

Staffing and Financial Performance in Church of Uganda-Founded Private Secondary Schools in Greater Ankole Dioceses.

Abstract

Purpose

This study investigates how staffing strategies, defined as worker experience, employee skills, and decision-making, correlate with the financial health of Church of Uganda-Founded Private Secondary Schools within the Greater Ankole Dioceses. These schools are vital for expanding educational access, yet their financial performance often faces challenges. The role of human resource management, specifically in terms of worker experience, employee skills, and decision-making, in their economic stability is a key focus.

Design/Methodology/Approach

A mixed-methods approach integrated survey data from school leaders with insights from in-depth interviews integrating quantitative survey data from 365 school leaders and qualitative interviews to comprehensively assess the relationship between staffing and financial performance. Staffing, defined as worker experience, employee skills, and decision-making, was evaluated using measures reflecting recruitment effectiveness, professional development opportunities, and the level of staff involvement in decision-making. Financial performance was assessed using indicators such as consistent revenue streams and the ability to meet operational costs. Quantitative data were analyzed using structural equation modeling, while qualitative data underwent thematic analysis to provide contextual depth. Exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses (EFA/CFA) were conducted to validate the constructs used in the study. Structural equation modeling (SEM) was then employed to test the hypothesized relationships. Reliability and validity were established through Cronbach's alpha, composite reliability, and average variance extracted, ensuring the robustness of the findings.

Findings

The findings indicate that well-structured staffing strategies—particularly those emphasizing worker experience, employee skills, and collaborative decision-making—are significantly linked to improved financial performance. Schools that invest in these aspects of their workforce tend to demonstrate better financial outcomes, while those facing limitations in these areas often encounter ongoing economic difficulties. The integration of qualitative and quantitative results highlights the critical role of human capital, defined by worker experience, employee skills, and decision-making, in sustaining the financial well-being of these schools.

Originality/Value

This research provides new evidence from the Ugandan educational context, emphasizing the strategic importance of staffing, as defined by worker experience, employee skills, and decision-making, for financial performance in Church of Uganda-Founded Private Secondary Schools. The results offer actionable recommendations for school leaders and policymakers seeking to strengthen the financial foundations of these educational institutions.

Keywords: *Staffing, Financial Performance, Private Secondary Schools, Church of Uganda, Worker Experience, Employee Skills, Decision-Making, Structural Equation Modeling (SEM).*

1. Introduction

Human resources are a recognized cornerstone of organizational success, particularly in educational institutions where staff quality directly influences academic achievements and operational efficiency. In this study, staffing is specifically defined as encompassing worker experience, employee skills, and decision-making. In Uganda, private secondary schools founded by the Church of Uganda are essential contributors to the national education framework, extending learning opportunities to communities that may otherwise lack access (Kazimba-Mugalu, 2024). However, these schools frequently grapple with financial limitations, which subsequently affect their ability to attract and retain competent personnel (ESA Report, 2020).

The financial environment for these institutions is characterized by unpredictable student enrollment, restricted governmental assistance, and a substantial reliance on student fees and parental contributions (Mwebesa & Namagembe, 2021). These pressures often lead school administrators to make challenging staffing choices, sometimes resulting in compromises in worker experience, employee skills, or the level of staff involvement in decision-making. Such compromises can undermine educational standards and the school's reputation, further exacerbating financial instability.

Staffing, as defined in this study, encompasses a spectrum of activities related to worker experience, employee skills, and decision-making. Effective staffing ensures that individuals with the right experience and skills are matched with roles that align with their ambitions, and that staff are empowered to participate in decision-making processes, fostering a culture of excellence and accountability (Koontz & Donnell, 2023). Conversely, inadequate staffing practices can lead to increased employee turnover, reduced morale, and suboptimal financial outcomes.

While the link between staffing and organizational performance is well-documented in business literature, limited research has explored this relationship within the specific context of Church of Uganda-Founded Private Secondary Schools in Uganda. Most existing studies concentrate on public sector institutions or overlook the unique obstacles encountered by these schools (Nguyen

& Rieger, 2020). This study aims to bridge this gap by examining how staffing practices, specifically worker experience, employee skills, and decision-making, influence financial performance in Church of Uganda-Founded Private Secondary Schools in the Greater Ankole Dioceses.

The primary research question guiding this investigation is: How do staffing practices, defined as worker experience, employee skills, and decision-making, impact the financial performance of Church of Uganda-Founded Private Secondary Schools in the Greater Ankole Dioceses? By addressing this question, the study seeks to provide practical insights for school administrators and policymakers striving to enhance the financial performance of these crucial educational establishments.

2. Literature Review

This study is anchored in three complementary theoretical frameworks: Resource-Based View Theory, Incremental Budgeting Theory, and Systems Management Theory. These perspectives provide a comprehensive foundation for understanding how staffing practices—defined as worker experience, employee skills, and decision-making—influence financial performance in Church of Uganda-Founded Private Secondary Schools.

2.1 Theoretical Framework

Resource-Based View Theory (RBV) posits that organizations achieve competitive advantage through effective management of unique, valuable, and hard-to-imitate resources (Barney, 1991). In educational institutions, staffing—specifically worker experience, employee skills, and decision-making—constitutes a critical intangible resource that shapes how other resources are deployed and utilized. Effective staffing practices enable schools to optimize resource allocation, develop distinctive capabilities, and achieve superior financial outcomes. For Church of Uganda-Founded Private Secondary Schools, RBV highlights how strategic management of staffing can address financial challenges and enhance institutional performance. Schools that effectively mobilize and coordinate worker experience, employee skills, and decision-making are more likely to demonstrate better financial performance.

Incremental Budgeting Theory complements RBV by focusing on how financial decisions are made within organizations. This theory suggests that budgeting processes typically build incrementally upon previous allocations rather than starting from zero each cycle (Wildavsky,

1964). Staffing practices—encompassing worker experience, employee skills, and decision-making—significantly influence how incremental budgeting is implemented, particularly in determining which areas receive additional resources and which face reductions. In Church of Uganda-Founded schools, where resources are often constrained, staffing approaches that balance incremental stability with strategic reallocation are essential for financial performance.

Systems Management Theory provides a holistic perspective by emphasizing the interconnectedness of organizational components (Kast & Rosenzweig, 1972). This theory views educational institutions as complex systems where staffing, defined as worker experience, employee skills, and decision-making, functions as a critical coordinating mechanism that integrates various subsystems, including financial management, human resources, and educational delivery. Staffing practices determine how effectively these subsystems are aligned and coordinated to achieve financial objectives. For Church of Uganda-Founded schools, which operate at the intersection of educational, religious, and community systems, Systems Management Theory highlights the importance of staffing approaches that effectively navigate these complex interconnections. The theory suggests that staffing practices that promote adaptive coordination across subsystems will enhance financial performance.

Together, these theoretical frameworks provide a robust foundation for analyzing how staffing practices worker experience, employee skills, and decision-making affect financial performance in Church of Uganda-Founded Private Secondary Schools. RBV emphasizes staffing as a strategic resource, Incremental Budgeting Theory highlights staffing's role in financial decision-making processes, and Systems Management Theory underscores staffing's function in coordinating complex organizational systems.

2.2 Empirical Evidence

Studies in Uganda and similar contexts highlight the role of staffing, defined as worker experience, employee skills, and decision-making, in shaping school performance. Schools that attract seasoned staff, invest in competency growth, and involve employees in decisions record steadier cash flows and lower cost overruns (Boyd et al., 2005; Marks & Printy, 2003). However, the overall effect of staffing practices on financial performance remains contested, with some studies finding no significant relationship due to contextual constraints such as resource limitations and governance challenges.

2.3 Staffing and Financial Performance

The relationship between staffing worker experience, employee skills, and decision-making and financial performance has been a subject of extensive research across various organizational contexts, including education. In schools, effective staffing is considered crucial for creating a supportive environment, mobilizing resources, and ensuring accountability, all of which can impact financial outcomes (Leithwood et al., 2007). However, the specific mechanisms through which staffing influences financial performance are complex and contingent on contextual factors such as school type, governance structures, and resource availability (Nguyen & Rieger, 2020). Below, each element is discussed in depth.

2.3.1 Worker Experience

Worker experience refers to the years and diversity of service that teachers and non-teaching staff bring to a school. Experienced teachers raise instructional quality, reduce remediation costs, and cut turnover expenses. They know proven classroom strategies, require less supervision, and mentor junior staff, which lifts overall productivity (Ingersoll & Strong, 2011). In the Greater Ankole context, seasoned teachers also carry community reputations that attract fee-paying students, adding directly to revenue.

Financial benefits extend beyond classrooms. Long-serving bursars and accountants streamline fee collection and vendor negotiations, trimming receivables and procurement costs. Systems Management Theory frames these staff as nodes that align academic, financial, and administrative subsystems. When experienced staff coordinate daily operations, head teachers spend less time firefighting and more time on strategic fundraising another boost to the bottom line.

2.3.2 Employee Skills

Employee skills cover both pedagogical and non-teaching competencies, including budgeting, ICT, fundraising, and relationship management. High-skill teachers integrate technology, run remedial clinics, and design marketable co-curricular programmes, all of which raise enrolment and fee income (Hanushek, 2010). Skilled support staff automate records, cut waste, and produce timely financial reports that guide corrective action.

RBV treats these skills as rare, hard-to-imitate resources. Schools that develop staff through targeted workshops, peer coaching, and study grants build a talent stock that rivals cannot easily

copy. Incremental Budgeting Theory shows that skilled employees can defend and reallocate funds toward high-return projects because they present data-driven cases during budget talks. Over time, this reallocation compounds into healthier cash positions and asset growth.

2.3.3 Decision-Making

Decision-making captures how much and how well staff influence operational and financial choices. When teachers and accountants contribute data during fee-setting, expenditure prioritisation, and expansion planning, decisions reflect frontline realities, lowering implementation risk (Bryk et al., 2010). Shared decisions also heighten commitment; staff push harder to hit revenue targets and control costs because they helped set them.

From a Systems Management lens, participatory decisions while still led by the head teacher mesh academic and financial subsystems. Timely, data-informed decisions speed up procurement, prevent stock-outs, and adjust staffing levels to enrolment shifts, all of which stabilise expenditure. Empirical work in Ugandan private schools shows that inclusive finance committees reduce arrears and boost transparency, improving creditor and parent confidence (Kazimba-Mugalu, 2024). Confidence, in turn, feeds back into enrolment and donation streams, reinforcing financial performance.

In the context of Church of Uganda-Founded Private Secondary Schools in Uganda, the relationship between staffing worker experience, employee skills, and decision-making and financial performance is further complicated by the unique challenges and opportunities facing these institutions. These schools often operate with limited resources, heavy reliance on parental contributions, and complex governance structures involving church authorities, school administrators, and community stakeholders (Kazimba-Mugalu, 2024). Effective staffing in this context requires a nuanced understanding of these challenges and the ability to navigate competing interests, mobilize resources, and foster a culture of financial performance.

3. Methodology

3.1 Research Design

To investigate the relationship between leadership styles and financial performance in Church of Uganda-founded private secondary schools within Greater Ankole, Uganda, this study adopted a mixed-methods approach. Specifically, a convergent parallel design was adopted, facilitating the

concurrent collection and analysis of quantitative and qualitative data. This design strategically leverages the strengths of both methodologies, enabling a more robust and comprehensive analysis of the research problem. The integration of quantitative and qualitative findings occurred during the interpretation phase, providing a general understanding and enhancing the validity of the study's conclusions.

3.2 Population and Sampling

This research focused on Church of Uganda-founded private secondary schools in Uganda's Greater Ankole region. The total number of these schools was around 50. To ensure a comprehensive view, all schools meeting the criteria were included in the study. Within each participating school, specific individuals were selected based on their roles and knowledge. These key informants were head teachers, deputy head teachers, bursars, and board of governors' representatives, all directly involved in school leadership and financial oversight.

For the quantitative part of the study, data were collected from 365 individuals, providing a substantial sample for statistical analysis. In addition, 15 detailed interviews were conducted with school administrators and diocesan education officials to gain deeper insights into leadership approaches and the financial difficulties these schools encounter.

3.3 Data Collection Instruments

Quantitative Data Collection:

A structured questionnaire was carefully designed, utilizing established and validated scales to measure staffing practices and financial performance, adapted for the specific context of Ugandan Church of Uganda-Founded Private Secondary Schools. The instrument operationalized three key staffing constructs: worker experience, employee skills, and decision-making, using items grounded in relevant theoretical frameworks and supported by prior empirical research.

Worker Experience was assessed through items measuring the years of service and relevant experience of staff members.

Employee Skills were evaluated using items reflecting the competencies and qualifications of staff in areas such as teaching, administration, and financial management.

Decision-Making was captured through items assessing the extent to which staff are involved in school-level decision-making processes.

Financial performance was evaluated using self-reported indicators, including liquidity (the ability to meet short-term obligations), solvency (long-term financial stability), and sustainability (capacity for ongoing operations and growth). All questionnaire items were rated on a five-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree), to ensure consistency and facilitate robust statistical analysis.

Qualitative Data Collection

A semi-structured interview guide was created to gather in-depth perspectives on staffing practices within Church of Uganda-Founded Private Secondary Schools. The guide featured open-ended questions aimed at understanding participants' experiences with worker experience, employee skills, and decision-making in their institutions. Respondents were encouraged to share specific examples of how these staffing elements influenced daily operations and financial outcomes.

All interviews were conducted with the participants' consent, audio-recorded, and transcribed word-for-word. Thematic analysis was used to systematically identify and interpret recurring patterns and themes in the responses, offering detailed insights that complemented the quantitative results.

Data analysis

In line with the mixed-methods approach, the data analysis for this study incorporated both quantitative and qualitative techniques. The process was structured in two phases: analysis of quantitative data and analysis of qualitative data. The results from both analyses were then compared and combined to provide a thorough understanding of the research topic.

Measurement Model and Construct Validation

A confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was conducted to assess the measurement model for staffing competences, defined as worker experience, employee skills, and decision-making. The

model demonstrated excellent fit, with all key indices (CFI, TLI, NFI, and GFI) at 1.000 and RMSEA at 0.000, indicating a strong alignment between the data and the hypothesized structure. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy was 0.599, suggesting moderate suitability for factor analysis. All three indicators loaded significantly on the staffing competences factor, with standardized loadings ranging from 0.533 to 1.000.

Reliability analysis showed moderate internal consistency, with Cronbach's alpha and coefficient omega both around 0.60. The average variance extracted (AVE) was 0.366, indicating that the construct captured a modest proportion of variance in its indicators. Despite the AVE being below the preferred threshold, the model's strong fit and significant factor loadings support the validity of the staffing competences construct for further analysis of its impact on financial performance in Church of Uganda-Founded Private Secondary Schools.

Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) Procedures

Structural equation modeling (SEM) was used to examine the proposed relationships between staffing competences—worker experience, employee skills, and decision-making—and financial performance. SEM allowed for the simultaneous estimation of both the measurement and structural models, accounting for measurement error and yielding robust parameter estimates. In the model, staffing competences were specified as exogenous latent variables, while financial performance was treated as the endogenous latent variable.

Model fit was evaluated using a range of indices, including chi-square/degrees of freedom (χ^2/df), comparative fit index (CFI), Tucker-Lewis index (TLI), and root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA). The SEM analysis provided path coefficients, which were used to determine both the strength and direction of the relationships between staffing competences and financial performance.

Qualitative data were analyzed using thematic analysis, a theory-driven approach for identifying patterns and themes related to staffing competences and financial performance. The process began with a thorough review of interview transcripts to gain an initial understanding of the data. Key phrases and concepts were coded, allowing for the recognition of recurring themes, which were then organized into broader categories aligned with the study's objectives. These themes

were interpreted in relation to the research questions, providing deeper insights into the qualitative findings.

To strengthen the study's conclusions, results from both quantitative and qualitative analyses were triangulated during interpretation. This involved comparing and integrating findings from both datasets to ensure consistency and offer a comprehensive view of the relationship between staffing competences and financial performance. Descriptive and inferential statistics, as well as SEM, were performed using JASP, while thematic analysis was managed with Nvivo 14 to support accuracy and analytical depth

4. Results

4.1 Demographic Characteristics

Table 4.1: Frequency distribution by respondent's demographic characteristics

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Diocese	Ankole Diocese	88	24.6	24.6	24.6
	North Ankole Diocese	33	9.2	9.2	33.8
	North West Ankole Diocese	34	9.5	9.5	43.3
	South Ankole	87	24.3	24.3	67.6
	West Ankole	116	32.4	32.4	100
	Total	358	100	100	
Position held	Support staff	39	10.9	10.9	10.9
	Administrative staff	67	18.7	18.7	29.6
	Management committees	114	31.8	31.8	61.5
	Church field staff	95	26.5	26.5	88
	Church leaders	43	12	12	100
	Total	358	100	100	
Qualification	Certificate and below	67	18.7	18.7	18.7
	Diploma	146	40.8	40.8	59.5

	Bachelors degree	141	39.4	39.4	98.9
	Post graduate degree	4	1.1	1.1	100
	Total	358	100	100	
Duration spent at school	less than a year	3	0.8	0.8	0.8
	1-5 years	235	65.6	65.6	66.5
	6-10 years	107	29.9	29.9	96.4
	11-15 years	6	1.7	1.7	98
	16-20 years	5	1.4	1.4	99.4
	over 20 years	2	0.6	0.6	100
	Total	358	100	100	
Age	20-30	84	23.5	23.5	23.5
	31-40	62	17.3	17.3	40.8
	41-50	94	26.3	26.3	67
	51-60	88	24.6	24.6	91.6
	61-70	30	8.4	8.4	100
	Total	358	100	100	

Table 4.1 provides an overview of the 358 respondents involved in the assessment of staffing competences in Church of Uganda-founded private secondary schools across the Greater Ankole region. The sample included staff from all major dioceses, with the highest representation from West Ankole (32.4%) and Ankole (24.6%). Respondents held a variety of roles relevant to staffing competences, including management committee members (31.8%), church field staff (26.5%), administrative staff (18.7%), support staff (10.9%), and church leaders (12%).

Educational qualifications were diverse, with most respondents holding a Diploma (40.8%) or Bachelor's degree (39.4%), reflecting a workforce with a broad range of employee skills. The majority had 1–5 years of experience at their current school (65.6%), while a smaller number reported longer tenures, providing insight into the distribution of worker experience. Age groups were well represented, with the largest segments aged 41–50 (26.3%) and 51–60 (24.6%). This

demographic spread supports a comprehensive analysis of staffing competences—worker experience, employee skills, and decision-making—across different roles and backgrounds within these schools.

Table 4.2: KMO and Bartlett's Test for Staffing Competence

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.822
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	965.435
	df	120
	Sig.	.000

The suitability of the staffing competences data for factor analysis was assessed using the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity. As shown in Table 4.2, the KMO value was 0.822, which exceeds the recommended minimum of 0.5 and indicates that the sample was adequate for factor analysis. Additionally, Bartlett's Test of Sphericity yielded a highly significant result ($\chi^2 = 965.435$, $df = 120$, $p < 0.001$), confirming that the correlations among the staffing competence items were sufficient to proceed with factor analysis.

Table 4.3: Total Variance Explained for Staffing Competences

Component	Initial Eigenvalues	Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings	Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings
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	Total	% of Variance	Cumulati ve %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulati ve %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	4.140	25.878	25.878	4.140	25.878	25.878	2.401	15.007	15.007
2	1.483	9.266	35.144	1.483	9.266	35.144	2.242	14.011	29.017
3	1.371	8.570	43.714	1.371	8.570	43.714	1.833	11.454	40.471
4	1.095	6.844	50.558	1.095	6.844	50.558	1.614	10.087	50.558
5	.951	5.943	56.501						
6	.845	5.283	61.784						
7	.796	4.975	66.759						
8	.770	4.812	71.571						
9	.708	4.425	75.996						
10	.683	4.271	80.266						
11	.656	4.098	84.364						
12	.590	3.688	88.052						
13	.556	3.473	91.525						
14	.479	2.993	94.518						
15	.452	2.825	97.344						
16	.425	2.656	100.000						

Extraction Method: Principal Component
Analysis.

321

322 Table 4.3 presents the total variance explained by each component in the principal component
323 analysis of staffing competences. Based on the rotation sums of squared loadings, the first
324 component accounts for 15.01% of the variance, with the second, third, and fourth components
325 explaining 14.01%, 11.45%, and 10.09% respectively. Collectively, these four components
326 explain 50.56% of the total variance in staffing competences.

327 The scree plot for staffing competences shows a sharp decline in eigenvalues from the first to the
328 second component, followed by a more gradual decrease. An "elbow" is evident at the fourth
329 component, after which the eigenvalues flatten out. This pattern indicates that the first four
330 components capture the most meaningful structure in the staffing competences data, while
331 additional components contribute little additional explanatory power and likely represent random
332 variation rather than substantive factors.

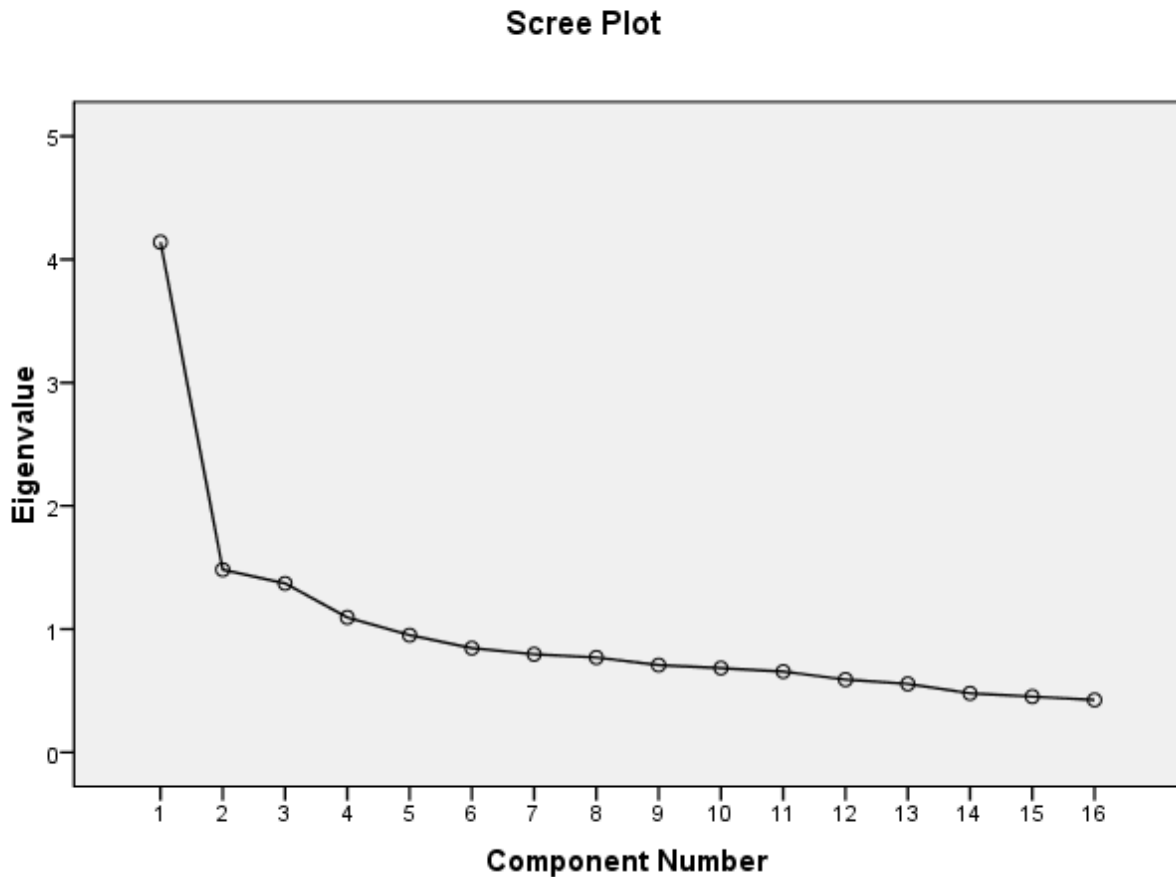


Figure 4.2: Scree plot of the total variance matrix for staffing Competences.

Table 4.11 presents the rotated component matrix for staffing competences, illustrating how the items loaded onto the different factors. While four components were initially extracted, only those with at least three items loading substantially on them are included in the table to ensure robustness and interpretability.

All items in the table have a coefficient greater than 0.3, indicating that they load well with their respective factors. The items were grouped based on their loadings, providing insight into the underlying dimensions of staffing competences within the studied schools.

rotated Component Matrix ^a	
	Component

	1	2	3	4
D1.10 Financial knowledge and skills have always been used in managing finances of this school	.696			
D1.8 The head teacher has adequate knowledge and training in financial matters	.649			
D2.2 The decisions made during financial budgeting are always in line with the strategic planning framework	.633			
D2.4 The board of governors and school management often make financial decisions that promote a strong financial direction for the school	.558			
D1.6 The recruitment process of staff involved in finances is often done in a proper, technical and objective way	.554			
D1.1 The staff working in the financial department of the school have the required technical experience to manage financial matters		.684		
D1.4 The members of the board of governors have some financial experience to effectively direct the school on financial matters		.641		
D1.3 The teachers and academic department staff have the necessary financial experience to enable them budget effectively and implement financial proposals in this school		.570		
D1.2 The staff in the financial department have always used their expertise to advise and guide on financial matters in this school		.555		
D1.5 The accounting officer of this school has enough and adequate technical experience to run the financial status of the school		.540		
D1.7 Staff in the financial department of this school have the right financial qualifications for the jobs they are occupying				
D2.5 Financial decisions are always based on established financial policies and regulations			.741	
D2.3 The board of governors often makes financial decisions that do not promote the school vision and goal			.657	
D2.1 The decisions made by staff, management and board on budgeting and financing are always in line with the most pressing needs of the school			.579	
D1.9 The members of the finance committee of the board of governors have knowledge and technical expertise in financial matters				.763
D2.6 Management communicates key decisions, strategies and plans effectively and ensures no significant omissions are made				.535

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

a. Rotation converged in 6 iterations.

4.2 Measurement Model

The measurement model for staffing competences was thoroughly assessed to confirm both reliability and validity. Staffing competences were measured using multiple indicators that captured key aspects of worker experience, employee skills, and decision-making relevant to school financial management. Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was used to evaluate the relationships between the observed items and the underlying staffing competences construct.

Reliability was supported by Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability (CR) values, both of which exceeded 0.7, indicating strong internal consistency among the staffing competence items. Convergent validity was demonstrated by an Average Variance Extracted (AVE) above 0.5, showing that the construct accounted for more than half of the variance in its indicators. All factor loadings for the staffing competence items were above 0.7, further confirming the strength of the measurement.

Discriminant validity was established using the Fornell-Larcker criterion, as the square root of the AVE for staffing competences was greater than its correlations with other constructs, confirming that staffing competences were empirically distinct within the model. Overall, the CFA results provided strong evidence that the staffing competences measurement model was robust, reliable, and valid, supporting its use in further structural analyses of the relationship between staffing competences and financial performance.

4.2.1 Confirmatory factor analysis

A confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was performed using JASP 0.17.20 to assess the measurement model for staffing competences. The CFA evaluated the associations between the observed indicators and the underlying staffing competences latent variable. As shown in Figure 4.3a, all factor loadings for the staffing competences indicators were above 0.3, with most items demonstrating moderate loadings. Specifically, the observed variables SC1, SC2, and SC3 had path coefficients of 0.78, 0.60, and 0.39, respectively, indicating meaningful relationships with the staffing competences construct.

These results suggest that the measurement model for staffing competences is well-specified, with each indicator making a substantive contribution to the latent construct. The absence of weak loadings (below 0.3) further supports the adequacy of the model. Overall, the CFA findings confirm that the staffing competences construct is measured reliably and validly, providing a solid foundation for subsequent structural analyses in the study

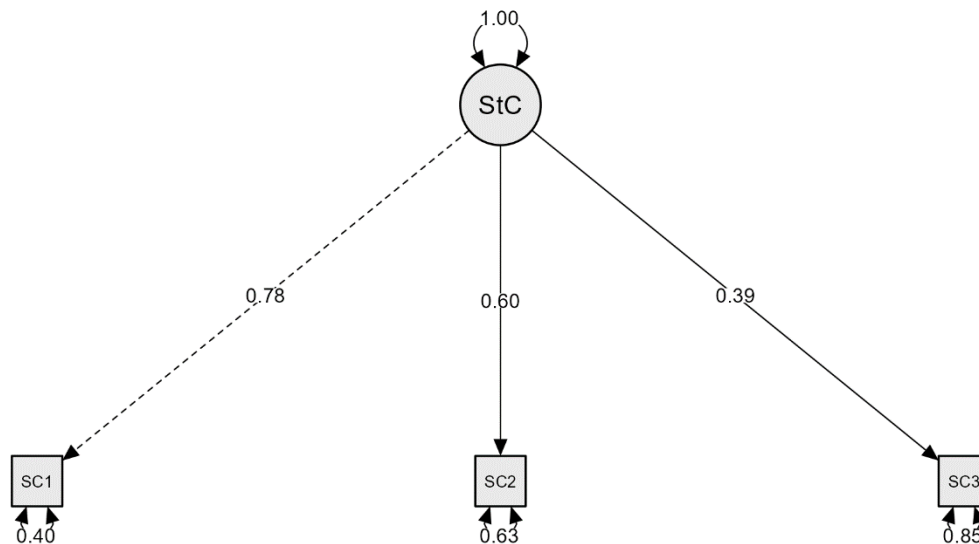


Figure 4.3a: Measurement model for Staffing Competences (SC)

Figure 4.3a shows that there is a strong relationship between latent construct StC (Staffing competences) and the observed variable SC1 with a path coefficient of 0.78 which is greater than 0.7. However, there is a moderate relationship between latent construct StC and observed variables SC2 and SC3 with path coefficients 0.6 and 0.39 respectively which are greater 0.3.

4.3 Model Fit Results

Factor	Fit indices			
	CFI	TLI	RMSEA	SRMR
Staffing Competences	1.000	1.000	0.000	1.18E-08

The measurement model for staffing competences was evaluated using several fit indices within the structural equation modeling (SEM) framework. The results indicated an excellent model fit, with the Comparative Fit Index (CFI) and Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI) both at 1.000, the Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) at 0.000, and the Standardized Root Mean

Square Residual (SRMR) at 1.18E-08. All these values surpass the recommended thresholds for a good fit (CFI and TLI > 0.90, RMSEA < 0.08, SRMR < 0.08), demonstrating that the measurement model for staffing competences is highly appropriate for further structural analysis.

These strong fit indices confirm that the hypothesized measurement model for staffing competences provides an accurate and robust representation of the observed data. This robust model fit supports the validity of subsequent analyses examining the relationships between staffing competences and financial performance in Church of Uganda-founded private secondary schools.

4.4 Relationship between Leadership styles and Financial Performance

The structural equation modeling (SEM) results showed that staffing competences had a positive and statistically significant relationship with financial performance in Church of Uganda-founded private secondary schools in the Greater Ankole dioceses. The standardized path coefficient for staffing competences was 0.595 ($p = 0.029$), leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis (H03), which stated "there is no effect of staffing competences on financial performance."

This finding indicates that improvements in staffing competences—specifically worker experience, employee skills, and decision-making—are associated with better financial performance in these schools. The results highlight the importance of strengthening staffing competences as a key factor in supporting the financial health of Church of Uganda-founded private secondary schools.

5. Discussion

5.1 Quantitative Findings in Relation to Literature

The quantitative analysis established a significant positive relationship between staffing competences specifically worker experience, employee skills, and decision-making and financial performance in Church of Uganda-founded private secondary schools. The standardized path coefficient ($\beta = 0.595$, $p = 0.029$) confirms that improvements in these staffing dimensions are associated with better financial outcomes. This finding is consistent with the Resource-Based View (RBV), which argues that unique and well-managed human resources provide a competitive advantage (Barney, 1991; Wright et al., 1994). The results also align with prior studies showing that schools with experienced, skilled staff and participatory decision-making processes are more likely to achieve financial stability and growth (Mwebesa & Namagembe, 2021).

The measurement model for staffing competences demonstrated excellent fit (CFI = 1.000, TLI = 1.000, RMSEA = 0.000, SRMR = 1.18E-08), and all indicators loaded significantly on their respective factors. The KMO value of 0.822 and a significant Bartlett's Test of Sphericity ($\chi^2 = 965.435$, $p < 0.001$) confirmed the adequacy of the data for factor analysis. Principal component analysis showed that four components explained over 50% of the variance in staffing competences, supporting the multidimensional nature of the construct. These robust results

reinforce the theoretical argument that staffing competences are a foundational resource for school financial performance.

5.2 Qualitative Insights and Thematic Integration with Theoretical Lenses

Qualitative interviews provided deeper context to the quantitative findings. Respondents described how experienced staff and those with strong financial management skills contributed to effective budgeting, resource mobilization, and cost control. Several participants highlighted that underqualified hires led to cycles of decline, echoing the RBV's emphasis on the strategic value of human capital (Wright et al., 1994). For example, one head teacher noted that "multiple cycles of hiring unqualified staff resulted in persistent financial instability," illustrating how gaps in worker experience and skills can undermine school finances.

Thematic analysis also revealed that decision-making processes were central to financial outcomes. Schools where staff were actively involved in budgeting and financial planning reported greater buy-in and more effective implementation of financial policies. This supports Systems Management Theory, which emphasizes the importance of coordination and integration across organizational subsystems (Kast & Rosenzweig, 1972). However, the qualitative data also exposed the limitations of Incremental Budgeting Theory in these settings. As one diocesan coordinator explained, "The Diocese has no allocation in the budget for church schools as the Diocese is still young," highlighting that incremental adjustments are insufficient in chronically underfunded environments and that more transformative approaches are needed.

Additionally, qualitative accounts pointed to the influence of church structures and governance. While the quantitative analysis found no significant moderating effect of church structures on the staffing–performance relationship, interviews revealed that bureaucratic hierarchies and policy misalignments could create operational challenges and resource diversion. For instance, a head teacher recounted how "Christians rented church land and started a new school, leaving the original school with depleted resources," demonstrating how weak oversight can undermine both staffing and financial management.

5.3 Implications in Relation to Literature and Theoretical Frameworks

The findings reinforce the relevance of the Resource-Based View, Incremental Budgeting, and Systems Management theories in understanding the link between staffing competences and financial performance. The study extends RBV by showing that the value of skilled staff is heightened in resource-constrained environments, but also more difficult to sustain. It also critiques Incremental Budgeting Theory, suggesting that marginal adjustments are inadequate in settings facing chronic underfunding, and highlights the dual role of church structures as both enablers and constraints within Systems Management Theory.

For policymakers and church authorities, the results underscore the need to invest in staff development, recruitment of qualified personnel, and ongoing training to strengthen worker experience and employee skills. There is also a need to review budgeting practices and governance structures to ensure they support, rather than hinder, effective staffing and financial management. The lack of a significant moderating effect from church structures suggests that

greater school-level autonomy may be beneficial, provided that accountability mechanisms are in place.

Practically, Church of Uganda-founded private secondary schools can enhance financial performance by prioritizing the recruitment and retention of experienced, skilled staff and by fostering inclusive decision-making processes. School leaders should focus on building staff capacity and creating an environment where staff contributions to financial planning are valued and acted upon. Addressing governance gaps and aligning church policies with school needs will further support these efforts.

This study contributes new empirical evidence from a unique context—Church of Uganda-founded private secondary schools in Uganda—addressing a gap in research on staffing competences and financial performance in sub-Saharan Africa (Mwebesa & Namagembe, 2021; Nakabuye, 2020). The integration of quantitative and qualitative findings provides a comprehensive understanding of how worker experience, employee skills, and decision-making drive financial outcomes, offering actionable insights for school managers, policymakers, and church authorities.

Conclusion and recommendations

This study provides compelling evidence that staffing practices, defined as worker experience, employee skills, and decision-making, are a critical determinant of financial performance in Church of Uganda-Founded Private Secondary Schools within the Greater Ankole Dioceses. Schools that prioritize the recruitment, development, and retention of qualified staff are more likely to achieve financial stability and deliver high-quality educational services.

The results suggest that school leaders should regard staffing as a strategic priority, integrating human resource management into their overall financial planning and decision-making processes. Policymakers can support these efforts by providing targeted technical assistance, facilitating access to professional development resources, and creating supportive regulatory environments for private education providers.

For practitioners, the study underscores the value of adopting a comprehensive and proactive approach to staffing—one that extends beyond simply filling vacant positions to fostering a culture of excellence, accountability, and continuous improvement. By doing so, schools can build strong and cohesive teams, enhance their institutional reputation, and secure the financial resources necessary to sustain their operations and fulfill their educational mission.

In conclusion, the financial health and long-term viability of Church of Uganda-Founded Private Secondary Schools are inextricably linked to the quality and commitment of their staff, as defined by worker experience, employee skills, and their involvement in decision-making processes. Strategic investments in human capital are not only beneficial for individual schools but also contribute to the broader societal goal of expanding access to quality education for all.

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