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Stewardship behaviour and perceived goal congruence in local governments in Uganda

The moderating role of collectivism

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Abstract

Purpose – The purpose of this paper is to investigate the relationship between stewardship behaviour and perceived goal congruence. Using local governments, the paper introduces collectivism as a moderating variable to ascertain whether the mixed views in the stewardship behaviour-perceived goal congruence nexus is due to variations in collectivism.

Design/methodology/approach – The paper espouses a cross-sectional descriptive and analytical design. The authors use structural equation modelling to investigate hypotheses. Using proportionate and simple random sampling procedures, a sample of 310 respondents were drawn from local governments in Uganda of which a response rate of 72.6 per cent was obtained.

Findings – The findings show that stewardship behaviour and collectivism are significant predictors of perceived goal congruence. Furthermore, the magnitude effect of stewardship behaviour on perceived goal congruence depends on collectivism; implying that the assumption of non-additivity is met.

Research limitations/implications – Only a single research methodological approach was employed and future research through interviews could be undertaken to triangulate.

Practical implications – Variations that occur in stewardship behaviour create variations in goal congruence in local governments. It is confirmed that collectivism technically strengthens the link between stewardship behaviour and perceived goal congruence: suggesting that indeed collectivism could establish a maximal impact on the stewardship behaviour—perceived goal congruence link.

Originality/value – This is one of the few studies that focus on testing the interactive effects of collectivism on the relationship between stewardship behaviour and perceived goal congruence in local governments in Uganda.

Keywords Collectivism, Goal congruence

Paper type Research paper

Introduction

In order to live in a vibrant, aggressive, demanding and often ruthless business milieu, organisations deliberately continue to follow compound goals. According to Guest (2014) and Van De Voorde *et al.* (2010), the pursuit of a multiplicity of goals in a volatile environment enables organisations to balance and harmonise competing interests, spread risks associated with performance through diversification and favourably compete. Lange *et al.* (2011) assert that for organisations to be competitive and build a good image, they require strategic goals. Organisations that continuously advocate for goal congruence reap



in terms of shared responsibility, attainment of integrated workplace goals and interests and building strategic consensus (Kristof-Brown *et al.*, 2005). Such organisations also gain in form of creating a shared understanding of roles (Matanda and Ndubisi, 2013) which transforms into avoidance of risks, high supervisory costs and revenue losses (Dooley, 2004). Dooley further asserts that goal congruence acts as a prerequisite for motivation, coordinated behaviour, productivity and a control mechanism for managerial action in times of competition, technological advancement and change. For goal congruence to exist it requires several inputs such as individuals working in a collectivism manner.

Collectivism refers to shared work aspirations, interests and pro-organisational goals that stand for shared tasks, responsibilities and functions (Gomez *et al.*, 2000). This helps to improve productivity through complementary skills, efforts and work-related goals that propel organisational success. Furthermore, collectivism refers to some sort of situation where multiple skill sets and knowledge proficiencies are coordinated to fulfil goals, objectives and strategic mandate of given organisations (Rubin *et al.*, 2010). It denotes team work or a peoples' willingness to work well with others. The argument here is that although employees are individually appointed, productivity and performance is based on well matched and joint interaction of individuals who through complementary and supplementary fit offer to achieve goals through professional work practices necessary to fit the required competition (Zahra and Nambisan, 2011). Collectivism rallies the different knowledge spheres, the efforts of many people working for the organisation and energy to achieve greater goals of the organisation. Collectivism enables goal congruence which denotes team work, similarity of actions, efforts and values that enhance coordination, consistency and consensus that helps to foster transformation and development (Sawitri *et al.*, 2013) among people and organisations such as local governments.

Local governments are expected to play a leading role in transforming nations especially developing countries like Uganda. These local governments require putting in place effective mechanisms for achievement of goal congruence that are responsible and responsive to citizenry demands (Golooba-Mutebi, 2005). Such mechanisms foster change, economic welfare and transformation in different sectors of public transport, road networks, health care services, education, water and sanitation, electricity and agricultural productivity associated with economic growth, prosperity and development (Golooba-Mutebi, 2005; Mpaata *et al.*, 2017). However, what is happening on the ground especially in developing countries like Uganda is different.

According to the World Bank (2015) and the Uganda Ministry of Local Government (MOLG) (2014), the achievement of multiple goals in local governments in Uganda, using many different players in a largely complex environment has not been realized. This has been challenged by factors such as lack of mechanisms to achieve goal congruence; inability to work as a collectivistic society, limited capacity of individuals to concurrently handle multiple tasks and poorly regulated institutional mechanisms (MOLG, 2014). For example, the District Local Governments of Uganda were established and mandated to effectively utilise public resources through collective governance mechanisms, coordinate productivity, eradicate poverty and spearhead socio-economic growth transformation and development (Mpaata *et al.*, 2017). The measures and strategies instituted by the Government of Uganda through its local governments have not materialised into much anticipated transformation despite technical, administrative, legislative and increased financial support for more than three decades (World Bank, 2014, 2015; Kakumba, 2010). The assumption is that the government has delegated work and decision-making authority to the local government officials with the supposition that the delegated officials will act, behave and decide like the central government in order to achieve its goals. An example is when in a bid to assist farmers improve agricultural productivity for eradication of poverty; the government of Uganda initiated the National Agricultural Advisory Services (NAADS) and localised the services at the district level. Although it took shape, it

lacked effective implementation mechanisms and compatibility modes to achieve its desired goals. Consequently, NAADS failed and farmers did not gain. Eventually, government introduced Operation Wealth Creation with similar goals of poverty eradication; but results have not been that felt by the intended recipient—who is the local farmer (Office of the Prime Minister–OPM, 2014). This is a manifestation that agencies and players lack a strategic mechanism to align to strategic interests designed to fight poverty, improve productivity and achieve desired development. That is why in this study the researchers argue that the application of stewardship rather than the agency theory might better explain the practice in performing local government roles.

Several theories have been advanced to articulate the practice in the concept of goal congruence in organisations. For example the agency theory (Jensen and Meckling, 1976) postulates that in an employee relationship where one party—the principal undertakes to delegate work and decision-making authority to the agent, the assumption is that the delegated party will act, behave and decide like the principal in order to achieve goal congruence. The theory assumes that due to information asymmetry and the selfish opportunistically motivated utility maximising behaviour of agents (Kaufman, 2008); the principal should use contracts, controls and economic incentives to achieve goal congruence. It is hoped that the use of controls helps to streamline work procedures and align divergent interests of the agent and the principal to achieve goal congruence. However the over reliance on economic factors and extrinsic motivation; and the use of controls increases supervisory costs which runs counter to efficiency (Boon and Hartog, 2011) making the agency theory unable to completely explain the practice in goal congruence. Furthermore, scholars such as Arrow (1985) argued that the different risk behaviours among agents with differing risk preferences may be responsible for individual and group incongruence. It is also difficult to draw comprehensive contracts and the principal cannot state with certainty what the agent will do after gaining access to the contract. Still, the agency theory fails to recognise the interactional and social psychological factors such as the lack of a systematic mechanism for shared workplace interests, goals, collective work practices and ethics which is suggested by stewardship theory (Cooper and Edgett, 2012). Given such weaknesses in the agency theory, the stewardship theory becomes a plausible mechanism for articulating the practice in goal congruence.

The stewardship theory (Block, 1993) posits that the utility and satisfaction that emanate from attaining success that arise from proper utilisation of resources is better than short-term benefits. The steward subjugates personal interests and short-term gains for common good and altruistic achievements as a trustworthy manager of public resources (Gomez-Mejia *et al.*, 2011; Laszlo *et al.*, 2003). A steward's behaviour is organisation-centred rather than self-centred (Donaldson and Davis, 1991). Therefore, a steward gets fulfillment from the victory of the organisation. Stewardship differs from agency in that the agency theory advocates for controls whereas the stewardship theory promotes maximisation of autonomy, authority and discretion of organisations because stewardship leadership can be trusted. For stewardship, structures are meant to facilitate and empower, not control and monitor making the stewardship theory better able to explain the practice in goal congruence especially in the local government.

This paper aims to serve two functions: first, the researchers construct a model on the foundation of the stewardship theory that will help investigators and practitioners in the area of local government management to move beyond extant frameworks when endeavouring to explain and predict goal congruence. Second, we offer a suitable stewardship—collectivism mix that generates goal congruence in the local government in Uganda. In undertaking this study, the researchers expect to contribute in the following ways:

- That local governments will be able to recognise the best stewardship—collectivism mix that will be functional in attaining goal congruence among all players in local governments.

- Getting to grips with the way stewardship—collectivism blend will enable officers in the local government to initiate policies and practices that build stewardship and collectivism for goal congruence.
- Additionally, this study represents one of the few pieces in extant literature that centre on a developing country (Uganda) and the first one to focus on measuring the stewardship—collectivism mix for goal congruence in the public service. The study hence offers a unique insight.

Literature review

Stewardship behaviour and perceived goal congruence

In stewardship, a leader endeavours to create a balance of power in which each and every stakeholder's interest is appealed to as stipulated by fiduciary obligations (Ali, 2012). According to Block's (1993) stewardship is an approach to governance that is designed to create a strong sense of ownership and responsibility for outcomes including change at all levels of the organisation and achievement of mutually desired goals. In a stewardship environment, employees go beyond contractual obligations to responsible management where duties are discharged with skill competencies, care and respect. Hernandez (2012) argues that stewardship involves risk analysis with a view of maximising possible gains out of public transactions while minimising associated losses. Under stewardship, employees and employers are argued to commit to a common good regardless of the incentives or even personal interests. Working under stewardship relations helps achieve the public sector transformation and restores public trust, service delivery and welfare (Hernandez, 2012). Donaldson and Davis (1991) and Davis *et al.* (2010) assert that stewardship behaviour and principles are aligned to long-term goals which benefit a cross section of stake holders (goal congruence) than the self-interested individuals who are mainly driven by economic motives.

Against this argument, Gomez-Mejia *et al.* (2011) postulated that since the theory contends that managers gain more motivation and utility from pro-organisational and collective behaviours that cherish altruism than individually self-motivated interests and behaviours; then stewardship is a pointer to goal congruence. Stewards have foresight knack to look beyond the existing circumstances and see the big picture of the organisation and in so doing, they drive the effort of the rest towards achieving organisational goals (Simms, 2009). Stewards are expected to be authentic in their undertaking, with a moral courage to execute public affairs (Hernandez, 2012). Stewardship characteristics such as personal responsibility, risk taking, moral action and moral courage (Hernandez, 2012; Laszlo *et al.*, 2003) are important in managing transformation hence achievement of congruent goals. Hernandez (2012) argues that under stewardship, managers are not concerned about self-centred individualistically oriented goals in their decisions and performance, but that members are assumed to be mobilised towards attainment of organisational goals.

We hence hypothesise as follows:

- H1.* There is a significant positive association between stewardship behaviour and perceived goal congruence in local governments in Uganda.

Collectivism and perceived goal congruence

According to Frost and Tischer (2014), public transformation and changes in public sector organisations are a constant which attracts collectivism in the pursuit of various functions, duties and activity plans. Frost and Tischer further argue that team work as a tool for collectivism has never been as important as before in pursuing mutuality in goal attainment. However, for goal congruence to be achieved, one needs organisational members' agreement on performance goals and expectations in the face of foresightedness of the steward

(Kagaari *et al.*, 2010). In the whole of this process, goal congruence cannot be shelved since accountability points to the justification for collective actions and decisions in the achievement of goals. As a strategy, many organisations are continuously creating more proactive problem-solving teams to effectively handle emerging issues and transform the way service delivery is managed (Matanda and Ndubisi, 2013). In an effort to achieve mutually desired goals, both employees and employers should actively be ready to strategically exchange information and shared knowledge and ideas (Frese and Gielnik, 2014) through effective communication strategies. This interaction for support has become more crucial in the attainment of congruency in goals. Scholars such as (Punnett *et al.*, 2007) assert that considering that the goals of the organisations and those of the employees are multiple, performance requires collective responsibility, team work and shared efforts. These help to create synergy and an environment where employees participate in major decisions, activities and plans designed for overall success of the organisations' and employees' perceived goals.

Therefore, in order for goals to be achieved employees should be involved in many work processes; they should also participate and be given opportunity to support goals (O'Reilly and Chatman, 1986). Participation and involvement helps motivation and support (O'Reilly and Chatman, 1986). Support can be physical, technical or even moral. It is collective work arrangements where the sum of a whole can be greater than the contribution of individual parts and it is this which helps effective attainment of goals for service delivery and development. Collectivism therefore helps to rally the different knowledge spheres, the efforts of many people working for the organisation and their efforts and energy to achieve high-order goals of the organisation. Frese and Gielnik (2014) maintain that the building of collective consensus and a shared understanding of strategies and policies lead to achievement of a unified purpose and shared benefits.

We hence hypothesise as follows:

- H2. There is a significant positive relationship between collectivism and perceived goal congruence in local governments in Uganda.

The moderator role of collectivism on the stewardship–goal congruence relationship

This section discusses stewardship behaviour and collectivism mechanisms which can induce goal congruence of local governments through stewardship theory perspective. Stewardship theory explains the maximisation of autonomy, authority and discretion of organisations because stewardship leadership can be a trusted relationship between managers and shareholders of the firm where the shareholder (owner) and the manager (employees) work together to achieve common goals (Hernandez, 2012). Notably, in recent years, research has moved from demonstrating a relationship between stewardship behaviour and outcomes towards examining the process through which stewardship behaviour has its effect on outcomes (Morela, 2012; Triandis, 1990, 1995). In support of the linkages, collective attitudes, motivation and behaviours have been shown to be mediators between several independent variables and performance outcomes at the organisational level (e.g. Said *et al.*, 2017). However, none of these studies have focused on collectivism as a moderator of the stewardship–goal congruence relationship. We would infer that since performance and goal congruence are associated positively (Goran and Greg, 2006; Howard and Cyril, 1988); and collectivism and performance are also associated (Louis and Deborah, 1987), then there could be an interplay of collectivism on the relationship between stewardship behaviour and goal congruence.

It is therefore proposed that stewardship behaviour pursued by both employees and managers produces results that lead to the attainment of goal congruence. According to Steve *et al.* (2004), stewardship behaviours have an economically and statistically significant

effect on collectivism, which, in turn, affects goal congruence. This study therefore posits as a moderating hypothesis that collectivism within local government workers in Uganda could have an impact or be a determining factor to explain the inconsistent relationship between stewardship behaviours and goal congruence link. Furthermore, according to Friedrich (1982), when two or more variables come together to predict a criterion variable, scholars should not be contented with the outcomes of just the main effects. Friedrich asserts that a blend of the two be established by creating a third variable in form of an interaction term to assess the multiplicative effect of the mix on the criterion variable.

We therefore hypothesise that:

- H3. The influence of stewardship behaviour on perceived goal congruence in local governments in Uganda varies with the level of collectivism.

Methodology

In this section, the researchers present the research design, population, sample size and sampling procedure. The researchers further discuss the data collection instrument, measurement of variables, validity and reliability of the instrument.

Research design

The study adopted a cross-sectional descriptive and analytical design. It examined stewardship behaviour, collectivism and perceived goal congruence. The study covered a random sample of employees in local governments in Uganda. The researchers were particularly interested in local governments in Uganda because the local governments are more likely to be in position to exhibit perceived goal congruence tendencies; yet this is not the case.

Population, sample size and sampling procedure

The unit of analysis was the employee in the local government in Uganda. Overall, 1,595 employees formed the population. These were identified from 55 selected district local governments in Uganda (MoLG, 2014). Each district local government has two committees; the technical and planning committee (22 members) and the administrative committee (7 members). In this study, 1,210 formed the population for the technical committees while 385 formed the population for the administrative committees. By computing a sample of size of 310 (Krejcie and Morgan, 1970), the researchers attained a 95 per cent confidence level. To get the actual respondents, the researchers used proportional simple random sampling. Proportionately the sample size was 235 respondents from the technical and administrative committee and 75 from the administrative committee members. Out of 310 respondents, 225 usable questionnaires (Table I) were obtained giving a response rate of 72.6 per cent. Table I shows the details of the respondents.

Data collection instrument, measurement of variables, validity and reliability

The researchers collected data using a close ended questionnaire. It was anchored on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The researchers assumed that a five-point Likert scale was appropriate for the study because higher scales have been found to be lengthy and time consuming for respondents to comprehend and respond (Podsakoff *et al.*, 2012) which may eventually result into common method variance. In operationalizing collectivism the researchers used the works of O'Reilly and Chatman (1986). The researchers used measures such as task participation, task support and involvement. A sample item for this scale was "Working in groups is better than working alone". We measured goal congruence in terms of organisational goals,

LODJ 39,6				Frequency	Per cent
718	Education Level	Certificate		30	11.7
		Diploma		82	32.0
		Bachelors		114	44.5
		Masters		29	11.3
		PhD		1	0.4
	Age group	18 years		4	1.6
		19–29 years		46	18.0
		30–39 years		95	37.1
		40–49 years		67	26.2
		50–59 years		43	16.8
Gender	above 60		1	0.4	
	Male		187	73.0	
	Female		69	30.0	

Table I.
Respondent profiles

individual goals and team goals (Jensen and Meckling, 1976). An example of a sample item in this scale was “Goals of this organisation are similar to my own goals”. Furthermore, the researchers measured stewardship behaviour in terms of personal responsibility, risk taking, moral action and moral courage (Hernandez, 2012; Laszlo *et al.*, 2003). An example of such items was “My manager always exhibits professional conduct while on duty”.

At first, using SPSS to conduct exploratory factor analysis (EFA), the validity of the data was tested through several standard diagnostic procedures—the adequacy of data was tested using the Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin (KMO) test of sampling adequacy and Bartlett test of sphericity. According to Field (2006) and Tabachnick and Fidell (2007), the acceptable limit for KMO is 0.70 and Bartlett’s test is significant at $p \leq 0.05$. For all our variables, Bartlett’s test was significant and the KMO statistic was high enough (well above 0.7) indicating acceptance for factorability. Furthermore, consistent with Nunnally (1978) and Dooley (2004), Chrobach’s α coefficients for all variables were above 0.7 implying that the items for all variables had internal consistency (see diagonals in Table II).

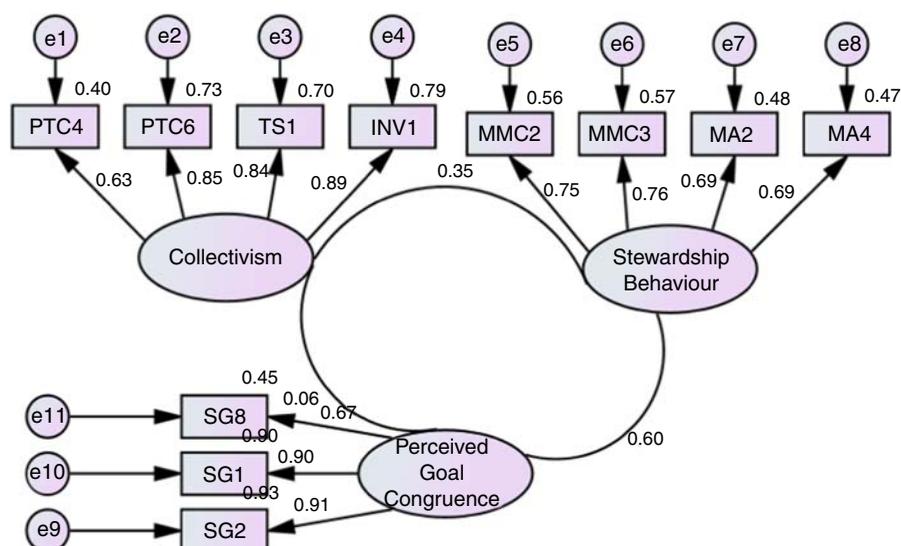
To establish convergent and divergent validity, the researchers followed a two-step approach as guided by Anderson and Gerbing (1988) and Medsker *et al.* (1994). Initially, we used analysis of moment structures (AMOS) (version 18.0) to conduct a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) to come up with a measurement model for our variables. In some cases, CFA confirmed the dimensions that were identified by EFA, while in others; CFA threw out some of them. CFA returned a Normed Fit Index NFI greater than 0.90 implying acceptable convergent validity and an average variance extracted greater than 0.5 implying acceptable divergent validity (Figure 1).

CFA further assisted to test the appropriateness of the theoretically grounded model and second, construct a structural equation model (SEM) to test the hypotheses developed from literature review (Jöreskog and Sörbom, 2005). Consistent with the works of Schermeller-Engel *et al.* (2003), cutoff points of indices for all SEM models indicated acceptability of model fit of our data (see Figures 2–4).

	Mean	SD	1	2	3
Stewardship Behaviour (1)	3.51	0.93	0.81	0.31**	0.56**
Collectivism (2)	3.19	1.07		0.83	0.08
Perceived goal congruence (3)	3.47	1.19			0.87

Table II.
Descriptive statistics
and correlations

Notes: The diagonals display the reliabilities. **Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level



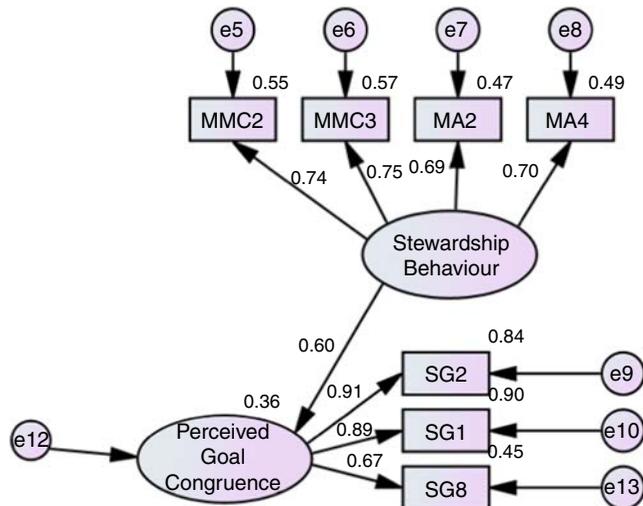
Notes: PTC, participation; TS, task support; INV, involvement; MMC, moral courage; MA, moral action; PTC, participation; GC, goal congruence. χ^2 (CMIN)=124.716; degrees of freedom (df)=41; probability (p)=0.000; goodness of fit index (GFI)=0.909; adjusted goodness of fit index (AGFI)=0.853; normed fit index (NFI)=0.902; Tucker–Lewis index (TLI)=0.907; comparative fit index (CFI)=0.937; root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA)=0.617; average variance extracted (AVE)=0.617

Figure 1.
CFA for collectivism,
stewardship
behaviour &
perceived goal
congruence

Results

The researchers run a number of nested SEMs to establish prognostic influence of each exogenous variable on to the endogenous variable, and establish the associations between the variables so as to test hypotheses developed from literature review. In Model 1 (Figure 2), stewardship behaviour is placed alone to predict perceived goal congruence; in Model 2 (Figure 3), collectivism was to stewardship behaviour to predict perceived goal congruence. In the final Model 3 (Figure 4), the interactive term (stewardship behaviour \times collectivism) was added to both exogenous variables (stewardship behaviour and collectivism) to predict perceived goal congruence. Friedrich (1982) states that in instances where two or more variables predict a criterion variable, the researcher must suspect an interaction effect. An interaction occurs when the effect of the independent variable on the dependent variable varies as a result of changes in the moderator (Baron and Kenny, 1986; Friedrich, 1982; Preacher *et al.*, 2007). According to Jose (2008, 2013), a researcher should test for the significance of the interaction by centring the predictor variables (subtracting the mean from all the scores to get marginal mean scores), getting a product of the centred variables to come up with the interaction term, that is used to test for interaction. Interaction is achieved if the beta coefficient of the interaction term is significant (Baron and Kenny, 1986; Friedrich, 1982; Jose, 2008; Preacher *et al.*, 2007) and indeed it was achieved (see Table IV). The three models revealed acceptable model fit indices as shown by the results of the fit indices in Table III.

Based on the results in Table III above, it was confirmed that Model 3 was appropriate for the data compared to the rest because it accounted for the highest variation in perceived goal congruence, i.e. squared multiple correlations (SMCs) of 0.43. This implies that the model explained 43 per cent of the variation in perceived goal congruence. We used the results in Model 4 and Tables III and IV to test the hypotheses developed from literature review.

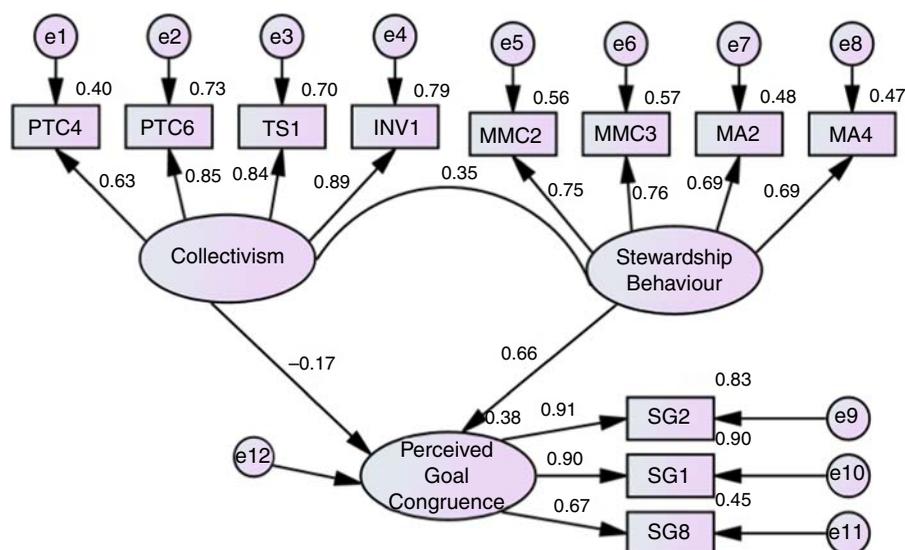


Notes: PTC, participation; TS, task support; INV, involvement; MMC, moral courage; MA, moral action; PTC, participation; GC, goal congruence; InterTerm, interaction term. χ^2 (CMIN)=61.948; degrees of freedom (df)=13; probability (p)=0.000; goodness of fit index (GFI)=0.920; adjusted goodness of fit index (AGFI)=0.859; normed fit index (NFI)=0.914; Tucker-Lewis index (TLI)=0.903; comparative fit index (CFI)=0.930; root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA)=0.073; squared multiple correlation (SMC)=0.360

Figure 2. SEM for stewardship behaviour on perceived goal congruence

H1 sought to establish the relationship between stewardship behaviour and perceived goal congruence. Correlation results in Table II show that stewardship behaviour significantly correlated with perceived goal congruence ($r = 0.56, p < 0.01$). This implies that a change of 1 SD in stewardship behaviours is associated with a change of 0.56SDs in perceived goal congruence. These correlation results were supported by the SEM results (Table IV) which indicate that stewardship behaviours are a significant predictor of perceived goal congruence ($\beta = 0.64, CR > 1.98$) in local governments in Uganda. This implies that positive variations that occur in stewardship behaviours create positive variations in stewardship behaviours. These results support *H1*.

H2 sought to establish the relationship between collectivism and perceived goal congruence in the local governments in Uganda. Correlation results in Table II show that collectivism positively but insignificantly correlated with perceived goal congruence ($r = 0.08, p > 0.05$). The implication here is that changes that occur in collectivism behaviours may not be associated with changes that occur in perceived goal congruence. Incidentally, the SEM results (Table IV) indicate that the standardized total effect of collectivism on perceived goal congruence was -0.19 meaning that collectivism explained -19 per cent of the variance in perceived goal congruence. The results show that collectivism tendencies are a significant predictor of perceived goal congruence ($\beta = -0.19, C.R. > -1.98$) in local governments in Uganda albeit in a negative direction; meaning that as collectivistic behaviours among local government officials go up by 1 SD, perceived goal congruence goes down by 0.19 SDs. Although the findings show a significant relationship between the two variables, the relationship is negative; hence, rendering *H2* unsupported.



Notes: PTC, participation; TS, task support; INV, involvement; MMC, moral courage; MA, moral action; PTC, participation; GC, goal congruence; InterTerm, interaction term.

χ^2 (CMIN)=124.716; degrees of freedom (df)=41; probability (p)=0.000; goodness of fit index (GFI)=0.909; adjusted goodness of fit index (AGFI)=0.853; normed fit index (NFI)=0.902; Tucker–Lewis index (TLI)=0.908; comparative fit index (CFI)=0.937; root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA)=0.067; squared multiple correlation (SMC)=0.382

Figure 3.
SEM for stewardship
behaviour &
Collectivism on
perceived goal
congruence

In *H3* the researchers sought to ascertain the moderating effect of collectivism on the relationship between stewardship behaviour and perceived goal congruence. The model (Figure 4) revealed that indeed collectivism moderates the relationship between stewardship behaviours and perceived goal congruence ($SE = 0.09$, $CR = 3.53$, $p < 0.001$) (Table IV). The inclusion of the interactive term (stewardship behaviours \times collectivism) in the third model (Figure 4) increased the predictive power of stewardship behaviour and collectivism on goal congruence from 38 per cent in the second model (Figure 3) to 43 per cent (Table III). The results show that the interactive-term boosts the main effects (stewardship behaviours and collectivism) to explain the variance in perceived goal congruence. Since the interaction term is significant ($\beta = -0.22$, $CR > -1.98$) (Table IV), we therefore maintain that *H3* is supported. In other words, the SEM used to test the hypothesis is multiplicative meaning that the contribution of stewardship behaviour is dependent on the contribution of collectivism in predicting goal congruence in the local governments in Uganda.

Discussion, conclusion, implications, limitations and propositions for further studies

Discussion

This study found a positive and significant relationship between stewardship behaviour and perceived goal congruence. This study reveals that when managers exhibit professional conduct while carrying out their duties, it creates a feeling among employees that the goals of the organisation they are working for are similar to their (employees') work-related aspirations. The study further argues that when the managers exhibit professional conduct in their duties, it makes both the supervisor and employee think alike on most issues with

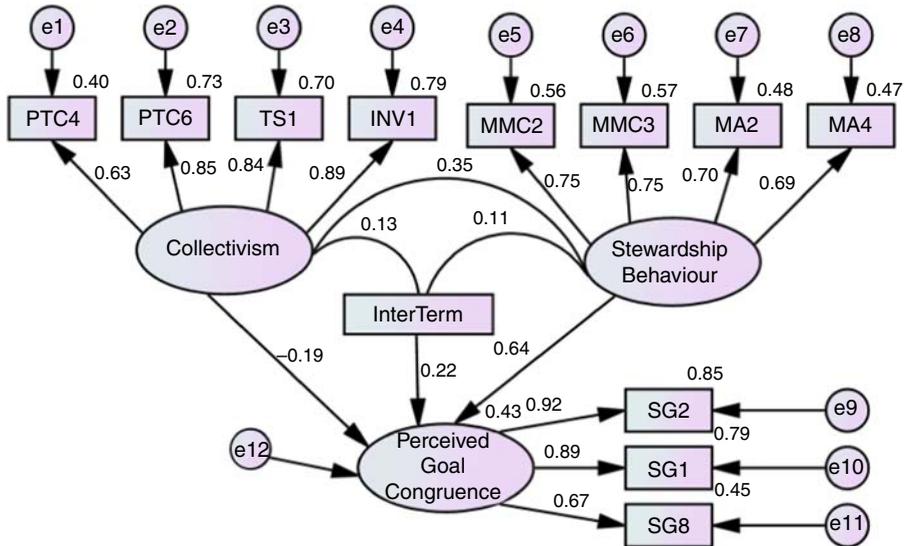


Figure 4. Interaction effect of collectivism on the stewardship behaviour-perceived goal congruence relationship

Notes: PTC, participation; TS, task support; INV, involvement; MMC, moral courage; MA, moral action; PTC, participation; GC, goal congruence; InterTerm, interaction term.
 χ^2 (CMIN)=137.001; degrees of freedom (df)=49; probability (p)=0.000; goodness of fit index (GFI)=0.908; adjusted goodness of fit index (AGFI)=0.853; normed fit index (NFI)=0.911; Tucker–Lewis index (TLI)=0.904; comparative fit index (CFI)=0.929; root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA)=0.073; squared multiple correlation (SMC)=0.428

		χ^2	df	p	GFI	AGFI	NFI	TLI	CFI	RMSEA	SMC for goal congruence
<i>Cutoff</i>		> 0.5	> 0.05	> 0.90	> 0.85	> 0.90	> 0.90	> 0.90	> 0.90	< 0.08	
Model 1	SB and GC	61.95	13	0.000	0.92	0.86	0.91	0.90	0.93	0.07	0.36
Model 2	SB, CLV and GC	124.72	41	0.000	0.91	0.85	0.90	0.91	0.94	0.07	0.38
Model 3	SB, CLV, Interterm and GC	137.00	49	0.000	0.91	0.85	0.91	0.90	0.93	0.07	0.43

Table III. Fit Indices for the different models

respect to the organisation. The study demonstrates that for the supervisor and the employee in the local government to have a similar vision regarding how work should be done in the district; there is necessity for managers to conduct themselves in a professional way. These findings support earlier studies by Brown and Mitchell (2010), who states that where organisations clarify to employees ethical expectations in form of values, norms and principles concrete and understandable to employees, it influences ethical behaviour and impedes unethical behaviour. In this study, the researchers demonstrate that when managers at the district local government discourage unethical behaviour, they create a feeling among employees that the goals of the organisation they are working for are similar to their (employees') work-related aspirations. Furthermore, discouraging unethical behaviour at the district local government tends to make both the supervisor and the

		Unstandardised estimate	SE	CR	<i>p</i>	Label	Standardized estimate
Perceived goal congruence	← Stewardship behaviour	0.95	0.13	7.29	***	par_9	0.64
Perceived goal congruence	← Collectivism	-0.29	0.11	-2.60	0.01	par_10	-0.19
Perceived goal congruence	← InterTerm	0.31	0.09	3.53	***	par_11	0.22
PTC4	← Collectivism	1.00					0.63
PTC6	← Collectivism	1.33	0.14	9.86	***	par_1	0.85
TS1	← Collectivism	1.33	0.14	9.79	***	par_2	0.84
INV1	← Collectivism	1.42	0.14	9.99	***	par_3	0.89
MMC2	← Stewardship behaviour	1.00					0.75
MMC3	← Stewardship behaviour	1.21	0.14	8.96	***	par_4	0.75
MA2	← Stewardship behaviour	0.93	0.10	9.62	***	par_5	0.70
MA4	← Stewardship behaviour	0.98	0.12	8.14	***	par_6	0.69
SG2	← Perceived goal congruence	1.00					0.92
SG1	← Perceived goal congruence	0.94	0.05	17.25	***	par_7	0.89
SG8	← Perceived goal congruence	0.79	0.07	10.97	***	par_8	0.67

Table IV.
Paths coefficients for
the hypothesised
moderated model

subordinate think alike on most issues with respect to the organisation. This is indeed an achievement of congruence of both their goals. The study demonstrates that for the supervisor and the employee in the local government to have a similar vision regarding how work should be carried out at the district; there is necessity for managers to always instill ethical behaviour among their staff. These findings are consistent with the works of Ali (2012), who suggests that for a leader to aggressively pursue the mission of the organisation, one needs to create a balance of power in which each and every stakeholder's interest is appealed to as stipulated by fiduciary obligations.

Consistent with the results, this study further finds that when managers are willing to face up to issues rather than burying them, it creates a feeling among employees that the goals of the organisation they are working for are similar to their (employees') work-related aspirations. The study indeed demonstrates that the willingness of managers to face up to issues rather than burying them, makes both the supervisor and employee think alike on most issues with respect to the organisation. The study further demonstrates that for the supervisor and the employee in the local government to have a similar vision regarding how work should be done in the district; there is necessity for managers to always be willing to face up to issues rather than burying them. These findings support earlier studies by Hernandez (2012), who states that stewardship involves risk analysis with a view of maximising possible gains out of public transactions while minimising associated losses. In this study, the researchers show that for employees to feel that the goals of the organisation they are working for are similar to their (employees') work-related aspirations; there is need for managers at the district local government to be seen as always working in the best interest of the local government. Furthermore, always working in the best interest of the organisation tends to make both the supervisor and employee think alike on most issues with respect to the organisation. The study demonstrates that for the supervisor and the employee in the local government to have a similar vision regarding how work should be done; there is necessity for managers to always work in the best interest of the organisation. These findings are consistent with the works of Gomez-Mejia *et al.* (2011), who suggests that stewardship is a pointer to goal congruence since the theory contends that managers gain more motivation and utility from pro-organisational and collectivism behaviours that cherish altruism than individually self-motivated interests and behaviours.

Correlation results indicated non-significance in the relationship between collectivism and perceived goal congruence. Yet SEM results showed that collectivism was a significant but negative predictor of perceived goal congruence. This was completely different from works by earlier scholars such as Frost and Tischer (2014), who argue that team work as a tool for collectivism has never been as important as before insisting that while most organisations employee people individually, performance is structured around team performance. This study deviates from findings by earlier researchers by insisting that as collectivism tendencies improve among workers and managers at the district level; then perceptions of achieving goal congruence tend to decline. These findings hence negated our hypothesis that collectivism is a significant predictor of perceived goal congruence. This divergence requires being explored further using other testing grounds and methodologies.

Given that the multiplicative term in the SEM was significant, it implied support for *H3* which states that the influence of stewardship behaviour on perceived goal congruence in local governments in Uganda varies with the level of collectivism. These results indicate that stewardship behaviour and collectivism pose a magnitude effect on perceived goal congruence hence the assumption of non-additivity is met (Jose, 2008; Aiken and West, 1991; Friedrich, 1982). It signifies that that for perceived goal congruence to be achieved in local governments in Uganda, the two must co-exist to influence it. In other words, perceptions of congruence in goals increase as stewardship behaviours and collectivism levels are increased. The findings demonstrated that combining the two elements will boost further the perceptions of congruence in goals and register higher perceptions of congruence in goals than what either of the variables would have single-handedly registered. The findings of this study have therefore proved that interplay of stewardship behaviour and collectivism is material in influencing perceived goal congruence in local governments in Uganda.

Conclusion

The study has found stewardship behaviours to positively and significantly predict perceived goal congruence. Although the study found collectivism to be a significant predictor of perceived goal congruence, the relationship was negative. Furthermore, the significant multiplicative effects of stewardship behaviour and collectivism on goal congruence confirm a conditional relationship. Besides, the interaction term is non-additive and its inclusion in the model gave rise to monotonic interactions (Bennet, 2000). Since the interaction term between stewardship behaviour and collectivism is multiplicative; there is more to consider than simply the main effects of each of the exogenous variables. This implies that stewardship behaviour alone may not adequately explain goal congruence without the input of collectivism. The researchers affirm that both stewardship behaviour and collectivism must co-exist in order to improve goal congruence. However, given that some of the study results (the collectivism-goal congruence relationship) disagree with pragmatic findings in the extant literature, we uphold that the use of these study findings be used with maximum carefulness in other sectors.

Theoretical and managerial implications

The study has addressed substantial issues which have not been attended to by the literature more especially in the local government setting. Furthermore, it has attempted to confirm or disprove whether the theoretical underpinnings of goal congruence are empirically supported in the local governments in Uganda. As a result, the study has added to the continuing stewardship discourse in the local government sector. In addition, the study has thrown more light on the non-additivity effect of stewardship behaviours and collectivism on perceived goal congruence in the local government sector. These findings on the non-additivity effect of stewardship behaviours and collectivism on perceived goal congruence in the local governments have thus shown the essence of diverse predictors that

mix to elucidate perceived goal congruence; thereby, making it possible for scholars to attend to the incongruities that exist in extant literature.

Primarily, the study has introduced a clear understanding of the effect of stewardship behaviours and collectivism on perceived goal congruence in the local governments in Uganda. This finding enhances management efforts in local governments to improve goal congruence which can be facilitated through the appropriate management of stewardship behaviours and collectivism.

Thus, management can intensify initiatives to encourage greater understanding and acceptance of stewardship behaviours and collectivism mix that boosts goal congruence in the local government in Uganda. The managers of local governments need to appreciate that the input of stewardship behaviours and collectivism in the local governments is inevitable, given the ever changing environment. Ideally managers should exhibit professional conduct while doing their duties. They should clarify to employees what is expected of them ethically. This will not only build team work at the workplace but also ultimately result into achievement of similar goals for the institution and the workers. Managers or leaders of local governments must discourage unethical behaviour; should face up to issues as they come up and work in the best interest of the organisation. When this is done, the zeal for employees to work as a team will increase; and will foster achievement of mutual goals.

More importantly, current and future managers must know that local governance is changing so rapidly that everything is dependent on their policies on stewardship behaviours and collectivism. It is therefore high time that local governments did away with management styles and traditional management models that do not capture appreciation of stewardship behaviours and collectivism as a major component. In order to advance goal congruence perceptions in the local governments in Uganda, management should endeavour to find and implement a viable stewardship behaviours and collectivism mix that increases goal congruence. If local governments emphasised appropriate policies for stewardship behaviours and collectivism, this would help increase goal congruence perceptions. Given the fact that the interactive term involving stewardship behaviours and collectivism was found to be significant and hence non-additive, emphasis should be put in cultivating policies that enhance appropriate stewardship behaviours and collectivism because they make viable combinations that predict goal congruence. The managerial implications involve explaining how collectivism can be used in the best manner to amplify stewardship for goal congruence. As it is evident that stewardship behaviours are an antecedent for goal congruence, leadership in the local government should explore ways and means to create conducive stewardship behaviours environments for their employees. For example, the local governments' leadership may introduce some programs that involve employees to take part in decisions that affect their team building. Also from managerial perspective, it is also important to work on the determinants of collectivism as it moderates the relationship between stewardship behaviours and goal congruence. These findings also hold extensive implications for Human Resource Managers. The study demonstrates that Human Resource Managers should, while evaluating employees' performance implement immediate and accurate procedures that include organisational input in terms of stewardship behaviours and collectivism.

Limitations and propositions for future studies

A few facets limit the scope of this paper. One is that the findings of this research are based only on a sample of one country—Uganda. This may not be fully representative for all developing countries' local government sectors. This necessitates more research on akin variables in different developing countries. The action will help to generalise the research findings. Second, are the mixed results of the study due to the methodology used for

measuring the study variables. In spite of the fact that researchers have attempted to define the constructs as accurately as possible by drawing relevant literature as validated by practitioners, the measurements used may not perfectly signify all the dimensions of each variable. Future studies could use longitudinal rather than a cross-sectional design to study the same basic hypotheses and SEM construction. Also, since collectivism was negatively and significantly associated with goal congruence, further research could be carried out in a relatively different field to prove or disprove this finding. Despite possible limitations of using single-period data, the results of the present study provide valuable insights into the effect of stewardship behaviour and collectivism on perceived goal congruence in local government in a developing country setting.

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