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ATTITUDE AND PERCEPTION OF ACADEMIC AND ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF TOWARDS PROGRESSION IN HIGHER INSTITUTIONS OF LEARNING IN GHANA

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ABSTRACT

The continuous development of staffs of higher institutions of learning is crucial in the attainment of institutional and national goals on quality education. This study analysed the attitude and perception of staff of the University for Development Studies (UDS) aimed at uncovering how issues of motivation impact on their performance. Data were collected from 44 lecturers and administrators across the three main faculties of the Wa campus of the institution using a semi-structured questionnaire. A participatory rating method using a 5-point Likert-scale was used. Findings revealed that staff of the institution are well motivated to perform their jobs. The majority of staff are unhappy with the issue of promotions in the system, which many perceived to be unfair, not transparent, and characterised by delays. The results show that increasing access to updated training, improving the physical work environment for staff and strengthening work supervision are areas that need improvement for staff progression. The study recommends that management of the institution as well as policymakers in the educational sector should take a keen interest in staff welfare issues by investing more in capacity building and basic infrastructure.

Contribution/ Originality: This study contributes in the existing literature by analysing staff motivation and how it is linked to their career progression. High level of motivation exists among staff with positive impacts on job performance. Issues of staff promotions (fairness, transparency, timeliness), conducive work environment, and putting concrete succession plans in place is advocated for a more sustained quality education.

1. INTRODUCTION

The key resources of any higher institution of learning are its staff who has a huge mandate of ensuring the attainment of institutional goals and objectives (Afful-Broni, 2004). The roles played by academic and administrative staff determine to a large extent, the quality of student experience in higher education which impacts significantly on student learning outcomes and the contributions that the institution makes to society. Consequently, staff training and motivation is critical in determining the quality of teaching and learning interface created with students (Rowley, 1996). Conducting quality research is important in revitalising staff interest in their

respective fields of interest and in building a reputable corporate image for staff and their institutions through publication. This is vital in attracting a high calibre of students, research funds and consultancy service to the institution and such achievements are only possible with a highly motivated and committed staff. Motivation then becomes the key to the establishment and further development of the quality of higher education. However, institutions of higher learning are challenged with funding constraints, quality assurance issues, information, and communication technology (ICT) gaps and infrastructure deficits which raises questions on relevance (Atuahene, 2015; Rupia, 2017). Poor motivation and inadequate incentives also lead to greater controllable staff turnover (Kyaligonza and Kamagara, 2017).

Motivation is defined as the inner drive that pushes individuals to act, make great discoveries or interventions, and enables people to stay focused on the path of success irrespective of the challenges encountered (Baumeister and Voh, 2004). Different factors influence the performance of staff in different locations and settings and performance is not only a function of motivation but also ability (Nnko, 2010). Nadeem *et al.* (2011) identified duties and demands on time, low pay, lack of support from other staff and student conduct issues as variables that affect the motivation level of staff. Buberwa (2015) found low monthly salaries as the major factor that dissatisfied academic staff and reduced their motivation for high performance at the University in Tanzania. Chatzopoulou *et al.* (2015) reported that interesting work, equal and fair treatment, good working relationships with supervisors and colleagues, objective assessment and a good salary are the most important factors which influenced local authorities to work hard in Greece. On the contrary, Mawoli and Babandako (2011) revealed high motivation among academic staffs with high content with their work environment in Nigeria. However, their research and publication performance was moderate compared to teaching which was rated high.

Inadequate training and development and job insecurity also cause poor attitude to work which is linked to staff performance (Abang and Suleiman, 2013). Franco *et al.* (2004) reported that self-efficacy, pride, management openness, job properties, and values had effects on motivational outcomes among health worker in Jordan and Georgia. The study highlighted the complexities and dynamics involved in worker motivation and called for a more comprehensive approach in dealing with the issue. As noted previously by Rowley (1996) formal reward systems are only one tool but other approaches exist which effective managers could use.

Poor motivation remains one of the biggest factors affecting employee performance in organisations (Gupta, 2005) and the UDS is no exception. How to get staff to willingly work effectively, efficiently and exhibit high performance and professionalism is a challenge. Motivational aspects such as working conditions and career advancement if well managed and provided, would guarantee better staff performance. Yet, funding constraints continue to adversely impact on staff performance and output. Also, the excessive workload on the few academic and administrative staff often leads to inefficiency both in terms of guiding students and providing administrative assistance to attain high-quality standards desired and in meeting optimal research targets. Assessing the attitude, perception, and motivation of academic and administrative staff towards academic progression is thus, timely and relevant.

2. ATTITUDE, PERCEPTION, AND MOTIVATION OF UNIVERSITY STAFF

Having staff with the right attitude to work is vital as it influences behaviour with an effect on labour market outcomes (Rotter, 1966). Linz and Semykina (2008) assessed the extent to which labour market outcomes can be explained by differences in locus of control (LOC) among workers in Russia using a sample of 1500 workers. The study found significant differences between internal and external LOC regarding work-related attitudes. Controlling for worker characteristics, individuals who exhibited internal LOC were found to perform better. The influence of internal LOC on performance also varies with region, gender, and supervisory position with female employees expressing significantly lower expectations for future promotions. This suggests that both internal and external factors influence the attitude of workers at the job place and the success, survival, and growth of

institutions hinge on workers with the right attitude (Abang and Suleiman, 2013). There is, therefore, the need for contextualisation and incorporation of the role of external factors to better understand the attitude of workers. Previously, Idaka *et al.* (2006) examined the attitude of 600 academic staff in tertiary institutions in Nigeria using student evaluation of instruction (SEI) to explore whether academic staff characteristics influence their expressed attitude. The study revealed that: (1) academic staff demonstrates a significantly positive attitude to SEI; (2) staff of some faculties (arts and education) display more positive attitude to SEI than those from the sciences; and (3) the professional status and academic qualification of staff significantly influences their expressed attitude to SEI.

Other studies have explored the relationship between staff training and development and its perceived impact on employee attitudes and job performance (Bowling, 2007; Truitt, 2011). Truitt (2011) explored the relationship between training experiences and attitudes about perceived job proficiency among 237 full-time salaried employees from one academic institution and three businesses in the states of Maryland, Delaware, and Arizona. The author found a direct positive relationship between one's training experience and attitudes and proficiency level. While 86.8% of those with updated training had positive attitudes toward training, 80% of those without training expressed a negative view on their attitude and proficiency. Thus, the organisational commitment of individuals depends on effective training and development programmes. According to Pool and Pool (2007) 'institutions with a focus to develop often make provisions in satisfying the training needs of the current workforce'. Adequate training produces marked improvements in employee communication and proficiency in performance and extends staff retention time on the job (Cheng and Ho, 2001). Education and training also have a positive significant impact on job involvement, job satisfaction and organisational commitment (Karia and Hasmi, 2006; Tsai *et al.*, 2007). Well trained employees are better placed to satisfy the needs of customers and employers, improve efficiency, promote responsible leadership, improve working relationships and increase profits (Rowden and Conine, 2005). A direct relationship, therefore, exists between job training and employee attitude to work though analysis focusing on higher institutions of learning remains limited.

Workers perception has the potential to impact on their career progression. Lanfranchi and Pekovic (2014) studied the perception of employees working for firms achieving registration for environmental-related standards. The study reported that 'green employees' had a significantly higher perception of usefulness and equitable recognition at work and are more likely to work uncompensated overtime. Wainaina *et al.* (2015) evaluated the conduct of academic staff in three public universities in Kenya aimed at uncovering the perceptions of the learner's on academic staff performance. While the academic staff was found to exhibit fairly morally accepted conduct on some behavioural characteristics, their behaviour towards colleagues was low. No significant difference in perception between male and female students was observed.

Nadarajah *et al.* (2012) analysed the relationship between human resource (HR) practices and job performance of academic staff towards career development. The study advocated the need for the conceptualisation of HR practices into job performance and career development. Digital literacy skills by library staff have been found to enhance individual job satisfaction and career progression (Itsekor and James, 2012). For librarian staffs to effectively manage and control the information-rich environment, sophisticated technical skills, true personal values, and willingness to help patrons learn how to discover relevant information are pre-requisites (Hall, 2003). Staff working in libraries, therefore, need to be comfortable with change since the environment could strongly influence the future of their profession. Rombouts *et al.* (2016) found that communication influences the perception of staff in a work environment.

Bird *et al.* (2012) investigated academics experiences and perceptions of a continuous and collaborative curriculum review process in Australian regional University and revealed that academics valued the opportunities the process afford to improve the curriculum from a programming perspective. The collaborative nature of the process, the opportunities for the scholarship of teaching outcomes and the building of multidisciplinary relationships were seen as positive outcomes.

Various studies that explored the link between motivation and employee performance shows that a positive relationship exists (Abejirinde, 2009; Baibaita, 2010; Geofrey, 2010). A critical literature review on employee's motivational practices done by Devadass (2011) revealed widespread support for motivational concepts in organisations with job characteristics, employee characteristics, management practices, and environmental factors influencing employees' motivation. Itsekor and James (2012) reported higher motivation on the job (47.9%) among 96 professional and semi-professional Liberians across 6 colleges and universities in Nigeria with likely impact on higher career progression. About 56.3% affirmed that they appreciate their colleagues and bosses on the job and were satisfied with progress in their career as their bosses carried them along and they enjoyed pay increases over time. Barth and Rieckmann (2012) found that personal competence development of beneficiary staff facilitated and changed their teaching practices as well as influenced the general organisational development of the University of Tecnica del Norte in Ecuador. Potential benefits in initiating individual learning process as well as facilitating social learning were highlighted which is a prerequisite for a sustainable paradigm shift in higher education. This shows that staff development offers an opportunity for organisational change which needs to be embraced by all academic institutions.

Job incentives also matter in employee motivation (intrinsic or extrinsic) in an effort to deliver effectively on organisational goals. Ghenghesh (2013) advocated the need for staff in higher management positions to give immediate attention to extrinsic factors to help create job satisfaction, motivate and retain academic staff at the University. Issues of work stress, less salary, and relationship with colleagues are impact factors in the job performance of staffs (Nadeem *et al.*, 2011). The greater number of students per lecture room witnessed in recent times is putting a lot of toll on educators with an effect on quality. In the absence of the right incentives, the staff is likely to be demotivated which has negative consequences on teaching and research outcomes. Effective teaching and delivery of knowledge, therefore, depends on the motivation of staff which is a basic pillar in building any national career (Kayuni and Tambulasi, 2007; Mawoli and Babandako, 2011).

Ahmed *et al.* (2014) assessed the satisfaction and overall motivation of academic staff of IBA Community Colleague, Nigeria with interesting findings: (i) there is correlation between work itself and satisfaction level at current salary; (ii) current salary is correlated with satisfaction level at work itself; (iii) recognition is negatively correlated with work itself; and (iv) too much workload reduces the satisfaction and motivation level of teachers. This shows that people naturally work for survival and the amount of salary received contributes to staff motivation. Previously, Jabeen (2011) reported that performance appraisal (as a motivator) exerts a significant impact on academic staff teaching performance but not their research performance. Academic staff must, therefore, be adequately motivated to facilitate effective knowledge delivery to students, uplift educational standards and ensure high-quality education. Furthermore, Abdul and Mawoli (2012) found a moderate positive correlation between motivation and teaching performance but a weak negative correlation between motivation and research performance among 141 academic staff of the Ibrahim Babangida University, Lapai (IBBUL), Nigeria. On the contrary, Geofrey (2010) found that motivational factors have significant effects on teaching and research performance but not with community service in a study of Makerere University, Uganda.

3. METHODOLOGY

The study was conducted in Wa Municipality in the Upper West Region (UWR) of Ghana. The Municipal is one of eleven districts in the region and has a total population of 107,214 representing 15.3% of the regions' total population (Population and Housing Census, 2010). The district is located in the northern savannah part of the country between latitude 8˚ 30"- 10˚ N and Longitude 0˚ 30"-2˚ 30" W and shares boundaries with Wa East district (to the East), Wa West district (to the South and West), and Nadowli district (to the North). Agriculture is the main dominant activity of the people with about 80% of the population engaged in subsistence farming under rain-fed conditions. Irrigation farming is very limited to dry season vegetable production in most cases due to limited

water resources. The incidence of poverty is high with 86% of the population living below the poverty line. Due to limited job opportunities, especially for the youth, migration to the Southern parts of the country is common. Common income-generating activities in the district are shea butter extraction, local soap making, pito brewing, weaving, dressmaking, carpentry, and masonry work.

A good number of educational institutions (110 primary, junior and senior high schools and 2 tertiary institutions) are concentrated in the Municipality. The University for Development Studies (UDS) Wa campus was purposively selected for this study. The study was conducted following scientific methods of inquiry for data collection and analysis in an effort to address the research issue. A participatory rating method using a 5-point Likert-scale was used to collect primary data through a survey questionnaire. This was complemented with secondary data collected through review of documents. The data covers staff perception, attitude, and motivation toward academic progression. The population for the study was made up of all the academic and administrative staff of the institution and a sample size of 44 was randomly selected as outlined in Table 1.

Table-1. Current Staff of UDS Wa Campus (Academic and Administrative Staff)

Faculties	Membership			Sampled		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Faculty of Integrated Development Studies	63	13	76	14	4	18
School of Business	8	7	15	4	2	6
Faculty of Planning and Land Management	41	4	45	18	2	20
TOTAL	112	24	136	36	8	44

Source: Personnel Manual, UDS (as at December 2017)

The analysis relied on Guilford and Flrucher (1973) formula in determining the sample size which is given by the relation:

$$SS = \frac{N}{1+\alpha^2} * N \tag{1}$$

Where

SS denotes sample size, *N* is the population size, and α (alpha) is the confidence level. Since the campus is made up of three (3) faculties (strata), the study used stratified proportionate random sampling in selecting staff to form the study sample. Out of a total of 136 staff, 44 were sampled and covered in the study. Personal interviews were conducted following pre-testing and adjustments made to the survey instrument. The study variables were measured using a nominal scale (the 5-points Likert type rating scale) and the responses evaluated using descriptive statistics. Data analysis was done using a thematic analysis approach (content analysis). This approach enables the researchers to isolate factors that affect the motivation of academic and administrative staff working in the institution.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.1. Descriptive Statistics of the Respondents

Table 2 shows the respondents' demographic profile. Classification of respondents by sex revealed that majority of them (82%) were males while 18% are females. The data analysis also revealed that majority of the respondents (42.85%) are within the age group of 36-45 years. This is closely followed by the age group of 25-35years (27.27%). These statistics mean that the future of the institution in terms of human resource is brighter since the economically active are involved in the administrative and academic duties and higher work output is anticipated. Only a few (9.09%) and (13.63%) were above the age of 60 years and below 25 years respectively.

Furthermore, the majority (81.81%) of the respondents were married, confirming the age structure of the sample. This suggests that respondents are more likely to be responsible in life with the right patience to guide students in their career development. The majority of respondents (77.27%) were and no respondent was practicing the traditional faith. The statistics also revealed that 54.54% hold a Master's degree, 9.09% had Ph.D. degrees while 36.36% hold either first degree or higher national Diploma (HND) degrees.

Table-2. Profile of the Respondents

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percent (%)
Sex	male	18	81.81
	female	4	18.18
Age	Less than 25 years	3	13.63
	25-35years	6	27.27
	36-45 years	10	42.85
	46-55 years	4	18.18
	> 60years	2	9.09
Marital Status	Married	18	81.81
	single	4	18.18
Religion	Islam	5	22.72
	Christianity	17	77.27
Highest Qualification	HND/Bachelor Degree	8	36.36
	Master Degree	12	54.54
	PhD	2	9.09
Income	Less than 1500	4	18.18
	1600-2000	4	18.18
	2100-3000	3	13.63
	3100-4000	7	31.81
	Above 4000	4	18.18

Source: Field Survey, 2017.

4.2. Level of Staff Motivation

Table 3 presents the outcome of staff motivation and revealed that the majority (72.7%) agreed that their achievements on the job were satisfactory. Interestingly, no staff expressed disagreement even though 9.1% were undecided. The revealed satisfaction over their achievements suggests an intrinsic motivation for staff with a greater potential to influence their career progression.

Table-3. General Staff Motivation

Statement	Rating Scale				
	Strongly agreed	Agreed	Undecided	Disagreed	Strongly disagreed
My **achievement**s on the job is satisfactory	8 18.2%	32 72.7%	4 9.1%	0	0
I am given due **recognition** at work	2 4.5%	28 63.6%	4 9.1%	10 22.7%	0
The **work itself** is interesting and challenging	10 22.7%	30 68.2%	4 9.1%	0	0
I am given the due **responsibilities** at work to execute	10 22.7%	22 50%	6 13.6%	6 13.6%	0
My **promotion** on the current job is satisfactory	8 18.2%	16 36.4%	12 27.3%	2 4.5%	2 4.5%
Personal growth (skills acquired through training and development) on the current job is satisfactory,	6 13.6%	20 45.5%	8 18.2%	10 22.7%	0

Note: N=44; figures are in frequency and percentages
Source: Field Survey, 2017

There is also a general agreement among most respondents (63.6%) that due recognition is given to them for the work that they do. However, 22.5% disagreed that they were given recognition at the work. This is part of human nature as people are not the same and respond differently to situations.

Furthermore, the majority (68.2%) agreed that the work that they do was in itself interesting and challenging. This is enforced by the strong agreement expressed by 22.7% of the respondents with no objection. This suggests that a high level of motivation exists among the sampled staff regarding the interest level they have on the job. Nonetheless, 9.1% could not decide on the issue. Assigning responsibility to staff is another area that motivates people and the results showed that the majority (72.7%) either agreed or strongly agreed that they were given due responsibilities at the workplace to execute. However, some 13.6% disagreed while others (13.6%) could not decide. Promotion on the job had the widest range of views expressed and over half (54.6%) agreed or strongly agreed that they were satisfied with their promotions. About 9% expressed unhappiness with their promotions and quite a sizeable number (27.3%) were indifferent. This is a worrying situation and management need to re-examine the promotion system to ensure fairness, transparency, and timeliness.

Finally, personal growth through on-the-job training has been proved to be a strong motivator in keeping people in organisations and enhancing their performance. The results in Table 3 revealed that majority (45.5%) of the respondents agreed that they were satisfied with the training opportunities offered them to help improve their skills and support their career development. However, 18.2% could not decide and 22.7% were not satisfied with their professional growth prospects in the institution. These outcomes point to the need to improve on human resource (HR) practices of the institution. As suggested by Nadarajah *et al.* (2012) HR practices should be conceptualised into job performance and career development.

4.3. Staff Perceptions towards Academic Progression

Table 4 present the perceptions of both academic and administrative staff on academic progression at the institution. The findings revealed that the majority (63.7%) were dissatisfied with the fairness in granting institutional sponsored training and seminars to staff. The widely perceived dissatisfaction, suggests a demotivation for some staff with likely negative impact on their performance. In addition, 18.1% were dissatisfied with the nature of communication with their supervisors to influence their progression. While the majority (45.5%) expressed satisfaction with the level of communication with their supervisors, some 36.4% were neutral.

Furthermore, the majority of the respondent (50%) expressed satisfaction with their ability to influence success at the institution while 23.3% felt they could not influence. The perceived ability to influence suggest that staff value the inputs they were making in shaping the institution and this could serve as a source of self-motivation. The majority (59.1%) also expressed satisfaction for the interest and concern shown by their supervisors towards their career development. Showing concern and good leadership to staff can serve as a source of motivation but 22.7% were dissatisfied. In addition, the analysis revealed that 45.4% were satisfied with how the current performance appraisal process is managed with 31.8% expressing total dissatisfaction.

Fairness in the selection of staff to occupy higher positions any time an opportunity exist is one key strategy used to motivate and retain hard working staff. Our results revealed that the majority (45.4%) of respondents were dissatisfied with the selection processes followed in choosing candidates to occupy certain positions. This suggests the existence of unfair practices and the so-called 'who you know' factor may be at play. About 68.1% of the respondents are not happy with the pace of conducting a training needs assessment to inform staff training decisions. This could be attributed to the limited number of training opportunities offered to staff due to funding challenges. This calls for special attention from management since in the absence of training needs assessments it is unlikely that training delivered will actually address the critical training needs of staff for increased productivity.

Table-4. Perception of Academic Staff on Academic Progression

Statement	Rating Scale				
	Very dissatisfied	Somewhat dissatisfied	Neutral	Somewhat satisfied	Very satisfied
Access to institutional sponsored training and seminars is fair	6 27.3%	8 36.4%	5 22.7%	3 13.6%	0
Communication with your supervisor influences your progression.	1 4.5%	3 13.6%	8 36.4%	8 36.4%	2 9.1%
I have the ability to influence the day-day success of the institution	2 9.1%	4 14.2%	5 22.7%	10 45.5%	1 4.5%
I am able to influence decisions that affect my carrier development	3 13.6%	3 13.6%	7 31.8%	7 31.8%	2 9.1%
My supervisor (s) management capabilities have a positive impact on my career progression	1 4.5%	2 9.1%	5 22.7%	10 45.5%	4 14.2%
Recognition received from my supervisor is commendable	2 9.1%	3 13.6%	2 9.1%	12 54.5%	3 13.6%
My supervisor actively involved and concerned with my career development	3 13.6%	2 9.1%	4 14.2%	11 50%	2 9.1%
Current performance appraisal process is well managed	3 13.6%	4 18,2%	5 22.7%	9 40.9%	1 4.5%
The process of identifying candidates to fill open positions is fair	5 22.7%	5 22.7%	7 31.8%	5 22.7%	0
Training needs assessments is conducted regularly	8 36.4%	7 31.8%	5 22.7%	2 9.1%	0
Management support for my efforts to improve my weakness is remarkable	6 27.3%	5 22.7%	6 27.3%	5 22.7%	0
The quality of orientation and training received for my current position is good.	5 22.7%	4 18.2%	4 18.2%	8 36.4%	1 4.5%

Note: N=44; figures are in frequency and percentages
Source: Field Survey, 2017

Moreover, about half (50%) of the respondents were dissatisfied with the level of support offered to them by management to help address observed weaknesses in their job performance. Thus, efforts to help improve staff weakness is minimal which is critical in performance management. Only 27.7% showed some level of satisfaction while 27.3% remained neutral. However, there is an equal level of satisfaction and dissatisfaction (40.9%) with the quality of orientation and training received by staff for their current positions. More, therefore, needs to be done in terms of delivering quality training to staff to enhance their academic progression at the institution.

4.4. Attitude of Staff towards Academic Progression

Results of the assessment of 18 administrative staff and 26 academic staff on their attitude towards academic progression are reported in Table 5. The majority of the respondents (59.1%) agreed that job training was being taken seriously by the institution. However, there was great disagreement (47.7%) on the involvement of all staff in these skills' development training by senior management. A great majority (63.6%) also disagreed that training was organised at all levels annually. Nonetheless, half of those who participated in these training actually agreed to the positive impacts it has created on their job performance. A high level of disagreement among respondents (52.3%) regarding the influence of such training on their academic/administrative progression and advancement is revealed.

In addition, the majority (43.2%) disagreed receiving updated training relevant to the positions they were holding. A greater number of respondents (38.6%) agreed that the training organised were inadequate and this requires the attention of management and the human resource department to act. The majority also did not benefit from the coaching support expected from their supervisors for professional growth. The majority (43.2%), therefore, disagreed having good mentors to support their career development, a worrying situation that calls for putting better succession plans in place to build and sustain the human resource base of the institution for quality education delivery.

Table-5. Attitude of Academic and Administrative Staff towards Academic Progression

Statement	Rating Scale				
	Strongly agreed	**Agreed**	**Undecided**	**Disagreed**	**Strongly disagreed**
Job training is taken seriously	0	26 59.1%	3 6.8%	11 25%	4 9.1%
Senior management include all staff in development training	3 6.8%	5 11.4%	8 18.2%	21 47.7%	7 15.9%
Training at all levels are organized annually	0	4 9.1%	5 11.4%	28 63.6%	7 15.9%
Training impact positively on my job growth	0	22 50%	7 15.9%	8 18.2%	7 15.9%
Trainings influence my academic progression and advancement	5 11.4%	13 29.5%	3 6.8%	23 52.3%	0
I receive updated training which is required for my position	0	4 9.1%	13 29.5%	19 43.2%	8 18.2%
Training is not adequate	13 29.5%	17 38.6%	6 13.6%	4 9.1%	4 9.1%
Effective coaching: My supervisor conducts effective coaching sessions with me.	0	7 15.9%	14 31.8%	20 45.45%	3 6.8%
Coaching is meaningful: my coaching sessions are meaningful and motivational	0	8 18.2%	14 31.8%	19 43.2%	3 6.8%
Feel valued at the job: my supervisor solicits my input on issues and opportunities.	4 9.1%	22 50%	4 9.1%	14 31.8%	0
I have a good mentor for my career development	7 15.9%	12 27.27%	4 9.1%	17 38.6%	4 90.9%

Note: N=44; figures are in frequency and percentages

4.5. Challenges Facing Staff Performance

A number of problems likely to affect staff performance in the institution were listed and respondents were asked to indicate in order of priority the three (3) most important items. The results which have been aggregated and ranked is captured in Table 6. Lack of office space and modern equipment is the number one challenge facing the staff of the UDS. Limited space, irregular power supply, and inadequate furniture were cited as some of the critical elements missing. For some academic staff, this was affecting their research and supervision activities since Lecturers do not have offices except the Head of departments and Deans. Stable internet connectivity is also an issue and management need to take appropriate steps and ensure completion of long-standing construction projects meant to serve as offices for staff.

Inadequate funds for research, infrastructure development and renovation of existing facilities are the second challenges facing staff as it relates to the working environment. The use of internally generated funds to finance these activities is a problem due to the huge capital outlay. This, therefore, requires direct financing support from the central government to help argument facilities for effective teaching and learning.

Poor carrier development opportunities for staff and too much workload is the third most pressing problem facing staff. Changes such as the amendment of academic progression rules have affected administrative staff which many described as unfair. The absence of sponsorship for staff to undertake further education and training especially administrative staff is an area that needs critical attention. The lack of regular promotions for staff who are due is a worrying phenomenon with the tendency to drive people to leave the institution and take appointments somewhere else. Inadequate supporting and teaching staff also lead to inadequate time for self-development.

Challenges facing staff performance	Frequency	Percent (%)	Rank
Lack of modern office space for staff (poor work environment).	32	34.6	1st
Limited research funding, inadequate infrastructure, and poor maintenance	16	17.4	2nd
Poor carrier development opportunities for staff	12	13.0	3rd
Too much workload for staff/inadequate staffing	12	13.0	3rd
Inadequate teaching and learning materials/ equipment	10	10.8	4th
Inadequate job training	6	6.5	5th
Poor working relationship between senior staff and management	6	6.5	5th
No accommodation for staff	4	4.3	6th
Total	92	100	

Source: Field Survey, 2017

Other areas of challenge expressed include inadequate teaching and learning materials, large class sizes without the needed facilities (projectors, microphones, large screens, and classroom space), inadequate on-the-job training, poor working relations between management and their subordinates, and limited accommodation for staff.

4.6. Ways to Improve Staff Performance

Respondents were asked to list three proposed solutions to the problems identified. The outcome revealed that majority (21.1%) felt that organising refresher training programmes for staff should be the first priority to management. This solution is well linked to their needs and management could consider expanding the scope of training opportunities for staff including securing sponsorships to help upgrade the skills of people for improved performance. Secondly, concentrating efforts to improve on work environment and make it more conducive was advocated for as expressed by 18.4% of respondents. Providing enough and secured space, provision of working facilities and furniture, standby generator, stable internet connections and breaking large classes into smaller units were some of the ideas proposed to help address the issue.

Motivational aspects such as recognition of hard-working staff (7.8%), strengthening of work supervision (7.8%), and the provision of accommodation for staff on campus (7.8%) were some of the areas that management could focus on to help promote quality education at the institution. Other critical solutions proposed are the inclusion of low-level staff in decision-making (5.3%), providing mentorship and ensuring fairness for all staff (5.3%), reduce staff workload by employing more people (5.3%), and allocating more internally generated funds to support research activities (2.6%). While management may not be able to implement all these solutions, there is the need to categorise them into immediate, short-term and long-term plans.

5. CONCLUSIONS AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS

This study has analysed the perception, attitude, and motivation of 44 academic and senior administrative staff towards academic progression using UDS Wa Campus as a case study. Data collection was done using a structured questionnaire and analysis was performed with SPSS. The findings show that staff of the UDS-Wa Campus are well motivated to perform their jobs and that the institution takes job training very seriously. However, not all staff were involved in developing training held for senior management and annual training organised did not cover all levels. While it was generally agreed that training actually has a positive impact on staff job performance, disagreement on the extent of influence of such training on their academic progression and advancement remains.

We found great dissatisfaction among both academic and administrative staff of the institution regarding the level of fairness for institutional sponsored training and promotions. The inability of staff to influence institutional processes also created a feeling of discomfort among staffs. The issue of promotions in the system, which many perceived to be unfair, not transparent, and characterised by delays has some policy implications for management.

However, most supervisors ware perceived to have interest in the career development of staff and how the current performance appraisal processes were managed.

A number of recommendations are made based on the study findings. Firstly, management should take a keen interest in staff promotions and ensure fairness, transparency, and timeliness. This can be done by increasing investments in the human resource development, implementing online assessment procedures and effectively monitoring the processes. Secondly, more training opportunities and capacity building initiatives for staff need to be facilitated through scholarships and in-service training especially for those who demonstrate greater promise and commitment. Thirdly, provision of office for staff as well as basic teaching and leading aids to effectively handle the large class sizes is a pre-requisite for quality education and must be pursued. This deserves more budgetary allocations both at the institutional (internally generated funds) and national levels. One observed limitation of this study lies in the sample size and coverage. Further research could expand the coverage to include all the three campuses of the institution and employ some quantitative models.

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