Research Paper

Enhancing Capacity Building Prior to Appointment as Heads of Department in Universities

Diana Ama Dogbatse[1]*
[1] University of Cape Coast, Ghana

Abstract

Developing the capacity of prospective heads of department (HoDs) at universities is essential for promoting effective leadership and enhancing performance within higher academic institutions. This research investigated capacity building prior to appointment as a HoD in Ghana. The study aimed to enhance capacity building of heads of department prior to their appointment as heads at the University of Cape Coast. A descriptive survey design was used, and 40 Heads of Department across the University Campuses were sampled for the study. A structured questionnaire was used for the data collection. Data was analyzed using descriptive statistics. Findings show that all the academic HoDs in this study have not been offered any orientation/workshop or formalized training before their appointments as Heads of Department. Most of the HoDs desired to acquire office procedures skills before they are appointed HoDs. This study has shown that academic HoDs in the University of Cape Coast do not have any orientation/workshop or formalized training prior to appointments as heads of department. The university should provide training programmes and workshops for academic candidates (Senior Lecturers/Associate Professors/Professors) who are eligible for appointment as heads of department to improve their administrative skills and competencies before their appointments to the position of HoDs.

Keywords *Academic Heads of Department, Administrative Competencies, Capacity Building, University of Cape Coast, Ghana*

INTRODUCTION

Developing the capacity of prospective heads of department (HoDs) at Universities is essential for promoting effective leadership and enhancing performance within academic institutions (Li et al., 2022). In today's interconnected world, focusing on academic excellence requires competent administration. To meet global expectations and achieve organizational objectives, developing competent individuals with effective management skills is important (Bolton et al., 2017). Given the significant role played by academic heads of department in the growth and success of academic institutions, it is crucial to prioritize the enhancement of their administrative skills as heads of department. Evidence suggests that providing specific leadership and management training for heads of department is paramount, as many are appointed without any prior training or experience in these areas (Li et al., 2022).

The effectiveness of universities in achieving their goals heavily relies on the administrative capabilities within academic departments (Adewusi & Haliso, 2022). Therefore, offering appropriate in-service training and professional development opportunities before their appointment ensures that department heads are equipped with the necessary skills and knowledge to effectively carry out their responsibilities. However, many faculty members are promoted to high positions without adequate administrative training. This lack of preparation can significantly affect circumnavigating the challenges of a changing educational landscape (Adewusi & Haliso, 2022).

Effective academic leadership requires the implementation of a comprehensive strategy for the development of competencies that are shared by multiple stakeholders (Rahmatika & Saragih,

2023). Remarkably, there has been little discussion about academic department heads' duties and information requirements despite their important role (Rahmatika & Saragih, 2023). Furthermore, their development projects need clear concepts. To overcome this obstacle, a structured program that incorporates the acquisition of administrative skills for those who should be appointed academic department heads must be established.

Because of recent changes to academic institutions, such as the addition of new departments and more leadership duties, previous studies have focused attention on the performances of academic heads of department (De Grauwe, 2009; Nxumalo, 2021; Sakiru et al., 2014). However, it is essential to begin thinking about preparations for prospective academic department heads in higher institutions before they are appointed as HoDs (Clarke et al., 2007; Khanyi & Naidoo, 2020; Kola & Selesho, 2012; Nxumalo, 2021). Furthermore, there is a lack of information on training and orientation programmes for prospective heads of department, which makes it difficult for faculty members to acquire adequate preparations before they are appointed HoDs. Some other studies have demonstrated deficiencies in the administrative ability of newly appointed HoDs a few months after their appointment (Islam et al., 2019; Riley & Russell, 2013; Saleem et al., 2022). The administrative skill dynamics and office procedures among department leaders are also not well investigated, which may affect the academic atmosphere and the output of the teaching staff. Focused research is required to investigate and improve the administrative competencies of potential heads of department through capacity-building programs to address the identified gaps in the literature. To address these lapses, the research question was, how prepared are prospective HoDs before their appointment? This study examined the capacity building of heads of department prior to their appointment at the University of Cape Coast.

Prospective Heads of Department now have additional leadership responsibilities as a result of recent faculty and school reorganizations and the establishment of new academic departments. This study contributes to the literature on capacity building of prospective heads of department and encourages interdisciplinary cooperation to improve the department heads' administrative skills at the University of Cape Coast. This eventually leads to the promotion of academic excellence in all university departments.

LITERATURE REVIEW
Theoretical Perspective
Human capital theory

The Human Capital Theory is a theoretical approach to economics that emphasizes the value of investing in people's education, training, and skill development to increase their productivity and, in turn, support economic growth and development. By this approach, people are viewed as capital assets whose skills and knowledge may be improved by investments in human capital, such as formal education, career training, and on-the-job learning (Nafukho et al., 2004). Higher earning potential and better economic prospects are thought to result from this expanded human capital, benefiting both individuals and society as a whole. The Human Capital Theory has shaped education and labour policies by highlighting the importance of knowledge and skills in promoting economic growth and competitiveness.

Human Capital Theory, while primarily rooted in economics, has been applied and adapted in various other fields of study due to its relevance in understanding human development and performance, for it has been applied in education (Blaug, 1976; Marginson, 2019), Labour Economics (Patterson, 2014), Health Economics (Fugar et al., 2013; Ozyilmaz, 2020), Social Sciences (Peccei & Van De Voorde, 2019; Hamadamin & Atan, 2019), Public Policy and Development (Werdhiastutie et al., 2020), Business and Management (Werdhiastutie et al., 2020), Environmental Economics (Amrutha & Geetha, 2020; Vrontis et al., 2022), and Innovation and Technology (Donald

et al., 2019).

About this study, the Human Capital Theory is pertinent to enhancing capacity building before the appointment of heads of department at the University of Cape Coast because it emphasizes the importance of investing in HoD orientation, training, and skills development and shows how doing so boosts university productivity and administrative growth. In the context of university leadership, this entails offering faculty members chances for formal education, on-the-job training, professional development, and information transfer to prepare them for department head positions. The university can improve the competence and credentials of possible department heads by adopting a human capital viewpoint. This will eventually lead to effective departmental leadership, which, in the long term, will have a favourable impact on the institution's overall performance and success.

Despite its usefulness, critics claim that it frequently emphasizes the need for each individual to take responsibility for their own training and skill development, potentially ignoring societal issues that obstruct access. It is also criticized for ignoring the wider aspects of human development in favour of a narrow concentration on employable skills and revenue. Some claim it is based on presumptions that might not necessarily represent how decisions are made in the real world. In response to these concerns, there is an increasing desire for a more comprehensive strategy that recognizes the importance of education and skills beyond economic benefits and takes into account societal justice, access to education and training, and skill values in human development.

The departmental framework of the University System is the cornerstone of its life, a crucial point clarified (Opigo, 2021). The hub of institutional action thrives within the revered confines of these departments. Here, dedicated researchers and teaching staff discuss novel approaches to improve their contributions to the larger academic community. At the heart of each academic institution are the Academic Heads of Department, individuals entrusted with multifaceted responsibilities, as clarified by Saleem et al., (2022) comprehensive observations. These demanding roles encompass a broad spectrum of tasks, from adeptly managing administrative affairs to mediating conflicts among colleagues, students, and visitors while safeguarding the interests of the department and the faculty as a whole.

To ensure high-quality education and the efficient functioning of departments, the Head of the Department shoulders the pivotal responsibility of supervising, directing, organizing, and evaluating both the department's activities and its faculty members. Achieving this mandate necessitates adept management strategies, efficient resource allocation, and the requisite knowledge and experience to execute the university's objectives as the department's primary policy executor and public face (Chen et al., 2021; Owens, 2014).

Appointment of Head of Department and Challenges

The appointment of a Head of Department is a significant decision made by the Vice-Chancellor based on the recommendations of the Provost and the Dean of the Universities. If a professorial member of the department is unavailable, the next category of senior members, such as Senior Lecturers or Senior Research Fellows of the Research units, are typically selected to assume the position (Chen et al., 2021). If a Lecturer is ever chosen, they serve on an interim basis as coordinators. For professorial and non-professorial members, the tenure of appointment for Heads of Department is typically three years and two years, respectively, with the possibility of renewal for one additional term in most universities. The recommendation process involves consultations between the Provost and the Dean, who, in turn, engages with the department's senior members (Chen et al., 2021; Gumede, 2003).

Consequently, the Head of Department must excel in managing both material and human resources. The department heads serve as a crucial link between Deans, Departments, and

University Administration. However, the multifaceted nature of their roles brings challenges and limitations that can hinder efficient management. Bennett's assertion in 1982 indicates that the position of Head of Department is one of the most challenging and demanding on campus with a set of responsibilities. These challenges include role ambiguity, insufficient training, resource and facility limitations, administrative procedural errors, and inadequate compensation. Without adequate preparations, department heads may become overwhelmed, negatively affecting the department's and the university's ability to deliver quality services (Gumede, 2003).

Orientation and Training Before Appointment

To ensure the efficient administration of academic departments within universities, potential Heads of Department must undergo formal orientation and training. Universities should prioritise creating and implementing training programmes that give department heads the administrative skills they need to succeed in their positions when appointed (Rahmatika & Saragih, 2023). Effective management of academic departments within universities necessitates capable department heads. However, even individuals with significant academic expertise may lack the administrative skills crucial for effective departmental operation (Rahmatika & Saragih, 2023). Addressing this issue requires a focus on providing eligible heads of department with orientation and formal training encompassing a broad range of subjects, including leadership, strategic planning, human resource management, financial management, and information and communication technology (ICT) skills before they are appointed Heads of Department.

Heads of the Department must benefit from orientation and training programmes that provide them with the knowledge and abilities to run their organizations successfully, including managing staff, finances, stakeholder relations, and implementing plans to meet departmental objectives. These programmes also give Heads of Department a greater grasp of their responsibilities, improving their decision-making ability. It is important to remember that offering formal orientation and training before appointment as Heads of Department should be a continuous practice rather than a one-time event (Saeed et al., 2023). This is to adequately prepare department heads to handle any new tasks and duties that may come up when appointed heads.

Orientation and training were two factors that Amos and Weathington (2008) looked at as other predictors of administrative success for department heads. The researchers used a survey to gather information from 142 department heads at a sizable public institution in the southeast of the United States. The findings demonstrated a favourable relationship between perceived administrative effectiveness and work satisfaction and orientation and training. Heads of department (HODs) need to be aware of the requirements of their role before they are appointed in the capacity of heads (Maseke & Muadinohamba, 2023).

According to Maseke and Muadinohamba (2023), there are many ways to demonstrate exemplary and effective leadership, including challenging the status quo by looking for novel and creative solutions, fostering a sense of teamwork by sharing the organization's objectives with the team and inspiring others to act by paying attention to them and enlisting their help. They also advised setting an example by becoming familiar with the organization's philosophies, goals, and strategies, encouraging and supporting others to improve their skills by recognizing and rewarding their accomplishments, keeping thorough notes and records, and consistently improving one's approach, competencies, and skills.

Evidence shows the importance of understanding the human elements impacting workplace behaviour and performance by highlighting the influence of personal attributes on HoDs' management abilities (Sakinah et al., 2023). The impact of individual characteristics on the behaviour and performance of academic staff, particularly administrative leaders, including gender, age, marital status, ethnicity, religion, academic credentials, professional level, and work

experience, has been researched (Sakinah et al., 2023). Also, programmes in Nigerian universities for newly appointed department directors, including training in administrative skills like leadership, communication, and conflict resolution, are highlighted. The programme was successful in boosting the administrative skills, performance, and job satisfaction of department heads. There is a connection between the characteristics of school administrators and their capacities to deal with teacher indiscipline (Sakinah et al., 2023).

Stakeholders want school administrators to have a deep understanding of people in addition to the necessary training and experience. Additionally, staff development and work performance are positively correlated (Qizi, 2020). This highlights the need to offer regular opportunities for training and development before new appointments as heads. University management needs to establish strict criteria through prerequisite training for appointing Heads of Department (HoDs), given the high expectations and complexity of departmental leadership (Qizi, 2020). This entails evaluating candidates based on their departmental goals, knowledge of management concepts, human resource management skills, and individual traits that greatly impact their actions, emotions, and behaviour. This enhances the capacity of HoDs to encourage cooperation within their departments since they have the power to affect their subordinates' behaviours, beliefs, and sentiments (Qizi, 2020).

Administrative Skills needed before appointment as Head of the Department

In preparing individuals for the Heads of Department (HoDs) role within a university setting, it is essential to focus on capacity building. These prospective academic leaders play a pivotal role in the efficient functioning of university departments, where primary activities encompass faculty-student interactions, research support, and contributions to the broader community (Sezer & Engin, 2021). Given the multifaceted responsibilities of heading a department, it is imperative to equip aspiring HoDs with the necessary administrative skills. In this regard, we delve into five crucial administrative skills that HODs should possess to excel in their roles.

Administrative Competencies

Emphasis has been made on the value of administrative training, particularly in leadership and communication skills, in enhancing the department head's performance. These results imply that department heads' administrative skills can be strengthened through training and orientation programmes, supporting their effective management of university departments before their appointments (Ahiaku, 2019). Additionally, studies have shown how academic department heads manage faculty and resolve conflicts using leadership and consultation behaviours (Ahiaku, 2019; Cameron, 2010). Furthermore, department heads with high levels of ICT competency are more likely to use technology in their teaching practices, demonstrating the importance of ICT proficiency (Cameron, 2010).

Effective departmental management also promotes connections with students and student affairs to better understand their needs and expectations. Department leaders are better prepared to make choices that support student progress when they gain knowledge through such exchanges before appointment as heads. Any department's successful operation depends on efficient office procedures, which department heads are aware of. Effective office administration, which includes handling communications, keeping records, and scheduling meetings, boosts productivity and creates a positive work environment (Cameron, 2010). Organizations that prioritize employee development generate a culture of continuous learning and development. When successful staff development strategies are used, department heads are more likely to notice gains in employee performance and work satisfaction (Cameron, 2010).

Proficiency in Office Procedures

Office procedures are a fundamental skill for efficient departmental administration (Miller, 1997). Office procedures are set norms and practices that are intended to guarantee the effective and successful completion of administrative activities. Office process proficiency includes abilities in record keeping, document management, handling of communications, meeting planning, and administrative duties specific to faculty. To increase productivity and ensure the department runs smoothly, HoDs must effectively manage their time, establish priorities, and coordinate departmental activities (Miller, 1997). Effective office administration also promotes a positive work environment and helps with decision-making, eventually lowering stress levels and raising employee morale.

Student Affairs Expertise

HoDs must be knowledgeable about "student affairs" to support effective departmental administration. Student affairs include a broad range of services and support systems intended to improve students' academic, social, and personal growth throughout their time at the university (Barnes, 2020). To efficiently distribute resources, address students' needs, increase enrollment rates, and improve academic quality, HoDs need a firm grasp of student affairs. Building a friendly and inclusive campus community that supports student accomplishment requires close cooperation with student affairs experts (Barnes, 2020).

Skill in Staff Development

For effective departmental leadership, HoDs should also be proficient in staff development (Barnes, 2020). The level of its workforce greatly influences the performance of a department, and HoDs are crucial in ensuring that employees have access to the right opportunities for training and development. This ability requires identifying the strengths and shortcomings of each employee and creating programmes specifically designed to improve their skills. To foster staff development and provide chances for participation in conferences, workshops, and seminars, HoDs should also act as mentors and coaches since effective staff development is directly correlated with higher productivity, higher employee retention, and enhanced organizational performance (Barnes, 2020).

Competence in financial management

HoDs must have strong financial management abilities to guarantee good departmental operations. Planning a budget, allocating resources, monitoring expenditures, and ensuring financial transactions are transparent are all included in this. The ability to analyze financial data and make decisions that are in line with the department's and the university's overall goals should be a requirement for competent department directors (Kaunang, 2020). Effective financial management boosts institutional reputation while improving stakeholder satisfaction and financial success. The importance of financial management for effectively managing departmental budgets and resources is also highlighted (Kaunang, 2020).

Information and communication technology (ICT) skills

HoDs must have ICT skills to effectively run their departments in the digital age. ICT includes a range of devices and methods for data analysis, data storage, and communication. ICT proficiency enables HoDs to manage data efficiently, communicate with stakeholders, and make defensible judgments (Zengeya, 2008). It is crucial to have proficiency with technology-based solutions and applications for administrative duties, which include project management, budget tracking, and report writing. HoDs should also be knowledgeable about cybersecurity and privacy precautions to

protect sensitive data online (Zengeya, 2008).

RESEARCH METHOD

The study population included academic heads of department at the University of Cape Coast. The Cross-Sectional Study design was used to examine capacity building prior to appointment in the position of department heads at a single point in time from different departments (Kesmodel, 2018). The sampling technique used in this study was simple random sampling to ensure that every respondent had an equal chance of being selected. The sample consisted of Forty (40) HoDs at the University of Cape Coast. The study chose 40 respondents due to the small population and accessibility issues caused by the absence of some HoDs (Lakens, 2022). The chosen area for the study was representative of the population, relevant to the research question, and had available and accessible data. The survey questionnaire was used to collect data for the study. Section A of the research instrument sought responses on the demographic characteristics of respondents. Section B contained issues about capacity building prior to appointment as heads of departments. The study used a concise questionnaire with five questions to meet its objectives. More complex questions were avoided to respect respondents' time, and binary answers were used for simplicity and clarity. The questionnaires were administered using the face-to-face method. One hundred per cent (100%) return rate was achieved. Data for the study were analyzed through descriptive statistics (frequency and simple percentages) using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences version 23.

This study used primary sources of data collected from a cross-section of HoDs in the University of Cape Coast using a survey method. The survey followed the standard procedures (i.e., sampling, questionnaire development, data collection, cleaning, coding and analysis). The study employed the simple random sampling technique to select 40 academic heads of department. Therefore, the sample size for the study was 40 HoDs (n=40) who had complete information on the variables of interest that were included in this study.

The response (dependent) variable of interest used in this study was appointment as heads of department. It was measured whether individuals/lecturers were appointed as Heads of Department. It was derived from a set of questions: 1.) Have the university appointed you as head of the department? The response categories to this question were dichotomous: "1=Yes" and "2=No".

The explanatory (independent) variables that were considered in this study include the main (capacity building) as well as sex, age, educational attainment, department, faculty, and college. The questions measured the key explanatory variables:

1. Have you ever had any orientation/workshop or formalized training prior to the appointment as head of the department?
2. Have you attended any training programme organized by any other institutions/organizations outside the university before you were appointed head of the department?
3. Would you need some form of orientation or training programmes before the assumption of office as head of the department?
4. Which strategy(ies) would you want to adopt to help your administrative work if you are given training before your appointment as head of your department?
5. Which administrative skill do you expect to acquire before your appointment as head of department? (1-5=capacity building before appointment)?

Responses for these were "1=Yes", and "2=No". Apart from the key explanatory variables, six additional variables were included. These were sex (1=male, 2=female), age (40-50+), educational qualification/rank= (1=Senior Lecturer without PhD, 2=Senior lecturer with PhD, 3=Associate

Professor, Professors), department, faculty, and college. The study conducted only descriptive analyses. The descriptive analysis was conducted for the background characteristics, as well as the response and the key explanatory variables that were selected for analysis.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Out of the 40 respondents, 48 % were between the ages of 45-49 years. Most of the selected HoDs were males (80%), while 20% were females. The majority (75%) of HoDs had a PhD degree, whereas 7.5% had an MPhil degree. Complete results are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Background Characteristics of the Respondents

Variables	Frequency	%
Age		
40-44	7	17.5
45-49	19	47.5
50+	14	35.0
Sex		
Male	32	80.0
Female	8	20.0
Educational Qualification		
MPhil	3	7.5
PhD	30	75.0
Postdoc	7	17.5
Rank		
Senior Lecturer	28	70.0
Associate Professor	12	30.0

Have you ever had any orientation/workshop or formalized training before your appointment as HoD?

All (100%) of the respondents had not been provided with any orientation/workshop or formalized training before the commencement of the appointments as Heads of Department. This suggests that all prospective HODs need some sort of training/orientation before their appointments as heads to enhance their administrative effectiveness and work satisfaction (Saeed et al., 2023). Suggesting that prospective HoDs need to be aware of the requirements of their role before they are appointed in the capacity of heads (Riley & Russell, 2013).

Table 2. Formalized training Before Appointments as Heads of Departments

Response	Frequency	%
Yes	0	0%
No	40	100%

Have you attended any training programme organized by any other institutions/organizations outside the university before you were appointed HoD?

Most respondents had not attended any training programmes organized by any other institutions outside the university before their appointments in the position of HoDs, while less than one-tenth (5.0%) indicated otherwise. For a plausible explanation, not having any training concerning academic headship positions and the duties and responsibilities before appointment as HoDs makes the already daunting work more difficult to mission impossible. This could have

adverse implications on the duties of newly appointed HoDs. This is consistent with the finding by Rahmatika and Saragih (2023), who found that HoDs in Nigerian Universities lacked adequate orientation and training programmes to prepare them for their roles.

Table 3. Attendance of Training Programmes outside the University

Response	Frequency	%
Yes	2	5
No	38	95

Would you need some form of orientation or training programmes before the assumption of office as HoD?

All the respondents (100%) indicated that they would need some form of orientation/training programmes before assuming office as HoDs to enable them to carry out their tasks efficiently. Consistently, Abiodun-Oyedenji (2013) has shown that HoDs must benefit from orientation and training programmes that provide them with the knowledge and abilities to run their organizations successfully, including managing staff, finances, stakeholder relations, and implementing plans to meet departmental objectives. These programmes also give HoDs a greater grasp of their responsibilities, improving their decision-making ability. It is important to remember that offering formal orientation and training before appointment as HoD should be a continuous practice rather than a one-time event (Riley & Russell, 2013).

Table 4. Required Training Before Assumption of Office

Response	Frequency	%
Yes	40	100%
No	0	0%

What administrative skills do you expect to acquire before your appointment as HoD?

Most respondents (70%) desired to acquire office procedures skills before appointment as HoDs. Also, half of the respondents (50%) indicated they would like to learn more about student affairs. Further, 48% revealed that they wished they had some degree of knowledge concerning financial management before their appointments. This could possibly be because most of the HODs do not have up-to-date knowledge of the application Office Procedures due to their specific academic background. This corroborates with a study that indicated that HODs must-have office procedures skills in the digital age to effectively run their departments. Office procedures competence enables HODs to manage documents and files efficiently, communicate with stakeholders, and make defensible judgments (Islam et al., 2019).

Further evidence shows that it is crucial to have office procedures skills and applications for administrative duties, including project management, budget tracking, and report writing (Islam et al., 2019). This also aligns with the fact that faculty members who have high levels of competence in office procedures are more likely to perform efficiently in their administrative practices (Kola & Selesho, 2012). This finding supports the notion that HoDs with office procedures competence are well-equipped to kick-start their schedule.

Table 6. Administrative Skills

Administrative Skills	Yes		No	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
ICT Competence	18	45	22	55
Student Affairs	20	50	20	50

Staff development	16	40	18	45
Finance	19	47.5	21	52.5
Office Procedures	28	70	12	30

Discussion

The study found that all Heads of Department (HoDs) surveyed had not received any orientation or training before their appointments, despite evidence suggesting its importance for administrative effectiveness and work satisfaction (Islam et al., 2019). The lack of such training, especially in leadership and communication skills, could negatively impact the performance of newly appointed HoDs (Rahmatika & Saragih, 2023). The respondents expressed a need for continuous training, particularly in office procedures competence, to efficiently execute their roles and manage their departments effectively in the digital age (Abiodun-Oyedenji, 2013). This includes managing documents, communicating with stakeholders, making defensible judgments, and performing administrative duties like project management, budget tracking, and report writing (Islam et al., 2019). The study provides novelty by shedding light on the lack of formalized training and orientation for HoDs in universities prior to their appointments. The study contributes to existing theories on the importance of training for administrative roles and identifies specific areas, like office procedures, where HoDs desire more competence. This research can guide policy-making in academic institutions and improve the effectiveness of HoDs.

CONCLUSIONS

This study has shown that Academic Heads of Department at the University of Cape Coast have not been offered any orientation/workshop or formalized training prior to appointments as Heads of Department. Most of the Academic Heads of Department have no experience of any training organized outside the university before their appointments in the position of Heads of Department. Heads of Department need orientation or training programmes before they assume office as Heads of Department to enable them to carry out their tasks efficiently. More specifically, this study has shown that office procedures are a priority area among training programmes prior to appointment as HODs. The university should provide training programmes and workshops for academic candidates (Senior Lecturers/Associate Professors/Professors) who are eligible for appointment as Heads of Department to improve their administrative skills before their appointments. Adequate support and training for eligible Heads of department could lead to full capacity building before appointment as HoDs and successful development of the University of Cape Coast.

LIMITATION & FURTHER RESEARCH

The study's limitations include its singular-university emphasis, dependence on self-report data, lack of a comprehensive examination of the structure and content of training programmes, and lack of a comparative analysis with other institutions. More research is suggested to address these constraints. Future research could examine a wider range of universities, compare different pre-appointment training methods, investigate the long-term effects of this kind of training, examine the content and design of training curricula, and evaluate the real effect of training on the performance of HoDs. It is possible to acquire a more thorough understanding of the function of pre-appointment training for academic leaders in higher education institutions by addressing these constraints and pursuing recommended research avenues.

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