



AN EVALUATION OF LEADERSHIP IN THE PERFORMANCE OF GOVERNMENT-OWNED HOSPITALS IN SIERRA LEONE. A CASE STUDY OF MAKENI GOVERNMENT HOSPITAL

Joseph Noah Bangura ¹, Xinglong Xu ¹, Lovel Fornah ²

¹School of Management, Jiangsu University, Zhenjiang, 212013 PR. China

²Department of Public Health, Microbiology & Immunology, Ernest Bai Koroma University of Science and Technology, Makeni Campus, Makeni, Sierra Leone

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ABSTRACT

Leadership plays a crucial role in healthcare facilities to ensure proper health service delivery. This research was undertaken to assess leadership in the performance of government-owned hospitals in Sierra Leone, with a focus on Makeni Government Hospital.

A stratified and purposeful sampling strategy was employed in the investigation. For this study, we selected employees from Makeni Government Hospital to participate as respondents. A sample of 100 respondents were carefully chosen from the hospital. The study collected data from both primary and secondary sources. Interviews and a structured questionnaire were used to gather the primary data. We conducted both quantitative and qualitative data analysis. We used descriptive statistics, regression, and Pearson correlation to analyze the quantitative data and presented the findings in tables, pie charts, and bar charts.

This study found that the hospital leadership possesses the necessary skills and competencies, with a predominant transformational leadership style that effectively contributes to proper health service delivery. The results also reveal a weak positive correlation between leadership styles, health service delivery, health workers' commitment to work, and hospital performance. These findings suggest that an effective and efficient leadership style can improve hospital performance.

KEYWORDS: leadership, government-owned hospitals, leaders, performance, leadership styles.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Effective leadership in government-owned hospitals is crucial for maintaining order and ensuring precise adherence to procedures and processes. Hospital administrators, nurses, and doctors play significant roles in the healthcare industry. Therefore, the hospital must prioritize the leadership styles adopted within its walls. The healthcare system is a vital component of any nation's development, as it involves maintaining and improving the health of its people. (Dinata, Bachri, and Rahmawati, 2019).

Effective leadership is crucial in all aspects of the healthcare system. It involves guiding individuals within healthcare facilities, ensuring the prevention of premature death and ill health, and promoting good health. To achieve desired results in the healthcare system, leaders must possess indispensable qualities such as effective communication, problem-solving skills, and a result-oriented approach. Leadership styles are a blend of responsibilities and actions that motivate people toward achieving target goals. Utilizing different leadership styles is a key leadership skill (Al-Hashimi, and Al-

Hashimi, 2020). However, many people misinterpret the necessary skills for effective leadership, particularly in managing a department or an entire hospital setting.

However, hospitals, in general, are innovative and continually progressing concerning medical technology and scientific medicines worldwide (Fahlevi, 2020). Given the aforementioned statement, hospitals must adopt modern machines and medicines swiftly to mitigate adverse patient effects (Alloubani, Almatari, and Almuhtar, 2014). Hospitals are there to make sure they treat patients in the appropriate approach for the patient's satisfaction. Therefore, the hospital management and staff need to be competent enough to get a substantive performance culture. The conditions of some government hospitals in Sierra Leone are still not satisfactory. It is an indication that these hospitals are still not operating appropriately. Health services of both government and private hospitals have not been friendly to less privileged patients. Moreover, in any organization, leadership has a great function to play to get the required result. The leader and the type of leadership styles. A



leader should be able to set a clear vision of the organization and share that vision with its team members.

Makeni Government hospital is conveniently located near several towns and villages. In that way, obtaining medical services and moving medical supplies and equipment are both simple processes. Government-owned hospitals in Sierra Leone are the country's main sources of healthcare, hence they bear the burden of providing care to the general public. Consequently, Public hospitals are required to provide patients with good quality service at the most affordable cost. Just like any other organization, these hospitals cannot function well without proper leadership to ensure proper health service delivery. Leaders in public hospitals exhibit numerous leadership styles (ALFadhah., and Elamir., 2019). Leaders in public hospitals must exhibit proper leadership competencies.

Moreover, the Ministry of Health and Sanitation (MoHS) has the responsibility of providing and supervising medical services in the public health sector. This is to enable the nation's population to achieve and maintain sound health at an affordable cost. At the time of the study, the country has a total of around 80 hospitals, both public and private, according to the Common Wealth Network-Sierra Leone (2020). Among the public sector, there are 21 district hospitals and three tertiary hospitals. Additionally, private and mission hospitals are also available (Johnson et al., 2021). Primary healthcare services are delivered countrywide through peripheral health units (PHUs), which are staffed by trained community health workers (CHWs) to support the operations of public hospitals. The Ministry of Health is responsible for setting policies, procedures, and processes to ensure efficient and effective leadership in public health facilities. The District Health Management Team (DHMT) oversees the implementation of these policies and is headed by the District Medical Officer (DMO). The DMO oversees the public health activities in the district. To ensure effective and efficient operation of healthcare facilities, the medical superintendents work with a matron and hospital secretary to manage the hospitals on a daily basis (Ministry of Health and Sanitation in 2016).

Research Objectives

1. To evaluate the leadership at Makeni Government Hospital.
2. To identify the predominant leadership styles adopted at Makeni Government Hospital.
3. To decide the effectiveness of the leadership styles in achieving the objectives of Makeni Government Hospital.

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

Leadership

A good number of studies have developed a concept of leadership that emphasizes the features of leaders (Mkheimer, 2018; Sfantou D, Laliotis A, Patelarou A, et al., 2017). It is a way of influencing the behaviors of individuals using different

approaches to attain desired goals. Kesting, Ulhøi, Song, et al. (2016) state that leadership involves inducing individual attitudes, behaviors, and interactions of group members to achieve desired goals. On this background, leaders are bent on influencing those they lead and inspiring them to do the requisite thing with shared vision and goals.

Mkheimer (2018) highlighted various definitions of leadership in his research and highlighted the lack of consensus regarding the definition, components, and characteristics of leadership. It is the practice of collective management in which members require the joint participation of subordinates to achieve organizational goals (Sfantou, Laliotis, Patelarou et al., 2017).

In an ever-changing and dynamic global economy, people are the most competitive asset within an organization. Leaders can have a valuable impact on their followers if they are efficient and well-managed. Leadership has to do with the commitment of all organization components to achieve the required goals; it is an interactive process of followers accepting an individual to meet set goals (Silva, 2016). Leadership is becoming more and more important in all areas and has a significant impact on the growth of organizations. Like many other concepts, the concept of leadership has yet to find a final consensus. There are many elements and functions related to the concept. To be called a leader, you must exhibit some of these factors and characteristics, as they are considered key influencers within the organization (Northhouse, 2016).

However, differences between leadership concepts and leadership positions not only represent significant disagreements among leading researchers but also lead to differing understandings of leadership outcomes. Anyone can assume leadership roles within the organization, contingent on the organizational requirements, time, and situation. In order to be a successful leader, there are various characteristics you should possess for an efficient result. As a leader, you need to be flexible to perform well in different situations (Khan, Khan, Qureshi et al., 2015). Organization changes; thus, a leader who is not dynamic may tend to have overwhelming challenges along the leadership process.

Leadership is a process that entails the leader to be visionary, committed, motivated, influential, and flexible to both the followers and the organizational environment, with a clear focus to achieve set goals with team members. Leaders must be able to inspire people, not just lead or control them. Leaders must be able to reach out and connect with people beyond the "formal level" (Malik and Azmat, 2019). For one to be called a leader, they must be accepted, if not by all, but by the majority of those they are leading. They act as key players in reaching the set goals of the group. Different opinions of leadership in the government health sector see leaders portray servant leadership, transformational, and situational leadership.

Leadership goes beyond being just the figurehead, it is about collaboration with team members to get the needed result. Leaders play a key role in the organization that is deemed necessary to be replicated by the followers. A good leader embraces and consistently demonstrates a wide range of



leadership qualities as the foundation of how they work to get the job done. They understand that it is a process of accomplishing a task or reaching a set goal and working with people to get there (Plecas, Squires, Garis, 2018). A good leader exhibits good leadership qualities throughout the leadership process. A good leader has discipline, vision, honesty, confidence, humor, passion, integrity, courage, confidence, inspires others, empathy, problem-solving skill, empowers others, is creative and innovative, has decision-making abilities, effectively communicate, and is a team builder (Hiregoudar and Vani, 2018).

Behaviors and Skills of a Good Leader

Plecas, D., Squires, C., and Garis, L. (2018) highlighted the behavior and skills of a good leader. According to them, a leader should possess the following behaviors: care for followers, be a good listener and communicator, be results-focused, visionary, innovative, and courageous, and should be collaborative.

The skills they must exhibit are coaching, mentoring and evaluating, problem-solving and decision-making, strategic thinking, personal organization, resource, and financial management.

Leadership in the government health sector should adhere to these key competencies of leadership discussed above and as well embrace the leadership qualities in the healthcare sector, which are: visions that are inspiring for the seamless operation at all levels in the organization, clear objectives for everyone in the organization; facilitating high levels of health workers engagement and supportive people management; quality improvement; innovation that is within in the practice of workers; and effective working with team members (Mohamed, Elshamy, El adawy, et al., 2022; West, Lyubovnikova, Eckert and Denis, 2014). Collective leadership in the healthcare sector considerably positively impacts the organization's performance (Dickinson, Ham, Snelling, et al., 2013; West et al., 2014).

Leadership Styles

Leadership styles are defined as a leader's pattern of behaviors they demonstrate within the organization to ensure they influence those they lead for the maximization of their desired goals. A leader uses a style or style to see how it will impact the organization positively.

The body of research on this concept is expanding, and studies have emphasized different leadership philosophies. However, it must be recognized that not every circumstance can be handled by a single leadership style. A leader can blend one or more leadership styles as necessary, depending on the occasion, the individual's needs, and the organization's needs, to persuade individuals to work toward the organization's objectives. The secret to a leader's success is thus choosing the appropriate style for the circumstance and timing. These styles are as follows:

Autocratic leadership Style: Lewin (1935) introduced this concept (Costa, Padua, Moreira, 2023). Typically, autocratic leaders' decision-making is based on their beliefs and judgments, and most times, they do not take the advice of their followers

(Cherry, 2019). Such leaders always want their followers to function to their expectations (Al Khajeh, 2018). These leaders are always bent on getting absolute group control in an authoritarian perspective at all times. This type of leadership could be essential when there is a crisis or an emergency, where the workforce is similar, and where the leader is knowledgeable, transparent, and understands the people they lead (Armstrong, 2012). Nonetheless, in some situations, it is applicable to be autocratic. It is important in a crisis that needs apt actions to be taken (Bhargavi and Yaseen, 2016).

In autocratic or which is sometimes called authoritarian or directing style of leadership, the leader has the majority of the power and leaves followers with little or no power to decide on their own. Individuals who lead this way seek absolute obedience from those under their leadership. They do not seek input from others, and the leader makes judgments as they want.

Democratic leadership Style: Smolović Jones, S., Smolović Jones, O., Winchester., et al. (2016) describe democratic leadership style based on the assumption that people are trustworthy, result-oriented, and responsible for their actions, thereby creating teamwork, high performance, and job satisfaction. In democratic leadership, members are always involved in decision-making (Cherry, 2019). On the contrary, it is suggested that depending on the contribution of employees or subordinates, subordinates could make bad decisions (Nwochoka and Iheriohanma, 2015). Often referred to as participatory leadership style, this leadership style can be divided into democratic, consensual, and consultative styles. This leadership style involves subordinates in decision-making. Before making a decision, a mentor leader solicits input from the group, while a consensus leader waits to consult the group before making choices. The consensus of the members is necessary for the decision to be considered final. Subordinates have the final decision-making power in a democratic system.

Laissez-Faire Leadership style: often, the laissez-faire leadership style increases anarchy in the organization because each person sees himself as his or her leader (Monzani, 2015). Laissez-faire leadership, often referred to as liberal leadership, gives complete decision-making authority to subordinates. Associates have complete freedom to make their own decisions, while leaders leave subordinates free to act independently and make critical judgments (Coyle Shapiro, 2013). Laissez-Faire management may be harmful if employees are not effectively managing their time or if they lack the motivation to do their jobs well. Some renowned researchers have suggested this to increase job satisfaction and improve employee performance.

Several well-known researchers have suggested that a laissez-faire style has led to improved job satisfaction and more desired and desired employee performance, but could very well be detrimental if employees do not manage their time effectively or perhaps in the case he is not motivated to do their job effectively (Martin, 2013). The basis of this type of leadership is the principle that employees know their job and it is best to leave them alone (Skogstad, A., Aasland, M. S., Nielsen, M. B, et al., 2015). However, Alan (2013) points out that if performance is



monitored by the leader and made recommendations to employees regularly, a laissez-faire management style can be effective. This approach minimizes the leader's involvement in decision-making, and people are free to choose. Team members enjoy complete autonomy by being allowed to choose and pursue their own goals. Under this leadership, employees often develop independence, and leaders rarely offer help unless specifically asked.

Transformational leadership style: transformational leaders can get trust from those they lead and serve as an embodiment of a good leader (Sadeghi and Pihie, 2012). Visionary, proactive, and creative are qualities that distinguish transformational leaders. Through interactions with others, this leadership style, which is founded on the individual's principles, is demonstrated (Steinwart and Ziegler, 2014). Followers are motivated to achieve long-term and short-term goals and self-interest-driven ambitions. Also, the transformational leader promotes staff members in a creative work environment (Moriano, Molero, Topa, and Mangin, 2014). This type of leadership model is of great importance in the healthcare system. It institutes team spirit and respect, gives confidence among healthcare workers, promotes commitment to work as a result of a shared vision, increases staff morale, and brings job satisfaction, productivity, and overall performance. An environment that is convenient to work in will give followers motivation to work effectively and makes the organization get the desired result. Charisma, inspirational drive, intellectual stimulation, and personal attention are the four qualities of transformative leadership (Onorato, 2013). While this leadership style has been hailed as having highly effective strategic elements, there have been suggestions that it should be combined with a transactional approach (Giltinane, 2013). Therefore, the ability to communicate complex problems and abstract concepts in a way that team members can understand is a requirement for leaders (Orazi, Turrini, and Valotti, 2013).

The transactional leadership style: according to Birasnav (2014), the transactional leadership style does not encourage creativity; rather, it ensures that employees understand their responsibilities while removing roadblocks to the desired goals. The leaders urge or encourage their subordinates toward predetermined goals by making clear the expectations for each role and task. The capacity of the leader to offer rewards like status and money is crucial to transactional leadership (McCleskey, 2014). According to Purwanto, Asbari, and Budi (2019), this leadership style involves a consistent exchange relationship between the leader and followers with rewards and punishment. While facing resistance, improving workplace performance is crucial and typically takes a collaborative effort rather than the power of a leader, which is characteristic of the transactional model (Malik et al., 2014). This leadership style greatly ensures the organization achieves its goals (Saravo, Netzel, and Kiesewetter, 2017). It has a positive correlation with the success of the organization. In simple terms, it is a system of rewards and punishments between leaders and those they lead.

Leadership in Government-owned Healthcare Facilities

A leader inspires others to achieve goals (Northouse, 2016). The administration of government hospitals is similar to that of other organizations. The focus is on serving the people. If we can pinpoint exactly what it is, we may be able to replicate it in government-owned hospital administration. As a good leader, it means you should possess some specific leadership qualities and demonstrate the right leadership style (Doherty, Couper, Campbell, et al., 2013). Leaders in government owned-hospitals must ensure they master the theories and skills of leadership for an efficient and effective health service delivery. Healthcare leaders use different leadership styles to influence the behaviors of employees. They evaluate the style they think is appropriate for the organization based on their beliefs, values, and performance. They also bring in the experience they get from the organizational culture and norms that best suit their leadership style (Sfantou et al., 2017; Thusini and Mingay, 2019).

A transformational leader can transform an organization by instilling values necessary to replicate for the betterment of employees and the organization. In a research conducted in 2021 with 27 Sierra Leonean doctors to know how effective leadership is, transformational and relational theories were perceived by participants as a leadership model. However, the contingent theory was also emphasized (Johnson et al., 2021).

Studies have shown that leadership has a significant impact on the performance of healthcare organizations. Leaders in these hospitals must ensure that they develop guidelines that they should endeavor to follow to maximize the performance of their organizations (Mafora, 2020). The modern leadership approach by leaders will ensure they meet their targets, depending if they are provided with the necessary resources to lead; one of the greatest resources in any organization is the human resource (people), and the leaders must treat them fairly.

Leadership is one factor that predicts whether an employee will stay or resign from a company (Ali, 2014). All team members must communicate openly and collaborate to follow the organization's policies. Collective leadership is required to ensure patients and other service users receive quality healthcare. Formal and informal leaders act collectively to get the organization's desired result (Mohamed, A.E., Elshamy, A.E., El adawy F.H., 2022).

Leadership is embedded in different levels of the organizational structure of the hospital. Traditionally, most of the senior leadership roles in hospitals are occupied by medical doctors. In Sierra Leone, for example, the health sector is being managed by MoHS. The Ministry is led by a Minister and Deputy Minister(s). The Ministry is divided into two - the professional division and the administrative division. The key head of the professional division is the Chief Medical Officer (CMO) and is assisted by Directors and other staff alike. The administrative division is led by a Permanent Secretary (PS), assisted by Directors and other relevant staff. Across the 14 health districts in Sierra Leone, each district has a District Health Management Team (DHMT) led by District Medical Officer (DMO). DHMT,



as an extension of MoHS, manages the health sector's activities at the district level. Each district government hospital has a Medical Superintendent responsible for overseeing the hospital's activities (Ministry of Health and Sanitation Sierra Leone, 2016).

Leadership in government healthcare facilities are faced with numerous challenges, ranging from financial challenge, technological, political, poor infrastructure, inadequate trained and qualified human resource, and organizational culture, to name but a few. However, amidst all of these challenges, public healthcare facilities must operate efficiently and cost-effectively to meet the needs of most people and in tandem with government policies and procedures.

Leadership and Performance Relationship

Undoubtedly, it is believed that an organization's leadership significantly affects workers' productivity, job satisfaction, and engagement at work. Leadership performance in government hospitals is the overall contributions or impacts leaders create towards the attainment of the hospital goals. It is to be noted that, leadership performance can be rated positively or negatively. Some researchers argue that adopting an effective leadership style can help leaders motivate their employees and increase their competitiveness (Bhargavi and Yaseen, 2016). Leadership styles are unique in their ways, with distinctive behaviors of every leader. However, the organization's performance will increase when a leader chooses an effective leadership style. Effective leadership is viewed as a potent tool for managing growth and long-term competitive advantage (Al Khajeh, 2018). The leadership style helps the organization achieve its current goals more effectively by aligning performance with valuable rewards and ensuring employees have the resources to get the job done.

Generating results in today's ever-changing and increasingly competitive world requires adopting leadership styles that have been studied in the past (Haque, Faizan, Zehra., et al., 2015). Now, leaders must simultaneously become agents of

change, sharpen their focus, maintain their inner focus, and enable individuals and organizations to thrive (Jyoti, and Bhau, 2015).

Leadership is associated with organizational performance consistently and powerfully. It refers to the activities carried out by those responsible for management in the aspect of the sound making of decisions, giving direction, and overseeing those they lead using official procedures. Leadership is, therefore, fundamental to the management process that deals with the steps of organizational performance evaluation and is critical in influencing and managing people and other resources. Elhajj (2013) found that the question of choice of government leaders, their preparation, and development has been a challenge most countries undergo, and still these challenges are yet to be resolved. Leadership tends to affect individual performance and organizational performance significantly. Any organization that uses the right leadership styles in the needed circumstance, along with other elements of its operations, has a much better chance of achieving its requisite result.

The type of leadership style used in the organization can greatly impact the organizational culture. It can affect organizational performance (Haque, Faizan, Zehra., et al., 2015; Klein, Cooke, and Wallis, 2013).

Notably, leadership is the lifeblood of any organization, and its significance cannot be underestimated. Leadership criteria are also necessary and the main factor in differentiating between productive and underperforming organizations. (Arif, 2018; Habes, Mohamed, Salloum, Alghizzawi, et al. 2019).

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework in Figure 1 below describes the development of the topic under study. It was designed to display the study's variables and how they interact with one another. There are independent, dependent, and intervening variables in the conceptual framework.

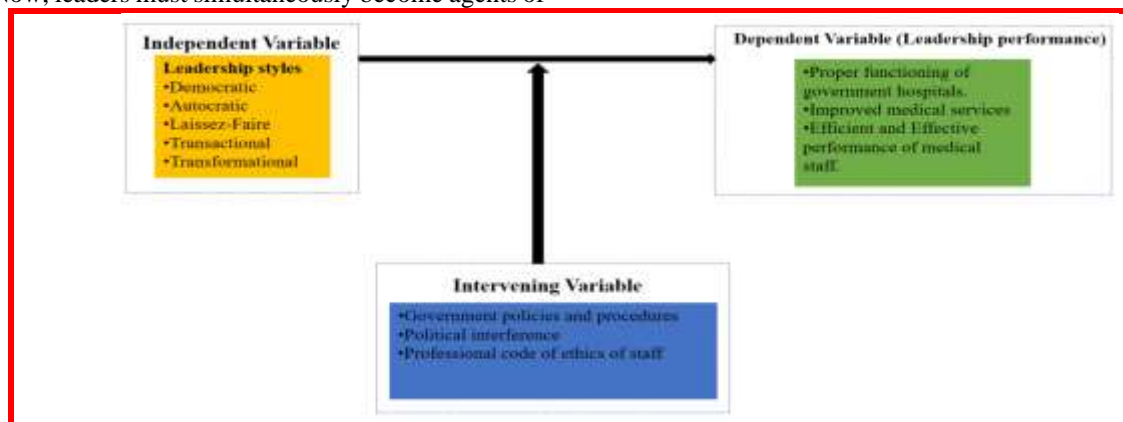


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

The conceptual diagram above represents the different leadership styles and their impacts on achieving the set goals of the organization. The selection and implementation of a well-organized leadership style (either democratic, autocratic, laissez-

faire, transactional, or transformational) in an organization have a direct link to the performance of that organization. All things being equal (i.e., no political interference, favorable government policies and procedures, and a well-practiced professional code



of ethics), when a leader selects the right leadership styles and implements them well, government-owned hospitals will function well, and their overall performance and medical service will relatively improve.

Research Key Assumptions

The study has the following key assumptions:

A 1: There is a significant correlation between adopted leadership styles and health service delivery at Makeni Government Hospital.

A 2: There is a significant relationship concerning leadership styles and health workers' commitment to work at Makeni Government Hospital.

A 3: Efficient and effective leadership can boost the organization's overall performance.

3.0 METHODOLOGY

Research Design

Research design is the overall plan to combine the many study components logically and cohesively, assuring you will successfully solve the research problem. It serves as a guide for data collection, measurement, and analysis (Thakur, 2021). The researcher employed both qualitative and quantitative methods to collect data. The study design was a "case study"- to make careful and thorough analyses of the entity, which serves as the base for the study. The design is significant because it examines a single entity in-depth.

Data Collection

Data collection is the process of acquiring and analyzing information on relevant variables in a predetermined, methodical way so that one can respond to specified research questions, test hypotheses, and assess results (Kabir, 2016). A total of 100 questionnaires were prepared and administered for the study. For the essence of this study, the researcher used primary and secondary data sources.

The interview questions were semi-structured, in-depth interviews purposely designed to get in-depth information from respondents relevant to the topic. The whole interview process was flexible to get to the depth of the topic. The average duration of the interview was between 5 to 10 minutes, and the time and environment of the interview were based on the interviewee's discretion. The duration of the whole research was from January 2023 to May 2023.

The sample size is selecting how many replicates to include in a statistical sample (Kaur, 2017). A sample size of 100

respondents (Approximately 30% of the target population) was purposefully drawn for the quantitative study to get in-depth responses from most respondents. A total of 8 respondents from the different units of the hospital (doctors, nurses, administrators, and supports staff) were interviewed for the qualitative data based on their experience in the hospital. The stratified sampling technique was used in conducting the research (that is, the researcher decided to get a representation of all the units in the hospital –nurses, doctors, administrators, and supports staff). Also, the researcher used the purposive sampling technique to obtain precise or in-depth data on the topic purposively.

Data Analysis

An empirical analysis of the data was conducted in this study. The first stage of the analysis involves presenting data in the form of charts and tables. The essence of such is to answer the research questions (objectives) and inform the outcome of the regression results. The regression analysis using SPSS version 20 was employed to establish facts between two or more variables, especially for the third assumption made in this study.

In this study, to establish the effect of effectiveness and efficiency of leadership style on the overall performance of the Makeni Government Hospital the regression model is, therefore, specified thus;

$$\text{Performance} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 \text{Leadership Style} + \beta_2 \text{Control Variables} + \epsilon \quad (3.1)$$

Where, β -s. are the estimation parameters and ϵ is the error term normally distributed with a mean one and a constant variance.

Controlled variables are Health service delivery at Makeni Government Hospital, Health Workers' Commitment, age, gender, service duration, and education level.

4.0 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Demographic Analysis

It presents the demographic characteristics of the respondents (it covers variables like the sex of respondents, their age, the highest level of education attained, and years of staff experience). Four (4) basic respondents' information was collected through questionnaires administered (n=100).



Table 1: Demographic Analysis

Variables		Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Female	62	62
	Male	38	38
	Total		100
Age	18-25 Years	21	21
	26-35 Years	40	40
	36-45 Years	20	20
	Above 46 Years	19	19
	Total	100	100
Level of Education	Secondary School Certificate	20	20
	Bachelor's Degree	11	11
	Postgraduate's Degree	4	4
	Tertiary Certificate/Diploma	65	65
	Total	100	100
Years of Experience	1-10Years	61	61
	11-20 Years	17	17
	21-30 Years	15	15
	Above 31Years	7	7
	Total	100	100

Source: Field Survey (2023)

Table 1 above shows the gender characteristics of respondents at Makeni Government Hospital. Results showed that most respondents, 62 (62%), were female, and 38 (38%) were male. The result indicated more female staff than male staff at the hospital.

Moreover, the age of respondents was also included in the questionnaire administered. Among the respondents, 21(21%) were 18-25 years of age, 40(40%) were between 26-35 years, 20(20%) were between 36-45 years, and 19 (19%) were above 46 years of age. This age distribution indicated more young staff at Makeni Government Hospital than aged staff.

The third demographic characteristic is the educational level of respondents. The educational level of every respondent

was attained, and the results showed that 20 (20%) of respondents had secondary school certificates, 65 (65%) had tertiary certificates/diplomas, 11 (11%) had bachelor's degrees, and 4 (4%) had a postgraduate's degree.

Years of experience are the final characteristic in the demographic information of respondents. All the respondents had some considerable years of experience, and the result of the analysis clearly showed that 61(61%) had 1-10 years of experience as a staff, 17(17%) had 11-20 years of substantial experience, 15(15%) had 21-30 years of experience as a staff, and 7(7%) had long-standing experience of over 31 years of experience.

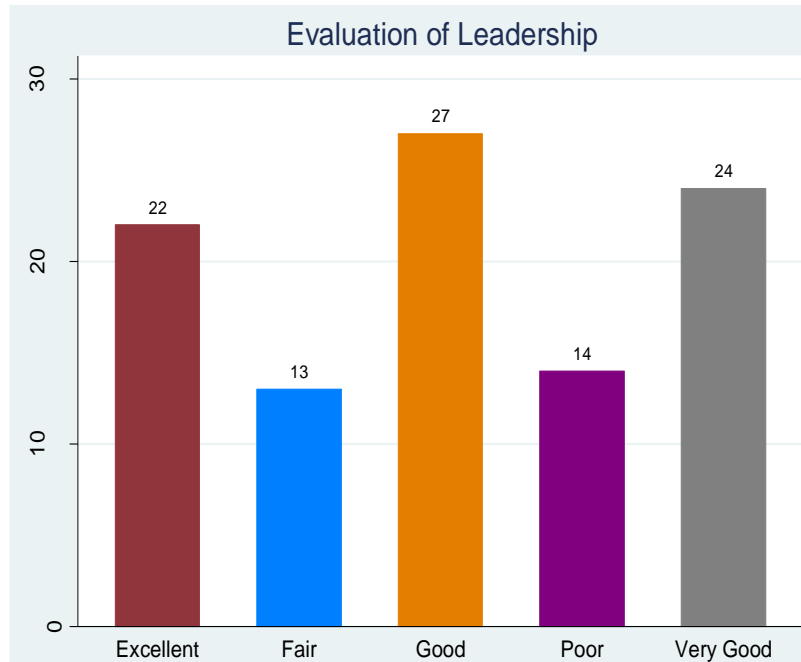


Figure 2: Evaluation of Leadership

Respondents evaluated leadership based on their opinion. According to the result, 14 (14%) opined that the leadership is poor, 13 (13%) ascertained that the leadership is fair, 27 (27%) opined that the leadership was good, 24 (24%) opined that the

leadership was very good, and 22 (22%) opined that the leadership was excellent. Based on this result, it is evident that the leadership was performing well.

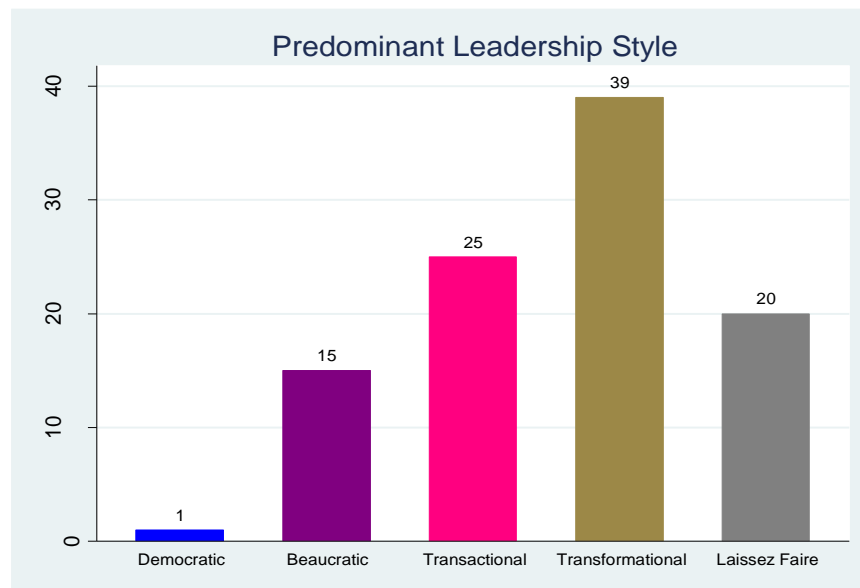


Figure 3: Predominant Leadership Styles Adopted at Makeni Government Hospital

According to the result, 15 (15%) responded that a bureaucratic leadership style was adopted at the hospital, 1(1%) opined that a democratic leadership style was adopted at the hospital, 20 (20%) responded that laissez-faire leadership style was adopted at the hospital, 39 (39%) responded that transformational leadership

was the predominant leadership style adopted among others, 25 (25%) responded that transactional leadership was adopted at the hospital. Thus, the major leadership style adopted at the Makeni Government Hospital was transformational.

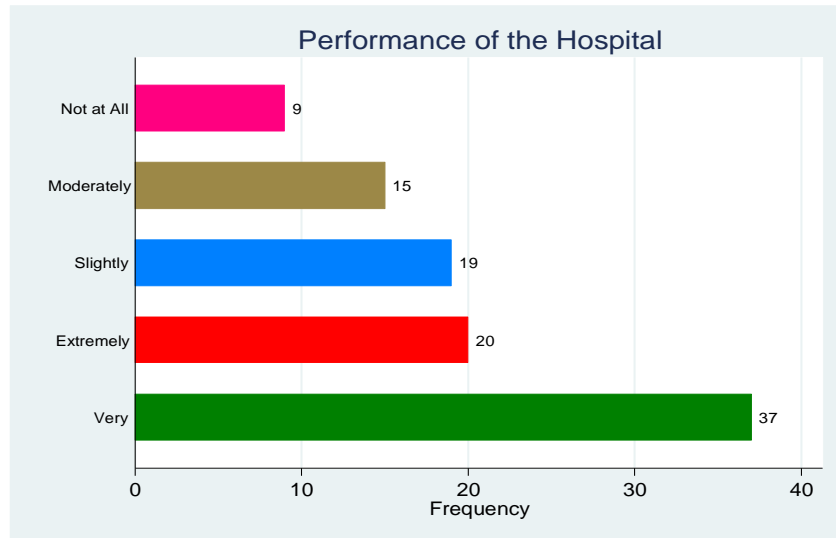


Figure 4: Effectiveness of the Leadership Styles

According to the result, 20(20%) rated the performance as extremely effective, 37 (37%) rated it very effective, 15 (15%) rated it moderately effective, 19(19%) rated it slightly effective, 9 (9%) rated it not at all effective. The result showed that the leadership style effectively achieved the objectives of Makeni Government Hospital.

Justification of the Assumptions

Correlation Model

Karl Pearson's correlation coefficient was used to determine the association, strength, and nature between these variables; Table 2 below provides a detailed analysis. As indicated in Table 3 below, the study computed the association between the variables using Karl Pearson's coefficient of correlation (r).

Table 2: Justification of Assumptions using Correlation Coefficient

Variables	Leadership styles	Health workers commitment	Health service delivery at Makeni Government Hospital	Performance
Leadership styles	1	0.257** (0.010)	0.416** (0.000)	0.372** (0.000)
Health workers commitment	0.257** (0.010)	1	0.209* (0.037)	0.166 (0.098)
Health service delivery at Makeni Government Hospital	0.416** (0.000)	0.209* (0.037)	1	0.201* (0.045)
Performance	0.372** (0.000)	0.166 (0.098)	0.201* (0.045)	1

Source: Field Survey (2023). Legends: p**<0.01, p* <0.05 P - Values in ()

Table 2 above displays the correlation index, which provides insight into the relationship between the variables. The correlation coefficients for leadership styles and health service delivery, leadership styles and health workers' commitment, and leadership styles and leadership performance are 0.416, 0.257, and 0.372, respectively. These results indicate a weak positive association between all variables being examined.

The research shows a significant correlation between leadership styles and health service delivery, health workers' commitment, and leadership performance. The statistical analysis indicates that these correlations are significant at a 1% level, with P values less than 0.01. Specifically, the P values for health service delivery and leadership performance are 0.000, and the P value for health workers' commitment is 0.010.



Regression Model

The ANOVA is employed to establish the causal relationship between the efficiency and effectiveness of leadership style and the overall performance of the Makeni Government Hospital. However, other variables were controlled

for in the model (Health service delivery at Makeni Government Hospital, Health Workers' Commitment, age, gender, duration of service, and educational level).

Table 3: Justification of Assumption using regression

Variables	Coefficient	Standard Error	t - Value	P - Value
Leadership Style	0.371	0.111	3.334	0.001
Health service delivery at Makeni Government Hospital	0.035	0.123	0.283	0.778
Health Workers Commitment	0.060	0.099	0.604	0.547
Age	0.119	0.100	1.186	0.239
Gender	-0.191	0.216	-0.886	0.378
Service Duration	-0.329	0.137	-2.402	0.018
Education Level	0.029	0.124	0.237	0.813
Constant	2.279	0.827	2.755	0.007
R – Squared	0.452			
F – Statistic	3.382			
F – Probability	0.003			

Source: Field Survey (2023).

Table 4 above shows that leadership style has a regression coefficient and probability value of 0.371 and 0.001, respectively. Also, one of the control variables, the duration of service of workers at the Makeni Government Hospital, has a coefficient of -0.329 and a probability value of 0.018. The R – Squared value is 0.452 and an F – Statistic of 3.382 and a probability value of 0.003 - This shows that 45.2% of the variation in the performance of Makeni Government Hospital is explained by leadership and other variables. While the F-statistic depicts that, overall, the model is well-fitted.

Discussion

Quality health service delivery is an essential aspect of all healthcare facilities. Poor health service delivery adds to more disease burden in our communities and considerably affects the global economy (WHO, World Bank Group, OECD, 2018).

There are four objectives in this research, to evaluate the leadership at Makeni Government Hospital, to identify the predominant leadership styles at Makeni Government Hospital, to find out the factors influencing the adoption of the leadership styles at Makeni Government Hospital, to decide the effectiveness of such styles in achieving the objectives of Makeni Government Hospital. The assumptions were justified using Pearson's correlation and regression coefficient through ANOVA.

Respondents evaluated the leadership of the hospital to be satisfactory. The result indicated that the majority, 27 (27%), opined that the leadership was good. However, some challenges

are still encountered in the leadership process, including the organization's structure, human resources, nature of the work, competencies of leaders, regulations and programs, sociocultural problems, and economic problems (Mosadeghrad, Arab., 2017).

The leadership style(s) adopted by a leader influences the organization. In this research, the predominant leadership style adopted in Makeni Government Hospital was transformational. This accounts for most of the respondents, 39(39%). This finding aligned with other studies; Alfadhalah and Elamir (2019), Alqahtani, Nahar, Almosa, (2021). As mentioned earlier, these studies also found that the predominant leadership style was transformational. This leadership style helps improve the performance of an individual and the organization.

The adoption of leadership styles is contingent on different factors. Respondents were asked to ascertain the factors influencing the adoption of leadership styles. The majority 37 (37%), strongly agreed that political interference, the economic situation of the hospital, social characteristics of staff, technological advancement, and the hospital's culture are factors influencing the adoption of leadership styles at Makeni Government Hospital. This finding was in relation to Hoover (2020); Nsingwane (2016); Othman, Lawrence, and Mohamed (2012). Based on these findings, the researcher ascertained that these factors significantly influence an organization's adoption of leadership styles.

Effective leadership is an integral part of the drive of an organization to achieve its objectives. Here, the effectiveness of the leadership styles in achieving the hospital's objectives is



synonymous with the good performance of Makeni Government Hospital. According to the result of this variable, 37 (37%) rated it 'very,' which means the performance of the hospital with regards to proper health service delivery was very good. This finding was in line with other studies like Ali and Islam (2020); and Win (2016). These studies above found that leadership styles have a significant influence on the performance of the organization.

The following assumptions were made in this research: A1 - there is a significant correlation between adopted leadership styles and health service delivery at Makeni Government Hospital; A 2 - there is a significant relationship with regards to leadership styles and health workers' commitment to work at Makeni Government Hospital; A 3 - efficient and effective leadership style can boost the overall performance of the organization. Karl Pearson's correlation coefficient (r) was used to determine these variables' association, strength, and nature.

The correlation coefficient for the relationship between adopted leadership style and health service delivery at Makeni Government Hospital is 0.416 and statistically significant at a 1% level (0.000). This means that there is a weak positive association between the variables. That is, a prudent leadership style adopted by the management goes in the same direction with an improvement in the delivery of health care services at the Makeni Government Hospital and vice versa. Thus, the assumption of a statistically significant relationship between the leadership style adopted and health service delivery at the Makeni government hospital holds.

The assumption of a positive relationship between leadership style and health workers' commitment to work at the Makeni Government Hospital also holds since it has a correlation coefficient and probability value of 0.257 and 0.010, respectively. This signifies that a good leadership style goes hand in hand with the commitment of the Makeni government hospital staff to work.

The third assumption in the study states that an effective and efficient leadership style can affect the overall performance of Makeni Government Hospital. A correlation coefficient is first employed to inform the regression analysis; the result of the correlation coefficient shows that both variables, that is, effective and efficient leadership style and overall performance of Makeni Government Hospital moves in the same direction with a low magnitude of 0.372. This is because it has a correlation coefficient of 0.372 and is statistically significant at a 1% level (0.000).

Moreover, the regression coefficient of the leadership style variable in the regression model was examined to determine if an effective and efficient leadership style can improve the overall performance of the Makeni Government Hospital. The leadership style variable has a regression coefficient of 0.371 and is statistically significant at a 1% level (0.001). Thus, the assumption of an effective and efficient leadership style can boost the overall performance of Makeni Government Hospital is satisfied. The result specifically implies that if a unit improves the effectiveness of leadership style, the overall performance of Makeni Government Hospital will improve by 0.371 units.

Conclusion

The establishment of Makeni Government Hospital in Makeni City, Sierra Leone, has significantly helped in the health service delivery issues faced by patients seeking medical care hitherto in other parts of the country and elsewhere. Sierra Leone is a developing nation, and its healthcare system is constrained by numerous daunting challenges that are affecting the performance of its public healthcare facilities; these challenges range from technological and medicinal advancement, finance, healthcare policies, corruption, staff attitude to work, patients behaviors, infrastructure, to name but a few. It is to be noted that these challenges require a good leader to handle these ever-growing challenges. The health sector of any country has a considerable impact on its economy. Thus, it must be managed well by competent and industrious leaders who are ready to maximize productivity at all levels of the health sector.

Leadership as a process and its activities will clearly show the type of leadership style involved in the holistic leadership process. The leadership process in the healthcare setting is dynamic, and leadership theories influence it. Not a single leadership style is fit to lead a healthcare organization, as it involves different styles to achieve its goals efficiently and effectively. On this background, respondents in Makeni Government Hospital deemed it necessary to select different leadership styles at the hospital. However, most respondents opined that the transformational leadership style is the predominant leadership style adopted at the hospital. The hospital should bend on training leaders in the hospital to be more transformational, among other leadership styles. COVID-19 spurred more leaders in healthcare settings to be more transformational.

Leadership is a key component in hospital management which requires the most effective leadership model to boost the hospital's performance. From the study findings, the respondents confirmed that leadership in Makeni Government Hospital is effective. Effective leadership is key in substantial health service delivery. Effective leadership for hospital performance towards proper health service delivery is contingent on factors such as open communication in the organizational structure, leadership skills of the leader, patients' satisfaction, etc.

Recommendations

From the research findings, leaders in the hospital should continue to improve their leadership skills and be dynamic to embrace contemporary global leadership processes and procedures. This will substantially contribute to the performance of the hospital.

Furthermore, it is recommended that the management at Makeni Government Hospital should continue adopting the transformational leadership style as it is efficient and most staff are carried along with it. Proper health delivery at the hospital also depends mainly on adopting this leadership style as it helps staff be innovative and prompt in saving lives. However, other leadership styles must also be adopted where the circumstances permit them to do so.



Moreover, different factors are responsible for adopting these leadership styles at the hospital. It is deemed necessary for leaders at Makeni Government Hospital to develop a positive attitude and swiftly be ready to embrace whatever impact for the smooth running of the hospital. Leaders in the Hospital have a critical duty to perform to foster the performance of proper health service delivery. The hospital's overall performance depends on how effective and efficient leaders at Makeni Government Hospital adopt these leadership styles. From the findings, respondents of the study ascertained that the adopted leadership styles are essential for the hospital's actual performance in attaining its objectives. On this background, every staff of the hospital should continue to abide by the policies and procedures being established at the hospital for an effective and efficient health service delivery.

Through the Ministry of Health and Sanitation, the government should ensure they provide the necessary advanced technological machines and medicines for the smooth running of government hospitals, as this will foster development in the health sector and ease some burden off the leadership of government-owned hospitals in Sierra Leone. When leaders in the health sector are provided with the right resources and policies, it will accelerate sustainable performance in government health service facilities.

Limitations and Future Directions

It is to be noted that this research is not a representation of all the government-owned hospitals in Sierra Leone. Other research could produce the same, similar, or contradictory results to this already researched. There are other areas the researcher is interested in, but because of the unavailability of finance and limited time, the researcher had to limit the scope of the study. On this view, it is recommended that further research should expand the sample size of the study for a generalized finding of similar research. This would give a representative result of the research alike.

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