

# Assessing the Effects of Job Description on Employees' Performance: The case of University College of Management Studies (UCOMS)

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**ABSTRACT:** *The study investigates the effects of job description on employee performance at University College of Management Studies (UCOMS). The stratified random sampling technique was used to gather data from 38 respondents who were staff of the University. The Statistical Package for Social Science (v 21) was used for data analysis. The study revealed a significant effect of job description on employee performance. Also, the study's findings demonstrated that the staff of UCOMS has been provided with appointment letters with clear job descriptions. The job descriptions components at UCOMS were: job identification, immediate boss to report to in the various departments of employees, reporting time and closing time, number of leave days to vacation, issues of medicals, utility bill and transportation as well as remuneration package. On the bases of the findings, the study recommends management of UCOMS should as a matter of concern continues to provide appointment letters with unambiguous job description to its staff to enhance employees' performance. The job description should not be static but should be updated as and when necessary. Also, major components such as: roles, duties, job identification, remuneration, line of reporting, reporting time to work and closing, severance package, traveling, utility, medical package. number of leave days to vacation, among others should be embedded in the job description.*

**Keywords:** job description, employee performance UCOMS

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## INTRODUCTION

In contemporary business world, the activities of Human Resource Management are crucial to the success of every organization. Human Resource Management is defined as a strategic and coherent approach to the management of an organisation's most valued assets, the people working there, who individually or collectively contribute to the achievement of its objectives (Dubey *et al.*,

2024). The overall purpose of HRM is to ensure that the organisation is able to achieve success through employees. Thus, employees are regarded one of the most indispensable resources of any business, and so it is important for HRM to formulate a good job description during recruitment to enhance performance. Job descriptions are the duties and requirements that are necessary for the recruitment of an employee (Ekhsan *et al.*, 2013). Goulart *et al.* (2022) described it as “a list of general chores, duties and role of the employee for a specific and general job. Without job description a person cannot perform his role accordingly. In simple words job description is the basic or main responsibilities that an employee is supposed to perform for any organisation or company. Employees’ performance in the educational sector is paramount as this can be achieved with a good job description. According to Muttaqin & Saputro (2023), employee job description should describe the duties, responsibilities, required qualifications and reporting relationships of a particular job. In buttressing this, Rizky *et al.* (2023) posit that job description report should contain qualifications which clearly relate and are relevant to acceptable job performance. Employee job descriptions sets clear expectations about what is expected by the employer from his employees. In the views of Vernau *et al.* (2021), job description is the first place to look if employees are not doing what is expected of them.

University College of Management Studies (UCOMS) once a buoyant private university in Ghana has experienced continuous decline in students’ enrollment leading to the near collapse of the university (GTEC Report, 2023). Staff attrition rate has been reportedly high as majority of the complaints have been attributed to lack of proper job description. Interestingly, there appears to be job description embedded in every appointment letter issued to every employee. Extant literature (ASTANTI & SWITASARRA, 2024; Kartika & Damaika; Muttaqin & Saputro, 2023) posit that job description gives a sense of responsibility and commitment to the employee as well as leads to motivation and job satisfaction. Also, studies have shown that organizations committed to well-developed job description have the potential to achieve competitive advantage in the face of heightened competition. The question then is: How have job description led to employees’ performance at UCOMS?

Also, job description has been studied in a wider context and in varied industries such as the construction industry (Abd Rahman Ahmad *et al.*, 2019), in the hospitality industry (Chandra, 2023) and in the manufacturing industry (Raju & Banerjee, 2017). However, there is little known in the educational sector more importantly the private universities, suggesting a gap in knowledge. This study aims to fill in the gap by investigating how job description affects employees’ performance among private universities in Ghana

### **Objective of the Study**

The general objective of the study is to investigate how job description affects employees’ performance among private universities in Ghana. Specific objectives of the study are to:

1. Determine the effect of job descriptions on employee performance at University College of Management Studies (UCOMS);
2. Examine employees' job description components at University College of Management Studies (UCOMS) and;
3. Examine how employee performance is measured at University College of Management Studies (UCOMS)

### **Research Question**

1. What is the effect of job descriptions on employee performance at University College of Management Studies (UCOMS)?
2. What constitute employees' job description components at University College of Management Studies (UCOMS)? and;
3. How are employees' performance measured at University College of Management Studies (UCOMS)?

### **Significance of the Study**

The outcome of the study is said to be significant not only to private and public universities in Ghana but also organizations in different industries. These organizations will be exposed to the importance of developing good job descriptions and how they impact employees' performance. Findings of the study will also be useful to policy makers such as the public service commission and the Fair Wages commission in Ghana when formulating wages policies in Ghana

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Job Description Defined**

A job description document is a formal document that exists in the organization that usually has a formal social structure. Job description, in general, contains information about individual jobs within an organization. Job description is defined as "a document or a posting on any job search engine that defines the position's primary duties, obligations, and liabilities" Chaudhary & Firoz (2024). Job description can be viewed as a checklist that can be used in performance evaluations and assist individual employees in self-evaluation and development. The Job description also aids managers in avoiding misunderstandings that could otherwise jeopardize the public organization's performance (Vernau, 2021). Job description is commonly used for job advertisements and for comparing candidates' qualifications during the recruiting process (Vernau, 2021). However, by changing Job description details into interview questions, the job description can be leveraged even further in the interview process.

### **Employee Performance**

Performance is defined as the results and accomplishments cherished by the organization or system that one works in (Paais & Pattiruhu, 2020). Employees' performance is the sum of all the objectives

and tasks that an individual employee has completed (Kuswati, 2020). It is one of the most important factors in management and human resource management (HRM). For employees, it may be used in a variety of ways to determine awards, pay, and promotions (Kuswati, 2020). According to Kuswati (2020), organizations must prioritize employees' performance since it affects overall performance.

### **Empirical Review on the Effects of Job Descriptions on Employee Performance**

The performance of employees is important for all organizational stakeholders. According to Murphy (2020), job performance is how clear the job is being completed as per well-known standard operating procedure; these operating standards are to facilitate the employee performance. Job descriptions are typically created by human resources professionals, hiring managers, or supervisors and are used for various purposes. It is regarded an important tool for increasing employees' performance. AL Rawas et al. (2023) conducted a study entitled: The moderating effect of leadership style on the relationship between job description and employee performance in the Omani public sector. The findings demonstrated that job description has a significant positive impact on employee performance. Literature Silalahi *et al.* (2023) posits that a well-structured job description can be used as a basic tool to improve employee performance. Also, the study of Ramli & Susanto (2023) found a positive effect of job description on employee performance. Similarly, the findings of Rawas & Jantan (2022) showed that job description affected positively the employee performance and that job description is antecedent of employee performance. Job description is regarded an important tool for increasing employees' performance

### **Components of Job Description**

According to Silalahi *et al.* (2023), there is no universal format for job description; however, a good job description must possess the following components: job identification, duties and responsibilities, job qualifications, job feedback, proper working conditions, social interaction and good working environment, travel issues, housing issues as well as the welfare of the employee. Others include proper remuneration schemes and benefits, organizations culture and styles of operations. This study will delineate on only four of these components

**Job Identification:** This refers to issues such as the title of the job, the code of the job, the department under which the employee falls, the relationship between the job and other jobs, summary of the job, duties and tasks to be performed by an employee (Ramli & Susanto, 2023) According to Ramli & Susanto (2023), job identification is a necessary component of enhancing employee performance in that it ensures that the right employees are recruited to do the right job at the time of recruitment. This also means that the employee's skills, experiences as well as academic achievements will be matched with the job that he/she is recruited to do.

**Duties and Responsibilities:** Duties and responsibilities is a key concept of job description as it highlights the duties and responsibilities of each employee in an organization (Rawas *et al.*, 2020).

It is interesting to know that different skills are needed for specific jobs. Therefore, some level of employee independence, commitment in short term and long run is required (Silalahi *et al.* 2023). The duties and responsibilities assigned to employees are necessary in enhancing employees' performance in that once it matches with the employees capabilities, it increases the capacity of the employee to deliver the best for the organization and the employer.

**Job Qualifications:** This refers to academic achievements, attitudes as well as the acquired skills and experience of a particular job that each employee must have before being employed for a particular (AL Rawas & Jantan, 2023). These qualifications determine the theoretical capabilities of an employee in understanding a wide range of issues. These understanding and knowledge acquisition is a key component in enhancing performance.

**Working Hours:** This includes issues such as working hours of employee. Usually, employees are mandated to work eight hours in a day. Also, five days in a week is required in most cases (Vernau *et al.*, 2021). The environment in which a job is performed must be safe, free from boredom and loneliness. It should be noted that sometimes the organization may be faced with a number of emerging issues that require the employees to work overtime and periods that are outside the required working hours, for example weekends and the public holidays. In such cases, employees should be paid their overtime dues or be adequately compensated for the extra time worked.

### **Measurement of Employees' Performance**

A number of measures are used by employers to measure employees' performance. Accordingly, Rizky *et al.* (2023) stated the following: punctuality, quality of work, observational of personal habits, cross checking of the employees' attitudes, reviewing of employees' personal presentation, meeting deadlines, achieving targets, quality of the work, employee cooperation, quality of employees work, efficiency and the levels of output or productivity. The study will expatiate on only four of them

**Punctuality:** This concept believes that those employees who regularly arrive late for work or are frequently absent from the office are unlikely to meet their performance objectives (Chapman *et al.*, 2020). The underlying issue is whether the employees get along well with other employees and their immediate bosses or not. According to Chapman *et al.* (2020), employees who arrive late to work demonstrate the lack of good behaviour or attitude to work.

**Quality of Work:** Quality of work refers to the ability of employees to finish their task on time (Bhattacharya & Ray, 2021) and also deliver as required of them. According to Bhattacharya & Ray (2021), this indicator can be used to measure employee performance.

**Personal Habits:** Personal habits can either enhance or lower performance. Bad habits which lower performance include office gossip, taking unauthorized breaks, disruptive behavior as well

as the use of the office machines for personal issues, i.e. social media for chatting, online shopping etc. There has to be behavioral codes in the organization to tame such behaviors.

**Attitude of Employees:** Attitude of employees' poor attitude of an employee will manifest itself in his behaviors such as insubordination. This behavior indicates a sign of poor performance of individuals who are unable to meet their work budgets. These employees will never comply with the company policies and will display disrespect for the bosses as well as the core workers.

**Personal Presentation:** Most organizations have professional dress code that fits their industry and conforms to the cultures of the organization. Employees who disregard these expectations appear to be careless and will affect the brand image of the company. This will definitely lower performance and the expectations of the employees will not be met.

**Meeting of Deadlines:** This means that employees must strive to complete the assigned tasks which are usually demanding within a short period of time or in line with the set timelines. However the employees should be cautious enough so that they do not compromise on quality as they strive to keep deadlines.

## METHODOLOGY

This study followed the descriptive design. The target population was all the employees of University College of Management Studies (UCOMS) who are 40 in total (UCOMS annual report, 2023). (i.e. both teaching and non-teaching staff). The study employed purposive sampling technique to select 38 staff of the university.

In this study, the stratified random sampling technique was used as advanced by Muttaqin & Saputro (2023) where employees within an organization are categorized into the departments or the clusters which they belong to. Out of the 40 questionnaires presented, 38 were returned. The study therefore recorded a response rate of 95% percent. According to Mugenda & Mugenda (1999), a response rate of 50% and above is good while that of 60% and above is fair, while that of 75% and above is excellent. Given that the response rate is above 95%, it was regarded excellent (Mugenda & Mugenda, 1999). The study used primary data which was obtained through self-administered questionnaires. Data collection procedure was through a drop and pick up later method. Data was analyzed through the descriptive statistics such as frequencies, percentages, mean and standard deviation.

Simple linear regression analysis will also be done to determine the effect of job descriptions on employee performance. This was guided by the model:

$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X + E$ , Where: Y=Employee Performance, X= Job Descriptions,  $\beta_0$ =Constant,  $\beta_1$ =Regression Coefficient, E= Error term



Informed and formal consent was obtained from respondents as their confidentiality was assured of any information they provided

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS**

### **Descriptive Characteristics of Respondents**

The findings obtained from the study showed that 92.00% of the respondents were males whereas 8.00% of the respondents were females. It can be concluded that there were more male respondents than females respondents although this was not predetermined at the beginning of the questionnaire distribution.

The study's findings also revealed that 5(13.1%) of the respondents were in the ages bracket of 20-30 years, 10(26.5%) of the respondents were in the ages bracket of 31-41 years, 15(39.4%) of the respondents were in the ages bracket of 42-52 years, 8(21.2%) of the respondents were of the ages of 52 and above years. The findings showed that majority of the respondents were in the mid-age bracket.

The results of the study found that 5(13.10%) of the respondents were master degree holders, 20(52.60%) of the respondents were MPhil degree holders, 4(10.50%) of the respondents were PhD degree holders, whilst 9(23.71%) of the respondents held other qualifications. Clearly, majority of the respondents of the study were MPhil degree holders. This is obviously the case since it is the basic requirement by Ghana Tertiary Education Commission (GTEC) to teach at the tertiary level.

Again, the study revealed that 6 (15.80%) of the respondents were in the BBA & Social Science department, 7(18.40%) of the respondents were in the Education department, 6 (15.80%) of the respondents were in the Health Sciences Department, 5(13.10%) of the respondents were found in the registry department, whilst 14(36.81%) of the respondents were found in other departments.

Additionally, 15(39.51%) of the respondents had been with UCOMS for 1-3years, 16(42.14%) of the respondents had been with UCOMS for 4-6years, 4(10.52%) of the respondents had been with UCOMS for 7-9years and 3(7.82%) of the respondents had been with UCOMS for over 9years, From the findings of data gathered, it was obvious that all the respondents had some considerable years of experience with UCOMS and therefore could provide information to reflect the objectives of the study

**Research Question One: What is the effect of job descriptions on employee performance at University College of Management Studies (UCOMS)?**

**Simple Regression Analysis**

The objective of regression analysis is to predict a single dependent variable from one or more independent variables. When the problem involves a single independent variable, the statistical technique is called simple regression. Also, when the problem involves two or more independent variables, it is a multiple regression. In this study, the use of only one single independent variable that is job description was to test the dependent variables (employee performance) required the use of a simple regression. The findings are presented in Table 1

**Table 1: Summary of Simple Regression Analysis between job description and employee performance**

Variables	B	R <sup>2</sup>	T	F	P-value
JD->EP	.664	.8766	48.060	1648.454	.000

Note: N=38,  $p < .05$ , Adjusted R<sup>2</sup>= .876 JD means job description, EP means employee performance

The result from the linear regression analysis showed significant effects of job description on employee performance ( $\beta = .664$ ,  $t = 48.060$ ,  $p = 0.00$ ). This means that the effect of job description resulted to an increase in employees overall performance

**Research Question Two: What are the employees' job description components at University College of Management Studies (UCOMS)?**

The opinion of the respondents were measured on a 5- point Likert scale rated as 1= *Strongly disagree*; 2= *Disagree*; 3= *Neither agree nor disagree*; 4= *Agree* and 5= *Strongly agree*. Descriptive statistics such as mean and standard deviation were used for the analysis of the responses. According to Mugenda & Mugenda (1999), on a scale of 1-5, the midpoint is 2.9, hence any mean score below 2.9 denote disagreement and any mean score above 2.9 represents Agreement. Also, the authors posited that anytime measures of central tendencies are computed, it is imperative to compute their measure of variations. Table 2 presents the findings



**Table 2: Descriptive Statistics of Job Description Components**

Statement	Mean	Standard Deviation
My job identification is clearly stated in my appointment letter	3.37	1.39
My duties and responsibilities as a staff are confirmed in my appointment letter	3.64	1.27
I know who my immediate boss is in my department	3.48	1.22
My appointment letter spells out my closing and reporting time	3.68	1.24
Number of my leave days of vacation are included in my appointment letter	3.44	1.28
Issues of medicals, utility bills, accommodation and transportation are well explained in my appointment letter	3.47	1.16
My remuneration package is explicit in my appointment letter	3.64	1.22

**Source: Field Survey, 2024**

From the findings, respondents agreed that their job identification is clearly stated in their appointment letters ( $M=3.37$ ;  $SD=1.39$ ), their duties and responsibilities are ( $M=3.64$ ;  $SD=1.27$ ). Also, who their immediate boss to report to in their departments ( $M=3.48$ ;  $SD=1.22$ ), the reporting to work and closing time ( $M=3.68$ ;  $SD=1.24$ ), number of leave days to vacation ( $M=3.44$ ;  $SD=1.28$ ), issues of medicals, utility bill, transportation are included in appointment ( $M=3.47$ ;  $SD=1.16$ ), remuneration package is explicitly stated ( $M=3.64$ ;  $SD=1.22$ ).

The study's findings demonstrate that the staff of UCOMS has been provided with appointment letters with clear job descriptions. This is in consonant with extant literature (AL Rawas & Jantan, 2023; Rawas & Jantan, 2020). According to the authors, employees should be given a well-documented appointment letters stating what their job descriptions are to enhance performance.

In the study of Vernau *et al.* (2021), the authors posited that unclear job descriptions led to poor performance of an employee as this makes it difficult to assess the performance of the employee. The authors stated further that with a good job description, it will be difficult to assess performance. Given the significant nature of job description, Vernau *et al.* (2021) stated that job description should be updated when there are any changes in the position or organizations structures

### **Research Question Three: How are employees' performance measured at UCOMS?**

The research objective for this question was to determine how employees' performances are measured at UCOMS. The Cronbach alpha coefficient was employed to ascertain the internal consistency of the responses collected. Table 3 presents the results

### **Reliability Statistics**

In measuring internal consistency, the Cronbach's Alpha has been identified as the appropriate tool for the measurement. The coefficient alpha values between 0.6 and 0.7 indicate fair reliability (Sauder *et al.*, 2009). However, according to Mugenda & Mugenda (1999), a Cronbach's Alpha

coefficient of 0.7 or above is regarded adequate to determine reliability in most social science research situations. Since all the study's reliability values are above 0.7, it can be regarded adequate. Table 3 presents the results.

**Table 3 Reliability Statistics**

Variables	Alpha
Punctuality	0.888
Quality of work	0.878
Personal habit	0.776
Attitude of employees	0.886

**Source: Field Survey, 2024**

**Table 4 Mean Ranking of the Measures to enhance Employees' Performance**

Challenges	Mean Ranked	Mean	Standard dev.	N
Quality work	1.48	3.2462	1.246	38
Punctuality	1.44	3.6682	1.486	38
Personal habit	1.42	3.8878	1.866	38
Attitude of employees	1.46	3.8286	1.662	38

**Source: Field Survey, 2024**

Table 4 showed ranking of how employees' performances are measured at West End University College. The table demonstrates the ranking of the parameters in the scale of 1 to 4 where 1 presents the highly favourable and 4 represents poorly favourable. The results from table 9 showed that the quality of work of the employee is ranked first with a mean ranked of 1.48 and a standard deviation of 1.246. Punctuality is ranked second with a mean ranked of 1.44 and a standard deviation of 1.486 personal is ranked third with a mean ranked of 1.42 and a standard deviation of 1.886 and employee attitude is ranked fourth with a mean ranked of 1.46 and a standard deviation of 1.662

The above results of the findings are not surprising as quality of work by employees was found to be significant measure in the study of (Vernau *et al.*, 2021). Vernau *et al.* (2021) shared that a good indicator of measuring employee performance is quality of work done. Therefore, management should assist employees to deliver quality work.

Also, punctuality has been debated extensively in literature as to whether it is a good measure of employee performance (Abd Rahman Ahmad *et al.*, 2019; Paais & Pattiruhu, 2020). Many authors believe that employees who arrive late for work demonstrates the fact that they are not giving their employee an honest service to their full potential. And it may be a sign of negative attitudes towards their jobs and in a long way affect the entire output of the organization. However, others

argue that being punctual does not necessarily translate into good performance.

Additionally, a good attitude to work has been found also as a good indicator of employee performance (Bhattacharya & Ray, 2021). It is stated that when employees put up good attitude, it has ripple effects on the organization. This can influence other employees to emulate such attitude thereby enhancing the overall performance of the organization (Bhattacharya & Ray, 2021).

## **KEY FINDINGS**

### **Objective One: To examine the effects of job descriptions on employee performance at UCOMS**

The first objective of the study sought to examine the effects of job descriptions on employee performance at UCOMS

The result from the linear regression analysis showed significant effects of job description on employee performance. This means that the effect of job description resulted in an increase in employees overall performance

### **Objective Two: To determine employees' job description components at UCOMS**

The second objective sought to determine employees' job description components at UCOMS. The study's findings demonstrated that the staff of UCOMS has been provided with appointment letters with clear job descriptions. The job descriptions components at UCOMS were: job identification, immediate boss to report to in the various departments of employees, reporting time and closing time, number of leave days to vacation, issues of medicals, utility bill and transportation as well as remuneration package.

### **Objective Three: To identify how employees' performance are measured at UCOMS**

The final objective also sought to examine how employees' performance is measured at UCOMS. The results of the study revealed varied elements such as punctuality, attitude towards work, work quality and employee attitude to work are used to measure employees' performance at UCOMS. However, quality work is ranked first, punctuality is ranked second personal habit is ranked third employee attitude is ranked fourth

## **CONCLUSION**

The importance of job description cannot be overstated given that it communicates clearly to employees what is expected of them as regards their appointment. The study concludes that a well-documented job description is paramount to guide employees even if it is not a good measurement of performance. As has been stated in literature, employees expect a clear written job description to avoid role-confrontation. This can affect the performance of the employee and by extension the overall output of the firm.

It can be concluded also that the job description should consist of major components such as: roles, duties, job identification, remuneration, line of reporting, reporting time to work and closing, severance package, traveling, utility, medical package among others. number of leave days to vacation among others.

Additionally, the study concluded that employees' performance should be measured. This can be done by the use of indicators such as: punctuality, attitude towards work, work quality and employee attitude to work. This will enable the organization to know the performance of its staff.

### **Recommendation**

Based on the findings, the following recommendations are made:

Management of UCOMS should as a matter of concern continues to provide appointment letters with unambiguous job description to its staff to enhance employees' performance. The job description should not be static but should be updated as and when necessary. This will help the University to be at par with the happenings of the business environment

Also, major components such as: roles, duties, job identification, remuneration, line of reporting, reporting time to work and closing, severance package, traveling, utility, medical package among others. number of leave days to vacation among others should not be missing in the job description.

Finally, employees' performance should be measured. It should not be left to assumption. This will lead to inefficiencies and consequently affect the overall output of the University. Measurement of employees' performance can be done quarterly, bi-annually or annually depending on measurement system of the University

### **Future Studies**

Only one university was considered in this study. Also not all the job description components were examined in the study. Future studies can focus on this direction

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### **About the Author**

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