



## **In-Service Training as a Tool for Sustaining Lecturers' Capacity in Teaching and Learning in Rivers State Universities**

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### **ABSTRACT**

The study centred on in-service training as a tool for sustaining lecturers' capacity in teaching and learning in Rivers State Universities. Thus, two research questions and hypotheses were drawn for the study. The population of the study consists of 60 lecturers drawn from Faculty of Education in Rivers State University and University of Education, Port Harcourt. The researcher adopted purposive sampling technique. The instrument was titled, in-service training and teachers' capacity in teaching and learning questionnaire (ITTCTLQ). Nineteen (19) structured items were drawn for the study. Likert scale was used and the respondents were requested to the options: Strongly Agree (SA) Agree (A) Disagree (D) and strongly Disagree (SD). Thus, 60 copies of questionnaire were administered and retrieved 46 (77%) for the study. The data were analyzed using frequency tables, mean scores and standard deviation as well as t-test for the hypotheses. Findings indicated that that in-service training enhances knowledge production and acquisition, developed capacity to understand necessary and fundamental nature of their specializations and developing of relevant ability to utilize basic modern instructional materials in teaching and learning. It was therefore recommended that there should be provision for positive reinforcement after training for transmission of the acquired knowledge and skills.

**Keywords:** in-service training, capacity, staff development, lecturers

### **INTRODUCTION**

In-service training is a component of staff development used for the purpose of improving the performance of an individual staff with assigned job responsibilities. In another development, it is used to develop a sense of purpose, broaden perception of the staff and increase the capacity to gain knowledge and mastery of techniques. This is often done through induction/orientation, on the job training, refresher courses, career development and other activities in which a serving staff may participate for the purpose of extending his/her professional knowledge and skills (Edo,2008).

As revealed by Olalekan (2009) in-service training developed capacity of the lecturers through designing effective educational research, developing relevant school curriculum, instructional management and evaluating of school climate. This implies that academic staff must possess thorough understanding of the learning process as well as the ability to communicate adequately in their respective area of specializations. In this respect, human skills and development must be seen as a factor that promotes an organizational set up. The advantage is that the application of acquired skills will go a long way to ensure increase in academic advancement.

#### **Statement of the Problem**

Lecturers constitute major component unit of the school hence undertakes the bulk of the entire processes of instruction. There is need to equip them with the required skills and potentialities to measure up with the educational challenges globally. Hence, lecturers have to be exposed through variety of training activities that will generate adequate background in different areas of specialization. Unfortunately, policies and programmes are not fully set in place to enhance and promote the potentialities of academic staff through in-service training. Insufficient provision of development opportunities for lecturers to acceptable standard inevitably constitutes the major sources of less quality of achievement.

#### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of the study was to examine in-service training as a tool for sustaining lecturers' capacity in teaching and learning in Rivers State universities. Thus, the specific objectives were: to determine

how in-service training enhances lecturers' capacity in teaching and learning as well as challenges of in-service training of lecturers in the universities.

### Research Questions

1. How does in-service training enhance lecturers' capacity in teaching and learning?
2. What are the challenges of in-service training of lecturers in the universities?

### Hypotheses

1. There is no significant difference in the opinions of male and female lecturers on how in-service training enhances teaching and learning.
2. There is no significant difference in the opinions of male and female lecturers on the challenges of in-service training of lecturers in the universities.

## REVIEW OF THE RELATED LITERATURE

The need for lecturers to improve their knowledge, skills, attitudes and behaviors while on the job is even more critical now in developing nations than ever before for a number of reasons. For instance, academic programmes in our universities rarely prepare candidates as finished products for their future positions and their accompanying responsibilities (Peretomode and Peretomode, 2001). There is also the issue of knowledge explosion, globalization and competition for talents (Fanny, 2001). This depicts that lecturers need to keep abreast of the time and the trends of knowledge development in their discipline so as not to become obsolete and made redundant. Therefore, the ultimate goal of in-service training is to enhance lecturers' job satisfaction, optimization of skills, talent and task accomplishment.

Jones (1994) stressed that development in the universities have to be geared towards acquiring or sharpening the capabilities of lecturers to perform various obligations, tasks, and functions associated with or related to their present or future expected roles. This implies increase in knowledge, skills and the development of positive attitude to work for enhancement of productivity and quality services. Mehmood (2008) identifies seminars, workshops, refresher courses, conferences and correspondence courses as in-service training strategies to sustain human capital quality in the university system. This ingredient facilitates changes and improves the quality of teaching and learning in educational institutions.

As succinctly put by Azam and Zainurin (2011), one of the objectives of in-service training is to equip academic staff with current pedagogical, knowledge and skills, latest technology and innovation in teaching and learning. This absolutely bestows on curriculum design, academic accountability, the use of technology in teaching and learning, generic skills, teaching and learning management. Other objectives are: student supervision, motivation strategies for the students, developing of counseling skills, understanding of the concepts of testing, measurement and assessment, preparation of answer scheme, test item analysis and exam analysis and evaluation. From this assertion, participant are exposed to varieties of skill and knowledge in each learning activities as well as acquainted with diversified strategies for the teaching-learning process. In order to have optimal in-service outcomes, the process always targets development of individuals' capacity to play their roles and fit in assigned responsibilities optimally for the attainment of quality service delivery. The programme foci may also include: understanding classroom management, lesson organization, recording and reporting students' work achievement, teaching skills, changing mode of lecturers' behavior and attitude to work, administration and material resource management, student management etc (Jamil, *et al.* 2011).

Literature revealed that human capital is a building block that increases the development of the universities but there is a relationship between in-service training and the quality of output by the institutions. This implies that training is vital and critical for the universities to develop and attain the expected outcomes. To sustain the credibility of in-service programme, systematic training is often organized by the universities and this has contributed significantly to the achievement of organizational goals. It is fundamental to note that capacity of individuals and organizations in the global academic competition or technological changes highly depended on the level or quality of the academic staff. In other words, the success or failure of the university depends on the level of productivity accruing from the academic staff. This implies that a well developed lecturer produces more than his counterparts of lesser training.

Enuku (2003) stated that management is always interested in developing academic staff because with the acquisition of necessary skills it would go a long way to increase capacity. He stated further that if academic staff is not at par with the modern administrative or academic challenges, it affects the rate

of achievement based on lack of technical know-how or experiences. On this note, academic staff is often exposed to the skills and knowledge to cope with changes in relation to their assigned roles. Because the management of the university understands this fact, opportunity are constantly created for the enhancement of staff capabilities.

The complexities and challenges of knowledge explosion have made other agencies and commissions such as: Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETfund), National Universities Commission (NUC) and other agencies to intermittently organize programmes for training lecturers in several categories of skills and knowledge. So, the business of in-service training is no more the sole responsibilities of the universities as other industries and agencies have seen that they can also benefit from the talents in the universities. Some of the professional organizations and agencies that have contributed to in-service training are: the Macarthur Foundation, African Economic Research Consortium and Mortenson Centre for International Libraries (Adeniji, 2010). Others are: Administrative Staff College of Nigeria (ASCON), Nigeria Institute of Management (NIM), Centre for Management Development (CMD), Industrial Training Fund (ITF), Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETfund).

In another development, Nwachukwu (1992) identified the challenges of in-service training thus:

- The objective of the training programmes may not be clearly stated to the participants. This means no mental preparedness for the achievement.
- Some staff exhibit lack luster attitudes as they perceive the programme as a few days off meant for relaxation.
- There is no positive reinforcement after training. It is relatively easy to provide opportunity to gain wider experience but at the same time no promotion to higher position.
- The trainee may not have opportunity to put what he/she learns into practice.
- There is inadequate support from the management and executive.
- Some related programmes are not properly planned or evaluated to ascertain the effectiveness.

Based on the above assertion, Ebong (1995) also acknowledged that non-transferability of knowledge is a big set back to the aims and objectives of the programme. In practice, in-service is an action packed but experience is easily forgotten once the participants go back to school and settle into the system. This is made worst especially in an environment where the option to practice the new skills, techniques knowledge acquired is optional. Some lecturers due to laziness and ease tend to fall back to the traditional ways of practice because no one in the school cares to know or encourage the new approaches.

Many employers have failed in organizations because of lack of basic training which was not identified and provided for as an indispensable part of management function. An organization may have employees with the ability and determination, appropriate equipment and managerial support yet productivity falls below expected standards. The missing factor in many cases is the lack of adequate skills and knowledge which can be acquired through training and development. Thus, in-service training of teaching staff has become a compulsory feature for adequate performance, competence and success. It is a stock of skills and knowledge necessary for effective and efficient management of instructional and curriculum activities (Edo, 2008). In other words, it is often associated with some set of skills useful for quality job delivery. In any training, skills are updated for comparative advantage especially with the present global academic changes and challenges. Hence, to achieve sustainable creativity, innovative workforce and high quality services, universities must develop complex strategic planning through the process of in-service training that fully incorporate individual and organizational needs.

## **METHODOLOGY**

The study adopted descriptive survey design. The population of the study consists of thirty lecturers each from Rivers State University and University of Education, Port-Harcourt, Faculty of Education. The sampling technique was purposive. The instrument was titled: In-service Training and Lecturers' Capacity in Teaching and Learning Questionnaire (ITLCTLQ). Twenty one items were drawn for the study. The respondents were requested to response to research questions rated on 4-points scale of: Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (DA) and strongly Disagree (SD). Thus, 60 copies of questionnaires were distributed and retrieved 46 (77%) copies for the analysis of research questions using frequency tables mean scores and t-test for the hypotheses.

**RESULTS**

**Research question 1:** *How does in-service training enhance lecturers' capacity in teaching and learning?*

**Table 1: Responses on in-service training and lecturers' capacity in teaching and learning**

	Items	Male lecturers N= 25		Female lecturers N=21		Mean set	Remarks
		$\bar{X}$	Std	$\bar{X}$	Std		
1	Covering course outline before the end of the semester.	1.52	0.51	2.05	0.74	1.79	Disagreed
2	Provision of students' cumulative examination scores.	3.24	0.66	2.52	0.51	2.88	Disagreed
3	Adequate utilization of modern instructional materials in teaching and learning.	1.88	0.33	3.48	0.68	2.68	Agreed
4	Completion of teaching-work-load before the end the semester or session.	1.48	0.57	3.33	0.86	2.41	Agreed
5	Enhance lecturers' ability to work independently and creatively.	3.24	0.59	3.48	0.81	3.36	Agreed
6	Regular class attendance.	1.52	0.51	1.57	0.59	1.55	Disagreed
7	Adequate supervision of undergraduate and post graduate projects.	3.68	0.56	2.81	0.93	3.25	Agreed
8	Provision of quality journal articles /monographs.	3.08	0.75	3.29	0.72	3.19	Agreed
9	Provision of standard working papers and technical reports.	3.24	0.72	3.19	0.75	3.22	Agreed
10	Quality production of textbooks/ chapters.	1.40	0.50	3.29	0.56	2.35	Agreed
11	Provision of scientific peer-reviewed bulletins.	1.40	0.50	1.71	0.64	1.56	Disagreed
12	Regular marking of assignments and tests.	3.28	0.74	3.05	0.92	3.17	Agreed
		2.41	0.59	2.89	0.73	2.66	

From the table 2.2 above, the respondents accepted item 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10 and 12 as the process in which in-service training enhancing lecturers' capacity for adequate teaching and learning in the universities system. In other words, the respondents generally subscribed to the items with the average mean score of 2.66.

**Research question 2:** *What are the challenges of in-service training of lecturers in the universities?*

**Table 2: Responses on the challenges of in-service training of lecturers in the universities**

	Items	Male lecturers N=25		female lecturers N=21		Mean set	Remarks
		$\bar{X}$	Std	$\bar{X}$	Std		
1	Adequate number of staff in the universities	1.48	0.59	1.52	0.60	1.50	Disagreed
2	Inadequate physical facilities	3.30	0.74	3.29	0.72	3.29	Agreed
3	inadequate Linkages between universities and industries	1.90	0.92	1.62	0.49	1.76	Disagreed
4	inadequate funding	2.64	0.70	3.19	0.81	2.92	Agreed
5	Limited collaboration between universities and other educational agencies	3.64	0.57	3.43	0.75	3.54	Agreed
6	Lack of reinforcement after on-the-job training	3.16	1.03	3.62	0.59	3.39	Agreed
7	Lack of promotion after the programme	3.12	0.78	3.33	0.58	3.23	Agreed
8	Adequate supervision of students' academic activities	1.80	0.76	1.62	0.49	1.71	Disagreed
9	Inability to develop standard course outlines	3.28	0.74	3.38	0.67	3.33	Agreed
	Total	2.70	0.76	2.78	0.63	2.74	

The result of table 2.2 demonstrated that item 2, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 9 were accepted by the respondents as challenging of in-service training of lecturers. Hence, it was generally confirmed that respondents agreed to the items with the average mean score of 2.74.

**Test of hypotheses**

Ho<sub>1</sub>: There is no significant difference in the opinions of male and female lecturers on how their capacity is enhanced in teaching and learning?

**Table 4.3: Hypothesis using t-test**

Variables	N	$\bar{X}$	Std	Df	t-cal	t-Crit	Level of Sign	Remarks
Male lecturers	25	2.41	0.59	45	0.79	1.96	0.05	Accepted
Female lecturers	21	2.89	0.73					

The result of table 4.3 above revealed that the t-cal (0.79) was less than t-crit (1.96) at degree of freedom (45). Hence, the null hypothesis was accepted. In other words, there is no significant difference in the opinions of male and female lecturers on how their capacity was enhanced in teaching and learning.

Ho<sub>2</sub>: There is no significant difference in the opinions of male and female lecturers on the challenges of in-service training of lecturers in the universities.

**Table 4.4: Hypothesis using t-test**

Variables	N	$\bar{X}$	Std	Df	t-cal	t-Crit	Level of Sign	Remarks
Male lecturers	25	2.70	0.76	45	0.45	1.96	0.05	
Female lecturers	21	2.78	0.63					

The result of table 4.4 above revealed that the t-cal (0.45) was less than t-crit (1.96) at degree of freedom (45). Hence, the null hypothesis was accepted. In other words, no significant difference exists in the opinions of male and female lecturers on the challenges of in-service training of lecturers in the universities.

## DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The result of research question one revealed that in-service training enhance lecturers capacity in teaching and learning in respects of adequate utilization of modern instructional materials in teaching and learning, creating ability to work independently in their areas of specialization, adequate supervision of undergraduate and post graduate projects, provision of quality journal articles /monographs, provision of standard working papers and technical reports and regular marking of assignments and tests. Hypothetically, no significant difference exists in the opinions of male and female lecturers on how their capacity is enhanced in teaching and learning.

These view agreed the proposition of Jamil, *et al.* (2011) who stated that the process always targets development of lecturers' capacity to play their roles and fit in assigned responsibilities optimally for the attainment of quality service delivery. Supporting above, Azam, *et al.* (2011) stated that the programme foci may also include: understanding classroom management, lesson organization, recording and reporting students' work achievement, teaching skills, changing mode of teacher's behavior and attitude to work, teacher's administration, material resource management and student management .

The result of research question two showed that challenges of in-service training reflects on: inadequate physical facilities, inadequate funding, limited collaboration between universities and other educational agencies, lack of reinforcement after training and inability to develop standard course outlines. The hypothesis indicated that there is no significant difference in the opinions of male and female lecturers on the challenges of in-service training of lecturers in the universities.

The above findings gained the accepted of Nwachukwu (1992) who opined that some staff exhibit lack luster attitudes as they perceive the programme as a few days off meant for relaxation couple with no positive reinforcement after training. It is relatively easy to provide opportunity to gain wider experience but at the same time no promotion to higher position hence preventing the trainee from having opportunity to put what he/she learns into practice. Supporting the above facts, Ebong (1995) also acknowledged that non-transferability of knowledge from in-service training is a big set back to the aims and objectives of the programme. In practice, in-service is an action packed but experience is easily forgotten once the participants go back to school and settle into the system.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the findings, it is therefore concluded that enabling environment and opportunities be created for consistent acquisition of knowledge, skills and potentialities to pursuit the academic excellence.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Sufficient resources should be provided to assure effectiveness during the programme. There should be provision for positive reinforcement after training for transmission of the acquired knowledge and skills. Varieties of development programme or activities should be provided to accommodate the interest of non-academic staff.

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