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Talent Management Practices and Performance of MDAs in Uganda

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Abstract: This study therefore aimed at examining the effect of talent management practices on the performance of Ministries, Departments, and Agencies (MDAs) in Uganda with four objectives which were designed to examine talent acquisition, talent development, performance management, and succession planning in MDAs in Uganda. This study used a positivism paradigm and applied a sequential mixed-methods explanatory research design in which data was collected through cross-sectional survey research design and analyzed using Pearson correlation and hierarchical regression analysis, with thematic data analysis used in analyzing data collected in the quantitative section of this research. Regression results indicate that talent acquisition significantly and positively affects MDA performance in Uganda ($B = 0.246$, $p < .01$), as do talent development ($B = 0.142$, $p < .01$) and performance management ($B = 0.414$, $p < .01$), which is the highest of all factors. However, succession planning has a slight negative effect but is not statistically significant ($B = -0.003$, $p > .05$). Overall, the results indicate that the model is statistically significant and explains 37.6 percent of the changes in MDA performance in Uganda (Adjusted $R^2 = .376$, $F = 71.657$, $p < .01$). Based on the results, the importance of merit recruitment, staff development, and performance management is highlighted, as is the importance of succession planning and its potential to support MDA performance in Uganda. The results of the present study provide solid support to inform HR policy interventions geared towards improving the efficiency, effectiveness, accountability, and sound financial management of MDAs in Uganda's public sector.

Keywords: *Talent management practices, performance of MDAs, Uganda*

1. Background

The effectiveness of ministry, department, and agency (MDA) is of topmost importance in national development because these are the channels through which government programs and policies are implemented to provide services that are of benefit to the welfare of citizens (Knies, Boselie, Gould-Williams & Vandenabeele, 2024). Effective MDAs are therefore of topmost importance in ensuring effective service delivery, preventing wastage of public expenditure, and ensuring accountability, which in turn builds public confidence in the government (Halim, Wibisono & Mulyono, 2024). In this case, talent management is of topmost importance in ensuring that only capable employees are hired to deliver duties in executing institutional roles (Wenting, Hussain, Xinlin, Na & Alam, 2024). Person-Job Fit Theory offers an understanding of the ways in which the question of why ensuring an appropriate fit between workers' skills, values, and interests can be appreciated in enhancing performance outcomes (Huang, Yuan & Li, 2019). For example, effective talent management strategies in which candidates are matched with job roles are of topmost importance in enhancing effectiveness and ensuring an appropriate fit between organizational needs and employees' capabilities (Bonet & Hamori, 2017). Recruitment software enabled through analytics also facilitates the identification of the workforce whose talent is closely aligned with the organizational needs, hence promoting organizational effectiveness (Palshikar, Srivastava, Pawar, Hingmire, Jain, Chourasia & Shah, 2018). Talent acquisition undertaken properly ensures that MDAs are not only staffed but staffed with people who are capable of delivering organizational goals, hence promoting value for money (Oueidat, 2022). Across the globe, there is evidence showing that governments whose talent acquisition and placement is closely aligned with organizational goals are likely to enjoy high levels of performance and satisfaction among the citizens (Karunathilaka, 2020). Under this perspective, the theory argues that the matching of workers with their respective professions is not just a personnel issue but an institutional one aimed at promoting performance (Opada, Ibrahim, Irawan, Akbar & Rasyid, 2024).

The development of talent also highlights the determination of the performance of MDAs. This is because, through the persistent development of the ability, potential, and know-how of the employees, the institution is able to ensure that its employees are able to keep up with the changing policy, technology, and administrative demands (Subotnik, Olszewski-Kubilius & Worrell, 2019). This is evidence of the Person-Job Fit Theory, which indicates that the performance of the employees improves when the changing abilities of the employees are

able to keep up with the demands of their respective jobs (Mensah & Bawole, 2020). It has been shown through research that talent development programs improve the engagement of the employees at all levels and create the institutional memory that is essential in sustaining the performance of the MDAs (Kaliannan, Darmalinggam, Dorasamy & Abraham, 2023). Secondly, continuous professional development helps employees maintain compatibility with organizational goals, thus boosting the efficacy of strategy implementation, accountability, and service delivery performance (Rezaei & Beyerlein, 2018). Research also indicates that organizations that develop talent holistically realize higher innovation and resilience to be able to adapt to challenges and maintain performance levels (Kwon & Jang, 2022). Research in the banking and corporate sectors also confirms that developing talent leads to operational effectiveness in making employees competent, motivated, and goal-oriented towards organizational targets (Aina & Atan, 2020). Therefore, talent development rooted in the provisions of Person-Job Fit Theory is a continuous strategic tool for realizing sustained high performance in public organizations (Gallardo-Gallardo, Thunnissen & Scullion, 2020).

Performance management and succession planning enable the acquisition and development of talent through the direct relationship between individual efforts and organizational outcomes, and the assured succession of leaders (Gerrish, 2016). Performance management systems that include goal setting, feedback, appraisal, and reward enhance efficiency, effectiveness, and accountabilities in MDAs (Gomes & Mendes, 2023). Person-Job Fit Theory is exemplified through the experience that matching individual tasks and abilities with performance goals leads to increased individual engagement and productivity (Zhu, Zhu, Xiong, Ma, Xie, Ding, & Li, 2018). Succession planning ensures continuity through the development of staff to lead the MDAs in the future, hence avoiding disruptions in the course of organizational changes (Frimpong, 2022). This is supported by the experience of Ghana and Tanzania, where the implementation of succession plans has been shown to improve organizational resilience, staff morale, and continuity of service (Karikari, Kodi, & Poku, 2020; Wanje, 2022). Lack of effective succession planning has been shown to create performance gaps and ineffective accountability (Mohamed, 2022). Across the globe, MDAs that incorporate all the elements of talent management into their human resource systems have been shown to improve their operational performance, improve their compliance with the budget, and enhance the quality of service (Knies et al., 2024). Across Africa and East Africa, performance-related reforms that incorporate the linkage between HR practices have shown significant progress, although challenges still exist in the implementation and the allocation of resources (Mwamanda, 2023; Gorman & Dwumoh, 2022). Within Uganda, research has shown that MDAs that utilize the systematic recruitment of talent, staff development, and performance monitoring improve their accountability, efficiency, and service delivery (Lugada et al., 2022; Nuwagaba et al., 2021; Mwesigwa & Oladapo, 2021). This supports the validation of the applicability of the Person-Job Fit Theory through the strategic talent management process to improve the performance of MDAs and Uganda at large.

2. Literature Review

Theoretical Literature Review

In order to gain more insights into the relationship between talent management and the performance of MDAs, the relationship could be understood through the perspective of the Person-Job Fit Theory. Person-Job Fit Theory, which was developed by Edwards in 1991, is founded on the assumption that the performance of the employees is greatly enhanced if there is a high level of correspondence between the person's ability, interest, and value system and the job's requirement and need. This is because if the employees feel they are well fit in their respective positions, they get motivated and become productive, hence the performance of the organization is improved (Huang, Yuan & Li, 2019). This theory has also shown that if there is no correspondence between the person and his/her job, the outcome is dissatisfaction with the job, low job satisfaction, and low efficiency (Mensah & Bawole, 2020). With the case of MDAs, the theory shows how the employees are able to perform well in their respective positions, hence the enhancement of their performance. Organizations that utilize systematic approaches in directing the employees' skills to the job tasks are shown to perform well (Zhu et al., 2018).

Huang, Yuan & Li (2019) applied the Person-Job Fit Theory to examine employees' skills-job demands fit and its impact on innovation behavior. The results indicated that employees with a very good match between their strengths and their jobs were extremely creative, highly motivated, and more inclined to contribute positively to organizational performance. They further found that job involvement and career commitment stabilized this relationship, proving that fit between a person and his or her work encourages innovation and long-term

commitment. Mensah & Bawole (2020) also explored person-job fit within the public organizations of Ghana through an analysis of its mediating role between talent management and employee outcomes. They discovered that increased person-job fit leads to increased job satisfaction, commitment, and productivity and therefore forms a critical component of public organizations seeking to increase efficiency and accountability. Zhu et al. (2018) extended the application of data-driven methods to further improve person-job matching using joint representation learning. Their findings confirmed that organizations that use such models achieve better talent alignment, leading to improved recruitment and performance.

Qin et al. (2018) developed an ability-conscious neural network model with the objective to improve recruitment processes via individual ability matching against specific job specifications. As reported by their study, in line with the fact that companies focus on person-job fit, turnover reduces and overall performance enhances. Qin et al. (2020) expanded upon this idea by proposing a sophisticated neural network model that considered the employee traits and occupational features, and found that companies implementing this model experienced improved performance indicators and job stability. Sun et al. (2021) also expanded upon the idea with their study on person-organization fit using structure-aware attentive neural networks. They found that firms that match employees' potential with strategic goals not only enhance engagement but also achieve higher institutional performance. Those studies as a whole illustrate that the Person-Job Fit Theory offers a useful framework for understanding how matching individual ability with job roles enhances performance in MDAs because proper matching drives motivation, innovation, and organizational success.

Empirical Literature Review

Talent Acquisition and Performance of MDAs

In the understanding of the relationship between talent management practices and performance, talent acquisition is at the core of the organizational outcomes. Wenting et al. (2024) is an example of how analytics-based talent acquisition improves the precision of talent acquisition, turnover reduction, and performance management. This is because the findings indicated that analytics assist the organization in selecting the best talent whose talent strengths match the organizational needs, hence increasing the effectiveness of the organization. However, the findings were more inclined towards private tech-based firms and could not be directly applied to public institutions such as the MDAs in Uganda, which are likely to be slow-moving and have minimal digital infrastructure. Similarly, in a theoretical study, Bonet & Hamori (2017) recognized that not only is recruitment an organizational process but also a strategic one. The study recognized that organizations that integrate their recruitment with organizational goals have been able to develop a dedicated and skilled workforce, which in return translates into organizational performance. Although the study was not tested, it is evident that it provides a conceptual model that public institutions could adopt in their efforts to transform recruitment from its traditional reactive, ritualistic approach to more strategic recruitment. Palshikar et al. (2018) also emphasized analytics-based recruitment. The study demonstrated how data systems could be used in reducing biases in recruitment, making it faster, and enhancing job fit. The study provides empirical evidence on how recruitment could be made more objective and performance-oriented. Therefore, it is evident that talent acquisition, being a strategic approach, could be effective in enhancing value for money in Uganda's MDAs, although it is subject to contextualization.

Oueidat (2022) analyzed the recruitment of talents in the organization by conducting quantitative regression analysis to reveal the interaction between recruitment practice and productivity, service delivery, and employee retention. A positive correlation was established with the observation that the organizational culture and leadership played a critical role in the quantification of the recruitment process. Vadithe & Kesari (2023) carried out a systematic review of the application of HR analytics in the recruitment of talents. The application of analytics in the recruitment process was seen to improve fairness and speed in the recruitment process and the quality of the candidate-organization fit. However, it was also seen that the application of technology in the recruitment process was not enough to improve organizational performance. Karunathilaka's (2020) research on the role of talent acquisition as a strategic business tool revealed that organizations that strategically align recruitment with organizational goals have better productivity and innovation. The research emphasized the importance of recruitment that does not only consider skills but also cultural aspects. The three studies reveal that the effectiveness of recruitment is largely dependent on the strategy, leadership, culture, and technology that are all integrated. The implications of these studies for the MDAs in Uganda are that better recruitment

outcomes are not just about the rules and regulations in place but also about the systemic approach that needs to be taken.

Opada et al.'s (2024) study examined the recruitment policy and talent acquisition strategies wherein openness and meritocracy in recruitment processes can significantly enhance the workers' productivity and organizational effectiveness. The mixed-methods approach revealed that harmonization of recruitment practices and organizational objectives minimizes nepotism and boosts accountability in institutions such as MDAs in Uganda. Anita (2019), in her conceptual paper, established a conceptual model of strategic talent acquisition through scientific steps in the recruitment process, such as workforce planning, employer branding, employee engagement, and post-hire assessment. Although not based on empirical data, the author offered practical suggestions in developing a system of recruitment that maximizes the performance of employees and minimizes turnover rates. Thakur & Sanjrani (2024), in their empirical study of the banking sector in Pakistan, statistically proved that recruitment processes planned and implemented in organizations can significantly motivate employees and enhance their productivity in organizations. The three studies show that recruitment is not only open but also strategic and regularly monitored in organizations. The MDAs in Uganda can benefit greatly from the principles of recruitment and talent acquisition in terms of enhanced efficiency, accountability, and value for money, and having an efficient workforce in delivering quality services to community.

Talent Development and Performance Of MDAs

Talent development is an essential driver of organizational performance, and the MDAs in Uganda are not exempted. Subotnik, Olszewski-Kubilius & Worrell (2019) explored the psychological aspects of high performance and explained the role of talent development in fostering unique talents in employees of an organization. The authors explained that talent development is not just training but also involves mentoring, challenging, and exposing employees to opportunities, discovering individual potential, and matching it with organizational objectives. The authors explained that when workers are provided with the right opportunities and support, the organization will reap more innovation, productivity, and motivation. An empirical study on the effect of talent development on organizational performance was carried out by Wesonga & Van Der Westhuizen (2024). The study confirmed that talent development programs have a significant positive effect on employee competence, staff retention, and service delivery performance through the survey method and regression analysis. This study was evidence that talent development programs result in improved efficiency and effectiveness in organizational performance, which is crucial for public organizations like MDAs. Another study by Mwanzi, Wamitu, & Kiama (2017) showed that talent management, in terms of talent development, leads to organizational development. The study showed that talent development is crucial in developing employees in an organization, and it leads to organizational development. The study showed that talent development in an organization leads to creativity and enhances organizational outcomes. The study showed that talent development in an organization leads to creativity and enhances organizational outcomes. This proves that talent development is crucial in improving performance in an organization, and in MDAs in Uganda, it is crucial in improving accountability and enhancing efficiency and effectiveness.

The importance of talent development was also studied by Rezaei & Beyerlein (2018) through a systematic review of empirical research in a literature review, which emphasized the importance of formal training, coaching, mentoring, and experience-based learning integration. It was proposed that cooperation between development programs and individual potential, as well as organizational goals, is essential for the achievement of performance improvements. Kaliannan, Darmalinggam, Dorasamy, & Abraham (2023) emphasized the importance of inclusive talent development, stating that the guarantee of access to development opportunities for various employee groups is essential for workforce engagement, capability, and performance. The study demonstrates the importance of inclusivity for workforce capacity as well as fairness, which is essential in public institutions. Kwon & Jang (2022) provided a critical analysis of talent development practices. They emphasized that unless there is alignment with organizational culture, there would be no significant outcomes from talent development. Kwon & Jang (2022) also emphasized that there is a possibility that employees could be demotivated or that performance could be enhanced up to a certain point if there is a top-down approach. From all three studies, it is evident that there is a need for inclusiveness in talent development strategies. For the MDAs in Uganda, there is a need for development interventions that go beyond basic training.

Gallardo-Gallardo, Thunnissen & Scullion (2020) undertook an investigation on the impact of context in the implementation of talent management. The study showed that the effectiveness of development programs is largely dependent on organizational culture and structural readiness. The study showed that the adoption of talent development practices in another context must be undertaken with utmost caution. Aina & Atan (2020) provided empirical evidence that organizations that adopt integrated talent development practices are able to realize long-lasting productivity improvements. The study showed that although development should be integrated in the organizational strategy, it should not be undertaken in isolation. Hongal & Kinange (2020) provided an empirical summary that showed evidence that strategic investment in the development of employees' talents is important in improving the efficiency and effectiveness of the organization. In general, these studies indicate that the development of employees' talents in the MDAs in Uganda is important in the development of an efficient and effective workforce that is able to provide quality services.

Performance management and performance of MDAs

Performance management is becoming increasingly aligned with institutional responsibility and effectiveness, especially in public organizations such as MDAs. Gerrish (2016) carried out a meta-analysis with the objective of finding out the level of effect of performance management systems on the overall performance of organizations in various public institutions. From the findings of Gerrish's analysis, it is evident that organizations with formalized performance management systems are likely to display efficiencies in terms of accountability and quality of service. Gerrish has also highlighted the fact that performance management is not only an assessment process but also a process of learning and improvement if done correctly. Gomes & Mendes (2023) also studied the organizational context in the application and impact of PMPs. Leadership support, employee participation, and evidence-based decision making were seen to be pivotal in making PMPs effective in the organizations studied. The researchers found that organizations that apply PMPs as development rather than punitive tools were seen to be more effective in aligning personal and organizational goals. Nduati & Wanyoike (2022) studied the application of employee PMPs and organizational effectiveness. The researchers found that transparent PMP goals, regular feedback, and developmentally focused evaluations were seen to be important in increasing organizational effectiveness. The reports indicate that it is the presence of performance rather than the presence of PMPs that is important in increasing the contribution of PMPs to organizational effectiveness. The application of transparent and participatory PMPs in the MDAs in Uganda could be important in increasing the effectiveness of the MDAs.

In addition, Bristol-Alagbariya, Ayanponle & Ogedengbe (2022) undertook an analysis of how the utilization of advanced performance management systems would improve productivity. They were motivated by technology and analytics applications in performance tracking. They found that data-based applications provide real-time feedback and better strategic decisions. They found digital transformation to provide efficiency and transparency in public organizations, which are both required. Almulaiki (2023) undertook an analysis of the effect of performance management on employees' performance in the context of Saudi Arabia. They found, in agreement with other researchers, that formal goal-setting, monitoring, and appraisal are to blame for employees' satisfaction. They undertook an analysis of the motivational effect of fair and transparent systems to attain individual outputs. Thneibat & Sweis (2023) undertook an analysis of how rewards based on performance and development evaluations trigger creativity through heightened motivation among employees. They found that linking rewards with evaluations of performance creates a performance-driven culture. All these research studies provide credible evidence of how current performance management systems, with the support of technology and fair measurement processes, can revolutionize performance. For MDAs, it is recommended that computerized monitoring systems and linking performance with rewards and career advancement can revolutionize public sector effectiveness.

Van Waeyenberg, Peccei & Decramer (2022) addressed the issue of the relationship between performance management and teacher performance, and they concluded that emotional commitment and low burnout are inevitable mediators of being productive. The study concluded that employees' performance and engagement levels are significantly improved if employees feel valued and appreciated through positive feedback and goals. Feruke, Olowookere & Ibrahim (2025) considered the practice of financial management and MDAs performance in Nigeria, and the study concluded that well-advanced performance monitoring systems in financial management result in better resource utilization. The study concluded that practice in performance management, especially financial operations, affects the efficiency of institutions. Matheka & Kosgei (2025) also

considered the practice of performance management in county governments in Kenya, and the study concluded that performance reviews regularly and financial performance indicators result in institutional credibility. The common factor of all these studies is that performance management is important for leading to transparency and accountability in institutions. In this regard, performance management in MDAs of Uganda should not only be focused on performance evaluation but also incorporate feedback, e-monitoring, and capacity building for leading to high performance.

Succession planning and performance of MDAs

In the quest to ascertain the impact of talent management practices on organizational performance, it is interesting to learn about the contribution of succession planning, which is the mainstay of organizational stability. Frimpong (2022) undertook an exploration of the succession planning practices of the Ghana Education Service in Asante Akim South and found that the implementation of succession planning improves the performance of the institution. Using the descriptive survey research design, the study revealed that the implementation of leadership development and mentorship programs in the institution motivated the employees and led to organizational transformation. Karikari, Kodi, & Poku (2020) also conducted a study on succession planning as a means of organizational development in the University of Education, Winneba-Kumasi, which revealed that through planned leadership succession, there is minimal interference with organizational performance. It was revealed that through deliberate capacity building and mentorship, the workforce becomes committed to their roles, thus making the organization more efficient in the long run. Gorman & Dwumoh (2022) also wrote about succession planning in the Technical Universities of Ghana, which revealed that although most of the institutions recognized the importance of succession planning, it was conducted sporadically and in an informal manner. Through this, there was a leadership vacuum, which made the organizations ineffective. All of the above research works, therefore, highlight that for public organizations such as MDAs in Uganda, there is a need for formalized succession planning through training, mentorship, and leadership grooming.

Mohamed (2022) studied the impediments to succession planning in the public health sector in Tanzania, with the case of Kinondoni Municipal Council. The author acknowledged that the performance of institutions in the public sector is often impaired by the failure to establish processes of leadership succession. Another author, Wanje (2022), also studied the effect of succession planning on the performance of employees in the Kilifi County Government in Kenya using a mixed method of research. The author established that succession planning improves the level of productivity and accountability of employees, especially when tied to training and promotion opportunities. Employees who have a clear line of progression in their organizations are more committed to their work and perform better. The discussion of succession planning in organizations is further enriched by the study of Wonnia (2021), who studied succession management in the public universities of Ghana and established that mentorship, leadership development, and talent management are integral parts of effective succession management in organizations. The author established that most of the universities in Ghana operated ad hoc leadership selection processes that impaired their performance and continuity. In combination, these studies illustrate that succession planning enhances performance through reduced uncertainty and the establishment of a leadership pipeline that guarantees the smooth running of institutions, a framework that can be used by Uganda's MDAs to enhance public service delivery.

Mwamanda (2023) also carried out an analysis of the role of succession planning practices in ensuring retention of employees in public colleges in Tanzania, using the case of the Tanzania Public Service College. It was found that succession planning is an effective way of ensuring retention of employees. Siambi (2022) carried out an extensive review of existing literature on succession planning in organizations. In his review, Siambi emphasized the importance of succession planning in aligning organizational goals with the capabilities of leaders. He further emphasized that in public organizations, the absence of active succession planning mechanisms is considered to cause disruptions in organizational functioning, which is equivalent to causing loss of morale. In another study carried out by Martin & O'Shea (2021) on succession planning in healthcare organizations, it was found that active succession planning in healthcare organizations prevents loss of knowledge. It was further emphasized in this study that organizations with active mechanisms of leadership development are considered to be stable despite management changes. Thus, it can be emphasized that by using such findings, it can be ensured that performance improvement is sustainable in organizations such as MDAs through institutionalization of such practices, which are independent of individual leaders.

Ikechukwu & Enudu (2022) researched the influence of succession planning on the performance of family firms in Enugu State and established that planned leadership successions sustain organizational culture, consistency, and efficiency of operations. Though they were concerned with the private sector, their observation highlights the overall importance of leadership continuity in institutions. Salau & Nurudeen (2022) in their study on succession planning as a means for small and medium-sized businesses in Nigeria to achieve growth as generational businesses identified that organizational culture also has a part to play in facilitating successful leadership successions. Bano (2023) in her study on best practices in succession planning identified that it is also effective for small businesses, as it is for larger businesses, for succession planning to be incorporated into overall human resource practices. Through this study, it was identified that for small businesses, it is effective for employees who have higher potential to be identified and provided with leadership development training. This means that for MDAs in Uganda, it is essential for value for money, accountability, and effective delivery to be maintained through a formal system of succession planning that is open and based on training and culture.

3. Methodology

The study was conducted using a positivist paradigm, which is based on the assumption that organizational practices and performance can be measured well using real data (Creswell, 2014). The study was conducted using a sequential explanatory mixed-methods design, which started with quantitative data collection using cross-sectional survey design to explore the relationship that exists between talent management practices and the performance of MDAs in Uganda (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2019). This was then followed by qualitative study that aimed at explaining what was revealed from the data (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). The study was conducted in 146 MDAs in Uganda, with 103 being selected using proportionate stratified sampling in combination with simple random sampling in order to ensure that all ministries, agencies, and departments were adequately covered (Krejcie & Morgan, 1970). Data was collected from senior executives, heads of departments, human resource managers, etc., using structured questionnaires that were then followed by an interview with key stakeholders (Bryman & Bell, 2015). This increased the validity of the study using triangulation, which provided a deeper understanding of talent management practices in MDAs (Denzin, 1978; Greene, Caracelli, & Graham, 1989; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2010).

Quantitative analysis of the quantitative data was carried out using SPSS, where Pearson correlation analysis was used to evaluate the nature of the relationship that may exist between the dimensions of talent management and the performance of MDAs. Ordinary least squares regression analysis was also carried out to evaluate the predictive value of the dimensions of talent management on the performance of MDAs (Gujarati & Porter, 2009; Field, 2018).

4. Results

Of the 103 MDAs sampled, 92% responded, which is 95 for analysis. If we consider how long these MDAs have been in existence, it is evident that almost half of them, 46%, have been in operation for over 15 years. This implies that these organizations are quite established. A further 28% have been in operation for 10 to 15 years, 18% for 5 to 10 years, and only 8% are relatively new in the sense that they have less than five years of operation. In terms of sources of funds, it is evident that 54% of these organizations are mainly funded through budget allocations from the government. A further 21% are funded through a combination of money from the government, donor agencies, and money generated internally. A further 15% are mainly funded through donor agencies, and 10% through money generated internally. In terms of location, it is evident that 42% of these organizations are based in the Central Region, followed by 29% in the Western Region, 17% in the Eastern Region, and 12% in the Northern Region.

When you look at the manner in which these MDAs are operating, it is evident that most of them, 61%, are operating at the national level. The others are scattered in that 19% are operating at the regional level, 13% at the district level, and 7% at the local level. On the other end, in terms of budgets, it is also notable that a significant number, 38%, are operating with budgets that exceed UGX 2 billion. Then there are 24% that are operating within the budget range of UGX 1.5-2 billion. Another 18% are operating within the UGX 1-1.5 billion budget. 12% are operating within the budget range of UGX 500-1 billion. The remaining 8% are operating at budgets that are below UGX 500 million. When you look at the sectors in which these MDAs are operating, it is

notable that most of these MDAs are in the service sector, 57%. The second highest number is in the agricultural sector, 28%, and then industry at 15%. When it comes to ownership, it is also notable that 63% are fully owned by the government. Then 24% are operating as semi-autonomous agencies. 13% are operating as parastatals.

Correlation results

This section presents the correlation results showing the relationship between talent management practices and the performance of MDAs in Uganda. The analysis highlights the direction and strength of the associations among the study variables and indicates which relationships are statistically significant.

Table 1: Correlation results

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Talent acquisition-1	1								
Talent development-2	.228**	1							
Performance management-3	.020	.192**	1						
Succession planning-4	.094*	.057	.176**	1					
Efficiency-5	.158**	.141**	.220**	.170**	1				
Effectiveness-6	.339**	.248**	.216**	.129**	.494**	1			
Fiscal compliance-7	.295**	.340**	.346**	.071	.490**	.713**	1		
Accountability-8	.107*	.270**	.758**	-.039	.104*	.181**	.320**	1	
Performance of MDAs-9	.311**	.341**	.507**	.113*	.706**	.626**	.677**	.522**	1

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

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Talent acquisition and performance of MDAs in Uganda

The results in Table 1 indicate that talent acquisition has a significant and positive relationship with the performance of MDAs in Uganda ($r = .311$, $p < .01$). This implies that any positive change in talent acquisition practices is associated with a positive change in the performance of MDAs in Uganda.

Talent development and performance of MDAs in Uganda

The findings further indicate that talent development has a significant and positive relationship with the performance of MDAs in Uganda ($r = .341$, $p < .01$). This suggests that any positive change in talent development is associated with a positive change in the performance of MDAs in Uganda.

Performance management and performance of MDAs in Uganda

The results also show that performance management has a significant and positive relationship with the performance of MDAs in Uganda ($r = .507$, $p < .01$). This implies that any positive change in performance management systems is associated with a positive change in the performance of MDAs in Uganda.

Succession planning and performance of MDAs in Uganda

Finally, the findings indicate that succession planning has a significant positive relationship with the performance of MDAs in Uganda ($r = .113$, $p < .05$). This implies that any positive change in succession planning is associated with a positive change in the performance of MDAs in Uganda.

Table 2: Regression Results

Model		**Unstandardized Coefficients**		**Standardized Coefficients**	**t**	**Sig.**
		B	**Std. Error**	**Beta**		
1	(Constant)	.391	.192		2.036	.042
	Talent acquisition	.246	.036	.258	6.859	.000

	Talent development	.142	.028	.193	5.053	.000
	Performance management	.414	.034	.465	12.325	.000
	Succession planning	-.003	.036	-.004	-.095	.924
R	.618[a]					
R Square	.381					
Adjusted R-Square	.376					
F	71.657					
Sig.	.000[b]					

a. Dependent Variable: Performance of MDAs

This shows that talent acquisition has a positive and statistically significant effect on the performance of MDAs in Uganda. This implies that if there is an increase in talent acquisition by one unit, there will be a corresponding increase in the performance of MDAs in Uganda by 0.246 units.

The findings have also shown that talent development has a positive and statistically significant effect on the performance of MDAs in Uganda (B = .142, p < .01). This implies that if there is an increase in talent development by one unit, there will be a corresponding increase in the performance of MDAs in Uganda by 0.142 units. The findings have also shown that performance management has a positive and statistically significant effect on the performance of MDAs in Uganda (B = .414, p < .01). This implies that if there is an increase in performance management by one unit, there will be a corresponding increase in the performance of MDAs in Uganda by 0.414 units. This is the strongest predictor of MDA performance of all the variables. The findings have also shown that succession planning has a negative but statistically insignificant effect on the performance of MDAs in Uganda

5. Discussion and Recommendations

Discussion

The results of the present study are generally in line with the Person-Job Fit Theory and previous empirical findings in the literature. The significant positive relationships of talent acquisition, talent development, and performance management with the performance of MDAs validate the importance of person-job fit in boosting the efficiency, effectiveness, accountability, and financial compliance of MDAs. The significant positive relationship of talent acquisition with the performance of MDAs also validates the findings of Oueidat (2022), Karunathilaka (2020), and Opada et al. (2024), which stress the importance of talent acquisition in boosting the productivity of MDAs. Similarly, the significant effect of talent development is in line with the studies by Wesonga and Van Der Westhuizen (2024), Subotnik et al. (2019), and Aina and Atan (2020), which establish the importance of competence, motivation, and service delivery in the context of talent development initiatives in MDAs. Performance management was established as the most significant predictor of MDA performance, which is in line with the arguments of Gerrish (2016), Nduati and Wanyoike (2022), and Gomes and Mendes (2023), who establish the importance of transparent goal-setting and performance monitoring systems in MDAs and other public institutions in general. On the other hand, the effect of succession planning was found to be statistically insignificant, which is in line with the arguments of Gorman and Dwumoh (2022) and Mohamed (2022), who establish that although succession planning is theoretically significant in MDAs, its lack of institutionalization and the bureaucratic and informal nature of succession planning in MDAs make it statistically insignificant in predicting MDA performance.

Recommendations

From the findings, the study recommends that MDAs in Uganda improve their merit-based and analytics-informed recruitment systems to improve person-job fit and eliminate inefficiencies due to the misplacement of human resources. There should be increased investment in talent development programs that link talent development with organizational performance goals. Performance management systems should be improved, considering their significant influence, by setting performance targets, using feedback mechanisms, and

incorporating digital monitoring technologies to improve transparency and accountability. Although succession planning was insignificant in the study, MDAs in Uganda should consider developing formal succession planning systems that link to leadership development, mentoring, and capacity building to improve sustainability of organizational performance. These improvements would increase value for money, accountability, and service delivery in Uganda's public sector MDAs.

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