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STAFF DEVELOPMENT AND CAPACITY BUILDING FOR EFFECTIVE TEACHING IN NIGERIAN UNIVERSITIES

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Abstract
This research explores the impact of staff development and capacity building on effective teaching in Nigerian tertiary institutions, relying on secondary data gleaned from both print and online sources. Through a comprehensive review of publications, the study underscores the positive impact of staff development on the effective implementation of teaching, research, and community service programs by academicians. The study emphasizes the integral role played by staff development and capacity building within tertiary institutions. Academic staff, when equipped with diverse skills through continual training, exhibit enhanced proficiency in executing their responsibilities across teaching, research, and community service realms. This research contributes valuable insights to the discourse on staff development and capacity building within academic settings. The study also showed the challenges that hinder staff development and capacity in tertiary and it was recommended that government should prioritize the education sector by allocating sufficient funds to tertiary institutions for staff development programs amongst others.
Keywords: Staff Development, Capacity Building, Education and Effective Teaching.

Introduction

Staff development and capacity building are critical components for ensuring effective teaching and learning in Nigerian tertiary institutions. As centers of higher education and research, these institutions play a pivotal role in producing the workforce, leaders, and innovators needed for national development. However, the quality of teaching in many Nigerian tertiary institutions has been significantly impacted by challenges such as outdated pedagogical practices, insufficient training opportunities, and limited exposure to modern teaching tools and technologies. This has led to a gap between global best practices in education delivery and the realities faced by both educators and students in Nigeria. (Chukwu, 2017).

To Sodiq (2016) capacity building encompasses equipping staff—academic and non-academic—with the knowledge, skills, and attitudes required to perform their roles efficiently. Effective teaching is no longer limited to subject-matter expertise; it now demands proficiency in contemporary instructional methods, technology integration, and continuous professional development. Unfortunately, in many Nigerian universities, polytechnics, and colleges of education, opportunities for professional growth are either inadequate or poorly implemented, which hampers the development of teaching staff. Factors such as funding constraints, lack of institutional support, and policy inconsistencies further exacerbate the situation. (Peretomode & Chukwuma, 2012).

Capacity building has been adjudged to be critical factors in Nigerian universities, culminating in their positions as major determinants of teachers' professional advancement. Aside from gaining pedagogical and content knowledge, lecturers' participation within the programmes enhances capacity building effectiveness in universities. Capacity building programmes such as conference and in-service training. Conference refers a one-day or multiday event during which researchers present their work to each other. Conferences are an

important way researchers stay connected to others in their field and learn about cutting-edge scholarship (Ibeme, 2020). It transforms role performance abilities and skills of lecturers in such way to confront challenges of their jobs. Without it, a missing gap evolves whereby universities become shadows of themselves. Ehinola and Akomolafe (2022) revealed that teaching staff perceived in-service training as a tool that moderately improve their capacity. Nwokedi, et al., (2018) contended that, capacity building enhances lecturers' job performance through acquisition of new knowledge and skills while Peretomode and Chukwuma (2018) revealed that capacity building programmes enhances lecturers' productivity. Korantwi-Barimah and Schultz (2017) found that building the capacity of educational staff must be considered as a strategic priority improving the standard of teaching and research output among academic staff. Chukwuedo and Igbinedion (2014) revealed that lecturers need capacity building within the use of ICT for instructional, research and administrative purposes. Therefore, this study seeks to explore the significance of staff development and capacity building as tools for enhancing teaching effectiveness in Nigerian tertiary institutions.

Statement of the Problem

The quality of education in Nigerian tertiary institutions has been a subject of concern over the years, as many graduates struggle to meet the demands of the modern labor market and global competitiveness. A major contributing factor to this challenge is the lack of adequate staff development and capacity-building programs for teaching personnel in these institutions. Effective teaching requires not only subject-matter expertise but also continuous professional growth, exposure to modern pedagogical techniques, and proficiency in leveraging technology to enhance learning outcomes. Unfortunately, many Nigerian tertiary institutions fall short in providing the necessary support and opportunities for their staff to acquire these competencies.

One of the critical issues is the outdated teaching methods used by lecturers who have not been exposed to modern instructional strategies and tools. With rapid advancements in technology and changing educational paradigms, it is imperative for teaching staff to regularly update their knowledge and skills. If these issues persist, Nigerian tertiary institutions will continue to struggle with producing graduates who possess the knowledge, skills, and competencies required to thrive in a dynamic global environment. Addressing these challenges through deliberate and sustainable staff development and capacity-building programs is, therefore, essential for enhancing teaching effectiveness, improving institutional performance, and advancing the country's educational system.

Purpose of the Study

(i) To evaluate the impact of capacity-building initiatives on the teaching effectiveness of teachers in in Nigerian tertiary institutions.

(ii) To identify the challenges hindering the implementation of staff development and capacity-building programs in Nigerian tertiary institutions.

(iii) To propose strategies for improving staff development and capacity-building to ensure effective teaching in Nigerian tertiary institutions.

Staff Development

Staff development refers to the process of providing structured and continuous learning opportunities for employees to improve their professional capabilities. In the context of teaching, it involves activities designed to enhance the pedagogical skills, subject-matter expertise, and overall effectiveness of academic staff. Staff development programs can take various forms, including;

- Workshops
- Seminars
- conferences

- In-service training
- Mentoring, and exposure to innovative teaching tools and techniques.

These activities enable academic staff to remain updated with advancements in their respective fields, adopt innovative teaching methods, and leverage emerging technologies to enhance instructional delivery. (Sodiq, 2016). Staff development also promotes the acquisition of soft skills, such as communication, leadership, and critical thinking, which are essential for effective engagement with students and colleagues. The importance of staff development cannot be overemphasized, as it directly impacts the quality of education and institutional performance. When teaching staff receive adequate training and exposure, they become better equipped to deliver engaging and effective lessons, mentor students, and conduct impactful research. This, in turn, improves learning outcomes and enhances the institution's reputation. However, staff development is not merely about attending training sessions; it also requires creating an environment that supports continuous learning and growth. This includes providing access to resources, fostering a culture of collaboration, and recognizing and rewarding professional achievements. The ultimate goal of staff development in tertiary institutions is to improve the quality of education by ensuring that lecturers are well-prepared to deliver content effectively, adapt to technological advancements, and address the diverse needs of students. According to Ibeme (2020), staff development should be goal-oriented and aligned with institutional objectives, enabling educators to contribute meaningfully to the learning process and the institution's academic reputation.

To Chukwu, (2017) staff development serves as a strategic investment in human capital, empowering educators to perform their roles effectively while contributing to institutional growth and the overall advancement of the education sector. It is a vital tool for ensuring that Nigerian tertiary institutions produce graduates who are equipped with the knowledge, skills, and competencies required to thrive in an increasingly competitive global environment.

Capacity Building

Capacity building focuses on strengthening the abilities of individuals and institutions to perform effectively and sustainably. Capacity building includes the provision of infrastructure, access to modern teaching technologies, curriculum development, and the creation of supportive institutional environments. For instance, the integration of digital tools such as learning management systems (LMS), virtual classrooms, and multimedia teaching aids has become a cornerstone of capacity-building efforts in tertiary education. By equipping lecturers with these tools and the knowledge to use them effectively, institutions enhance teaching quality and learning outcomes. (Agbonna et al., 2022).

The United Nations Development Programme (2017) defines capacity building/capacity development as the process through which individuals, organizations and societies obtain, strengthen and maintain the capabilities to set and achieve their own development objectives over time. The UNDP identified five steps that are involved in capacity building policy analysis and programming process as follows: engage stakeholders on capacity building, assess capacity assets and needs, formulate a capacity building response, implement a capacity building response, and evaluate capacity building process to improve productivity.

Staff Development and Capacity Building for Effective Teaching

The school system being a formal organization also requires effective capacity building programme to keep teachers abreast of the latest trends in digital technology, research process, innovative teaching, networking instructional tasks performance, interactive communication strategies, knowledge dissemination process, skills development, resource coordination and sustainable improvement in productivity in secondary schools. Ajadi (2016) stated that nothing in a school has more impact on students in terms of skills development, self-competence and classroom behaviour than personal and professional growth of the teacher. In similar vein,

Ibeme (2020) argued that regardless of a teacher's pre-service training, there is need to constantly renew, upgrade and update the teacher's knowledge, skill and capabilities so as to keep pace with the rapidly changing society. Jolaade and Kehinde (2023) added that one should not be satisfied that one is a trained teacher; in order to excel in the teaching profession, one must continue to update one's knowledge and skills so as to cope with the problems and innovation in education. Jolaade and Kehinde (2023) further argued that teacher development is necessary because many teachers appear to be professionally trained but occupationally incompetent. The effectiveness of an educational system depends on the quality of the teaching staff and where qualified and competent people are given the appropriate training, quality will result. Teachers' quality encompasses both paper qualification, job competence and an up-to-date knowledge of the principles and practice of education. Effective teaching in tertiary institutions goes beyond content delivery; it requires dynamic interaction between educators, students, and the learning environment. To Sodiq (2016) staff development and capacity building are critical to achieving effective teaching as they address key areas such as:

Pedagogical Innovation: Training in modern instructional strategies, including student-centered learning, collaborative approaches, and problem-based learning.

Technological Proficiency: Exposure to and mastery of digital tools that facilitate online and blended learning environments.

Research Competence: Development of skills necessary for conducting impactful research and integrating research findings into teaching.

Leadership and Mentorship: Building the capacity of lecturers to guide students academically, professionally, and personally.

Challenges

The effective implementation of staff development and capacity-building programs in Nigerian tertiary institutions is essential for improving teaching quality and institutional performance. However, several challenges hinder these efforts, limiting their impact. To Nwokedi et al., (2018) these challenges include:

Inadequate Funding: One of the most significant obstacles is the chronic underfunding of the education sector in Nigeria. Many tertiary institutions lack the financial resources to organize regular training program.

Lack of Institutional Support: In many cases, institutional leadership does not prioritize staff development as a critical component of academic success. This lack of commitment leads to poor planning, inconsistent implementation, and inadequate monitoring of capacity-building programs.

Poor Infrastructure and Facilities: The lack of adequate infrastructure, such as functional ICT laboratories, training centers, and access to online learning platforms, hinders capacity-building efforts. In an era where technology plays a central role in education, many Nigerian tertiary institutions are ill-equipped to provide the necessary tools and environments for effective training.

Resistance to Change: Some academic staff members resist new teaching methods, technologies, or approaches to professional development. This resistance may stem from a lack of awareness, fear of technology, or comfort with traditional teaching practices. Such attitudes undermine efforts to modernize teaching methods and integrate innovative practices.

Policy Inconsistencies and Weak Governance: Inconsistent policies on staff development and weak governance structures within tertiary institutions create barriers to sustainable capacity-building programs. The absence of a standardized framework or long-term vision for staff development results in fragmented and ineffective initiatives.

Limited Access to Training Opportunities: Opportunities for professional development, such as workshops, conferences, and advanced studies, are often limited or unevenly distributed. Staff in rural or underfunded institutions are particularly disadvantaged, as they rarely have access to such programs.

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Insufficient Collaboration with External Partners: Many Nigerian tertiary institutions fail to establish partnerships with international organizations, industries, and professional bodies that could support staff development programs. These collaborations could provide funding, expertise, and access to global best practices, but their absence limits the scope of capacity-building efforts.

Theoretical Review

This study was guided by Human Capital Theory which was propounded by Schultz in 1967 which posits that investments in human beings through training and development programmes enhance their productivity and contribute significantly to economic growth and societal development. This theory emphasizes that individuals are valuable resources, and their skills, knowledge, and competencies are critical assets that can be cultivated to achieve organizational and national objectives. The work of human capital theory rests on the idea that capacity building is very instrumental and even necessary to enhance the assembly capacity of the institution/organization. Human capital theory emphasizes on how training and development increases the productivity and efficiency of workers (Oluwuo & Nwabueze, 2016). It increases their chances of employment within the labour market, and allows them to reap pecuniary and non-pecuniary returns and provides them opportunities for job mobility. This theory is not only imperative but also indispensable to the achievement of educational and organizational goals. By equipping lecturers with modern pedagogical skills, advanced knowledge in their fields, and proficiency in technology, institutions can significantly enhance the quality of education they provide.

Methodology

The paper adopted the exploratory research design in which qualitative data was obtained through in-depth review of relevant literature and the researcher's personal observation of the scenario.

Empirical Review

Agbonna et al., (2022) examined capacity building as correlates of lecturers' job performance in state owned universities in South-West Nigeria. A descriptive survey design was used. The population of the study comprised academic staff of state-owned universities in South-West, Nigeria. Using stratified sampling technique, a total of six universities were selected. A proportionate sampling technique was adopted in selecting 75 academic staff from each selected universities making a total 450 staff as sample size. Self-developed questionnaire title Capacity Building Programme and Lecturers' Job Performance Questionnaire with 0.82 as reliability coefficient was adopted for data collection. Research questions were answered using descriptive statistics of mean and standard deviation while the hypothesis was tested using multiple regression analysis. Findings of the study revealed that the level of lecturers' job performance in state owned universities in South-West Nigeria was high and that the needed capacity building programmes for lecturers' job performance were also high. There was significant composite contribution of capacity building programmes on lecturers' job performance and that about 94% of the variance in lecturers' job performance was accounted for by the linear combination of the capacity building programme attended. The study recommended among others that lecturers should be encouraged to participate in capacity building programmes.

Ayeni (2020) investigated the level of teachers' capacity building and determined its implication on teachers' productivity in secondary schools in Ondo North Senatorial District of Ondo State, Nigeria. Descriptive research design of the survey type was adopted. The sample comprised 30 principals and 600 teachers randomly selected from 30 public secondary schools. Data were collected using two research instruments titled Teachers' Capacity Building Questionnaire (TCBQ) and Teachers' Productivity Questionnaire (TPQ). Two research questions were raised and one hypothesis was formulated. Research questions were analyzed using frequency count and percentage while the hypothesis was tested using Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) at 0.05 level of significance. Results revealed that there was a significant relationship between capacity building and teachers' productivity.

Jolaade & Kehinde (2023) examined capacity building and non-teaching staff service delivery of some selected tertiary institutions in Ogun State, Nigeria. Population comprised of one thousand, five hundred and forty-six (1,546) non-teaching staff of tertiary institutions selected from the three Geopolitical Zones in the State – The Federal Polytechnic, Ilaro in Ogun West, Federal College of Education, Osiele in Ogun Central and Tai Solarin University of Education, Ijebu-Ode in Ogun East. Structured questionnaire was used as the instrument for data collection. However, Krejcie and Morgan method of sample determination was used for sample size determination at 0.05 margin error which gave a sample size of three hundred and six (306). Three hundred and six (306) copies of the questionnaire were produced and administered on the respondents, but one hundred and eighty-seven (187) copies were filled, retrieved and used as sample. Data collected were analyzed using descriptive and inferential methods of analysis with linear regression at 0.05 level of significance. Findings revealed that capacity building is very important to the non-teaching staff service delivery in tertiary institutions.

Ajadi (2016) examined the relationship between capacity buildings and academic staff job performance in Colleges of Education in Northcentral Nigeria. The study adopted descriptive research design of survey type. The population of the study comprised all the 2,510 academic staff in State owned Colleges of Education in North-Central, Nigeria as at the time of this study. A total of 601 academic staff participated in the study which was selected from 3 states. Multistage sampling procedure which involves simple random sampling technique stratified sampling techniques and purposive sampling techniques were used to select sample for the study. Two sets of instruments tagged "Funding and Capacity Building Questionnaire (FACBQ)" and "Academic Staff Job Performance Questionnaire (ASJPQ) were used for the study. The two instruments were validated by experts in Educational Management. The reliability of the instruments wee ascertained using test retest method and reliability coefficients of 0.76 was obtained for FACBQ, and 0.80 for ASJPQ. The data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. All the hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance. The study revealed that the level of academic staff participation in capacity building programmes and academic staff job performances were moderate. There was significant relationship between capacity building programmes and academic staff job performance. It was recommended that stakeholders in educational sector should improve on funding capacity building programmes for effective academic staff job performance.

Conclusion

This study highlights the critical importance of staff development and capacity building in enhancing effective teaching within Nigerian tertiary institutions. It was inferred from the study that staff development and capacity building, such as workshop programmes, training of academic staff in ICT, conferences programmes and seminar programmes were important factors that influenced teaching performance of staff in tertiary institutions. Given the increasing demand for quality education and the need for Nigerian graduates to remain competitive globally, there is an urgent need to prioritize staff development programs tailored to meet the evolving dynamics of tertiary education. This includes initiatives such as workshops, seminars, mentorship programs, and access to relevant educational technologies. Through deliberate and sustained capacity-building efforts, teaching staff will be better positioned to adopt innovative strategies that foster critical thinking, creativity, and problem-solving among students.

Recommendations

To address the challenges hindering the implementation of staff development and capacity-building programs in Nigerian tertiary institutions, the following recommendations are proposed:

Increased Funding: The government should prioritize the education sector by allocating sufficient funds to tertiary institutions for staff development programs. This includes budgetary provisions for workshops, training, advanced studies, and investment in modern teaching technologies. Institutions should also explore

alternative funding sources, such as partnerships with private organizations, NGOs, and international donor agencies.

Institutional Commitment and Strategic Planning: Tertiary institutions should demonstrate strong commitment to staff development by integrating it into their strategic plans. A dedicated unit for professional development should be established to coordinate programs, monitor progress, and ensure alignment with institutional goals.

Provision of Adequate Infrastructure: Institutions should invest in modern infrastructure, such as ICT centers, virtual learning platforms, and well-equipped training facilities. This will support technology-driven capacity-building programs and ensure staff can access contemporary teaching tools and methods.

Establishment of Comprehensive Policies: The government and institutional leadership should develop and enforce standardized policies on staff development and capacity building. These policies should define clear objectives, provide guidelines for implementation, and include frameworks for evaluating program outcomes.

Promoting Collaboration and Partnerships: Tertiary institutions should establish partnerships with international organizations, industries, and professional bodies to gain access to funding, expertise, and global best practices.

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