

Work attitude as a mediator between experience, training, and post-promotion performance: Evidence from senior staff in Ghanaian public universities

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ABSTRACT

This research aims to examine the impact of the factors commonly considered in the promotion of senior staff in public universities in Ghana and their influence on the post-promotion performance of senior staff. This study examines the employee's experience, training, and performance as common variables, while the employee's work attitude serves as a mediator among them. This study is grounded in the Social Exchange Theory (SET) and supported by the Ability, Motivation, and Opportunity framework (AMO). The research design is exploratory and quantitative. With data from a target population of 821 senior staff from the University of Ghana and the University for Development Studies and using Slovin's formula to determine the sample size (268), the collected data through the administered questionnaire were used to test some suggested connections by using the Structural Equation Modelling-Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS). The data have demonstrated that there is a direct significant influence of training on performance ($\beta = 0.484$, $p = 0.000$) and also a positive effect on performance through work attitude ($\beta = 0.113$, $p = 0.001$). The data have also shown that the study does not align with previous research indicating that experience directly influences performance ($\beta = -0.078$, $p = 0.285$); instead, it reveals that work attitude (motivation) can mediate the effect of experience on performance ($\beta = 0.012$, $p = 0.371$). The empirical findings have shown that training has a direct impact on the performance of the senior staff, and to increase performance, the enabling conditions (work attitude-motivation) must be created. The findings also indicate that experience alone has an inverse relationship with performance, necessitating the presence of work attitude-motivation to positively influence performance. It is recommended that universities consider the training of senior staff as a factor in promoting them for performance, and to enhance performance, they must create an enabling environment (work attitude/motivation). Again, it is recommended that, when senior staff are promoted based on experience, the enabling environment (work attitude-motivation) must be ensured to lure the performance of the staff. This study is beneficial for the university management to focus on the influence of experience, training, work attitude, and employee performance when it comes to matters of promotion in order to enhance post-promotion performance. The university policy document should incorporate training, attitude management, and performance management. In conclusion, training alone can be a driver of performance and must be considered a factor for promotion, while experience alone is not; the motivational factors must be there. This approach conforms to the social exchange theory.

Keywords: Experience, Performance, Promotions, Training, Work Attitude

I. INTRODUCTION

Public universities in Ghana play a critical role in producing the human capital necessary for national development (Abonyi, 2016). A public university in Ghana is one funded by the Government of Ghana and housed under the Ministry of Education (Manuh et al., 2007). The universities are guided by the Education Act, 2008 (Act 778), and are audited and accredited by the Ghana Tertiary Education Commission (GTEC) Act, 2020 (Act 1023). Public universities, as important establishments in societal development, depend vigorously on the productivity and effectiveness of their senior staff, crucial to this productivity is the strategic management of human capital, in matters relating to promotion decisions (Machlup 2014).

Senior Staff play an important role in university growth in Africa by providing high-level support that ensures the smooth operation of academic and administrative units, they act as a vital link between different levels of the university hierarchy, and are key to implementing policies and procedures, their work directly impacts the efficiency, effectiveness, and overall quality of the institution, (Amponsah & Onuaha, 2013). The performance of Senior Staff in these public universities is important for the quality and effectiveness of higher education, particularly in a developing country like Ghana. Among the various factors influencing employee performance and career progression in matters

of promotions are experience, training, and performance, these three consistently emerge as significant determinants (Haryono et al., 2020; Kanapathipillai & Azam, 2020).

In the case of Ghanaian public universities, studies have highlighted the positive relationship between experience, training, and job performance, emphasizing the need for human resource professionals to prioritise such initiatives (Appiah, 2010). This study is driven by the effects of performance, experience, and training which are widely acknowledged as direct contributors to job performance and often serve as criteria for promotion, and the subsequent assumption that promotion will naturally lead to enhanced performance (Haryono et al., 2020). While the link between experience, training, and job performance seems intuitively positive, the actual effects within the Ghanaian public university context may be more nuanced (Moorman & Blakely, 1995). The influence of both experience and training on performance is unlikely to be direct across industries, the employees' attitude towards their work, colleagues, promotions, and the institution itself is a significant factor that can mediate this relationship (Ngo et al., 2013; Chan, 2018).

This study examines the employee's experience, training, and post-promotion performance, as common variables, while the employee's work attitude serves as a mediator among them. Experience and training are widely acknowledged as direct contributors to job performance and often serve as criteria for promotion, and the subsequent assumption that promotion will naturally lead to enhanced performance, however, there is an observable inconsistency in the expected positive impact on post promotion job performance among employees in many public institutions across Ghana. By employing a quantitative method approach and conducting a comprehensive analysis, this study provides a holistic understanding of the effects of promotion on Senior Staff performance in public universities in Ghana.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

Experience and training are widely acknowledged as direct contributors to job performance and often serve as criteria for promotion, and the subsequent assumption that promotion will naturally lead to enhanced performance (Haryono et al., 2020). However, there is an observable inconsistency in the expected positive impact on post promotion job performance among employees in many public institutions (Haryono et al., 2020); the reason could be the interplay of individual psychological factors, such as work attitude cannot be overlooked. Despite the widespread use of experience and training as promotion criteria, post promotion performance remains inconsistent in Ghanaian public universities, suggesting that psychological factors such as work attitude may be a missing explanatory mechanism.

1.2 Research Objectives

- (i) To investigate the direct influence of experience on job performance
- (ii) To investigate the direct influence of training on job performance
- (iii) To investigate the mediating role of work attitude in the relationship between experience and job performance
- (iv) To investigate the mediating role of work attitude in the relationship between training and job performance

1.3 Research Questions

- (i) What is the influence of experience on job performance?
- (ii) What is the influence of training on job performance?
- (iii) How does attitude mediate between experience and job performance?
- (iv) How does attitude mediate between training and job performance?

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Theoretical Framework

2.1.1 Social Exchange Theory (SET)

Social Exchange Theory is one of the major theories of social interaction in the social sciences, (Cervone, 2023) were the key theorists who developed the original theories of social exchange.

Social Exchange Theory proposes that, behaviours can be thought of as the result of cost-benefit analyses by people attempting to interact with society and the environment (Cervone, 2023). If a person believes that they are able to extract more of a reward through behaviour than they lose by performing it, then the person will perform the behaviour. Conversely, when the person feels that, the cost will outweigh the benefit, the behaviour will not be performed. If someone does not value maintaining a relationship or is distrustful and does not expect others to follow through with the reward, then the balance would be higher, and the anticipated rewards would be lower. Such a mind-set could produce a short-term orientation favouring immediate, assured rewards, and would elicit the socially aversive behaviour.



Social Exchange Theory is often integrated with the Ability, Motivation, and Opportunity (AMO) framework to explain how organisations foster positive employee behaviour by providing the necessary support and environment for social exchange to occur. While SET focuses on the cost benefit analyses of relationships, the AMO model acts as a mechanism to facilitate those exchanges- ensuring employees have: Ability- providing the training and experience necessary for employees to perform their roles effectively. Motivation- creating an environment where employees want to contribute because they perceived a fair return on their efforts (work attitude). Opportunity- giving employees the chance to use their skills and participate in the exchange process, (post-promotion performance).

2.2 Literature and Hypotheses Development

2.2.1 Experience and Performance

Based on the benefits of the working period, an employee who has had a longer working life when compared to others will provide benefits such as getting better trust from others in the implementation of his duties, authority will be increased so that it can influence others to work in accordance with his wishes, the implementation of the work will run smoothly because the employee already has a number of knowledge, skills, and attitude and the better work experience, than employees will get better income. Research (Yadav & Dhar, 2024) provides evidence that experienced employees perform better because they have a greater knowledge base to improve their performance. These gains are useful for developing skills to have good performance. Various kinds of experiences that individuals have will affect the work that leads to optimal performance. Indicators for experience are the time of work, the increase in knowledge and skills, the expansion of work and equipment.

Employee experience in higher education institutions and its effects on the employee's performance, experience refers to the totality of employee interactions, perceptions and feelings throughout the employees' journey (Bilal et al., 2024). Experience is complicated in higher education institutions because employee's engagement can range from academia (teaching) to administrative, but the research focus of this study is on the administrative category specifically the Senior Administrative Staff group. Research indicates that, there is a strong correlation between employee experience and job satisfaction, retention and reputation of the institution (Veldsman & Van der Merwe, 2025).

The main drivers of quality employee experience in higher education institutions are a consistent, supportive institution culture, fair human resource policies, development opportunities and the extent and connection with meaningful interactions with leadership. Banerjee and Sinha (2025) define experience as the total of all employees' interactions with the organisation for each employee within three interconnected environments: physical, digital and cultural. Work experience is a measure of how much time and effort an employee has put into learning the responsibilities of a job and do them well (Kim & Kim, 2021). Experience is important, meaning in the employee selection process, because an organisation or company will tend to choose experience applicants, those who are considered more capable in carrying out the task that will be given. The benefits of experience are for trust, authority, job execution, and income.

H1: Experience affects employee performance

2.2.2 Training and Performance

Most of the previous studies provide evidence that there is a strong positive relationship between human resource management practices and organisational performance, and training has an impact on the performance of employees with regard to their jobs (Nassazi, 2013). Employees are aware about training; employees are motivated through training, and training and development results into higher performance, training and development of all staff should be dynamically followed and made obligatory and the employer should give compulsory training programs for all employees to improve performance, there is need for continuous training and development taking into deliberation the opposition, market dynamics, customer satisfaction, and net promoter score among others (Karim et al., 2019).

According to Guest (1997) mentioned in his study that training and development programs are one of the vital human resource management practices, positively affecting the quality of the workers' knowledge, skills, and capabilities and thus resulting in higher employee performance on the job. This relation ultimately contributes to supreme organisational performance, the result of Obisi (2001) study depicts the positive correlation between training and employee performance; thus, we can predict from this finding that the firm cannot gain higher returns without best utilization of its human resource, and it can only happen when organisations can meet its employees' job-related needs in timely fashion. Training is the only way to identify employees' unmet needs, and build the required competence levels so they can perform well and achieve organisational goals (Elnaga & Imran, 2013).

As depicted by the work of Nassazi (2013), learning through training influences organisational performance by greater employee performance, and is said to be a key factor in the achievement of corporate goals. However, implementing training programs as a solution to cover performance issues such as filling the gap between the standard

and the actual performance is an effective way of improving employee performance (Kinnie et al., 2005). The above studies all support that training positively affects the performance of the employee but the gap here is that, other psychological and organisational factors could impede performance even though the employee had the requisite training.

H2: Training affects job performance.

2.2.3 Experience and Attitude

Attitude is a learned feeling which determines, to a considerable extent, how an individual responds to other individuals, institutions, objects, events, or situations, (Robbins, 2009) affirmed that attitudes are evaluative statements, which can either be favorable or unfavorable, concerning objects, people, or events as the case may be, therefore they reflect an individual's likes and dislikes towards other people, objects, phenomena, and activities in his or her physical or social environment, favorable statements made about individuals, objects or events may have positive effects regarding the concerned target whereas, negative effects refers is the case for unfavorable statements, four important characteristics are apparent in this definition: first, attitudes are a product of experience; that is, they are learned, second, attitudes reflect one's perception and also influence one's inclination to think or behave in a particular manner, third, attitudes make one more or less emotionally involved in interacting and identifying with others, fourth, attitudes are an important element of personality; and, as such, they are relatively stable although they are also subject to change, work attitudes have influence on the behaviour of a person (Robbins & Judge, 2009). Employees demonstrate positive or negative attitudes towards superiors, subordinates, peers, supervision, pay, working conditions, promotions (Ogunyemi, 2020).

Attitudes formed through direct behavioural experience with an attitude object have been found to better predict later behaviour than attitudes formed through indirect experience, an experiment was conducted to test the hypothesis that an information processing difference exists between direct and indirect experience, subjects watched a videotape of an individual working examples of a variety of puzzles under instructions to empathize with that person or not, taking the perspective of the person having the direct experience led empathy subjects to behave more consistently with their own reported attitudes toward those puzzles than Control subjects, the results suggest that direct experience affects the attitude formation process by altering the way in which the available information is processed (Fazio et al., 1978). The above studies proved that attitude has an influencing ability and can be a psychological variable to mediate with other variables.

H3: Experience affects work attitude

2.2.4 Training and Attitude

It is incumbent on training and development professionals to design, implement, and evaluate the effectiveness of their programs in reducing disputes in workplace performance, this study explores the relationships between training and attitudes and attitudes about perceived job proficiency, In a sample of 237 full-time salaried/exempt and hourly/non-exempt employees from one academic institution and three businesses in the states of Maryland, Delaware, and Arizona, the author finds a direct relationship between one's positive training experiences and attitudes and one's proficiency, In that study, 86.8% of those who had updated training had the most positive attitudes toward training, furthermore, 80% of those who had negative training attitudes also had negative views on their proficiency (Truitt, 2011).

While the attitudes of individuals towards environmental issues have been widely studied (Wehrmeyer & McNeil 2000; Hargittai & Shafer, 2006), the attitudes of firms towards sustainable development performance, including environmental protection standards, have still not been sufficiently canvassed. Study shows that the environmental attitude of the firm's top management team which the researcher assume reflects the attitude of the wider firm can have a significant effect on the sustainable development performance of the firm, moreover, firms' practice of employee training can have a significant moderating effect on the relationship between the attitude and performance in sustainable development (Ji et al., 2012).

H4: Training affects work attitude.

2.2.5 Attitude and Performance

Job-related attitudes predict important employees' behaviour towards performance, employees with strong organisational commitment are emotionally attached to the organisation and have a strong desire to contribute significantly to the organisational success (Kidombo, 2008; Chughtai & Zafar, 2006); this leads to competitiveness, accountability, minimum wastage of resources, high innovativeness, and desire to improve organisational performance

(Laschinger et al., 2001). In their study of workplace empowerment, organisational commitment, and job satisfaction, confirmed that there is a positive relationship between job-related attitudes and performance.

An attitude is a psychological state of mind; it is the way a person thinks about situations, and it ultimately determines a person's behaviour, in the workplace, employees can have either a positive or negative attitude towards specific work tasks, products or services, co-workers or management, or the company as a whole, positive attitudes among employees make workdays more enjoyable, tasks are performed to a higher standard and without complaint, result shows that all attitude-related factors positively affect employee performance, motivation and job commitment have a highly significant impact on the performance of employees, as a result, organisations should value their experienced personnel and devise effective retention policy by giving competitive salary, experienced base pay and experienced based promotion, that will increase the overall performance of the organisation (Cabrera & Estacio 2022).

H5: Work attitude affects performance

2.2.6 Mediating Role of Work Attitude: Work Attitude as a Psychological Mechanism

Sobaih and Elshaer (2022) in their study to examined the direct impact of the big five personality traits, i.e., openness to experience, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness, and neuroticism on digital entrepreneurship intention and the indirect impact through personal attitude. A mediation effect was confirmed for personal attitude in the link between personal traits and digital entrepreneurship intention among senior students in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) higher education. In this study, the same methodology is used to test the mediation effects of work attitude between experience, training, and performance in the context of Senior Staff in Ghanaian public universities, as was done in the above study and (Ngo et al., 2013).

H6: Work attitude affects experience and performance when serving as a mediator

H7: Work attitude affects training and performance when serving as a mediator.

III. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

The research philosophy adopted in this study is pragmatism, according to (Simpson, 2018); the word “pragmatism” is commonly used in the English language to denote the practicalities of just getting on and doing what the situation demands. The research method adopted in this study is primarily quantitative with supporting secondary data. With this method, the researcher blends quantitative data with some level of qualitative data to solve the research problem, and this conforms to the chosen philosophy of study that is pragmatism.

3.2 Study Area

In this study, the University for Development Studies and the University of Ghana Senior Staff Administrative category are selected for the study since they meet these criteria and having Senior Staff promotion ranks (Administrative Assistant, Senior Administrative Assistant, Principal Administrative Assistant and Chief Administrative Assistant). A total of 821 Senior Staff from both universities are expected (www.UG.edu.gh & www.UDS.edu.gh). The Senior Staff population in UDS is 578 with 368 being males and 210 females, vice chancellors report for 2023/2024, (Source: www.UDS.edu.gh). The University of Ghana has a Senior Staff strength of 243 with 135 being males and 108 females, vice-chancellors report as at 2023/2024 (Source: www.UG.edu.gh). Slovin's formula is used to determine the sample size, Slovin's formula allows a researcher to sample the population with a desired degree of accuracy, and it gives the researcher an idea of how large his sample size needs to be to ensure a reasonable accuracy of results (Indarti et al., 2017).

$$n = N / (1 + Ne^2)$$

n=Number of samples

N = Total population

e = Error tolerance, 0.052

$$n = 821 / (1 + 821 (0.052^2))$$

$$n = 268$$

3.3 Choice of PLS-SEM

This is an explanatory, associative, quantitative study using PLS-SEM. An explanatory, associative, quantitative study analyses numeric data from a population at one specific time to explain ‘Why’ or ‘How’ relationships exist between variables (Spector, 2019). First, PLS-SEM excels in preliminary research, especially when developing the theoretical framework or when the study primarily focuses on making predictions rather than verifying

them (Hair et al., 2020). Second, PLS-SEM works well with complex models containing numerous variables and small-to-moderate sample sizes, which makes it an excellent fit for analysing the 268 Senior Administrative Assistants. Because PLS-SEM integrates many measuring scales, it is also capable of handling reflective and formative components, which is crucial for this research.

3.4 Variables and Constructs

Post-promotion Performance: This latent variable assesses how Senior Staff perform their duties, i.e. whether they can accomplish the tasks required of them in the university after been promoted. Scales are included in a single questionnaire, where participants rate their job performance. Ratings of task performance is obtained from the same participants using the nine items, a five-point Likert scale originally developed by (Bott et al., 2003), with higher ratings indicating better performance, these items are centered on issues like fulfilment of objectives required by the job, competence to do all tasks, and the potential for promotion, “achieves the objectives of the job” and “demonstrates expertise in all job-related tasks” are examples of items of this measure. The exploratory factor analysis carried out by the authors of the scale indicates a single factor, with the nine items together 0.93. Participants rate their own’ contextual performance on a five-point Likert scale with nine items, (1- *Strongly Disagree*; 5- *Strongly Agree*), with higher ratings indicating better performance, these nine items were used by (Morgeson et al., 2005).

Employee Experience: This latent variable the research looks at the accumulated knowledge that an employee gained as a result of staying in the role for several years or changing to different kinds of organisations and performing different roles. The measurement is based on the more detailed and specific experience related questions proposed by (Burt, 2015), the three items are: how many different organisations have you undertaken this job in? How many different work groups or teams have you performed this job with? And how many different work environments have you undertaken this job in? Participants are asked to think only about their current job and respond to all three items using a numerical value ranging from 1-5, (Shackleton, 2016). This scale is adopted because it spells out the experience questions during consideration for promotions.

Employee Training: This latent variable assesses the knowledge and skills required of a Senior Staff to carry out his/her work. In the measure of training, the researcher adopts a questionnaire that was used for direct research on the impact of staff training on university staff productivity through job satisfaction; a study of ISO-9001-certified institutions, the research is authored by (Iqbal et al., 2024). The ratings are on a likert scale ranging from 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree, this had a Cronbach’s alpha of 0.70. Some of the questions asked in this questionnaire are; how relevant are the trainings you received to your work? How likely do you think training has helped improve your job performance? How will you rate the quality of the training programme/s for which you have participated? This questionnaire was used by (Nassazi, 2013) in her research “Effects of training on employee performance: Evidence from Uganda.”

Attitude towards work: Attitude is composed of Job satisfaction and Organisational Commitment (Robbins & Judge, 2009). The Job Satisfaction Sub-Scale of the Michigan Organisational Assessment Questionnaire (MOAQ-JSS) was used by (Rahman et al., 2014), the Job satisfaction sub-scale consists of three positively and negatively worded items on a 5-point Likert-type format with responses ranging from 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree. Samples of items on the scale are ‘In general, I don’t like my job’ and ‘In general, I like working here’. According to Leonard (2022), the internal consistency and test–retest reliabilities of the MOAQ-JSS yielded acceptable levels of reliability with Cronbach’s alpha being .84 and a test-retest reliability coefficient being .50.

3.4 Analytical Techniques

This section presents the results of the data analysis conducted to test the hypothesized relationships in the research model, using the Structural Equation Modelling – Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS) it begins with the collinearity (VIF) test, measurement model (outer model) to establish reliability and validity, and subsequently followed by a detailed assessment of the structural model (inner model). The research hypotheses are tested, and the chapter concludes with an assessment of the model’s predictive relevance and overall fit.

3.5 Collinearity (VIF) - Inner Model

When assessing the structural (inner) model, the primary goal is to ensure that, the predictor constructs are distinct enough to provide meaningful and independent insights. The most common tool is the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF). For the inner model, a VIF value below 3.3 is often recommended to ensure collinearity is not problematic (Hair et al., 2020).



Table 1
Collinearity (VIF) - Inner Model

	VIF
A->P	1.424
E->A	1.009
E->P	1.014
T->A	1.009
T->P	1.421

3.6 Measurement Model Assessment (Outer Model)

Composite Reliability measured the reliability of the reflective construct. Composite Reliability must be > 0.6 and Cronbach’s Alpha >0.7 (Ghozali & Latan, 2015). As shown below in the Table, it indicates the Cronbach’s Alpha and Composite Reliability value. Convergent validity is determined based on the principle that the metric of a construct should be highly, correlated it should be done based on the value of the loading factor and AVE, outer loading factor >0.70 (Hair et al., 2020).

Discriminant validity intends to define whether a reflective indicator is really a good measure of its construct based on the assumption that each indicator must be highly correlated with its construct only. Measures of different constructs should not be highly correlated (Ghozali & Latan, 2015). In the Smart PLS application, the discriminant validity test uses cross loadings value and the Fornell-Larcker criterion (Henseler et al., 2015), if the square root value of the AVE for each construct is greater than the correlation value between construct and other construct in the model then the model is said to have a good discriminant validity value (Fornell & Larcker 1981 in Wong, 2013). Cross-loading is based on the factor loading of all indicators in one latent variable, which must be greater than those in other latent variables. As shown in the table below.

Table 2
Outer Loading Factors, AVE, Cronbach’s Alpha, and Composite Reliability

Latent Variable	Indicators	Outer Loading Factors	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)	Cronbach’s Alpha	Composite Reliability
Experience	E2	0.773	0.680	0.882	0.913
	E3	0.882			
	E4	0.913			
	E5	0.670			
	E6	0.861			
Training	T1	0.821	0.696	0.927	0.941
	T2	0.862			
	T3	0.878			
	T4	0.834			
	T5	0.868			
	T6	0.788			
	T7	0.786			
Attitude	A2	0.762	0.590	0.861	0.895
	A4	0.627			
	A5	0.660			
	A6	0.873			
	A7	0.822			
	A8	0.833			
Performance	P1	0.763	0.627	0.925	0.938
	P2	0.803			
	P3	0.744			
	P4	0.845			
	P5	0.818			
	P6	0.855			
	P7	0.829			
	P8	0.672			
	P9	0.781			



3.7 Structural Model Assessment (Inner Model)

Evaluation of the structural model is used to predict the causal relationship between latent variables based on the hypothesis (Ghozali & Latan, 2015). In the assessment of the structural model, an evaluation is carried out by testing the value of R-Square (R^2), the Q-Square (Q^2) test, and the NFI. The following is a description of each stage involved in evaluating the structural model along with the criteria used for evaluation.

3.8 R-Square

R-squared is intended to measure the proportion of change in exogenous variables. The condition is that, if the R-Square (R^2) value of 0.67 means that the model is good, 0.33 means a moderate model and 0.19 means the, model is weak (Chin, 1998; Ghozali & Latan, 2015).

Table 3

R-Square and R-Square Adjusted

	R-Square	R-Square Adjusted
Attitude (A)	0.298	0.292
Performance (P)	0.385	0.378

The R-Square value of the combined effect of Experience, and Training towards performance is 0.385 with an adjusted r- square value of 0.378 (Table.3), it can be explained that, all independent variables (Experience and Training) simultaneously affect performance by 0.385 or 38.5%. Because the adjusted r-square 37.8% is < 50% the effect of all independent variables (Experience, Training) on performance demonstrate moderate explanatory power. Looking at the conceptual model, the variable (Attitude) serves as a mediator variable, in that event can be a dependent variable between (Experience and Training) and the above explanations also apply to that scenario.

3.9 Predictive Relevance

A Q^2 value greater than zero for an endogenous construct indicates that the model has predictive relevance for that construct (Hair et al., 2020). Q- Square (Q^2) test measures how well the observed values are generated by the estimated model and parameter. The requirement is that if the Q- square value is more than 0 (zero) it means that the model has a good predictive relevance value, whereas if the Q- square value is less than 0 (zero) it means that the model lacks good predictive relevance. Based on calculations using Q-square (Q^2) the values are: Attitude (A) 0.280, Performance (P) 0.332. Our focus is on the performance as the dependent variable and looking at its value of 0.332 which is more than 0 (zero), it means that the model has a good predictive relevance value.

Table 4

Predictive Relevance

	Q² Predict	RMSE	MAE
A	0.280	0.857	0.680
P	0.332	0.827	0.587

3.10 Model Fit

NFI value is used to measure how good the research model is. The requirement is that if the NFI value produces a value from 0 (zero) to 1 (one), a good NFI value is a value close to 1 (one). Based on calculations using NFI, the value is 0.823 (value close to value 1). It means it is a good research model to estimate the effect of experience, training, and attitude towards performance.

Table 5

Model Fit

	Saturated Model	Estimated Model
SRMR	0.059	0.059
d_ ULS	1.307	1.307
d_ G	0.605	0.605
Chi-square	916.467	916.457
NFI	0.823	0.823

Standardised Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR) of 0.059. This is a strong result (well below the 0.08 threshold), indicating good model fit. The SRMR value of 0.059 is below the recommended threshold of 0.08, indicating a good fit between the proposed model and the observed data (Henseler et al., 2015).



3.11 Findings

3.11.1 Direct Effect of Experience on Performance (H1)

Based on calculations using bootstraps, where the test results of the estimated coefficient of experience against performance (E- > P) bootstrap results are -0.080 with T statistics value of 1.070 and standard deviation of 0.073. The p value is 0.285 > 0.05 so reject H1 (Hair et al., 2020) it means that direct effect of experience on performance is not significant.

This is not in line with the previous study stating that experience has a positive and significant impact on performance, Yadav and Dhar (2021), Kim and Kim 2021, and Veldsman and Van der Merwe (2025). In this study experience of the senior administrative assistant have no influence on their performance on the job.

3.11.2 Direct Effect of Training and Performance (H2)

Based on calculations using bootstraps, where the test results of the estimated coefficient of training against performance (T- > P) bootstrap results are 0.486 with T statistics value of 6.736 and standard deviation of 0.072, the p value is 0.000 < 0.05 so accept H2 (Hair et al., 2020) it means that direct effect of training on performance is significant.

This is in line with previous study stating that training has a positive and significant impact on performance, (Karim et al., 2019, Nassazi 2013, Obisi 2001, Elnaga & Imran 2013, and Cervone, 2023). In this study the training of Senior Staff in public universities in Ghana have influence on their performance on the job.

3.12.1 Mediation Analysis

3.12.2 Indirect Effects (Experience, Attitude & Performance H3)

The bootstrap results for H6, where the test results of the indirect effects estimated coefficient of experience through attitude against performance (E- > A->P) are, 0.012 with T statistics value of 0.897 and a standard deviation of 0.013. The p- value is 0.371 > 0.05 so reject H6 (Hair et al., 2020).

3.12.3 Indirect Effects (Training, Attitude & Performance H7)

The bootstrap results for H7, where the test results of the indirect effects estimated coefficient of training through attitude against performance (T- > A->P) bootstrap results are, 0.113 with T statistics value of 3.413 and a standard deviation of 0.033. The p- value is 0.001 < 0.05 so accept H7 (Hair et al., 2020). This result is in line with previous studies that when attitude is serving as a mediator between variables like, training and others there is a positive effect as in the studies of (López-Bonilla & López-Bonilla, 2017; Homer, 1990; Wardana et al., 2020; Sobaih & Elshaer, 2022, and Cabrera & Estacio, 2022).

Table 6

Specific Indirect Effects

Variables	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics (O/STDEV)	P- Values
E- > A->P	0.012	0.012	0.013	0.897	0.371
T ->A->P	0.113	0.112	0.033	3.413	0.001

3.12 Direct Hypotheses Results

The table below is a summary of the hypotheses indicating which hypotheses are accepted and which are rejected using the p- values.

Table 7

Hypotheses Summary

NO	Hypotheses	P. Value	Accepted/ Rejected
1.	What is the influence of experience on job performance? (E- > P) H1	0.285	Rejected
2.	What is the influence of training on job performance? (T- > P) H2	0.000	Accepted
3.	What is the influence of experience on work attitude? (E- > A) H3	0.361	Rejected
4.	What is the influence of training on work attitude? (T-> A) H4	0.000	Accepted
5.	What is the influence of work attitude on job performance? (A->P) H5	0.001	Accepted
6.	How does attitude mediate between experience and job performance? (E- > A->P) H6	0.371	Rejected
7.	How does attitude mediate between training and job performance? (T ->A->P) H7	0.001	Accepted



Based on the result, the researcher considers the research model as fit and perceives that it can be used for hypothesis testing (figure).

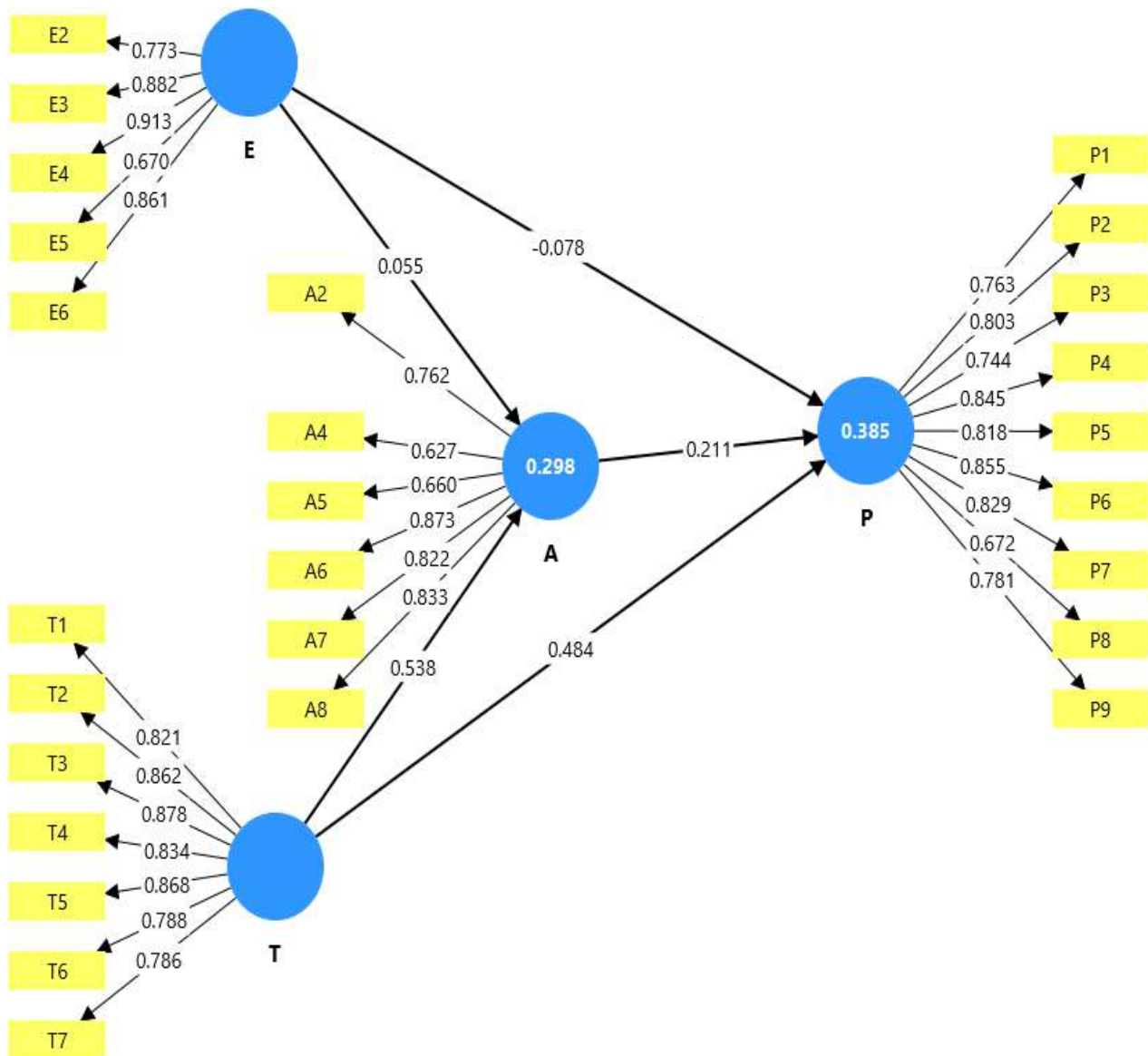


Figure 1
Indicator Loadings

4.2 Discussion of Results

This study is established to examine the influence of experience, training, and performance as factors commonly considered in matters of promotion in many institutions (Haryono et al., 2020; Kanapathipillai & Azam (2020), with work attitude as a mediator among these variables. As hypothesised, the results of structural equation modelling using Smart PLS 4 (version 4), analysis supported training as a direct path between performance ($\beta= 0.484$, $T= 6.736$, $p= 0.000$), this is consistent with the results of Karim et al., (2019), Nassazi, (2013), Obisi (2001), Elnaga & Imran, (2013), and Cervone, (2023) which indicate that, training and development results into higher performance, training and development of all staff should be dynamically followed and made obligatory and the employer should give compulsory training programs for all employees to improve post-promotion performance. Such analysis demonstrates that, acquiring the right training for an intended role improves performance. This answers the objectives that, training would have influence on the post promotion performance of the Senior Staff.

Again, training shows a positive relationship through work attitude, and performance, ($\beta= 0.113$, $T= 3.413$, $p= 0.001$). This is consistent with similar previous studies such as Sobaih and Elshaer (2022), Ngo et al., 2013, and Chan, (2018). As was done in Sobaih and Elshaer (2022), the researchers examined the direct impact of the big five personal traits, i.e., openness to experience, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness, and neuroticism, on digital entrepreneurship intention and the indirect impact through personal attitude, a mediation effects were confirmed in

this study. This finding is backed by the Social Exchange Theory which posits that, individuals evaluate relationship based on a cost-benefit analyses and one of the assumptions of the theory is reward, which refers to tangible or intangible benefits like pay, status, promotion etc. An employee will acquire the right training for a job if he or she thinks the benefits of acquiring the training outweighs the cost and in turn this training reflects on his performance. With the AMO framework, Motivation (M) in the model which relates to the work attitude (job satisfaction and job commitment) confirms a positive mediation since the organisation has made the enabling environment for employees to be trained, this influence their capabilities (e.g., 'I am now more skilled') and this translates to performance of the employee.

In the resource- constrained environment of Ghanaian public universities, training may be a rare and valued signal of institutional investment, which directly boosts morale (attitude) and, in turn, performance. This suggests training functions not just as a human capital investment, but as a powerful motivational tool. This answers the objective that, acquiring the right training for the job can influence job satisfaction and job commitment thus serving as a motivation and impacting post-promotion performance. One can conclude on this hypothesis that, Senior Staff promoted based on training can impact post-promotion performance significantly.

As hypothesised, the results of structural equation modelling using Smart PLS 4 (version 4), analysis rejected the findings that, experience positively impacts performance Yadav and Dhar (2024), Kim and Kim (2021), Veldsman and Van der Merwe, (2025), the results are ($\beta = -0.078$, $T = 1.070$, $p = 0.285$). The analysis has demonstrated that the mere number of years spent in a role, organisation, or number of institutions worked with has no impact on performance if the employee is not motivated, justifying this with the Social Exchange Theory and the AMO framework, one of an employee's social asset is his or her experience and he/she expects that, when put into use will be for the benefit of the organisation and the reciprocal will be an award in the form of status, promotion and pay increase. One will realize that, the absence of motivation leaves experience inversely related to performance ($\beta = -0.078$). More so, Motivation as one of the branches of the AMO framework, entails creating an environment where employees want to contribute because they perceived a fair return on their effort.

Again, one of the reasoning in this study is that, the routine of doing administrative work does not guarantee that productivity is enhanced or will be enhanced, perhaps it's the motivational factor that matters, not the quantity spends on the job as the case of bureaucratic public university settings, tenure as a function of experience may be valued independently of current performance, decoupling the two variables. When work attitude mediates the relationship between experience and performance, the results indicated that, it does not significantly affect post-promotion performance ($\beta = 0.012$, $T = 0.897$, $p = 0.371$), though the p-value is out of rank for acceptance. The measurement of experience in bureaucratic public institutions/settings, experience is tied to tenure and promotion regardless of attitude towards work. When work attitude mediates between experience and performance as was done in Morgan (2017), Ngo et al. (2013) and Chan (2018) the path coefficient is positive ($\beta = 0.012$) which indicates that, work attitude (job satisfaction and job commitment) which relates to motivation in the AMO framework plays an important role when it comes to employee performance by influencing experience to achieve this.

The study reports a moderate R-squared, showing that experience and training together account for a moderate share of variation in employee post-promotion performance. This is one of the limitations of the study, and this could be the reason that it is not only experience and training that serves as key drivers of performance in organisations.

The current study contributes to the academic body of literature on factors used in promotion and their implications on work attitude as well as post-promotion performance. The literature has confirmed that, with no doubt, modern training skills have promoted the exploitation of performance (Kinnie et al., 2005), Obisi (2001), Elnaga and Imran (2013) and Nassazi (2013). This is confirmed by the model fit using the Standardised Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR) which found a score of 0.059 which is below the cut off 0.08, thus showing strong agreement between theory and observed data. The Normed Fit Index (NFI) was 0.823 suggesting an acceptable level of model fit. The inconsistency measures- $d_{ULS} = 1.307$ and $d_G = 0.605$ which also confirmed that the model is sound. The above indicators confirmed that, the structural model is appropriate and that the hypothesised relationships among the constructs are valid within the Ghanaian public universities.

V. CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Conclusion

The study leads to three primary conclusions: First, while training is a direct and powerful predictor of post-promotion performance, experience alone is not. Second, work attitude is a critical psychological mechanism, partially mediating the effect of training and also acting as a necessary conduit for experience to impact post-promotion performance in a moderate manner. Third, the Social Exchange Theory and the AMO framework provide a valid framework for understanding these dynamics in the context of Senior Staff in public universities' promotions.



5.2 Recommendations

Public universities should move beyond using years of experience (seniority) as a primary promotion criterion. The Universities should rather focus creating the motivational environment in order to benefit from the experienced Senior Staff after they have been promoted. It is the motivation that brings out the benefits from the experience.

It is also recommended to increase investment in continuous, relevant training programs. Frame these not just as skill development but as a core strategy for boosting employee morale and engagement (attitude).

There should be also implementation of programs to monitor and foster positive work attitudes, such as mentorship, recognition schemes, and climate surveys, recognising that attitude is a key performance driver.

Declaration of Interest

The authors declare that they do not have any known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

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