

Human capacity development and Performance: A focus on the Abia sector command of Nigeria federal road safety corps, 2010-2020

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the impact of human capacity development on staff performance in the Federal Road Safety Corps, Abia State Sector Command. Anchored on human capital theory and qualitative and quantitative data generated through documentary and survey methods, the study observed that the regular training and re-training FRSC periodically conducts for its Officers and Marshals enhanced the capacity of the Command to enforce road safety regulations as evident in increased compliance to road safety regulations by road users. The study thus posits that human capacity development enhanced staff performance in the Federal Road Safety Corps, Abia State Sector Command, between 2010 and 2020. Among others, the study recommends increased awareness campaign among commercial drivers to ensure continued compliance with road safety regulations.

Keywords: Human capacity training, development, staff performance, organizational growth, road safety management

INTRODUCTION

The wealth and development potentials of any nation depend primarily on the quality of its human resources and, very marginally on her natural resources. The active agents are human beings, for they alone can accumulate capital, explore and exploit natural resources, and build political and social organizations [1, 2, 3, 4, 5]. This therefore underscores the indispensability of human resources in the production of goods and services. Human resources refer to the managerial, technical and other skills which are employed (or could be employed) in creating, designing, developing, managing, and operating procedure of service enterprises or economic institutions [6]. In a more quantitative term, the population of any nation is usually referred to as the human resource potential of that nation. In effect, a nation's population constitute inestimable

asset [7]. Therefore, the level of socio-economic development nations attain depends not so much on the abundance of natural resources and the stock of physical capital, but on the quality of human resources [8, 9, 10]. Human capacity development is the frameworks for helping employees develop their personal and organizational goals, knowledge and abilities. It encompasses such opportunities as "employee training, career development, performance management, mentoring tuition assistance, key employee identification and organizational development" [11]. Human capacity development prepares employees to undertake a higher level of organized learning over a period of time. The target is to develop a better equipped workforce so that both the organization and individual employees can accomplish their work goals.

Unlike the developed and newly industrializing countries, Nigeria's rich and abundant human resources have not been fully developed, managed and utilized to accelerate socio-economic development [11,12,13]. The abundance of unskilled and largely untrained manpower, has continued to pose serious challenges to every of Nigeria's development enterprise. The attempts by the Federal Government to address the huge deficit of skilled manpower resulted in the establishment of institutions like the Centre for Management Development (CMD), Administrative Staff College of Nigeria, Industrial Training Fund (ITF), and Federal Training Centre to train and retrain employees as well as give orientation to fresh graduates of formal academic institutions [14]. At the same time, both public and private organizations/agencies have come to appreciate the significance of training for their survival in knowledge-intensive and volatile markets of this era, and thus have increasingly acknowledged the profitability of developing their human resources through various forms of training [12]. One government agency in which training and retraining of employees attracts much attention is the Federal Road Safety Corps (FRSC). Established by the Federal Government through Decree No. 45 of the 1988 as amended by Decree 35 of 1992, referred to in the statute books as the FRSC Act Cap 141 Laws of the Federation of Nigeria (LFN), the Federal Road Safety Corps is a paramilitary agency in charge of road safety and traffic management in Nigeria [13]. Prior to its establishment, there was no concrete and sustained policy action to address the carnage on Nigerian roads. The creation of the National Road Safety Commission (NRSC) by the then military government in 1974 marked the first deliberate policy on road safety in Nigeria. The impact of the Commission was, however, short-lived. The subsequent attempt by the Oyo State Road Safety Corps, which came into

existence in 1977, made some significant improvements in road safety and road discipline until 1983, when it was disbanded by the Federal Government [14]. With the continued dangerous rise in road traffic accidents, estimated at 32109 cases per annum (Figure for 1983) (FRSC, 2009), the Nigerian government was compelled to establish the Federal Road Safety Corps in 1988 to address the carnage on the highways with a view to minimizing the monumental loss of lives and properties. To perform the foregoing responsibilities creditably, the FRSC periodically equips its staff with basic knowledge and relevant skills through regular trainings and other programmes of human resource development. Staff training in the FRSC, which occurs either as training programmes in the FRSC Academy or in training schools, encompasses various programmes of human capital development. Of the 37 Sector Commands of the FRSC in Nigeria, however, the Abia Sector Command is outstanding in staff training and other programmes of staff development. Between 2010 and 2020, the Command conducted four-week capacity training for staff per annum, six-month basic courses for Officers and Marshals in five times, once per annum; four-week ICT capacity training, three-week annual promotion courses for officers, among others. The extant literature on human capacity development and staff performance rich and illuminating but none examine the impacts of human capacity development on staff performance in the Federal Road Safety Corps, Abia Sector Command. Against this backdrop, the study examines the impact of human capacity development on staff performance in the Abia State Sector Command of Federal Road Safety Corps in Nigeria with specific focus on the linkage between the regular training of FRSC staff on accident prevention and reduction in the incidence of road crashes 2010 and 2020.

Theoretical Framework

This study is situated within the theoretical context of human capital theory as advanced by [13, 14, 15], among others. Human capital theory is associated with the resource-based view of organizations [16]. This implies that sustainable competitive advantage is attained when organizations have a human resource pool that can enact strategies that improve efficiency and effectiveness, exploit market opportunities, and/or neutralize potential threats [16]. The competitive advantage an organization needs to survive is obtained by using methods different from those used by its competitors; hence, each organization aspires always to have and retain rare resources that are impossible to replace. The theory sees the stock of human knowledge as the ultimate resource for organizations, and this resource is used to maintain competitive advantage. Therefore, human resources in organizations, as equivalent to human capital, become in time a vector carrying the knowledge that is difficult to duplicate. Furthermore, human capital theory contends that the value of human capital is inherently dependent upon its potential to contribute to the competitive advantage or core competence of organizations. Like other organizational assets, employee skills can be classified as core or peripheral assets [17]. Core assets are vital to the competitive advantage of an organization and often require continual internal development [18]. Accordingly, the theory regards people as assets and stresses that investment in human capital development by organization generates worthwhile returns. The theory thus posits that attracting, training, developing, retaining and rewarding human resources is necessary in order to create and maintain a skilled, dedicated and motivated personnel that can get better returns. These returns are expected to be improvement in performance, increase in productivity, flexibility and the capacity to innovate that which should result from

enlarging the skill base and increasing knowledge and competence [19], further suggests that “skills, knowledge and competence are key factors in determining whether organization and nation will prosper.” The theory therefore underpins the philosophies of human resource management and human capital management [5]. The effect of human capacity development on staff performance in the Federal Road Safety Corps, Abia Sector Command is explained in the light of human capital theory. Since its establishment, the FRSC has been making contributions and aggressively pursuing policies aimed at ensuring good governance and attaining national security. Prominent in this regard is the untiring effort of the Corps to train and develop its staff for optimum performance. Indeed, the FRSC attaches immense importance to training and development of its human resources as a way of leveraging its performance. To groom, retrain and utilize a crop of skilled human resources capable of getting better returns, no fewer than 68 officers of the Corps have been trained as system auditors to equip them with competence to effectively participate in ISO 39001 Traffic Safety Management Standards [4]. The Corps has also established FRSC Academy and Training School to anchor staff development programmes. The sole aim of this is to elevate FRSC operations to international standards. Furthermore, the World Bank has engaged in sponsoring training need assessment of the Corps to provide an enduring development programme for the officers and men [5]. The Abia State Sector, as one of the Commands of the Corps, has richly benefitted from the robust programmes of human capital development routinely carried out by the FRSC. According to the FRSC report, virtually all the staff of the Command have, between 2001 and 2020, intermittently participated either in the job training, capacity training, Officers basic course, Marshall basic course or

arms training [8]. The purpose of these trainings was to educate the staff about the most current trend in road safety matters, as it affects operational and rescue activities; the world best practices in road safety and traffic management; among

others. Accordingly, the hypothesized that the regular training of FRSC staff on accident prevention and rescue operations reduced the incidence of road crashes and related casualties in Abia State.

METHODOLOGY

The study adopted longitudinal research design which entails observing and measuring changes in variables over time and associating them with the causal factors. Applying the longitudinal research design to our study entailed observation and measurement of the behaviour of the dependent variable over a period, before and after the intervention of the independent variable which is a presumed causal event. To generate the relevant data, the study employed survey method, using instruments of questionnaire and interview to generate primary data, as well as and documentary method to generate secondary data from books, journal articles and official documents and others. The study population consisted of the entire 355

regular personnel of FRSC in Abia Sector Command who underwent one training or the other within the study period [5]. The population has two groups. The first group is made up of Officers rank (131), while the second group is made up of Marshals rank (224). Based on clarification of [7], that “choosing of a representative sample has no fixed number or fixed percentage. If for example we are dealing with a population of few hundreds, a forty percent (40%) or even more can be suitable, but, if our population involves many hundreds, twenty percent (20%) and while if several thousands, five percent (5%) or even less sample will suffice” (p. 48), 50% of the entire population, drawn proportionally from both the Officers and Marshals rank, was selected as sample.

Table 1: Sampling of Staff in Federal Road Safety Corps Abia State Command

Officers rank	Sample size	Marshals rank	Sample size
131	65	224	112

To draw the sample size from each category, a systematic random sampling technique was adopted. In this case, the staff list of FRSC, Abia Sector Command was drawn and randomly selected until the number of sample size was obtained. Our preference for a systematic random sampling was to give all the staff equal opportunity of being included in the sample.

On the other hand, six key informants, including the Sector Commander and Administration Officer/Head of TSC, who are directly involved in designing and implementing programme of development, and the State Chairman, National Union of Road Transport Workers (NURTW) were additionally interviewed.

The reason for taking to a multiple data gathering method in this study was to improve the reliability and validity of our expected findings. The study thus did not embark on any pilot study or apply the test-retest method but rather depended on an internal consistency method of instruments. In this regard, crosscheck questions were included to establish how consistent the respondents were in their answers to questions earlier presented. As regards validity of this study, the adopted the content or face validity method together with the use of external criterion to ascertain the veracity of the findings of a particular instrument. As regards methods of data analysis, the study content analysis and logic induction.

Tables and simple percentage difference were also used to present and analyze the data we generated.

Capacity Training for FRSCS Staff in Abia State Sector Command

Officers and staff of the Command have participated in the FRSC annual capacity training for staff lasts for four (4) weeks. The purpose of the annual capacity training is to build capacity of staff with a view to educating officers about the world best practices in Road Safety and Traffic

management. It also aims to train senior and Principal Officers on command and control while dealing with subordinates in their various command. Table 2 presents data on number of staff from the Abia Sector Command who received the four weeks annual capacity training.

Table 2: Staff who received the annual capacity training

Year	Officers	Marshal	Total
2010	105	250	355
2011	90	202	292
2012	92	198	288
2013	93	196	289
2014	99	210	309
2016	95	205	300
2018	90	185	275

Source: FRSC, Abia Sector Command, 2019.

Under the FRSC capacity training, selected staff of the Command have also undergone arms training. The arms training are conducted in accordance with Section 19 of FRSC Establishment Act 2007 which states that: For the purpose of carrying out or enforcing the provisions of this Act, such members of the Corps as may be determined by the Commission, exposed to high risk in the enforcement of the provisions of this Act, shall have the same powers, authorities and privileges including power to bear arms as are given by law to members of the Nigeria Police. Between 2010 and 2020, three batches of arms training lasting for six (6) weeks each, were conducted for staff of the zone. The arms training builds the capacity of the staff on how to handle firearms of different types including how to aim and shoot, how to dismantle rifle and pistol and principles of engaging a firearm. ICT Capacity Training is aimed at training the

staff on the use of information and communication technology on performing their duties so as to promote the corps as an agency adopting world best practices in the discharge of its duties. Furthermore, in order to objectively and strategically reposition the Corps to effectively utilize prevalent Information and Communications Technology facilities in modern Road Safety Administration, FRSC Officers including those from Abia Sector command have continued to receive specialized computer training at the FRSC training schools and other collaborating institutes to comprehensively undertake practically courses under the European/International Computer Drivers' License (ECDL/ICDL) requirements [9]. Picture in figures 1 and 2 below show cross section of FRSC Officers including those from Abia Sector Command receiving ICT training Digital Bridge Institute and FRSC Headquarters, Abuja.

Conduct of 6 months basic courses for staff of FRSC Abia Sector Command

Newly recruited Officers and Marshals of FRSC Abia Sector Command also received basic courses. Between 2010 and 2020, Officers and Marshals of Abia Sector Command participated in the 6 months

basic courses for officers and Marshals of FRSC. Officers' basic course and Marshal basic course for FRSC staff usually lasts for six (6) months. Both basic courses are the initial training given to newly recruited

officers and men of the FRSC about the Modus Operandi of Corps. It is also occasionally given to staff that need to be retrained about the job. Related to the basic courses is the conversion course aimed to educate senior marshal that want to convert to a commission officer cadre or Road Marshal Assistant that want to convert to marshal inspector cadre (Non-

Commissioned Officer) on how to comport themselves as gentleman officer or and how to maintain an officer carriage as well as command and control as the duties and responsibilities of senior officer and staff officers including dressing and grooming of a discipline officer or marshal inspector.

Conduct of 3 Week Annual Promotion Courses for Officers FRSC Staff in Abia State

Staff of FRSC Abia Sector Command also participated in the annual promotion courses for Officers and Marshals of the FRSC conducted between 2010 and 2020. Promotion course is a training that prepares and educates staffs for the next rank and the responsibilities that follows the rank and cadre. In line with this, the Corps' vision of enhancing work force productivity and achieve job satisfaction is being supported by the conduct of regular promotion exams for all categories of Staff. Promotion exams for the Marshals cadre are regularly conducted following strictly the guidelines set by Management Promotion Board (MPB). All officers also participate in the online exams after the mandatory two weeks promotion course at the FRSC Academy. Staff of the rank of Deputy Route Commander (DRC) to Assistant Corps Marshal (ACM) also participates in the Officers' cadre exams.

Only Senior Officers of the rank of DCC and above are exempted from the two weeks course. After the promotion examinations, candidates who emerged successful are duly communicated and decorated with their new ranks [15]. The above information is corroborated by data obtained through survey conducted in FRSC Abia Sector Command. For instance, concerning the frequency of training attendance, data obtained as contained in table 3 reveal that 56% of the respondents confirmed that they attend training annually, 20% attend training bi-annually, 5.6% said they attend training quarterly while 17.6% confirmed they attend training twice a year. Of interest is the fact that none of the respondents affirmed that he/she has not received any form of training. This indicates that all the Officers and Marshalls of the command have received one form of training or the other.

Table 3: Responses of Respondents on the training/re-training received in Abia State Command

How often do you go on training while in Abia Sector Command	Annually	Bi-annually	Quarterly	Have not been trained
Marshal	57	21	2	0
Officers	23	8	6	0
Total	80(56.3%)	29(20.4%)	8(5.6%)	0

Source: Researcher's Survey, 2021

Table 4 further presents data on the kind of training received by Officers and Marshals of the Command. Data in the table shows that the Weekly in-house and basic course training have been attended by all the respondents. Capacity training

have been attended by 84.5% of the respondents, 71.8% have undergone the ICT training while 30.3% and 57.7% have undergone the arms training and promotion course respectively

Table 4: Responses of Respondents on the training/re-training received in Abia State Command

Which of these training did you receive while in this Command	Capacity Training	ICT Training	Basic Course	Arms Training	Promotion Course	Weekly In-house training
Marshal	76	67	91	27	43	91
Officers	44	35	51	16	39	51
Total	120(84.5%)	102(71.8%)	142(100%)	43(30.3%)	82(57.7%)	142(100%)

Source: Researcher’s Survey, 2021

In a face to face interview with the Administration Officer/Head of TSC, FRSC Abia State Command, it was confirmed that all staff of the Command have undergone one form of training or the other while in the Command. According to the Officer: Regular training and re-training are conducted for all our staff irrespective of their rank. Training is taken seriously in FRSC as a whole because our Officers and Marshals have to be fit at all times to discharge their duties. Aside from the weekly internal in-house training, every staff in this Command has undergone at least one form of training or the other at our Academy or in the training schools or

even outside the country [14]. The Sector Commander of FRSC Abia State collaborated the above information in a face to face interview when he noted that the major criteria for selecting staff for training is based on the need of the Command and also the need for the staff to be fit for the job. Given the premium attached to staff training and re-training, fund spent on staff training for the Abia state sector command have also continued to increase. Data on fund spent on staff training for the Command shows that between 2010 and 2020, the Command spent a reasonable amount money on staff training alone.

Table 5: Amount Allocated/Spent on Staff Training in FRSC Abia Sector Command

Years	Amount Spent (₦)
2010	8,346,505.85
2011	11,576,647.20
2012	12,560,344.24
2013	15,914,775.54
2014	8,677,160.17
2016	17,852,785.79
2018	4,247,702.8

Source: FRSC, Abia Sector Command, 2019

Enforcement of Crash Helmet

The trainings and retraining of officers and men in FRSC Abia Sector Command, have contributed to increased enforcement of road safety regulations like the use of crash helmet. For instance, as table 6 shows, between 2010 and 2018, the number of reported crash helmet usage

enforcement by the Command increased by more than 17.8 % from 474 to 791. This is an indication that the knowledge and skills acquired by the officers and men of the FRSC in the Sector have impacted positively with regards to enforcement of road safety regulations.

Table 6: Number of crash helmet enforcement

Years	Helmet Enforcement
2010	474
2011	446
2012	1742
2013	593
2014	565
2016	572
2018	791

Source: FRSC, Abia Sector Command, 2019

Overloading Violation Enforcement

Similarly, in the area of overloading violation, the Abia Sector Command has recorded significant increase in reported cases of overloading violation enforced by the Officers and Marshals of the Sector. The reported cases of overloading

violation enforcement increased from 48 in 2010 to 426 in 2018 as shown in table 7. This can also be attributed to the training and re-training received by the staff which enhanced their capacity to enforce the regulation.

Table 7: Overloading violations enforcement by FRSC Abia Sector Command

Years	Overloading violation Enforcement
2010	48
2011	55
2012	133
2013	311
2014	280
2016	401
2018	426

Source: FRSC, Abia Sector Command, 2019

Enforcement of Usage of Valid Number Plate and Drivers Licenses

In the area of usage of valid number plates and drivers licenses by drivers, the Sector also recorded increased enforcement within the period under study. The recorded issuance of valid number plates to drivers increased by over 152% from 117 in 2010 to 338 in 2018. Similarly, production and issuance of valid drivers' licenses within the period of study increased by over 280% from 3,852 to

14,672 (see table 8). The increased production and issuance of valid number plates and drivers licenses by the Abia Sector Command indicates that more drivers complied with the FRSC rule of using valid number plates and drivers licenses. This is attributed to the training and re-training received by the Officers and Marshals of the Command.

Table 8: Vehicle Number Plate and Drivers Licenses Designed and Produced

Years	Number of Plates issuance	Drivers Licence
2010	117	3,852
2011	302	11,430
2012	429	10,406
2013	232	14,499
2014	387	16,922
2016	105	22,286
2018	338	14,672

Source: FRSC, Abia Sector Command, 2019

Reported Cases of Traffic Offences

The FRSC Abia Sector Command also witnessed tremendous reduction in number of traffic offences committed by drivers in Abia State during the period of study. This reduction in offences is also attributed to the enhanced capacity of the Officers and Marshalls of the Command to ensure that drivers comply with road

safety regulations. For instance, data in table 9 reveals that the number of recorded offences committed by drivers in Abia State within the period of study reduced by 302% from 42,376 to 10541. Similarly, the number of offenders apprehended and sanctioned within the study period reduced by 307% from 38858 to 9548.

Table 9: Traffic Offenders and Offences

Years	Offenders	Offences
2010	38858	42,376
2011	12998	13604
2012	7987	14898
2013	7774	8913
2014	5825	6545
2016	7227	8761
2018	9548	10541

Source: FRSC, Abia Sector Command, 2019
To confirm the secondary data presented above, questionnaires were administered

to Officers and Marshalls of the Sector who are the actual enforcement officers.

Table 10: Respondents Responses on Capacity Training Road Safety Regulations Enforcement in Abia State

S/N	Questionnaire Items	SA	A	UD	D	SD
1	The trainings you received enhanced your capacity to enforce usage of crash helmet by road users	88(61.9%)	45(31.7%)	5(3.5%)	4(2.8%)	0
2	The trainings you received enhanced your capacity to enforce overloading violation by drivers	73(51.4%)	51(35.9%)	8(5.6%)	10(7%)	0
3	The trainings you received enhanced your capacity to enforce of usage of valid number plate and drivers licences	91(64.1%)	27(19%)	8(5.6%)	14(9.9%)	2(1.4%)
4	The enforcement of road safety regulations by Officers and Marshalls of Abia Sector Command reduced cases of traffic offences in Abia state.	57(40.1%)	39(27.5%)	11(7.7%)	30(21.1%)	5(3.5%)

Source: Researcher’s Field Survey, 2021

Data in table 10 reveals that most of the respondents agreed that the trainings and re-trainings they received enhanced their capacity to enforce road safety regulations. For instance, 61.9% and 31.7% of the respondents strongly agreed and agreed respectively that trainings they received enhanced their capacity to enforce usage of crash helmet by road users. Similarly, 51.4% of the respondents strongly agreed that trainings they received enhanced their capacity to enforce overloading violation by drivers, another 35.9% agreed, 5.6% were undecided while only 7% disagreed. Concerning enforcement of usage of valid number plates and drivers licenses, 64.1% and 19% strongly agreed and agreed respectively that trainings they received

enhanced their capacity to enforce such regulation. Finally, majority of the respondents (40.1% and 27.5%) strongly agreed and agreed respectively that the enforcement of road safety regulations by the Command reduced cases of traffic offences in Abia state, 7.7% were undecided, 21.1% disagreed while 3.5% strongly disagreed. The views of the Officers and Marshalls were corroborated by the Principal Officers of the Command interviewed. For instance, in a face to face interview, the Administrative Officer/Head of TSC opined that “the training and re-training has not just enhanced the capacity of the staff to enforce road safety regulations but has manifested at the rate in which they are able to enforce compliance by road users” [8].

CONCLUSION

Training and re-training are critical for staff performance in every organization. The FRSC was established by law in on 18 February, 1988 with the central objective of preventing accidents on the highways and rescuing accident victims where accidents occur. To achieve this objective, the Corps adopted the strategy of regular training and re-training of its officers and

marshalls to enhance their capacity in enforcing compliance with road traffic laws and to prevent road crashes/rescue road crash victims. Based on the study of the FRSC Abia State Sector Command, this study contends that the regular training and re-training of Officers and Marshalls of the FRSC enhanced their capacity to enforce compliance with extant road safety

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regulations by road users. Again, the training received by staff equipped them with requisite skills for accident prevention and rescue operations. This led to reduction in number of reported road crashes and number of casualties arising from such road crashes. In sum, human capacity development adopted by the FRSC enhanced performance of its Officers and Marshals with regard to enforcing

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compliance with road safety regulations, prevention of accidents and rescuing of road crash victims. Based on the findings, of the study opines the FRSC should increase its awareness campaign targeted at commercial drivers and extend its training to commercial drivers in collaboration with NURTW to ensure that they continue to comply with road safety regulations.

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