Effect of Budget Implementation on Health Infrastructure in Federal Capital Territory FCT, Abuja.

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Abstract

This study examines the effect of budget implementation on health infrastructure development in the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), Abuja. While annual budget allocations to the health sector in Nigeria have steadily increased, the persistent inadequacy of health infrastructure suggests a disconnect between budgeting and actual service delivery. The study investigates the extent to which budget execution influences the availability, quality, and functionality of public health facilities within the FCT. Guided by the Public Financial Management (PFM) Theory. The research adopts Survey approach, primary source of data was utilized, data were collected through questionnaires. The study adopted simple percentages and descriptive statistics as methods of analysis. Findings reveal that delayed fund releases, weak oversight, and procurement inefficiencies significantly hinder the effective implementation of capital health projects. As a result, many health facilities remain under-equipped or incomplete, affecting healthcare access and quality. The study recommends strengthening institutional accountability mechanisms, adopting performance-based budgeting, and improving transparency to enhance the impact of public health investments. These insights are critical for policymakers aiming to align budget execution with infrastructure outcomes in Nigeria's health sector.

Keywords; Budgeting, Healthcare Infrastructures and Budget Implementation.

Introduction

The development and sustainability of health infrastructure are vital components of a nation's public health system, serving as a cornerstone for achieving universal health coverage. In Nigeria, and particularly in the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), Abuja, the effectiveness of health service delivery is closely tied to the efficiency and transparency of budget implementation. Budget implementation refers to the process of executing the approved financial plans, including the allocation, disbursement, and utilization of funds for specific sectors such as health (Olurankinse, 2012). Despite repeated increases in health budget allocations in Nigeria, the health infrastructure in many parts of the FCT remains inadequate, revealing a potential disconnect between budgetary provisions and their actual implementation.

The World Health Organization (WHO) emphasizes that strong health infrastructure is critical for ensuring access to quality care, especially in urbanizing areas like Abuja, where population growth exerts pressure on existing facilities (WHO, 2020). However, several studies have identified persistent issues such as delayed fund releases, misappropriation, bureaucratic inefficiencies, and lack of accountability as major hindrances to the effective implementation of health budgets (Olaoye & Olayemi, 2021; Nweze & Eze, 2018). These issues result in under-equipped hospitals, incomplete health projects, and poor maintenance of existing infrastructure, ultimately affecting the health outcomes of residents.

This study seeks to explore the effect of budget implementation on the development and maintenance of health infrastructure in the FCT, Abuja. By examining the link between fiscal discipline, policy execution, and infrastructural outcomes, the study aims to contribute to ongoing discourse on public finance management and its implications for sustainable health systems in Nigeria.

Statement of the Problem

Despite significant budgetary allocations to the health sector in Nigeria, the quality and availability of health infrastructure in the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), Abuja remain inadequate and underdeveloped. The recurring challenge is not necessarily the size of the health budget, but rather the inefficiencies in its implementation. In many instances, funds allocated to improve or expand health infrastructure are either not released on time, diverted, or underutilized, resulting in abandoned projects, poorly equipped facilities, and an overall decline in service delivery (Uzochukwu et al., 2015; Aregbeyen & Akpan, 2013). Several primary healthcare centres in the FCT still lack essential medical equipment, experience frequent power outages, and suffer from infrastructural decay, even though these issues are often addressed in annual budgets (Olaove & Olayemi, 2021). Furthermore, audit reports and assessments by civil society organizations have exposed significant gaps between what is budgeted and what is implemented in the health sector, leading to widespread public dissatisfaction and questions about accountability and transparency (BudgIT, 2022).

Given the critical role of health infrastructure in promoting public health and achieving Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), especially SDG 3 (Good Health and Well-being), the persistent disconnect between budget implementation and infrastructure development in the FCT poses a serious threat to effective healthcare delivery. There is thus a pressing need to investigate the extent to which budget implementation influences the condition

and expansion of health infrastructure in Abuja, to identify the key bottlenecks, and to propose actionable solutions.

Objectives of the Study

- i. To examine the extent to which health budget allocations are implemented in the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), Abuja.
- ii. To assess the impact of budget implementation on the development and maintenance of health infrastructure in the FCT.

Literature Review

Concept of Budgeting

A budget is a critical tool for planning, controlling, and evaluating the use of public resources in any government. It outlines the priorities of a government and provides a roadmap for achieving development goals. According to Olurankinse (2012), a well-formulated budget aligns resources with national development priorities, but its effectiveness is dependent on proper implementation. In many developing countries, however, a persistent gap exists between budget formulation and actual execution. In Nigeria, the budget process is governed by legal and institutional frameworks, but implementation often falls short due to issues such as late approvals, non-release of funds, and poor accountability. Aregbeyen and Akpan (2013) noted that Nigeria's budget performance is characterized by frequent deviations from planned allocations, leading to ineffective public service delivery. This challenge is especially pronounced in capital projects, where infrastructure development suffers due to inconsistent funding and political interference.

The work of Eze and Nweze (2018) highlights that the Nigerian budget system is often reactive rather than strategic. Budgets are frequently altered during the fiscal year without adequate justification or stakeholder involvement, undermining transparency and effectiveness. These issues are compounded by weak institutional capacities in budget monitoring and evaluation. Transparency and citizen engagement in the budget process have been recognized as key to improving implementation outcomes. According to BudgIT (2022), most Nigerians lack access to clear information on how public funds are spent, which weakens public trust and reduces pressure on government institutions to deliver on budgetary promises. The lack of participatory budgeting also limits the relevance and responsiveness of budget allocations to real community needs. Additionally, the World Bank (2020) stresses the importance of results-based budgeting, where budget allocations are tied to measurable outcomes. This approach has been successfully implemented in several countries but remains largely underutilized in Nigeria, where inputs and expenditures are prioritized over results and impacts.

Health Infrastructure

Health infrastructure forms the backbone of any functional healthcare system. It encompasses physical facilities such as hospitals, clinics, laboratories, equipment, sanitation systems, and essential utilities like electricity and water. The availability, quality, and accessibility of such infrastructure are key determinants of public health outcomes and overall system efficiency (World Health Organization [WHO], 2020). In developing countries like Nigeria, inadequate health infrastructure has long been a major barrier to effective healthcare delivery. According to Uzochukwu et al. (2015), many primary health care (PHC) centers across Nigeria operate without basic diagnostic equipment, reliable electricity, or adequate staff accommodation. This gap is most noticeable in rapidly growing areas like the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), where population growth outpaces infrastructure development.

Olaoye and Olayemi (2021) emphasize that poor infrastructure leads to overcrowding, long waiting times, and reduced quality of care, which discourages the use of public health facilities. In their study of the FCT, they found that although several health facilities were budgeted for upgrades or new construction, many projects were either delayed or abandoned due to poor budget implementation. The World Bank (2020) reports that investment in health infrastructure must be both adequate and strategic to improve service coverage and health equity. Without strong infrastructure, efforts to improve maternal health, reduce child mortality, and combat communicable diseases become ineffective. Furthermore, inefficient maintenance of existing facilities has also contributed to the degradation of once-functional health centers (Nweze & Eze, 2018).

Aregbeyen and Akpan (2013) argue that the challenges in Nigeria's health infrastructure are not always due to lack of funding, but often arise from poor governance and inefficiencies in public spending. They note that capital expenditure on health infrastructure is frequently under-implemented, affecting the delivery of basic health services and eroding public confidence in the system. Moreover, equitable distribution of health infrastructure remains a challenge. Urban centers like Abuja tend to have better facilities than rural areas, despite policy claims of universal health access. This inequality reinforces health disparities and limits access to quality care for vulnerable populations (WHO, 2020).

Budget Implementation

Budget implementation refers to the process by which planned government expenditures and revenues, as outlined in the budget document, are carried out over a fiscal period. It encompasses fund releases, procurement, project execution, and financial reporting. According to Olurankinse (2012), successful budget implementation requires strong institutional frameworks, transparent financial processes, and timely release of funds. In Nigeria, however, budget implementation has historically been fraught with challenges. These include delays in fund releases, diversion of funds, poor procurement practices, and a lack of effective monitoring and evaluation systems (Aregbeyen & Akpan, 2013). These issues often result in the underperformance of public projects, particularly in sectors like health, education, and infrastructure.

Nweze and Eze (2018) emphasize that the disconnection between budget formulation and execution stems from both technical and political factors. For instance, budget padding, mid-year budget revisions, and poor revenue projections contribute to inconsistencies between planned and actual expenditures. Their findings show that capital projects, especially those related to infrastructure, suffer the most from these implementation gaps. BudgIT (2022) further notes that while Nigeria records relatively high budget approval rates, implementation is often below expectations—particularly in the capital expenditure component. The group's 2022 report on budget performance highlighted that while over 70% of the health capital budget was approved, less than 50% was released and utilized, leading to abandoned or incomplete health infrastructure projects.

According to Ezeabasili and Mojekwu (2021), one of the root causes of poor budget implementation in Nigeria is weak institutional capacity and low levels of accountability. They argue that government agencies often lack the technical expertise and internal controls necessary to ensure proper execution of budgeted activities. In addition, limited involvement of citizens and civil society groups in budget tracking allows inefficiencies to persist unchecked. The World Bank (2020) supports the view that improved budget implementation is crucial for translating public investment into development outcomes. They advocate for performance-based budgeting, real-time public financial management systems, and transparent procurement practices to improve execution rates. In countries with similar governance structures as Nigeria, these reforms have shown measurable success in improving service delivery.

Budget Implementation and Health Infrastructure

The link between budget implementation and the development of health infrastructure has been widely studied within the broader context of public financial management and health system performance. In developing countries like Nigeria, health infrastructure is a critical component of healthcare delivery, yet it remains largely underdeveloped due to poor fiscal discipline and weak implementation of health budgets (Uzochukwu et al., 2015). According to Aregbeyen and Akpan (2013), while Nigeria continues to allocate considerable resources to the health sector in annual budgets, the impact of these allocations is often not felt due to systemic inefficiencies in budget execution. They observed that delays in fund releases, political interference, and bureaucratic bottlenecks commonly result in incomplete or abandoned health projects, particularly in the primary healthcare sub-sector.

Furthermore, Nweze and Eze (2018) emphasized that the health sector suffers from frequent discrepancies between appropriated funds and actual expenditures. Their study revealed that although funds are budgeted for the renovation and equipping of health centers, implementation is often below 60%, leading to poor infrastructure and limited access to basic healthcare services, especially in rural and peri-urban areas of the FCT. Transparency and accountability also play a critical role in determining how effectively budgets are implemented. Olaoye and Olayemi (2021) argue that weak oversight and limited citizen participation in the budget process contribute to poor monitoring and evaluation of health infrastructure projects. Their research in the FCT showed that despite budgetary provisions for healthcare infrastructure, facilities remain grossly inadequate, with poor sanitation, obsolete equipment, and insufficient space.

Additionally, the World Health Organization (2020) highlights that for health systems to thrive, governments must prioritize the full and timely implementation of health budgets. This includes strategic planning, robust procurement systems, and strong institutional frameworks to ensure funds are used as intended. In the context of Abuja, population growth and urbanization have put additional pressure on health infrastructure, further highlighting the consequences of weak budget execution (BudgIT, 2022).

Empirical Literature Review

Aregbeyen and Akpan (2013) examines the relationship between budget implementation and health sector performance in Nigeria. The study employed a quantitative time-series analysis using secondary data from government budget reports and health sector performance indicators from 1999 to 2010. They found that ineffective implementation of capital budgets significantly hinders the development of health infrastructure. The study attributed this to poor fund releases and procurement inefficiencies.

Uzochukwu et al. (2015) assess the financing and infrastructure readiness of primary health care facilities in Nigeria. This study used a mixed-methods approach involving structured questionnaires, facility assessments, and

interviews with healthcare workers across various states. Their findings showed that inconsistent and poorly implemented budgets lead to inadequately equipped health centers, particularly in peri-urban and rural communities.

Olaoye and Olayemi (2021) studied public financial management and healthcare delivery in the Federal Capital Territory. The study adopted a descriptive survey design and collected data through questionnaires administered to staff in selected public health facilities in the FCT, Abuja. Their survey and document review revealed that although budget allocations for health were relatively high, weak implementation due to bureaucratic delays and poor oversight limited the effectiveness of these investments on infrastructure development.

Eze and Nweze (2018) analysis of federal and state-level budget performance across the Nigerian health sector. The study employed panel data regression analysis using state-level data from the Nigerian Bureau of Statistics and budget implementation records. They concluded that only about 40-60% of capital budgets were implemented on average annually, directly correlating with poor health infrastructure outcomes in many regions, including the FCT.

Oluwole and Adegoke (2020) explored the impact of capital budget implementation on public health infrastructure in southwestern Nigeria. This research utilized ordinary least squares (OLS) regression analysis to assess the relationship between capital budget implementation and health infrastructure in Southwest Nigeria.. Their results showed a statistically significant relationship between timely fund releases and improvements in hospital facilities and equipment acquisition.

Abdulraheem et al. (2012) used survey methods to evaluate the availability of resources in primary health care facilities across Nigeria. The study used a cross-sectional survey design to collect data from 240 primary health care facilities across 6 geopolitical zones in Nigeria. They found that the inadequate budget implementation was a major cause of decaying infrastructure, poor staffing, and lack of basic medical supplies.

Lawal and Olasupo (2019) analyzed audit reports and fiscal data to investigate discrepancies between budgeted and actual expenditures in Nigeria's health sector. the study adopted a documentary analysis approach using budget implementation reports, audit documents, and public expenditure tracking surveys (PETS). The study revealed that only 55% of planned infrastructurerelated health projects were completed between 2015 and 2018 due to funding shortfalls and corruption.

World Bank (2020) carried out a public investment efficiency assessment in Nigeria. The study using institutional analysis and fiscal data from Nigeria's federal and state governments. The study found that delays in procurement processes and fund releases significantly affect infrastructure project completion rates in the health sector. It recommended institutional reforms and digital tools for improved budget tracking and implementation.

Theoretical Framework

Public Financial Management (PFM) Theory

Public Financial Management (PFM) Theory deals with how governments plan, allocate, spend, and monitor public resources. The theory posits that effective financial planning and execution are essential for achieving public sector objectives, including infrastructure development and service delivery (Allen, Hemming & Potter, 2013).

According to PFM theory, the budgeting process should be transparent, accountable, and performance-oriented. Inadequate implementation—such as delayed fund releases, poor procurement practices, and lack of monitoring—can lead to poor infrastructure outcomes regardless of budget size. Thus, in the context of this study, ineffective budget implementation undermines the ability of the FCT government to develop and maintain adequate health infrastructure.

Relevance of Public Financial Management (PFM) Theory

The Public Financial Management (PFM) Theory provides a structured approach to understanding how government resources are planned, allocated, executed, and monitored to achieve public service goals. It is especially relevant to your study in the following ways:

Focus on Budget Execution and Outcomes; PFM theory emphasizes not just the preparation of budgets but also their implementation, evaluation, and impact on service delivery. This directly aligns with the study's focus on how budget implementation affects health infrastructure outcomes in the FCT.

Promotes Accountability and Transparency; The theory stresses the importance of transparency, accountability, and rule-based financial governance in the use of public resources (Allen et al., 2013). In Nigeria, where misappropriation and delays in fund disbursement are common, the theory provides a normative framework for diagnosing weaknesses in the budget cycle.

Link to Service Delivery; PFM theory is grounded in the idea that good financial management leads to better public services. In this study, it provides a lens through which to analyze how lapses in financial discipline—such as underexecution of capital budgets—contribute to poor health infrastructure.

Institutional Strengthening: It highlights the role of institutions, procedures, and systems ensuring budget effectiveness. This supports recommendations that might arise from your research, such as improved budget monitoring and performance-based funding mechanisms.

Criticism of Public Financial Management (PFM) Theory

Overemphasis on Process over Context: Critics argue that PFM theory is often too procedural, focusing on technical aspects like accounting, procurement, and auditing, while neglecting political, social, and cultural dynamics that heavily influence budget implementation, especially in developing countries (Andrews, 2010).

Assumes Rational Decision-Making: The theory presumes that public institutions will act rationally and in the public interest if proper systems are in place. However, in practice, political interference, patronage networks, and rent-seeking behavior often override formal procedures—making this assumption unrealistic in many low-governance contexts.

Limited Consideration for Local Realities: The theory tends to be Westerncentric and may not always accommodate the informal practices and institutional weaknesses that shape public financial management in countries like Nigeria (Schick, 1998).

Implementation Gap: Even when PFM systems are well-designed, capacity constraints—such as lack of skilled personnel, weak monitoring, and poor data systems—can hinder real-world implementation. The theory often underestimates these practical barriers.

Research Design

The study employed both descriptive and survey method, in order to conduct an intensive investigation of the variables. The survey method is a widely used research approach that involves the collection of data from a predefined group of respondents to gain insights into specific issues. In the context of healthcare delivery, this method helps in understanding the perceptions, experiences, and outcomes of budget implementation within healthcare facilities. The survey typically involves structured instruments like questionnaires or interviews designed to capture quantitative and qualitative data.

In examining how budget implementation affects healthcare delivery in the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), the survey method was tailored to capture data from diverse stakeholders, including healthcare providers, administrators, policymakers, and patients.

Population of Study

the study selected Garki Hospital, Teaching Hospital Gwagwalada and General Hospital Bwari. Service recipients (Patients) in the selected FCT health centers to provide perspectives on healthcare delivery outcomes. Administrative staff responsible for budget management and financial operations. Officials in the FCT Health and Human Services Secretariat (HHSS). Budget officers in the FCT budget and Finance department. The total Population is 1200.

Sampling Techniques

The study adopted Taro Yamane formula, is a statistical method used to determine sample size for a study. It provides a simplified formula for calculating sample sizes in cases where the population size is known. It helps ensure the sample is representative of the population.

Formula:

$$n= \frac{N}{1+N(e)^2}$$

Where n=sample size

N=total population size

1 is constant

e = the assume error margin or tolerable error which is taken as 5% (0.05)

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^{2}} \frac{1200}{1 + 610(0.05)^{2}} \frac{1200}{= 300}$$

(sample size)

The reason for sampling is to ensure lower costs, greater speed of data collection and availability of population elements.

Stratified Sampling Method

N ----* S P

N Is the number of elements in the stratum,

P Is the population of the study,

Is the required sample size. S

Stratify the sample to representing the strata of the Garki Hospital, Teaching Hospital Gwagwalada and General Hospital Bwari. Service recipients (Patients) in the FCT

S/N	Population Strata Items	NO. OF	No. of sample	
		Population on	Drawn from each	
		each Strata	Strata	
1.	Garki Hospital Patients	300	75	
2.	Gwagwalada Hospital Patients	480	120	
3.	Bwari Hospital Patients	130	33	
4.	Health workers	170	42	
5.	Financial Officers in FCTA	120	30	
6.	Total	1200	300	

Sample Size

Therefore, the sample size of this study is **300**.

Data Collection Methods

Data was collected using questionnaires, and document reviews. Questionnaires allowed for easy correlation and regression analysis. Document review offered access to recorded data relevant to the study.

Data Analysis and Result

showing the number of questionnaires distributed and how many retrieved

The below table shows that out of 305 questionnaires administered to the target population, only 250 representing 82% were completed and returned, while 55 questionnaires representing 18% of the questionnaires were not returned. The 250 returned questionnaires were used for analysis.

Questionnaires	Response Rate	Percentage (%)
Returned	250	81
Unreturned	50	19
Total	300	100

Source: Field Survey, 2024

effect of budgetary implementation on the availability of health infrastructure in FCT.

Question	SA	Α	D	SD	Total	Mean	Std Dev
	(4)	(3)	(2)	(1)	Responses		
The level of	50	20	100	80	250	2.16	1.08369
budgetary							7
allocation for							
health							
infrastructure in							
FCT is adequate.							
Timely release	20	50	80	10	250	1.96	0.95833
of allocated				0			2
funds							
significantly							
improves the							
availability of							
health							
infrastructure in							
FCT							
Monitoring and	60	40	100	50	250	2.44	1.06132
evaluation of							
budgetary							
implementation							
are effectively							
carried out to							
ensure health							
infrastructure							
projects are							
completed							

The health	40	60	50	10	250	2.16	1.12
infrastructure in				0			
FCT has							
improved due to							
proper budget							
implementation.							
Challenges in	30	30	90	10	250	1.96	0.9992
budgetary				0			
implementation							
negatively affect							
the availability							
and quality of							
health							
infrastructure in							
FCT.							

Survey 2024

Adequacy of Budgetary Allocation for Health Infrastructure. Mean Score: Relatively low (below midpoint of 2.5) Interpretation: Most respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed that the level of budgetary allocation for health infrastructure in FCT is adequate. This suggests a perception that funding levels are insufficient to meet the needs. Timely Release of Allocated Funds: Mean Score: Also, low. Interpretation: A significant number of respondents believe that funds are not released timely, which negatively affects the availability of health infrastructure. Timely disbursement is seen as crucial but is not adequately practiced. Effectiveness of Monitoring and Evaluation. Mean Score: Slightly higher but still below 2.5.

Interpretation: There is a moderate level of agreement that monitoring and evaluation are effectively carried out. However, many respondents still see room for improvement in this area.

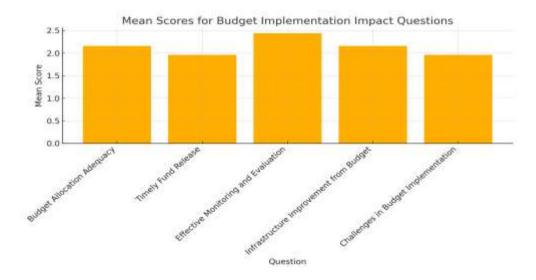
Improvement in Health Infrastructure Due to Proper Budget Implementation: Mean Score: Near the midpoint but leaning towards disagreement. Interpretation: While some improvement in health infrastructure is acknowledged, it is not seen as substantial or widespread, indicating that proper budget implementation is not consistently translating into visible improvements. Challenges in Budgetary Implementation: Mean Score: Below the midpoint.

Interpretation: Respondents strongly believe that challenges in budgetary implementation, such as delays and mismanagement, negatively impact the availability and quality of health infrastructure.

Graphs and Charts on Budget Implementation Impact

This document presents a visual representation of the survey data regarding the effect of budget implementation on health infrastructure in FCT. Figure 1:

Mean Scores for Budget Implementation Impact Questions



Discussion of Findings: Effect of Budgetary Implementation on the **Availability of Health Infrastructure in FCT**

The study revealed that budgetary implementation significantly impacts the availability of health infrastructure in Federal Capital Territory (FCT). Adequate and timely allocation of financial resources facilitated the construction and renovation of health centers, procurement of essential medical equipment, and expansion of healthcare facilities. However, the findings also highlighted inconsistencies in the disbursement of funds, often resulting in delayed or incomplete projects. The analysis demonstrated a direct correlation between budget execution rates and the physical availability of infrastructure, underscoring the critical role of effective budget management in healthcare development.

Recommendations

Strengthening Monitoring and Evaluation Systems There should be robust monitoring and evaluation frameworks to ensure that allocated health budgets are properly utilized. Independent bodies should be tasked with assessing project completion rates and resource utilization.

To improve the availability and accessibility of healthcare infrastructure, budgetary funds should be released promptly. This will prevent delays in the procurement of medical equipment and construction of health facilities.

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