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# EMPLOYEES' CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES AND PERFORMANCE OF STAFF IN KWARARAFA UNIVERSITY WUKARI

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## ABSTRACT

*This study investigated the effect of employees' capacity development strategies on staff performance in Kwararafa University Wukari. The effect of four dimensions of employees' capacity development strategies was studied. The study adopts a quantitative approach where 150 staff of Kwararafa University Wukari were surveyed using a structured questionnaire for data collection. To test the hypothesis, multiple regression analysis was adopted, and the results reveal that in-service training significantly predicts staff performance, evidenced by a coefficient of 0.350 and a p-value of 0.013, indicating that a one-unit increase in in-service training corresponds to a 0.350 increase in staff performance. Conversely, conferences (coefficient = 0.100, p-value = 0.407), delegation of duties (coefficient = 0.120, p-value = 0.276), and mentoring (coefficient = 0.050, p-value = 0.719) do not exhibit statistically significant effects on performance. These findings align with existing literature that underscores the importance of targeted employee capacity development initiatives. The study recommends that Kwararafa University should invest in in-service training initiatives, increase engagement in conferences, and mentoring to create a more productive work environment.*

**Keywords**: Employee Capacity Development; Staff Performance; In-Service Training; Higher Education, Conferences

## Introduction

Employee development is the backbone of growth in any organization as it directly affects staff performance and productivity. Job performance refers to how efficiently and effectively staff execute their duties and contribute to the organisation's goals. It covers the quality, quantity and timeliness of staff output and is widely seen as a measure of individual and organizational success. Several factors, such as skills, motivation and work environment, affect job performance. Tannenbaum and Yukl (2012) say performance is enhanced when staff participate in targeted training and development programs that align with organization's goals. These programs equip staff with the necessary knowledge and

competencies to meet job demands thus leading to higher productivity, less errors and more innovation.

Staff are the backbone of any organization and investing in their development is key to improving their performance and ultimately gives the organization a competitive advantage. According to Karim et al (2019) well trained staff who benefit from quality development strategies show improved skills and behaviors and contribute significantly to the organization's overall success. Amadi et al (2021) also emphasized that effective employee capacity development especially in today's technology driven world results to higher quality products and services due to less errors and higher efficiency. Such strategies also ensure the workforce is competent, adaptable to technological advancement and prepared for organization growth and expansion.

Additionally, today's business environment characterized by fierce competition, which requires effective capacity development to maximize employee performance and deal with market challenges. Repeated and regular performance assessment help identify the needs of development and help to align employee performance with organizational goals (McConel, 2014). Employee capacity development strategies, which enhance approach, knowledge and skills, are important to increase the workforce capacity and achieve a competitive edge (Gambo et al., 2022). Training and development, including skill development, empowers employees to meet challenges and contribute to organizational success (Tannanbam and Yukal, 2012; 2012; Vinayga, 2018). This approach promotes lifelong learning, adaptability and constant professional development (Jacob et al., 2020). Relations between various employee capacity development strategies such as conferences, in-service training, duties/delegation of delegation and employee are well established. These strategies directly increase employee competencies, improve job performance and productivity (Priyadhini and Vinayaga, 2018; Jacob et al., 2020).

However, despite the increasing emphasis on the capacity development strategies of the employees, a significant difference remains in understanding their effectiveness, especially for employees in Kwararafa University Wukari. While the current research has detected these strategies in various contexts, this institution lacks empirical evidence about their impact on the performance of employees. Reports developed by Bekaller-Nikolau et al (2023) sought to evaluate training for staff. Moreso, the assessment of the training impact on performance was not done. In the same way, Mirror and Orlu (2021) conducted a study on the employee development strategies in some Nigerian universities but did not focus on Kwararafa University Wukari.

Additionally, the lack of proper plan to develop the capacity of the employees is associated with many negative results, including low work efficiency, high employee turnover, reduction in creativity, and difficulties in adaptation to change. Such challenges not only obstruct the morale of the employees, but also affect the overall academic environment, which has reduced the student's busyness and success. These issues are especially a matter of concern in the light of general trends in higher education, which may also be a sign of the situation in Kwararafa University Wukari. Adweolu (2024) indicates that by 2021, only 57% of lecturers in Nigerian universities have a postgraduate degree, which suggests intervals in the required qualification. In addition, a survey by the National Association of Academic Technologists suggests that more than 70% of academic workers expressed more training to enhance their skills (Seagle et al., 2004). Such figures underline urgency for the Kwararafa University Wukari to evaluate and enhance their employee capacity development strategies, as they directly affect academic outs. This study aims to determine the effect of

employee capacity development strategies on staff performance at Kwararafa University Wukari. Specifically, the study aims to assess the impact of conferences, in-service training, delegation of duties/tasks, and mentoring on staff performance.

## Literature Review

### Conceptual Framework

### Job Performance

Job performance is a critical concept in organizational studies, defined by various scholars to capture its multifaceted nature. McConnell (2014) describes job performance as the effectiveness with which employees execute their tasks and responsibilities, considering both the quality and quantity of work, as well as adherence to organizational policies. Daft and Lane (2018) expand on this by emphasizing job performance as a measure of an employee's output relative to the resources utilized, linking it to efficiency and productivity. Tannenbaum and Yukl (2012) further classify job performance into task performance, focusing on core duties, and contextual performance, which encompasses behaviors that enhance the overall work environment. These perspectives collectively highlight that job performance involves not only completing assigned tasks but also contributing to organizational success through efficiency, behavior, and adherence to organizational norms.

### Capacity Development

Capacity development, as discussed by Groot and Molen (2015), is a multidimensional process aimed at enhancing the knowledge, skills, and attitudes of individuals and groups. This process is crucial for generating new ideas, managing interests, and maintaining institutionally relevant structures within organizations. While this approach is comprehensive, its emphasis remains on education, training, and the development of human resources. In a broader sense, capacity development refers to the improvement of employees' abilities to meet an organization's overall performance standards. The United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) (2017) identifies three levels at which capacity building occurs: individual, institutional, and societal. At the individual level, capacity building involves creating environments that allow individuals not only to enhance their existing skills but also to participate actively in learning and adapting to changes (Eze, et al., 2022).

Capacity development has been described in various ways. Some scholars define it broadly, encompassing the knowledge, skills, and resources that organizations, especially non-profits, require for success, while others focus on the process of capacity building itself (Anoke, Nzewi, & Tukura, 2022). Fullan (2007) expands on this idea by defining capacity building in collective terms as a series of strategic actions aimed at improving group efficiency, enhancing performance, expanding resources, and increasing motivation among employees. Azeem et al., (2021) emphasize the importance of organizations offering capacity development programs to equip employees with new and enhanced business knowledge, which contributes to organizational growth. Importantly, definitions of capacity should not be limited to organizations, as capacity can also be developed at the individual and community levels. The United Nations Development Program (UNDP) (2011) defines capacity building as the process by which individuals, organizations, and communities enhance their abilities to perform essential tasks, solve complex challenges, achieve organizational goals, and address long-term developmental needs comprehensively. Capacity development can be achieved through conferences, in-service trainings, delegation of duties/tasks and mentoring.

### Conferences

A conference is a formal gathering or event where individuals with shared interests, professions, or expertise come together to discuss, present, and exchange ideas, research, and innovations. Conferences typically feature presentations, discussions, workshops, and networking sessions, with the aim of advancing knowledge in a specific field or industry (Al-Kurdi et al., 2018). Conferences as a dimension of employee capacity development provide significant opportunities for professional growth, knowledge exchange, and networking. Attending conferences allows employees to acquire new insights and skills that can be applied to their roles, while also exposing them to emerging trends, innovative practices, and expert perspectives in their fields (Carnevale, 1990). Conferences create an environment conducive to learning, where employees can engage in discussions, attend workshops, and collaborate with other professionals, thereby broadening their expertise and improving their job performance.

Additionally, conferences are essential for encouraging creativity and innovation within organizations. By exposing employees to diverse ideas and approaches, conferences promote cross-pollination of concepts, which can lead to novel solutions for organizational challenges (Zegwaard & Rowe, 2019). This exchange of knowledge not only strengthens the capabilities of individual employees but also contributes to organizational growth by improving productivity and enhancing problem-solving abilities. Investing in conference attendance as a form of employee capacity development demonstrates an organization's commitment to professional growth and innovation.

**In-service Training**

In-service training is a critical dimension of employee capacity development strategies that focuses on enhancing the skills, knowledge, and competencies of employees while they are actively working in their roles. This type of training occurs during employment and is designed to help employees stay updated with current industry standards, adapt to new technologies, and improve their performance (Bluestone et al, 2013). In-service training is an essential tool for organizations aiming to maintain a competitive workforce and ensure that employees are continuously learning and developing within their professional roles.

One of the key benefits of in-service training is that it promotes lifelong learning. By offering employees the opportunity to engage in ongoing training, organizations foster an environment where continuous improvement and skill enhancement are prioritized. This ensures that employees are not only proficient in their current tasks but also prepared for future responsibilities and advancements. For example, training on new software or processes equips employees to handle technological advancements efficiently, increasing productivity and reducing errors (Shiri et al., 2023). In-service training supports employee engagement and retention. When organizations invest in the professional growth of their employees, it boosts morale, demonstrates commitment to their development, and enhances job satisfaction (Rehbein et al., 2003). Employees who receive regular training are more likely to feel valued and motivated to contribute to the organization’s success. Additionally, training helps reduce the skills gap and ensures that the organization remains adaptable to changes in the business environment.

**Delegation of duties/tasks**

Delegation is a vital management strategy that involves assigning specific tasks to employees, enabling them to contribute to the organization's objectives. Effective delegation not only distributes workload but also empowers employees to develop skills, take ownership, and enhance decision-making capabilities (Yukl, 2015). It fosters professional growth, capacity development,

and prepares employees for future leadership roles by exposing them to new challenges and aspects of the job (Daft & Lane, 2018; Hamel, 2008). Delegation promotes team collaboration by distributing duties among team members, encouraging trust, accountability, and effective communication. This fosters teamwork and creates a collaborative work environment, which is crucial for achieving organisational goals (Khan & Lahore, 2020). However, successful delegation requires clear communication, proper guidance, and feedback. Managers must define tasks, set expectations, provide necessary resources, and offer feedback to ensure employees perform effectively and understand their progress and areas for improvement (Whetten & Cameron, 1998).

**Mentoring**

Mentoring is a developmental relationship in which a more experienced or knowledgeable person guide and supports the professional and personal growth of a less experienced individual. According to Tannenbaum and Yukl (2012), mentoring involves providing advice, feedback, and support to help mentees enhance their skills, career development, and understanding of organizational dynamics. Al-Kurdi, El-Haddadeh, and Eldabi (2018) describe mentoring as a strategic process that fosters knowledge sharing and capacity building within organizations, helping mentees align their personal goals with organizational objectives. Jacob et al. (2020) further emphasize that mentoring enhances the mentee's ability to adapt to new challenges and increases their performance, thus contributing to organizational success. Beyond skill transfer, mentoring also provides emotional support, fosters confidence, and builds trust, which is vital for career progression and personal growth. This process can improve job satisfaction, increase employee retention, and promote a culture of continuous learning within an organization.

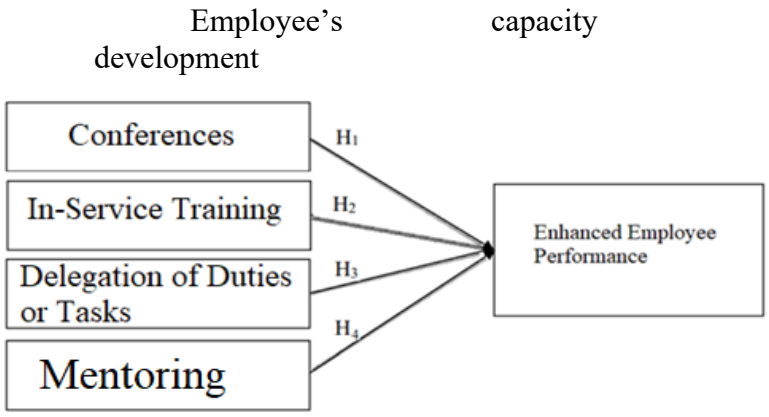


Figure 1: Model of the study
Source: Researcher's Conceptualization, 2024

**Theoretical Framework**

This research centres on the Human Capital Theory (HCT) which comprehensively informs the investment in employee capacity development. Developed by Becker (1964) and Schultz (1961), this theory stems from the work of Adam Smith in 1776. They assert that people's skills, knowledge and experience are economic resources that improve productivity and performance. Smith's notion and its advocates further argue that funding in education and training is seen as an enhancement in human capital, thus contributing to organizational success. Individually, human capital, consisting of competencies and abilities acquired through formal education and professional training, is a major source of economic value and competitive edge. Hence, HCT argues that training and development must be treated as expenses which the institution shall benefit from in the form of increased productivity and effectiveness. More importantly, for the development of the staff of the universities, there has to be an expectation of improved job performance in line with the institution's strategy (Schultz, 1961). Additionally, HCT explains that employee performance is

enhanced through a well-designed capacity building strategy, which consists of skills development workshops, a reward system and recognition programs. Employees are able to be more effective in their roles which enhances the productivity of the institution as a whole (Becker, 1964; Schultz, 1961). Moreover, HCT also argues that these investments are not only useful but essential to sustain and improve organizational performance and achieve success in the long run. (Becker, 1962).

**Empirical Review**

Adejare et al. (2020) studied the effect of employee training and development on managerial efficiency in Nigerian public universities. Method: A convenience and stratified sampling technique was used to include 293 staff in the study. We performed data analysis using structural equation modelling (SEM). There was a strong negative correlation between the quality-of-service delivery and on-the-job training, which cannot be used as a replacement for effective training programs that can make employees more efficient. Also, Eze et al. (2022) studied the relationship between capacity building and performance of employee in Nigerian banks including Fidelity Bank Plc, Guarantee Trust Bank Plc, and First Bank Plc. Using a survey design and structured questionnaire, they analyzed data with frequency tables, means, and Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient via SPSS. The study showed significant association between capacity building and employee performance.

Additionally, Maku et al. (2021) explored how capacity building affects employee performance at Dr. Isa Mustapha Agwai I Polytechnic, Lafia. Their study used a descriptive research design, measuring capacity building through training and education and performance through productivity. Using a sample size of 155, data were collected and analysed using Pearson's Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient. The outcomes indicate that there is a significant correlation between education, training, and productivity in the study, suggesting an urgent need for capacity building to enhance staff performance. In the Anambra State Civil Service Commission, Chukwurah et al. (2020) examined the effects of capacity building on service delivery. The study adopted a survey design and chi-square analysis to test hypothesis, finding that Capacity building was strongly associated with service quality. In order to maximize the potential of their staff, they proposed policies requiring ongoing training and development. Agbonna et al. (2022) studied capacity building and job performance of staff in state-owned universities in South-West Nigeria. The study was conducted using a descriptive survey method with 450 academic staff as its sample. A 94% increase in variance was found to be due only to capacity building, according to the findings.

**Methodology**

The study utilized a survey research design to explore the effectiveness of various capacity development dimensions on organizational performance at Kwararafa University Wukari. The study's population consists of 195 staff members from all fifteen departments in the three colleges of the University (Human Resource Department, KUW). From each of these departments, 10 staff were randomly selected, resulting in a total sample size of 150 respondents.

To gather primary data for the investigation, the study utilized structured questionnaire with a 5-point Likert Scale to measure responses. Content validity of the questionnaire was established through expert review, ensuring the instrument accurately assessed the intended variables. Further, a reliability analysis was used to confirm the internal consistency of the instrument of data collection utilizing Cronbach's alpha, which yielded a coefficient

of 0.79, indicating the instrument's reliability for data collection. Descriptive statistics, such as tables, frequencies, and percentages, were used to analyze demographic and survey data. To evaluate the relationships between these dimensions and performance, Multiple Regression analysis was conducted using SPSS Package version 25. The model is represented by the equation:

$$\text{Per} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 Conf_i + \beta_2 InStr_i + \beta_3 DD/T_i + \beta_4 Ment_i + e_i$$

where: Per = Performance; Conf = Conferences; InStr = in-service training; *DD/T* = delegation of duties/tasks and *Ment.* = Mentoring.

$B_0$ = Constant; $e_i$ = Error term; $\beta_1$, $\beta_2$, $\beta_3$ and $\beta_4$ = Coefficient of Independent Variables

A significance level of 5% was used for hypothesis testing. Statistical significance was determined based on probability values (PV); values less than 0.05 indicated significance, while those above were considered not significant.

## Results and Discussion

### Test of Hypothesis

Table 1: Model summary and ANOVA

**Model Summary**

| Model | R | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 0.55 | 0.302 | 0.285 | 1.8 |

**ANOVA**

| Model | Sum of Squares | Df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Regression | 118.1 | 4 | 29.525 | 18.4 | 0.000 |
| Residual | 274.2 | 231 | 1.188 | | |
| Total | 392.3 | 235 | | | |

a. Dependent Variable: Performance

b. Predictors: (Constant), Conferences, In-Service Training, Delegation of Duties/Tasks, Mentoring

**Table 2: Coefficients on the Employee's Development Strategies on Performance of Staff in Kwararafa University Wukari**

| Variable | B | Standard Error | t | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Constant ($\beta_0$) | 3.000 | 0.550 | 5.450 | 0.000 |
| Conf ($\beta_1$) | 0.100 | 0.120 | 0.830 | 0.407 |
| InStr ($\beta_2$) | 0.350 | 0.140 | 2.500 | 0.013 |
| *DD/T* ($\beta_3$) | 0.120 | 0.110 | 1.090 | 0.276 |
| *MENT.*($\beta_4$) | 0.050 | 0.140 | 0.360 | 0.719 |

a. Dependent Variable: Performance

### Interpretation

The model summary and ANOVA outcomes in Table 1 indicate a moderate relationship among employee capacity development strategies and staff overall performance, with a correlation coefficient (R) of 0.55 and R-squared price of 0.302. This suggests that about 30% of the variation in staff performance may be attributed to the impartial variables. The adjusted R-squared of 0.285 and Std. Error of the estimate of 1.8 demonstrate a great match.

Moreover, the ANOVA consequences verify a statistically significant courting among the variables, with an F-statistic of 18.4 and significance fee of 0.000.

The first null hypothesis of this study stipulates that conferences do not affect staff performance. As shown in Table 2 of the regression analysis, the coefficient for conferences is set at 0.100, with p=0.407. Since the p-value does not exceed 5%, we fail to reject of the null hypothesis. Therefore, conferences could serve as a forum for information dissemination and networking; nevertheless, they do not contribute much, if at all, to any meaningful improvement in employee performance. The purported lack of evidence for the utility of conferences calls for a re-examination of how such events are structured and what their intended outcomes ought to be.

For the second hull hypothesis which states that in-service training has no significant effect on staff performance, the results presented in Table 2 revealed that, in-service training (InStr) emerged as the most robust predictor of overall staff performance, displaying a coefficient (β2) of 0.350 and a significant p-value of 0.013. The observed p-value is less than 5% and therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected. Based on the statistical information, an increase in one unit of in-service training results in an improvement of 0.350 in staff performance. The noted findings are in accordance with the already established studies conducted by Eze et al. (2022), Maku et al. (2021), and Agbonna et al. (2022), all of which emphasize the crucial role that in-service training plays in improving the skills of workers, notwithstanding different organizations' contexts. Thus, this proves the need for Kwararafa University Wukari to consider in-service training as a strategic professional development among other modalities for staff performance enhancement.

The third null hypothesis, delegation of duties/tasks does not significantly affect staff performance, the results (as presented in Table 2) shows that the null hypothesis could not be rejected. This implies that delegation of duties/tasks does not have a significant impact on staff performance, with a coefficient of 0.120 and a p-value of 0.276 (p>5%). These results indicate that delegation contributes to the operational efficiency of Kwararafa University Wukari but does not specifically raise performance levels among the university's employees. These findings contradict the findings of Omolawal (2015) as this reveals an avenue in respect to inefficient delegation practices in the institution; that is, the assignment of duties may need reevaluation to fit the bill for accountability and performance improvement among the support staff.

Finally, the fourth tested hypothesis states that mentoring has no significant effect on staff performance. The mentoring variable had no significant effect on staff performance, with a coefficient of 0.050 and a p-value of 0.719. Because the p-value is more than 0.05 (level of significance), the null hypothesis is not rejected. This means that the current mentoring practices at Kwararafa University Wukari are perceived to have little or very little direct influence on improving employee performance outcomes.

**Discussion of Findings**

The research established a moderate link between employee capacity-building strategies and staff performance, which can be termed as structural initiatives related to the efficient working of a given workforce. However, not all are equally impactful. For example, while conferences do help in exchanging information and networking, they do not particularly affect staff performance. This echoes the opinion of Adejare et al. (2020), which opined that only on-the-job experiences cannot take the place of structured training. The limited impact of conferences might indicate the need to refine

their design and execution to have them contribute meaningfully toward employee growth and productivity.

In contrast, in-service training emerged as the strongest prophet of the staff performance, strengthening its role in professional development. The positive effect of training supports the findings of Maku et al. (2021) and Ez et al. (2022), who emphasized the link between capacity building and employee efficiency. This shows that institutions such as Kwarafa University Wukari should give priority to structured training programs to increase skills and job performances. However, the delegation and mentoring did not show significant impact on the performance, which opposes studies such as Omolaval (2015) and Chukvurah et al. (2020). These results mean that while these strategies contribute to the organizational structure, they may not be well applied to run the average improvement in the effectiveness of the employees.

Mixed conclusions highlight the need for a strategic approach to capacity development. While in-service training proves necessary, the limited effectiveness of other strategies suggests that institutions should assure their implementation. It aligns with Agbonna et al. (2022), who found that capacity-building efforts should be well structured well to maximize their impact. Therefore, organizations should refine their training, delegation and advice practices to ensure that they translate into meaningful performance results.

## Conclusion

This study was conducted to examine the impact of employee capacity development strategies on the performance of employees, which focus on dimensions such as conferences, in-service training, delegation of duties and advice. Using regression analysis, the study assessed the strength of the relationship between these strategies and the performance of employees, measuring statistical importance. The results indicate that while the performance of employees in in-service training is significantly increased, other strategies such as conferences, delegations of duties, and advice do not show sufficient effects in their current form. Similarly, the weak impact of the delegation on performance implies a possible difference in accountability or execution, which highlights the need of organizations to refine these processes to increase the productivity of employees. While the in-service training proves a valuable tool to increase the performance of the staff, other strategies require revaluation to maximize their impact.

## Recommendations

Based on the results of this study, the following are the recommendations suggested:

i. Encourage In-Service Training: This study recommends that the development of specific in-service training programs for staff should be introduced to improve their skills and performance.

ii. Improve Conference Effectiveness: this study recommends that the structure and content of conferences should be reexamined to include more workable and interactive sessions that address specific challenges of staff.

iii. Increase in Delegation Practices: This study recommends that a better framework for task delegation in relation to staff strength and weakness should be cultivated. It should be a system that encourages the provision of up-to-date feedback and contribute to accountability and development.

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