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The Influence of Nepotistic Education Leaders on Employee Turnover Intentions: Academic Performance Plays a Mediator Variable at Private Universities in Mogadishu

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed to ascertain the nature of the relationships between employee turnover intention, nepotism, and academic performance as mediating variables. The researchers thoroughly investigated the relevant literature and conducted empirical studies. Field research was conducted in the present study using a quantitative methodology. Ninety-eight academic staff members were selected to ensure the sample's representativeness of the population; a total of 98 academic staff members were selected. The researchers gathered data on nepotism, employee turnover intention, and academic performance via questionnaires. The research team gathered the data to guarantee the accuracy and reliability of the study's findings. Data were analyzed using SPSS version 23 and SmartPLS 4. This study showed that employee turnover intentions are significantly harmed by nepotism. Nepotism and academic performance were significantly positively correlated. Academic performance and employee turnover intention were significantly positively correlated. The research identified nepotism with academic performance as a mediating variable concerning staff turnover intentions. This research adds significantly to the ongoing scholarly conversation about nepotism, academic performance, and staff turnover intentions in higher education institutions, providing critical insights into this phenomenon's positive and negative consequences. The studies offered a series of recommendations for additional research that could be conducted to rectify the identified deficiencies.

Nepotism, a pervasive problem in the corporate world, is often associated with corruption and the misallocation of resources, influencing both commercial and governmental sectors (Abdalla et al., 1998). This issue is pervasive worldwide and affects every nation, culture, and sector (Mohamed et al., 2023). Owing to its inherent characteristics, nepotism is a worldwide phenomenon that is challenging to record (Ombanda, 2018). Organizations often prioritize social relations and family over their interests, leading to nepotism and cultural differences hindering their sustainability and development (Khan et al., 2020). Nepotism persists in the workplace and is viewed as a detrimental practice affecting an organization's productivity (Ombanda, 2018).

Parents often hire their children and relatives in their workplaces even if they have lower observable qualities (Ombanda, 2018). Upper-management nepotism may result in strained relationships, lost customers and coworkers, generational disputes, diminished dedication, workplace stress, and employee loyalty (Mohamed et al., 2023). Nepotism negatively affects organizational performance and is influenced by societal acceptance of and prejudice toward unethical behavior. Perceptions vary across cultures and sectors, thus affecting employee resistance and economic development (Kato et al., 2024).

Previous studies have criticized nepotism as unprofessional, leading to the adoption of preventive measures in developing countries and the presence of such practices in business life in developed economies (Büte, 2011). Nepotism, influenced by family, religion, caste, language, and social status, is prevalent in both developing and developed countries, leading to unfairness, dishonesty, and hostile work environments. This phenomenon is complex in all industries (Mohamed et al., 2023).

Firms with non-qualified staff can increase employee stress due to preferential treatment and an imbalance between the contribution rate and incentives, creating an unfair working environment (Büte, 2011). Employee morale has a detrimental impact on performance, contentment, and commitment; however, offering incentives and bonuses based on nepotism may increase turnover rates within an institution (Kato et al., 2024).

Nepotism has been widespread worldwide for many generations; however, some scholars argue that it is diminishing in the era of large organizations (Mohamed et al., 2023). By contrast, others trust it persists in American and European businesses and is prevalent in less-developed nations (Abdalla et al., 1998). Tribalism is often seen in Middle Eastern, Arab, and Turkish cultures, where it fosters nepotism through clan networks, religious ties, and political associations (Mohamed et al., 2023). Somalia's relevance lies in its social and cultural ties with these nations. It is imperative to increase awareness of the prevalence of nepotism in African institutions, as it frequently results in the termination or departure of employees (Mohamed et al., 2023).

Countries characterized by rampant corruption and a lack of competition in their universities often engage in nepotism-based appointing and advancement of academics, as shown by the higher education system in Italy (Denisova-Schmidt, 2020; Mohamed et al., 2023). Although African research demonstrates that educational and political elites use nepotism to control institutions, more needs to be known about how nepotism interacts with international institutions on local and global scales (Mohamed et al., 2023).

Academic institutions are well recognized for their ability to generate top-notch graduates, carry out excellent research, and make substantial contributions to the advancement of society via the caliber of their teaching members (Otache & Inekwe, 2022).

Somalia is confronted with a severe unemployment crisis, with a staggering overall unemployment rate of 54% and a youth unemployment rate of 75%. This issue is mainly caused by nepotism, a mismatch between job seekers' capabilities and the requirements of available positions, inadequate training opportunities, and a recruitment process prioritizing personal connections over merit. Furthermore, the problem is worsened by the history of illicit activities and the prevalence of family ties in employment decisions (Mohamed et al., 2023). Upon examining nepotism and turnover intention statistics in organizations, it becomes evident that this subject has significant relevance (Kerse & Babadağ, 2018). Researchers seek to examine the influence of nepotism on academic performance and staff attrition at private universities in Mogadishu. No research has investigated how nepotism influences academic performance and staff turnover at Mogadishu's private universities. This study investigated the effect of nepotism on academic performance and staff turnover intentions at private universities in Mogadishu. The specific goals of this study were as follows:

1. The research examines how nepotism influences employee turnover intentions
2. The research seeks to examine the influence of nepotism on academic performance
3. The study examines how nepotism affects employee turnover intentions, with academic performance playing a mediating role

Literature Review

Nepotism

Nepotism, derived from the Latin word "Nepos," refers to showing preference towards one's relatives in positions of influence or control, often based on family ties rather than qualifications or achievements, and originated from the Latin term "depot." (Kato et al., 2024; Mohamed et al., 2023). Nepotism is a conflicting interest where individuals use public power to gain favor for family members, often based on kinship rather than merit (Abdalla et al., 1998; Kerse & Babadağ, 2018). It often results in preferential treatment over colleagues, acquaintances, or business partners and is considered improper in academic and professional contexts (Ombanda, 2018). This study defines nepotism as hiring individuals from the same institution or using family connections to get employment in other organizations.

Depending on the selection procedure, nepotism can be classified into related, friends, connections, contributions, referrals, entitled, and reciprocal (Mohamed et al., 2023; Ombanda, 2018). The literature on family-owned businesses discusses the advantages and disadvantages of nepotism, highlighting its potential to identify dedicated employees but also causing family disputes, sibling rivalry, and incorrect decision-making processes (Abdalla et al., 1998). This study investigates the influence of nepotism from five different angles: familial relationships, parental connections, geographical regions, tribal affiliations, and racial backgrounds.

Nepotism is a prevalent issue in developed and developing nations, particularly in collectivist societies where support for family members is encouraged through social, educational, political, and economic systems (Mohamed et al., 2023). It is particularly prevalent in developing and industrialized nations, where employees often feel frustrated and untreated,

hindering their performance and overall performance (Kato et al., 2024). Nepotism is a prevalent cultural phenomenon in Middle East, Arab, and Turkish societies, promoting favoritism and unfair treatment based on familial, religious, and political connections (Mohamed et al., 2023). Somalia's significance is attributed to its strong social and cultural ties with these nations.

Nepotism can impact employee motivation, behaviors, and intentions, leading to job loss, negative workplace opinions, and lower morale (Abdalla et al., 1998). It can also cause family disputes, decreased productivity, trust, and potential institutional failure risks (Mohamed et al., 2023). It also identified four negative business impacts: employee unhappiness, high staff turnover, team mistrust, and disagreements (Ombanda, 2018). It impacts academic and occupational advancement systems by prioritizing seniority over merit (Mohamed et al., 2023). Most studies of nepotism have focused on developed countries (Mohamed et al., 2023). While these studies provide a foundational understanding of nepotism, they lack a detailed exploration of how nepotism affects specific organizational outcomes, particularly in non-Western contexts like Mogadishu. This study aims to fill this gap by examining the micro-level impacts of nepotism on employee turnover intentions and academic performance in private universities in Mogadishu.

Nepotism and Employee Turnover Intentions

Employee turnover intention is the likelihood of an individual changing their job within a specific timeframe, influenced by their perception and evaluation of job alternatives (Karan & Rahman, 2014). It is a deliberate decision to leave their current organization, resulting in work and job withdrawal behaviors, indicating a breach in employee-employer relationships (Al Balushi et al., 2022; Kerse & Babadağ, 2018). This intention is influenced by an individual's mental condition and thoughtful consideration (Otache & Inekwe, 2022).

The intention to leave a job is a crucial indicator of turnover behavior, influencing whether an employee seeks another job or quits (Büte, 2011). Factors contributing to turnover intention can be categorized into personal, organizational, and external factors (Kerse & Babadağ, 2018). Drivers of employee turnover include economic opportunity and individual and work-related factors (Karan & Rahman, 2014). Factors affecting turnover intention include work satisfaction, stress, gender, age, low salary, recognition, unclear role expectations, job possibilities, dedication, fairness, social adaptation, and educational attainment (Otache & Inekwe, 2022).

Nepotism can lead to high employee turnover, as they perceive a hostile atmosphere and may exhibit turnover intention (Kerse & Babadağ, 2018). Factors contributing to high turnover include poor staff preparation, policies, decision-making, and criticism (Kato et al., 2024). A lack of legitimate administrative practices, clear advancement strategies, and established complaint methods can lead to decreased performance and motivation, negatively impacting the organization's success (Kerse & Babadağ, 2018). To reduce turnover intention, organizations must focus on increasing employee engagement and addressing the negative associations between nepotism and turnover (Al Balushi et al., 2022). The existing literature does not sufficiently address how nepotism specifically impacts turnover intentions in academic institutions in developing countries. This study seeks to fill this gap by investigating the relationship between nepotism and turnover intentions in private universities in Mogadishu, providing a context-specific analysis that has been lacking. The current study aims to

empirically investigate the following research hypothesis by conducting a comprehensive review of pertinent theoretical literature:

H1: There is a negative correlation between nepotism and employee turnover intention at private universities in Mogadishu.

Nepotism and Academic Performance

Performance is an individual's work achievement, encompassing actions and behaviors controlled by them, contributing to the organization's goals (Karan & Rahman, 2014). It measures an employee's effort to achieve specific objectives by effectively completing tasks (Ombanda, 2018). Performance differs from current criteria of precision, comprehensiveness, expense, and frequency (Odiachi, 2022). It is the outcome of an individual's actions and results, making a worker's profession dependent on achieving the organization's objectives (Mohamed et al., 2023). The literature explores various forms of performance, including team, work, and management performance, which are crucial for academic performance, as they help institutions achieve their goals and are highly valued by researchers and practitioners (Karan & Rahman, 2014; Mohamed et al., 2023; Otache & Inekwe, 2022). This study defines academic performance as the outcome of an individual's outcomes or outputs, emphasizing that a worker's career depends on attaining the organization's goals.

Performance is a crucial concept for organizations and institutions worldwide, assessing quantity, quality, accuracy, staff efficiency, commitment to high-quality work, and achievement of work objectives (Karan & Rahman, 2014). It is a globally recognized term that quantitatively and qualitatively evaluates the achievements of individuals, groups, and institutions in achieving their specific activity objectives (Mohamed et al., 2023). The academic study suggests that professional success is linked to specific qualities and efficient process implementation, while organizational effectiveness is linked to labor productivity, and suboptimal results may result from insufficient staff recruitment and retention (Mohamed et al., 2023; Ombanda, 2018).

Nepotism in family-owned enterprises can enhance work satisfaction, performance, and communication. However, it can also lead to loss of trust, hindering organizational advancement and encouraging employees to seek alternative employment opportunities despite its potential positive impacts (Abdalla et al., 1998; Mohamed et al., 2023). The literature largely overlooks the impact of nepotism on academic performance in non-Western educational contexts. This study aims to address this gap by exploring how nepotism affects academic performance in private universities in Mogadishu. From the above discussion, it may be expected that workers or employers who are extensively engaged in nepotism may exhibit either more excellent or poorer academic performance in Mogadishu universities. The second hypothesis of this investigation is as follows:

H2: A negative association exists between nepotism and academic performance at private universities in Mogadishu.

Nepotism, Academic Performance, and Employee Turnover

Nepotism, a practice since the 14th century, involves unethical leaders promoting their interests, negatively impacting workplace morale, productivity, and decision-making fairness (Mohamed

et al., 2023). While it can improve efficiency and job satisfaction in small and family-owned enterprises, it can also lead to losing trust among non-family workers, hindering organizational progress (Abdalla et al., 1998). While most studies show nepotism lowers employee loyalty and satisfaction, this study found it had an insignificant effect on academic performance (Kerse & Babadağ, 2018; Ombanda, 2018). However, it significantly impacted resigning desire, work happiness, managerial commitment, and human resource management practices (Büte, 2011; Mohamed et al., 2023). On the other hand, previous research indicates a positive correlation between nepotism and employee turnover intentions, with literature supporting the notion that nepotism significantly impacts employee turnover intentions (Kato et al., 2024; Kerse & Babadağ, 2018).

Low job satisfaction negatively impacts lecturers' turnover intentions, affecting their overall performance and productivity (Otache & Inekwe, 2022). The U-shaped correlation between job performance and turnover could be more accurate, as top and lowest workers often leave voluntarily (Odiachi, 2022). Most research is conducted in industrialized nations, showing a robust inverse relationship between employee attrition intention and work satisfaction (Otache & Inekwe, 2022). A modest but substantial association exists between job performance and employee turnover intention (Odiachi, 2022). This study addresses the gap by investigating whether academic performance mediates the relationship between nepotism and employee turnover intentions in Mogadishu's private universities. This mediation effect has not been thoroughly explored in the existing literature, particularly in the context of developing countries. Based on a thorough analysis of the relevant theoretical literature, this study proposes the following research hypothesis:

H3: Academic performance mediates the association between nepotism and employee turnover intention in Mogadishu's private universities.

Theoretical Framework

Equity Theory

This research was led by John Stacey Adams' equity theory, which was developed in 1976. The theory of equity presents the idea of social comparisons, in which workers assess their input-to-output ratios by contrasting them with those of other workers (Ombanda, 2018). Equity theory posits that workers experience demotivation due to unjust employment practices, which may result in decreased effort, dissatisfaction, or even disruptive conduct contingent upon their perspective of their job and employer (Ombanda, 2018). Thus, the argument has significant ramifications for the connection between academic performance, nepotism, and employee turnover intention. This study selected this theory based on its significance to many types of institutions, particularly within the context of higher education. Nepotism, which includes parents, clans, tribes, regions, relatives, and race, is highly valued by the majority of workers and may thus significantly impact academic performance and worker turnover intentions. The variables under study are closely related to equity theory.

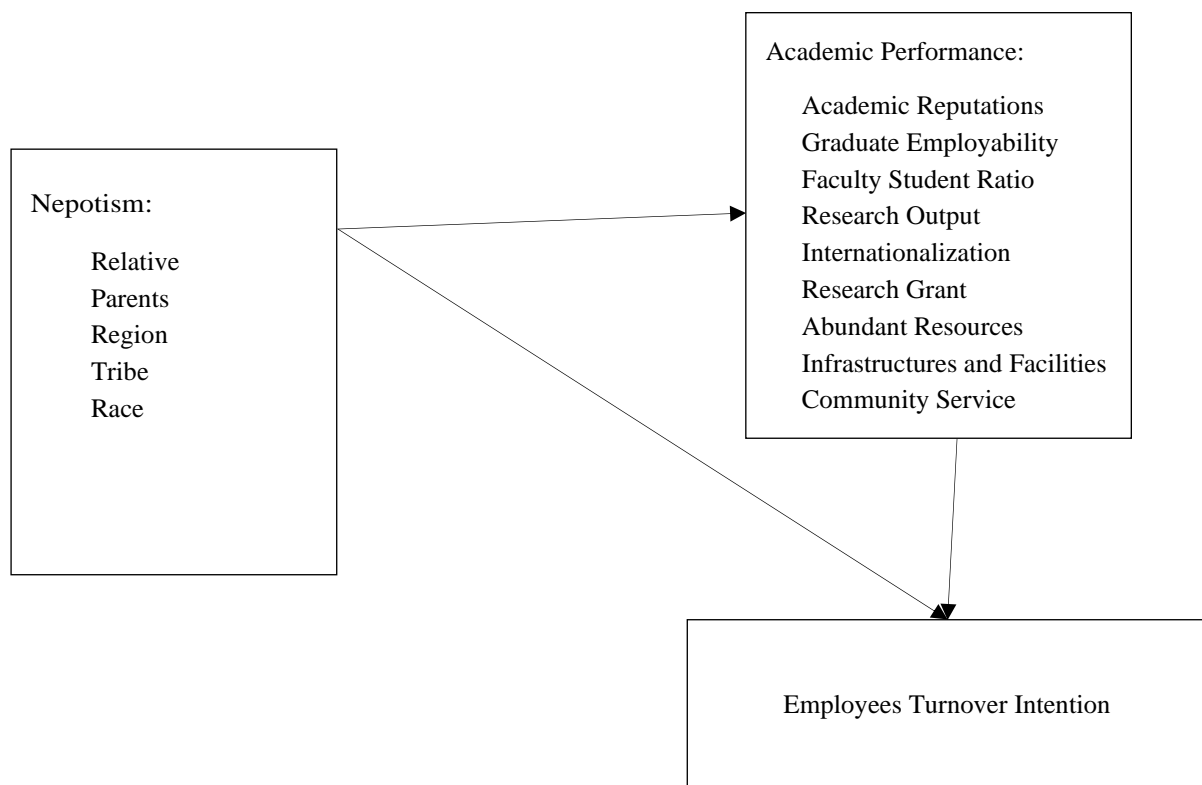
Hypothetical Model of the Research

Nepotism is a widespread issue in the academic domain, particularly at private universities. This problem is not exclusive to academics but is seen in every sector that depends on human

interaction. This study investigated the correlation between nepotism, staff attrition, and academic performance at private universities in Mogadishu. To accomplish this goal, a thorough examination of the existing literature was conducted, leading to the development of a research model. The constructed model incorporated variables such as nepotism, staff attrition, and academic performance in the literature. Subsequently, these factors were merged with the variable to formulate a hypothesis. However, empirical support for this correlation has yet to be discussed, and it still needs to be found in the available literature. This picture depicts a conceptual framework created to investigate the influence of nepotism and employee turnover on the academic performance of private universities in Mogadishu. Empirical research has established a clear connection between nepotism, employment turnover, and academic performance. The question arises of whether the correlation is positive or negative. [Figure 1](#) shows this relationship and demonstrates whether it is positive or negative. A clear link exists between nepotism, employment turnover, and academic performance. The conceptual research model of this study is shown in [Figure 1](#).

Figure 1

Research Model



Method

Research Design

This study has a correlational research design based on a quantitative research method. Considering the research's general purpose and problem situation, it was preferred to design it as correlational research because it allowed the relationship between two or more variables to be examined without interfering with the variables in question (Wallen & Fraenkel, 2013). Correlational design is suitable for examining the effects and relationships between dependent,

independent, and mediator variables. Correlational research is a research design suitable for revealing the relationships between variables and determining the levels of these relationships. This study utilized an explanatory research technique to explore the correlation between nepotism, employee turnover intentions, and academic performance, acting as a mediating variable. It aims to enhance understanding of events by refining or validating hypotheses (Saunders et al., 2023). This study used an explanatory technique to examine problems or challenges in explaining relationships between variables, emphasizing causal connections among social events (Neuman, 2011; Saunders et al., 2023).

Sample

In 1954, Somalia's higher education system, which was initially composed of two faculties, grew and developed into the country's only public university (MOECHE, 2022; Mohamed et al., 2023, 2024). In 1991, violent conflict led to the overthrow of the central government, resulting in substantial destruction (Mohamed et al., 2023). In 1999, a consortium of global organizations, indigenous communities, diaspora, and religious factions reinstated it (Mohamed et al., 2024). The capital city of Mogadishu is situated in the Banadir region, which serves as the political and economic center of the nation. Banadir has the most significant recorded number of universities, with 67 private universities (MOECHE, 2022). The total number of faculty members at these universities is 5,402, with only 9% female and 91% male. According to Oso's (2013) table for selecting sample sizes in research, a sample size of 98 is recommended for a population of 5,402. To provide equitable opportunities, a random sampling technique was used to choose participants from Mogadishu's private colleges, including administrative personnel and instructors.

Data Collection

The study employed a combination of secondary and primary data with questionnaires as the primary instrument for data collection. Questionnaires are standardized surveys in which a specific group of individuals answers questions in a predetermined sequence (Saunders et al., 2023). Private universities in Mogadishu employed a total of 120 academic members. Nevertheless, the data collected from 98 faculty members who correctly provided the relevant information were analyzed. The study used structured questionnaires with a five-point Likert scale to survey 98 faculty members of private universities in Mogadishu.

Instruments

The scales used in this study were derived from previous research. The nepotism scale has 16 components derived from research conducted by (Mohamed et al., 2023). Nine questions were used from the research conducted by (Abubakar et al., 2018) to assess academic performance. The construct of employee turnover intention consists of six elements, which were used in prior research (Al Balushi et al., 2022; Büte, 2011; Kerse & Babadağ, 2018). Responses to all items were gathered using a five-point Likert scale from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree." This study employed a total of 31 items.

Data Analysis

This study used descriptive and inferential statistical methods. Descriptive statistics were used to analyze the demographic characteristics of the study participants through data screening. SPSS version 23 was used to conduct preliminary data screening, which involved checking for missing values. Smart PLS version 4 was used for the model validation. Measurement and structural modeling techniques were used for data analysis, with measurement modeling evaluating the instrument's reliability and validity. Structural modeling was used to analyze the interconnections between the variables in the research model.

Ethical Consideration

This research effectively addressed ethical concerns by maintaining strict confidentiality during data collection, administration, and analysis. It also provided participants with information about anonymity, confidentiality, and study goals before consent, allowing them to choose their involvement without the researchers' intervention.

Results

Characteristics of the Participants

Researchers have conducted data screening to detect missing values and eliminate instances of missing data values. They used Google Forms and required respondents to answer all the questions. Seven participants with disengagement responses were excluded from the analysis, and seven demographic characteristics were analyzed for background information. The survey revealed a predominantly male workforce, with 84 of 98 participants experiencing cultural bias. The participants were divided into three age groups: 35 under 30, 35 between 31 and 35, and 28 over 36, indicating a youthful labor force predominantly composed of 25–35-year-olds.

The study found that 70% of participants were married and followed the cultural norms of early marriage. The job title distribution showed 46 senior academics, 32 management or administrative roles, and 20 junior lecturers, indicating a small number of junior faculty members. Most respondents in Mogadishu's private universities hold master's degrees, with a small number holding PhDs.

The study categorized employment experience into three groups: 36 participants under six years, 36 between six and ten years, and 26 over 11 years, indicating varying levels of experience among staff members. The job status of 76 out of 98 respondents at these colleges was permanent, with part-time workers and special contractors being used less frequently.

The Measurement Model

The measuring model assessed the quality of the constructs by assessing their validity and reliability. VIF, composite reliability, discriminant validity, factor loadings, and average variance extracted were evaluated to identify multicollinearity. The findings of this study are presented in [Table 1](#) and [Table 2](#).

Table 1
Constructs Loadings, CR, AVE, and VIF for Multicollinearity

Variables	Indicators	Loading	CR	AVE	VIF
Nepotism	NPT01	.74	.85	.54	1.88
	NPT02	.72			1.36
	NPT03	.77			1.47
	NPT04	.64			1.37
	NPT05	.89			1.95
Academic Performance	AP01	.81	.85	.53	1.91
	AP02	.67			1.52
	AP03	.73			1.32
	AP04	.76			1.91
	AP05	.67			1.55
Employee Turnover	ET01	.73	.75	.50	1.18
	ET02	.58			1.09
	ET03	.80			1.14

Researchers have validated measurement models to evaluate their reliability and accuracy. The factor loadings within the range of .5 to .7 were deemed suitable (Chin, 2015). The research revealed that 13 indicators satisfied the validity requirement, with factor loadings ranging from .58 to .89, which fell within the acceptable range (Chua, 2022; Ringle et al., 2023) proposed that convergent validity requires an Average Variance Extracted (AVE) value greater than .5. They concluded that all values were above the minimum allowable threshold. Composite reliability was used for reliability testing because it provides a more accurate assessment (Hair & Alamer, 2022). All variables surpassed the minimum criterion of .70, with satisfactory CR values ranging from .75 to .85. Two methodologies were used to test the discriminant validity (see Table 2).

Validity evaluates a scale's ability to accurately measure a desired component, including convergent and discriminant validity (Henseler et al., 2015). Convergent validity is determined by factor loading and AVE, assessing the extent to which the observed variability in an indicator construct is adequately explained by the latent construct (Hair & Alamer, 2022). The factor loading and AVE are listed in Table 1. Discriminant validity refers to the capacity of a concept to be differentiated from others using empirical data (Chin, 2015; Fornell & Larcker, 1981) introduced techniques to assess discriminant validity in PLS analysis. Table 2 shows the use of the Fornell-Larcker criterion.

Table 2
Fornell-Larcker Criterion and Heterotrait-monotrait ratio (HTMT)

Variables	AP	ET	NPT	Remarks
Academic Performance (AP)	.73			Fornell-Larcker Criterion
Employee Turnover (ET)	.57	.71		
Nepotism (NPT)	-.27	-.29	.73	
Academic Performance (AP)				Heterotrait-monotrait ratio (HTMT)
Employee Turnover (ET)	.83			
Nepotism (NPT)	.32	.45		

The Fornell-Larcker criterion evaluates the discriminant validity of a model by calculating the square root of the AVE for each variable, which indicates the strength of the correlation between variables (Chua, 2022; Hair & Alamer, 2022). The findings show a significant level of discriminant validity, as shown in Table 2. The HTMT criteria assess discriminant validity by computing the mean correlation between indicators across several constructs and comparing it with the mean correlation between indicators measuring the same construct (Hair & Alamer, 2022; Sarstedt et al., 2022). A correlation ratio test with values below .90 indicates discriminant validity (Chua, 2022). The results indicate that all constructs are distinct and independent, as shown in Table 2. The Goodness of Fit approach was used to assess the appropriateness of the model fit, as shown in Table 3.

This study evaluated the adequacy of a PLS-SEM model fit using goodness-of-fit statistics, as shown in Table 3 (Hair & Alamer, 2022). SRMR, d ULS, d_G, and NFI measures were used to compare the observed and anticipated correlation matrices. The model's fit was satisfactory, meeting the acceptable levels, as evidenced by the analysis in Table 3.

Table 3

Model Fit

Fit indices	SRMR	D-ULS	DG	NFI
Recommended value	< .10	.05 >	.05 >	> .90
Research Findings	.09	.89	.29	0.92

Structural Model

This study validated a measurement model, tested its structural model, and evaluated its applicability and importance. Following Hair and Alamer's (2022) suggestions, indicators were used to assess collinearity between constructs and determine the coefficients of determination (R^2), Q^2 , and F^2 values. Further details on each stage are provided.

Collinearity

This study assessed the model for potential collinearity, which could lead to biased route coefficients (Hair & Alamer, 2022). A diagnostic test was used to detect common method bias, as the data were collected from a single source (Sarstedt et al., 2022). The results showed that all variables had Variance Inflation Factor values under five, indicating no issues with common technique bias (Sarstedt et al., 2021). The findings are summarized in Table 1.

The Coefficient of Determination (R^2), Predictive Relevance (Q^2) and F Square Value

Researchers utilized the R^2 to assess the predictive accuracy of a structural model and evaluate its ability to accurately predict outcomes, as shown in Table 4 (Hair & Alamer, 2022; Sarstedt et al., 2021). Falk et al. (1992) proposed that R^2 values equal to or greater than .10 are satisfactory for adequately explaining the variance of a particular endogenous concept. As shown in Table 4, nepotism links explain 7.5% and 34% of the differences in academic performance and employee turnover, respectively. Q^2 is a statistical metric used to assess a model's prediction accuracy, with Q^2 values greater than zero indicating successful values (Sarstedt et al., 2021). The effects were assigned small (.02), moderate (.15), and high (.35)

values (Hair & Alamer, 2022). Table 4 displays the Q^2 outcomes for academic performance and employee turnover, demonstrating the model's predictive significance when the anticipated Q^2 values surpass zero. F^2 is a statistical technique used to evaluate the influence of removing specific components from a model on the R^2 value (Cohen, 1988). It determines whether these modifications have a substantial effect on the internal structure, with corresponding values of .02 (small), .15 (moderate), and .35 (High), respectively (Hair & Alamer, 2022). Table 4 reveals that the analysis reveals that nepotism significantly influenced academic performance and employee turnover.

Table 4

The Coefficient of Determination R^2 , Q^2 , and F^2

Variables	R^2	R^2 Adjusted	Q^2	F^2
Academic performance	.08	.07	.03	
Employee turnover	.34	.33	.04	
Academic Performance -> Employee Turnover Intentions				.39
Nepotism -> Academic Performance				.08
Nepotism -> Employee Turnover Intentions				.03

The Significance and Relevance of Path Coefficients

The research used a two-tailed confidence interval and a significance threshold of .05 to examine the correlation between endogenous and exogenous variables (Hair & Alamer, 2022). The test evaluates a hypothesis's significance using probability values and t-statistics, with a 5% alpha value (p-value) indicating a likelihood below .05 and a t-value equal to or above 1.96 indicating a statistically significant level (Hair & Alamer, 2022; Sarstedt et al., 2021). The results of the studies are illustrated in Table 5.

Table 5 shows a noteworthy correlation between the research variables, indicating that nepotism had an insignificant effect on employee turnover intention. A p-value of .07 was higher than the significance threshold of .05. Additionally, the T-statistic value of 1.47 is lower than that of 1.96. Furthermore, the Beta value indicates a negative relationship between the variables, with a value of -.14. The research revealed a negative association between nepotism and academic performance, with a beta value of -.27, as shown in Table 5. The p-value and T-value indicated a positive correlation between nepotism and academic performance. Finally, according to the study's findings, there is a direct and positive relationship between academic performance and employee turnover intention. This relationship was quantified using a beta value of .53, as shown in Table 5. The p-value and T-value indicated a positive association between academic performance and employee turnover intention.

Table 5

Direct Relationships

Relationships	β	t	P	Hypothesis
Nepotism -> Employee Turnover Intentions	-.14	1.47	.07	Accepted
Nepotism -> Academic Performance	-.27	2.34	.01	Rejected
Academic Performance -> Employee Turnover Intentions	.53	6.40	.00	Rejected

Mediation Results Analysis

The mediator variable in social science research significantly influences the relationship between dependent and independent variables, making its use increasingly essential in modern literature and research projects. Mediating effect sizes were categorized as high (.25), medium (.09), or small (.01) (Chua, 2022; Hair & Alamer, 2022). The research examined the indirect influence on nepotism, academic performance, and employee turnover intention, and Table 6 summarizes the results.

A bootstrapping technique evaluated the inverse association with academic performance as the mediating variable. Statistical analysis revealed substantial connections between nepotism, academic performance, and employee turnover intention. This is supported by the t-values of 2.33 and p-values of .01. However, a beta value of -.15 indicates an insignificant link between the variables. This finding indicates that academic performance partially mediates the relationship between nepotism and employee turnover intention.

Table 6

Indirect Relationships

Relationships	β	t	p	Hypothesis
Nepotism -> Academic Performance -> Employee Turnover Intentions	-.15	2.33	.01	Rejected

Discussion

This section analyses the outcomes of the study's goals and hypotheses. A conceptual framework was developed based on the available literature, which included empirical studies that examined the link between the variables in the research.

Nepotism Influences Employee Turnover Intentions

The study found that nepotism insignificantly impacted employee turnover intention. The research findings demonstrate a statistically insignificant association between nepotism and employee turnover intention ($p = .07$). Nepotism in higher-level management can lead to adverse outcomes, such as family disputes, generational conflicts, reduced dedication, increased job stress, decreased employee loyalty, and higher turnover rates, ultimately causing the loss of customers, colleagues, and connections (Mohamed et al., 2023). This demonstrates that nepotism may impact employee turnover intention. The findings of this study are similar to those of previous studies (Büte, 2011; Mohamed et al., 2023; Ombanda, 2018). This study revealed that nepotism positively and substantially influences employee turnover intention (Kato et al., 2024; Kerse & Babadağ, 2018).

The Influence of Nepotism on Academic Performance

The study findings indicated a significant negative correlation between nepotism and academic performance, shown by a beta value of -.27. The p-values and T-values suggest a significant positive association between nepotism and academic performance. These findings suggest that significant nepotism inside Mogadishu's private universities would hurt academic performance; conversely, a decrease in nepotism would lead to improved academic performance. Nepotism impacts current workers and professional managers, deterring them from entering businesses due to measures favoring relatives in top management, potentially impacting academic performance (Ombanda, 2018). The results of this study were consistent with those of previous

studies (Mohamed et al., 2023; Ombanda, 2018). However, the findings of this study indicate that nepotism substantially and positively affects employee turnover intentions (Kerse & Babadağ, 2018).

Nepotism Affects Employee Turnover Intention, with Academic Performance Mediating at Private Universities in Mogadishu

These findings indicate that academic performance served as a mediator. Table 6 demonstrates that academic performance partially mediated the relationship between nepotism and employee turnover intention. Previous studies have indicated a positive correlation between nepotism, performance, and employee turnover intentions, with the literature supporting that nepotism significantly affects employee turnover intentions (Kato et al., 2024; Kerse & Babadağ, 2018). The findings of this study align with those of previous studies conducted by Odiachi (2022) and Otache and Inekwe (2022). However, previous research indicates that nepotism negatively impacts employee loyalty, job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and human resource management practices, while academic performance is insignificant (Büte, 2011; Mohamed et al., 2023; Ombanda, 2018).

Analyzing the findings of this study via the framework of Equity Theory can help one gain a thorough understanding. According to this idea, individuals determine the fairness of their treatment by comparing the ratio of what they contribute to what they receive with that of others (Adams & Freedman, 1976). This theory is crucial in elucidating the dynamics identified in the relationship between nepotism, academic performance, and employee turnover intentions.

In accordance with Equity Theory, the notable inverse link between nepotism and academic success is a matter of concern. Employees who perceive nepotistic practices are prone to experiencing a sense of unjust treatment, resulting in a decline in motivation and performance. The perception of unfairness, as proposed by Adams and Freedman (1976), leads to decreased motivation and effort, which is seen in the detrimental effect on academic achievement. When employees observe their relatives receiving preferential treatment over more competent persons, it undermines their perception of fairness, resulting in less dedication and productivity.

Moreover, the study finds that nepotism has a minimal effect on employee turnover intention, as analyzed using Equity Theory, which is an intriguing component of this research. While nepotism may be seen as unjust, its effect on turnover intentions may not be considerable due to other reasons, such as job market conditions or personal circumstances that influence the decision to quit an organization. Employees may experience injustice due to limited advancement prospects or a solid commitment to their current positions, even in the face of unfair treatment.

A partial mediation effect of academic performance in the connection between nepotism and employee turnover intentions provides additional evidence in favor of Equity Theory. According to the notion, when people feel they are being mistreated, it can impact their performance and potentially lead to them wanting to leave the company. This is because they may become less satisfied with their employment and less committed to the organization. The concept of the mediating function of academic performance suggests that nepotism has a direct impact on performance. This decrease in performance, in turn, can result in an increase in turnover intentions, but not in a direct manner. This sophisticated comprehension highlights the intricate interaction of conceptions of fairness in organizational behavior.

Theoretical Implications

The findings of this study indicate that nepotism perception can either negatively or positively affect academic performance and employee turnover intention. First, universities should prioritize promoting a fair work environment, fostering a fair culture, and implementing transparent policies to address nepotism and ensure equal opportunities. Second, private universities should prioritize transparent and fair evaluation processes, including performance appraisals and feedback mechanisms, to mitigate the adverse effects of nepotism. Staff universities should be informed of the criteria used for these evaluations. Third, objective criteria for promotions and rewards are crucial for fair decision-making and for demonstrating the university's commitment to meritocracy. Investing in employees' emotional connection initiatives can boost their commitment. These contradictory results highlight the intricate nature of the matter and emphasize the need for more studies to understand the intricacies of university trust, loyalty, nepotism, and staff turnover intentions.

Practical Implications

This study has equal significance in the practical realm of business. In the current era of rapid globalization, nepotism, employee turnover, and academic performance are essential factors in determining private universities' future potential and long-term sustainability. These aspects play a crucial role in private universities' success. This study is beneficial for private universities and higher education because it offers valuable insights into the impact of nepotism on academic performance and employment turnover intentions. Nepotism has been positively or negatively linked to employee turnover and academic performance, suggesting management should avoid considering families in job selection or promotion to prevent employees from feeling unfairly treated or undue.

Conclusion

This study established a detrimental association between nepotism and employee turnover intention. This demonstrates a statistically significant link, indicating that nepotistic practices at private colleges in Mogadishu have a deleterious effect on their academic performance. Academic leaders must be aware of misconceptions around nepotism and take steps to guarantee equitable treatment in areas such as career progression, remuneration, and performance assessments.

The study has contributed new knowledge to the literature in several key ways. It found a negative association between nepotism and academic performance in Mogadishu's private universities, adding to the understanding that nepotism can hinder academic effectiveness and outcomes. Additionally, the research demonstrated that nepotism insignificantly impacts employee turnover intentions, providing a nuanced view that the effects of nepotism on employee behavior may vary in different contexts. The study also introduced the concept that academic performance partially mediates the relationship between nepotism and employee turnover intentions, suggesting that improving academic performance could mitigate some of the adverse effects of nepotism on employee turnover. By developing a conceptual framework and hypothetical model based on equity theory, the study provided a structured approach to examining these relationships, serving as a foundation for future research. These findings highlight the complexities of how nepotism affects academic institutions, particularly in the

context of private universities in Mogadishu, offering empirical evidence that can inform policy-making and management practices to address the challenges posed by nepotism.

Limitations and Future Studies

This study examined the effects of nepotism on employee turnover intentions and academic performance as a mediating variable, particularly in private colleges in Mogadishu. Hence, it may be challenging to apply these findings universally. Additional research should be conducted in other locations in Somalia to expand our understanding of these dynamics. Future research must investigate supplementary variables, including organizational trust and commitment, conflicts of interest, employee silence, and organizational politics. Although this study used only quantitative techniques, future research might enhance its findings using a mixed-methods approach. This would provide a more thorough understanding of the impact of nepotism and employee turnover intention on academic performance.

Declarations

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Ethics Approval

Not applicable.

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