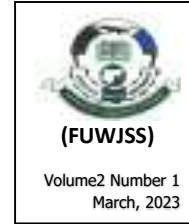


**EFFECTIVE POLITICAL LEADERSHIP AND
SERVICE DELIVERY IN CHANCHAGA AND
LAPAI LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREAS,
NIGER STATE, NIGERIA**



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Abstract

Globally, service delivery is crucial in improving human lives and a formidable measure of assessing the performance of any leadership or government. In the past decades, several efforts have been put in place by the Niger State Government in strengthening capacity to promote service delivery at both the State and Local Government levels. However, in Chanchaga and Lapai Local Government Areas of Niger State, empirical evidences showed low strategic planning experience and lack of managerial skills in the Councils. Thus, this study assesses the impact of political leadership on service delivery in Chanchaga and Lapai Local Government Areas, Niger State. The study depended on both primary and secondary sources of data collection. Quantitative data were analyzed through descriptive and inferential techniques. Qualitative data were thematically analyzed. The study's results established that leader's strategic planning experience significantly affected service delivery in Chanchaga and Lapai Local Government Areas. The study also affirmed that managerial skills among the leaders affected service delivery in Chanchaga and Lapai Local Government Areas. The study then recommends that there is need to strengthen strategic planning experience among present and future leaders in Chanchaga and Lapai Local Governments for better result (efficient service delivery) in order to be fair and responsive to public needs and demands. More so, political leaders should be trained and motivated to apply the skills of management for effective service delivery in Chanchaga and Lapai Local Governments.

Keywords: Leadership, strategic planning, service delivery, managerial skills

Introduction

Globally, service delivery is an imperative aspect of making sure that the lives of the people are improved, it is also a yardstick for measuring the

performance of any administration. Since the public sector (including Federal, State and Local Government) of various countries in the world have been the backbone of economy's service delivery, it is important for its public sector to flourish (Ajay, 2018). Thus, it can be stated that there is a need to improve the service delivery in public sector for public sector's growth and development. One way to improve the service delivery in public sector is guidance via effective political leadership. Political leadership therefore, is critical for the success and survival of all forms of organizations worldwide (being it public or private). That is why Hughes (2012) argues that the role of leadership in organizations is to put structure and order; to direct and coordinate the work of group members and building interpersonal relationships with others. Additionally, Sifuna, (2012) averred that leaders who are visionary can actually steer the organization towards great success; as such, leadership effectiveness is shown by quality results (determined by the leader's strategic planning experience and leader's managerial skills).

In essence, getting results through others and the ability to build cohesive, goal-oriented teams is the essence of a good political leader. It is on this ground that Sendlove, (2007) asserted that leadership is a complex, multifaceted process concerned with the art of influencing followers in a particular direction which involves casting a vision and directions, goal setting and motivating people. In line with the argument of Sendlove, Brown (2001) proposes that effective political leaders have to develop both managerial and leadership behavior and traits. To this end, management is concerned with the implementation of set objectives on the basis of established rules. It answers how are the rules applied and is concerned with the efficiency and effectiveness and quality of services provided to both internal and external stakeholders (Sifuna, 2012). He further submits that leadership is under-utilized in many organizations (either public or private) in Nigeria; this in most cases what make subordinate staff and other stakeholders disgruntled thereby leading to poor results (poor service delivery).

Accordingly, Local Governments as third tier units of government are created to bring government closer to the people at the grassroots and for transformation of lives at the rural level. One of the ways of bringing government closer to the people at the grassroots is through the delivery of service in a satisfactory, timely, effective and adequate manner. On this note, Ayotunde and Kunle (2016) stressed that Local Government that is supposed to serve as a form of political and administrative structure facilitating decentralization, national integration, and a sense of belonging at the grassroots through effective leadership and efficiency in governance, but the kind of political leadership that exists in most Local Governments definitely affect the service delivery negatively. In Chanchaga and Lapai Local

Governments, Niger State, the political leadership has managed to deliver services that are basic to the people, the strength of the leadership lies on its strategic planning experience and leader's managerial skills which have significantly impacted on service delivery in Chanchaga and Lapai Local Government Areas. Regarding the part of strategic planning experience, the leaders now uphold to professionalism; fair to public needs and are responsive to public needs. With respect to leader's managerial skills, the leaders are now applied decision making skills; problem solving skills; motivation skills and time management as against what was obtainable in the past.

Leadership has been identified as one of the major problems militating against growth and development in all sectors of the economy and levels of government in Africa (Lamidi and Adeyeye, 2013). The need for effective leadership in any level of government is very essential. This is because Local Governments exist with stated objectives and leaders as 'machineries' for achieving such stated objectives. Developmental goals will remain unrealistic without a 'designated individual' known as leader. As a result, leaders are 'central instruments' to any government. Success or failure of a government lies in the hands of the leaders. With disparities existing among the nature of leaderships among Local Governments in developing nations compared to that of developed nations resulting from their distinctive characteristics - leader's strategic planning experience and leader's managerial skills this necessitates measuring the effectiveness of leadership in Chanchaga and Lapai Local Government Areas as its impacted on service delivery. The issue of leadership in Government has been receiving special attention worldwide, for several decades. This topic has been widely discussed by academics and researchers in developed countries, and now the developing economies are joining in the discussion. As argued by Timothy and Maitreesh (2005) thus:

Public services delivery in many African countries is riddled with poor leadership; corruption; selfishness and favouritism; low strategic planning experience among the leaders and low managerial skills among the leaders that tend to impoverished many. And this has the effect of undermining the quality of service offered by these institutions. Additionally, governance practices at subnational levels seem to be poor, thereby making service delivery at grassroots to be done at a snail pace.

In Nigeria, public service delivery faces numerous challenges including public money wastage, low revenue collections, low paid and unmotivated public servants, poor accountability, and, generally poor performance on service delivery (Issa, 2010 & Magayane, 2013). Recent evidence shows that even when resources are allocated for provision of services, the bulk of it never reaches the intended public (Lubuva, 2008). Despite broad plans and

massive injections of international and domestic resources, public services delivery is still poor in most underdeveloped countries (Nigeria inclusive) (Lenietal, 2012). This is primarily due to poor fund management which in essence, is indicative of poor leadership commitment to improved decision-making and low managerial skills of the leaders within country's public institutions. Several efforts have been put in place by Niger State Government to strengthen leadership qualities in order to promote service delivery in Niger State and Local Governments in the State. One of such efforts has to do with improvement in strategic planning experience of leaders of the State. Workshops and training programmes were organised between 2000 to 2014 meant to get the leaders taught about strategic planning experience (such as responsiveness and fairness to public needs; ways by which leaders can uphold to professional values) (Niger State Leadership Development report, 2014).

In the same vein, development of managerial skills and competence of the leaders within the State including Local Government leaders is another viable effort put in place by Niger State Government to strengthen leadership qualities in order to promote service delivery in Niger State and Local Governments in the State. State sponsored seminars conducted in 2015 are one of the strong examples meant to develop the managerial skills and competence of leaders in Niger State (Niger State Leadership Development report, 2014). In spite of all efforts by various leadership to promote service delivery in Chanchaga and Lapai Local Government Areas of Niger State, empirical evidences, and records showed that low strategic planning experience among leaders in Chanchaga and Lapai Local Government Areas have been detrimental to effective service delivery (Chanchaga and Lapai Local Governments Service Delivery Challenges and Way-out report, 2019).

In the same vein, leader's managerial skills (i.e. requisite skills to direct and coordinate the work of group members and building interpersonal relationships with others) is identified as one of the means to ensure effective service delivery in Chanchaga and Lapai Local Government Areas (Chanchaga and Lapai Local Governments Service Delivery Challenges and Way-out report, 2019). The report provides that most leaders between the years of 2011-2019 lack requisite managerial skills necessary for effective service delivery in Chanchaga and Lapai Local Governments. The report showed inadequate service delivery in particularly water supply and primary education. It is against this background that this study seeks to assess the impact of leadership on service delivery in Chanchaga and Lapai Local Government Areas, Niger State.

Conceptualizing Managerial Skills in Leadership Development

Defining leadership is a recent academic activity, though the phenomenon of leadership has been ever present in human relations. Stogdill reminds us that the word “leader” has origins back to the 1300s and the word “leadership” dates back to the 1800s. He reviewed over 3,000 studies directly related to leadership and suggested that there are almost as “many different definitions of leadership as there are persons who have attempted to define the concept” (Stogdill, 1974, page number). Notwithstanding the multitude of definitions, the few comprehensive ones have been developed. Batten (1989, p. 35) defines leadership as “a clear and complete system of expectations in order to identify, evoke, and use the strengths of all resources in the organisation – the most important of which is people”. Staub (1997, p. 160) adds to this by stating that “leadership is, by definition, the capacity to forge ahead, blaze new trails, open up new realms. It is characterised by breaking with tradition and seizing new opportunities where others see only danger and ruin.” Coetzee (2006, p. 203) focus on the behavioural side of leadership and define it as “the ability to influence the behaviour of others so that they can cooperate willingly to reach goals”. Moreover, according to Goetsch and Davis (2006, p. 255), leadership is the ability to inspire people to make a total, willing, and voluntary commitment to accomplishing or exceeding organisational goals”. In addition, Hellriegel (2006, p. 286) explain that leadership “involves influencing others to act towards the attainment of a goal. It is based on interpersonal relationships, not administrative activities and directives.

Despite the plethora of definitions of leadership, some authors such as Doh and Stumpf (2015) contend that the ultimate question is not what the definition of leadership is, but rather what constitutes good leadership. They add that there is no confusion about what leaders do - the question is, what would be the best way to do it. After all, that is the point of studying leadership. With due consideration of the multitude of definitions, for the purpose of this study, effective leadership was defined as “the mobilisation and influencing of people to work towards a common goal (i.e. efficient service delivery) through strategic planning experience and adequate managerial skills. Strategic planning is a management tool for several key purposes: to help an organization do a better job, to focus its energy, to ensure that members are working toward the same goals and to assess and adjust its direction in response to an ever-changing environment. Strategic planning provides the master plan an organization uses to achieve its aims. It charts the direction and goals of the entire organization and all aspects of its operation. In short strategic planning is a disciplined effort to produce fundamental decisions and actions that shape and guide what an organization is, what it does, and why it does it, with a focus on the future. (Bryson, 1988). In addition, strategic planning does the following:

- Shares an organization's vision with a large internal and external audience.
- Clarifies and makes the organization's mission specific. The process is strategic because it involves choosing how best to respond to the circumstances of the organization's environment.
- Identifies clients, consumers and stakeholders served by the organization.
- Identifies distinctive strengths and weaknesses of the organization.
- Scans the relevant environment to find emerging opportunities and threats for an organization.
- Involves the key people inside and outside the organization in the planning process – The process is about planning because it involves intentionally setting goals (choosing a desired future) and developing an approach to achieving those goals.
- Creates a context for making choices about possible future directions (National Minority AIDS Council (NMAC), Manual, 2014).

Managerial skills or techniques develop out of theory and practice. According to J.S. Ninomiya (1991), the skills of effective managers could be summed up in seven roles as follows: listener, teacher, peacemaker, visionaries, self-critics, team captain, leader. Management skills can be defined according to Gboyega (2014) as certain attributes that an executive should possess in order to fulfil specific tasks in an organisation. They include the capacity to perform executive duties in an organisation. Management skills can be developed through learning and practical experience as a manager. The skills help the leader to relate to their fellow co-workers and know how to deal well with their subordinates, which allows for the easy flow of activities in the organization (Gboyega, 2014). We could therefore, add that good management skills are vital for any organization to succeed and achieve its goals and objectives. A leader who fosters good management skills is able to propel the organisation's mission and vision forward with fewer huddles and objections from internal and external sources.

According to American Social and Organizational Psychologist – Katz (2013), the three basic types of management skills includes: *technical skills*: technical skills not only involve operating machines and software, production tools, and pieces of equipment but also the skills needed for priority service delivery. *Conceptual skills*: these involve the leader's ability to see an entire concept, analyse and diagnose a problem, and find creative solutions. This helps the leader who has conceptual skills to effectively predict hurdles the organisation may face in the future. *Human or interpersonal skills*: the human or interpersonal skills are the skills that present the leader's ability to interact, work or relate effectively with people.

These skills enable the leader to make use of human potential in an organisation and motivate employees for better result – service delivery in the case of public sector. Figure 2.1 depicts the three broad managerial skills according to – Katz (2013).

According to McLennan (2009) service delivery is commonly understood to mean “the provision of goods or services by a government or other organizations to those who need or demand them” (p. 21). Such delivery of services by whoever is constitutionally responsible takes into consideration numerous social factors. This includes evenly rearrangement and reallocation of resources, social equality, and improvement of people’s living condition and stimulating economy to ensure service provision sustainability. Berry (2004) opines that service delivery is conceptualised as the relationship between policy makers, service providers and poor people. It encompasses services and their supporting systems that are typically regarded as a state responsibility. These include social services (primary education and basic health services), infrastructure (water and sanitation, roads and bridges) and services that promote personal security (justice, police). Similarly, World Bank (2004) sees service delivery as a relationship of accountability between users, providers and policy-makers and proposes a possible framework for conceptualising pro-poor service delivery that examines the relationships of accountability between the policy maker, the provider and the citizen – indicating the central role of the public institutions in guaranteeing the provision of pro-poor services and the role of politics in this process.

VNG (2007) opines that service delivery is an essential function of the relationship between government bodies and citizens. This has over the years, categorised the citizens as customers and has changes the way governments think and act. In the world of government therefore, (particular, in the world of local government) customers have a right to demand services from their suppliers that meet their needs: fast, accessible, of good quality and at modest cost, and all wrapped in friendly treatment. This applies particularly to the government as a supplier of key public services.

Empirical Evidences of Leadership Styles and Organizational Performance in Nigeria

In his study of the impact of leadership style on organizational performance, Ojokuku (2012) examined the impact of leadership style on organizational performance in selected Banks in Ibadan Nigeria. Purposive sampling technique was adopted in selecting a total of sixty (60) respondents as sample for the study, while relevant data was gathered with the aid of a structured questionnaire. One hypothesis was formulated and inferential statistical tool was used to analyze the data specifically Pearson product

moment correlation was used to examine the relationship between leadership style dimensions and organizational performance, while Regression analysis was used to examine the significant effect of leadership style dimensions on followers and performance. Findings showed positive and negative correlation between leadership style dimensions and organizational performance. It was also found that leadership style dimensions jointly predict organizational performance, which counted for 23% variance of performance. The study concluded that transformational and democratic leadership style should be employed by the Banks' management in order to wax stronger in a global competitive environment.

Abdulazeez (2014) empirically examines the relationship between leadership style and organizational effectiveness in the Nigerian small and medium enterprises. A survey of two hundred and sixty-eight (268) small and medium enterprises was used. The self-administered questionnaire was used as sources of data for the study. A total number of 209 copies of the questionnaires were returned and properly filled and subsequently used for the analysis. Descriptive Statistics-T-test and Pearson Product Moment Correlation test were used. Data processing and analyses were carried out with the aid of computer using Statistical Packages for Social Sciences (SPSS). All the analyses were conducted using 5% level of significance. The results found that the Nigerian SMEs are more autocratic and less participative as the power distance between business owner and employees is very wide. The study further reveals an insignificant relationship between leadership style and organizational effectiveness. Therefore, the study finding cannot be generalized because it uses only two styles of leadership as determinants for the study.

Odewale and Benson (2016) highlight the various factors that influence political leadership on service delivery in Osun State Local Governments of Nigeria. It argues that effective political leadership is a cornerstone for sustainable development through the provision of social services. The study utilized both primary and secondary data. The study further revealed that political leadership at local level embarked on services based on the whims and caprices of the state government (80%), state-local fiscal relations was unfavorable to political leaders (90%) as well as disenchantment of political leadership from accessing grants and loans from international agencies (62%). Also the study showed that corruption among political leaders has become a major clog in the provision of adequate service (94%). The paper highlighted some recommendations and concluded that political leaders at local level had momentous impact on service delivery but the major hindrance is the way and manner the State Government operates with them.

Ajay (2018) assessed the impact of leadership in service delivery by assessing the betterment of public sector services as a result of leadership in

public sectors. After the review of available literature, the study provides a brief but analytical understanding of the leadership traits and how the implementation of these traits can affect the services in the public sector. This provides an effective understanding of role of leadership in service delivery in public sector, creating positive outcomes for effective service provision, better response system and increased efficacy of public sector programs in comparison to the past instances of public sector service delivery. The study recommends among others the need to counsel leaders through technical education and managerial workshops and through setting up incentives for goals achieved.

However, various researches have been carried out on the impact of leadership on service delivery. For example, Ojokuku (2012), Abdulazeez (2014), Odewale and Benson (2016) and Ajay (2018)) concentrated on the impact of leadership on service delivery but none of these studies have attempted a dynamic study of the impact of leadership on service delivery by operationalising effective leadership as strategic planning experience of the leader and managerial skills of the leader. Therefore, filling these gaps make this study novel and has contributed immensely to existing body of knowledge within the field of management and leadership. More so, Riaan (2011), Ojokuku (2012), Abdulazeez (2014), Odewale and Benson (2016) and Ajay (2018)) all relied on questionnaire and quantitative techniques for data collection and analysis. Our study was integrative in nature i.e. relying on both quantitative (questionnaire) and qualitative method (interview).

Theoretical Framework: New Public Management (NPM) Theoretical Perspective

The NPM movement began in the late 1970s and early 1980s. Its first practitioners emerged in the United Kingdom under Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher and in the municipal governments in the U.S. (e.g., Sunnyvale, California) that had suffered most heavily from economic recession and tax revolts. Next, the governments of New Zealand and Australia joined the movement. Their successes put NPM administrative reforms on the agendas of most Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development countries and other nations as well (OECD, 1995). Only later did academics identify the common characteristics of these reforms and organize them under the label of New Public Management (Dunsire, 1995, p. 21). NPM as a contemporary watchword is based on how management performs from the private segment are currently being functional in the public service area (Lane, 2000). The vital features of NPM (Pollitt, 1994) are given below:

- i. NPM identifies the need for leadership which undertakes strategic planning while upholding values such as professionalism, fairness and responsiveness to public needs;
- ii. The issue of effective communication (bottom-up communication) also aligns with the NPM perspective which emphasizes on quality services delivery and consumer satisfaction as desired outcomes in the public sector.
- iii. Inclination of lean/flat, independent organizational forms and decentralization;
- iv. Favoring contract-like relations in place of hierarchical relations and concentration on quality services;
- v. Value based: preferring individuality and competence instead of parity and diversity.

Methodology

This study adopted sequential mixed method also known as integrating or multimethod (Bryman, 2006; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003). The rationale behind the choice of ‘explanatory sequential mixed method procedures’ is to elaborate on the findings of one method (questionnaire) with another method (interview). In other words, the study lies on its ability to broaden understanding by incorporating both qualitative and quantitative research. The target population of the study includes the executives of National Union of Local Government Employee (NULGE), current political and administrative staff of both local governments and major party leaders of the two Local Governments. The rationale behind the choice of these category of respondents lies on their level of involvement and their in-depth knowledge on leadership of the Local Governments and service delivery in the study area. The respondents also included the ‘District Heads’ in the eight districts forming the two Local Governments as they offered authentic information concerning service delivery in their respective communities. The population of these categories of staff is summarised in table 1 below:

S/No.	Respondents Category	Population
1.	Executives of National Union of Local Government Employee (NULGE), Chanchaga and Lapai Local Government	$10 \times 2 = 20$
2.	Political staff Chanchaga Local Government	12
3.	Political staff Lapai Local Government	12
4.	Administrative staff of Chanchaga Local Government	252
5.	Administrative staff of Lapai Local Government	268
6.	Major party leaders, Chanchaga Local Government	4
7.	Major party leaders, Lapai Local Government	4
8.	District Heads, Chanchaga Local Government	4
9.	District Heads, Lapai Local Government	4

**	Total	582
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Table 1 Target Population of the Study

Source: Staff Register, Chanchaga and Lapai Local Government Areas (2020) and Political Parties Membership register (2018).

The study adopted Yamane sampling technique for objective determination of representative sample size. According to Yamane (1967), for a 95% confidence level and $p = 0.5$, size of the sample should follow the following formula:

n = sample size required

N = number of people in the population

e = allowable error or Level of Precision ($\pm 5\%$)

Let this formula be used for our population, in which $N = 582$, with $\pm 5\%$ precision. Assuming 95% confidence level and $p = 0.5$, we get the sample size n

$N =$

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

As shown in the above discussions, the sample size is Two-Hundred and twenty-nine (229) arrived at through Taro Yamane sampling technique. Among this sample size, some respondents like executives of National Union of Local Government Employee (NULGE), current political staff, district heads and major party leaders of the two Local Governments were interviewed for corroboration of information generated through questionnaire. The questionnaire for the study was distributed via probability proportionate cluster sampling technique by dividing the total by the number of cluster as shown in table 2 below. On the other hand, purposive and snowball sampling techniques were adopted in selecting the interviewees.

Table 2 Distribution of Questionnaire

Staff Category	Population of Staff	Distribution of Questionnaire
Executives of National Union of Local Government Employee (NULGE), Chanchaga and Lapai Local Government	20	$20 / 582 \times 229 = 8$
Political staff Chanchaga and Lapai Local Government	12	$24 / 582 \times 229 = 10$
Administrative staff of Chanchaga and Lapai Local Government	252	$252 / 582 \times 229 = 99$
Administrative staff of Lapai Local Government	268	$268 / 582 \times 229 = 108$
Major party leaders and district Heads Chanchaga and Lapai Local Government	16	$16 / 582 \times 229 = 6$
Total	582	$582 / 582 \times 229 = 229$

Source: Researchers' Computation, 2023

Instruments of Data Collection/ Data Analysis

The instruments of data collection are both primary and secondary data. While questionnaire and interview were the primary methods of data; reliable documents (e.g. Staff Register, Chanchaga and Lapai Local Government Areas (2020); Chanchaga and Lapai Local Governments Service Delivery Challenges and Way-out report, 2019) and Political Parties Membership register (2018). constituted the secondary sources of data for the study. However, the primary (quantitative) data was analysed using multiple regression and the interview responses were thematically presented and analysed.

This section deals with the data presentation and analysis. Needless to state here that though, Though, two-hundred and twenty (229) questionnaires were printed and distributed, but 190 questionnaire representing 82.98% of the total questionnaire were duly filled and returned, while thirty-nine (39) questionnaire representing 17.03% of the total questionnaire were not returned. Therefore, one-hundred and ninety (190) returned questionnaires formed the basis for analysis and interpretation.

Results and Discussions

Table 3 Regression Output 1

ANOVA^a

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	1802.639	3	600.880	3476.407	.000 ^b
	Residual	67.237	389	.173		
	Total	1869.876	392			

a. Dependent Variable: SERVICE_DELIVERY

i. Predictors: (Constant), STRATEGIC_PLANNING, AND MANAGERIAL_SKILLS

Source: SPSS Output, 2023.

Table 3 above shows the result from the multiple regression analysis which tests the effects of the independent variables (strategic planning and managerial skills) on service delivery. The F-statistic for Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) which measures the adequacy and goodness of fit of the model and test the joint significance of the variables in the study model stood at 3476.407 with a p-value of 0.000^b which is significant at 5%; this shows that the model is absolutely fit for the data.

Table 4 Regression Output 2

Model Summary^b

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.778 ^a	.680	.680	.41575	1.65

a. Predictors: (Constant), STRATEGIC_PLANNING, and MANAGERIAL_SKILLS

a. Dependent Variable: SERVICE_DELIVERY

Source: SPSS Output, 2023

Table 4 above shows the summary of the multiple regression analysis. The empirical findings show that computed multiple correlation coefficient represented by (R), stood at 0.778^a which indicates a correlation. *R* Square (*R*²), the multiple coefficient of determination of the variables stood at 0.680 indicating that 68.0% of the total variation in the level of service delivery in Chanchaga and Lapai Local Governments is explained by variations in the ‘independent variables’ (leaders’ level of: strategic planning, and managerial skills) captured in the study. Thus, the remaining 38.0% of the variation in the dependent variable can be explained by other variables not captured in the study. The adjusted *R*² being 0.680 also indicates that the independent variables will still explain 68.0% of the inadequate service delivery in Chanchaga and Lapai Local Governments even if other variables were added to the study.

Table 5 Regression Output 3

Coefficients^a

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	.036	.104		.348	.728
1 STRATEGIC PLANNING	.135	.022	.837	5.642	.000
MANAGERIAL SKILLS	.606	.018	.199	27.385	.000

a. Dependent Variable: GRANT_MANAGEMENT

Source: SPSS Output, 2023.

Table 5 above shows the outcome of the respective variables on service delivery. Upon the fulfilment of the assumptions of regression analysis, multiple regression analysis was considered suitable in testing the research hypotheses. The respective hypotheses as tested in table 5 are discussed as follows:

Ho₁ Leader’s strategic planning experience has no significant impact on service delivery in Chanchaga and Lapai Local Government Areas.

The coefficient of “leader’s strategic planning experience” stood at 0.135 which is also positive. This implies that an improvement in leader’s strategic planning experience would lead to efficient service delivery in Chanchaga and Lapai Local Government Areas. However, the significance of this can be judged from the sig (P value).

The t statistics of “leader’s strategic planning experience” stood at 5.642 with a p-value of 0.000. The p-value is less than 0.05, indicating that the relationship depicted in the model is significant at 95% confidence level. This implies that the study does not have enough statistical evidence to accept the null hypothesis. Based on the above analysis, the study failed to accept the null hypothesis H_{03} , which states that “Leader’s strategic planning experience has no significant impact on service delivery in Chanchaga and Lapai Local Government Areas”.

H₀₂ Leader’s managerial skills has no significant impact on service delivery in Chanchaga and Lapai Local Government Areas.

The coefficient of “leaders’ managerial skills” stood at 0.606 which is positive. This implies that an increase in managerial skills among the leaders would lead to efficient service delivery in Chanchaga and Lapai Local Government Areas. However, the significance of this can be judged from the P value represented as “sig”.

The t statistics of “managerial skills among the leaders” stood at 27.385 with a p-value of 0.000. The p-value is less than 0.05, indicating that the relationship depicted in the model is significant at 95% confidence level. This implies that the study does not have enough statistical evidence to accept the null hypothesis. Based on the above analysis, the study failed to accept the null hypothesis H_{01} , which states that “Leader’s managerial skills has no significant impact on service delivery in Chanchaga and Lapai Local Government Areas”.

Analysis of Interview Responses Using Thematic Analysis

Theme I: Strategic Planning and Service Delivery in Chanchaga and Lapai Local Government Areas, Niger State

Sub-Theme Ia. What is the nexus between strategic planning by leaders of Chanchaga and Lapai Local Government Areas and service delivery?

There is unanimous agreement among the community district heads in respect to the overhead issue as they worriedly stressed thus:

Strategic planning is always the bedrock of success in any organization (Chanchaga and Lapai Local Government Areas are not exception to this). But in terms of service delivery in our Local Government Areas, there is a big question mark? Services like education, health etc. are in short supply by the Local Governments. The few services delivered are not also evenly distributed but distributed based on the district’s head connection

to the political staff and NULGE leaders of the respective Local Governments (D₁₀, D₁₁, D₁₂).

On the contrary, the political staff and NULGE leaders of the respective Local Governments responded to their own favour asserting that service delivery in the respective Local Governments is adequate because of their strategic planning (D₁, D₂, D₃, D₄, D₅, D₆, D₇ and D₈).

Theme II: Managerial Skills and Service Delivery in Chanchaga and Lapai Local Government Areas, Niger State

Sub-theme II (a): Discuss how managerial skills of past and present leaders of Chanchaga and Lapai Local Government Areas promoted efficient service delivery.

The community members felt the management of the Local Government is so poor that the indigenes are so unhappy about the leadership of of Chanchaga and Lapai Local Government Areas. This has caused the the few facilities and infrastructures in Chanchaga and Lapai Local Government Areas to be in a bad condition (D₁₀, D₁₁, D₁₂).

The study assessed the impact of effective leadership on service delivery in Chanchaga and Lapai Local Government Areas. From the presentation and analyses of data, a number of findings were arrived at which are discussed below.

- i. The study found that leader's strategic planning experience significantly affected service delivery in Chanchaga and Lapai Local Government Areas. Because the coefficient of "leader's strategic planning experience" stood at 0.135 which is also positive. t statistics of "leader's strategic planning experience" stood at 5.642 with a p-value of 0.000. The p-value is less than 0.05, indicating that the relationship depicted in the model is significant at 95% confidence level.
- ii. The study also discovered that managerial skills among the leaders significantly affected service delivery in Chanchaga and Lapai Local Government Areas because the coefficient of managerial skills among the leaders stood at 27.385 with a p-value of 0.000. The p-value is less than 0.05, indicating that the relationship depicted in the model is significant at 95% confidence level.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The study set out to assess the impact of effective leadership on service delivery in Chanchaga and Lapai Local Government Areas, Niger State. The study concludes that leader's strategic planning experience and managerial skills among the leaders significantly affected service delivery in Chanchaga

and Lapai Local Government Areas. In view of the research findings, it is recommended that in order to strengthen leadership and achieve efficient service delivery in Chanchaga and Lapai Local Government Areas of Niger State, there is need for the strengthening of strategic planning capacity building for present and future leaders in Chanchaga and Lapai Local Governments for better result (efficient service delivery). Also, there is need for political leaders to be motivated to learn to apply the skills of management.

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