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THE INFLUENCE OF EXTROVERSION ON EMPLOYEE RETENTION IN UGANDAN HIGHER EDUCATION: A CASE OF UGANDA CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY

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ABSTRACT

The problem of employee turnover has emerged as a strategic issue for universities facing growing competition for skilled academic and non-academic professionals, higher turnover among employees, and evolving work practices demands. The purpose of this study was to investigate the effect of extroversion on employees' retention at Uganda Christian University (UCU) in Uganda. The study was based on Personality Traits Theory, Social Exchange Theory, and Job Embeddedness Theory. A convergent parallel research design with both quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis methods was used. Structured questionnaires were used for data collection from both academic and non-academic staff, and interviews and open-ended responses from the university leaders and key informants were used for collecting qualitative data. The results showed that extroversion of leaders was a very strong statistically significant predictor of employee turnover (Estimate = 1.830, $p < 0.001$). Leaders who were extroverted were more effective in facilitating open communication, teamwork, interpersonal relationships, employee engagement, inclusivity, and supportive work environments, which in turn resulted in increased employee retention. When leaders shared a friendly and engaging attitude and were visible and reachable, employees felt valued, recognized, and psychologically connected to the university. The study also confirmed that extroverted leadership had a positive relationship with trust, organizational commitment, and job satisfaction, which in turn led to lower employee turnover. The findings also showed that the over-dominance, attention-seeking behaviors, and over-socialized leadership of certain extrovert leaders could have a detrimental impact on the perception of employees and relationships within the workplace if not complemented with emotional intelligence and inclusiveness. The study concludes that extroversion is one of the most powerful characteristics of a leader in retaining employees in university settings, especially when teamwork, communication, and interpersonal relationships are critical. The study suggests that universities can improve their leadership development initiatives by focusing on leadership attributes such as communication, emotional intelligence, employee engagement, and inclusive leadership practices among leadership levels within the institution.

Keywords: Extroversion, Employee Retention, Leadership, Personality, Higher Education

INTRODUCTION

Today, employee retention in higher education institutions is considered one of the most important challenges facing the world (Likoko and

Kipkenei, 2022; Zahidi, 2025). Academic and administrative staff members are crucial for the achievement of the institutions' goals in relation to

teaching, research, innovation, and institutional development in universities (Kabasiita et al., 2024). In South and East Africa, universities continue to strategize to maintain their competent staff and attract more in the market (Injikuru & Etomaru, 2024). But a high percentage turnover in employees is still a problem that poses a threat to the efficiency, continuity, and delivery of services of the university, particularly in the context of a competitive and limited-resource university (Injikuru et al., 2024).

The pressure on universities in Uganda to recruit and retain competent staff is growing due to the growing competition from other Universities, government institutions, international organizations, and the private sector (Bigabwenkya & Binta, 2024). The loss of employees in universities has an impact on the loss of institutional memory, employee morale, research productivity, student support services, and stability of the organization (Ssali & Onen, 2019). As a result, the attention of institutions has increasingly been directed toward leadership as one of the factors important in determining satisfaction of employees, organizational commitment and retention (Tushabe et al., 2025).

While the impact of leadership styles on employee turnover is the topic of many studies, few have explored the impact of personality traits of leaders, especially extroversion. One of the core factors of personality, extroversion is defined by being sociable, assertive, enthusiastic, communicative, self-confident, and engaging with others (Räsänen & Lippert, 2024). Buller (2025) states that extroverts get energy from social interaction and from external engagement and exhibit behaviours that are outgoing and relationship-oriented.

In an organizational context, extroverted leadership is often linked to open communication, collaboration, visibility, motivation, and active involvement of employees. Leaders like these are likely to be accessible, dynamic, and engaging, fostering positive relationships and cultures in the

workplace. Farrell (2017) and Räsänen & Lippert (2024) were able to show that extroverted leadership acts as a positive influence in employee retention through increases in trust, recognition, participation, and psychological attachment to organizations.

Extroversion can also have its problems if it is overused in the dominance form, attention seeking, or over-centralization of communication (Freeze, 2019). Extrovert leaders can sometimes be seen by others as controlling, less listening, and more needing to be seen and recognized. The conflicting viewpoints leave the question open as to whether extroversion is related to employee turnover, especially in higher education settings in developing countries.

Ensuring the retention of competent workers is critical to maintaining quality teaching and learning, competitiveness, and providing efficient services at Uganda Christian University (UCU). It is, therefore, equally vital to understand the effect of extroverted leadership on the retention of employees in the university in the context of strengthening leadership development, improving organizational relationships, and enhancing the stability of employees in the university. This study thus focused on the effects of extroversion on retention of employees at Uganda Christian University. The study followed the research questions: What is the level of Extroversion among leaders in Uganda Christian University?, and What is the Influence of Extroversion on Employee Retention in Uganda Christian University?

Literature Review

Theoretical Review

The study “The influence of Extroversion on Employee Retention: Evidence from Uganda Christian University” utilizes three theoretical approaches, namely Trait Theory of Personality, Social Exchange Theory (SET), and Job Embeddedness Theory (JET). These theories offer a basis for understanding the link between

personality traits of leaders, specifically extroversion, and leadership actions, interpersonal relationships in the workplace, and employees' retention in universities.

Trait Theory of Personality: The most basic explanation of extroversion as a personality dimension comes from a group of theories known as Trait Theory of Personality, which was proposed by Carl Jung in 1921 (Jung, 1971). The theory assumes that people have a consistent set of personality characteristics that shape their behaviors, interactions, and reactions to their surroundings (Brewer, 2019). Jung's view of extroverts is that they are typically sociable, active, optimistic, and outgoing (Sutton, 2025). In an organizational context, these tendencies can affect the leadership's functionality, as the ability to involve employees, establish relationships, and foster communication is more typical of an extroverted leader. Therefore, extroverted leaders can improve employee satisfaction and decrease the likelihood of employees' intention to quit by establishing socially supportive work environments (Caprelli, 2024). The theory, however, acknowledges that the personality of leaders has a different impact on employee retention in different situations within an organization, such as the work environment, which can either enhance or inhibit the impact of leaders' personality on employee retention (Eshete et al., 2025).

The Social Exchange Theory (SET) by Homans (1958) explains why people stay in an organization by emphasizing the concept of reciprocity between employees and an organization. According to the theory, employee relationships take place with the organization based on perceived exchanges, which means that an employee's commitment, efforts, and loyalty are driven by the support, recognition, and rewards provided by the employer (Hom et al., 2009). In the context of the university, leaders' personalities and leadership styles affect the quality of social exchanges between leaders and employees. Effective leaders who are extroverted

and encourage communication, teamwork, and social support can foster positive interactions that lead to greater employee engagement, satisfaction, and retention (Turyahikayo et al., 2023; Javaid, 2020). On the other hand, unhelpful relationships with colleagues, or poor leadership, can decrease employees' sense of belonging to the institution and lead to a higher likelihood of turnover.

The Job Embeddedness Theory (JET) developed by Mitchell et al. (2001) suggests that the personal factors linking workers to their jobs are responsible for why workers stay in their organizations. The theory suggests that there are three types of embeddedness: Link, Fit, and Sacrifice (Setthakorn et al., 2024). These links are the relationships between employees and their peers, their superiors, and the institution; fit is the agreement between employees' values and those of the organization; and sacrifice is the advantage employees would gain if they were to leave the organization (Mitchell et al., 2001). At Universities, staff are more likely to stay when they feel good relationships with leaders, work conditions are supportive, career opportunities are available, and they feel like they belong. These relationships can be further reinforced by leaders' personality traits such as extroversion, which foster social interaction and employee involvement (Taylor, 2020).

These theories describe the link between extroversion and higher education employee turnover. According to Trait Theory, the characteristics of the leader's personality affect the leader's behaviour; according to Social Exchange Theory, the behaviour of a leader leads to reciprocal relationships between the employee and the university, which in turn affects the employee's decision to remain at the university; and according to Job Embeddedness Theory, this relationship has an impact on employees' decisions to stay. Thus, the combination of these theories offers a comprehensive approach to the analysis of whether the extroverted leaders in Ugandan Universities provide supportive workplaces, thereby improving

employees' satisfaction, commitment, engagement, and retention.

The study focuses on extroversion in Higher Education in Uganda.

Extroversion is one of the key personality factors in higher education that affects communication, relates to inter-personal relations, leadership behaviour, and retention of employees. Extroverted employees and leaders are viewed as open, socially connected, self-confident, and good at establishing positive relationships in a college environment. Babar & Tahir (2020) believe that companies that allow extroverts to voice their opinions and grievances have a conducive working environment, which increases employee retention. Effective communication further fosters employees' dedication and decreases turnover intentions (Rangasamy, 2023).

The findings in Ugandan universities are mixed as far as the impact of extroversion on retention is concerned. The study conducted by Mayende & Musenze (2014) indicated that extraversion was a significant determinant of turnover intentions in the employees of Busoga University; personality traits thus affect employees' turnover intentions. Sitthiwarongchai et al. (2019) and Mary Catherine (2024) revealed, however, that in their study extroversion did not play a significant role in turnover intentions or retention; thus, other personality factors and organizational factors may be more significant.

Extroverted leaders could foster retention within university leadership through social connections, teamwork, and employee engagement. According to Lubua (2022), extroverted leaders are good with people, and they can identify the needs of their employees and build better relationships at the office. Amir (2020) also states that extroverts might be more able to manage stress in the workplace due to their capacity to obtain social support and participate in teamwork. This can help lower burnout and improve employee satisfaction and commitment.

However, extroversion can also be a negative attribute for retention in an excessive dominant or aggressive communication. Psychology. Town (2024) states that extroverts could be too critical or pushy in their approach to problems, and Lubua (2022) suggests that introverted leaders might have a bias towards ideas that align with them, leaving employees with the impression of one. Such behaviors can lead to decreased employee satisfaction and increased turnover.

Extroversion is also associated with leadership styles, such as extroverted leaders tend to be transformational and participative, which can improve employee engagement and organizational commitment (Clarke et al., 2022). But the impact of extroversion is contingent on the institutional setting and the nature of the balance between assertiveness and employee engagement by leaders. There has been a small amount of research in Uganda's higher education sector that has looked into the interplay between the leader's extroversion, leadership styles, and working conditions and their impact on employee retention. As a result, the current study, with a focus on the influence of extroversion on employee retention: evidence from UCU, aims to fill this lacuna by testing the hypothesis that extroversion fosters employee commitment and intention to remain in the organization or that it poses difficulties that affect employee intention to stay.

Employee Retention in Higher Education in Uganda

Employee retention has emerged as a major issue in the higher education sector as universities rely on dedicated and experienced staff to ensure the quality of their academic programs, the productivity of their research, and the success of their operations. Employee retention is defined as the desire of the employee to stay in a particular organization and not look for other employment opportunities (Huang et al., 2006; Inda & Mishra, 2016). Employee perspectives of the value, support, motivation, and satisfaction in the work

environment, however, are more important than just organizational retention initiatives (Janarthanan et al., 2023; Singh, 2019).

In Uganda's tertiary education, employee retention is still a problem because of the demands of teaching, scarcity of career progression opportunities, inadequate remuneration, leadership practices, and evolving employment conditions. Academic and administrative staff are critical for maintaining the knowledge and service delivery of universities, but they can leave universities due to inadequate leadership, lack of support, little professional development, or poor working conditions (Justine Injikuru & Irene Etomaru, 2024; Ssali & Onen, 2019). This turnover leads to the loss of experienced staff, lower morale among the remaining employees, and higher hiring and training expenses.

There are organizational and individual factors that affect employee retention in universities. Organizational factors such as supportive leadership, fair policies, working conditions, compensation, and career development opportunities, and individual perceptions of satisfaction, commitment, engagement, and belonging, all impact employees' decisions to stay (Ahmed, 2024; Karungi, 2024; Tania & Kowser, 2022). According to Andari et al. (2021) and Yameen et al. (2021), employees who feel their contribution is acknowledged and their career is being promoted will tend to be loyal and committed to their institutions.

In universities, employee retention plays a major role for a leader (Mugizi et al., 2023). Leaders who are responsive, communicative, equitable, and engaging in institutional activities are more likely to retain employees (Nassani et al., 2024). On the other hand, unskilful leadership, lack of support, and low employee engagement can lead to higher employee dissatisfaction and turnover intentions (Khaled, 2025). Consequently, retention is viewed more and more as a management issue, that is,

establishing environments that foster engagement and commitment as well as employee wellbeing.

In the context of a university in Uganda, the indicators of employee retention are job satisfaction, employee commitment and engagement, perceived organizational support, career development opportunities, and absenteeism. Job satisfaction is the positive attitude of an employee when working in their work environment, whereas commitment and engagement are the positive feelings of an employee towards his/her job and willingness to contribute beyond the requirements of the job (Singhal, 2020; Tafesse & Mohammedhussen, 2020). The higher an employee is found on the career ladder, the more the institution supports him, the more he is willing to be part of the institution (Moreira et al., 2022).

To address the challenges of employee retention in higher education institutions in Uganda, it is important to understand the experiences and perceptions of the employees in these institutions regarding leadership, working environment, and career prospects. While a few studies have focused on the issues of retention, little has been studied about the personal characteristics of the leader, specifically extroversion, on employee retention in universities. This study aims to fill this gap.

Methodology

Research Philosophy and Approach

The pragmatic research approach was adopted for this study as it centers on approaches that are most useful in solving the research problem with little regard to methodological traditions (Kiiza 2023). According to pragmatism, both objective and subjective forms of knowledge should be incorporated to enable the researcher to approach a social phenomenon like employee retention from multiple perspectives (Alsharidi, 2025). To affirm this approach, the study employed a mixed-methods research design, with both quantitative and qualitative research methods.

The quantitative was employed to measure the relationship between extroversion and employee retention using statistical analysis, while qualitative was used to get deeper insights into the lived experiences of the participants and their contextual interpretation of the leadership behaviours within the university. Both methods were integrated to support triangulation of results that resulted in the increased validity, depth, and comprehensiveness of the results of the study (Islam et al., 2022).

Research Design

The research method was a mix of methods, convergent parallel research design. The design allowed for quantitative and qualitative data to be collected and analyzed simultaneously from a cross-sectional perspective to gain a full picture of the effect of extroversion on employee retention (Haque, 2022).

Study Area, Population, and Sample Size

This study was carried out at Uganda Christian University (UCU) in Central Uganda. The target population was 135 full-time staff members, comprising 90 academic staff and 45 non-academic staff who had worked at the university for three or more years. The selection of full-time staff members was based on the assumption that their experience and knowledge of institutional practices meant they would be able to offer informed opinions on behaviours of leadership and employee turnover.

According to Slovene's formula (Creswell, 2023), the number of 101 respondents was calculated, and then the respondents were proportionately assigned to the two categories of staff. The sampling method employed was stratified simple random sampling, where the study population was first divided into two categories: academic and non-academic staff, and then respondents were sampled randomly from each stratum, as shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Quantitative Sample Size Distribution of Respondents

No.	University	Academic Staff (AS)	Non-Academic Staff (NAS)	Target Population	Sample size (AS)	Sample size (NAS)	Sampling technique
1	UCU	90	45	135	67	34	Stratified and simple random sampling techniques

Source: UCU Human Resource Department, 2025.

To add to the quantitative data, 15 key informants were purposively chosen from the institutions involved in higher education governance and management, such as the National Council for Higher Education (NCHE), the Ministry of Education and Sports (MoES), and the University Staff Association Leaders (USALs). Their wealth of expertise on higher education policy, institutional governance, and human resource management helped give contextual frameworks on leadership and employee retention.

Table 2: Qualitative Sample Size & Distribution of Participants

No.	Category of Participants	Sample Size	Sampling technique
1	NCHE Officials	5	Purposive sampling
2	MoES Officials	5	Purposive sampling
3	USALs	5	Purposive sampling
Totals		15	

Source: MoEs, 2025; NCHE, 2022

Sampling Procedure

Key informants and university leaders were purposively selected because of their experience and knowledge on the subject of leadership and employee retention. Stratified and simple random sampling methods were employed to select academic and non-academic staff to provide good representation of the various categories of staff as recommended by Rahman (2023).

Data Collection Methods

Structured questionnaires with items on the Likert scale that measured the extroverted leadership behaviors and indicators of employee retention were used to gather quantitative data. Qualitative data were collected from open-ended questions and interviews to elicit information about participants' experiences, perceptions, and explanations about extroverted leadership and retention (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018).

Validity and Reliability

The research instruments were given to experts in the field of Organizational behavior and HRM to assess content validity, which resulted in a Content Validity Index (CVI) of 0.94. This was greater than the minimum acceptable content validity (Amin, 2005) of 0.70, which indicates that the items were representative of the constructs being measured. Based on the expert feedback, items were revised such that those that were deemed unclear or less relevant were modified before administration of the questionnaire. The high CVI thus validates the instrument's suitability in that it can measure the effect of extroversion on employee retention in Uganda Christian University (Amin, 2005; Prabhat Pandey, 2015).

Table 3: Instrument Overall Reliability Test Results

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items
0.936	0.941

Reliability test for the study instrument was done by Cronbach's Alpha coefficient analysis. The Cronbach's alpha coefficient obtained from the test was 0.94, which was very high, indicating that there is a high internal consistency among the items of the test. Mugenda & Mugenda (2003) describe Cronbach's Alpha as a measure of consistency of items within a scale, and as a measure of the extent to which the items measure the same construct. Furthermore, Creswell (2023) suggests that a test of 0.70 or above is a good alpha coefficient to use in establishing reliability in social science research. Thus, the coefficient obtained was 0.94, which was high enough and suitable for data collection and showed good internal consistency among all the measurement items used in the study.

Data Analysis

Data were analysed using SPSS with descriptive statistics, and Linear Mixed Models were used to determine the influence of extroversion on employee retention. In this study, a Linear Mixed Model with fixed effects was used to appropriately analyze the relationship between extroversion and retention of employees, considering the nature of the data collected from respondents in the various departments and sections of the university. This was appropriate due to the ability to account for unobserved heterogeneity, which may be present in responses grouped at the item level, as well as individual-level variation, and to derive more robust and reliable estimates than possible with traditional regression methods (Schork, 2025).

Furthermore, the method is suitable for data that potentially do not satisfy the strict independence assumption that is typical of ordinary least squares regression, which is often the case in organizational studies where answers are likely to be grouped within departments and/or units. The fixed-effects specification also allowed the estimated relationship between extroversion and retention to stand alone from any other unobserved but constant factors in the context of the study. For this reason, the Linear Mixed Model was used to

provide more accurate and statistically sound means of accomplishing the goals.

Qualitative data analysis was done thematically, identifying patterns, themes, and participant explanations in NVivo version 12 (Schuttler, 2024).

Ethical Considerations

The study was ethically approved by the Hospice Africa Uganda Research Ethics Committee (HAUREC) with reference number HAU-2024-145, the Uganda National Council for Science and Technology (UNCST) with reference number SS3673ES, and the management of Uganda Christian University. All the participants were

informed about the study, and informed consent was obtained; anonymity, confidentiality, and privacy were ensured throughout the study.

Results

Both phases of data collection had a high response rate. The quantitative phase received 93 out of 101 questionnaires (92.4%), which increased the credibility of the findings. The qualitative phase involved 15 of the 20 targeted interviews, which was deemed to be a satisfactory level of response to provide useful qualitative data and interpretation for the study.

Table 5: Demographic characteristics of study participants (n=101)

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Sex	Male	22	51.1
	Female	20	48.9
Staff Group	Academic Staff	29	66.7
	Non-Academic Staff	15	33.3
Age	18-30 years	9	21.5
	31-40 years	14	33.3
	41-45 years	10	22.2
	Above 45 years	10	23.0
Education level	A' Level Certificate and Below	1	1.5
	Diploma		
	Bachelors	1	3.0
	Masters	10	22.2
	PhD or beyond	24	53.3
		9	20.0

Demographic information for the respondents suggests that there is little gender difference within the sample: 22 (51.1%) were male and 20 (48.9%) were female. When asked about the category of the staff, 29 (66.7%) were academic staff, and 15 (33.3%) were non-academic staff. This suggests that the results mainly reflect the views of academic staff but that there are also important contributions from the views of non-academic staff.

The age distribution shows that the largest proportion of respondents were aged 31–40 years (33.3%), followed by those above 45 years (23.0%), 41–45 years (22.2%), and 18–30 years (21.5%). It

implies that the study reflects the perspectives of those who are middle-career or more experienced in the workplace, where they may have more institutional knowledge and experience.

Educational level: most of them had Master's degrees (53.3%), secondly Bachelor's degrees (22.2%), and lastly PhD qualification or above (20.0%). Few had Diploma qualifications (3.0%) or below A' Level (1.5%) certificates. In general, the respondents were highly educated people, and this will help to make the data collected from the respondents credible, reliable, and of good quality to support the validity of the study findings.

Table 6: Descriptive Statistics for Response Distribution on extroversion statements (n = 101)

Opinion Statements	Mean	Std. D
My supervisor tends to thrive in fast-paced dynamic environments	3.44	1.126
My supervisor openly initiates social interactions or conversations with other staff	3.73	1.226
My boss at the university enjoys being the center of attention	2.92	1.371
My supervisor tends to think out loud and share his/her ideas freely with others	3.57	1.225
My university leader often enjoys leading group discussions	3.35	1.261
The leader at my university is usually direct in their communication style with staff	3.57	1.308
The leader prioritizes relationship building and networking with others at the university	3.62	1.250
Social interactions often motivate and energize my immediate leader at my university	3.69	1.220
My supervisor often tends to easily adapt to new changes	3.81	1.124
Often my supervisor at the university seeks feedback or validation from others	3.58	1.255
My supervisor at the university tends to be outgoing and talkative, even in unfamiliar settings	3.05	1.261
My supervisor at work tends to enjoy public speaking and presenting to large groups	3.79	1.116

Source: Survey Data, 2025

The descriptive statistics of the statements related to extroversion show that participants (101) generally agree that there are moderate to high levels of agreement about the existence of extroverted leadership behaviours at Uganda Christian University. The vast majority of items (most mean scores above 3.0) indicated that respondents agreed that their supervisors exhibit extroverted traits in the workplace.

Supervisors' acceptance of change ($M = 3.81$, $SD = 1.124$), enjoyment of public speaking and presentations ($M = 3.79$, $SD = 1.116$), initiation of social interactions ($M = 3.73$, $SD = 1.226$), and being energized by social engagement ($M = 3.69$, $SD = 1.220$) showed the highest levels of agreement. From these results, it is observed that most respondents felt their supervisors were approachable, socially interactive, communicative, and comfortable working in a dynamic organizational environment.

Likewise, respondents confirmed that they share ideas openly with others at the university ($M = 3.57$, $SD = 1.225$), focus on networking and building

relationships ($M = 3.62$, $SD = 1.250$), communicate directly with university staff ($M = 3.57$, $SD = 1.308$), and seek feedback from colleagues ($M = 3.58$, $SD = 1.255$). The behaviours further confirm the perception of extroverted leaders of promoting collaboration, openness, and good interpersonal communication in the university.

In contrast, the mean scores were lower for the items involving being the centre of attention ($M = 2.92$, $SD = 1.371$) and being outgoing in unfamiliar settings ($M = 3.05$, $SD = 1.261$). This reflects that the respondents perceived their supervisors as extroverted, but rather didn't associate them with attention-seeking or dominant social behaviours. Largely, the results indicate a dominant trait of extroversion among university leaders in the form of effective communication, adaptability, relationship building, teamwork and social participation, but not in terms of being too vocal or dominating in social interaction. Such attributes offer an advantageous leadership setting that will positively impact individuals' engagement with and retention in the organization.

Table 7: Fixed Effects Estimates for Linear Mixed Model Predicting Employee Retention Based on Extroversion

Estimates of Fixed Effects

Parameter	Estimate	Std. Error	df	t	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
						Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Intercept	10.026	1.020	94.564	9.833	0.00	8.001457	12.050204
Extroversion	1.830	0.264	312.412	6.934	0.00	1.310701	2.349231

Dependent Variable: Employee retention.

Source: Survey Data (2025)

The fixed effects estimate from the linear mixed model indicate a statistically significant positive relationship between extroversion and employee retention. The results show that extroversion is a strong predictor of employee retention ($\beta = 1.830$, $t = 6.934$, $p < 0.001$), implying that higher levels of extroversion are associated with increased employee retention among staff at Uganda Christian University.

The model intercept ($\beta = 10.026$, $p < 0.001$) represents the expected level of employee retention when extroversion is held constant, while the positive coefficient for extroversion suggests that a one-unit increase in extroversion is associated with an average increase of 1.83 units in employee retention. The narrow confidence interval (1.31 to 2.35) further confirms the stability and reliability of this effect. Largely, the findings demonstrate that the extroverted leadership trait significantly and positively influences employee retention within the university context.

The quantitative analysis of the study revealed significant patterns, notably that extroversion is a positive and statistically significant predictor of employee retention at the university. However, to obtain a more comprehensive and nuanced understanding of this relationship, the study proceeded to the qualitative findings, which provided in-depth insights into the lived experiences, perceptions, and explanations of participants regarding how extroverted leadership behaviours influence employee retention within Uganda Christian University.

Findings from the correlation analysis indicate that extroversion is a statistically significant positive predictor of employee retention, yet this pattern raises further questions about the underlying mechanisms, which are unpacked in the qualitative results.

Respondents explained that:

“Leaders who openly communicate and regularly interact with employees make staff feel appreciated and connected to the university.” Respondent 015

“Such leaders create a sense of belonging because staff can easily approach them whenever they have concerns.” Respondent 025

“Frequent interaction between leaders and staff reduces misunderstandings and builds trust within the institution.” Respondent 050

Participants (Key informants) stated that:

“When leaders are approachable and involve employees in discussions, employees become more committed and willing to stay.” Participant 02

“Employees are more likely to remain in the university when their opinions are considered in decision-making processes.” Participant 07

“Inclusive leadership makes staff feel like part of the institution’s success, which strengthens retention.” Participant 014

Respondents also highlighted the motivational role of extroverted leadership, for example verbatim included:

“Leaders who recognize employee efforts and encourage teamwork create a positive

environment that reduces turnover.” Respondent 052

“Public appreciation of staff achievements increases morale and motivates employees to perform better.” Respondent 045

“Team-oriented leadership fosters collaboration, which strengthens employees’ attachment to the institution.” Respondent 034

Nevertheless, some participants cautioned against excessive extroversion:

“Some leaders talk too much and dominate discussions, making employees feel less involved in decision-making.” Participant 04

“When leaders overemphasize their own views, staff may withdraw from participation and feel undervalued.” Participant 09

“Excessive dominance in meetings can discourage open contribution from other employees.” Participant 012

In summary, both respondents and participants emphasized that extroverted leadership was most effective when balanced with listening skills, fairness, and emotional intelligence.

Discussion

The results of this study show that extroversion is a strong predictor and statistically significant as a predictor of employee turnover at Uganda Christian University. The findings indicate that extroverted leadership has a significant impact on employees' intentions to stay in the organization, fostering communication, relationships, trust, and organizational involvement.

The results align with the Personality Traits Theory that posits that people with stable personality traits exhibit leadership behaviour and organisational outcomes (Psico-smart-EditorialTeam, 2024). Consistent with Guy-Evans (2024), the characteristics of an extroverted leader are more likely to be interpersonal engagement, assertiveness, visibility, and enthusiasm, which all positively influence the employees' experience within businesses.

The results are also aligned with Social Exchange Theory that highlights reciprocal relationships between leader and employees (Aluko et al., 2022). Similarly, Asemota & Olufunmilola (2024) affirmed these findings by noting that supportive communication, recognition, participation, and relational support by leaders will increase employees' ability to return the favor by their commitment to the organization and stay in the institution long-term. Extroverted leaders enhance these interactions through their active and visible engagement with employees.

Likewise, results corroborated the Job Embeddedness Theory, which states that Employees stay in the organization due to the fit, relationship, and perceived sacrifice of quitting the organization (Mashi et al., 2022). This is in line with Herrmann (2025), who describes how extrovert leaders increase these aspects through teamwork, social integration, collaboration, and employee inclusion in the institutional setting.

The results also show that extroverted leadership fosters a supportive and motivational work culture, which leads to a higher level of job satisfaction and employee morale. Employees will be more inclined to stay on board if their leaders are approachable and open to communication, and actively involved with employee concerns and organizational processes (Khalil, 2016).

The study also suggests that too much extroversion in the workplace can lead to less positive workplace relationships through overly dominant behavior, over-centralized communication, and over-attention seeking. The discovery indicates that, when it comes to extroversion, emotional intelligence, inclusiveness, and active listening are key to making the most out of it. So universities should promote extroverted leadership styles, but they should also ensure that the extroverted leadership is applied in a balanced, supportive, and employee-friendly manner.

Conclusion

The study shows that extroversion has a positive and significant effect on employee retention at Uganda Christian University. Extroverted leadership builds retention through communication, interpersonal connection, recognition, team-building, and taking an active approach with employees. But the power of extroverted leadership is balanced, emotionally intelligent, and inclusive.

Recommendations

University management and administration recommendations:

The university must improve Leadership Development exercises to increase communication, emotional intelligence, inclusiveness in leaders' relations, teamwork, and employee engagement in the university. Establish participatory communication channels, reward systems, joint decision-making, and feedback systems regularly to build employees' commitment to the organization and attachment to the organization.

The university should also make sure that the outward expression of leadership is complemented by listening, being fair, and understanding other employees' needs and preferences.

Policy recommendations:

Higher learning institutions in Uganda, especially Uganda Christian University, should include leadership development that is extroversion-friendly into their human resource policies. University management should have leadership development programs, with a focus on balanced extrovert behaviors, specifically communication, emotional intelligence, inclusivity, and active listening, while maintaining natural extrovert behaviors such as assertiveness and enthusiasm. Policy frameworks should include participatory communication forums such as regular staff meetings, collaborative decision-making committees, and formal reward systems for extroverted leaders to develop and bring their interpersonal skills to the positive. Further, universities need to create performance evaluation

metrics that go beyond communicating a leader's visibility and that reflect his or her inclusivity and capacity to engage a wide variety of employee groups, so that extroverted leadership is not reduced to being too centralizing and attention-seeking, which can negatively affect relationships at work.

Theoretical recommendations:

In the future, the application of Personality Traits theory, social exchange theory, and job embeddedness theory in the African context of higher education could be extended by investigating how extroversion, in particular, interacts with the cultural dimensions in the organizational context in Uganda. The current study found that over-Extroversion can have negative effects on workplace relationships, and scholars should study the moderating effect that emotional intelligence and cultural factors have on the relationship between Extroversion and retention outcomes. Further research is needed to examine the possibility of contextual leadership theory incorporating these current theories to gain a better understanding of how extroverted leadership is effective in various institutional cultures and national contexts. Continuations of the longitudinal studies to determine whether the positive link between extroverted leadership and its claims on retention is durable or not over time, to better understand how the sustainable linkages between personality traits and organizational commitment may occur in African universities.

Note taking and summarizing.

This study's results on the relationship between extroversion and employee retention at Uganda Christian University are limited to the scope of the study for the following reasons. The findings of this study are limited to Uganda Christian University due to the following reasons. The cross-sectional research design allows the initial investigation to detect associations between extroverted leadership and employee retention, but does not allow the drawing of definite causal conclusions.

Although this does not definitively prove that extroversion leads to increased retention over time, sufficient correlations were found to overcome this limitation, and regression analysis was conducted using the mixed effects model to look for predictive relationships in this study. Future studies should use longitudinal study designs to gain insight into the temporal effects and causal mechanisms of extroversion and retention.

This study used self-reported data on the questionnaire, subject to social desirability and the subject's perception of leadership practices. To reduce this concern, anonymity and confidentiality were strictly maintained throughout the data-gathering process, and the data-gathering instruments used were strictly maintained and had acceptable reliability coefficients for the data. Findings might be enhanced in future research through the use of complementary qualitative interviews and administrative turnover data or supervisor evaluation of staff with survey data.

Further, the results are also not necessarily representative of other private universities in Uganda as the study was exclusively conducted on Uganda Christian University due to limited resources, but it gives evidence of the situation in Uganda's private university sector, and research should be replicated in other private universities in Uganda and other universities in East Africa to increase the external validity of the results.

Contribution

Contribution to Theory:

The present study is significant in this regard as it gives empirical evidence from an African higher education context that Extroversion is a good predictor of employee retention, which in turn helps to advance the research on Personality Traits Theory, Social Exchange Theory and Job Embeddedness Theory. The literature has overwhelmingly concentrated on Western (particularly American) settings, and this study shows that stable personality traits, especially those of extroverts in the context of leadership,

such as being socially outgoing, dominant, conspicuous, and enthusiastic, have a significant impact on the outcomes of an organization in the higher education sector of Uganda.

The findings further elaborate the social exchange theory by showing how leaders can increase their own and others' commitment to the organization and the long-term attachment to it by communicating support, being recognized, and providing relational support, especially for extroverted leaders.

Moreover, this study is a contribution to the job embeddedness theory, as it shows that extroverted leadership increases the three components of job embeddedness – organizational fit, interpersonal links and perceived sacrifice – by fostering teamwork, social integration, collaboration and employee inclusion. Importantly, the research showed that there are shades of extroversion: being too extroverted can have detrimental consequences on relationships at work if in the form of dominance or over-centralization; hence, emotional intelligence and inclusivity should be added as moderating variables to future theories.

Contribution to Practice:

The study provides useful recommendations for further enhancing employee retention through leadership development for higher education institutions in Uganda and East Africa. Leadership development programmes should focus on enhancing balanced extroverted behaviours, with a focus on communication skills, emotional intelligence, inclusiveness and active listening, in addition to assertiveness and enthusiasm, to ensure positive and motivating working relationships.

Institutions should create forums for participative communication, employee recognition systems, decision-making systems, and regular feedback systems to increase employee attachment and organizational commitment, enabling extroverted leaders to better use their interpersonal skills constructively.

For evaluation of leaders, the assessment systems should measure the leaders' ability to communicate as well as their inclusiveness and ability to engage various groups of employees; and extroverted leaders should be evaluated in terms of being employee-oriented and not just dominant.

Furthermore, HR policies should acknowledge that the leadership effectiveness of extroverts can differ for various types of employees, and therefore take the time to accommodate different HR needs, such as those for academic administrative and support employees. The evidence gives higher education policymakers in Uganda a basis for creating standards for leadership that will equip people with extroverted behaviours and emotional intelligence to improve the stability of their workforce in resource-poor settings.

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