



Effects of Digital Transformation on Employee Performance and Engagement in Public Health Facilities in Lagos State, Nigeria

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Abstract

This study examined the effect of digital transformation on employee performance and engagement in selected public health facilities in Lagos State, Nigeria. Lagos State was selected because it is Nigeria's leading commercial centre and one of the first states to implement digital health initiatives across several public health facilities, providing an appropriate context for examining the influence of digital transformation on healthcare employees. Although previous studies have investigated digital transformation in healthcare, most have focused on technology adoption, healthcare quality, or patient outcomes, with limited empirical evidence on the combined influence of Electronic Health Records (EHRs) and Digital Patient Engagement (DPE) systems on employee performance and engagement in public health facilities in Lagos State, Nigeria. This study was conducted to address this contextual and empirical gap. The study adopted a descriptive survey research design, enabling the systematic collection of quantitative data on employees' perceptions without manipulating the study variables. The study population comprised 921 employees drawn from three selected public general hospitals in Lagos State, Nigeria. Using proportionate sampling, a sample size of 279 respondents was selected, of which 235 valid questionnaires were retrieved for analysis. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire with a Cronbach's Alpha reliability coefficient ($r = 0.723$), indicating acceptable internal consistency. The data were analysed using descriptive statistics and multiple regression analysis with the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). The findings revealed that Electronic Health Records significantly improved employees' service quality ($\beta = 0.612$, $p < 0.05$), while Digital Patient Engagement significantly enhanced employees' adaptability and effectiveness ($\beta = 0.487$, $p < 0.05$). The results further showed that digital transformation systems accounted for 68% of the variation in employee performance ($R^2 = 0.680$, $F = 124.56$, $p < 0.05$), demonstrating their significant positive influence. Based on these findings, the study recommends strengthening ICT infrastructure in public health facilities, providing continuous staff training and capacity building, implementing integrated e-health systems across all departments, strengthening digital health policies, establishing sustainable technical support systems, and instituting regular monitoring and evaluation of digital transformation initiatives. The study provides valuable empirical evidence to guide policymakers, healthcare administrators, hospital management boards, technology partners, and other critical stakeholders in formulating evidence-based strategies that strengthen digital transformation, enhance employee performance and engagement, and improve healthcare service delivery in Nigeria.

Keywords: Digital transformation, employee performance, employee engagement, e-health systems, public health facilities

1. Introduction

Digital transformation has emerged as one of the most significant developments in contemporary public health systems, fundamentally reshaping how healthcare services are planned, delivered, managed, and evaluated. Globally, healthcare organisations are increasingly integrating digital technologies into clinical and administrative operations to improve efficiency, strengthen decision-making, enhance patient safety, and promote sustainable healthcare

delivery. The growing complexity of healthcare systems, rising patient expectations, increasing disease burdens, and the need for timely access to health information have made digital transformation an indispensable strategy for improving healthcare outcomes. Consequently, governments, healthcare organisations, and development partners across developed and developing countries continue to invest substantially in digital health initiatives to strengthen healthcare systems and improve population health.

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The rapid advancement of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) has accelerated the adoption of e-health systems and other digital innovations in healthcare delivery. Contemporary public health facilities increasingly utilise Electronic

Health Records (EHRs), Electronic Medical Records (EMRs), Hospital Information Management Systems (HIMS), telemedicine platforms, mobile health applications, artificial intelligence, cloud computing, and digital communication technologies to improve healthcare accessibility, efficiency, and quality of care. These technologies enable real-time access to patient information, enhance communication among healthcare professionals, reduce administrative bottlenecks, minimise medical errors, and support evidence-based clinical decision-making. In many developed countries, digital transformation has become integral to healthcare reforms aimed at improving service delivery and achieving universal health coverage.

Digital transformation in public health facilities encompasses several interrelated components that collectively determine the effectiveness of healthcare delivery. These include the adoption of Electronic Health Records and Electronic Medical Records, the utilisation of Hospital Information Management Systems, the availability of digital communication platforms such as telemedicine and mobile health applications, the adequacy of ICT infrastructure, and the level of employees' digital competencies acquired through ICT education and continuous professional training. The successful implementation of these components enables healthcare organisations to improve operational efficiency, enhance information management, facilitate coordinated patient care, and strengthen organisational performance. However, successful digital transformation requires not only technological investments but also institutional readiness, effective leadership, supportive policies, and continuous employee capacity development.

Employee performance remains a fundamental determinant of organisational effectiveness in public healthcare institutions. The quality of healthcare services delivered to patients depends largely on the competence, productivity, responsiveness, and commitment of healthcare professionals. In an increasingly digital healthcare environment, employee performance extends beyond traditional clinical responsibilities to include the effective use of digital technologies for patient management, health information processing, communication, and service delivery. Consequently, improving employee performance has become a strategic priority for healthcare managers seeking to enhance healthcare quality and organisational effectiveness.

Employee performance in public health facilities can be assessed using several indicators, including service delivery efficiency, the accuracy and speed of clinical and administrative tasks, productivity, the quality of patient care, reductions in documentation and reporting errors, and the timely completion of assigned responsibilities. Digital technologies can improve each of these dimensions by automating routine administrative processes, enhancing access to accurate

patient information, facilitating collaboration among healthcare professionals, and supporting evidence-based clinical practice. However, the extent of these improvements depends largely on employees' ability and willingness to utilise available digital technologies effectively.

Despite the recognised benefits of digital transformation, many public health facilities in Nigeria continue to face significant implementation challenges. Inadequate ICT infrastructure, unreliable electricity supply, limited internet connectivity, insufficient funding, weak institutional capacity, inadequate digital competencies among healthcare workers, cybersecurity concerns, and resistance to organisational change continue to hinder the successful implementation of digital health initiatives. These challenges limit the extent to which digital technologies can improve employee performance, engagement, and healthcare service delivery within public healthcare institutions. The purpose of this study is to examine the effect of digital transformation on employee performance and engagement in selected public health facilities in Lagos State, Nigeria, with particular emphasis on Electronic Health Records and Digital Patient Engagement systems. Although previous studies have examined digital transformation in healthcare, most have focused on technological adoption, patient outcomes, or organisational efficiency, with relatively little empirical attention to the combined influence of digital transformation on employee performance and engagement within public health facilities in developing countries, particularly in Lagos State, Nigeria. This contextual and empirical gap justifies the present study.

The findings of this study are expected to contribute to the existing literature on digital transformation in healthcare and provide practical evidence for policymakers, healthcare administrators, hospital management boards, ICT professionals, and development partners working to strengthen Nigeria's public healthcare system. The study also offers useful insights for healthcare professionals seeking to improve employee performance, enhance employee engagement, and maximise the benefits of digital transformation for sustainable healthcare service delivery.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

Despite increasing investments in digital health technologies across Nigeria's healthcare sector, many public health facilities continue to struggle to achieve the expected improvements in employee performance and engagement. Although digital transformation initiatives such as Electronic Health Records, Hospital Information Management Systems, telemedicine, and digital communication platforms have been introduced in several public healthcare institutions, their implementation remains uneven because of infrastructural deficiencies, inadequate ICT competencies, insufficient staff training, limited

financial resources, resistance to technological change, and inconsistent policy implementation. Consequently, many healthcare organisations continue to face inefficiencies in service delivery, delays in clinical and administrative processes, documentation errors, and suboptimal employee productivity. Against this background, this study investigates the effect of digital transformation on employee performance and engagement in selected public health facilities in Lagos State, Nigeria.

1.2 Objectives of the Study

The primary objective of this study is to examine the effects of digital transformation on employee performance and engagement across selected public health facilities in Lagos State, Nigeria. The specific objectives are to:

1. Examine the effect of Electronic Health Records on employees' service quality
2. Determine the effect of Digital Patient Engagement systems on employees' adaptability
3. Assess the combined effect of Electronic Health Records and Digital Patient Engagement systems on employee performance.
4. Examine the contribution of digital transformation to employee engagement in selected public health facilities.

1.3 Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What effect do Electronic Health Records have on employees' service quality?
2. What effect do Digital Patient Engagement systems have on employees' adaptability?
3. What is the combined effect of Electronic Health Records and Digital Patient Engagement systems on employee performance?
4. How does digital transformation influence employee engagement in selected public health facilities?

1.4 Research Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were tested at the 0.05 level of significance:

H₀₁: Electronic Health Records have no significant effect on employees' service quality in selected public health facilities.

H₀₂: Digital Patient Engagement systems have no significant effect on employees' adaptability within selected public health facilities.

H₀₃: Electronic Health Records and Digital Patient Engagement systems have no significant joint effect on employee performance in selected public health facilities.

H₀₄: Digital transformation has no significant effect on employee engagement within selected public health facilities.

2. Review of Related Literature

2.1 Concept of Digital Transformation

Digital transformation has become a central theme in contemporary organisational studies, particularly as organisations increasingly rely on information and communication technologies (ICT) to enhance operational efficiency and strategic posture. It entails embedding digital technologies across all aspects of an organisation's activities, thereby radically reshaping how value is created, delivered, and sustained. Beyond mere technological adoption, digital transformation encompasses a holistic reconfiguration of organisational processes, culture, and business models (Ismail et al., 2017; Kutnjak et al., 2019).

Scholars argue that digital transformation is not only about digitisation (the conversion of analogue data into digital form) or digitalisation (the use of digital technologies to improve processes), but also about organisational transformation that drives innovation and competitive advantage (Reddy & Reinartz, 2017). It enables organisations to streamline workflows, enhance decision-making through data analytics, and foster collaboration across functional units.

2.2 Electronic Health Records (EHR)

Electronic Health Records (EHRs) are digital records of patients' medical histories, containing comprehensive health information, including demographic data, diagnoses, medications, laboratory results, treatment plans, allergies, immunisation records, and clinical notes. Unlike traditional paper records, EHRs enable the real-time collection, storage, retrieval, and sharing of patient information among authorised healthcare professionals across departments and healthcare facilities. Their primary purpose is to improve the quality, safety, continuity, and efficiency of healthcare delivery by providing accurate, timely access to patient information.

The adoption of EHRs has become a fundamental component of digital transformation across healthcare systems worldwide. Studies have shown that EHR implementation reduces medical errors, enhances clinical decision-making, improves documentation accuracy, shortens patient waiting times, and promotes coordinated care among healthcare professionals. Furthermore, EHR systems enable healthcare organisations to monitor patient outcomes, generate health statistics, support research activities, and facilitate evidence-based practice.

Despite these challenges, evidence from Nigerian

healthcare institutions indicates that EHR adoption significantly improves healthcare service delivery. A recent review by Nigerian researchers found that EHR implementation enhances patient safety, improves documentation quality, reduces duplication of medical tests, facilitates continuity of care, and strengthens communication among healthcare providers. Similarly, healthcare workers in Ogun State reported positive attitudes towards EHR adoption, citing its perceived ability to improve efficiency, patient safety, and service quality. However, infrastructural constraints continue to limit full utilisation.

2.3 Digital Patient Engagement (DPE)

Digital Patient Engagement (DPE) is the use of digital technologies and communication platforms to encourage patients to actively participate in managing their health and healthcare decisions. It encompasses a range of digital tools, including patient portals, mobile health (mHealth) applications, telemedicine platforms, SMS reminders, online appointment scheduling, electronic prescription services, wearable devices, virtual consultations, and digital feedback systems. These technologies enable continuous communication between healthcare providers and patients and improve patients' access to health information and healthcare services.

Digital Patient Engagement is grounded in the patient-centred care philosophy, which emphasises collaboration between healthcare providers and patients. Rather than being passive recipients of healthcare services, digitally engaged patients actively participate in treatment decisions, medication adherence, disease monitoring, preventive care, and follow-up consultations. Digital engagement improves communication, increases patient satisfaction, promotes treatment adherence, and ultimately leads to better health outcomes.

Globally, digital patient engagement has become increasingly important as information and communication technologies advance rapidly. Healthcare organisations utilise digital engagement platforms to improve accessibility, reduce hospital congestion, enhance continuity of care, and strengthen patient-provider relationships. Research consistently shows that patients who actively engage through digital platforms are more likely to adhere to treatment plans, attend scheduled appointments, monitor chronic conditions effectively, and report higher satisfaction with healthcare services.

2.4 Employee Performance

Employee performance is the extent to which employees perform assigned tasks effectively and efficiently to achieve organisational objectives. It encompasses employees' productivity, work quality, efficiency, accuracy, service delivery, innovation, commitment, and ability to meet organisational expectations. In healthcare organisations, employee performance directly influences patient safety, quality

of care, organisational effectiveness, and overall health outcomes.

According to organisational performance theories, employee performance is influenced by several factors, including employee competence, motivation, leadership style, organisational culture, resource availability, technological support, training opportunities, and the workplace environment. In contemporary healthcare systems, digital transformation has become a key determinant of employee performance, as digital technologies streamline work processes, improve access to information, reduce administrative workload, and facilitate evidence-based clinical decision-making.

3. Theoretical Framework

3.1 Technology Acceptance Model (TAM)

The Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) was developed by Fred D. Davis (1986) and later refined by Davis (1989) to explain the factors influencing individuals' acceptance and use of information technology. The theory posits that an individual's intention to use a technology is primarily determined by two key beliefs: Perceived Usefulness (PU) and Perceived Ease of Use (PEOU). Perceived usefulness refers to the degree to which an individual believes that using a particular technology will enhance job performance, while perceived ease of use refers to the extent to which an individual believes that using the technology will require little effort. According to the model, when users perceive a technology as useful and easy to use, they are more likely to accept, adopt, and utilise it effectively in performing their tasks.

The Technology Acceptance Model is highly relevant to this study because the successful implementation of digital transformation in public health facilities largely depends on healthcare employees' willingness to adopt and use digital technologies such as Electronic Health Records (EHRs) and Digital Patient Engagement (DPE) systems. Employees who perceive these technologies as beneficial and user-friendly are more likely to integrate them into their daily work, thereby improving service quality, adaptability, efficiency, and overall employee performance. Consequently, TAM provides an appropriate theoretical basis for explaining how employees' perceptions of digital technologies influence their performance within public healthcare institutions.

3.2 Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT)

The Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT) was developed by Viswanath Venkatesh, Michael G. Morris, Gordon B. Davis, and Fred D. Davis (2003). The theory integrates constructs from eight earlier technology acceptance models into a comprehensive framework for explaining users' behavioural intention and actual use of technology. UTAUT proposes that technology adoption is influenced by four major constructs: Performance

Expectancy, Effort Expectancy, Social Influence, and Facilitating Conditions. Performance Expectancy refers to the belief that using a technology will improve job performance; Effort Expectancy concerns the ease of use of the technology; Social Influence reflects the extent to which significant others encourage technology use; and Facilitating Conditions refer to the availability of organisational and technical support necessary for effective technology utilisation.

The relevance of UTAUT to this study lies in its ability to explain the organisational and behavioural factors that influence healthcare employees' adoption and use of digital transformation systems. Implementing Electronic Health Records and Digital Patient Engagement platforms in public health facilities requires not only employees' willingness to use these technologies but also adequate organisational support, training, ICT infrastructure, and management commitment. The theory therefore provides a comprehensive explanation of how technological, organisational, and social factors jointly influence employees' acceptance of digital technologies and, ultimately, their performance and engagement. Applying UTAUT to this study helps explain why successful digital transformation extends beyond technology acquisition to include employee readiness, institutional support, and conducive working conditions.

The integration of the Technology Acceptance Model and the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology provides a robust theoretical foundation for this study. While TAM explains how healthcare employees' perceptions of the usefulness and ease of use of digital technologies influence their acceptance and utilisation, UTAUT extends this perspective by emphasising the influence of organisational support, facilitating conditions, and social factors on technology adoption. Together, the two theories provide a comprehensive framework for understanding how digital transformation systems enhance employee performance and engagement in public health facilities in Lagos State, Nigeria.

4. Methodology

This study adopted a descriptive survey design to systematically collect quantitative data from healthcare employees and examine the relationship between digital transformation systems and employee performance without manipulating the study variables. The study population comprised 921 employees from three selected public general hospitals in Lagos State, Nigeria, namely Epe General Hospital, Randle General Hospital, and Badagry General Hospital. A sample of 279 respondents was selected using proportionate sampling to ensure fair representation of employees from each hospital, based on each hospital's population size. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire developed in line with the study objectives. The instrument contained items on Electronic Health Records (EHR), Digital Patient

Engagement (DPE), and employee performance, and responses were measured on a five-point Likert scale. The questionnaire demonstrated acceptable internal consistency, with a Cronbach's Alpha reliability coefficient ($r = 0.723$), indicating that it was reliable for data collection. Of the 279 questionnaires administered, 235 were correctly completed and returned for analysis. The collected data were analysed using descriptive statistics (mean and standard deviation) and multiple regression analysis in the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) to determine the effect of digital transformation systems on employee performance.

4.1 Population, Sample Size, and Data Collection

The study targeted employees of three purposively selected general hospitals in Lagos State, namely Epe General Hospital, Randle General Hospital, and Badagry General Hospital, all of which had adopted digital health systems. The total study population comprised 921 employees, from which a proportionally selected sample of 279 respondents was drawn to ensure adequate representation across the hospitals and enhance the generalisability of the findings.

Data were collected using a structured questionnaire comprising sections on respondents' demographic characteristics, Electronic Health Records (EHR), Digital Patient Engagement (DPE), and employee performance. Responses were measured on a five-point Likert scale. The questionnaires were administered directly to respondents to improve clarity and response rates, while maintaining confidentiality and ensuring voluntary participation throughout the data collection process.

5. Results and Discussion of Findings

The study found that respondents held a positive view of digital transformation initiatives, with Employee Performance recording the highest mean score, followed by Electronic Health Records (EHR) and Digital Patient Engagement (DPE). Regression analysis revealed a strong positive relationship between digital transformation and employee performance ($R = 0.825$), with EHR and DPE jointly explaining 68% of the variation in employee performance. The ANOVA results confirmed that the regression model was statistically significant, and the regression coefficients indicated that both EHR and DPE had significant positive effects on employee performance, with EHR exerting the strongest effect.

The hypothesis testing results showed that all three null hypotheses were rejected. Specifically, Electronic Health Records significantly improved service quality; Digital Patient Engagement significantly enhanced employee adaptability; and the combined effect of digital transformation systems significantly improved employee performance in the selected public health facilities.

The findings further indicate that digital transformation is a strategic organisational resource that enhances healthcare service delivery by improving efficiency, communication, coordination, and employee responsiveness. The results support the Resource-Based Theory by showing that digital technologies, when effectively integrated with employee competencies and organisational capabilities, significantly contribute to organisational performance. The study also extends existing knowledge by providing empirical evidence from public health facilities in Lagos State, Nigeria. It highlights the need for sustained investment in digital infrastructure, employee training, supportive policies, and integrated digital health systems to maximise workforce productivity and healthcare service delivery.

6. Conclusion

This study concluded that digital transformation, particularly through the adoption of Electronic Health Records (EHRs) and Digital Patient Engagement (DPE) systems, significantly enhances employee performance, engagement, and operational efficiency in public health facilities in Lagos State, Nigeria. The findings demonstrate that digital technologies improve service delivery, enable data-driven decision-making, and strengthen overall organisational performance.

The study further concludes that successful digital transformation depends not only on technological investment but also on employees' digital competencies, ongoing training, and institutional support. However, challenges such as inadequate ICT infrastructure, unreliable electricity, limited funding, resistance to change, and cybersecurity concerns remain significant barriers to effective implementation. Overall, the study emphasises that sustained investment in digital infrastructure, workforce development, and supportive policy frameworks is essential to maximising the benefits of digital transformation, enhancing employee performance and engagement, and building a more efficient, responsive, and resilient public healthcare system in Nigeria.

7. Recommendations

I. Strengthening ICT Infrastructure in Public Health Facilities in Nigeria.

The Federal Ministry of Health, the Lagos State Ministry of Health, and hospital management boards should prioritise sustained investment in modern ICT infrastructure, including reliable broadband internet, an uninterrupted electricity supply, secure servers, cloud-based data storage, and modern computer hardware. Strengthening ICT infrastructure will ensure the effective operation of Electronic Health Records and other digital health applications.

II. Continuous Staff Training and Capacity Building.

The management of public health facilities, professional regulatory bodies, and training institutions should organise regular training sessions, workshops, and refresher programmes to improve healthcare

workers' digital literacy, competence in using Electronic Health Records, cybersecurity awareness, data management, and digital patient engagement systems.

III. Full Implementation of E-Health Systems across all Departments in Public Health Facilities.

The Federal Ministry of Health, State Ministries of Health, and hospital management should ensure the full deployment and integration of Electronic Health Records, electronic prescribing, telemedicine services, laboratory and pharmacy information systems, and digital patient management platforms across all departments to improve coordination and service efficiency.

IV. Enhancing Employee Motivation, Performance and Engagement.

Hospital administrators and healthcare managers should implement employee motivation strategies, including performance-based incentives, recognition awards, career development opportunities, supportive supervision, and staff participation in digital transformation initiatives, to encourage acceptance and effective use of digital technologies.

V. Policy Strengthening and Enforcement as well as Collaboration with Technology Partners.

The Federal Government, the National Information Technology Development Agency (NITDA), the Federal Ministry of Health, and State Governments should strengthen digital health policies, enforce implementation standards, and form strategic partnerships with reputable technology companies, software developers, telecommunications providers, and development partners to enhance digital innovation and sustainability.

VI. Establishment of Technical Support and Maintenance Systems.

The management of public health facilities should establish dedicated ICT support units responsible for routine system maintenance, software updates, equipment servicing, troubleshooting, cybersecurity management, and prompt resolution of technical issues to minimise system downtime.

VII. Integration of Digital Tools into Daily Work Processes.

Hospital management, departmental heads, and healthcare professionals should fully integrate digital technologies into routine clinical and administrative activities, including patient registration, diagnosis, treatment documentation, appointment scheduling, communication, and performance monitoring, to maximise productivity and service quality.

VIII. Monitoring and Evaluation of Digital Adoption in Public Health Facilities in Nigeria.

The Federal Ministry of Health, State Ministries of Health, hospital management boards, and quality assurance units should establish continuous monitoring

and evaluation frameworks with clearly defined performance indicators to assess digital adoption, identify implementation challenges, measure employee performance, and guide continuous improvement.

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