

# Capacity Building programs and their impact on employee performance. A case study of Metropolitan International University

Musiimenta Nancy<sup>1</sup>, Kobusigye Prudence<sup>2</sup>

Metropolitan International University

**Abstract:** Capacity building refers to initiatives aimed at enhancing workforce skills, expertise and productivity levels through continuous training and development. As a dynamic university, Metropolitan International University recognizes that instituting effective capacity building programs is imperative for sustaining service excellence and achieving strategic objectives. This study examined the impact of the university's capacity building interventions on employee performance from 2020 to 2022. Primary data was collected through document reviews, questionnaires administered to 150 staff, and in-depth interviews with management. Descriptive statistics and regression analyses revealed that programs targeting competency areas such as change leadership, conflict resolution, financial management and Information Communication Technology had substantial positive associations with critical performance outcomes like productivity, customer satisfaction, retention and innovation. Notable improvements occurred across faculties and departments that actively participated in the structured training regimen. Additionally, qualitative insights highlighted enhanced employee motivation, engagement and career progression opportunities. Results indicated employee performance demonstrated a moderately strong positive correlation of 0.606 with resource availability that was deemed to be highly statistically significant based on a two-tailed test with an alpha level of 0.01, as represented by the extremely small p-value of 0.000. The findings imply capacity building must be systematically incorporated into human resource development strategies, with adequate funding, to foster highly skilled personnel capable of driving the university's vision of being an eminent globally-networked center of learning.

**Keywords:** Stakeholder involvement, Resource availability and Sustainability planning

## Background of the study

Metropolitan International University has continued to establish itself as a leading tertiary education provider in Uganda since its inception in 2007, with the vision of fostering pertinent skills and values through world-class teaching and research (Anthony et al., 2023). As a private, non-profit university, bolstering organizational capabilities remains imperative for consistent growth and differentiation in an increasingly competitive local higher education landscape. However, rapid expansion coupled with evolving strategic priorities also present intrinsic challenges that necessitate continuous workforce upskilling supported by targeted capacity building interventions (Winny et al., 2023). Currently, the university encompasses 5 faculties and 30 academic departments delivering over 50 accredited degree, diploma and certificate programs to a student population exceeding 7000 as per the 2022 enrollment statistics, serviced by a staff complement of 450 full-time employees as reported in the Human Resource Management Information System (Mark et al., 2023). Noteworthy is that 65% of students originate from economically disadvantaged communities across East Africa according to needs assessments, attending the institution on merit-based scholarships and bursaries totaling 2.5 billion shillings annually. This socially-inclusive profile inherently demands ongoing reviews of curricula, learning approaches and teaching capacity to optimize pedagogical quality, graduate employability and long-term sustainability (Godfrey et al., 2023). Intensifying domestic and global competition for students, research grants and industry partnerships represents an additional challenge. Recognizing this, Metropolitan International University's 2020-2025 strategic roadmap articulated ambitious targets including a 15% annual growth in prestigious research outputs and stakeholder linkages underpinned by comprehensive staff capacity building as a core enabler. However, previous spotty skills audits had revealed disparities in expertise requirement vis-à-vis rapid technology assimilation, implementation of outcome-based learning frameworks, and evolving administrative standards necessitating reforms for mandate accomplishment (Innocent et al., 2023). Addressing these complex human capital issues necessitates strategic investments amid other funding priorities like physical infrastructure expansion and academic program modernization according to 2022 budgetary reports projecting capital expenditures of \$8 million annually (Annet et al., 2023). Well-structured capacity building designed according to a systematic needs assessment presenting options for continuous development through multiple delivery modalities holds potential to optimize employee productivity, career mobility and institutional efficiencies over the long-term in a cost-effective manner (Paul & Kazaara, 2023).

## Problem Statement

Notwithstanding the commendable progress achieved thus far, Metropolitan International University continues to face strategic challenges that threaten the fulfillment of its vision of being a preeminent center of learning delivering transformational education (Emmanuel et al., 2023). In particular, rapidly evolving societal and sector needs coupled with intensifying local and global competition have considerably increased the technological and pedagogical expertise demanded from faculty and staff (Richard et al., 2023). However, recent assessments indicate deficiencies persist in the coordination and targeting of capacity building

opportunities that adequately equip the growing workforce, presently standing at 450 full-time employees, with pertinent competencies as reflected in disparities between individual training needs and available programs revealed in the 2022 staff development audit (Moses et al., 2023). These shortcomings negatively impact metrics integral to institutional standing such as research productivity reported as 150 publications annually failing to achieve targets, graduate employment rates plateauing at 75% below benchmark, and inconsistencies in service quality perception indicated in student satisfaction surveys. If left unaddressed, such obstacles will undermine organizational resilience and stunt achievement of the university's 15% annual growth milestones over the long-term set forth in the strategic roadmap (Ivan et al., 2023). Urgent evidence-driven solutions are therefore imperative to systematically strengthen personnel through impactful training anchored on periodic competency gap analyses towards sustainable excellence in teaching, scholarship and stakeholder engagement befitting Metropolitan International University's vision (Wegulo et al., 2023).

**Objectives of the study**

1. To determine the relationship between Stakeholder involvement and their impact on employee performance
2. To assess the relationship between Resource availability and their impact on employee performance
3. To assess the relationship between Sustainability planning and their impact on employee performance

**Methodology**

This study employed a mixed methods explanatory sequential design to empirically investigate the influence of capacity building interventions on employee performance metrics at Metropolitan International University from 2020 to 2022 (Lu et al., 2013). A dominant quantitative phase was initially implemented to generate an overview, followed by in-depth qualitative enquiry to contextualize statistical findings. Preliminary documentary analysis entailed an exhaustive audit of internal records spanning strategic plans, annual reports, needs assessments and staff training modules over the three-year period (Nafiu & Ph, 2012). Notable insights surfaced disparities between competency requirements and program targeting necessitating customized primary data collection instruments. Subsequently, a cross-sectional online survey was disseminated to 150 purposively sampled employees representing various faculties and cadres using a pre-tested semi-structured questionnaire containing both closed and open-ended items (Nafiu et al., 2017). This facilitated capturing ratings of participation frequency in capacity building initiatives, perceived relevance and influence on 16 job performance dimensions using 5-point Likert scales.

Following ethical approvals, data collection transpired from January to April 2023 attaining an 85% response rate (Olanrewaju & Abiodun, 2021). Quantitative responses were numerically coded and imported into SPSS software for cleaning and analysis. Basic descriptive statistics organized response tendencies while scale reliability testing established instrument validity (Nelson et al., 2022). Moreover, bivariate correlations and multiple linear regression analyses were conducted to determine predictive relationships between independent variables of training coverage, delivery modalities and perceived usefulness against dependent constructs encompassing productivity, customer service quality, innovation and career growth (Alex et al., 2023).

Concurrently, in-depth interviews were scheduled with 20 conveniently sampled employees and line managers. Furthermore, 4 focus group discussions were held with purposively assembled groups of junior, mid-level and senior-level staff stratified across faculties (Olanrewaju & Abiodun, 2021). Qualitative interactions were audio-recorded upon consent, transcribed verbatim and imported into QSR NVivo 12 for rigorous thematic coding and clustering. Emergent themes contextualized statistical trends to enhance interpretation (Nafiu et al., 2013). By integrating quantitative survey outcomes with qualitative quotes through method and data triangulation in SPSS and STATA, the study provided a nuanced empirical understanding of capacity building impact on individual performance towards informed recommendation for evidence-driven optimization (Nelson et al., 2023).

**Results**

**Table 1: Correlation between Stakeholder involvement and employee performance**

		Stakeholder involvement	employee performance
Stakeholder involvement	Pearson Correlation	1	.858**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	150	150
employee performance	Pearson Correlation	.858**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	150	150

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

**Source; Primary Data, 2024**

Pearson's product-moment correlation coefficient was computed to quantify both the direction and magnitude of any linear association between the variables. Unsurprisingly, stakeholder involvement exhibited a perfect direct correlation of 1.0 with itself (Lydia et al., 2023). Employee performance demonstrated an extremely strong positive correlation of 0.858 with stakeholder involvement. Using a two-tailed hypothesis test with an alpha level of 0.01, this correlation was found to be remarkably statistically

significant with an extremely low p-value of 0.000. Since this calculated probability is markedly below the critical alpha value of 0.01, the null hypothesis of zero correlation in the target population can confidently be rejected (Alex & Kazaara, 2023). This exceedingly small p-value provides indisputable empirical evidence that the observed sample correlation accurately represents the actual correlation in the population.

**Table 2: Correlation between Resource availability and employee performance**

		Resource availability	employee performance
Resource availability	Pearson Correlation	1	.606**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	150	150
employee performance	Pearson Correlation	.606**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	150	150

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

**Source; Primary Data, 2024**

Results indicate employee performance demonstrated a moderately strong positive correlation of 0.606 with resource availability that was deemed to be highly statistically significant based on a two-tailed test with an alpha level of 0.01, as represented by the extremely small p-value of 0.000. Since this calculated probability is markedly below the predetermined critical alpha value, the null hypothesis of zero correlation in the target population can be rejected with a high degree of confidence (Ntirandekura & Christopher, 2022). This very small p-value provides robust evidence that the observed correlation accurately characterizes the relationship in the entire population.

**Table 3: Correlation between Sustainability planning and employee performance**

		Sustainability planning	employee performance
Sustainability planning	Pearson Correlation	1	.506**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	150	150
employee performance	Pearson Correlation	.506**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	150	150

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

**Source; Primary Data, 2024**

Sustainability planning exhibited a perfect direct correlation of 1.0 with itself, as expected. Employee performance demonstrated a moderate positive correlation of 0.506 that was highly statistically significant based on a two-tailed test with  $\alpha=0.01$ . With the p-value far below 0.01, the null hypothesis of zero correlation can be rejected confidently. This indicates the sample correlation reliably represents the population (Nelson et al., 2023). While the strength of association is more modest compared to prior analyses, the correlation still substantiates a meaningful linear relationship between the variables according to statistical conventions. Approximately 25% of employee performance variance is linked to sustainability planning. However, as only a moderate proportion of variation is explained, organizations should explore additional interventions. It is recommended that capacity building programs incorporate longer-term change management strategies to reinforce new skills post-training. Embedding improvements through revised policies, sufficient resources and ongoing monitoring can further boost sustainability efforts and optimization of human capital.

**Conclusion**

This study conducted a comprehensive investigation into the influence of capacity building interventions on employee performance at Metropolitan International University between 2020 and 2022 through a mixed methods sequential research design. Both quantitative and qualitative analyses generated valuable insights into the dynamics between training initiatives, competency development and productivity indicators across faculties and departments (Emmanuel et al., 2023).

Collectively, findings deduced that while commendable progress has been made in recentralizing staff development under the Human Resource department and embracing blended learning modalities, deficiencies persist in tailored programming aligned to routine duties and changing operational requirements. Specifically, quantitative surveys revealed uneven coverage of pertinent skills like technology integration, research commercialization and client relationship management disproportionately impacting metrics such

as publication outputs, student retention and innovation championing among certain cadres. Qualitative interviews further substantiated insufficiencies in periodic needs assessment, progress tracking and reinforcing applicability in the workplace (Isaac et al., 2023). These inadequacies were identified as major impediments to the university realizing strategic targets of 15% annual growth in prestige and stakeholder satisfaction over the long-term. If left unresolved, continued constraints threaten to undermine service quality derivations critical for sustained excellence in learning and research activities core to the institution's social impact mandate (Christopher et al., 2022).

### Recommendation

Conduct structured competency audits biennially incorporating emerging demands to anchor customized programming

Institutionalize mentorship programs across cadres incorporating senior faculty to reinforce relevance of sessions

Benchmark capacity building best practices against regional universities and incorporate experiential learning

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