



A Systematic Review of Randomised Field Trials for Efficiency Measurement in Nigerian Community Health Centres

Methodological Appraisal, 2000–2026

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ABSTRACT

Background: Community health centres are critical for primary care delivery in Nigeria, yet their operational efficiency remains a significant policy concern. Randomised field trials have emerged as a prominent methodological approach for evaluating interventions aimed at improving efficiency within these systems.

Purpose and objectives: This systematic review aims to critically appraise the methodological rigour of randomised field trials used to measure efficiency gains in Nigerian community health centres, identifying common design strengths, limitations, and reporting practices.

Keywords: *Randomised controlled trials, Health systems research, Primary health care, Sub-Saharan Africa, Efficiency measurement, Community health services, Nigeria*

Article Highlights

- Pronounced gap in accounting for intra-cluster correlation in efficiency analyses.
- Dominant reliance on partial productivity measures over

Core Recommendation

Future trials must pre-specify efficiency outcomes using robust frontier methods and incorporate cluster-robust standard errors by design.

<p>comprehensive efficiency frontiers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Inference frequently compromised by insufficient statistical power calculations.• Strong causal design often undermined by methodologically incomplete application.	<p><i>This review appraises the methodological rigour of trials, not their clinical findings.</i></p>
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