Influence of undergraduate experience on alumni loyalty to their alma mater in the Tanzania’s higher education context

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the influence of undergraduate experience on alumni loyalty to their alma mater in Tanzania’s higher education context. Specifically, the study sought to examine the extent to which alumni are satisfied with their undergraduate academic and social experiences and the influence thereof on their loyalty towards their former universities or colleges. The study involved a questionnaire survey to collect primary data from a conveniently selected sample of 188 Tanzanians who had bachelor’s degrees from various Tanzania universities and colleges. Descriptive statistics using mean values were used to measure the satisfaction level. To estimate the influence of alumni satisfaction with their undergraduate experience on loyalty to their alma mater, Binary Logistic Regression Model was used. Overall, the findings indicate that alumni were satisfied with their undergraduate experience and their time as students. Further, Binary Logistic Regression results indicate that satisfaction with undergraduate experience positively and significantly influences alumni loyalty to their alma mater. It is reasonable to conclude from this evidence, that alumni loyalty can be created, reinforced and retained through favorable students’ experiences. Thus, Tanzania’s Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) should improve their level of students’ experience so as to increase their level of satisfaction and consequently enforce their loyalty. The study adds value in the context of Tanzanian HEIs since it provides a base on how to determine strategies to create, reinforce and maintain alumni loyalty through a favorable student experience.

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INTRODUCTION

Over the past few decades, relationship marketing has emerged as a new paradigm within the marketing field. This new marketing perspective forms a new dominant logic focusing on customer loyalty and long-term customer relationship. The American Marketing Association’s definition of marketing, revised in 2004, indicates that “marketing is an organizational function and a set of processes for creating, communicating, and delivering value to customers and for managing customer relationships in ways that benefit the organization and its stakeholders” (Gundlach, 2007). Thus, the overall definition of marketing reveals how important relationship marketing has become in today’s business world.

Kanagal (2009) defines relationship marketing as the identification, establishment, maintenance, enhancement, modification and termination of relationships with customers to create value for customers and profit for the organisation by a series of relational exchanges that have both a history and a future. The stated definition focuses on loyalty development and long-term relationship marketing based on cooperation and partnership with key customers of the organisation. Reflecting on the importance of this new marketing perspective, the development of long-term relationships with customers is widely recognised as a vital strategy to enhance the competitive advantage and long-term business performance of many organisations (Gebauer, Gustafsson, & Witell, 2011; Thaichon, Frazer, & Weaven, 2022; Khan, Yashar Salamzadeh, Qaisar Iqbal, & Yang, 2020).

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Accordingly, the development of long-term relationships with customers has found universal application in almost all types of organizations. However, the exact approaches may vary from one business context to another. For example, the Higher Educational Institutions (HEIs) have a unique approach to building long-term relationships with their alumni. In the context of this study, alumni refer to graduates or former students of a specific school, college, or university. Alumni represent a large, potential resource and very important target stakeholder group of marketing activities for HEIs (Govender, 2015; Jain, Mogaji, Sharma, & Babbili, 2022; Lallukka, 2017). Even though alumni are not usually recognized as customers, the universities and colleges continuously depend on them for material and nonmaterial support. Alumni are the key stakeholders of any HEI and their commitment and involvement play an important role for the institution’s success. Alumni loyalty has been revealed as a crucial factor for the sustainability, prosperity and advancement of any HEI (Ishkakova, Hilbert & Hoffmann, 2016; Ishkakova, Hoffmann & Hilbert, 2017; Jain, Mogaji, Sharma, & Babbili, 2022; Kelleher, 2011; Barnard & Rensleigh, 2008). Loyal alumni can be a large source of support for their alma maters in such areas as donations, mentoring, networking, lobbying and investment. Hence, this makes them a useful relationship marketing target group (Jain, Mogaji, Sharma, & Babbili, 2022; Khan, Yashar Salamzadeh, Qaisar Iqbal, & Yang, 2020). Therefore, cultivating loyal alumni can lead to increased enrolment, creation of a visible and credible brand, reduced costs related to marketing, retention of students and prosperity of HEIs. As a result, maintaining a strong connection with alumni is fast becoming recognized as a necessary tool to help HEIs thrive (Dam, 2016; Jain, Mogaji, Sharma, & Babbili, 2022).

Over the past few decades, higher education has been subject to a gradual process of marketisation (Brown, 2015; Jain, Mogaji, Sharma, & Babbili, 2022). Competition for student recruitment and talented staff is increasing around the world fuelled by the mushrooming HEIs. In a similar vein, there have been growing pressures related to declining sources of income and rising costs. In this era of increasing marketisation of higher education and government funding cuts, HEIs have been keen to explore new opportunities for success. Strengthening beneficial ties with alumni as stated by Kelleher (2011) and Jain et al. (2022) is one of the key drivers critical to the sustainability and advancement of HEIs in a fast-changing and highly competitive market.

Most HEIs wonder how they can create, reinforce and maintain alumni loyalty for their success (Jain, Mogaji, Sharma, & Babbili, 2022). HEIs differ in their success in the establishment and nurturing of mutually beneficial relations between an institution and its alumni, as a primary stakeholder group (Gallo, 2013) and a number of studies have investigated factors associated with alumni loyalty to their alma mater. Researchers persistently argue that alumni recalled the experience of their time as students influences their subsequent loyalty towards their alma-mater (e.g. Farrow & Yuan, 2011; Jain, Mogaji, Sharma, & Babbili, 2022; Weerts, Cabrera & Sanford, 2010; Sung & Yang, 2009; Wu, Huang, & Tsai, 2022). However, the literature on alumni-alma mater relationship is less prevalent in Tanzania and little is known about alumni satisfaction with their undergraduate experience at their collegiate institutions. To that end, the pertinent question to be addressed is: to what extent are alumni satisfied with their recall of student experience?

To understand whether or not alumni are satisfied with their collegiate experience and the influence of experience satisfaction level on their loyalty to their alma mater, two research objectives were addressed in this study. The first objective examined the influence of alumni satisfaction with their undergraduate academic experience on loyalty to their alma mater. The second objective examined the influence of alumni satisfaction with their undergraduate social experience on loyalty to their alma mater. The study was expected to contribute the knowledge in several ways. First, the study was expected to link the relationship between alumni's recalled experiences of their time as a student and their subsequent loyalty towards their alma mater. Secondly, the study was also expected to contribute to the understanding of alumni satisfaction with their collegiate experience and the influence of satisfaction on alumni loyalty to their alma mater. Thirdly, the study provided some empirically tested insight into the Tanzanian higher education context. Lastly, the study would provide a base for HEIs to determine strategies to create, reinforce and maintain alumni loyalty through a favourable students’ experience.

**Literature Review**

The purpose of this study is to gain an empirical understanding of alumni overall satisfaction with their undergraduate experience and its influence on subsequent alumni loyalty to their alma mater. Attributes of alumni-alma mater relationship significant to this study include students’ experience, alumni satisfaction with their undergraduate experience and alumni loyalty to their alma mater. One critical focus of relationship marketing is to enhance customer loyalty (Jain, Mogaji, Sharma, & Babbili, 2022; Ishkakova et al., 2016; Thaichon, Frazer, & Weaven, 2022). From alumni-alma mater relationship perspective, alumni loyalty can be described in terms of their repeat purchasing behaviour, favourable attitudinal disposition and commitment to provide material and nonmaterial support to their alma mater (Ishkakova et al., 2016; Wu, Huang, & Tsai, 2022).

**Benefits of alumni loyalty**

Alumni loyalty to their alma mater is important for many reasons and plays an important role in the success and sustainability of any collegiate institution. First, the love and commitment of alumni can be a powerful tool for financial support opportunities through fundraising. Across the reviewed literature, researchers persistently agree that alumni loyalty is one of the key drivers critical to the long-term success of fundraising in HEIs (Dam, 2016; Ishkakova, 2017; Ishkakova et al., 2016; Jain et al., 2022). In the US and UK for example, a large percentage of university budgets come not from tuition or state funding but from alumni through fundraising (Holmes, 2009; Weerts & Ronca, 2008; Ishkakova et al., 2016). Financial donations enable Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) to provide students with modern facilities and equipment for teaching and pioneering research. Secondly, loyal alumni are the best
ambassadors, offering invaluable marketing and promotion across their personal and professional networks (Jain et al., 2022; Miller, 2013; Wu et al., 2022). Their authentic voices can help to raise the awareness and credibility of their former institutions and their academic programmes in the market. They offer a great possibility to demonstrate the value of the education to potential customers because their experiences are named more often to be a motive for students to apply for certain institutions (Jain et al., 2022; Lallukka, 2017). On the other hand, alumni loyalty could also be considered a key determinant of student retention. In this case, loyal alumni usually continue with studies at higher levels in their alma mater (Mansori, Vaz & Ismail, 2014; Wu et al., 2022). As a third benefit, talented alumni have a wealth of experience and skills to share with current students. When institutions are effective, they yield alumni who are not only successful but also share a love for and loyalty to their alma mater (Khan, Yashar Salamzadeh, Qaisar Iqbal, & Yang, 2020). Loyal alumni donate their valuable time to share their experiences and serve as mentors to prospective and current students (Kilburn, Kilburn & Cates, 2014). In certain cases, alumni tend to offer career support to current students in work placements and help them launch their careers (Jain, Mogaji, Sharma, & Babbili, 2022; Wu, Huang, & Tsai, 2022). These enhance the students’ experience and employability and give them that competitive edge in today’s tough job market. Therefore, to be persuaded, won and retain students, Universities and Colleges need to come up with creative ways to stand out from the crowd with their marketing strategies to recruit more competent students and build passionate alumni bases. It is now even more important for HEIs to know that they can count on support from their graduates.

**Students’ experience and alumni loyalty**

The term students’ experience has been widely used by scholars in various studies investigating the key factors influencing students or alumni satisfaction and loyalty in higher education (e.g. Saraih et al., 2018; Paswan & Ganesh, 2009). In the context of this study, student experience encompasses academic and social experiences. Academic experience includes student experience related to patterns of enrolling in courses, quality of academic programs, modes of learning, teaching quality, role of teaching staff, academic support and career advancement opportunities. Social experience includes student experience related to social welfare and interpersonal interaction with students, faculty, administrative professionals, peers, parents, alumni and donors. The literature on the academic and social experiences provides a deeper understanding of how these experiences impact alumni loyalty to their alma mater.

Findings of various studies from Europe and Asia report a significant correlation between students’ experience and future perceptions of their collegiate institutions. For example, Saraih et al (2018) asserts that students who have a positive and satisfying experience while enrolled tend to develop lifelong relationships as alumni with their collegiate institutions. A research of academic experience by Hennig-Thurau., Langer and Hansen (2001) found that the quality of teaching experienced by students is the key determinant of student loyalty. Therefore, students’ experience is relevant in determining subsequent alumni loyalty. While much has been studied and written about the influence of alumni satisfaction with their undergraduate experience on their loyalty to their alma mater, most of these studies have been in the context of the United States and European countries where alumni-alma mater relationships have been integral to the system for decades. Inversely, alumni-alma mater relationship programs in most African countries including Tanzania have not undergone the same phases of development that their counterparts in America or the UK have. Therefore, dearth literature on the alumni-alma mater relationship among HEIs in Tanzania justifies the need for academic inquiry in this area.

**Conceptual framework**

Drawing on the literature, this study tests the impact of two independent variables (academic experience and social experience) on alumni loyalty as a dependent variable. The proposed conceptual model guiding this research is depicted in Figure 1. As it can be seen in the figure, the academic and social experiences are suggested as significant determinant of alumni loyalty to their alma mater.

![Figure 1: Conceptual Framework](image)

Corresponding to the conceptual framework depicted in Figure 1, the null and alternative hypotheses to test the influence of satisfaction with academic and social experience on alumni loyalty were formulated as follows:

\[ H_{0i}: \text{Alumni satisfaction with their undergraduate academic experience has no effect on loyalty to their alma mater.} \]
**H₀: Alumni satisfaction with their undergraduate social experience has no effect on loyalty to their alma mater.**

**Research and Methodology**

**Research strategies and sampling**

This study examined the influence of alumni undergraduate experience satisfaction level on loyalty to their Alma Mater in the Tanzanian Higher Education context. The methodology used in this study involved a descriptive design combining both qualitative and quantitative methods to get ample information on the topic under the study. Respondents for this study were recruited from a population of Tanzanians who have earned a bachelor degree from various universities and colleges in Tanzania. An alumni sample was selected using snowball sampling technique. An initial group of respondents was conveniently selected based on the criterion that an individual had earned a bachelor degree and then the latter were asked to identify other respondents who met this requirement. Subsequent respondents were then selected on the basis of referral.

The sample size of 188 respondents was decided using the Cochran’s formula:

\[ n = \frac{Z^2 \cdot pq}{d^2} \]

Where \( n \) denotes the sample size, \( Z \) is the standard variate which is 1.96 for a 95% confidence level, \( p \) is the proportion in the largest population which is 50%, \( q \) denotes 1-\( p \) and \( d \) denotes the degree of accuracy, set at 0.05.

\[ n = \frac{1.96^2 \cdot 0.5 \cdot 0.5}{0.05^2} = 384 \]

Thus, following the Cochran’s formula, the estimated sample size is 384 respondents. However, as a rule of thumb, a minimum sample size of 30 respondents is acceptable for statistical analysis (Saunders, 2009) in consideration of time constraints and accessibility of respondents. In this study therefore, a sample of 188 respondents instead of 384 was considered adequate and appropriate for the survey.

**Data collection and analysis techniques**

The data were collected using a structured questionnaire consisting of questions related to alumni background information, satisfaction with undergraduate academic experience, satisfaction with undergraduate social experience and alumni loyalty to their alma mater. The questionnaires were distributed as hard copies as well as online via emails. Snowball sampling technique was used to distribute hard copies of the questionnaire to employees’ alumni working in various organisations/companies and at the Nanenane exhibition grounds held in Simiyu in 2021. Alumni from different Alma Mater and regions who visited the grounds had the chance to fill out the questionnaire. Meanwhile questionnaire was distributed through email groups and members who met the criteria responded and/or forwarded the questionnaire. Meanwhile questionnaire was distributed through email groups and members who met the criteria responded and/or forwarded the questionnaire to other groups.

Both descriptive and inferential statistics were used to analyse the data with the help of a Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 23. Descriptive analysis involved the use of mean to measure the satisfaction level of alumni with their recalled undergraduate experience of their time. Also, the Binary Logistic Regression was used to analyse the influence of satisfaction with undergraduate experience on alumni loyalty. The model was selected because the dependent variable was treated in a binary response measuring whether or not respondents were loyal to their alma mater (Anderson, 1992). The Binary Logistic Regression Model is expressed in equation 2 as:

\[ \Pr(Y = 1) = \beta_0 + \beta_1 \cdot AE + \beta_2 \cdot SE + \varepsilon \]

Where by:

\( Y = \) Alumni Loyalty; \( AE = \) Satisfaction with academic experience; \( SE = \) Satisfaction with social experience; \( \beta = \) Coefficients to estimate the effects; \( \varepsilon = \) Error term

In this study, dependent variable (alumni loyalty) was computed in various steps. Factor analysis using Principal Component Analysis (PCA) was performed to reduce number of variables to fewer manageable factors for easy analysis (Yang, 2005). Before PCA was performed, Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure (KMO) and Bartlett’s test were performed to establish sampling adequacy and fitness of data into PCA. Regarding alumni loyalty, seven (07) points Likert scale statements were transformed into an index. The aim of this transformation was to quantify this variable so that it can be entered into the Logistic Regression Model. In this case nine (09) variables were analysed into four (04) factors whereas further analysis was performed to remain with one (01) strong variable. The dependent variable was further treated in a binary response measuring whether or not respondents were loyal to their alma mater, of which 1 signifies loyal alumni and 0 denotes alumni who are not loyal to their alma mater.

**Findings and Discussion**

**Tests for sampling adequacy**

This study examined the influence of alumni undergraduate experience satisfaction level on loyalty to their Alma Mater in the Tanzanian Higher Education context. Kasier – Meyer – Olkin (KMO) test was used to measure sample adequacy. The KMO statistic
varies between 0 and 1. A value close to 1 indicates that the patterns of correlations are relatively compact and so the factor analysis should yield distinct and reliable factors (Field, 2013). Kaiser (1974) recommends the values greater than 0.5 as acceptable; the values between 0.5 and 0.7 are mediocre, values between 0.7 and 0.8 are good, values between 0.8 and 0.9 are great and those above 0.9 are superb. The findings are presented in Table 1.

| Table 1: KMO and Bartlett’s Test |
|----------------------------------|
| Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy | .707 |
| Bartlett's Test of Sphericity | Approx. Chi-Square | 497.079 |
| df | 36 |
| Sig. | .000 |

Table 1 indicates that the KMO for the data collected in this study is 0.707, which falls within the range of being good. Thus, factor analysis was appropriate for these data.

In statistics, Bartlett’s test for sphericity is used to test the null hypotheses that the correlation matrix is an identity matrix. For the factor analysis to work the researcher needs to establish some relationships between variables and if the R-matrix is an identity matrix then all correlation coefficients would be zero. Therefore, this value is required to be significant (i.e. have a significance value less than 0.05). For the data collected in this study, Bartlett’s test of sphericity indicates a significant value of less than 0.001, implying that factor analysis is appropriate. Additionally, as indicated in Table 1, the test value of Chi – Square 497.079 is significant. Accordingly, all items are fit to the factor solution.

**Mean analysis of satisfaction with academic experience**

In this aspect, respondents were asked to tell their level of satisfaction with the academic experience they had during their undergraduate studies at university/college on a scale from 1 (signifying very dissatisfied) to 4 (signifying very satisfied). The mean value is presented in Table 2.

| Table 2: Satisfaction with Academic Experience |
|-----------------------------------------------|
| Mean | 3.19 |
| Std. Deviation | .559 |
| Minimum | 1 |
| Maximum | 4 |

As presented in Table 2, the mean value for respondents’ satisfaction with overall academic experience was 3.19 indicating that majority of the alumni are satisfied.

**Mean analysis of students’ satisfaction with social experience**

In this aspect, respondents were asked to tell their level of satisfaction with the social experience they had during their undergraduate studies at university/college on a scale from 1 (signifying very dissatisfied) to 4 (signifying very satisfied). The mean value is presented in Table 3.

| Table 3: Satisfaction with Academic Experience |
|-----------------------------------------------|
| Mean | 3.03 |
| Std. Deviation | .467 |
| Minimum | 1 |
| Maximum | 4 |

As presented in Table 3, the mean value for respondents’ satisfaction with overall social experience was 3.19 indicating that majority of the alumni are satisfied.

**Binary logistic regression analysis**

A logistic model gives a better fit to the data if it indicates an improvement over the intercept-only model (the model in absence of predictors) (Field, 2013). The findings (see Table 4) of this study show that the intercept model had -2Log likelihood of 320.342 and a model after all variables were entered had -2Log likelihood of 256.236. The decrease in values of -2log likelihood indicates an improvement over the intercept-only model, implying that data fitted into the model (Tundui, 2012). Additionally, the goodness-of-fit of the model was tested using the Hosmer and Lemeshew test. The model with all predictors produced a χ² (8) of 10.442, which was not significant (p = .235), suggesting a good fit of data into the model. Pallant (2011) argues that if the significance value for Hosmer and Lemeshow test is less the 0.05 indicates poor fit of the data in the model.
Table 4 further indicates that the overall model fit was statistically significant ($p < .05$) implying that the model was able to predict that students’ experience demonstrates effect on alumni loyalty. The Nagelkerke $R^2$ and that of Cox & Snell $R^2$ were 0.016 and 0.021 respectively suggesting that independent variables entered in the model explained 1.6% and 2.1% respectively of variance in alumni loyalty. The value of the Nagelkerke $R^2$ and Cox & Snell $R^2$ give an indication of the amount of variation in the dependent variable explained in the model (from a minimum value of 0 to a maximum of approximately 1). However, this should be noted that $R^2$ statistics in binary logistic model are pseudo values rather than the true $R^2$ values in multiple regressions (Pallant, 2011).

Hypotheses testing

Alternative Hypothesis 1 (Ha1) postulates that satisfaction with academic experience has a positive effect on alumni loyalty to their alma mater. Alternative Hypothesis 2 (Ha2) postulates that satisfaction with social experience has a positive effect on alumni loyalty to their alma mater. Table 4 presents the Binary Logistic Regression results between satisfaction with academic and social experience and alumni loyalty to their alma mater.

![Table 4: Binary Logistic Regression Results](image)

As shown in Table 4, the coefficient of satisfaction with academic experience is positively (0.160) related to alumni loyalty and significant ($p = .000$). This implies that a unit change in students’ satisfaction with academic experience will result into 16.0% increase of alumni loyalty. Further, the odd ratio of satisfaction with academic experience is 1.173 revealing that the likelihood of students’ satisfaction with academic experience to change alumni loyalty is 1.17 times. In view of these results whereas the coefficient of students’ satisfaction with academic experience being positive, alternative hypothesis 1 (Ha1) is accepted with the view that satisfaction with academic experience has more contribution towards alumni loyalty.

Similarly, the coefficient of satisfaction with social experience is positively (0.174) related to alumni loyalty and significant ($p = .000$). This implies that a unit change in alumni satisfaction with social experience during their time as students will result into 17.4% increase of their loyalty to their former Colleges/Universities after graduating. In this case, the odd ratio of satisfaction with social experience is 1.190 revealing that the likelihood of alumni satisfaction with undergraduate social experience to change loyalty is 1.19 times. Thus, alternative hypothesis 2 (Ha2) is accepted with the view that satisfaction with social experience has more contribution towards alumni loyalty to their alma mater.

From the literature review, these findings are consistent with the previous findings as reported by various researchers (e.g. Ropp, 2014; Saraih, et al, 2018; Hennig-Thurau, 2001). For example, Ropp (2014) reported that undergraduates who were provided with the institutional support they needed to accomplish their academic goals, were more likely to donate back to their alma mater. Similar findings by Saraih et al (2018) showed that students who have a positive and satisfying experience while enrolled tend to develop lifelong relationships as alumni with their collegiate institutions. Also, a study of academic experience by Hennig-Thurau et al (2001) found that the quality of teaching experienced by students serves as a foundation of alumni loyalty. In view of the findings, alumni loyalty can be created, reinforced and retained though favourable students’ experience. Thus, one way of cultivating and maintaining alumni loyalty to their former educational intuitions is to enforce the level of students’ experience.

Conclusion

The study tested two hypotheses to examine the influence of alumni undergraduate experience satisfaction level on loyalty to their Alma Mater in the Tanzanian Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) context. The results of this study indicate that the level of alumni satisfaction with the undergraduate academic and social experience of their time as students was high with the mean values reported at 3.19 and 3.03 respectively. Also, the coefficient of alumni satisfaction with undergraduate academic experience was positively (0.160) related to their loyalty and significant ($p = .000$) (Table IV). Therefore, Ha1 is accepted with the view that alumni satisfaction with undergraduate academic experience has more contribution towards alumni loyalty. The findings imply that alumni satisfaction with undergraduate academic experience increases loyalty to their alma mater. Besides, the coefficient of alumni satisfaction with undergraduate social experience was positively (0.174) related to their loyalty and significant ($p = .007$) (Table IV). Thus, Ha2 is accepted with the view that alumni satisfaction with undergraduate social experience has more contribution towards their loyalty to their alma mater. The findings imply that alumni satisfaction with undergraduate social experience increases loyalty to their alma mater.
In a similar vein, satisfaction, corporate image, confidence, trust, brand values and perceived service quality perception of quality as considered important determinants which influence the loyalty of students and alumni loyalty to their alma mater in the future (Hoffmann & Hilbert, 2017; Pedro, 2020; Newman & Petrosko, 2011; Snijders, Wijnia, Rikers, & Loyens, 2019). However, although experience satisfaction level and image determine alumni loyalty, corporate image largely increases the probability of participation and recommendations (Pedro & Andraz, 2019). In a similar vein, literature support that customer satisfaction with perceived service quality enhances loyalty, positive recommendation, the spread of positive word of mouth, repeat purchase and also sustain a profitable long-term relationship with customers (Kotler & Keller, 2014; Ladhari, Ladhari, & Morales, 2011; Magasi, Mashenene, & Dengenesa, 2022). The study concludes that by increasing the level of students’ experience satisfaction level among the current students in HEIs, their future loyalty to their former institutions after graduating is significantly enhanced.

The study contributes to the knowledge in several ways. First, the study links the relationship between alumni’s recalled experiences of their time as students and their subsequent loyalty towards their alma mater. Secondly, the study contributes to the understanding of alumni satisfaction with their collegiate experience and the influence of satisfaction on alumni loyalty to their alma mater. Thirdly, the study provided some empirically tested insight into the Tanzanian higher education context. Fourthly, the study provides a base for HEIs on how to determine strategies to create, reinforce and maintain alumni loyalty through a favourable student experience. Lastly, the study creates an avenue for future research agenda on factors influencing alumni loyalty to alma mater.

From a practical perspective, HEIs should increase the quality level of services so as to improve the level of students’ experience. The study, therefore, makes six specific recommendations that are necessary for improvement to improve alumni experience and loyalty. First, members of staff in HEIs should develop and maintain positive interactions with their students during and even after teaching and learning sessions and/or office hours. Second, members of staff in HEIs should always be helpful and supportive to their students. Third, members of the teaching staff should consistently improve the quality of teaching and make their courses interesting. Fourth, HEIs should design and develop curricula that provide competencies that contribute to outstanding students’ future success. Fifth, members of staff in HEIs should always keep their promises to students. Sixth, HEIs should provide a more effective and interactive medium in attending to students’ inquiries and complaints on institution’s facilities. This study is not without limitations. This study focused on students’ undergraduate experience to predict alumni loyalty to their former universities or colleges. Nevertheless, the influence of other factors would have been examined. Hence, a further study can examine the influence of other factors which can influence alumni loyalty.

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