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THEORETICAL REVIEW ARTICLE ON ORGANIZATION STRUCTURE AND ACADEMIC STAFF PERFORMANCE IN PRIVATE UNIVERSITIES IN UGANDA

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Abstract

This theoretical review examines the influence of organizational structure on the performance of academic staff in private universities in Uganda, utilizing the administrative management theory and expectancy theory of motivation as the conceptual frameworks. The review investigates how various organizational structures affect the efficiency, effectiveness, and motivation of academic staff, which ultimately impacts educational outcomes. By applying administrative management theory and expectancy theory of motivation, this study provides insights into university management practices. To gather relevant literature, keywords such as "performance," "monitoring," "academic staff performance," and "private universities" were used to search databases like Google Scholar, JSTOR, and academic journals specific to the field of education. Out of the first 60 articles downloaded, 30 were deemed relevant and analyzed using content analysis. The findings indicate that both administrative management theory and expectancy theory of motivation significantly influence organizational structure and academic staff performance. Based on these results, the study recommends that future research should focus on performance monitoring as a tool for enhancing academic staff performance in private universities. Additionally, the study suggests that universities should adopt a hybrid organizational structure that combines functional, divisional, and matrix elements to balance specialization, collaboration, and flexibility. Furthermore, enhancing professional development through continuous training, implementing transparent reward systems that clearly link performance to rewards, and fostering a collaborative culture with team-building activities and open communication are crucial for improving staff performance and motivation.

Keywords: Administrative Theory, Expectancy Theory, Organizational Structure, Academic Staff Performance

Introduction

The performance of academic staff in private universities is essential to the quality of education and the overall success of these institutions by directly influencing academic outcomes, research productivity, and institutional reputation. Organizational structure is a fundamental determinant of institutional functioning which significantly impacts academic staff performance in these universities. The way an institution is structured can either facilitate or hinder the effective execution of tasks, coordination among staff, and overall institutional efficiency. Therefore, understanding the relationship between

organizational structure and academic staff performance is crucial for enhancing the quality of education in private universities, particularly in Uganda, where higher education is experiencing rapid growth and transformation (Geoffrey, et al., 2024; Juma, & Eze, 2024).

To provide a comprehensive understanding of this relationship, this theoretical review integrates insights from Administrative Management Theory and Expectancy Theory of Motivation. Both theories offer valuable perspectives on how organizational structures impact academic staff performance in private universities in Uganda. Administrative Management Theory, developed by Henri Fayol in 1916, emphasizes the importance of managerial practices and organizational efficiency through principles such as division of work, authority and responsibility, discipline, unity of command, and unity of direction (Ali et al., 2021; Eze, et al., 2023). These principles suggest that well-defined organizational structures that are characterized by clear roles, responsibilities, and authority lines, can enhance performance by ensuring that employees are adequately guided and supported in their roles (Mathebula & Barnard, 2020). For example, Fayol's principle of the division of work aligns with the functional structure commonly used in private universities, where specialization promotes efficiency but may also create silos that hinder communication and overall performance according to Waal et al. (2019).

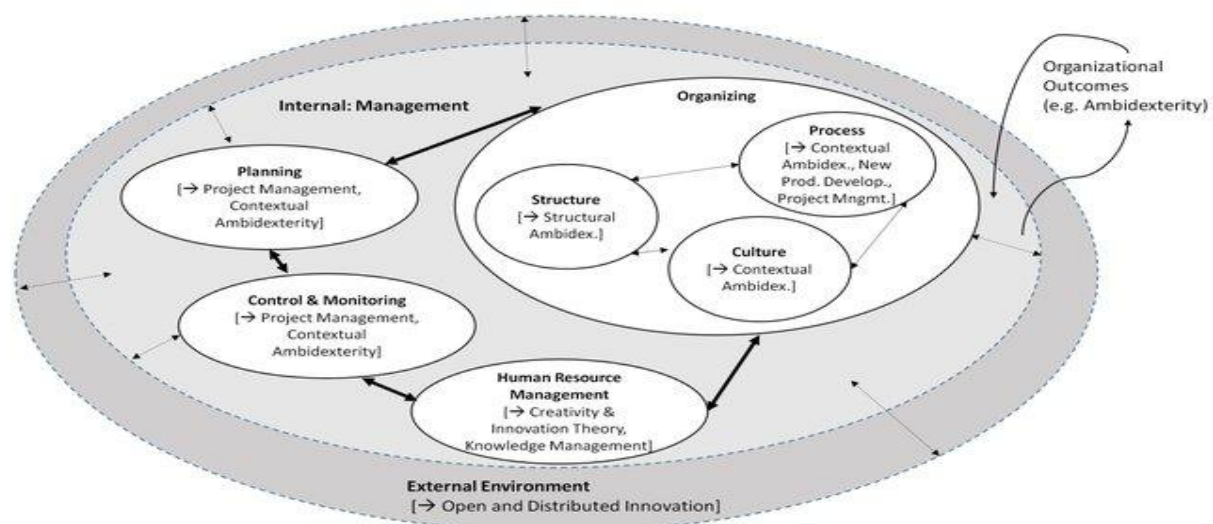


Figure 1. Framework based on Henry Fayol's (1916) functions of management theory It is inspired by Henry Fayol's theory of functions of management, uploaded by (Alizadeh, 2018).

Expectancy Theory of Motivation, developed by Victor Vroom in 1964 also offers an additional insight into how organizational structure influences motivation and performance among private university staff. This theory states that motivation is a function of an individual's expectations that will lead to performance (expectancy), performance will lead to outcomes (instrumentality), and the value of these outcomes (valence) (Vroom, 1964). In the context of academic staff performance, Expectancy Theory suggests that organizational structures that provide clear goals, adequate resources, and professional development opportunities enhance staff confidence in achieving performance targets (Fang, 2023). For instance, transparent evaluation and reward systems in universities would significantly impact staff motivation and ensure that staff performance leads to desired outcomes. When academic staff perceive that their efforts are fairly assessed and appropriately rewarded, they are more likely to be engaged and motivated in contributing to a higher performance level and the achievement of institutional goals (Kansiime & Singh, 2023).

Motivation



Figure 2. Expectancy Theory was proposed by Victor Vroom (1964)

Both theories highlight the critical role of organizational structure in influencing academic staff performance. By applying the principles of Administrative Management Theory, private universities can create structures that promote efficiency and enhance performance through clear roles, responsibilities, and accountability mechanisms (Tadle-Zaragosa & Sonsona, 2021; Eze, et al., 2023a). Similarly, by adopting structures that align with the principles of Expectancy Theory, universities can promote a motivational environment that supports high academic staff performance. Therefore, private universities would have a well-structured organization which indicates that aligning organizational rewards with staff values, such as career advancement and research opportunities, enhances motivation and performance, as emphasized by Franco-Santos and Otley (2018).

Organizational structures in private universities in Uganda can be broadly categorized into functional, divisional, matrix, and flat structures. Each structure has unique characteristics that influence academic staff performance differently. For example, functional structures, characterized by specialization, align with Fayol's principle of the division of work, promoting efficiency but potentially creating silos that hinder communication (Rishipal, 2014). In contrast, divisional structures, based on academic disciplines or geographical locations, enhance focus and accountability but may lead to duplication of resources (Waal et al., 2019). Matrix structures, which combine functional and divisional elements, facilitate collaboration and resource sharing but can create confusion regarding authority and responsibility (Turyamureeba et al., 2023). Flat structures, on the other hand, promote flexibility and quick decision-making but may lack clear authority lines, affecting discipline and unity of command (Rishipal, 2014).

Therefore, understanding how different organizational structures impact academic staff performance is essential for designing effective management practices in private universities. By applying the principles of Administrative Management Theory and Expectancy Theory of Motivation, universities can enhance managerial efficiency, ensure clear authority lines, and promote a motivational environment that supports high performance. The findings from previous studies highlight the importance of aligning organizational structures with both administrative management principles and motivational factors to enhance academic outcomes in higher education institutions (Ali et al., 2021; Franco-Santos & Otley, 2018; Kansime & Singh, 2023). As private universities in Uganda continue to evolve, understanding the impact of organizational structure on academic staff performance will remain a key area of focus for educational researchers and practitioners. This study aims to contribute to the broader discourse on educational management and performance enhancement in higher education institutions by examining these theories and their applicability in the context of private universities in Uganda.

Methodology

The methods used in retrieving the analyzed articles, keywords such as performances, monitoring, academic staff performance, and private universities were used. The search engines used are databases such as Google Scholar, JSTOR, and academic journals specific to the field of education. First 60 articles were downloaded, the articles were screened and found that 30 are relevant in this study which were analyzed using content analysis. A comprehensive literature review was conducted to gather relevant studies, reports, and articles on Organizational structure and academic staff performance in private universities using administrative management theory and expectancy theory of motivation

Findings

The administrative management theory developed by Henri Fayol (1841–1925), the theory plays a crucial role in academic staff performance within private universities. In relation to this theory, (Bell, Filatotchev, Krause, & Hitt, 2018) asserts that principles of management provide a framework for efficiently and effectively organizing, planning, coordinating, and controlling activities in private universities, thus implementing these principles can lead to improved academic staff performance and overall institutional success. Moreover, according to Fayol's Theory (1841–1925), division of labor suggests that tasks should be divided among individuals or groups to increase specialization and efficiency.

In private universities, this can mean assigning specific roles and responsibilities to academic staff based on their expertise. Specialization can lead to improved teaching and research outcomes (Innocent, Daniel & Gambo, 2024). In term of the authority and responsibility, Fayol maintains that authority and responsibility should be clearly defined. Academic staff should have the authority to make decisions related to their areas of responsibility. This can enhance their motivation and accountability, leading to better academic staff performance. Whereas discipline is a fundamental principle in administrative management. Private universities need to have clear policies and procedures in place to ensure that academic staff adhere to professional standards. Effective discipline can help maintain a positive work environment and enhance staff performance (Koigi, Marwa, Theuri, & Kiragu, 2018). Another concept is unity of command, this principle states that an employee should have only one supervisor to avoid conflicting directives. In private universities, ensuring that academic staff receive clear instructions from a single authority of the university can reduce confusion and improve performance (Koigi, Marwa, Theuri, & Kiragu, 2018).

In this study the universities considered are private universities. Unity of Direction is also another part of the administrators' role in organization in the theory of Administrative Management. According to Saurombe and Barkhuizen, (2022) Unity of direction means that activities with a common objective should be coordinated under one plan. Private universities should align their academic goals and strategies, ensuring that academic staff are working cohesively toward a common mission, which can improve overall performance. The last administrative role according to the Fayol's Theory (1841–1925) is the scalar chain, which emphasizes the hierarchy of authority in an organization. Private universities should establish a clear chain of command, which facilitates effective communication and decision-making, ultimately benefiting academic staff performance (Daft, 2018). Centralization and Decentralization: Private universities need to strike a balance between centralization and decentralization. Some decisions may be centralized, while others should be made at lower levels, considering the expertise and experience of academic staff. Finding the right balance can enhance academic staff performance (Edwards, 2018).

The second theory which underpinned this study is Expectancy Theory of Motivation developed by Victor Vroom (Vroom, 1964), Theory posits that an individual's motivation to perform a task is

determined by their expectation that their efforts will lead to a desired outcome and that will be valuable to them. In the context of academic staff performance in private universities, the Expectancy Theory can have a significant role in understanding and improving staff motivation and performance (Lauring et al., 2019). According to Edabu and Anumaka, (2014) differences in the application of motivation tools by gender among private universities in central Uganda, as well as to examine how these tools are used in these institutions to encourage academic staff to complete assigned work.

The ex-post facto design is used in the descriptive comparative survey designs. 665 respondents took part in the research. Among them were senior lecturers, assistant lecturers, professors, associate professors, lecturers, and teaching assistants. The algorithm developed by Sloven was used to choose the responders. The technique of proportionate stratified sampling was utilized. Universities were chosen using basic random sampling. Data was gathered from academic personnel at four private universities: Nkumba University (77 academic staff members), Uganda Christian University (65 academic staff members), Cavendish University (37 academic staff members), and Kampala International University (215 academic staff members). using two sets of specially designed, non-standardized questions for study.

Descriptive analysis and the independent t-sample test were used to analyze the data. There was disagreement on the application of motivational methods, implying a lack of motivation in private institutions located in central Uganda, there was no discernible variation in the application of motivational methods based on gender. In conclusion, low production was caused by uninspired academic staff. To retain and prevent excessive labor costs, the study suggested basing wage offers on labor market circumstances, cost of living, and performance.

According to Lokman et al. (2022), "Investigating motivation for learning via Vroom's Theory " Academic staff members need to believe that their efforts, such as teaching and research activities, will lead to successful performance outcomes. Universities should provide clear expectations and support, such as adequate resources and training, to help staff believe in their ability to perform effectively. The study recommends a direct connection between their performance and the rewards they receive, Private universities should ensure that the evaluation and reward systems are transparent and aligned with the achievements of academic staff. These could include promotions, salary increases, recognition, or other incentives (Barkhuizen, Masale & Schutte, 2022).

Again, the rewards offered by the university should be valuable and attractive to academic staff. Private universities should understand the diverse needs and preferences of their staff members and tailor rewards to match individual and collective preferences. This can include financial incentives, professional development opportunities, and a positive work environment. Increased Motivation. When academic staff members believe that their efforts will lead to improved performance and that this performance will result in desirable rewards, they are more motivated to excel in their roles. Motivated staff are more likely to be engaged, committed, and enthusiastic about their work (Galstyan & Tuji, 2019).

According to Ekhsan, Parashakti, Hikmah, Bangsa, & Nusantara (2023), expectancy theory suggests enhanced Productivity. When universities align the efforts and performance of academic staff with meaningful rewards, it can lead to higher levels of productivity. This would enable academic Staff members to invest time and effort into their teaching, research, and administrative duties. Again, it posits for Improved Retention, Motivated academic staff members are more likely to stay with their current employers, this is crucial for private universities to retain experienced and talented lecturers, thereby maintaining the quality of education and research (Ekhsan et al., 2023). More so, expectancy

theory is set to encourage Innovative Teaching and Research. Hence motivated academic staff members are more likely to be innovate and contribute to the growth and development of the university, they may engage in cutting-edge research, adopt innovative teaching methods, and participate in curriculum development. It again brings Positive Work Culture. Applying the Expectancy Theory can lead to a positive work culture in private universities, when staff members see that their efforts are recognized and rewarded, it can foster a collaborative and supportive environment (Barkhuizen, Masale & Schutte, 2022).

Whereas performance monitoring is management technique designed to improve the performance of the organization by monitoring what workers do at work to meet organizational objectives (Berkovich, 2023). Furthermore, expectancy theory mentions of three crucial tasks that are involved in performance monitoring include information analysis, information gathering, and action (Atwebembeire & Malunda, 2019). Again, the need for performance monitoring (information collection), information analysis, consequence management, performance evaluations, and performance discussion (doing action) was emphasized. As the study incorporated the performance discussion, performance reviews, performance tracking, and consequence management techniques suggested by the authors previously mentioned, these were viewed as being crucial for university-level learning and research of the highest caliber (Malunda, Ssentamu & Atwebembeire, 2021). However high-quality teaching includes a variety of elements, including the design of the course content and an effective curriculum, the use of a range of learning contexts such as guided independent study, project-based learning, collaborative learning, experimentation, the request and use of feedback, the accurate assessment of learning outcomes, the creation of conducive learning environments, and the provision of student support services are key (Christopher 2020).

Theoretical Implications of the Study

Theoretical implications of his study when analysed based on Administrative Management Theory and Expectancy Theory of Motivation, the theoretical impact of Organizational Structure and Academic Staff Performance in private universities in Uganda reveal an important link between structured management practices and staff motivation. Henri Fayol's Administrative Management Theory (1916) emphasizes the importance of clearly defined roles, unity of command, and division of labour, which are essential for optimizing academic staff performance. The application of Fayol's principles, such as clear division of tasks based on expertise and establishing a hierarchical chain of command, is critical in private universities to enhance specialization and streamline decision-making processes. This structured approach promotes efficient management and contributes to a more effective and disciplined academic environment. Ensuring that academic staff have well-defined responsibilities, and a clear authority structure can lead to improved performance, as evidenced by the findings in the study, which highlight the benefits of aligning roles and responsibilities with staff expertise and maintaining a clear chain of command (Daft, 2018; Koigi, Marwa, Theuri, & Kiragu, 2018).

On the other hand, the Expectancy Theory of Motivation, developed by Victor Vroom, provides a framework for understanding how academic staff's expectations about their efforts, rewards, and performance can significantly influence their motivation and productivity. The theory suggests that staff members are more motivated when they perceive a clear link between their efforts and desired outcomes, such as promotions or salary increases. This aligns with the study's findings, which emphasize the need for private universities to offer transparent and meaningful rewards that are perceived as valuable by the staff (Barkhuizen, Masale & Schutte, 2022). By implementing effective performance monitoring and reward systems that reflect staff achievements, private universities can

enhance motivation, leading to higher productivity and retention rates. Furthermore, applying Expectancy Theory can promote a positive work culture, encouraging innovative teaching and research practices, which are essential for maintaining high-quality education (Galstyan & Tuji, 2019; Ekhsan et al., 2023). Thus, integrating both Administrative Management Theory and Expectancy Theory provides a comprehensive approach to improving academic staff performance and institutional success in private universities.

Practical Implications of the Study

Applying Henri Fayol's Administrative Management Theory (1916) and Victor Vroom's Expectancy Theory of Motivation (1964) to the organization structure and academic staff performance in private universities in Uganda has several practical implications. Fayol's principles, such as division of labor, authority and responsibility, discipline, unity of command, unity of direction, and scalar chain, emphasize the need for clear organizational structures and efficient management practices. In the context of private universities, these principles can guide the development of an effective organizational framework that enhances academic staff performance. For example, assigning specific roles based on expertise (division of labor) and ensuring a clear chain of command (scalar chain) can streamline decision-making and improve coordination among staff. Implementing Fayol's principles helps create a well-structured environment where staff responsibilities are clearly defined, contributing to better performance and institutional success (Bell, Filatotchev, Krause, & Hitt, 2018; Daft, 2018).

Incorporating Expectancy Theory into this framework highlights the importance of aligning academic staff's efforts with rewards that are perceived as valuable. According to Vroom's theory, motivation is influenced by the belief that effort will lead to desired outcomes (Vroom, 1964). For private universities in Uganda, this means developing transparent reward systems that clearly link performance to rewards such as promotions, salary increases, and recognition (Barkhuizen, Masale & Schutte, 2022). Additionally, providing adequate resources and support to ensure that staff can perform effectively is crucial (Lokman et al., 2022). A focus on individualized rewards and professional development opportunities can further enhance motivation and performance, leading to higher productivity and improved retention of talented staff (Ekhsan et al., 2023; Galstyan & Tuji, 2019).

To effectively integrate these theories, private universities in Uganda should consider adopting a hybrid organizational structure that combines functional, divisional, and matrix elements. This approach balances specialization with collaboration and flexibility, addressing the diverse needs of academic staff while promoting a cohesive work environment. Continuous professional development should be emphasized to boost staff expertise and confidence, supporting their role in achieving institutional goals. Furthermore, promoting a collaborative culture through team-building activities and open communication channels will enhance staff engagement and motivation (Atwebembeire & Malunda, 2019). By implementing these strategies, universities can create an environment that supports high-quality teaching and research, ultimately leading to better academic staff performance and institutional success (Christopher, 2020; Berkovich, 2023).

Conclusion

The organizational structure of private universities in Uganda plays a crucial role in the performance of academic staff. Drawing on administrative management theory, the establishment of clear lines of authority, division of labor, and disciplined procedures is essential for an efficient and effective educational environment. By defining roles and responsibilities, universities can improve accountability and streamline operations, leading to better staff performance. Additionally, expectancy theory of

motivation emphasizes the importance of aligning staff expectations with institutional goals, where motivation is strengthened when staff believe their efforts will lead to desired outcomes and rewards. Consequently, designing effective reward systems and providing professional development opportunities are vital for maintaining high motivation and performance. A balanced organizational structure, incorporating elements from functional, divisional, and matrix models, can address the diverse needs of academic staff, fostering a high-performing environment. Ultimately, private universities in Uganda should adopt a holistic approach, integrating management principles and motivational strategies to create a supportive environment that promotes academic excellence and sustainable growth.

Recommendations

- 1) Adopt a Hybrid Structure: Combining functional, divisional, and matrix elements to balance specialization, collaboration, and flexibility.
- 2) Enhance Professional Development: Provide continuous training and development to improve staff expertise and confidence.
- 3) Implement Transparent Reward Systems: Ensure clear links between performance and rewards to motivate staff.
- 4) Foster a Collaborative Culture: Promote team spirit and unity through team-building activities and open communication channels.

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