



# Effect of Advanced Academic Qualification Strategy on Staff Performance in Umaru Musa Yar'adua University, Katsina, Nigeria

Ibrahim Salisu<sup>1,\*</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Department of Public Administration, Faculty of Administration, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, Nigeria

\* Corresponding author: Irosfd1977@gmail.com

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## ABSTRACT

The performance of staff in higher education institutions remains a critical determinant of the quality of teaching, research productivity, and overall institutional effectiveness. In many Nigerian universities, considerable resources have been invested in staff development initiatives to strengthen the professional competence of academic personnel. Despite these efforts, questions persist about the extent to which capacity-building strategies translate into improved staff performance. Against this background, this study examined the effect of advanced academic qualification development on staff performance in Umaru Musa Yar'adua University, Katsina State, Nigeria. The study employed a cross-sectional survey design. The study population comprised 1,095 staff members of the university, including academic and selected management/administrative staff. Using the Krejcie and Morgan sample size determination table with a 30 per cent adjustment to account for possible non-response, a sample size of 371 respondents was obtained. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire based on a five-point Likert scale. A total of 352 valid questionnaires were returned and used for analysis, representing a response rate of 95 per cent. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and simple linear regression analysis with the aid of SPSS, while qualitative data were analyzed thematically. The study found that advanced academic qualification development significantly enhanced staff knowledge, teaching competence, and research productivity, thereby improving staff performance.

**Keywords:** Advanced Academic Qualification; Capacity-Building Strategies; Institutional Effectiveness; Staff Performance

## 1. Introduction

In the contemporary knowledge economy, the ability of organizations to achieve sustainable performance increasingly depends on the quality, competence, and adaptability of their human resources. As technological innovation, globalization, and knowledge production accelerate across sectors, organizations must continuously enhance the capabilities of their workforce in order to remain effective and competitive. Capacity building has therefore emerged as a critical strategy for strengthening organizational performance through the systematic development of employees' knowledge, skills, competencies, and professional capabilities (Aguinis & Kraiger, 2009; United Nations Development Programme [UNDP], 2009).

Employee performance constitutes a central indicator of organizational success because employees are responsible for transforming organizational resources and strategies into measurable outputs. Performance generally reflects the extent to which employees effectively execute assigned responsibilities, contribute to organizational goals, and maintain high levels of productivity and service delivery (Campbell & Wiernik, 2015). In this regard, organizations that invest in the professional development of their workforce are more likely to experience improved employee motivation, enhanced competence, and higher levels of institutional productivity (Aguinis & Kraiger, 2009). Consequently, capacity-building initiatives are widely recognized as essential tools for strengthening workforce performance and sustaining organizational effectiveness.

Globally, universities invest significantly in capacity-building initiatives to improve staff competence and institutional performance. These initiatives often include postgraduate training opportunities, research grantsmanship development, technological capacity enhancement, participation in international conferences, and mentorship programmes for early-career academics. Through these interventions, universities seek to strengthen research productivity, improve teaching effectiveness, and enhance institutional visibility within the global academic community. Reviews of the training literature show that systematic training and development yields benefits for individuals, teams, and organizations (Aguinis & Kraiger, 2009). Studies of Nigerian universities report that lecturers participate widely in professional development programmes intended to raise institutional output (Awodiji et al., 2022).

In Nigeria, capacity building within tertiary education institutions has been strongly influenced by national policies and government intervention programmes aimed at improving the quality of higher education. One of the most significant institutional mechanisms for supporting staff development in Nigerian universities is the Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFund). The TETFund was established in 2011 following the transformation of the Education Trust Fund (ETF), which had been created in 1993 to support educational development through targeted financial interventions (Tertiary Education Trust Fund [TETFund], n.d.). Through this intervention mechanism, Nigerian universities receive funding for staff training, postgraduate sponsorship, conference participation, research development, and infrastructural improvement.

In developing countries, however, higher education institutions face numerous structural challenges that may limit the effectiveness of capacity-building initiatives. These challenges include inadequate funding, limited access to research infrastructure, insufficient technological resources, and weak institutional support systems. As a result, although many universities implement staff development programmes, the extent to which these programmes translate into improved performance outcomes remains a subject of ongoing academic and policy debate. Against this background, the present study investigates the effect of capacity-building programmes on staff performance in Umaru Musa Yar'adua University, Katsina State, Nigeria. Specifically, the study examined the effect of advanced academic qualification development on staff performance in the university, asking how it influences staff knowledge, research competence, teaching effectiveness, and overall job performance. By providing empirical evidence on the relationship between this capacity-building intervention and staff performance outcomes, the study seeks to contribute to the development of more effective staff development strategies within Nigerian universities.

## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1 Capacity Building

The term “capacity building” is widely used in academic and policy literature, but there is no universally agreed-upon definition. In its broadest sense, capacity building refers to the process through which individuals, organizations, and systems develop the abilities required to perform functions effectively, efficiently, and sustainably over time (Morgan, 2006). The UNDP (2009) conceptualizes capacity building as a continuous and dynamic process through which individuals, organizations, and societies obtain, strengthen, and maintain the capabilities needed to set and achieve their development objectives. From this perspective, capacity building is not a one-time intervention but an ongoing developmental process that evolves in response to changing organizational needs and environmental conditions.

Capacity-building strategies constitute structured institutional mechanisms through which universities invest in the development of their human resources in order to improve teaching quality, research productivity, and administrative effectiveness. In contemporary higher education systems, capacity-building strategies are increasingly viewed as essential tools for strengthening institutional performance and achieving global competitiveness in the knowledge economy (Altbach et al., 2009; Marginson, 2016). For the purpose of this study, a major capacity-building strategy commonly used in higher education institutions is examined: advanced academic qualification development, which represents a distinct dimension of institutional efforts to enhance staff performance.

## 2.2 Staff Performance

The concept of staff performance occupies a central position in organizational studies, human resource management, and institutional effectiveness research. Performance represents the extent to which employees successfully execute assigned responsibilities and contribute to the attainment of organizational goals. In contemporary management literature, employee performance is widely regarded as a key determinant of organizational productivity, service quality, and institutional sustainability. As organizations operate in increasingly competitive and knowledge-driven environments, employees' ability to perform effectively has become a critical determinant of organizational success (Armstrong & Taylor, 2020; Campbell & Wiernik, 2015).

## 2.3 Theoretical Framework

Human Capital Theory is adopted as the principal theoretical framework for this study because it offers the most appropriate explanation of the relationship between capacity-building strategies and staff performance in higher education institutions. The theory was significantly advanced by Becker (1993), who argued that investments in education, training, and professional development constitute investments in human capital that enhance the productive capabilities of individuals and organizations. According to this perspective, employees possess knowledge, skills, competencies, and experience that function as forms of capital capable of generating value for organizations. When organizations invest in the development of these capabilities, they increase the productivity and effectiveness of their workforce.

## 2.4 Empirical Review

Awodiji et al. (2022) analysed the participation of Nigerian lecturers in professional development programmes, including training for higher education, conferences, and workshops. The study adopted a descriptive survey design and collected data from 280 lecturers in federal universities selected through stratified sampling. Using descriptive statistics, it found a high rate of participation in professional development programmes and recommended expanding international training opportunities through formal agreements to raise academic productivity. Similarly, Sunday and Isa (2023) examined the impact of training and development on job satisfaction and retention among 150 academic staff at Taraba State University and Federal University of Wukari. Regression analysis showed that training and development had a significant effect on both job satisfaction and academic staff retention. In the same vein, Okocha-Ojeah et al. (2026) investigated institutional development initiatives as determinants of academic staff productivity in two public universities in Osun State, Nigeria. Using a survey of 344 respondents and regression and correlation analysis, they found that development initiatives significantly strengthened staff capacity for community service, administrative participation, and professional effectiveness.

Evidence on non-academic staff points in the same direction. Eunice et al. (2019) surveyed 228 secretariat staff drawn from a population of 904 in two universities in Oyo State, Nigeria, using a descriptive survey design with Pearson correlation analysis. They found that the availability of information and communication technology facilities and in-service training were significantly related to staff effectiveness and job performance. Outside Nigeria, Yimam (2022) surveyed 316 administrative staff of Bahir Dar University, Ethiopia, who had taken part in training programmes. The study found that training design, training needs assessment, training delivery style, and training evaluation each had a significant positive effect on employee performance. Taken together, these studies show that staff training and development is generally associated with better staff outcomes in universities, although most of them examine short-term training rather than advanced academic qualifications specifically, which is the gap the present study addresses.

### 3. Methodology

#### 3.1 Research Design

The study adopted a cross-sectional survey research design, which enables the systematic collection of data from university staff and the analysis of relationships between capacity-building strategies and staff performance (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

#### 3.2 Data Sources

Primary data were collected through structured questionnaires and semi-structured interviews with staff members of Umaru Musa Yar'adua University. Secondary data were obtained from academic books, peer-reviewed journal articles, policy documents, and institutional reports.

#### 3.3 Population of the Study

The population comprised 1,095 staff members of Umaru Musa Yar'adua University (UMYU), Katsina State, Nigeria, including academic staff, administrative staff, and selected management personnel directly involved in the formulation, implementation, and oversight of staff development policies within the university.

#### 3.4 Sample and Sampling Technique

A stratified random sampling technique was employed. The university staff population was divided into two broad strata—academic staff and non-academic staff—reflecting their different institutional functions and experiences of staff development initiatives. The population distribution and sample allocation are presented in Table 1.

**Table 1: Population and Sample Distribution by Stratum**

| Stratum                           | % of Population | Population (N) | Sample Allocated (n) |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------|----------------|----------------------|
| Academic staff                    | 60              | 657            | 222.6                |
| Administrative staff              | 30              | 328.5          | 111.3                |
| Management personnel (Deans/HODs) | 10              | 109.5          | 37.5                 |
| <b>Total</b>                      | <b>100</b>      | <b>1,095</b>   | <b>371.3</b>         |

Source: Umaru Musa Yar'adua University Staff Records (2025). See module docstring for a flagged internal-arithmetic note on this table's non-integer population counts and sample-allocation total.

A total of eight management personnel were purposively selected for semi-structured interviews. These included Deans of Faculties and Heads of Departments who are directly involved in the implementation of staff development programmes. Participants were selected based on their official roles and involvement in capacity-building decision-making.

#### 3.5 Sample Size Determination

The sample size was determined using the Krejcie and Morgan (1970) sample size determination table, which assumes a confidence level of 95 per cent and a margin of error of approximately 5 per cent. For a population of approximately 1,100 individuals, the recommended minimum sample size is 285 respondents. To account for possible non-response, this figure was increased by 30 per cent, giving a final sample size of 371 respondents ( $285 \times 1.30 = 370.5$ , rounded up).

#### 3.6 Data Collection

Data were collected using a structured questionnaire administered to the sampled respondents across the relevant faculties and administrative units. Trained research assistants assisted with the distribution and retrieval of questionnaires. Of the 371 questionnaires distributed, 352 valid copies were returned and used for analysis, representing a response rate of 95 per cent.

### 3.7 Instrument Development and Validation

The questionnaire was developed based on the study's conceptual framework. Each item was measured on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Content validity was established through expert review; the draft instrument was presented to experts in public administration, human resource management, and research methodology, whose feedback led to the rephrasing of ambiguous items and the removal of redundant questions. Reliability was assessed using Cronbach's alpha in a pilot study involving 50 staff members not included in the final sample. The results are presented in Table 2.

**Table 2: Reliability Test Results**

| Construct                                | Number of Items | Cronbach's Alpha |
|------------------------------------------|-----------------|------------------|
| Advanced academic qualification strategy | 5               | 0.82             |
| Staff performance                        | 8               | 0.84             |

Source: Field survey (2025).

Both values exceeded the acceptable threshold of 0.70, confirming the internal consistency of the instrument.

### 3.8 Measurement of Variables

Staff performance, the dependent variable, was measured using a composite score derived from eight Likert-scale items covering research productivity, teaching effectiveness, and professional competence. The mean score of these items was computed for each respondent and used as the dependent variable in the regression analysis. The operationalization of variables is presented in Table 3.

**Table 3: Operationalization of Variables**

| Variable                     | Dimension                       | Indicators                                                       | Measurement  |
|------------------------------|---------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|
| Capacity building strategies | Advanced academic qualification | Postgraduate training sponsorship, acquisition of higher degrees | Likert scale |
| Staff performance            | Research productivity           | Publications, conference presentations, research outputs         | Likert scale |
|                              | Teaching effectiveness          | Quality of instruction, student engagement                       | Likert scale |
|                              | Professional competence         | Application of knowledge, innovation in teaching and research    | Likert scale |

### 3.9 Ethical Considerations

The study adhered to standard ethical research practices. Informed consent was obtained from all respondents, who were informed about the purpose of the research and their right to withdraw at any stage. Confidentiality and anonymity were maintained, as the questionnaire did not require personal identifying information. Participation was entirely voluntary, and all data were used solely for academic purposes.

### 3.10 Data Analysis

Simple linear regression analysis was used to test the study hypothesis at the 0.05 level of significance.

## 4. Results

### 4.1 Demographic Profile of Respondents

The educational qualifications of the respondents were examined in order to determine the academic background of the staff who participated in the study.

**Table 4: Educational Qualification of Respondents**

| Qualification     | Frequency  | Percentage (%) |
|-------------------|------------|----------------|
| Doctorate (PhD)   | 54         | 15.3           |
| Master's degree   | 240        | 68.2           |
| Bachelor's degree | 50         | 14.2           |
| Others            | 8          | 2.3            |
| <b>Total</b>      | <b>352</b> | <b>100</b>     |

Source: Field survey (2025).

The results presented in Table 4 indicate that the majority of the respondents possess postgraduate qualifications. Approximately 68 per cent of the respondents hold master's degrees, while 15 per cent possess doctoral qualifications. Respondents with bachelor's degrees constitute 14 per cent, while 2 per cent indicated other qualifications.

**Table 5: Gender Distribution of Respondents**

| Gender       | Frequency  | Percentage (%) |
|--------------|------------|----------------|
| Male         | 264        | 75             |
| Female       | 88         | 25             |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>352</b> | <b>100</b>     |

Source: Field survey (2025).

Male respondents constitute the majority of the study participants, accounting for 75 per cent of the respondents, while female respondents represent 25 per cent of the sample.

**Table 6: Age Distribution of Respondents**

| Age Category | Frequency  | Percentage (%) |
|--------------|------------|----------------|
| 25–35 years  | 35         | 10             |
| 36–45 years  | 106        | 30             |
| 46–55 years  | 141        | 40             |
| 56–65 years  | 70         | 20             |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>352</b> | <b>100</b>     |

Source: Field survey (2025).

The largest proportion of respondents falls within the 46–55 years age category, representing 40 per cent of the respondents. This is followed by respondents within the 36–45 years age bracket (30 per cent), respondents aged 56–65 years (20 per cent), and those between 25–35 years (10 per cent).

**Table 7: Years of Work Experience of Respondents**

| Years of Experience | Frequency  | Percentage (%) |
|---------------------|------------|----------------|
| 0–5 years           | 25         | 7              |
| 6–10 years          | 106        | 30             |
| 11–15 years         | 106        | 30             |
| 16–20 years         | 115        | 33             |
| <b>Total</b>        | <b>352</b> | <b>100</b>     |

Source: Field survey (2025).

The largest proportion of respondents has between 16 and 20 years of working experience (33 per cent), closely followed by respondents with 6–10 years and 11–15 years of experience, each accounting for 30 per cent of the sample. Only 7 per cent of respondents have five years of experience or less.

## 4.2 Advanced Academic Qualification and Staff Performance

To assess the influence of advanced academic qualifications on staff performance, respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement with several statements relating to how postgraduate education and higher academic qualifications influence their professional responsibilities. The responses are presented in Table 8.

**Table 8: Responses on the Advanced Academic Qualification Strategy and Staff Performance**

| S/N | Statement                                                                                  | SA  | A   | U  | D  | SD | Mean | Std. Dev. |
|-----|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|-----|----|----|----|------|-----------|
| 1   | Participation in postgraduate training has broadened my knowledge of my subject area.      | 180 | 122 | 18 | 22 | 10 | 4.25 | 1.00      |
| 2   | Acquiring higher academic qualifications has improved my research competence.              | 165 | 138 | 15 | 21 | 13 | 4.20 | 1.02      |
| 3   | Postgraduate training has improved my ability to supervise students' research projects.    | 158 | 134 | 22 | 24 | 14 | 4.13 | 1.06      |
| 4   | Advanced academic qualifications have enhanced my teaching effectiveness.                  | 171 | 129 | 16 | 23 | 13 | 4.20 | 1.04      |
| 5   | Higher academic qualifications have improved my overall job performance at the university. | 162 | 138 | 19 | 21 | 12 | 4.18 | 1.01      |

Source: Field survey (2025). SA = strongly agree, A = agree, U = undecided, D = disagree, SD = strongly disagree.

The results reveal that a large proportion of respondents expressed agreement with the statements relating to the influence of advanced academic qualification strategies on staff performance. The first statement indicates that postgraduate training has broadened respondents' knowledge of their subject areas. A total of 302 respondents (SA = 180; A = 122) agreed with the statement, while only a small number expressed disagreement. The mean score of 4.25 indicates a strong level of agreement that postgraduate education contributes significantly to expanding the knowledge base of staff. Similarly, the responses to the second statement show that the acquisition of higher academic qualifications has improved the research competence of academic staff, with a mean score of 4.20.

The third statement examined whether advanced academic qualifications improve staff's ability to supervise students' research projects. The findings indicate that most respondents agreed, with a mean score of 4.13. This suggests that staff who undergo postgraduate training acquire the methodological and theoretical competencies required to effectively guide students in conducting academic research. The fourth statement indicates that advanced academic qualifications enhance teaching effectiveness, with a mean score of 4.20. The fifth statement examined whether higher academic qualifications improve overall job performance, with a mean score of 4.18, indicating a strong level of agreement.

Overall, the results indicate that advanced academic qualification development strategies play a significant role in enhancing staff performance. The high mean scores across all items demonstrate that postgraduate education contributes to improving the knowledge base, research competence, and teaching effectiveness of academic staff.

### 4.3 Test of Hypothesis

$H_0$ : Advanced academic qualification strategy has no significant effect on staff performance in Umaru Musa Yar'adua University. To test this hypothesis, regression analysis was conducted to determine the extent to which the advanced academic qualification strategy predicts staff performance.

**Table 9: Regression Analysis for the Advanced Academic Qualification Strategy and Staff Performance**

| Variable                        | B (Unstandardized) | Std. Error | t-value | Sig. (p-value) |
|---------------------------------|--------------------|------------|---------|----------------|
| Advanced academic qualification | 0.462              | 0.071      | 6.507   | 0.000          |

Source: Field survey (2025). Dependent variable: staff performance.  $n = 352$ . The coefficient reported is the unstandardized coefficient (B). Additional model statistics (intercept,  $R^2$ ,  $F$ -statistic) were not available in the original output and are therefore not reported.

The results presented in Table 9 show that the advanced academic qualification strategy has a positive unstandardized regression coefficient ( $B = 0.462$ ), indicating that improvements in postgraduate training and higher academic qualifications are associated with improvements in staff performance. The reported p-value is less than 0.001, indicating that the relationship between the advanced academic qualification strategy and staff performance is statistically significant.

This finding implies that staff who pursue higher academic qualifications are more likely to demonstrate improved teaching competence, research competence, and professional effectiveness within the university environment.

Decision rule: Since  $p < 0.05$ , the null hypothesis is rejected. The advanced academic qualification strategy has a significant positive effect on staff performance in Umaru Musa Yar'adua University.

## 5. Discussion

The discussion interprets the quantitative results obtained from the questionnaire survey and relates the findings to the theoretical and empirical literature on staff development and institutional performance.

These findings are consistent with the assumptions of Human Capital Theory, which posits that investments in education and training enhance the productivity and professional effectiveness of individuals. In the context of higher education institutions, academic qualifications represent an important form of intellectual capital that contributes directly to institutional performance through improved teaching quality and research output.

The findings also align with empirical studies that have reported a positive relationship between staff training and development and employee performance, including in Nigerian public universities (Eunice et al., 2019; Okocha-Ojeah et al., 2026; Yimam, 2022). The results of this study therefore reinforce the argument that continuous investment in postgraduate training remains a critical strategy for strengthening the intellectual capacity of universities.

## 6. Qualitative Findings

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with eight management personnel, including Deans of Faculties and Heads of Departments, who are directly involved in the formulation and implementation of staff development policies at Umaru Musa Yar'adua University. The interview data were analysed thematically. Three major themes emerged.

## 6.1 Institutional Commitment to Staff Development

Interview participants generally indicated that the university recognises capacity building as a strategic mechanism for improving staff performance. According to one respondent, “The university encourages staff to pursue higher academic qualifications through study leave and, in some cases, financial support. This is because the quality of teaching and research depends on the competence of academic staff.” However, some respondents noted that institutional commitment is sometimes constrained by financial limitations and administrative challenges, which may affect the extent to which staff are sponsored for training programmes.

## 6.2 Advanced Academic Qualification Development and Staff Performance

All interview participants emphasised that postgraduate education, particularly doctoral training, is widely regarded as one of the most significant forms of capacity building. According to the respondents, “Staff who obtain advanced academic qualifications demonstrate stronger research competence, improved teaching effectiveness, and greater academic confidence.” Another respondent noted, “Postgraduate training has contributed significantly to improving the research profile of the university because many staff members who complete doctoral programmes become more actively engaged in research activities and scholarly publications.” Respondents also noted that staff with advanced academic qualifications are better equipped to supervise postgraduate students, contribute to curriculum development, and participate in research collaborations.

## 6.3 Challenges in Pursuing Higher Academic Qualifications

Despite the positive contributions of advanced academic qualifications, interview participants identified several challenges. One respondent stated, “Limited funding for postgraduate studies is a major challenge. Many staff members struggle to finance their doctoral programmes.” Another added, “Heavy teaching workloads and delays in obtaining study leave approvals also make it difficult for staff to balance academic responsibilities with postgraduate research.” These qualitative findings corroborate the quantitative results, demonstrating that advanced academic qualification development is perceived by institutional leaders as a critical driver of staff performance, while also highlighting implementation challenges that need to be addressed.

## 7. Limitations and Direction for Future Research

This study has several limitations. First, it is a cross-sectional survey conducted in a single university, so the findings may not generalise to other institutions or to other parts of Nigeria. Second, the key variables were measured through respondents' own perceptions on a Likert scale, which may introduce common-method and self-report bias. Third, the hypothesis was tested with a single predictor and no control variables such as age, rank, years of experience, or discipline, so the estimated association may partly reflect other factors. Fourth, the study examined only one capacity-building strategy and did not compare it with other strategies such as ICT training, research grantsmanship, or mentorship.

Future research should use multi-institution samples and include control variables in a multiple-regression model, combine perceptual measures with objective performance indicators such as publication counts, supervision loads, and student evaluations of teaching, and consider longitudinal designs that follow staff before and after completing advanced degrees. Comparative studies of the advanced academic qualification strategy against other capacity-building strategies would also provide evidence on the relative contribution of different interventions.

The regression analysis reported in this study is based on the available SPSS output, which provided the unstandardized coefficient ( $B = 0.462$ ), standard error (0.071), t-value (6.507), and p-value (0.000). However, the original output did not include the intercept,  $R^2$ , adjusted  $R^2$ , F-statistic, or standardized coefficient ( $\beta$ ). While the reported coefficient and t-value are sufficient to establish statistical significance, the absence of  $R^2$  and F-statistics limits the ability to assess overall model fit. Future research should report complete regression statistics to facilitate a more comprehensive evaluation.

## 8. Conclusion and Recommendations

This study examined the effect of advanced academic qualification development, as a capacity-building strategy, on staff performance in Umaru Musa Yar'adua University, Katsina State, Nigeria. The study was motivated by the increasing recognition that human capital development is a critical determinant of institutional effectiveness in higher education institutions. Universities rely heavily on the knowledge, skills, and professional competence of their staff to achieve their core mandates of teaching, research, and community service, and many Nigerian universities have invested considerable resources in staff development programmes, including postgraduate training.

The study found that advanced academic qualification development is significantly and positively associated with staff performance. Respondents reported that higher academic qualifications were associated with improved subject knowledge, research competence, teaching effectiveness, and overall professional performance. The study therefore concludes that the acquisition of advanced academic qualifications is an important strategic mechanism through which universities can strengthen the intellectual capacity of their workforce and enhance institutional performance.

Based on these findings, the following recommendations are offered. First, the university should strengthen institutional support for postgraduate training and higher degree programmes, including expanding opportunities for study leave. Second, financial sponsorship for staff pursuing master's and doctoral degrees should be increased to reduce the financial barriers identified by both the survey and interview respondents. Third, clear policies that encourage continuous academic advancement should be developed and implemented across all faculties and administrative units. These initiatives would contribute to strengthening the intellectual capacity of the university workforce and improving the quality of teaching and research.

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