

FROM DELAY TO DECLINE: A SYSTEMATIC LITERATURE REVIEW ON THE IMPACT OF INEFFICIENT PROCUREMENT IN STATE UNIVERSITIES AND COLLEGES (SUCS)

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DOI: <https://www.doi.org/10.58257/IJPREMS44263>

ABSTRACT

Procurement efficiency is central to organizational performance, especially in public institutions where the timely delivery of goods and services directly impacts governance, accountability, and stakeholder trust. This systematic literature review synthesizes empirical and theoretical studies on the effects of procurement delays on organizational performance, service delivery, and stakeholder satisfaction. Through a comprehensive review of recent literature from both global and Philippine contexts, the study reveals that inefficient procurement practices lead to financial losses, reduced productivity, and erosion of institutional credibility. The review highlights the cascading effects of procurement inefficiency in the public sector, particularly within Philippine State Universities and Colleges (SUCs), where bureaucratic bottlenecks and compliance overload hinder project implementation and service quality. Findings underscore the need for reforms emphasizing transparency, digitalization, and capacity-building in procurement management. The review concludes that institutional resilience depends not only on compliance but also on strategic agility and stakeholder engagement in procurement processes.

Keywords: Procurement Delays, Organizational Performance, Public Sector Procurement, Philippine SUCs, Service Delivery.

1. INTRODUCTION

Procurement forms the operational backbone of any organization, governing how resources are acquired, allocated, and managed to achieve institutional goals. Within public sector institutions—particularly State Universities and Colleges (SUCs) in the Philippines—procurement serves a dual purpose: it ensures accountability in the use of public funds and guarantees that goods and services necessary for education, research, and infrastructure are delivered promptly. However, delays in procurement have become an endemic problem, undermining organizational effectiveness and stakeholder satisfaction.

Globally, studies have established the link between procurement delays and organizational inefficiency. For example, Ngcobo and Conradie (2024) demonstrated that protracted procurement procedures in South African schools led to significant service delivery failures. Similarly, Mebrate (2024) found that procurement inefficiencies correlate with reduced organizational performance indicators such as cost efficiency and timeliness. In the Philippine setting, the Commission on Audit (COA) and the Government Procurement Policy Board (GPPB) have repeatedly noted that compliance-oriented procurement systems often sacrifice efficiency, particularly in SUCs where procedural rigidity delays research grants, facility construction, and resource acquisition (COA, 2023; GPPB, 2024).

The present review systematically explores how procurement delays affect organizational performance, service delivery, and stakeholder satisfaction, with a special focus on the Philippine public education sector. By integrating international evidence and local realities, the paper provides a nuanced understanding of how inefficiencies in procurement can transform from mere administrative slowdowns into systemic institutional decline.

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Procurement and Organizational Performance

Procurement efficiency directly influences an organization's ability to meet strategic and operational targets. According to Kipkemoi (2017), delays in procurement contribute to higher transaction costs, missed deadlines, and underutilized resources. Mebrate (2024) further explains that procurement processes serve as a core determinant of institutional productivity, affecting cost management, project implementation speed, and the overall organizational climate.

In the context of SUCs, procurement inefficiencies often delay the acquisition of laboratory equipment, ICT resources, and infrastructure upgrades—factors crucial to improving instructional and research quality. COA reports from 2023 cite repeated procurement delays in Philippine universities, such as the late delivery of classroom construction materials and stalled bidding processes for digital learning platforms. These delays, while often justified by

compliance with Republic Act 9184 (the Government Procurement Reform Act), reveal the tension between bureaucratic control and institutional agility.

Procurement and Service Delivery

Service delivery is one of the most visible casualties of procurement inefficiency. Ahmad et al. (2019) found that delayed procurement in infrastructure projects results in postponed completion and poor-quality outputs. Adhikari et al. (2024) similarly showed that inefficiencies in the procurement of health commodities in Nepal led to shortages and service disruptions.

In Philippine SUCs, service delivery delays manifest in slow infrastructure modernization, deferred scholarship fund releases, and limited access to updated learning materials. Ngcobo (2024) highlighted similar challenges in the South African education sector, showing how inefficient procurement impedes the attainment of educational goals. In both contexts, administrative delays in procurement extend beyond logistics—they undermine institutional credibility and the social contract between government agencies and their stakeholders.

Procurement and Stakeholder Satisfaction

Stakeholders—including students, faculty, suppliers, and community partners—are directly affected by the efficiency of procurement operations. Patil et al. (2022) note that complex and opaque tendering processes discourage supplier participation and reduce long-term partnership potential. When stakeholders perceive procurement systems as slow or unfair, institutional trust deteriorates.

Within SUCs, procurement delays frustrate both internal and external stakeholders. Faculty members face difficulties conducting research due to late delivery of supplies, while students suffer from inadequate facilities. External suppliers, facing months-long delays in payment or contract approval, often hesitate to engage in future partnerships. These inefficiencies create a cycle of dissatisfaction that weakens institutional reputation and morale (Katamuna et al., 2025).

Governance and Accountability Dimensions

Procurement inefficiency is not merely a managerial failure but a governance concern. It reflects systemic weaknesses in policy implementation, oversight, and ethical conduct. The GPPB (2024) and COA (2023) have emphasized that while Philippine procurement laws promote transparency, excessive procedural layers—such as repetitive bid evaluations and unclear technical specifications—delay implementation. The challenge lies in balancing accountability with efficiency, ensuring that compliance does not paralyze delivery.

3. METHODOLOGY

This study employed a systematic literature review approach following the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) framework. Peer-reviewed journal articles, government reports, and institutional case studies from 2015–2025 were included. Search databases included Scopus, Google Scholar, and Philippine E-Journals, using keywords such as “procurement delays,” “organizational performance,” “public sector procurement,” “Philippine SUCs,” and “service delivery.”

Inclusion criteria were (1) studies focusing on procurement inefficiencies and their organizational impacts, (2) research within public or educational institutions, and (3) publications available in English. Excluded were papers with purely theoretical models without empirical or policy relevance.

Data were analyzed using thematic synthesis, categorizing insights under three main dimensions: organizational performance, service delivery, and stakeholder satisfaction. The method allowed for an integrative understanding of procurement inefficiencies across multiple governance contexts, including Philippine SUCs.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The review revealed three major patterns. First, procurement delays significantly impair organizational performance. Studies consistently show that slow procurement inflates costs and reduces productivity (Kipkemoi, 2017; Mebrate, 2024). In the Philippines, procurement backlogs within SUCs result in underspending, delayed project implementation, and poor budget absorption—a recurring issue noted in COA audit reports (COA, 2023).

Second, inefficiencies disrupt service delivery, particularly in education and infrastructure. Delayed procurement of learning materials and facility repairs compromises academic quality and student satisfaction. The Philippine Association of State Universities and Colleges (PASUC, 2023) has emphasized that procurement bottlenecks hinder SUCs' capacity to align with global education standards, particularly in research competitiveness and digital transformation initiatives.

Third, stakeholder trust deteriorates when procurement processes are slow, unpredictable, or non-transparent. Patil et al. (2022) found that supplier participation declines when tendering lacks clarity. In SUCs, local contractors often disengage due to late payment cycles and bureaucratic evaluations, weakening institutional-community relations.

Collectively, the findings underscore that procurement inefficiency is a multidimensional issue—affecting finances, performance, and legitimacy. For Philippine SUCs, the challenge is compounded by overlapping regulatory frameworks and limited procurement capacity. Transitioning toward e-procurement systems, process automation, and continuous capacity-building can help reconcile accountability with operational efficiency.

5. CONCLUSION

This systematic review establishes that procurement delays are not isolated administrative concerns but structural issues that undermine performance, service delivery, and stakeholder confidence. Evidence from global and Philippine contexts demonstrates that inefficient procurement leads to higher operational costs, service delays, and institutional distrust. For Philippine SUCs, the findings highlight an urgent need to streamline procurement through digitalization, procedural simplification, and staff training.

Strengthening procurement capacity within SUCs is not only a matter of compliance but a governance imperative essential to educational excellence, fiscal discipline, and public accountability. Addressing procurement inefficiencies offers a pathway toward restoring institutional trust and ensuring that public resources translate into timely, effective, and equitable services.

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