ENHANCING NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN NIGERIA THROUGH CAPACITY BUILDING OF THE WORKFORCE

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Abstract
The situation of capacity building in the Nigerian workforce has been a pathetic one for a long time, especially with regards to the quality of goods and services from our production and service industry, the quality of teaching and research in our tertiary institutions and the prevalence of skill gap in the Nigerian workforce. It has become an issue that create worry and grave concern because of the incessant rejection and neglect of Nigeria's products and services including the unemployability state of most Nigerian graduates at the international labour market due to high level of deficiency in capabilities in relation to excellent academic qualifications as a result of poor educational training. The data for this paper was collected through a review of related literatures from various media. The paper therefore examines the need for capacity building in Nigeria and also suggests capacity building strategies necessary to enhance national development in Nigeria.

Keywords: Capacity, Strategy, Capacity Building, National Development, Workforce.

Introduction
Capacity simply refers to an individual's ability or capability to function. Capacity can be expressed in terms of maximum possible output or performances. Simply put, capacity building is the process of developing and improving the capabilities of an individual to function more effectively. Capacity building is the gateway to national development because no nation can succeed without a highly skilled and efficiently capacitated workforce. National development entails establishing and building "a free and democratic society; a just and egalitarian society; a united, strong and self-reliant nation; a great and dynamic economy; and a land full of bright opportunities for all citizens"(FRN, 2014). It involves the total transformation of society, making humanity the focus of the development drive and seeking to develop man's potentialities to the fullest. National development includes reduction of poverty, wealth creation and equitable distribution of wealth, ensuring nutrition and health, housing and ancillary services, social security and welfare (Mohammed, 1991). It entails building capacities to advance material and human capital or human resources for effective production of goods and services.
Unfortunately Nigeria has failed to achieve its national development goals due to a poorly capacitated workforce. The country is still trapped in a vicious cycle of underdevelopment, security crisis, political and social upheavals that threaten national unity. The people are still engulfed in ignorance, disease, and poverty. According to United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)(2019) report, Nigeria was classified as one of the countries with low human development index. This implies that the country is still characterized with high level of poverty, insecurity, poor nutrition and sanitation, high illiteracy level, health crisis, dead infrastructure and lack of improved water sources (Agba & Agba 2008). These problems have been attributed to a number of factors including lack of visionary and strategic leaders, corruption, poor utilization of human and natural resources and above all neglect to capacity building which is a major management improvement technique. This paper therefore sets out to examine the capacity building strategies: the gateway to national development in Nigeria in the 21st century.

Conceptual Overview of Capacity Building

In a report by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) (2015) capacity building also referred to as capacity development was described as a conceptual approach to development that focuses on understanding the obstacles that inhibit people, governments, international organizations and non-governmental organization from realizing their developmental goals while enhancing the abilities that will allow them to achieve measurable and sustainable results. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)(2010) defines capacity building as a long-term

continual process of development that involves all stakeholders; including ministries, local authorities, governmental and non-governmental organizations, professionals, community members, academics and more. Capacity building uses, develops and improves a country's human, scientific, technological, organizational, institutional and resource capabilities. The goal of capacity building is to tackle problems related to policy and methods of development, while considering the potential, limits and needs of the people of the country concerned. The UNDP outlines that capacity building takes place on an individual level, an institutional level and societal level.

- **Individual level** – Capacity building on an individual level requires the development of conditions that allow individual participants to build and enhance existing knowledge and skills. It also calls for the establishment of conditions that will allow individuals to engage in the "process of learning and adapting to change".
- **Institutional Level** - Capacity building on an institutional level should involve aiding pre-existing institutions in developing countries. It should not involve creating new institutions, rather modernizing existing institutions and supporting them in forming sound policies, organizational structures, and effective methods of management and revenue control.
- **Societal Level** - Capacity building at the societal level should support the establishment of a more interactive public administration that learns equally from its actions and from feedback it receives from the population at large. In this case capacity building must be used to develop public administrators that are responsive and accountable.

The World Customs Organization (WCO)(2009) defines capacity building as "activities which strengthen the knowledge, abilities, skills and behavior of individuals and improve institutional structures and processes such that the organization can efficiently meet its mission and goals in a sustainable way". Capacity building is defined as the "process of developing and strengthening the skills, instincts, abilities, processes and resources that organization and communities need to survive, adapt and thrive in the fast-changing world" (Anabel, 2018). Capacity building is the element that gives fluidity, flexibility and functionality of a personnel, program or organization to adapt to changing needs of the population that is served.

Capacity building is much more than mere training and includes the following:

- **Human Resource Development:** The process of equipping individuals with the understanding, skills access to information, knowledge and training that enables them to perform effectively.
- **Organizational Development:** The elaboration of management structures, processes and procedures, not only within organizations but also the management of relationships between the different organizations and sectors (public, private and community).
- **Institutional and Legal Framework Development:** Making legal and regulatory changes to enable organizations, institutions and agencies at all levels and in all sectors to enhance their capacities (Eade, 2007).

Capacity building in a broad development context implies a dynamic process which enables individuals and agencies to develop the critical social and technical capabilities to identify and analyses problems and proffer solutions (Olajide, 2015). Similarly Ngozi (2019) refers to capacity building as activities that improve an organization's ability to achieve its mission or a person's ability to define and realize his/her goals or to do his/her jobs more effectively. In other words, capacity building is the process by which individuals, organizations and societies develop abilities to perform functions, solve problems, set and achieve goals.

From the conceptual review it is obvious that capacity building is the sine qua non for development in any nation since innovations in science and technology is an everyday phenomenon. Therefore engineers, members of staff of organizations and other stakeholders in the workforce should be at the fore front of current information, skills and knowledge acquisition and like the Boy Scout must always be prepared to learn, unlearn and relearn so as to update their knowledge and capabilities to enhance national development. In support of this, Fullan (2007) alludes that the illiterates of the 21st century are not those who cannot read and write, but those who cannot learn, unlearn and relearn. It is therefore imperative for the engineers (the think tanks of the society) and other members of the workforce to personally embrace capacity building activities to acquire the capabilities necessary for national development in the 21st century.

The Need for Capacity Building in the Nigerian Workforce
Capacity building is necessary because of the high level of underdevelopment in Nigeria which is as a result of the prevalence of skill gap among the workforce or members of staff in most organizations in Nigeria. A skill denotes expertise or ability developed in the course of training and experience. It includes not only trade and craft skills acquired by apprenticeship, but also includes high-grade performance in various fields such as professional practice, education, leadership, the arts, games and athletics. Adetokunbo (2009) describes a skill gap or performance gap as a significant gap between the needed skills and the current capabilities of the workforce in an organization. A skill gap is the shortage in performance. It is a negative performance. It is the difference between the standard required or expected performance and the actual performance from a worker. In other words, skill gap is the standard required performance minus the present performance. He further stated that the prevalence of skill gap in the Nigerian workforce has negatively affected the quality of goods and services from Nigeria as well as the quality of teaching and research in our tertiary institutions, consequently leading to the accumulation of graduates with very good certificates but without the requisite capabilities to function effectively in the work place: thereby supporting the united nations statement that "over 60% of Nigerian graduates are not employable"(UNDP,2019).

Measuring skill gap: Skill gap analysis is a scientific quotient developed by researchers for measuring skill gap. In this analysis, they compare the performer's (the worker) skills with the standard skills required for a particular kind of job in order to determine the deficiency and to identity future performance improvement opportunities. The present behavior (B) is subtracted from the desired standard (S) to measure the performance gap (G) This measurement, $S-B = G$, becomes the span that must be bridged in order to reach the objective. Therefore, it is the measured skill gap that determines the kind of capacity building training needed to bridge the gap so as to improve the performance of the capacity-deficient staff. Skill gap analysis can also be use for personal improvement of capabilities.

For leaders who want to plan for future requirements (visioning), you determine where you are now [present behavior (B)] and where you want to go [the future standard (S)]. Again, the difference $S-B$ is the performance gap (G).In other words, skill gap (G) = standard expected performance (S) minus present actual performance (B) i.e. $G = S-B$.
He further stated that in every organization the gaps are noticeable in five major areas:
- **Basic skills:** These include proficiency in reading, writing, simple calculations, communications and human relations.
- **Technical skills:** These are capabilities in manipulating engines, machines, equipments, constructions, computers, etc.
- **Professional skills:** These are required skills in fields like engineering, law, medicine, marketing, teaching, nursing, surveying, architecture, etc.
- **Management/leadership Skills:** These cover areas like supervision, team-building, goal-setting, planning, motivation, decision making, delegation, ethical judgment, etc.
- **Emotional intelligence skills:** These are innate capabilities. They manifest as self-awareness, self-discipline, persistence, sympathy, perseverance, intuition etc.

From the foregoing, it is obvious that bridging the skill gaps is not merely improving worker's competence in core fields like technology, engineering, science and mathematics, but there are gaps too in non-technical areas such as leadership, management and communication. Research shows that the changing nature of jobs due to innovations in science and technology affect the availability of labour to fill high-skilled jobs. Ironically, skill gaps result from technological advancements. Therefore, in reality, organizations will always face some types of skill gaps all the time; if they do not, they are not growing.As a result of the current trends in innovations, capacity building remains a vital necessity for every organization be it an educational or industrial organization to enhance national development in the 21st century.

Capacity Building Strategies at the Institutional Level
The UNDP in its 2008-2013 "strategic plan for capacity development in Africa" focuses on building capacity on an institutional level and offers a 5–step strategic process for systematic capacity building. The strategic steps are:

1) **Engage stakeholders on capacity development:** An effective capacity building process must encourage participation by all those involved. If stakeholders are involved and share ownership in the process of development they will feel more responsible for the outcome and sustainability of the development. Engaging stakeholders who are directly affected by the situation allows for more effective decision-making, it also makes development work more transparent. UNDP and its partners use advocacy and policy advisory to better engage stakeholders.

2) **Assess capacity needs and assets:** Assessing preexisting capacities through engagement with stakeholders allows capacity builders to see what areas require additional training, what areas should be prioritized, in what ways capacity building can be incorporated into local and institutional development strategies. The UNDP argues that capacity building that is not rooted in a comprehensive study and assessment of the preexisting conditions will be restricted to training alone, which will not facilitate sustained results.

3) **Formulate a capacity development response:** The UNDP says that once an assessment has been completed a capacity building response must be created based on four core issues:

   A. Institutional arrangements- assessments often find that institutions are inefficient because of bad or weak policies, procedures, resource management, organization, leadership, frameworks, and communication. The UNDP and its networks work to fix problems associated with institutional arrangements by developing human resource frameworks "cover policies and procedures for recruitment, deployment and transfer, incentives systems, skills development, performance evaluation systems, and ethics and values."

   B. Leadership-the UNDP believes that leadership by either an individual or an organization can catalyze the achievement of development objectives. Strong leadership allows for easier adaption to changes, strong leaders can also influence people. The UNDP uses coaching and mentoring programmers to help encourage the development of leadership skills such as, priority setting, communication and strategic planning.

   C. Knowledge- The UNDP believes knowledge is the foundation of capacity. They believe greater investments should be made in establishing strong education systems and opportunities for continued learning and the development of professional skills. They support the engagement in post-secondary education reforms, continued learning and domestic knowledge services.

   D. Accountability- the implementation of accountability measures facilitates better performance and efficiency. A lack of accountability measures in institutions allows for the proliferation of corruption. The UNDP promotes the strengthening of accountability frameworks that monitor and evaluate institutions. They also promote independent organizations that oversee, monitor and evaluate institutions for more effective performance.

4) **Implement a capacity development response**: Implementing a capacity building program should involve the inclusion of multiple systems; national, local, institutional. It should involve continual reassessment and expect change depending on changing situations. It should include evaluative indicators to measure the effectiveness of initiated programs.

5) **Evaluate capacity development**: Evaluation of capacity building promotes accountability. Measurements should be based on changes in an institutions performance. Evaluations should be based on changes in performance based around the four main issues: institutional arrangements, leadership, knowledge, and accountability.

Modalities for Enhancing Capacity Building of Nigeria Workforce for National Development

To effectively enhance the efficiency of the Nigerian workforce through capacity building, the researchers developed and proposed the adoption of the under listed Ten (10)-step modalities that can enhance national development:

1) **Building the Capacity of the Nigeria Government:** The federal government should invest seriously in building the capacity of the Nigeria government at the federal, state, and local level for better governance that can lead to sustainable development and democracy. Capacity building in governments often involves providing the tools to help governments best fulfill their responsibilities. These include building up a government's ability to budget, collect

revenue, create and implement laws, promote civic engagement, be transparent and accountable and also fight corruption. Capacity building is use here to capacitate government for a more effective performance.

2) **Conducting Skill Gap Analysis Periodically:** Organizations should conduct skill gap analysis periodically to determine the status of the actual capabilities of the workforce as compared to the standard expectation. This will enable the organization to know the kind of capacity building needed to fill the gap or bridge the performance gap that exist to reduce the trend of performance shortage to enhance improvement.

3) **Utilizing Capacity Building Training Opportunities:** Organizations should always utilize capacity building training opportunities available by national and international communities as well as government and non-governmental organizations such as NBTE, NCCE, NUC, CBN, UNDP, UNESCO and USAID etc.

4) **Organizing Periodic Professional Development Programmes:** Professional bodies should organize professional development programmes to build the capacity of its members. For instance, the council for the regulation of engineering in Nigeria COREN in addition to its duties should organize periodic training and retraining programmes for all cadres of engineering personnel to update their knowledge and skills in current innovative practices in the engineering profession that will promote national development. The various teaching professional bodies should sensitize the teachers at all levels of learning on the standard acceptable professional ethical practices that will enhance national development in the 21st century.

5) **Patronizing Indigenous Industries:** The federal government should encourage the growth of Nigeria industry by patronizing indigenous firms, contractors and consultants for all kinds of project. Nigeria should rely on local resources and indigenous effort to enhance our capacity building technologically. Machines and equipments should be developed in Nigeria. All spare parts for imported and indigenous machines should be fabricated in Nigeria in other to improve the level of our indigenous capabilities.

6) **Using Capabilities as a Basis for Promotion:** After conducting a critical skill gap analysis in an organization, staff competency and high capabilities should be used as a basis for promotion periodically. This strategy will motivate competent staff and incompetent or weak staff to put in more effort on the job.

7) **Curricular Review:** Appropriate educational curricular must be designed and implemented by our institutions of learning especially the technical colleges, polytechnics, monotechnics, college of technology, universities and other specialized training institutions. Skills that are in critical short supply must be addressed while tailoring the curricula to meet demand of employers and the global society.

8) **Promoting Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Literacy:** Literacy in ICT must become an imperative of all organization and should be integrated and implemented in all levels of education. The curriculum at all levels of studies must be geared towards empowering Nigerian citizens with the information technology (IT) skills they need for life-long learning, both in the work place and in private life.

9) **Promoting Further Education:** The door for continuing to further education should always be open for those who wanted to, so as to maintain appropriate levels of standard. This will enable acquisition of new knowledge and skills for national development.

10) **Partnership with Industries and Corporate Bodies:** Organizations and educational institutions can build capacity appropriately by encouraging partnership and alliance with relevant industries and corporate bodies. This will accelerate human capacity building as in train the trainer programmes. The close link with industry also helps to develop strong career orientation necessary to function well in the world of work to enhance national development.

Conclusion

The paper examined the need for capacity building of the Nigerian workforce and also stresses that, capacity building remains a single major factor for national development. It also highlights the capacity building modalities needed for national development since no nation can make any meaningful development in the 21st century with a poorly capacitated workforce. Nigeria should begin now by investing seriously in capacity building programmes and adopt the necessary capacity building strategies which are the gateway for national development in the 21st century.

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