

ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE AND EMPLOYEE RETENTION IN FAITH-BASED UNIVERSITIES IN KENYA

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ABSTRACT

Employee retention is a vital concern for higher education institutions, and in faith-based universities in Kenya and the world at large, organizational culture has emerged as a central area of scholarly and managerial interest because it shapes how employees identify with the mission, values and norms of their institutions. The purpose of this study was to determine the effect of organizational culture on employee retention in faith-based Universities in Kenya. The study was anchored on Psychological Contract Theory. The study adopted a positivist research philosophy and realist ontology informed the study, using a quantitative cross-sectional survey design. The target population comprised 2,000 academic and non-academic employees from 22 registered faith-based universities in Kenya. A sample of 333 respondents was drawn from five selected universities using stratified and simple random sampling techniques, of whom 325 returned usable questionnaires. Data were collected using structured questionnaires administered to staff and faculty. Instrument reliability was established through a pilot study involving 33 employees at Hekima

University College in Nairobi, while content validity was ensured through expert review. Data were analyzed using SPSS, employing descriptive statistics (means and standard deviations) and inferential statistics including Pearson product-moment correlation and simple linear regression. The study found that organizational culture has a positive and statistically significant effect on employee retention ($\beta = 0.700$, $t = 13.832$, $p < .001$), with organizational culture explaining 37.2% of the variance in employee retention. Employees generally perceived the culture of faith-based universities as positive and mission-aligned, characterized by shared values, clear norms, open communication, fair treatment and recognition. The null hypothesis was therefore rejected. The study recommends that faith-based universities deliberately cultivate value-driven, inclusive and recognition-oriented cultures as a strategic mechanism for enhancing employee retention.

Key words: Organizational Culture, Employee Retention, Faith-Based Universities.

INTRODUCTION

Background

Organizational culture is inherently dynamic, continuously evolving in response to shifts in leadership, institutional vision, workforce composition, external pressures, and broader socio-economic changes. This ever-changing nature positions organizational culture as a critical source of competitive advantage, shaping how employees behave, interact, and contribute to organizational goals (Galindo, 2022). A strong, coherent culture provides a shared sense of identity and direction that aligns individual actions with the organization's core values and strategic priorities. When employees clearly understand and connect with these cultural expectations, they are more likely to demonstrate higher commitment levels, engagement, and discretionary effort, all of which contribute to improved retention and institutional performance.

In faith-based universities, where mission alignment and spiritual identity are deeply embedded in organizational life, culture extends beyond formal rules to incorporate shared values, a sense of calling, and collective purpose (Dolan, 2020). These institutions cultivate a unique workplace ethos grounded in principles such as integrity, service, compassion, and community. Such values shape not only employee interactions but also leadership practices and institutional norms, and they attract individuals who seek both professional development and a workplace consistent with their beliefs.

Effective management of organizational culture is necessary for forming an atmosphere where employees feel supported, valued, and motivated. Abwavo and Muli (2020) emphasize that nurturing a positive culture plays a vital role in retaining workers and safeguarding the organization's investment in training and capacity development. When culture supports collaboration, recognition, fairness, and career growth, employees gain a stronger sense of belonging and are more inclined to remain within the institution. This is especially important in knowledge-driven sectors, such as higher learning, where employee turnover could interrupt continuity, diminish institutional memory, and increase operational costs.

In addition to shaping employee experiences, organizational culture interacts with other aspects of human resource management, including compensation, benefits, leadership practices, and work environment, to influence retention outcomes. Kitonga *et al.* (2021) highlight that culture acts as a foundational pillar in talent management, reinforcing the behavioral norms and shared values that underpin long-term employee commitment. A supportive culture amplifies the effectiveness of reward systems and professional development initiatives, ensuring that employees not only receive competitive compensation but also experience meaningful connections, respect, and purpose in their daily work.

Ultimately, organizational culture serves as both the emotional and strategic backbone of an institution. When deliberately cultivated and aligned with organizational mission and values, it enhances employee satisfaction, supports change management, and fosters sustainable organizational success. Despite this, much of the empirical evidence linking culture and retention comes from corporate, banking, healthcare and public-sector settings, with limited attention to faith-based universities, where shared beliefs play an especially central role. This study therefore seeks to fill this gap by examining the effect of organizational culture on employee retention in faith-based universities in Kenya.

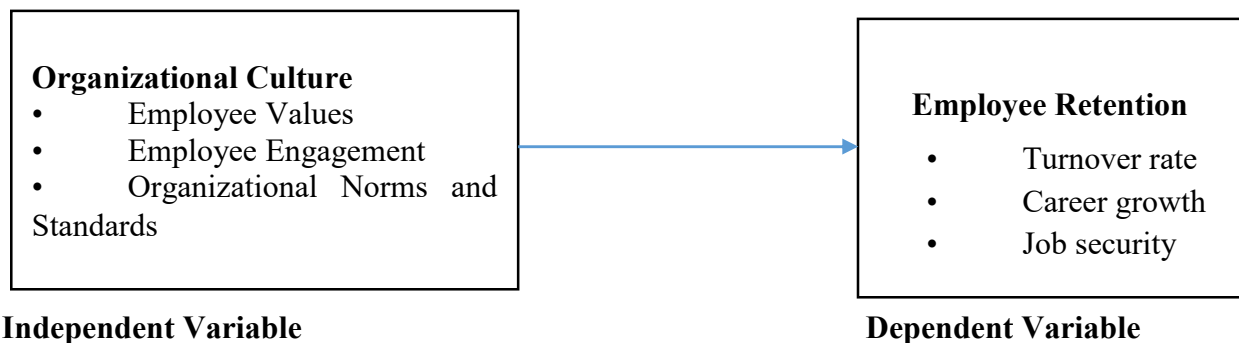
Purpose of the Study

To determine the effect of organizational culture on employee retention in faith-based Universities in Kenya.

Research Hypothesis

H₀: Organizational culture has no statistically significant effect on employee retention in faith-based Universities in Kenya.

Conceptual Framework



Statement of the Problem

Employee retention remains a persistent challenge within faith-based universities in Kenya, with growing concerns over the ability of these institutions to maintain a stable and committed academic and administrative workforce. Evidence from the Commission for University Education indicates rising staff turnover in private universities, increasing from 4% in 2020 to 6.5% in 2022, reflecting declining retention levels. Faith-based universities are particularly affected due to constrained financial resources, mission-driven and often hierarchical management structures, and compliance with stringent denominational and regulatory requirements, all of which shape the culture employees experience every day.

Institutional conditions in these universities are often characterized by rigid administrative and bureaucratic structures, limited opportunities for career progression, and uneven recognition of employee contributions. These challenges are most acute at senior academic levels, where repeated

recruitment drives often fail to attract or retain suitably qualified staff, leaving critical leadership and mentorship gaps. In the broader Sub-Saharan African context, these pressures are compounded by regional talent mobility and brain drain, further destabilizing retention in higher education institutions.

Despite deliberate efforts by faith-based universities to strengthen institutional culture through values-based leadership and mission-driven practices, employee turnover remains high. This suggests that espoused values have not always translated into lived cultural experiences, such as fair treatment, open communication and recognition, that sustain employee commitment. The resulting costs, including disrupted academic programmes, loss of institutional knowledge, weakened succession planning, and diminished student experience, continue to accumulate.

While existing studies establish a link between organizational culture and employee retention, most empirical evidence is drawn from municipal, banking, healthcare and information technology settings (Galindo, 2022; Ngugi & Waweru, 2020; Mwangi & Kamau, 2021; Kumari & Sharma, 2022), with limited focus on faith-based higher education institutions. Inadequate empirical attention has been given to how the unique religious identity, shared beliefs and governance structures of faith-based universities shape the relationship between culture and retention. This presents a critical research gap, necessitating an empirical examination of the effect of organizational culture on employee retention in faith-based universities in Kenya.

Theoretical Framework

Psychological Contract Theory

This theory was founded by Argyris in 1960. The psychological contract theory explicates the implicit expectations and obligations in the relationship between employers and employees. Rousseau (1989) defined it as an individual's beliefs regarding a mutual exchange with an organization, emphasizing subjective perceptions. Mather and Bam (2025) adapted the idea to organizational settings, focusing on undefined commitments and power imbalances in social relationships. Guest and Conway (2022) extended the definition to include both the employee's and employer's perspectives, recognizing that breaches in the psychological contract by either party could lead to behavioral changes. This concept has become a critical framework for understanding employee-employer dynamics.

Psychological contract theory emphasizes the implicit and perceived expectations and obligations between employers and employees. These expectations significantly influence employee attitudes, satisfaction, and retention. Employees form implicit expectations regarding fairness, respect, recognition and value congruence; when these expectations are met through positive organizational cultural practices, employees are less likely to perceive contract breach and more likely to maintain long-term commitment.

This theory assumes heavy reliance on subjective perceptions, the active and developing nature of psychological contracts, and the challenges in measuring and managing these implicit agreements. The theory relies heavily on individual beliefs and perceptions about mutual obligations. Another assumption is the dynamic nature of psychological contracts, which are constantly evolving based on interactions and experiences. Additionally, the theory assumes mutual awareness, whereby both parties are aware of the implicit expectations, although they may not be explicitly stated. Finally, breaches in the psychological contract by either party can lead to changes in behavior and attitudes.

The Psychological Contract Theory has several limitations, including subjectivity, whereby the theory's reliance on subjective perceptions makes it difficult to measure and manage these implicit agreements. The theory is also marred by complexity, since analyzing human behavior influenced by factors such as culture, socialization, and personal experiences is complex (Samoliuk *et al.*, 2022). Despite these limitations, Psychological Contract Theory remains suitable for this research as it provides insights into the socio-emotional dynamics that influence employee retention in faith-based universities.

This theory is relevant to this study as it addresses socio-emotional aspects like trust, loyalty, and justice in employment, which shape employees' perceptions of their employers. In faith-based universities, the alignment of personal beliefs with organizational values, the ethical and faith-based principles that guide institutional conduct, and the fair treatment and recognition of employees form part of the implicit promise the institution makes to its staff. Where the lived culture honours these expectations, the psychological contract is strengthened and employees are more inclined to remain; where it does not, perceived breach may trigger withdrawal and turnover (Ndirangu *et al.*, 2022). It is therefore relevant in explaining employee retention in faith-based universities in Kenya.

EMPIRICAL LITERATURE REVIEW

Galindo (2022) looked into the connection between employee retention and organizational culture in Chino, California. The general organizational culture of the City of Chino as a municipal government body was the focus of the study, and entry-level and non-management staff were surveyed quantitatively. The study found that organizational culture is an ongoing process that can adapt and change over time, and that employees look to join organizations in which they share similar values and beliefs. The study noted that the next challenge for leaders will be to create a culture with which younger generations, such as millennials and Gen Z, can identify.

A study by Karimi and Nduku (2021) on organizational culture and employee retention highlighted that a supportive organizational culture, characterized by recognition, fair treatment, and opportunities for professional growth, significantly contributes to employee retention in faith-based universities. The study used a quantitative method, collecting data through closed-ended

questionnaires from academic and non-academic staff. The findings revealed that employees who experienced a positive organizational culture, where their contributions were recognized and where there were clear avenues for career development, were more committed and less likely to leave their positions. The researchers recommended that universities promote recognition programs, ensure fair treatment, and offer professional growth opportunities to enhance staff loyalty and reduce turnover.

Mutisya and Gachunga (2019) investigated how organizational culture affected the ability to retain staff in faith-based organizations in Kenya. Information was obtained from a sample of employees representing different departments and job levels using a standardized questionnaire. The results demonstrated that staff retention was positively impacted by a strong culture defined by shared values, effective communication, and employee involvement. The study concluded that institutions with a supportive and well-defined culture were more likely to retain employees, especially in faith-based institutions where alignment with the organization's values was particularly important.

Ngugi and Waweru (2020) researched employee retention and organizational culture in Kenyan commercial banks. The study adopted a quantitative cross-sectional survey design, collecting data from employees across different departments. Using regression analysis, the study concluded that a strong organizational culture marked by open communication, shared values, and participatory decision-making significantly enhanced employee retention. Employees who felt aligned with the organization's culture reported higher job satisfaction and lower turnover intentions.

Amin and Yusof (2019) explored the relationship between organizational culture and employee retention in Malaysian private universities, employing a mixed-methods approach to assess how cultural factors, including trust, recognition, and collaborative work practices, influenced retention. Results indicated that employees who perceived a positive organizational culture were more committed to their institutions, demonstrating loyalty and longer tenure. The study emphasized that embedding supportive cultural practices within institutional policies strengthens employee engagement and retention.

Mwangi and Kamau (2021) examined the role of organizational culture in employee retention among Kenyan healthcare institutions. A quantitative survey design was used, targeting clinical and non-clinical staff. The study revealed that a culture promoting teamwork, ethical practices, and professional development opportunities positively influenced retention. Staff members were more likely to work longer in the organization when the cultural environment supported personal growth and recognized individual contributions.

Kumari and Sharma (2022) investigated organizational culture and its impact on employee retention in Indian IT firms. Using a descriptive research design with structured questionnaires,

the study examined cultural dimensions such as innovation, adaptability, and employee involvement. Findings indicated that employees in organizations with adaptive and innovative cultures demonstrated higher retention levels, and that cultural alignment, particularly where employees feel their contributions are valued, plays a key role in sustaining workforce stability in competitive sectors.

Omondi *et al.* (2023) investigated the influence of organizational culture on employee retention in faith-based universities in Kenya, adopting a quantitative cross-sectional survey design with data from both teaching and non-teaching staff. The findings revealed that institutions characterized by strong ethical values, teamwork, and alignment with the institution's spiritual mission recorded higher levels of employee retention. Employees who experienced a sense of belonging and value congruence demonstrated greater loyalty and commitment to their institutions.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study adopted a positivist research philosophy and realist ontology informed the study, using a quantitative cross-sectional survey design. The target population comprised 2,000 academic and non-academic employees from 22 registered faith-based universities in Kenya. A sample of 333 respondents was drawn from five selected universities using stratified and simple random sampling techniques, and 325 usable questionnaires were returned and analyzed. Data were collected using structured questionnaires administered to staff and faculty, with organizational culture measured through nine items on a five-point Likert scale capturing employee values, engagement, and organizational norms and standards. Instrument reliability was established through a pilot study involving 33 employees at Hekima University College in Nairobi, yielding a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.863 for the organizational culture scale, while content validity was ensured through expert review. Factor analysis showed good sampling adequacy ($KMO = 0.854$; Bartlett's $\chi^2 = 807.874$, $df = 36$, $p < .001$). Two items with loadings below 0.50 were removed, after which the seven retained items loaded between 0.633 and 0.752, the KMO improved to 0.871 ($\chi^2 = 734.724$, $df = 21$, $p < .001$) and the single extracted component explained 50.934% of the variance. Data were analyzed using SPSS, employing descriptive statistics (means and standard deviations) and inferential statistics including Pearson product-moment correlation and simple linear regression, based on the model $Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \varepsilon$, where Y is employee retention and X_1 is organizational culture.

Descriptive Statistics

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics for Organizational Culture

Statement	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Dev.
My personal values are consistent with the mission and values of this faith-based university.	325	2.0	5.0	3.978	.7594
The ethical and faith-based principles practiced in this university's culture strengthen my commitment to the university.	325	2.0	5.0	4.237	1.7819
Fair treatment and respect for employees in this university make me feel like a valued member of the institution.	325	1.0	5.0	3.994	.7973
The university has open communication and mutual respect are part of the organizational culture.	325	1.0	5.0	4.055	.8032
I feel that my contributions to the university are recognized and appreciated.	325	1.0	5.0	3.997	.8696
The University's employee engagement initiatives have improved service delivery and academic outcomes.	325	1.0	5.0	4.065	.7321
I am satisfied with the organizational norms and standards upheld in the university since they promote fairness, discipline, and professionalism among employees.	325	1.0	5.0	4.086	.8599
I feel encouraged to remain employed at this university because of the shared values and beliefs that shape its work culture.	325	1.0	5.0	4.095	.7578
The organizational norms in this university guide my behavior and how I conduct myself at work influencing my commitment and job performance.	325	1.0	5.0	4.271	.7031
Average Mean	325			4.086	0.896

Source: Field Data 2026

Table 1 presents respondents' ratings of their level of agreement with statements relating to organizational culture in their universities. Across items, the minimum observed value was 1 and the maximum was 5, indicating full use of the scale for most statements. Respondents agreed that "the organizational norms in this university guide my behavior and how I conduct myself at work, influencing my commitment and job performance," with the highest mean of 4.27 and a standard deviation of 0.70. This reflects strong consensus that clear, shared norms shape conduct and reinforce engagement and performance across the institution.

There was also agreement that "the ethical and faith-based principles practiced in this university's culture strengthen my commitment to the university," with a mean of 4.24, suggesting high endorsement of the institution's ethical and faith identity as a source of commitment, although the comparatively large standard deviation (1.78) indicates more varied responses on this item. Regarding value alignment, respondents agreed that "I feel encouraged to remain employed at this university because of the shared values and beliefs that shape its work culture," with a mean of 4.10 and $SD = 0.76$, indicating that cultural congruence and shared mission are salient drivers of retention intentions. These findings echo Mutisya and Gachunga (2019), who found that alignment with organizational values is particularly important for retention in faith-based institutions.

On institutional standards, respondents agreed that "I am satisfied with the organizational norms and standards upheld in the university since they promote fairness, discipline, and professionalism among employees," with a mean of 4.09 and SD = 0.86. This points to the perceived legitimacy of the institution's conduct standards and their role in supporting a stable, professional environment. There was agreement that "the university's employee engagement initiatives have improved service delivery and academic outcomes," reflected by a mean of 4.07 and SD = 0.73, suggesting that engagement practices are seen as effective and linked to tangible institutional performance. Respondents further agreed that "open communication and mutual respect are part of the organizational culture," with a mean of 4.06 and SD = 0.80, indicating a generally positive climate for collegial interaction and voice. On recognition, respondents agreed that "I feel that my contributions to the university are recognized and appreciated," with a mean of 4.00 and SD = 0.87, and that "fair treatment and respect for employees in this university make me feel like a valued member of the institution," with a mean of 3.99 and SD = 0.80. These results point to a supportive relational culture, though there may still be scope to deepen visible, equitable recognition practices, consistent with Karimi and Nduku (2021), who identified recognition and fair treatment as key retention drivers in faith-based universities.

Respondents also agreed that "my personal values are consistent with the mission and values of this faith-based university," with a mean of 3.98 and SD = 0.76, indicating meaningful value congruence between staff and the institution. Overall, the average mean for the organizational culture construct was 4.09 with an average standard deviation of 0.90, suggesting general consensus that the institutional culture is positive and mission-aligned. The findings indicate that faith-based universities in Kenya have cultivated cultures in which shared values, clear norms, open communication and recognition are visible to employees, a pattern that Omondi *et al.* (2023) associate with higher levels of employee retention in faith-based educational institutions.

Correlation Analysis

Table 2: Correlation Analysis

		Organizational Culture	Employee Retention
Organizational Culture	Pearson Correlation	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)		
	N	325	
Employee Retention	Pearson Correlation	.579**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	325	325

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Source: Field Data 2026

The correlation results (N = 325) indicate that organizational culture has a strong, positive and statistically significant correlation with employee retention ($r = .579$, $p < .001$). This suggests that improvements in cultural dimensions such as shared values, open communication, fair treatment,

recognition and clear organizational norms are associated with higher employee intentions to stay. The association is consistent with Ngugi and Waweru (2020), who found that employees who felt aligned with their organization's culture reported higher job satisfaction and lower turnover intentions.

Regression Analysis

Table 3: Model Summary for Organizational Culture and Employee Retention

R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
.610a	0.372	0.370	0.51425	0.372	191.334	1	323	0.000

a Predictors: (Constant), Organizational Culture

b Dependent Variable: Employee Retention

Source: Field Data 2026

The simple linear regression model with organizational culture as the predictor of employee retention showed that the model correlation was $R = .610$, indicating a strong positive relationship between organizational culture and employee retention. The model explained 37.2% of the variance in employee retention ($R^2 = .372$), while the adjusted coefficient of determination (Adjusted $R^2 = .370$) differed only marginally, demonstrating that the model provides a stable estimate of the population relationship. The standard error of the estimate (0.51425) suggests that predicted employee retention scores deviated from the observed values by approximately 0.51 units on the measurement scale. Based on Cohen's effect size measure, the explained variance corresponds to $f^2 = 0.59$ ($0.372 \div (1 - 0.372)$), representing a large effect size.

Table 4: ANOVA Results for Organizational Culture and Employee Retention

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	50.598	1	50.598	191.334	.000b
Residual	85.418	323	.264		
Total	136.016	324			

a Dependent Variable: Employee Retention

b Predictors: (Constant), Organizational Culture

Source: Field Data 2026

The ANOVA results in Table 4 show that the regression model was statistically significant, $F(1, 323) = 191.334$, $p < .001$, demonstrating that organizational culture significantly predicts employee retention. The regression sum of squares was 50.598, compared to a residual sum of squares of 85.418, indicating that a substantial proportion of the variation in employee retention was explained by organizational culture. The ratio of the regression sum of squares to the total sum of squares ($50.598 / 136.016$) corresponds to $R^2 = .372$, confirming that organizational culture accounted for 37.2% of the total variance in employee retention. The highly significant F-statistic further indicates that the observed relationship is unlikely to have occurred by chance.

Table 5: Regression Coefficients for Organizational Culture and Employee Retention

Variable	Unstandardi zed B	Std. Error	Standardize d Beta	t	Sig.	95% CI for B
(Constant)	2.137E-5	0.029		0.001	0.999	-0.056, 0.056
Organizational Culture	0.700	0.051	0.610	13.832	0.000	0.601, 0.800

a Predictors: (Constant), Organizational Culture (mean-centred)

b Dependent Variable: Employee Retention

Source: Field Data 2026

The coefficients results presented in Table 5 indicate that organizational culture is a strong, positive, and statistically significant predictor of employee retention. The unstandardized coefficient ($B = 0.700$, $SE = 0.051$) shows that a one-unit increase in organizational culture is associated with a 0.700-unit increase in employee retention. This relationship is highly significant ($t = 13.832$, $p < .001$), providing strong statistical evidence for rejecting the null hypothesis. The standardized coefficient ($\beta = 0.610$) further confirms a large and practically meaningful effect, indicating that a one standard deviation increase in organizational culture leads to a 0.61 standard deviation increase in employee retention. The narrow confidence interval (95% CI: 0.601 to 0.800) reinforces the stability of this estimate. The intercept is approximately zero and statistically non-significant because the organizational culture scores were mean-centred before estimation. The simple regression equation is as follows.

$$Y = 0.00002 + 0.700OC$$

(Employee Retention = $0.00002 + 0.700 \times \text{Organizational Culture}$). This means that when an institution strengthens its people-related cultural practices, such as shared values, open communication, fair treatment, recognition and supportive norms, employees become significantly more likely to stay.

These findings are consistent with existing empirical research emphasizing the importance of value alignment and relational workplace dynamics. Congruence between employees' individual values and institutional mission significantly enhanced commitment and reduced turnover in faith-based organizations (Nzyimi *et al.*, 2024). Similarly, Osman *et al.* (2024) observed that organizational cultures characterized by openness, mutual respect, and recognition foster stronger employee engagement and loyalty. The substantial coefficient observed in this study is comparable to findings by Mather and Bam (2025), who reported that supportive leadership and cohesive cultures significantly predicted retention in higher education institutions, and that employees are more likely to remain in institutions where they feel respected, included, and emotionally connected to organizational values.

The findings also align strongly with Psychological Contract Theory, which suggests that employees form implicit expectations regarding fairness, respect, and value congruence. When these expectations are met through positive organizational cultural practices, employees are less likely to perceive contract breach and more likely to maintain long-term commitment. The findings

not only corroborate earlier studies but also extend them by providing empirical evidence from faith-based universities, a context where culture and shared beliefs play an especially central role. Consequently, the null hypothesis (H_0) was rejected, affirming organizational culture as a powerful driver of employee retention.

Conclusion

The study found that organizational culture has a positive and statistically significant effect on employee retention, explaining 37.2% of the variance in retention outcomes. The findings indicate that organizational culture, particularly people-centered values and shared norms, has a major influence on employee retention in faith-based universities. Employees reported strong alignment between their personal values and the mission and ethos of their institutions, suggesting a deep sense of belonging and shared purpose. This value congruence enhances emotional attachment and strengthens employees' intentions to remain with their universities. Respondents also emphasized that ethical and faith-driven principles embedded in the organizational culture foster trust, integrity, and commitment, which are critical drivers of long-term staff loyalty in faith-based institutions.

In addition, the study revealed that fair treatment, mutual respect, open communication, and recognition of employee contributions are consistently upheld within these institutions. Such practices promote transparency, dignity, and appreciation, reinforcing employees' motivation and sense of worth. Organizational norms and standards characterized by professionalism, discipline, and fairness establish a stable and predictable work atmosphere that encourages continued service, while engagement initiatives and shared beliefs enhance performance, service delivery, and commitment to the university's mission. Correlation and regression analyses established a strong, positive, and statistically significant relationship between organizational culture and employee retention. Consequently, the null hypothesis (H_0) was rejected, confirming that a values-driven organizational culture significantly enhances employee retention in faith-based universities in Kenya.

Recommendations

Faith-based university management should deliberately cultivate and sustain a value-driven organizational culture as a strategic mechanism for enhancing employee retention. Institutions should clearly articulate their mission, values and expected norms during recruitment, induction and performance management, so that employees whose values align with the institution are attracted, and existing staff continue to identify with the institutional ethos.

University leadership should strengthen recognition and fair-treatment practices, which recorded comparatively lower agreement than other cultural dimensions. Transparent and equitable recognition schemes, consistent application of policies across departments and cadres, and visible appreciation of employee contributions would deepen employees' sense of being valued members of the institution.

In addition, faith-based universities should institutionalize open communication and participatory decision-making. Staff consultation forums, feedback channels, and employee engagement initiatives that involve both academic and non-academic staff can enhance trust, collegiality and a sense of belonging. Ethical and faith-based principles should be modelled consistently by leaders, since perceived gaps between espoused and lived values may weaken the psychological contract and trigger turnover.

Regulatory bodies such as the Commission for University Education (CUE) and the Ministry of Education should encourage universities to adopt governance and human resource practices that promote fairness, inclusivity and staff engagement as part of institutional quality and accreditation requirements.

Human resource departments in faith-based universities should conduct regular organizational culture and staff satisfaction audits to monitor value alignment, recognition, communication and adherence to institutional norms, and to implement timely interventions aimed at improving retention.

While this study focused on the effect of organizational culture on employee retention in faith-based universities in Kenya, future studies could adopt a longitudinal research design to examine how cultural change influences retention over time. Further research may also examine faith identity and mission alignment as distinct cultural drivers, and incorporate qualitative approaches to gain deeper insights into how employees experience their institution's culture. Additionally, comparative studies between faith-based, public and secular private universities could provide valuable insights into contextual differences in culture and employee retention outcomes.

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