International Journal of Scientific Research Studies

ISSN (print): 3050-6905, ISSN (online): 3050-6913

DOI:10.58806/ijsrs.2026.v3i11n03

Volume 03 Issue 11 November 2026

Page No: 541-548

Empirical Review of Staff Training and Performance in Nigeria's National Assembly, 2019–2023

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ABSTRACT

This article presents an empirical review of studies on staff training and performance in Nigeria's National Assembly, with attention to the period 2019–2023. It examines seven empirical studies on National Assembly staff, namely Iwo (2020), McTams (2021), Adeleke (2021), Omolayo (2022), Ijefuamhen (2022), Nwafor (2022) and Moshood (2026), and compares them with empirical studies of training in other Nigerian public bodies and with international evidence on the conditions under which training works. Human Capital Theory serves as the benchmark, complemented by institutional theory and the transfer-of-training perspective. The review finds a consistent pattern across the National Assembly studies. Training is present and is usually described as important, but it is reported as inadequate, poorly matched to staff needs, unevenly accessed, weakly linked to promotion and rarely evaluated, and its effect on performance is either not established or described as limited. Two studies report that knowledge acquired through training did not show in staff performance (McTams, 2021) and that no significant relationship was found between training and performance (Omolayo, 2022). The most recent and detailed survey (Moshood, 2026; n = 290) reports that 21.4% of respondents had ever been trained, that only about one in four of those trained found the training relevant, and that 60.0% identified favouritism, politics and corruption as the main problem, while a trained minority reported better competence in drafting, research and ICT. Studies of other Nigerian bodies, by contrast, mostly report positive effects, which suggests that coverage, relevance, selection and follow-up, and not training as such, explain the National Assembly pattern. The article identifies gaps in the evidence, including small samples, reliance on perception data, absence of objective performance indicators and absence of published training records, and proposes directions for policy and research.

KEYWORDS: Empirical review, staff training, organisational performance, National Assembly, parliamentary staff, legislative aides, Nigeria.

ARTICLE DETAILS

Published On:
16 November 2026

Available on:
https://ijsrs.org/

1.0 INTRODUCTION

A legislature depends on its staff to carry out its law-making, oversight and representation functions. The Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) describes the parliamentary administration as in many ways the backbone of parliament, providing impartial assistance to members and serving as institutional memory, and notes that a strong and independent administration often accompanies an autonomous and resilient parliament (IPU, n.d.). In Nigeria's National Assembly, career staff are permanent and pensionable and are governed by public service rules, Section 51 of the 1999 Constitution provides for the Clerk and other staff prescribed by an Act of the National Assembly, and legislative aides serve at the pleasure of individual legislators (Habu, 2016).

Training is the principal means by which such staff are equipped for their work, and Human Capital Theory treats it as an investment that raises productivity (Becker, 1964). The National Institute for Legislative and Democratic Studies (NILDS) is the capacity-building agency of the National Assembly (NILDS, n.d.-a). Whether training has in fact improved staff and organisational performance is an empirical question, and it is the question addressed here. An empirical review does not rely on opinion or

institutional statements. It examines what studies that collected and analysed data have found, how they were conducted, where they agree and disagree, and where the gaps lie.

Several studies, most of them theses held in the NILDS institutional repository, have examined aspects of staff training, capacity and performance in the National Assembly. Their findings have not been brought together. Peter, Ayogu and Egbara (2025) observe that few studies explicitly examine the impact of staff training programmes on organisational performance in the National Assembly, and Oboh, Vu and Nwachukwu (2021) observe that there are few empirical studies on training and recruitment in the Nigerian public sector more generally. This article therefore reviews the empirical studies one by one, synthesises their findings by theme, and assesses the strength of the evidence.

2.0 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM AND PURPOSE OF THE REVIEW

The National Assembly regularly arranges development programmes for staff, but the institution continues to be associated with concerns about low performance and inefficient service delivery, and training is often administered without a prior assessment of the gap between current and desired competence (Moshood, 2026). Individual studies have examined different parts of this problem: the performance of parliamentary staff support services, the effect of NILDS capacity building, the role of legislative aides in law-making, the qualities of committee clerks, the performance of the National Assembly Service Commission and the direct effect of training on employee performance. Taken separately, they give partial and sometimes apparently conflicting answers.

The purpose of this review is to consolidate that evidence. It seeks to establish what the empirical studies agree on, to explain apparent disagreements, to compare the National Assembly findings with studies of other institutions, and to identify the weaknesses in the evidence that should be addressed by future research.

3.0 CONCEPTUAL AND THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

3.1 Key Concepts

Training is the organised process through which organisations develop the capabilities of staff for improved performance, while capacity building is broader and includes formal training, mentoring, professional development and exposure programmes. Organisational performance is the extent to which an institution achieves its goals in terms of efficiency, effectiveness, productivity and quality of output. In the National Assembly it is assessed through administrative efficiency, committee research outputs and the quality of support for law-making, oversight and representation (Moshood, 2026).

Aguinis and Kraiger (2009), reviewing the training and development literature since 2000, conclude that training produces benefits for individuals and teams, organisations and society, and they review needs assessment, training design and delivery, evaluation and transfer to identify the conditions under which benefits are maximised. This points the review towards conditions and not merely towards whether training works.

3.2 Theoretical Perspectives

Human Capital Theory (Becker, 1964) holds that skills acquired through training are a form of capital that raises productivity. It predicts a return when training reaches enough staff, is based on skill gaps, is relevant to the job, is applied after the programme and is rewarded through promotion or responsibility. Institutional theory (March & Olsen, 1984) explains how informal rules such as patronage and seniority can override formal training policy. The transfer-of-training perspective (Baldwin & Ford, 1988) holds that training improves performance only to the extent that trainees apply what they learn, and Blume, Ford, Baldwin and Huang (2010), in a meta-analysis of 89 empirical studies, examined how trainee characteristics, the work environment and training interventions predict transfer. The empirical studies are read through these three lenses.

3.3 Institutional Context

Descriptive, non-empirical sources provide context. NILDS conducts short-term training modules for members and staff of national and state assemblies (NILDS, n.d.-a), and its Department of Training and International Cooperation coordinates training in Nigeria and international partnerships (NILDS, n.d.-b). In August 2021 NILDS organised a three-day workshop for directorate-level Senate staff and described its approach as evidence-based and predicated on the needs of legislators and staff (ThisDay, 2021). After the inauguration of the 10th Assembly, NILDS reported that it had started a needs assessment of legislators and their workforce to design training modules (NILDS, n.d.-c). These sources show that training activity took place. They are statements of intention and activity, not evaluations, and they are not treated as empirical evidence of effect.

4.0 METHOD OF THE EMPIRICAL REVIEW

The review followed a structured narrative approach. Studies were identified in October 2026 from the NILDS Institutional Repository, university and journal sources, and the reference lists of the main documents. A study was included if it collected or analysed empirical data on training, capacity building or staff performance in the National Assembly, or, for comparison, on training and performance in other Nigerian public bodies or in the wider international literature. Studies of the National Assembly were

included whether or not they fell wholly within 2019–2023, because several cover the 8th session (2015–2019) or earlier years and bear directly on the same staff, and their periods are stated.

For each study the review records the author and year, the focus and period, the design and sample, and the findings that relate to training. Studies were then compared by theme: coverage and access, relevance, selection, effect on performance, and challenges. Where a study was consulted at the level of its published abstract, the review reports only what the abstract states and does not infer further. The strength of evidence for each theme is rated according to the number of independent studies that agree, the directness of the evidence, and the type of data used.

5.0 EMPIRICAL REVIEW

5.1 Empirical Studies on Staff Training and Performance in the National Assembly

Table 1 summarises the seven studies on the National Assembly. They are then reviewed in turn.

Study	Focus and period	Design and sample	Main findings relevant to training
Iwo (2020)	Performance of parliamentary staff support services	Mixed design; questionnaire	Staff support services important; inadequate training (48.8%) among the challenges
McTams (2021)	Performance of the National Assembly Service Commission, 2013–2018	160 staff of the National Assembly Service and a few civil society organisations	Training usually carried out but knowledge acquired not reflected in staff performance; recruitment and promotion rules skewed
Adeleke (2021)	Qualities of committee clerks and committee performance, 8th Senate	Secondary data on clerks' qualifications and training; questionnaires to senators and clerks	Skills from training and retraining indispensable to improved committee performance
Omolayo (2022)	Effects of staff training and development on employee performance, National Assembly	Questionnaire and documents including staff nominal roll (sample not stated in abstract)	No significant relationship between training and performance; suitably skilled personnel inadequate; training arrangement not good enough
Ijefuamhen (2022)	Role of legislative aides in law-making, 8th session (2015–2019)	Qualitative design; questionnaire and documents	Aides performed poorly; poor capacity and training among factors; structured quarterly training recommended
Nwafor (2022)	Effect of NILDS capacity building on legislative staff, 2015–2021	Historical descriptive; purposive sample of 32	NILDS important for capacity building; poor funding and manpower constrain it; more funds needed so more staff and aides can attend
Moshood (2026)	Staff training and organisational performance, 2019–2023	Descriptive survey; 290 questionnaires returned of 364; interviews with management and staff	21.4% ever trained; 5.5% found training relevant; no general positive effect on performance; trained minority report gains

Table 1: Empirical studies on training and performance of National Assembly staff

Source: Author's compilation from the studies cited.

5.1.1 Iwo (2020)

Iwo (2020) investigated the performance of support services provided by parliamentary administrators in the National Assembly, using a mixed design and a questionnaire. The study found consensus on the importance of parliamentary staff support services, naming Senior Legislative Aides, Legal Aides, Principal Secretaries to Legislators, Committee Clerks and Administrative Staff as contributing to the Assembly's effectiveness. Among the challenges that limited the effectiveness of these services it identified inadequate training, cited by 48.8% of respondents. The study is relevant because it identifies training inadequacy as a leading constraint, although it does not measure the effect of training on performance directly.

5.1.2 McTams (2021)

McTams (2021) assessed the performance of the National Assembly Service Commission from 2013 to 2018 in recruitment, promotion and discipline, using a sample of 160 staff of the National Assembly Service and a few civil society organisations. The study found that recruitment rules were set aside to allow inexperienced staff to be recruited, and that rules on promotion and discipline were skewed. On training, it reported that training was usually carried out, but the knowledge acquired did not reflect in

staff performance, which affected the processes, conduct and outcomes of legislation. It recommended objective recruitment, promotion and discipline, a robust motivation package, and training and retraining of staff. This study is important because it links non-merit management of staff to the failure of training to translate into performance, a link that institutional theory would predict.

5.1.3 Adeleke (2021)

Adeleke (2021) examined the extent to which the qualities of committee clerks add value to committee performance in the 8th Senate, including whether training and retraining of clerks affect that performance. The study used secondary data on clerks' educational qualifications, training and retraining from the Senate's Director and Clerk of Committees, and primary data from senators and committee clerks. It found that relevant qualities, including sound education, cognate experience and skills acquired from training and retraining, are indispensable to improved committee performance. It recommended a master's degree in a legislative-related discipline for appointment as a committee clerk. This is the most positive finding on training among the National Assembly studies, and it concerns a specific, high-impact role in which training is closely matched to the task.

5.1.4 Omolayo (2022)

Omolayo (2022) is the study most directly concerned with the question reviewed here. It assessed the effects of staff training and development on employee performance in the National Assembly, investigating the availability of personnel with suitable skills, the effectiveness of training arrangements and related matters, using questionnaire data and documents including the staff nominal roll. Its findings were that no significant relationship existed between training and performance in the National Assembly, that the availability of suitably skilled personnel was significantly inadequate for effective performance, and that the training arrangement was not good enough to accommodate the organisation's personnel needs. Nevertheless, the study concluded that training programmes have an impact on employee performance and should be designed on the basis of institutional needs, and it recommended regular training. The reported absence of a significant relationship alongside the conclusion that training has an impact suggests that the finding reflects the quality of the training arrangement rather than the value of training.

5.1.5 Ijefuamhen (2022)

Ijefuamhen (2022) examined the role of legislative aides in the law-making process of the 8th session (2015–2019), motivated by the fact that the National Assembly Service Commission Act 2014 did not define the status and roles of personal aides. Using a qualitative design, a questionnaire and National Assembly documents, the study found that legislative aides performed poorly in the law-making process, and listed contributing factors that included qualification and experience, poor capacity and training, conflicting values and interests of principals, poor funding, and lack of office space, equipment and a bill drafting policy. It recommended amendment of the Act, structured quarterly training for legislative aides, more stakeholder engagement platforms, office equipment and improved funding. The study is relevant because it concerns the staff category that is least likely to be nominated for training, according to Moshood (2026).

5.1.6 Nwafor (2022)

Nwafor (2022) studied the effect of NILDS capacity-building activities on legislative staff of the National Assembly from 2015 to 2021. It used a historical descriptive design and purposive sampling, with a sample of 32 made up of ten legislative staff, ten legislative aides, ten legislators and two NILDS staff. It found that NILDS is important in sustaining democracy through its capacity building for the legislature, but that poor funding, shortage of manpower and inadequate working space limit its performance. It recommended more government funding, more manpower, relocation to its permanent site, and more funds from the National Assembly to NILDS so that more legislative staff and aides can participate in its programmes. The sample is small and purposive, so the findings cannot be generalised, but the study adds a supply-side perspective: the capacity-building agency itself reports constraints.

5.1.7 Moshood (2026)

Moshood (2026) is the most recent and most detailed empirical study, and the only one whose stated focus is staff training and organisational performance in the National Assembly for 2019–2023. It used a descriptive survey design. A sample of 364 was drawn from a population of 4,064 (3,595 parliamentary staff and 469 legislators) using Taro Yamane's formula, and 290 questionnaires were returned and analysed (79.67%), supplemented by interviews with management and staff. The thesis was informed by Human Capital Theory, with institutional theory and the transfer-of-training perspective used to explain departures from its predictions.

The main findings were as follows. Only 62 respondents (21.4%) had received any training since appointment, and 228 (78.6%) had not. Of those trained, about one in four (16 respondents, or 5.5% of the total) found the training relevant to their duties. Selection was based mainly on position (53.1%) and years of service (26.9%), with only 4.1% reporting qualification-based selection, and 92.1% said opportunities were not equal. Respondents described top management's attitude as not serious (85.5%), reported that training does not lead to promotion (76.6%, with the remainder not responding), and identified corruption, favouritism and politics as the main problem (60.0%). A total of 231 respondents (79.7%) said training had not positively affected staff performance, although 89.3% agreed that good training contributes to efficiency and effectiveness.

The interviews qualified the survey. Participants who had attended relevant training in legislative drafting, policy analysis and ICT reported greater confidence, fewer drafting errors and faster document handling, and some described how COVID-19-period virtual

training in e-document management made remote committee work possible. The interviews also indicated that senior and management staff are nominated more often for high-profile programmes and that junior staff and legislative aides are less likely to be selected. The thesis concludes that training had a limited and conditional influence on performance, because coverage, relevance, selection and follow-up were weak.

5.2 Empirical Studies in Other Nigerian Public Bodies

Studies of other Nigerian institutions provide a comparison. Agabu-Ekwue and Okoye (n.d.) studied the impact of staff training and development on employee performance in the Federal Civil Service from 2006 to 2015. They collected questionnaire data from 396 respondents and secondary data on training and development expenditure and annual performance evaluation scores from the Federal Civil Service Commission, and found a direct relationship between training and development and workers' performance, as well as positive relationships between job knowledge and engagement and between job skill and commitment to duty. Their use of administrative data on expenditure and appraisal scores distinguishes it from most National Assembly studies.

Chikwelu (2005) examined human resources development in the Ebonyi State Civil Service from 1996 to 2004 and found a reasonable number of staff development programmes, but also that money constraints and ignorance on the part of some senior civil servants hindered effective implementation, and that there was some degree of favouritism in the selection of those to be trained. This finding closely resembles the National Assembly evidence on selection. Oboh, Vu and Nwachukwu (2021), reviewing the Nigerian public sector literature, note that few empirical studies exist and that a lack of objectivity and transparency in recruitment, influenced by non-merit considerations, has undermined service delivery.

Falola, Osibanjo and Ojo (2014) found that training and development significantly enhance employee performance and organisational competitiveness in the Nigerian banking industry, and Ofobruku and Nwakoby (2015) found that effectively managed training raises employee productivity in the insurance industry. These studies were conducted in commercial settings, and, as the thesis notes, patronage, dual staff categories and weak incentives that characterise the National Assembly are less severe there (Moshood, 2026).

5.3 International Empirical Evidence

Two bodies of international research are relevant. Aguinis and Kraiger (2009) reviewed the literature and concluded that training produces benefits at the level of the individual, the team, the organisation and society, but that these benefits depend on needs assessment, pre-training states, design and delivery, evaluation and transfer. Blume et al. (2010), in a meta-analysis of 89 empirical studies, examined predictors of transfer in three groups: trainee characteristics, the work environment and training interventions. Together they imply that a null or weak result in a particular institution should be read as a signal about those conditions, not as evidence that training is ineffective, which is consistent with how Omolayo (2022) and Moshood (2026) interpret their own results.

5.4 Thematic Synthesis

5.4.1 Coverage, Access and Supply of Training

The studies agree that training is inadequate. Iwo (2020) found inadequate training to be a leading challenge (48.8%), Omolayo (2022) found that the training arrangement did not meet personnel needs and that suitably skilled staff were significantly inadequate, Ijefuamhen (2022) listed poor capacity and training among the reasons for the poor performance of legislative aides, and Moshood (2026) found that 78.6% of respondents had never been trained. On the supply side, Nwafor (2022) found that NILDS itself faces funding, manpower and space constraints, and recommended funding so that more staff and aides can attend. The one point of difference is that Moshood (2026) found inadequate funding to be the least cited problem (3.4%), which may reflect the fact that respondents experience allocation and selection, not the funding position of the training provider.

5.4.2 Relevance

Only Moshood (2026) measured relevance directly, and found that 5.5% of respondents, about one in four of those trained, considered training relevant to their duties. Omolayo (2022) and Ijefuamhen (2022) point indirectly to the same problem by finding that training arrangements do not match needs and by calling for structured, needs-based programmes. Adeleke (2021), which found positive effects for committee clerks, concerns a role in which training is closely tied to a clearly defined task, and Moshood's interviewees who gained from training were those whose training matched their work in drafting, research and ICT. The evidence is therefore consistent with the view that relevance determines whether training pays.

5.4.3 Selection and Patronage

McTams (2021) found that recruitment, promotion and discipline rules in the National Assembly Service were set aside or skewed, and Moshood (2026) found that selection for training followed position and years of service, that 92.1% reported unequal access, and that 60.0% identified favouritism, politics or corruption as the main problem. Chikwelu (2005) found favouritism in the selection of civil servants for training in Ebonyi State, and Oboh et al. (2021) report non-merit influences on public sector staffing. Peter, Ayogu and Egbara (2025) address organisational politics in the Eighth and Ninth National Assemblies, which provides context for this pattern. This is the theme on which independent studies agree most closely.

5.4.4 Effect on Performance

The studies diverge on the effect of training on performance, but the divergence is more apparent than real. Adeleke (2021) reports positive effects of training and retraining on committee performance, and Agabu-Ekwue and Okoye (2013), Falola et al. (2014) and Ofobruku and Nwakoby (2015) report positive effects in other settings. McTams (2021) found that training was carried out but that knowledge acquired was not reflected in performance, Omolayo (2022) found no significant relationship, and Moshood (2026) found that 79.7% of respondents reported no positive effect on performance, while a trained minority reported gains. The differences can be explained by what each study examined. Positive findings come from studies of a defined role or from institutions with systematic training, whereas null findings come from studies of the National Assembly workforce at large, where, as the other findings show, coverage, relevance and selection are weak. Where training is poorly targeted, a null average effect is the expected result.

5.4.5 Incentives, Management and Follow-Up

Moshood (2026) found that training was not linked to promotion (76.6% said it was not, with no respondent affirming a link), that management attitude was perceived as not serious (85.5%) although interviewees gave a more mixed account, and that post-training evaluation was weak. McTams (2021) recommended a robust motivation package, and Omolayo (2022) recommended regular training for job enthusiasm and performance. Blume et al. (2010) place the work environment among the predictors of transfer, which suggests that the absence of rewards and follow-up reduces what the National Assembly gets from the training it provides.

Theme	Studies in agreement	Strength of evidence
Training is inadequate or insufficiently supplied	Iwo (2020); Omolayo (2022); Ijefuamhen (2022); Nwafor (2022); Moshood (2026)	Stronger: five studies agree
Training is poorly matched to needs and duties	Omolayo (2022); Ijefuamhen (2022); Moshood (2026)	Moderate: one direct measure, two indirect
Selection is influenced by rank and patronage	McTams (2021); Moshood (2026); Chikwelu (2005); Oboh et al. (2021)	Stronger: independent studies agree
Training has no general effect on performance in the National Assembly	McTams (2021); Omolayo (2022); Moshood (2026)	Moderate: consistent but perception-based
Relevant, role-specific training improves performance	Adeleke (2021); Moshood (2026) interviews; Agabu-Ekwue & Okoye (n.d.)	Moderate: small samples or other institutions
Training is weakly rewarded and evaluated	Moshood (2026); McTams (2021)	Limited: few studies

Table 2: Thematic synthesis of the empirical evidence

Source: Author's synthesis.

6.0 CRITICAL APPRAISAL AND GAPS IN THE EMPIRICAL EVIDENCE

The consistency of findings across studies that used different samples, periods and questions gives the review's main conclusion, that training has not been a general driver of performance because of weaknesses in how it is provided and managed, reasonable support. It is nonetheless limited by several weaknesses in the evidence.

First, samples are small or of uncertain representativeness. Nwafor (2022) used a purposive sample of 32, McTams (2021) a sample of 160, and the sample for Omolayo (2022) is not stated in the abstract consulted. Moshood (2026) used the largest sample (290 returned questionnaires), but the thesis reports an allocation table based on estimated populations that differs from the population figure used to compute the sample size, the response rate among top management was 36.36%, and legislators formed 28.97% of respondents, which limits the conclusions on staff alone.

Second, most evidence is perception-based and cross-sectional. Moshood's survey was conducted in May 2025 and asked respondents to reflect on 2019–2023, and the other studies rely largely on questionnaires. Only Adeleke (2021) and Agabu-Ekwue and Okoye (n.d.) used administrative records such as qualifications, training records or appraisal scores. No National Assembly study located measures objective performance indicators such as turnaround time, error rates or committee report acceptance.

Third, periods do not align. Several studies cover 2013–2018, 2015–2019 or 2015–2021, so only Moshood (2026) is centred on 2019–2023. Findings from earlier periods are used here to show continuity, not to describe the period itself.

Fourth, studies were consulted at different depths. For some of the repository studies the review relied on abstracts, so details of design, sample and analysis are incomplete, and the review reports only what the abstracts state. The abstract of Omolayo (2022) reports no significant relationship between training and performance alongside a conclusion that training programmes have an impact, and the full text should be consulted before this study is relied upon for either position.

Fifth, little of the evidence follows trained and untrained staff over time, and none compares trained with matched untrained staff. As a result the evidence cannot separate the effect of training from other influences on performance, such as supervision, workload, remuneration and political interference.

7.0 LESSONS FROM THE EMPIRICAL EVIDENCE

- Findings converge on the conditions, not on the value of training. The studies agree that training is inadequate, poorly matched and unevenly accessed, which points to management of training as the main weakness.
- Role-specific training shows the clearest benefit. The positive results concern defined roles such as committee clerks and the trained minority in drafting, research and ICT.
- Non-merit selection is a recurring finding across institutions. Evidence from the National Assembly, a state civil service and a literature review of the public sector all points to favouritism in selection.
- Legislative aides and junior staff are under-served. Studies of aides and the interview evidence both indicate poor capacity and limited access to training for this group.
- Supply-side constraints are real but under-measured. The training agency reports funding and manpower limits, while staff rarely cite funding, so the actual constraint needs to be measured.
- The evidence base lacks objective measures. Without training records and performance indicators, the return on training cannot be demonstrated.

8.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

For policy and practice, the review recommends the following:

1. The National Assembly Service Commission and NILDS should publish an annual training register showing the number of staff trained by cadre, directorate, gender and category (career staff and legislative aides), and the basis of selection.
2. Training should be allocated on published, competency-based criteria derived from documented training needs assessments, with open calls for nomination.
3. Training should be designed by role, using modular, task-specific programmes for committee clerks, researchers, drafters, legislative aides and ICT staff, following the evidence that role-specific training pays.
4. Training outcomes should be linked to appraisal and promotion so that new skills are rewarded and applied.
5. Post-training reports, supervisor attestations and follow-up evaluations should be required, with objective indicators such as turnaround time and error rates.
6. The needs assessment begun by NILDS should be completed, shared within the service and used to plan training, and the funding, manpower and space constraints reported by NILDS should be addressed.
7. Legislative aides, who are the least served category, should be included in structured, regular training programmes, as recommended by Ijefuamhen (2022).

For research, future studies should: use administrative records and objective performance data alongside perception data; analyse staff and legislators separately; compare trained and matched untrained staff or follow cohorts over time; consult full texts and datasets of existing theses so that findings can be compared on a like-for-like basis; and extend comparison to other legislatures that have parliamentary training institutes.

9.0 CONCLUSION

This empirical review has examined seven studies of staff training, capacity and performance in Nigeria's National Assembly, together with comparative studies from other Nigerian public bodies and international research. The studies are consistent on the main point. Training exists and is valued, but it is inadequate, poorly matched to needs, unevenly accessed, shaped by rank and patronage, weakly rewarded and rarely evaluated, and for these reasons its effect on performance across the institution is limited or has not been demonstrated. Positive effects appear where training is matched to a defined role and reaches the staff concerned.

The review therefore supports a conditional conclusion: the empirical evidence does not show that training fails, but that the National Assembly has not yet created the conditions in which training reliably raises performance. The evidence is also thin, with small samples, perception data, different periods and no objective performance measures, and the review's conclusions should be read accordingly. Better data, including published training records and objective performance indicators, are as necessary as better training if the National Assembly is to show that its investment in staff produces results.

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