

Capacity Enhancement Strategies and Organizational Productivity in Nigeria's Civil Service. An Assessment of Akwa Ibom State Ministry of Education.

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ABSTRACT: Capacity enhancement plays a vital role in human resource management by aligning employee performance with organizational objectives and driving overall productivity. In Akwa Ibom State, the Ministry of Education depends on strategic capacity-building initiatives to improve educational outcomes. Despite numerous government-led training programs, their effectiveness has been hampered by persistent challenges, including inadequate funding, irrelevant training content, limited access to resources, political interference, and the absence of performance evaluation mechanisms. Additional issues such as high staff turnover, a lack of institutional support, and poor retention of trained personnel further compromise the sustainability of capacity development efforts. This study, grounded in Gary Becker's Human Capital Theory (1964), adopted a descriptive and documentary research design, integrating both quantitative and qualitative methods to assess the relationship between capacity enhancement and organizational productivity in the Ministry. Data were

collected from primary sources through key informant interviews with ten senior personnel across departments, and from secondary sources including scholarly publications, government reports, and online materials. Data analysis involved thematic content analysis for qualitative insights and descriptive techniques for interpreting interview responses. Findings revealed that while capacity enhancement is recognized as a strategic necessity, its implementation remains inconsistent and under-resourced. Based on these insights, the study recommends the establishment of a legally backed training fund with dedicated annual budgetary allocations, the creation of a modern training institute for education personnel, and the institutionalization of inclusive and structured staff development policies. These measures are essential for bridging competence gaps, promoting equitable access to training, and improving productivity within the Ministry of Education.

Keywords: *Capacity enhancement, Human Capital Theory, organizational productivity, Ministry of Education, staff development, training fund, human resource management, educational outcomes.*

Introduction

In the intricate landscape of educational management, capacity enhancement stands as a critical pillar for improving organizational performance, particularly within public institutions such as the Akwa Ibom State Ministry of Education. Capacity enhancement, often referred to as manpower development, is a vital organizational strategy aimed at boosting employee competence, productivity, and overall effectiveness (Harrison & Kavanagh, 2015). Numerous studies have affirmed the importance of capacity enhancement in educational settings. For instance, Asamoah, Agbenyega, and Boakye (2016) demonstrated that targeted interventions aimed at improving educators' capacities significantly enhanced their pedagogical skills, leading to improved student learning outcomes. Similarly, Saka and Adepoju (2017) observed a strong positive correlation between capacity development initiatives and teacher motivation, job satisfaction, and institutional performance. These findings reinforce the argument that capacity enhancement plays a pivotal role in strengthening not only the skills of educational personnel but also the productivity and success of educational institutions (Rothwell & Kazanas, 2017).

As a strategic element of human resource management, capacity enhancement facilitates the acquisition of essential skills and alignment of individual contributions with organizational goals (Swanson & Holton, 2009). According to Arthur (2003), Tom. Ebong and Nseyo (2024) capacity enhancement is a comprehensive process that fosters increased productivity and serves as an avenue for effectively communicating institutional priorities to employees. Across advanced and industrialized societies, deliberate efforts in manpower development have been fundamental in driving productivity, ensuring competitiveness, and sustaining institutional growth (Storey & Quintas, 2001; Goldstein & Ford, 2002). In the context of Akwa Ibom State, the Ministry of Education serves as the central authority responsible for policy formulation and program execution aimed at improving educational outcomes. The efficiency and effectiveness of this ministry are largely dependent on the extent to which its workforce is adequately capacitated, as capacity enhancement initiatives directly influence the quality of education delivery, shape student academic performance, and impact the wider educational landscape.

Despite numerous governmental claims of ongoing capacity enhancement initiatives ranging from on-the-job training to external development programs the actual outcomes have often fallen short of expectations. Etim and Udoh (2019) identified several constraints impeding successful implementation, including inadequate funding, poor access to modern training resources, and political interference in staff selection. Etim (2022) further highlighted issues such as a disconnect between capacity-building content and actual job demands, challenges in retaining trained personnel, and weak selection frameworks. These challenges necessitate a critical appraisal of how capacity enhancement influences staff performance and institutional productivity, particularly within public educational institutions in Nigeria.

Although the value of capacity enhancement is well-recognized, its effectiveness remains clouded by questions regarding the adequacy, relevance, and execution of development programs. Concerns persist about whether these initiatives are sufficiently tailored to address the evolving roles and practical realities of employees. The lack of access to essential resources such as qualified facilitators and functional facilities also limits the effectiveness of such programs. Furthermore, the

organizational environment including leadership commitment, institutional support, and the presence of a learning culture plays a significant role in determining the success of capacity enhancement strategies. In addition, the absence of clear performance metrics and evaluation mechanisms has made it difficult to ascertain the actual impact of these efforts on organizational productivity. High rates of staff turnover and the frequent migration of trained employees to other organizations also threaten the sustainability of capacity-building investments, leading to potential losses in institutional knowledge and service delivery continuity (Udo & Eke, 2020).

Given these prevailing challenges, there is a critical need to assess the role of capacity enhancement in shaping employee performance and productivity in the Akwa Ibom State Ministry of Education. This study therefore seeks to explore the extent to which capacity enhancement initiatives contribute to skill development, job performance, service delivery, and institutional outcomes. It is in response to these observed gaps and concerns that the following research questions are posed:

Research Questions

- i. How does poor funding of staff skill enhancement and development programme affect organizational productivity in Akwa Ibom State Ministry of Education?
- ii. how has poor training facilities affect the level to which staffs are trained and developed in Akwa Ibom State Ministry of Education?

1.4 Research Objectives

- i. To investigate how poor funding of staff skill enhancement and development programmes affect organizational productivity in Akwa Ibom State Ministry of Education?
- ii. To assess the level to which poor training facilities affect the level to which staffs are trained and developed in Akwa Ibom State Ministry of Education

Review of General Literature and Theoretical Framework

Conceptual Literature

1. Capacity Enhancement

Capacity enhancement is a broad and multidimensional concept that entails the continuous improvement of an individual's or institution's ability to perform functions effectively, efficiently, and sustainably. In public administration, especially in developing countries, capacity enhancement is viewed as a vital ingredient for achieving governance objectives, delivering quality public services, and fostering institutional accountability (Grindle & Hilderbrand, 1995). At the individual level, capacity enhancement involves improving the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and competencies of staff through structured training, mentoring, and career development opportunities. At the organizational level, it includes the strengthening of systems, processes, resources, leadership, culture, and technology that enable optimal performance (UNDP, 2020). According to Okotoni and Erero (2005), public service institutions in Nigeria have historically suffered from skill deficits and poor administrative capacity, making capacity enhancement a national imperative.

In the context of education ministries such as that of Akwa Ibom State, capacity enhancement is crucial for improving administrative operations, policy implementation, educational planning, teacher effectiveness, and monitoring and evaluation practices. Without adequate capacity, institutional goals related to educational development and service delivery are unlikely to be met.

Capacity Enhancement Strategies

Capacity enhancement strategies are deliberate actions and frameworks designed to improve the capabilities of individuals and organizations. These strategies may be short-term, such as workshops and seminars, or long-term, such as professional certification programs, institutional restructuring, and systemic reforms (Adebayo & Dada, 2020). Kofi, Mathew and Ebong (2025)

Some of the most common strategies include:

- i. **Training and Development:** Regular training programs to build competencies in areas such as ICT, project management, budgeting, and leadership.

- ii. **Knowledge Sharing:** Encouraging peer learning, communities of practice, and institutional memory retention.
- iii. **Organizational Learning:** Institutionalizing learning processes that adapt to environmental changes and policy demands.
- iv. **Technological Adoption:** Introducing digital tools for administrative processes and service delivery.
- v. **Leadership Development:** Focusing on middle and senior-level management to drive change, innovation, and staff motivation.

In Nigeria's public service, several reform initiatives have emphasized these strategies, yet many ministries still lag behind in implementation due to weak institutional arrangements (Agba, Akwara, & Idu, 2013). For instance, in the education sector, there is a persistent gap between training received and on-the-job performance due to a lack of post-training follow-up and evaluation (Federal Government of Nigeria, 2019). Effective capacity enhancement strategies must be tailored to institutional needs, responsive to performance gaps, and supported by adequate resources, both financial and technical. Strategic planning, needs assessment, and continuous evaluation are essential components of successful capacity-building interventions (Ejumudo, 2014).

Organizational Productivity

Organizational productivity refers to the degree to which an organization can achieve its objectives by effectively utilizing its human and material resources. In the public sector, productivity is not always measured in profits but in the quantity and quality of services delivered to the public (Osawe, 2015). Key indicators include efficiency, timeliness, citizen satisfaction, compliance with standards, and policy impact. In ministries such as the Akwa Ibom State Ministry of Education, productivity could be measured by improved access to quality education, timely disbursement of teaching materials, successful implementation of educational policies, and effective monitoring of schools. However, these outcomes are influenced by several variables

such as workforce capacity, institutional processes, leadership effectiveness, and budgetary allocation.

Dunlop and Lee (2004) argue that productivity in public institutions often suffers due to bureaucratic red tape, outdated technology, limited capacity of personnel, and low motivation. Therefore, productivity enhancement in public organizations is often linked to reforms that increase efficiency, accountability, and staff engagement. Improving productivity also requires fostering a results-oriented work culture where performance metrics are clearly defined and monitored. This involves the integration of modern management practices, performance appraisal systems, and the decentralization of decision-making to empower lower administrative units.

Components of Organizational Productivity

Organizational productivity refers to the capacity of an institution to utilize its resources human, financial, and material efficiently and effectively to achieve desired outcomes. It goes beyond mere output levels to encompass the quality, timeliness, relevance, and sustainability of the services or goods delivered. Productivity is a multidimensional concept, especially in public organizations like ministries, where output is often intangible or measured in developmental rather than commercial terms (Dunlop & Lee, 2004). Understanding the components of organizational productivity helps in identifying specific areas that require improvement for institutional effectiveness. These components are interrelated and often mutually reinforcing.

i. Human Resource Efficiency

At the heart of productivity lies the performance of the workforce. Human resource efficiency refers to how well employees perform their tasks relative to organizational goals. This includes the skills, competencies, motivation, discipline, and adaptability of staff members (Obasan, 2011). Productive organizations are often characterized by a well-trained, motivated, and performance-driven workforce.

In the public sector, especially in ministries such as Education, human resource efficiency translates to competent teachers, proactive administrators, and policy

officers who can implement government programs with minimal supervision. Okotoni and Erero (2005) stress that deficiencies in staff training and motivation are among the leading causes of low productivity in Nigeria's public service.

Key indicators:

- a. Staff performance appraisal scores
- b. Attendance and punctuality rates
- c. Task completion timelines
- d. Innovation and initiative levels

ii. Effective Leadership and Governance

Leadership quality is a pivotal component of organizational productivity. Effective leaders set clear goals, motivate employees, allocate resources judiciously, and ensure that strategic objectives are pursued ethically and efficiently. Leadership also includes establishing an organizational culture that promotes accountability, transparency, and meritocracy (Yukl, 2010).

In public sector institutions, leadership effectiveness is linked to the ability to manage public expectations, implement policies, and direct institutional change. The absence of visionary leadership often results in poor coordination, policy inconsistency, and low morale, all of which erode productivity.

Key indicators:

- a. Clarity of organizational vision
- b. Alignment between leadership actions and staff goals
- c. Degree of delegation and empowerment
- d. Ethical conduct and compliance

iii. Technological Infrastructure

Technology plays a transformative role in boosting organizational productivity. It facilitates communication, data processing, monitoring, service delivery, and

feedback systems. In the context of public organizations, technological tools such as Management Information Systems (MIS), e-governance platforms, and digital reporting systems are essential for improving efficiency and reducing manual workload (UNDP, 2020). In the Nigerian public sector, many ministries still lag in adopting technology, thereby affecting their ability to deliver services quickly and effectively. The use of outdated equipment, absence of internet facilities, and lack of staff ICT training are common barriers.

Key indicators:

- a. ICT adoption rate
- b. Availability of functional digital platforms
- c. Digital literacy among staff
- d. Reduction in processing time for routine tasks

iv. Organizational Structure and Processes

A productive organization typically has a well-defined structure with streamlined processes and clear lines of authority and communication. Organizational structure determines how tasks are divided, coordinated, and supervised, while processes dictate how activities are carried out to meet objectives (Mintzberg, 1983).

Rigid bureaucracies, overlapping functions, and unclear reporting lines often reduce productivity in public institutions. For example, in some Nigerian ministries, excessive layers of approval and documentation delay decision-making and service delivery.

Key indicators:

- a. Responsiveness and turnaround time
- b. Process automation and simplification
- c. Coordination and communication efficiency
- d. Clarity of roles and job descriptions

v. Resource Management and Utilization

Productivity is directly influenced by how well an organization manages its resources—financial, physical, and informational. Efficient resource management ensures that the institution operates within its budget while maximizing output (Osawe, 2015). In many public organizations, however, budget constraints, corruption, and misallocation of funds often result in poor service delivery. For ministries, the efficient use of resources could mean ensuring that teaching materials are supplied to schools on time, budgeted funds are properly utilized, and capital projects are completed without unnecessary delays.

Key indicators:

- a. Budget performance reports
- b. Cost-efficiency ratios
- c. Rate of fund absorption and utilization
- d. Inventory and asset management systems

vi. Performance Measurement and Evaluation

An often overlooked yet vital component of organizational productivity is the presence of systems for measuring, evaluating, and improving performance. Performance metrics provide evidence-based insights into whether institutional goals are being met and where adjustments are necessary (Grindle & Hilderbrand, 1995). Public organizations often face challenges in implementing robust monitoring and evaluation (M&E) frameworks. Yet, without reliable data and feedback mechanisms, it becomes difficult to track progress or ensure accountability.

Key indicators:

- a. Existence of performance indicators and benchmarks
- b. Frequency of monitoring and evaluation reports
- c. Integration of M&E results into planning
- d. Stakeholder feedback incorporation

vii. Organizational Culture and Work Environment

Organizational culture refers to the shared values, beliefs, norms, and practices that shape behavior within an institution. A positive work culture encourages innovation, teamwork, accountability, and dedication all of which enhance productivity (Cameron & Quinn, 2006). In the Nigerian public sector, issues such as favoritism, lack of recognition, poor communication, and low morale often contribute to poor performance. Changing the organizational culture requires leadership commitment and a shift from control-oriented to performance-oriented approaches.

Key indicators:

- a. Employee engagement levels
- b. Openness to innovation and change
- c. Recognition and reward systems
- d. Employee satisfaction surveys

viii. External Environment and Stakeholder Engagement

Finally, organizational productivity is influenced by the external environment political, social, economic, and legal contexts as well as stakeholder relationships. Ministries operate within broader governance frameworks, and their ability to deliver is often shaped by inter-governmental collaboration, community feedback, and donor support.

In the education sector, for instance, involving school heads, parents, and civil society groups in decision-making can lead to better policy implementation and responsiveness.

Key indicators:

- a. Stakeholder participation in planning and evaluation
- b. Policy stability and government support
- c. Donor collaboration and project execution
- d. External audits and public accountability

Capacity Enhancement and Organizational Productivity: The Nexus

There is an intrinsic and positive linkage between capacity enhancement and organizational productivity. Enhanced staff capacity leads to increased motivation, efficiency, innovation, and better service delivery. When public servants are well-trained, adequately resourced, and properly supervised, they tend to exhibit improved work performance, which in turn contributes to the organization's ability to achieve its goals (Olowu, 2002; Obasan, 2011). In educational ministries, capacity building efforts such as continuous teacher training, data management skills, and policy interpretation have a direct impact on educational outcomes such as improved school management, reduced dropout rates, and timely curriculum implementation.

Ejumudo (2014) found that organizations that invest systematically in capacity development tend to outperform others in terms of service quality and responsiveness to public demands. This link is especially critical in the Nigerian context, where weak institutional frameworks and under-skilled personnel have historically hampered public service delivery (Agba et al., 2013). Moreover, capacity enhancement fosters organizational learning and innovation, both of which are essential for adapting to changes and addressing emerging challenges. As institutions become more dynamic and responsive, their overall productivity improves.

Challenges of Capacity Enhancement in Public Organizations

Despite the recognized importance of capacity enhancement, numerous challenges impede its effectiveness in Nigeria's public institutions:

- i. **Inadequate Funding:** Most public institutions operate under tight budgets, making it difficult to allocate sufficient resources for training and development (Agba et al., 2013).
- ii. **Weak Policy Implementation:** Although capacity-building policies exist, poor execution, lack of political will, and leadership inefficiencies undermine their success (Ejumudo, 2014).

- iii. **Resistance to Change:** Many public servants, especially those in senior positions, are resistant to reform and innovation, often fearing the loss of status or control (Okotoni & Erero, 2005).
- iv. **Mismatch Between Training and Needs:** Training programs are often generic and not aligned with the actual skill gaps or operational demands of the ministries (Adebayo & Dada, 2020).
- v. **Lack of Monitoring and Evaluation:** Most capacity-building efforts lack mechanisms for assessing impact, making it difficult to track effectiveness or make improvements (UNDP, 2020).
- vi. **Inadequate ICT Infrastructure:** In many Nigerian public organizations, there is limited access to digital tools and platforms that can enhance training delivery and administrative efficiency.

Theoretical Framework

To establish a solid scientific foundation for this study, the researcher adopted the Human Capital Theory, developed by Gary Becker in 1964, as the theoretical framework. This theory emphasizes that investments in education, training, and skill development enhance human capital, leading to increased productivity and improved organizational performance. Within the Akwa Ibom State Civil Service, Human Capital Theory highlights the significance of staff training and development in strengthening institutional efficiency. By focusing on professional development initiatives, the ministry can enhance employees' skills, competencies, and overall effectiveness, ultimately contributing to improved service delivery.

Empirical studies affirm the positive impact of training on organizational performance in the education sector. For instance, Darling-Hammond et al. (2017) found that teacher professional development programs significantly improved student achievement, reinforcing the need for continuous training investments. Likewise, Desimone (2009) demonstrated that structured staff development programs positively influenced teacher practices and student learning outcomes. In the context of the Akwa Ibom State Ministry of education, Human Capital Theory underscores

the necessity of equipping educators and administrative staff with relevant skills to meet evolving educational demands. By investing in ongoing professional training, the ministry can ensure that employees stay updated on best practices, innovative teaching methods, and emerging trends in education. Furthermore, the theory highlights the importance of lifelong learning and continuous skill enhancement for organizational growth and competitiveness. As Becker (1996) noted, human capital investments are critical for institutions operating in dynamic environments. By adopting this perspective, the Akwa Ibom State Ministry of education can strengthen its workforce capabilities, leading to enhanced educational outcomes and greater institutional effectiveness.

Research Design

The study employed a descriptive and documentary research design, utilizing both quantitative and qualitative approaches to explore the relationship between capacity enhancement and organizational productivity within the Akwa Ibom State Ministry of Education. Data were sourced from both primary and secondary materials. Primary data were gathered through personal interviews, while secondary data were obtained from textbooks, academic journals, government publications, magazines, and credible online sources. These secondary sources helped to reinforce the primary data by providing theoretical and contextual background for the study. For data analysis, both quantitative and qualitative techniques were applied. The quantitative aspect involved the use of key informant interviews, while the qualitative component relied on content analysis using a thematic approach. A total of 10 key informants, drawn from various departments within the Ministry, participated in the interviews.

Evaluation of Research questions:

Evaluation of Research questions I: How does poor funding of staff skill enhancement and development programme affect organizational productivity in Akwa Ibom State Ministry of Education?

Poor funding of staff training and development programmes has significantly hampered the productivity and efficiency of the Akwa Ibom State Ministry of Education. Staff development is a crucial tool for capacity building, policy implementation, and service delivery in public institutions. Unfortunately, the

Ministry's training and skill enhancement initiatives are often poorly funded, sporadic, and lack long-term strategic planning. This has resulted in a stagnation of staff competencies and has hindered the modernization of the educational system.

According to Etim and Daniel (2020), the budgetary allocation for human resource development in the Akwa Ibom State Ministry of Education is not only insufficient but also inconsistently released, making it difficult to run structured and impactful training programmes. Without adequate funding, the Ministry cannot sponsor staff for workshops, professional courses, or seminars that expose them to emerging trends in education management, curriculum design, ICT integration, and policy execution.

Moreover, Udom and Akpan (2022) emphasize that this lack of investment in staff development has led to poor performance among education officers, school supervisors, and administrators, thus affecting the quality of policy implementation and monitoring in schools across the state. The result is a workforce that is unmotivated, under-equipped, and ill-prepared to meet contemporary educational challenges. The absence of well-funded development programmes also limits career progression and contributes to high staff turnover, as employees seek better opportunities elsewhere. As Nwachukwu and Ekong (2023) recommend, there is a need for a dedicated and legally backed funding structure for continuous professional development in the education sector to enhance organizational productivity and accountability.

The above perspectives are consistent with findings from key informant interviews conducted with senior personnel in the Akwa Ibom State Ministry of Education. One of the directors in the Ministry, whose name is withheld for confidentiality, stated emphatically:

“Poor funding remains a major bottleneck to staff development and organizational productivity within the Ministry. Over the years, we’ve struggled with insufficient financial support for training programmes, which are essential for capacity building and improved service delivery.”

This view was reinforced by the Director of Administration, who noted:

“We hardly receive the full budgetary provision for training and staff development. Even when such provisions are approved, the actual release of funds is often delayed, and what we eventually get is not enough to run meaningful or impactful capacity-building programmes.”

This response underscores the persistent gap between training budget estimates and actual disbursements, which hampers the Ministry's ability to implement structured and effective training programmes. As the informant further explained, the erratic funding system leads to ad hoc and unsustainable training efforts, which fail to enhance the capacity of staff in line with evolving educational demands.

Similarly, a Deputy Director in the Department of Planning shared the following insight:

“Only a small percentage of staff ever benefit from training programmes, and even then, it is usually when development partners or NGOs provide funding. State-sponsored training is very limited and typically reserved for senior officials.”

This selective allocation of training opportunities, according to the informant, creates a deep imbalance within the Ministry, as lower and mid-level staff rarely have access to professional development. This inequity not only stunts career growth but also limits institutional productivity since the bulk of administrative and operational responsibilities lie with these neglected cadres. These testimonies are consistent with the findings of Etim and Daniel (2020), who assert that poor and inconsistent funding for staff development in public institutions, particularly in the education sector, leads to ineffective workforce management, low morale, and diminished performance. Without consistent exposure to innovations in educational leadership, planning, and digital tools, staff remain outdated in their approaches to service delivery.

Evaluation of Research Question II: how has poor training facilities affect the level to which staffs are trained and developed in Akwa Ibom State Ministry of Education?

In addition to poor funding, the lack of modern training facilities poses another major obstacle to effective staff development in the Akwa Ibom State Ministry of Education. Training programmes, when occasionally conducted, are often hosted in outdated and poorly equipped venues that lack the technological tools and resources necessary for effective adult learning and professional development. Udofia (2019) points out that most of the training centres used by the Ministry lack access to computers, audiovisual equipment, internet connectivity, and digital learning platforms, making it difficult to deliver up-to-date knowledge or engage staff through interactive and innovative methods. This lack of modern infrastructure significantly diminishes the quality of training and the ability of staff to translate the knowledge gained into improved performance.

Furthermore, many training sessions rely heavily on traditional lecture-based formats, with minimal hands-on activities or access to digital content. As a result, staff often return to their roles without acquiring the practical skills needed to respond to new educational demands such as digital record-keeping, e-learning platforms, and data-driven planning. The limited level to which staff are developed in the Ministry is also exacerbated by the absence of a centralized training institute. Aguisiogu and Nweze (2021) argue that professional development must be continuous, structured, and tailored to the needs of various staff levels, including junior officers and field workers. However, in Akwa Ibom State, most training is concentrated among senior officials, leaving a significant portion of the workforce underdeveloped.

Aside from funding issues, the absence of modern training facilities also contributes significantly to poor staff development outcomes in the Ministry. Most training programmes are conducted in outdated centres lacking essential infrastructure like computers, projectors, internet access, and digital learning tools.

Collaboratively, the responses gathered from the key informant interviews align closely with the earlier discussion on infrastructural limitations and unequal access to

staff development opportunities in the Akwa Ibom State Ministry of Education. Several staff members expressed dissatisfaction with the poor state of training facilities and the manner in which development programmes are implemented.

A senior staff member from the Human Resource Unit explained:

“When we do get training opportunities, we are often hosted in facilities that have no multimedia tools. Sessions are mostly theory-based, and there’s very little engagement with modern teaching technologies or practical demonstrations. It’s difficult to take back anything meaningful from such sessions.”

This highlights a critical gap between training content and delivery, as the absence of ICT tools and interactive methodologies hinders knowledge retention and the practical application of skills acquired during training. The observation supports Udofia’s (2019) finding that most training centres in the state are not adequately equipped for professional capacity development, especially for an education workforce expected to drive innovation in teaching and learning.

Another informant, an officer from the Schools’ Supervision Department, further lamented:

“There’s no dedicated training school or institute for continuous staff development in the Ministry. We depend on rented or borrowed venues that were not designed for learning or professional development. Sometimes, training is held in meeting halls that lack even basic equipment like projectors.”

This response reflects the structural inadequacies facing the Ministry in building a resilient, future-ready workforce. The lack of a centralized, fully equipped training facility severely limits the effectiveness of any staff development initiative, no matter how well-intentioned.

A junior administrative officer also shared their concern over exclusion and inequality in training access:

“Many of us at the lower level are left out entirely. Most of the training is meant for directors or those close to political appointees. We don’t even get notifications, let alone invitations. It’s as if our professional development doesn’t matter.”

This exclusionary pattern reflects systemic inequities that prevent equitable capacity enhancement across all staff levels. The result is a growing skills gap between the senior and lower cadres, which weakens the overall functionality of the Ministry and reduces institutional effectiveness. These concerns mirror the argument of Aguisiogu and Nweze (2021), who stressed that training in the public sector must be inclusive, continuous, and supported by modern facilities to foster productivity and morale. Without deliberate efforts to provide modernized, accessible training infrastructure, many public institutions especially those in the education sector will continue to underperform.

Findings

Finding from Research Question one revealed that poor funding of staff training and development programmes has significantly undermined the capacity of the Akwa Ibom State Ministry of Education to enhance organizational productivity. Budgetary allocations for training are often either insufficient or not fully released, resulting in poorly implemented and uncoordinated training efforts. Key informant interviews confirmed that only a few staff benefit from training, primarily when external donors are involved. Most state-sponsored training is irregular, limited in scope, and often reserved for senior officials. This has contributed to low staff morale, skill stagnation, and weakened policy implementation.

Similarly, Finding from Research Question two also established that the lack of modern training facilities constitutes a major obstacle to effective staff development. Most training venues used by the Ministry are outdated and poorly equipped with inadequate ICT tools, limited internet connectivity, and minimal access to multimedia equipment. Interviews with staff confirmed that many training sessions are largely theoretical and lack practical engagement. Furthermore, there is no centralized training institute for the Ministry, and most junior and mid-level staff are

excluded from available training opportunities. This situation has deepened the skills gap within the Ministry and negatively affected the quality of educational service delivery.

Discussion of Findings

The findings from this study align with existing literature and reinforce the critical role that adequate funding and infrastructure play in public sector staff development. Etim and Daniel (2020) argue that consistent financial investment is essential for structured and meaningful capacity-building initiatives. The evidence from key informants validates this position, illustrating how delayed or partial funding compromises the planning and execution of training programmes in the Ministry. The findings also highlight systemic inequities in access to development opportunities. The restriction of training to senior staff undermines the potential contributions of lower and mid-level employees, who are essential to day-to-day operations. As Udom and Akpan (2022) observe, such practices breed dissatisfaction and inefficiency, ultimately affecting organizational outcomes. Regarding training infrastructure, the study reinforces Udofia's (2019) assertion that poor facilities hinder knowledge transfer and practical skill acquisition. The interviews revealed that the absence of modern tools like projectors, computers, and internet access severely diminishes the quality of training. Aguisiogu and Nweze (2021) emphasize that without modern facilities and inclusive approaches, public sector institutions will continue to struggle with productivity and innovation. The cumulative impact of poor funding and lack of training infrastructure has resulted in an under-skilled workforce, weakened institutional effectiveness, and poor education sector outcomes in Akwa Ibom State.

Conclusion

This study concludes that poor funding of staff development programmes and the lack of modern training facilities significantly hinder organizational productivity in the Akwa Ibom State Ministry of Education. These limitations result in irregular, underfunded, and largely ineffective training efforts, with lower-level staff often excluded from professional development opportunities. Consequently, many

employees remain ill-equipped with outdated skills and knowledge, affecting the Ministry's ability to deliver quality educational services. The absence of adequate infrastructure, such as ICT tools and digital learning resources, further reduces the impact of training programmes. To overcome these barriers, the following recommendations are made:

Recommendations

i. Establish a Dedicated and Legally Backed Training Fund

The Akwa Ibom State Government should create a statutory training fund within the Ministry of Education with dedicated annual budgetary allocations. This fund should ensure timely disbursement and cover inclusive training for all staff levels to bridge the competence gap and enhance productivity.

ii. Develop a State-of-the-Art Training Institute for Education Personnel

The government should invest in a centralized training institute equipped with modern ICT tools, multimedia resources, and access to digital learning platforms. This will improve the quality of delivery training, promote hands-on learning, and modernize staff competencies in line with global standards.

iii. Institutionalize Inclusive and Structured Staff Development Policies

The Ministry should implement policies that guarantee equal access to training for all cadres of staff. This includes clear criteria for training selection, rotation schedules, and mandatory development plans tailored to job functions. This approach will ensure holistic workforce improvement and better organizational outcomes.

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Sample Questions used for Key Informant Interview

Section A: Questions Related to Poor Funding of Staff Development Programmes

1. What major challenges does the Ministry face in funding staff training and development programmes?
2. How often does the Ministry receive the full budgetary provision for staff training and development?
3. When funds are approved for training, are they released on time and in adequate amounts?
4. How does this irregular or insufficient funding affect the implementation of capacity-building programmes in the Ministry?
5. Who typically benefits from staff training programmes in the Ministry—are they accessible to all staff levels?
6. How does the limited access to training for junior and mid-level staff affect the overall productivity of the Ministry?

Section B: Questions Related to Poor Training Facilities and Staff Development Outcomes

7. Can you describe the kind of facilities usually used for staff training in the Ministry?
8. How do you assess the availability of modern tools such as projectors, computers, and internet during training sessions?
9. Is there a dedicated or centralized training institute for continuous staff development in the Ministry?
10. How effective are the venues currently used in supporting professional and skill-based learning?

11. Do lower-level staff receive equal opportunities for training and development in the Ministry?
12. How does this perceived exclusion from training affect morale and professional growth among junior staff?
13. What do you think can be done to ensure more equitable and impactful training programmes for all staff categories?