating a proactive approach to retention. Similar to the observations made by Ahmad, Nawaz, Ishaq, Khan & Ashraf 2023; Bordogna, 2023, p.178.), about the Social Exchange Theory, the findings highlighted that people evaluate costs and benefits in relationships, to maximize benefits and minimize expenses

The findings highlighted the expectation for competitive salaries and comprehensive benefits, including health and retirement plans, as fundamental to long-term commitment to the university. LEY3 also stressed that competitive compensation must reflect the increasing cost of living and workload.

Further, the findings highlighted the need for a strong desire for clear career advancement opportunities as a key retention approach. The need for professional development initiatives, including workshops and scholarships was emphasized. The participants echoed the need for structured mentorship programs that foster professional growth with clear pathways for career progression, particularly for Teaching Assistants. The findings align with Herzberg's theory and suggest that to prevent dissatisfaction Universities need to increase motivation, leading to intrinsic factors to ensure job satisfaction and higher performance (Miah & Hasan, 2022).

Furthermore, academic staff expect a transparent promotional system and a merit-based approach to career progression for retention. The findings suggest that CoUFHEIs needed to revisit the promotional approaches to higher roles and exercise equity in implementation to motivate staff to stay. Similarly, a study by Mampuru et al. (2024), among foreign lecturers, suggested equal opportunity promotion is vital for academic staff retention. Academic staff in universities desire equal opportunities and clear guidelines for promotion. Similarly, leadership opportunities were considered for academic staff to consider staying in HEIs. Engagement in senior leadership and governance roles, makes staff feel more engaged and desire to contribute more to their institution. Hence, academic staff especially the Senior academic staff expressed a desire for leadership engagement and strategic planning processes for their longer stay in Universities in Uganda. Similarly, Mugizi, Kato, Kyoziira, Ariyo, & Bamusibule (2024, p.302), argued that advancement and recognition are important in retaining staff.

In addition to the above findings, the rigid, unsupportive work environment and lack of recognition were identified as demotivators. Academic staff will stay if they perceive that the environment in which they serve is supportive and conducive. The observation made by Mampuru et al. (2024), supports the study findings indicating that academic staff consider the environment in which they operate a great motivator for their retention. Participants also mentioned that a well-structured induction process was an important aspect that needed to be adopted by universities. They also advocated for comprehensive training programs to help new staff, adjust.

In addition to the unsupportive work environment, the findings revealed that rigid workload management leads to burnout among academic staff, necessitating them

to leave. Improved work-life balance would enhance job satisfaction and retention among academic staff. The findings also revealed that equitable task distribution strengthens the need for a fair workload that fosters job satisfaction and academic staff retention. Similarly, Adam's equity theory of motivation suggests that to be motivated, individuals perceive that the environment needs to be conducive, where rewards received for their contributions are fair and similar to those obtained by their peers. On the other hand, if staff perceive the environment as unfair and inequitable, they will feel distressed and try to change the environment by looking for better alternatives (Bernard, 2012).

Similarly, the social exchange Theory (SET) centers on intrinsic and extrinsic motivation through rewards, recognition, autonomy, competence, and relatedness. This helps to illuminate the motivational barriers for academic staff to stay in Universities in Uganda.

The findings underlined the value of intellectual freedom and supportive work culture, indicating that a positive environment is crucial for academic staff retention. The element of academic freedom in staff retention was also emphasized by Rwothumio et al. (2021). The findings revealed that academic staff face unique circumstances that affect their retention, such as academic freedom. Similarly, Ishola et al. (2020) argued that Academic staff should be granted the freedom to engage in intellectual study pertinent to their areas of expertise in a manner they consider most fitting for the course, aligned with the university's core values and mission, and free from undue constraints.

The study findings underscored the importance of collegiality and mutual respect among staff members as a great motivator for academic staff to stay in universities.

The study also revealed that respectful, participatory, and receptive, with supportive leadership, is vital for addressing academic staff concerns. In addition, collegiality, mutual respect, and clear communication between administration and academic staff were also singled out to enhance support systems for academic staff retention in universities. Similar findings were revealed in other studies on staff retention (Haviland et al., 2017; Shah, 2012). Participants emphasized comprehensive communication and indicated that staff needed to be involved in decision-making processes to foster a sense of belonging. Involving senior academics in strategic decisions underscored the need for leadership to recognize and utilize the expertise of their staff.

Concerning the above, academic staff desired a structured mentorship and professional development initiatives, which they considered essential for enhancing job satisfaction and retention. The study findings are similar to the assertions by Ros and Oleksiyenko (2018), who emphasized the importance of mentorship programs to enhance job satisfaction and commitment to the institution. The implementation of robust mentorship programs cited by academic staff as being done in other HEIs was an expectation held by academic staff in universities. The academic staff recognized that implementing the mentorship programs would assist in retaining staff, particularly early-career academic staff. This will not only help to develop their skills but also enhance their retention in Universities in Uganda. The study findings further highlight the importance of mentorship programs in building commitment to fostering integration and providing guidance within the academic community.

Access to research opportunities and funding influences academic staff retention. This was emphasized by TAX5, who echoed that collaborative research initiatives at

other institutions could enhance the experience and access to funding for academic staff. Similarly, TAY2 reechoed the importance of seed funding for early-career researchers, which may facilitate their professional development. In the same way, similar findings are highlighted by other scholars such as Mather & Bam (2025), Ng'ethe (2014), Saif & Al-Qarshoubi (2020). Hence, the study findings implied that CFoUHEIs need to invest in research opportunities for academic staff, as this approach motivates them to stay. The findings therefore align with the social exchange theory, emphasizing the importance of exchange and reciprocation, emphasizing that when academic staff are supported to carry out research, they are motivated to stay.

The study findings revealed the importance of interdisciplinary collaboration in motivating academic staff to stay. Participants like TAX6 advocated for opportunities to work across departments to create a dynamic environment. Similarly, LEY2 called for dedicated funding for research to reinforce institutional support for research activities. In the same way, Kuuyelleh, et al., (2022), and Mather & Barn (2025), highlighted the importance of the work environment in contributing to academic staff retention, indicating the importance of collaboration among staff and faculties. The findings reveal that Universities need to cultivate interdisciplinary collaboration and create an environment where networks and linkages among staff are promoted since they all belong to the same institution. The findings correlate with Adam's equity theory, which emphasizes the treatment of staff in the same way without favoritism.

The findings also suggested that fostering a healthy work-life balance is crucial for staff retention. Participants such as TAX2 emphasized the need for flexible work arrangements, while TAX5 stressed the importance of mental health support. The

study revealed that Universities should focus on structured workload management and reflect on the relationship between workload and staff well-being. Participants like SLEY2 emphasized wellness programs and indicated that comprehensive support for staff health and well-being is essential for long-term retention and needs to be promoted. The findings are similar to the suggestions by Kipkoskgei (2019) and Mashile et al. (2021), who emphasized the need for academic institutions to meet staff expectations by implementing strategic human resource management procedures, such as fostering open and honest communication, ensuring fair allocation of workloads. Similarly, Anderson (2019), highlighted the difficulties encountered by academic staff, emphasizing the substantial workloads that restricted opportunities for career progression among academic staff. Hence, workload management caters to staff's physical and mental health, which is of heightened importance for staff in universities and needs to be considered in balancing staff load and well-being.

Participants expressed interest in collaborative environments and global exposure to enhance retention. TAX5 noted the benefits of involving teaching assistants in larger research projects. TAY2 emphasized the importance of seed funding for early-career academic staff, which may reduce staff intentions to leave. TAX6 proposed an Interdisciplinary collaboration, and LEX2 suggested the idea of global exposure through exchange programs. PROY5 highlighted the potential of formal partnerships with global institutions to enhance staff development and engagement. This suggests that academic staff value collaboration and exchange programs, which keep them in the institution.

From the reviewed documents, it is clear that the university's initiative for performance-based evaluation aligns with human capital theory, stressing the

investment in employee development to enhance skills and productivity. The training aims to standardize the performance metrics and integrate performance-based rewards, thereby promoting motivation among the staff.

The university policy on tuition fee waivers for employees' children reflects the university's commitment to enhancing access to education and support for staff family needs. This also aligns with human capital theory, which posits that investing in employees' well-being promotes loyalty and reduces turnover. This also has a reciprocation arm, where staff feel obliged to stay because of the care given by the university to their families.

Further, the Staff Tuition Fee Waiver benefit program demonstrates the university's investment in employees' education and skills development. This support aligns with the human capital theory of enhancing employees' knowledge and competencies and benefits to the organization.

The performance-based rewards circular to staff emphasizes the relationship between staff performance and eligibility for benefits. This aligns with Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory, which highlights the importance of both intrinsic and extrinsic motivators in promoting staff satisfaction and retention. In addition, the provision of annual year-end bonuses reflects social exchange theory, emphasizing the reciprocal relationship between staff and the institution. This incentive fosters a sense of appreciation and loyalty among staff and encourages continued commitment to the university.

The university's health benefits for staff and their families denote an investment in human capital. The institution's provision of health coverage to staff enhances their loyalty and productivity, underscoring the importance of well-being in supporting

staff retention. In addition, the personal accident insurance coverage offered to all employees highlighted in the document review and mentioned by the respondents aligns with Adam's equity theory and Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory, addressing the hygiene factors. This motivates academic staff to stay and prevents dissatisfaction while ensuring equity among staff and well-being.

Again, the promotion procedures outlined in the university's statutes reflected a commitment to transparency and merit-based advancement. This approach aligns with the human capital theory of investing in staff development and the equity theory of ensuring equal treatment for all. Participants recognized the value of performance-based incentives and institutional acknowledgment in promoting academic staff retention. Study participants like TAX3 noted that implementing performance-based rewards motivated staff to remain committed. This was also emphasized by TAX4, who underscored the importance of recognizing excellence following the award system contribution implemented by universities. However, academic staff expectation is a formal recognition program where staff can feel appreciated and motivated to stay longer. Emphasis on transparency in promotion systems, stressed by the participants in the study, indicated the need for clear criteria that foster motivation and career advancement. Similarly, findings advanced by Mampuru et al. (2024) highlighted the difficulties and inequalities in academic staff promotion. The study revealed that academic staff's expectation for their promotion means financial benefits associated with the new position and the advancement from a lower to a higher rank within the institutional hierarchy, which also comes with recognition. The findings suggested that academic staff expect promotional opportunities to enhance motivation and contribute to being appreciated for their work. Staff morale improves due to promotion, leading to

heightened performance and productivity. Academic staff expect that the increase in individual performance and promotion contributes to the overall effectiveness and success of the institution and staff stay in the institution. Similar findings were mentioned by studies such as Abdulmumini (2021), Bibi & Ahmad (2017), Setyawati et al. (2022). The study therefore underscored the importance of promotion in the retention of academic staff and revealed staff expectations for their promotion and stay in CoUFHEIs in Uganda.

The document reviews revealed the guidelines on academic staff teaching loads, emphasizing the university's strategy for balancing workload and other responsibilities. The study revealed the university's intentions to prevent dissatisfaction and promote a fair working environment. However, the study participants mentioned that academic staff expected CoUFHEIs to align with the guidelines for the staff needs of promoting equity among staff when implementing policies sensitive to staff wellbeing. The findings align with the recommendations by Ssali et al. (2019), urging universities to develop policies geared towards providing terms of work and work-life balance that favor both the university and staff needs.

The study findings also revealed the university's investment in research funding and highlighted the institution's commitment to supporting staff academic development. Participants expressed the desire to ensure fair and inclusive practices that address potential disparities based on factors such as gender, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, and age. Academic Staff expected equal opportunities for career development, recognition, and support for all staff without discrimination. The findings align with the observations made by Nabawanuka (2023), revealing the inequalities in approaches used to retain staff in academic institutions. Academic

staff expectations in CoUHEIs include modeling equity and transparency in the approaches used to retain academic staff.

The results above maintain the position of Social Exchange Theory (SET) which emphasizes the reciprocation of staff for their treatment by the institution where employees are expected to deliver their optimum performance upon achieving support and perceiving value from their employers (Cropanzano, Anthony, & Hall, 2017; Xuecheng et al., 2022); the Human Capital Theory by Gary Becker and Theodore Schultz (1960), which pointed out that education and training were investments that could add to productivity educational attainment, knowledge, experience, and skills of an employee (Aribah, Minza, Ghulam, & Abdul, 2023; Cappelli et al., 2023; Shcherbakov, 2023; Theodore, 1961) and the Equity Theory posited Adams (1963), emphasizing psychological basis of inequity perception by staff. Equity theory is a theory of motivation that suggests that employee motivation at work is driven largely by their sense of fairness. It involves ensuring that all academic staff regardless of their background, identity, or circumstances, have equal opportunities to be retained within an institution. The findings emphasized that everyone should have fair access to the factors that contribute to their motivation to stay in the institution such as fair compensation, career development opportunities, and a supportive work environment, and if not provided it can lead to staff demotivation and staff retention challenges (Abdulmumini, 2021; Kulothungan, Roopavathi, & Kishore, 2020; Nabawanuka, 2023; Xuecheng, Iqbal, & Saina, 2022).

## CHAPTER SIX

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 6.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the conclusions and recommendations of the study based on the findings discussed in the preceding chapter. These conclusions align with the research objectives and offer actionable insights informed by theoretical perspectives and empirical evidence. The study recommendations intend to address the challenges faced in the retention of academic staff identified by the study and propose approaches that can be employed by Universities in Uganda to enhance academic staff retention.

The conclusions generated from the study underscore the importance of retention approaches such as fair compensation and benefits, opportunities for career advancement and promotion, a supportive work environment and collegiality, and a supportive institutional culture and leadership. These findings emphasize the role of human capital development and equity in academic staff retention approaches in universities. The chapter further suggests evidence-based recommendations designed to inform institutional leaders, policymakers, and other stakeholders on practical methods that can be implemented to address the challenge of academic staff retention in universities and other. The proposed recommendations are the study's contribution to the broader discourse on academic staff retention in universities and improving the approaches used to retain staff in Uganda's higher education system and beyond.

## 6.2 Summary of the Study

The study investigated the retention approaches used in Church-Founded Universities in Uganda, and explored the perceptions of academic staff on the retention approaches. The study identified the various retention approaches adopted by the Church of Uganda's Universities and explored academic staff perceptions of these approaches and their expectations for retention. The study elicited important responses from academic staff members on their perceptions of their retention in universities.

Data was collected from academic staff working in the Church of Uganda-founded Universities located in central Uganda. A case study research design was adopted, with qualitative methods employed for data collection. An interview guide containing semi-structured interview questions was an instrument that was used to collect information from academic staff. Face-to-face individual interviews and Focus group discussions were conducted with Forty-eight (48) participants, including professors, senior lecturers, lecturers, and teaching assistants. This encouraged in-depth conversations and allowed probing questions to elicit rich data. This approach allowed for a much deeper understanding of the experiences and perspectives of participants regarding retention approaches used in universities. Participants were purposefully selected using a snowball sampling technique, where willing academic staff provided names and contact details, leading to set-up interviews and participation in the study. The four focus group discussions (FGDs) conducted with Teaching Assistants from the participating institutions were composed of eight participants per group.

## **6.3 CONCLUSIONS**

This final section summarizes the key insights gained from the study, articulates the conclusions drawn from the empirical evidence, and presents practical recommendations. It also outlines the study's unique contribution to retention theory in the context of Church-founded institutions.

The study set out to establish retention approaches used in Church-founded Universities and the perceptions of academic staff on the retention approaches. The study established that various retention approaches were used by universities, and the perceptions of staff on the retention approaches varied. The study highlighted academic staff expectations for their retention in Universities in Uganda. Hence, the results of this study have various implications for higher education institution administrators in Uganda, particularly those found by the Church, human resource practitioners, and government policymakers. This study offers considerable adaptive measures that institutions can adopt, which are articulated in the objectives and the findings from this study.

### **6.3.1 Conclusions on staff retention approaches applied by Universities in Uganda**

Based on the findings, the conclusions regarding approaches used to retain academic staff in Universities in Uganda are:

- a) Continuous Learning and Training Programs motivate academic staff. The university's commitment to professional development through workshops, seminars, and conferences encourages academic staff to stay, as a result of personal growth and professional development.

- b) Institutional support extended to academic staff to pursue further studies through scholarships and flexible work arrangements influences academic staff retention. When supported, academic staff feel valued and committed to the institution. This creates a feeling of an obligation for the supported academic staff to stay and work for the institution for some time. Additionally, sabbatical leaves given to staff make them rejuvenated and motivated to stay longer and to focus on academic pursuits without work pressure.
- c) Cultivating a collegial and supportive work environment helps Universities to retain academic staff. Organizing informal gatherings and team-building activities improves staff morale, encourages mentorship, and fosters a sense of community among staff, aiding the integration of staff into the university culture.
- d) The Spiritual and emotional support initiatives reinforce staff well-being through regular fellowship meetings, prayer sessions, and counseling services. These provide spiritual nourishment, which many staff members find valuable, and offer spiritual nourishment, psycho-social support, thereby motivating staff to remain in CoUFHEIs.
- e) Implementation of the awards and recognition program ceremonies enhances a motivational approach that motivates academic staff to stay. Retention programs focusing on acknowledging achievements in teaching, research, and community service attract and retain academic staff. Public recognition of the staff contributions is essential, as it boosts morale and job satisfaction and contributes to academic staff retention.
- f) Performance-based bonuses linked to research output and teaching excellence are retention approaches that Universities need to perform regularly to encourage academic staff's personal development and contribute to their motivation to stay.

- g) Competitive salaries and comprehensive benefits packages help to retain academic staff. When combined with such approaches like consultancy projects and additional tutoring opportunities create avenues for supplementary income and professional growth for academic staff and motivate them to stay in universities.
- h) Transparent promotion policy with clearly defined criteria is a retention approach that motivates academic staff to stay in universities. Delays in the promotion process create dissatisfaction among academic staff and may lead to turnover.
- i) Leadership development programs that prepare staff for administrative roles and cater to the diverse interests of all staff, particularly focusing on research and teaching, motivate academic staff to stay in universities.
- j) Flexible working arrangements, including remote work options and hybrid teaching formats, are crucial in promoting a healthy work-life balance, especially in times like the COVID-19 pandemic, and motivate academic staff to stay in UNIVERSITIES.
- k) Family-friendly policies, such as parental leave and on-campus childcare, motivate academic staff to stay in universities.

### **6.3.2 Conclusions on Academic Staff's views on Retention Approaches applied in Universities in Uganda**

The conclusions regarding academic staff views on retention approaches applied in CHFHEIs are:

#### **a) Competitive salaries and Financial Rewards**

Although competitive salaries and other financial rewards, particularly timely and structured allowances for activities such as student supervision, are essential

motivational factors for academic staff's long stay in universities, these incentives alone

are insufficient to make academic staff stay in universities. A more comprehensive retention approach encompassing both financial and non-financial incentives would be more effective.

**b) Professional Development Opportunities**

Academic staff attach a lot of value to professional development. The availability of professional development opportunities provided to academic staff to pursue higher degrees and tailored professional courses motivates academic staff to stay in HEIs. Opportunities to access and advance to higher roles with structured mentorship programs and tailored development opportunities are crucial approaches for maintaining staff engagement and commitment to universities.

**c) A supportive work environment and collegial support**

A supportive work environment and collegial support atmosphere in universities greatly influence academic staff retention. The absence of formal mentorship systems and guidance leads to feelings of isolation, which increases the likelihood of staff turnover. A positive work environment is a crucial retention factor that fosters a sense of community and shared values among academic staff in universities, contributing to their retention.

**d) Work-life balance and flexibility**

Work-life balance and flexibility are critical approaches that impact the retention of academic staff in universities. To effectively manage their commitments and professional growth, academic staff require adaptable work schedules. A lack of flexibility in work arrangements can lead to burnout and job dissatisfaction among

academic staff, which ultimately undermines their long-term commitment to their institutions.

Recognition and opportunities for promotion are crucial approaches that influence academic staff to remain in Universities in Uganda. Universities need to establish clear and documented guidelines for academic staff recognition and promotion. This transparency helps to foster an environment that encourages ongoing engagement and commitment from academic staff within universities. Such opportunities for promotion and involvement in decision-making processes enhance visibility and motivation, reinforcing academic staff's commitment to the institution.

**e) Workload Distribution and Balance**

Workload distribution and balance are crucial retention approaches that alleviate the burden of heavy workloads, especially among senior staff, reducing burnout. Better management of workload and balancing teaching, research, and administrative responsibilities enhances academic staff retention in universities.

**f) Promotional opportunities**

The provision of opportunities for career progression for academic and proper administration of clear advancement paths, structured mentorship programs, contributes to staff retention. Career growth opportunities aligned with staff needs are essential in encouraging the long-term commitment of academic staff.

**g) A collaborative work environment**

A collaborative work environment creates a strong sense of community and collegiality among academic staff. Academic staff value a collaborative environment that fosters institutional values. This encourages mentorship

opportunities, promotion prospects for academic staff, and contributes to their decision to stay in universities.

#### **h) Ethical Leadership and Governance**

Ethical leadership and governance are a major retention factor for academic staff. Academic staff perceive that Universities are a home for ethical leadership and governance where transparency, integrity, and fairness in decision-making are underscored as crucial for building trust and job satisfaction among staff. The university's Mission and Values, based on Christian foundations, play a pivotal role in motivating academic staff to stay. Staff who share these values feel more connected and committed to the institution and are encouraged to remain at the university.

### **6.3.3 Conclusions regarding academic staff expectations for their retention in Church-founded universities in Uganda**

The conclusions regarding expectations of academic staff for their retention in CHFHEIs are.

#### **a) Compensation and Benefits**

Universities need to implement a competitive salary structure aligned with workload and regular reviews of compensation packages to match inflation and the cost of living. Pay structures and staff salaries should reflect their workload with regular salary adjustments to address inflation and the cost of living. Improved benefits, such as health insurance and housing allowances, contribute to academic staff morale and commitment to the university. Performance-based incentives need to be

tied to salary increases, creating comprehensive benefits, retirement plans, and family support systems that can foster a stable work environment.

**b) Career Advancement and Promotion**

Transparent promotion system, clear criteria, and timelines for career advancement motivate academic staff to stay. Clear career advancement and propositional policies, structured mentorship programs, and professional development opportunities such as workshops and scholarships contribute to academic staff decisions. Transparent and equal opportunity promotion systems based on merit and performance, support for further studies equitably, and enhancement of retention of academic staff.

**c) Work Environment and Collegiality**

A positive work environment and a better workload for academic staff management can help prevent burnout. A supportive and collegial atmosphere is essential for job satisfaction and retention. Equitable task distribution, fair workload, encourage collaborative relationships among staff, foster collegiality, and support for each other promote work-life balance and contribute to academic staff welfare and retention

**d) Supportive Institutional Culture and Leadership**

A supportive institutional culture and leadership, clear communication channels between the administration and academic staff, with a participatory approach where staff voices are considered in decision-making processes, promote academic staff retention. Involvement of academic staff in strategic decision-making processes encourages them to stay.

#### **e) Initiatives from Other Universities**

The participants called upon CFHEUs to adopt some of the successful initiatives from other institutions that could enhance retention, such as:

- i. Professional development programs that include mentorship and training.
- ii. Research support and funding opportunities to encourage academic engagement.
- iii. Flexible work arrangements and wellness programs to promote work-life balance.

It was clear that academic staff expect Church-founded universities in Uganda to focus on their concerns about compensation, career advancement, work environment, and institutional support. Applying the suggested approaches could help Universities boost staff morale and commitment, and improve retention rates. The need for institutions to invest in their academic staff is essential to foster a productive and engaged workforce, ultimately benefiting the institution's overall performance and reputation.

#### **6.4 Recommendations**

Based on the study findings and conclusions, the recommendation will help to improve academic staff retention in the Church of Uganda's higher Education Institutions.

##### **Recommendations for Improving Academic Staff Retention in Church-Founded Universities in Uganda**

- a) Church-Founded Universities' management should cultivate a culture of generating feedback regarding their retention strategies. This approach will enhance awareness of existing retention practices and facilitate ongoing improvements.

- b) The management of universities should implement equitable and transparent retention policies. These policies must balance financial and non-financial incentives to effectively motivate academic staff to remain at Universities in Uganda.
- c) Review Staff Retention Policies: Universities should frequently review their staff retention policies and introduce new ones where applicable. The Human Resource Office should maintain a database of academic staff achievements and ensure promotion criteria and processes are transparent.
- d) Universities should adopt a more integrative retention approach to cater to the various retention challenges, such as the one proposed by the researcher. This comprehensive model aims to enhance the perceptions and experiences of academic staff, thereby fostering a more stable and committed academic workforce.

Following the above recommendation, a proposed staff retention model adopted from the study findings can be a guide to CFHEI leaders, human resource practitioners, policymakers, and others to improve the retention of academic staff in universities in Uganda and beyond.

## **6.5 Contribution of the Study**

The findings of this study revealed that academic staff in universities possess varying perceptions regarding the effectiveness of retention approaches. This variation underscored the need for tailored retention approaches that address academic staff's unique needs and concerns. By highlighting the critical areas for improvement in staff retention approaches, the study contributes to the existing body of

knowledge on academic staff retention. Institutional leaders and policymakers will use the model to improve staff retention. Ultimately, enhancing the institutional climate and academic staff motivation.

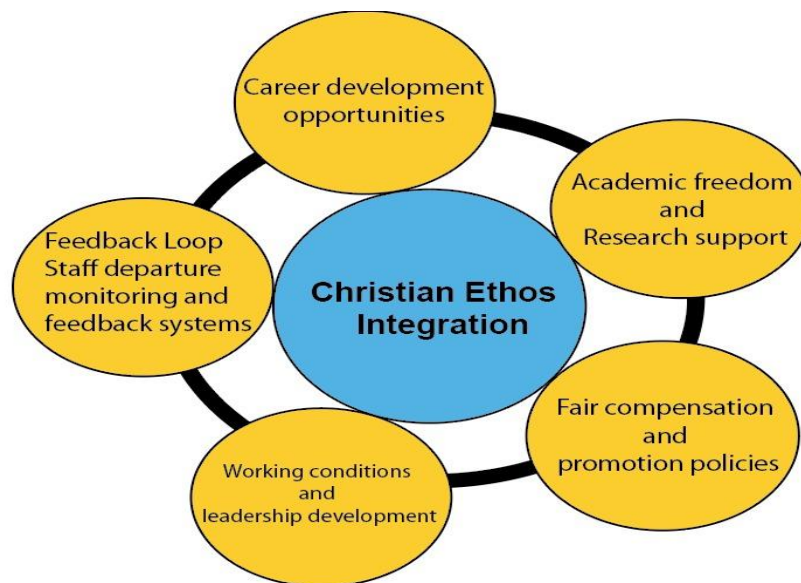
Hence, the study's contributions to the field of academic staff retention are by developing a recommended model as indicated in **Figure 6.1**. Specifically, the model is tailored for Universities in Uganda but can be adopted by other HEIs. The model serves as a valuable guide for administrators, policymakers, and scholars, providing insights and strategies to enhance the retention of academic staff.

### **Aim of the Model**

The proposed model aims to address the challenges faced by Universities in Uganda in the retention of academic staff. The proposed model is based on the study findings and anchors on the four theories that were used in the study namely; Social Exchange theory advanced by Blau, (1964), Human Capital Theory postulated by Theodore Schultz, Jacob Mincer, and Becker, (1960), Adam's Equity Theory (Adams, 1963), and Herzberg Two-Factor Theory, (1959).

The following model in Figure 6.1 outlines key approaches to enhance staff retention in Universities in Uganda:

**Figure 1: Proposed integrative model for Academic Staff Retention (ASRIM) for Church-Founded Universities in Uganda**



### **About the ASRIM Model**

The study's findings identified gaps in the approaches to academic staff retention at Church-founded Universities in Uganda, which impede their continued employment. Academic staff reported various challenges contributing to dissatisfaction, burnout, inequality, and a desire to seek better job opportunities elsewhere. Consequently, the proposed model is based on the feedback from academic staff regarding the current retention approaches employed by CFHEIs. Their perceptions, and recommendations for improving retention contributed to the model. Hence, the model suggests that career development and advancement opportunities, academic freedom and research support, working conditions and leadership development, fair compensation and promotion policies, staff departure monitoring, and feedback systems, if integrated as a staff retention approach, may help to address the retention challenges faced by Church-founded Universities in Uganda.

**The model suggests that:**

**i. Career development opportunities**

Universities must allow academic staff the freedom to engage in advanced studies within their fields of expertise without unnecessary constraints, providing necessary support for their career pursuits. These can be done through workshops where university staff can map out their potential career paths. These interactive sessions should include discussions on career development and advancement opportunities. Participants can visualize different roles, identify necessary skills, and discuss how academic freedom and research support can facilitate their growth. This hands-on approach can help staff see a clear connection between their current roles and future possibilities, reinforcing the importance of career development in retention. Offering clear career development pathways and advancement opportunities can ly enhance staff retention. Institutions can provide ongoing professional development programs, implement mentorship schemes, and offer funding for further education and research, which can motivate academic staff to stay.

**ii. Academic freedom and Research support**

CFHEIs can organize and host research support forums focused on academic freedom and research support, inviting successful academic staff to share their experiences. An event can include panel discussions on how supportive leadership fosters innovative research. By emphasizing the connection between academic freedom and institutional support, staff can better understand the impact of these factors on their job satisfaction and retention. This understanding can lead to a culture where academic staff feel empowered to pursue their academic interests.

Ensuring academic freedom and robust research support can boost job satisfaction among academic staff. This can also be achieved through providing autonomy in teaching and research, granting access to research funding and resources, and encouraging interdisciplinary and collaborative projects.

**iii. Working conditions and leadership development**

Focus on creating motivating work environments that ensure timely promotions and compassionate leadership can improve employee retention.

Improving working conditions and fostering leadership development can lead to a more motivated workforce. Key approaches may include maintaining a safe and supportive work environment, offering flexible working hours and workload management, and providing leadership training, career coaching, mentorship, and spiritual nourishment.

Investing in leadership development and mentorship programs that focus on transformational leadership skills can enhance staff engagement and well-being, ultimately improving retention rates.

**iv. Fair compensation and promotion policies**

Equitable compensation and transparent promotion policies are critical for staff retention. Institutions can conduct regular salary reviews and adjustments, ensure transparent and merit-based promotion processes, and recognize and reward outstanding performance. Such approaches can greatly influence academic staff retention. Universities should prioritize retention approaches that facilitate career progression, including opportunities for further education, job security, and equitable compensation packages

**v. Feedback Loop and Staff departure monitoring and feedback systems**

A structured feedback loop system where academic staff can express their concerns regarding working conditions, compensation, and promotion policies can contribute to retention. This system should incorporate regular surveys and open forums for discussion. By actively involving staff in monitoring their experiences, and providing feedback, the institution can demonstrate a commitment to fair compensation and responsive leadership. This initiative will enhance working conditions and nurture a sense of belonging and engagement, which are critical for academic staff retention.

Universities should establish robust mechanisms to monitor the reasons for staff departures, promoting open communication between management and academic staff. This data will help identify retention gaps and inform the development of targeted strategies. Monitoring staff departures and collecting feedback can help identify retention issues and inform improvement approaches. This can be done through implementing genuine exit interviews and surveys, analyzing turnover data and trends, and creating action plans based on feedback to address areas of concern. Regular reviews of staff retention feedback inform policy alongside the introduction of new measures where necessary, will ensure that policies remain relevant. The Human Resource Office should maintain comprehensive records of academic staff achievements, ensuring transparency in promotion criteria and processes.

The model, therefore, serves as a comprehensive framework for CoUFHEIs to adopt effective approaches aimed at retaining academic staff, and fostering a supportive and equitable academic environment. Combining these components into a comprehensive retention model can help CoUFHEIs create a supportive and

rewarding environment for academic staff, ultimately leading to higher retention rates and a more stable workforce.

## **6.6 Limitations of the Study**

Despite the contributions of this research relating to perceptions of academic staff on retention approaches used in universities, there are some limitations inherent in this study that need to be seriously considered in future research studies. To begin with, this study relied on a relatively small sample size, hence, future researchers are encouraged to use an expanded sample that includes individuals excluded from participation in this study based on the criteria used by the researcher.

Second, this study is a qualitative case study and therefore, the findings cannot easily be generalized or directly transferred to all other HEIs with similar intent in understanding the perception of academic staff on retention approaches. The results of this study are contextually constrained by focusing only on two institutions whose settings and cultures may be similar.

The researcher therefore proposes that future studies can be undertaken in other HEIs using a quantitative approach based on a comparative design, perhaps in multiple sites, to avoid the above limitations.

## **6.7 Implications for Further Research**

To further address the problem of retention of academic staff in Church-Funded universities in Uganda, the researcher recommends that:

- i. Further research should be conducted concerning the approaches in place for the professional development of academic staff post-recruitment. The research should establish practices that foster staff commitment in universities.

- ii. Comparative research can be conducted on the different approaches used by other Universities. This will greatly assist in identifying best practices that can be adopted by Universities in Uganda in a bid to enhance academic staff retention.
- iii. A study focusing on other variables, such as age and gender, that affect the turnover and retention of academic staff in universities can be carried out.
- iv. Finally, a similar study can be carried out in more Universities located in different geographical regions of Uganda. Undertaking such research will go a long way in providing further information on approaches for academic staff retention from varying perspectives and contexts, thus broadening the general understanding of effective management and solutions to challenges faced by universities.

## **6.8. Conclusion**

This study set out to examine the perceptions of academic staff on retention approaches in Church-founded universities in Uganda, with particular focus on the approaches applied, staff views, and expectations for their retention. The findings revealed that while institutions had initiated several promising strategies such as training opportunities, spiritual support, performance-based incentives, and family-friendly policies, their impact was uneven and often undermined by unclear promotion processes, inadequate remuneration, and limited research support. Academic staff expressed mixed feelings—valuing opportunities for professional growth and collegiality, but also highlighting dissatisfaction with compensation,

workload, and governance structures. Their expectations centered on fair pay, transparent career advancement, supportive leadership, and research facilitation, underscoring a demand for integrated and context-sensitive policies. By proposing the Academic Staff Retention Integrated Model (ASRIM), the study contributed a framework that blends institutional mission, staff welfare, and evidence-based practices to improve retention. For graduate audiences, the study illustrates how theoretical insights from Social Exchange Theory, Human Capital Theory, Equity Theory, and Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory can be pragmatically applied in educational administration to address persistent staffing challenges. Ultimately, retention is not simply about keeping staff in place, but about nurturing motivated, fulfilled, and productive scholars who sustain institutional excellence and innovation.

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## APPENDICES

### 8.1 Appendix i: Activity Plan and Budget

The study will be conducted and concluded within 12 months beginning June 2024 and ending March 2025 as illustrated in the Action Plan below:

#### Appendix i: Activity Plan and Budget

The study will be conducted and concluded within 12 months beginning June 2024 and ending March 2025 as illustrated in the Action Plan below:

#### Activity Plan

TIME FRAME / Year 2024/25

Project Stage	Activity	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb-March
Final Proposal	Corrections & Submit to REC & NCST									
Field Test	Pre-test the tools									
Field Work	Data Collection									
Data Analysis	Data analysis									
Reporting	Report Writing and Submission									

## 8.2 Appendix ii: Budget

### Budget

Activity	Number	Cost per unit	Total cost
REC Fees	1	350,000	350,000
NCHE and other Approvals		1,50,0000	
Proposal Printing/Binding	3 copies	250,000	750,000
Research support/Transport and Fuel	Lumpsum	4,000,000	4,000,000
Data Analysis		1500,0000	1,500,000
Final Printing and Binding	4	500,000	2,000,000
<b>Total</b>			<b>10,100,000</b>

### 8.3 Appendix iii: Community Engagement Plan

**Name of the study:** “Perceptions of Academic Staff on Retention Approaches in Church-founded Higher Education Institutions in Uganda”

Principal investigator: Margaret Rose Nagita

**Goals and Aims of the Project**

The purpose of this research study is to explore the perceptions of academic staff on the retention approaches implemented by Church founded Higher Education Institutions in Uganda for improvement of the retention approaches in HEIs.

**Objectives of the Project shall be:**

1. To establish the staff retention approaches applied by Church- founded universities in Uganda.
2. To analyze the views of academic staff towards the staff retention approaches applied in Church of Uganda-founded universities in Uganda.
3. To discover the expectations of academic staff for their retention in Church-founded universities in Uganda.

**Community entry process**

I will follow all the ethical requirements ranging from securing permission from Uganda Christian University (UCU) and Ndejje University (NDU) to approval from UCU Research and Ethics committee, and, Uganda National Council for Science and Technology. Prior to the interview, respondents will be informed about the study details and given assurance about ethical principles that includes anonymity and confidentiality so that respondents will obtain knowledge of what to expect from the interview which increases the likelihood of honesty and is also a fundamental aspect of the informed consent process (Gill et al., 2008). During actual data collection, I will seek informed consent from the participants after giving pertinent information concerning the study, providing adequate opportunity for the subject to consider all options. I will also ensure respect for anonymity and confidentiality by using codes. I will ensure respect for

privacy by conducting all interviews in private setting, being a good listener who is not judgmental or biased, and ensure safety of the participants. The interviews will be conducted in areas free from distractions and at times and locations that are most suitable for participants or agreed upon by the participants.

**The Research Team Responsible for Managing Community Engagement Activities**

The PI will solely be responsible for managing community engagement as per the nature of this study.

**Mode, Methods for Collecting Information.**

This study will adopt Key informants' interviews, and will use Key informant interview guide, for collecting information. The researcher will physically conduct the interview herself.

**Plan on mitigation of risks and conflicts resulting from community engagement.**

The risk of Covid-19 is the greatest risk given the time of this research and the challenges the country is facing with the pandemic. During the community engagement processes, the Researcher is committed to ensuring her own safety and the safety of every community member who will be involved in the study. Compliance with Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) issued by the Ministry of Health, and presidential directives prevailing at the time of the research will be mandatory.

Yours Sincerely,

.....

Nagita Margaret Rose

Principal Investigator

## 8.4 Appendix iv: Informed Consent Document for Academic Staff Interviews

### CONSENT FORM FOR PARTICIPANTS IN THE STUDY

#### Informed Consent Document for Academic Staff interviews

Study Title: "Perceptions of academic staff on retention approaches in Church founded Higher Education Institutions in Uganda"

#### 1. Study Investigators

The Investigators in charge of this study are:

Name	Institution of affiliation	Telephone number	Email address
Margaret Rose Nagita	Uganda Christian University	+256772770842	mnkiwanuka@gmail.com

#### 2. Organizational Affiliation/ Collaboration and Sponsorship

This study is being conducted by Margaret Rose Nagita and it is self-sponsored.

#### 3. Background and rationale for the study

This research project is about Perceptions of academic staff on retention approaches in Church founded Higher Education institutions in Uganda.

#### 4. Purpose of this research study

The purpose of this research study is to explore the perceptions of academic staff on the retention approaches implemented by Church founded Higher Education Institutions in Uganda for improvement of the retention approaches in HEIs.

#### 5. Length of Your Participation

Your participation in the study will last not more than 30 minutes.

#### 6. Where the Study is being done and Number of People Participating

This study is being conducted in Uganda Christian University and Ndejje University. The number of participants expected to take part in this study will be determined by the level of saturation. This



is where the researcher will feel that there is no new information being added by any of the new participant in the study and this will determine the number of participants for this study.

#### **7. Study Procedures**

Before you take part in this research study, the study will be explained to you, and you will be given the chance to ask questions. You must read and sign this informed consent form. If you agree to take part in this study, you will be interviewed.

#### **8. What Will Happen When You Complete the Study:**

When your participation in the study ends, you will no longer have access to the study documents.

#### **9. Costs for Taking Part in this Study**

There are no possible costs to be met during the study as far as the participant is concerned.

#### **10. Compensation for Participation in the Study:**

This research is purely voluntarily. However, you will receive compensation amounting to Shillings 20,000 for your time.

There will be no injuries expected to occur during participation. By signing this consent form, you will not waive any of your legal rights or release the parties involved in this study from liability for negligence.

#### **12. Possible Risks or Discomforts while taking part in this study**

There are no possible risks and discomforts that a participant might experience while taking part in the study.

#### **13. Possible Benefits to You for Taking Part in the Study**

There may be no direct benefits to you for participating in this study. However, as a participant in this study you may receive the research results in abstract form if you wish free of any cost by email or any platform of your choice.



#### **14. About Participating in this Study**

Your participation in this study is voluntary. You may stop participating in this study at any time without penalty. Your decision not to take part in this study or to stop your participation will not affect your continued employment by your institution in anyway. If you decide to stop taking part in this study, you should notify the investigator.

Alternatively, the investigator may stop your participation in this study at any time if he/she decides that it is in your best interest. He/she may also do this if you do not follow instructions.

#### **15. Approval of the research study**

This study has been approved by the UCU Research Ethics Committee (UCUREC) and the Uganda National Council for Science and Technology (UNCST).

#### **16. Confidentiality of Study Records**

Information collected for this study is confidential. All study records accessed by the PI will use anonymous ID codes. However, the UCUREC and UNCST will receive copies of the study records. UCUREC and UNCST may have access to private information that identifies you by name. Any publication resulting from this study will use anonymized data.

#### **17. Names of Contacts for Questions about the Study**

If you have any issues pertaining to your rights and participation in the study, please contact the Administrator UCU Research Ethics Committee Administrator: Mr. Ahimbisibwe Osborn on 256 775-737627 or Chairperson, UCU Research Ethics Committee: Prof. Peter Waiswa on 256 772405357.

#### **18. Feedback on Study Findings and Progress of the Study**

You will get feedback on the findings and progress of the study and any new information that affects the study or data that has relevance to you will be made available to you and the



institutions where this study has been carried out namely; Uganda Christian University and Ndejje University.

**19. Participant Statement of consent**

I ..... certify that I have read this consent form, describing the procedures, benefits and risks of the study titled **“Perceptions of academic staff on retention approaches in Church founded Higher Education Institutions in Uganda”**, and that I understand its contents. I have been given an opportunity to ask questions about the study and these have been answered to my satisfaction. I am aware that the discussions will be audio recorded and grant consent for these Audio recordings, provided that my privacy will be protected. I am aware that I may withdraw at any time. I understand that by signing this form, I do not waive any of my legal rights but merely indicate that I have been informed about the research study in which I am voluntarily agreeing to participate.

A copy of this form will be provided to me.

I agree to participate voluntarily.

Date\_\_\_\_\_ Signature or mark of Participant\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of participant (print)

I certify that the nature and purpose, the potential benefits, and possible risks associated with participating in this study have been explained to the above individual (s).



Date

Signature of person who obtained consent

---

Name of person who obtained consent (print)



## 8.5 Appendix v: REC Approval



# UGANDA CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY

A Centre of Excellence in the Heart of Africa

08/05/2024

To: Margaret Rose Nagita

Uganda Christian University  
0772430377

Type: Initial Review

**Re: UCUREC-2024-860: Perceptions Of Academic Staff On Retention Approaches In Church Founded Higher Education Institutions In Uganda: A Qualitative Study**

I am pleased to inform you that the Uganda Christian University REC, through expedited review held on **02/05/2024** approved the above referenced study.  
Approval of the research is for the period of **08/05/2024** to **08/05/2025**.

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 addenda 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.
3. Reports of unanticipated problems involving risks to participants or any new information which could change the risk benefit: ratio must be submitted to the REC.
4. Only approved consent forms are to be used in the enrollment of participants. All consent forms signed by participants 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. Continuing review application must be submitted to the REC **eight weeks** prior to the expiration date of **08/05/2025** 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.
6. The REC application number assigned to the research should be cited in any correspondence with the REC of record.
7. You are required to register the research protocol with the Uganda National Council for Science and Technology (UNCST) for final clearance to undertake the study in Uganda.

The following is the list of all documents approved in this application by Uganda Christian University REC:



No.	Document Title	Language	Version Number	Version Date
1	Informed Consent forms	English	1	2024-04-15
2	Community Engagement plan if applicable to your study	English	1	2024-04-15
3	Data collection tools	English	1	2024-04-15
4	Protocol	English	1	2024-04-15

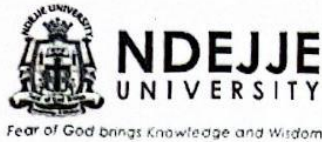
Yours Sincerely



Prof. Peter Waiswa  
For: Uganda Christian University REC



## 8.6 Appendix vi: Ndejje University Administrative Clearance



Office of the Deputy Vice Chancellor  
P. O. Box 7088, Kampala – UGANDA  
Tel: +256 773761008  
Email: [dvc@ndejejeuniversity.ac.ug](mailto:dvc@ndejejeuniversity.ac.ug)  
Website: [www.ndejejeuniversity.ac.ug](http://www.ndejejeuniversity.ac.ug)

Date: 07<sup>th</sup> June 2024

Margaret Rose Nagita  
Uganda Christian University

### RE: Request to Conduct Academic Research in Ndejje University

Your letter of request to conduct research in Ndejje University (dated 17<sup>th</sup> 05 2024) was received. The purpose of this letter is to communicate that you are granted the permission to collect data on the topic entitled; '*Perceptions of Academic Staff on Retention Approaches in Church Founded Higher Education Institutions in Uganda*'. You are advised to follow the following guidelines carefully as you conduct the study in Ndejje University.

1. You are expected to abide by national council for higher education guidelines on data collection and thus expected to produce a copy of clearance letter from a recognised IRB.
2. You will work closely with/under the Director of Research and Innovations (Dr Primrose Nakazibwe 0772393128) and the Director of Quality Assurance (Mr Amos Ggita 0772487942). Make arrangements to meet each of them physically before you start your data collection. The Security office will be notified when you report to the Directorate of Research and Innovations for your clearance to conduct research at NDU.
3. You are requested to share findings from the study with the University. The sharing will be done through the two Directors mentioned above.
4. You are requested to ensure confidentiality. In addition, the delicate information about the University that you may encounter during your study must be kept safe as much as possible.
5. Participation in the study by different individuals will be voluntary; participants are also free to withdraw any time. No one should be coerced to participate or to continue.

Thank you for choosing Ndejje University and I wish you good time and success in your study.

Yours Sincerely,

Frederick Kakembo (PhD)  
Deputy Vice Chancellor

## 8.7 Appendix vii: Uganda Christian University Administrative Clearance



**UGANDA CHRISTIAN  
UNIVERSITY**

A Centre of Excellence in the Heart of Africa

11<sup>th</sup> June, 2024

Margaret Rose Nagita  
Principal Investigator  
Uganda Christian University.  
+256 772770842  
Email: [mnkiwanuka@gmail.com](mailto:mnkiwanuka@gmail.com)

Dear Margaret,

**Re: Administrative clearance to a study: Perceptions of Academic Staff on Retention Approaches in Church Founded Higher Education Institutions in Uganda: A Qualitative Study**

Greetings from Uganda Christian University (UCU)!

Following the approval from Uganda Christian University REC (UCUREC-2024-860), you are cleared to conduct research at UCU. This permission is valid for one year beginning 16<sup>th</sup> May, 2024 (date of approval).

The administrative clearance does not guarantee individual participant's consent; you require consent approvals from each participant.

You are expected to adhere to our institutional code of ethics in conduct, decency, observance of SOPs, and respect for all individuals. Additionally, you will be required to submit a report of your findings by at least 8 weeks before the expiry of your study.

We wish you success in your endeavours.

Sincerely,

*Elizabeth Kizito*

Assoc. Prof. Elizabeth Balyejusa Kizito

[ebkizito@ucu.ac.ug](mailto:ebkizito@ucu.ac.ug), +256752141377



Director; Research, Partnerships & Innovation, UCU.

## 8.8 Uganda National Council for Science and Technology Research Approval



### Uganda National Council for Science and Technology

*(Established by Act of Parliament of the Republic of Uganda)*

Our Ref: SS2766ES

10 March 2025

Margaret Rose Nagita  
Uganda Christian University  
Mukono

Re: Research Approval: Perceptions Of Academic Staff On Retention Approaches In Church Founded Higher Education Institutions In Uganda: A Qualitative Study

I am pleased to inform you that on 10/03/2025, the Uganda National Council for Science and Technology (UNCST) approved the above referenced research project. The Approval of the research project is for the period of 10/03/2025 to 10/03/2026.

Your research registration number with the UNCST is SS2766ES. Please, cite this number in all your future correspondences with UNCST in respect of the above research project. As the Principal Investigator of the research project, you are responsible for fulfilling the following requirements of approval:

1. Keeping all co-investigators informed of the status of the research.
2. Submitting all changes, amendments, and addenda to the research protocol or the consent form (where applicable) to the designated Research Ethics Committee (REC) or Lead Agency for re-review and approval prior to the activation of the changes. UNCST must be notified of the approved changes within five working days.
3. For clinical trials, all serious adverse events must be reported promptly to the designated local REC for review with copies to the National Drug Authority and a notification to the UNCST.
4. Unanticipated problems involving risks to research participants or other must be reported promptly to the UNCST. New information that becomes available which could change the risk/benefit ratio must be submitted promptly for UNCST notification after review by the REC.
5. Only approved study procedures are to be implemented. The UNCST may conduct impromptu audits of all study records.
6. An annual progress report and approval letter of continuation from the REC must be submitted electronically to UNCST. Failure to do so may result in termination of the research project.

Please note that this approval includes all study related tools submitted as part of the application as shown below:

No.	Document Title	Language	Version Number	Version Date
1	Data collection tools	English	1	15 April 2024
2	Community Engagement plan if applicable to your study	English	1	15 April 2024
3	Project Proposal	English	1	
4	Approval Letter	English		
5	Administrative Clearance	English		
5	ICF -Key informants Participants	English	20-02-2025	20 February 2025
6	Key Informants Guide	English	20-2-2025	20 February 2025
7	ICF - FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS	English	20-2-2025	20 February 2025
8	Focus Group Discussions Guide	English	20-2-2025	

Yours sincerely,



Hellen Opolot

For: Executive Secretary

UGANDA NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

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**LOCATION/CORRESPONDENCE**

Plot 6 Kimera Road, Ntinda  
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KAMPALA, UGANDA

**COMMUNICATION**

TEL: (256) 414 705500  
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WEBSITE: <http://www.uncst.go.ug>



# UGANDA CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY

A Centre of Excellence in the Heart of Africa

UGANDA CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY

SCHOOL OF RESEARCH & POSTGRADUATE STUDIES

## DISSERTATION CORRECTION COMPLIANCE REPORT BY THE CANDIDATE (POST VIVA FORM)

Date: 29<sup>th</sup> August, 2025

Name of Candidate: MARGARET ROSE NAGITA Reg. No: RM/ 17P02/002

Title of Dissertation: PERCEPTIONS OF ACADEMIC STAFF ON RETENTION APPROACHES IN CHURCH FOUNDED UNIVERSITIES IN UGANDA.

SN	COMMENTS BY EXTERNAL EXAMINER	ACTION TAKEN	INDICATOR
1	Revisit the abstract based on the comments provided throughout the paper. The conclusion sounds like a recommendation. That should be realigned.	Abstract revised to ensure the conclusion is distinct from recommendations.	p. iii
2	Choose one or two very key persons to dedicate this thesis to. the rest should appear in the acknowledgment section.	Dedication section revised; acknowledgments updated.	pp. iv-v
3	When citing more than two authors, mention the first, followed by et. al. (year). Do this throughout the document.	All citations corrected to APA style.	Throughout document

4	Are these academic staff leaving their job and join other careers? Which careers do they join? or do they continue with their teaching careers to other universities which pay better?? Make this clear.	Clarified in the problem statement and discussion.	pp. 32-33, 231-261
5	What is the intention to explore perceptions? How will the perceptions resolve the problem? Looking into perceptions at the PhD level may not be the best way of solving the retention problem. What is next after knowing the perceptions?	Explained the justification and significance of the study.	pp. 36-38
6	How many are religious/ church funded universities? And why did you select the religious universities? Is there a specific problem in such universities compared to the rest?	Rationale and figures provided.	pp. 17-20
7	Is it health for employees to remain in the same institutions for the rest of their life? Are there no advantages of moving?	Discussion enriched with pros and cons.	pp. 233-261
8	Define this(interpretivism) philosophy. It remains undefined throughout this section.	Definition and justification added.	pp. 100-101
9	Was there a permission from government authorities too? What is the requirement in Uganda?	Included clearances from UNCST and UCU-REC.	pp. 122-125, 312-322
10	Provide a preamble. Provide a research question too. Do the same for the previous objectives.	Preambles and questions inserted before each objective in Ch. 4.	pp. 135, 159, 193
11	Provide numbering. Refer to the subsequent subsections in this chapter, where the numbering is confusing.	Corrected numbering and cross-references.	pp. 132-222
12	Improve the recommendations by explaining who should do what and how. The recommendations should correspond with the conclusions.	Recommendations rewritten to specify responsible actors.	pp. 271-272

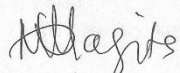
<b>SN</b>	<b>COMMENTS BY INTERNAL EXAMINER</b>	<b>ACTION TAKEN</b>	<b>INDICATOR</b>
1	On the Topic: Critiqued the topic's use of the broad term "Higher Educational Institutions" when the study exclusively focused on two universities, suggesting that title should be more specific to avoid creating an expectation of wider stratification. Besides grammatical errors	Title refined to focus on Church-founded Universities.	Title page, p. i
2	On the Theoretical Framework: Questioned the use of approach with multiple theories. The member stated that the candidate should have first established the deficiencies of a single primary theory to justify the inclusion of others and clarified which theory underpinned each specific objective.	Clarified in theoretical framework and linked the theories to the objectives.	pp. 40-45

<b>SN</b>	<b>COMMENTS BY VIVA VOCE PANNEL</b>	<b>ACTION TAKEN</b>	<b>INDICATOR</b>
1	On the Philosophy: The panelist asked the candidate to specify which particular branch of interpretivism was used to ground the study's design.	Branch specified as Interpretivism (Phenomenological stance).	pp. 100-101
2	On Scope, Questioned the rationale for excluding non-teaching staff from the study, who also face retention challenges.	Clarified in scope section.	pp. 35-36
3	Asked if data saturation was achieved and noted that this should be discussed explicitly in a qualitative study.	Explicit discussion on saturation included.	pp. 108-111
4	Critically questioned the study's operational definition of "retention," asking if a discontented, apathetic staff member who remains physically at the institution but is spiritually absent is truly "retained".	Clarified in conceptual background and discussion.	pp. 18-20, 233 -261

5	Stated that findings from the documentary review should have been thematically integrated with the interview data, not presented separately, as a core part of triangulation.	Findings are integrated in the discussion.	pp. 231-261
6	Noted that a formal conclusion to the study was missing from the presentation, leaving the panel in suspense.	Formal conclusion added in Chapter Six.	pp. 279 -280

**Margaret Rose Nagita**

Candidate's Name

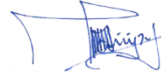


.....

Signature

**Dr. Masagazi Joel Yawe**

Supervisor's Name



Signature