

REVIEWER'S REPORT

Manuscript No.: IJAR-52336

Date: 19-06-2025

Title: Effect of Church structures on Financial Performance of Church of Uganda-founded private secondary schools: Evidence from Greater Ankole Dioceses, Uganda

Recommendation:

Accept as it is.....**YES**.....
 Accept after minor revision.....
 Accept after major revision
 Do not accept (*Reasons below*)

Rating	Excel.	Good	Fair	Poor
Originality			√	
Techn. Quality		√		
Clarity		√		
Significance			√	

Reviewer's Name: Shafiya Akhter

Reviewer's Decision about Paper: **Recommended for Publication.**

Comments (*Use additional pages, if required*)
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Reviewer's Comment / Report

Title:

The title accurately reflects the focus of the study, specifying the institutional context (Church of Uganda), geographic scope (Greater Ankole Dioceses), and the thematic concern (financial performance). It is both informative and appropriately academic in tone.

Abstract:

The abstract is well-structured and follows a clear format—purpose, methodology, findings, and originality/value. It effectively conveys the research problem, design, and key outcomes. The methodological detail (use of SEM, EFA/CFA, Cronbach's alpha, etc.) signals a robust analytical framework. The study's key finding—that church structures, particularly hierarchy, have a non-significant or even negative association with financial performance—is clearly stated. The value proposition of the research is clearly articulated in terms of its contribution to policy and management practices within a church-affiliated educational context.

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Keywords:

The keywords—*Church structures, Church policies, Church hierarchy, financial performance, Church of Uganda schools*—are appropriate and representative of the study's central themes.

Introduction:

The introduction sets the stage effectively by emphasizing the societal importance of education and the historical and moral role of the Church of Uganda in the education sector. It succinctly outlines the study's context and rationale, referencing national policy documents and recent ecclesiastical discourse. The problem of persistent financial management challenges in church-founded schools is clearly identified and grounded in both empirical and institutional realities.

Methodology:

The abstract and introduction provide insight into the study's methodological rigor. The use of a convergent mixed-methods design adds credibility and depth. The selection of stakeholder respondents—ranging from bishops' office staff to government officials—reflects a comprehensive approach to data collection. The integration of SEM and factor analyses, alongside standard reliability and validity checks, indicates adherence to established quantitative research standards.

Theoretical Framing:

The mention of resource-based theory, incremental budgeting, and systems management as interpretive lenses is analytically sound. It provides a structured foundation for understanding the relationships between organizational structure and financial outcomes. This theoretical layering enhances the study's explanatory strength.

Findings:

The results—particularly the weak or negative influence of church hierarchy on financial performance—are presented clearly and directly. This counters possible assumptions about the inherently beneficial role of religious structures in institutional management, adding a nuanced dimension to the literature.

Contribution to Knowledge:

The study offers original empirical insight from a context not frequently represented in mainstream educational finance literature. By focusing on church-founded schools within the Ugandan diocesan framework, it highlights governance dynamics that are often overlooked. Its practical relevance to administrators, policymakers, and church authorities is evident and well stated.

Clarity and Style:

The language is formal, clear, and appropriate for an academic audience. Concepts are communicated efficiently, and there is an effective balance between theoretical exposition and empirical grounding.

Overall Evaluation:

This manuscript demonstrates methodological rigor, contextual relevance, and theoretical depth. It contributes meaningfully to both the academic understanding of organizational influences on school finance and to practical conversations around governance in faith-based education systems. The study's findings are well-articulated and of interest to researchers and practitioners working at the intersection of education, religion, and institutional management.