

Resource Allocation and Performance of Public Hospitals in Montserrado County: A Case of John Fitzgerald Kennedy Medical Centre, Liberia.

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ABSTRACT:

This paper has addressed how allocation of resources affects performance of the public hospitals using the example of John F. Kennedy Medical Center in Montserrado County, Liberia. Descriptive research design approach was used to allow a systematic evaluation to take place without interfering with the natural setting. The target population included 214 employees of the hospital, and purposive sampling was used to complement the census approach and justify the efficiency in the progress of the data collection. Primary data was collected using structured questionnaire consisting of open and closed ended questions, and scale used in answering the questions had a five-point likert scale. Analysis of the data included incorporating descriptive measurers like the average and standard error to give a summary of trends, as well as income methods like correlation and regression analysis to build association of variables. Upon research findings, allocation of financial, human, capital, and technological resources seemed to have significant effect to hospital performance, although there are various dimensions that have varying effects to it. Regression analysis-based results showed that the allocation of resources is one of the major indicators of efficiency in operation and results of services delivery. Resting on such findings, the research proposes a more calculated, balanced, and needs-connected distribution of resources in order to gain the optimum output in state medical establishments. Such insights can have real-life implications in the context of better hospital administrators and policymakers striving to have better healthcare systems by managing all the resources efficiently.

Keywords: Organisational resources, , Strategy implementation, Organisational performance

INTRODUCTION

Hamann and Schiemann (2021) observed that organisational performance entails the assessment of different parts of an organisation, and such parts include financial performance, productivity of employees, customer satisfaction, and operational efficiency. The first one is financial performance, which incorporates such measures as profitability, growth of revenues, and the level of return on investment. The financial performance indicators can be used to indicate whether or not an organisation is achieving its financial goals and is able to maintain its long-term growth (Demeke & Tao, 2020). Employee performance constitutes a significant consideration on non-financial performance indicators, and this is done by identifying how the employees are doing concerning their personal and group benefits as well as the effect that employee productivity has on overall performance of the organisation (Moumin, 2024). Organisations with good record of performance usually consider investment to develop their employees and provide a good workplace environment to enhance productivity and work enjoyment.

Customer satisfaction is an essential element of organization performance. Companies need to always measure the satisfaction of their customers in relation to a product or a service (Conțu, 2020). Customer satisfaction tends to correlate with repeat business and also, client loyalty which is important in long term success. Finally, two factors, such as operational efficiency, are decisive in the organization performance. The efficient management of resources, efficient processes, and technology can result in savings and increased efficiency (Gomide Júnior et al., 2022). Moreover, it is crucial to make sure that resource distribution, be it financial, human, or

technological is distributed to the right places when implementing the strategies (Fuertes et al., 2020). Such allocation should be in relation to the strategic priorities and needs of the organisation.

More so, resource allocation refers to assigning and managing the assets in a way that contributes to the strategic planning of an organisation (Ali et al., 2022). The resources involved in resource allocation include four groups of resources that comprise finances, technologies, materials and people. In Indonesia, Dharyanti et al. (2019) recorded that strategy implementation is made up of communication, resources, disposition, and bureaucratic structure. A hospital is a costly health facility that offers rehabilitative, medical and diagnostic services. Hence, it is important to plan strategically and enhance the standards of public health. The research concluded by Al Humeisat and Abushattal (2022) in Jordan involved the dimensions of strategic management in the context of coping with the spread of coronavirus, such as environmental scanning, strategy formulation, strategy implementation and strategy evaluation. The analysis concentrated on environmental scanning, strategy formulation and its assessment post-implementation and discovered that high-rank management could decide on the mechanism of preparedness to face the pandemics by extrapolating general policies of the functional strategy and operational strategies, which were described as short-term strategies.

In Kenya, Waswa and Osoro (2024) found that the implementation of effective strategies in health facilities was dependent on aligning personnel, culture, systems, and resources in the private sector. Mwangi and Kihara (2021) also stated that the performance of privately owned hospitals required management commitment and cultural endorsement. Therefore, in Liberia, Alwan et al. (2024) emphasized the benefits of focusing on the appropriate distribution of resources to enhance universal health coverage through countries reliant on donor assistance.

The JFKMC is Liberia's premier tertiary, referral, and teaching hospital, situated in the capital, Monrovia. The hospital has a bed capacity of 500, but currently has more than 400 functional beds. Moreover, the hospital was commissioned in the year 1971 (Joseph, 2019). The hospital provides all levels of health care, that is, primary, secondary, and tertiary medical services. The first two services are provided to the communities around it, and tertiary health services to the whole of Liberia. In addition, JFKMC receives referrals from all fifteen counties of Liberia, which in the year 2022 had a population estimated to be 5.3 million. Also, the funding for the hospital's operations comes mainly from government allotments and fees-for-service, with additional support from both local and international organisations (Dadzie & Kanagasabai, 2022).

In 2013-2020, the country noted a reduction of maternal mortality by 1,072 to 742 deaths per person per 100,000 live births although haemorrhage (20%) and eclampsia (17%) are the top causes. In 2019, the estimated loss of disability-adjusted life years of Liberia was 1.98 million, of which 60 percent was due to communicable, maternal, child, and nutritional, 30 to non-communicable diseases, and 5 to injuries (Ako-Egbe et al., 2023). There is however a significant constraint in terms of the public health infrastructure of which only two out of the scheduled five regional laboratories have been built, restricting decentralised disease testing. The health sector suffers under budgetary constraints that are currently at around 25 percent of what they should be, and human resource shortages, with turnover being too high, making it hard to implement integrated disease surveillance and response, and follow international health regulations (NPHIL, 2022).

Statement of the Problem

The healthcare system of Liberia is burdened with a number of acute problems, which impact on the efficiency of the hospitals and effective delivery of the services substantially (Ako-Egbe et al., 2023). Among them is inadequate customer service, manifested by the presence of long queues and lack of efficiency in communication with the patient and a shortage of necessary medical supplies and equipment (Nyenswah et al., 2023). Also, the incapacity to follow common treatment practices and little infection prevention and control procedures occurs continuously. This is additionally worsened by the poor training of healthcare workers who in general are undermining the quality of care given even in the health facilities in the country (Dadzie & Kanagasabai, 2022).

A major gap identifies was that left by Tawse and Tabesh (2021) centered on strategy formulation and implementation in the healthcare sector in the USA. Thus, did not focus on public hospital performance. Another, gap addressed by this study emanated from Eresia-Eke and Soriakumar (2021) in South Africa that determined challenges to strategy implementation and on public sector organisations. Thus, this study is more specific to

Liberia public hospitals. Further, Godana et al. (2022) study examined the impacts of financial resource deployment on the realisation of strategic directions in the public hospitals in Kenya. However, the study did not include technological and human resources which were addressed by this article.

Objective of the Study

To determine the influence of resource allocation on performance at JKPMC, Montserrado County, Liberia.

Hypothesis

Resource allocation has no statistically significant influence on the performance of public hospitals in JKPMC in Montserrado County, Liberia.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Eresia-Eke and Soriakumar (2021) explored the obstacles to strategy implementation in the South African public sector, referring to both internal and external barriers like the short amount of resources, the organisational structure, culture, politics, infrastructure and regulatory frameworks in the country. Nevertheless, although this study can be applied in the context of raising the issue of the problem of resources, its context, method, and subject are dramatically different than the present research. One is that it was done in the general public sector of South Africa and not in the public health facilities and hence might not be easily applicable to the performance of the hospital in Liberia. Second, it used qualitative research design in terms of a multiple case study based on using semi-structured interviews as opposed to using the present study which employs a descriptive research design and structured questionnaires where the outcomes of the research design can be measured quantitatively in terms of the effectiveness of allocating financial, human, and capital resources. Besides, the above study was more general as pertaining to the strategy implementation, whereas the given study is specific as it draws attention to the impact of resource allocation on the performance of the public hospitals. Whereas the two studies appreciate resources as an important determinant in the success of organisations, the present study constricts the research to the healthcare segment and collects a complete census of the target population, as well as employing regression analysis in creating statistical links.

Mapetere et al. (2023) investigated empirically the interaction between resource allocation and the strategy implementation of commercialised state-owned enterprises in the communication technology industries, as well as the courier services industry in the country of Zimbabwe. The study used a questionnaire. Their results confirmed the fact that proper resource allocation played a crucial role in the attainment of the strategic goals, but a lack of resources negatively affected the implementation of a strategy. As the study is useful in showing how resource allocation is a crucial element, its unilateral concentration on technology and courier services makes it insufficiently applicable to the healthcare setting which is unlike the other sphere in its operations and resources requirements. In addition, the above study mostly tested the resource allocation based on the implementation of the strategy when the connection between resource allocation and measurable results of performance like the speed of service delivery and quality of patient care was not directly tested. The gaps filled by current study are by focusing on resource allocation of financial, human and capital sources within the confines of the public hospitals and also utilizing correlation and regression analyses.

Onyegbula and Nwoye (2023) conducted a study in the country of Nigeria regarding the impacts of implementing strategies in stock and insurance markets on the performance of regulatory and supervisory institutions. The study was premised on the theory of resource-based view and utilized a descriptive research design that retrieved primary data constituting 145 employees selected. The authors used OLS regression to determine that strategic alignment, resource availability, and organisational structure had a significant positive impact on organisational performance. Even though applying this study practically, can also be useful in terms of theoretical insights of the relations between resources and performance, it is less applicable in the healthcare sector, as financial regulatory agencies, first of all, have different priorities on operations and performance rather than the healthcare sector. Also, the study demonstrates the value of available resources, but does not refer to specific aspects of the sector like patient care quality or hospital efficiency. The present study was based on these results, as it

implements regression analysis to a public hospital setting, but with financial, human, and capital sources of resources allocation, and organisational performance in health care sector.

Waithira (2022) carried out a cross-sectional quantitative study in Kenya that aimed to analyze the obstacles to the implementation of strategies in Saint Francis Community Hospital in Nairobi with the specificity of dedicating attention to the significance of resource allocation. The study used correlational research design, and it targeted 347 employees, 102 of whom were purposely sampled. Questionnaires were used to collect data and descriptive and inferential statistical methods were used in analysis process. According to the results, there was a close positive relationship between strategy execution and physical resource capability, technological resource, and physical resources allocation. This study has provided the give and take as far as the healthcare sector in concerned, however, study was limited to a single hospital and the area of focus was on strategy implementation other than the aspect of depth involved in the performance of a hospital. The current study further narrows this down to exploring resource allocation of financial, human and capital among the public hospitals in Montserrado County through the deployment of a compulsory census of target population and use of correlation and regression analysis to capture a broader view of the effect of resource allocation on the entire hospital performance.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Resource-Based View (RBV) theory is the work of Barney (1991). The theory goes to the extremes of using factors of organisational economics and strategic management to give a general account on how to describe competitive advantage and high organisational performance (Barney, 1991). The other existing competitive advantage generating sources of competitive advantage including financial and natural resources, technology, and economies of scale are generating value but are now being readily made more accessible by competitors and can be easily imitated. It is pointed out, however, that the RBV focuses more on recognizing internal resources, which enable sustained competitive advantage, which in turn reveals the reason why companies operating in the same industry can perform at varying degrees (Seriki, 2023).

According to RBV supporters, valuable resources are capable of providing high performance and leading the company to attaining a sustainable competitive advantage. The RBV classifies resources into tangible and intangible assets including technological, human and physical assets that are elements strongly linked to the firm (Lubis, 2022). Nonetheless, these resources are not adequately available. The RBV also introduces the so-called concept of capabilities; they are being manifested in the form of webs of relationships and coordination and spread across resources in a firm (Bertram, 2016). The idea just came out to reveal how these resources are even more valuable when packaged with the special capabilities that a firm develops in its working life. The RBV supposes that the resources and capabilities, being two of the strategic assets are more valuable when they are combined.

What is intended is basically to inquire how resources could be organized in such a way that they generate the highest financial returns on the investment and overall proficiency. These are enhanced organisational financial performance, organisational efficiency and organisational institutional capacity. Therefore, analyzing the influence of unique resources and capabilities, the study will reveal what processes allow the firms to sustain competitive advantage in the environment of the Kenyan healthcare insurance industry (Nayak et al., 2023). In addition, RBV tenets come in handy in establishing how the external environment of firms may be identical yet results of the analysed firms operating in the same industry may vary. Through RBV, this paper will be able to argue out that the internal sources and capabilities of firms are main drivers towards their success. Therefore, the study, by analysing internal resources utilisation and how organisational capabilities can be better leveraged, will contribute to an understanding of how strategy management practices of public hospitals may be improved to generate greater performance (D'Oria et al., 2021).

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework given in Figure 1.1 explains the relationships of the research concepts together with the constructs under study (Van Der Heijden, 2020). In this paper resource allocation is the independent variable, and the dependent variable is organization performance.

Independent Variables

Dependent Variable

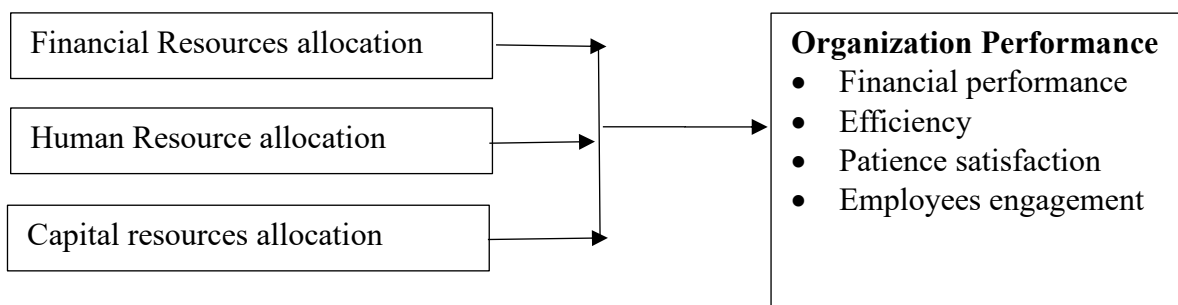


Figure 1.1 Conceptual Framework

METHODOLOGY

The research design was descriptive, and this allowed systematic description and presentation of the nature of the population and the variables of the study without changing the natural environment of the research (Creswell & Creswell, 2023). The target population to be studied was 214 employees in JFKMC in Liberia. Census method was used to cover the representation of the entire population, although purposive sampling technique was used to simplify the process and to facilitate effective data collection in the rigorous conditions of functioning of healthcare organizations. Structured questionnaires that have open-ended and closed questions were utilized to collect the data as recommended by (Mallette & Duke, 2021). To embrace the perspectives of the respondents, the questionnaires included a five-point likert scale, which Flick (2020) interpreted as best practice. The data analysis followed two steps: descriptive statistics where the Data was summarized using various measures like mean and standard deviation to see variations; and inferential statistics whereby the data was analysed using linear regression analysis to establish the relationship between the variables in the study. This combination of approaches gave the overview of the data and statistical evidence on how resource allocation contributes to the performance of hospitals.

FINDINGS

The descriptive statistics for the study were based on the mean and standard deviation as indicated in the table 1.

Table 1 Descriptive statistics of Resource Allocation and Performance of Public Hospitals

Resources Allocation	Mean	Standard deviation
Financial resource allocation influences an organisation's performance	2.91	1.21
Influence of human resource allocation on organisational performance	2.58	1.40
Capital resource allocation influences organisational performance	2.64	1.35
Adequate resource allocation for strategy implementation	2.55	1.38
Influence of technological resource allocation on organisational performance	3.39	1.25
Lack of strategy execution is influenced by resource allocation	2.97	1.52
Composite mean and standard deviation	2.84	1.35

In table 1, the analysis showed that the composite mean of resource allocation was 2.84 and composed standard deviation was 1.35 to use as benchmarks against the outcomes of the analysis. The allocation of financial resources presents a high mean of 2.91 as compared to the composite value, a fact that suggests its positive relevance to the performance of public hospitals. Its standard deviation was 1.21 as compared to the composite which indicated that there was less variability in responses. The mean of human resource allocation was less

than the composite mean at 2.58 and it had a larger standard deviation of 1.40 which portrayed it as having a negative effect with increased variability in the responses amongst the respondents.

Capital resource allocation rated at the mean of 2.64 which is lower than the composite average which represents a negative impact, but with equal standard deviation as the composite which gives the same extent of variability. Reasonable resource investment in strategy execution has a lower result of 2.55, which is lower than the composite with a slightly higher standard deviation of 1.38 which in such case indicates more variability. Technological resource allocation showed a mean of 3.39, thus, surpassing composite mean, meaning that it had a positive impact on the responses, and a smaller standard deviation of 1.25 which showed more unified answers. Lastly, the ineffectiveness of strategy implementation as a result of resources allocation had a mean of 2.97 above the overall mean indicating that there is a positive effect but the standard deviation stood at 1.52 indicating that there is more variance in the perceptions. In addition, the inference statistics for the study were determined using simple regression analysis as indicated in the table 2.

Table 2: Inference Statistics Result of Resource Allocation and Performance of Public Hospitals

Allocation of resources	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
(Constant)	2.610	0.101		25.794	0.001
Resources allocation	0.459	0.037	0.661	12.491	0.001
R		0.661a	Sig.		0.000b
R Square		0.537	F		156.01
Adjusted R Square		0.534	Sum of Squares		44.846
Std. Error of the Estimate		0.47235	df		201
Mean Square regression		34.810	Mean Square residual		0.223
a. Dependent Variable: Performance of Public Hospitals					

In table 2, regression analysis was used to gauge the influence that resource allocation has on the performance of the public hospitals. A strong connection can be observed in the results because the p-value of 0.001 is much lower than 0.05. The value of the unstandardized coefficient of resource allocation ($B = 0.459$) indicates that 1 unit in resource allocation is associated with a 0.459 unit increase in the performance of public hospitals, where the other factors are kept the same. The standardized value of the full coefficient beta (0.661) shows that the relationship between the two variables is very positive. The high correlation coefficient ($R = 0.661$) implies that there is a significant extent of association between the model and the correlation coefficient of 0.661 illustrates a high level of correlation. On the other hand, since $R \text{ Square} = 0.537$, this shows that resource allocation explains a significant proportion of hospital performance (roughly 53.7 percent). The R Square is adjusted (0.534) to prove that the model is strong considering the number of predictors. The overall significance of the model, as well as the F-statistic also supports the existence of the overall model significance ($F = 156.01$, $p < 0.05$). The standard error of the estimate (0.47235) implies that the degree of error in prediction would be moderate. The findings, overall, suggest the importance of the resource allocation as a predictor of public hospital performance as the better resource distribution would produce a significant change in the service delivery and outcome.

DISCUSSION

The research established that resource allocation is a key factor behind the operation of the public hospitals in Liberia. The aspect of proper allocation plays a significant role in ensuring that medical supplies and equipment, as well as human beings are available to run the hospital cost effectively, which instantly impacts on the service delivery capability and patient outcomes. These findings share similarities with the study by Eresia-Eke and Soriakumar (2021) who highlighted that organisational resources are vital in the increase in performance. They

found in their studies that effective management of resources enhances productivity, decision making, and in general institutional performance.

Moreover, the results of the research are associated with a study by Mapetere et al. (2023), who examined the impact of resource allocation when implementing strategies in commercialized state-owned enterprises. In their studies, they found that the effective allocation of resources is fundamental in the pursuit of strategic objectives since ineffective resources are a hindrance to implementation and a decline in organisational performance. On the same note, this research study affirms that resources should be allocated properly such that implementation of strategic initiatives in Liberian public hospitals would have improved service delivery and an efficient operation process.

In addition, this study is consistent with the study conducted by Onyegbula and Nwoye (2023), which concluded and determined that strategic alignment, availability of resources, and organisational structure are instrumental in boosting the performance of organisations. Their writing indicated that when organisations are able to match their strategy with the available resources and where a structure is well organised, they are able to attain greater efficiency and better outcomes. On the same note, it is true, according to the present study that resource allocation, organisational structure, and strategic communication are crucial to the performance of the public hospitals in Liberia.

Finally, the results of the current research were aligned with Godana et al. (2022), who concluded that financial allocation of resources is the key determinant of the proper execution of county health strategies. In their paper, they stressed that proper funding improves the delivery of services, performance of staff, and the level of health improvement in the community. On the same note, this paper finds out that resource allocation is vital in enhancing rather poor performance of public hospitals in Liberia. Hospitals lack enough money; therefore, they are impacted in terms of infrastructure, medical supplies and effectiveness of the working force, which influences the quality of the provided services. Consequently, efficient financial resource management is crucial in making sure that hospitals use their strategies to great success and hence offer improved healthcare services.

CONCLUSION

The outcomes indicate that resource allocation is a significant factor for performance of a public hospital is concerned. The positive unstandardized coefficient ($B = 0.459$, $p = 0.001$) shows that resource allocation has an association with performance, given other variables being constant, one unit change in the resource allocation can be linked to 0.459 units change in performance. This relationship is very strong, with a high value of standardized beta (0.661) and the correlation coefficient (0.661). Moreover, an R Square value of 0.537 indicates that the model is reliable since it demonstrates that 53.7 percent of the change in any hospital performance is dependent on resource allocation and a high-quality adjusted R square of 0.534 approves the goodness of the model. The large F-statistic ($F = 156.01$, $p < 0.05$) further confirms the predictive ability of the model under study. As the standard error of the estimate is rather small (0.47235), it is quite obvious that with the effective and strategic allocation of the financial, human, capital, and technological resources, significant progress may be achieved in the efficiency, quality, and overall performance of the public hospitals.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Considering the results, the following recommendation is made, the strategic and balanced approach to resources allocation should be used in public hospitals so that the performance of the latter could be improved. In managing all the resources, it is imperative that financial, human, capital and technological resources be channeled to where they can create maximum impact on services delivery and efficiency of operations. These are bringing budgets inline on matters of priority in healthcare, investing in new equipment and technology, and having proper staff numbers with the skills to sufficiently attend to patient needs. Moreover, hospitals ought to introduce effective monitoring and evaluation systems to ensure that they monitor the utilisation of resources in the hospitals as well as noting and solving inefficiencies in them. Using appropriate data to coordinate and select the planning and allocation will assist in reinforcing healthcare delivery, patient satisfaction, and long-term sustainability of hospital operation.

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