

Competitiveness a Masculinity-Femininity Cultural Dimension and Multinational Corporations' Performance in Uganda

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Abstract

This study conducted under strategy management sought to examine the influence of competitiveness within masculinity-femininity cultural dimension on performance of multinational corporations (MNCs) in Uganda. Specifically, it focused on aspects of competitiveness within the masculinity-femininity cultural dimension that included aggressiveness and materialism. The interest in this study was aroused because of MNCs performance challenges such as struggling to maintain businesses acumen, market share, growth and closure of businesses. This study adopted a cross-sectional research design using a quantitative approach and it involved 50 participants who responded to statements in a questionnaire. A simple regression analysis and a multiple-regression analysis were conducted to assess the influence investigated in this study. Results revealed that competitiveness within masculinity-femininity cultural dimension that included both aggressiveness and materialism had a significant positive influence on performance of MNCs in Uganda. In particular, low levels work aggressiveness and work materialism among MNCs' employees contributed to the low levels of performance of MNCs in Uganda. The study recommends MNCs to align their strategic vision and mission towards competitiveness to instilling employee work aggressiveness and materialism toward achieving the objectives of the MNCs.

Keywords: Masculinity-femininity, competitiveness, aggressiveness, materialism and performance

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1. Introduction

This study examined the influence the competitiveness under masculinity-femininity dimension on performance of multinational corporations (MNCs) in Uganda. Competitiveness (one of Hofstede's masculinity-femininity related values) was assessed in form of aggressiveness and materialism while performance of MNCs was assessed in form of job satisfaction, customer satisfaction and market share. Masculinity-femininity dimension is one of Hofstede's national culture traits which look at culture as being masculine and feminine, hence masculinity-femininity traits among nations.

MNCs are referred to as organizations that happen to have branches operating in different countries globally, and therefore they employ people from diverse cultural backgrounds (Piekkari, Welch & Westley 2022) and the employment aspect applied to MNCs operating in Uganda. Ugandan culture has been globally rated low on masculinity-femininity (Rarick *et al.* 2013) but in East Africa, it scores high on masculinity-femininity (Galperin *et al.* 2017). However, it was argued in this study basing on the definition of MNCs that the composition of employees in MNCs operating in Uganda includes Ugandans and other people from different countries and therefore some of these come from low, while others come from moderate, and others come from high masculinity-femininity countries. Therefore, it was argued in this study that the employees' values of aggressiveness and materialism while executing MNCs activities in Uganda varies and as such, the assumption that some employees put in more effort to help these organizations perform better while others do not. However, this required to be verified in this study.

It had been also observed that some MNCs in Uganda were experiencing organizational performance challenges (Nakaweesi 2021; Nassuuna 2021; Ladu 2021; Mugenyi 2014; Nankya 2013). Some multinational firms were struggling in terms of low returns and shrinking sales (Nakaweesi 2021) and slow growth while others have closed their operations (Nassuuna 2021; Ladu 2021; Nakaweesi 2021). It had been reported that 21 MNCs in Uganda closed their operations since 2013 (Ladu 2021).

Therefore, interest was aroused in this study because the diverse cultural backgrounds of employees appeared to have a bearing on organizational performance challenges of MNCs operating in Uganda. Literature shows that MNCs usually have one of their concerns is how to manage staff from diverse cultural background in an effort to improve their performance (Appiah & Adeyeye 2021; Fernando 2021; Inegbedion *et al.* 2020; Garg & Panchal 2016) and this was expected to be applicable to MNCs in Uganda but empirical evidence was lacking.

This study sought to establish how two components of competitiveness that included aggressiveness and materialism influenced the performance of MNCs operating in Uganda. This is because when any organization

such as the MNCs continues having problems with its performance, negative consequences arise not only to the organization but also the other stakeholders it provides its services as well as to the nation where the organization operates. The negative consequences to the organization include failure to achieve its objectives (Nassuuna 2021; Ladu 2021) and leaving a number of people unemployed when MNCs close shop (Nassuuna 2021; Ladu 2021). The negative consequences to the government include lost tax revenue when MNCs close shop (Nassuuna 2021). Thus, this study looked forward to avoid or minimize these negative consequences by providing recommendations based on its findings.

1.1 Problem statement

The performance of MNCs is important if they are to realize their objectives. However, a number of MNCs operating in Uganda have been experiencing organizational performance challenges as evidenced by some struggling to continue to maintain their operations, while other have completely failed and thus, closed business (Nakaweesi 2021; Nassuuna 2021; Ladu 2021; Mugenyi 2014; Nankya 2013). However, it has been observed that these MNCs employ people from various parts of the world and thus, they have a diverse work culture (Piekkari, Welch & Westney 2022). The assumption of this study was that this might be one of the explanatory factors because people from different national cultures may bring with them cultural values that may enhance the performance of MNCs but these cultural values may work against the performance of these organizations. Given that lack of evidence on what the situation was, this study sought to address this knowledge gap.

1.2 Purpose of the study

The purpose of the study was to examine the influence of competitiveness on performance of MNCs in Uganda.

1.3 Objectives of the study

The objectives of the study were:

1. To assess the influence of aggressiveness on the performance of MNCs in Uganda
2. To examine the influence of materialism on the performance of MNCs in Uganda
3. To establish the combined influence of aggressiveness and materialism on the performance of MNCs in Uganda

1.4 Hypotheses of the study

The following hypotheses were tested:

1. There is a significant influence of aggressiveness on the performance of MNCs in Uganda
2. There is a significant influence of materialism on the performance of MNCs in Uganda
3. Aggressiveness and materialism have a significant combined influence on the performance of MNCs in Uganda

2. Literature review

The literature that was reviewed first starts broadly by looking at previous works related to masculinity-femininity culture and its influence on organizational performance. Then it narrows down to one component of masculinity-femininity culture which is competitiveness in relation to how it influences organizational performance. The review then further breaks down the competitiveness component of the masculinity-femininity culture to two cultural values that include aggressiveness and materialism and their influence on organizational performance.

2.1 Theoretical review

The study was based on the social learning theory pioneered by Bandura in 1977 (Koutroubas & Galanakis 2022). In context of this study, this theory helps in understanding how behavior in organizations affects the achievement of their objectives. The assumption of this theory is behavior exhibited by individuals is learned and the extent to which it is learned, determines how the individuals do something (Şenyuva & Gönül 2011). From this assumption of this theory, two phrases are applicable to this study. The first phrase is “*behavior exhibited by individuals is learned and the extent to which it is learned*” which related to employee work-competitive behavior in this study and second phrase is “*determines how the individuals do something*” this relates to how such employees’ affect organizational performance in this study. The theory further explains how the belief and capacity of individuals determines their learning to perform the behavior necessary to produce specific performance achievements (Koutroubas & Galanakis 2022). The “*belief and capacity of individuals*” when related to this study refer to the competitiveness (a masculinity-femininity dimension) and “*learning to perform the behavior necessary to produce specific performance achievements*” relates to organizational performance. Less belief and capacity of individuals will lead their less learning to perform the behavior necessary to produce specific performance achievements while more belief and capacity of individuals will lead their more learning to

perform the behavior necessary to produce specific performance achievements. The relevance of this theory to this study was culture is learned but the learning depends on the employees' belief and capacity to learning the competitive cultural values and this will contribute to the extent to which employees will be helpful in improving organizational performance.

2.2 Masculinity and organizational performance

Masculinity in an organization is where employees are assertive towards executing organizational tasks and their focus is on achieving material success (Hung, Su & Lou 2022). Employees with work assertiveness behavior approach work tasks and problems head-on with a goal of succeeding in their endeavor (Wahjudi, Singgih, Suwignjo & Baihaqi 2016). This behavior also characterizes employees who feel comfortable handling work task in a manner they feel is right even if the approach differs from their workmates but they also show respect to how they workmates handle similar work task (Hung, Su & Lou 2022). This employee work assertiveness behavior sometimes positively and other times negatively influences organizational performance. For example, from positive view, Employees with work assertiveness behavior usually are bold at requesting their workmates to put in extra effort to execute work tasks for an organization and the workmates comply, it leads to better organizational performance (Hamouda, Eid & Abd-Alla 2018). Employees with work assertiveness behavior if they sense that the manner they are handling organizational work tasks is not the best, they usually tend to apply an alternative approach and this may help in solving the problem leading to better organizational performance (Oducado & Montaña 2021). Work assertiveness behavior of an employee increases the confidence of that employee in executing organizational tasks leading to better organizational performance (Hamouda *et al.* 2018). However, on a negative side, workmates may misinterpret an employee with work assertiveness behavior in terms of such an employee being coercive towards them when he/she boldly requests them to put in extra effort to execute organizational tasks (Oducado & Montaña 2021). In such a situation, the workmates of the employee with work assertiveness behavior may resort to act indifferently by not doing as requested by the employee with work assertiveness behavior leading to poor organizational performance. In addition, the workmates may misinterpret an employee with work assertiveness behavior in terms of such an employee trying to show off that he/she is better at executing organizational work tasks (Oducado & Montaña 2021). As such, they may not cooperate with such an employee and instead, they let such an employee go ahead to handle the organizational tasks by himself/herself and this will lead to poor organizational performance (Oducado & Montaña 2021).

Ogunyemi (2022) found that masculinity culture significantly affected the performance of Nestle Nigerian PLC. One of his objectives focused on the masculinity-femininity values of culture and their effect on the performance of Nestle Nigerian PLC and finding showed regression coefficient of $R = .4097$ and Adjusted R of 50.6% suggesting a moderate influence on the performance of Nestle Nigerian PLC. Some studies have conducted not focusing organizational performance but on other types of performance such as task performance and employee performance but it argued in this study that these have a bearing of performance of organizations. For example, Hung *et al.* (2022) in their study found that masculinity has a positive significant influence on task performance. Lau *et al.* (2020) showed similar results but this was employee performance. Therefore, it can be said that these two studies indirectly showed that masculinity culture significantly and positively influences organizational performance. However, Wahjudi *et al.* (2016) did not find any significant influence of masculinity on organizational performance. Lwin (2020) also did not find a significant influence although the results indicated a very negative influence ($B = -.075$) on task performance as well as a very negative influence ($B = -.030$) on contextual performance. Hamelmal (2019) examined Hofstede's cultural dimensions' effect on organizational effectiveness and found that higher masculinity orientation among the people, but did not significantly affect organizational effectiveness. Thus, these review of literature showed mixed results related to the effect of masculinity on organizational performance leading to questioning what the situation was among MNCs in Uganda, necessitating conducting this study by focusing on two masculinity values that included competitiveness and materialism.

2.3 Competitiveness cultural aspect of masculinity and organizational performance

A competitive organizational culture is that characterize employees of being achievement oriented (Kachel, Steffens & Niedlich 2016). Employees aim at achieving higher results. Employees with work-competitive behavior have a desire to do better at organizational tasks than their co-workers (Wang, Wang & Liu 2018). Such employees are motivated to ensuring that work tasks assigned to them are completed within the required time compared to their workmates (Bean 2021). In addition, these employees make sure that the work done is excellent compared to their workmates (Siegling, Ng-Knight & Petrides 2019). In other words, these employees have a characteristic that drives to outperform their co-workers (Wang *et al.* 2018).

However, the results of earlier research on the relationship between employee work-competitive behavior and organizational performance are mixed. Although some research has found that employee work-competitive behavior is positively related to performance (e.g., Brown & Peterson 1994; Carsrud & Olm 1986), other

research failed to find a significant relationship while some have found a negative relationship between employee work-competitive behavior and firm performance (Spence & Helmreich 1983). The contradiction in these earlier studies implies other factors mediating the relationship between employee work-competitive behavior and firm performance.

That having been explained, most literature explains that organizational employees who happen to possess Hofstede's competitive culture tend to demonstrate tendencies of risk-taking and goal achievement (Wang *et al.* 2018). Therefore, under such circumstances, employees' collective efforts tend to improve organizational performance. However, when in their effort to achieve organizational goals, employees can be in a state of constant fear and tension, which can contribute to reduced productivity and thus compromise organizational performance (Sengke 2015). One of characteristics of employees with competitive value culture is their ambitiousness (Berdahl *et al.* 2018). Employee ambitiousness has been considered necessary for improving organizational performance (Bean 2021; Siegling *et al.* 2019). However, Wang *et al.* (2018) also observed that mixed results in earlier research where some indicated a positive significant influence of employees' competitive culture on organizational performance while other results indicated a negative significant influence and other results indicated no significant influence. The assumptions in this study were that the three scenarios could happen depending on the composition of employees. The first scenario is that positive significant influence occurs when most employees have culture traits that are more competitive. The second scenario is that negative significant influence occurs when most employees have culture traits that are less competitive. The third scenario is that no significant influence occurs when most employees have culture traits that are somewhat (moderately) competitive. Taking into what has been said, this study assessed what happens to organizational performance where MNCs employ people from diverse cultural backgrounds where some employees exhibit high levels of competitiveness while other exhibit moderate or low levels.

2.4 Competitiveness cultural aspect of masculinity and organizational performance

The tendency of aggressiveness is expectation-oriented, emphasizing initiative taking, anticipating change in an important situation, early preparation for likelihood unspecified risk creating change and achievement-oriented (Boohene, Marfoiyadom & Yeboah 2012). Employee work aggressiveness has also been explained in terms of employee proactive work behavior (Fay, Strauss, Schwake & Urbach 2022). Employee proactive work behavior is an element that reflects an employee's self-initiated efforts to create positive changes in the workplace (Parker *et al.* 2010).

Previous research has identified various forms of employee proactive work behavior outcomes, particularly its influence on employee performance and organizational performance (Tornau & Frese 2013; Thomas, Whitman & Viswesvaran 2010). However, employee proactive work behavior has also been associated with costs for the individual and the organization. For example, an employee with proactive work behavior can face resistance from workmate leading to poor organizational performance (Frese & Fay 2001), and employee proactive work behavior has been associated with fatigue that contributes to poor organizational performance (Fay & Hüttges, 2017; Strauss, Parker & O'Shea 2017; Zacher, Schmitt, Jimmieson & Rudolph 2019).

Research shows that employee work aggressiveness is an organizational culture entails a workforce where employees strive to outcompete themselves in handling organizational activities so that the organization can realize its objectives rather being casual (Niswaty, Dhahri, Nasaruddin & Sitti 2021). In their striving, employees become motivated to take risks and be innovative in helping improve organizational performance (Chinyelu & Konya 2020). Employees are action oriented towards pacesetters rather followers in what is supposed to be done to satisfaction in order for the organization to realize its objectives and as such, they ensure timeliness in decisions affecting the organization, make innovative decisions and show a sense of urgency to perform organizational activities (Sahul & Peris-Ortiz 2014).

Employees with an aggressive orientation are typically innovative because they closely monitor the actions of their competitors and initiate a series of actions beneficial to the performance of an organization (Aigboje 2018). Such employees tend to have the ability to adapt to the changing organizational environment and finding solutions that are helpful to promote organizational performance (Coleman 2019). Chinyelu & Konya (2020) further explained that these employees are proactive by being responsive to opportunities. Those employees with aggressive nature look into the future and seek the prospect of opportunities, which means they anticipate future trends and demands with the motive of helping the organization benefit from opportunities (Panjaitan, Cempena, Trihastuti & Panjaitan 2021). Previous studies have shown that work aggressive employees are more likely to improve an organization's competitiveness and improve its performance (Chinyelu & Konya 2020). However, the situation is not direct as it is explained because employees that exhibit aggressiveness tend to slow down their co-workers, which negatively affect the organization's performance (Chinyelu & Konya 2020).

2.5 Materialism aspect of competitiveness culture and organizational performance

Materialism as a component of masculinity-femininity is about a workforce that is results oriented rather than

focusing on processes and technicalities in achieving those results (Niswaty *et al.* 2021). This results orientedness depicts employees who focus on extrinsic goals rather than intrinsic goal. Wang *et al.* (2017) defined it in terms of a person's extrinsic goal of satisfying inherent desires. Extrinsic goals rather and intrinsic goal have a bearing on employees behavior and the manner their goal pursuit processes (Lee & Pounders 2019). An employee with a work-materialism behavior is extrinsic goals oriented while an employee lacking a work-materialism behavior is intrinsic goals oriented (Lee & Pounders 2019). The one with extrinsic goals orientedness always looks to pursuing achievement of external outcomes with an outward orientation such as executing organizational tasks within time, meeting set targeting and delivering quality work, to mention some (Landry, Gagné, Forest, Guerrero, Seguin, & Papachristopoulos 2017). On the other hand, an employee with extrinsic goals orientedness always looks to pursuing achievement of innate outcomes such as self-satisfaction, self-initiation and self-motivation (Wang *et al.* 2017).

Previous research on the influence of employee work-materialistic behavior on organizational performance presents mixed results with some showing a positive influence while other showing a negative influence. For example, research has shown that that an individual who places greater importance on extrinsic goals over intrinsic goals exhibits greater materialistic tendencies (Unanue, Dittmar, Vignoles, & Vansteenkiste 2014). However, such employees freely choose their individual actions which affect relationships of others with whom they interact and influence their work environment as well as organizational performance (Elphinstone & Critchley 2016). Employees who show tendencies of materialism use various incentives to motivate their co-workers to increase their performance and achieve organizational goals (Landry *et al.* 2017). However, it has also been observed that employees with materialistic values sometimes hinder other employees' morale to perform organizational activities by utilizing incentives to control how work should be done leading to poor organizational performance (Jaspers & Pieters 2016; Landry *et al.* 2017). Subsequently, employees with materialistic values may force their colleagues to engage in activities that may not be beneficial to the achievement of organizational goals (Richins 2017). Emanating from the mixed explanations from the literature that was reviewed, the question that arouse was how materialism aspect of masculinity-femininity influenced the performance of MNCs in Uganda. Materialism has been reported to be unfavorable to pro-social behavior and to discouraging teamwork towards achieving organizational goals (Giri 2022). This study sought to fill this knowledge gap.

3. Methodology

A positivist research paradigm was applied for this study. This was because the process for conducting this study started deductively by theorizing from existing facts and literature that masculinity values of aggressiveness and materialism possessed by employees of MNCs in Uganda could be explanatory to the organizational performance challenges of these organizations. This was followed by constructing testable hypotheses with the assumption that the objective information will be obtained, gathering measurable data by using a coded questionnaire, subjecting the gathered information to testing using statistical methods and objectively interpreting the tested results. The way the positivist research paradigm for this study was conducted is supported by various scholars such as Park, Kong & Aretino (2020), Bunche & Fasting (2020), Kaduna & Konini (2017), and Antic & Hamza (2015).

The study utilized a cross-sectional survey design using an approach that was purely quantitative to collect information related to three variables that included aggressiveness, materialism and performance of MNCs in Uganda using a questionnaire. This survey design was appropriate to reach out to a large section of respondents by having a single interface with each of them during information gathering (Spector 2019; Zangirolami-Raimundo, Echeimberg & Leone 2018). In doing so, the process of gathering information was quicker. The quantitative approach allowed collection of information that was quantified and subjected to statistical analysis as suggested by Lo, Rey-Martí & Botella-Carrubi (2020).

The total sample of MNCs was two from which four top managers (that is two chief executive officers and two deputy chief executive officers) and 46 middle managers (that is 23 middle managers from each of the two MNCs) were selected. Thus, the total sample of respondents that responded to the statements related to the three variables was 50. All these respondents were selected by purposive sampling because they held positions for a period of more than five years that enabled them to be knowledgeable about the variables this study investigated.

The questionnaire that was developed for this study included statements about aggressiveness, materialism and performance of MNCs in Uganda. The statements for each of these three variables were measured using five-response Likert scale (ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree). The following paragraphs explain the scoring of the variables in the questionnaire.

Section A of the questionnaire had 8 statements about competitiveness. Therefore, the lowest possible total score on 8 statements for a respondent whose response was strongly disagree which was coded 1 was 8 (that is 8 statements X code 1) while the highest possible total score on 8 statements for a respondent whose response was strongly agree which was coded 5 was 40 (that is 8 statements X code 5). Thus, the total range score was 8-40.

Lower scores (8-14) represented low competitiveness, middle scores (15-21) represented moderate competitiveness and higher scores (22-28) represented high competitiveness.

Section B of the questionnaire had 9 statements about materialism. Therefore, the lowest possible total score on 9 statements for a respondent whose response was strongly disagree which was coded 1 was 9 (that is 9 statements X code 1) while the highest possible total score on 9 statements for a respondent whose response was strongly agree which was coded 5 was 45 (that is 9 statements X code 5). Thus, the total range score was 9-45. Lower scores (9-21) represented low materialism, middle scores (22-33) represented moderate materialism and higher scores (34-45) represented high materialism.

Section C of the questionnaire had 28 statements about MNCs performance. Therefore, the lowest possible total score on 28 statements for a respondent whose response was strongly disagree which was coded 1 was 28 (that is 28 statements X code 1) while the highest possible total score on 28 statements for a respondent whose response was strongly agree which was coded 5 was 140 (that is 28 statements X code 5). Thus, the total range score was 28-140. Lower scores (28-65) represented low MNCs performance, middle scores (66-103) represented moderate MNCs performance and higher scores (104-140) represented high MNCs performance.

Analysis involved two major types that included descriptive statistics and inferential statistics. The descriptive statistics were mainly frequencies and percentages that were used to assess the levels of aggressiveness, materialism and performance of MNCs in Uganda. The inferential statistics to types of regression analysis where one was a simple regression that was used to test hypothesis one and two. The second type was the multiple-regression analysis that was used to test hypothesis three.

4. Results

Results are presented in form of descriptive statistics which included frequencies and percentages as well as inferential statistics which regression results. The following are the results starting with the descriptive statistics followed by the regression results.

4.1 Descriptive statistics

The descriptive statistics were important in that they helped the trend in the variables that included aggressiveness, materialism and MNC performance in Uganda. These trends are shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Frequency distribution on the rating of the variables

Variables	Rating	Frequency	Percent
Aggressiveness	Low	24	48
	Moderate	7	14
	High	19	38
Materialism	Low	27	54
	Moderate	12	24
	High	11	22
MNC Performance	Low	27	54
	Moderate	7	14
	High	16	32

Source: Primary data

Results in Table 1 show that the highest percentage (48%) as low aggressiveness among employees of MNCs in Uganda, followed by 38% indicating high aggressiveness among employees of MNCs in Uganda and 14% indicating moderate aggressiveness among employees of MNCs in Uganda. Thus, the composition of employees characterized by low aggressiveness among employees of MNCs in Uganda was higher compared to employees characterized by high aggressiveness and moderate aggressiveness. The largest proportion of low aggressiveness among employees of MNCs in Uganda is more likely to contribute to poor performance of these organizations. This is because these employees are not expectation-oriented, they are not initiative taking, they do not anticipate change in an important situation, they do not engage in early preparation for likelihood unspecified challenges and are not achievement-oriented and they do not engage in proactive work behavior. This reasoning will be confirmed by the inferential statistics under section 4.2.

In addition, results show that the highest percentage (54%) as low materialism among employees of MNCs in Uganda. These are followed by 24% indicating moderate materialism among employees of MNCs in Uganda and 22% indicating high materialism among employees of MNCs in Uganda. These results also show that the composition of employees characterized by low materialism among employees of MNCs in Uganda was higher compared to employees characterized by high materialism and moderate materialism. The largest proportion of low materialism among employees of MNCs in Uganda is more likely to contribute to poor performance of these

organizations. This is because these employees are not results oriented, are not extrinsically goals oriented and thus, they do not always look to pursuing achievement of the organizational goals. This reasoning will be confirmed by the inferential statistics under section 4.2.

Lastly, results show that the highest percentage (54%) as low MNC performance in Uganda. These are followed by 32% indicating high MNC performance in Uganda and 14% indicating moderate MNC performance in Uganda. The results, therefore, show that the composition of low MNC performance in Uganda was higher compared to high MNC performance and moderate MNC performance. The next section presents the inferential statistics. The largest proportion of low MNC performance in Uganda could be due to the largest proportion of low aggressiveness and materialism among employees of MNCs in Uganda explained earlier as will be confirmed by the inferential statistics under section 4.2.

4.2 Inferential statistics

The inferential statistics were used to test the hypothesis of this study. This testing was important to determine if the results based on the sample of 4 top managers and 46 middle managers from the selected MNCs that participated in this study could be generalized to the rest of population of MNCs operating in Uganda. The following subsections present the regression results for each of the three hypotheses of this study.

4.2.1 Influence of aggressiveness on the performance of MNCs in Uganda

Hypothesis one that was tested stated, “*There is a significant influence of aggressiveness on the performance of MNCs in Uganda*”. To address this hypothesis, a simple regression analysis was conducted. The reason for using the simple regression analysis was that objective one sought to investigate “influence” where there was one independent variable (aggressiveness) and one dependent variable (performance of MNCs). Results are shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Simple regression analysis of the influence of aggressiveness on the performance of MNCs in Uganda

<i>Regression Statistics</i>					
Simple R		.734			
R Square		.538			
Adjusted R Square		.529			
Standard Error	25.307				
Observations	50				

<i>ANOVA statistics</i>					
	<i>df</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Sig F</i>
Regression	1	35849.0	35849.0	56.0	.000
Residual	48	30741.5	640.4		
Total	49	66590.5			

<i>Coefficients statistics</i>					
	<i>Coefficients</i>	<i>Standard Error</i>	<i>Beta</i>	<i>t Stat</i>	<i>P-value</i>
Intercept	16.14	8.70		1.85	.070
Aggressiveness	2.50	.33	.73	7.48	.000

Source: Primary data

The simple regression coefficient values range from 0 to 1 and therefore, when the simple regression coefficient is computed, the values falls within this range. To determine the strength of the simple regression coefficient (Simple R), the following ranges were used. Values from 0 to .2 indicate a very weak relationship, values above .2 to .4 indicate a weak relationship, values above .4 to .6 indicate a moderate relationship, values above .6 to .8 indicate a strong relationship, and values above .8 to 1 indicate a very strong relationship.

The regression statistics in Table 2 show the simple regression coefficient (Simple R = .734) indicating a strong relationship between aggressiveness and performance of MNCs in Uganda. The coefficient of determination (R Square = .538) was obtained by squaring the Simple R = .734 and this shows that one unit change in aggressiveness explains 53.8% change in performance of MNCs in Uganda. However, the R Square does not provide a precise explanation on the influence of aggressiveness on the performance of MNCs in Uganda because it fails to account for points that fall off the regression line. Thus, the Adjust Square (Adjust Square = .529) which is more accurate shows that aggressiveness explains 52.9% change in performance of MNCs in Uganda.

The Analysis of Variance statistics (ANOVA statistics) were used to test if the result that aggressiveness explains 52.9% change in performance of MNCs in Uganda could be accepted or rejected. It is shown that

Fishers ratio ($F = 56.0$) had a significance value ($\text{Sig } F = .000$) which was less than $.05$ which usually recommend for testing results. Because of this, the result that aggressiveness explains 52.9% change in performance of MNCs in Uganda was accepted leading to accepting the hypothesis that stated, “*There is a significant influence of aggressiveness on the performance of MNCs in Uganda*”. Thus, there was sufficient evidence to conclude that aggressiveness significantly influenced MNC performance in Uganda.

The coefficients statistics (Coefficients = 2.50) has a positive sign an indication that an increase in aggressiveness is accompanied by an increase MNCs performance in Uganda while a decrease in aggressiveness is accompanied by a decrease MNCs performance in Uganda. These changes are statistically significant ($P\text{-value} = .000 < .05$). This shows evidence to conclude that one unit change in aggressiveness leads to 2.50 unit change in MNCs performance in Uganda.

4.2.2 Influence of materialism on the performance of MNCs in Uganda

Hypothesis two that was tested stated, “*There is a significant influence of materialism on the performance of MNCs in Uganda*”. To address this hypothesis, a simple regression analysis was conducted. The reason for using the simple regression analysis was that objective two sought to investigate “influence” where there was one independent variable (materialism) and one dependent variable (performance of MNCs). Results are shown in Table 3.

Table 3. Simple regression analysis of the influence of materialism on the performance of MNCs in Uganda

Regression Statistics					
Simple R		.700			
R Square		.490			
Adjusted R Square		.479			
Standard Error		26.599			
Observations		50			

ANOVA statistics					
	<i>df</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Sig F</i>
Regression	1	32630.6	32630.6	46.1	.000
Residual	48	33959.9	707.5		
Total	49	66590.5			

Coefficients statistics					
	<i>Coefficients</i>	<i>Standard Error</i>	<i>Beta</i>	<i>t Stat</i>	<i>P-value</i>
Intercept	22.20	8.70		2.55	.014
Materialism	2.28	.34	.70	6.79	.000

Source: Primary data

The simple regression coefficient values range from 0 to 1 and therefore, when the simple regression coefficient is computed, the values falls within this range. To determine the strength of the simple regression coefficient (Simple R), the following ranges were used. Values from 0 to .2 indicate a very weak relationship, values above .2 to .4 indicate a weak relationship, values above .4 to .6 indicate a moderate relationship, values above .6 to .8 indicate a strong relationship, and values above .8 to 1 indicate a very strong relationship.

The regression statistics in Table 3 show the simple regression coefficient (Simple R = .700) indicating a strong relationship between materialism and performance of MNCs in Uganda. The Adjust Square (Adjust Square = .479) shows that materialism explains 47.9% change in performance of MNCs in Uganda.

The ANOVA statistics show that Fishers ratio ($F = 56.0$) had a significance value ($\text{Sig } F = .000$) which was less than $.05$. Because this, the result that materialism explains 47.9% change in performance of MNCs in Uganda was accepted leading to accepting the hypothesis that stated, “*There is a significant influence of materialism on the performance of MNCs in Uganda*”. Thus, there was sufficient evidence to conclude that materialism significantly influenced MNC performance in Uganda.

The coefficients statistics (Coefficients = 2.28) has a positive sign an indication that an increase in materialism is accompanied by an increase MNCs performance in Uganda while a decrease in materialism is accompanied by a decrease MNCs performance in Uganda. These changes are statistically significant ($P\text{-value} = .000 < .05$). This shows evidence to conclude that one unit change in materialism leads to 2.28 unit change in MNCs performance in Uganda.

4.2.3 Combined influence of aggressiveness and materialism on the performance of MNCs in Uganda

Hypothesis three that was tested stated, “*Aggressiveness and materialism have a significant combined influence on the performance of MNCs in Uganda*”. To address this hypothesis, a multiple-regression analysis was

conducted. The reason for using the multiple-regression analysis was that objective three sought to investigate “influence” where there was two independent variables (aggressiveness and materialism) and one dependent variable (performance of MNCs). Results are shown in Table 4.

Table 4. Multiple-regression analysis of the combined influence of aggressiveness and materialism on the performance of MNCs in Uganda

<i>Regression Statistics</i>					
Multiple R	.788				
R Square	.621				
Adjusted R Square	.605				
Standard Error	23.182				
Observations	50				
<i>ANOVA statistics</i>					
	<i>df</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Sig F</i>
Regression	2	41333.3	20666.6	38.5	.000
Residual	47	25257.2	537.4		
Total	49	66590.5			
<i>Coefficients statistics</i>					
	<i>Coefficients</i>	<i>Standard Error</i>	<i>Beta</i>	<i>t Stat</i>	<i>P-value</i>
Intercept	7.45	8.42		.88	.381
Aggressiveness	1.64	.41	.48	4.02	.000
Materialism	1.24	.39	.38	3.19	.003

Source: Primary data

The multi-regression coefficient values range from 0 to 1 and therefore, when the multi-regression coefficient is computed, the values falls within this range. To determine the strength of the multi-regression coefficient (Simple R), the following ranges were used. Values from 0 to .2 indicate a very weak relationship, values above .2 to .4 indicate a weak relationship, values above .4 to .6 indicate a moderate relationship, values above .6 to .8 indicate a strong relationship, and values above .8 to 1 indicate a very strong relationship.

The regression statistics in Table 4 show the multiple-regression coefficient (Multiple R = .788) indicating a strong relationship between aggressiveness, materialism and performance of MNCs in Uganda. The Adjust Square (Adjust Square = .605) shows that aggressiveness and materialism explain 60.5% change in performance of MNCs in Uganda.

The ANOVA statistics show that Fishers ratio ($F = 38.5$) had a significance value ($Sig F = .000$) which was less than .05. Because of this, the result that aggressiveness and materialism explain 60.5% change in performance of MNCs in Uganda was accepted leading to accepting the hypothesis that stated, “*Aggressiveness and materialism have a significant combined influence on the performance of MNCs in Uganda*”. Thus, there was sufficient evidence to conclude that aggressiveness and materialism had a significant combined influence on the performance of MNCs in Uganda.

The coefficients statistics (Coefficients = 1.64) has a positive sign an indication that an increase in aggressiveness is accompanied by an increase MNCs performance in Uganda while a decrease in aggressiveness is accompanied by a decrease MNCs performance in Uganda. These changes are statistically significant ($P\text{-value} = .000 < .05$). This shows evidence to conclude that one unit change in materialism leads to 1.64 unit change in MNCs performance in Uganda. In addition, the coefficients statistics (Coefficients = 1.24) has a positive sign an indication that an increase in materialism is accompanied by an increase MNCs performance in Uganda while a decrease in materialism is accompanied by a decrease MNCs performance in Uganda. These changes are statistically significant ($P\text{-value} = .003 < .05$). This shows evidence to conclude that one unit change in materialism leads to 2.24 unit change in MNCs performance in Uganda.

5. Discussion

This study examined the influence of competitiveness on performance of MNCs in Uganda. It focused on influence of two values of competitiveness which included aggressiveness and materialism on the performance of MNCs in Uganda. It was revealed in this study that aggressiveness and materialism had a strong positive influence of the performance of MNCs in Uganda whereby an increase in aggressiveness and materialism among employees led to an increase on the performance of MNCs in Uganda. Even when they were combined, they retained the same magnitude of influence on the performance of MNCs in Uganda. Particularly, going by the

positive influence established in this study, as well as the findings that showed that majority of respondents indicating low aggressiveness and materialism among employees of MNCs in Uganda in addition to low performance of MNCs in Uganda, the following is deduced. The low aggressiveness and materialism among employees of MNCs contributed to the low performance of MNCs in Uganda. These findings are aligned with previous scholarly works that focus on the masculinity-femininity dimension in other countries.

For example, the finding of this study related to the influence of aggressiveness aspect of competitiveness culture on performance of MNCs in Uganda concur with Chinyelu & Konya (2020), Sahul & Peris-Ortiz (2014), Aigboje (2018) and Coleman (2019), Panjaitan *et al.* (2021). These scholars all indicated that the aggressiveness aspect of competitiveness culture significantly and positively influenced the performance of organizations. The study agrees with these scholars that the positive influence arises because employees who possess the aggressiveness aspect of competitiveness culture strive to excellence in what they do for the organization. However, the finding of this study contradicted Chinyelu & Konya (2020) who explained that there are instances where a higher aggressiveness aspect of competitiveness culture resulted into poor organizational performance.

Furthermore, the finding of this study related to the influence of materialism aspect of competitiveness culture on performance of MNCs in Uganda in line with Elphinstone & Critchley (2016) and Landry *et al.* (2017). This is because the explanation of these scholars emphasized a positive influence of competitiveness on performance of organizations. Their explanations highlighted that the positive influence is due to the fact the employees with materialism aspect of competitiveness culture tend to be results-oriented and as such, these employees are extrinsically motivated to helping the organizations realize their objectives by encouraging their co-workers to execute organizational activities. The finding of this study differed from Jaspers & Pieters (2016), Landry *et al.* (2017) and Richins (2017) who were of the view that a higher materialism aspect of competitiveness culture contributed to poor performance of the organizations.

The low levels of aggressiveness and materialism among most employees of MNCs in Uganda can be explained from the fact that despite these multinational companies employing a diverse group of employees from various countries, they happen to have the majority from Uganda which has a low global rating on masculinity (Rarick *et al.* 2013). It should be noted that a 2016 survey by Njuba-Bwaya (2017) concluded that Ugandans were lazy. This observation corroborates the argument in this study that the large number of MNCs Ugandan employees was the reason why the findings of this study indicated low aggressiveness and materialism in these organizations. Thus, it argued that this too explains the low performance of MNCs in Uganda.

5.1 Conclusion

This study has demonstrated that both the aggressiveness aspect of competitiveness culture and the materialism aspect of competitiveness culture play a critical role on MNCs performance in Uganda. This is because results of this study showed that there is favorable aggressiveness aspect of competitiveness culture among employees of MNCs in Uganda, it contributed to better performance of these organizations. On other hand, results of this study showed that there is unfavorable aggressiveness aspect of competitiveness culture among employees of MNCs in Uganda, it contributed to poor performance of these organizations. Furthermore, results of this study showed that there is favorable materialism aspect of competitiveness culture among employees of MNCs in Uganda, it contributed to better performance of these organizations. On other hand, results of this study showed that there is unfavorable materialism aspect of competitiveness culture among employees of MNCs in Uganda, it contributed to poor performance of these organizations. In particular, the findings showed the employees exerted less effort in helping the organizations perform well when they have low levels of the work aggressive values and work materialism values and explained why MNCs encountered challenges in their performance in Uganda.

5.2 Recommendations

MNCs operating in Uganda need to improve their employee competitive values of the masculinity-femininity culture that in this study were aggressiveness and materialism for these organizations to realize improvement in their performance. This can be achieved if these MNCs have the participation and support of all their employees in aligning their strategic vision and mission towards the employee masculinity culture of competitiveness that focuses on instilling employee work aggressiveness and materialism toward achieving the objectives of the MNCs. These recommendations are in line with Bayraktar, Hancerliogullari, Cetinguc & Calisir (2017) and De Clercq, Thongpapanl & Voronov (2018) who emphasized that organizational survival can be achieved by adapting its culture to the environment. From this study there is need to introduce what would be referred to as *cultural synergy* whereby there is learning and unlearning of the positive and negative masculinity-femininity indices targeted towards improving performance within MNCs.

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