International Journal of Business & Law Research 14(3):402-411, July-Sept, 2026

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DOI:10.5281/zenodo.23057084

Operational, Regulatory, and Environmental Challenges Affecting Procurement Processes in Selected Public Tertiary Institutions in Zamfara State, Nigeria

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ABSTRACT
Public procurement plays a pivotal role in ensuring the efficient utilization of public resources, particularly in tertiary institutions where procurement activities support teaching, research, infrastructure development, and administrative functions. Despite the enactment of the Nigerian Public Procurement Act (2007) and related procurement regulations, many public tertiary institutions continue to experience procurement inefficiencies characterized by delays, cost overruns, poor compliance with due process, inadequate transparency, and weak accountability mechanisms. These challenges undermine institutional performance and the effective delivery of educational services. This study investigates the operational, regulatory, and environmental challenges affecting procurement processes in selected public tertiary institutions in Zamfara State, Nigeria. The study adopts Institutional Theory and Agency Theory as its theoretical foundations and proposes a quantitative research design using structured questionnaires administered to procurement officers, bursary personnel, works departments, audit units, and management staff. Data will be analyzed using descriptive statistics and Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM). The findings are expected to provide evidence-based recommendations for strengthening procurement governance, enhancing regulatory compliance, improving institutional capacity, and promoting transparency and value for money in public procurement. The study contributes to the growing literature on procurement management in developing countries while offering practical policy recommendations for improving procurement performance in Nigerian public tertiary institutions. Existing evidence suggests that procurement outcomes are often constrained by weak institutional capacity, limited compliance with procurement regulations, inadequate professional expertise, and governance-related challenges.

Keywords: Public Procurement, Procurement Performance, Operational Challenges, Regulatory Challenges, Environmental Challenges, Public Tertiary Institutions, Zamfara State.

1. INTRODUCTION

Public procurement refers to the process through which government institutions acquire goods, works, and services necessary for delivering public services. Globally, public procurement accounts for a substantial proportion of government expenditure and serves as a strategic instrument for promoting transparency, accountability, economic development, and efficient resource utilization. In higher education institutions, procurement supports teaching, learning, research, infrastructure development, laboratory equipment acquisition, ICT facilities, library resources, and administrative operations. Consequently, an effective procurement system is fundamental to achieving institutional goals and delivering quality education.

Nigeria introduced comprehensive procurement reforms through the Public Procurement Act (PPA) of 2007 to address longstanding concerns relating to corruption, lack of transparency, political interference, contract inflation, and inefficient procurement practices. The Act established standardized procurement procedures and created oversight mechanisms intended to improve accountability, competitiveness, and value for money. Nevertheless, studies indicate that compliance with the Act remains inconsistent across many public institutions due to institutional weaknesses, insufficient professional capacity, weak monitoring mechanisms, and governance challenges.

Public tertiary institutions in Zamfara State operate within a particularly demanding environment characterized by fiscal constraints, rising inflation, insecurity, changing government policies, and increasing demand for educational services. These environmental conditions create additional pressures on procurement planning, supplier availability, logistics, project implementation, and contract management. Operational challenges further complicate procurement activities. These include inadequate procurement planning, poor record management, insufficient staff training, lengthy approval procedures, inadequate information systems, delayed budget releases, weak internal controls, and ineffective contract administration. Such deficiencies frequently result in procurement delays, increased project costs, poor quality outcomes, and underutilization of available resources.

Regulatory challenges constitute another major concern. Although procurement regulations exist, many institutions experience difficulties interpreting and implementing statutory provisions consistently. Weak enforcement mechanisms, limited institutional autonomy, overlapping administrative responsibilities, inadequate oversight, and insufficient awareness of procurement regulations often reduce compliance with due process requirements.

Environmental challenges including inflationary pressures, exchange rate volatility, supply chain disruptions, political influence, security challenges, technological limitations, and market instability also significantly affect procurement performance. In northwestern Nigeria, insecurity has further complicated contractor mobility, project supervision, material transportation, and timely contract execution.

Collectively, these operational, regulatory, and environmental factors reduce procurement efficiency, delay project completion, increase procurement costs, weaken transparency, and limit institutional effectiveness. Although several studies have examined procurement compliance in Nigeria, relatively few have focused specifically on public tertiary institutions in Zamfara State or simultaneously examined the combined influence of operational, regulatory, and environmental challenges on procurement performance.

This study therefore seeks to investigate these challenges and provide empirical evidence that can guide policymakers, institutional managers, procurement practitioners, and regulatory agencies in improving procurement processes within public tertiary institutions in Zamfara State.

Statement of the Problem

Despite the implementation of procurement reforms in Nigeria, procurement processes in many public tertiary institutions continue to face persistent challenges that undermine institutional efficiency and service delivery. Procurement activities are frequently characterized by delays in contract awards, inadequate procurement planning, weak compliance with procurement regulations, poor documentation, limited professional expertise, political interference, inadequate monitoring, and inefficient contract management. These challenges often lead to project abandonment, cost overruns, procurement disputes,

reduced transparency, and poor value for public expenditure. Studies on Nigerian tertiary institutions have consistently identified deficiencies in due process compliance, professional capacity, and institutional governance as major contributors to procurement inefficiency.

In Zamfara State, procurement operations are further affected by environmental conditions including insecurity, inflation, unstable markets, delayed government funding, limited contractor capacity, and broader macroeconomic uncertainties. These issues have the potential to significantly impair procurement performance and institutional development.

Although previous studies have investigated procurement compliance and implementation of the Public Procurement Act in other regions of Nigeria, limited empirical evidence exists regarding how operational, regulatory, and environmental challenges collectively influence procurement processes within public tertiary institutions in Zamfara State.

This knowledge gap necessitates a comprehensive investigation into the factors affecting procurement performance in selected public tertiary institutions in the state.

Research Objectives

General Objective

To examine the operational, regulatory, and environmental challenges affecting procurement processes in selected public tertiary institutions in Zamfara State, Nigeria.

Specific Objectives

1. To identify the operational challenges affecting procurement processes in selected public tertiary institutions in Zamfara State.
2. To examine the regulatory challenges affecting procurement processes in selected public tertiary institutions.
3. To assess the environmental challenges affecting procurement processes in selected public tertiary institutions.
4. To determine the influence of operational challenges on procurement performance.
5. To evaluate the effect of regulatory challenges on procurement performance.

Research Questions

1. What operational challenges affect procurement processes in selected public tertiary institutions?
2. What regulatory challenges affect procurement processes?
3. What environmental challenges affect procurement processes?
4. How do operational challenges influence procurement performance?
5. How do regulatory challenges influence procurement performance?

1.5 Research Hypotheses

H01: Operational challenges have no significant effect on procurement performance in selected public tertiary institutions.

H02: Regulatory challenges have no significant effect on procurement performance in selected public tertiary institutions.

H03: Environmental challenges have no significant effect on procurement performance in selected public tertiary institutions.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

This chapter reviews the theoretical and empirical literature relating to operational, regulatory, and environmental challenges affecting procurement processes in public tertiary institutions. The review establishes the conceptual foundation of the study, examines relevant theories, synthesizes previous empirical findings, identifies gaps in the literature, and develops the conceptual framework guiding the research.

Public procurement has become a strategic function that extends beyond the acquisition of goods, works, and services. Modern procurement systems contribute to institutional efficiency, transparency, accountability, innovation, sustainability, and prudent financial management. In developing countries

such as Nigeria, procurement reforms have sought to improve governance and ensure value for money in public expenditure. Nevertheless, procurement systems continue to encounter operational inefficiencies, regulatory weaknesses, governance issues, environmental uncertainties, and institutional capacity constraints that adversely affect procurement performance.

Conceptual Review

Concept of Public Procurement

Public procurement refers to the systematic process through which government ministries, departments, agencies, and other public institutions acquire goods, works, and services using public funds to achieve organizational and developmental objectives. The procurement process extends beyond purchasing activities to include needs assessment, procurement planning, budgeting, preparation of specifications, tender advertisement, bid evaluation, contract award, contract administration, monitoring, and post-contract evaluation. It is designed to ensure that public resources are utilized efficiently, economically, transparently, and accountably while delivering value for money. Effective public procurement has therefore become an essential component of public financial management and good governance, particularly in developing economies where public expenditure constitutes a significant proportion of national budgets (Thai, 2017; World Bank, 2020).

The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) defines public procurement as a strategic policy instrument capable of promoting economic efficiency, transparency, innovation, environmental sustainability, and inclusive social development (OECD, 2016). Similarly, the World Bank (2020) views public procurement as one of the most effective mechanisms through which governments translate public policies into tangible developmental outcomes while safeguarding public resources. Globally, governments increasingly employ procurement policies to stimulate local industries, encourage innovation, support environmental sustainability, and improve the quality of public service delivery. Consequently, modern procurement systems are expected to achieve not only cost savings but also broader socioeconomic objectives that enhance national development and institutional performance.

In Nigeria, public procurement is primarily regulated by the Public Procurement Act (PPA) 2007, which established the Bureau of Public Procurement (BPP) as the apex regulatory body responsible for monitoring and supervising procurement activities in federal public institutions. The Act prescribes principles of open competition, transparency, accountability, fairness, professionalism, equity, and value for money in the procurement of public goods, works, and services (Federal Government of Nigeria, 2007). Through these provisions, the Act seeks to minimize corruption, eliminate procurement inefficiencies, improve public confidence, and ensure prudent utilization of government resources. Despite these reforms, several studies have reported persistent challenges in achieving full compliance with procurement regulations due to weak institutional capacity, bureaucratic bottlenecks, political interference, and inadequate monitoring mechanisms (Ansa et al., 2025; Adebola, 2025).

Within public tertiary institutions, procurement plays a critical role in supporting teaching, learning, research, infrastructure development, and administrative operations. Procurement activities include the construction and rehabilitation of academic buildings, acquisition of laboratory equipment, information and communication technology (ICT) facilities, library resources, office equipment, instructional materials, consultancy services, maintenance works, and research facilities. An effective procurement system enhances institutional efficiency, promotes accountability, and ensures the timely delivery of quality educational services. However, empirical evidence indicates that many Nigerian tertiary institutions continue to experience procurement challenges arising from inadequate procurement planning, limited professional expertise, delayed approvals, poor contract management, and weak governance structures, thereby affecting institutional performance and the realization of value for money (Salaudeen, 2025; Suleiman et al., 2025).

Procurement Process

The procurement process comprises a systematic sequence of interrelated activities undertaken by public institutions to acquire goods, works, and services in a manner that ensures efficiency, transparency, accountability, competitiveness, and value for money. It is a structured process that begins with

identifying organizational needs and ends with contract completion and post-procurement evaluation. According to the World Bank (2020), an effective procurement process enhances public service delivery by ensuring that procurement decisions are guided by fairness, economy, and compliance with established legal and institutional frameworks. Similarly, the Public Procurement Act (2007) provides standardized procedures to ensure that procurement activities within Nigerian public institutions are conducted transparently and competitively.

The procurement cycle generally consists of procurement planning, tendering, bid evaluation, contract award, and contract administration. Procurement planning involves identifying institutional requirements, preparing annual procurement plans, estimating budgets, developing technical specifications, and scheduling procurement activities. Proper planning minimizes waste, reduces emergency procurement, and enhances efficient budget utilization. However, poor procurement planning, characterized by weak needs assessment, delayed budget approvals, inaccurate forecasting, and inadequate coordination, remains one of the major causes of procurement inefficiency in Nigerian public institutions (Suleiman et al., 2025).

The tendering stage encourages competition by inviting qualified suppliers to submit bids, while bid evaluation involves assessing technical competence, financial capacity, legal compliance, experience, and value for money before selecting the most responsive bidder. Following the evaluation process, contracts are awarded to bidders who meet all statutory requirements and offer the most economically advantageous proposals.

The final stage, contract administration, encompasses project monitoring, quality assurance, payment certification, contract variation management, dispute resolution, and performance evaluation. Effective contract administration is essential for ensuring timely project completion, quality service delivery, and prudent utilization of public resources. Conversely, weak contract management has been associated with project abandonment, cost overruns, delayed execution, poor-quality infrastructure, and reduced procurement performance in many Nigerian public institutions (Ansa et al., 2025; Manu et al., 2017). Consequently, strengthening every stage of the procurement process is critical for improving institutional efficiency, promoting accountability, and achieving sustainable procurement outcomes in public tertiary institutions.

Procurement Performance

Procurement performance refers to the extent to which procurement activities achieve predetermined organizational objectives efficiently, effectively, and in compliance with applicable laws and regulations. It is a critical measure of how well public institutions utilize available resources to acquire goods, works, and services while ensuring value for money, transparency, accountability, fairness, and quality service delivery. Contemporary procurement performance extends beyond obtaining goods at the lowest possible cost to encompass prudent financial management, stakeholder satisfaction, ethical conduct, and the timely delivery of projects that support institutional goals (World Bank, 2020; OECD, 2016).

Procurement performance is commonly evaluated using several key indicators, including procurement cycle time, cost savings, budget adherence, timely project completion, supplier performance, compliance with procurement regulations, transparency, accountability, and service quality. These indicators enable organizations to assess the effectiveness of procurement processes, identify operational weaknesses, improve supplier relationships, and strengthen decision-making. Efficient procurement systems also promote institutional productivity by reducing unnecessary costs, minimizing procurement delays, and ensuring that acquired goods and services meet specified quality standards (Thai, 2017).

Recent empirical evidence from Nigerian public universities indicates that sound procurement practices, particularly effective budget adherence, inventory management, and regulatory compliance, significantly improve institutional operational efficiency and financial accountability. Nevertheless, challenges relating to supplier management, contract administration, procurement risk management, and monitoring continue to undermine procurement performance in many tertiary institutions. Addressing these challenges through strengthened institutional capacity, professional development, and improved governance frameworks is

essential for enhancing procurement effectiveness and achieving sustainable organizational performance (Salaudeen, 2025; Adebola, 2025).

Operational Challenges Affecting Procurement

Operational challenges refer to internal organizational constraints that impede the efficiency, effectiveness, and overall performance of procurement activities in public institutions. These challenges arise from weaknesses in institutional structures, human resource capacity, administrative procedures, financial management, and technological infrastructure. When operational systems are inefficient, procurement processes become susceptible to delays, increased costs, poor-quality outcomes, and non-compliance with procurement regulations. Consequently, operational challenges undermine the ability of public institutions to achieve value for money, transparency, and accountability in the procurement of goods, works, and services (Thai, 2017; World Bank, 2020).

One of the most significant operational challenges is inadequate procurement planning, which often results in emergency purchases, inaccurate budgeting, delayed project implementation, and unnecessary contract variations. Similarly, limited professional capacity among procurement personnel negatively affects procurement planning, bid evaluation, contract administration, and compliance with procurement regulations. Manu et al. (2017) identified inadequate procurement capacity, weak organizational capability, insufficient technical expertise, and limited institutional support as major obstacles to effective public procurement in Nigeria. In addition, bureaucratic procedures, characterized by multiple approval stages, excessive documentation, and lengthy administrative processes, substantially increase procurement cycle times and reduce organizational responsiveness to institutional needs.

Another critical operational challenge is the weak adoption of information and communication technology (ICT) in procurement management. Many public institutions continue to rely on manual procurement systems, resulting in poor record management, limited transparency, slow decision-making, and increased opportunities for errors and fraudulent practices. Studies have shown that the adoption of electronic procurement (e-procurement) significantly enhances procurement efficiency, improves supply chain performance, and strengthens accountability within public institutions (Ansa et al., 2025). Furthermore, budget constraints, including delayed budget releases, inadequate funding, and cash-flow shortages, frequently disrupt procurement schedules and delay project execution. These financial challenges are further exacerbated by inflation and rising material costs, which reduce purchasing power and increase overall procurement expenditure. Addressing these operational challenges through capacity building, process automation, improved planning, and timely budget implementation is essential for enhancing procurement performance in public tertiary institutions (Suleiman et al., 2025).

3. METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study adopts a cross-sectional survey design to examine the operational, regulatory, and environmental challenges affecting procurement processes in selected public tertiary institutions in Zamfara State, Nigeria. A quantitative approach is employed because it enables the collection of standardized data and facilitates statistical testing of the hypothesized relationships (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2023).

Study Area and Population

The study focuses on selected public tertiary institutions in Zamfara State, namely Abdu Gusau Polytechnic, Zamfara State University, and the Federal College of Education (Technical), Gusau. The target population comprises procurement officers, bursary staff, internal auditors, works department personnel, store officers, and management staff directly involved in procurement activities.

Sample Size and Sampling Technique

A representative sample will be determined using Yamane's (1967) formula at a 5% level of precision. Purposive sampling was used to select the institutions, while stratified and simple random sampling techniques was employed to select respondents from relevant departments.

Data Collection Instrument

Primary data was collected using a structured questionnaire with five-point Likert-scale items measuring operational challenges, regulatory challenges, environmental challenges, and procurement performance. Questionnaire items will be adapted from validated procurement literature and contextualized for Nigerian public tertiary institutions.

Measurement of Variables

Operational, regulatory, and environmental challenges constitute the independent variables, while procurement performance is the dependent variable. Procurement performance will be assessed using indicators such as procurement cycle time, cost efficiency, budget adherence, transparency, regulatory compliance, project timeliness, and service quality.

Validity and Reliability

Content validity will be established through expert review, while construct validity will be assessed using factor loadings and Average Variance Extracted (AVE). Reliability will be evaluated using Cronbach's alpha and Composite Reliability, with acceptable thresholds of 0.70 or higher (Hair et al., 2022).

Data Analysis Techniques

Data will be analyzed using IBM SPSS Statistics for descriptive statistics and Smart PLS 4 for structural equation modelling (PLS-SEM). Descriptive statistics will summarize respondent characteristics, whereas the structural model will test the proposed hypotheses through path coefficients, R^2, f^2, Q^2, and bootstrapping at a 5% significance level.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents the descriptive analysis and interpretation of the data collected from respondents regarding the operational, regulatory, and environmental challenges affecting procurement processes in selected public tertiary institutions in Zamfara State, Nigeria. The analysis is based solely on the 274 completed questionnaires returned from the 320 questionnaires distributed. The findings are presented using frequencies and percentages, followed by detailed interpretations for each study construct. The interpretations are based strictly on the summary data contained in the uploaded document.

Questionnaire Distribution and Response Rate

A total of 320 questionnaires were distributed among procurement-related staff in three selected public tertiary institutions in Zamfara State. Out of these, 274 questionnaires were completed and returned, while 46 questionnaires were not returned, resulting in a response rate of 85.6%.

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Questionnaires Distributed	320	100.0
Questionnaires Returned	274	85.6
Questionnaires Not Returned	46	14.4
Total	**320**	**100.0**

Interpretation

The response rate of 85.6% is considered highly satisfactory for survey research. It indicates a high level of participation among respondents and suggests that the collected data are adequate to provide meaningful insights into procurement challenges within the selected institutions. Such a response rate minimizes non-response bias and enhances the credibility of the study findings.

Operational Challenges Affecting Procurement

Table 4.2 Responses on Operational Challenges

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Strongly Agree	120	43.8
Agree	48	17.5
Neutral	34	12.4
Disagree	44	16.1
Strongly Disagree	28	10.2
Total	274	100.0

Interpretation

The findings indicate that 120 respondents (43.8%) strongly agreed and 48 respondents (17.5%) agreed that operational challenges significantly affect procurement processes in their institutions. Together, 61.3% of the respondents expressed agreement that operational factors constitute major impediments to effective procurement.

On the other hand, 44 respondents (16.1%) disagreed while 28 respondents (10.2%) strongly disagreed, representing a combined 26.3% who did not perceive operational challenges as a significant problem. Additionally, 34 respondents (12.4%) remained neutral, suggesting uncertainty or varying experiences regarding operational issues.

Overall, the results demonstrate that operational challenges are widely perceived as a major constraint to procurement effectiveness. The high level of agreement suggests that problems such as inadequate procurement planning, limited professional capacity, bureaucratic procedures, weak ICT infrastructure, and budgetary constraints continue to impede efficient procurement operations within the selected public tertiary institutions.

Regulatory Challenges Affecting Procurement

Table 4.3 Responses on Regulatory Challenges

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Strongly Agree	107	39.1
Agree	67	24.5
Neutral	31	11.3
Disagree	36	13.1
Strongly Disagree	33	12.0
Total	274	100.0

Interpretation

The results show that 107 respondents (39.1%) strongly agreed and 67 respondents (24.5%) agreed that regulatory challenges adversely affect procurement processes. This represents a combined agreement of 63.6%, indicating that most respondents believe regulatory issues significantly influence procurement performance.

Meanwhile, 36 respondents (13.1%) disagreed and 33 respondents (12.0%) strongly disagreed, accounting for 25.1% of the respondents. Another 11.3% maintained a neutral position.

These findings suggest that although procurement regulations exist, their implementation may be constrained by issues such as inadequate compliance, weak monitoring, insufficient procurement audits, and administrative interference. Consequently, strengthening institutional governance and ensuring strict adherence to procurement regulations could improve procurement efficiency and accountability.

Environmental Challenges Affecting Procurement

Table 4.4 Responses on Environmental Challenges

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Strongly Agree	189	69.0
Agree	64	23.4
Neutral	17	6.2
Disagree	3	1.1
Strongly Disagree	1	0.4
Total	**274**	**100.0**

Interpretation

Environmental challenges received the strongest level of agreement among all the study variables. 189 respondents (69.0%) strongly agreed and 64 respondents (23.4%) agreed that environmental factors affect procurement processes, giving a combined agreement of 92.4%.

Only 3 respondents (1.1%) disagreed and 1 respondent (0.4%) strongly disagreed, while 17 respondents (6.2%) remained neutral.

The overwhelming agreement suggests that external conditions such as inflation, insecurity, exchange rate fluctuations, supplier instability, and economic uncertainty are perceived as serious obstacles to procurement activities. These factors appear to have a substantial influence on procurement planning, implementation, project delivery, and overall institutional performance.

Procurement Performance

Table 4.5 Responses on Procurement Performance

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Strongly Agree	121	44.2
Agree	82	29.9
Neutral	27	9.9
Disagree	28	10.2
Strongly Disagree	18	6.6
Total	**274**	**100.0**

Interpretation

The results reveal that 121 respondents (44.2%) strongly agreed and 82 respondents (29.9%) agreed with the procurement performance statements, resulting in an overall positive response of 74.1%. Equally, 28 respondents (10.2%) disagreed and 18 respondents (6.6%) strongly disagreed, while 27 respondents (9.9%) were neutral.

These findings indicate that respondents generally perceive procurement performance within the selected institutions to be satisfactory. However, the existence of operational, regulatory, and environmental challenges suggests that there remains considerable scope for improving procurement efficiency, transparency, accountability, and value for money.

Summary of Findings

The descriptive analysis indicates that respondents perceive all three categories of challenges as affecting procurement processes in the selected public tertiary institutions. Among the three, environmental challenges recorded the highest level of agreement (92.4%), followed by regulatory challenges (63.6%) and operational challenges (61.3%). These findings suggest that while internal operational and regulatory issues are important, external environmental conditions are perceived as the most significant barriers to effective procurement. Respondents also reported generally positive procurement performance (74.1%), implying that institutions are achieving reasonable procurement outcomes despite the challenges identified. Overall, the findings underscore the need for improvements in procurement planning, regulatory compliance, institutional capacity, and the management of external risks to further enhance procurement effectiveness.

6. CONCLUSION

This study examined the operational, regulatory, and environmental challenges affecting procurement processes in selected public tertiary institutions in Zamfara State, Nigeria. The conclusions presented are based on the descriptive findings obtained from the 274 valid questionnaires analyzed. The findings indicate that procurement processes within the selected institutions are influenced by a combination of internal organizational factors and external environmental conditions. The high response rate obtained from respondents provides a reasonable basis for understanding their perceptions of the procurement challenges experienced within their respective institutions.

The descriptive findings revealed that operational challenges constitute a major obstacle to efficient procurement processes. A substantial proportion of respondents agreed that issues such as inadequate procurement planning, bureaucratic procedures, limited professional capacity, weak information and communication technology (ICT) infrastructure, and budget constraints negatively affect procurement activities. These operational deficiencies are likely to reduce procurement efficiency, prolong procurement cycle time, and hinder the effective utilization of institutional resources.

The findings further indicate that regulatory challenges continue to affect procurement performance. Most respondents agreed that issues relating to compliance with procurement regulations, procurement

monitoring, transparency, accountability, and institutional oversight remain important concerns within the selected institutions. Furthermore, environmental challenges recorded the highest level of agreement among all the study variables, suggesting that external factors such as inflation, insecurity, exchange rate fluctuations, supplier instability, and broader economic conditions exert considerable influence on procurement processes. Despite these challenges, respondents generally perceived procurement performance to be satisfactory, indicating that the institutions have achieved reasonable procurement outcomes while still facing opportunities for improvement. Overall, the findings underscore the importance of strengthening operational systems, improving regulatory compliance, and addressing environmental constraints to enhance procurement efficiency, transparency, accountability, and value for money in public tertiary institutions in Zamfara State.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the descriptive findings of this study, the following recommendations are proposed:

Management of public tertiary institutions should strengthen procurement planning by conducting comprehensive needs assessments, preparing realistic annual procurement plans, and ensuring timely budget implementation to minimize procurement delays and unnecessary emergency purchases.

Institutions should invest in continuous professional training and certification programmes for procurement personnel to improve their technical competence in procurement planning, bid evaluation, contract administration, and regulatory compliance.

Procurement approval procedures should be streamlined by reducing unnecessary bureaucratic processes and adopting efficient administrative practices that shorten procurement cycle times without compromising accountability and transparency.

Public tertiary institutions should expand the adoption of electronic procurement (e-procurement) systems to improve record management, transparency, monitoring, reporting, and overall procurement efficiency.

Institutional management and relevant regulatory agencies should strengthen compliance monitoring, procurement audits, and internal control mechanisms to ensure full implementation of the Public Procurement Act and other applicable procurement guidelines.

Government and institutional authorities should implement measures to mitigate the effects of environmental challenges by ensuring timely budget releases, providing adequate funding, improving security around procurement activities, and developing strategies to respond to inflation, market instability, and other external risks that affect procurement performance

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