

EXPLORING CONTINUOUS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT'S EFFECTS ON EFFICACY AND JOB PERFORMANCE OF GHANAIAN UNIVERSITY ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF

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Abstract

This study investigated the influence of Continuous Professional Development (CPD) on administrative staff in Ghanaian universities, focusing on how CPD participation enhances skills, knowledge, and job performance. A quantitative approach was adopted, with surveys administered to 521 administrative personnel across selected institutions. The instrument assessed participants' involvement in CPD and their perceptions of its effects on skills, knowledge, performance, and overall efficacy. Data were analysed using SPSS Version 27 to explore associations between CPD engagement and indicators such as productivity, efficiency, and problem-solving capacity. Findings demonstrated that CPD participation exerted a significant positive impact across all dimensions, with a mean score of 4.00, reflecting improvements in career advancement, adaptability, learning opportunities, and communication. Moreover, CPD led to enhanced job performance, notably in productivity, engagement, error reduction, satisfaction, time management, and reduced absenteeism. The study recommends that universities prioritise diverse, innovative CPD initiatives responsive to evolving higher education needs.

Keywords: Continuous Professional Development (CPD), Knowledge, Skills, Impact, Efficacy, job performance

Introduction

In the rapidly evolving higher education sector, institutional success extends beyond academic excellence to include the competence and effectiveness of administrative personnel (Hughes, 2021; Nyarko & Kumi, 2023). University administrative staff constitute the backbone of institutional operations, managing governance structures, maintaining student and staff records, overseeing data systems, and providing essential academic support services (Boateng & Nartey, 2022; Tuffour, 2024). Their multifaceted responsibilities have grown increasingly complex as universities adapt to technological innovation and global educational standards, generating an urgent need for continuous skill development and knowledge enhancement among these critical professionals (Mensah & Amponsah, 2021; UNESCO, 2023). Continuous Professional Development (CPD) represents a systematic approach to sustaining and advancing knowledge, skills, and competencies throughout an individual's career trajectory (Adepoju, 2020).

Within university contexts, CPD is operationalised through diverse learning opportunities, including specialised workshops, targeted short courses, professional seminars, academic conferences, and formal education programmes (Mumuni, 2022; Owusu-Mensah & Ofori, 2024). These structured interventions not only address identified skill gaps but also foster adaptability, encourage innovation, and enhance overall institutional efficiency and performance (Osei-Tutu & Addo, 2021). Ghanaian universities have implemented varied CPD frameworks aimed at strengthening administrative capacities across their institutions (Arkorful, 2020; Owusu, 2024). Notable examples include the Teacher Education and Continuing Professional Development Centre at the University of Education, Winneba, and the Centre for Strategic Business and Professional Development at Ghana Communication Technology University (Dakora & Issah, 2023). These dedicated facilities provide comprehensive programmes covering office management principles, digital literacy enhancement, data processing systems, and contemporary human resource management practices, all specifically designed to address the developmental needs of administrative staff (Ampofo & Hammond, 2022).

The transformative impact of CPD initiatives on university administrative personnel is evident across multiple dimensions (Kwarteng & Oteng, 2021). Professional development initiatives enhance individual skill sets, improve operational efficiency, create career advancement opportunities, and contribute significantly to institutional performance metrics (Teye et al., 2023; Hussein & Boateng, 2025). Administrative staff engaged in regular CPD

activities exhibit improved capacity to support academic functions and to respond effectively to evolving student needs and institutional demands (Kumi-Yeboah, 2022; Zawacki-Richter & Jung, 2023).

Moreover, CPD fosters a sustainable culture of lifelong learning and professional advancement within higher education institutions (Adepoju, 2020; Gyamfi, 2023). Ghanaian administrative professionals who participate systematically in professional development initiatives are more likely to secure promotions and leadership roles, thereby contributing to institutional growth and strategic development (Amankwah & Tuffour, 2024). Evidence from the Ghana Association of University Administrators demonstrates that CPD participants report heightened job confidence and enhanced problem-solving abilities, illustrating the transformative potential of structured development programmes (GAUA, 2022). Nonetheless, implementation challenges persist, impeding effective CPD delivery and accessibility. Financial constraints, insufficient training resources, inadequate materials, and the absence of mandatory participation policies remain substantial barriers to widespread adoption (Nyarko & Kumi, 2023; Tuffour, 2024). Furthermore, inconsistent policy frameworks across Ghanaian universities result in uneven staff development opportunities, with some institutions lacking formalised CPD protocols entirely (Hussein & Boateng, 2025; Arkorful, 2020).

The critical relationship between administrative staff effectiveness and institutional success underscores CPD's pivotal role as a performance enhancement mechanism (Mumuni, 2022; UNESCO, 2023). Professional development directly influences skill acquisition, knowledge advancement, and job performance outcomes among administrative personnel (Ampofo & Hammond, 2022). Addressing this relationship necessitates systematic examination of the impact of CPD programmes on administrative effectiveness within Ghanaian higher education (Owusu-Mensah & Ofori, 2024). This investigation is guided by two principal research dimensions: first, analysing how CPD participation enhances skills and knowledge among administrative staff in Ghanaian universities; and second, evaluating the extent to which CPD contributes to measurable improvements in job performance. Establishing empirical evidence of CPD's effectiveness in strengthening administrative functions is therefore essential for advancing the sector's transformation agenda (Kwarteng & Oteng, 2021; Teye et al., 2023).

Method

This study adopted a quantitative research design to examine the impact of Continuous Professional Development (CPD) on the efficacy of administrative staff in Ghanaian universities. A survey methodology was employed to collect data from 521 administrative staff across five purposively selected universities: the University of Education, Winneba (102 participants), Accra Technical University (96 participants), the University of Cape Coast (110 participants), the University of Ghana (132 participants), and Cape Coast Technical University (81 participants). All participants completed the survey, yielding a 100% response rate.

The survey instrument assessed participants' engagement in CPD programmes, their perceptions of its influence on skills, knowledge, and job performance, as well as their overall efficacy levels. Demographic variables, including age, gender, educational background, and years of work experience, were collected to enhance reliability and to examine their potential influence on the study outcomes. Data were analysed using SPSS (Version 27) to investigate relationships between CPD participation and various efficacy indicators such as productivity, efficiency, and problem-solving ability. The analysis addressed two primary research questions concerning the effect of CPD on skills development and improvements in job performance.

Findings

The data analysis and subsequent discussions presented herein are derived from responses obtained from university administrative staff participants. The study employed a comprehensive sample of 521 administrative staff members drawn from five prominent Ghanaian universities: the University of Education Winneba (n=102), Accra Technical University (n=96), University of Cape Coast (n=110), University of Ghana (n=132), and Cape Coast Technical University (n=81). Complete participation was achieved across all sampled institutions, ensuring robust data collection for the investigation.

Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

The study examined four key demographic variables: gender, age, educational background, and professional experience. These demographic characteristics were analyzed to explore and examine the impact of CPD on administrative staff efficacy within the selected Ghanaian universities, while simultaneously establishing the reliability of responses and determining how these demographic factors influence study outcomes.

Age Distribution of Respondents

The age analysis revealed significant demographic patterns among participants. The majority of respondents (72%) fell within the active workforce age range of 20-40 years, representing a dynamic and professionally

adaptable cohort. This demographic composition is particularly well-suited for engagement with CPD programmes designed to develop both foundational and advanced professional competencies.

The remaining participants comprised 24% in the 41-50 years age bracket and 5% in the 51-60 years category. While constituting smaller proportions, these groups represent experienced professionals whose inclusion addresses critical needs for career advancement, mentorship capacity building, and institutional knowledge transfer opportunities.

The diverse age distribution enhances the study's credibility, as it encompasses perspectives from multiple career stages and experience levels. This demographic heterogeneity ensures that the collected responses provide reliable foundations for developing comprehensive CPD strategies that address the varied professional development needs across different age cohorts within Ghanaian university administrative structures.

4 CPD Program Participation Impact on Ghanaian University Administrative Staff Skills and Knowledge

Table 1: Age of respondents

S/N	AGE	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1.	20 – 30 years	230	44.0
2.	31- 40 Years	143	28.0
3.	41-50 years	124	24.0
4.	51-60 years	24	4.6
5.	Total	521	100

Source: Field Survey (2024)

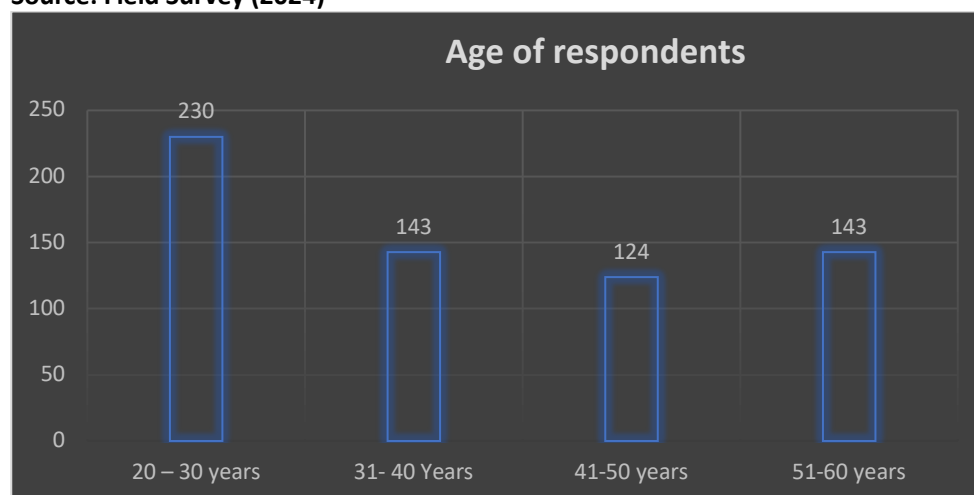


Figure 1: Age of Respondents

Source: Field Survey (2024)

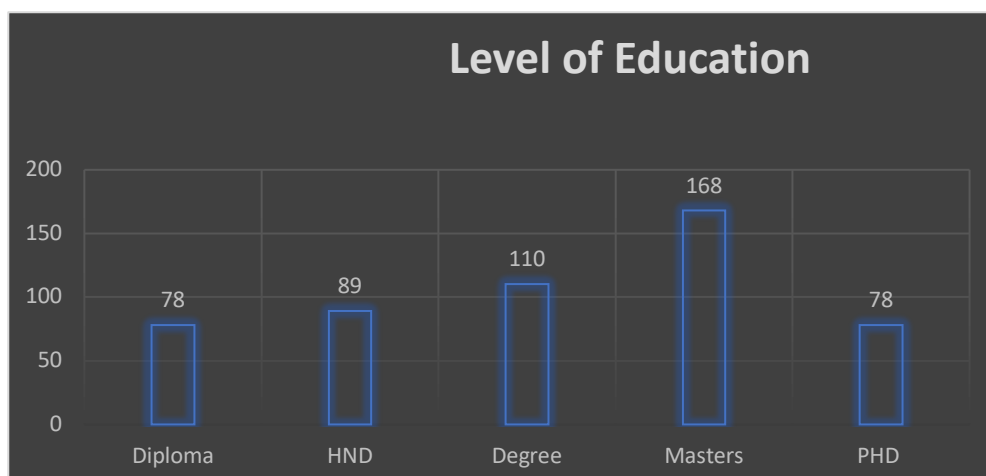
Level of education

Regarding educational background, the study findings revealed diverse academic qualifications among the administrative staff. The majority possess advanced degrees, with 32.2% holding a master's degree, followed by 21.1% with a bachelor's degree, and 17.1% with a Higher National Diploma (HND). Additionally, 15.0% have completed a diploma, while 15.0% hold a PhD. This educational distribution demonstrates that most respondents have attained substantial academic qualifications, providing them with the knowledge and skills necessary to contribute effectively to their roles and enhance the reliability of the study's findings.

Table 2: Level of education

S/N	Level of Education	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1.	Diploma	78	15.0
2.	HND	89	17.1
3.	Degree	110	21.1
4.	Masters	168	32.2
5.	PHD	76	15.0
6.	Total	521	100

Source: Field Survey (2024)

**Figure 2: Level of Education****Source: Field Survey (2024)*****Years of service***

The study also examined participants' years of service as university administrative staff. The findings revealed that 83 participants (15.9%) had served for less than one year, 134 (25.7%) had worked for 1-5 years, 63 (12.1%) had worked for 6-10 years, 128 (24.5%) had worked for 11-15 years, 60 (11.5%) had worked for 16-20 years, and 53 (10.1%) had worked for 21 years or more.

Based on these findings, the majority of participants had substantial experience as university administrative staff, with only a minority having fewer than five years of service. This distribution indicates that participants possessed considerable experience and the necessary expertise to provide valuable insights for this study.

Table 3: Years of service

S/N	Years of service	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1.	0-1	83	15.9
2.	1-5 years	134	25.7
3.	6-10 years	63	12.4
4.	11- 15 years	128	24.5
5.	16-20 years	60	11.5
6.	21 years and above	53	10.1
7.	Total	521	100

Source: Field Survey (2024)**Figure 3: Years of Service****Source: Field Survey (2024)**

Objective 1: How does participation in CPD programs impact the skills and knowledge of administrative staff in Ghanaian universities?

The findings on the impact of continuing professional development (CPD) on the efficacy of university administrative staff indicate significant positive outcomes across core domains of skills, knowledge, and job performance. Table 4 presents the distribution of frequencies and percentages across a four-point Likert scale, revealing strong consensus among respondents that participation in CPD programmes meaningfully enhances the skills and knowledge of administrative staff in Ghanaian universities. The majority of responses fall within the "Agree" and "Strongly Agree" categories, underscoring the widespread perception of CPD as a vital catalyst for professional excellence, skills development, and knowledge enhancement.

The results reveal that 84.6% of respondents *strongly agree* and 15.4% *agree* that CPD enhances the knowledge and skills of administrative staff by providing career advancement opportunities. Likewise, 72.5% *strongly agree* and 27.5% *agree* that CPD participation contributes to skills and knowledge development through structured learning opportunities. Moreover, 68.8% *strongly agree* and 31.2% *agree* that CPD enables administrative staff to adapt effectively to organisational changes, thereby positively influencing their knowledge and skills. In addition, 93.5% *strongly agree* and 6.5% *agree* that CPD participation strengthens communication and collaboration competencies among staff.

Collectively, these findings demonstrate that CPD participation exerts a transformative impact on the professional capabilities of university administrative staff. The evidence reinforces the necessity for sustained institutional investment in CPD programmes to optimise these benefits and to advance organisational growth and excellence.

Table 4: How the participation in CPD programs impact the skills and knowledge of administrative staff in Ghanaian universities.

key 1= Strongly disagree, 2. Disagree, 3 = Agree, 4 = Strongly Agree.

S/N	How participation impact knowledge and skills of administrative staff	1		2		3		4	5
		Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq (%)	Freq (%)	Freq (%)	Mean (SD)%
1.	Career enhancement	-	-	-	-	441 (84.6%)	80 (15.4%)		4.00 (0.00)
2.	By providing opportunities for learning	-	-	-	-	378 (72.5%)	143 (27.5%)		4.00 (0.00)
3.	Adaptability to Change	-	-	-	-	487 (93.5%)	34 (6.6%)		4.00 (0.00)
4.	Enhanced Communication and Collaboration	-	-	-	-	338 (68.8%)	183 (35.2%)		4.00 (0.00)

Source: Field Survey (2024)

The analysis of how Continuing Professional Development (CPD) participation influences the knowledge and skills of university administrative staff in Ghana reveals unanimous recognition of its positive impact across all measured dimensions. Specifically, career enhancement, provision of learning opportunities, adaptability to change, and improved communication and collaboration each recorded a mean score of 4.00 with a standard deviation of 0.00. This homogeneity indicates complete consensus that participation in CPD significantly enhances the skills and knowledge of administrative staff.

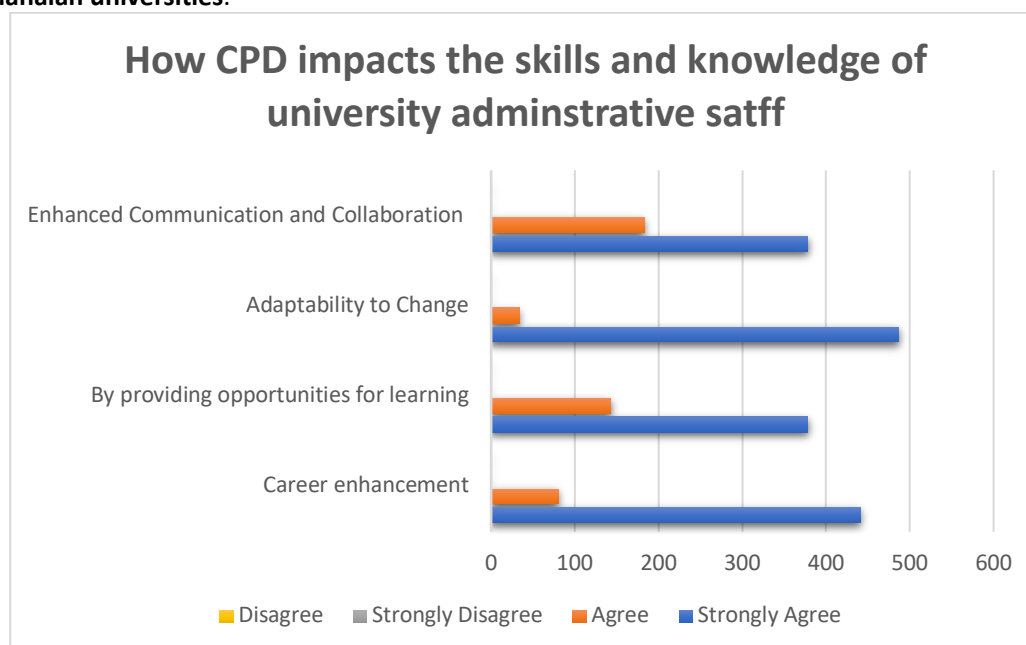
These findings are consistent with those of Owusu-Cole (2023), who demonstrated that engagement in CPD activities strengthens career development while improving communication and collaboration among administrative staff. Similarly, Kwakye (2023) emphasised that CPD participation equips employees to respond effectively to organisational changes and remain current with emerging trends, technologies, and best practices in their fields. Collectively, these outcomes contribute not only to the professional growth of individual staff members but also to the overall development of the university as an institution.

The influence of CPD on adaptability to change underscores its strategic importance in preparing staff for increasingly dynamic work environments. The unanimous agreement across dimensions highlights the role of CPD in equipping staff with essential tools to address challenges proactively and adapt to institutional transformations. These results reaffirm the conclusions of Yaqub (2020), who argued that professional development programmes are critical for fostering resilience and innovation in administrative practice.

Furthermore, the universal acknowledgment of CPD's value in strengthening communication and collaboration demonstrates its effectiveness in enhancing teamwork and interpersonal relationships among staff. This finding aligns with the work of Armour et al. (2017), who identified communication skills as a fundamental component of administrative effectiveness.

In conclusion, the unanimous responses affirm the pivotal role of CPD in enhancing administrative staff performance across knowledge, skills, and overall job effectiveness. This uniformity of perception validates the effectiveness of current CPD initiatives within Ghanaian universities. Nonetheless, to sustain and build upon these positive outcomes, institutions must continuously review and adapt CPD frameworks to align with evolving professional demands. Collectively, the findings provide compelling empirical evidence supporting the prioritisation of CPD as a strategic investment for both institutional advancement and workforce development.

Figure 4: How the participation in CPD programs impact the skills and knowledge of administrative staff in Ghanaian universities.



Source: Field Survey (2024)

5 CPD's Transformative Impact on Job Performance of University Administrative Staff in Ghana

Objective 2- To what extent does CPD contribute to improved job performance among administrative staff?

The findings of this study demonstrate that Continuous Professional Development (CPD) contributes significantly to job performance among university administrative staff. The research question aimed to investigate the extent to which CPD enhances job performance within Ghanaian universities, with particular focus on key performance indicators (KPIs) that measure the relationship between CPD participation and improved outcomes.

Data were gathered using a four-point Likert scale, where responses ranged from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 4 (Strongly Agree). Frequencies and percentages were employed to capture the degree of agreement with each performance indicator. Across the indicators, the results provide compelling evidence of CPD's positive influence on multiple dimensions of employee performance.

In terms of productivity, 95.2% of respondents strongly agreed and 4.8% agreed that CPD initiatives enhance the productivity of university administrative staff in Ghana. Regarding employee engagement, 81.9% strongly agreed and 18.1% agreed that CPD activities foster higher engagement, a crucial dimension of workplace effectiveness. Concerning proactiveness, 75.8% strongly agreed and 24.2% agreed that CPD participation improves proactiveness, thereby reducing administrative errors and the waste of resources often encountered in routine duties.

With respect to job satisfaction, 67.7% strongly agreed and 32.2% agreed that CPD had improved their job satisfaction, consequently leading to enhanced performance. Similarly, 89.2% strongly agreed and 10.8% agreed that CPD had substantially enhanced their time management skills, thereby improving their broader job performance. Finally, with regard to absenteeism and truancy, 94.2% strongly agreed and 5.8% agreed that CPD had significantly reduced these practices among administrative staff.

Synthesising these findings across the key performance indicators—including improved productivity, enhanced employee engagement, reduction of errors and waste, greater job satisfaction, better time management, and decreased absenteeism—the study concludes that CPD substantially improves job performance among administrative staff in Ghanaian universities. The aggregate responses demonstrated unanimous agreement, reflected in a recorded mean score of 4.00 and a standard deviation of 0.00 across all indicators.

These findings are consistent with the extant literature. Harunavamwe and Mnqayi (2021) argued that CPD programmes exert highly positive effects on employee performance, playing a vital role in the development of knowledge, skills, and attitudes. Similarly, Nyaaba et al. (2023) identified CPD as a crucial determinant of improved employee performance, with participants affirming its significant influence on job outcomes.

The widespread consensus observed in this research underscores the extent to which CPD influences the performance of university administrative staff in Ghana, positioning it as a cornerstone of administrative efficiency. On the basis of this evidence, it can be concluded that CPD has a substantial and far-reaching impact on job performance, and should be regarded as an indispensable mechanism for enhancing administrative effectiveness within university contexts.

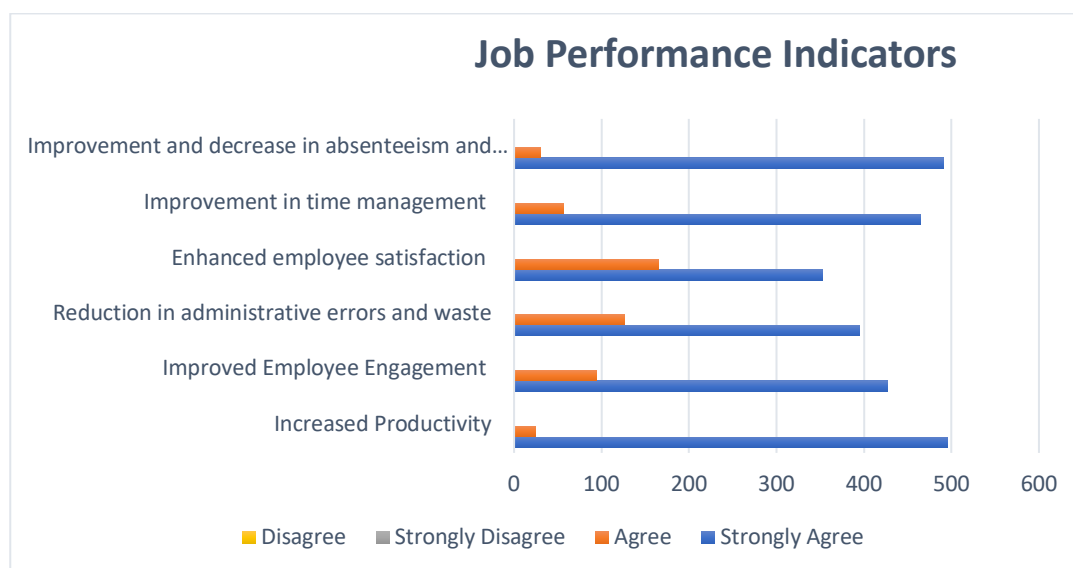
Table 5. The extent to which CPD contribute to improved job performance among administrative staff in Ghanaian Universities?

key 1= Strongly disagree, 2. Disagree, 3 = Agree, 4 = Strongly Agree.

S/N	Indicators of Job Performance	1 Freq (%)	2 Freq (%)	3 Freq (%)	4 Freq (%)	5 Mean (SD)
1.	Increased Productivity	-	-	496 (95.2%)	25 (4.8%)	4.00 (0.00)
2.	Improved Employee Engagement	-	-	427 (81.9%)	94 (18.1%)	4.00 (0.00)
3.	Reduction in errors and waste	-	-	395 (75.8%)	126(24.2%)	4.00 (0.00)
4.	Enhanced employee satisfaction	-	-	353 (67.7%)	168 (32.2%)	4.00 (0.00)
5.	Improvement in time management	-	-	465 (89.2%)	56 (10.8%)	4.00 (0.00)
6.	Improvement and decrease in absenteeism and truancy	-	-	491 (94.2%)	30 (5.8%)	4.00 (0.00)

Source: Field Survey (2024)

Figure 5: Indicators of Job performance. The extent to which CPD influences Job performance



Source: Field Survey (2024)

Concluding remarks

The findings of this study demonstrate that continuing professional development (CPD) participation exerts a transformative effect on the skills and knowledge of university administrative staff in Ghana. The evidence highlights the critical importance of sustained investment in CPD programmes to maximise these benefits and support institutional advancement. The study further establishes that CPD significantly enhances job performance among administrative staff in Ghanaian universities.

Recommendations

The results underscore the fundamental role of CPD in fostering professional growth and operational efficiency among administrative staff in Ghanaian universities. Given the demonstrated value of CPD initiatives, this study recommends that university authorities prioritise the implementation of diverse, contemporary, and adaptive CPD programmes that address the dynamic landscape of higher education. Such programmes should be strategically designed to optimise CPD practices while ensuring alignment with both institutional objectives and individual professional development needs.

Expected Outcomes and Contributions

This research is expected to provide robust empirical evidence regarding the impact of CPD on the efficacy of administrative staff. The findings will identify specific CPD activities that demonstrate the highest effectiveness in strengthening staff competencies, knowledge acquisition, and job performance. This evidence-based insight will be invaluable to university administrators seeking to enhance the quality and impact of their CPD programmes while maximising institutional return on investment.

The study makes a significant contribution to the scholarly literature on CPD by offering a rigorous quantitative assessment of its impact on staff efficacy in the higher education context. It generates critical insights for university administrators and policymakers engaged in designing and implementing CPD initiatives that are both strategically aligned with institutional goals and capable of driving measurable improvements in organisational performance and professional development outcomes.

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