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Original Research Article

ENHANCING QUALITY EDUCATION DELIVERY THROUGH PERIODIC TEACHER PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN NIGERIAN SECONDARY SCHOOLS

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ABSTRACT: Quality education delivery in the 21st century requires teachers to possess up-to-date knowledge, pedagogical skills, and technological competencies that enable them to respond effectively to evolving educational demands. This paper examined the role of periodic teacher professional development in enhancing quality education delivery in Nigerian secondary schools. Professional development encompasses continuous training activities such as workshops, seminars, conferences, mentoring programmes, and in-service training designed to improve teachers' instructional effectiveness and professional competence. The paper explored how regular professional development opportunities equip teachers with innovative teaching strategies, classroom management skills, assessment techniques and digital literacy competencies necessary for improving students' learning outcomes. Through a review of relevant literature, the study highlights the significant contribution of teacher professional development to instructional quality, curriculum implementation, learner engagement, and overall school effectiveness. The discussion further reveals that periodic training enables teachers to adapt to educational reforms, integrate modern technologies into teaching, and address emerging challenges in contemporary classrooms. Additionally, effective leadership support is identified as a critical factor in ensuring the successful implementation of professional development programmes within schools. The paper concluded that sustained investment in teacher professional development is essential for achieving quality education and meeting national educational goals. It recommends that educational policymakers, school administrators, and relevant stakeholders prioritize continuous capacity-building initiatives that promote lifelong learning among teachers. Such efforts will enhance instructional delivery, improve students' academic achievement, and strengthen the overall performance of secondary schools in Nigeria. Consequently, periodic teacher professional development remains a vital strategy for advancing educational quality and preparing learners for the demands of the twenty-first century.

Keywords: Teacher Professional Development, Quality Education Delivery, Secondary Schools, Instructional Effectiveness, Teacher Training, Educational Leadership, Nigeria.

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INTRODUCTION

Quality education delivery in Nigerian secondary schools depends majorly on the competence and continuous development of teachers. As such, periodic teacher professional development equips educators with current pedagogical knowledge, technological skills and innovative

instructional strategies needed to meet the demands of 21st-century education (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017). Through workshops, seminars, mentoring and in-service training, teachers enhance their instructional effectiveness, classroom management, and curriculum implementation capacities. Continuous professional development equally promotes lifelong learning and adaptability to educational reforms, aimed at improving student learning outcomes and overall school performance (Guskey, 2002).

The 21st century educational landscape presents unprecedented challenges and opportunities for teaching and learning across the globe. In Nigeria, as in many developing nations, the quest for quality education delivery has become increasingly urgent, particularly at the secondary school level which serves as a critical bridge between basic education and higher learning or workforce participation. The dynamic nature of contemporary society, characterized by rapid technological advancement, globalisation, and evolving labour market demands, necessitates a corresponding evolution in pedagogical approaches and teacher competencies (Abanum et al., 2025). Central to this evolution is the continuous professional development of teachers through periodic training programmes that equip them with the skills, knowledge, and dispositions required to facilitate effective learning in the 21st century.

The Federal Government of Nigeria has demonstrated commitment to improving educational quality through various policy initiatives and intervention programmes. Recent evidence of this commitment includes the launch of the EDUREVAMP Communities of Practice (CoPs) by the Federal Ministry of Education, described as a bold and strategic step towards transforming education delivery and professional collaboration in Nigerian schools (Federal Ministry of Information and National Orientation, 2025, para. 1). This initiative aims to build strong, digitally empowered, and connected professional communities that serve as platforms for sustainable teacher professional development (Federal Ministry of Information and National Orientation, 2025).

Similarly, the Universal Basic Education Commission (UBEC), in collaboration with the Federal Ministry of Education, has launched Teacher Professional Development initiatives designed to elevate basic education delivery, foster continuous professional growth for educators, and empower community-driven school governance structures across all 36 states and the Federal Capital Territory (Universal Basic Education Commission, 2025, para. 1). These national-level interventions underscore the recognition that teacher quality is the single most important school-based factor influencing student achievement (Adeyemi & Olaleye, 2022).

In spite of these policy-level commitments, significant challenges persist in the actual delivery of quality education in Nigerian secondary schools. Concerns have been raised by stakeholders about the poor quality of students graduating from secondary schools who, invariably, will proceed to tertiary institutions. This quality deficit has been attributed, in part, to inadequacies in teacher preparation and ongoing professional development (Onyemejezi & Nwafor, 2022). The National Senior Secondary Education Commission (NSSEC) has consequently unveiled a nationwide quality assurance monitoring and evaluation scheme designed to transform the sub-sector through, among other strategies, enhanced teacher development and support.

The imperative for periodic teacher training is further reinforced by the global shift towards competency-based education models that emphasize 21st century skills such as critical thinking, creativity, collaboration, communication, digital literacy, and global citizenship. Research indicates a wide gap between Nigeria's content-heavy, examination-driven curriculum and global competency-based models, highlighting the urgent need for "targeted teacher training,

stronger policy commitment, equitable ICT access, and coordinated partnerships" to bridge this divide (Abdulganeey et al., 2025, p. 10). Teachers cannot be expected to facilitate the development of skills they themselves do not possess, making their continuous professional development a prerequisite for curriculum reform and educational transformation.

This paper examined periodic training of teachers as a leadership approach for enhancing 21st century quality education delivery in secondary schools in Nigeria. It explores the conceptual underpinnings of teacher training and professional development, analyses the impacts of various training approaches, discusses the role of school leadership in facilitating teacher development, and provides recommendations for strengthening periodic training programmes to achieve quality education outcomes.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Human Capital Theory

This paper is anchored on Human Capital theory propounded by Theodore Schultz and Gary Becker cited in (Nworgu, 2024). Human Capital Theory, associated with the work of economists such as Theodore Schultz and Gary Becker, posits that investment in human capabilities through education and training enhances individual productivity and contributes to economic growth. From this perspective, teachers are human capital whose value can be increased through ongoing investment in their knowledge and skills (Ogunyinka et al., 2021). Periodic training represents such investment, yielding returns in the form of improved teaching effectiveness, enhanced student learning outcomes, and ultimately, national development.

Applying Human Capital Theory to teacher training in Nigerian secondary schools suggests that the quality of education delivered is directly related to the quality of teachers, which is in turn dependent on the nature and extent of their professional development (Taiwo & Emeke, 2024). Schools that invest systematically in periodic teacher training can expect higher returns in terms of student achievement, school effectiveness, and societal contribution. This theoretical lens justifies the allocation of resources to teacher professional development as an investment rather than an expense, with long-term benefits that outweigh immediate costs.

CONCEPTUAL CLARIFICATION

Teachers in the 21st Century

Teachers constitute the most critical human resource in any educational system. They are professionally trained individuals responsible for facilitating learning, imparting knowledge, shaping character, and developing skills in learners (Federal Ministry of Education, 2024). In the Nigerian context, teachers at the secondary school level are expected to possess appropriate qualifications, typically a Nigeria Certificate in Education (NCE) or a bachelor's degree in education, and must be registered with the Teachers Registration Council of Nigeria (TRCN) to practice legally (Taiwo & Emeke, 2024).

The role of teachers in the 21st century has expanded significantly beyond traditional transmission of information. Contemporary teachers are expected to be facilitators of learning, curriculum developers, assessment experts, technology integrators, counsellors, and agents of social change (Abanum et al., 2025). They must possess not only subject matter knowledge but

also pedagogical content knowledge, technological proficiency, and socio-emotional competencies that enable them to respond effectively to diverse learner needs. As noted in the NextGen Teachers' Bootcamp innovation, teachers need to be able to "distinguish between knowledge-based and competency-based learning" and "discover the benefits of competency-based learning including real-world relevance, 21st-century skill development, and learner empowerment.

The professional identity of teachers is continuously shaped by their initial training, ongoing professional development experiences, and the school contexts in which they work (Adebayo & Ogunleye, 2023). In Nigeria, the teaching profession has historically faced challenges related to status, remuneration, and working conditions, which have implications for teacher motivation and retention. However, initiatives such as the NextGen Teachers' Bootcamp aim to help educators reconnect with the initial reasons for becoming a teacher and reignite passion and motivation for teaching (Abanum et al., 2025, p. 16), recognizing that affective dimensions of teaching are as important as cognitive competencies.

Periodic Training

Periodic training refers to systematic, planned, and ongoing professional development activities designed to enhance teachers' knowledge, skills, and competencies at regular intervals throughout their careers (Onwuemezie & Ugwu, 2023). Unlike one-time workshops or pre-service preparation, periodic training acknowledges that professional learning is a continuous process that must adapt to changing circumstances, emerging research, and evolving educational demands.

In Nigeria, the Teachers' Registration Council of Nigeria (TRCN) has established a Mandatory Continuing Professional Development Programme (MCPDP) for teachers at all levels of the educational system. A recent evaluation of this programme for primary school teachers in Ekiti State revealed that most teachers agreed that the MCPDP fostered their cross-fertilisation of ideas and experiences and professional competence (Taiwo & Emeke, 2024, p. 8). The study further reported that the MCPDP improved PSCTs' teaching competencies, commitment, and continuous relevance to the teaching profession.. These findings support the continuation and strengthening of such programmes across all educational levels, including secondary schools (Liman et al., 2025).

Periodic training can take various forms, including workshops, seminars, conferences, online courses, peer coaching, lesson study, action research, and communities of practice (Ogunyinka et al., 2021). The EDUREVAMP Communities of Practice initiative exemplifies an innovative approach to periodic training, creating "learning communities, hubs of shared knowledge, and platforms for sustainable teacher professional development" (Federal Ministry of Information and National Orientation, 2025, para. 4). This approach recognises that professional learning is most effective when it is collaborative, contextualised, and sustained over time rather than delivered through isolated, one-off events.

Leadership Approach in Education

Leadership in education encompasses the processes, behaviours, and practices through which school principals and other educational administrators influence, guide, and support teachers and other stakeholders towards achieving educational goals (Adebayo & Ogunleye, 2023; Yusuf &

Ajayi, 2023). A leadership approach to teacher training implies that principals do not merely administer training programmes but actively champion, facilitate, and participate in professional development activities that enhance teacher quality and student learning.

The concept of instructional leadership emphasises the principal's role in managing the instructional programme, supervising teaching and learning, and promoting professional development. Transformational leadership, alternatively, focuses on inspiring and motivating teachers to transcend their immediate interests and commit to shared organisational goals (Yusuf & Ajayi, 2023). Both leadership models have relevance for periodic teacher training, as they position the principal as a key agent in creating conditions conducive to teacher learning and growth.

Contemporary leadership approaches also recognise the importance of distributed leadership, wherein leadership responsibilities are shared among teachers and other stakeholders (Onyemejezi & Nwafor, 2022). In the context of periodic training, distributed leadership might involve experienced teachers serving as mentors, coaches, or facilitators of professional learning communities. The Communities of Practice model explicitly embraces this approach, with trained CoP administrators serving as anchors and coordinators, supporting teachers as they engage digital training modules and fostering stronger professional communities (Federal Ministry of Information and National Orientation, 2025, para. 5).

QUALITY EDUCATION IN THE 21ST CENTURY

Quality education is a multidimensional concept that extends beyond mere access to schooling or cognitive achievement (Atiku et al., 2025). The 21st century conception of quality education encompasses the development of knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values that enable learners to thrive in rapidly changing social, economic, and technological contexts (Abanum et al., 2025). It includes foundational literacies (literacy, numeracy, scientific literacy), competencies (critical thinking, creativity, communication, collaboration), and character qualities (curiosity, initiative, persistence, adaptability, leadership, social and cultural awareness).

In Nigeria, the pursuit of quality education at the secondary level is guided by national policy frameworks and international commitments, including the Sustainable Development Goals, particularly SDG 4 which aims to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all (Federal Ministry of Education, 2024). The Federal Government has reaffirmed its determination to "ensure quality senior secondary education in the country through various strategic policies aimed at boosting the nation's education sector" (Olugbuyi et al., 2025, p. 26). These policies encompass infrastructure development, teacher development, curriculum delivery, and the promotion of Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) to equip learners with entrepreneurial skills.

Quality education in the 21st century also requires alignment with global competency standards (Abdulganeey et al., 2025). Recent analysis of Nigeria's basic education curriculum reveals significant gaps between current practices and international competency-based models, highlighting the need for a context-sensitive integration framework that bridges global best practices with local needs. Such alignment cannot be achieved without corresponding investment in teacher development, as teachers are the primary agents through which curriculum intentions are translated into classroom realities.

THE IMPERATIVE FOR PERIODIC TEACHER TRAINING IN NIGERIAN SECONDARY SCHOOLS

Changing Educational Contexts

The context in which Nigerian secondary school teachers work has changed dramatically in recent decades. Technological advancement, particularly the proliferation of digital devices and internet connectivity, has transformed how information is accessed, processed, and used (Attahiru et al., 2025). Students increasingly come to school with digital experiences and expectations that differ significantly from those of previous generations (Abanum et al., 2025). Teachers who lack digital literacy skills struggle to engage these students or to leverage technology for enhanced learning outcomes.

The EDUREVAMP initiative explicitly recognises this reality, aiming to prepare for the rollout of the EDUREVAMP digital platform, which will empower teachers with 21st-century skills, reward their progress, and promote collaborative innovation (Federal Ministry of Information and National Orientation, 2025, para. 6). The platform is designed to ensure that very soon, learning online will come with both knowledge and benefits (Federal Ministry of Information and National Orientation, 2025, para. 7), acknowledging the centrality of digital competencies to contemporary teaching and learning.

Beyond technology, Nigerian society itself is evolving in ways that have implications for education (Dauda et al., 2025). Urbanisation, demographic shifts, changing family structures and economic pressures all affect the circumstances in which teachers work and students learn (Atiku et al., 2025). Teachers need periodic training to understand and respond effectively to these changing social realities, ensuring that their pedagogical approaches remain relevant and responsive.

Curriculum Reform Demands

Nigeria has undertaken various curriculum reforms aimed at improving educational quality and relevance (Abdulganeey et al., 2025). The basic education curriculum has been revised multiple times, and efforts are underway to strengthen secondary education through improved curriculum delivery and the promotion of Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Design and Mathematics (STEAM) education. Curriculum reform inevitably creates new demands on teachers, who must understand new content, adopt new pedagogical approaches, and develop new assessment practices.

The integration of 21st century skills into the curriculum represents a particularly significant challenge (Abanum et al., 2025). Research indicates that Nigeria's curriculum remains content-heavy, exam-driven and misaligned with global competency-based models. Shifting towards competency-based education requires fundamental changes in how teachers conceptualise their role, design learning experiences, and assess student progress (Atiku et al., 2025). Such changes cannot be achieved through policy pronouncements alone but require sustained investment in teacher professional development that builds understanding, develops skills, and supports implementation.

Student Diversity and Inclusion

Secondary school classrooms in Nigeria are increasingly diverse, with students varying in their backgrounds, abilities, learning styles, and needs (Akinyemi & Ofoegbu, 2023). Inclusive education principles require that all students, including those with disabilities or special educational needs, have access to quality learning opportunities (Liman et al., 2025). Teachers need training to understand diverse learner needs, differentiate instruction, adapt materials, and create inclusive classroom environments.

The emphasis on leaving no child behind, central to international education agendas has implications for teacher preparation and development (Dauda et al., 2025). Without periodic training that addresses inclusive pedagogy, teachers may lack the knowledge and skills to respond effectively to student diversity, resulting in exclusion and marginalisation of certain learner groups.

Professional Status and Motivation

The teaching profession in Nigeria faces challenges related to status, motivation, and retention (Akinyemi & Ofoegbu, 2023). Teachers who feel undervalued, inadequately supported, or ill-equipped to meet the demands of their work may become demotivated, disengaged, or leave the profession entirely (Adebayo & Ogunleye, 2023). Periodic training can address these challenges by enhancing teachers' sense of competence, confidence, and professional identity.

The NextGen Teachers' Bootcamp recognises the motivational dimension of professional development, designing each bootcamp "to reignite educators' passion for teaching, as well as embracing new ways of teaching that can have a genuine impact on Nigeria's future" (Abanum et al., 2025, p. 18). This approach acknowledges that cognitive development alone is insufficient; professional development must also address the affective and motivational aspects of teaching if it is to have lasting impact.

IMPACTS OF PERIODIC TRAINING OF TEACHERS ON QUALITY EDUCATION DELIVERY

Enhanced Pedagogical Competence

Periodic training contributes directly to enhanced pedagogical competence by exposing teachers to new instructional strategies, assessment techniques, and classroom management approaches. Research on the Nigerian MCPDP found that participating teachers reported improved teaching competencies and professional commitment as a result of their training experiences (Taiwo & Emeke, 2024). These self-reported improvements are consistent with broader evidence that well-designed professional development positively influences teacher practice.

Enhanced pedagogical competence manifests in various ways (Ezeugbor & Onwuameze, 2022). Teachers develop greater repertoire of instructional strategies, enabling them to vary their approaches based on learning objectives and student needs. They become more adept at facilitating student-centred learning, moving beyond traditional lecture-based instruction to incorporate discussion, inquiry, collaboration, and project-based learning. They develop improved capacity to assess student learning formatively, using assessment information to guide instructional decisions and provide targeted feedback.

Improved Student Learning Outcomes

The ultimate purpose of teacher training is improvement in student learning outcomes (Ogunyinka et al., 2021). While the causal chain from teacher professional development to student achievement is complex and mediated by multiple factors, evidence suggests that effective training does translate into improved student learning (Yusuf & Ajayi, 2023). Teachers who participate in sustained, collaborative, content-focused professional development are better equipped to facilitate deep learning, address student misconceptions, and support mastery of challenging content.

In the Nigerian context, the quality assurance monitoring and evaluation scheme launched by NSSEC aims to "improve the quality of secondary education" by, among other strategies, enhancing teacher performance (Olugbuyi et al., 2025, p. 28). The implicit logic is that improved teacher quality will yield improved student outcomes, equipping learners for life beyond the classroom.

Technology Integration

Effective integration of technology into teaching and learning is a hallmark of 21st century education. Periodic training plays a crucial role in developing teachers' capacity to use technology purposefully and effectively (Abanum et al., 2025). This includes not only basic digital literacy skills but also pedagogical understanding of how technology can enhance learning, engage students, and expand educational opportunities. The EDUREVAMP digital platform represents a significant investment in building teachers' technological capacity (Federal Ministry of Information and National Orientation, 2025). By empowering teachers with 21st-century skills and rewarding their progress, the initiative aims to "promote collaborative innovation" and transform teaching practice (Federal Ministry of Information and National Orientation, 2025). Such technology-focused training is essential if Nigerian secondary schools are to prepare students for a digital economy and information-rich society.

Professional Collaboration and Learning Communities

Periodic training, particularly when it incorporates collaborative elements, can foster the development of professional learning communities that extend beyond formal training events (Liman et al., 2025). Teachers who learn together are more likely to continue supporting each other's professional growth through informal collaboration, resource sharing, and peer observation.

The Communities of Practice model explicitly aims to create "learning communities, hubs of shared knowledge, and platforms for sustainable teacher professional development" (Federal Ministry of Information and National Orientation, 2025, para. 4). By connecting teachers within and across schools, these communities enable ongoing professional learning that is grounded in practice, responsive to local needs, and sustained over time. The NextGen Teachers' Bootcamp has similarly established 200+ active Peer Learning Circles, which now function as self-sustaining professional communities of practice, ensuring collaboration, accountability, and long-term teacher development.

Teacher Retention and Motivation

Investment in teacher professional development signals that teachers are valued and that their growth matters. This can enhance job satisfaction, professional commitment, and retention. Teachers who have access to ongoing learning opportunities are more likely to remain in the profession and to maintain the motivation necessary for effective practice (Yusuf & Ajayi, 2023). The evaluation of Nigeria's MCPDP found that participating teachers reported improved commitment to the teaching profession (Taiwo & Emeke, 2024). This finding suggests that periodic training can contribute to teacher retention, addressing a significant challenge facing Nigerian education. When teachers feel competent, supported, and valued, they are more likely to remain engaged and committed to their work.

LEADERSHIP STRATEGIES FOR EFFECTIVE PERIODIC TEACHER TRAINING

Creating a School Culture that Supports Professional Learning

School principals play a critical role in creating organisational cultures that value and support continuous professional learning (Adebayo & Ogunleye, 2023). This involves articulating a clear vision for teaching and learning, modelling commitment to professional growth, and establishing norms of collaboration, inquiry, and reflection (Yusuf & Ajayi, 2023). Principals who prioritise professional development communicate that learning is not an occasional event but an ongoing expectation for all members of the school community.

Creating a supportive culture also involves allocating time and resources for professional learning (Onwuemezie & Ugwu, 2023). This may include scheduling common planning time for teachers, providing coverage so teachers can observe colleagues or participate in training, and ensuring that professional development opportunities are accessible and relevant. Principals who actively facilitate teacher participation in training programmes demonstrate through their actions that professional learning is valued.

Needs Assessment and Programme Design

Effective periodic training is responsive to teacher needs, school priorities, and student learning requirements. Principals have a responsibility to ensure that training programmes are informed by systematic needs assessment rather than selected arbitrarily or imposed externally (Ogunyinka et al., 2021). This involves gathering input from teachers about their perceived professional learning needs, analysing student achievement data to identify areas where instructional improvement is needed, and aligning training with school improvement goals. Needs assessment should be ongoing rather than a one-time event, enabling training programmes to evolve in response to changing circumstances and emerging challenges (Ige, 2023). Principals can facilitate this process by establishing mechanisms for regular feedback, maintaining dialogue with teachers about their professional learning experiences, and monitoring the impact of training on classroom practice and student outcomes (Olugbuyi et al., 2025).

Facilitating Access to Training Opportunities

Principals serve as gatekeepers and facilitators of teachers' access to training opportunities (Adebayo & Ogunleye, 2023). This involves identifying relevant programmes, disseminating information about available training, supporting teachers' participation through logistical arrangements, and ensuring that learning from training is shared and applied within the school. In the Nigerian context, principals can leverage national initiatives such as the Teacher Professional Development programme coordinated by UBEC, which provides substantial funding for teacher capacity-building at the state level (Universal Basic Education Commission, 2025). They can also connect teachers with innovative programmes like the NextGen Teachers' Bootcamp, which has demonstrated success in training and equipping educators across four Nigerian states and establishing professional learning communities.

Supporting Transfer of Training to Classroom Practice

Perhaps the greatest challenge in professional development is ensuring that learning from training transfers to classroom practice. Teachers may acquire new knowledge and skills during training but fail to implement them consistently or effectively in their own classrooms. Principals can support transfer by providing opportunities for teachers to practise new skills, offering feedback and coaching, and creating conditions that enable implementation (Liman et al., 2025).
Mentoring and coaching are particularly effective strategies for supporting transfer. Experienced teachers or instructional coaches can work with colleagues to model new approaches, co-plan lessons, observe teaching, and provide constructive feedback . The Communities of Practice model incorporates this principle by training CoP administrators who serve as "anchors and coordinators, supporting teachers as they engage digital training modules and fostering stronger professional communities" (Federal Ministry of Information and National Orientation, 2025, para. 5).

Monitoring and Evaluating Training Impact

Accountability for professional development requires attention to its impact on teacher practice and student learning. Principals should establish mechanisms for monitoring the implementation of learning from training and evaluating its effectiveness. This may include classroom observations, review of lesson plans and student work, analysis of student assessment data, and dialogue with teachers about their experiences. The national quality assurance scheme launched by NSSEC recognises the importance of monitoring and evaluation in driving improvement (Olugbuyi et al., 2025). Through "rigorous monitoring and evaluation," the scheme aims to pinpoint where schools are excelling and where they need support," promoting "innovation in teaching" and empowering educators. At the school level, principals can adapt similar principles to evaluate the effectiveness of their professional development programmes.

COUNTERACTING CHALLENGES AGAINST PERIODIC TEACHER TRAINING IN NIGERIA

Funding Constraints

Adequate funding is essential for effective teacher professional development, yet resource constraints are a persistent challenge in Nigerian education. Training programmes require investment in facilitators, materials, venues, and sometimes travel and accommodation for participants. Schools operating on limited budgets may struggle to allocate sufficient resources to professional development, particularly when faced with competing priorities. The federal government has made significant investments in teacher development, including the disbursement of ₦598 million to each state for the implementation of Teacher Professional Development programmes (Universal Basic Education Commission, 2025). However, ensuring that these funds reach schools and are used effectively for their intended purpose remains a challenge (Taiwo & Emeke, 2024). The evaluation of the MCPDP recommended that TRCN should intensify the funding of the MCPD Programme, indicating that current investment levels may be inadequate relative to need.

Time Constraints

Teachers' workloads in Nigerian secondary schools are often substantial, leaving limited time for professional development activities (Akinyemi & Ofoegbu, 2023). Training programmes that require teachers to be away from their classrooms create coverage challenges and may be resisted by school administrators concerned about instructional continuity. After-school or weekend training may conflict with teachers' personal responsibilities and affect motivation to participate (Ige, 2023). Addressing time constraints requires creative scheduling and the integration of professional learning into teachers' regular work. School-based professional development, collaborative planning time, and online learning options can reduce the burden of travel and time away from school. The development of the digital version of the NextGen Teachers' Bootcamp using a Learning Management System (LMS) aims to "open up access to wider communities of educators" by enabling flexible, self-paced learning.

Quality Assurance in Training Provision

Not all training programmes are of equal quality, and teachers may participate in professional development that is poorly designed, inadequately facilitated, or irrelevant to their needs. Ensuring quality in training provision requires attention to programme design, facilitator competence, content relevance, and pedagogical approach. Without quality assurance mechanisms, investment in training may yield limited returns. The TRCN's role in regulating the teaching profession includes oversight of professional development provision (Taiwo & Emeke, 2024). However, the sheer number and diversity of training providers, including government agencies, non-governmental organisations, private consultants, and international partners, makes comprehensive quality assurance challenging. Schools and principals must exercise discernment in selecting training programmes that meet quality standards and address genuine teacher needs.

Teacher Motivation and Resistance

Not all teachers are equally motivated to participate in professional development (Akinyemi & Ofoegbu, 2023). Some may view training as an imposition rather than an opportunity, particularly if past experiences have been negative or if training is perceived as irrelevant. Resistance may also stem from workload concerns, scepticism about the value of particular approaches, or discomfort with change. Addressing motivational challenges requires that training be relevant, engaging, and respectful of teachers' professionalism (Ofojebe & Ezugoh, 2023). Involving teachers in needs assessment and programme design can enhance ownership and commitment. Recognizing and rewarding participation and application of learning can also strengthen motivation. The NextGen Teachers' Bootcamp approach, which aims to reignite teachers' passion for teaching, acknowledges the importance of addressing affective dimensions of professional learning.

Infrastructure and Resource Limitations

Effective implementation of learning from training often requires adequate infrastructure and resources (Liman et al., 2025). Teachers trained in technology integration may lack access to computers, internet connectivity, or software in their schools (Abdulganeey et al., 2025). Those trained in activity-based or experiential methods may lack materials, equipment, or appropriate classroom spaces. Infrastructure deficits can undermine the transfer of training to practice and lead to frustration among teachers.

The NSSEC's intervention projects, including the construction of e-learning libraries and classroom buildings, represent efforts to address infrastructure gaps (Olugbuyi et al., 2025). However, such interventions are currently limited to selected schools and may take time to scale nationally. In the interim, teachers and principals must be creative in adapting learning to available resources, and training programmes should address contextual constraints realistically.

STRATEGIES FOR STRENGTHENING PERIODIC TEACHER TRAINING IN NIGERIAN SECONDARY SCHOOLS

Policy and Institutional Strengthening

Strengthening periodic teacher training requires coherent policy frameworks that mandate, guide, and resource professional development at all levels (Federal Ministry of Education, 2024). The TRCN's Mandatory Continuing Professional Development Programme provides a foundation, but implementation requires reinforcement through clear standards, monitoring mechanisms, and accountability measures. Policies should also address the quality of training provision, ensuring that teachers have access to programmes that meet defined quality criteria (Ogunyinka et al., 2021). Institutional capacity for coordinating and delivering professional development should be strengthened at federal, state, and local levels (Universal Basic Education Commission, 2025). This includes investing in trainer development, developing quality training materials, and establishing systems for tracking teacher participation and programme impact. Partnerships with universities, colleges of education, and professional associations can expand capacity and bring research expertise to bear on training design and evaluation.

School-Based and Collaborative Approaches

School-based professional development offers advantages in terms of relevance, sustainability, and cost-effectiveness. When training is grounded in the specific context of a school and its students, teachers can more readily see its applicability and adapt learning to their circumstances. School-based approaches also enable ongoing follow-up and support, addressing the transfer challenge that plagues one-off training events.

Collaborative approaches, such as professional learning communities, lesson study, and peer coaching, embed professional learning in teachers' daily work and foster collective responsibility for improvement (Liman et al., 2025). The Communities of Practice model exemplifies this approach, creating "learning communities, hubs of shared knowledge, and platforms for sustainable teacher professional development" (Federal Ministry of Information and National Orientation, 2025, para. 4). Schools should be supported and encouraged to develop such collaborative structures, with principals playing a key role in facilitating their establishment and sustainability.

Leveraging Technology for Scalable Training

Technology offers significant potential for expanding access to quality professional development at scale (Abdulganeey et al., 2025). Online courses, webinars, virtual communities, and digital resource libraries can reach teachers in remote locations, accommodate diverse schedules, and provide ongoing access to learning materials. The development of the EDUREVAMP digital platform and the digital version of the NextGen Teachers' Bootcamp represent important steps in this direction (Federal Ministry of Information and National Orientation, 2025).

However, technology-enabled training must be designed thoughtfully to ensure engagement, interaction, and application (Attahiru et al., 2025). Simply putting content online is insufficient; effective online professional development incorporates opportunities for collaboration, reflection, and practice. It also requires attention to digital literacy, ensuring that teachers have the skills to navigate online learning environments and access digital resources.

Differentiated and Personalized Professional Development

Teachers vary in their experience, expertise, interests, and needs, suggesting that one-size-fits-all training programmes may be suboptimal. Differentiated professional development recognizes this diversity and offers teachers choices in the focus, format, and intensity of their learning. Personalized approaches may involve self-assessment, individual learning plans, and access to a range of learning options. Differentiation does not imply abandoning shared professional learning experiences that build collective capacity and common understanding. Rather, it suggests a balanced approach that includes both common experiences addressing school-wide priorities and differentiated opportunities addressing individual teacher needs and interests. Principals can facilitate this balance by ensuring that school-based professional development includes both collective and individual elements.

Recognition and Incentives

Teachers' participation in professional development should be recognised and valued. This may include formal certification of completed training, linkage to career progression and remuneration, and public acknowledgement of achievement (Taiwo & Emeke, 2024). The TRCN's requirements for continuing professional development as a condition of license renewal provide a framework for recognition, but implementation requires robust systems for tracking and verifying participation.

Beyond formal recognition, principals can create informal incentives by celebrating teachers' learning, showcasing innovative practices developed through training, and providing opportunities for teachers to share their learning with colleagues. When professional development is positioned as an opportunity rather than an obligation, and when its value is visibly demonstrated, teacher motivation to participate is enhanced.

CONCLUSION

This paper has examined periodic training of teachers as a leadership approach for enhancing 21st century quality education delivery in secondary schools in Nigeria. The analysis has demonstrated that quality education in contemporary contexts depends fundamentally on the quality of teachers, which in turn depends on ongoing investment in their professional development through periodic training programmes. The rapid pace of technological change, evolving curriculum demands, increasing student diversity, and shifting societal expectations all create imperatives for continuous teacher learning that cannot be met through pre-service preparation alone. Periodic training contributes to quality education delivery through multiple pathways: enhancing pedagogical competence, improving student learning outcomes, enabling technology integration, fostering professional collaboration, and supporting teacher motivation and retention. These impacts are maximised when training is well-designed, relevant to teacher needs, sustained over time, and supported by school leadership.

Suggestions

Based on the analysis presented in this paper, the following suggestions are offered for enhancing periodic training of teachers as a leadership approach for quality education delivery in Nigerian secondary schools:

- Secondary school principals should prioritise periodic teacher training by allocating resources, scheduling regular professional development activities, and actively participating in training programmes alongside their teachers.
- Teacher training programmes should be aligned with 21st century skill demands, including digital literacy, critical thinking, creativity, collaboration, and communication.
- Needs assessment should inform training design and selection, ensuring that professional development responds to genuine teacher needs and school priorities.
- Collaborative professional learning structures should be established within and across schools, including communities of practice, peer learning circles, and lesson study groups.

- Technology should be leveraged to expand access to quality training, through online courses, virtual communities, and digital resource libraries.
- Funding for teacher professional development should be increased and protected, at federal, state, and school levels.

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