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Professional Research

*The role of administrative leadership and
operational performance in the development of
pharmacies.*

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Introduction

Administrative leadership is one of the most decisive factors determining the success or failure of any institution, as it is the principal force directing the efforts of employees and the party responsible for formulating vision, allocating resources, and taking the decisions that are translated into actual performance on the ground. In the context of pharmacies — which, as addressed in previous research, constitute a vital link within the healthcare system — administrative leadership assumes a twofold importance, since the quality of the leadership prevailing within the pharmacy is directly reflected in the level of daily operational performance: from the speed and accuracy with which tasks are completed, to the level of coordination among staff, to the capacity to cope with the pressures and fluctuations that characterise the pharmaceutical work environment.

The concept of operational performance in pharmacies is associated with a set of practical daily indicators, including the speed of dispensing operations, the accuracy with which procedures are executed, the level of coordination among staff across the various tasks, the degree of responsiveness to changes in workload or in the nature of incoming cases, in addition to the pharmacy's overall productivity relative to the resources

available. Taken together, these indicators represent the practical translation of what takes place ‘inside’ the pharmacy on a daily basis — a translation that is fundamentally influenced by the leadership style governing that day.

In light of the developments witnessed by the pharmacy sector — the growing complexity of operations, the diversity of patients’ needs, and competitive and economic pressures — it has become necessary to reconsider traditional leadership patterns founded upon direct supervision and centralised decision-making, and to move towards more contemporary leadership styles based on a clear strategic vision, leading by example, motivation and team building, and decision-making that balances centralisation and decentralisation according to the nature of the situation. These leadership styles vary in their impact upon the different dimensions of operational performance, which constitutes the principal subject of analysis in this study.

Nevertheless, the practical reality of many pharmacies, particularly in both the public and private sectors, still reveals a gap between the theoretical framework, which affirms the importance of modern administrative leadership, and actual practice, which may still rely upon traditional leadership methods that concentrate on the technical and procedural aspects without devoting sufficient attention to the leadership

and human dimensions — a state of affairs that is reflected in the level of operational performance in terms of efficiency, productivity, and flexibility.

Proceeding from this premise, the present study seeks to analyse the role of administrative leadership in developing the operational performance of pharmacies, by means of an analytical study aimed at revealing the nature of the relationship between the dimensions of administrative leadership and the dimensions of operational performance, identifying the obstacles that limit the activation of this relationship, and proposing practical means of developing it in a manner conducive to improving the operational performance of pharmacies.

This study therefore represents a scholarly contribution that helps to enrich the literature on administrative leadership and performance management in the health sector, and supports the trend towards adopting modern leadership styles that enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of pharmacies, and that are ultimately reflected in the quality of the service provided to the community.

Statement of the Problem

Despite the growing recognition of the importance of administrative leadership in determining the level of institutional operational performance, the reality of many pharmacies indicates a continued reliance upon traditional leadership methods characterised by centralised decision-making, weak motivation and team-spirit building, and the absence of a clear strategic vision to guide daily work — a state of affairs reflected in the disparity of operational performance levels from one pharmacy to another, even where comparable resources are available.

This reality reflects a gap between the theoretical framework, which stresses the importance of modern leadership styles in improving operational performance, and practical application, which remains limited in many pharmacies. From another perspective, the literature and previous studies point to variation in the findings concerning the impact of administrative leadership on operational performance from one context to another, as this impact differs according to the prevailing leadership style, the clarity of the strategic vision, and the level of motivation offered to employees. This raises fundamental questions regarding the effectiveness of administrative leadership in developing the operational performance of pharmacies, the leadership dimensions that exert the greatest influence, and the obstacles that prevent the attainment of the desired outcomes.

Accordingly, the problem of this study centres upon the need to investigate and analyse the role of administrative leadership in developing the operational performance of pharmacies, and to reveal the nature of the relationship between the dimensions of administrative leadership and those of operational performance, in light of the organisational and human challenges confronting the activation of this relationship, thereby contributing a scientific framework that supports the development of leadership practices in pharmacies.

Significance of the Study

The significance of this study stems from the pivotal role played by administrative leadership in determining the level of operational performance of pharmacies — a level of performance that is directly reflected in the quality of the service provided to patients and in the economic efficiency of the establishment, given that the pharmacy is a service institution of particular sensitivity, as addressed in previous research.

The scholarly significance of the study is manifested in its contribution to enriching the research literature in the fields of administrative leadership and performance management, through an analysis of the relationship between the dimensions of administrative leadership and those of operational performance within the pharmacy context, thereby strengthening theoretical understanding and making it possible to develop models or conceptual frameworks that may be drawn upon in future studies.

As for the practical significance of the study, it lies in the findings and recommendations it may offer to assist those responsible for managing pharmacies in adopting more effective leadership styles, with a positive impact upon operational efficiency, productivity, and flexibility. The

findings of the study may likewise help to orient the qualification and training programmes for pharmacy leaders towards developing the leadership skills required to improve operational performance.

The study further derives its importance from the fact that it provides a guiding framework that may be drawn upon in developing human resource management policies in pharmacies, and in supporting their efforts to achieve institutional excellence and to improve operational performance in line with contemporary best practice in management.

Objectives of the Study

- *To identify the nature of administrative leadership, its styles, and its dimensions within the pharmacy context.*
- *To measure the impact of administrative leadership upon the development of the operational performance of pharmacies.*
- *To determine the extent to which strategic vision and leading by example contribute to improving operational efficiency.*
- *To analyse the impact of motivation and team building upon productivity and service quality.*
- *To reveal the impact of the leadership decision-making style upon operational flexibility and responsiveness.*

Hypotheses and Questions of the Study

Hypotheses of the Study

- *Administrative leadership has an impact upon the development of the operational performance of pharmacies.*
- *Strategic vision and leading by example contribute to improving the operational efficiency of pharmacies.*
- *Motivation and team building affect the level of productivity and the quality of the service provided.*
- *The leadership decision-making style affects the flexibility of the pharmacy and its responsiveness to operational changes.*

Questions of the Study

- *What is the nature of administrative leadership and what are its dimensions within the pharmacy context?*
- *What is the impact of administrative leadership upon the development of the operational performance of pharmacies?*
- *How do strategic vision and leading by example contribute to improving operational efficiency?*
- *What is the impact of motivation and team building upon productivity and service quality?*

Methodology of the Study

*The **descriptive-analytical approach** has been adopted in order to examine “the role of administrative leadership and operational performance in the development of pharmacies.”*

Scope of the Study

Spatial scope: the Arab world.

Temporal scope: 2007–2026.

Plan of the Study

The plan of the study is organised as follows, comprising a number of chapters, sections and subsections, together with a conclusion:

Chapter One: The Theoretical Framework and Scientific Concepts

Section One: An Introduction to Understanding Administrative Leadership in Pharmacies

First: The nature, concept and styles of administrative leadership.

Second: The dimensions of administrative leadership in pharmacies (strategic vision, leading by example, motivation and team building, and decision-making).

Third: The importance and objectives of administrative leadership in developing the work of pharmacies.

Section Two: An Introduction to Understanding Operational Performance in Pharmacies

First: The nature of operational performance and its dimensions (efficiency, productivity, quality, and flexibility).

Second: The criteria and determinants of operational performance in pharmacies.

Third: *Methods of measuring and evaluating operational performance.*

Chapter Two: The Role of Administrative Leadership in Developing the Operational Performance of Pharmacies

Section One: The Impact of the Dimensions of Administrative Leadership upon the Dimensions of Operational Performance

First: *The impact of strategic vision and leading by example upon operational efficiency.*

Second: *The impact of motivation and team building upon productivity and service quality.*

Third: *The impact of the leadership decision-making style upon operational flexibility and responsiveness.*

Section Two: Challenges and Opportunities in Activating the Role of Administrative Leadership

First: *The challenges that limit the activation of the role of administrative leadership in developing operational performance.*

Second: *The opportunities available for enhancing the role of administrative leadership in pharmacies.*

Third: Strategies for activating administrative leadership so as to achieve the greatest benefit in developing operational performance.

Chapter Three: The Role of Ethical Leadership in Strengthening Job Loyalty and Developing the Administrative System

Section One: The Role of Ethical Leadership in Strengthening Job Loyalty

First: The influence of integrity and fairness upon employees' sense of belonging.

Second: The role of transparency and role-modelling in strengthening organisational trust.

Third: The relationship between ethical leadership and the reduction of turnover rates.

Section Two: Mechanisms for Activating Ethical Leadership within the Administrative System

First: Programmes for qualifying and developing leaders in ethical values.

Second: The role of governance and accountability systems in supporting ethical leadership.

Conclusion

This study has addressed a subject of fundamental importance to the development of institutional performance in pharmacies, namely the role of administrative leadership and operational performance in the development of pharmacies, regarding administrative leadership as the ‘driving element’ that converts available resources into actual daily performance. The study proceeded from the theoretical framework that established the concept of administrative leadership and its four dimensions (strategic vision, leading by example, motivation and team building, and decision-making), together with the concept of operational performance and its four dimensions (efficiency, productivity, quality, and flexibility), its determinants and the methods by which it is measured. It then moved on to a detailed analysis of the relationship between the dimensions of leadership and those of performance, addressing the challenges, opportunities, and strategies associated with activating the role of administrative leadership in the practical reality of pharmacies.

Through its theoretical framework and its review of previous Arab and foreign studies, the study has confirmed that administrative leadership, with its four dimensions, constitutes an integrated ‘system’ in which each dimension is translated into a specific effect upon operational performance: vision and role-modelling serve efficiency by unifying the

criteria of priority and reducing the cost of supervision; motivation and team building serve productivity and quality by narrowing the gap between capability and performance and reducing coordination errors; and decision-making serves flexibility by reducing response time within organised limits. What follows is a presentation of the most significant findings reached by the study, together with the recommendations derived from them.

Findings

- *'Management' is distinguished from 'leadership' in terms of dealing with 'complexity' as opposed to dealing with 'change'; 'administrative leadership' represents the combination of both functions together, resting upon formal authority and actual influence over individuals.*
- *Management thought is undergoing a shift from thinking in terms of discrete leadership 'styles' (autocratic, democratic, and laissez-faire) towards thinking in terms of integrated 'dimensions', and these dimensions overlap to a considerable extent with the essence of transformational leadership.*
- *The four dimensions of administrative leadership (strategic vision, leading by example, motivation and team building, and decision-making) are integrated with one another in a dynamic manner: vision provides direction, role-modelling translates standards into lived behaviour, motivation and team building create the supportive environment, and decision-making translates all of this into actual conduct.*
- *Operational performance is composed of four interacting dimensions (efficiency, productivity, quality, and flexibility) that*

carry potential tensions among themselves (such as the tension between speed and accuracy), and their level is determined by structural, managerial/leadership, and environmental/contextual determinants.

- *Strategic vision affects efficiency by unifying the criteria of priority in recurrent daily decisions, whereas leading by example affects it by transforming commitment from something ‘imposed and requiring supervision’ into something ‘spontaneous and internalised’.*
- *Motivation affects productivity by narrowing the gap between employees’ latent capability and their actual performance, whereas team building affects quality by reducing coordination errors and enhancing the continuity of performance in cases of absence.*
- *The decision-making style affects flexibility by reducing the response time to operational changes through delegation, provided that ‘clear limits’ to such delegation exist so as to prevent it from turning into a fragmentation of individual decisions.*
- *The activation of administrative leadership faces challenges relating to the pathway of leadership qualification (intuitive leadership), daily time pressures, the small size of teams, the absence of tools for*

measuring leadership performance, and the succession of leaders with the resulting discontinuity of accumulated experience.

- *Opportunities exist for addressing these challenges, represented in specialised leadership qualification programmes tailored to the health field, leadership practices embedded within the daily routine, models adapted to small teams, self-assessment tools linked to data, and mechanisms for documenting transitions between leaders.*
- *Developing operational performance is not a matter of the 'presence' of leadership as opposed to its absence, but rather a matter of awareness of its four dimensions, of adapting their practical embodiment to the reality of each individual pharmacy, and of linking that embodiment to performance data so as to guide continuous improvement.*

Recommendations

- *Incorporating the four axes of administrative leadership (vision, role-modelling, motivation and team building, and decision-making) as an essential and continuing component of the qualification programmes for pharmacists nominated for leadership positions, together with a targeted preliminary diagnosis of the needs of each leader.*
- *Encouraging the formulation of a clear strategic vision — even a simple one — for every pharmacy, defining the criteria of priority in recurrent situations of daily conflict, so as to reduce variation in individual decisions and inconsistency in the flow of operations.*
- *Designing short, repeated ‘micro-rituals’ that embed team building and leading by example within the daily routine, rather than treating them as separate activities competing for time with direct execution tasks.*
- *Linking incentive systems to specific and measurable operational performance indicators (efficiency, productivity, and quality), combining extrinsic motivation (rewards) with intrinsic motivation (meaning and accomplishment).*

- *Strengthening team-building practices by improving the flow of tacit information among staff, and by clarifying roles in a manner that guarantees the continuity of performance when one of the members is absent.*
- *Designing a clear scope for delegating operational decisions of limited impact to frontline staff, together with simple mechanisms for coordination or subsequent reporting that prevent conflict between simultaneous individual decisions.*
- *Developing practical ‘adaptation guides’ that translate the four leadership dimensions into practices appropriate to the small team sizes found in independent pharmacies, with emphasis on the essence of each dimension rather than merely its classical form.*
- *Developing leadership self-assessment tools linked to actual operational performance data, and allocating periodic time to review these data from the perspective of ‘what they say about leadership’, and not merely ‘what happened’.*
- *Establishing simple mechanisms for documenting the most important elements of the vision and of leadership practices, so as to facilitate transitions between leaders and to shorten the ‘rebuilding’ period when one leader succeeds another.*

- *The adoption by large institutions and chains of policies that strike a balance between the mobility of leadership cadres and a degree of stability sufficient to achieve the cumulative impact of the leadership dimensions upon operational performance.*

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