

THE IMPORTANCE OF ORGANIZING CAPACITY BUILDING PROGRAMMES FOR SECONDARY SCHOOL SECURITY PERSONNEL IN NIGERIAN SCHOOL FOR SUSTAINABLE SCHOOL SAFETY

By

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Abstract

The safety of students, staff, and school property in Nigerian secondary schools has become a significant concern due to increasing incidents of theft, vandalism, violence, and other security threats. While infrastructure such as fences and surveillance systems is essential, the competence and preparedness of security personnel remain critical for effective school security management. This paper adopts the position that organizing capacity building programmes for school security personnel is indispensable for enhancing their skills, knowledge, and professionalism. Drawing on existing literature and documented security practices, the study highlights the benefits of such programmes, including improved emergency response, ethical conduct, technological competence, and the creation of a safe learning environment. The paper concludes that investing in the professional development of security personnel ensures proactive security management, minimizes risks, and promotes trust among all school stakeholders.

Keywords: Capacity Building, School Security Personnel, Secondary Schools, Nigeria, Professional Development, Emergency Preparedness

1.0 Introduction

The safety and security of students, staff, and property in Nigerian secondary schools have become pressing concerns due to rising incidents of theft, vandalism, violence, and, in some cases, targeted attacks on educational institutions. While physical infrastructure such as fences, gates, and surveillance systems are essential, the effectiveness of school security largely depends on the competence, preparedness, and professionalism of security personnel. Secondary school security personnel are often the first line of defense against potential threats, and their ability to prevent, detect, and respond to security incidents is critical for maintaining a safe learning environment.

Capacity building programmes, which include training, workshops, drills, and professional development activities, equip security personnel with the skills, knowledge, and awareness necessary to handle security challenges effectively. These programmes enhance their ability to implement security policies, manage emergency situations, handle conflicts, and utilize security technologies efficiently. In addition, well-trained security personnel contribute to a culture of safety and vigilance that permeates the entire school community, fostering confidence among students, teachers, parents, and other stakeholders.

Given the complex security challenges facing Nigerian secondary schools, organizing regular and structured capacity building programmes is indispensable. It ensures that security personnel remain updated on modern security practices, are prepared for evolving threats, and can respond proactively rather than reactively. This paper posits that investing in the professional development of secondary school security personnel is not merely an operational necessity but a strategic approach to safeguarding educational institutions and promoting a conducive learning environment in Nigeria.

2.0 Conceptual Terms

2.1 School Security Personnel

School security personnel are trained individuals responsible for maintaining the safety and protection of students, staff, and school property. They act as the first line of defense against threats such as theft, vandalism, violence, bullying, and unauthorized access to school premises. In Nigerian schools, security personnel include guards, gatekeepers, and other staff assigned to monitor and control access to the school environment. Their duties extend beyond physical protection to include enforcing school rules, supervising students during school hours, managing emergencies, and collaborating with teachers, administrators, and law enforcement agencies to

ensure a secure learning environment. The effectiveness of security personnel depends on their training, vigilance, and ability to respond appropriately to various security challenges.

School security personnel are trained individuals responsible for maintaining the safety, protection, and order within educational institutions. They act as the first line of defense against potential threats such as theft, vandalism, violence, bullying, and unauthorized access to school premises. In Nigerian schools, security personnel typically include security guards, gatekeepers, and other staff assigned to monitor school environments.

Key Responsibilities:

1. **Protection of Students and Staff:** Ensuring that students, teachers, and other school staff are safe from harm while on school premises.
2. **Safeguarding School Property:** Preventing theft, vandalism, and destruction of school facilities and resources.
3. **Monitoring and Surveillance:** Observing school grounds, entrances, and exits to detect suspicious activities or potential threats.
4. **Emergency Response:** Acting promptly in emergencies, such as fires, medical incidents, or intrusions, and assisting in evacuation or crisis management.
5. **Enforcing School Policies:** Ensuring compliance with school rules, regulations, and security procedures.
6. **Collaboration with Stakeholders:** Working with teachers, administrators, parents, and law enforcement agencies to maintain a safe and secure learning environment.

2.2 Importance in School Security:

School security personnel are crucial in creating a safe and conducive environment for learning. Their presence deters potential offenders, reassures students and staff, and allows teaching and learning activities to proceed without disruption. The effectiveness of these personnel, however, largely depends on their training, professionalism, and preparedness to handle evolving security challenges.

2.3 Capacity Building Programme for School Security Personnel

A capacity building programme for school security personnel is a planned and systematic initiative designed to improve their skills, knowledge, and competencies in school security management. These programmes aim to ensure that security personnel are adequately equipped to handle emerging security threats and perform their roles effectively. Components of such programmes typically include:

1. **Training in Emergency Response:** Skills to handle emergencies like fires, medical situations, or intrusions.
2. **Conflict Resolution and Communication Skills:** Techniques for managing disputes, calming disruptive situations, and coordinating with school staff and law enforcement.
3. **Use of Security Technology:** Training on surveillance systems, alarms, access control, and monitoring tools.
4. **Policy Awareness and Legal Knowledge:** Understanding school security policies, regulations, and relevant laws to maintain compliance and professionalism.
5. **Risk Assessment and Threat Prevention:** Ability to identify potential threats, anticipate security risks, and implement preventive measures.

Capacity building is a training programme design for the acquisition of skills, knowledge, altitude and social behavior. Capacity building improves staff competencies to improve job performance in the institutions Capacity is the training that require systematic development of knowledge, skills and altitude required by a staff to perform adequately on a given tasks in the organization (Ogunode, 2025). Capacity building is the process of enhancing an individual or organization's capacity to improve their performance to achieve a certain outcome. It basically involves providing the necessary resources and training to individuals or organizations so that they can increase their efficiency and effectiveness (Ibrahim, Junaidu, Muhammad, & Isah, 2023).

Maxwell (2024) described capacity building as systematic process of developing and strengthening the skills, knowledge, resources, and capabilities of individuals, organizations, or communities to achieve their goals and objectives. It involves activities aimed at addressing challenges, improving performance, and adapting to changing circumstances, ensuring effective goal achievement. Capacity building empowers individuals, groups, and organizations to enhance performance, capabilities, and resources for effective problem solving and decision-making, addressing systemic

issues, human resources, infrastructure, sustainability, and impact. It involves developing competencies, and policies (Smyth, 2022). Adebayo et al (2016), continuous learning and development are essential for teachers to effectively fulfil their roles and generate current knowledge. Teachers who stop learning after preservice training may struggle to synthesize content with pedagogy and technology, leading to dull teaching and a lack of creativity. They may become “prisoners of their own experience,” repeating their experiences without reflecting on current changes.

3.0 Method

This paper adopts a position paper methodology, which involves critically analyzing existing literature, policies, and practices to articulate a reasoned stance on the importance of capacity building for school security personnel. The approach is qualitative and relies primarily on secondary sources, including academic journals, government reports, policy documents, and media reports on school security in Nigeria.

Procedure:

1. Review of literature on school security challenges and personnel management in Nigerian secondary schools.
2. Identification of the roles and responsibilities of school security personnel.
3. Analysis of the impact of capacity building programmes on personnel performance and school safety.
4. Synthesis of findings to argue the position that organized capacity building programmes are essential for effective school security management.

4.0 Result and Discussion on Benefits of Organizing Capacity Building Programmes for School Security Personnel

Enhanced Professional Competence and Skills

Capacity building programmes significantly enhance the professional competence of school security personnel. Through structured training, security staff gain advanced skills in threat assessment, emergency response, crowd management, and conflict resolution. These programmes also provide knowledge of best practices in school security management, including techniques for

surveillance, patrolling, and incident reporting. Enhanced skills not only improve the efficiency of security operations but also increase the confidence of personnel in performing their duties. Competent security personnel are better equipped to anticipate and prevent potential threats, which is critical in minimizing risks and ensuring a safe learning environment.

Improved Emergency Preparedness

Organized capacity building programmes prepare security personnel to respond effectively to emergencies. These programmes often include simulated drills for scenarios such as fires, medical emergencies, intrusions, violent incidents, or natural disasters. By practicing emergency procedures, security personnel develop quick decision-making abilities, coordination skills, and familiarity with evacuation routes and safety protocols. This preparedness reduces reaction time during real emergencies, limits harm to students and staff, and ensures continuity of teaching and learning activities. Additionally, trained personnel can provide immediate first aid and support before professional emergency services arrive, which can be lifesaving in critical situations.

Strengthened Policy Compliance and Ethical Conduct

Capacity building programmes provide security personnel with in-depth knowledge of school policies, regulatory frameworks, and legal responsibilities related to security management. Understanding these policies ensures that security staff perform their duties ethically, professionally, and within the limits of the law. It reduces incidents of abuse of authority, arbitrary enforcement of rules, or neglect of responsibilities. By reinforcing the importance of accountability, capacity building programmes create a disciplined and professional security workforce that can be trusted by students, teachers, and parents. Compliance with policies also helps schools meet regulatory and accreditation requirements.

Effective Use of Security Technology and Resources

Modern school security relies heavily on technological tools such as CCTV cameras, alarm systems, biometric access controls, and digital incident reporting platforms. Capacity building programmes train security personnel to operate these technologies efficiently and integrate them into daily security routines. Trained personnel can monitor multiple systems simultaneously, detect unusual activities, respond promptly, and maintain proper records. This maximizes the utility of available security infrastructure, minimizes human errors, and ensures that technological investments contribute to effective protection of the school environment. Moreover, understanding

technology allows personnel to adapt to emerging threats, including cyber-security challenges that may affect schools.

Promotion of a Safe and Conducive Learning Environment

A direct benefit of well-trained security personnel is the creation of a safe and supportive environment for learning. When students, teachers, and staff feel secure, they are more likely to focus on academic activities without fear of violence, harassment, or theft. This sense of safety enhances student engagement, teacher performance, and overall school morale. Additionally, parents and community members develop trust in the school, strengthening cooperation between stakeholders. A secure environment also discourages vandalism, truancy, and other disruptive behaviors, ensuring that schools can fulfill their educational mission effectively.

4.1 Conclusion and Recommendations

Organizing capacity building programmes for school security personnel is a critical strategy for improving the safety and security of Nigerian secondary schools. These programmes enhance professional competence, emergency preparedness, ethical conduct, and technological skills, enabling security personnel to respond effectively to a wide range of security challenges. Moreover, well-trained security personnel foster a safe and conducive learning environment, promoting academic performance and social development. The involvement of competent security staff strengthens stakeholder trust, minimizes risks, and ensures that schools can operate smoothly without interruptions caused by security breaches.

Based on the analysis, the following recommendations are proposed:

1. **Regular and Structured Training:** Secondary schools should organize periodic capacity building programmes for security personnel to ensure their skills and knowledge remain current.
2. **Collaboration with Security Experts:** Schools should partner with law enforcement agencies, security consultants, and relevant NGOs to provide comprehensive and practical training for personnel.
3. **Investment in Professional Development:** Government authorities and school management boards should allocate funds for the professional growth of security personnel, including workshops, seminars, and certification programmes.

4. **Integration of Technology Training:** Capacity building programmes should include training on modern security tools such as CCTV systems, alarms, access control devices, and digital reporting platforms.
5. **Monitoring and Evaluation:** Schools should implement mechanisms to assess the effectiveness of training programmes and adjust them to address emerging security challenges.
6. **Stakeholder Engagement:** Parents, community members, and school administrators should support and participate in initiatives aimed at enhancing the professionalism of security personnel.

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