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The Impact of Training and Development on the Performance of Academic Staff in Technical Universities in Ghana [A Conceptual Paper]

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Abstract

The technical universities in Ghana have metamorphosed through three stages; first as technical institutes to polytechnics and then finally to technical universities. In each of these stages, academic staff members are downgraded, laid off or had to pursue further studies for a secured tenure. The introduction of the Technical University's (TU's) Act, 2016 (Act 992) has put a lot of pressure on both government and stakeholders in the educational sector in Ghana. Whilst, the government wants to ensure the recruitment of only qualified academic staff i.e., PhD holders to teach in the technical universities, the academic staff members are also requesting for parity in the benefits and courtesies given to all lecturers in the traditional universities in Ghana. On the other hand, managers of these technical universities also want government to support them with modern infrastructural facilities and higher budgetary allocations to enable them promote technical university education in Ghana. This study therefore intends to examine the effect of recruiting, orientating, and training qualified employees on job performance using stakeholders' support as a moderator. Mixed method using questionnaire and interview method would be used to collect data. SmartPLS and Nvivo would be used to analyze the data collected.

Keywords: Training and Development, Employee Performance, Recruitment, Orientation, Academic Staff and Technical Universities (TUs).

Introduction

Due to the globalization, the main priority of each organization will be to manage its employees well, both individually and organizationally, to optimize efficiency. Any company's success in this competitive age lies in being able to develop their human resources to be creative, innovative and imaginative, which inevitably enhances their efficiency and boosts their competitive advantage (Edralin, 2004; Lynton & Pareek, 2000; Lussier & Hendon, 2017). Training and development is one aspect of the management of human resources that aims to increase employees' expertise, skills knowledge, abilities and qualification. It is a medium that strikes a balance between expected performance and actual performance levels. The main

role of training can be "to ensure that the organization has people with the right mix of attributes, by creating appropriate learning opportunities and motivating people to learn, thereby enabling them to achieve the highest level of quality and service performance." Organizational planning and growth in the have undergone a significant transformation in recent times. As the essence and fundamentals of work have changed, training goals have evolved beyond simply improving productivity in simple manual tasks to the provision of necessary information to workers Kavanagh & Johnson (2017), technological advances now enable learning to take place on demand and almost anywhere and at any time. The task of training and development has also grown to include the current position that it is not the only means to enhance individual abilities, but also a valuable level for improved team performance and competitive advantage for organizations (Noe et al., 2014). This transformation has led to the development of a wider and ever-developing research teams across a variety of disciplines, such as industrial psychology, military psychology, human factors and cognitive psychology which has increased the understanding of how organizations design and deliver training and development to improve their performance (Bell et al., 2017). Sanyal & Hisam (2018), are of the view that, companies will benefit from training and development by winning their employees ' heart and mind to connect with, workout more on their behalf and stay with the company.

Training of employees is a very important factor for achieving any organizations goals and objectives. Training is a critical activity employee for increasing the skills and efficiency of employees in order to sustain the company. This is mainly aimed at improving employees ' knowledge and skills as required by organizations and also reducing problems associated with performance (Surbhi, 2015). It means trainees can grasp the entire work requirements of the company in which they are working upon completion of their training. Employees are the vital asset, and an essential tool to enhance the performance of any organization through training (Armstrong & Mitchell, 2019). Training and development initiatives are ways to improve an organization's performance and productivity.

Therefore, this study ventures in to how the technical universities in Ghana commonly referred to as TU's can embark on vigorous recruitment programs in order to have a high caliber of staff who can undergo training and develop over time to impact greatly on the academic needs of the various students under their jurisdiction theoretically and practically. In view of this a model has been developed to examine the recruitment requirement of academicians at the TU's, followed by their training and developmental needs and the orientation given to them to determine how that can influence the performance of these academic staff.

Brief History of Technical Universities in Ghana

Since its inception at the beginning of the 1960s, technical university training in Ghana has undergone multiple transformational changes aimed at addressing the problems that have been found in the country's technical and vocational education system. Consequently, various educational reforms, law-making and policy coordination were conducted in this field. In 1963 these reforms began with the re-designation as polytechnics of several technical institutions in the country to provide craft people with the knowledge and skills required in emerging industries. (Boakye-Agyeman, 2006). The Provisional National Defense Council (PNDC), Law 321 of 1992, released the law on polytechnics, which established the legal basis for the implementation and upgrading to tertiary status of six existing polytechnics. Three such technical institutes were re-designated as polytechnics in Accra, Kumasi and Takoradi in

1963 to run non-tertiary programmes. (Boakye-Agyeman, 2006). Tamale and Ho were respectively followed in 1984 and 1986. In Koforidua, Cape Coast, Wa, Bolgatanga and Sunyani five other polytechnics were set up in the 1980s and 2000s, taking the polytechnic count to ten (10) in all the administrative regions of the country (Nsiah-Gyabah, 2005).

Figure 1: A Map of Ghana Showing the Location of the Eight TUs



This enabled polytechnics to fulfill their mandate in the educational system in full and to harmonize them. Nevertheless, some deficiencies were later identified in the polytechnic education system that required urgent attention. Such flaws were the conventional topic-based learning program, which does not allow learners to exhibit the skills and knowledge acquired during the learning process which has been a major concern for many stakeholders. Consequently, the Competence Based Learning (CBT) model introduced to address this deficiency of the current teaching and learning process by replacing the subject base approach with the problem-based approach. The CBT concept focuses more on the achievement of defined performance standards throughout the training

process and also gives priority to what people will do at work after they have completed their training (ACCI, 1992). The most recent change is the 2016 conversion into formal universities of polytechnics through the passage of the Act on technical universities (Act, 2016). In 2016, the Government of Ghana upgraded eight Polytechnics in Ghana into Technical Universities (TUs) with a redefined mandate to provide higher education in engineering, science and technology-based disciplines, technical and vocational education and training, applied arts and related disciplines with little attention on Business and humanities. The TU's Act 2016 (Act 992), adopted by Parliament and endorsed by the President of Ghana on August 31, 2016, clearly states this. TUs are technologically advantaged universities focusing not on the search for new knowledge but on applying technology in the various fields of learning. They are guaranteed to provide a four (4) years of bachelor's degree in technology (B-Tech) in science and technology in addition to the Higher National Diploma (HND) and Diploma courses already being taught. Kumasi TU, Accra TU, the Sunyani University of Technology, Koforidua University of Technology, Ho Technical University are newly converted TUs. (MOE, 2014). The bone of contention in Ghana now after this convention is; are these technical universities equivalent or the same as the existing traditional universities?, what are the requirements for engagement as an academician in these technical universities? And finally how does the training and developmental needs of these academic staff in the TU's impact on their

performance. Figure 1 above shows the location of the eight converted technical universities in Ghana.

The motivation behind this study is to conscientise human resource practitioners to evaluate and assess whether it is worth to enable employers upgrade and also if they upgrade what benefit(s) do employers and employees stand to gain. This I believe will enable human resource practitioners to continuously appraise performance in their organisations and also promote training and development of their staff.

The contribution of the study is in three folds. First we are conducting this study in Ghana, a fast developing country. Secondly, our study is amongst the few to quantitatively study the impact of training and development on the performance of academic staff and then finally, the uniqueness of our conceptual frame work. This is because each of the relationship in the current frame work comes from the hypothesis which was formulated based on the gap identified in the literature. Thus our study integrates all the gaps identified in literature into one model and this was done through the deduction process or approach.

Literature Review

Recruitment

Recruitment is the process of generating a pool of qualified and capable job seekers to apply for employment into an organization (Acikgoz, 2019). According to Beiu, (2018), the main objective of recruitment is to acquire the number of eligible and qualified applicants for the company at a minimal expense to satisfy the employment needs of the organization. Organizations recruit prospective applicants through identification, assessment and use of the most appropriate recruitment sources. This indicates that applicants with the required experience, qualification and expertise similar to job specifications and job description standards will ultimately be chosen to be screened for employment. Recruitment begins when a vacancy emerges in an organization. Organizational vacancies arise when a new positions is created, a new department is created, an employee retires, is promoted, transferred, demoted or dies.

Human resources are considered the most vital assets of any organization, thus hiring the personnel with appropriate skills and abilities is important. The mode of recruitment differs from one organization to another. When an organization is able to utilize machines, equipment, time and other resources to enhance performance and productivity, credit must be given to the human resources that operate and utilize them for this output. Recruitment is the very basic human resource function that sets to acquire the right people with the requisite knowledge, skills, abilities and competencies to help an organization function effectively.

Basak & Khanna (2017), are of the view that recruitment is a process of identifying and trying to attract employable candidates who are adequately eligible and thus able to efficiently fill vacancies within an organization. The goal is to allow them to apply for the vacancy. Waxin et al (2018) assert that recruitment is an operational process by which organizations legally attract at the right time and place the appropriate and sufficient number of qualified candidates to allow both candidates and the organisation to choose one another for the maximum benefit of each other. This suggests that applicants with experience and qualifications most closely related to job specifications may eventually be selected.

According to Lussier & Hendon (2019), the recruiting of potential employees is an aggressive marketing activity that requires employers to sell their jobs in the labour market to optimize

the pool of skilled prospective applicants from whom to choose future employees. However, before this is done, Rema et al., (2018), in their study defined five different questions an organization has to answer in order to design and implement an effective recruitment strategy to ensure organizational success and survival. The questions are “Whom to recruit?”, “Where to recruit?”, “What recruitment sources to use?”, “When to recruit?” and “What message to communicate?” these questions if properly analyzed can enable any organization to establish an effective recruitment strategy.

Even though most people confuse recruitment and selection as one activity, they are very different from each other. Recruitment begins when a vacancy is declared in an organization and ends when a pool of prospective applicants are gathered and selection begins immediately recruitment ends; and undertakes a series of activities to get the right person to fill the declared vacancy. Recruitment is mainly to create a pool of qualified candidates to apply for the job; consequently ensuring the best candidates are selected for the organization, this is done by attracting many potential applicants to apply for the job while selection is mainly to screen the submitted resumes and other documents to pick the most qualified candidate from the available list of job seekers to fill the vacant positions advertised in the organization.

Source of Recruitment

The choice of sources of recruitment normally depends on the kind of position that needs to be filled in an organization and the target population for the vacancy. There are two main sources of recruitment namely: Internal recruitment and External recruitment.

Internal Recruitment

Internal recruitment mechanisms refers to recruiting employees from within the organization. In deciding requirement for the recruitment of employees, initial consideration should be given to a company's current employees, who are already working in the organization. Some of the sources of internal recruitment includes: Promotion, Transfer, Job Posting, Job Bidding,

External Sources of Recruitment

External sources of recruitment refers to hiring of the employees outside the organization. In other words, the candidates seeking employment opportunities in this situation are those outside the company. External employees offer the company flexible, resourceful, imaginative and fresh ideas. Although external recruiting is a costly and complicated process, it has a high potential helping the company achieve its goals and targets. The external sources have been stated as follows: Advertisements, Institutions of Learning, Professional Associations, Unsolicited applications, Labour Offices, Word of Mouth Advertising, Employment Agencies, E-Recruitment, and Previous Applicants

Orientation

Orientation is an activity or series of activities undertaken in an organization to welcome new employees into an organization; making them feel accepted and welcomed. Orientation programmes offered to new employees differ from one organization to the other depending on the organization, the type of job, the management style, the organizational policy among others. An orientation program will give workers an acceptable introduction to the organization, its goals and where the new employee fits in. Institutions need to concentrate

very much on orientation since supervisors are made to guide workers about their new roles and demonstrate to them how things are done in their fields of work. Hello notes, visiting the campus, introductions, etc. are undertaken to help employees familiarize themselves with the working environment, work station and their colleagues.

The orientation of employees is a process that allows workers to understand what they are supposed to do at the workplace and needs modification where and when the need arises. The process is designed to ensure the employee understands the culture, values, responsibilities, abilities and goals of the company among other things (Latham, 2018).

Research conducted on this matter by Adams & Van Rooyen (2017), shows that orientation systems are essential for the continuous employment of staff, motivate staff, minimize turnover, increase output, raise employee morale, stimulate learning and reduce new workers' anxiety and fear. Zaid et al (2018) cautioned that inadequate orientation programmes will affect both current and future recruitment efforts of an organization. A variety of positive impacts such as improved employee satisfaction, stronger retention of workers, and employee success are supported by new employee orientation programs. An appropriate orientation program increases employees' commitment to make them feel more easily that they are a valuable part of society. Commitment of employees can also be strengthened through the involvement of mentors who are usually experienced workers who help new workers learn rules associated to their jobs. With a mentor, new employees are given the confidence to have the colleagues they can trust and learn from.

Organizations benefit from employee orientation, which provides workers with an opportunity to understand their work expectations within an institutional context. Employees benefit from the knowledge of essential policies and work information. Employees must follow the basic rules, get an employee handbook and study it, learn about and apply for benefits and get to know some very fundamental elements for their new job. Employees' consciousness of what is expected of them as far as job assignments are concerned, leads to better and improved performance as regards job contracts (Guest, 2017).

According to Gong et al (2017), the skills, competencies and knowledge of employees vary through the effectiveness of orientation program received as new employees. Orientation does not only improve the general performance of the employee, to efficiently perform the present work, but also enhances the knowledge, skills, and attitude of employees that may be required for the performance of certain work schedules in the future. The skills of an employee are built and enhanced through orientation, allowing them to effectively contribute to assigned duties in the organization which in turn helps in the attainment of organizational goals.

To enhance and maintain quality performance outputs among academic staff who help to discharge the core mandate of Tus, there is the need for orientation to be conducted before the start of work, during the discharge of duties and after the performance of duties. Orientation if managed well goes a long way to influence the performance of employees at the workplace.

Training and Development

In most developed countries, such as the United States of America, Britain and Japan, human resources have played and continue to play a vital role in the social, economic, technological and political development. Therefore, it can be implied that a developing and third world country such as Ghana, with its rich natural and human resources, can also experience such benefits when given the necessary support and opportunities. Training and development play

an important role in human resource development in the attainment of both individual and organizational goal. Training and development is said to have significant impact on employee's performance as well as organizational performance.

Training and development are the means by which organizations invest in people in order to equip them with the required knowledge and skills for the performance of their duties and responsibilities at the workplace. These processes adopted, are part of an overall human resource management approach that will positively result in people being motivated to perform. It is therefore imperative that the training and development of employees has become crucial to every organization whether private or public. However, the amount, quality and quantity of training carried out vary enormously from organization to organization. Organizations have to train their employees very well with emphasis on staff development policies, (Lussier, & Hendon, 2017). Training and development have become a key human resource practice in the world of business today; enhancing both employee productivity and company effectiveness. Training and development can be viewed as mechanisms designed to strengthen educators 'professional skills knowledge and attitudes, in order to enhance the learning of higher education students. Training and development are the mechanism adopted by modern organizations to help acquire, develop, maintain and enhance upon the knowledge, skills, competencies and abilities of workers. Sections 8 and 9 of The Labour Act, 2003 (Act 651) of Ghana entreats employers to develop the human resources by way of training and retaining of the workers; while employees have the right to be trained and retained for the development of his or her skills. This makes training and development of employees an indispensable element in the employment relationship.

Categories of Employee Training

Employee training programs are undertaken on the basis of the training needs and the type of training methods an institution has at its disposal. All types of training methods have a long-term effect and progression over the working life of the affected employee (Armstrong & Taylor 2020). Different methods are used within the same organization, to train various categories of people. The training methods mostly used by organizations are classified into two major classifications namely: On-the-job Training Methods and Off-the-Job Training Methods.

On-the-job Training Methods

On-the-job Training Methods refers to the learning of new or novice workers, by watching the work performed by colleagues or supervisors and trying to imitate their behavior. It is also acknowledged that, on-the-job training could be useful for newly employed employees, enhancing the knowledge and skills of existing employees when new innovations and technology are introduced, for cross-training in a department or working group and for realigning employees who are being transferred or promoted to their new jobs. Training in the work environment takes a variety of forms, including coaching and integrated learning programmes. It is an attractive way of teaching, because it takes less time and money for equipment, training materials, compared with other methods. (Dipboye, & Dipboye 2018). By observing peers or managers doing the job and trying to imitate their behavior and actions, new or inexperienced employees learn according to these methods. Such training methods are not costly and are less disruptive because workers (trainees) are always in the workplace doing their job, training is performed on the same machines and experience is focused on

already accepted requirements, and above all the trainee is learning while receiving regular income (Obeng, 2018).

Some of the commonly used methods of On-the-job training are: Coaching, Mentoring, Job Rotation, Job Instruction Technology, Apprenticeship, Understudy etc.

Off-the-Job Training Methods

Off-the-job training methods are implemented in separate environments away from the workplace, studies are delivered, there is focus on learning rather than performance, one is fully focused and freedom of expression exists throughout the learning process (Koppes, 2014). Off-the-job training includes: seminars, workshops, vestibule preparation, simulation drills, sensitivity training, trainings, etc. All types of training methods have a long-term effect and progression over the working life of the affected employee, (Billings, 2018). Off-the-job training can take the following methods: Seminars & Lectures, studies outside, Demonstration, Case-Study, Workshop & Conferences.

Every individuals recruited and hired as an academic staff automatically have a certain level of experience, knowledge and skills; however, with time they experience changes and transformations in the discharge of their duties such as working conditions, introduction and utilization of innovative techniques, methods of performing jobs, organizational policies, government policies, and methods of enhancing productivity among others. It is therefore imperative that the academic staff is encouraged to undertake training and development programmes to keep them abreast with these changes and also enhance their performance.

Stakeholders Support

Winning stakeholders support is very crucial and relevant in every training and development environment. For the government of Ghana to realise the impact of training and development of her academic staff in technical universities, there is the need to get the support of all stakeholders involved in technical university education in Ghana.

According to (Velte, Velte, & Elsenpeter, 2008; Burchell, 2011), the only situation to avert resistance to change is to involve all workers in the development and training processes in an organization. Velte et al (2008) opines that involvement of every one that matters in an organisation is the only way to ensure inclusiveness and avoid resistance at the work environment. Burchell (2011), advocates open communication and education of stakeholders on any change as the only means by which the support and cooperation of stakeholders can be sought in any organisation, in order to avoid any form of resistance.

Therefore to conclude, it is evident that the support of stakeholders both internally and externally in the technical university education in Ghana is very essential for the government of Ghana to assess and evaluate their impact and performance on training and development of the academic staff at the technical universities in Ghana.

Performance

The word performance is difficult to quantify or qualify and is stated in relation to goods and service received or provided; it is an approach involving consistency in behavior and quality, economy, effectiveness and efficiency in the provision of goods and services. Employee performance is measured in operation within an organisation, using multiple methods based on management expectations, employee expectations and performance management programmes. The performance management system determines the assessment parameters for employees i.e. the parameters by which employees' performance levels can be quantified,

qualified and assessed. Zena (2019), posited that performance is the output of a particular task measured against pre-determined quality, completeness, and speed and cost standards. Furthermore, he added that performance is considered an achievement of the employee obligation in an employment contract which releases the performer from all obligations stipulated in the contract. Efficiency and effective performance are key elements that can be emphasized through training and development to improve performance. Efficiency is the ability to achieve desirable results by using the least resources available while effectiveness is the potential for workers to achieve desired goals or targets (Serdyukov, 2017).

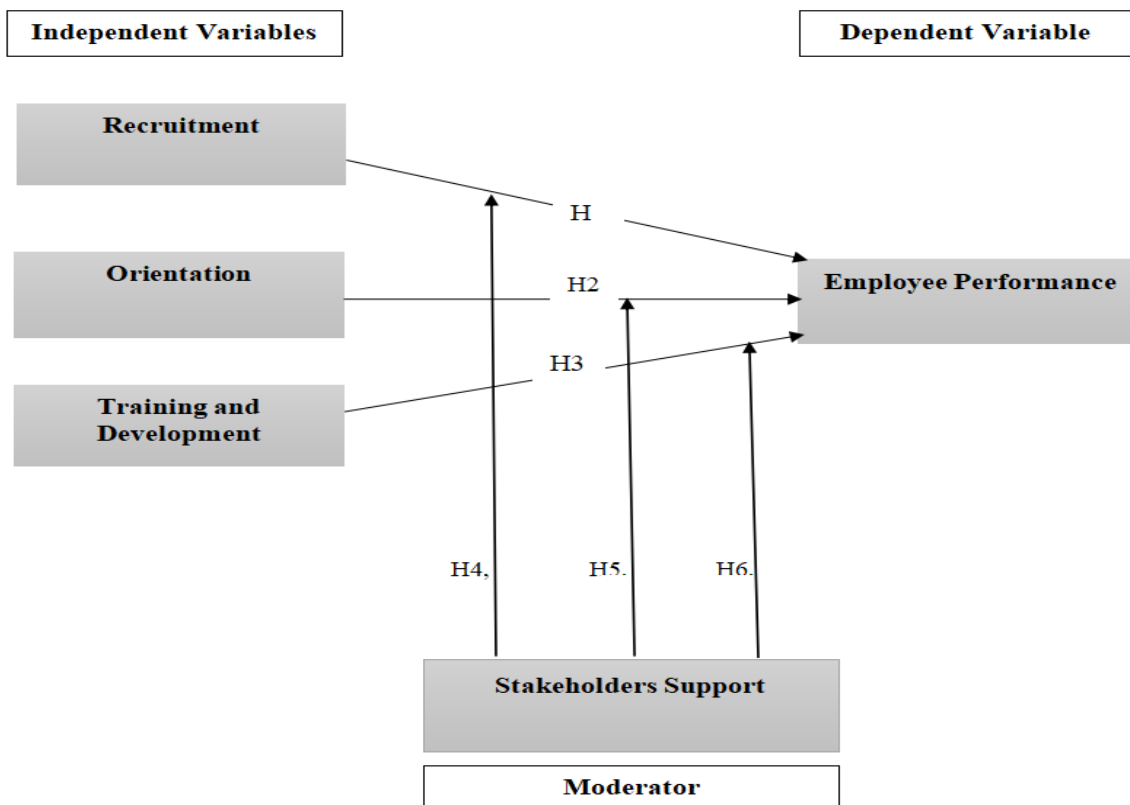
Outcomes are bases upon which employee performance is usually assessed, however, employee behavior can also be used to measure performance (Mone, & London (2018). The performance of the employee is measured according to the organization's performance standards. A variety of steps are taken to assess performance using, for example, efficiency, effectiveness, consistency and profitability (Kallio et al., 2017).

Organizational performance on the other hand, can also be characterized as the capacity of the organization to achieve its goals by effectively and efficiently utilizing human resources. The success or failure of businesses therefore depends on the output of employees. Rodriguez & Walters (2017), also clarified the following advantages of successful employee training: better quality products and services because of potentially less errors. Accuracy, performance, good job, health and good customer service may therefore be anticipated.

It is proven without doubt that training leads to enhanced performance for both the employee and the organization through the beneficial effect of the employee's success, experience, abilities, skills and actions, in generating success-related benefits for the employee and for the company (Ibrahim et al., 2017).

Conceptual Framework

A conceptual frame work has been developed which consists of four antecedents namely; recruitment, orientation, training and development. These four antecedents are also known as the independent variables. The employee performance is the dependent variable and there is one moderator to support the study namely; stakeholders support. What the model seeks to explain is that the caliber of individuals recruited at the TU's and the type of orientation and training given to them will ensure their development, this has a critical impact on their performance as academic staff. Additionally, the role and support of stakeholders in the educational sector is key for the TU's to achieve their mandate in this twenty first century. The role of recruitment, orientation, training, and development is indispensable and relevant towards the attainment of effectiveness and efficiency in the performance of their duties as academicians.



Methodology

According to Gillani & Kiani (2019), research design connotes a number of sequential decisions regarding the aim of the study (exploratory, description, hypothesis /causal testing), its position, (i.e. the study situation), the type of inquiry, the level of intrusion by the researcher, time horizon and the degree under which the collected information will be scrutinized. This study basically looks at the requirements for recruitment, orientation, training and developmental needs of academic staff at the TU's and their respective performance, therefore in ascertaining the relationship between the independent variables and the dependent variables, hypothesis will have to be developed as shown in the frame work and once they are developed , they must also be tested. For this reason, this study adopts the causal or hypothesis testing design. There are eight technical universities in Ghana and the researcher intends to collect data from these eight institutions one time, therefore the cross-sectional method will be adopted for the data collection. Currently in Ghana every academic staff is regarded duly qualified after undergoing a vigorous verification exercise by the National Council for Tertiary Education (NCTE). Those who are not qualified have been downgraded. Each of the eight TU's have a rough estimate of at least One Hundred and Eighty (180) academic staff. The sampling frame can easily be obtained at the Human Resource (HR) departments of the TU's. The sampling instrument to be used for this study will be self-administered questionnaires, since the sampling frame of all the respondents can easily be adopted with a random number generator from internet called Research Randomizer (Ikart, 2018).

Anticipated Results

The researchers' anticipate that the predictors that is recruitment requirement, orientation training, and developmental needs of academic staff of the TU's should correlate positively with the dependent variable, employee performance. Additionally, the researchers also expects the moderator, which is stakeholders support to correlate positively with the independent variables to lead to the dependent variable which is employee performance.

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