

(RESEARCH ARTICLE)



## Assessment of the corporate social responsibility, task significance, and job performance at the university of Cape Coast, Central Region, Ghana

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### Abstract

The study was conducted at the University of Cape Coast, Ghana to analyse the role of task significance in the association between Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and the job performance of the administrative staff of the University. The study specifically addressed four objectives that emanated from the main objective. These objectives were to; assess the influence of CSR on the performance of employees; analyse the effect of CSR on task significance; assess the influence of task significance and employee performance, and examine the moderating role of task significance in CSR and job performance nexus. A self-administered questionnaire was utilised to collect data from 273 randomly sampled respondents and with the use of the partial least square structuring equation modelling, and the hypotheses were tested. The results revealed that CSR has a significant positive relationship ( $R=0.097$ ;  $t=2.549$ ;  $p=0.003$ ) with staff performance, and a positive link with task significance ( $R=0.928$ ;  $t=77.470$ ;  $p<0.000$ ). The study further established that task significance had a significant positive relationship with staff performance ( $R=0.346$ ;  $t=2.096$ ;  $p = 0.037$ ). Lastly, the indirect column revealed that task significance partially mediates the relationship between CSR and task significance ( $R=0.321$ ;  $t=2.071$ ;  $p=0.039$ ). The study therefore recommended that managers of the University of Cape Coast should invest financial resources into CSR activities, create a friendly working environment, and donate to the welfare of employees, and their families.

**Keywords:** Corporate Social Responsibility; Job Performance; Task Significance; University of Cape Coast

### 1. Introduction

Fasoulis (2023) defined CSR as "the obligations of the organisation and taking measures inside the organisation that surpass its lawful commitments and the financial or business objectives". These wider responsibilities are usually summarised as philanthropic/social, ethical, legal, and economic responsibilities (Caroll's pyramid) (Topić 2023). The concept of CSR makes organisations execute their activities by taking into account the needs and responsibilities of society to make an impact on their shareholders, employees, suppliers, customers, settlements, and other participants as well as their environs (Gromis, Fiandrino & Yahiaoui (2022). These needs and responsibilities of the society show that the organisations have adhered to rules and regulations, and they have voluntarily taken initiatives to think about the wellbeing of their workers and their dependents and to improve the local community at large. CSR has become an integral part of the sustainability strategy of many organisations and companies. It is said to be the holder of many business and organisation decisions as well as the reputation of many organisations (Jones, Willness, & Madey, 2014). The general aim of the research sought to assess the CSR effects on the performance of employees through the mediating effects of task significance.

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All socially responsible organisations have global accomplishments in their own businesses. Companies have focused on CSR by going beyond their mission. Great attention has been paid to this concept in sustaining modern organisation (Baptiste et al. 2022; Besharov, M., & Mitsinneck, B. 2023). There has been a growing interest from both practitioners and scholars in the area of CSR (Rasool, Shah, & Islam 2020). This is because many organisations respond to ethical obligations and societal pressure through their efforts in socially responsible actions. Thus, the goal of CSR is for organisations to take charge of their actions and encourage positive influence through their activities which are associated with society, the environment, the economy, and stakeholders. The encouragement of positive influence is what gives rise to task significance.

Again, CSR has enabled organisations to contribute to the broader community where they work by engaging in solving certain philanthropic/social, ethical, legal, and economic problems (Aguinis & Glavas, 2012). The contributions include some investments in the environmental safeguard, provision of education for diverse social groups, human rights protection, provision of scholarships, the building of facilities to complement the requirements of the neighborhood local area, and the improvement of the health conditions of the society. Companies view these activities as having task relevance when they have an impact on an individual's life, their job, and the lives of others, either inside the immediate company or in the external environment (Larsen, Mkalama, & Mol 2023). Task Significance includes the significance and influence of a job over the lives and well-being of co-workers and consumers (Aho, 2021). Companies that operate socially responsible activities with tasks significant ensure that they promote and spread the results achieved, to achieve the mission of their CSR which intends to impact the lives of individuals and the jobs of other people (Shen & Benson, 2016). The research problem therefore is that failure on the part of an organisation to properly adopt CSR programs or activities will result in employees' job dissatisfaction, low morale, intention to quit, and absenteeism (Setyaningrum & Haryono, 2018).

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## 2. Empirical Review

### 2.1. Corporate Social Responsibility and Task Significance

Task significance enables the activities of CSR of great importance for companies. In modern businesses, monitoring new trends in management provides a competitive advantage in the market (Skýpalová, Kosáková, Urbánová, & de Sabato, 2023).

Companies that understand the task significance of CSR will try to increase their capabilities. Such companies continually seek to improve their work knowledge to ensure that the value of their activities goes beyond their legal requirements and economic or business goals. Kirat (2015) argued that the activities of corporate social obligation can be heightened through cultivating the perceptions of task significance among workers, that is, organisations judge one's job based on progressive impact on other people and the community at large.

However, task significance is very critical in executing social responsibilities, since organisations are becoming concerned with providing employees the opportunity to be anxious about providing service that advantages individuals and adds to society (Aho, 2021; Chaker, 2023). The preceding study has opted to ignore the possibility that task significance may influence the productivity of organisations at the individual or employees' level through CSR activities (Gonsáles-Rodríguez, Días-Fernández, Shi, & Okumus, 2021; Rupp, & Mallory, 2015). This is unexpected not just because workers are the essential core stakeholders who play crucial functions in a firm's corporate social obligation, but also because the importance of their work is essential to the survival and success of the organisation (Halverson, 2023).

Also, Ong et al., (2018) submitted that task significance is part of workers' work experiences which influences their CSR sensitivity. Skýpalová, Kosáková, Urbánová, and de Sabato, (2023) added that employees who have high undertaking importance are more aware of the social significance of their positions and thus, they know that their job possesses a meaningful and progressive effect on others' lives. Lemoine, Parsons and Kansara (2015) also see employees whose work has higher task significance as expected to be more reactive to their company's CSR practices than the ones whose work has low task significance. Grant and Berry (2011) researched the vicious cycle of making a positive change and suggested that if employees turn to help others, they can be motivated to engage in even further prosocial conduct.

Specifically, Skýpalová, Kosáková, Urbánová, and de Sabato, (2023) posited that workers who make a dynamic change by fulfilling their clear work-related responsibilities become more aware of the possibility of assisting in other contexts, indirectly by supporting the operations of their organisation rather than just directly through their employment. Employees who do tasks with high work importance are therefore more likely to be delicate to their company's CSR judgments, and when they see their firm's positive determinations of CSR, they are bound to encounter an increase in

prosocial motivation. Employees with low task significance, on the other hand, do not receive the same attention when seeking out other opportunities for prosocial behaviour and are thus less bound to participate in their organisations' CSR initiatives.

Skýpalová, Kosáková, Urbánová, and de Sabato, (2023) suggested that the engagement in CSR by organisations is one tool by which employees can increase their perceived task significance in their work. Again, Ong, Mayer, Tost and Wellman (2018) added that the engagement of organisations in CSR activities helps them to contribute actively to the ecological, economic, social, and or environment around them. These initiatives enhance the organisation's appearance and give workers the chance to positively distinguish themselves and the company where they work. The workers have begun to see their company as a foundation that supports and cares for the welfare of others. This belief should heighten task importance, which entails the conviction that CSR initiatives are improving the lives of others.

## **2.2. Corporate Social Responsibility and Job Performance**

Being socially mediated, CSR is likely to be contextualised by the era and culture in which it is being considered. According to Thordardottir (2011), the basic elements of CSR comprise staff development through equal opportunity statements, education, training, written anti-discrimination policies, approaches to fair exchange, obligation to the assurance of the nearby local area, strategies for confining the utilisation of kid work by providers, and obligation to covering CSR. The concept of CSR attracts attention all over the world and acquires new ideas about employee performance and job satisfaction (Shuli & Suwantee, 2017). CSR contains several efforts, theories as well as terminologies. A vibrant and secure society is largely the result of CSR. Businesses are under increasing pressure from their stakeholders, including owners, investors, management, employees, and customers, to perform socially responsible acts. As a result, a lot of organisations have acclimatised to the relevance of adhering to CSR activities.

### *2.2.1. Benefits of Corporate Social Responsibility and Job Performance*

It is believed that CSR helps corporations to give back to their community and stakeholders which extends to the interests of their businesses (Shuli & Suwantee, 2017). Charitable responsibility, economic responsibility, ethical responsibility, and legal duties are the four parts of CSR, according to Amin, and Fachruddin (2022).

Concerns have been made regarding how CSR will affect workers' well-being as the subject has gained more attention. The literature review explores the connection between CSR and job performance and satisfaction, which is a more generally accepted metric for evaluating well-being at work. For instance, Rahman (2017) reported that measures of external and internal social obligation were positively correlated with work satisfaction among 3637 staff in Estonia, Latvia as well as Lithuania. According to the study's findings, employees' evaluations of several parts of their jobs are considerably higher in companies where employees are thought to be more engaged. The connection between CSR's good effects and its competitive advantages, such as reputation and customer happiness, is what causes it to affect work performance.

The association between CSR and job performance is being promoted (Alnuaim, 2019). The positive correlation between CSR and corporate success has received the consideration of many authors, making it a recurrent issue in many works globally (Abu Bakar & Ameer, 2011; Fasoulis, 2023). Most researchers have looked at the association between CSR and company performance. Recent employment practices with experienced hands who are trained, well-motivated employees, properly rewarded shared successes established. The group that disregards this obligation may confront a threat of missing profoundly motivated staff indicating factors that affect employee job satisfaction (Alafi, Al-Queed & Alkayed, 2014). Employees and all other stakeholders, according to the theoretical viewpoint, can only feel connected and content when they have a favorable assessment of the organisation's operations.

### *2.2.2. Needs of employees*

Security, belongingness, self-esteem, and meaningful existence with the firm are the four main psychological requirements of employees that Bauman and Skitka (2012) identified. These needs can be strongly impacted by the degree of association of the organisation in different CSR drives. According to the most recent research, CSR is described as a business behavior toward its employees in which it assists them with a variety of issues, such as workplace promotion. Rendering to the current study's definition of job satisfaction comes from employees' successes, which entails CSR in terms of employee advancement and workplace conditions (Ali, Danish, & Asrar-ul-Haq, 2020; Huang, (2022).

Scholars have employed techniques adopted by the bulk of studies, which have explored the connection between CSR and work performance. They contend that results showing a positive regulatory or neutral relationship between CSR

and firm/job performance cannot be completely trusted because other intervention elements that many researchers have neglected may have an impact on this relationship. This study makes an effort to expand on earlier work on the connection between CSR and company performance. The association between CSR and job/firm performance has undergone slower, more thorough research. For example; (Mulki & Jaramillo, 2011). CSR has an advantageous impact on business. Employees are satisfied with the services provided by the organisation (Mayuri-Ramos et al.; 2023). Every employee must be given the same chance for reward and development to have a satisfactory employment practice with motivated, well-trained workers who are fairly compensated. Investigations launched into the employees' conduct disregard responsibility, which could result in the loss of productive workers (Gonsález-Rodríguez, 2021), and the job and promotion value of both employee success and unhappiness (Onkila, 2015). The CSR pyramid's basic dimension, which indicates that the CSR Corporation should aim to generate a profit, and the legal dimension, which maintains law and ethical standards to become a good corporate citizen, contradicts earlier studies (Newman et al., 2015; 2016).

Studies on the connection between CSR and corporate success should take into account both customer happiness and competitive advantage (e.g., Saeidi, 2015; Islam et al., 2021). Despite the abundance of literature on CSR, there is no clear-cut definition (Hamplová, Janeček, & Lefley, (2022). With carefully crafted CSR initiatives, businesses can reap significant financial rewards thanks to improved stakeholder relationships and a more positive public perception, such as increased stakeholder trust and satisfaction (Timothy & Holladay, 2013). Additionally, CSR can support the development of a company's key intangible assets, including its human capital, a positive corporate culture, and innovation (Mattera, & Baena, 2015). Al Qeed, (2015) and the current research agree on the priority of response structure. However, Choi and Yanni Yu (2014) uncovered research done in China to look at how CSR activities affect employees' behaviour and attitudes. The effect of interference on employees is examined by the writers. Some academics examine these elements, including employee achievement and prior job environment and promotion discontent, concerning worker job happiness in the work environment and its promotion (Al Qeed, 2015).

### *2.2.3. Effects of CSR on shareholder and consumer behaviors*

The body of knowledge now in existence has a vast quantity of research on the impact of social performance on shareholder and consumer behaviors. A substantial association between internal social responsibility activities is discovered by Awaysheh, Heron, Perry, and Wilson, (2020). Education and training, workplace and job dedication, human rights, safety and wellbeing, and lifter work balance and variety. Once more, in their meta-analysis study, the findings from numerous additional studies attest to the connection between working for socially conscious businesses and organisational researcher of employee engagement or even organisational citizenship behavior. Awaysheh, Heron, Perry, and Wilson, (2020) discover a strong link between variations in workplace and work dedication and internal social responsibility practice education and training on human rights safety and well-being (Aguinos & Glavas, 2012).

Reports of numerous studies demonstrate the connections between employment with socially conscious businesses and a rise in employee involvement or even organisation citizenship. These studies demonstrate a connection between internal and constructive work attitudes and employees' perceptions of CSR. The results of fewer studies frequently demonstrate the existence of a connection between workers' perceptions of CSR activities and favorable employee views. According to these findings, learning positive (CSR) information about a company increases one's possible employment intention.

CSR can be categorised into two divisions i.e. community-related CSR and environment-related CSR. The first is evaluated using a metric for corporate accountability and social responsibility, while the second is evaluated using a metric for environmental policies and trash re-education. Workers are more likely to go back to the former by acting in a way that will help the organisation if the organisation provides them with higher socioeconomic benefits. Some of them have also worked on internal employees but these studies are limited to some dimensions of organisational commitment and organisational citizenship behaviour (Rupp, 2015; Choi & Yu, 2014).

The idea of CSR serves a beneficial impact on influencing employees' behaviours and attitudes with increased job performance (Almeida & Coelho, 2019). Employees' satisfaction, which is essential for increased effectiveness, productivity, and quality of work, will increase when they recognise that their companies are morally and socially responsible (Sarkar et al., 2023). Additional research indicates that workers would favour socially conscious companies (Chaker, 2023; Tsiner, 2013), which might have a favourable effect on turnover and job satisfaction, among other things (Hudson, Bryson & Michelotti, (2017); (Du, Bhattacharya, & Sen, 2015).

Additionally, workers would be able to perform with complete assurance. People are said to naturally gravitate toward moral behaviour and social responsibility when they want to live moral lives. They, therefore, work more

enthusiastically when they see that the norms and values of their organisation and their values align. In return for CSR practices, they will be able to accomplish their goals in this manner, efficiently and effectively (Abrudan, & Tatu, (2019).

In summary, the positive impact of CRS on the employees will improve their job performance for the growth of the organisation or institution. This therefore means that CRS serves as the vehicle for the beneficiaries to meet their needs as a way to sustain the running of the business, or institution.

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### 3. Material and methods

#### 3.1. Materials

The third public university in Ghana situated at Cape Coast, the University of Cape Coast was the area under investigation. The institution was given a particular affiliation with the University of Ghana when it was formally established on December 15, 1962. The University College of Science Education as formally known was given the responsibility of preparing graduate educators in Arts and Science, particularly the last option for Ghana's auxiliary schools, educator trade schools, polytechnics, and specialised colleges. The three public universities in the nation were given specified disciplines of study in 1964 by the public authority. The College was renamed "The University College of Science Education" in response to the emphasis placed at that time on scientific education. Act 390, known as the University of Cape Coast Act, was passed to grant the College full university status starting on October 1, 1971. Later, this was reiterated by the University of Cape Coast Law in 1992 (PNDC Law 278). The University of Cape Coast has reorganised its degree programmes by separating the study of professional education courses from the foundational degree courses. The university's primary goal is to deliver educational programmes in other Colleges. Therefore it was formed with the flexibility and variety in course offerings to fit the demands of each student. The University is currently organised into five Colleges spearheaded by Provosts, namely: the College of Humanities and Legal Studies; the College of Education Studies; the College of Agricultural and Natural Sciences; the College of Health and Allied Sciences; and the College of Distance Education. The university also harbours fifteen Faculties/Schools headed by Deans namely: The School of Graduate Studies (SGS); the Faculty of Arts; the Faculty of Social Sciences; the Faculty of Law; the School of Agriculture; the School of Biological Sciences; the School of Business; School of Medical Sciences; School of Nursing and Midwifery; School of Allied Health Sciences; School of Physical Sciences; Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences education; Faculty of Science and Technology Education; Faculty of Educational Foundations; and School of Educational Development and Outreach.

#### 3.2. Methods

According to Sekaran and Bougie (2016), a research design is a plan or guide that specifies how data pertinent to a given study should be obtained, evaluated, and analysed. Kothari et al. (2022) claimed that study designs are focused on making decisions on the data collection techniques, the types of sample strategies and instruments, and how the time and budgetary constraints may be addressed. Since this study principally centers on an examination of a circumstance or a particular issue to make sense of the examples of interactions between variables, this study used the explanatory design (Creswell, 2014). The fact that the data were quantitative and almost always required the application of a statistical test to prove the validity of the correlations further influenced the decision to approach the investigation statistically.

The targeted population of this research constitutes all administrative staff of the University. The total study population was 1,396 administrative staff (University of Cape Coast, 2019). A sample size of 302 administrative staff members was chosen for the study utilising the rules in light of the Krejcie and Morgan (1970) assurance table. From the probability sampling techniques, a straightforward random sample method was used. This method was judged appropriate since it gave the researcher the freedom to ask any permanent administrative staff member in the university questions without regard for their interest or consideration. Again, because they are all workers of the same institution and have comparable duties, the respondents from across the university shared similar traits. The sample frame, which contains each employee's name, was acquired. The Excel RAND function was utilised to pick personnel randomly from the sampling frame to take part in the study.

##### 3.2.1. Data Collection Methods

A structured questionnaire was utilised in this research to gather data from respondents on their knowledge. The survey was divided into four divisions, numbered A through D. The personal demographics, including gender, age, education, and work experience, were the main topics of Section A. Section B gathered information on CSR, Section C measured task significance, while Section D captured administrative staff performance using employee performance

instrument for educational institutions. A seven-point Likert scale, with 1 denoting "least agreement" and 7 denoting "strong agreement," was used to ask respondents to indicate. For ethical issues, the participants were informed of the study's justification, the guarantee of secrecy, and their opportunity to withdraw. To establish authority, a letter of introduction from the Department of Management was also requested. The letter explained the purpose and validity of the study. The respondents who wanted to confirm the validity of the study were given this letter.

This research made use of first-hand data. Primary data come from fresh, first-time data sources and are, as a result, considered to be original in character. The survey method was used to gather the main data. This involves handing out survey instruments and gathering information from respondents. Well-designed questionnaires with closed-ended questions were employed to meet the study objectives. The researcher and his aide shared the questionnaires with the respondents. On the best time to collect the survey instruments, the researcher and the respondents both agreed. The data collection was completed as a result of careful adherence to the time frame agreed upon. The collection of data was between May 2022 and June 2022. Two hundred and seventy-five respondents from three hundred and two questionnaires were retrieved completely comprising a response rate of 91 percent.

### 3.2.2. Data analysis

For data analysis, the software packages IBM SPSS (version 26) and SmartPLS (version 3.3.3) were used as the statistical tools for this study. The study's problems were addressed using inferential statistics and partial least squares structural equation modelling (PLS-SEM).

## 4. Results and discussion

The bio-data of the respondents were presented in this section. The information on their gender, age, education level, and experience or length of service were captured in Table 1. This helps to understand the general make-up of the staff in the institution. As reported in Table 1, the majority of the administrators in the university were males, 177 (64.4 %), compared to the number of females 98 (35.6%) sampled for the study.

**Table 1** Background Characteristics of Respondents

Option	Frequency	Percent %
Gender		
Male	177	64.4
Female	98	35.6
Total	275	100
Age Group		
18-24	55	20
25-31	4	1.2
32-38	28	10.2
39-45	188	68.4
Total	275	100
Educational Qualification		
Postgraduate	35	12.7
First degree	138	50.2
Diploma	102	37.1
Total	275	100
Number of years working with the university		
5-10	90	32.7
11-15	67	24.4

Above 15 years	118	42.9
Total	275	100

Source: Field survey (2022)

Table 1 revealed the age categorisation of the respondents. The findings show that the biggest number of the respondents were within the 39 – 45 years age group (68.4 %). The next age group with most respondents is 18 – 24 years (20%). Another important group noted was those within 32 – 38 years (10.2%). A few of them were within the 25 to 31 years (1.2%). The age disparity of the respondents showed that the administrators in the college are inside the young and fiery age bracket. On the issue of academic qualifications, the majority (50.2%) of the respondents had first degree qualifications. Also, (37.1%) of the respondents had NHD, while (12.7%) had postgraduate degree qualifications. This means that all the respondents have undergone formal education with the majority of them having higher education.

The staff respondents were asked to indicate the number of years they had been working with the university. In Table 1, most (42.9%) of the respondents have worked for the university for over 15 years. This was followed by (32.7%) of the respondents who indicated that they have worked for a period of between 5 to 10 years. Finally, (24.4%) of them indicated that they have been working at the university for 11 to 15 years.

#### 4.1. Measurement Model Results

**Table 2** Item Loading, Construct Reliability, and Convergent Validity

Constructs	Loadings	CA	rho_A	CR	AVE
<b>CSR (CSR)</b>		0.942	0.943	0.953	0.744
csr1	0.918				
csr2	0.899				
csr3	0.915				
csr4	0.841				
csr5	0.871				
csr6	0.849				
csr8	0.729				
<b>Task significance (TS)</b>		0.891	0.891	0.925	0.755
tsk1	0.889				
tsk2	0.906				
tsk3	0.882				
tsk4	0.795				
<b>Job performance (JP)</b>		0.930	0.936	0.942	0.670
SpE1	0.820				
SpE2	0.805				
SpE3	0.845				
SpE4	0.810				
SpE5	0.825				
SpS6	0.768				
SpS7	0.840				

SpS8	0.831				
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Source: Field survey (2022)

The measurement model results are displayed in Tables 2 and 3. First, Table 2 illustrates the quality criteria for item loadings, internal consistency, and convergent validity. Based on the established criteria, Table 2 (see also Figure 1) revealed that loadings were well within the recommended criteria of 0.70. Thus, loadings for CSR were between 0.729 – 0.918, loading for task significance ranged from 0.795 – 0.906, while those for job performance were between 0.768 – 0.845.

Again, even though the composite reliability (CR) is thought to be the best indicator of internal consistency, a quick review of the results of all the other indicators revealed that the constructs' internal consistency reliability had been attained. Since the values of CA, rho A, and CR are all above the established cut-off of 0.70. Finally, the constructs' convergent validity, which assessed how much they were related to one another, was good. This was because Average Variance Extractors (AVE) values were reasonably higher than the minimum 50% limit (AVE≥0.50).

**Table 3** Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT)-Discriminant Validity

	CSR	Staff Performance	Task significance
CSR			
Staff performance	0.436		
Task significance	.336	0.467	

Source: Field survey (2022)

Table 3 was used to confirm that CSR, task significance, and staff performance were distinct constructs. As a general rule, HTMT, a ratio smaller than 0.85, denotes the absence of difficulties with discriminant validity. Observations emanating from the results of Table 3 showed that constructs were well distinguished (HTMT <0.85).

**4.2. Structural Model Assessment**

The assessment of the structural model came next after a successful evaluation of the measurement model. Primarily, the structural model assessment was used to examine relationships between the constructs, and conclusions were drawn from the study's findings through the various hypotheses. The model is shown in Table 4.

**Table 4** Structural Model Results and Hypotheses

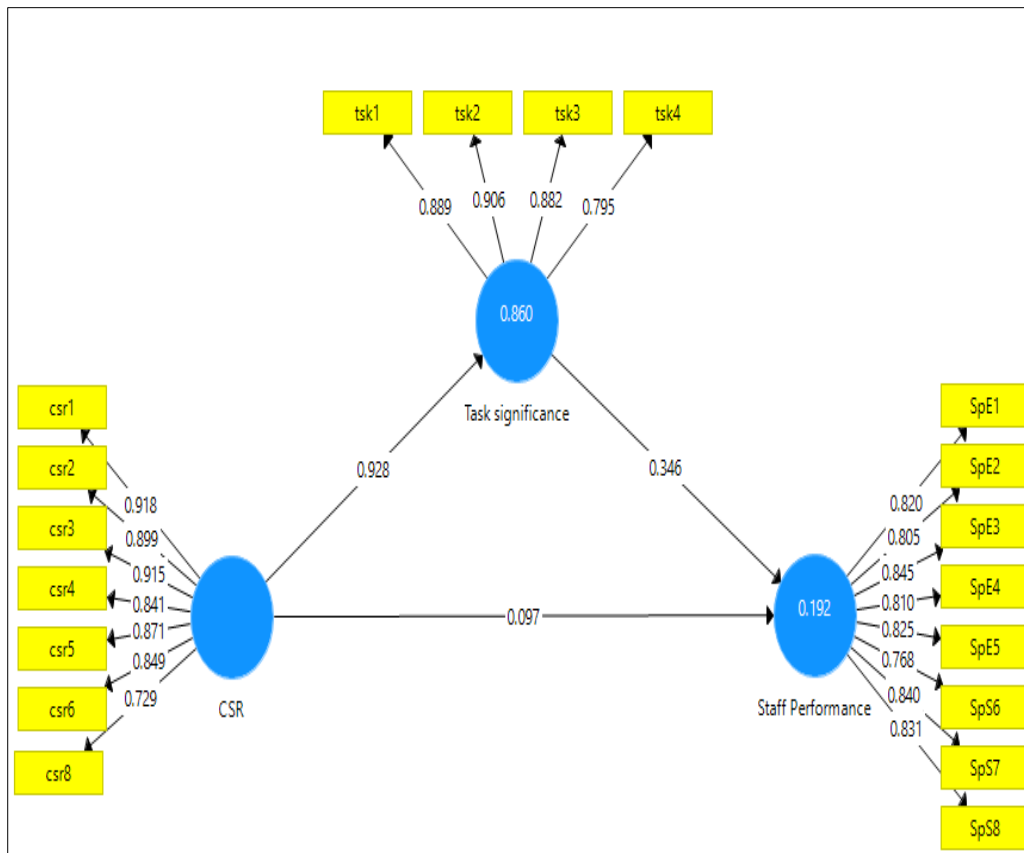
Paths	Beta (R)	T Statistics	P Values	Hypotheses/Decision	R <sup>2</sup>	Q <sup>2</sup>	f <sup>2</sup>
Job (staff) performance					0.192	0.119	
Task significance					0.860	0.634	
<i>Directs</i>							
CSR -> Staff performance	0.097	2.549	0.003	H <sub>1</sub> : Supported			0.002
CSR -> Task significance	0.928	77.470	0.000	H <sub>2</sub> : Supported			.168
Task significance -> Staff performance	0.346	2.096	0.037	H <sub>3</sub> : Supported			0.021
<i>Indirect</i>							
CSR -> Task significance -> Staff Performance	0.321	2.071	0.039	H <sub>4</sub> : Supported			

Source: Field survey (2022)

From Table 4, the results indicated that CSR has a significant positive relationship (R=0.097; t=2.549; p=0.003) with staff performance. Table 4 further revealed that CSR significantly had a positive link with task significance (R=0.928; t=77.470; p<0.000). Again, the study found support for the third hypothesis which established that task significance had a significant positive relationship with staff performance (R=0.346; t=2.096; p = 0.037). Finally, the indirect column which shows the mediation, revealed, that task significance partially mediates the relationship between CSR and task significance (R=0.321; t=2.071; p=0.039).



The value of the R<sup>2</sup>s indicated that CSR and task significance together account for 19.2% of the variation in staff performance at the University of Cape Coast, while CSR alone accounts for 86% of the variation in task significance. Concerning the predictive relevance of the model, CSR, and task significance combined (Q<sup>2</sup>=0.119), as well as task significance (Q<sup>2</sup>=0.634) alone made small and substantial predictive relevance on the values of staff performance respectively. Concerning the effect size, this study averred that CSR leads to a small significant influence on staff performance (f<sup>2</sup>=0.002); and a moderate effect on task significance (f<sup>2</sup>=0.168), while task significance (f<sup>2</sup>=0.021) also caused a small statistically significant positive effect on staff performance.



**Figure 1** Path model

Source: Field Survey (2022).

## 5. Discussion of Results

The following section discusses the findings of the various objectives and their respective hypotheses of the study. From the above results, four hypotheses were tested in the study. The revelations of the hypotheses were in line with the study’s expectations that: CSR has a significant positive relationship with employee performance; CSR has a significant positive relationship with task significance; task significance had a significant positive relationship with employee performance, and task significance mediates the relationship between CSR and employee performance. The discussion of the specific hypotheses followed.

Hypothesis 1: The study’s initial hypothesis looked at the connection between CSR and the administrative personnel at the University of Cape Coast’s job performance. The findings demonstrated a significant beneficial association between CSR and employee performance. Thus, H<sub>1</sub> was supported in the study. This means the performance of the staff will increase when they perceive some of the CSR activities of the university are geared towards improving their wellbeing. Fundamentally, when the management of the university guarantees enough steps are taken against all kinds of discrimination, refers to employees on important issues, and is committed to the health and safety of the administrators, will lead to their enhanced performance. The administrative staff will apply the skills and experiences needed for effective service delivery in the University to project its image in so far as certain CSR programs inure to their good. The findings of the study have been intercepted by results of other scholars who held the view that institutions that put in

place CSR activities that seek to train, empower, and remunerate the hard work of the employees will excel (Alafi, Al-Queed & Alkayed, 2014; Bauman & Skitka, (2012).

Hypothesis 2: Again, the second hypothesis which was related to the link between CSR and task significance at the University of Cape Coast was supported. According to the revelation of the result, CSR is a necessary factor that influences the task significance of the institution. Concisely, CSR seeks to introduce programs and practices that are meant to yield benefits to the receivers of the programs. In this regard, the management of the university can identify administrative roles that are frustrating employees and eliminate them. This will improve the characteristics of the job, summed, as task significance.

Also, Ong, Mayer, Tost and Wellman (2018) submitted that task significance is part of employees' work experiences which influences their CSR sensitivity. Skýpalová, Kosáková, Urbánová, and de Sabato, (2023) added that employees who have a high task significance are more conscious of the social importance of their jobs and thus, they know that their jobs have a meaningful and progressive effect on others' lives. Ong, Mayer, Tost and Wellman (2018) also shed light that workers whose work has greater task significance are expected to be more reactive to their firm's CSR practices than those whose work has low task significance.

Hypothesis 3: From the research's findings, it is expressed that hypothesis 3 which is task significance and job performance of administrators at the University of Cape Coast was confirmed. As a result, task importance predicts employee performance and heightens their sense of loyalty and dedication to the position. Additionally, studies show that task significance increases employees' commitment, happiness, health, and productivity (Rupp et al., 2018). According to Gao et al. (2018), task importance is a powerful predictor of employee performance. Therefore, it makes sense that task significance would encourage individuals to push themselves beyond their comfort zones, feel proud of their accomplishments, and perform more effectively and efficiently in those organisations.

Hypothesis 4: The final hypothesis, H<sub>4</sub>, was supported in the study by indicating that task significance partially moderated the connection between CSR and staff performance. The findings proved that although CSR significantly predicts variance in staff performance in the university, such influence is improved by task significance. Thus, to improve the performance of the administrators, the management of the university should direct CSR activities toward making the job roles of the administrators flexible and rewarding.

Empirically, this stance has been expressed by some previous researchers who collectively held the assertion that for CSR to improve job performance, effective job characteristics of the employees are very important (Bauman & Skitka, 2012; Glavas & Godwin, 2013). It is first necessary to decide the level of analysis before discussing the effects of CSR activities on employees' job performance. Perception is acknowledged as a key factor influencing behaviour since people frequently act under their perceptions of reality rather than reality itself (Chang et al., 2023).

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## 6. Conclusions and Recommendations

In summary, the study aimed to examine the mediating effect of task significance in the relationship between CSR and the job performance of the administrative personnel at the University of Cape Coast. The findings corroborated previous research in a similar field and were in line with the hypotheses put forth. The study arrived at the following conclusions, among many others: firstly, the administrative staff would employ the skills and expertise necessary for effective service delivery at the university to project its image, to demonstrate that particular CSR programmes are beneficial to them. The study also finds that university administration may identify and eliminate administrative tasks that are irritating to staff. This will improve the job's characteristics, which are summed up as task significance. Finally, the study finds that to boost the performance of the administrators, the university management should target CSR initiatives towards making the work of the administrators flexible and rewarding.

The following recommendations were made in light of the findings and conclusions. Administrators at the University of Cape Coast should invest financial resources in CSR initiatives such as creating a welcoming environment and donating to the welfare of staff and their families. Furthermore, management may recognise the importance of CSR in enhancing employees' happiness, health, and performance; as a result, management ought to ease the workload to increase the task significance of employees. Finally, the findings of this study may motivate administrators to participate in efforts aimed at improving employee well-being and performance. For example, the Human Resources department can tell employees about the institution's involvement in CSR efforts and discuss it with recruits during orientation. Because employees want to work for organisations that promote social responsibility, the institution would benefit from hiring top talents to gain an edge over its peers.

## Compliance with ethical standards

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### *Disclosure of conflict of interest*

The author declared no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this article.

### *Statement of informed consent*

Informed consent was obtained from all individual participants included in the study.

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