



Staff Capacity Building in Nigerian Secondary Schools: A Means of Enhancing Teachers' Job Performance

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ABSTRACT

The paper examined staff capacity building in Nigerian secondary schools as a means of enhancing teachers' job performance. The 21st century is characterized by knowledge-driven environment and strategic skill-dependent economy which require teachers to be continuously equipped with skills for problem solving, self-reliance and career progression in the performance of their (teachers) job. Specifically, the paper considered capacity building concept, capacity building programmes, types of staff development, teachers' job performance, benefits of teachers' capacity building, challenges of teachers' capacity building and possible recommendations towards enhancing teachers' capacity building among others. Among some of the challenges of teachers' job performance include the following: poor attitudes, subject-mastery, teaching methodology, classroom environment, relationship with students and parents, lesson preparation and planning, motivation and self-improvement. The following recommendations were made among others: secondary school principals should actively engage teachers in the teaching and learning process; principals should ensure teachers work in synergy with their colleague, principals must work towards identifying teachers' areas of need as well as making it mandatory for teachers to pursue continuous professional development.

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INTRODUCTION

Education is the pivot upon which nations depend for the transmission of socio-cultural and moral heritage from one generation to another. Education remains a vital instrument for national development and a foundation on which other developmental efforts depend. In Nigeria, the education system is sub-divided into primary, secondary and tertiary levels. Secondary education is the education students receive immediately after primary education and comes before the tertiary education level. Secondary education provides students with foundational knowledge required for professional growth. Teachers are at the center of any educational system globally. Hence their capacity to carry out their roles effectively is of concern to all relevant stakeholders. The 21st century is characterized by knowledge-driven environment and strategic skill-dependent economy which require teachers to be continuously equipped with skills for problem solving, self-reliance and career development programmes such as in-service trainings, information and communication technology (ICT) training, peer mentoring training, workshops, collaborative training, individualized training and seminars among others. Capacity building programmes have the potentials of improving teaching quality and help teachers to carry out teaching roles effectively.

On the other hand, teachers' job performance could be seen as the skills, knowledge and competence with which teachers execute their duties and responsibilities associated with their job description (Nwaeke & Obiekwe, 2017). By implication, teachers' job performance has to do with how teachers carry out their responsibilities and duties in the teaching and learning process in schools. This involves various aspects such as: teaching effectiveness, classroom management, students' evaluation and commitment to professional development among others. It involves fulfilling obligations, carrying out duties and accomplishment of set goals and objectives. It includes teachers' role in disseminating knowledge, providing guidance and counseling services to students. According to Nwaeke and Obiekwe (2017), teachers job performance can be measured in such areas as effectiveness in lesson delivery, writing of lesson notes, selection and usage of instructional materials, completing number of lessons per week as well as involvement and commitment to other duties that could lead to the realization of school goals.

Capacity building could be seen as the process of upgrading the abilities of employees, organizations and systems to perform their core roles and continue to improve and develop over time. Capacity building is the ability to use various resources (financial, human and material) and capacity to achieve organizational goals (Ajade & Omotayo, 2023). Teachers' quality remains one of the key determinants of students' performance. Capacity building is therefore an important aspect of education process that is concerned with the art of acquiring skills in the teaching and learning process.

Teaching as a profession demands continuous development of knowledge and ability through training programmes. Experience has shown that capacity building programmes significantly improve teachers' effectiveness, leading to enhanced instructional delivery and enhanced job performance. These programmes equip teachers with new skills, knowledge and strategies, ultimately impacting students' achievement and teachers' well-being. Capacity building programmes aims at equipping teachers with the needed knowledge base, skills and attitudes to effectively deliver instructions and adapt to changing educational requirements. Capacity building programmes are mostly organized as: In-service trainings, ICT trainings, Mentorship training, workshops, collaborative trainings, seminars, individualized trainings and cluster trainings among others.

CAPACITY BUILDING

Capacity building refers to the process of developing and strengthening the skills, resources and abilities of individuals, organizations and nations to effectively respond to their needs and attain their goals. It involves a systematic and conscious efforts towards improving the capabilities of individuals, organizations and systems to achieve desired results (Ajade & Omotayo, 2023). Capacity building has a significant nexus with employee performance. Investing in employee development through training and development programmes has the potential of positively enhancing skills, knowledge and overall employee performance. Teachers' capacity building has to do with the continuous improvement of their career until retirement. Capacity building could be seen as a series of activities which include: down-sizing, auditing, planning, re-organization, process automation, recruitment and training used by an institution to create workable linkages between organizational operations and its effectiveness (Hart, 2025).

Capacity building has moved from being a focus of concern to individuals, individual training, development of institutions to a complex system philosophy where individual capacities are linked with those of institutions and system as a whole (Osuji, 2014). Currently, capacity building definitions harps on continuous process of strengthening of abilities to perform central functions, problem-solving, outline and attain goals, understand and deal with developmental needs.

Capacity building involves developing and strengthening the skills, resources and processes within an institution in order to achieve long-term goals. it is a multi-dimensional process that could be sub-divided into various components. Maxwell (2024) provided the following as the principles for developing capacity building programmes:

- a. **Assessment of Current Capacity:** Evaluate the current capabilities, resources and skills available in the organization
- b. **Definition of Desired Capacity:** Identify the specific skills, resources and processes that need to be developed to achieve desired results.
- c. **Identification of Gaps and Needs:** Determine the difference between current and desired capacity to bring out areas that require improvement.
- d. **Development of Objectives and Strategies:** Creation of clear goals and plans on how capacity will be built, including specific training, resource allocation and process changes.
- e. **Implementation of Capacity Building Activities:** Put plans into action, such as provision of training, creation of new resources and establishment of new processes.
- f. **Monitoring and Evaluation of Progress:** Track progress towards goals, identify areas that require adjustments and assess the general effectiveness of the programme.
- g. **Review and Revision of Plan:** Regularly review and update the capacity building plan to adapt to changing needs and circumstances.
- h. **Sustainability:** Develop strategies to ensure that the current trend is sustained over a long period of time, including continuous learning opportunities and ongoing support.
- i. **Stakeholder Engagement:** Involve all relevant stakeholders in the capacity building process to ensure participation and support.

CAPACITY BUILDING PROGRAMMES

In Nigeria, teachers' capacity building at secondary school level is usually organized cluster training by the Federal and State Ministries of Education. These training sessions are carried out by facilitators who are seasoned researchers selected from consulting tertiary institutions of learning such as colleges of Education, Universities of Education, Faculties of Education in other universities and other organization among others that provide professional expertise for such training programmes across the country. During such training sessions, participants engage in professional interactions by exchanging ideas and knowledge regarding theories, principles and practices related to instructional planning, use of teaching aids, methodologies, curriculum implementation, evaluation, ICT usage, time management, classroom management, leadership skills, communication skills, record keeping among others (Hart, 2025). Participants are expected to replicate the training experiences through knowledge sharing, skills and other experiences gained with their colleagues in their various schools. Capacity building courses available for secondary school teachers in Nigeria are subject-based training in such areas as: Strengthening Mathematics and Science-based courses, team spirit building, staff development, games and sports management, ICT-related courses, Agricultural

Education programme, decision-making, problem-solving, student discipline management, leadership in education, guidance and counseling, curriculum implementation, education management, physical planning and development, supervision, evaluation, drug abuse, financial management and control among others.

Globally, other forms of capacity building programmes exist. For example, the UNESCO Capacity Development for Education (CapED) programme is a global initiative that aims at strengthening education programmes, particularly in least developed and crisis-affected countries with a view to achieving Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG, 4) and national development priorities. It centers on building capacity in three major areas: sector-wide policy and planning, skills for life and work, and teachers. CapED emphasizes on comprehensive teacher policies and strengthening teacher training institutions through the development of quality assessment frameworks and improvement plans. It also builds capacities for pre-service and in-service teacher training programmes, curricula, teaching and learning, material development, pedagogical supervision for continuing supports in the classrooms and the piloting and scaling up of successful initiatives and teaching practices with emphasis on gender-responsiveness approaches (Mumo, Mungati & Nzioki, 2024).

Organizations can implement various capacity building strategies based on requirements. It is important to note that there are many capacity building strategies in existence but organizations are at liberty to implement those that are perceived to produce desired results based on organizational needs. Ekpiken (2015) provided the following capacity building strategies to boost organizational productivity:

- a. **Employee-Based Capacity Building:** This centers on enhancing skills and capabilities through deliberate training, mentorship, job guidance among others. This initiative makes it possible for organizations to take care of skills gaps, enhance continuous learning and adopt new technologies. Additionally, it provides avenues for boosting employee job satisfaction, talent retention and building a skilled and motivated workforce.
- b. **Organizational Capacity Building:** This has to do with enhancing systems, processes and work-flow across the organization. It includes infrastructure upgrades, robust policy establishment and strengthening major areas such as leadership, strategic planning and general operational efficiency. These initiatives helps organizations in adapting to evolving market dynamics and capitalize on these opportunities effectively.
- c. **Systematic Capacity Building:** This has to do with enhancing the interconnected components within the organization through direct focus on relationships, policies and processes at a broader level. It involves collaboration with various

stakeholders such as government, law-makers and civil society among others in addressing systematic issues. This guarantees the development of effective systems that allows for sustainable growth and long-term efficiency.

- d. **Material-Based Capacity Building:** This form of capacity building lays emphasis on tangible resources required for enhancing the capabilities of individuals and organizations. The approach involves supplying tools, equipment, technology and other materials needed to perform task efficiently. It often support other capacity building initiatives and support s enhanced performance and growth.

Ekpiken (2015) further identified five significance of human resources development as follows:

- That the vast reservoir of human talents could be harnessed to achieve organizational objectives through developmental programmes.
- Developmental programmes make human resources adapt to the changing technological improvements
- Developmental programmes which comprises planned development and training extends to every process of management to improve the role of a manager, his interaction with the group and his ability to get things done through the group
- Formal and informal development of people would be positive through well planned and executive development programme
- Human resources development approach involves policies that are useful in providing satisfactory work, enhancing opportunities for career growth and in reducing the sense of frustration among employees.

TYPES OF STAFF DEVELOPMENT

a. On-the Job Training Method:

On-the job training method emphasizes skills acquisition within the work place under normal working conditions. It is normally carried out when employees are trained while the work place under normal working conditions. It is normally carried out when employees are trained while carrying out their assigned roles. The rationale for this method of training is to provide workers with task-specific knowledge and skills in that particular role (Ojugo & Olubor, 2021). The knowledge and skills provided in on-the0job training sessions are directly linked to job requirements, job instructions and techniques, job rotation, coaching and mentoring are the common forms of the on-the-job training method.

Coaching has to do with working one-on-one with the learner to conduct need assessment and set major goals to accomplish the plan. The learner

carries out his activities while the coach provides continuous guidance and feedbacks. Coaching enhances a worker's competence in particular skill areas. On-the-job training is ideas as it improves teachers' skills and their overall performance. Another form of on-the-job training is job rotation. This helps to prevent burn-out and boredom. It also help in making workers flexible, adaptable, innovative, eager to learn and able to communicate effectively in the work place.

Mentoring on the other hand involves having a more experienced teacher to provide assistance and support to a less experienced colleague in order to improve his job performance. Mentoring promotes a teacher's awareness and refinement of his professional teacher provides another less experienced professional teacher with information, knowledge, guide and feedback for the purpose of refining present skills, development of new ideas in such a manner that promotes professional development of the less experienced teacher (Honore & Mukamazimpaka, 2022).

b. Off-the-Job Training Method:

Off-the-job-training method involves getting away from the immediate work environment to a place where frustrations and the demands of the work are avoided (Ojugo & Olubor, 2021). This makes it possible for workers to be exposed to new and innovative ideas. It takes place in an environment that has been specially designed for such trainings. These include lectures, training by management, institutions, conferences, seminars, workshops and case studies among others. Off-the-job training is usually designed to meet the shared learning needs of a group rather than a particular individual needs. Lecturers, computer-based training, games and simulations are the most common forms of off-the-job training method. During off-the-job training, the teacher is trained on how to use or apply skills through simulations, classroom management and video teaching. It also includes techniques such as laboratory, group training and communication workshops among others.

TEACHERS' JOB PERFORMANCE

Teachers' job performance refers to the quality and effectiveness of teachers' work in instructional delivery, classroom management and general contribution to the teaching and learning process. Teachers' job performance encompasses different dimensions such as teaching skills, classroom management, lesson planning as well as professional growth, all of which contributes to the overall achievement of educational goals (Obineme, 2020). Performance hasto do with measurement of the quality of instructions given to learners in the school system. Teachers' job performance is measured through students' performance and achievement in terminal and standardized examinations such as end of year examinations, West African Examinations Council

(WAEC) and National Examinations Council (NECO) examinations, among others. Teacher evaluations are essential because they ensure that curriculum requirements and teachers perform optimally in the teaching learning process.

Employees' job performance over the years has remained a matter of concern to organizations, including the school. Performance could be viewed as the act of accomplishing or carrying out a given task (Mbonu, 2023). It can also be seen as the ability to combine skillfully the appropriate behavior towards the achievement of organizational goals and objectives. Similarly, teachers' job performance is determined by the teachers' level of participation in the day-to-day running of the school (Obineme, 2020). Obineme further pointed out some factors that contribute to teachers' job performance among which include the following:

- Satisfying the learners through theirs (teachers) teaching style and quality
- Aside teaching, performance of other assignments as assigned by the principal and the department
- Classroom management, discipline, student motivation and achievement improvement
- Performance of their duties regularly
- Interaction with students, parents, colleagues and other school officials.

Teachers' job performance serves as an avenue for monitoring and evaluation as it influences decisions regarding teachers' job guarantee and promotions. Information collected on teachers job performance reveals teachers' strengths and weaknesses. This provides the basis for deciding on whether or not capacity building is required. Ultimately, it determines the actualization of set standards of the school (Amede & Adetayo, 2023).

PERCEIVED BENEFITS OF TEACHERS' CAPACITY BUILDING

There are many benefits of teachers' capacity building on their job performance. Ameda and Adetayo (2023) pointed out the following as some of the benefits of teachers' capacity building:

1. Teachers' capacity building improves the quality of teaching and learning as well as the overall performance of those teaching and management responsibilities.
2. Teachers' capacity building contributes to teachers' job performance by increasing their knowledge, skills, technical rationality, work quality and waste reduction.
3. Teachers' capacity building help in enhancing a high level of productivity and efficiency through reinforcement of desirable teaching/learning methods and procedures, contributing to curriculum innovations and technologies that ensure detailed and professional delivery of

lesson objectives and enriching teachers' academic focus and interest.

4. Teachers' capacity building encourages the realization and accomplishment of school goals and objectives.
5. Teacher's capacity building makes teachers become more responsible in their task analysis and procedures. This ensures detailed and expert lesson delivery which ultimately affects the quality of their (teachers) job performance.

CHALLENGES OF TEACHERS' JOB PERFORMANCE

Teachers' job performance, like in any other profession is bedeviled by quite a number of challenges. These challenges range from personal to institutional depending on the circumstances. These factors that affects teachers job performance include among others: Attitude, Aptitude, Subject-mastery, Teaching methodology, Personal characteristics, Classroom environment, Relations with students, Preparation and planning, effectiveness in presenting subject matter, relationship with colleagues, self-improvement, relationship with parents and community, self-confidence, intellect, teaching techniques, teaching competence, motivation and attitude towards their students (Easaw, 2021). The Nigerian government, through the Ministry of Education has expressed commitments towards improving the quality of education (FRN, 2014). Therefore, the main aim of capacity building programmes for teachers is to mitigate these challenges and improve the performance of teachers and students' achievements.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In other to further enhance teachers' job performance, the following recommendations have been put forward:

1. Secondary school principals should actively engage teachers in the teaching and learning process.
2. Secondary school principals should ensure that teachers work in synergy and cooperation with their colleagues.
3. Principals must work towards identifying teachers' areas of need and recommend same for enhanced capacity building.
4. Principals and school administrators should make it mandatory for teachers to pursue continuous professional development.
5. Government and relevant stakeholders should regularly organize capacity building programmes for teachers and other school staff to enhance their capacity.

CONCLUSION

Teachers are the driving force in the school system. Their performance is of great concern as it is capable of

defining the entire education enterprise. Teachers' job performance determines to a large extent whether the school achieves its set goals and objectives or not. In the Nigerian context, there have been concerns about the performance level of teachers when it comes to discharging their responsibilities. These concerns are multi-dimensional and they require urgent and appropriate measures to mitigate their impacts. Capacity building initiatives are deemed as the solution to the performance issues of teachers in Nigerian education landscape including secondary schools education system. If relevant stakeholders in secondary school education system in Nigeria will regularly organize capacity building programmes for teachers and other school staff, it will go a long way in improving teachers' job performance and students achievement in secondary schools.

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