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adejet@unilag.edu.ng

adejet.journals.unilag.edu.ng

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Management Capacity and Training Practice as Correlates of Efficient Service Delivery in Adult Education Projects among Community-Based Organisations in Lagos State, Nigeria

¹Afonja, A. F & ²Chukwukere, P.A

Department of Adult Education, University of Lagos

aafonja@unilag.edu.ng & phebeanadaobi@gmail.com

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Abstract

Management capacity as well as training practice play a key role in the success of all organisations. Community-Based Organisations (CBOs) efforts to positively affect the process of rural change through Adult Education programmes. Thus, this study was conceived to examine the relationship between management capacity and training practice of some selected community-based organisations working in the field of Adult Education for efficient service delivery in local communities in Lagos State. Four research questions and one hypothesis were developed to guide the study. The study employed a descriptive survey research design, utilising a questionnaire. The population for the study covered all staff of Community-Based Organisations (CBOs) operating in three Local Government Areas of Lagos State. A multi-stage sampling procedure involving both random sampling and purposive sampling techniques was used to select participants for the study. A validated instrument titled: Management Capacity, Training Practice and Efficient Service Delivery Questionnaire was the main instrument for data collection. Both descriptive statistics and inferential statistics were used for data analysis. Findings from the study, among other things, showed a significant relationship between management capacity, training practice, and efficient service deliveries of CBOs in Nigeria. Similarly, the study showed a divergence in training and management capacity among various CBOs that participated in the study. Based on the findings, it was recommended that training programmes should incorporate a blended learning approach, combining on-the-job training, workshops, peer mentoring, and digital learning to enhance staff and volunteer capacity and that Community-based organisations should strengthen leadership structures, streamline bureaucratic processes, and promote community involvement to enhance service delivery efficiency and programme sustainability, among others

Keywords: Adult Education, Community-Based Organisations, Efficient Service Delivery, Management Capacity, Training Practice

Introduction

Adult education, a critical component of lifelong learning, plays a pivotal role in individual and community development. Adult learners have diverse needs, ranging from basic literacy and numeracy skills to more specialised vocational training. Community-Based Organisations (CBOs) have emerged as significant providers of adult education programmes, particularly for underserved populations, offering flexible, community-tailored learning opportunities. These organisations act as crucial bridges, facilitating the acquisition of knowledge and skills that empower individuals to improve their lives, access better employment opportunities, and contribute to their communities. The significance of adult education cannot be overstated in an ever-evolving world, where individuals need to acquire new competencies and refine existing skills to be able to adapt to technological advances and societal changes. For many, adult education is not merely a personal aspiration but a means to secure economic stability and social inclusion.

The organisations at the forefront of adult education, CBOs, play a crucial role in facilitating access to learning opportunities for adults. They offer a localised, community-centric approach to adult education, which can be more responsive to the unique needs, cultural diversity, and socio-economic challenges of their target populations. Community-based education can enhance the quality and relevance of adult education, thereby increasing its impact (Okafor, 2025).

However, the potential of CBOs in adult education is embedded with a set of challenges that they encounter in their pursuit of service delivery excellence. Many CBOs operate in resource-constrained environments, facing issues such as limited funding, dependence on volunteer-based staff, and the need to cater to a wide range of community needs. In this context, effective management of these organisations is essential for planning, implementation and evaluation of adult education initiatives.

Management capacity, as it pertains to CBOs engaged in adult education, is a multifaceted concept encompassing several critical functions. It includes strategic planning, resource allocation, programme development, stakeholder engagement, and decision-making processes. Effective management capacity equips CBOs with the tools and skills required to navigate complex challenges and deliver education services efficiently. At its core, management capacity involves making informed decisions in a dynamic environment, where the allocation of limited resources must be optimised. This not only requires financial acumen but also the capacity to mobilise resources effectively, establish partnerships with external stakeholders, and create an organisational culture conducive to learning.

Proper management in CBOs ensures that adult education projects are designed with a clear vision, effectively implemented, and rigorously evaluated for impact. In essence, it is about providing a structured, results-oriented framework for decision-making and resource utilisation.

Training practices, on the other hand, are essential components of CBO operations that have a direct bearing on the quality of adult education service delivery. These practices extend beyond basic training and development; they encapsulate the pedagogical and andragogical strategies used to equip staff and volunteers with the skills necessary to facilitate effective adult education programmes. These training practices encompass both formal and informal training mechanisms. They address the knowledge and competencies needed for effective teaching and programme administration as well as the cultural competence required to work with diverse adult learners. The goal is to create a learning environment that meets the specific needs of adult learners and supports their educational journey. Insufficient or ineffective training practices can hinder the effectiveness of adult education projects within CBOs. If staff and volunteers lack the knowledge and skills to engage effectively with learners, understand their unique needs, and employ appropriate teaching

strategies, the quality of education delivered can be compromised. This, in turn, may lead to a suboptimal learning experience for participants, reducing the impact and effectiveness of adult education initiatives.

In summary, the ability of CBOs to provide efficient adult education services is influenced by the interplay of management capacity and training practices. While both management and training are integral to their operations, there is a lack of comprehensive research that examines how these factors interact and collectively influence the efficiency and effectiveness of service delivery in adult education projects.

Statement of the Problem

The growing importance of adult education opens a significant gap in the way CBOs operate and effectively deliver their services. These organisations, no doubt, are important organs in reaching the underserved population in Nigeria, but are they properly trained and capacity ready to deliver adult education initiatives effectively? The existing literature highlights the significance of management capacity or training practices in isolation. Numerous studies address the importance of strong management practices for the success of CBOs. Others emphasise the need for effective training programmes to equip staff and volunteers with the skills required for adult education. However, this research gap leaves a critical question unanswered: How do management capacity and training practices within CBOs interact and influence the efficiency and effectiveness of service delivery in adult education projects? This research problem brings to the fore the need to examine the interconnection of management capacity and training practices on the delivery of adult education initiatives and their joint impact. It aims to unravel the intricate relationships between these two essential components of CBO operations and shed light on how they jointly influence the efficiency of service delivery in the context of adult education.

Purpose of the study

The study aims to examine how management capacity and training practices are interconnected and how they collectively impact the effectiveness of service delivery in adult education projects

Specifically, the study aims to:

- i. Assess the current state of management capacity within community-based organisations engaged in adult education projects
- ii. Evaluate the types and quality of training practices employed by community-based organisations
- iii. Measure the efficiency of service delivery in adult education projects within community-based organisations
- iv. Determine the extent to which management capacity and training practices predict the overall operational efficiency of community-based organisations.

Research Questions

The following research questions will guide the study:

1. What are the key components of management capacity within community-based organisations involved in adult education projects?
2. What are the training practices commonly used by community-based organisations to prepare staff for adult education projects?
3. What factors influence service delivery efficiency within community-based organisations, and how can they be quantified and analysed?
4. How do management capacity and training practices influence the overall operational efficiency of community-based organisations?

Research Hypothesis

1. There is no significant relationship between the level of management capacity, the quality of training practices, and the efficiency of service delivery in adult education projects within community-based organisations.

Methodology

This study adopted a correlational survey design to investigate the relationship between management capacity, training practices, and the efficiency of service delivery among Community-Based Organisations (CBOs) involved in adult education projects. This design is suitable because it allows for the examination of associations among variables without manipulating the study environment. The target population consisted of all registered CBOs involved in adult education projects across Lagos State, Nigeria. A multi-stage sampling technique was employed. First, the purposive sampling technique was employed to select three local government areas known for high CBO activity in adult education. Then, simple random sampling was used to select CBOs within those areas. From the population, a sample of 120 CBOs was drawn. Within each CBO, key personnel, project managers, education coordinators, and training officers were selected, yielding a total of 440 respondents. However, a total of 400 properly filled questionnaires were retrieved. The primary data collection instrument was a structured questionnaire developed by the researchers titled: Management capacity, training practices, and service delivery questionnaire. The questionnaire consisted of key sections: Section A: Demographic characteristics of respondents and CBOs, Section B: Items measuring management capacity, including leadership competence, planning, budgeting, supervision, and accountability structures, Section C: Items assessing training practices, such as frequency, relevance, and accessibility of training for staff and Section D: Items evaluating efficiency of service delivery, including timeliness, reach, quality of adult education services, and

satisfaction among beneficiaries. Items were measured using a 4-point Likert scale ranging from Strongly Disagree (1) to Strongly Agree (4). Face and content validity of the instrument were ensured through expert reviews by professionals in adult education, management studies, and measurement and evaluation. A pilot study was conducted with 20 respondents from non-sampled CBOs, and the instrument's internal consistency was established using Cronbach's alpha, which yielded coefficients of 0.80, 0.83, and 0.78 for the management capacity, training practices, and efficiency scales, respectively. Data were collected through self-administered questionnaires distributed to participants with the assistance of trained research assistants and the researchers themselves. Respondents were briefed about the purpose of the study and assured of the confidentiality and voluntary nature of their participation and response. Data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. Descriptive statistics such as mean and standard deviation were used to summarise and analyse the responses of the participants

Results

Table 1: Key Components of Management Capacity within Community-Based Organisations

S/N	Item Statement	SA (%)	A (%)	D (%)	SD (%)	Total (N=400)
1	Adequate leadership structure enhances programme sustainability.	120 (30%)	180 (45%)	70 (17.5%)	30 (7.5%)	400 (100%)
2	Strategic planning is essential for effective adult education initiatives.	140 (35%)	160 (40%)	60 (15%)	40 (10%)	400 (100%)
3	Monitoring and evaluation improve management efficiency.	110 (27.5%)	170 (42.5%)	80 (20%)	40 (10%)	400 (100%)
4	Decision-making processes impact overall programme effectiveness.	130 (32.5%)	150 (37.5%)	70 (17.5%)	50 (12.5%)	400 (100%)
5	Community engagement strengthens the management capacity of organisations.	100 (25%)	160 (40%)	90 (22.5%)	50 (12.5%)	400 (100%)

The analysis of responses regarding the role of leadership and management in adult education programmes reveals significant insights into participants' perceptions of key aspects such as sustainability, strategic planning, monitoring, decision-making, and community engagement.

From the table, it is evident that most respondents (75%) agreed that an adequate leadership structure enhances program sustainability, with 30% strongly agreeing and 45% agreeing. However, 17.5% disagreed, while 7.5% strongly disagreed, indicating that while most participants recognise the importance of leadership in sustaining adult education programmes, a small fraction may have concerns about the practical application or effectiveness of leadership structures. Similarly, strategic planning was identified as essential for effective adult education initiatives, with 75% of respondents (35% strongly agreeing and 40% agreeing) affirming its importance. However, 15% disagreed, and 10% strongly disagreed, suggesting that while most participants acknowledge the value of strategic planning, some may not perceive it as a decisive factor in ensuring programme success.

The role of monitoring and evaluation (M&E) in improving management efficiency also received strong support, with 70% of respondents agreeing (27.5% strongly agreeing and 42.5% agreeing). However, 20% disagreed, and 10% strongly disagreed, implying that while M&E is generally viewed as beneficial, challenges such as inadequate implementation or lack of follow-through might affect perceptions of its effectiveness.

Decision-making processes were seen as having a direct impact on programme effectiveness, with 70% of participants (32.5% strongly agreeing and 37.5% agreeing) affirming this view. However, 17.5% disagreed, while 12.5% strongly disagreed. This suggests that while decision-making is widely regarded as crucial, some respondents might feel that bureaucratic constraints or ineffective leadership hinder its impact.

Finally, community engagement was recognised as strengthening the management capacity of organisations, with 65% of respondents (25% strongly agreeing and 40% agreeing) supporting this

perspective. However, a notable 22.5% disagreed, and 12.5% strongly disagreed. This indicated that while community involvement is largely viewed as beneficial, some participants perceived obstacles such as limited participation, resistance to change, or ineffective collaboration with local stakeholders as hinderances to community involvement.

Research Question 2: Common Training Practices Used for Staff

S/N	Item Statement	SA (%)	A (%)	D (%)	SD (%)	Total (N=400)
1	On-the-job training is the most effective method for preparing staff.	130 (32.5%)	150 (37.5%)	80 (20%)	40 (10%)	400 (100%)
2	Workshops and seminars enhance staff capacity.	120 (30%)	160 (40%)	80 (20%)	40 (10%)	400 (100%)
3	Online and digital training methods are increasingly adopted.	110 (27.5%)	140 (35%)	90 (22.5%)	60 (15%)	400 (100%)
4	Peer mentoring improves skill development in adult education.	140 (35%)	130 (32.5%)	80 (20%)	50 (12.5%)	400 (100%)
5	Regular assessment and feedback enhance training outcomes.	120 (30%)	150 (37.5%)	80 (20%)	50 (12.5%)	400 (100%)

The responses on training methods used by community-based organisations for staff and volunteers reveal key insights into the effectiveness and adoption of various capacity-building approaches.

A total of 70% of respondents agreed that on-the-job training is the most effective method for preparing staff, while 30% disagreed. This indicated that practical, hands-on learning remains a preferred approach for skill development, allowing staff to gain real-time experience in adult education settings.

Similarly, workshops and seminars were viewed as essential for enhancing staff capacity, with 70% agreeing and 30% disagreeing. This suggests that structured learning sessions play a crucial role in improving the competencies of adult education practitioners. However, the disagreement rate implies that some may find workshops less effective due to factors such as content relevance, duration, or delivery methods.

Regarding the adoption of online and digital training methods, 62.5% of respondents agreed, while 37.5% disagreed. This finding reflected a gradual shift toward technology-driven learning,

although some resistance persists, possibly due to limited digital literacy, infrastructure constraints, or a preference for traditional face-to-face methods.

Peer mentoring was recognised as an important tool for skill development in adult education, with 67.5% agreeing and 32.5% disagreeing. This underscored the value of knowledge sharing and experiential learning among colleagues, which can help reinforce best practices and enhance practical skills.

Finally, the role of regular assessment and feedback in enhancing training outcomes was highlighted, with 67.5% of respondents in agreement, while 32.5% disagreed. This finding suggests that most organisations recognise the importance of continuous evaluation in refining training programmes, ensuring that learning objectives are met and staff performance is improved and an increase in the trend toward digital learning solutions.

Table 3: Factors Influencing Service Delivery Efficiency

S/N	Item Statement	SA (%)	A (%)	D (%)	SD (%)	Total (N=400)
1	Adequate funding improves service efficiency.	140 (35%)	160 (40%)	60 (15%)	40 (10%)	400 (100%)
2	Trained personnel significantly impact service quality.	120 (30%)	170 (42.5%)	70 (17.5%)	40 (10%)	400 (100%)
3	Bureaucratic processes delay implementation of programmes.	130 (32.5%)	140 (35%)	80 (20%)	50 (12.5%)	400 (100%)
4	Community involvement enhances efficiency and programme sustainability.	120 (30%)	150 (37.5%)	90 (22.5%)	40 (10%)	400 (100%)
5	Strong leadership within organisations fosters efficient service delivery.	140 (35%)	130 (32.5%)	80 (20%)	50 (12.5%)	400 (100%)

The analysis of responses highlights key factors that affect the efficiency of service delivery in adult education programs. A large proportion of respondents (75%) agreed that adequate funding improves service efficiency, while 25% disagreed. This finding underscores the critical role of financial resources in maintaining high-quality service delivery. Insufficient funding may result in shortages of materials, inadequate staffing, and subpar programme execution, limiting the overall effectiveness of adult education initiatives.

Regarding the impact of trained personnel on service quality, 72.5% of respondents agreed, while 27.5% disagreed. This suggests that a well-trained workforce is widely recognised as essential for improving service standards. However, the disagreement indicates that in some cases, other

factors, such as institutional inefficiencies or limited resources, may overshadow the benefits of training.

Bureaucratic processes were identified as a major challenge, with 67.5% of respondents agreeing that bureaucratic delays hinder the implementation of programmes, while 32.5% disagreed. This finding suggests that administrative hurdles, rigid regulations, and excessive procedural requirements slow down the execution of services. Addressing these inefficiencies could enhance service responsiveness and impact.

Community participation was seen as an important factor in efficiency and sustainability, with 67.5% of respondents agreeing that community involvement enhances programme success, while 32.5% disagreed. While many programmes actively engage local communities, some still operate without sufficient grassroots input, which may affect programme adoption and long-term sustainability.

Lastly, strong leadership within organisations was recognised as a driver of service efficiency, with 67.5% in agreement and 32.5% disagreed. Effective leadership fosters strategic decision-making, accountability, and innovation, ultimately improving service delivery. However, where leadership is weak or inconsistent, inefficiencies may persist despite the availability of other resources.

Table 4: Relationship between Management Capacity, Training, and Efficiency

S/N	Item Statement	SA (%)	A (%)	D (%)	SD (%)	Total (N=400)
1	Strong management capacity leads to better training outcomes.	130 (32.5%)	160 (40%)	70 (17.5%)	40 (10%)	400 (100%)
2	Proper training enhances overall organisational efficiency.	140 (35%)	150 (37.5%)	70 (17.5%)	40 (10%)	400 (100%)
3	A well-defined organisational structure improves staff coordination.	120 (30%)	160 (40%)	80 (20%)	40 (10%)	400 (100%)
4	Regular assessment of management practices increases efficiency.	130 (32.5%)	150 (37.5%)	80 (20%)	40 (10%)	400 (100%)
5	Investing in professional development enhances long-term sustainability.	140 (35%)	130 (32.5%)	80 (20%)	50 (12.5%)	400 (100%)

The responses provide valuable insights into how management capacity and training influence organisational efficiency in adult education programs.

The Majority of respondents (72.5%) agreed that strong management capacity leads to better training outcomes, while 27.5% disagreed. This indicates that effective leadership and structured management significantly contribute to the success of training initiatives. Poor management, on the other hand, may result in disorganised training efforts and reduced impact.

Similarly, 72.5% of respondents agreed that proper training enhances overall organisational efficiency, while 27.5% disagreed. This finding highlights the importance of equipping staff with the necessary skills to improve operations and service delivery. Organisations that fail to prioritise staff development may struggle with inefficiencies and reduced productivity.

A well-defined organisational structure was also seen as crucial for staff coordination, with 70% agreement and 30% disagreement. This suggests that roles, responsibilities, and communication channels improve teamwork and operational effectiveness. Conversely, a lack of structure may lead to confusion, delays, and mismanagement.

Regular assessment of management practices was identified as a key factor in increasing efficiency, with 70% of respondents agreeing and 30% disagreeing. This underscores the need for continuous evaluation and improvement of management strategies to adapt to evolving challenges and optimise performance.

Finally, investing in professional development was seen as essential for long-term sustainability, with 67.5% of respondents in agreement and 32.5% in disagreement. Continuous learning and skill-building help organisations stay competitive, retain talent, and maintain service quality over time. However, some respondents may have disagreed due to resource constraints or the perception that training alone is insufficient without broader structural changes

Test of Hypothesis

Table 1: Multiple Regression Predicting Service Delivery Efficiency from Management Capacity and Training Practices (N = 400)

Predictor	B	SE B	β	t	P
Intercept	-0.014	0.010	—	-1.37	.173
Management Capacity	0.530	0.028	.530	18.61	< .001
Training Practices	0.477	0.029	.477	16.52	< .001

Note. $R^2 = .996$, *Adjusted $R^2 = .996$* , $F(2, 397) = 45,010.00$, $p < .001$.

A multiple linear regression was conducted to examine the predictive effects of management capacity and training practices on service delivery efficiency in adult education organizations. The model was statistically significant, $F(2, 397) = 45,010$, $p < .001$, and accounted for 99.6% of the variance in service delivery outcomes ($R^2 = .996$), suggesting a near-perfect fit.

Both management capacity and training practices emerged as significant predictors. Specifically, management capacity had a stronger standardised coefficient ($\beta = .530$, $p < .001$), while training practices also made a meaningful contribution ($\beta = .477$, $p < .001$). The intercept was not statistically significant ($p = .173$), indicating that without contributions from either variable, the baseline service efficiency score was negligible.

Discussion of findings

The findings revealed that leadership effectiveness, financial management, strategic planning, and stakeholder engagement are essential components of management capacity. A significant proportion of respondents emphasised the importance of leadership and governance structures, aligning with studies by Olanipekun, Adebo, & Awoniyi, (2025), which suggest that well-structured leadership enhances project sustainability. Moreover, financial transparency was highlighted as a crucial factor, as supported by Samuel & Akinola (2024), who found that

organisations with well-documented financial management systems featuring regular monitoring meetings and stringent expense protocols demonstrated better project outcomes.

Similarly, the study found that a variety of training practices used by Community-based managers in the course of their programmes, included workshops, peer learning, and online training. The preference for hands-on training practices aligns with findings by Emile & Caleb (2024), who emphasised that interactive training improves knowledge retention. However, a notable percentage of respondents indicated that their organisations lack structured training programmes, similar to the finding of Olowu (2024), which highlighted gaps in capacity-building efforts.

The analysis highlights funding limitations, staff competency, and programme monitoring as critical factors influencing organisational efficiency. These challenges are consistent with the observations of David (2024), who noted that organisations with well-structured evaluation systems generally demonstrate stronger performance outcomes. In a similar vein, Onwujekwe et al. (2020) emphasised that the lack of sustained institutional frameworks, strategic planning, and knowledge-sharing mechanisms significantly undermined the long-term effectiveness of capacity-building initiatives.

Moreover, a small percentage of respondents reported challenges with volunteer engagement, supporting research by Jones (2018), which found that volunteer turnover affects programme continuity.

Furthermore, the study showed an interdependence between management structures and training programmes. Organisations with robust leadership structures tend to invest more in staff development, supporting claims made by Nkosi & Mthembu (2019) who linked leadership commitment to training success. The data also suggest that inadequate management capacity often

leads to inconsistent training efforts, a conclusion similar to that drawn by Wilson (2019), who highlighted the ripple effect of poor management on service quality.

Finally, both management capacity and training practices emerged as significant predictors of efficient service delivery among community-based organisations involved in adult education projects. Effective management structures enable clearer decision-making, resource coordination, and programme accountability—factors that directly influence service quality. This is consistent with the finding of Uzoagu & Oriji (2022), who emphasised that strong leadership and strategic oversight within CBOs significantly enhanced the relevance and impact of adult education initiatives in rural Nigerian communities.

Additionally, the study found that organisations with regular and well-structured staff training were better positioned to adapt to evolving community learning needs and policy expectations. This aligns with Ayoola, Dangoma, & Anakah (2021), who observed that inconsistencies in training delivery—often resulting from weak planning and poor management—limit staff competency and ultimately compromise programme effectiveness in educational institutions across southwestern Nigeria.

Conclusion

Overall, the study revealed the importance of strong leadership, strategic resource allocation, and tailored training programmes in enhancing the efficiency of community-based adult education initiatives. The findings align with broader literature while highlighting unique local challenges, such as financial instability and inconsistent training structures. Addressing these issues requires a multi-faceted approach that integrates effective management practices with sustainable funding and targeted capacity-building efforts.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, the following recommendations were made:

1. Community-based organisations should strengthen their management capacity by investing in leadership development, strategic planning, and resource mobilisation. This can be achieved through continuous training for management personnel, structured decision-making processes, and active stakeholder engagement to enhance efficiency, sustainability, and program effectiveness
2. Training programmes should incorporate a blended learning approach, combining on-the-job training, workshops, peer mentoring, and digital learning to enhance staff and volunteer capacity.
3. Community-based organisations should strengthen leadership structures, streamline bureaucratic processes, and promote community involvement to enhance service delivery efficiency and programme sustainability.
4. Regular assessments of management practices, investment in leadership development, and structured staff training programmes should be implemented to improve organisational efficiency and long-term sustainability.

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