



Human Capital Development and Service Delivery in Nigeria's Public Service: The Role of Administrative Staff College of Nigeria

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Abstract

Reforms in the Nigerian Public Service have aimed to overcome challenges of ineffectiveness and inefficiency in service delivery. Among these reforms, the establishment of training institutions was highlighted by the Public Service Review Commission of 1974, leading to the creation of the Administrative Staff College of Nigeria (ASCON), a premier training institute for the public service. Despite such efforts, challenges in service delivery continue to be a concern. This study explores the impact of Human Capital Development (HCD) programmes on service delivery within Nigeria's Public Service, focusing on the efficacy of these programs in addressing persisting inefficiencies. Adopting a case study approach, this research integrated quantitative and qualitative techniques, including surveys and document analysis. Quantitative results highlighted a weak, yet statistically significant, positive relationship between the Relevance of Content of Curriculum (RCC) and Benefits from the course attended (BC) ($r=0.012$, $p<0.05$). Conversely, a weak, non-significant negative association was found between Utilization of Knowledge (UK) and Participation in Training (PT) ($r= -0.003$, $p>0.05$). Qualitatively, while some progress has been evident in certain domains, persistent challenges, such as limited funding, policy inconsistencies, and a lack of alignment between training initiatives and public service requirements, were identified. This study recommends key reforms for ASCON to enhance Nigeria's Public Service delivery: implementing a structured feedback system for quality assurance, revitalizing training programs to meet current inefficiencies, integrating tailored project management techniques, aligning with contemporary technological trends, and fostering public-private partnerships for better facilities management.

Keywords: ASCON, HCD, Nigerian Public Service, Training



Citation of article: Olufunmilayo, O. & Chigozie, U. (2024). Human Capital Development and Service Delivery in Nigeria's Public Service: The Role of Administrative Staff College of Nigeria, *African Journal of Politics and Administrative Studies AJPAS*, 17(1):403-426
Date Submitted: 28/03/2023 **Date Accepted:** 09/04/2023 **Date Published:** June, 2024

Introduction

The concern of human capital and, subsequently, its development has been a recurrent global issue because of the major role it plays in the achievement of growth and development, which has been a significant challenge for African governments as a whole and Nigeria in particular. The role of the human capital in achieving organizational objectives cannot be over emphasized; in fact, the ability of any organization, the public service inclusive, in implementing its strategy and achieving its goals and objectives depends on whether it can organize, develop, and manage its human resources effectively (Paauwe, 2020). It is in recognition of this fact that (Carlson, 1994) opined that any organization that aspires to a positive change or improved quality in service delivery would, as a matter of necessity, strive to acquire quality human resources.

Human capital development, anchored in theories by prominent economists such as Jacob Mincer, Theodore Schultz, and Gary Becker, refers to investments in vocational education, technical training, health, and values that are essential for societal progress. This concept traces its roots back to classical economists like Adam Smith, who saw humans as integral to wealth creation and economic advancement. In essence, human capital development equips individuals with the requisite knowledge and skills, ensuring they can fully contribute to an organization or nation's objectives (Olusadum, 2020).

Nigeria's history showcases a strong emphasis on human capital development, especially the post-colonial era when the nation recognized the necessity of a trained workforce for governance. However, despite substantial investments in training and extensive reforms, Nigeria's public service has been criticized for its inadequate service delivery, characterized by issues like corruption, incompetence, and inefficiency (Temitope & Qwabe, 2023). From Hunt's Commission of 1934 to the Obasanjo service renewal programme in year 2000, various reforms aimed at improving service delivery were instituted. Yet, the impact remains underwhelming;



while government expenditure soared by 500% between 2000 and 2012, public service quality saw a meager increase of 1.9% (Otivei, 2015, Oyelude , 2017).

Training, a critical part of human capital development and the focus of this study, was once perceived as a cost rather than an investment in countries like Nigeria and even in developed nations like the United Kingdom (Greer, 2021). However, the tide changed as countries realized the importance of a well-trained workforce in driving economic performance. The need for training institutions in Nigeria can be traced back to 1896 when some educated persons in Lagos proposed the establishment of a Training College and Industrial Institute (Emmanuel, 2021). However, it was the recommendations of the second national development plan (1970-1974) that gave considerable attention to the concerns for the training of public servants, and the report of the Public Service Review Commission (1974) culminated in the establishment of Training Institutes and manpower development agencies by the Government (Ogbonnaya, 2020).

One of such institutions is the Administrative Staff College of Nigeria (ASCON), established to provide advanced management training and foster better management practices. It was established through Decree No. 39 of 1973 (now ASCON Act, Cap 6, Vol. 1 LFN 1990). This paper aims to assess human capital development's role in the Nigerian public service and specifically gauge the impact of training programs provided by ASCON on service delivery. Despite the numerous human capital development initiatives and training programs in the Nigerian public sector, there are concerns regarding the integration and application of acquired skills, especially in areas of leadership, financial management, project management, facilities management, and ICT. The extent to which these trained skills directly influence and improve service delivery within their respective Ministries, Departments, and Agencies (MDAs) remains unclear. Therefore, the objectives are captured as follows:

1. To ascertain whether there is a successful integration of acquired skills in leadership, financial, and project management by public service personnel who have undergone human capital development initiatives.
2. To investigate the relationship between former trainees' new knowledge on facilities management and ICT and the subsequent improvement (or lack thereof) in service delivery within their respective MDAs.



Conceptual clarification

Human Capital

Human capital is a complex, multifaceted concept that draws from diverse fields and spans centuries of scholarly thought. Emerging from the economic realm, introduced by Sir William Petty in the 17th century and popularized by Adam Smith in 1776. The resurgence of human capital research in the 1960s was spearheaded by scholars like Mincer, Schultz, and Becker, emphasizing the individual's role and contributions within organizational frameworks.

Distinct perspectives shape the human capital discourse. A segment of literature narrows it to formal education, underlining knowledge and skills procured via structured educational activities. Another views it as knowledge and skills gleaned from personal experiences and on-the-job training, as argued by Mincer in 1996. Expanding the boundaries, some scholars see investments on human capital as enhancing individual, firm, and national well-being—encompassing health, nutrition, vocational training, and more. A broader interpretation posits it as a conglomeration of resources—knowledge, talents, skills, experiences—that collectively amplify a population's capacity, thereby advancing national goals.

These discussions also venture into categorizing human capital into three distinct types: General, Firm-Specific, and Task-Specific. General human capital, transferable across sectors, is accumulated through experiences and education. In contrast, Firm/Task-specific capital, primarily accrued through specialized training and experience, lacks easy transferability across varied professional landscapes.

Evolution of Human Capital Development

The emergence and evolution of "human capital development" (HCD) stands as a testament to the growing importance of nurturing and enhancing human potential. This assertion, gaining momentum from the 19th century, cannot be discussed without recognizing the parallel developments in HRM and HCM (Hamadamin & Atan, 2019).

The term "personnel management" surfaced in the early 1900s, the aftermath of the Industrial Revolution. Managers like Henri Fayol suggested that workplaces should focus not just on the tasks and their efficiencies but also on workers' psychological well-being and development. This



nascent recognition of the human element paved the way for more strategic and developmental approaches to people management. As the world recovered from World War II, "Human Resources Management" (HRM) ascended to prominence, signaling a broader approach to managing people, encompassing everything from recruitment to retirement (Kadam et al., 2022; Yusof et al. , 2023). It focused on the alignment of individual aspirations with organizational goals, ensuring people were both motivated and productive. However, as organizations recognized that their greatest assets were their people, the concept of Human Capital Management (HCM) began to crystallize. Beyond just managing people, HCM viewed employees as investments whose current and future value can and should be enhanced through targeted development initiatives. This is where HCD comes into focus, emphasizing the importance of investing in training, education, and other avenues to develop and enhance the skills, knowledge, and capabilities of the workforce. HCD bridges HRM's operational functionalities and HCM's strategic vision. While HRM provides the structure and the mechanisms for people management, and HCM emphasizes the strategic valuation of human assets, HCD is the process by which these assets are nurtured, refined, and developed. Central to this is the understanding that when given the right opportunities and tools, individuals can significantly increase their value to an organization, leading to mutual growth and success. In summary, human beings are repositories of innate talents and skills. But for them to meaningfully impact society, developmental interventions, both formal and informal, are crucial. Singular reliance on formal education or mere job experience may not suffice for optimal service delivery. The continuous pursuit of knowledge, often sidelined in many discourses, remains paramount to human capital's essence (Kadam et al., 2022).

Public Service Delivery

The public service is an indispensable instrument through which the government implements its policies and programmes. The former head of the Nigerian civil service, Stephen Oronsaye, describes it as the bridge between the government and the governed, stressing that an inefficient public service, therefore, constitutes a barrier between the government and the people (Oyedele, 2015). It is important to note that the 1999 constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria as the supreme law did not exclude employees of statutory corporations and boards as public servants.



Civil Service is often used synonymously with government, and it refers to the body of permanent officials appointed to assist the political executive in formulating and implementing government policies”. It also refers to ministries and departments within which specific aspects of government work are carried out (Adamolekun, 2007, Oyelude, 2023). Service Delivery is the tangible and intangible offerings by the government to elevate citizens' well-being. It spans social amenities, infrastructure, and security services, evaluating how well government services align with citizens' expectations (Ihemeje & Afegbua, 2020). In the achievement of this ultimate goal of government, efficiency, and effectiveness is pertinent. Efficiency refers to achieving maximum results with minimal resources and time, ensuring optimal utilization. Effectiveness, on the other hand, gauges the extent to which an organization realizes its set objectives. In the public sector, this means assessing how well services are delivered and if a conducive environment for development is maintained. Ultimately, an effective public service meets and aligns with societal values and expectations (Cole & Kelly, 2020; Lawan et al., 2023).

HCD as a Catalyst for Efficiency and Effectiveness in the Public Sector

(1) In Chen et al.'s 2021 study set in Taiwan, the focus is on the role of onboard training in influencing various facets of public service, including Public Service Motivation (PSM). The research found that training can be a potent tool for enhancing public service-related knowledge and fostering a positive attitude toward public service work. However, it's important to note that while training did show a measurable positive effect on these aspects, its influence on PSM was more limited. Satisfaction with the training was closely associated with gains in public service-related knowledge, indicating that the quality of training matters. Additionally, when trainees found the training to be useful, they exhibited more positive attitudes toward public service as well as some growth in PSM. These findings suggest that well-designed and effective training programs can positively impact the public service sector by enhancing knowledge and attitudes (Chen et al, 2021; Nkwede, 2013).

Mankiw, Romer, and Weil (1992) extend the Solow model to demonstrate that human capital accumulation, as indicated by educational levels, significantly impacts economic development and GDP growth. Similarly, Judson (1998) employs a model to evaluate the efficacy of education investments on economic development, using UNESCO data for his analysis. He finds



that while the correlation between human capital and GDP growth is not significant in countries with poor resource allocation, there is a significant positive relationship in countries where resources are reasonably allocated (Nonneman, & Vanhoudt, 1996). Both studies underscore the critical role of education in economic development, contingent upon effective resource allocation.

Silles (2009) investigates the impact of minimum school-leaving age on economic development. This study finds the impact of education on health is positive. The more the education gives more opportunities for employment and it further increases the more spending on health and education. The study concludes that for getting the optimal level of economic development it necessary for an economy to invest on physical as well as human capital. Zhang and Zhuang (2011) examined the effects of economic development by the composition of human capital in China. They use the data from different provinces of china from 1997 to 2006 According to their results they get three divisions in provinces between education and economic development. The results highlighted that those areas where education is high are economically highly developed than others, so we can say human development plays a significant role in economic development of a country.

Human Capital theory

This study is anchored on the theory of human capital. The theory of human capital has its origin in the field of macroeconomic development theory (Schultz, 1993). Becker (1993) argues that there are different kinds of capitals that include schooling, a computer training course and expenditures on medical care. This theory shows how education leads to increase in productivity and efficiency of workers by increasing the level of their cognitive skills. Theodore, Schultz (1993), Gary Becker (1993) and Jacob Mincer (1996) introduced the notion that people invest in education so as to increase their stock of human capabilities which can be formed by combining innate abilities with investment in human beings (Nadezhina, & Avduevskaia, 2021). Examples of such investments include expenditure on education, on- the- job training, health, and nutrition. Human capital theory rests on the assumption that formal education is highly instrumental and



necessary to improve the productive capacity of a population. Human capital theorists argue that an educated population is a productive population. The provision of formal education is seen as an investment in human capital, which proponents of the theory have considered as equally or even more worthwhile than that of physical capital (Kuzminov, et al., 2019). At its core, public service revolves around serving the citizenry and advancing public interest. A skilled, knowledgeable, and efficient workforce is indispensable to achieve these aims. This is where HCT comes into play. By understanding the significance of investments in human capital - including education, training, and health - public service agencies can enhance their efficacy, meet their mandates, and ensure high public satisfaction. Public service agencies often grapple with evolving policy landscapes, technological changes, and diverse public demands. As highlighted by HCT, effective training programs can equip public servants with the tools to navigate these challenges, ensuring that services are delivered seamlessly and that public trust in institutions is maintained (Becker, 1964). Given the constraints on public resources, efficiency is paramount. HCT suggests that investing in the training and development of public servants can lead to increased productivity and, consequently, better resource utilization. When public servants are well-trained, they can perform their duties more efficiently, leading to faster service delivery and reduced wastage (Schultz, 1961).

Methodology

The research utilized a mixed-methods approach to comprehensively understand the impact of training programs on participants from 12 MDAs.

A stratified random sampling technique was employed, leading to a sample size of 1,270 that consisted of both trainees and their supervisors. The selection of this sample size was underpinned by several considerations. Given the diverse range of skills, behaviors, and outcomes associated with human capital development, the intention to achieve a heightened precision in our estimates necessitated a substantial sample size. Furthermore, reference to established benchmarks, such as Krejcie and Morgan's (1970) sample size table, which suggests



a sample size of 384 for maximum variability in a population of 1,000,000, reinforced our choice. Factoring in our study's multifaceted nature of human capital attributes, a sample size of 1,270 was deemed adequate and appropriate.

The study employed a validated questionnaire to gauge various facets: The questionnaire was organized into four distinct sections. The first part gathered demographic details of the participants. The next segment presented questions requiring simple "yes" or "no" answers and fill-in-the-blank tasks. The third segment incorporated a five-point Likert scale, with ratings from "Excellent" to "Poor" and "Good" to "Below Average." The decision to use a questionnaire stemmed from its proven efficacy in obtaining varied data from a substantial number of participants, ensuring uniformity in the responses collected (Oni, 2010). Participation in Training (PT) (Cronbach's alpha (α) =0.89); Relevance of Content of Curriculum (RCC), (α =0.83); Benefits from Courses Attended (BC), (α =0.85); and Utilization of Knowledge Acquired (UK), (α =0.80). Of the 1,270 questionnaires administered, the response rate was 85.4%. Questionnaires were administered to ASCON trainees (those who had participated in the training in the past) of grade level 08 and above and their overseeing supervisors from the selected MDAs. To facilitate this process, three research assistants were employed. All interviews were personally conducted by the researcher using an interview guide. To complement the quantitative data, qualitative insights were sought through in-depth interviews. These were conducted with six officials from ASCON, 82 trainees, and 20 supervisors of trainees. Document reviews were also undertaken to triangulate the gathered data in the quest for a comprehensive perspective.

Quantitative data were subjected to descriptive and inferential statistical analyses using the SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences). Correlation and regression analyses were leveraged to test the posited hypotheses at a 5% significance level. Concurrently, the qualitative information gleaned from the interviews underwent transcription and was subsequently content-analyzed.

Presentation of Data

Administration of Questionnaire: One thousand (1000) copies of questionnaire designed for trainees were administered, eight hundred and forty-five (845) copies were retrieved;



two hundred and seventy (270) copies of questionnaire were designed and administered to Supervisors of trainees, two hundred and forty (240) copies were returned valid. Therefore, the ratio of supervisors to trainees in terms of retrieved questionnaire is 1: 4 (approximately). Supervisors in this context refers to the leaders of units/sub-units in departments within the MDAs. The trainees here refer to public officers who went through training at ASCON within the period under consideration. The customers are those who utilise the services of the MDAs in any way. The high level of responses recorded from various respondents in each Ministry/Department/Agency was due to the strategies adopted in administering the questionnaire. Research assistants were utilized, and the three groups of interest were approached at different venues (their offices, other areas of convergence, ASCON) for several weeks; in addition, the identified supervisors gave easy access to their subordinates, who are the trainees.

Descriptive Statistics

Demographic Analysis of the Trainees

Table 1 –Gender distribution of the respondents

| | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid male | 486 | 57.5 | 57.5 | 57.5 |
| female | 359 | 42.5 | 42.5 | 100.0 |
| Total | 845 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

Source: Field survey, 2016

Table 1 reveals the demographic details of respondents; 486 and 359 are females and males respectively, representing 42.5 percent and 57.5 of total respondents of 845 trainees. The ratio of male to female public servant is 2:1 approximately, which means that for every 2 male trainees there is just one female trainee, this affirms the belief that men are probably given priority in public service employment.

**Table 2: Distribution of Departments/Units sampled from each MDA**

| | Frequency | Valid Percent |
|-----------------------|-----------|---------------|
| Audit | 38 | 4.5 |
| Procurement | 206 | 24.4 |
| Compliance monitoring | 83 | 9.8 |
| Finance | 127 | 15.0 |
| Administrative | 237 | 28.0 |
| Planning and Design | 55 | 6.5 |
| ICT | 27 | 3.1 |
| Liaison and Research | 72 | 8.5 |
| Total | 845 | 100.0 |

Source: Field survey,2016

Table 2, It can be inferred that out of the 9 Departments/Units extracted from these MDAs that 4.5per cent, 24.4 per cent, 9.8 per cent, 15.0 per cent, 28.0 per cent, 6.5 per cent, 3.1 per cent, 8.5 per cent of copies of questionnaires were retrieved from Audit, Procurement, Compliance monitoring, Finance, Administrative, Planning and design, ICT and Liaison and Research departments respectively. In other words, Administrative departments recorded the highest number of respondents followed by Procurement departments, Finance Departments, Compliance monitoring departments, Liaison and Research departments, Planning and Design departments, ICT departments and auditing departments respectively. While their descriptive indices shows the pooled mean as 1.967 which implies that the Means of the various Departments/Units are clustered around two trainees per department and the Variation among the departments is 0.045. Since the mean is greater than the skewness and the kurtosis, we assume that the distribution under consideration is normal.

**Table 3 Frequency distributions of the MDAs**

| Organizations | Frequency | Valid Percent |
|---|-----------|---------------|
| Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Natural resources | 64 | 7.6 |
| Federal Ministry of Finance | 84 | 9.9 |
| Federal Ministry of Labour | 68 | 8.1 |
| Federal Ministry of Youths development | 98 | 11.6 |
| Nigerian Communication commission | 62 | 7.3 |
| Public complaints commission | 82 | 9.7 |
| Federal Inland Revenue Service | 76 | 9.0 |
| Nigeria Deposit Insurance corporation | 81 | 9.6 |
| University of Abuja Teaching Hospital, Abuja | 85 | 10.1 |
| National Agency for control of aids | 82 | 9.7 |
| Nigerian Television Authority | 45 | 5.3 |
| Bureau of Public Enterprises | 18 | 2.1 |
| Total | 845 | 100.0 |

Source: Field survey, 2016

It can be inferred from Table.3 above, that out the 12 MDAs, Federal Ministry of Youths development has the largest number (11.6 per cent) of respondents followed by University of Abuja Teaching Hospital, Abuja, Federal Ministry of Finance, Public complaints commission, National Agency for control of aids, Nigeria Deposit Insurance corporation, Federal Inland Revenue Service, Federal Ministry of Labour, Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Natural resources, Nigerian Communication Commission, Nigerian Television Authority, Bureau of Public Enterprises with the following percentages (10.1, 9.9, 9.7, 9.7, 9.6, 8.1, 7.3, 5.3, and 2.1) respectively. Figure5. 1: **Frequency distributions of the MDAs**

Table 4: Categories of trainees who have attended ASCON training in the last ten years

| | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---------|-----------|---------|--------------------|
| Yes | 682 | 80.7 | 80.7 |
| No | 158 | 18.69 | 18.69 |
| Missing | 5 | 0.61 | 100 |
| Total | 845 | 100.0 | |

Source: Field survey, 2016



Table 4 clearly shows the ratio of public servants who have received training facilitated by ASCON in the last 10 years to those who have not as 4:1. In essence, majority of the trainees that had participated in ASCON trainings are officers who have spent at least 10 years in the service

Table 5: Number and percentage of trainees who had attended ASCON training in the last four years

| | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-----------|-----------|---------|--------------------|
| Yes | 116 | 13.667 | 13.667 |
| No | 723 | 85.5 | 99.1 |
| Undecided | 6 | 0.9 | 100 |
| Total | 845 | | |

Table 5 buttresses and confirms what was revealed in table 5.4 that subscription to trainings facilitated by ASCON had dropped drastically in the last four years. Less than 14 per cent of the respondents have undergone human capital development effort facilitated by ASCON in the past four years.

Table 6: PERCENTAGE RANKING OF ASCON TRAINING PROGRAMMES BY TRAINEES (Ranking in percentage)

| | Presentation Method | Use of Modern training equipment | Richness of the programme content | illustration by practical examples | Instructor's knowledge about the subject | Skill oriented | Attitude Reformation |
|---------------|---------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------|--|----------------|----------------------|
| Good | 49.5 | 27.8 | 56.2 | 38.0 | 45.7 | 16.8 | 19.8 |
| Average | 10.0 | 24.1 | 14.5 | 15.0 | 18.2 | 20.8 | 18.0 |
| Below Average | 39.8 | 34.5 | 25.2 | 44.0 | 13.2 | 55.5 | 56.2 |
| Poor | 0.7 | 13.6 | 4.1 | 3.0 | 22.9 | 5.06 | 6.0 |

Source: Field survey, 2016



It can be inferred from Table 6 which is an assessment of training programmes of ASCON by trainees that the methods and strategies used in presenting the ASCON trainings are averagely effective, that is, the methods and strategies in impacting training. Trainees rated the equipment used by ASCON as largely obsolete and inadequate to pass across the necessary knowledge. In addition, the table shows that facilitator(s) are knowledgeable and have sufficient teaching experience about the subject matter. The table equally shows that the trainees believe that their skills were not largely improved after training and that attitude to work did not improve

Table 7 ANOVA TABLE

| | | Sum of Squares | df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
|---|---------------|----------------|-----|-------------|--------|-------|
| Introduction of new ideas/ techniques into the departments/Units | Among Groups | 986.089 | 1 | 56.00 | 19.90 | 0.001 |
| | Within Groups | 1433.01 | 844 | 12.728 | | |
| | Total | 21646.141 | 845 | | | |
| Increase in revenue for the organizations | Among Groups | 345.112 | 1 | 189.778 | 17.007 | 0.001 |
| | Within Groups | 1409.905 | 844 | 11.258 | | |
| | Total | 21879.71 | 845 | | | |
| Effective service/product delivery to Customers/Clients/General Public | Among Groups | 458.064 | 1 | 367.08 | 13.432 | 0.001 |
| | Within Groups | 1347.269 | 844 | 12.773 | | |
| | Total | 21895.234 | 845 | | | |

significantly even after a session of training addition, the table shows that facilitator(s) are knowledgeable and have sufficient teaching experience about the subject matter. The table equally shows that the trainees believe that their skills were not largely improved after training and that attitude to work did not improve significantly even after a session of training.

From the ANOVA table (Table.7), it was revealed that some of the courses offered by ASCON are to introduce new ideas and techniques, increased revenue and promote effective delivery of service(s)/products to customers. The question is "which of those courses have been significantly impacting these aforesaid". This led to the "Post Hoc" test otherwise known as multiple comparison test in determining the courses that has made the most impact in terms of efficiency and effectiveness in the services rendered by the trainees.

**POST HOC TEST****Table 8: MULTIPLE COMPARISONS VIA TURKEY, SCHEFFE, LSD, BONFERRONI AND SIDAK TEST TO KNOW THE MOST RELEVANT AND IMPACTED OUT THE COURSES OFFER BY ASCON.**

| COURSES | Turkey HSD (Sig.) | Scheffe (Sig.) | LSD (Sig.) | Bonferroni (Sig.) | Sidak (Sig.) |
|---|-------------------------|-------------------|---------------|----------------------|-----------------|
| Public Administration techniques | 0.003 | 0.003 | 0.003 | 0.003 | 0.003 |
| Policy Analysis, formulation and implementation | 0.22 | 0.22 | 0.22 | 0.22 | 0.34 |
| Project Management | 0.246 | 0.902 | 0.09 | 0.9999 | 0.789 |
| Financial Management | 0.0043 | 0.0046 | 0.0041 | 0.0040 | 0.0041 |
| Work techniques | 0.043 | 0.039 | 0.041 | 0.042 | 0.044 |
| Security management | 1.000 | 0.029 | 0.512 | 1.000 | 1.000 |
| Manpower Development & management | 0.052 | 0.051 | 0.0045 | 0.054 | 0.052 |
| Facility Regulations/ Management | 0.890 | 0.900 | 0.91 | 0.088 | 0.9 |
| Procurement and Supply chain Management | 0.000 | 0.000 | 0.001 | 1.000 | 0.956 |
| Computer and information Management | 0.173 | 0.1809 | 0.200 | 0.140 | 0.055 |
| Effective communication and report | 0.059 | 0.057 | 0.051 | 0.055 | 0.053 |

Table 8 displays the multiple comparison of the prominent Courses offered by ASCON in improving Human Capital Development (HCD) via five tests. This is for us to evaluate which of the courses has been most effective in contributing knowledge for new ideas/techniques, revenue increment to organization in summary, effective delivery of service/product to customers/clients/General public. The table shows that Public Administration technique is the most impactful in ensuring that the responsibilities of the Public servants are implemented effectively; followed by financial regulations and Working techniques courses with Turkey HSD, Scheffe, LSD, Bonfferoni and Sidak test (0.003,0.003,0.003, 0.003,0.003), (0.0043, 0.0046, 0.0040, 0.0041, 0.0040) and



(0.043,0.039,0.041,0.042, 0.044), all less than 0.05 level of significant respectively, while courses on Monitory & Evaluation, Man-power development & management, purchasing and supply, Broad Ecosystem and Effective communication and report writing with Turkey HSD, Scheffe, LSD, Bonfferoni and Sidak test P-value > **0.05** indicates that the effectiveness and efficiency of these courses are indecisive.

H01: There is no integration of acquired skills on leadership, financial and Project management by former trainees.

| | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-----------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid Yes | 171 | 71.3 | 71.3 | 71.3 |
| No | 69 | 28.7 | 28.7 | 100.0 |
| Total | 240 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

Table 9, an extraction from Supervisors’ copies of questionnaire as shown above, 71 per cent of the Supervisors are of the opinion that their subordinates needed to be upgraded in some specific aspects before sending them to ASCON while 29 per cent stated that training needs were not identified before embarking on training. This indicates that there is awareness about identification of training needs before embarking on training.

Table 10 Paired Samples Statistics

| | Mean | N | Std. Deviation | Std. Error Mean |
|---|-------|-----|----------------|-----------------|
| Pair 1 Rating of supervisee before training | 5.678 | 240 | 1.342 | 0.463 |
| Rating of supervisee after training | 6.23 | 240 | 1.567 | 0.357 |

From the pair sample statistics above, there is a slight difference between supervisor's rating before and after ASCON's trainings. This indicates that ASCON trainings contribute to the performance of trainees, though minimal.

**Table 11 ANOVA on the assessment of trainees by supervisors**

| | Sum of Squares | df | Mean square | F | Sig. |
|--------------------------------------|----------------|----|-------------|-------|-------|
| Rating of supervisee before training | 4.179 | 2 | 2.089 | 6.686 | 0.056 |
| Rating of supervisee after training | 1.250 | 4 | 0.312 | | |

The ANOVA table above shows the significant need for ASCON trainings that is since 0.056 is greater than 0.05 there is significant difference in rating of trainees both after and before being sent for training. In other words, there is need for the human capital development efforts of ASCON

Table 12 Directional Measures of impacts of ASCON on leadership, financial and project management skills acquired

| | Value | Asymptotic. Std. Error | Approx. T | Approx. Sig |
|-----------------------|-------|------------------------|-----------|-------------|
| Financial Management | 0.04 | 0.026 | 5.057 | 0.063 |
| Project Management | 0.33 | 0.031 | 6.056 | 0.071 |
| Leadership | 0.51 | 0.042 | 5.0167 | 0.048 |
| Improved productivity | 0.22 | 0.027 | 7.323 | 0.051 |

Table 13 Symmetric Measures

| | Value | Asymptotic. Std. Error | Approx. Tb | Approx. Sig. |
|----------------------|-------|------------------------|------------|--------------|
| Kendall's tau-b | 0.021 | 0.023 | 15.078 | 0.4 |
| Spearman Correlation | 0.021 | 0.026 | 14.948 | 0.054 |
| Pearson's R | 0.05 | 0.023 | 15.522 | 0.07 |



From the data on Table 13, The Goodman and Kruskal Tau test revealed a 0.021 correlation between the ASCON courses and the trainees' job schedules, signifying a positive but extremely weak correlation. Notably, leadership stands out with the most substantial training impact. Analyses using Kendall's tau, Spearman correlation, and Pearson's R show a consistent, albeit weak correlation of 0.021, 0.021, and 0.05, respectively. Given their significance values all surpassing 0.05, the null hypothesis is rejected, highlighting an integration of the skills taught. However, leadership skill emerges as the most prominent, possibly influencing the positive correlation. Therefore, ASCON's influence on Financial Management, Project Management, and productivity improvement is marginal, suggesting limited effects on service delivery.

H₀₂: There is no relationship between new knowledge acquired on facilities management and ICT use by former trainees improved service delivery in their MDAs

Table 14 Correlation analysis of the facilities management and ICT used

| | | NEW KNOWLEDGE ACQUIRED ON FACILITIES MANAGEMENT | ICT USE BY FORMER TRAINEES IMPROVED SERVICE DELIVERY IN |
|--|-----------------------------------|---|---|
| NEW KNOWLEDGE ACQUIRED ON FACILITIES MANAGEMENT | Pearson Correlation | 1 | -0.241 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | ----- | 0.082 |
| | Sum of Squares and Cross-products | 39.903 | 28.456 |
| | Covariance | -3.519 | 0.0067 |
| | N | 1156 | 1156 |
| ICT USE BY FORMER TRAINEES IMPROVED SERVICE DELIVERY | Pearson Correlation | -0.241 | 1 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | 0.082 | ----- |
| | Sum of Squares and Cross-products | 39.903 | 28.456 |
| | Covariance | -3.519 | 0.0067 |
| | N | 1156 | 1156 |

The two-tailed significant is tested at: 0.01

**Table 15 Chi-Square Tests**

| | Value | df | Asymp. Sig. (2-sided) |
|------------------------------|----------------------|----|-----------------------|
| Pearson Chi-Square | 3.805E5 ^a | 2 | 0.328 |
| Likelihood Ratio | 274.894 | 2 | -.5760 |
| Linear-by-Linear Association | 30.549 | 1 | 0.3231 |
| N of Valid Cases | 845 | | |

There is a weak negative correlation (-0.241) between new knowledge acquired on facilities management and ICT use by trainees in improving service delivery in their respective MDAs. Table 14 justifies the weak link between knowledge acquired on facilities management and ICT use after training facilitated by ASCON. Table 15 also suggests that training on ICT at ASCON has not produced the corresponding improved service delivery that is expected. The Pearson Chi-Square shows that $p=0.328 > 0.01$, which is a validation of the negative type of correlation between knowledge acquired on facilities management and ICT. From the covariance it can be deduced that new knowledge acquired on facilities management and ICT is not significantly addressing the problem of Information Communication Technology among civil servants. However, because our p value is greater than the Significant value at 0.01, we reject the null hypothesis and the alternate hypothesis is to be accepted, that there is relationship a between new knowledge acquired on facilities management and ICT use by former trainees but a negative relationship, indicating that the trainings have had almost a zero effect in the improvement of service delivery in Nigeria the Nigerian Public service

Discussion of Findings

ASCON's mandate is cultivating the human capacity for efficient public sector service delivery. Our research aims to determine the extent of skill integration in leadership, financial, and project management by trainees. We observed a correlation of 0.021, indicating a positive yet extremely weak integration. Specifically, leadership skills were more pronounced, while financial and project management skills lagged, as corroborated by both trainees and supervisors. Interestingly, trainees with training from more than four years prior to the study demonstrated minimal prowess in financial and project management. Despite the leadership skills upliftment,



the broader impact on service delivery remains suboptimal. Key challenges highlighted include resistance from untrained staff, departmental transfers post-training, and broad course outlines that do not cater specifically to unique MDA's needs.

Our second inquiry revolves around how trainees' knowledge in facilities management and ICT has impacted service delivery. Results indicated a weak negative correlation between these domains and service improvements. Notably, 93% of respondents felt that the quality of training, especially in ICT, was below par. This is evidenced by the limited digitization in MDAs. The Researcher's observations at ASCON also underscored the lethargic digital adaptation. Furthermore, while trainees exhibited slight improvements in inventory maintenance post-training, challenges persisted in physical asset inspection and maintenance. The root causes ranged from budget constraints to inadequate facilities management policies. ASCON's role as a "think tank" for government aligns with global shifts towards leveraging technology for enhanced public service delivery. However, 93% of respondents advocate for a complete overhaul of ICT training. Drawing parallels, Singapore's public service stands as a benchmark where a holistic approach to ICT has transformed service delivery. For ASCON to be at the forefront, beyond facility upgrades, it must strategically reimagine its training modules to mirror global best practices.

Conclusion

The research underscores a notable impact of ASCON's training on the leadership acumen of trainees affiliated with the MDAs. Post-training, these individuals demonstrated enhanced capabilities to navigate challenges, propose actionable solutions, and provide adept guidance to their peers, contributing to the overarching goals and objectives of their respective organizations. However, a nuanced observation reveals that those who completed their ASCON training more than four years prior to this study manifested limited proficiency in both financial and project management spheres. Several impediments to the effective integration of the training content into real-world scenarios were identified. Among these were resistance from colleagues who had not undergone similar training and, significantly, trainees being repositioned to different



Departments shortly after their training — a move which often rendered their freshly-acquired skills irrelevant and stood in stark contrast to federal training guidelines. Shifting the lens to the realm of facilities management and the use of ICT, the research paints a concerning picture. A pronounced disconnect was observed between the theoretical content of the training and the practical facilities and resources available for implementation, underscoring a deficit in the standard of training in these areas. This observation is particularly pressing in the light of the global trend that emphasizes the leveraging of ICT to drive efficiency, transparency, and enhanced public service delivery. A staggering 93% of the surveyed respondents voiced a sentiment that ASCON's current pedagogical approach in this domain is wanting and necessitates a thorough revamp to align with contemporary demands and best practices.

Recommendations

Feedback Mechanism for Quality Assurance: To underscore the commitment to optimal public service delivery, ASCON should establish a structured feedback system. The insights garnered from this system will serve as pivotal quality assurance mechanisms, subsequently refining and enhancing the training curriculum to better serve the needs of the attendees. **Reemphasis on Effective Training:** Given Nigeria's current scenario, where over 75% of the States grapple with fulfilling statutory obligations, the onus to ensure premium service delivery has never been more pronounced. The subpar service quality of various state governments has eroded their perceived value. As such, rigorous and impactful training is non-negotiable.

Incorporation of Tailored Project Management Techniques: Borrowing cues from the private sector's success with project management tools, ASCON should establish a specialized unit dedicated to project management. This unit should focus on customizing contemporary project management methodologies to resonate with the unique demands of public institutions. Furthermore, the curriculum should be enriched not only in financial and project management realms but should also emphasize real-time supervision of the application of these tools. For a seamless integration, a phased implementation complemented by comprehensive awareness programs is advised.



Realigning ASCON's Mandate with Contemporary Technological Trends: The Government needs to critically assess and revise ASCON's foundational policy to resonate with the nuances of the modern technological landscape. Retaining an outdated, analog-centric approach will hinder progress. As the torchbearer of human capital development, ASCON's mandate should pivot towards a strategic, long-term vision underpinned by a robust training policy. Paramount to this transformation is an intensified focus on ICT, which necessitates the onboarding of seasoned experts in this field and a holistic revamp of the curriculum. Public-Private Partnership for Facilities Management: Recognizing the nascent stage of facilities management in Nigeria and the successes achieved by the private sector in this domain, ASCON should proactively seek partnerships with private entities. This collaborative approach, under the umbrella of a public-private partnership, aims to amalgamate the strengths of both sectors, fostering a symbiotic relationship poised to elevate service delivery standards.

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