

The Impact of Administrative Leadership on Public Sector Performance in Nigeria (a case study of Federal Medical Center Jalingo taraba state)

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Abstract

This study examines the impact of administrative leadership on public sector performance within Nigeria's healthcare sector, focusing on the Federal Medical Center (FMC) Jalingo as a case study. Utilizing a survey methodology, data were collected from 60 respondents, including departmental leaders and subordinate staff across various clinical departments. The findings reveal that leadership styles, notably transformational leadership, significantly enhance service delivery and employee morale through clear goal setting and effective communication. The results indicate a strong positive correlation between leadership behaviors—such as recognition, feedback, and support for innovation—and improved employee engagement and operational efficiency. Additionally, the study underscores the importance of equitable workload distribution and transparent communication in fostering a cohesive work environment. These insights contribute to existing literature on leadership in public healthcare, suggesting that adaptive and innovative leadership practices are essential for addressing the complexities of healthcare delivery in Nigeria. Ultimately, this research advocates for targeted leadership training and development initiatives to enhance organizational performance and patient outcomes in public health settings.

Keywords: Administrative Leadership, Public Sector Performance, Healthcare, Employee Morale, Nigeria

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Administrative leadership plays a pivotal role in determining the performance outcomes of organizations across various sectors, and the public sector is no exception. In Nigeria, where public institutions often face challenges such as bureaucracy, inefficiency, and inadequate resources, effective leadership can be the key to transforming these organizations into efficient service providers. This becomes especially relevant in the healthcare sector, where administrative leadership directly influences service delivery, outcomes, and public trust in health systems. With a rapidly evolving socio-political landscape, understanding how administrative leadership affects public sector performance remains critical for policymakers, administrators, and researchers alike. In Nigeria, the complexities of administrative leadership are further compounded by socio-economic factors such as poverty, illiteracy, and cultural attitudes toward healthcare (Elisha, 2025). These factors can hinder the implementation of effective health policies and strategies, making it essential for leaders to navigate these challenges thoughtfully. Effective leadership requires a nuanced understanding of these contextual elements, which can significantly impact

decision-making processes and outcomes in public health. Recent scholarship underscores the necessity for adaptive leadership styles that integrate local knowledge and community needs into administrative practices (Adetola & Adebayo, 2023).

This involves engaging with stakeholders, including community leaders, patients, and healthcare professionals, to foster a sense of ownership and collective responsibility for health outcomes. By promoting teamwork and collaboration among healthcare providers, leaders can create a more responsive and efficient healthcare system. Moreover, being attuned to the pressing health needs of the community enables administrators to prioritize resources effectively, thus improving service delivery. Ultimately, the intersection of administrative leadership and public health outcomes in Nigeria highlights the importance of leadership development initiatives aimed at equipping public sector leaders with the skills and insights necessary to meet these challenges head-on, supporting the creation of a more efficient and trustworthy health system.

Furthermore, leadership in the public sector encompasses various dimensions, each with unique implications for performance, such as transformational, transactional, and servant leadership. Transformational leadership, in particular, has been shown to cultivate an environment rich in motivation and innovation, ultimately leading to improved service delivery and heightened organizational commitment (Ogundipe, 2024). Transformational leaders inspire their teams through a shared vision and foster an atmosphere of trust and collaboration, enabling healthcare professionals to think creatively and implement innovative solutions. By contrast, transactional leadership focuses primarily on routine operations, emphasizing performance-based rewards and controls. While this leadership style can be effective in maintaining order and achieving short-term goals, it may stifle the creativity and adaptability that are crucial for thriving in dynamic healthcare settings.

Emerging research suggests that a blended approach, which incorporates elements from various leadership styles, may yield optimal results in improving public sector performance, particularly in complex environments such as Jalingo's healthcare system (Daniel & Okafor, 2025). This hybrid approach recognizes that different situations require different responses and that leaders can draw on a range of strategies to meet the diverse needs of their organizations. Recent studies have confirmed that effective administrative leadership can significantly enhance organizational performance by fostering a culture of accountability, communication, and innovation (Ogunleye, 2023; Ndubuisi, 2024). This is particularly salient in Nigeria's public healthcare sector, which frequently faces scrutiny for its inefficiencies and inadequate service delivery. The Federal Medical Center (FMC) in Jalingo, Taraba State, serves as a compelling case study to investigate the specific impact of administrative leadership on public sector performance. As a federal facility, the FMC is tasked with delivering comprehensive healthcare services to a diverse population while navigating the constraints frequently associated with public institutions.

The challenges encountered by FMC Jalingo epitomize the broader issues affecting Nigeria's healthcare system, including resource allocation and management inefficiencies (Mohammed et al., 2023). Here, administrative leadership plays a pivotal role in mediating these challenges by implementing effective strategies for resource management, staff motivation, and optimized patient care processes. The quality of leadership at the FMC directly influences not only its internal operations but also its external relationships with the wider community and other stakeholders in the healthcare ecosystem (Garba, 2024).

Conducting a thorough analysis of the Federal Medical Center Jalingo provides invaluable insights into how administrative leadership can directly influence organizational performance. By scrutinizing leadership practices within this healthcare institution, we can delineate successful

strategies that contribute to enhanced service delivery, greater patient satisfaction, and improved employee morale. Understanding the dynamics governing FMC Jalingo will not only have implications for that specific institution but can also inform best practices relevant to other public sector entities across Nigeria, enabling a ripple effect of improvement.

Moreover, evaluating the impact of leadership on performance in public healthcare is of paramount importance as Nigeria moves towards Universal Health Coverage (UHC). The World Health Organization (WHO, 2024) emphasizes the critical role of strong leadership in enhancing health system performance, underscoring the need for effective administrative practices to meet national health objectives. Given its context within Taraba State's unique health challenges and administrative hurdles, the case of FMC Jalingo serves as a microcosm of the broader healthcare landscape in Nigeria, providing a fertile ground for policy development and leadership training initiatives aimed at fostering a more equitable and efficient healthcare system. The lessons gleaned from this case study could be pivotal in shaping strategies that enhance both patient outcomes and the overall effectiveness of public health institutions nationwide. In conclusion, the impact of administrative leadership on public sector performance, particularly in the context of the Federal Medical Center Jalingo, warrants a comprehensive exploration. As Nigeria aims to enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of its public sector, understanding the nuances of leadership within healthcare settings is crucial. By focusing on this area, we can contribute to the development of leadership models that not only elevate performance at the FMC but ultimately enhance the overall health outcomes for communities across Nigeria. This study aims to delve into the intricacies of administrative leadership and its consequential effects on public sector performance, providing recommendations for future leadership practices and policies to better equip Nigeria's healthcare system for the challenges ahead.

1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT

The effectiveness of administrative leadership is increasingly recognized as crucial for optimizing public sector performance, particularly in healthcare institutions in Nigeria, where systemic challenges persist. The Federal Medical Center (FMC) Jalingo serves as a focal point for examining how leadership impacts service delivery amidst widespread criticisms of inefficiency and inadequate healthcare (Adeleke et al., 2022). Despite the government's efforts to enhance healthcare services through reforms, challenges such as poor resource allocation, lack of accountability, and inadequate staff motivation continue to undermine operational effectiveness (Ogunleye, 2023). Consequently, the quality of leadership at FMC Jalingo directly influences not only internal management processes but also the overall satisfaction of patients and staff (Mohammed et al., 2023). Emerging research indicates that effective administrative leadership can foster a culture of accountability, innovation, and improved health outcomes (Daniel & Okafor, 2025). However, limited empirical evidence exists on the specific leadership practices that drive performance improvements in the Nigerian public healthcare system. Therefore, this study seeks to fill this gap by exploring the relationship between administrative leadership and public sector performance at FMC Jalingo, contributing valuable insights for policymakers and healthcare administrators aiming to enhance organizational efficacy in Nigeria's healthcare landscape.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS;

The following research questions was answered

- i. What is the Influence of Leadership Style on Service Delivery?
- ii. How does Administrative Leadership effect Operational Efficiency?

- iii. How does Administrative Leadership impacts staff morale, as a crucial determinant of organizational performance?

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

Administrative leadership plays a pivotal role in determining the efficiency and effectiveness of public sector organizations, particularly in the healthcare sector in Nigeria. This literature review examines the relationship between administrative leadership and public sector performance, with a focus on empirical studies and theories relevant to the Nigerian context.

Theoretical frameworks underline the importance of leadership in public administration. Transformational leadership theory, which emphasizes inspiring and motivating employees to exceed expectations, has been recognized as significantly impactful in enhancing organizational performance (Bass & Riggio, 2018). In Nigeria's healthcare sector, transformational leaders can cultivate a culture of innovation and accountability, fostering better health outcomes (Adeleke et al., 2022). Research shows that effective leadership, characterized by vision, communication, and integrity, directly correlates with improved performance metrics in public institutions (Ogunleye, 2023).

In the Nigerian context, several studies have documented the challenges facing healthcare administration. Mohammed et al. (2023) highlight that poor resource management, ineffective communication, and lack of accountability often contribute to low staff morale and inadequate patient care. These challenges underscore the need for strong administrative leadership to navigate complexities and drive improvement. Effective leaders can initiate reforms, enhance teamwork, and expand resource allocation, ultimately leading to improved performance and health outcomes (Daniel & Okafor, 2025).

Furthermore, the relationship between leadership styles and employee engagement has been critiqued extensively. Studies indicate that participative leadership breeds a sense of ownership among employees, enhancing job satisfaction and overall performance (Nwoke et al., 2021). In contrast, autocratic leadership styles can stifle creativity and innovation, thereby compromising service quality in public healthcare settings (Obi et al., 2024). Empirical evidence suggests that inclusive leadership practices significantly improve both staff performance and patient satisfaction levels at healthcare facilities (Mohammed et al., 2023).

The role of strategic leadership in mitigating conflicts and driving change in healthcare organizations cannot be understated. Leaders who strategically align the institution's goals with the broader national health policy enhance adaptability and responsiveness to emerging health challenges (Abdullahi et al., 2024). This alignment is especially critical in Nigeria, where healthcare delivery often faces constraints such as funding shortages and political interference. Effective leaders can leverage their positions to advocate for necessary reforms and attract resources, facilitating improvements in public sector performance.

Moreover, training and development of leadership skills are crucial for enhancing administrative effectiveness. The findings by Adeyemi et al. (2022) suggest that ongoing leadership training programs can equip healthcare leaders with the necessary skills to manage diverse teams and streamline operations. In a rapidly changing healthcare environment, continuous professional development for leaders significantly impacts organizational adaptability and resilience.

Despite the substantial body of knowledge on leadership impacts, gaps remain in empirical research relating to the specific practices that most effectively drive performance in Nigeria's healthcare sector. While various studies have demonstrated correlations between leadership and performance, detailed analyses of how specific leadership behaviors – such as communication

styles, conflict resolution tactics, and decision-making processes – influence outcomes particularly in Nigerian public healthcare settings are still lacking (Ogunleye, 2023). Addressing these research gaps is critical for formulating effective leadership development programs and policies that can enhance public sector performance.

Overall, the literature indicates that administrative leadership profoundly affects public sector performance in Nigeria, particularly in healthcare settings. By cultivating effective leadership styles and practices, healthcare leaders can improve organizational efficiency, staff engagement, and patient outcomes, ultimately contributing to a stronger and more resilient public health system in Nigeria.

2.2 THEORETICAL FRAME WORK

Transformational Leadership Theory

Transformational Leadership Theory posits that effective leadership is characterized by the ability to inspire and motivate followers to exceed their own self-interests for the sake of the organization or community. Transformational leaders appeal to the values, emotions, and needs of their team members, fostering an environment of collaboration, innovation, and commitment to organizational goals. In the context of public sector performance in Nigeria, especially in healthcare, transformational leadership is critical as it emphasizes the engagement of employees and responsiveness to community needs. This leadership style is particularly relevant for addressing the bureaucratic challenges and resource constraints faced by public institutions, as it encourages staff to embrace change and work collaboratively towards improved service delivery.

Contingency Theory

Contingency Theory posits that there is no one-size-fits-all approach to leadership; instead, the effectiveness of a leadership style is contingent upon various contextual factors, such as the environment, organizational structure, and specific challenges faced by an organization. In the Nigerian public sector, particularly within the healthcare system, leaders must adapt their styles based on the unique challenges presented by socio-economic factors, community health needs, and institutional capacity. This theory highlights the importance of adaptive leadership practices that respond to the complexities inherent in public sector management, allowing leaders to tailor their approaches to meet the specific needs of their organizations and the communities they serve.

These theories provide a framework for understanding how various leadership styles and approaches can impact public sector performance in Nigeria, particularly within the healthcare context.

3.0 METHODOLOGY

This study employed a survey methodology to gather data from the staff of the Federal Medical Center (FMC) Jalingo. Specifically, questionnaires were distributed to the leaders of each department, which included Surgical, Internal Medicine, Pediatrics, Obstetrics and Gynecology, Emergency Medicine, Radiology, and Laboratory Services. In addition, an average of five subordinate staff members from each department participated in the survey, resulting in a total sample size of 10 departmental leaders and 50 subordinates. Two distinct questionnaires were crafted for this research: one specifically designed for departmental leaders and the other for their subordinate staff. To ensure the reliability and validity of the instruments, both questionnaires were subjected to a validation process involving a focus group comprised of representatives from four departments, including four leaders and ten subordinates. This rigorous validation process aimed

to confirm the relevance and appropriateness of the questions included in the questionnaires. In terms of data analysis, multiple regression analysis was employed to examine the relationship between various leadership attributes and public health performance indicators. This statistical approach will provide insights into the extent to which administrative leadership influences key performance metrics such as service delivery, operational efficiency, and employee morale within the public health sector.

4. DISCUSSIONS OF FINDINGS

The results of this study underscore the significant influence of administrative leadership on key performance indicators within the Federal Medical Center (FMC) Jalingo. Data collected from 60 respondents, comprising 10 departmental leaders and 50 subordinate staff across seven clinical and diagnostic departments, reveal notable trends in how leadership attributes correlate with public health sector performance. The findings are discussed below in line with the research objectives.

4.1 Influence of Leadership Style on Service Delivery

Table 1 presents the regression analysis results examining the relationship between leadership style (transformational, transactional, and servant leadership) and service delivery effectiveness

Table 1: Regression Analysis – Leadership Style and Service Delivery

Leadership Style	β Coefficient	t-value	p-value	Interpretation
Transformational	0.68	4.12	0.001 **	Strong positive relationship
Transactional	0.21	1.89	0.064	Weak positive relationship
Servant Leadership	0.47	3.45	0.003 **	Moderate positive relationship

Source: Authors Computations ($p < 0.01$)

Goal clarity and transparent communication emerged as pivotal drivers of efficiency within healthcare settings, aligning with the conclusions drawn by Ogunleye (2023), who emphasized that effective administrative leadership fosters accountability and streamlined operations. When leaders articulate clear expectations and promote an environment of open communication, departments are better equipped to function cohesively. Respondents in various studies indicated that departments led by individuals who consistently communicated objectives experienced fewer delays in patient management and improved interdepartmental coordination (Adeleke et al., 2022). Additionally, research by Mohammed et al. (2023) highlights that clarity in goals enhances staff motivation and engagement, ultimately leading to better patient outcomes. Furthermore, according to Daniel and Okafor (2025), transparent communication channels reduce misunderstandings and promote a collaborative atmosphere, where team members feel empowered to share insights and contribute to problem-solving. These findings collectively underscore the vital role of goal clarity and communication in enhancing operational efficiency within Nigeria's public healthcare sector.

4.2 Administrative Leadership and Operational Efficiency

Table 2 summarizes findings on the link between leadership practices and operational efficiency.

Table 2: Regression Analysis – Leadership Practices and Operational Efficiency

Leadership Attributes	β Coefficient	t-value	p-value
Goal Clarity	0.59	3.78	0.002 **
Resource Management	0.44	2.96	0.006 **
Communication Transparency	0.51	3.21	0.004 **

Source: Authors Computations 2025 ($p < 0.01$)

Goal clarity and transparent communication emerged as crucial drivers of efficiency within healthcare institutions, significantly enhancing overall performance. This aligns with the findings of Ogunleye (2023), who emphasized that effective administrative leadership not only fosters accountability but also promotes streamlined operations across various departments. Similarly, Adeleke et al. (2022) found that clear goal articulation by leaders leads to enhanced alignment within teams, which is essential for efficient healthcare delivery. Respondents in their study reported that units led by individuals who clearly articulated goals and expectations experienced markedly improved patient management and interdepartmental coordination. These leaders ensured that staff understood their roles and responsibilities, contributing to a more cohesive team dynamic. Open communication channels allowed for timely sharing of information, minimizing misunderstandings and facilitating quicker decision-making processes (Mohammed et al., 2023). As a result, departments benefited from reduced delays in patient care, leading to improved satisfaction among both patients and healthcare personnel. Moreover, Daniel and Okafor (2025) highlighted that transparent communication not only improves operational efficiency but also enhances employee morale, fostering an environment where staff feel valued and engaged. The emphasis on setting clear objectives and maintaining transparent interactions underscores the critical role of effective leadership in navigating the complexities of healthcare service delivery, ultimately enhancing organizational efficacy and patient outcomes.

4.3. Leadership and Employee Morale

The third objective investigated how leadership impacts staff morale, a crucial determinant of organizational performance.

Table 3: Regression Analysis – Leadership Behavior and Employee Morale

Leadership Behavior	β Coefficient	t-value	p-value
Recognition & Feedback	0.53	3.58	0.002 **
Support for Innovation	0.49	3.33	0.003 **
Fair Workload Allocation	0.38	2.77	0.008 **

Source: Authors Computations 2025 ($p < 0.01$)

Departmental subordinates consistently reported higher morale in units where leaders provided regular feedback, acknowledged contributions, and encouraged innovative thinking. These findings echo the work of Ndubuisi (2024), which highlights the importance of positive leadership practices in enhancing employee engagement within healthcare settings. Similarly, the World

Health Organization (2024) emphasizes that recognition and constructive feedback are critical components of effective leadership in public healthcare environments. When leaders take the time to acknowledge individual efforts, it fosters a culture of appreciation and motivation, significantly enhancing team morale (Adeleke et al., 2022). Conversely, leaders who fail to recognize contributions or do not equitably distribute workloads have been associated with lower morale and diminished performance outcomes (Mohammed et al., 2023). In such environments, employees may feel undervalued, leading to disengagement and increased turnover rates. Ultimately, nurturing a supportive atmosphere through acknowledgment and equitable practices is vital for sustaining employee morale and improving overall organizational performance.

CONCLUSIONS

This study highlights the integral role of administrative leadership in enhancing performance within healthcare institutions, particularly within the Federal Medical Center (FMC) Jalingo. The findings reveal that effective leadership styles, characterized by transformational qualities, clear goal setting, and transparent communication, are pivotal in promoting operational efficiency and improving service delivery. Notably, leadership behaviors that promote recognition, feedback, and innovation were shown to significantly boost employee morale, contributing to a cohesive and productive work environment. As healthcare systems face increasing pressures to deliver quality care, the importance of these leadership attributes cannot be overstated. The alignment of these findings with existing literature underscores the necessity for healthcare leaders to cultivate environments where clarity, communication, and recognition flourish. This will not only enhance patient outcomes but also foster overall organizational effectiveness. Therefore, the implications of this research advocate for tailored leadership training programs focused on these critical attributes, ultimately aiming to create more resilient healthcare institutions capable of meeting the complexities of public health challenges.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Base on the study's findings, the following recommendations were made:

- i. **Implement Leadership Training Programs:** Develop comprehensive training initiatives focused on transformational and servant leadership styles to strengthen leadership capacity across departments.
- ii. **Establish Clear Communication Channels:** Foster open lines of communication by instituting regular departmental meetings and feedback sessions where goals and expectations are clearly articulated.
- iii. **Promote Recognition and Feedback Systems:** Create structured recognition programs that celebrate employee contributions and encourage regular feedback mechanisms to enhance staff engagement.
- iv. **Evaluate Workload Allocation Practices:** Conduct assessments to ensure equitable distribution of workloads, reducing employee burnout and fostering higher morale.
- v. **Encourage Innovation Initiatives:** Introduce platforms for staff to propose innovative ideas, thereby empowering them and fostering a culture of creativity and continuous improvement within the organization.

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