

**WHAT INFLUENCE ACADEMIC STAFF SWITCHING INTENTION IN CHARTERED PRIVATE UNIVERSITIES IN GHANA?**

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**Abstract**

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**Purpose** — The study is driven by the reality that Ghana's private universities are losing a large proportion of key teaching staff (intellectual capital).

**Methods** — The mixed method of sequential explanatory research was adopted for the study. Academic staff from three chartered private universities with representative sample size of 287 were involved in the study. Binary logit model was employed to analyse the study objectives, followed by the qualitative content analyses.

**Findings** — Remuneration and job security for staff are the most significant factors for academic staff switching intention. Also, the leadership style discouraged some academic staff to leave. Males have showed greater propensity to switch as compared to females.

**Conclusion & Recommendation** — Management of private universities should promote staff welfare to avoid switching intentions of academic staff. Private university management could collaborate with prominent universities to assist academic staff in gaining experience and recognition, which could attract them grants.

**Keywords** — Switching, switching intention, Academic Staff, Chartered Private Universities

**Introduction**

Fundamentally, private universities in Ghana, like other universities are composed of Staff (human capital), students and buildings. Among the three principal components of the universities, the staff in the universities are recognized for their teaching, research, administration, community service and engagement. Academic staff are essential to societal life because they educate the leaders, produce highly skilled and enlightened intellectual capital of the society, conduct scientific research to deliver quality learning experiences to students for the social transformation and economic development of a nation (Chankseliani et al. 2021). Therefore, competence in terms of both human capital and advanced technology has transformed education for the good of society (Rosenbusch, 2020).

The education work environments are generally associated with beneficial outcomes like higher productivity and lower turnover (Harun, Md Shahid, & Othman, 2016). However, switching intentions and switching are considered as the most important variables in private universities. Service switching is defined as the act of

replacing and exchanging the current service provider with another that is available to the client in the market (Bedi, 2015). The growing competition in the global market is showing that it is becoming increasingly important for private universities to retain their existing academic staff who are also customers. For instance, Akeyo and Wezel (2017) conducted a study on how salary and its related issues can lead to some staff switching jobs in the Humanitarian sector using employees of various non-governmental organizations (NGOs). Also, many scholars explore how the management treats their employees as having significant effects on influencing employees' intention to stay (Harun, Md Shahid, & Othman, 2016). The implication is that gaining knowledge about customers' switching behavior is substantively important which can only be examined by analyzing the role of various factors affecting the switching processes of academic staff.

Hur and Perry (2016) stated that the employee of public organization enjoyed high job security in 20<sup>th</sup> Century. Private sector employees' job satisfaction depends upon salary, fringe benefits, efficiency in work, quality of supervision, and co-worker relationship among others, while public sector employee job satisfaction depends on balancing family life and after-retirement benefits (Hur & Perry, 2016). This suggests that, employees at private universities are perhaps sensitive to switching to public universities. A synthesis of factors influencing employee turnover in institutions of higher learning in Ghana' suggests that salary and its associated gratuities and emoluments positively influence staff turnover, (Hur & Perry, 2016). Kwegyir-Aggrey (2016), states that private universities in Ghana do not have the required number of lecturers and administrators in terms of quantity and quality to teach, research and manage the research. He concluded that 54% of lecturers and administrators leave the university every year. To Ongori (2007), people leave organizations without any specific reason. This indicates that there is a lack of consensus on the generalizability factors influencing switching intention. In context and scope, studies on switching intention are not done across Chartered Private Universities in Ghana which leaves a gap to fill. Meanwhile, staff of private universities expresses their frustration resulting from management treatment by leaving the institution rather than strike action, which appears to be common language among the staff of public universities to government.

The literature explains that when universities lose lecturers they are not only losing future earnings and students' enrolments but also incurring the cost of finding new lecturers and convincing students for enrolment, (Zheng (2015). Regarding Private Universities, loyal lecturers become less wage-sensitive over time, therefore, losing loyal lecturers means less research output and perhaps low enrolment. Considering the proliferation of private universities, poaching of lecturers is not uncommon, Besides, lecturers with the aid of technological advancements have easy access to available information and may easily decide to switch or not to switch to other universities or companies (Zheng (2015). This is the reason; lecturers' retention is the core concern of each private university. These notions laid the foundation of this study as to determine the most important factors influencing the switching intention of academic staff in Chartered Private Universities in Ghana. The main objective is to examine the factors that influence academic staff switching intentions of three chartered private universities in Ghana.

The factors that affect the employee switching their job from a private university to public university in Bangladesh are mostly job security, safety, future benefits, and employee empowerment (Rosenbusch, 2020). The elements of fairness and justice in how the management treats their employees also play a significant role in influencing the employees' work attitudes and performance (Herr, Bosch, Loerbroks, Genser, Almer, van Vianen, & Fischer, 2018). Many scholars indicated that fairness and justice have significant effects in influencing employees' intention to stay (Herr et al. 2018). They further reported that injustice perceptions were found to not only have a direct effect on employees' performance but also reduces their mental and physical health.

According to Zheng (2015), high employee turnover rate delays the projected work and hurting the total productivity of a project. As an employee with experience and knowledge in certain positions quit the works, it causes a slowdown in the scheduled tasks. It takes time to replace someone with an intimate experience with new workers and the new comers need a certain time to learn and follow up on the procedure and experience. In the view of Zheng (2015), the feelings of job insecurity occur in the remaining employees in an organization. Is noted that whenever workers are being laid off or resign by their own volition, the remaining workers have to take on extra task and duties. This situation creates low morale in the group of employees, and they will tend to perform lower and less enthusiastic.

Despite faculty turnover having some positive effects on an institution, such as bringing in new ideas, high turnover rates cause financial losses, the disruption of teaching and research, and discontinuity in student mentoring (Rosser, 2004). High turnover tarnishes the image and reputation of an institution and negatively affects the ‘satisfiers’ of the remaining faculty (Rosser, 2004). Factors such as tenure, university policies toward outside offers and psychological contracts (Herzberg 1966) are also often identified as playing a major role in a faculty member’s decision to depart.

Academic staff switching intention in universities and other higher education institutions has been widely researched (Kwegyir-Aggrey, 2016; in Winneba and Boakye et al, 2022 in Kumasi). These two studies (Kwegyir-Aggrey, 2016 & Boakye et al, 2022) explored the factors that affect staff retention and predict faculty mobility. The paper adopted Two-Factor Theory of Herzberg (1966). The first factor ‘hygiene’, includes salary, working conditions and company policy (Herzberg, 1966). These factors are identified as elements that could cause satisfaction as well as dissatisfaction. The hygiene factors are considered extrinsic factors and that they are under the control of the management or someone other than the employee (Nickerson, 2021). The second factor is the ‘satisfiers’. They include achievement, recognition, responsibility, and advancement (Herzberg, 1966). The satisfier factors are related to the intrinsic values of the employees and they are part of their job content and the outcomes of the values that are closely monitored by the employees (Nickerson, 2021).

## Materials and Methods

This study was grounded in a pragmatism research paradigm. This paradigm offers the philosophical framework for mixed-method research leading to a better understanding of social realities (Wahyuni, 2012). This study explores explanatory sequential mixed methods design. A quantitative survey questionnaire was constructed and administered to Deans, HoDs and Academics who are also administrators. The same questionnaire was administered to lecturers using random sampling methods. In the same vein, four Deans and Two Registrars were interviewed for qualitative data. Specifically, the quantitative research approach was used to generate quantifiable data to explain the academic staff switching intention in relation to demographic and institutional factors. The qualitative data was used to further explain and confirm results from the quantitative data. The study design focuses on a mixed method of data collection using a structured survey and interview guide with closed and open-ended items respectively to better understand the study objective.

### Sample Size and Response Rate

The sample size calculation formula was adapted from Yamane (1967).  $Sample\ Size\ (n) = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$  where n = sample size, N = populations, and e = margin error. In substituting N = 453 and e = 0.05 in the above formula, the least sample size should be approximately two hundred and twelve (212). Therefore, 320 participants in the universities were employed for the study. However, 277 participants filled out questionnaires, representing 86.6% response rate, and these were used for the analysis. This is consistent with Kothari & Gang (2014) who stated a response rate of above 70% is considered as excellent and useful for analysis. In the qualitative aspect, respondents were 6, (four Deans and two Registrars), who were purposively selected and interviewed. At the time of data collection, chartered private universities were five. The three chartered private universities selected have programmes in Science, Business and Liberal Arts and have been mentored by public universities for ten years and more.

**Table 1: Deans, Heads of Department and Administration**

Name of University	Deans	Heads of Department	*Administrative Heads	Total
Ashesi University	1	4	2	7
Central University	9	17	3	29
Valley View University	6	14	4	24
<b>Total</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>60</b>

Source: Universities website (May 10, 2020)

\*Administrative heads who also lecture.

Table 1 indicates the number of Deans and Heads of Department and Administrative Unit. The total number in these categories of staff is 60.

**Table 2: Number of Lecturers and Proportion Selected**

<b>Name of University</b>	<b>Number of Lecturers (Not Dean or HoD)</b>	<b>Proportion selected</b>
Ashesi University	60	10
Central University	214	117
Valley View University	119	37
<b>Total</b>	<b>393</b>	<b>164</b>

Source: NAB Annual Statistics Report 2018/2019

Table 2 shows the lecturers proportionally selected to respond to the questionnaire. The minimum respondents were 164 per the calculation.

*Data Collection Instrument*

The questionnaire was designed using a Likert five-point scale ranging from (1-Strongly disagree to 5-Strongly agree) to gather information on staff retention strategies adopted by private universities. The follow-up interview guide was open-ended only. The interview guide was used for the six respondents only.

*Data Collection Procedures*

The researcher sought clearance from the University of Cape Coast Institutional Review Board (UCCIRB) by presenting a comprehensive proposal to the Institute for review. Then I collected a letter for ethical clearance from the Institutional Review Board and presented it to the universities where the study was conducted. Every participant was assured that their responses would be treated with the utmost confidentiality. In the process of distributing the questionnaire, the researcher verbally informed all respondents who consented to answer the questionnaire and interview that their participation was voluntary and they could opt-out at any stage of the research process. The data were collected within one month, January 2021. A pre-test study was carried out using 50 senior members at Methodist University to establish the content validity and reliability of the instrument. The Cronbach alpha value for the questions was 0.860.

**Table 3: Description of variables used to determine switching intentions**

Construct	Variable	Variable definition	
<b>Switching Propensity (dependent variable)</b>	Switching Intention	Dummy = 1 if the participant has intention to switch and 0 if otherwise	
	Gender (Male)	Dummy = 1 if male, and 0 if female	
	Age Group (20-49)	Dummy = 1 aged between 20-49, and 0 if older than 50 years	
	Academic qualification (MPhil/PhD/ED/DPhil)	Dummy = 1 MPhil; PhD/ED/DPhil, and 0 otherwise	
<b>Demographics Characteristic</b>	Years worked in the university (Less than 5 years)	Dummy = 1 if the participant has worked for less than 5years, and 0 otherwise.	
	Academic Designation (Lecturer)	Dummy = 1 academic designation is a lecturer, and 0 otherwise.	
	Positions or roles played or ever played	Dummy = 1 ever been assigned position in the university and 0 if otherwise	
	Specific positions or roles played	Dummy = 1 assigned specific role and 0 if otherwise	
	Employment Status	Dummy = 1 employed fulltime and 0 if otherwise	
	Number of tertiary institutions taught	Dummy = 1 taught in more than one institution and 0 if otherwise	
	Promotion (1- strongly disagree)	Promotion was originally measured as an interval scale variable using five-point Likert Scale where; 1 – strongly disagree, 2 – disagree, 3 – indifferent, 4 – agree and 5 – strongly agree. In order to obtain a new index for the logit model. We first, transformed all the items under this variable to extract averages. Secondly, we realigned the extracted averages to obtain binary outcome (e.g., 1 disagree, and 0, otherwise). Specifically, all extracted averages with a mean of 2.4 and below were indexed as disagree, and means of 2.5 to 5 were indexed as agreed.	
	Remuneration (1- strongly disagree)		
	<b>INSTITUTIONAL FACTORS</b>		
	Leadership style (1- strongly disagree)		
Training (1- strongly disagree)			
Enrolment (1- strongly disagree)			
*Note	<i>The first options (As indicated in the parenthesis) of the alternatives given were used as reference numbers in the logit model</i>		

Sources: Author's Compilation (2021)

## Results and Discussion

### *Demographic data*

There were more males than females in the sample collected. Males represented 78.7% of the entire sample. Education of women is not exempted in that, the Population and Housing Census (PHC, 2021) indicates the gender divide in education as reflected in the fact that while 74.1 per cent of males were literates, the proportion for females was 34.4 per cent.

**Table 4: Demographic Data of Respondents**

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
<b>Gender</b>		
Female	59	21.3
Male	218	78.7
<b>Age categories</b>		
20 – 24	0.0	0.0
25 – 29	0.0	0.0
30 – 34	26	9.4
35 – 39	58	20.9
40 – 44	57	20.6
45 – 49	54	19.5
Above 50	82	29.6
<b>Academic Qualification</b>		
MSc/MA/MBA	8	2.9
MPhil	2	0.7
PhD/ED/DPhil	85	30.7
Professionals	129	46.6
Others	53	19.1
<b>Number of years worked</b>		
Less than 5 years	65	23.5
6 to 10 years	92	33.2
11 to 15 years	88	31.8
16 -20	18	6.5
More than 20 years	14	5.0
<b>Academic Designation</b>		
Academic Counsellor	75	33.9
Lecturer	50	22.6
Unit Coordinator	16	7.2
Accountant	2	0.9
Examination Officers	40	18.2
Others	38	17.2
<b>Position</b>		
Head of Department	84	30.0
Dean	9	4.0
Other	184	66.0
<b>Size of University</b>		
Less than 5000 students	202	73.9
5000 and more	75	27.1
<b>Years of Incorporation</b>		
5 – 10 years	55	19.9
More than 10 years	222	80.1
<b>Type of work contract</b>		
Part-time	13	4.7
Full-time	264	95.3
<b>Total for each case</b>	<b>277</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: Author's Data Analysis 2021

Between the sexes, there is very little variation in the distribution of people by education at the managerial and professional levels of occupation. However, there is a much higher concentration of females as services and sales workers at all levels of education and as clerical support. Age is a critical variable, either directly or indirectly, in almost every population research and analysis. The majority of the respondents, 29.6%, fall within 50+ years followed by 20.9% of the respondents falling within 35-39 years. The distribution shows that majority of the respondents are above 35 years old. The ‘expected’ pattern of numbers at various ages is that, given stable birth rates, there should be more people in age compared to the next higher age as a result of death in the absence of migration (PHC, 2021). The pattern of the distribution is not consistent with the PHC 2021. This probably is attributed to Private universities regular hiring of more retired academic staff to build their staff capacity. Out of the 277 participants who reported their academic qualifications, the majority 46.6% (n = 129) of the participants had professional qualifications. Besides, 30.7% (n=85) and 19.7% (N=53) hold PhD and others respectively.

Table 4 revealed that 4.0% (n=9) of the respondents had held a Deanship position. Also, 30.0% (n=84) were Heads of Department (HoD) or held such positions before. However, the remaining 66.0% (n=184) of the respondents held positions either than Deans or HoD. Regarding the size of the universities, 72.9% (n=202) of the academic staff who participated in this study reported that their universities have a student population of less than 5000. Additionally, 27.1% (n=75) of the academic staff reported that their universities student population ranging from 5000 to 10000. It was noted that 80.1%, (n = 222) of respondents indicated that their university was incorporated more than 10 years ago. Also, 19.9% (n=55) indicated that their University was incorporated between 5 to 10 years. Lastly, Table 4 reveals that the chartered private universities have 95.3% (n=264) of full-time academic staff. The part-time academic staff was 24.7% (n=13).

*Demographic Factors and Switching Intention (Chi-square ( $\chi^2$ ) Analysis)*

In this study, the Chi-square test was used to compare the observed and expected distributions for two different factors (Demographic and Institution Factors) affecting switching propensity of academic staff working with chartered private universities. In the case of this study, chi-square tests for the different factors were performed.

**Table 6: Association between Demographic Factors and Switching Intention**

Items	Chi-square ( $\chi^2$ )	Cramer’s V	Df	p-value
Gender	9.125	0.182	2	0.010
Age	43.732	0.281	8	0.000
Academic qualification	23.776	0.207	8	0.002
Professional or other masters	24.644	0.213	8	0.002
Years of working in the university	38.445	0.263	8	0.000
Years intending to work in the university	19.064	0.189	10	0.039
Current Designation	8.555	0.124	6	0.200
Positions or roles played or ever played	12.321	0.149	4	0.015
Specific positions	31.484	0.267	10	0.000
Full-time or part-time staff	5.100	0.136	2	0.078
Number of tertiary institutions taught or worked	34.954	0.251	8	0.000

Source: Field Data (2021)

As shown in the Table 6, there is a significant association ( $\chi^2 = 9.125$ ,  $df = 2$ ,  $p-value = 0.010$ ) between respondent’s gender and switching propensity. It was observed from the cross-tabulation that males have showed greater propensity to switch as compared to females. This result implies that the prevailing working conditions in the Ghanaian private universities affect males and females differently to a very large extent. This result could be linked to the prevailing socioeconomic conditions in the country. Given the culturally defined role of men in Ghana, they face more demands than their female counterparts, resulting in a strong proclivity to migrate from one company to another where they may meet those expectations.

There is significant association ( $\chi^2 = 43.732$ ,  $df = 8$ ,  $p-value = 0.000$ ), ( $\chi^2 = 23.776$ ,  $df = 8$ ,  $p-value = 0.002$ ) respectively between Age, Academic Qualification and switching propensity of staff. The age bracket that is sensitive to ‘switching intention’ is 40-44, followed by 50+ and 45-49. The age range that is susceptible to

switch to different universities is 40-50. This age group has work experience and is motivated to build their life, making them quite mobile. Both public and private institutions are fighting for experienced academic personnel to serve as enrolment pull agents and to earn research funds from sponsors. It is understandable that all private colleges are implementing methods to maintain their core and experienced workforce in order to compete for student enrolment and grants.

Besides, 107 of the respondents comprise 51 PhD degree holders and 56 professionals. Further, academic staff who worked 6-10 years was 92% and those who worked for 11-15 years was 88%. This confirms the fact that private universities have adopted strategies to retain core and experience academic staff.

Academic staff were asked how long they intended to work in their current university, the cross tabulation shows a high propensity to work less than five years in their current university. Table 6 shows there is significant association ( $\chi^2 = 19.064, df = 10, p\text{-value} = 0.039$ ) between respondent's years intended to work at the current university and switching propensity to other universities.

Academic staff positions or roles played or ever played, specific positions, and number of tertiary institutions taught or worked, all show significance at 5% association between academic staff demographic factors and their strong desire to switch off to other universities. However, the association between Switching Intention and demographic factors such as current designation ( $\chi^2 = 8.555, p\text{-value} = 0.200$ ) as well as full-time or part-time staff ( $\chi^2 = 5.100, p\text{-value} = 0.078$ ) is not significant.

### Binary Logistic Models Analysis

Binary logit models were developed to estimate the probability of a binary response as a function of one or more predictors. The study uses a binary logistic regression model, as the dependent variable (switching propensity) is dichotomous (e.g., yes or no).

**Table 7: Binary Logit Model 1: Demographic Factors that Affect Switching Intentions**

Factors	B	SE	Wald	Exp(B)	P- value	95 % CI
Gender	-0.920	0.341	7.288	0.398	0.007	0.204-0.777
Age	0.317	0.115	7.585	1.374	0.006	1.096-1.722
Academic qualification	-0.209	0.164	1.623	0.812	0.203	0.589-1.119
Professional or other masters	-0.050	0.136	0.133	0.952	0.716	0.729-1.242
Years of working in the university	-0.014	0.141	0.010	0.986	0.919	0.748-1.299
Current Designation	-0.245	0.211	1.348	0.782	0.246	0.517-1.184
<b>Constant</b>	0.503	0.894	0.317	1.653	0.574	
<b>Model fit Statistics</b>						
-2loglikelihood (Final model)			365.268			
$\chi^2(df)$ Final Model			17.432(6)**			
$\chi^2(df)$ Hosmer and Lemeshow Test			20.622(8)**			
Nagelkerke R-Square			0.081			
Cox and Snell R <sup>2</sup>			0.061			
Overall Percentage Classification			59.2			

\*significant at 99% ( $p=0.01$ ) \*\*significant at 95%

From the estimated demographic factors, the coefficients determine the contribution of each independent (predictor) variables in explaining the probability (log odd) of occurrence. The Wald statistics was used to validate the significance of the regression coefficients as indicated in the Table 7. The Logit model 1 was statistically significant  $\chi^2(8) = 20.622, p = 0.000$ . The explained variation in switching propensity in the current model ranges from 6.1% to 8.1% respectively for Cox and Snell R<sup>2</sup> and Nagelkerke R<sup>2</sup> and correctly classified 59.2% of the cases which is high indication of good fit for the model. Table 7 result shows that gender ( $\beta = -0.920, OR = 0.398, p\text{-value} = 0.007$ ) of the respondents significantly influence the switching propensity of the respondents. The result further shows that females are 0.398 times more unlikely to switch as compare to their male counterparts controlling for other variables in the model. Additionally, age ( $\beta = 0.317, OR = 1.374, p\text{-value} = 0.006$ ) of the respondents significantly influence the switching propensity of the respondents. The result shows that respondents within age category of 20-49 are 1.374 times more likely to

switch as compared to their counterparts in the other age categories controlling for other variables in the model.

**Table 8: Association between Institutional Factors and Switching Intention**

Items	Chi-square ( $\chi^2$ )	Cramer's V	Df	p-value
Promotion	7.204	0.163	3	0.066
Remuneration	33.206	0.349	4	0.000
Leadership	9.071	0.183	3	0.028
Training	10.382	0.195	4	0.034

Source: Field Data (2021)

As shown in the Table 8, there is a significant association between Switching Intention and remuneration ( $\chi^2 = 33.206$ ,  $p$ -value=0.000), leadership ( $\chi^2 = 9.071$ ,  $p$ -value=0.028) and training ( $\chi^2 = 10.382$ ,  $p$ -value=0.034). However, the association between Switching Intention and promotion ( $\chi^2 = 7.204$ ,  $p$ -value=0.066) was not significant.

**Table 9: Binary Logit Model 2: Institutional Factors Affecting Switching Intentions**

Factors	B	SE	Wald	Exp(B)	P- value	95 % CI
Promotion	-0.200	0.208	.922	0.819	0.337	0.544-1.231
Remuneration	1.048	0.211	24.781	2.853	0.000	1.888-4.311
Leadership	-0.536	0.211	6.477	0.585	0.011	0.387-0.884
Training	0.009	0.135	.005	1.009	0.945	0.775-1.315
<b>Constant</b>	<b>-2.437</b>	<b>0.938</b>	<b>6.746</b>	<b>0.087</b>	<b>0.009</b>	

**Model fit Statistics**

-2loglikelihood (Final model)	339.152
$\chi^2$ (df) Final Model	35.800(6)**
$\chi^2$ (df) Hosmer and Lemeshow Test	34.200(8)
Nagelkerke R-Square	0.165
Cox and Snell R <sup>2</sup>	0.123
Overall Percentage Classification	67.6

Source: Field Data (2021) \*significant at 99% ( $p=0.01$ ) \*\*significant at 95% ( $p=0.05$ )

Table 9 shows that remuneration academic staff receives for their work is satisfactory and disagree that, they are 2.853 times more likely to switch to other universities than their counterparts who are not receiving same remuneration. Following on the same table 9, Leadership style in Chartered Private Universities makes positive contribution to the overall effectiveness of the institution. Academic staff who are not under a committed leadership agree that they are 0.585 times more likely to switch off to other universities than their counterparts controlling for other variables in the model. The explained variation in switching intentions of the respondents in the current model ranges from 12.3% to 16.5% for Cox and Snell R<sup>2</sup> and Nagelkerke R<sup>2</sup> respectively. The model correctly classified 67.6% of the cases which is an indication of a high good fit for the model.

Also, the following qualitative excerpts are from two respondents on the question ‘What measures do management take to ensure the payment of staff remunerations during times of financial crisis?’

“[...] It takes a lot of juggling with the finances, including getting overdraft from the banks, and sometimes appealing to our mother organization, the church to bail us out. The major challenge is that we rely mostly on students’ fees to pay all our staff, and if we have low student numbers, default fee payments or with the difficulty in the economy, payment of salaries are delayed. Staff feel unsecured when salaries are delayed”.

(Participant 2, University Y, 17<sup>th</sup> August, 2022).

“[...] Salaries are paid through loans in some cases, the non-payroll allowances are paid in arrears as and when funds are available from fees and investments. This situation drives out our experience lecturers to join timely paid jobs”. (Participant 10, University Z, 19<sup>th</sup> August, 2022).

The excerpts conclude that chartered private universities rely heavily on students’ fees to pay staff remunerations, which appear unsustainable. Increasing demand of remuneration by academic staff coupled with the cost of borrowing from banks is relatively high, which adds to the cost of running the university.

Therefore, inability of private universities to offer competitive remuneration to their academic staff will lose the experience staff to competitive organizations. Table 9 further, indicates the variables like Promotion ( $p=0.337$ ) and Training ( $p=0.945$ ) are not significant on staff switching intention. Thus, the likelihood of Chartered Private Universities' academic staff intention to leave or not to leave for other universities or jobs is not associated with Promotion and Training. The following qualitative comments are typical of what two respondents said based on the question 'Is your university affected by high attrition rate? What does your university put in place to motivate academic staff to stay?'

"[...] Yes, the leadership style is amorphous; it is determined by those in charge. I believe that leadership could be more consensus-based than it is now. Management's leadership style causes academic staff to leave the university." (Participant 1, University Y, 17<sup>th</sup> August, 2022).

Beardwell & Claydon (2007) claims that the role of a supervisor and leadership is critical in employee retention and that employee quit managers, not firms.

"[...] Those who need to complete their terminal degree are given a fixed amount. There is also a regular workshop on research, academic writing, and grant writing, which is usually organized by the research office. These are training sessions designed to help academic staff advance in their careers. The irony is that those who benefit from training to obtain a terminal degree eventually leave the university." (Participant 6, University Z, 19<sup>th</sup> August, 2022)

The result is that, academic staff are dissatisfied with management's leadership style and believes that support for training and obtaining terminal degrees is insufficient. Terminal degree holders should be given some recognition upon their return by being given higher positions in the university to earn some allowances as an incentive to stay.

Two participants excerpts summaries the question that 'Do you think the owners of the university have influence on academic staff decision?'

"[...] The owner is the church, and we are members of the church, so the university is for us, and we will work there until we retire." (Participant 3, University X, 20<sup>th</sup> August, 2022).

"[...] The university owner's humility and nobleness have made some lecturers loyal friends who vow not to leave the university to another." (Participant 8, University Z, 19<sup>th</sup> August, 2022).

The excerpts from the participants expressed the participants' belief that university owners have no direct influence over academic staff at chartered private universities. The participants believe that owners are role models and pacesetters for some academic staff, an intrinsic motivation for them to stay in these chartered private universities.

## Discussion

Private universities place a high value on the reasons for academic staff retention and continuation, as well as academic staff exit. Understanding these reasons can help private universities strengthen academic staff retention and reduce staff exit. Academic staff retention in private universities was found to be predicted by remuneration. This is consistent with the following studies; Rosser (2004) observed that although much of the overall research on faculty members suggests that salary (Akeyo & Wezel (2017), in and of itself, is not the most important aspect of their work life and satisfaction, salary is one of the primary reasons why faculty members leave their institution. Kipkebut (2010) found that 51% of the faculty did not believe that they were compensated fairly, relative to those other comparable institutions. Manogharam, Thivaharam and Rahman (2018) explain that academic staff expects and demand for higher pay which is a limitation for small colleges. They further conclude that dissatisfaction with salaries is a key factor undermining the commitment of academics to their institutions and careers, and consequently their decision or intent to leave. The results show that the age range 20-49 is susceptible in leaving the private universities. Contrary, evidence indicates that some academic staff, approaching the decade prior to retirement, get very anxious about the financial trepidations that tend to accompany retirement. They, therefore, make decisions about quitting academia in good enough time and taking up positions that are better paying and are more likely to enable them to accumulate enough to ensure a more comfortable retirement, even if they do not get a large pension.

In the qualitative results, training alone without promotion is not sufficient to retain academic staff. Again, training and promotion are not significant in the logit model. The implication is that academic staff training should be followed by promotion to guarantee their retention and continuation. These results supports

Nawaz and Pangil (2015) findings that training and development did not have a significant impact on turnover intention and organizational commitment. However, Nawaz and Pangil (2015) find that promotion speed and remuneration growth had significant relationships with turnover intention. They also indicated that, even though one has already been given a promotion, if one is offered a better position in another organization, it is not known whether he/she will stay or leave the organization. Apparently in this current study, promotion is not significant with switching intention because in the private universities in some cases, people are being promoted with or without allowances, hence, not a deciding factor.

The study explained leadership style and owners influence of academic staff in relation to their stay or leave the private universities. The results provide that academic staff stay with leaders or leave leaders not institutions. The findings are supported by the studies of Watson (2009) who claims that the most significant determinant of continued job satisfaction and organizational commitment for employees is a positive relationship with their immediate supervisor. The academic staff will be committed to their core mandate, when there is positive relationship between academic staff on one hand and Heads of Department, as well as Deans on another hand. Similarly, (Ng'ethe et al; 2012) stated that leadership has ability to increase the commitment of employees and retain talented employees in the organization. Further, Gwavuya (2011) affirms that incompetent leadership results in poor employee performance, high stress, low job commitment, low job satisfaction and turnover intent. Moreover, Nyambubarwa (2013) demonstrated that employee motivation and retention is actively affected by organisational leadership, specifically when positive feedback together with recognition is regularly directed to the employees. Hence, a positive influence can be created upon the academic staff intentions to leave, or stay at, an organisation from the nature of leadership.

### **Conclusions and Recommendations**

With the issue of staff switching intention using demographic factors, age and gender were prominently associated with staff switching intention. It was observed that males have shown greater propensity to switch as compared to females. There are many social expectations from males than females that propel them to switch from one institution to another. The age group that is sensitive to switch is 20-49 years bracket. The females are 39.8% times unlikely to switch as compared to their male counterparts in chartered private universities. With the institutional factors, affecting switching intention, remuneration staff received for their work in Private Universities is satisfactory and disagree that they are 2.853 times likely to switch to other institutions than their counterparts, who did not receive the same remuneration. Academic staff are dissatisfied with management's leadership style and believes that support for training and obtaining terminal degrees is insufficient and they eventually leave the university.

Based on the aforementioned, the researcher outlines the following policy recommendations;

- i. According to the findings, age and gender are the most relevant demographic characteristics influencing academic staff switching intentions as the workforce transitions to a new generation of workers. Ph.D. holders should be recognized upon their return by being assigned to higher-level posts within the university in order to receive allowances as an incentive to stay.
- ii. It was concluded that Remuneration and Leadership style are predictors that are most likely to influence staff switching intention.
- iii. To reduce excessive staff turnover, private university administration should establish criteria for training, promotion, and staff welfare. Private universities should be proactive in attracting grants in order to move away from relying solely on student fees for all university payments.

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