

Mediating effect of integrated health commodities procurement system on the relationship between responsiveness and health service delivery

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Abstract:

Purpose The problems that face health service delivery across different countries are compounded by financial, political, institutional and technical deficiencies. Yet, the role of technological aspects in the procurement of health commodities and health service delivery system requires in-depth exploration. This study bridges this gap by examining the mediating effect of an integrated health commodities procurement system on the relationship between responsiveness and health service delivery. **Design/methodology/approach** Data for this study were collected from 274 respondents, comprising procurement staff and pharmacists using a cross-sectional questionnaire survey. A total of 28 government-owned hospitals from 6 regions in the Southern Highland of Tanzania were sampled for observation. Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) and structural equation modelling (SEM) were used for data analysis. **Findings** The results of the study revealed a positive and significant relationship between responsiveness and integrated health commodities procurement system ($\beta = 0.572$, $p < 0.001$). Responsiveness positively and significantly affects health service delivery ($\beta = 0.175$, $p = 0.004$). The results also show that integrated health commodities procurement system is positive and significantly related to health service delivery ($\beta = 0.264$, $p < 0.001$). Lastly, the bootstrapping confidence intervals revealed that an integrated health commodities procurement system significantly mediates the relationship between responsiveness and health service delivery. **Practical implications** To strengthen the health service delivery system, the study recommends enforcing internal control mechanisms and supporting policies that will monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the integrated health commodities procurement system and service practitioners' responsiveness. Moreover, health service managers should ensure that the planning, procurement and distribution of health commodities are fully and effectively integrated at each node of the health supply chain. **Originality/value** The study contributes to the body of knowledge which examines the efficacy of health service delivery from procurement perspective. To the best of the author's knowledge, this is the first study that offers empirical evidence for the mediating effect of integrated health commodities procurement system on the link between responsiveness and health service delivery.

Keywords: integrated health, procurement system, health service delivery