

AKENTEN APPIAH-MENKA UNIVERSITY OF SKILLS TRAINING AND
ENTREPRENEURIAL DEVELOPMENT, KUMASI

THE IMPACT OF JOB AUTONOMY ON EMPLOYEE CREATIVITY AND
EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE IN SELECTED UNIVERSITIES IN THE ASHANTI
REGION OF GHANA

PATRICK BOADU AMOAH

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DECLARATION

STUDENT'S DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this thesis, with the exception of quotations and references contained in published works which have all been identified and duly acknowledged, is entirely my original work, and that it has not been submitted, either in part or whole, for another degree elsewhere.

Signature:

Date:

(PATRICK BOADU AMOAH)

SUPERVISOR'S DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of this thesis were done in accordance with the guidelines for supervision of thesis laid down by the Akenten Appiah-Menka University of Skills Training and Entrepreneurial Development, Kumasi.

Signature:

Date:

(DR. COURAGE S. K. DOGBE)

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated my entire family for their support in diverse ways throughout my study.

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To God be the Glory, great things He has done, for without Him nothing is possible and for His guidance and protection over my life throughout the period of my study in this University. My sincere gratitude goes to my supervisor, Dr. Courage Dogbe who provided an invaluable assistance in guiding me through to the completion of this research. I also wish to render my profound gratitude to all lecturers who taught me throughout my two year course of study at the Department. I cannot forget to thank my respondents, friends and colleagues for their moral support, and all numerous authors whose work have been helpful in diverse ways to successfully complete this dissertation.

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ABSTRACT

The study sought to investigate the impact of job autonomy on employee creativity and performance in selected universities in the Ashanti region of Ghana. The study employed a quantitative research approach specifically the cross sectional survey. A semi-structured questionnaire was designed for the study. The study adopted a stratified random sampling and simple random sampling techniques to select the employees from each university. The target population was all the university staff from the selected university. The sample size was the 240 university staff from the selected universities. The data collected were analyzed using the Statistical Product and Service Solutions (SPSS) version 20. The study concluded that job autonomy has a significant effect on employee performance and employee Creativity partially mediates the relationship between Job Autonomy and Employee Performance. The study therefore recommends that there is the need to offer training programs that help employees develop the skills and confidence needed to effectively manage their work autonomously. There is also the need to actively promote a culture of autonomy by empowering employees to make decisions related to their work processes and tasks.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction

The chapter one presented an introductory overview that lays the foundation for this research endeavour, which explores the intricate relationships between job autonomy, employee creativity, and performance in selected universities within the Ashanti region of Ghana. This chapter established the rationale and significance of this study by highlighting the critical role of higher education institutions in fostering innovation, creativity, and productivity. Additionally, the chapter outlined the specific objectives, research questions, and the significance of the study, the scope and the limitation of the study.

1.1 Background of the Study

Globally, universities have faced increasing pressure to provide quality education, conduct research, and foster innovation to remain competitive in the global academic market (Jaiswal & Dhar, 2017). Companies and organizations around the world are constantly searching for ways to improve employee creativity and performance to increase their competitiveness and productivity. To achieve these goals, universities require a workforce that is not only highly qualified but also productive, creative, and motivated. One factor that has been identified as a potential influence on employee creativity and performance is job autonomy. According to a report by the International Labour Organization (2020), nearly 40% of workers worldwide feel that they have little or no control over their work tasks, schedules, and environment. This lack of autonomy can lead to disengagement, reduced productivity, and poor job satisfaction. In the

selected universities, where employees are expected to be innovative and produce high-quality research, the impact of job autonomy on employee creativity and performance becomes even more critical (Khoshnaw & Alavi, 2020).

Job autonomy refers to the degree of control and independence an employee has in carrying out their tasks, including the ability to make decisions and take initiative without constant supervision (Nasution *et al.*, 2021). This control can include decision-making power, flexibility in scheduling, and the ability to choose the tools or methods they use to complete tasks. In the academic sector, universities in Africa are expected to play a critical role in the country's socio-economic development by producing highly skilled graduates who can contribute to the country's development. However, the achievement of this goal is largely dependent on the performance and creativity of employees in these institutions. Job autonomy is an essential factor in promoting employee performance, well-being, and job satisfaction (Siregar *et al.*, 2021).

Employee creativity refers to the ability of employees to generate new ideas and solutions to problems, which is an essential aspect of innovation and growth in organizations. Job autonomy can facilitate creativity by allowing employees to engage in self-directed learning, experimentation, and exploration of new ideas and approaches (Huang, 2021). This is because autonomy allows employees to align their work with their personal goals and values, leading to a sense of ownership and commitment to their work.

In Ghana, job autonomy can contribute to employees' feelings of empowerment, engagement, and motivation, which can have positive impacts on job performance and retention. When employees have more control over their work tasks and decision-making, they can use their skills and knowledge to perform their job more effectively (Cai *et al.*, 2018). Employees in the selected universities in Ashanti region who have job

autonomy are more likely to be motivated and engaged in their work, leading to higher levels of job satisfaction and overall well-being. Job autonomy has been shown to have a positive impact on employee creativity, innovation, and problem-solving (Tisu *et al.*, 2023). By giving employees the freedom to make decisions and use their own judgment in their work, they are more likely to feel motivated and engaged, and to generate new ideas and approaches to problem-solving.

Moreover, when employees have a sense of control and ownership over their work, they are more likely to feel a sense of accomplishment and pride in their work, and to feel more invested in their job and organization (Suhandiah *et al.*, 2023). This can lead to increased job satisfaction and overall well-being, which in turn can have positive impacts on employee performance and retention. A study by Ding and Yang (2023) found that employees who reported higher levels of job autonomy were more likely to engage in proactive behaviour, which is a key aspect of creativity and innovation. This suggests that employees who have more control over their work tasks and decision-making are more likely to take initiative and come up with new ideas and solutions.

Job autonomy can play an important role in promoting employee creativity and employee performance among faculty members in universities. By providing employees with greater control over their work tasks and decision-making processes, universities can create a more supportive and empowering work environment that encourages innovation and excellence (Stawicki *et al.*, 2023). A study of university employees found that increased autonomy led to greater job satisfaction and a sense of empowerment, which, in turn, improved their job performance. Job autonomy has a significant impact on both employee creativity and employee performance. Employees with high levels of autonomy tend to be more innovative and generate higher-quality work, leading to

improved job performance (Miao *et al.*, 2022). It is essential for the selected universities to consider job autonomy when designing work environments and policies to ensure that employees work effectively and efficiently.

1.2 Problem Statement

Over the past years, universities in Ghana have experienced rapid growth and development, which has led to an increased demand for highly creative and productive employees (Santiago-Torner, 2023). These selected universities in Ghana are facing significant challenges in retaining top talent and fostering a work environment that promotes creativity and productivity. This is because many universities in Ghana are experiencing a shortage of qualified staff due to a lack of attractive incentives and career progression opportunities.

The success of any organization depends largely on the performance of its employees, especially in the higher education sector, where creativity and innovation are essential for the growth and development of institutions (Dler & Top, 2023). Job autonomy has been identified as a critical factor that influences employee creativity and performance, particularly in knowledge-intensive organizations such as the selected universities in the Ashanti region of Ghana (Suwannasri *et al.*, 2023).

Moreover, the selected universities in the Ashanti region of Ghana face unique challenges that affect the relationship between job autonomy, employee creativity, and performance (Sia, S. K., & Appu, 2015). These challenges include limited resources, bureaucratic structures, and a highly regulated environment. Therefore, it is essential to examine the relationship between job autonomy, employee creativity, and performance in the context of Ghanaian universities to provide insights into how universities can effectively manage their human resources to enhance creativity and performance (Akhtar & Ali, 2015).

Also, despite the importance of job autonomy in enhancing employee creativity and performance, there is limited research on the impact of job autonomy on employee creativity and performance in the selected universities in Ashanti region of Ghana (Bhattacharjee & Sarkar, 2023). Additionally, there are limited studies on the moderating effect of job autonomy on the relationship between creativity and performance among employees in universities in Ghana (Siregar *et al.*, 2021). Thus, the purpose of this study is to examine the impact of job autonomy on employee creativity and employee performance in selected universities in Ghana.

1.3 Research Objectives

The general objective of this study was to investigate the impact of job autonomy on employee creativity and performance in selected universities in the Ashanti region of Ghana. The specific objectives are as follows:

- i. To assess the effect of job autonomy on employee performance.
- ii. To determine the effect of job autonomy on employee creativity.
- iii. To ascertain the effect of employee creativity on employee performance.
- iv. To determine the mediating effect of employee creativity in the relationship between job autonomy and employee performance.

1.4 Research Questions

The following research questions will guide this study:

- i. How does job autonomy affect employee performance?
- ii. How does job autonomy influence employee creativity?
- iii. How does employee creativity affect employee performance?

- iv. Can employee creativity mediate in the relationship between job autonomy and employee performance?

1.5 Significance of the Study

The study on the impact of job autonomy on employee creativity and employee performance in the selected universities in Ashanti region of Ghana had significant implications for the universities, the employees, and the Ghanaian society as a whole.

The following are the key contributions of the study:

Contribution to the understanding of the relationship between job autonomy, employee creativity, and employee performance: The study would provide insights into the relationship between job autonomy, employee creativity, and employee performance in the context of universities in the Ashanti region of Ghana. This would enhance the understanding of the factors that affect employee creativity and performance, which could be used to develop effective strategies to improve employee productivity (Pattnaik & Sahoo, 2021).

Contribution to the development of effective human resource management practices: The study findings could be useful to human resource managers in developing effective practices to enhance job autonomy and creativity in the workplace. By understanding the factors that affect job autonomy and creativity, managers can design policies and practices that foster an environment of creativity and innovation, which could lead to improved performance (Garg & Dhar, 2017).

Contribution to the development of policies and guidelines for universities: The study would provide insights into the factors that influence employee creativity and performance, which could be used to develop policies and guidelines for the selected

universities in the Ashanti region of Ghana. By providing guidelines for promoting job autonomy and creativity, universities could improve employee satisfaction, retention, and productivity (Peng *et al.*, 2019).

Contribution to the development of the Ghanaian society: The study would contribute to the development of the Ghanaian society by providing insights into the factors that affect employee creativity and performance in the workplace. By improving employee creativity and performance, the study could contribute to the development of the Ghanaian economy, which could lead to improved living standards for Ghanaians (Huang, 2021).

1.6 Overview of the Methodology

The study employed a quantitative research design to gather and analyze structured data regarding the impact of job autonomy on employee creativity and employee performance in selected universities in the Ashanti region of Ghana. A cross-sectional survey design would be utilized to collect data from a larger, more representative sample of employees. Probability sampling techniques, such as simple random sampling or stratified random sampling, would be employed to ensure the generalizability of findings to the wider population of employees in the selected universities.

Data collection was carried out through questionnaire. The quantitative data underwent descriptive and inferential statistical analyses, including correlation analysis, regression analysis, and one-way ANOVA. Ethical considerations was upheld by obtaining informed consent, maintaining participant confidentiality, and safeguarding data from unauthorized access.

1.7 Scope of the Study

The scope of the study was limited to a specific geographic location, such as a particular country or region. This may affect the generalizability of the findings to other regions or countries. The study was limited to KNUST, AAMUSTED-K and Kumasi Technical University in the Ashanti region of Ghana. The study aimed to explore the impact of job autonomy on employee creativity and employee performance among academic staff in these selected universities.

The selection of the universities was based on convenience sampling, where universities that are accessible to the researcher and willing to participate in the study would be chosen. The study focused on academic staff in selected universities because they are more likely to experience job autonomy due to the nature of their work. The study gathered data through surveys with academic and non-academic staff members. The surveys were distributed electronically to ensure that responses are received in a timely and efficient manner.

1.8 Limitations of the Study

There are several limitations that should be considered purposely for the impact of job autonomy on employee creativity and employee performance. Firstly, the study relied on self-reported data from employees, which may be subject to social desirability bias (Nasution *et al.*, 2021). Participants may be hesitant to report negative experiences or feelings, which may lead to an overestimation of the impact of job autonomy on their creativity and performance. To address this limitation, the study employed measures to ensure the confidentiality and anonymity of the participants. Secondly, the study focused only on selected universities in the Ashanti region, which may limit the generalizability of the findings to other universities or regions (Balkin *et al.*, 2015). To mitigate this

limitation, the study aimed to select a diverse sample of universities that represents the broader population of universities in the region.

Thirdly, the study investigated the impact of job autonomy on creativity and performance, without exploring other potential factors that may contribute to employee outcomes, such as job satisfaction, motivation, and work-life balance. This limitation may restrict a comprehensive understanding of the relationships between job autonomy and employee outcomes. Lastly, the study would be conducted within a specific cultural context, which may impact the results. Ghana has a unique cultural background that may influence employee perceptions of job autonomy and creativity (Semedo *et al.*, 2016). While the study would aim to consider cultural factors, the findings may not be generalizable to other cultural contexts.

1.9 Organization of the Study

The study was organized into five chapters. Chapter one provided an introduction to the study, including the background, problem statement, research questions, objectives, significance, scope, and limitations. Chapter two reviewed the relevant literature on job autonomy, employee creativity, and performance. Chapter three described the research methodology, including the research design, data collection method, sampling technique, and data analysis method. Chapter Four presented the findings of the study, and Chapter Five provided conclusions, implications, and recommendations for future research.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

This research would explore the large body of literature on the relationship between job autonomy, employee creativity, and employee performance. It would examine previous research, theories, and conclusions pertaining to these concepts, illuminating their relevance and connections in diverse organisational contexts. This literature review would also provide the framework for our investigation of the selected universities in the Ashanti Region of Ghana by critically analysing previous studies.

2.1 Job Autonomy

Job autonomy refers to the degree to which employees have control over their work and decision-making. It involves the ability of employees to make decisions regarding their work, set their own goals, and control their work environment (Siregar *et al.*, 2021). In the context of universities, job autonomy can include factors such as the ability to choose research projects, design courses, and schedule work hours. Job autonomy has been shown to be an important factor in employee motivation, job satisfaction, and performance.

In universities, job autonomy can be particularly important for faculty members, who often have a high degree of expertise and experience in their fields. By providing faculty members with job autonomy, universities can tap into their expertise and creativity, allowing them to explore new research areas, develop innovative teaching methods, and contribute to the academic community. Also, job autonomy can be a powerful tool for enhancing employee motivation, job satisfaction, and performance in universities. By

providing employees with greater control over their work, universities can tap into the creativity and expertise of their faculty and staff, leading to greater success and impact in the academic community (Preenen *et al.*, 2016).

There are several benefits of job autonomy in universities, including:

Increased motivation: By giving employees more control over their work, they are more likely to be motivated and engaged in their jobs.

Improved job satisfaction: Employees who have greater job autonomy tend to be more satisfied with their jobs, as they are able to work in ways that align with their values and interests.

Enhanced creativity: Job autonomy can allow employees to think creatively and come up with new ideas that may benefit the university and the academic community.

To promote job autonomy in universities, organizations can consider:

Providing employees with the necessary resources and support to carry out their work independently.

Allowing employees to set their own goals and objectives, within the context of the university's mission and priorities.

Providing opportunities for professional development and training, so that employees can continue to develop their skills and expertise.

Encouraging a culture of innovation and experimentation, so that employees feel empowered to explore new ideas and approaches.

2.1.1 Types of Job Autonomy

Job autonomy can take different forms depending on the nature of the work and the organization's culture. By providing employees with different types of job autonomy, selected universities can promote employee empowerment, motivation, and job

satisfaction (Liu *et al.*, 2021). In the selected universities, there are different types of job autonomy that employees can have. Some of the common types of job autonomy include:

Task autonomy: This refers to the degree of control employees have over the tasks they perform. Employees with high task autonomy have the freedom to choose which tasks to perform, how to perform them, and when to complete them. For example, faculty members may have task autonomy when selecting their research topics or designing their courses.

Time autonomy: This refers to the degree of control employees have over their work schedules. Employees with high time autonomy have the ability to schedule their work hours and determine when they would complete their tasks. For example, some faculty members may have the option to work from home or have flexible work hours.

Resource autonomy: This refers to the degree of control employees have over the resources they use to perform their work. Employees with high resource autonomy have the ability to choose which resources to use, such as technology, equipment, or materials. For example, faculty members may have resource autonomy when selecting the software or equipment they use in their research.

Team autonomy: This refers to the degree of control employees have over the teams they work with. Employees with high team autonomy have the ability to choose their team members, delegate tasks, and make decisions about how to work together. For example, faculty members may have team autonomy when selecting their research collaborators or teaching assistants.

2.1.2 Importance of Job Autonomy in the University

Job autonomy refers to the degree to which employees in universities have control over their work and the decisions they make (Lee *et al.*, 2021). In universities, job autonomy is particularly important because of the nature of the work and the need for employees to have the flexibility and freedom to carry out their responsibilities effectively (Glowacka, 2021).

One of the key benefits of job autonomy in universities is that it can lead to increased job satisfaction and motivation among employees (Cai *et al.*, 2018). When employees have greater control over their work, they are more likely to feel a sense of ownership and pride in their work, which can lead to higher levels of job satisfaction and motivation. Additionally, job autonomy can help to reduce stress and burnout among employees, as it allows them to manage their workload and schedule in a way that works best for them (Ding & Yang, 2023).

Another benefit of job autonomy in universities is that it can lead to improved performance and innovation (Dler & Top, 2023). When employees have the freedom to make decisions and take initiative, they are more likely to identify and implement new ideas and approaches, which can lead to improved performance and innovation in the university. Additionally, job autonomy can help to create a culture of trust and collaboration, as employees feel empowered to share their ideas and work together to achieve common goals (Akhtar & Ali, 2023).

Job autonomy is effective in universities by providing employees with the necessary resources and support to carry out their responsibilities effectively (Huang, 2021). This includes providing access to training and development opportunities, as well as the tools and technology needed to carry out their work. Additionally, universities should provide

clear guidelines and expectations for employees to ensure that they are meeting the institution's goals and objectives while still maintaining the flexibility and freedom to carry out their work in a way that works best for them (Khoshnaw & Alavi, 2020).

2.2 Employee Creativity

Creativity is the ability to generate novel and valuable ideas or solutions (Tang, 2017). According to Pattnaik and Sahoo (2021), creativity can be fostered through a combination of intrinsic motivation, domain-relevant skills, and the appropriate work environment. The work environment includes factors such as resources, feedback, and autonomy. Employee creativity refers to the ability to generate novel and useful ideas or solutions to problems. When employees have greater job autonomy, they are more likely to engage in creative thinking and generate innovative solutions to problems (Garg & Dhar, 2017). Employee creativity is a critical aspect of innovation and progress in selected universities. Research has shown that creative employees can generate new ideas, solve complex problems, and contribute to the development of new knowledge and technologies (Peng *et al.*, 2019). Employee creativity can be achieved in the selected universities through:

Organizational culture: Organizational culture can play a critical role in fostering creativity among employees in selected universities. A culture that values innovation, risk-taking, and experimentation can encourage employees to think creatively and generate new ideas. Research has shown that universities with more innovative cultures tend to have higher rates of research productivity and impact.

Job autonomy: As mentioned earlier, job autonomy can be an important factor in employee creativity. Giving employees more control over their work, such as choosing

their research projects or designing their courses, can provide them with the freedom to explore new ideas and approaches.

Collaboration: Collaboration can be another key driver of employee creativity in selected universities. Working in teams or with colleagues from different fields can expose employees to new perspectives and ideas, leading to more innovative solutions. Research has shown that interdisciplinary collaboration can be particularly effective in promoting creativity and innovation in universities.

Intellectual curiosity: Intellectual curiosity is a personal trait that can drive employee creativity in selected universities. Employees who are naturally curious and interested in learning new things are more likely to generate novel ideas and approaches. Encouraging employees to pursue their intellectual interests, through opportunities such as sabbaticals, can support this trait and boost creativity.

Supportive leadership: Finally, leadership can play an important role in fostering employee creativity in selected universities. Supportive leaders who provide resources, feedback, and recognition can create a positive work environment that encourages creativity and innovation.

Ranjit (2022) suggested that employee creativity in the selected universities can be fostered through a combination of organizational factors, job autonomy, collaboration, personal traits, and leadership. By creating a culture that supports creativity and innovation, selected universities can leverage the expertise and talent of their employees to make meaningful contributions to the academic community and beyond.

2.2.1 Fostering Employee Creativity in the Selected Universities

In universities, employees such as faculty members, researchers, and administrators are expected to generate new ideas, solve complex problems, and contribute to the development of new knowledge and technologies (Semedo *et al.*, 2016). Employees' creativity can be fostered in selected universities through:

Encouraging innovation: The selected universities can encourage innovation by creating a culture that values creativity, risk-taking, and experimentation. Providing opportunities for employees to pursue their research interests and collaborate with colleagues from different fields can expose them to new ideas and approaches.

Providing resources: The selected universities can support employee creativity by providing the necessary resources such as funding, equipment, and technology. Access to these resources can enable employees to pursue their research interests and develop new ideas and technologies.

Fostering collaboration: Collaboration can be another key driver of employee creativity in selected universities. Encouraging employees to work in teams or with colleagues from different fields can provide them with a diverse range of perspectives and ideas.

Offering training and development: The selected universities can provide training and development opportunities to help employees enhance their creative skills. This can include courses on creative problem-solving, brainstorming techniques, and design thinking.

Recognizing and rewarding creativity: Finally, the selected universities can recognize and reward employee creativity through various incentives such as awards, promotions, and tenure. Celebrating the achievements of creative employees can motivate others to pursue their creative endeavours.

Also, employee creativity is a critical aspect of the academic and research enterprise in selected universities. By fostering a culture that values innovation and creativity, providing resources and support, promoting collaboration, offering training and development, and recognizing and rewarding creativity, the selected universities can leverage the talent and expertise of their employees to make meaningful contributions to the academic community and beyond (Liu, 2016).

2.2.2 The Importance of Employee's Creativity in the Selected Universities

Creativity is a vital component of innovation and progress in the university setting. Employee creativity is particularly important in universities because of the need to develop new ideas, approaches, and solutions to complex problems (Liu *et al.*, 2021). Creative employees are more likely to identify new opportunities and develop innovative solutions, which can lead to improved performance and competitiveness for the university.

One of the key benefits of employee creativity in universities is that it can lead to improved research outcomes and academic excellence (Tang *et al.*, 2017). Creative employees are more likely to generate new ideas and approaches to research, which can lead to ground-breaking discoveries and advancements in their field. Additionally, creativity can help to promote interdisciplinary collaboration and knowledge-sharing, as employees from different disciplines come together to develop new ideas and approaches.

Another benefit of employee creativity in universities is that it can help to create a culture of innovation and progress (Semedo *et al.*, 2016). When employees are encouraged to be creative, they are more likely to take risks and try new things, which can lead to new

discoveries and breakthroughs. Additionally, a culture of creativity can help to attract and retain top talent, as employees are more likely to want to work in an environment that values and rewards their creativity.

Employee creativity can be improved in the universities by creating a supportive and encouraging environment (Pattnaik & Sahoo, 2021). This includes providing employees with the resources and tools they need to be creative, such as access to funding, facilities, and technology. Additionally, universities should provide opportunities for employees to collaborate and share ideas, such as through interdisciplinary research programs and workshops. Finally, universities should recognize and reward employee creativity, such as through awards and promotions, to encourage employees to continue to be creative and innovative in their work.

2.3 Employee Performance

Performance refers to the degree to which an employee achieves their work-related goals (Preenen *et al.*, 2016). Performance can be measured using a variety of metrics, including productivity, quality of work, and customer satisfaction. Also, employee performance refers to the extent to which employees meet or exceed the expectations of their job (Balkin *et al.*, 2015). It refers to the extent to which an employee is meeting their assigned responsibilities and expectations in a manner that contributes to the success of the institution. The performance of employees in universities has significant implications for the achievement of the institution's goals and objectives, including the provision of high-quality education, research, and community engagement (Khoshnaw & Alavi, 2020).

When employees have greater job autonomy, they are more likely to be motivated and engaged in their work, which can lead to higher levels of performance (Tisu *et al.*, 2023).

The concept of employee performance in universities is complex and multidimensional, encompassing various aspects such as teaching effectiveness, research output, service to the university and the community, and overall contribution to the institution's mission (Ding&Yang 2023). Employee performance can be evaluated based on various factors, including but not limited to:

Teaching effectiveness: This refers to the ability of an employee to deliver high-quality instruction to students, which includes designing and delivering effective lesson plans, providing timely feedback to students, and creating an engaging and supportive learning environment.

Research productivity: This refers to the quantity and quality of an employee's research output, which includes publications in peer-reviewed journals, conference presentations, and grant awards. Research productivity is critical for the advancement of knowledge in the field and for establishing the university's reputation as a research institution.

Service to the institution and community: This refers to the extent to which an employee contributes to the university's mission by engaging in service activities that benefit the institution and the broader community. This may include serving on committees, participating in outreach programs, and providing consulting services to external organizations.

Professional development: This refers to the employee's ongoing efforts to develop their skills, knowledge, and abilities through training, workshops, mentoring, and other forms of professional development. This is important for staying current in the field, developing new expertise, and advancing in one's career.

Effective employee performance in the university requires a combination of knowledge, skills, and attitudes that align with the institution's mission and goals. It also requires ongoing feedback, coaching, and support from supervisors and colleagues to ensure that employees are continuously improving and meeting expectations (Stawicki *et al.*, 2023). Overall, employee performance is a critical component of the success of the university and is essential for achieving the institution's strategic objectives.

2.3.1 Performance Evaluation in Universities

Performance evaluation is a critical component of human resource management in universities, as it provides a mechanism for assessing employee performance and identifying areas for improvement (Miao *et al.*, 2022). Performance evaluation can be defined as a systematic process of assessing an employee's job performance against predetermined standards or objectives (Suwannasri *et al.*, 2023). The objective of performance evaluation in universities is to provide employees with feedback on their performance and to ensure that they are meeting the institution's goals and objectives.

Performance evaluation in universities can take several forms, including self-assessment, peer evaluation, and supervisor evaluation (Bhattacharjee & Sarkar, 2023). Self-assessment involves employees reflecting on their own performance and providing feedback on their strengths and weaknesses. Peer evaluation involves colleagues providing feedback on each other's performance, while supervisor evaluation involves the employee's immediate supervisor assessing their performance. According to Tang (2017), a combination of these evaluation methods is often used in universities to provide a more comprehensive assessment of employee performance.

Performance evaluation provides a mechanism for identifying areas for improvement and setting goals for future performance. Also, performance evaluation provides employees with feedback on their performance, which can motivate them to improve their performance and contribute to the university's goals and objectives (Peng *et al.*, 2019). Additionally, performance evaluation can help universities identify high-performing employees and provide them with opportunities for career development and advancement.

The selected universities should follow the best practices, such as setting clear performance standards and objectives, providing regular feedback, and linking performance evaluation to career development and rewards to ensure that performance evaluation is effective (Ranjit *et al.*, 2022). Furthermore, universities should ensure that performance evaluation is fair and objective and that all employees are evaluated using the same criteria. Finally, universities should ensure that the performance evaluation process is transparent and that employees understand the criteria used to evaluate their performance (Preenen *et al.*, 2016).

2.3.2 Professional Development Opportunities

Professional development opportunities are also critical for enhancing employee performance in universities. Training sessions, workshops, conferences, and mentoring programs have been shown to help employees develop their skills and abilities (Hollar *et al.*, 2022). These opportunities can help employees reach their full potential and contribute to the success of the institution.

This is because professional development opportunities can help employees in universities stay current in their field, develop new skills and knowledge, and advance in

their careers (Moonasar & Underwood, 2018). According to an article by MacPhail *et al.* (2019), professional development opportunities can also help universities attract and retain top talent by demonstrating their commitment to employee development and growth.

There are several types of professional development opportunities available to employees in universities. These include conferences and workshops, mentoring and coaching programs, online courses and webinars, and professional memberships and associations (Bossu *et al.*, 2018). As stated by MacPhail *et al.* (2019), these opportunities can provide employees with access to industry-specific resources, such as research journals, networking opportunities, and job boards. Additionally, online courses and webinars can be a cost-effective way for employees to develop new skills and knowledge and can be especially useful for employees who are unable to attend conferences or workshops in person.

As highlighted by (Hollar *et al.*, 2022), a professional development plan should outline the types of opportunities available, the criteria for eligibility, and the expectations for employees who participate in professional development programs. Furthermore, the universities should provide financial support for professional development opportunities, such as covering the cost of conference registration fees or offering reimbursement for travel. Finally, the universities should encourage employees to participate in professional development opportunities and create a culture that values employee development and growth (Bossu *et al.*, 2018).

2.4 Impact of Job Autonomy on Employee Creativity in Universities in Ghana

Job autonomy and employee creativity are closely related. Job autonomy refers to the degree of freedom and independence an employee has in making decisions and carrying

out tasks related to their job (Jaiswal & Dhar, 2017). When employees have a high level of job autonomy, they are able to use their own judgment and creativity to solve problems and complete tasks, which can lead to increased creativity. For instance, in a study by Santiago-Torner (2023), it was found that employees with greater job autonomy were more likely to engage in proactive behaviors that facilitated creativity. Another study by Sia and Appu (2015) revealed that employees who had greater control over their work environment and greater job autonomy were more likely to experience intrinsic motivation, which in turn led to higher levels of creativity.

Job autonomy can impact creativity by providing employees with the freedom and flexibility to explore new ideas and approaches, without the constraints of strict rules and procedures (Pattnaik & Sahoo, 2021). This is because they are more likely to have a deep understanding of the tasks they perform and the issues they encounter in their work, and they have the freedom to experiment with different approaches to find the best solutions. Secondly, job autonomy can increase employees' motivation and engagement in their work, which in turn can lead to greater creativity. When employees feel that they have more control over their work, they are more likely to feel invested in their work and motivated to perform at a high level (Garg & Dhar, 2017). Third, job autonomy can create a supportive work environment that fosters creativity. When employees have more control over their work, they are better able to collaborate and share ideas with their colleagues, which can lead to a more open and supportive work culture (Peng *et al.*, 2019).

However, the impact of job autonomy on creativity may not always be positive. High levels of job autonomy can lead to reduced creativity if employees do not feel supported or valued by their supervisors or peers (Huang, 2021). Therefore, it is important for

organizations to carefully consider factors such as task interdependence, feedback and recognition, and employee skill and expertise when designing job roles and responsibilities that promote job autonomy and creativity.

2.5 Impact of Job Autonomy on Performance in Universities in Ghana

Job autonomy has been found to have a positive impact on employee performance in various studies (Jong, 2016). When employees have a greater degree of autonomy, they have the freedom to make decisions about how they complete their work, which can lead to increased job satisfaction and motivation. Additionally, employees with greater job autonomy may be more likely to engage in proactive behaviours that improve their job performance (Zhang & Bartol, 2010). Also, job autonomy can reduce stress and job-related burnout, which can negatively impact employee performance. When employees have more control over their work, they can manage their tasks and responsibilities more effectively, leading to a better work-life balance and reduced stress.

Job autonomy can enhance motivation and engagement. When employees have greater control over their work, they are more likely to feel a sense of ownership and responsibility for their tasks, which can increase their motivation and engagement (Pattnaik & Sahoo, 2021). Moreover, employees with greater job autonomy are more likely to experience intrinsic motivation, which is linked to higher levels of job satisfaction and performance (Khoshnaw & Alavi, 2020). Furthermore, job autonomy can increase employees' sense of ownership and responsibility for their work, motivating them to put forth greater effort and engage in more creative problem-solving (Tisu *et al.*, 2023). This can lead to higher levels of performance, as employees are more likely to take pride in their work and strive to achieve better results. Moreover, job autonomy can lead to improved decision-making and problem-solving, as employees who have more

control over their work processes are better able to identify and respond to challenges in a timely and effective manner (Suwannasri *et al.*, 2023). This can result in higher quality work and improved organizational outcomes.

However, it is important to note that the impact of job autonomy on employee performance is not always positive. High levels of job autonomy can lead to decreased performance if employees do not have the necessary skills, resources, or support to effectively carry out their work (Peng *et al.*, 2019). Therefore, it is important for organizations to carefully consider the level of job autonomy provided to employees, and ensure that employees have the necessary training, resources, and support to effectively carry out their work tasks. Also, the impact of job autonomy on employee performance may depend on individual differences and the nature of the job. For example, some employees may prefer more guidance and structure in their work, while others may thrive with more freedom and flexibility. Therefore, it is important for organizations to carefully consider the needs and preferences of their employees when designing job roles and responsibilities that promote job autonomy and performance (Preenen *et al.*, 2016).

2.6 History of Higher Education Institutions

The history of higher education can be traced back to ancient civilizations such as Greece and Rome, where institutions of higher learning, such as the Academy of Athens and the Library of Alexandria, played a crucial role in the development of philosophy, science, and the arts. In medieval Europe, universities emerged as centers of learning and scholarship, with the University of Bologna being the oldest continually operating university in the world, founded in 1088 (Kohl *et al.*, 2022).

During the Renaissance, universities expanded their curriculum to include subjects such as mathematics, astronomy, and the natural sciences, reflecting the growing interest in empirical observation and experimentation. The establishment of printing presses also facilitated the dissemination of knowledge and helped to spur the growth of universities across Europe. In the United States, the first colleges and universities were founded in the colonial period, with Harvard University being the oldest, founded in 1636 (Liu & Gao, 2021). These institutions were primarily focused on training clergy and educating the elite, and were often affiliated with religious denominations. However, as the country expanded and the demand for education grew, new institutions emerged that were focused on a broader range of subjects and a more diverse student population.

During the 20th century, higher education institutions expanded rapidly around the world, driven in part by the growing demand for a skilled workforce and the increasing role of technology and research in society (Thelin, 2021). Today, there are thousands of colleges and universities around the world, offering a wide range of programs and degrees in fields ranging from the humanities to the sciences. The history of higher education institutions reflects the evolution of human knowledge and the changing needs of society, as well as the enduring importance of education in shaping individual lives and the broader world.

2.7 Theoretical Literature

Theoretical literature refers to the body of knowledge and ideas that explain and interpret a particular phenomenon or topic. It typically includes concepts, theories, models, and frameworks that are used to understand, analyze, and explain complex phenomena. Theoretical literature can be found in various academic fields such as psychology, sociology, economics, and political science, among others. Theoretical literature is

critical to research as it provides a foundation upon which empirical studies can be conducted. It helps researchers to identify key variables and relationships, develop hypotheses, and design research studies. Theoretical literature can also be used to develop interventions, policies, and practices that can improve outcomes in various domains.

2.7.1 Self-Determination Theory (SDT)

The Self-Determination Theory (SDT) provides a theoretical framework for understanding the relationship between job autonomy, employee creativity, and employee performance (Deci *et al.*, 2017). Self-determination theory of employees also emphasizes the importance of creating work environments that support employees' innate psychological needs, which can lead to greater motivation, engagement, and well-being. According to SDT, individuals have three basic psychological needs: autonomy, competence, and relatedness. Job autonomy satisfies the need for autonomy by allowing employees to have control over their work and decisions, which in turn can enhance their sense of competence and relatedness to their work (Ryan & Deci, 2017). These needs are:

Autonomy: The need for autonomy involves having control over one's work and decision-making. In the selected universities, this may involve giving employees the freedom to choose their research projects, teaching methods, and work schedules. By providing employees with autonomy, universities can increase their sense of ownership and engagement in their work.

Competence: The need for competence involves feeling capable and effective in one's work. In universities, this may involve providing employees with opportunities for

professional development and training, as well as resources and support to help them achieve their goals. By developing employees' competence help them increase their confidence and motivation in their work.

Relatedness: The need for relatedness involves feeling connected to others and a sense of belonging to a community. In universities, this may involve creating a supportive and collaborative work environment, promoting teamwork, and providing opportunities for social interaction and networking. By fostering a sense of relatedness, universities can increase employees' motivation and job satisfaction.

According to SDT, when these needs are met, individuals are more likely to be self-motivated, engaged, and satisfied in their work. Conversely, when these needs are not met, individuals may experience feelings of frustration, apathy, or disengagement.

In the workplace, SDT suggests that organizations can create environments that support these needs, which can lead to greater employee motivation, engagement, and job satisfaction. In the selected universities, providing employees with opportunities for autonomy, such as flexible work arrangements or the ability to make decisions about their work, can increase their sense of control and ownership over their job (Ryan & Deci, 2020). Similarly, providing employees with opportunities for growth and development, such as training or mentorship programs, can increase their sense of competence and effectiveness.

2.7.2 Expectancy Theory

Expectancy Theory is a framework for understanding employee motivation that suggests that individuals are motivated by the belief that their efforts would lead to desired outcomes (Zboja *et al.*, 2020). Expectancy Theory also provides a useful framework for

understanding employee motivation in universities, and suggests that organizations can use goal setting, resource allocation, and rewards to enhance employee motivation and engagement in their work. This theory has been applied to the context of universities and academic work, and it proposes that employees would be motivated when they believe that their efforts would lead to successful outcomes such as promotion, tenure, or recognition (Miao *et al.*, 2022). According to Expectancy Theory, there are three key factors that influence employee motivation:

Expectancy: This refers to an employee's belief that their efforts would lead to high performance. In universities, this could mean providing employees with the necessary resources, training, and support to help them succeed.

Instrumentality: This refers to an employee's belief that high performance would lead to desirable outcomes, such as promotions or recognition. In universities, this could mean providing opportunities for career advancement, research funding, or other incentives.

Valence: This refers to an employee's personal value or preference for the outcomes associated with high performance. In universities, this could mean understanding the values and preferences of employees and providing incentives that align with their individual needs and interests.

When employees believe that their efforts would lead to successful outcomes that are valuable to them, they are more likely to be motivated and engaged in their work. Conversely, when employees do not believe that their efforts would lead to successful outcomes or do not value the rewards associated with those outcomes, they may be less motivated and engaged in their work. In the selected universities, organizations can provide employees with clear goals and expectations for their work, and ensure that they have the necessary resources and support to achieve those goals. Organizations can also

provide rewards that are valued by employees, such as opportunities for professional development or recognition for their achievements (Kumar & Prabhakar, 2018).

2.8 Conceptual Framework

The framework suggests that when employees are given greater job autonomy, they are more likely to feel empowered to take ownership of their work and are more likely to engage in creative problem-solving. This increased creativity can lead to better job performance, as employees are able to come up with new and innovative solutions to the challenges they face in their work (Pattnaik & Sahoo, 2021). Furthermore, the mediating variable of employee creativity suggests that the relationship between job autonomy and employee performance may be strengthened by the extent to which employees are able to exercise their creativity in their work. This highlights the importance of fostering a work environment that encourages and supports creative thinking (Khoshnaw&Alavi, 2020). Job autonomy is the degree of freedom and discretion employees have in their work. The more job autonomy employees have, the more control they have over their work, and the more they can make decisions about how to complete tasks. Job autonomy can be measured through various objective criteria such as:

Decision-making authority: The extent to which an employee has the power to make decisions regarding their work, including the ability to choose tasks, methods, and goals.

Task variety: The range of different tasks that an employee is responsible for, which can affect the level of autonomy they have in their work.

Time autonomy: The degree of control an employee has over their work schedule, including the ability to set their own hours, take breaks when needed, and work from home or remotely.

Resource availability: The level of resources and support available to an employee to complete their work, including access to equipment, training, and guidance.

Performance feedback: The frequency and quality of feedback an employee receives about their performance, including the ability to review their own work and make adjustments as needed.

Employee creativity is the ability to generate novel and useful ideas. It is an essential component of employee performance because it can lead to innovative solutions to problems and new opportunities for the organization. Employee creativity can be measured through various objective criteria such as:

Quantity and quality of ideas: The number and originality of ideas generated by an employee in response to a given problem or task.

Novelty: The degree to which an employee's ideas are new or different from existing solutions or approaches.

Fluency: The speed and ease with which an employee generates ideas, as well as their ability to switch between different types of ideas.

Elaboration: The level of detail and complexity in an employee's ideas, as well as their ability to develop and refine their ideas over time.

Flexibility: The ability of an employee to adapt their thinking and generate alternative solutions when faced with new or unexpected challenges.

Employee performance is the level of productivity, efficiency, and effectiveness demonstrated by an employee. Employee performance can be measured through various objective criteria such as:

Quantity and quality of work output: The amount and level of quality of work produced by an employee within a given time period.

Customer satisfaction: The level of satisfaction or happiness of customers with the product or service provided by the employee.

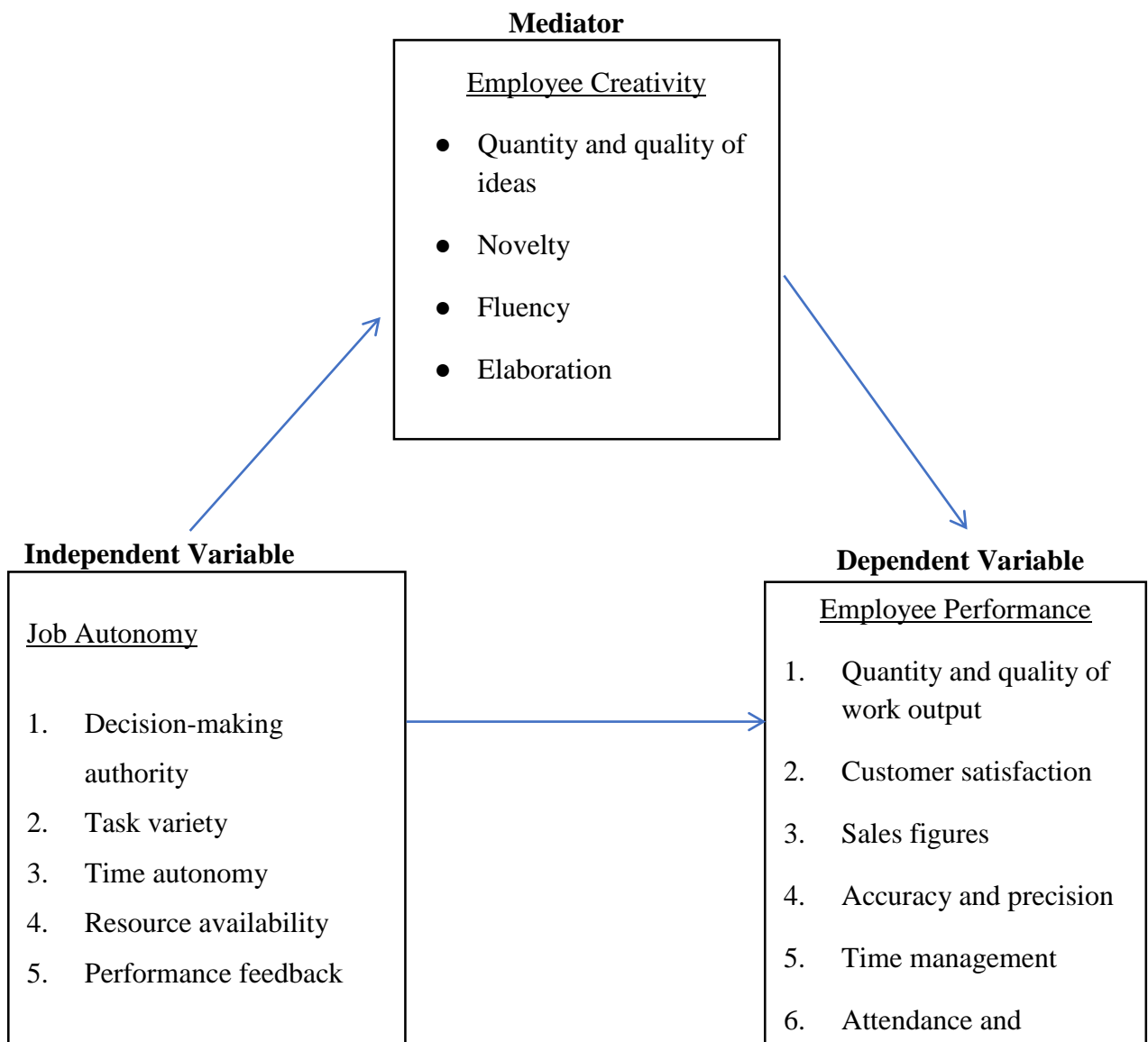
Sales figures: The amount of revenue generated by an employee in a given period.

Accuracy and precision: The level of accuracy and precision with which an employee completes their tasks.

Time management: The ability of an employee to effectively manage their time and prioritize tasks to meet deadlines.

Attendance and punctuality: The level of attendance and punctuality of an employee in completing their tasks.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK



2.9 Empirical Review

(Joo *et al.*, 2014) conducted a study to investigate the impact of perceived learning culture, leader-member exchange (LMX) quality, job autonomy, and proactivity on employee creativity in Korean firms. The study was conducted among knowledge workers in five Korean firms, and data were collected through self-administered questionnaires. The study findings suggested that the four predictors (perceived learning culture, LMX quality, job autonomy, and proactivity) and control variables explained 57% of the variance in self-rated creativity and 14% of the variance in manager-rated employee creativity. The study also found a positive and significant relationship between self-rated and manager-rated employee creativity, but the correlation was modest ($r = .24$) and job autonomy impacted employee creativity positively, hence increased employee performance.

Also, Guo *et al.* (2021) conducted a study to examine the relationship between corporate social responsibility (CSR), job autonomy, and employee creativity in the hotel sector of Pakistan. The study aimed to explore the mediating effect of job autonomy in explaining the relationship between CSR and employee creativity. The study collected data from 511 employees in the hotel sector of Pakistan using a self-administered questionnaire. The results of the study indicated a significant positive relationship between CSR and employee creativity. Job autonomy was found to mediate this relationship, suggesting that autonomy acts as a motivational pull for employee creativity. The study concluded that CSR initiatives and job autonomy helped improve employee creativity and employee performance in the workplace.

Orth and Volmer (2017) conducted a study to explore the influence of situational job autonomy and momentary work engagement on innovative behavior of employees. The

study analyzed data collected from 123 employees who were surveyed for five consecutive workdays. Hierarchical linear modeling was employed to analyze the data. The findings of the study suggest that both autonomy and work engagement have a positive influence on self-reported innovative behavior on a daily basis. Moreover, the study revealed that the effect of autonomy on innovative behavior is contingent upon the employee's level of core self-evaluations (CSE). Specifically, the daily within-person effect of autonomy on innovative behavior was found to be stronger for individuals with higher CSE beliefs as compared to those with lower CSE beliefs. Overall, the study highlights the importance of situational autonomy and momentary work engagement as day-level factors that promote innovative behavior among employees. The findings also indicate that the impact of situational autonomy on innovative behavior can be enhanced by employees' CSE beliefs.

Moreover, Preenen et al. (2016) aimed to explore the association between job autonomy and company performance growth (revenue, profit) and examine the moderating effect of company maturity in this relationship. Data was collected from 216 employees working in 45 companies in the Netherlands and analyzed the data using hierarchical regression analysis. The findings of the study revealed that job autonomy was positively related to company revenue growth, and the relationship was stronger for young companies. Additionally, job autonomy was found to be positively related to company profit, but only for young companies. These results suggest that job autonomy is important for young companies to provide their employees with the freedom to make decisions that can positively impact the company's performance. The study provides insights into the importance of job autonomy as a significant factor in improving company performance growth, especially for young companies.

Also, (Alhassan *et al.*, 2022) conducted a study to investigate the relationship between employee autonomy, intrinsic motivation, and employee creativity. The study collected data from a sample of 133 employees from selected institutions in Ghana and analyzed the data using the Hayes Process model of mediation. The findings of the study revealed that there is a significant relationship between employee autonomy and creativity, which is mediated by employee intrinsic motivation. The study also found a significant relationship between employee autonomy and intrinsic motivation and a significant relationship between intrinsic motivation and employee creativity.

The study conducted by Nasution (2021) aims to investigate the effect of job autonomy on employee innovative behavior, with the role of job satisfaction as the intervening variable. The research was conducted in Rantaurapat and used quantitative methods to collect data from 100 workers through questionnaires distributed via Google Form. The results of the study show that job autonomy can increase job satisfaction and employee innovative behavior. However, the study found that job satisfaction did not mediate the effect of job autonomy on innovative behavior. The direct effect of job autonomy on innovative behavior was found to be greater than the indirect effect via job satisfaction. The study also concluded that providing opportunities for employees to develop and innovate without feeling pressured at work can increase employee satisfaction, leading to better company performance. (Siregar *et al.*, 2021) conducted a study to examine the relationship between job autonomy, organizational commitment, and innovative work behavior of marketing employees in the automotive industry in Indonesia.

A total of 230 questionnaires were distributed to marketing employees working in the automotive industry in Bandung, West Java, Indonesia. Out of these, 209 questionnaires were collected and used as a sample in the study. The results of the study indicate that

job autonomy and organizational commitment have a significant positive influence on the innovative work behavior of marketing employees in the automotive industry in Indonesia. The study also found that job autonomy has a positive and significant influence on employee commitment and performance. The study concluded that job autonomy and organizational commitment play a crucial role in enhancing innovative work behavior among marketing employees in the Indonesian automotive industry.

Also, Jaiswal and Dhar did a study to examine the factors that create conditions for fostering creativity in employees in the hotel industry, and the focus was on the impact of human resource practices on employee creativity. Data for the study were collected from 440 employees working in 35 hotels using a structured self-administered questionnaire. The findings of the study suggest that affective commitment plays a significant role as a mediator between human resource practices and employee creativity. Job autonomy was found to act as a moderator between affective commitment and employee creativity. Moreover, the study highlights that job autonomy has a crucial role in enhancing the impact of affective commitment on employee creativity. The study findings indicated that affective commitment mediates the relationship between human resource practices and employee creativity, while job autonomy moderates the relationship between affective commitment and employee creativity.

The study conducted by Nande *et al.*, (2022) aimed to investigate the relationship between professional autonomy and innovative performance in French universities. A qualitative research design was used, and a qualitative comparative analysis (QCA) was conducted to explore the resource configurations that lead to innovative performance. The study focused on the combination of professional autonomy with various resources, such as individual, social, and organizational resources. The results of the study showed

that professional autonomy, when combined with appropriate individual, social, and organizational resources, can lead to innovative performance.

The study by Saragih *et al.*, (2015) aimed to examine the relationship between job autonomy and work outcomes, including job performance, job satisfaction, and job stress, as well as the mediating role of self-efficacy. The data were collected through a survey of 190 banking salespersons in D.I. Yogyakarta and Solo. The results of the study showed that job autonomy was significantly related to job satisfaction and job performance, but not job stress. Furthermore, self-efficacy partially mediated the relationship between job autonomy and both job satisfaction and job performance, but not job stress. Interestingly, the study concluded that there was no significant relationship found between job autonomy and job performance, but job satisfaction was found to be significantly related to job performance.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the methodology used to investigate the impact of job autonomy on employee creativity and employee performance in the selected universities in the Ashanti region of Ghana. The chapter includes a description of the research design, the sampling strategy, data collection instruments, data analysis techniques, and ethical considerations.

3.1 Research Design

The research design adopted a quantitative method to gather data and analyze the research question (Dawadi *et al.*, 2021). The quantitative component would involve a cross-sectional survey design to investigate the impact of job autonomy on employee creativity and employee performance in the selected universities in the Ashanti region of Ghana. The cross-sectional survey design was chosen because it allows for the collection of data at a single point in time from a large sample of participants. This design enables the researcher to examine the relationship between variables without manipulating them.

3.2 Population of the Study

3.2.1 Target Population

The target population is the complete group of elements relevant to the research project. The target population was all the university staff from the selected universities.

3.3 Sampling and Participants

Sampling is a crucial aspect of research design, as it enables researchers to draw inferences about a population based on data collected from a smaller subset of that population. The study employed quantitative sampling techniques to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the impact of job autonomy on employee creativity and employee performance in selected universities in the Ashanti region of Ghana (Etikan *et al.*, 2016). The study adopted probability sampling techniques to select a larger, more representative sample of employees to complete a survey. This quantitative approach would allow for generalization of the results to a broader population of employees at the selected universities in the Ashanti region of Ghana. Stratified random sampling and simple random sampling were used to select a representative sample of employees from each university (Rahman *et al.*, 2022).

3.4 Sample Size

The sample size was the 240 university staff from the selected university.

Table 3. 1: Sample Size

Name of Institution	Frequency
KNUST	80
AAMUSTED-K	80
Kumasi Technical University	80
Total	240

3.5 Data Collection

The study employed quantitative data collection techniques to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the impact of job autonomy on employee creativity and

performance in selected universities. The qualitative approach would provide more detailed insights into the experiences and perspectives of employees, while the quantitative approach would allow for statistical analyses and generalization of the findings to a broader population of employees (Taherdoost *et al.*, 2021). A questionnaire was administered to a larger, more representative sample of employees selected using probability sampling techniques. The survey would include validated measures of job autonomy, employee creativity, and employee performance. In addition, demographic information such as age, gender, education, and job position would be collected. The questionnaire was administered using Google form survey. The data collected would be entered into a statistical software program for analysis (Maida *et al.*, 2022).

3.6 Data analysis

The data collected were analyzed using statistical packaging for social science (SPSS v25) and reported as followed; representing respondents' characteristics were presented in Table 4.1, using frequencies and percentages measurement. This was followed by Cronbach's Alpha in Table 4.2, Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) in Table 4.3, also the descriptive result were presented in (Table 4.4, Table 4.5 and Table 4.6) and Table 4.7 and Table 4.8 present the correlation and regression result respectively.

3.7 Validity and Reliability

Validity and reliability are important concepts in research that refer to the accuracy and consistency of the results obtained from the data collection and analysis methods. Validity ensures that the research methods measure what they are intended to measure, while reliability ensures that the research methods produce consistent and accurate results across different situations and observers. This section described the measures used

to ensure content validity, construct validity, face validity, criterion validity, internal consistency, test-retest reliability, interrater reliability, and data analysis reliability (HR & Aithal, 2022).

3.7.1 Validity

Content validity provided evidence that the measures used to collect data were appropriate and relevant to the research questions being asked. This was done by conducting a review of the literature and consulting with experts in the field. The construct validity demonstrated that the measures used to collect data accurately and consistently measured the constructs they were intended to measure. This was done by conducting a confirmatory factor analysis or by demonstrating that the measures are correlated in the expected directions. Also, the criteria for validity were demonstrated to ensure that the measures used to collect data were related to other measures that were known to be related. This was done by correlating the measures with other established measures in the literature.

3.7.2 Reliability

The internal consistency would provide evidence to ensure that the measures used to collect data are internally consistent or were related to each other. The data collected for the study were reliable, this was done by checking for errors in the data, ensuring that appropriate statistical methods were used met the assumptions of the statistical tests. This was done by calculating the Cronbach's alpha coefficient.

3.8 Ethical Considerations

The study followed ethical guidelines for research involving human subjects. Participants were informed about the purpose of the study and their voluntary participation. Informed consent was obtained before the survey. Participants were assured of their anonymity and confidentiality, and their data would be protected from unauthorized access (Spellecy & Busse, 2021).

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.0 Introduction

The chapter four presented a comprehensive analysis of the empirical results and findings relating to the impact of job autonomy on employee creativity and performance within selected universities in the Ashanti region of Ghana. This chapter provided a thorough assessment of the level of job autonomy experienced by employees in the selected universities within the Ashanti region, shedding light on their perceptions and its potential implications. Subsequently, the chapter delved into exploring the intricate relationship between job autonomy and employee creativity, revealing through a combination of quantitative metrics and qualitative insights the factors that both stimulate and inhibit creativity in the academic setting.

Additionally, it scrutinized the connection between job autonomy and employee performance, offering a nuanced perspective on the effects of autonomy on productivity and effectiveness. Objective four was realized as the chapter identified key factors influencing job autonomy among university employees, yielding valuable insights into the complexities surrounding this crucial element in the academic landscape.

4.1 Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Table 4.1 below provides an overview of the demographic profiles of the survey's respondents, offering key insights into the composition of the workforce within selected higher educational institutions. From Table 4.1 below, it was observed that more males (57.1%) took part in the study than females (42.9%). This slight gender imbalance suggested that there might be variations in responses and perceptions based on gender

(Dler & Top, 2023). The age distribution indicates that, within the selected universities that are understudy, 1.3% of the respondents were aged between 18 to 25, 30.4% were aged 26-35, 36.7% were aged 36-45, 22.9 % were aged 46-55, and 8.8% were aged 56 years and above.

This demographic concentration suggests that a significant proportion of the workers fell within the mid-career phase of their professional lives. The demographic Table below additionally reveals that the majority of the respondents were Master's Degree holders, representing 51.2%. Followed by first-degree holders representing 28.7%, Doctorate Degree holders representing 14.6 %, followed by SHS Certificate holders (2.9%), Diploma holders (1.3%), and Basic Certificates representing 1.3. The majority of the survey respondents held Master's degrees (51.3%), this indicates a high level of education and expertise in their respective fields in the three universities (Kumar & Prabhakar, 2018).

To measure the organizational rank level of the respondents, the demographic table below represented this by revealing that the majority of the respondents in the three Universities are senior administrative assistants (25%), followed by principal administrative assistants representing 22.9%, followed by senior members representing 21.7%, followed by chief administrative assistants (21.7%), followed by junior administrative assistants (10.8%), followed by other staff members representing 3.8%, and casual staff comprising 2.1%.

The number of years of service was also assessed to determine the level of work experience the respondents have had in the selected universities. The result indicates that the majority of the respondents had 4-6 years of experience representing 28.7%, followed

by 7-10 years of experience representing 27.1%, followed by 10 years and above service period (17.5%), and finally 1-3 years working experience representing 17.5%.

This showed a significant level of tenure and experience among the workers within their respective university environments. Longer tenure implied a deeper understanding of the organizational culture, greater familiarity with processes and practices, and potentially a more comprehensive view of the challenges and opportunities within the university settings (Miao, 2022). The number of respondents for the survey is represented by 33.3% respectively at each University; KNUST, AAMUSTED-K, and Kumasi Technical University. This diversity in institutional affiliations suggests that the sample is not biased towards a single university, increasing the generalizability of the findings.

Table 4.1: Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Demographics	Responses	Frequencies (N)	Percentages (%)
Gender	Male	137	57.1
	Female	103	42.9
	Total	240	100.0
Age	18 - 25 years	3	1.3
	26 - 35 years	73	30.4
	36 - 45 years	88	36.7
	46 - 55 years	55	22.9
	56 years and above	21	8.8
	Total	240	100.0
Education qualification	Basic certificate	3	1.3
	SHS certificate	7	2.9
	Diploma	3	1.3
	Bachelor's Degree	69	28.7
	Master's Degree	123	51.2
	Doctorate Degree	35	14.6
	Total	240	100.0
Job Title	Casual staff	5	2.1
	Junior Administrative Assistant	26	10.8
	Senior Administrative Assistant	60	25.0
	Principal Administrative Assistant	55	22.9
	Chief Administrative Assistant	33	13.8
	Senior Member	52	21.7
	Other	9	3.8
	Total	240	100.0
Years of Service	1 - 3 years	42	17.5
	4 - 6 years	69	28.7
	7 - 10 years	65	27.1
	More than 10 years	64	26.7
	Total	240	100.0
Institution	KNUST	80	33.3
	AAMUSTED-K	80	33.3
	Kumasi Technical University	80	33.3
	Total	240	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2023.

4.2 Data Validity and Reliability

4.2.1 Cronbach's Alpha

To measure the validity and reliability of the variables used in the study (job autonomy, employee's creativity, and employees' performance), Cronbach's Alpha was run for all variables in the study to ensure that they met the validity and reliability standards, see Table 4.2 below. Table 4.2 below shows a list of the variables used in the study, the number of measurement items under the variables, Cronbach's Alpha coefficient, and the interpretation of its internal reliability. It can be seen from Table 4.2 below that, the Cronbach's Alpha for all variables was higher than the minimum requirement of 0.7, which shows that there was high internal reliability among the measurement variables.

Table 4.2: Cronbach's Alpha

Variables	N of Items	Cronbach's Alpha	Internal Reliability
Job Autonomy	5	0.733	Acceptable
Employee Creativity	7	0.884	Good
Employee Performance	3	0.796	Acceptable

Source: Field Survey Report (2023)

4.2.2 Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA)

The use of EFA assists to find out if measurement items were properly loaded onto their corresponding latent variables. EFA was run in SPSS (v.28). There were three (3) latent variables, which were, job autonomy, employee creativity, and employee performance. From the questionnaire (Appendix I), job autonomy had 5 measurement items, employee creativity had 7 measurement items, and employee performance had 3 measurement items. During the EFA, all measurement items loaded correctly onto their corresponding latent variables.

It can be inferred from Table 4.3 below that, the total variance extracted (TVE) was 60.82% which is higher than the minimum requirement of 50%. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling Adequacy should be at least 0.6 which the current study achieved 0.789 indicating high sample adequacy. Also, Bartlett's Test of Sphericity should be statistically significant in order to show the strength of correlations among the variables to guarantee EFA. The results attained ($X^2 = 1906.897$; Sig. 0.000) showed EFA was appropriate, as there existed enough correlation among the variables. The Determinant of correlation should also not be equal to zero (0), as an indication of positive definiteness in the data used for the estimation. The Determinant obtained for EFA was 5.256E-8 which is not equal to zero (0).

Table 4.3: Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA)

Measurement items	Component		
	1	2	3
JA1	0.652		
JA2	0.608		
JA3	0.708		
JA4	0.601		
JA5	0.697		
EC1		0.666	
EC2		0.762	
EC3		0.735	
EC4		0.736	
EC5		0.808	
EC6		0.758	
EC7		0.618	
EP1			0.825
EP2			0.759
EP3			0.804
Total Variance Explained	60.82%		
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy	0.789		
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	<i>Approx. Chi-Square</i>		1906.897
		Df	105
		Sig.	0.000
a. Determinant	5.256E-8		

4.3 Descriptive Analysis

4.3.1 Job Autonomy

In Table 4.3 below, the descriptive analysis for all the constructs studied under this subsection was presented. The measurement items were responded to on a Likert scale of 1-strongly disagree to 5-strongly agree. Mean scores above 3 were designated as falling within the ‘agree’ range and mean scores of less than 3 were also designated as falling within the ‘disagree’ range. The overall mean score for job autonomy was 3.82 which is above 3, and was thus concluded that the respondents agreed that job autonomy affects overall employee performance. It was further identified that all five (5) individual measurement items under this construct had mean scores greater than three (3). It was agreed that employees are involved in decision making processes that relate to their work. Additionally, it was revealed that employees have autonomous capacity that allow them to set their work goals.

Moreover, it was also agreed that employees have control over the scheduling of their work tasks and projects. The analysis further identified that employees have some level of autonomous capacity to choose the methods and approaches they have to adopt to enhance their ability to complete tasks and responsibilities. Finally, it was agreed that employees are empowered to independently plan and execute their job tasks and duties. The principle of employee empowerment was thus greatly observed within the three selected Universities that are understudy (KNUST, AMMUSTED-K, and KTU). This findings is in support of (Akhtar & Ali, 2023), who found a significant positive effect of job autonomy on employee performance. Allowing employees to make independent decisions and involving them in contributing to major goals makes employees feel empowered and committed to the organization (Khoshnaw & Alavi, 2020; Huang, 2021; Nande, 2022; Orth and Volmer, 2017).

Table 4.3: Descriptive Analysis on Job Autonomy

Items	Mean	Std. Deviation	Ranking
I am involved in decision-making processes related to my work.	4.03	0.90	1 st
My autonomy at work allows me to set my own goals.	3.99	1.04	2 nd
I have control over the scheduling of my tasks and projects.	3.85	0.91	3 rd
I can choose the methods and approaches I use to complete tasks	3.82	0.89	4 th
My job allows me to independently plan and execute my tasks.	3.42	1.19	5 th
Totals	3.82	0.93	

Source: Field Survey Report (2023)

4.3.2 Employee Creativity

The descriptive analysis for all the constructs studied under this subsection is presented in Table 4.4 below. The measurement items were responded to on a Likert scale of 1-strongly disagree to 5-strongly agree. Mean scores above 3 were designated as falling within the ‘agree’ range and mean scores of less than 3 were also designated as falling within the ‘disagree’ range. The overall mean score for employee creativity was 3.82 which is above 3, and was thus concluded that the respondents agreed that employee creativity will enhance employee performance. It was further identified that all seven (7) individual measurement items under this construct had mean scores greater than three (3). It was agreed that employees in the three Universities understudy (KNUST, AMMUSTED-K, and KTU) are willing to take calculated risks to explore innovative ways of executing tasks, solving problems, and enhance their performance towards the attainment of organizational goals.

Additionally, the analysis revealed the willingness of employees to take risks in efforts to explore innovative ideas that will enhance their creativity and overall level of performance. It was agreed that employees put in seamless efforts to engage in brainstorming and idea-sharing sessions to improve their creative abilities and performance at their job. It was further discovered from the analysis that employees are encouraged to think outside the box, and bring out innovative and creative ideas. It was also agreed that employees are motivated to develop novel approaches and ways of doing things in their work routines.

Furthermore, it was agreed that employees are inspired to think creatively about their tasks, this increases employee performance in a unique way. Finally, the analysis revealed that employees in the three Universities under study are recognized and rewarded for their creative contributions and impact on their organization's overall performance. Employee creativity was thus, a great tool that induces a great impact of fresh ideas, novel approaches, and encourages employees to nurture and put into practice their creative minds within the Universities under study (KNUST, AAMUSTED-K, and KTU). The findings align with (Ranjit, 2022), who made the assertion that; employee creativity results in the creation of a work atmosphere that is full of vibrant ideas, creative approaches to solutions, and a sense of trust and commitment among employees. Employee creativity consequentially increases employee performance, and their personal development, while it increases organizational output and efficiency (Guo *et al.*, 2021; Alhassan, 2022; Jaiswal & Dhar, 2017).

Table 4.4: Descriptive Analysis on Employee Creativity

Items	Mean	Std. Deviation	Ranking
I am willing to take calculated risks to explore innovative solutions.	4.13	0.81	1 st
I am willing to take calculated risks to explore innovative ideas.	4.12	0.79	2 nd
I actively engaged in brainstorming and idea-sharing sessions.	4.08	0.94	3 rd
I am encouraged to think "outside the box" to solve problems.	4.06	0.80	4 th
I am motivated to come up with novel approaches in my work.	4.02	0.83	5 th
I feel inspired to think creatively about my tasks.	3.98	0.81	6 th
I am recognized and rewarded for my creative contributions.	3.88	0.88	7 th
Totals	3.82	0.84	

Source: Field Survey Report (2023)

4.3.3 Employee Performance

Employee performance was the last variable in the study. The descriptive analysis for all the constructs studied under this variable is presented in Table 4.5 below. The measurement items were responded to on a Likert scale of 1-strongly disagree to 5-strongly agree. Mean scores above 3 were designated as falling within the ‘agree’ range and mean scores of less than 3 were also designated as falling within the ‘disagree’ range. All three (3) measurement items had mean scores greater than 3 (agree). The overall mean score for the 3 items was 4.22, indicating that there was a good employee performance in the 3 Universities understudy (KNUST, AAMUSTED-K, and KTU). It was agreed that employees are aware of the impact of their performance on the

university's success, and as such through their ingenuity and creativity their put in efforts to increase their level of performance. Additionally, the analysis also revealed that employees have a clear understanding of how their performance is evaluated, and thus use creative approaches in their tasks execution to get a good performance rating. Finally, it was agreed that when employees experience autonomy on their job, they feel motivated to increase their performance and excel. The findings of this analysis are in support of the findings made by (Ding, 2023), who revealed that employee's level of performance increases significantly when they have the flexibility to adapt their methods to their own strengths and work style. It tends to result in more effective and efficient execution of tasks, this consequentially increases performance level.

Table 4.5: Descriptive Analysis on Employee Performance

Items	Mean	Std. Deviation	Ranking
I am aware of the impact of my performance on the university's success.	4.27	0.79	1 st
I have a clear understanding of how my performance is evaluated.	4.26	0.71	2 nd
I feel motivated to excel because of the autonomy I experience	4.15	0.83	3 rd
Totals	4.22	0.78	

Source: Field Survey Report (2023)

4.4 Correlation

To assess the role of employee creativity as a mediator between job autonomy and employee performance, a correlation analysis was run. This was done by adding up control variables to ascertain the relation between the variables (job autonomy, employee creativity, and employee performance).

From table 4.6, it was indicated that any variable that correlates to itself has a correlation coefficient of one (1). Institution positively correlates gender with a correlation coefficient of 0.052. Also, institution positively correlates age with a correlation coefficient of 0.53. Also, there is an existence of a positive relation between institution and educational qualification with a correlation coefficient of 0.011. There exists a positive relation between institution and job title with a correlation coefficient of 0.012. Additionally, there is a negative relationship between institution and years of service, this is represented by a correlation coefficient of -0.024.

Also, there is a positive relation between institution and job autonomy, this is represented by a correlation coefficient of 0.062. Institution positively correlates to employee creativity with a correlation coefficient of 0.028. There is an existence of a negative relation between institution and employee performance, this is represented by a correlation coefficient of -0.023. Moreover, there is an existence of a negative relation between gender and age, this is represented by a correlation coefficient of -0.006. Also, gender positively correlates to level of formal education with a correlation coefficient of 0.085. Gender correlates negatively to job title with a coefficient of -0.051.

Additionally, gender correlates negatively to years of service with a correlation coefficient of -0.110. Furthermore, gender correlates negatively to job autonomy with a correlation coefficient of -0.104. There also exists a positive correlation between gender and employee creativity, this is represented by a correlation coefficient of 0.174, this is statistically significant at (0.01). Gender correlates positively to employee performance with a coefficient of 0.076. The relationship between age and level of education is positive with a correlation coefficient of 0.302, this is statistically significant at (0.01). Age positively correlates rank with a correlation coefficient of 0.515, and is statistically

significant. Also, there is an existence of a positive relation between age and years of service with a correlation coefficient of 0.375, this is statistically significant at (0.01), and this positive relation is also an indication that the higher the respondent's age the higher the respondent's working experience.

There is a positive relationship between age and job autonomy, this is represented by a correlation coefficient of 0.200, this is statistically significant at (0.01). Also, there is a positive relation between age and employee creativity, this is represented by a correlation coefficient of 0.060. Age positively correlates to employee performance with a correlation coefficient of 0.227 and is statistically significant at (0.01). The relationship between educational qualification and job title is positively correlated by a correlation coefficient of 0.638, this is statistically significant at (0.01) and indicates that an increase in respondent's level of education results in a corresponding high job title. Also, education is positively correlated to years of service with a correlation coefficient of 0.48a, this is statistically significant at (0.01).

Moreover, there exists a positive relation between educational qualification and job autonomy with a correlation coefficient of 0.130, and this is statistically significant at (0.05). Educational qualification positively correlates to employee creativity with a correlation coefficient of 0.305, and is statistically significant at (0.01). Education also correlates positively to employee performance with a correlation coefficient of 0.124. Job title correlates positively to years of service with a correlation coefficient of 0.538, t this is statistically significant at (0.01). Also, the relationship between job title and job autonomy is positive with a correlation coefficient of 0.056. Additionally, job title positively correlates to employee creativity with a correlation coefficient of 0.166, and is statistically significant at (0.01). Job title also correlates negatively to employee

performance with a correlation coefficient of -0.025. There is an existence of a positive relation between years of service and job autonomy, and this is positively correlated with a coefficient of 0.163, this is statistically significant at (0.01). Additionally, years of service positively correlates to employee creativity with a correlation coefficient of 0.150, and is statistically significant at (0.01). Years of service also correlates positively to employee performance with a correlation coefficient of 0.108.

Additionally, it can be inferred from the correlation table below that, there is an existence of a positive relation between job autonomy and employee creativity. This is represented by a correlation coefficient of 0.501 and is statistically significant at (0.01). This result validates the fact that job autonomy induces a high level of creativity among employees in the selected Universities understudy (KNUST, AAMUSTED-K, and KTU), this has the potential to results in higher employee performance level. Job autonomy also positively correlates to employee performance with a coefficient of 0.396 which is statistically significant at (0.01).

It is also evident from Table 4.6 below that, there exists a positive correlation between employee creativity and employee performance. This is demonstrated by a correlation coefficient of 0.484 which is statistically significant at (0.01). This result is in support of (Ranjit. 2022), who assert that when employees unleash their creativity, it fosters an environment brimming with lively ideas, inventive problem-solving approaches, and a culture of trust and dedication. This, in turn, boosts individual performance and personal growth, ultimately elevating organizational productivity and efficiency within the selected Universities understudy (KNUST, AAMUSTED-K, and KTU).

Table 4.6: Correlation Analysis

	Institution	Gender	Age	Educational Qualification	Job Title	Years of JA Service	JA	EC	EP
Institution	1								
Gender	.052	1							
Age	.053	-.006	1						
Educational Qualification	.011	.085	.302**	1					
Job Title	.012	-.051	.515**	.638**	1				
Years of Service	-.024	-.110	.375**	.482**	.538**	1			
JA	.062	-.104	.200**	.130*	.056	.163*	1		
EC	.028	.174**	.060	.305**	.166**	.150*	.501**	1	
EP	-.023	.076	.227**	.124	-.025	.108	.396**	.484**	1

***. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).*

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).*

4.5 Regression

To estimate the effect of the variables, the analysis was run in three models where the effect of job autonomy on employee performance was estimated in model 1, in model 2, the effect of job autonomy on employee creativity was estimated, and the last model which is model 3 the researcher estimated for the mediating role of employee creativity between job autonomy and employee performance.

From model 1 in Table 4.7 below, job autonomy had a significant effect on employee performance ($\beta= 0.330$; $t=5.782$). This means that job autonomy enhanced employee performance by about 33%, hence when employees in the selected Universities understudy (KNUST, AAMUSTED-K, and KTU) are autonomous by 33%, their performance level toward their organization would also increase by 33% and vice versa. When employees are involved in decision-making processes related to their work, when employees are autonomous at work, when employees have control over the scheduling of their tasks and projects, when employees can choose the methods and approaches they use to complete tasks, and when employees are allowed to independently plan and execute their tasks, it provides them with an avenue to nurture and put into practice the ingenuity and creativity at their disposal, and this consequentially results in increased level of employee performance.

The study is in support of (Akhtar & Ali, 2023; Nande, 2022), who made the assertion; empowering employees through autonomy and active participation in key objectives fosters a sense of commitment, motivating them to elevate their performance within the organization. Based on the results of the study, hypothesis H1: that job autonomy has a positive effect on employee performance is accepted.

From model 2, job autonomy had a positive effect on job creativity ($\beta = 0.507$; $t=8.778$). This shows that job autonomy influences employee creativity by about 50.7%. Therefore, when employees' autonomous capacity on their work increases by 1%, selected Universities understudy (KNUST, AAMUSTED-K, and KTU), employee job creativity will also increase by 50.7% and vice versa. This result is also in support of the study of The study is in line with the study of Guo *et al.*, 2021, who indicated that when employees bring their creativity to the table, it transforms the work environment into a hub of lively ideas, inventive problem-solving approaches, and fosters a strong sense of trust and commitment among team members. Therefore, hypothesis H2: job autonomy positively influences employee creativity is accepted.

From model 3 in Table 4.7 below, where employee creativity was added to estimate the mediating role, the results showed an insignificant effect between job autonomy and employee performance but the mediation effect was significant and positive ($\beta = 6.481$; $t=0.439$). This indicates that employee creativity fully mediates the relationship between job autonomy and employee performance. The results are consistent with Ranjit's (2022) research, which showed that the creative input of employees acts as a mediator between autonomy in decision-making (empowerment) and the overall performance of employees. According to his findings, fostering a work environment filled with innovative ideas, creative problem-solving methods, and a sense of self-directed capability leads to a subsequent enhancement in employee performance. Therefore, hypothesis H4: employee creativity mediates the relationship between job autonomy and employee performance.

Table 4.7: Regression Results

Variables	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	VIF
(Constant)	2.273(7.442**)	1.882(6.682**)	1.713(5.815**)	-
Institution	-0.051(-1.101)	-0.043(-1.007)	-.048(-1.117)	1.012
Gender	0.123(1.569)	-0.032(-0.432)	.001(0.011)	1.138
Age	0.167(3.552**)	0.232(5.428**)	.212(4.830**)	1.496
Educational Qualification	0.115(2.075*)	0.053(1.015)	.052(1.008)	1.935
Job Title	-0.131(-3.396**)	-0.162(-4.583)	-.150(-4.203**)	2.332
Years of Service	0.030(0.685)	0.038(0.940)	.032(0.788)	1.554
JA	0.330(5.782**)	-	.116(1.863)	1.528
EC		0.507(8.778**)	.439(6.481**)	1.582
<i>R</i>	<i>0.485</i>	<i>0.586</i>	<i>0.594</i>	
<i>R</i> ²	<i>0.235</i>	<i>0.343</i>	<i>0.353</i>	
<i>F</i>	<i>10.174</i>	<i>17.292</i>	<i>15.726</i>	
<i>Sig.</i>	<i>0.000</i>	<i>0.000</i>	<i>0.000</i>	

Dependent Variable: EP

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSIONS

5.0 Introduction

This chapter presents a summary of the research findings, gives conclusion and further gives recommendation of the research findings. This chapter also gives the contribution of the research to the body of knowledge.

5.1 Summary of Research Findings

The study sought to investigate the impact of job autonomy on employee creativity and performance in selected universities in the Ashanti region of Ghana. The analysis revealed several significant findings related to employee demographics and their perceptions of autonomy, creativity, and job performance within the organization. A slightly higher percentage of males participated in the study compared to females, suggesting potential variations in responses based on gender. Most workers fell within the 26 to 45 years age range, indicating a significant mid-career presence, likely with accumulated work experience. The majority of workers held Master's degrees, highlighting a well-educated workforce. Furthermore, the majority of workers held higher-ranking positions within the organization, and more than half of the workers had over four years of tenure. This diverse sample represented different types of institutions enhanced the generalizability of the study.

Employees reported a significant level of autonomy in decision-making, planning, and task execution, indicating empowerment and responsibility. Autonomy was associated with effective skill utilization, accountability, self-confidence, alignment with strengths, motivation, and understanding of performance evaluation. Employees understood their

impact on the university's success and believed autonomy contributed to their professional growth.

The regression analysis revealed a strong and statistically significant positive relationship between job autonomy and both employee creativity and performance. Approximately 44.9% of the variance in creativity and 60.3% in performance could be explained by job autonomy. For every unit increase in job autonomy, creativity increased by approximately 0.697 units, and performance by about 0.777 units, emphasizing the importance of autonomy in fostering creativity and enhancing job performance. Therefore, there was a significant difference between job autonomy, employee creativity and employee performance in the selected universities in the Ashanti region of Ghana

5.2 Conclusions

Based on the findings of this study, this analysis of employee demographics and their perceptions of autonomy, creativity, and job performance revealed a diverse and well-educated workforce. The study concluded that job autonomy has a significant effect on employee performance and employee Creativity partially mediates the relationship between Job Autonomy and Employee Performance.

5.3 Recommendation

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made to investigate the impact of job autonomy on employee creativity and performance in selected universities in the Ashanti region of Ghana. The study therefore recommends that;

- There is the need to offer training programs that help employees develop the skills and confidence needed to effectively manage their work autonomously. This can include decision-making, time management, and goal setting.
- There is the need to actively promote a culture of autonomy by empowering employees to make decisions related to their work processes and tasks.
- Acknowledge and reward creative contributions from employees. Implement recognition programs that celebrate innovative ideas and solutions. This would motivate employees to continue generating novel approaches to challenges.
- There is the need to highlight the connection between autonomy and long-term professional growth. Employees should see autonomy as a pathway to acquiring new skills, taking on challenging tasks, and advancing their careers within the organization.

5.4 Suggestion for Further Research

Though this study has provided valuable insight into job autonomy, employee creativity and employee performance, it has equally led to some unanswered questions relative to its capacity to produce the desired outcomes in higher educational Institutions Ghana. In view of this, the following recommendations were made for future research:

- This study was limited to only three universities in the Ashanti Region of Ghana and it is therefore recommended that future works should have a larger scope that would strengthen the findings of this study in order to ascertain whether generalizing these findings is possible beyond where this research was undertaken.
- Another acknowledged limitation of this study was its over reliance on data obtained within the period of study. A repetition of this study in the future could

add the benefit of a longitudinal scope and could allow researchers to understand by identifying the impact of job autonomy on employee creativity and performance in selected universities in the Ashanti region of Ghana.

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APPENDIX
RESEARCH QUESTIONNAIRE

This questionnaire is intended to solicit your views on the impact of job autonomy on employee creativity and employee performance in selected universities in the Ashanti region of Ghana. All information provided would be treated as strictly confidential and for academic purpose only and has no prejudices for future endeavours.

Please tick [] where necessary.

SECTION A: Demographic Characteristics of Workers

1. Gender

a. Male []

b. Female []

2. Age

a. 18 – 25 []

b. 26 – 35 []

c. 36-45 []

d. 46-55 []

e. 56 and above []

3. Educational Qualification

a. Basic Certificate []

b. SHS certificate []

c. Diploma []

- d. Bachelor's Degree []
- e. Master's Degree []
- f. Doctorate Degree []
- g. Others []

4. Position/Job Title

- a. Casual Staff []
- b. Junior Administrative Assistant []
- c. Senior Administrative Assistant []
- d. Principal Administrative Assistant []
- e. Chief Administrative Assistant []
- f. Senior Members []
- g. Other (Please specify:)

5. Years of Service in the University

- a. Less than 1 year []
- b. 1-3 years []
- c. 4-6 years []
- d. 7-10 years []
- e. More than 10 years []

6. Department/Faculty

Please specify.....

7. University Affiliation

- a. KNUST []

b. AAMUSTED-K []

c. Kumasi Technical University []

SECTION B: Job Autonomy

Please in the table below, state whether you agree or disagree on the statements provided regarding job autonomy.

Please tick (✓) as appropriate: **1=SD=Strongly Disagree, 2=D=Disagree, 3=N=Neural, 4=A=Agree and 5=SA=Strongly Agree**

Code	Statements	SD	D	N	A	SA
JA1	My job allows me to independently plan and execute my tasks.					
JA2	I can choose the methods and approaches I use to complete tasks.					
JA3	I have control over the scheduling of my tasks and projects.					
JA4	My autonomy at work allows me to set my own goals.					
JA15	I am involved in decision-making processes related to my work.					

SECTION C: Employee Creativity

Please in the table below, state whether you agree or disagree on the statements provided in respect of employee creativity.

Please tick (√) as appropriate: 1=SD=Strongly Disagree, 2=D=Disagree, 3=N=Neutral, 4=A=Agree and 5=SA=Strongly Agree

Code	Statements	SD	D	N	A	SA
EC1	I feel inspired to think creatively about my tasks.					
EC2	I am willing to take calculated risks to explore innovative solutions.					
EC3	I am willing to take calculated risks to explore innovative ideas					
EC4	I am motivated to come up with novel approaches in my work.					
EC5	I am recognized and rewarded for my creative contributions.					
EC6	I am encouraged to think "outside the box" to solve problems.					
EC7	I actively engaged in brainstorming and idea-sharing sessions.					

SECTION D: Employee Performance

Please in the table below, state whether you agree or disagree on the statements provided regarding employee's performance.

Please tick (√) as appropriate: **1=SD=Strongly Disagree, 2=D=Disagree, 3=N=Neural, 4=A=Agree and 5=SA=Strongly Agree**

Code	Statements	SD	D	N	A	SA
EP1	I feel motivated to excel because of the autonomy I experience.					
EP2	I have a clear understanding of how my performance is evaluated.					
EP3	I am aware of the impact of my performance on the university's Success.					

Thank you for your cooperation