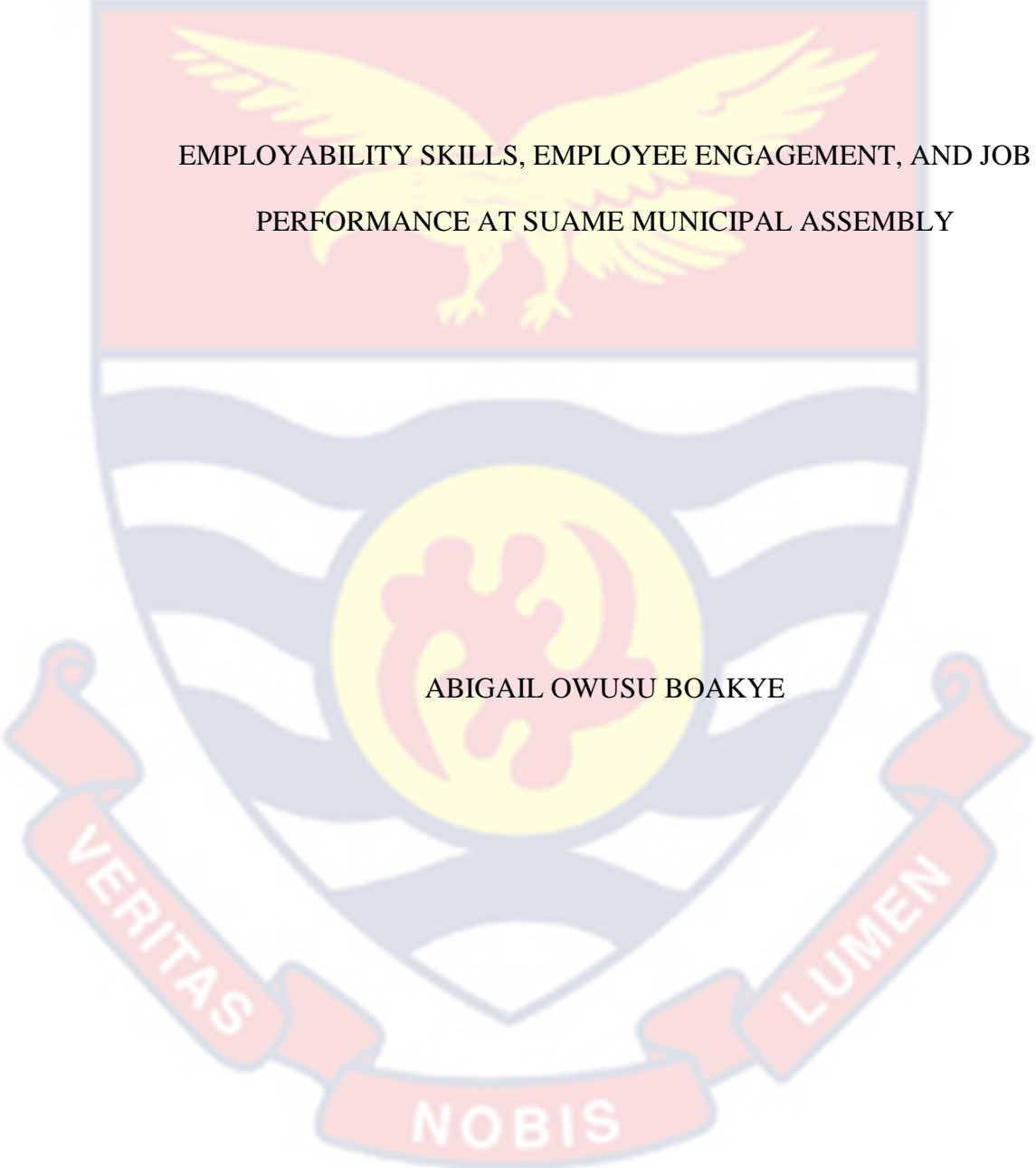UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS, EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT, AND JOB

PERFORMANCE AT SUAME MUNICIPAL ASSEMBLY

ABIGAIL OWUSU BOAKYE

2023

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

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PERFORMANCE AT SUAME MUNICIPAL ASSEMBLY

BY

ABIGAIL OWUSU BOAKYE

Thesis submitted to the Department of Human Resource Management of the
School of Business, College of Humanities and Legal Studies, University of
Cape Coast, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of Master
of Commerce degree in Human Resource Management
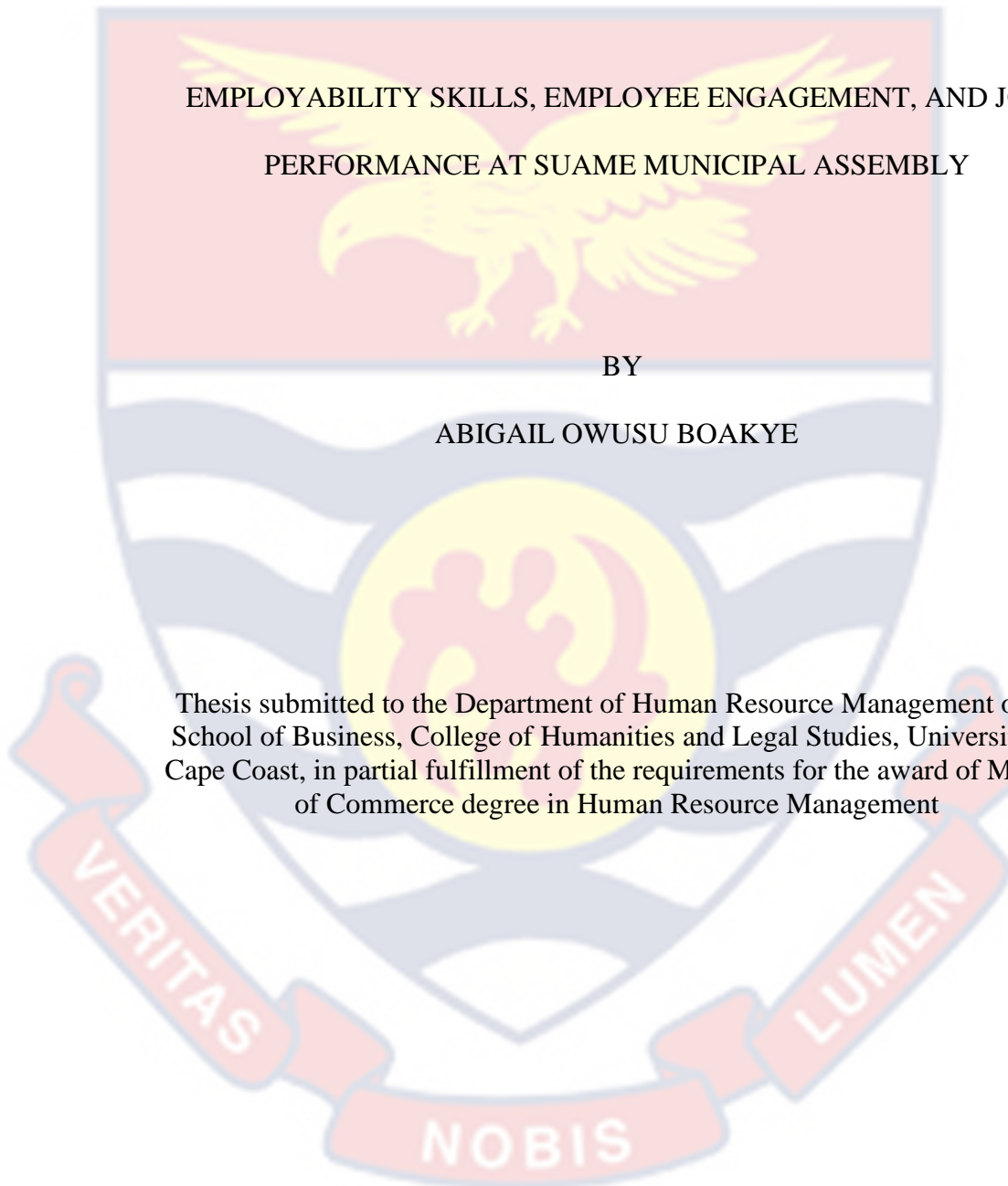
SEPTEMBER 2023

DECLARATION

Candidate's Declaration

I hereby declare that this thesis is the result of my original research and that no part of it has been presented for another degree in this university or elsewhere.
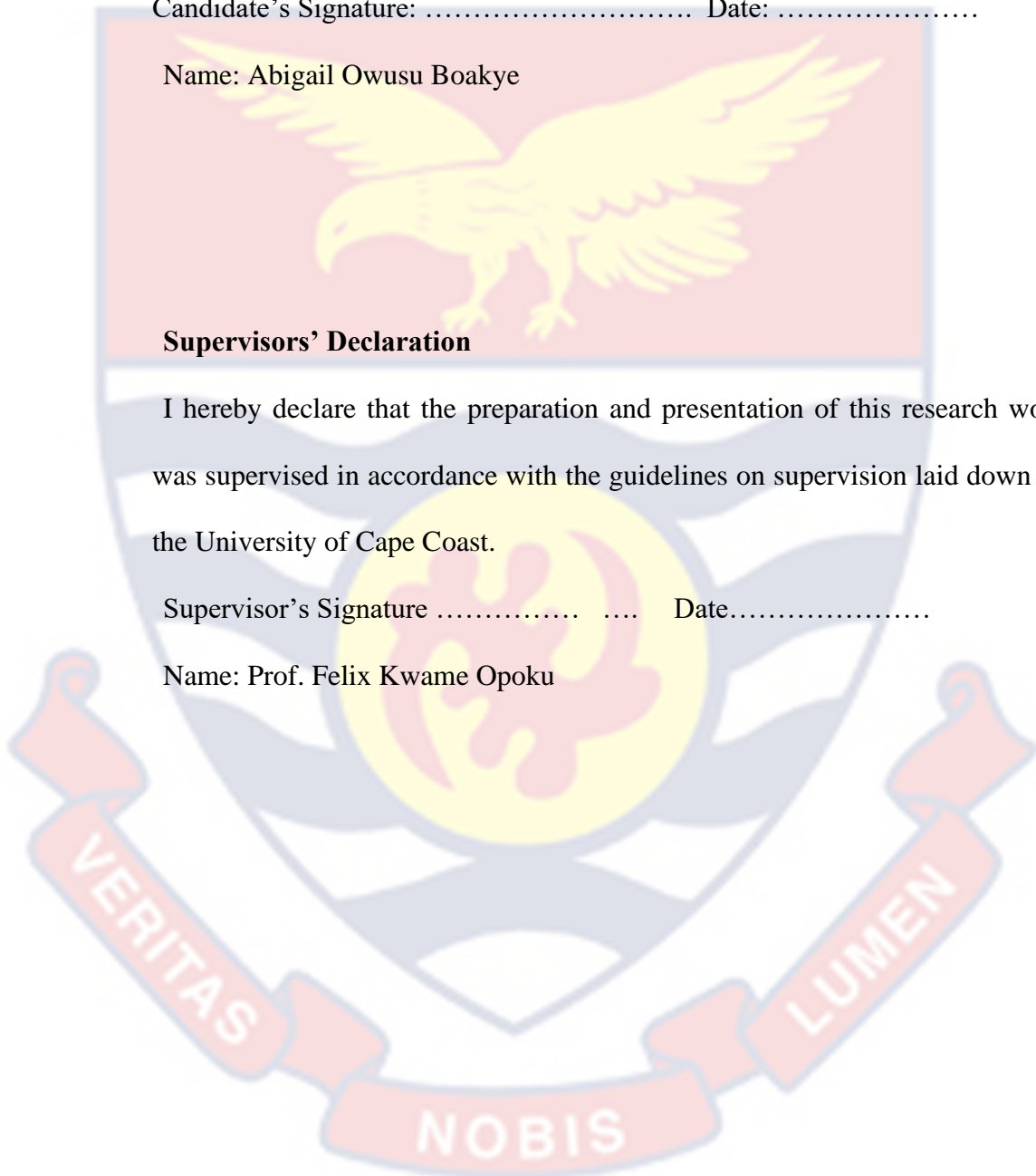
Candidate's Signature: ………………………. Date: …………………

Name: Abigail Owusu Boakye

Supervisors' Declaration

I hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of this research work was supervised in accordance with the guidelines on supervision laid down by the University of Cape Coast.

Supervisor's Signature …………… …. Date…………………

Name: Prof. Felix Kwame Opoku

ABSTRACT

Employability skills are a set of essential qualities and abilities that go beyond technical knowledge and are essential for building positive work relationships, collaborating on projects, and directing the complexities of the modern workplace. The study examined the relationship between employability skills and job performance of staff at Suame municipal assembly, the mediating effect of employee engagement. This research employed a quantitative research methodology. Again, descriptive and explanatory research designs were used to explain the findings. The research used human capital theory and two-factor theory. In addition, sample size of 144 staff members were used using random sampling technique, and the data were analyzed using partial least squares structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM). The research findings showed that the relationship between employability skills and job performance is statistically insignificant; hence, employees' skills did not affect their performance at Suame municipal assembly. Again, it was found that employability skills have a statistical relationship with employee engagement. This study also found employee engagement has a significant effect on job performance. Finally, study's results show employee engagement mediates the relationship between employability skills and job performance indirectly. This study recommends that the management of the Suame municipal assembly explore alternative factors (job satisfaction and leadership quality) that could potentially impact job performance. Again, this study recommends that the management of the Suame municipal assembly make a radical shift and transformation to intensify the level of engagement they offer to employees.

KEYWORDS

Employability skills

Employee engagement

Job performance

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DEDICATION

To my family

TABLE OF CONTENT

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF FIGURES

LIST OF ACRONYMS

ES   Employability Skills

EE   Employee Engagement

JP   Job Performance

IBES   Integrated Business Establishment Survey

LGS   Local Government Service

SMA   Suame Municipal Assembly

xiii

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Background to the Study

Policymakers and academics alike typically concur on the significance of employability in a worldwide competitive economy where transformation is a daily reality (Peeters et al., 2019). The concepts of employability skills, employee engagement, and job performance exist and permeate every society, and have been deemed very essential to the functioning and effectiveness of organisations within societies (Amoako-Asiedu & Obuobisa-Darko, 2017; Brenyah & Obuobisa-Darko, 2017). Employability skills, usually referred to as career abilities, are collections of essential qualities, knowledge, and abilities that help people to succeed in the workplace and increase their employability (Schaufeli, 2021). Employers highly value these skills, and candidates actively seek them for various job positions.

The concept of employability skills has evolved over time in response to changing labour market demands and the need for a more adaptable and competent workforce (Markos & Sridevi, 2010). Traditionally, employability skills focused on technical abilities specific to particular industries. However, as the nature of work transformed due to technological advancements and globalization, there emerged a greater emphasis on transferable skills applicable across multiple professions and sectors (Chen, 2018). According to Suarta et al. (2019), specialized work-related skills are no longer suitable for employees to meet labor market demand in the modern workplace. However, employers are searching for employees with exceptional abilities and characteristics known as employability skills (ES), which are considered vital

1

issues in the national, regional, and the international labor market (Mason et al., 2021).

Bennett et al. (2021) further posited that employees require several employability skill traits when they enter the workforce. The essential elements of employability skills that employees must possess; comprise communication skills, problem-solving skills, decision-making skills, and teamwork (Hashim, 2020). Misra and Mishra (2021) defined employability as acquisition of the necessary abilities enabling one to obtain and remain in employment throughout one's career life. Employees are considered relevant within an organisation because they partake in the organisation's daily activities for the continuity and survival of the organisation (Wambugu, 2019; Abdullahi et al., 2020).

Ramli (2018) further posited that Employees must be forward-thinking, receptive, hard-working, and meticulous in order to remain completely ahead of their competitors. This shows how employability skills are important to the success of every organisation and to get the best performance possible. According to Sarwar et al. (2020), job performance measures the amount of efficacy brought about by a specific level of efficiency-related costs. Similarly, Ganyang (2019) also posited that an organisation's total success is extremely dependent on employability skills through job performance. Sarwar et al. (2018) further posited that Job performance quantifies the concentration of effectiveness at a particular level of efficiency-related cost. Therefore, according to Mkamburi and Kamaara (2017), job performance is the process by which an employee successfully

2

completes task assigned to them while making fair use of the resources at their disposal.

The concerted engagement effort of its employees determines an organisation ability to earn more profit and sustain a competitive advantage, as every organisation exists to make a profit (Dobre, 2019). Given the assertions made above about the concept and viewpoint of job performance, its general applicability could be contested, and not be disregarded because it forms part of what every organisation needs to achieve its stated goals and objectives. However, (Obuobisa-Darko, 2020; Schaufeli, 2021; Zhao & Zhao, 2017) posit employee engagement is the state of mind at the workplace characterized by positive feelings, a sense of fulfilment, and a strong dedication to work. This state of mind is marked by vigour, commitment, and interest in one's job responsibilities.

An inspired and motivated staff promotes employee engagement as proactive and positive workplace conduct centred on attaining clearly stated business objectives (Turner, 2020). A three-pronged strategy focusing on social, affective, and behavioural factors encourages employee engagement. The concept of engagement assesses an employee's social engagement, an employee's affective engagement, and an employee's behavioral engagement initiative, and how actively a worker looks for opportunities to discuss work-related improvements with co-workers. However, employee engagement has attracted a lot of attention recently, with researchers demonstrating important role it plays in job performance (Brenyah & Obuobisa-Darko, 2017; Cesário & Chambel, 2017; Markos & Sridevi, 2010; Ohemeng, Darko & Amoako-Asiedu, 2019). The engagement is a key in achieving best levels of job

3

performance, and employee's engagement levels have significant impacts on organisation's overall success (Ganyang, 2019). Thus, an engaged employee inspires his coworkers to follow suit by being aware of his contribution to the accomplishment of organisational goals. To attain the best levels of employee performance, businesses needed to discover how to include engagement tactics into their overall organisational strategy (Brenyah & Obuobisa-Darko, 2017; Cesário & Chambel, 2017; Turner, 2020). This demonstrates that employee engagement really fuels performance, rather than efficiency alone having an impact on an organisation's financial health.

Both the human capital theory and two-factor theory are used to link the connection between employability and job performance (Cesário & Chambel, 2017; Turner, 2020). These theories reveal that the key factor in improving job performance and employability is employee engagement. The human capital theory posits that individuals can enhance their earning potential and their prospects in the labour market through acquisition and development of knowledge, skills, and abilities (Yong et al., 2019). According to this theory, individuals are seen as rational decision-makers who carefully evaluate the costs and benefits of investing in education and training (Chen & Chang, 2018).

However, employees take into consideration the anticipated returns on their investment, such as higher wages or improved job opportunities, and weigh them against the associated costs, including tuition fees, time commitments, and the potential loss of earnings during the education or training period (Chen & Chang, 2018). Additionally, according to Herzberg (1971), two-factor theory of motivation, the theory posits that individuals

4

possess an inherent desire for personal growth, achievement, and self-development. According to Shaikh et al. (2019), intrinsic aspects of one's job—such as feeling fulfilled, taking on difficult tasks, and having opportunities for both personal and professional advancement—are what motivate people.

Bhave et al. (2019) established that employee's engage in a rationalisation process to comprehend their wants, perspectives, and value through encounters at work. The above assumptions about these theories show how important they are for explaining the relationship between study variables and why the researcher chose them. There is accumulating empirical evidence that employability skills affect job performance and that engaged employees deliver better performance (Abas & Imam, 2016; Abdullahi et al., 2021; Marzec et al., 2021; Ismail et al., 2019; Nguyen & Nguyen, 2022; Oluwatobi et al., 2020; Arsenis et al., 2022). For instance, Abas and Imam (2016) examined the connection between competence in employability skills and job performance and found a substantial but weak association among these variables. It was further emphasized that employees' employability skills are relevant to the employee's progression.

Marzec et al. (2021) assessed the connection among job content and employees' employability and job performance in public organisations and found that employability significantly improved the standard of job performance. Arsenis et al. (2022) looked at the relationship between employability skills and employee engagement and found there was a strong positive link between the variables. Oluwatobi et al. (2020) carried out comparable investigations in Nigeria and reached the same outcome. Ismail et

al. (2019) assessed the link among employee engagement and job performance, and discovered that employee's engagement significantly improves job performance. Abdullahi et al (2021) further studied mediating effect of employee involvement in organisational culture on employee performance in Malaysian educational sector. The research discovered a strong correlation between job performance and employee engagement.

In contrast with aforementioned findings, Nguyen and Nguyen (2022) examined the association between employee engagement, and performance in Vietnam and found there was no statistically significant connection among employee engagement and performance. The results from aforementioned studies indicate a significant relationship among the study variables with only a few exceptions. However, there is a need to understand the pathways through which performance takes place, and employability skills may be one such mechanism (Sadat & Nilasari, 2022).

Furthermore, although the majority of reviewed studies revealed a significant relationship among these variables, some of the reviewed studies also attested to the fact that employee engagement could moderate, if not mediate, the connection between employability skills and job performance (Abdullahi et al., 2021). However, only a few studies on these concepts have been examined in developing nations like Ghana, majority concentrating on developed nations. Oluwatobi et al. (2020), also, assert that employee engagement affects job performance across all economies, not only those in developed nations. In light of the above-mentioned suppositions and given that studies in the area remain important to the success of most sectors, both private and public, the study, therefore, pursues to analyze the mediating effect

6

of employee engagement on the relationship between employability skills and job performance in Ghana, focusing on Suame Municipal Assembly.

Statement of the Problem

Local Government Service, ranked Suame Municipal Assembly low (below average) on their performance standards and productivity, according to reports from the regional coordinating councils and metropolitan, municipal, and district assemblies (MMDs), (LGS, 2021). Amoako-Asiedu & Obuobisa-Darko (2017) discovered direct correlation among employee performance in the public sector and degree of engagement. Muhammad-Bashir et al. (2020) also posit that performance of employees reflects the behaviours they engage in, positively or negatively, because it eventually leads to the organisation's success or failure.

Organisations are faced challenges in maximizing employee job performance due to a lack of emphasis on employability skills. Employability skills are essential competencies that enable individuals to secure and excel at employment opportunities (Abdullahi et al., 2021). However, there is an absence of responsiveness and knowledge about the important of these employability skills, resulting in suboptimal job performance and decreased organisational productivity. The Integrated Business Establishment Survey (IBES) (2017) reveals that employees lacking the necessary employability skills plague the majority of Ghanaian enterprises, thereby negatively affecting output and performance. The report further revealed a lack of employee engagement in most Ghanaian enterprises which negatively affects performance.

7

A survey by Boahin (2018) also revealed that employees have weak employability skills, in the areas of communication, teamwork, and the problem-solving, which is why prospective employees go through prolonged orientation and probationary periods before being selected. Job performance is an important criterion and a key factor in the achievement of an organisation's goals (Motyka, 2018). Also, a plethora of studies has examined how employability skills affect job performance (Imam & Abas, 2018), ensuring the intervening role of other variables like; engagement, commitment, and perceived organisational support (Aryani & Widodo, 2020; Uddin et al., 2018; Kompaso & Sridevi, 2020).

The existing literature on the connection between employability skills and job performance often incorporates intermediate variables, but there are limited comprehensive evidence exploring the effect of employee engagement in strengthening this connection. Ngai et al. (2016) examined the impact of employee engagement on the link among employability skills and job performance. However, it focused solely on the telecommunications industry in China, which limits generalization of its finding to other geographical locations and institutions. To avoid potential misinterpretation of recommendations from the aforementioned study and considering the geographical and contextual differences, it is essential to study specifically in municipal assembly of Suame in Ghana.

The study aims to analyze mediating effect of employee engagement on the relationship between employability skills and job performance in this specific setting. By conducting research in this relevant context, the findings will provide valuable insights and actionable recommendations for improving

8

job performance through the enhancement of employability skills and employee engagement in the Suame municipal assembly.

Purpose of the Study

The study aims to analyze mediating effect of employee engagement on the relationship between employability skills and job performance of staff at the Suame Municipal Assembly.

Research Objectives

These specific objectives guide the study;

1. To examine the effect of employability skills on job performance of staff at the Suame Municipal Assembly.

2. To analyze the effect of employability skills on employee engagement of staff at the Suame Municipal Assembly.

3. To analyze the effect of employee engagement on job performance of staff at the Suame Municipal Assembly.

4. To analyze the mediating effect of employee engagement on the relationship between employability skills and job performance of staff at Suame Municipal Assembly.

Hypotheses

This study was based on the following hypotheses:

H_1. There is a significant relationship between employability skills and job performance of staff at Suame Municipal Assembly.

H_2. There is a significant relationship between employability skills and employee engagement of staff at the Suame Municipal Assembly.

H_3. There is a significant relationship between employee engagement on job performance of staff at Suame Municipal Assembly.

9

H₄. Employee engagement has a mediating effect on the relationship between employability skills and job performance among the staff at Suame Municipal Assembly.

Significance of the Study

Employability skills are important researchable issue that has drawn interest recently. Various studies have steered on the connection between employability skills and performance worldwide, including in Ghana. Anticipation of results of the study would be beneficial to other municipal assemblies within the metropolis and metropolitan that have similar characteristics to the Suame Municipal Assembly. Furthermore, Literature gathered would be beneficial to academia and other business students who would want to do similar research and also use the literature gathered as reference material. This study would aid employers and HR professionals in keeping key personnel in the organisation. Also, this study results will enhance the body of knowledge regarding psychological and human resource-related aspects that may affect employee job performance.

Delimitation of the Study

The study focused on employability skills, employee engagement, and job performance. The study was confined within Suame Municipal Assembly, in the Ashanti region. Staff at the Assembly form study subjects; comprising Human Resource managers, administrative assistants, Finance, Accountants, Clerks, and messengers who have access information the researcher needs for the study.

Limitations of the Study

Employability skills was tested as a major component, however, the individual variables which comprises employability skills (communication, teamwork, decision making, and problem solving) were not tested, therefore making it difficult to single out the employability skill component which affected job performance. This is seen as a limitation in this study and has therefore been suggested for further studies.

Again, the use of self-reporting has the incidence of bias. However, the outcome of the findings does not appear to support that since the study does not present an overly optimistic view as would expected.

Definition of Terms

Employability skills: Possessing fundamental core competencies or a broad range of generic qualities or qualities that employers look for in job candidates is employability skills.

Job performance: job performance is the execution of tasks by employees in accordance with management-established metrics while utilizing available resources in a changing environment (Carlson et al. 2019).

Employee Engagement: Employee engagement is the worker's attitude toward his or her workplace or employer in a favorable light (Stoyanova & Iliev, 2017).

Organisation of the Study

This study contains five (5) chapters, each addressing different aspects of the research. In Chapter One, the researcher delved into background of the study, statement of the problem, research purpose, research objectives, hypotheses, significance, limitations, delimitations, and organisation of the

11

entire study. Chapter Two primarily focuses on the literature review, exploring relevant studies related to employability skills, employee engagement, and job performance. The review covers theoretical, conceptual, and empirical studies related to these concepts. Chapter Three provides an extensive overview of the research methods used in this study. It includes details about the research design, philosophy, approach, population, sampling procedure, research instrument, sources of data, data collection methods, and data analysis techniques employed. In Chapter Four, titled "Results and Discussion," the researcher presents findings of research alignment with the study questions. Finally, chapter five serves as the concluding chapter, summarizing the study's key findings, drawing conclusions, and offering recommendations based on the research outcomes.
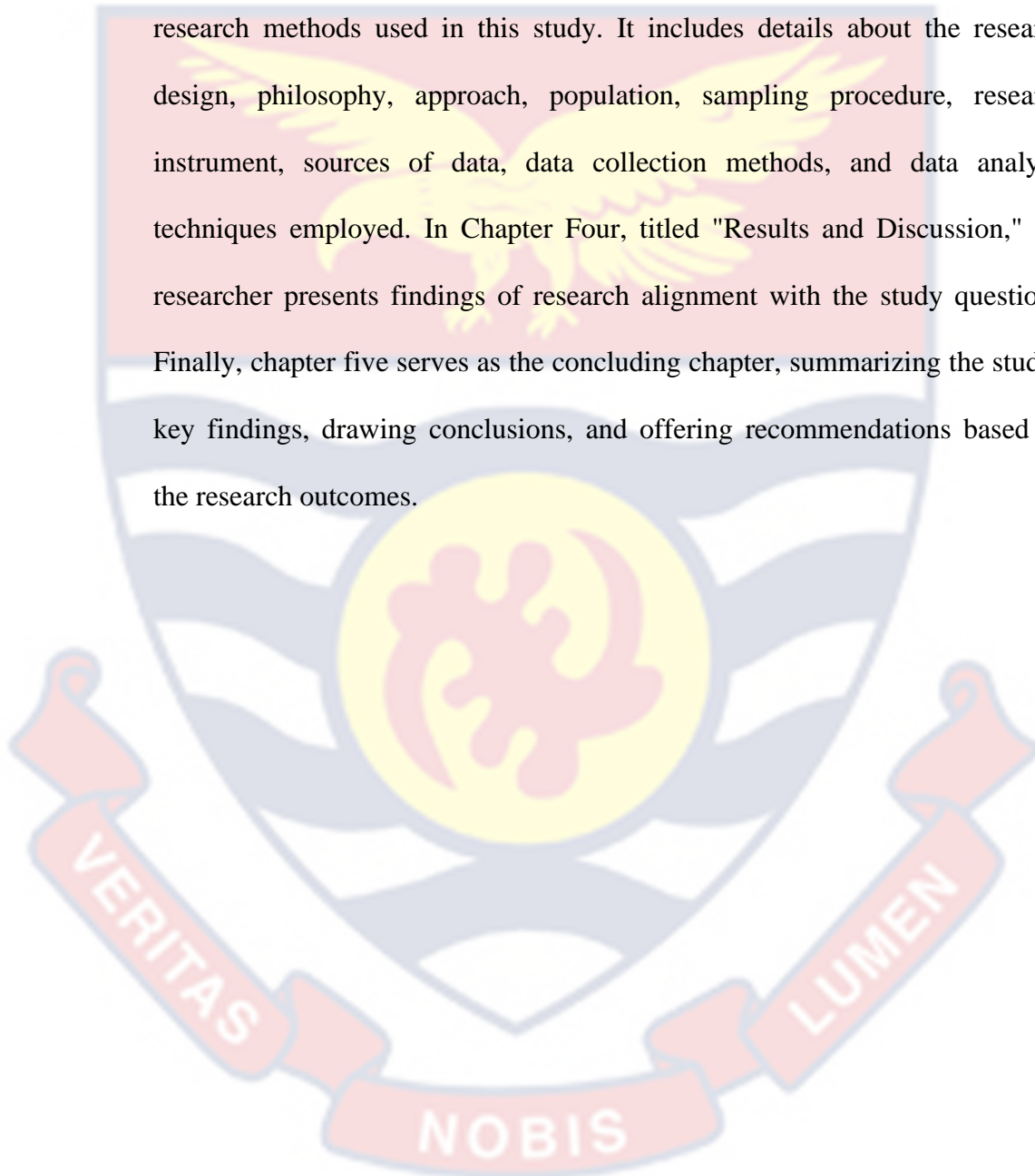
CHAPTER TWO
LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

The chapter aims to examine pertinent literature regarding employability skills, employee engagement, and job performance. It encompasses a comprehensive review that includes theoretical, conceptual, and empirical aspects while also presenting a conceptual framework. The foundation of the study lies within theoretical review, which explores existing theories and frameworks. The conceptual review focuses on the essential concepts that underpin this study. Additionally, the empirical review sector provides an overview of relevant studies to guide the methodological approach and other crucial aspects of this research.

Theoretical Foundation

Two theories underpin this study. They are human capital theory and two-factor theory.

Human Capital Theory

The theory of human capital was developed by Gary Becker, an esteemed economist from the United States in the 1960s. The theory is an economic framework that emphasises the importance of investing in education, training, and other forms of human capital to enhance individual productivity and promote economic growth (Chen, 2018). He published his seminal work titled "Human Capital: A Theoretical and Empirical Analysis, with Special Reference to Education" in 1964. The basic assumption of the theory is that investments in education, training, and other forms of human capital enhance an individual's productivity and economic outcomes. This

13

assumption suggests that individuals increase their earning potential and improve their prospects in the labour market by acquiring and developing knowledge, skills, and abilities (Yong et al., 2019).

According to the theory, individuals are viewed as rational decision-makers considering the costs and benefits of education and training investment (Chen & Chang, 2018). Notwithstanding, employees consider the expected returns on their investment, such as higher wages or better job opportunities, against the costs involved, including tuition fees, time, and foregone earnings during the education or training period (Chen & Chang, 2018). Furthermore, Chahal et al. (2020) posit that the theory assumes that knowledge and skills acquired through education and training are transferable and can function in numerous job settings. The theory also highlights the importance of employability skills developed through education and training, which contribute to an individual's overall human capital (Chahal et al., 2020). These competencies consist of teamwork, communication, problem-solving, critical reasoning, adaptability, and technical skills relevant to specific industries or occupations (Campbell et al. 2019).

Human capital theory, however, recognises the dynamic nature of skills and the need for individuals to continually upgrade and adapt their skill sets (Martins, 2022). Employability skills are not static; they required to be continuously industrialized and refined to meet changing labour market demands. Additionally, the theory recognises employees' skills, knowledge, and abilities as critical determinants of their productivity (Khaomin, 2022). However, Martins (2022) posited that skilled and knowledgeable employees are more likely to generate innovative ideas, make better decisions, and

contribute to the overall success of the organisation. The human capital theory highlights the importance of retaining talented employees and providing them with opportunities for growth and development (Jana & Kaushik, 2022). Organisations that invest in their employees' human capital and offer a supportive and motivating work environment are more likely to attract and retain top talent (Khaomin, 2022).

Human capital theory was criticised for oversimplifying the complexity of labour markets and reducing individuals to economic entities because it failed to consider the social and contextual factors that influence educational and labour market outcomes, such as discrimination, social networks, and structural barriers (Sánchez Queija et al., 2021). Also, Römgens et al. (2020) critique human capital theory as it tends to overlook the unequal distribution of resources necessary for investing in education and training. These resources, such as socioeconomic disparities, limited access to quality education, and systemic barriers, can prevent individuals from fully realizing the potential benefits of human capital investments.

Another critique of the theory is that it assumes a direct relationship between education and employment, but in reality, there can be a mismatch between the skills acquired through education and the requirements of the job market. This can results individuals working in jobs that do not fully utilise their skills and qualifications (Kornblum et al., 2018). In relation to the study, human capital theory provides a framework for understanding the link between employability skills and employee Performance. By recognizing this nature of skills, knowledge, and abilities employees possess and their reflection on their job performance.

15

Two Factor Theory

Frederick Herzberg (1950), a psychologist and management theorist, developed two-factor theory, also known as motivation-hygiene theory or dual-factor theory of Herzberg, in 1950s. The two-factor theory explores factors that influence employee satisfaction and motivation in the workplace (Daft, 2018). The theory assumes that individuals have an innate need for growth, achievement, and personal development. Indicating that people are motivated by factors that are intrinsic to the work itself, such as sense of accomplishment, challenging tasks, and opportunities for personal and professional growth (Shaikh et al., 2019). Moreso, the theory also assumes job satisfaction and job dissatisfaction as not two ends same continuum but rather separate and independent constructs. That is, factors that contribute to job satisfaction (motivational factors) are different from those that lead to job dissatisfaction (hygiene factors) (Hapsari et al., 2021).

Dissatisfiers (Hygiene factors) refers to facets of work setting, if absentminded or insufficient, would lead to job dissatisfaction (Dahling et al., 2015). However, their existence does not always lead to job fulfillment. Examples of hygiene factors include income and benefits, security of employment, conditions of employment, company policies, and interpersonal relationships, supervision, status, and organisational culture. According to Dahling et al. (2015), it was argued that improving hygiene factors could help prevent job dissatisfaction, but their presence alone would not lead to increased job satisfaction.

16

While motivational factors (satisfiers) are associated to the actual nature of the work itself and can contribute to job satisfaction and motivation (Bashir et al., 2020), these factors are intrinsically rewarding and can stimulate individuals' desire to perform at higher levels. Examples of motivational factors include achievement, recognition, responsibility, advancement opportunities, challenging work, personal growth and development, and a sense of achievement. According to Bashir et al. (2020), increasing the presence of motivational factors at the workplace would lead to higher job satisfaction, intrinsic motivation, and improved performance.

The Two-Factor Theory have been widely applied in organisational behaviour and management field and has influenced discussions on employee motivation, job satisfaction, and performance (Jacobs & Manzi, 2020). In context of Human Resource Management, Two-Factor Theory have been utilised to develop practises and policies that focus on employee satisfaction and motivation and has influenced approaches to job design, performance management, employee engagement, and reward systems (Boon et al., 2019). The theory's distinction between hygiene factors and motivational factors has helped HR professionals understand the importance of addressing both aspects in managing employee satisfaction and performance (Boon et al., 2019).

By addressing both hygiene and motivational factors, one can increase employee engagement and job performance (Lee et al., 2017). Satisfied, and motivated employees are more likely engaged in their workplace, exhibit high level of productivity, and contribute positively to organisational success. According to Two-Factor Theory, motivational factors, like achievement, acknowledgement, responsibility, and individual growth are crucial for job

17

fulfilment (Lee et al. 2017). These motivational factors create a sense of purpose, intrinsic motivation, and fulfilment, contributing to high level of employee's engagement at the workplace. Employee engagement is the level of dedication, zeal, and participation an employee has towards his or her work and the organisation (Srivastava & Madan, 2016).

Engaged employees are proactive, take initiative, are committed, dedicated, and are eager to go extra miles to attain organisational goals (Srivastava & Madan, 2016). Employees demonstrate higher levels of productivity, quality of work, and innovation, which has a direct impact on their performance. The motivation and satisfaction derived from the presence of motivational factors, as emphasized in the two-factor theory, contribute to higher levels of engagement, which leads to improved performance outcomes (Dahling et al., 2015). Although two-factor theory, also known as motivation-hygiene theory, is a popular motivational theory, it has been criticized by scholars for various reasons.

Özsoy (2019) criticizes the methodology used in the studies conducted by Herzberg. The methodology relied on retrospective self-reporting, which may be subject to bias and unreliable memory recall. Also, the methodology used in the studies may not provide accurate and objective insights into the factors influencing job satisfaction and dissatisfaction (Özsoy 2019). Again, it was argued that the theory did not sufficiently consider individual differences in the perception and interpretation of job factors (Zhao, 2020). Different individuals may have varied preferences, values, and needs, which can influence their satisfaction and motivation.

18

Furthermore, the theory did not account for the dynamic nature of motivation and job satisfaction (Nguyen, 2017). It assumes a static relationship between the factors and outcomes, suggesting that job satisfaction and dissatisfaction are separate constructs. Also, studies have suggested the relationship between factors influencing job satisfaction is more complex and interconnected (Zhao, 2020). According to the study, the Two-factor theory's framework aids organisations in comprehending the variables that affect employee motivation and job satisfaction. This understanding helps organisations create work environments that address both hygiene and motivational variables, resulting in high level of employee satisfaction, engagement, and performance.

However, this research adapted dual-theory approach in gaining a comprehensive understanding of various aspects related to the research questions. The first theory utilised was the human capital theory, which examined the connection between employability skills and employee performance. However, two-factor theory was employed because it examines the connection between employee engagement and performance. By incorporating these two theories, the study aimed to enrich the analysis and offer a more nuanced perspective on the topic under investigation.

The conceptual framework served as the foundation for establishing the relationship between the two theories. It provided a systematic framework for integrating and harmonizing the theories, guiding the stages of research processes, including data collection, data analysis, research design, and interpretation of data. Through this integrated approach, the study aimed to

19

enhance the comprehensiveness and depth of the results, contributing to a deeper comprehension of the phenomenon being investigated.

Conceptual Review

The section reviews the concepts underpinning the study. These concepts include; employability skills, employee engagement, and job performance. Employability skills will discuss first, followed by employee engagement, and finally, job performance.

Concept of Employability Skills

Employability skills encompass the capabilities, expertise, and qualities that individuals possess that enable them to secure employment, perform effectively in the workplace, and adapt to changing work environments (Suarta et al., 2017). Employability was also defined by Misra and Mishra (2021) defined workforce skill acquisition as the process of obtaining the essential competencies required for individuals to access and sustain employment over the course of their careers. Employability skills (ES), also known as unique abilities and traits, are therefore, sought after by employers and are seen as a critical issue in the national, regional, and global labour markets (Mohd et al., 2020). Employability is the capacity of both employed and unemployed individuals to obtain better positions with the same or a different employer. (Shahzad et al, 2019).

However, employability is still a contentious idea when it comes to how it should be employed in theory and policymaking (Shahzad et al, 2019). Over the past century, employability skills have been utilised as both the supply of labour and demand for labour notion. While researchers and policymakers embrace more general perspective on employability, others

20

adopt a more focused supply-side approach (Misra & Mishra, 2021). Vicki and Ranald (2017) argue that the broader perspective focuses on individuals' employability in relation to their ability to secure new employment within the labour market, which may involve transitioning from unemployment to a stable job or transitioning from one job to another.

Therefore, the comprehensive approach encompasses not only the specific employable skills and attributes emphasised in limited supply-side notions of employability but also factors such as job search strategies and labour market conditions. These additional aspects are crucial in determining whether an individual can effectively secure new employment or make successful job transitions (Suarta et al., 2017). The idea of employability has practical application in sectoral and job market inclusion strategies, especially when it focuses on evolving skill sets and employer demands like the increase of "soft" employability abilities that employers are increasingly demanding.

In their framework of the evolving nature of work and its impact on the skill demands of employers in call centers, Vicki and Ranald (2017) consider factors such as social exclusion and the significance of training for call center employees. For many jobs, basic skills, especially communication skills, has become crucial and fundamental competencies that all employees need to possess are those related to communication, problem-solving, decision-making, and teamwork (Hashim, 2018). Specialised occupational skills are no longer sufficient for employees to meet labour market needs in the workplace of the twenty-first century (Suarta et al., 2017). When graduates enter the workforce, they must possess a number of ES qualities, according to Barbara et al (2017).

Components of Employability Skills

Employability skills can be classified into several types for the purpose of the study. The study discusses four types of employability skills in this section. These include; communication, teamwork, problem-solving, and decision-making skills.

Communication Skill

Communication pertains to an individual's capacity to effectively transmit information in a clear and comprehensible manner to others through a good medium (Back et al., 2020). A semantic component of social interaction is communication. Every individual action involves communication with others because it is carried out in the context of direct or indirect relationships with others (Yalap & PolatĂ, 2020). In today's world, the advancement of human communication abilities is turning into a critical issue (Yesnazar et al., 2020). The advancement of scientific technology has increased society's demand for experts who can formulate and find solutions to issues pertaining to both the present and the future. One crucial aspects of a person's life is their desire for communication (Nkrumah et al., 2021). Employers always seek employees with good communication skills. Mahbub and Hadina (2021), employers seek employees with good and clear writing skills who can fluently communicate.

However, effective communication is a constant occurrence within the workplace. It plays a crucial role in fostering positive relationships among employees and superiors, thereby cultivating a favorable work environment. Moreover, proficient communication enables employees to carry out their work more efficiently and effectively. According to Ridlo (2020), being a

skilled communicator entails not only the ability to convey information effectively but also the capacity to be a good listener. Employees must possess the capability to comprehend the inquiries and concerns raised by clients and attentively listen to the directions provided by their employers. A study conducted by Mata et al. (2021) focusing on communication skills training for healthcare professionals, it was discovered that training in communication skills enhances the performance and self-efficacy of healthcare professionals.

Teamwork Skill

Teamwork refers to the aptitude to collaborate effectively with others, supporting and empowering them to reach their maximum potential while collectively striving to accomplish shared objectives (Chowdhury and Murzi, 2020). Also, employers actively seek employees who possess the valuable skill of teamwork. Teamwork cultivates trust among colleagues within the workplace, leading to increased productivity and enhanced employee satisfaction, consequently improving overall performance. Furthermore, it fosters a sense of camaraderie and community within the work environment, creating opportunities for professional development and advancement. Being an effective team member entails the capacity to articulate ideas clearly to the group, utilising various communication channels such as phone, email, and in-person interactions. The ability to employ both verbal and nonverbal communication is crucial when collaborating with a group face-to-face. (Hastie and Barclay, 2021).

Problem-Solving Skill

Problem-solving skills are regarded as a critical competency for individuals within organisations, as they empower individuals to effectively identify, analyse, and resolve challenges or dilemmas (Brooks et al., 2022). In today's highly competitive business landscape, organisations frequently encounter multifaceted problems that demand prompt attention and efficient resolution to ensure sustained success and resilience. Consequently, the ability to demonstrate adept problem-solving skills becomes paramount for organisations seeking to navigate turbulent waters successfully (Brooks et al., 2022).

According to Melawati et al. (2022), employees equipped with proficient problem-solving skills not only exhibit qualities of self-initiation and autonomy but also demonstrate their aptitude for collaborative teamwork. These individuals proactively engage in comprehending the fundamental underpinnings of a problem, employing analytical thinking to delve into its intricacies, and actively seeking diverse perspectives from colleagues. By fostering a collaborative environment, they encourage the exploration and evaluation of a broad spectrum of potential solutions (Melawati et al., 2022). This inclusive approach enables the team to consider multiple perspectives, draw upon collective wisdom, and ultimately arrive at well-informed decisions regarding the most effective course of action.

Moreover, an employee with strong problem-solving skills demonstrates a holistic and systematic approach to problem resolution. They exhibit a proactive mindset, striving to address issues at their root cause rather than merely treating symptoms (Brooks et al., 2022). By thoroughly dissecting

24

and analysing the problem, they gain a comprehensive understanding of its various dimensions and potential ramifications. Armed with this deep comprehension, they are equipped to formulate innovative solutions that address the core issues while considering the broader organisational context.

Decision-Making Skill

Decision-making skills refer to the ability to analyse situations, consider alternatives, evaluate options, and make sound choices or judgements (Rösch et al, 2021). It involves the cognitive processes and thought patterns used to arrive at decisions. Effective decision-making begins with identifying and understanding the problem or situation at hand (Gesel et al, 2021). It involves gathering relevant information, analysing the root causes, and defining the objectives or desired outcomes. Also, effective decision-making involves reflecting on the outcomes of decisions and learning from them. It requires evaluating the effectiveness of decisions, identifying areas for improvement, and adjusting future decision-making processes based on lessons learned (Nurtamara & Prasetyanti, 2020).

Employees who possess strong decision-making skills in the workplace are capable of comprehensively evaluating all pertinent information, understanding the current state and desired goals of the company, and selecting the most optimal course of action (Nurtamara & Prasetyanti, 2020). Gesel et al, (2021) posit that decision-making skills also involve prioritizing tasks, setting deadlines, and managing time effectively to ensure decisions are made in a timely manner. Moreso, developing decision-making skills takes practice and experience. It is enhanced through training, learning

from past experiences, seeking feedback, and actively seeking opportunities to make decisions in both personal and professional settings. (Gesel et al, 2021).

Measurement of Employability Skills

There is not a single universally recognised employability measurement scale, as employability is a complex and multifaceted concept (Idkhan et al., 2021). However, various organisations and researchers have developed their own scales to assess employability. The Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills (SCANS) formulated a scale of foundational skills and personal qualities essential for success in the workplace (Jamaludin et al., 2019). The SCANS Skills Assessment measures skills such as teamwork, communication, problem-solving, and adaptability. Also, UK government's Employability Skills Framework outlines a set of core employability skills for assessing employees, including communication, teamwork, problem-solving, self-management, and business and customer awareness (Gesel et al, 2021).

Additionally, the Conference Board of Canada was responsible for developing the Employability Skills Profile. It outlines a comprehensive set of skills deemed essential for individuals to thrive in the employment landscape (Chowdhury & Murzi, 2020). The employability skills profile identifies and measures nine essential skills for employability. These skills include oral communication skill, teamwork skill, critical thinking skill, and digital skills, among others. Notwithstanding, Azmi et al. (2018) also developed an 18-item scale for measuring employability skills, considering teamwork, decision-making skill, problem-solving skill, and communication skills. The researcher

26

adapted the study measurement of employability skills from Azmi et al. (2018).

The scale consists of five items assessing communication skills, another five items evaluating teamwork skills, four items examining decision-making skills, and finally four items measuring problem-solving skills. Examples of items on communication skills: I communicate well with my colleagues and superiors; I always convey information orally and in writing at the workplace; I actively communicate ideas verbally in group discussions. Examples of items on teamwork skills: I establish and sustain productive relationships with both peers and supervisors; I am able to adapt to changing situations in the workplace.

Examples of items on problem-solving skills: I possess the ability to recognize job-related issues and challenges; I am able to execute plans to solve the problem. Examples of items on decision-making: I employ a comprehensive evaluation of the situation to inform my decision-making process, and I am able to visualize my role in response to those changing strategies at the workplace. The scale utilizes a five-point Likert scale where participants can show their level of agreement or disagreement. The options ranges from "strongly disagree," which parallel to value 1, to "strongly agree," which parallel to value 5.

Concept of Employee Engagement

Psychologist William Kahn (1990) is credited as one of the pioneering researchers who introduced the notion of employee engagement. Engagement is explained in relations to three dimensions by Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (2016): emotional, cognitive, and physical.

Participation in one's work on an emotional level is referred to as emotional engagement; intense concentration at work is referred to as cognitive engagement; and readiness to "go the extra mile" for the owner is referred to as physical engagement. As per the definition provided by the Gallup Institute, employee engagement refers to the positive attitude that workers hold towards their workplace or employer (Stoyanova & Iliev, 2017). Employee engagement can vary in its definition across different organisations, with Caterpillar being an example of such variation. In the context of Caterpillar, engagement is characterized by the commitment, morale, and active involvement of employees who choose to remain with the company (Hapsari et al, 2021).

Robinson et al. (2019) define employee engagement as a positive attitude or mindset that employees develop towards their organisation and its core values. Engaged employees are characterised by their understanding and knowledge of the organisational environment, and they actively participate in collaborative efforts with their colleagues to improve their job performance, ultimately benefiting the organisation as a whole. Every organisation needs to work to foster, keep, and expand engagement, which calls for a partnership between the employer and the employee (Hapsari et al., 2021). Employee engagement is the outcome of social interactions within the workplace, which results in a state of heightened involvement and commitment among employees. The state of employee engagement has beneficial influence on the performance of organisations. Enhanced work performance is observed when an employee perceives significance in their job as well as identifies with the corporate culture and policies. Furthermore, active engagement in job roles,

including consistent attendance, strong involvement, and increased participation in work-related activities, also contributes to employee commitment and dedication (Srivastava & Madan, 2016).

Research supports the idea that workplace psychological experiences have an impact on people's attitudes, behaviours, levels of engagement, and work-related stress. Margaretha et al. (2021), assert that psychological meaning plays an important role in determining the extent of employee engagement in their workplace. Accordingly, "individual goals and concentrated energy, flexibility, effects, and tenacity oriented towards organisational goals" are primary contributors to employee engagement overall (Bakker & Albrech, 2018). Engagement is a quality that almost all businesses have measured throughout the years. Employee engagement goes beyond mere satisfaction with job arrangements or basic loyalty to the employer, as it motivates employees to go above and beyond in their efforts (Margaretha et al., 2021).

However, engagement is about yearning and commitment, or being ready to step up and help employers on your own (Bakker & Albrech, 2018). Employee engagement is associated with sustained employment, shifts in work patterns, environments, and expectations, as well as changes within the workplace. Effective communication plays a vital role in ensuring that employees comprehend and internalize information, fostering a sense of trust in the company's commitment to engagement (Srivastava & Madan, 2016). In every instance of engagement, there is a consistent pattern where managers, executives, and workers possess a comprehensive understanding of the situation. They are cognizant of the existing challenges, areas of dysfunction,

29

and aspects where trust, coherence, harmony, and communication may be lacking.

Dimensions of Employee Engagement

   This section examines the various aspects or dimensions of employee engagement. These include cognitive, emotional, and physical.

Cognitive Engagement

   Employees' level of cognitive engagement reflects how much focus they put on their work (Li & Lajoie, 2022). When an employee is cognitively engaged, they are better able to focus on their task despite interruptions and other work-related problems. This form of engagement relates to how an employee feels and perceives both their work and the organisation. It might be the most important type of employee engagement due to its connection to how employees regard the company's ideals (Huang et al., 2021). Cognitively engaged employees are supportive of the organisation's mission, strategy, goals and aware of what has to be done to help attain these goals (Khusanova et al, 2021).

   Prior knowledge of the organisation's mission and adherence to its cultural values are requirements for this type of participation (Li & Lajoie,2022). Employees must also understand their responsibilities, expectations, and how they contribute to the success of the business in addition to being aware of their goals (Huang et al., 2021). Kahn (1990) made the case that employees who were more engaged in their profession showed higher creativity and made extra confident decisions whenever examining the cognitive part of the engagement. Kahn also considered the importance that workers attach to their work.

Emotional Engagement

For employees to feel engaged, it is important for them to have a strong sense of dedication towards their organisation, experience a sense of appreciation and recognition, and believe that their work is making a significant and meaningful contribution. These factors are interlinked with emotions. Emotional engagement is closely intertwined with engagement itself, as highlighted by Cooper and Erik (2016). An employee's emotional engagement is shaped by their feelings towards the company, colleagues, and leadership, as noted by Claeys et al. (2019). It is influenced by their immediate experience of working and the emotions associated with it.

How invested a person is in their work depends on how they feel about it and how they interact with their coworkers, management, and the company. Employees who are emotionally engaged feel good about their jobs and will apply those positive feelings and emotions to their work. Erik and Cooper (2016), employees who are emotionally involved put more effort into their work and are more likely to be fulfilled with their careers. High emotional engagement also helps create a productive workplace where it is simpler for other employees to become involved in their work.

Physical Engagement

According to Claeys et al. (2019), Physical engagement pertains to an employee's mindset and behaviour regarding their work, involving their active involvement in job-related tasks and the level of physical and mental exertion they invest in their role. These actions demonstrate their dedication and commitment to their work. Kahn (1990) discovered a positive correlation between self-assurance and the amount of mental and physical effort

31

individuals invest in their work. Engaged employees who are physically active exhibit enthusiasm for their job and possess a growth-oriented mindset (Claeys et al., 2019). Moreover, physically engaged employees are more inclined to seize opportunities for learning and personal development.

Physical and mental well-being is correlated with physical involvement. Employee engagement and feeling supported by their employers are both more likely when they feel valued by their employers. According to Kahn (1990), employees tend to exhibit higher levels of physical engagement in their work when they experience better mental and physical well-being. A culture of health and wellness within the organisation, along with engagement initiatives that prioritise employee well-being, conveys the message that the company values and appreciates its employees both professionally and personally (Huang et al., 2021).

Importance of Employee Engagement

A company's ability to effectively manage employee engagement is positively associated with its potential to achieve high performance levels and yield better outcomes. Engaged employees demonstrate commitment to the company, contribute to its success, and are extra likely to stay with the organisation in the long term, thus bolstering its overall performance (Billett, 2021). Employee engagement strengthens employees' trust and confidence in the organisation, cultivates loyalty, creates a vibrant and energetic work environment, facilitates business expansion, and empowers employees to act as ambassadors for the company's brand (Billett, 2021).

Billett (2020) suggested a Dual-Base approach to examine co-participation at work. and he concluded that any firm that wants to keep its

valuable personnel must prioritize employee engagement. Employee engagement and performance have a basic connection, which has been confirmed by researchers and practitioners. As stated by the Corporate Leadership Council (2018), organisations that have disengaged employees perform significantly poorer than those with engaged employees, experiencing a decline in performance of approximately twenty percent (Meere, 2019).

Measurement of Employee Engagement

There are several measurement scales for measuring engagement. For instance, the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES) and Java Enterprise System (JES) are the most widely used instruments for gauging employee engagement (Rich et al., 2019). Although the UWES is widely used, its validity has been questioned (Newman & Harrison, 2018; Wefald et al., 2019). In contrast, the JES has more robust support (Alfes et al., 2018; Chen et al., 2017; Shuck et al., 2019). Scale for measuring employee engagement was developed by the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) (2016), was adapted by the researcher in measuring the engagement levels. The scale comprises a total of eight items, which are distributed across three dimensions: cognitive engagement, emotional engagement, and physical engagement.

Cognitive engagement dimension of scale evaluates the degree of concentration and attentiveness displayed by employees while performing their work tasks. Physical engagement dimension assesses willingness of employees to surpass the basic requirements of their job and make extra efforts for the benefit of their employer. Emotional engagement measures the level of emotional investment that employees have in their jobs. Five-point

scale, with 1=Never, 2= sometimes, 3= Often, 4= Very often, and 5= Always, was used to indicate the level of agreement.

Concept of Job Performance

Motowidlo et al., (2020) define job performance as the values and overall benefits that an organisation obtains from an employee throughout the course of a given time period. Campbell et al., (2019) described job performance as a way to accomplish goals and objectives while working. Additionally, job performance is a series of sophisticated and complex tasks that refer to how a job is carried out rather than the results of the actions taken to complete a job. According to Carlson et al. (2018), job performance is the execution of tasks by employees in accordance with management-established metrics while utilizing available resources in a changing environment. A summary of the aforementioned definition demonstrates that job performance is used to evaluate how well an employee performs a particular job. Murphy (2020) places emphasis on the necessity of basing employee behavior-based job performance systems rather than the outcomes of those behaviors.

Murphy (2020) goes on to say that emphasizing repercussions is likely to encourage workers to find a quicker or more convenient way to reach predetermined results, which will ultimately be harmful to the business. As a result, Murphy (2020) and Campbell (2019) appear to concur that job performance should be viewed as the visible behaviors that employees engage in and that performance should be considered as the outcome of a collection of actions. According to Pritchard's (1995) performance theory, an organisation should either employ its people or make technological changes in order to improve performance. Pritchard (1995) went on to say that the personnel of an

34

organisation have the greatest untapped potential for boosting productivity. Due to facts that job performance is a crucial factor in determining the success, and wealth of a business, researchers have emphasized its significance and relevance.

Additionally, employees place importance on job performance since it conveys a level of efficacy, high performance, and mastery and fosters sentiments of job satisfaction. (Kanfer et al., 2005; Bandura, 1997). All actions taken by employees while they are working are referred to as job performance (Fogaça et al., 2018). Aspects including job-specific task competency, core work task behaviors, amount of dedication to core tasks, and general work behaviors all have a significant role in job performance. Task performance, which corresponds to an employee's primary duties, and contextual performance, which goes beyond those duties, make up the two key components of job performance (Motowidlo et al., 2020).

Dimensions of Job Performance

Several dimensions of job performance can be found in literature. Task performance and contextual performance were identified by Borman and Motowidlo in 1993. Task performance, which relates to an employee's primary duties, and contextual performance, which goes beyond those duties, make up the two key components of job performance (Motowidlo et al., 2020). Detecting and defining the fundamental characteristics of the behavioural components that constitute the performance domain is valuable. Task performance specifically pertains to the essential technical behaviours and actions associated with the job. This suggests that task performance is related to how well job holders carry out tasks that either directly or indirectly help

35

the company achieve its goals. As a result, administrative choices (including staffing, terminating, and wage increases) are frequently made based on an employee's level of task performance.

Although supervisor-subordinate evaluations are frequently employed to gauge job performance, some roles allow for the collection of objective task performance indicators. Whereas Contextual performance encompasses actions that provide support to the environment in which the primary technical functions operate (Griffin et al., 2018). According to Motowidlo (2020), contextual performance is the extent to which an organisation's environment influences its effectiveness. For instance, indicators of contextual performance can be found in how enthusiastically individuals behave within the workplace and in their initiatives to solve problems. The actions that support, promote, and defend corporate objectives are considered contextual performance. These attitudes also include participating in organisational politics and enhancing the organisation's reputation (Borman & Motowidlo, 1993).

Organisational citizenship behaviour is another aspect of job performance, according to Ziegler et al., (2012). Organisational citizenship behaviours are activities that, while not strictly speaking part of a worker's job description, are still beneficial to the organisation as a whole or to specific employees at the workplace (Ziegler et al.,2012). Going above and beyond an employee's primary responsibility is a common way to characterize engaging in organisational citizenship activities (Podsakoff et al., 2018). Organisational citizenship behaviours involve lending a helping hand to coworkers, demonstrating care for their welfare, and volunteering to help out.

According to Bennett et al. (2018), job performance may take on additional dimensions that aren't necessarily advantageous to a company. Employees might participate in counterproductive behaviour at work, which is described as any voluntary action that violates important organisational guidelines and puts the organisation, its members, or both in danger. According to Bennett et al. (2018), there are two categories of unproductive work behaviours: (a) deviance behaviours directed at the company and (b) deviance behaviours directed at other employees. These habits directly conflict with the organisation's goals, rather than advancing them. Simply put, engaging in counterproductive work habits is detrimental to the success of the firm (Lam et al. 2016).

For purpose of the study, three of the four job performance dimensions suggested by Koopmans et al. (2014) were employed. Task performance, contextual performance, and adaptive performance make up the dimensions.

Task performance

According to Koopmans et al. (2014), task performance refers to an employee's primary duties and responsibilities on the job. It is commonly referred to as "in-role prescribed behaviour." Task performance encompasses the specific outcomes and deliverables that are expected from the employee, including their quality and quantity. It plays a vital role in production of job-specific goods and services, relying on employees' achievement and demonstration of fundamental technical skills. These skills are essential for carrying out the necessary functions and responsibilities associated with the

job.   An essential component for determining a person's behavior and performance at work is task performance.

Task performance is described by Pattnaik and Pattnaik (2021) as "the efficiency with which job holders carry out their given responsibilities, that realizes the achievement of the organisation's vision while compensating organisation and individual correspondingly." Meaning that firms' job descriptions and compensation programs typically incorporate the behavior associated with task performance. According to Jawahar and Ferris (2019) and Daz-Vilela et al. (2015), task performance includes activities that are officially defined and mandated by the job description. These activities are regulated and prescribed, outlining the specific responsibilities and duties that employees are expected to fulfil in their roles. A significant number of companies rely on task performance as a measure of an employee's capability to fulfil the essential technical responsibilities of a specific job role. Factors include the quantity and quality of work, along with job-related skills and expertise, are key indicators of task performance (Campbell, 2019; Bohlmann et al., 2018).

Contextual performance

Contextual performance refers to discretionary actions taken by employees that are perceived to contribute directly to the smooth functioning of an organisation, even if they may not directly impact an employee's productivity (Podsakoff et al., 2017). Contextual performance is demonstrated through actions such as mentoring colleagues, cultivating internal social networks, and going the extra mile for the organisation, according to Koopmans et al. (2016). Performance in a context goes beyond one's official

38

work duties. In this era, contextual performance has appeared as crucial element of total performance. It encompasses behaviours that provide support to the organisational, social, and psychological environments which the core technological functions might operate. This type of performance is also referred to as citizenship performance (Pattnaik & Pattnaik, 2021).

Contextual performance is comprised of organisational citizenship behaviours and pro-social organisational behaviours (Pattnaik & Pattnaik, 2021). Individual behaviours referred to as "organisational citizenship behaviour" are those that are voluntary, not immediately or explicitly recognised by the formal reward system, and collectively help to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the organisation's operations (Organ, 2018). However, a voluntary activity that does not immediately fall under the purview of regular employment but yet indirectly affects an organisation's performance constitutes contextual performance. These actions contribute to the context or environment that supports efficient task performance. Contextual performance behaviours encompass representing efforts, fostering peer and team performance, collaborating, and effectively communication (Campbell, 2019; Bohlmann et al., 2018).

Adaptive Performance

Adaptive performance refers to people capacity to embrace and willingly accept any potential changes that occur in the work environment (Irimu et al., 2014). That is, an employee's capacity to adapt to either pleasant or unpleasant changes in their job responsibilities or their workplace (Koopmans et al. 2014). How well a person adapts to changes in a working system determines their level of adaptive performance. Examples of adaptive

work performance behaviours include learning new tasks, technologies, and processes; adapting to a new culture, new people, and the physical environment; coping with complex or unexpected work situations, also involves the ability of an individual to generate innovative and creative solutions to problems (Koopmans et al. 2014).

In comparison to employees who are not adaptable to change, employees who demonstrate high adaptive performance in an organisation have a competitive advantage in terms of career chances. According to a study by Irimu et al. (2014), indicators of workers' adaptive performance included things like demonstrating high work efficiency and quality, successfully managing difficult circumstances and setbacks at work, quickly recovering from difficult circumstances or setbacks, and expertly handling uncertain and unpredictable situations in the work environment.

Measurement of Job Performance

It's important to evaluate how well people are performing their jobs using objective indicators like output records, the number of days they are actively working, counts of the required actions, and subjective measures like work quality (Bakker et al., 2010). As a result, job performance should be viewed as a construct with a number of indicators, according to Koopmans et al. (2014). Therefore, each of its component indicators should be examined objectively in order to assess work performance. Indicators that accurately and explicitly describe each of the various components of an employee's performance can be used to assess those aspects.

The researcher in the study adopted Individual Work Performance Questionnaire (IWPQ) developed by Koopmans et al. (2014) to assess job

40

performance. The items from IWPQ were used to measure level of job performance in this study: "Finish the job faster than the specified time", "Completing work according to company quality standards", "The quantity of work is according to the expected standard", "Complete work according to a predetermined schedule" and "I kept searching for new challenges in my work". The measurement of job performance in the study consisted of a 10-item assessment using five-point Likert scale, ranges from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). These items were considered to assess task performance, contextual performance, and adaptive performance.

Relationship among Employability Skills, Employee Engagement and Job Performance

Employability skills refer to a set of attributes, skills, and knowledge that make individuals more likely to gain employment and be successful in their careers (Mohd et al., 2020). Employee engagement is the emotional commitment employees have towards their organisation. According to Carlson et al. (2018), job performance is the execution of tasks by employees in accordance with management-established metrics while utilizing available resources in a changing environment.

Theoretically, possessing strong employability skills enhances job performance. Individuals with effective communication, problem-solving, and decision-making skills are likely to excel in their roles, contribute positively to the work environment, and adapt to the changing demands of the job. Additionally, engaged employees are motivated, committed, and satisfied with their work, leading to higher productivity and better job performance. They are more likely to go above and beyond their basic job requirements,

41

contributing to the overall success of the organisation (Carlson et al., 2018). There is a cyclical relationship among these factors. Possessing strong employability skills can contribute to higher levels of employee engagement. Engaged employees, in turn, are likely to perform better in their roles.

Empirical Review

The study reviews related literature on employability skills and job performance, employability skills and employee engagement, employee engagement, and job performance.

Employability Skills and Job Performance

Previous researches have consistently shown that employability skills have a significant impact on job performance. Abas and Imam (2016) conducted a study titled "Graduates' Competence in Employability Skills and Job Performance" to examine the connection between employability skills and success in the workplace. The study aimed to evaluate the extent to which employees' proficient use of knowledge, skills, and values aligned with job requirements, fulfilled employer expectations, and contributed to the success of overall institutional goals. The study utilised an explanatory-correlational research design to examine the relationship between employability skill categories and elements of contextual performance.

The sample consisted 220 participants, including employers and employees, who were selected from 25 government institutions located in the south-central part of the Mindanao region in the Philippines. Inferential analysis revealed a moderate association between fundamental skills and employees' contextual performance. The findings of the study demonstrated that personal management skills showed a moderate correlation with

42

employees' contextual behaviour. Additionally, competence in personal adaptability and continuous learning had a positive impact on all aspects of contextual performance.

Additionally, results revealed a moderate correlation between teamwork skills, specifically the ability to work effectively with others, and employees' contextual performance. These findings suggest that possessing competence in employability skills can provide graduates with an advantage in their respective work environments. The study recommended that employers, employees, higher education institutions, labour agencies, and policymakers prioritize the development of employability skills and competence to address job performance challenges effectively.

Similarly, Marzec et al. (2021) conducted a study focusing on influence of job content on employability and job performance in public organisations in Poland. This objective was to address the increasing expectations for job performance and changes in employment relationships within public organisations, emphasizing the importance of enhancing workers' employability. The sample included 566 employees and their direct supervisors from 147 public organisations responsible for providing essential public services in Poland. The study utilised path analysis and structural equation modelling (SEM), develop model that depicts the connections between job diversity, the learning value of the job, employability, and job performance. Findings indicated significantly and a positive influence of employees' employability on the quality of their job performance. A noteworthy result from the study suggests that enhancing employability would lead to increased work effort and improved work quality.

43

Also, Rodzalan and Jasman (2022) conducted a study investigating the correlation between employability skills and job performance among university graduates in Malaysia. This objective of the study was to assess graduates' job attainment and performance levels, as well as explore the relationship between employability skills and job performance. A quantitative approach was employed in the study, targeting graduates from eight faculties at a public university in Malaysia. 2,713 graduates made up the entire population, and Krejcie & Morgan (1970) determination sample table was used to arrive at a sample size of 338 respondents would be sufficient to complete the questionnaires. The study utilised simple random sampling as the sampling method. The collected data was analysed using descriptive and correlation analysis techniques.

Descriptive analysis was employed to obtain observable insights from the raw data without interpretation, while correlation analysis was utilised in examine relationship among employability skills and job performance variables. Study's findings showed university graduates perceived themselves as possessing high levels of employability skills and job performance. Moreover, significantly positive connection was identified among employability and job performance. Based on these results, it was concluded that employability skills play a crucial role in determining an employee's job performance. The study recommended that future research broaden its scope to further explore this relationship.

Employability Skills and Employee Engagement

Research was conducted by Oluwatobi et al., (2020) investigating the effect of student engagement strategies on the enhancement of employability

skill. The study looked at how stakeholders perceived how student engagement strategies were enhancing employability skills. The target population was 1019 graduate students, sample of 950 were administered a questionnaire. The research methodology employed in this study consisted of collecting primary data through cross-sectional surveys. The collected data were analysed using statistical measures such as the relative importance scale, mean, and standard deviation. The study findings indicated a significant correlation between student engagement and the enhancement of employability skills. Based on these results, the study recommended that students be encouraged to participate in group activities as a means of fostering the development of employability skills.

In a study by Panagiotis et al. (2022), the emphasis was on enhancing graduate employability skills and student engagement through the use of group video assessment. Primary objective of the research was to evaluate students' perspectives regarding their engagement and the development of skills when utilising video group assessment methods. The study employed focus groups, with voluntary participation from representatives of 22 groups, totaling 108 students. The analysis was conducted using the partial least squares (PLS) method with Smart PLS ver. 3.0 software. The composite reliability value of 0.875 indicated that the variables used in the study were reliable, as it exceeded the threshold of 0.7. Additionally, the Cronbach's alpha value of 0.875, which was greater than 0.6, indicated that the variables met the desired criteria. The findings revealed a significant positive relationship between employability skills and student engagement. The conclusion drawn from the study was that engagement positively contributed to students' learning

experiences by developing crucial employability skills such as communication and teamwork.

Employee Engagement and Job Performance

Jemal (2017) conducted a study examining correlation among employee engagement and job performance in 16 chosen institutions in Ethiopia. The study focused on supervisors, professionals, and clerical staff located at the headquarters of these 16 banks. A quantitative research strategy was employed, utilising explanatory research design. This study consisted of sample size 342 employees working in various banks, with 181 participants selected through a stratified random sampling technique. A structured questionnaire was used to collect the primary data, and employee engagement was measured using the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES). Descriptive and inferential statistical analyses were conducted to analyse the obtained data.

The study results revealed a notable and favourable influence of employee engagement on job performance. The findings indicated a significant and positive relationship between the level of employee engagement and their performance in their respective roles. It was suggested that organisations, particularly in the financial industry, develop engagement strategies to increase retention. Other studies, according to the researcher, should employ different employee engagement measurement methodologies and variables for assessing job performance than those employed in the study.

Hussein et al. (2018) conducted a study in Lebanon with the aim of examining the connection between employee engagement and job performance as well as potential mediating role of creativity. The objective

46

examines impact of employee engagement on job performance and determine whether creativity acts as a mediator between engagement and performance. The study included a sample of 186 participants employed in various Lebanese firms. The researchers employed stepwise multiple regression and bootstrapping methods for data analysis, using SPSS version 23 software tested main hypotheses of the study. Findings indicated a significantly positive effect of employee engagement on job performance. The study concluded that fostering managerial systems and practices that encourage employee creativity in the workplace is crucial for enhancing influence of engagement on job performance.

In a study by Nguyen and Nguyen (2022), the emphasis was on examining the connections between employer attractiveness, employee engagement, and employee performance. Research aimed to investigate effects of employer attractiveness on employee engagement and performance. A mixed research method was employed, and the analytical technique utilised was Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modelling. The survey questionnaires were gathered from 937 employees, representing 37 enterprises in Vietnam. However, the results of the research indicated that employee engagement did not have a statistically significant influence on employee performance.

This study concluded that supervisors should emphasise internal sharing activities to facilitate knowledge exchange among employees, as these activities contribute to a sense of meaningfulness and usefulness, leading to increased organisational contributions. The recommendation suggested that managers should harmonize and synchronize social, developmental,

47

application, safety, and economic factors. Furthermore, it was observed that when employees actively engage with their organisation, it can have a beneficial effect on their performance.

Mediating role of Employee Engagement in the relationship between Employability skills and Job Performance

The section primarily focuses on reviewing studies that examine the relationship of employee engagement and its role strengthening the connection between employability skills and job performance.

Ngai et al. (2016) conducted a quantitative study to examine whether employee engagement acts as mediator in the connection between employability skills and job performance among employees of a large state-owned telecommunications company in China. The research employed a cross-sectional design and utilised a convenience sample of 540 individuals. The data was collected through an online questionnaire administered to the participants. The Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES) was utilised to measure employee engagement. Statistical measures such as mean, standard deviation, and basic regression analysis were employed to analyse collected data. Findings of the study indicated that employee engagement serves as mediator in the connection between employability skills and job performance.

According to Agarwal et al. (2012), a strong sense of employee engagement and a favourable work environment can lead to several business benefits, including enhanced job performance. When employees are intrinsically inspired and engaged in tasks that they find interesting or challenging, their performance tends to improve. As individuals become more engaged, they are more likely to generate innovative solutions to everyday

48

work problems, which ultimately has a positive impact on their overall work performance (Bititci, 2015). Similarly, the employee's high level of employability skills may positively influence their engagement at work (Prattet et al., 2013). When employees feel confident in their skills and believe they are well-suited for their job, employees are more likely to be engaged and invested in their work. However, engaged employees most likely to exhibit higher levels of job performance because they are motivated, dedicated, and willing to go above and beyond to achieve organisational objectives (Bititci, 2015).

Lessons Learnt from Literature Review

According to the literature, employability skills, employee engagement, and job performance have all been explained in various ways. In other words, any definition presented to constructs is accepted in literature. As a result, the definition's application is determined by how it is conceptualized and operationalized inside the study. Divergent perspectives voiced by several writers regarding the definitions of the variables in the study add to the dilemma of the study's generalizability. Second, the research shows that developing a common theory that specifies the scope and limitations of employability has been highly contentious. While the theoretical underpinning is vital, there is limited agreement on a specific theory that underpins employability research (Cao & Sun, 2018).

Although a few studies used other theories such as job demand and job resource theory, conservation of resources theory, and so on, major studies reviewed above were grounded in the human capital theory and two-factor theory, and other equally relevant theories in the study area. Additionally, little

49

research has been conducted in Africa to explore the connection between employable skills and job performance, employing employee engagement serving as a mediator variable. Majority of the study was studied in developed countries such as America, Asia, and Europe, raising concerns about its applicability in developing countries such as Ghana.

As a result, employing a descriptive study on how employability skills improve job performance in Ghana, specifically in Municipal Assembly, will fill the gap. The studies were mostly quantitative with a few qualitative ones thrown in for good measure, and the descriptive research design was commonly employed. The authors largely used a self-reported questionnaire to collect data, and they mostly used a scale consisting of five points on a likert scale was utilised to measure relevant constructs. A few authors also used secondary data, but only a few employed seven-point Likert scales.

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework was built on the foundations of this study, as seen in the reviewed literature of previous empirical studies. The study's objectives informed the conceptual framework, which displays the connectivity among all the concepts. Structured into three major parts, employability skills Come first, following employee engagement, then job performance (see Figure 1). Job performance is the dependent variable, with employability skills as the independent variable and employee engagement serving as mediating variable. This conceptual framework intended to regulate the rationality underlying the connection among these variables addressed in the study based on the overall purpose of the investigation, considering an

understanding of the objectives, theoretical background, and patterns detected through the literature review.

Communication, teamwork, decision-making, and problem-solving were the factors considered under independent variable (employability skills). Job Performance as dependent variable, and factors considered are task, contextual, and adaptive performance. The mediating effect of employee engagement was examined in relation to cognitive, emotional, and physical engagement factors. The conceptual framework shows that employability skills have a direct impact on job performance. Furthermore, it suggests that employee engagement acts as mediating variable, influencing the connection between employability skills and job performance. The diagram helps visualise these relationships, providing a clear representation of the research model and guiding the understanding of the theoretical underpinnings.

51
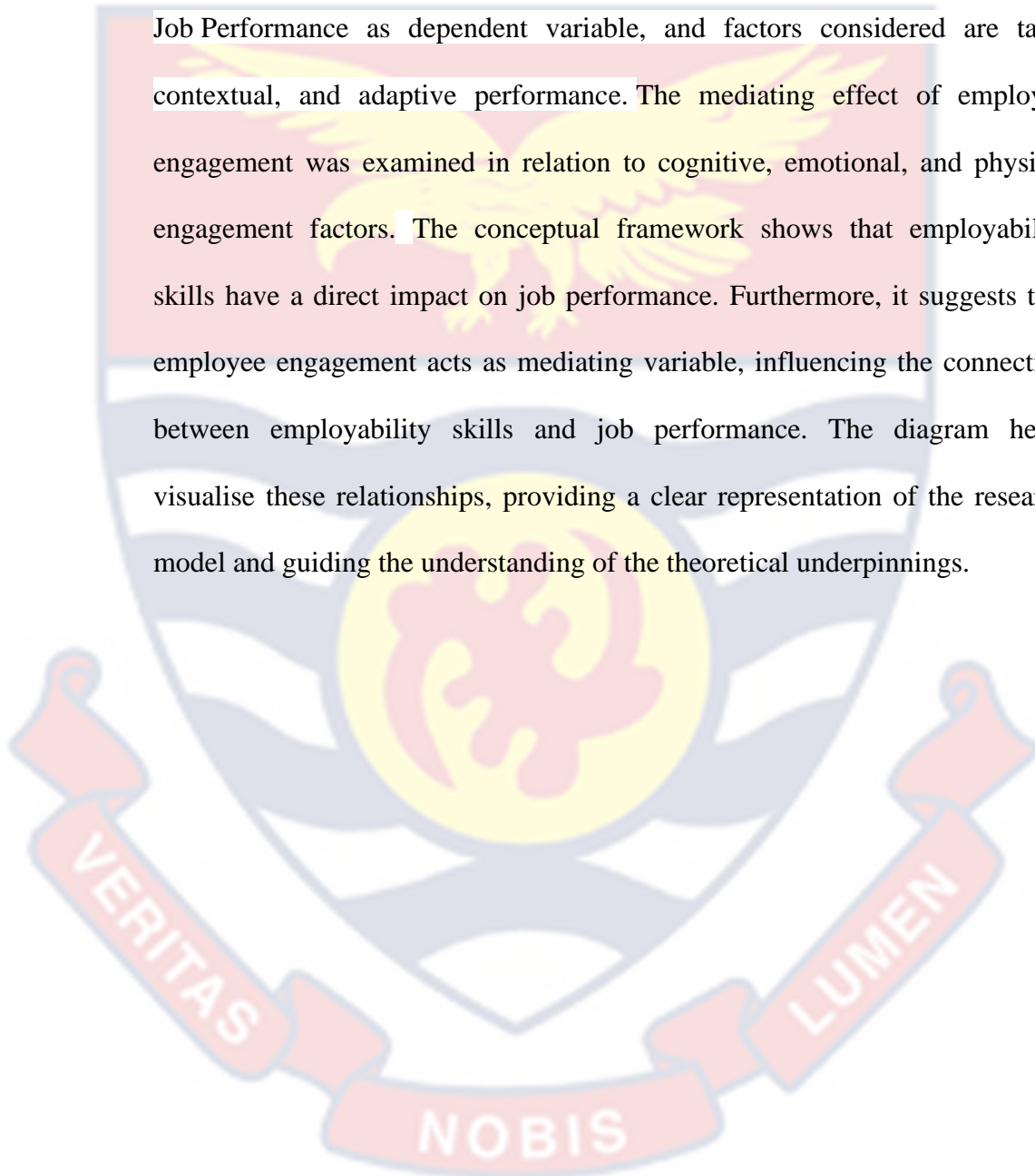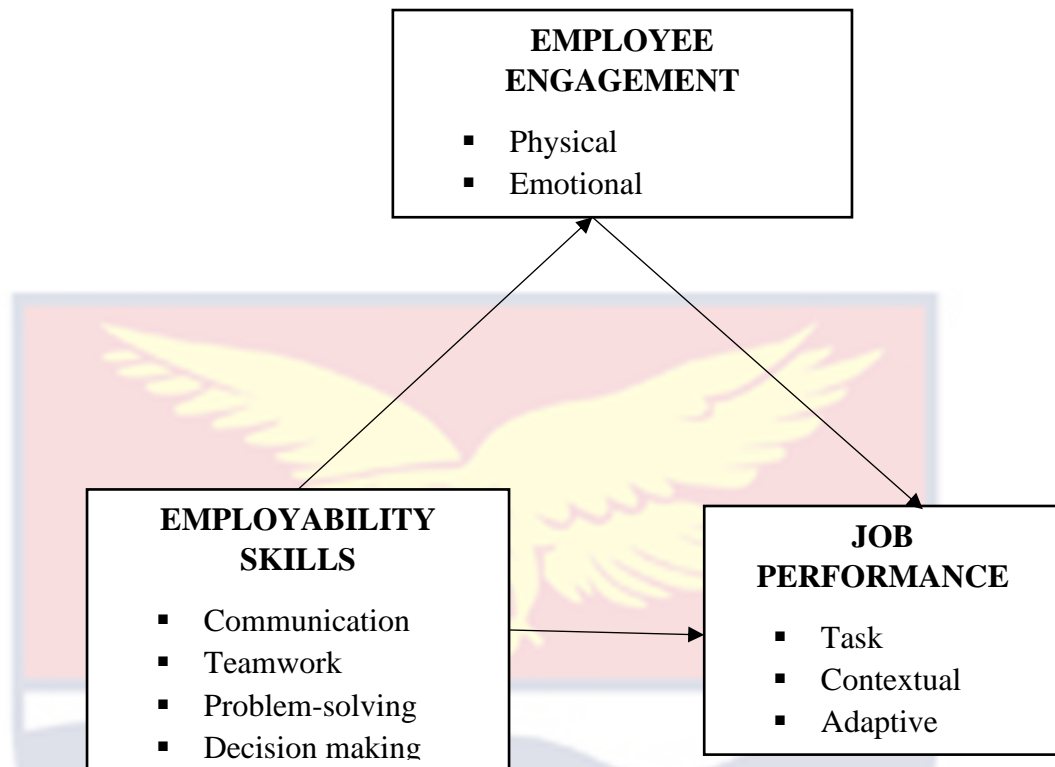
Figure 1: Conceptual Framework for Employability Skills, Employee

Engagement, and Job Performance.

Source: Author's Construct (2023)

Chapter Summary

The chapter discussed reviews of related literature. It specifically

discusses the theories underpinning the study that is human capital theory and

the two-factor theory. The chapter also conducted an empirical review of

relevant literature, exploring previous studies on employability skills and job

performance, employability skills and employee engagement, employee

engagement and job performance, and the mediating effect of employee

engagement in the relationship between employability skills and job

performance. The chapter concluded by presenting a conceptual framework

for the study.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODS

Introduction

This chapter discusses the methods and techniques implemented by the researcher for data collection and analysis. The methodology describes the steps taken by the researcher to conduct the study and the rationale for those steps. The chapter consists of subsections that outline various aspects of the study. These subsections include the following: research philosophy, study unit, methodological approach, research design, study population, sampling procedures, sources of data, data collection instruments, pretesting of these instruments, fieldwork procedures, data processing and analysis, ethical considerations, and a chapter summary.

Research Philosophy

As stated by Pathiranage et al. (2020), individuals' beliefs and assumptions about the universe and the acquisition of knowledge led to the formulation of research philosophy. Hitchcock et al. (2021) posit that researchers hold diverse assumptions regarding the nature of truth and knowledge, as well as the processes through which they are obtained. Mitchell and Education (2018) assert that researchers' assumptions, personal perspectives, interests, and objectives shape the selection of research philosophy, which pertains to the origin and characteristics of knowledge. Five main philosophies have influenced social science research over the years: interpretivism, positivism, critical realism, postmodernism, and pragmatism (Mitchell & Education, 2018). These research philosophies bring something distinct and valuable to researchers' work (Pathiranage et al., 2020).

53

Thus, a researcher must become familiar with the particular research philosophy that will be appropriate for the study being conducted. According to the interpretive philosophy, it is only through subjectively interpreting and engaging in the phenomenon under study that one can fully comprehend reality (Durand & Chantler, 2014). Within the framework of the interpretive paradigm, the primary focus is on comprehending the subjective world of human experiences (Kincheloe & Tobin, 2015). Consequently, the objective of research, as advocated by the interpretive philosophy, is to heavily rely on the perspectives and insights of the participants regarding the phenomenon being investigated (Maxwell, 2016).

French philosopher Auguste Comte developed the term positivist in 1822 to characterize those who think that studying society may be as scientific as studying biology or physics because it can be observed and described logically and rationally (Williams, 2020). Positivism has been around for a while in the field of social science, although it has only been seriously challenged very recently (Bell et al., 2022). The advocates of positivism rely on deductive logic to state theories that can be examined through "fixed, predetermined research design and objective measures" (Williams, 2020).

Positivism is an intriguing philosophy because it affirms the importance of science and maintains a clear distinction between the true and the false. Positivism is also philosophical and scientific approach that emphasizes the use of empirical evidence and the scientific method to understand and explain phenomena (Bell et al., 2022). It places a strong emphasis on empirical observation and advocates for the application of the scientific method in the pursuit of knowledge. Positivism often aligns with

quantitative research methods, allowing for statistical analysis and the identification of patterns or trends within data sets. The Positivist philosophy was deemed suitable for this study. Concerns that are demonstrated systematically and give a basis for generalization are encouraged in positivism, a philosophical framework (Williams, 2020). Scientists, according to positivists, are the only ones capable of discovering the world's objective truth (Bell et al., 2022).

Study Area

The study was carried out at the Suame Municipal Assembly, which is one of the five sub-metropolitan district councils under the Kumasi Metropolitan Assembly in Ashanti region, Ghana. Situated in the geographical centre of the Ashanti Region, the municipality shares its northern border through the Afigya Kwabre South District, its eastern border with the Old Tafo Municipality, and its western and southern borders with Kumasi Metropolis. It is strategically located approximately 319 kilometers north of the national capital, Accra, where intra- and inter-day commercial activities occur.

55
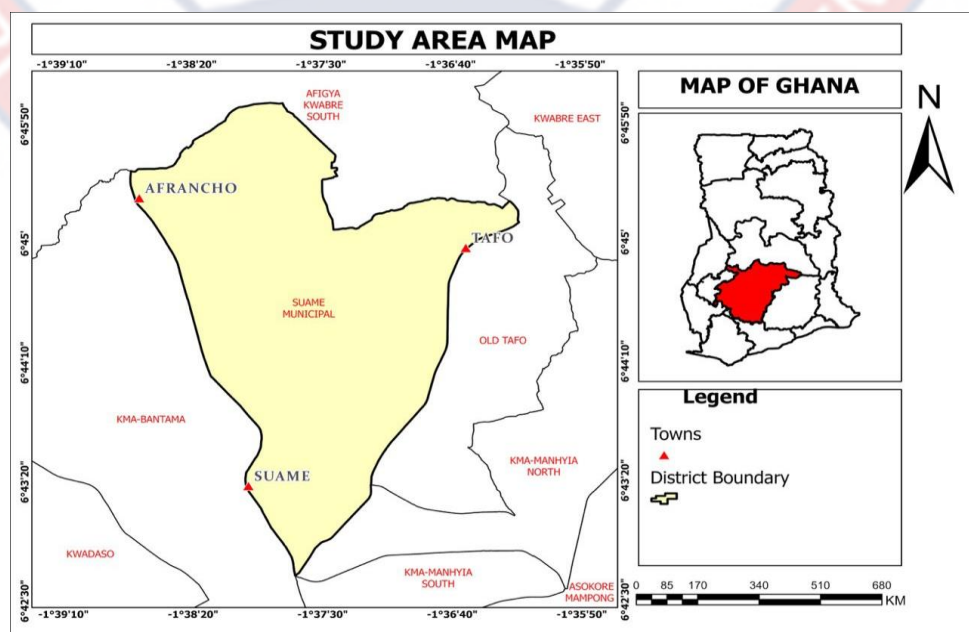
Figure 2: A Map of Suame Municipal Source: Department of   Geography and Regional Planning, University of Cape Coast (2023).

Methodological Approach

Research methodology encompasses three main approaches: quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods. Quantitative research approach places importance on quantification in empirical investigations, employing methods such as questionnaires, surveys, and experiments to gather data that can be quantified and analysed statistically (Bryman, 2011; Coy, 2019). According to Malhorta and Birks (2017), quantitative researchers collect data by measuring variables from a sample of subjects and use statistical analysis techniques such as correlation, regression, and relative frequencies to examine the relationships between variables. Typically, a quantitative researcher starts with a set of hypotheses or research questions (prior to conducting the research) that are formulated based on a theory they aim to test and either support or refute (Nekhwevha, 2022).

Most quantitative researchers adopt the positivist approach to social science research, following a linear research path that involves conducting experiments and surveys and employing statistical analysis to test hypotheses and predict general patterns of human behaviour (Nekhwevha, 2022). In contrast, qualitative research takes a naturalistic approach by studying social reality within its natural settings. Qualitative researchers utilise non-numerical data to gain insight into and interpret phenomena based on the meanings attributed by groups of people and communities being studied (Coy, 2019). The purpose of qualitative studies is to facilitate researchers in understanding of the complexities and differences among individuals as well as the social and cultural contexts in which they exist.

56

In qualitative research, there is often uncertainty regarding the dimensions or characteristics of the research problem (Malhotra et al., 2017). It is fundamentally interpretive, follows a non-linear research path, and employs a language of cases and contexts (Coy, 2019). The mixed methods strategy combines the advantageous aspects of both quantitative and qualitative perspectives within a study (Malhotra et al., 2017). By incorporating multiple forms of validation and offering more comprehensive information than either perspective can provide individually, the mixed methods approach enables the gradual accumulation of knowledge, enhances the methodological rigour of a study, and ultimately enhances its value in terms of its overall persuasiveness or practical applications (Durand & Chantler, 2014). The study employs the quantitative approach which statistically analysed the given data of the study.

Research Design

Research design serves as a roadmap, guiding the entire research process and ensuring that data collection and analysis are conducted in a systematic and purposeful manner (Nekhwevha, 2022). According to Creswell and Clarke (2007) and Halcomb (2019), social science research has traditionally been categorized into three main types: exploratory, descriptive, and explanatory. These designs serve as fundamental frameworks that researchers commonly use to conduct their studies in the social sciences (Bell et al., (2022). By exploring, describing, or explaining various phenomena, these designs provide researchers with a structured approach to systematically investigating and understanding social phenomena (Bell et al., 2022).

The exploratory design places significant importance on generating ideas and insights about social reality (Creswell & Clarke, 2007). Its primary goal is to identify key issues and variables within a real-world context. By delving into uncharted territories, the exploratory design allows researchers to have a deeper understanding of the subject matter. In contrast, descriptive design aims to provide an accurate portrayal of observations related to a specific phenomenon (Creswell & Clarke, 2007). Descriptive designs often facilitate comparisons, contrasts, and the identification of similarities among phenomena, thereby enriching our understanding of social reality (Halcomb, 2019).

The explanatory design, on the other hand, focuses on addressing "why" questions to comprehend the relationships between variables (Halcomb, 2019). By establishing causal relationships, such as how phenomenon X (e.g., gender) influences phenomenon Y (e.g., income level), researchers aim to uncover the underlying reasons behind observed phenomena. The researcher determined that descriptive and explanatory design was suitable for this study, which aimed to provide an explanation of relationship between employability skills, employee engagement, and job performance among employees at Suame Municipal Assembly.

Study Population

A study population is a group of people who have certain characteristics or a set of characteristics (Quinlan et al., 2023). A population is defined as a group of participants from which a sample is drawn in order to gather data for a study (Malhorta & Birks, 2017). The study's target population is the Suame Municipal Assembly staff in the Ashanti region, comprising

human resource managers, administrators, finance, accountants, clerks, and messengers. The target population is estimated to be 230 Staff employees in the Suame Municipal Assembly, according to data from the Human Resource Unit of the Suame Municipal Assembly (2022).

Table 1: Study Population

Staff	Total number of staff
HR Managers	20
Administrative Assistant	80
Finance	25
Accountants	30
Clerks	30
Messengers	45
TOTAL	230

Source: Field survey, Boakye (2023)

Sampling Procedures

A representative sample is a limited subset of a population (Quinlan et al., 2023). Sampling is an essential procedure for data analysis and a valid method for obtaining data without engaging the entire population. A sample is a selection of individuals or events from a population. Considering a total population of 230 individuals, the researcher opted for a sample size of 144 at a 95-percent confidence level and a 5-percent margin of error. For the sample size determination method, Krejcie and Morgan's 1970 formula was implemented.

Required Sample Size $= \frac{X^2 \text{NP}(1-\text{P})}{d^2(\text{N}-1)+X^2\text{P}(1-\text{P})}$

Where:

X^2 = the table value of chi-square for one (1) degree of freedom at the desired

confidence   level

N = the Population Size

P = the population proportion assumed to be 0.50 since this provides the

maximum sample size

d = the degree of accuracy expressed as a proportion (0.05)

Appendices II provides Krejcie and Morgan's Table for determining

sample size.

Simple random sampling was used to obtain data from participants for this study. According to Bryman (2016), simple random sampling procedure is a probability sampling technique that ensures every instance in the population has an equal chance of being selected for the sample. In sampling technique, each item in the population has the same probable chance of selection in the sample. The method is termed the "Method of Chance Selection" because the selection of an item is entirely dependent on the chance. Also, the sample size is huge, and the item is chosen at random. The researcher self-administers the questionnaire to the staff without any engagement from field assistants. Therefore, there was no recruitment of Field Assistants for the study.

The researcher also used the Lottery method to select the number of HR Managers, Administrative Assistants, Finance, Accountants, Clerks, and Messengers. The names of staff were categorized under HR Managers, Administrative Assistants, Finance, Accountants, Clerks, and Messengers. The researcher then selects the respective number of respondents determined for

60

each category using lottery method. In sampling of participants, names of respondents for each category were first listed and assigned numbers. The researcher then writes the numbers of the respondents on an identical sheet of paper and fold it equally and mixed them up into a bowl. The researcher drew slips from the container one by one until obtaining the desired number for each of the categories to determine the sample size for this study.

Sources of Data

The research work relied on both primary and secondary data sources. This primary data was obtained through a survey questionnaire administered to various individuals, including human resource managers, administrators, finance professionals, accountants, clerks, and messengers. Coy (2019) asserts that primary data is considered the closest to the truth, providing high validity, insightful information, and a manifestation of truth. In addition to collecting primary data, the study also incorporated secondary data from a range of sources. These sources included textbooks, published and unpublished journal articles, magazines, other MCOM and MPHIL theses, government publications, and internet searches. By utilising secondary data, the researcher accessed existing information and findings relevant to their study from various credible and diverse sources.

Data Collection Methods

Data collection methods are broadly classified into two categories: primary data collection methods and secondary data collection methods. Primary data collection methods encompass various techniques such as observation, interviews or questionnaires, case studies, projective, and other techniques as identified by Coy (2019). These methods involve directly

61

gathering data from the target population or individuals involved in the study. On the other hand, secondary data collection methods involve accessing and utilising existing sources of information. These sources include publications from central, state, and local governments, publications from international organisations, journals, magazines, books, public records, statistics, and historical documents. Baskerville and Myers (2009) outline these different sources as valuable reservoirs of secondary data.

In the study, survey data collection method was used. The researcher utilised standardised questionnaires to gather data regarding the preferences, thoughts, and behaviours of the respondents involved in this study. Adoption of this method aligns with research conducted by Creswell (2003) and Brennan et al. (2003), who have highlighted its efficacy. The survey method was chosen due to its suitability for descriptive, exploratory, or explanatory research purposes. Additionally, the method is particularly well-suited for studies that focus on individuals, groups, or organisations as the unit of analysis, as mentioned by Brennan et al. (2003). The survey method of data collection encompasses two primary components: interviewing and questionnaire administration (Coy, 2019).

Coy (2019) states that interviews are characterized by their conversational nature rather than being formal events with pre-established response categories. During interviews, researchers engage in a dialogue with participants, allowing for a more fluid and flexible exchange of ideas. While the researcher may explore a few general topics to guide the discussion, they also respect the participant's autonomy in shaping and structuring their responses (Brennan et al., 2003). This approach acknowledges the participant's

perspectives and allows for a deeper understanding of their views and experiences by giving them the freedom to express themselves in their own words.

The questionnaire administration is a widely utilised method for data collection, particularly when targeting large groups of participants and emphasizing the need for standardization (Creswell, 2003). When employing questionnaire administration, the construction of questions typically consists of two main components: the questions themselves and the responses they elicit. While evaluators occasionally opt for "open-ended" responses, allowing respondents to provide free-flowing narrative answers, this study employed a "closed-ended" approach. In the closed-ended format, participants were presented with a predetermined set of answer options from which they could choose (Baskerville & Myers, 2009; Coy, 2019). This approach facilitates easier data analysis and enables researchers to compare and quantify responses systematically. By utilizing standardized questionnaires, the researcher aimed to ensure consistency and reliability in collecting data from the study participants.

Data Collection Instrument

Structured questionnaire was employed in collecting data because of benefits it provides in terms of "data accessibility", and the ease with which it is coded, processed, and analysed using proper statistical methods (Ali & Bhaskar, 2016). The busy schedules of the respondents, which would not allow for the use of other techniques like the interview, were a big factor in favor of the survey questionnaire being chosen over other approaches. Target population members (respondents) find the questionnaire easy to use,

comprehend study items, and fill it out independently. Creswell and Creswell (2017) argued that questionnaires provide respondents a higher level of anonymity. The study employs primary data. Structured survey questionnaire with closed-ended questions was developed for the study. The questionnaire consists four parts; A, B, C, and D.

In measuring Employability Skills, the scale developed by Azmi et al., (2018) was adapted with 18 items covering communication, teamwork, decision-making, and problem-solving skills. In adapting the questionnaire, some of the wording within the original instrument were rephrased to suit the research objectives. Communication skill items on the questionnaire were questions (1, 2, 3, 4, 5), Teamwork skill comprised items (6, 7, 8, 9, 10), Decision making skill items were (11, 12, 13, 14), Problem-solving skill items (15, 16, 17, 18). Section B of the questionnaire employed a five-point likert scale to measure these items.

The Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (2016) developed a scale that consists 11 items to measure employee engagement. The research adapted this scale to measure employee engagement in Section C of the questionnaire. The items within the questionnaire were rated on five-point scale, with 1 indicating "strongly disagree," 2 indicating " disagree". 3 indicating " neutral," 4 indicating "agree", 5 for "strongly agree". Adapted from Koopmans et al. (2014), ten items were used to measure job performance.

Section D, of the instrument was specifically designed to evaluate three dimensions of job performance: task performance, contextual performance, and adaptive performance. Participants were asked to rate their

responses on five-point scale, with 1 for "strongly disagree," 2 for "disagree," 3 for "neutral," 4 for "agree," and 5 for "strongly agree." while Section, A, acquired information on the respondents' demographic characteristics. Respondents were specifically questioned about their ages, gender identity, educational level, and the number of years they worked with the Suame municipal assembly.

Pre-test of data Collection Instrument

Prior to the full-scale survey, the questionnaires underwent a pilot test involving the staff of the Tafo Municipal Assembly. The primary objective of this pre-test phase was to assess feasibility of survey questionnaires and allow researcher to identify and address any challenging areas. Conducting a pilot test was crucial because, regardless of the careful design of a data collection instrument, the possibility of errors such as ambiguous questions, leading questions, or other violations of effective questionnaire design principles remains. By pre-testing the questionnaire in a different setting, the researcher could detect and rectify such unnecessary errors, ensuring the reliability and validity of the instrument before its widespread administration.

On July 12, 2023, the pilot pre-testing of the questionnaires was conducted, and each of the twenty participants received a personal copy to complete. All twenty respondents actively filled out the questionnaires and returned them as requested. To assess reliability of questionnaire, Cronbach's alpha, or the Alpha coefficient, was employed as a statistical measure. The test was conducted to evaluate the internal consistency and reliability of questionnaire items.

65

Table 2: Reliability and Validity (Cronbach's Alpha) for pilot-testing

Variable name	Number of Items	Cronbach's Alpha
Employability skills	18	.854
Employee engagement	11	.885
Job Performance	10	.926
Total	39	.910

Source: Field survey, Boakye (2023)

According to Hair et al. (2010), Cronbach's alpha should have a value of 0.7 or higher for the factors or survey to be considered significant. Therefore, considering the pre-testing results, where both the factor loadings and Cronbach's alpha were found to be significant, it was expected that the instruments used in this study, along with the chosen sample size, would yield statistically significant results. This indicates that the data collected through the instruments is reliable and capable of producing meaningful findings in the study.

Fieldwork

On July 20th, 2023, an advance notification letter was sent to the respondents, providing them with information about the research purpose, the researcher's name, the research topic, the expected duration of the survey, and assurance of confidentiality for their survey responses. The actual data collection phase commenced on August 1st, 2023, and spanned 10 working days. The survey questionnaire was self-administered to staff members. The drop-off and pick-up methods were employed for questionnaire administration. Two weeks were given to participants in completing the questionnaire.

After 10 working days, a reminder message was sent to the participants as a prompt for completion. During the administration process, the researcher encountered three main challenges. First, some respondents declined in participating in the interview. Secondly, a portion of the participants collected the questionnaire, but failed to return it. Lastly, some respondents picked up the questionnaire but only partially completed it. Despite these challenges, the researcher managed to obtain the necessary number of responses for the study.

Data Processing and Analysis

Data processing for collected data was carried out using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS), specifically version 26.0 and Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM). The data gathered from the survey questionnaire was analysed using PLS-SEM (Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling). The utilization of PLS-SEM was deemed appropriate because it offers advantages of various multivariate techniques, including regression, factor analysis, and correlation (Haenlein & Kaplan, 2004).

This modeling approach was chosen to ensure the attainment of satisfactory levels of validity and reliability of analysis. To assess reliability of the measurement model, Composite Reliability was employed. This measure helps determine the consistency and dependability of the variables included in the model (Ringle et al., 2020). Additionally, assessment of validity involved examining both convergent and discriminant validity. Convergent validity ensures that the measurement model captures intended constructs effectively, while discriminant validity determines the distinctiveness of the constructs

67

from one another. These techniques were employed to ensure the measurement model demonstrated adequate levels of validity and reliability.

Ethical Considerations

According to Gravetter and Larry (2016), research ethics entails the obligation of researchers to uphold truthfulness and respect for all individuals impacted by research studies or the dissemination of study findings. Although winning over respondents' trust and support is a crucial first step, ethical considerations must always serve as a guide for all research endeavours (Hisni & Widowati, 2019). In order to ensure adherence to ethical principles, the researcher secured ethical approval (UCCIRB/CHLS/2023/28) from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at the University of Cape Coast (see Appendix C). During data collection, the researcher anticipated a variety of ethical problems that might come up. As a result, in order to guarantee that the rights of respondents are respected and protected, particular consent will be sought from the Chief Executive Officer in the Suame Municipal Assembly.

The researcher sent an informed consent form's guidelines and handle the following ethical concerns: the researcher sees to it that the research respondents' rights were protected. As a result, they had the right to volunteer for this research and the freedom to opt-out at any moment. No one was forced to partake in the study, the researcher made sure of that. Additionally, participant received enough information regarding the study's primary objectives and its approach so they may understand how the study will affect them.

Furthermore, researcher maintained participants' identity and confidentiality by withholding their identities and any information from the questionnaire from any outside parties. Due to this, the researcher gave the respondents a consent form before the scheduled actual data collection; this was done from 9:00 am to 4:00 pm during working hours. The consent form was given out in their various offices performing their duties. The purpose of this was to give the respondents a chance to briefly discuss confidentiality, anonymity, and their rights to voluntarily participate in or withdraw from this study.

Chapter Summary

The chapter discusses insights into research methods employed by the researcher for gathering, collecting, organising, processing, and analysing the primary data, as well as research paradigm adopted for this study. Furthermore, it emphasises mode of data presentation and interpretation within the context of the study.

69

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Introduction

This chapter presents information relating to the main results in respect of the specific research objectives and the hypotheses that guided the study. The findings of the research are based on the demographic characteristics of respondents, effect of employability skills on job performance, effect of employability skills on employee engagement, effect of employee engagement on employee job performance at the municipal assembly, and the mediating effect of employee engagement on the relationship between employability skills and job performance of staff at Suame Municipal Assembly. The final section presents discussion of the results.

Demographic Information of Respondents

In this section, an analysis of the demographic characteristics of the participants is presented. The statistical tools utilized for this analysis include descriptive measures such as frequencies and percentages. The demographic variables examined in this study are sex, age, work experience, and educational qualifications of the staff. The significance of analysing these demographic characteristics lies in their ability to guide the research in assessing whether the respondents possess the required level of maturity, authority, and freedom to provide reliable and accurate information. This information forms the basis upon which the I can make informed decisions. Table 3 displays the demographic distribution for the complete sample, which comprises a total of 144 questionnaires retrieved from the municipal assembly for further analysis.

70

Table 3: Demographic Information of Respondents

	Frequency	Percentage
Sex		
Male	84	58.3
Female	60	41.7
Age		
Below 30 years	45	31.3
30-40 years	69	47.9
41-50 years	27	18.8
51 – 60 years	3	2.1
Educational Qualification		
Senior high Level	38	26.4
Diploma Level	12	8.3
First degree Level	81	56.3
Second degree Level	8	5.6
Ph.D. Level	2	1.3
Any Other	3	2.1
Work experience		
Below 3 years	57	39.6
3 - 6 years	49	34.0
Above 6 years	38	26.4
Total	144	100

Source: Field Survey, Boakye (2023)

The results presented in Table 3 shows that out of 144 participants, there are 84 males, who accounted for 58.3% of the total surveyed participants, and 60 females, who accounted for 41.7% of the total participants sampled for the study. (58.3%) of the respondents were males, this does not imply that the Suame Municipal Assembly is dominated by males. This validates the findings of Magar et al. (2019), who asserted that there is a greater number of males dominating the job market in Africa.

Among the 144 individuals who responded, 69 were categorized within the age bracket of 30–40 years. This specific demographic segment constituted 47.9% of the overall persons who took part in the study. Subsequently, the age category covering respondents below 30 years, as well as those aged between 41 and 50 years, contributed 31.3% and 18.8% respectively, of the total participants included in the study. Notably, a smaller subset of 3 participants fell within the ranges of 51 to 60 years, accounting for 2.1% of the entire participant unit analyzed. The findings reveal that a substantial proportion, surpassing 79.2%, of the staff members participated in the study were categorized as youthful and thus aged below 41 years.

Additionally, examining the educational backgrounds of the 144 participants, it was observed that: 81 individuals, constituting 56.3% of the respondents, held bachelor's degrees, 38 participants, accounting for 26.4%, possessed Senior High School qualifications, 12 respondents, making up 8.3% of the sample, had obtained diplomas, 8 individuals, or 5.6%, had achieved master's degrees, and 2 respondents, a minority at 1.3%, held Ph.D. degrees. The remaining 3 participants, equivalent to 2.1% of the group, possessed various alternative educational qualifications. The statistical breakdown of respondents' educational attainments clearly demonstrates that all participants surveyed had achieved some form of educational qualification. Additionally, the findings highlight a notable prevalence of first-degree qualifications among the respondents.

Concerning the duration of employment within the assembly presented in Table 3, the examination revealed that 57 respondents (39.6%) had a tenure of less than 3 years, while 49 respondents (34.0%) had served for a span

72

ranging from 3 to 6 years. Furthermore, 38 participants (26.4%) had accumulated over 6 years of service within the assembly. The assessment highlighted that over 60.4% of the participants had garnered experience exceeding 3 years in their roles, suggesting a substantial foundation of expertise among the respondents, poised to contribute significantly to the study.

Assessing Measurement Models for the Study

The sector delves into the measurement model utilized within this study. Evaluation of these measurement models encompasses several key aspects: Factor loadings, internal consistency reliability (also referred to as composite reliability), convergent validity (measured by AVE - Average Variance Extracted), and discriminant validity (evaluated through the Fornell-Lacker criterion and HTMT - Heterotrait-Monotrait ratio). As outlined by Hair et al. (2017), the assessment of a reflective PLS (Partial Least Squares) model's measurement quality stands as a statistical approach employed to gauge the robustness and reliability of the study's measurement framework.

This evaluation serves as a necessary precursor to conducting structural analyses. For a study's measurement model to achieve statistical credibility, it necessitates the attainment of satisfactory levels of internal consistency reliability, convergent validity, and discriminant validity, as stipulated by Hair et al. (2017). Consequently, the procedure is executed in a methodical sequence utilizing Smart-PLS software. Internal consistency is assessed through measures such as Cronbach's alpha, rho_ A, and composite reliability. Furthermore, evaluating a study's convergent validity is facilitated by analyzing factor loadings of indicators and calculating the Average

73

Variance Extracted (AVE), as prescribed by Hair et al. (2017). These authors emphasise that certain benchmarks must be met for robust results.

Specifically, indicator loadings, Cronbach's alpha, and composite reliability values should all surpass a threshold of 0.7. Likewise, the AVE must achieve a value greater than 0.5 in order to establish the required level of convergent validity, as detailed by Hair et al. (2016). Furthermore, when considering the structural models, it has been established that R-square values of 0.25, 0.5, and 0.7 correspond with weak, moderate, and substantial degrees of influence, respectively. Similarly, f-square values of 0.02, 0.15, and 0.35 are interpreted as indicating small, medium, and large effects, respectively. Henseler et al. (2015) talked about the Fornell-Larcker criterion, cross-loadings, and the Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT) criterion as three important statistical tools for figuring out whether a discriminant is valid. Notably, the HTMT criterion is highlighted as the superior method for assessing discriminant validity, as it provides an upper threshold for this aspect (Henseler et al., 2015; Hair et al., 2017).

Assessing indicator loadings

The factor loading shows how much an observable factor is stated to be constituted of the items under consideration. Based on the suggestion of Hair et al. (2017), the lower limit for factor loadings should be greater than 0.7, with higher index loadings showing a strong association with a specific component. All measurement items that exceeded the prescribed threshold were retained, while those indicators falling below the recommended threshold of 0.7, as suggested by Hair et al. (2017), were removed to enhance the overall model's reliability, as detailed in Table 4. Within the set of 39 indicators used

to assess different variables, seven indicators were excluded due to their inability to meet the criteria for indicator reliability, except ESC1, ESC3, ESD11, ESP16, EE1, and JP7 which loaded below (0.642 to 0.699) but did not have any significant impact on the model's validity for the samples.

It can be seen from Table 4 that the items loaded between 0.642 and 0.799 for complete samples. Interestingly none of the scales of the constructs were fully maintained. Employability skills which were independent had 18 indicators. Fourteen indicators loaded above the threshold of 0.7. The employee engagement which had 11 indicators was reduced to 8 indicators. One indicator loaded less than 0.7. job performance had 10 indicators, however, seven of the indicators loaded above 0.7 (see Table 4). Table 4 reveals that for employability skills, a total of fourteen indicators exhibited loadings above the minimum threshold of 0.7. These loadings ranged from a minimum of 0.710 to a maximum of 0.799, indicating a high level of reliability for the retained indicators. Similarly, for employee engagement, the indicator loadings ranged from a minimum of 0.707 to a maximum of 0.738, while job performance indicators demonstrated loadings between a minimum of 0.729 and a maximum of 0.742.

Table 4: Cross Loadings, VIF, Cronbach's Alpha, Composite Reliability, Composite Reliability, Average Variance Extracted

	Outer loadings	VIF	Cronbach's alpha	Composite reliability (rho_a)	Composite reliability (rho_c)	Average variance extracted (AVE)
Communication skills			0.773	0.780	0.846	0.525
ESC1	0.675	1.378				
ESC2	0.770	1.628				
ESC3	0.665	1.409				
ESC4	0.710	1.467				
ESC5	0.794	1.787				
Teamwork skill			0.726	0.732	0.829	0.549
EST6	0.713	1.356				
EST7	0.715	1.398				
EST8	0.733	1.379				
EST9	0.799	1.517				
Decision-making skill			0.703	0.708	0.818	0.531
ESD11	0.642	1.165				
ESD12	0.749	1.386				
ESD13	0.740	1.435				
ESD14	0.776	1.414				
Problem-solving skill			0.707	0.710	0.819	0.531
ESP15	0.730	1.286				
ESP16	0.699	1.335				
ESP17	0.750	1.410				
ESP18	0.736	1.376				
Employability skill	1.000	1.000				

76

Table 4: Cont;d

Employee engagement			0.864	0.865	0.894	0.513
EE1	0.684	1.560				
EE11	0.707	1.618				
EE2	0.712	2.004				
EE3	0.738	2.028				
EE4	0.738	1.802				
EE5	0.713	1.733				
EE7	0.720	1.746				
EE9	0.715	1.851				
Job performance			0.808	0.815	0.861	0.510
JP1	0.734	1.760				
JP2	0.736	1.795				
JP3	0.742	1.498				
JP5	0.732	1.654				
JP6	0.729	1.692				
JP7	0.600	1.406				

Source: Field Survey, Boakye (2023)

Assessing Internal Consistency Reliability

In the research, assessment of construct internal consistency relied on the use of composite reliability, considering Cronbach's alpha as a less dependable measure of internal consistency compared to composite reliability, as suggested by Viladrich et al. (2017). Table 4 provides insights into internal consistency reliability of the constructs under scrutiny. It's worth noting that all latent variables in this study exhibited reliability, surpassing 0.7 threshold recommended by Hair et al. (2019). From Table 4, ES (Communication) achieved a composite reliability score of 0.780, ES (Teamwork) demonstrated a composite reliability score of 0.732, ES (Decision-making) showed a composite reliability score of 0.708, ES (Problem-solving) exhibited a composite reliability score of 0.710, Employee engagement displayed the highest composite reliability score of 0.865, and Performance followed closely with a composite reliability score of 0.815. These results affirm the internal consistency reliability of the model. Additionally, Table 4 incorporates convergence validity findings.

Assessing Convergent Validity

To evaluate convergent validity, we employed the Average Variance Extracted (AVE), which measures the extent to which a particular measure positively correlates with other measures of the same construct, as recommended by Hair et al. (2019). An AVE value exceeding 0.50 signifies that, on average, the construct accounts for more than half of the variance among its indicators. Conversely, an AVE value below 0.50 suggests that, on average, a larger proportion of the variance is attributed to measurement error rather than the construct itself. The results from Table 4 demonstrate that all

constructs in this study exhibit an AVE exceeding the threshold of 0.50. ESC (0.525), EST (0.549), ESD (0.531), ESP (0.531), EE (0.513), and JP (0.510). With the highest being EST and the least being JP, with AVE of 0.549 and 0.510 respectively. This implies that the constructs within this model have the capacity to explain over half of the variance present in their respective indicators. As a component of evaluating the measurement model, discriminant validity was also examined.

Assessing Discriminant Validity

According to Acquah et al. (2020), to establish how one construct differs from another in a model, discriminant validity is employed. To assess the correlations among latent variables, three criteria were employed: cross-loadings, the Fornell-Larcker criterion, and the HTMT (Heterotrait-Monotrait) ratio assessment, following the recommendations of Acquah et al. (2020). The Fornell-Larcker criterion, based on the square root of the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values, was used to evaluate the relationships between latent constructs. According to Ab Hamid et al. (2017), each construct's highest correlation with any other construct should be smaller than the square root of its own AVE.

In this study, the HTMT ratio was utilized to establish discriminant validity. According to Henseler et al. (2020), a latent construct demonstrates discriminant validity when the HTMT ratio falls below 0.90. Findings, as presented in Table 5, indicate that HTMT values are well below the 0.90 threshold, confirming the discriminant validity of the variables.

Table 5: Discriminant Validity Assessment- HTMT Criterion

	EE	ES	ESC	ESD	ESP	EST
ES	0.584					
ESC	0.490	0.842				
ESD	0.415	0.719	0.196			
ESP	0.518	0.875	0.406	0.839		
EST	0.479	0.831	0.688	0.261	0.403	
JP	0.702	0.425	0.388	0.345	0.478	0.257

Source: Field Survey, Boakye (2023)

Assessing the structural model

In this sector, evaluation of the study's hypotheses was shown. Examination of various aspects of the structural model, including collinearity between constructs, coefficient of determination, predictive relevance, effect size, path coefficient, and significance. Following this approach outlined by Nitzl et al. (2016), both direct and indirect models were simultaneously analyzed. The results of the assessment of multicollinearity among the study's indicators are presented in Table 6. As per Hair et al. (2011), in the context of Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM), a tolerance value of 0.20 or less and a Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) value of 5 or higher suggest a potential collinearity issue. For instance, a VIF of 5 for an indicator implies that 80% of the indicator's variance is explained by other formative indicators linked to the same construct.

The findings in Table 6 indicate that the VIF values for the endogenous variables, which include employability skills, employee engagement, and job performance, range from a minimum of 1.000 to a maximum of 1.427.

Table 6: Multicollinearity

	VIF
EE -> JP	1.427
ES -> EE	1.000
ES -> JP	1.427
ESC -> ES	1.432

Source: Field Survey, Boakye (2023)

      The VIF findings from Table 6 provide evidence that there is no common method bias present, as all VIF scores remain below 3.3. A VIF score exceeding 3.3 is considered indicative of severe collinearity issues and may suggest the presence of common method bias, as per the criteria established by Kock and Lynn (2012). Consequently, this model can be deemed free from both vertical and lateral collinearity concerns as well as common method bias when all VIF values, as determined through a comprehensive collinearity test, are equal to or below 3.3, in accordance with the guidelines presented by Moqbel et al. (2013).

Assessing the coefficient of determination

      In a Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) structural model, predictive significance of latent variables is assessed through the R-Square (R^2) metric. R-Square is the primary statistic employed to evaluate the predictive capability of a structural model. It quantifies the degree to which variations in the exogenous variable can explain variances in the endogenous variable. Higher R-Square values signify a stronger predictive capacity. The range of influence that the exogenous latent variable(s) exert on the endogenous latent variable typically falls within the range of 0 to 1.

80

Hair et al. (2016) and Yuliansyah and Razimi (2015) both agree that 10% is the minimum acceptable coefficient of determination. It can be seen from Table 7 that, R^2 score for ES is 0.998, and 0.358 for JP. These values are deemed to have significant prediction ability on structural modeling. Employability skills were employed as a latent exogenous variable in this study to evaluate the predictive relevance, whilst job performance was used as a latent endogenous variable. The endogenous construct (Job performance) for the study's coefficient of determination is shown in Table 7.

Assessing predictive relevance

In Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM), the Q-Squared (Q^2) metric is employed to assess the predictive utility of a structural model. Q-Squared (Q^2) values greater than 0, as per Hair et al. (2019), indicate that the external variable holds predictive significance for the endogenous construct. Table 7 presents the Q^2 results, which are as follows: EE (Employee Engagement) = 0.274, ES (Employability Skills) = 0.998, and JP (Job Performance) = 0.129. Regarding predictive relevance, the outcomes indicate a moderate predictive relevance of the model on the endogenous variable ES (0.998), and for the endogenous variable JP (0.129). The results in Table 7 also underscore the effectiveness of the exogenous variables in predicting the endogenous variables. The study now proceeds to evaluate the effect sizes (F^2) assessment.

Effect Size (F^2)

The effect size (F2) is used to calculate how much each exogenous construct contributes to the endogenous construct. To evaluate the effect of each external latent variable on the model's endogenous variable, F^2 (Cohen,

81

1992) can be calculated. Additionally, it is necessary to quantify the significance of the significant effects that can be obtained by assessing their impact size F2 (Henseler, 2017). The F^2 must reach a value of at least 0.35, 0.15, or 0.02 in order to be classified as having a strong, moderate, or mild impact size (Cohen, 1988). The effect sizes (F^2) of the various structural routes as seen in this investigation are shown in Table 7.

Significance of the Structural Model

Prior to approving study findings, a measuring framework underwent testing to make sure it met PLS-SEM requirements. Hair et al. (2019) claim that this was accomplished by determining the intensity and direction of the trend using the path coefficient (β) and determining the degree of significance using t-statistics computed from 5000 bootstraps, which produced a two-tailed 95 percent confidence interval (CI).

Table 7: Significance of Structural Model Path Coefficient

	(β)	T statistics	P values	2.5%	97.5%	f-square
ES -> JP	0.077	0.947	0.344	-0.090	0.236	0.007
ES -> EE	0.547	9.065	0.000	0.423	0.660	0.427
EE -> JP	0.552	7.127	0.000	0.415	0.718	0.333
ESC -> ES	0.426	18.035	0.000	0.377	0.470	74.144
ESD -> ES	0.318	15.496	0.000	0.275	0.355	38.037
ESP -> ES	0.320	18.739	0.000	0.287	0.354	34.611
EST -> ES	0.354	15.423	0.000	0.310	0.399	51.976
	R-square	R-square adjusted	Q²predict	RMSE	MAE	
EE	0.299	0.294	0.274	0.868	0.692	
ES	0.998	0.998	0.998	0.047	0.035	
JP	0.358	0.349	0.129	0.946	0.767	

Source: Field Survey, Boakye (2023)

82

The results were presented in accordance with Hair et al. (2019) suggested t-stats values. Researchers argue that p-values of 0.05, which indicate the model's statistical significance, correspond to t-stats values over 1.96 and vice versa. Path coefficients were also explained using Cohen's (1988) criteria, according to which a correlation coefficient (r) of 0.10 indicates a weak association/relationship, a correlation coefficient (r) of 0.30 indicates a moderate relationship and a correlation coefficient (r) of 0.50 or higher indicates a significant association/relationship.

Hypothesis One: There is a significant relationship between employability skills and job performance among staff at Suame Municipal Assembly.

This hypothesis aimed at determining the relationship between employability skills and job performance of staff at Suame Municipal Assembly. The path coefficient, p values, and t-statistic were used to test this relationship. The related expected result demonstrated that there was no statistical relationship between employability skills and job performance of staffs the at Suame Municipal Assembly. From Table 7, ($\beta = 0.077$, t-stat = 0.947 and p-value = 0.344 > 0.005), hence providing a statistically insignificant result, the study rejects the null hypothesis that posits "There is a significant relationship between employability skills and job performance among staff at Suame Municipal Assembly."

Hypothesis Two: There is a significant relationship between employability skills and employee engagement of staff at the Suame Municipal Assembly.

The second hypothesis aimed at determining the relationship between employability skills and employee engagement of staff at Suame Municipal Assembly. The path coefficient, *p* values, and t-statistic were used to test this relationship. The related expected result demonstrated that there is a statistical connection between employability skills and employee engagement of staff at Suame Municipal Assembly. From Table 7, ($\beta = 0.547$, t-stat = 9.065 and p-value = $0.000 < 0.005$), hence providing a statistically significant reason to maintain the null hypothesis which states that ''There is a significant relationship between employability skills and employee engagement among staff at the Suame Municipal Assembly''.

Hypothesis Three: There is a significant relationship between employee engagement on job performance of staff at Suame Municipal Assembly.

The third hypothesis aimed to assess the relationship between employee engagement and job performance among the staff at Suame Municipal Assembly. This relationship was evaluated using path coefficients, p-values, and t-statistics. The anticipated outcome indeed confirmed the presence of a statistically significant relationship between employee engagement and job performance among the Suame Municipal Assembly staff. The results in Table 7 showed ($\beta = 0.552$, t-stat = 7.127, and p-value = $0.000 < 0.005$), the findings provide strong statistical evidence in favor of retaining the null hypothesis, which asserts that "There is a significant

84

relationship between employee engagement and job performance of staff at the Suame Municipal Assembly."

Analysis of mediation

From the model's structure, it was determined that ES has an influence on JP through EE. This suggests that EE plays a crucial role in explaining the unique connections between ES and JP. In the absence of EE, ES may not fully explain for the variation in JP. Consequently, it becomes important to investigate the nature of these indirect relationships. To delve into this further, a mediation analysis was conducted, and the results are summarized in Table 8. In interpreting these mediation results, guidelines provided by Zhao et al. (2010) were considered.

Firstly, "no mediation" occurs when there is no significant mediation effect observed. Secondly, "partial mediation" is identified when both the direct and indirect effects are statistically significant. This suggests that while the direct relationship between ES and JP is significant, a portion of this relationship is also explained indirectly through EE. Lastly, "complete mediation" emerges when the indirect effect is significant, but the direct effect is not, it suggests that the connection between employability skills (ES) and job performance (JP) is entirely elucidated by the mediating variable, employee engagement (EE). This interpretation can be further substantiated by evaluating the Variance Accounted For (VAF) within the mediation process.

Table 8: Direct Effect and Indirect Effect

	Total Effect	t-stats	p-value	Direct effect	t-stats	p-value		indirect	t-stats	p-value
ES -> JP	0.380	5.974	0.000	0.077	0.947	0.344	ES -> EE -> JP	0.302	5.201	0.000

Variance accounted for (VAF) VAF = (Indirect effect/Total effect) *100

FS -> OMC -> Oln		80%	

VAF No mediation (0.0%≤ mediation ≤ 20%); Partial mediation (20% ≤ mediation ≤ 80%); Full mediation (mediation ≥ 80%)

Source: Field Survey, Boakye (2023)
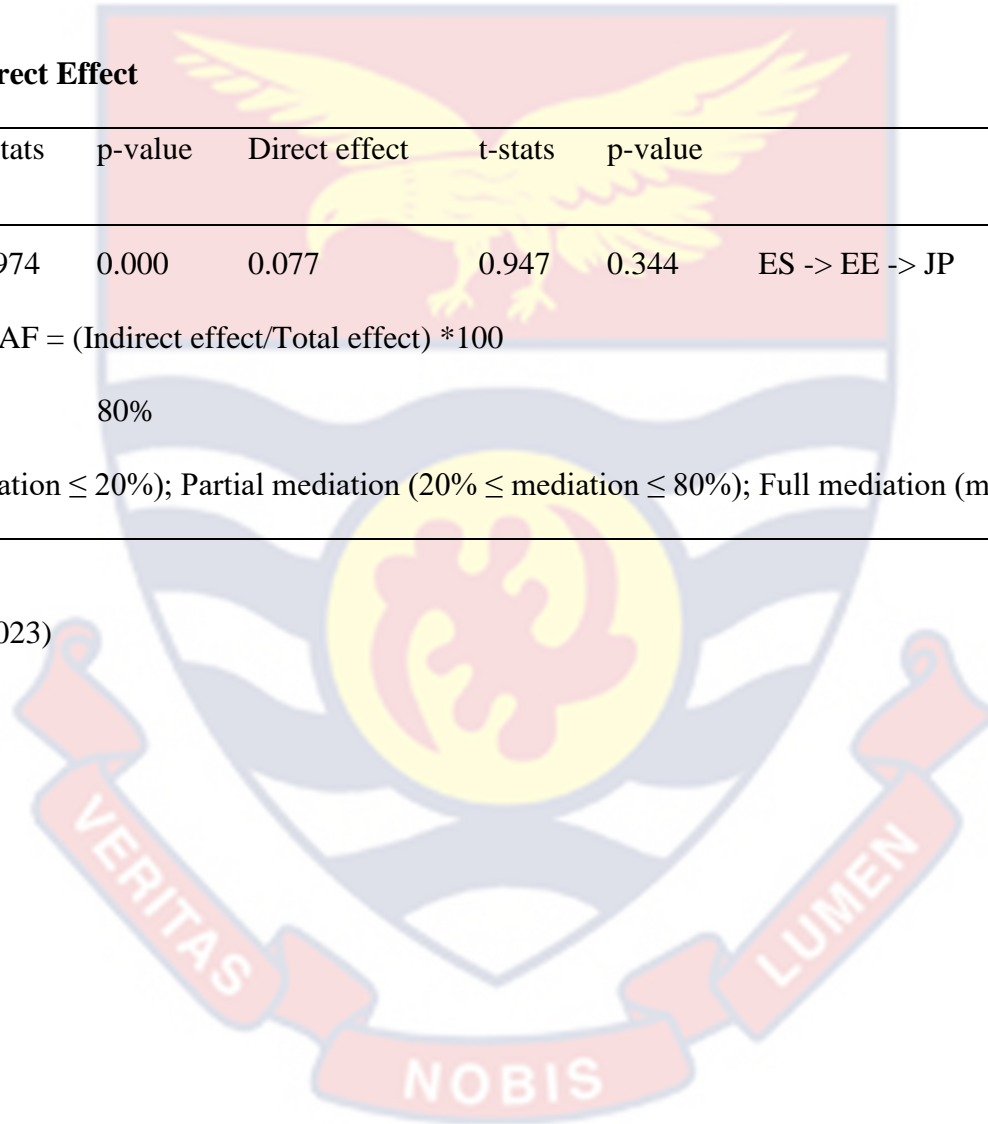
Hypothesis Four: Employee engagement has a mediating effect on the relationship between employability skills and job performance among the staff at Suame Municipal Assembly.

The fourth and final hypothesis investigate the mediating effect of employee engagement on the relationship between employability skills and job performance among Suame Municipal Assembly staff. Interestingly, the direct association between employability skills and job performance was found to be insignificant. However, it's noteworthy that the indirect connection between employability skills and job performance, mediated through employee engagement, demonstrated statistical significance [B = 0.302; t-stats = 5.201; p < 0.05], as evidenced in Table 8. Considering results of the direct relationship and the substantial Variance Accounted For (VAF) of 80%, it becomes apparent that the relationship between employability skills (ES) and job performance (JP) is entirely mediated by employee engagement (EE).

The decision on the Research Hypotheses

Upon effective discussion of the research findings, decisions about the hypotheses stemming from the research objectives were made and presented in Table 9.
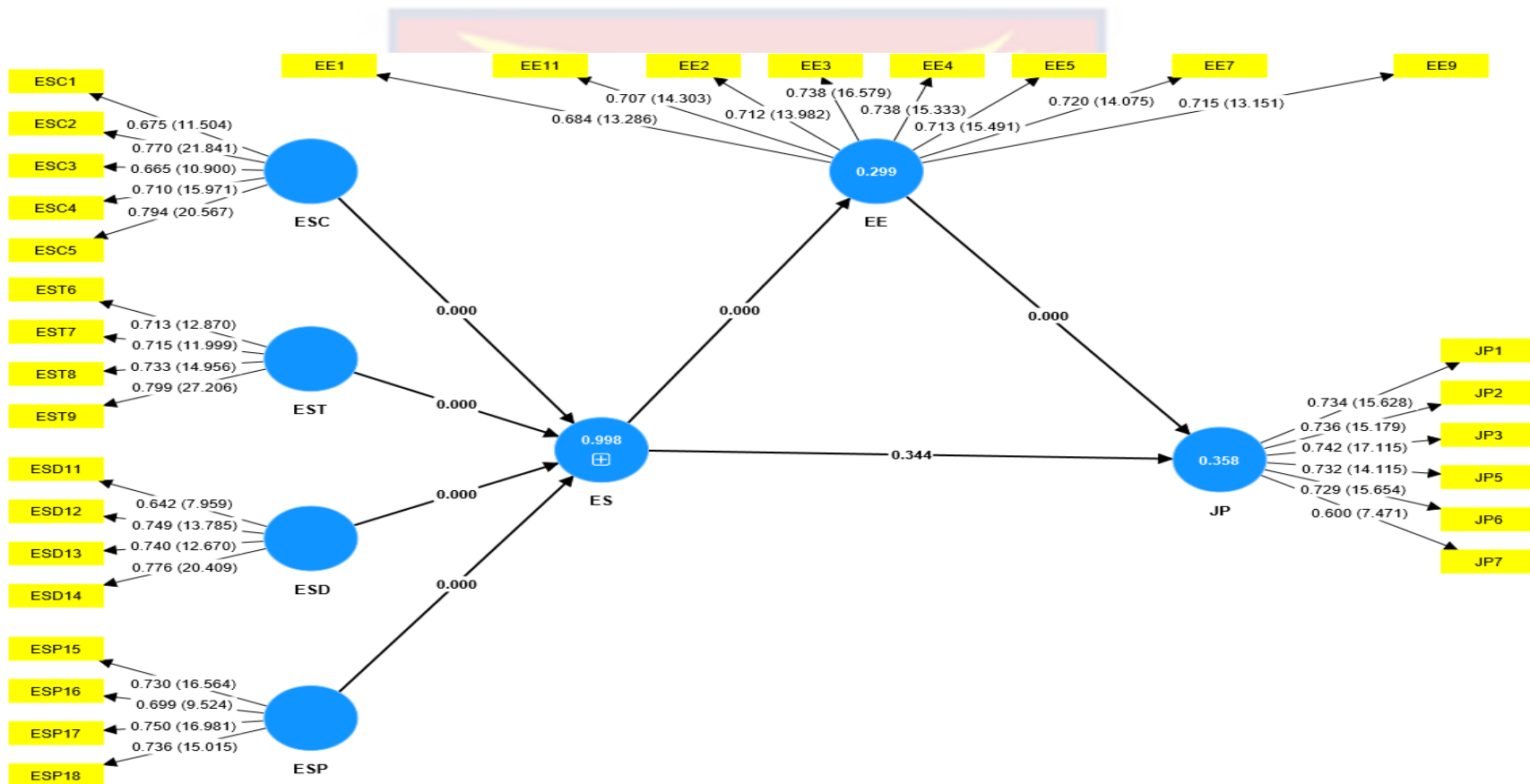
Figure 3: Structural Model showing the effect of employability skills on job performance, employability skills on employee engagement, and employee engagement on job performance at Suame Municipal Assembly.

Source: Field Survey, Boakye (2023)

Table 9: Research Hypotheses

Objective	Hypothesis	Path Coefficient	T-stats	p-value	Remarks
1	ES -> JP	0.077	0.947	0.344	Rejected
2	ES -> EE	0.547	9.065	0.000	Maintained
3	EE -> JP	0.552	7.127	0.000	Maintained
4	ES -> EE -> JP	0.302	5.201	0.000	Maintained

Source: Field Survey, Boakye (2023)

Discussion

This subsection gives a full explanation of the findings reported in the preceding paragraphs in relation to the study's specific objectives.

Objective 1: Examine the effect of Employability Skills on Job Performance of staff at the Suame Municipal Assembly.

The findings of this study shed light on the intricate relationship between employability skills and job performance within the organisational context of the Suame Municipal Assembly. The initial objective was to explore whether possessing a set of employability skills, including communication, teamwork, decision-making, and problem-solving, significantly influenced the job performance of staff members. However, the results indicate that there is a lack of substantial impact exerted by employability skills on job performance, as evidenced by the non-significant coefficient ($\beta = 0.077$) calculated through the statistical analysis presented in Table 7. The corresponding t-statistic registers at 0.947 and the associated p-

value is computed to be 0.344. Importantly, it is observed that this p-value surpasses the established significance level of 0.005.

The lack of statistical significance in this context could be attributed to several transmission mechanisms and underlying intuitions. One plausible explanation is related to the complexity of the organisational environment itself. The Suame Municipal Assembly may have a unique structure and operational dynamics that interact with employability skills in a way that doesn't lead to a significant improvement in job performance. It's possible that other factors, such as organisational culture, leadership style, and job demands, might have a stronger influence on performance outcomes.

From a theoretical perspective, these results can be linked to the Human Capital Theory and the Two-Factor Theory. The Human Capital Theory posits that individuals' skills and knowledge contribute to their overall productivity and potential economic value. In the context of this study, the possession of employability skills can be seen as a form of human capital investment. However, the lack of a significant impact on job performance suggests that the mere possession of these skills might not be sufficient to translate into tangible productivity gains. This could be due to the specific way in which the Suame Municipal Assembly's work environment values and utilizes these skills.

The Two-Factor Theory, also known as Herzberg's Motivation-Hygiene Theory, could also provide insights into these findings. According to this theory, there are factors that can lead to satisfaction (motivators) and factors that can lead to dissatisfaction (hygiene factors) in the workplace. Employability skills could be considered motivators, as they are skills that

91

enhance an individual's ability to perform well. However, the absence of a statistically significant effect on job performance suggests that these skills might not be functioning as strong motivators in this particular setting. Other hygiene factors, such as job security, work conditions, and recognition, might be overshadowing the influence of employability skills in determining job performance outcomes.

Comparing these results with the study conducted by Rodzalan and Jasman (2022), which found a significant positive connection between employability skills and job performance among university graduates in Malaysia, suggests that the relationship between employability skills and job performance might be context-dependent. Factors such as the nature of the workforce, industry demands, and the specific skills valued within a region or organisation could all contribute to these discrepancies.

Similarly, the study by Marzec et al. (2021), which identified a significant and positive influence of employees' employability on job performance in public organisations in Poland, indicates that the interplay between employability and performance can vary across different organisational and cultural contexts. The contrast between these findings and the current study underscores the importance of considering contextual factors when interpreting the relationship between employability skills and job performance.

The study's findings suggest that while there wasn't a statistically significant relationship between employability skills and job performance within the Suame Municipal Assembly, managers can still glean valuable insights. First, a tailored approach to skill development is vital. By

identifying context-specific skills that align with the Assembly's operational dynamics, employees can better understand the relevance of their skill enhancement efforts and how they contribute to performance outcomes. Second, a holistic perspective on performance assessment is necessary. Managers should consider a broader range of factors beyond employability skills, such as the work environment, job design, leadership, and job satisfaction, to fully comprehend what influences job performance.

Moreover, Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory underscores the importance of a positive work environment. Addressing hygiene factors like fair compensation, recognition, and career opportunities can enhance the impact of employability skills on job performance. Additionally, fostering a culture of continuous learning and skill adaptation is crucial. Encouraging employees to apply employability skills flexibly and providing access to training, workshops, and industry insights can empower them to continually enhance their skills, contributing to the organisation's long-term success. By incorporating these insights, managers can bridge the gap between employability skills and job performance, cultivating an environment that nurtures growth, collaboration, and overall performance improvement.

In conclusion, this study's results suggest that within the Suame Municipal Assembly, possessing employability skills might not significantly enhance employees' job performance. The insights from Human Capital Theory and the Two-Factor Theory, alongside the comparison to other studies, underscore the complexity of this relationship and emphasize the role of contextual factors in shaping the impact of employability skills on job performance within diverse organisational settings. Also, managers have the

93

opportunity to shape the impact of employability skills through tailored skill development, holistic performance assessment, and a supportive work environment.

Objective 2: Analyze the effect of Employability skills on Employee engagement of staff at the Suame Municipal Assembly.

The examination effect of Employability Skills (ES) on Employee Engagement (EE) at Suame Municipal Assembly presents significant implications for understanding the relationship between these two critical factors. The results of this research reveal a noteworthy positive connection between Employability Skills and Employee Engagement, highlighting the importance of these skills in fostering a more engaged workforce. The statistical analysis, as demonstrated in Table 7, solidifies this relationship, with a coefficient (β) of 0.547, a t-statistic of 9.065, and a p-value of 0.000, indicating a substantial level of significance.

This significant outcome can be understood through various transmission mechanisms and underlying intuitions. According to the Human Capital Theory, individuals' skills and competencies contribute to their overall productivity and value within an organisation. In the context of this study, possessing Employability Skills can be seen as an investment in human capital, leading to improved Employee Engagement. The link between these skills and engagement could be explained by the idea that when employees feel competent in their roles and capable of contributing meaningfully, they are more likely to be engaged in their work.

Furthermore, Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory provides insights into the observed relationship. Employee Engagement can be considered a motivator,

94

as it represents the positive emotional and cognitive state that drives employees to go beyond their basic job requirements. The presence of Employability Skills, such as effective communication and problem-solving, might contribute to a sense of achievement and recognition—factors known to enhance motivation and job satisfaction, thereby influencing Employee Engagement. Additionally, Herzberg's hygiene factors, which include working conditions and interpersonal relationships, could be influenced positively by Employability Skills, leading to an enhanced overall work environment that promotes engagement.

Comparisons to similar research studies provide additional context. Panagiotis et al.'s (2022) studied, exploring the relationship between employability skills and student engagement, aligns with the current findings. This aligns with the present research's outcomes, suggesting that the positive relationship between employability skills and engagement transcends organisational contexts. This resonates with the idea that individuals who perceive themselves as competent and capable are extra likely to engage actively and enthusiastically in their roles.

Moreover, research conducted by Oluwatobi et al. (2020), which highlighted association between student engagement and employability skills, mirrors the present findings. This alignment reinforces the notion that the relationship between engagement and employability skills is not confined to a single setting. The insights from Oluwatobi et al.'s (2020) research resonate with the current study's conclusions, emphasizing that engagement and fundamental employability skills share an interconnected relationship.

95

To capitalize on these findings, managers should integrate Employability Skills into training programs and recruitment processes. Nurturing cross-functional collaboration and recognizing employees who actively apply ES can stimulate EE. Leadership development, personalized growth plans, and a learning culture can further enhance the linkage between ES and EE. Regular feedback sessions and surveys can offer a continuous feedback loop for monitoring and optimizing the impact of ES on EE.

In conclusion, the significant impact of ES on EE at the Suame Municipal Assembly underscores the critical role these skills play in fostering a more engaged workforce. The connections drawn from Human Capital Theory and Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory shed light on mechanisms through which these results emerge. Comparisons to other studies further validate the findings, emphasizing the universality of the link between engagement and employability skills. By recognizing these insights, managers can strategically leverage employability skills to cultivate higher levels of Employee Engagement, leading to enhanced organisational performance and overall employee satisfaction. By aligning skill development, leadership practices, and organisational culture, managers can forge a workforce that is not only skilled but also motivated, contributing to improved performance and overall organisational success.

Objective 3: Analyze the effect of Employee Engagement on Job Performance of staff at the Suame Municipal Assembly.

This exploration of the intricate interplay between Employee Engagement (EE) and Job Performance (JP) within context of Suame Municipal Assembly offers a nuanced understanding of how these two factors

96

are inherently connected. The results of the study unravel a compelling narrative, unveiling a substantial and positive effect of EE on JP. This indicates that when employees are engaged, their job performance tends to be markedly enhanced. The robustness of this connection is clearly delineated through the statistical analysis, revealing a coefficient (β) of 0.552, a t-statistic of 7.127, and an impressive p-value of 0.000, unmistakably affirming the statistical significance of this relationship.

Delving into the mechanisms that underpin this relationship offers insights into how engaged employees are extra likely to exhibit better job performance. Through the lens of the Human Capital Theory, the correlation can be understood as a result of the heightened effort and enthusiasm that engaged employees invest in their work. Engaged individuals view their roles as opportunities for growth, actively seeking avenues to develop their skills and competencies. As a result, they continuously enhance their human capital, leading to elevated levels of competence and, consequently, enhanced job performance.

Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory further enriches our comprehension of this phenomenon. Employee Engagement can be seen as a powerful motivator that transcends mere compliance with job requirements. Engaged employees are intrinsically driven to excel, deriving satisfaction and a sense of accomplishment from their work. This emotional investment contributes to a more positive attitude toward tasks, enabling employees to approach challenges with determination and creative problem-solving. This elevated commitment to work ultimately translates into improved job performance outcomes.

97

Drawing parallels with similar research studies reinforces the validity of these findings. Jemal's (2017) study, which similarly identified a positive connection between employee engagement and job performance, resonates with the current outcomes. Similarly, Hussein et al. (2018), discovered a link between employee engagement and job performance, mirror the present research. These convergent results lend credence to the idea that engaged employees are extra likely to exhibit heightened job performance across diverse organisational contexts.

The significant influence of EE on JP within the Suame Municipal Assembly holds vital policy implications for managers aiming to optimize their organisational outcomes. With clear evidence pointing to the positive effect of EE on JP, managers can strategically design policies and initiatives that foster a culture of engagement to drive overall performance.

Firstly, managers should prioritize the creation of an environment that nurtures and sustains high levels of employee engagement. This can be achieved through policies that promote open communication, recognition, and opportunities for professional growth. Regular feedback mechanisms and channels for employees to voice their opinions and concerns can create a sense of inclusion, fostering a deeper connection between employees and the organisation. By investing in mechanisms that enhance employee engagement, managers can set the stage for improved job performance.

Secondly, training and development programs can be tailored to include modules that emphasize the development of soft skills, emotional intelligence, and interpersonal abilities. The findings highlight the significant impact of engagement on job performance, these skills can be viewed as

98

critical assets in enhancing engagement levels. Policies should encourage employees to participate in workshops and training sessions that hone these skills, ultimately enabling them to better connect with their work, colleagues, and the organisation as a whole.

Lastly, recognizing and rewarding efforts that contribute to increased employee engagement can be formalized through policies such as performance-linked incentives and awards. Managers can link bonuses or promotions to not only job performance but also active participation in engagement initiatives. This policy approach not only reinforces the organisation's commitment to engagement but also highlights the tangible benefits that stem from an engaged workforce, creating a positive feedback loop that further boosts engagement and subsequent job performance.

In conclusion, this significant relationship between EE and JP at the Suame Municipal Assembly underscores the profound influence of engagement on workforce effectiveness. The insights gleaned from the Human Capital Theory and Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory illuminate the pathways through which this relationship operates. Comparative analysis with other studies underscores the universality of this relationship. In essence, the significant impact of Employee Engagement on Job Performance underscores the need for comprehensive policies that target engagement enhancement. By creating an environment that fosters engagement, emphasizing the development of critical interpersonal skills, and linking engagement efforts to incentives, managers can set the stage for a more engaged, motivated, and high-performing workforce at the Suame Municipal Assembly.

Objective 4: Analyze the mediating effect of employee engagement on the relationship between employability skills and job performance of staff at Suame Municipal Assembly.

Objective 4 of this comprehensive study dives deep into the intricate dynamics among Employability Skills (ES), Employee Engagement (EE), and Job Performance (JP), particularly through the lens of the mediating effect of EE on the relationship between ES and JP. These insights uncovered in the objective provide a rich tapestry of understanding, revealing that while the direct link between ES and JP might not exhibit immediate statistical significance, the inclusion of EE as a mediating factor adds a critical layer of significance to this relationship. This mediation effect, as demonstrated by the robust statistical values in Table 8 such as a Coefficient (B) of 0.302, a t-statistic of 5.201, and a p-value less than 0.05 underscores the pivotal role that EE plays in amplifying the influence of ES on JP within the Suame Municipal Assembly.

Peeling back the layers of this mediating effect, transmission mechanisms and underlying intuitions come to light, revealing how EE bridges the gap between ES and JP. Anchored in the Human Capital Theory, the significance of this mediation effect can be understood as an intricate interplay between individual skill development and the enabling environment. While ES invests individuals with the capability, EE serves as a catalyst that transforms these capabilities into proactive commitment and effort. In essence, EE acts as the conduit through which ES translates into meaningful and impactful contributions to JP. This connection resonates with Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory, wherein EE serves as motivational factor that nurtures an

100

intrinsic sense of accomplishment and satisfaction, elevating employees' commitment and performance in their roles. Thus, engaged employees are extra likely to view their roles as meaningful and aligned with personal growth, thereby leveraging their ES more effectively to enhance their JP.

The findings also echo parallels from prior research, amplifying their validity. Ngai et al.'s (2016) study that revealed EE as mediating effect in the relationship between ES and JP among employees in China mirrors the present findings. Similarly, Agarwal et al. (2012) emphasized the role of EE and a conducive work environment in driving improved job performance. The Two-Factor Theory's tenets hold true here as well engaged employees are naturally drawn to tasks that challenge and stimulate them, thus leading to elevated performance outcomes. These interconnections validate the notion that EE acts as a bridge, propelling ES into tangible JP outcomes.

The practical implications of these findings reverberate significantly for the Suame Municipal Assembly. While elevating employability skills remains a cornerstone, the strategic emphasis should also encompass the creation of an ecosystem that nurtures heightened EE levels. This encompasses initiatives that empower employees to effectively employ their acquired skills, alongside initiatives that acknowledge, reward, and provide opportunities for growth. By doing so, the assembly can foster an engaged workforce that not only possesses the requisite skills but is also motivated to channel them effectively toward improved JP outcomes.

In summation, Objective 4 enriches our understanding by spotlighting the pivotal role of EE as a mediating force between ES and JP. This mediation underscores the imperative of cultivating an engaged workforce to

unlock the latent potential of employees' skills. The symbiotic relationship with the Human Capital Theory and Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory reiterates the centrality of EE as a catalyst for transmuting skills into tangible job performance enhancements. Ultimately, this insight stands to enhance the Suame Municipal Assembly's operational effectiveness and overall organisational triumph.

Chapter Summary

This chapter presented relevant information in connection to main research objectives and hypotheses of the study. The chapter started and reported the response rate obtained from the field survey. It subsequently discussed demographic characteristics participants regard toward sex, age, the number of years worked, and academic qualifications of staff members at the Suame municipal assembly. The chapter also shared some insights observed based on demographic characteristics of the survey participants through descriptive statistics.

Furthermore, this chapter focused its analysis on the specific study objectives and hypotheses set for undertaking this study. From a statistical viewpoint, PLS-SEM (PLS algorithm) was the model used in analyzing objectives 1 to 4. The first hypothesis, which projected that employability skills have a significant relationship on job performance at the Suame municipal assembly, was rejected. Also, second hypothesis, which claimed that employability skills have a significant relationship on employee engagement at the Suame municipal assembly, was maintained. The third hypothesis, which states employee engagement has a significant relationship on job performance at Suame Municipal Assembly, was also maintained. The

final hypothesis, which tested mediating effect of employee engagement on the relationship between employability skills and job performance, was also maintained. Relevant literature was given to support the findings of the study.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

This chapter covers a summary of the study, its conclusions, and recommendations drawn from this research. This summary provides a concise outline of study objectives, methods, and results. In similar, the conclusions summarize the comprehensive results derived from the study, aligning them with the research hypotheses. To conclude, this chapter provides actionable suggestions and suggests potential pathways for future study endeavors.

Summary of the Study

The study examined employability skills, employee engagement, and job performance of staff at Suame municipal assembly. Employee engagement as a mediator. In pursuit of the main goal, four distinct specific objectives were devised: examining effect of employability skills on job performance of staff at Suame Municipal Assembly; analyzing effect of employability skills on employee engagement of staff at Suame Municipal Assembly; analyze the effect of employee engagement on job performance of staff at the Suame Municipal Assembly, and analyzing mediating effect of employee engagement on the relationship between employability skills and job performance of staff at Suame Municipal Assembly.

The study was centered on two theories. These theories were human capital and two-factor theory. The concepts of employability skills, employee engagement, and job performance were all explained. The conceptual framework linking these variables were also explained. This research adopted the positivism philosophical paradigm in analyzing study objectives. Since

104

this study objectives sought to test hypotheses, which are predictive-based, and the investigator sought to collect large amounts of data that could be measured numerically, this study employed a quantitative research approach. Also, given that the research objectives sought to explain the causes and effects among the variables of interest, an explanatory research design was adopted. Total sample size of 144 respondents was considered, out of a target population of 230. Krejcie and Morgan's 1970 formula was implemented.

The study population was made up of staff members within the Suame Municipal Assembly. These employees comprised human resource managers, administrators, finance, accountants, clerks, and messengers. Primary data was employed. A structured questionnaire served as the data collection instrument for the study. The technique used to test the objectives and hypotheses in the study was Partial Least Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM). This technique employed to achieve objectives one, two, three, and four of this research. The selection of the tools was predicated on their effectiveness in assessing the anticipated relationships between the variables in the research.

Summary of Key Findings

This research arrived at these results.

The first objective examined effect of employability skills on job performance of staff at Suame Municipal Assembly. This study found that there was no significant relationship between employability skills and job performance. It emerged from the study that possession of employability skills by an employee does not appear to have significant impact on their overall performance within organisational context. This statistical analysis

presented in Table 7 substantiates this discernment, revealing a calculated coefficient (β) of 0.077. The corresponding t-statistic registers at 0.947, and the associated p-value is computed to be 0.344. Importantly, it is observed that this p-value surpasses the established significance level of 0.005. Therefore, based on the empirical evidence gathered from the data analysis, it can be inferred that the presence of employability skills, encompassing the aforementioned attributes, does not appear to markedly enhance total work performance of employees at Suame Municipal Assembly.

This study second objective analyzed effect of employability skills on employee engagement among staff at Suame Municipal Assembly. This research found there was a significant relationship between employability skills and employee engagement. Specifically, calculated coefficient (β) stands at an appreciable 0.547. This is further substantiated by a corresponding t-statistic value of 9.065, demonstrating a substantial level of significance. Most notably, the derived p-value, which is impressively computed at 0.000, clearly falls well below the conventional threshold of significance at 0.005.

In essence, the empirical evidence summarized within these findings resolutely substantiates that possessing a set of Employability Skills, as assessed through factors such as communication, teamwork, decision-making, and problem-solving skills, indeed play pivotal role in fostering higher employee engagement among staff at the Suame Municipal Assembly. This outcome further underlines the importance of these skills in influencing the dynamic relationship between employee competencies and their proactive involvement in the organisation.

106

The third objective of the study was analyzing effect of employee engagement on the job performance of staff at Suame Municipal Assembly. The study found there was significant relationship between employee engagement and job performance. Evidently, calculated coefficient (β) has an appreciable value of 0.552. This quantitative representation gains additional support from the associated t-statistic, which emerges clearly at 7.127, reflecting a notable level of statistical significance. The derived p-value, blindingly computed at 0.000, bears explicit testament to its pronounced statistical strength, firmly surpassing the conventional threshold of significance at 0.005.

The findings explain that a higher degree of employee engagement, as assessed through various parameters, profoundly contributes to an increased level of job performance across the assembly's workforce. This finding highlights the significance of nurturing and fostering active employee engagement strategies to optimize overall job performance outcomes, ultimately strengthening the assembly's operational efficacy and main organisational success.

Finally, fourth objective of the study examine mediating effect of employee engagement on the relationship between employability skills and job performance among Suame Municipal Assembly staff. The research findings revealed that employee engagement indeed exerted full mediating effect on the relationship between employability skills and job performance. These was underscored by significant findings presented in Table 8 [Coefficient (B) = 0.302; t-statistics = 5.201; p < 0.05]. However, this positive effects of these skills on job performance became significant when

mediated by employee engagement. The mediation effect proposed that employees who were extremely engaged in their tasks and displayed genuine interest and motivation towards their work were more likely to leverage their employability skills effectively, leading to improved job performance. The engagement factor acted as a bridge that enhanced the translation of employability skills into actual job performance outcomes.

Conclusions

The study provided a summary of three (3) major variables and relevant discussion (employability skills, employee engagement, and job performance) in literature academically. Relevant information has come to light that can provide valuable insights for shaping policies of Suame municipal assembly and other municipal assemblies across the country. Based on the study's primary discoveries, the following conclusions were formulated:

Objective 1 examines effect of Employability Skills on Job Performance of staff at Suame Municipal Assembly. In conclusion, this objective revealed that the possession of employability skills does not seem to exert a significant direct impact on the job performance of employees at the Suame Municipal Assembly. This outcome is aligned with the understanding that possessing employability skills does not inherently translate into improved job performance. The findings suggest that employees may focus primarily on their core tasks, potentially neglecting other performance dimensions. Managers can take away the importance of recognizing that while employability skills are crucial for well-rounded employee development, they might not be the sole driver of enhanced job performance.

To foster comprehensive performance, managers should encourage a balance between core duties and broader contributions, potentially through clear performance expectations and multi-dimensional assessments.

In summary, Objective 2 underscored the significance of Employability Skills in influencing Employee Engagement within the Suame Municipal Assembly. This finding revealed that possessing these skills have substantial effect fostering a more engaged workforce. Managers can infer that enhancing employability skills contributes to a workforce that is more enthusiastic, collaborative, and proactive in their involvement with the organisation. Leveraging these findings, managers should focus on aligning skill development initiatives with strategic goals, promoting cross-functional collaboration, and providing opportunities for employees to apply their skills meaningfully.

Conclusively, Objective 3 illuminated the substantial effect of Employee Engagement on Job Performance among staff at Suame Municipal Assembly. This finding underscores the pivotal role of engagement in driving higher levels of job performance. This aligns with the notion that an engaged workforce tends to invest more effort, enthusiasm, and creativity into their tasks, leading to improved overall performance. Managers can take away the importance of nurturing an environment that fosters engagement through various strategies, such as regular feedback, meaningful recognition, and opportunities for growth. Recognizing the significance of engagement in enhancing job performance, managers should prioritize initiatives that boost employee commitment and enthusiasm in their roles.

109

Objective 4 analyze the mediating effect of Employee Engagement on the relationship between Employability Skills and Job Performance of staff at Suame Municipal Assembly. In conclusion, this objective provided deeper understanding of the interplay between Employability Skills, Employee Engagement, and Job Performance. This finding illuminates that while the direct link between Employability Skills and Job Performance might not be immediately evident, Employee Engagement emerges as significant mediating role that bridges this connection. This underscores the role of engagement in translating skills into tangible performance outcomes. Managers should recognize the pivotal function of Employee Engagement in unlocking the latent potential of employability skills. This insight calls for a holistic approach, wherein fostering engagement is essential alongside skill enhancement. The study highlights that an engaged workforce optimally leverages their skills to achieve superior job performance.

Recommendations

The results led to the formulation of the following recommendations:

1. Firstly, the research recommends that management of Suame municipal assembly explore alternative factors (Job satisfaction, leadership quality and motivational tools like promotion, incentives etc.) that could potentially impact job performance. By focusing on identifying and addressing these influential skills, the Suame Municipal Assembly can also develop targeted strategies to improve employee's performance and overall organisational success.

2. Secondly, this study's findings revealed the significance of employee engagement as a pivot for enhancing job performance of staff. This

110

research recommends that the assembly's management place concerted importance on involving employees in decision-making processes that directly affect their roles and the organisation. Providing leadership training to administrators and other core persons in the assembly to train them with the necessary skills to efficiently lead and motivate their teams. Thus, strong leadership plays essential role in shaping employee engagement. Organize team-building events, social gatherings, and volunteering opportunities that promote friendship and a sense of community among employees.

Also, promoting diversification and inclusiveness within the workplace by creating an enabling environment where employees from various backgrounds feel appreciated and respected can significantly enhance their sense of engagement. There should be encouraged open and transparent communication across all levels of the organisation.

3. Lastly, the study also showed employee engagement as situational factor that enhanced job performance and act as mediating role in the relationship existing between employability skills and job performance of staff at Suame Municipal Assembly. It was recommended that management of the Suame municipal assembly make a radical shift and transformation to intensify the level of engagement they offer to employees. That is to say, the assembly should formulate strategies (Establish Clear Expectations, Encourage Work Autonomy, Employee Surveys, Regular Performance Feedback, Flexible Work Arrangements, Professional Development, recognition

111

and rewards, and wellness programs) Implementing these strategies, tailored to specific needs, can contribute to a more engaged and motivated workforce. This is because when staffs perceive high engagement, it will increase their engagement levels, which translates into superior organisational success or performance.

Suggestions for Future Research

This research was conducted among staff at the Suame municipal assembly on employability skills, employee engagement, and job performance.

- The research recommends that other researchers study the relationship between employability skills (components) and job performance as mediated by employee engagement, among different occupational sectors, such as other financial institutions, educational institutions, and manufacturing firms. Others could also carry out similar studies in different districts, municipalities, and regions of Ghana.

- Again, the current study's reliance on the quantitative approach has yielded valuable insights; future research endeavors could harness the strengths of a mixed-methods approach to reveal a more comprehensive and profound understanding of the complex interplay between employability skills, employee engagement, and job performance.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

SCHOOL OF BUSINESS

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR STAFF

Introduction

This survey is designed to gather information on *Employability Skills, Employee Engagement, and Job Performance at Suame Municipal Assembly*, Ashanti region. Through this survey questionnaire, you are invited to share your views on the issues under investigation. Your participation is voluntary, and your responses are required for purely academic purposes. Your responses will be treated confidentially.

SECTION A: Demographics Characteristics

Kindly select the appropriate response

1. **Sex:**

   A. Male [   ]

   B. Female [   ]

2. **Age**:

   A. Below 30 years [   ]

   B. 30 - 40 years   [   ]

   C. 41 – 50 years   [   ]

   D. 51 – 60 years [   ]

3. **Number of years worked:**

   A. Below 3 years [ ]

   B. 3 - 6 years   [ ]

   C. Above 6 years [ ]

4. **Educational level:**

   A. Senior High School [ ]

   B.   Diploma   [ ]

   C.   First degree [ ]

   D. Second degree [   ]

   E. Ph.D.   [   ]

   F. Other specify …………………………

SECTION B: EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS

INSTRUCTION: Please rate your level of agreement with each of the items below. The Columns are on a Scale of 1–5, With **Strongly disagree=1, Disagree=2, Neutral=3, Agree =4, and strongly agree=5.** Please tick [√]

No.	Item	1	2	3	4	5
	Communication skill					
1.	I communicate well with my colleagues and superiors.					
2.	I always convey orally and written information at the workplace.					
3.	I actively communicate ideas verbally in group discussions.					
4.	I listen attentively at the workplace.					
5.	I respond to others' comments during a conversation.					
	Teamwork skill					
6.	I develop and maintain effective relationships with colleagues and superiors					
7.	I function effectively in teamwork.					
8.	I am able to adapt to changing situations in the workplace					
9.	I recognize alternative routes in meeting objectives at the workplace.					
10.	I plan and take decisions with others.					
	Decision-making					
11.	I make decisions based on a thorough analysis of the situation.					
12.	I am able to visualize my role in response to those changing strategies at the workplace.					
13.	I understand how the organisation functions in relation to its competitors.					
14.	I always initiate change to enhance productivity.					

141

	Problem-solving						
15.	I am able to identify problems related to the job.						
16.	I am able to explore problem situations at the workplace.						
17.	I am able to execute plans to solve the problem.						
18.	I am able to monitor and reflect on the alternative solutions to the problem.						

SECTION C: EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT

Each of the following indicators relates to employee engagement. Please indicate your level of agreement with each of the statements. Using the seven-point scale, with **Strongly disagree=1, Disagree=2, Slightly disagree=3, Neutral=4, Slightly agree =5, Agree=6 and strongly agree=7.** Please tick [√]

No.	Items	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1.	I feel inspired to meet my work goals.							
2.	I am completely involved in my work.							
3.	I share the work goals as my colleagues							
4.	I really push myself to work beyond what is expected of me.							
5.	I do more than is expected of me.							
6.	I work harder than expected to help my company be successful.							
7.	I share the same work values as my colleagues							

142

8.	I often go above what is expected of me to help my team be successful							
9.	I am completely focused on my job duties when I am at work							
10.	Organisational members take the initiative to assist others when they need assistance.							
11.	Organisational members willingly to accept change.							

SECTION D: JOB PERFORMANCE

Each of the following indicators relates to job performance. Please indicate your level of agreement with each of the statements. Using the five-point scale, With **Strongly disagree=1, Disagree=2, Neutral=3, Agree =4, and strongly agree=5.** Please tick [√]

No.	Items	1	2	3	4	5
1.	I maintain a high standard when working.					
2.	I am capable of handling my assignments without much supervision.					
3.	I am very passionate about my work.					
4.	I complete my assignments according to a predetermined time.					
5.	I understand task-giving.					
6.	I involved others when it was necessary to ensure quality performance.					
7.	I actively participate in group discussions and work meetings.					
8.	I easily adjusted to changes in my work.					

143

9.	I guide new colleagues beyond my job purview.					
10.	I share knowledge and ideas among my team members.					

Thank you.

144

APPENDIX B

TABLE OF SAMPLE SELECTION

N	S	N	S	N	S
10	10	220	140	1200	291
15	14	**230**	**144**	1300	297
20	19	240	148	1400	302
25	24	250	152	1500	306
30	28	260	155	1600	310
35	32	270	159	1700	313
40	36	280	162	1800	317
45	40	290	165	1900	320
50	44	300	169	2000	322
55	48	320	175	2200	327
60	52	340	181	2400	331
65	56	360	186	2600	335
70	59	380	191	2800	338
75	63	400	196	3000	341
80	66	420	201	3500	346
85	70	440	205	4000	351
90	73	460	210	4500	354
95	76	480	214	5000	357
100	80	500	217	6000	361
110	86	550	226	7000	364
120	92	600	234	8000	367
130	97	650	242	9000	368
140	103	700	248	10000	370
150	108	750	254	15000	375
160	113	800	260	20000	377
170	118	850	265	30000	379
180	123	900	269	40000	380
190	127	950	274	50000	381
200	132	1000	278	75000	382
210	136	1100	285	1000000	384

Source: Krejcie and Morgan (1970) **S =** Sample Size **N** = Population

145

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INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD SECRETARIAT

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YOUR REF:
OMB NO: 0990-0279
IORG #: IORG0011497   3RD AUGUST, 2023

Ms Abigail Owusu Boakye
Department of Human Resource Management
University of Cape Coast

Dear Ms Boakye

ETHICAL CLEARANCE – ID (UCCIRB/CHLS/2023/28)

The University of Cape Coast Institutional Review Board (UCCIRB) has granted Provisional Approval for the implementation of your research **Employability Skills, Employee Engagement, and Job Performance of Employees in Suame Municipal Assembly.** This approval is valid from **3rd August, 2023** to **2nd August, 2024.** You may apply for an extension of ethical approval if the study lasts for more than 12 months.

Please note that any modification to the project must first receive renewal clearance from the UCCIRB before its implementation. You are required to submit a periodic review of the protocol to the Board and a final full review to the UCCIRB on completion of the research. The UCCIRB may observe or cause to be observed procedures and records of the research during and after implementation.

You are also required to report all serious adverse events related to this study to the UCCIRB within seven days verbally and fourteen days in writing.

Always quote the protocol identification number in all future correspondence with us in relation to this protocol.

Yours faithfully,

Kofi F. Amuquandoh
Ag. Administrator

ADMINISTRATOR
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD
UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST.

146