

## Public Infrastructural Decay as An Impediment to Effective Performance

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Received: 15 February 2023; Revised: 8 May 2023; Accepted: 15 May 2023

**Abstract:** *This study identified the various public infrastructural facilities—power, health, and information and communication technology (ICT)—that aid the Federal Road Safety Corps (FRSC) in performing their duty effectively. It also examined how public infrastructural decay renders Nigeria’s public service handicapped in its ability to effectively execute its goals. It adopts a survey research design technique, and a questionnaire was used to gather data. The primary data collected were analysed using descriptive statistics, while the hypothesis was tested using Pearson correlation analysis. The sample size was determined by the convenience nonprobability sampling method, and questionnaires were distributed to the respondents. The scope of the study is the FRSC Zone RS 8 Headquarters, Ilorin, Kwara State, Nigeria. The result shows that there is a weak positive relationship between adequate public infrastructural facilities and effective performance in Nigeria’s public service. It also revealed that the effective performance of Nigeria’s public service is aided by adequate public infrastructural facilities. Likewise, inadequate public infrastructural facilities slow down the effective performance of Nigeria’s public service. The study recommended that public infrastructural facilities should be taken as vital tools to enhance Nigeria’s public service performance and that public infrastructural decay should be tackled.*

**Keywords:** *Federal Road Safety Corps (FRSC); Health; Information and Communication Technology (ICT); Infrastructural Decay; Power.*

### How to Cite:

Akindele, I. T., Okanlawon, D., & Olusesi, D. I. (2023). Public Infrastructural Decay as An Impediment to Effective Performance. *Journal of Governance*, 8(2), 165–176.  
<https://doi.org/http://dx.doi.org/10.31506/jog.v8i2.19178>



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## Introduction

Education, health, water, electricity, housing, roads, and other infrastructures, in addition to food, constitute the basic requirements of man in human society. In the Nigerian context, the major areas of basic needs include the provision of more and better food, which is the most important of the basic needs; adequate water supply, shelter, health and sanitation, learning, including both formal and non-formal education; work; transportation; and personal safety (Awogbemi, 2010).

In our society today, the public service seeks to accomplish its objectives by providing better service to the public. This context refers to the extent to which government ministries, departments, and agencies (MDAs) and parastatals achieve specified levels of progress towards the attainment of their corporate goals as expected or designed.

Infrastructure provides the foundation of every nation's economy and quality of life; thus, investing in ageing infrastructure is essential to supporting healthy and vibrant communities (Aghedo, 2021). Public infrastructural decay has been a major concern, slowing down the public service in achieving the next level of progress.

Infrastructural decay will inadvertently lead to infrastructure inequalities, which will further widen the gap between the rich and the poor, rural and urban areas, as well as developing and developed countries. Thus, it is important to curb infrastructural inequalities, which will directly curb infrastructural decay, for at least five reasons. First, infrastructure inequalities can affect progress towards sustainable development, as 72% of the targets associated with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UN-

SDGs) are associated with infrastructure (Thacker et al., 2019).

Second, due to the infrastructure's durable nature, infrastructure inequalities can persist for a prolonged period (Grant, 2010). Third, infrastructure inequality can lock in inequalities in other dimensions, such as the economic dimension, by limiting access and opportunities for some communities (United Nations, 2016).

Fourth, as urban areas globally are expected to almost double in size by the middle of this century (Huang, Li, Liu, & Seto, 2019), concomitant infrastructure expansion presents an opportunity to shape future inequalities while addressing existing ones. Fifth, infrastructure growth faces physical and resource constraints (Bhartendu, Brelsford, & Seto, 2022). Unequal and sometimes inequitable socio-spatial distributions can emerge from infrastructure allocation decisions made under these constraints (Ferre, Ferreira, & Lanjouw, 2012; Weiss et al., 2018).

The notion of infrastructural decay as an impediment affecting the effective performance of the public service is in the context of unstable electricity, inadequate health services or care, and a deficient transportation system. If these infrastructural facilities are adequate, not only will they boost the performance of Nigeria's public service, but they will also lead to the development of Nigerian society.

In making direct reference to the quagmire that is Nigeria's health status, it is never the intention of this study to deliberately relegate the traumatic state that Nigeria as a nation is undergoing to the background. Even though Nigeria is rich in mineral resources, oil and gas, cheap manpower, import-dependent, and investor-attractive, it is also anxiety-laden if its variegated domestic insecurity,

institutionalised corruption, and infrastructural deficit are put into consideration (Innocent-Franklin & Princewill, 2023).

Furthermore, there is a general opinion that most of the public enterprises have failed to deliver on the purposes for which they were established (Esu & Inyang, 2009). This is true; however, the issue is more nuanced. For instance, why will the office of the Ibadan Electrical Distribution Company (IBEDC) need generators to supply electricity to carry-out their daily operations or activities?

The public services were established to provide services to the public as well as to other public enterprises, but as they embark on developmental projects, they are limited by inadequate infrastructural facilities, which contributes to their failure as well as to the failure of other public enterprises that are dependent on the services they provide. Infrastructural decay has become a huge concern that should not be ignored, instead, it needs to be resolved so as to aid the performance of Nigeria's public service.

The FRSC in Ilorin, Kwara State, Nigeria, as well as many other public service providers, require electricity to aid them in carrying out their day-to-day operations. However, there is inadequate provision for a steady power supply, which negatively impacts public service providers. Khandaker et al. (2022) opined that the deteriorating state of electricity supply in the country is worrisome, and urgent attention should be given to its improvement.

Likewise, public hospitals lack adequate facilities to treat their patients. The FRSC officers need health facilities to aid their operation in the case of medical emergencies; inadequate provision of these facilities has led to several medical

injuries to affected individuals. Furthermore, Yakubu et al. (2023) were of the opinion that health worker migration in Nigeria is at an alarming rate and that urgent attention should be given to the retention of health workers by the government.

Furthermore, the FRSC has issues when it comes to ICT. The gadgets provided for their daily operations are inadequate, and the ones given slow down their work process. Also, the officers find it difficult to get their needs met by the government. Moreover, Nigeria's public service was established to ensure that adequate livelihood is provided to the public and also for the enhancement of economic growth and development in the country, but this has not been the case (Obasa, 2018).

If infrastructural facilities in the context of this study are provided—that is, adequate power, health, transportation, information, and communication services—the public service will have more resources to aid them in their operation and performance, thus ensuring efficient service delivery to the public.

The public service in Nigeria today faces several challenges in one way or another that limit its effectiveness and efficiency. Many scholars and public stakeholders have argued that the public service has been bedevilled with lots of unfavourable environmental factors such as corruption, inadequate infrastructural facilities and decay, favouritism, nepotism, constant political interference, and other primordial factors such as geographical, ethnic, cultural, and religious affiliation, with the constitutional consequence of the federal character principle or quota system (Olaseni & Alade, 2012). This study identifies and considers the challenge that public infrastructural decay presents as an

impediment to effective performance in the FRSC in Ilorin, Kwara State, Nigeria.

Specifically, this research work bridges the link between public infrastructural decay and effective performance in Nigeria's public service using FRSC, Ilorin, and Kwara State as a case study. Several measures have been taken towards the attainment of effective public service delivery, but this research identifies public infrastructural decay as one of the major factors that slow down the effective performance of Nigeria's public service. Public infrastructural decay is an impediment to effective performance in Nigeria's public service; thus, this research considered it one of the elementary factors that should be tackled by the government so as to give rise to effective performance in the FRSC as well as in other public services.

The objectives of the study are to examine the various public infrastructural facilities in relation to the performance of FRSC public officers in Nigeria and analyse the role of public infrastructural decay and its effect on the effective performance of Nigeria's public service. While the stated hypotheses are as follows:

H1: There is no significant relationship between various public infrastructural facilities and the performance of FRSC public officers in Nigeria.

H2: There is no relationship between public infrastructural decay and public service performance.

## Method

### *Theoretical Framework*

Several theories have been postulated to explain the effective performance of the public service. Incremental, rational choice, and elite theories will be adopted and applied in this study. Incremental theory is based on

incrementalism, which is a method of working by adding to a project using many small incremental changes instead of a few (extensively planned) large jumps. This method of decision-making contrasts sharply with the rational model of decision-making, which involves conducting a thorough analysis of all possible options and their consequences and then evaluating their advantages and disadvantages (Lindblom, 2018). Government administration comes and goes, if they can build on the various public infrastructural development schemes or projects of the previous administration, then there won't be cause for alarm on infrastructure.

Likewise, rational choice theory is an economic principle that states that individuals always make prudent and logical decisions. These decisions provide people with the greatest benefit or satisfaction given the choices available and are also in their highest self-interest. The theory argues that government officials pursue their own self-interests instead of any national interest. They also formulate policies and carry out administrative exercises or duties based on their own goals. This model alerts us to the importance of self-interest in public service. If both political leaders and public servants are able to sit together to rationalise and brainstorm regarding public infrastructure as it affects their performance, the government will be able to see what the public service needs to aid their performance and make necessary decisions that will improve their service. Finally, this study is anchored in elite theory. This is because a small minority, consisting of members of the economic elite and policy planning networks, holds the most power, and this power is independent of a state's democratic election process, which would enable right

decisions regarding public infrastructure aiding societal development. These elites are the rich and well-educated who share common beliefs, use their influence to dictate public policies, and use public service as an instrument to carry out their operations. Any policy that goes against this class could be predicted to fail (Tareq, 2014). If public services are seen as tools for assisting the public, these elites will do everything in their power to support their performance, even going so far as to provide the public with infrastructural facilities that will enable the public servants to function efficiently.

### **Study Design**

A descriptive survey design was adopted for the study. The targeted population for this study covers the entire public officers of the Federal Road Safety Corps (FRSC) Zone RS 8 Headquarters, Ilorin, Kwara State, Nigeria, which is 64 officers in total. For this research, a questionnaire with a Likert scale of 1–5 was developed using past literature to gather information from respondents. The sampling size used is 55, as constructed using Taro Yamane Formula for this research and the sampling techniques adopted are purposive and random sampling techniques. While 49 questionnaires were returned for quantitative data analysis, presented, and interpreted using descriptive statistics. To investigate the relationship between variables, the study used the Pearson Product Moment correlation method, which evaluated the linear relationship between two continuous variables in the study. Pearson correlation was used due to the fact that the method was able to determine the extent or degree to which two variables are correlated.

## **Results and Discussion**

### **Public Service**

Public service represents the building of bridges for government to respond to the needs of the general public (citizens). In other words, the public service carries the responsibility of formulating and executing policies and programmes with the ultimate goal of delivering important welfare services that are capable of enhancing the standard of living of the general public (Abubakar, Kirfi, & Ahmed, 2022). It is usually provided by the government to people living within its jurisdiction, either directly (through the public sector) or by financing the provision of services.

Also, public service is a body or department in the executive arm of government with the responsibility of assisting in the planning and implementation of government policies. It is not profit-oriented but an institution established to deliver essential services to the people (Arowolo, 2012). Even in cases where public services are neither publicly provided nor publicly financed, for social and political reasons, they are usually subject to regulations that go beyond those applied to most economic sectors.

### **Public Infrastructure**

Public infrastructure refers to infrastructure facilities, systems, and structures that are developed, owned, and operated by the government. It includes all infrastructural facilities that are open to the general public for use. It includes basic facilities such as roads, water supply, electricity, and telecommunications, among others.

Rogowski et al. conducted a study on the relationship between public infrastructure and economic development and concluded that public infrastructure plays an important role in promoting

economic growth. The study also indicated that infrastructural projects have longstanding effects on relevant communities (Rogowski, Gerring, Maguire, & Cojocar, 2021).

### **Performance**

Performance is the accomplishment of a given task measured against preset, known standards of accuracy, completeness, cost, and speed. In a contract, performance is deemed to be the fulfilment of an obligation in a manner that releases the performer from all liabilities under the contract. (Osawe, 2015). What most administrative officers in government agencies, including state governments, are likely to face is the crucial question of what factors influence employee performance in the public service. Job performance becomes the most important focus of administrators and academicians because the performance level will deteriorate if the level of skill of the employee drops (Osawe, 2015).

### **Empirical Review**

According to Ogbuagu et al. (2014), bad governance has contributed to the weakening of the three tiers of government, and corruption has become the order of the day. If corruption is not curbed, public infrastructural projects will remain a channel for bad public officers to steal from the government fund instead of using it for innovations, repairs, and maintenance.

Good governance has occupied significant discourse in the development of many nations over the last few decades. Deviations from good governance negatively impact every aspect of human endeavour, especially infrastructural development.

Governance is ultimately concerned with creating the conditions for ordered rule and collective action. Therefore, good governance ensures that political, social, and economic priorities are based on broad consensus in society and that the voice of the poorest and most vulnerable is heard in decision-making, especially decisions regarding the allocation of wealth.

The COVID-19 pandemic exposed a lot of governance deficits in our system with regard to how the government responded to the outbreak and its effect on human wellbeing. This is why we assert that governance deficit birthed the infrastructural deficit, the suppression of the rights of the people alongside disregard for the rule of law, and the lack of transparency and accountability, all of which were exposed during the COVID-19 pandemic era in Nigeria (Olise, Eme, & Emeh, 2022).

Also, Rufus and Bufumoh (2017) noted that infrastructural decay has contributed to the high level of poverty, unemployment, insecurity, and epileptic power supply, which the government ought to investigate. The research concluded that the availability of this infrastructure will enable people to be creative, innovative, gainfully employed, self-reliant, and wealth creators; thus, this will secure society.

Likewise, according to Bubou et al. (Bubou, Gumus, & Ogungbemi, 2017), the lack of maintenance culture also contributes to public infrastructural decay, which is why Nigeria is poor. They asserted that Nigeria's poor maintenance culture has negatively impacted infrastructural development, which is crucial for the nation's development.

Moreover, this has also penetrated Nigeria's public service, where public officers no longer care about public

infrastructural facilities, abandoning them when they are spoiled or outdated. The use of these public infrastructures is to aid the public service, but when not properly used and maintained, they will decay over time and affect the performance of the public service.

Finally, this study concurs that the availability of this infrastructure will improve the performance of Nigeria's public services, allowing them to be more effective and efficient. However, to do these things, the government must avoid misappropriation, corruption, and less visionary leaders.

### **Infrastructural Decay and Other Challenges Affecting Nigeria's Public Service**

The performance of the public service towards national development is no doubt the most daunting challenge that the government of Nigeria is facing today. The public service reflects the state of the nation, and no nation has been able to advance beyond its public service. Studies have shown that no nation can attain sustainable development for the enhancement of the living standard of its people without a properly organised public service to implement government policies (Osawe, 2015).

For the public service to perform effectively, it operates under some core values such as integrity, meritocracy, discipline, professionalism, patriotism, impartiality, secrecy of government information, infrastructural innovation, etc. However, over the years, Nigeria's public service has been bedevilled by lots of unfavourable environmental factors, which have limited its effective performance. Nigeria's public service has over the years been plagued or challenged by a number of problems that continue to adversely affect its role as an instrument

for national development. Some of these problems are listed below:

1. The Nature of Political Competition in the Nigerian Environment (Promise, 2019)
2. Corruption
3. Poor Remuneration
4. Ethnicity and Nepotism
5. Infrastructural Decay

These include, among others, poor funding, poor governance, corruption and economic sabotage, poor maintenance culture, population explosion, neglect of urban and regional planning, etc. These are the basic factors that have caused public infrastructural decay over the years.

### **Discussion of Findings**

The first hypothesis (H1) stated that there is no significant relationship between adequate public infrastructural facilities and effective performance in Nigeria's public service. This was tested at a 5% significance level using Pearson correlation. The result from the analysis showed a p-value of 0.119, while the alpha value was 0.05. Therefore, following the decision rule, the null hypothesis was rejected and the alternate hypothesis accepted, which states that there is a significant relationship between adequate public infrastructural facilities and effective performance in Nigeria's public service. This analysis also shows the Pearson correlation to be 0.172, which implies that there is a weak positive relationship between adequate public infrastructural facilities and effective performance in Nigeria's public service.

The second hypothesis (H2) that stated there is no significant relationship between public infrastructural decay and public service performance was rejected and the alternative hypothesis upheld.

That shows that there is a significant relationship between the two variables. Which means poor or decaying

infrastructural facilities will adversely affect the performance of Nigeria’s public service, most especially the FRSC.

**Table 1: Electricity infrastructural facility and effective performance in the FRSC Correlations**

		There is no relationship between electricity infrastructural facility and effective performance in the FRSC Zone RS 8 Headquarters, Ilorin, Kwara State.	There is a relationship between electricity infrastructural facility and effective performance in the FRSC Zone RS 8 Headquarters, Ilorin, Kwara State.
There is no relationship between electricity infrastructural facility and effective performance in the FRSC Zone RS 8 Headquarters, Ilorin, Kwara State.	Pearson Correlation	1	.269*
	Sig. (1-tailed)		.031
	N	49	49
There is a relationship between electricity infrastructural facility and effective performance in the FRSC Zone RS 8 Headquarters, Ilorin, Kwara State.	Pearson Correlation	.269*	1
	Sig. (1-tailed)	.031	
	N	49	49

\*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (1-tailed).

Source: Authors data

H1: There is no significant relationship between various public infrastructural facilities and performance of FRSC public officers in Nigeria.

From the table above, the correlation coefficient ( $r = 0.269$ ) between electricity infrastructural facility and effective performance in the FRSC Zone RS 8 Headquarters has a weak positive linear

relationship. The significant value of 0.031 ( $p < 0.05$ ) reveals a significant relationship. Based on that, the null hypothesis was rejected. This implies that, there is a significant relationship between electricity infrastructural facility and effective performance in the FRSC Zone RS 8 Headquarters, Offa GRA, Ilorin, Kwara State.



**Table 2: Health facilities and effective performance of FRSC officer**

Correlations

		There is no relationship between health facilities and effective performance of FRSC officers which aids their operation.	There is a relationship between health facilities and effective performance of FRSC officers which aids their operation.
There is no relationship between health facilities and effective performance of FRSC officers which aids their operation.	Pearson Correlation	1	.382**
	Sig. (1-tailed)		.003
	N	49	49
There is a relationship between health facilities and effective performance of FRSC officers which aids their operation.	Pearson Correlation	.382**	1
	Sig. (1-tailed)	.003	
	N	49	49

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (1-tailed).

Source: Authors data

From the table above, the correlation coefficient ( $r = 0.382$ ) between health facilities and effective performance of FRSC officers which aids their operation has a weak positive linear relationship. The significant value of 0.003 ( $p < 0.05$ )

reveals a significant relationship. Based on that, the null hypothesis was rejected. This implies that, there is a significant relationship between health facilities and effective performance of FRSC officers which aids their operation.

**Table 3: The relationship between the use of ICT gadgets and effective communication among FRSC officers for effective service delivery**

Correlations

		There is no relationship between the use of ICT gadgets and effective communication among FRSC officers and with the public for effective service delivery.	There is a relationship between the use of ICT gadgets and effective communication among FRSC officers and with the public for effective service delivery.
There is no relationship between the use of ICT gadgets and effective communication among FRSC officers and with the public for effective service delivery.	Pearson Correlation	1	.402**
	Sig. (1-tailed)		.002
	N	49	49
There is a relationship between the use of ICT gadgets and effective communication among FRSC officers and with the public for effective service delivery.	Pearson Correlation	.402**	1
	Sig. (1-tailed)	.002	
	N	49	49

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (1-tailed).

Source: Authors data

From the table above, the correlation coefficient ( $r = 0.402$ ) between ICT gadgets ease communication exercise among FRSC officers and reaching the public for effective service delivery has a weak positive linear relationship. The significant value of 0.003 ( $p < 0.05$ ) reveals

a significant relationship. Based on that, the null hypothesis was rejected. This implies that there is a significant relationship between the use of ICT gadgets and effective communication among FRSC officers and with the public for effective service delivery.

**Table 4: The relationship between public infrastructural decay and Nigeria’s public service Performance**

Correlations

		There is no relationship between public infrastructural decay and Nigeria’s public service Performance	There is a relationship between public infrastructural decay and Nigeria’s public service Performance
There is no relationship between public infrastructural decay and Nigeria’s public service Performance	Pearson Correlation	1	.172
	Sig. (1-tailed)		.119
	N	49	49
There is a relationship between public infrastructural decay and Nigeria’s public service Performance	Pearson Correlation	.172	1
	Sig. (1-tailed)	.119	
	N	49	49

Source: Authors data

H2: There is no relationship between public infrastructural decay and Nigeria’s public service Performance.

From the table above, the correlation coefficient ( $r = 0.172$ ) between public infrastructural decay and Nigeria’s public service performance has a weak positive linear relationship. The significant value of 0.119 ( $p < 0.05$ ) reveals a significant relationship. Based on that, the null hypothesis was rejected. This implies that, there is a significant relationship between adequate public infrastructural facilities and effective performance in Nigeria’s public service.

**Recommendations**

Due to the findings of the study, the following recommendations are hereby suggested:

- Public infrastructural facilities should be taken as vital tools to enhance Nigeria’s public service.
- Public infrastructural decay should be tackled in order to aid the effective performance of Nigeria’s Public Service which will bring about societal and economic development.
- Retention strategies for health workers should be put in place to reduce the migration of experts. Also, adequate equipment should be provided to hospitals and rural health centres.
- More importantly, electricity transformation is needed to enhance regular supply and even

distribution. The mass production of solar energy should be embraced.

- Political officers who do not have the intention to solve or tackle public infrastructural decay due to their selfish interests should be weeded out of the system and replaced with those who will.
- The Nigerian government should give it all it takes to curb corruption, misappropriation of funds, wastage, and embezzlement, among others, which hinder them from tackling public infrastructural decay.
- There should be significant political will to prioritise solutions to public infrastructural decay and to enact the necessary laws and regulations to make them a reality.

### Conclusion

This study has established that public infrastructural decay is an impediment to the effective performance of Nigeria's public service. Therefore, the government should endeavour to implement solutions to public infrastructural decay. This will improve the performance of Nigeria's public service and its service delivery. Also, it will not only bring a new productive phase to Nigeria's public service but also engender societal and economic development. Even if corruption is not completely eradicated, it can be regulated, controlled, reduced, and suppressed, which will motivate political and public officers to take the necessary steps to enhance the effectiveness of Nigeria's public service.

### Acknowledgment

The authors are thankful to all study participants – the entire public officers of the Federal Road Safety Corps (FRSC) Zone RS 8 Headquarters, Ilorin, Kwara State, Nigeria – their feedback was instrumental to the work accomplished in this study.

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