Influence of Strategic Procurement and Inventory Management on Performance of Public Higher Education Institutions in South-South Nigeria

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In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Award of Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) Degree in Educational Management

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Certification

This is to certify that **Francis ERHABOR** with matriculation number **LCU/PG/002899** carried out this research work titled "Influence of Strategic Procurement and Inventory Management on Performance of Public Higher Educational Institutions in South-south Nigeria" in the Department of Arts and Social Science Education, Faculty of Education, Lead City University, Ibadan, Oyo State, for the award of Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in Educational Management and that this research has not been previously submitted to any other institution for the award of degree or any certificate.

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Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to my Wife, Mrs. Esther Otiotio Erhabor and my Children Tovia Erhabor, Osayande Erhabor and Osarugwe Erhabor.

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Abstract

Performance in public Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in South-South Nigeria is often hampered by challenges such as poor procurement planning, corruption, and ineffective inventory control. This study investigated how strategic procurement and inventory management practices

influence the performance of these institutions. Guided by the economic order quantity model, resource-based view, and stakeholder theories, the study adopted a descriptive survey research design. The population consisted of 523 procurement officers and 185 inventory managers from 31 public HEIs across six South-South states. A sample of 274 procurement officers and 105 inventory managers was drawn using a purposive sampling technique to select the study area and institutions. This resulted in picking three of the oldest states (Cross River, Edo, and Rivers) with well-established institutions and structures. A total enumeration of all procurement officers and inventory managers within these selected institutions was utilized. Data were collected using two sets of questionnaires: "Strategic Procurement and Institutional Performance Questionnaire (SPIPQ)" and "Inventory Management and Institutional Performance Questionnaire (IMIPQ)" which were developed and adapted respectively. The results indicated a high level of performance. The study found that the most prevalent strategic procurement practices were procurement monitoring, followed by procurement planning, competency and control. The existing inventory management techniques were found to be moderately effective in mitigating inventory shrinkage and related problems. The study also identified prevailing challenges in procurement to be technological challenges, aligning procurement strategies with sustainability goals, collaborating with external entities, regulatory frameworks and policies, budgetary constraints, collaboration with internal stakeholders and governance issues. For inventory management, budgetary constraints and technological challenges were most critical, while stakeholder collaboration and sustainability alignment were least severe. Framework analysis showed that strategic procurement frameworks and inventory management frameworks strongly supported institutional performance. Regression analysis showed that strategic procurement practices had a strong, positive, and significant effect on institutional performance ($B = 0.993$, $\beta = 0.975$, $t = 69.687$, $p < 0.05$), while inventory management practices also exerted a significant positive influence ($B = 0.570$, $\beta = 0.962$, $t = 32.523$, $p < 0.05$). Among procurement components, procurement control was the strongest predictor ($B = 1.653$, $\beta = 1.614$, $p < 0.05$), whereas staff competency showed a significant negative relationship ($B = -0.868$, $\beta = -0.829$, $p < 0.05$). Procurement planning ($B = 0.127$, $p > 0.05$) and monitoring ($B = 0.073$, $p > 0.05$) had positive but insignificant effects. Furthermore, inventory shrinkage ($B = 0.310$, $\beta = 0.523$, $t = 3.199$, $p < 0.05$) and inventory control ($B = 0.260$, $\beta = 0.444$, $t = 2.716$, $p < 0.05$) significantly improved performance. In conclusion, the study shows that improving public higher education performance requires strategically strengthening procurement and inventory practices through effective policies, technological integration, and a skilled workforce. It recommends that HEIs enforce strict strategic policies and invest in recruiting and retaining qualified staff in these departments to achieve sustainable institutional growth and excellence.

Keywords: Strategic Procurement, procurement monitoring, procurement planning, Inventory Management, Inventory shrinkage, Performance of Higher Education Institutions,
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List of Acronyms

Abbreviation	Meaning
LCU	Lead City University
SPSS	Statistical Package Social Sciences Software
HEIs	Higher Education Institutions
SPIPQ	Strategic Procurement and Institutional Performance Questionnaire
IMIPQ	Inventory Management and Institutional Performance Questionnaire

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