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Educational Administration and Capacity Building Programme in Nigerian Schools: Strategies for Improving Capacity Building Programmes

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Abstract: Capacity building is an important component of effective educational administration because the quality of school leadership and teaching personnel influences the implementation of educational policies, curriculum delivery and learners' outcomes. In Nigerian schools, capacity building programmes include in-service training, workshops, seminars, mentoring, professional development, leadership training and technology-oriented training. However, challenges such as inadequate funding, irregular training, weak needs assessment, limited follow-up and inadequate monitoring continue to reduce the effectiveness of some capacity-building interventions. This paper examines strategies for improving capacity-building programmes in Nigerian schools. The strategies are: systematic training-needs assessment, institutionalisation of continuous professional development and school-based training, strengthening of digital capacity, establishment of mentoring and professional learning communities, and effective monitoring, evaluation and accountability, strengthen capacity building for school administrators and educational leaders, improve funding and provision of training resources, promote partnerships with universities and professional bodies, integrate capacity building with teacher performance appraisal and career progression, develop context-specific and inclusive capacity-building programmes. The paper argues that capacity building should be continuous, needs-based, practical, digitally responsive and linked to measurable improvements in professional practice. Effective implementation of these strategies can strengthen teachers' and school administrators' competencies and contribute to improved educational administration and service delivery in Nigerian schools.

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1. Introduction

Educational administration involves the coordination of human, material, financial and institutional resources for the achievement of educational objectives. School administrators are expected to provide instructional leadership, supervise teachers, manage resources, implement educational policies, promote staff development and create an environment conducive to effective teaching and learning. Consequently, the competence of teachers and school administrators is central to the successful administration of schools.

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Capacity building refers broadly to systematic efforts to develop the knowledge, skills, attitudes, competencies and professional abilities of individuals and institutions to perform their responsibilities more effectively. In the school system, capacity building may involve teacher training, leadership development, mentoring, coaching, workshops, seminars, professional learning communities, digital-skills development and other forms of continuous professional development.

The importance of capacity building is recognised within Nigeria's education policy environment. The Federal Ministry of Education identifies teacher education, capacity building and professional development as important components of education-sector development and recognises continuous professional education as part of the development of serving teachers [1]. The National Teacher Policy of Nigeria also provides a broader framework covering teacher preparation, professional development, career progression, welfare and accountability [2].

Recent Nigerian initiatives have also placed emphasis on teacher development. In 2024, the Federal Government announced teacher training and support programmes that include digital-skills development for teachers to facilitate the use of technology in classrooms [3]. Similarly, UBEC and the Federal Ministry of Education launched school-improvement and Teacher Professional Development initiatives across the states and the Federal Capital Territory in 2025 [4].

Despite these initiatives, capacity building requires more than occasional workshops. UNESCO's review of Nigerian education policy notes that school leaders and teachers should have opportunities for continuous professional development through workshops, seminars and conferences, with training based on identified needs and supported by documentation and certification [5]. Therefore, there is a need for systematic strategies capable of transforming capacity building from isolated training activities into continuous professional development. This paper therefore discusses strategies for improving capacity-building programmes in Nigerian schools.

2. Materials and Methods

2.1 Conceptual Clarification

2.1.1 Concept of Educational Administration

Educational administration refers to the process of coordinating people, policies, resources and activities in educational institutions to accomplish predetermined educational goals. At the school level, it includes planning, organising, staffing, directing, coordinating, supervising, budgeting, decision-making and evaluating school programmes. Effective educational administration requires competent school leaders who can translate educational policies into practical programmes. Educational administration is the application of educational resources to achieve educational goals. Educational administration is the act and process of using resources in an effective and efficiency ways to attain the various objectives of educational institutions. Educational administration deals with the planning and organizing human and materials resources to realise the goals of educational institutions. Educational administration is the systematic arrangement of educational input in an operational means to achieve the set goals of educational institution. Educational administration as concerned with integrating the appropriate human and material resources that are made available and made effective for achieving the purposes of a program of an educational institution. Educational administration is the process of identifying, mobilizing and utilizing scarce human and material resources relevant in education for the purpose of achieving specific educational goals efficiently and effectively.

Educational administration according to Okoroma, is the process that involves a careful and systematic use of methods, principles, plans and procedures necessary to

achieve the educational objectives. The objectives of educational administration according to Okoroma, as follows: (1) to provide proper education to students, (2) to ensure adequate utilization of all resources, (3) to ensure professional ethics and professional development among teachers, (4) to organize educational programmes for acquainting students with the art of democratic living and giving them excellent training in democratic citizenship, (5) to mobilize the community, (6) to organize co-curricular activities effectively for developing talents of students and work efficiency of educational teachers, (7) to get the work done, (8) to prepare students for taking their places in various vocations and avenues of life, (9) to train the students in developing scientific attitude and objective outlook among them towards all aspects and activities of life, and (10) to ensure qualitative improvement of education.

Educational administration is designed to involve many programme of activities. Kalagbor stated that the following activities and programmes come under the scope of educational administration at the institutional level: (a) Deciding the purposes of the institution or school, (b) Planning for academic or curricular and cocurricular activities, (c) Preparing the time table and the time schedules for various activities, (d) Assigning duties and responsibilities to the staff members, (e) Organizing curricular and co-curricular programmes, (f) Directing and motivating the staff of the institution, (g) Coordinating by efforts of people to achieve the purpose. h. Exercising control over the staff, (i) Conducting periodical reviews about the progress, achievements and failures of the institution, (j) Taking measures for staff development, (k) Maintaining order and discipline, (l) Management of materials, (m) Management of finance, (n) Maintaining records and registers up to date, (o) Maintaining human relationships, (p) Supervision of the work of teachers and other employees, (q) Giving feedback to the teachers performing well and taking remedial measures for teachers not performing well.

The educational administration programme and activities appears to be affected by the economic hardship in Nigeria that is caused by inflation and other economic problems. The Federal Ministry of Education identifies policy formulation, standard setting, teacher-quality assurance, curriculum-delivery monitoring and oversight of schools among the responsibilities associated with the administration of basic and secondary education (FME, n.d.).

2.1.2 Concept of Capacity Building

Capacity building is the systematic process of strengthening the knowledge, skills, competencies, attitudes and institutional capabilities required to perform assigned responsibilities effectively. In schools, it involves improving the professional competencies of teachers, principals, head teachers, education officers and other personnel. Capacity building is the process of enhancing an individual or organization's capacity to improve their performance to achieve a certain outcome. It basically involves providing the necessary resources and training to individuals or organizations so that they can increase their efficiency and effectiveness. Maxwell described capacity building as systematic process of developing and strengthening the skills, knowledge, resources, and capabilities of individuals, organisations, or communities to achieve their goals and objectives. It involves activities aimed at addressing challenges, improving performance, and adapting to changing circumstances, ensuring effective goal achievement. Capacity building empowers individuals, groups, and organizations to enhance performance, capabilities, and resources for effective problem solving and decision-making, addressing systemic issues, human resources, infrastructure, sustainability, and impact. It involves developing competencies, and policies.

Adebayo et al, continuous learning and development are essential for teachers to effectively fulfil their roles and generate current knowledge. Teachers who stop learning after preservice training may struggle to synthesise content with pedagogy and technology, leading to dull teaching and a lack of creativity. They may become

“prisoners of their own experience,” repeating their experiences without reflecting on current changes. The National Teacher Education Policy emphasises both pre-service and in-service teacher education and promotes career-long professional development. Thus, capacity building should not be regarded as a one-time event but as an ongoing professional process.

2.1.3 Concept of Capacity-Building Programme

A capacity-building programme is an organised intervention designed to improve the professional competence and institutional performance of educational personnel. It may include workshops, seminars, conferences, induction, mentoring, coaching, school-based professional learning, leadership development and digital-skills training. Capacity building is a training programme design for the acquisition of skills, knowledge, altitude and social behavior. Capacity building improves staff competencies to improve job performance in the institutions. Capacity is the training that requires systematic development of knowledge, skills and altitude required by a staff to perform adequately on a given task in the organization.

2.2 Theoretical Framework

Human Capital Theory, developed by **Theodore W. Schultz** and further developed by **Gary S. Becker**, is considered suitable for this paper because it explains how investment in people's knowledge, skills, competencies and abilities contributes to improved individual and institutional productivity. Schultz argued that expenditure on education and training constitutes an investment in human capabilities rather than merely consumption. Becker similarly explained that education and training increase the productive capacities of individuals, thereby improving their performance and economic value. The theory assumes that individuals and organisations can achieve improved outcomes when deliberate investments are made in the development of knowledge and skills.

Human Capital Theory is particularly relevant to **educational administration and capacity building in Nigerian schools** because teachers and school administrators constitute critical human resources within the education system. Their effectiveness depends partly on the knowledge, professional competencies, leadership skills and technological abilities they possess. Capacity-building programmes such as workshops, seminars, mentoring, coaching, continuous professional development, leadership training and digital-skills development represent investments in the human capital of schools. When teachers acquire improved pedagogical knowledge and school administrators develop stronger leadership and management competencies, they are better positioned to perform their responsibilities and contribute to school improvement.

The theory also provides a basis for understanding why capacity building should be **continuous rather than occasional**. Educational practices, technologies, curricula and administrative requirements change over time; consequently, existing knowledge and skills may become inadequate. Continuous professional development enables teachers and administrators to acquire new competencies and adapt to emerging demands. In the Nigerian context, the National Teacher Policy places emphasis on professional development and career-long growth of teachers, reinforcing the importance of sustained investment in educational personnel.

The theory further supports the argument that investment in capacity building should be **needs-based and outcome-oriented**. Resources devoted to training are more meaningful when they address identifiable competency gaps and produce improvements in professional practice. This explains the importance of training-needs assessment, practical professional development, mentoring, digital training, performance appraisal, monitoring and evaluation. Capacity-building programmes should therefore be designed around the actual professional needs of teachers and administrators and should be evaluated according to their contribution to improved school practices.

The application of Human Capital Theory to this paper suggests that governments, school proprietors and education agencies should regard expenditure on staff development as an **investment in educational quality**. Adequate funding for training, professional learning communities, leadership development, digital competence and mentoring can strengthen the capabilities of personnel and, ultimately, improve school administration and teaching and learning. The theory therefore provides a strong conceptual foundation for the ten strategies proposed in this paper for improving capacity-building programmes in Nigerian schools.

3. Result and Discussion

3.1 Conduct Systematic Training-Needs Assessment

One effective strategy for improving capacity-building programmes is the systematic identification of the actual training needs of teachers and school administrators. Training programmes should not be organised merely because they appear fashionable or because funding is available. Rather, education authorities and school administrators should identify specific gaps in teachers' subject knowledge, pedagogy, classroom management, assessment, educational technology, inclusive education and school leadership [6]. Needs assessment can involve classroom observation, performance appraisal, teacher self-assessment, learner-performance data, interviews, questionnaires and consultations with school leaders. The information obtained should guide the design of training content. This approach is consistent with the Nigerian policy environment, which recognises the importance of continuous professional development based on needs assessment [7]. It is also consistent with the World Bank's evidence that effective school- and cluster-based professional development should provide localised, practical and continuing support rather than relying exclusively on isolated training events [8]. Therefore, education ministries, SUBEBs, TESCOMs, school proprietors and school administrators should undertake periodic capacity audits and use the results to develop annual staff-development plans.

3.2 Institutionalise Continuous Professional Development and School-Based Training

Capacity building should be institutionalised as a continuous activity within every Nigerian school. Instead of depending mainly on occasional external workshops, schools should establish regular professional-development activities such as lesson-study sessions, peer learning, departmental seminars, professional reading groups, demonstration lessons and school-based workshops [9]. Continuous professional development allows teachers to acquire new knowledge and apply it progressively to their professional responsibilities. The Federal Ministry of Education's teacher-education framework recognises continuous professional education for serving teachers as an important component of teacher development [10]. Evidence from Nigeria's Teacher Development Programme also demonstrates the importance of structured in-service training. The programme supported in-service training for primary and junior secondary teachers, particularly in English, mathematics and science and technology. School-based professional development can also reduce the problem of training that is disconnected from teachers' actual classroom circumstances. Teachers can discuss common instructional problems, observe colleagues, receive feedback and jointly develop solutions. Consequently, school administrators should incorporate professional-development activities into the annual school calendar and allocate time and resources for them.

3.3 Strengthen Digital and Technology-Oriented Capacity Building

Strategy to address this problem is to strengthen digital capacity among teachers and school administrators. Contemporary educational administration increasingly

requires personnel who can use digital tools for teaching, assessment, communication, record management, data analysis, research and professional development. The Federal Government of Nigeria has explicitly identified teacher digital-skills development as part of its teacher-training and support agenda, with the objective of improving the use of technology in classrooms [11]. The Federal Ministry of Education has also continued to highlight teacher training as part of its education-sector development initiatives (FME, n.d.). Digital capacity building should therefore cover more than basic computer literacy. Teachers should be trained in learning-management systems, digital instructional resources, online assessment, educational applications, data management, cybersecurity, responsible use of artificial intelligence and digital communication. School administrators should similarly be trained to use education-management information systems for planning, monitoring, personnel management and evidence-based decision-making. UNESCO's wider teacher-development agenda emphasises the importance of professional development, educational leadership and innovation in strengthening education systems. Thus, digital capacity building should be integrated into regular professional development rather than treated as an isolated ICT project [12].

3.4 Establish Mentoring, Coaching and Professional Learning Communities

Another strategy is the establishment of structured mentoring, coaching and professional learning communities within schools and across school clusters. Newly employed teachers and administrators often require practical guidance in classroom management, lesson planning, assessment, record keeping, student discipline and administrative procedures. Experienced personnel can provide such support through mentoring and coaching. School- and cluster-based professional development has the advantage of bringing teachers together to work on common professional problems. According to Ding et al. such approaches can strengthen teachers' content and pedagogical knowledge while also promoting collaboration, critical inquiry and teacher leadership. Mentoring programmes should therefore pair experienced teachers or school leaders with less-experienced personnel [13]. Coaching should involve observation, feedback, demonstration and follow-up rather than merely giving instructions. Professional learning communities can also be established at school, district or cluster levels where teachers meet regularly to examine teaching practices, learner performance and professional challenges. The policy framework for Nigerian school leadership similarly provides for induction of newly appointed and promoted school leaders and continuing professional-development opportunities for school leaders and teachers.

3.5 Strengthen Monitoring, Evaluation and Accountability

Another strategy is to establish effective monitoring, evaluation and accountability mechanisms for capacity-building programmes. Training should not end when participants receive certificates. Education authorities need to determine whether participants have acquired new competencies and whether those competencies are being applied in schools. Monitoring should therefore occur before, during and after training. Pre-training assessment can establish baseline competencies, while post-training assessment can determine knowledge and skill acquisition [14]. Follow-up classroom observations, performance reviews, teacher portfolios, learner-performance evidence and school-improvement indicators can help determine whether training has influenced professional practice. This approach is consistent with Nigeria's emerging emphasis on stronger implementation and monitoring mechanisms in teacher policy. The National Teacher Policy provides an integrated framework covering professional development, career progression, accountability and institutional responsibilities. Accountability should also extend to training providers and education administrators. Training institutions should be required to demonstrate the relevance, quality and outcomes of their programmes. School administrators should document staff participation and evidence of professional application. Education ministries and agencies should

periodically evaluate programmes and discontinue or redesign interventions that do not demonstrate meaningful results [15], [16], [17].

3.6 Strengthen Capacity Building for School Administrators and Educational Leaders,

Capacity-building programmes should give specific attention to principals, head teachers, vice-principals, heads of departments and other educational administrators. School administrators are responsible for translating policies into school practices, supervising teachers, managing resources, resolving conflicts and coordinating school improvement activities. Consequently, leadership capacity is essential to effective school administration. Training for educational leaders should cover instructional leadership, strategic planning, financial management, human-resource management, conflict resolution, data-informed decision-making, staff motivation and change management. The Federal Ministry of Education recognises professional development and leadership development as important components of strengthening the education system [18]. Effective capacity building should therefore distinguish between the needs of classroom teachers and those of school administrators.

3.7 Improve Funding and Provision of Training Resources,

Adequate funding is necessary for the successful implementation of capacity-building programmes. Training requires qualified facilitators, instructional materials, transportation, accommodation where necessary, digital facilities, internet connectivity and follow-up activities. Where funding is inadequate, programmes may become irregular, overly theoretical or limited in scope. The Federal Ministry of Education has identified financing as a major component of education-sector development and has emphasised the need for improved investment in education. Similarly, the Universal Basic Education Commission (UBEC) has continued to support teacher professional-development and school-improvement interventions [19], [20], [21], [22], [23]. Sustainable funding should therefore be provided by federal and state governments, education agencies, school proprietors and development partners. Schools should also prepare annual staff-development budgets and ensure that funds allocated for capacity building are transparently utilised. Funding should cover not only workshop attendance but also training materials, technology, mentoring and post-training support [24].

3.8 Promote Partnerships with Universities and Professional Bodies,

Nigerian schools should establish stronger partnerships with universities, colleges of education, research institutes, professional associations and relevant education agencies to improve capacity-building programmes. Universities possess specialised expertise in pedagogy, educational administration, curriculum studies, educational psychology, measurement and evaluation, educational technology and other fields that can support school personnel. Professional bodies can also provide specialised training, certification, conferences, seminars and continuing professional-development opportunities. The National Teacher Policy places emphasis on continuous professional development and professional growth of teachers [25]. Such partnerships can make training more evidence-based and responsive to emerging educational challenges. Schools and education authorities can therefore develop formal partnerships with teacher-education institutions for joint training, action research, school-based research, mentoring and curriculum implementation. This would help reduce the gap between educational research and classroom practice.

3.9 Integrate Capacity Building with Teacher Performance Appraisal and Career Progression,

Capacity-building programmes should be connected with professional performance appraisal and career development. Training is more likely to produce sustainable results when teachers can see how newly acquired competencies contribute

to their professional responsibilities and career advancement. The National Teacher Policy of Nigeria recognises professional development and career progression as interconnected aspects of the teaching profession [26]. Therefore, school authorities should use performance-appraisal information to identify professional-development needs and subsequently provide relevant training. For example, a teacher experiencing difficulties with classroom assessment could receive training in assessment strategies, followed by mentoring and classroom observation [27]. Similarly, teachers preparing for leadership positions could receive training in school administration, instructional leadership and strategic planning. Such an approach changes capacity building from a certificate-oriented activity into a continuous professional-development process.

3.10 Develop Context-Specific and Inclusive Capacity-Building Programmes

Capacity-building programmes should reflect the diverse circumstances of Nigerian schools. Training designed for an urban secondary school may not completely address the challenges of a rural school, while the needs of schools serving learners with disabilities may differ from those of other schools [28]. Professional development should therefore address issues such as inclusive education, gender responsiveness, large-class management, multilingual classrooms, rural-school challenges, learning poverty, child protection, psychosocial support and the use of locally available instructional resources. UNESCO emphasises the importance of strengthening teacher capacity to respond to diverse learners and changing educational demands [29]. Training should also accommodate differences in teachers' levels of experience and digital competence. Rather than providing identical training to everyone, education authorities should develop differentiated programmes for beginning teachers, experienced teachers, heads of departments, principals and other administrators.

4. Conclusion

Capacity building is fundamental to effective educational administration because schools require competent teachers and administrators to implement educational policies, manage resources and promote quality teaching and learning. In Nigeria, national education policies and recent government initiatives recognise the importance of continuous professional development, teacher training, leadership development and digital skills. However, capacity building is more effective when it is systematic rather than occasional. Strategies are particularly important: systematic training-needs assessment, institutionalisation of continuous professional development and school-based training, strengthening of digital capacity, establishment of mentoring and professional learning communities, and effective monitoring, evaluation and accountability, strengthen capacity building for school administrators and educational leaders, improve funding and provision of training resources, promote partnerships with universities and professional bodies, integrate capacity building with teacher performance appraisal and career progression, develop context-specific and inclusive capacity-building programmes. The implementation of these strategies requires collaboration among the Federal Ministry of Education, state ministries of education, SUBEBs, TESCOMs, TRCN, teacher-education institutions, school administrators, teachers, development partners and school communities. Capacity building should consequently be treated as a long-term investment in the professional and institutional capacity of Nigerian schools. Based on the discussion, the following recommendations are made: Training needs should be assessed regularly. Education authorities should conduct periodic competency assessments of teachers and school administrators before designing capacity-building programmes. Schools should institutionalise continuous professional development. Every school should have an annual staff-development plan containing workshops, peer learning, mentoring, lesson study and other professional-learning activities. Digital training should be expanded. Government and school

proprietors should provide teachers and administrators with continuous training in digital pedagogy, educational technology, data management and responsible use of emerging technologies, including artificial intelligence. Mentoring and coaching should be strengthened. Experienced teachers and administrators should be formally assigned mentoring responsibilities, particularly for newly recruited and promoted personnel. Capacity-building programmes should be monitored and evaluated. Training providers and education authorities should measure changes in professional knowledge, classroom practice and school administration after training and use the findings to improve subsequent programmes. Adequate funding should be provided. Federal and state education authorities should provide sustainable funding for teacher development, training materials, digital infrastructure, professional-learning communities and follow-up activities.

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