



## RESEARCH ARTICLE

### EVALUATION OF STAKEHOLDERS' INVOLVEMENT AND PROCUREMENT TRANSPARENCY IN SELECTED FEDERAL POLYTECHNICS, SOUTHEAST NIGERIA

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#### ABSTRACT

This study determined the relationship between stakeholders' involvement and procurement transparency in selected federal polytechnics in Southeast Nigeria. This study specifically focused on Federal Polytechnic Nekede, Owerri, and Federal Polytechnic Oko, Anambra State. The research used a quantitative survey design and structured questionnaires administered to 384 respondents selected from administrative staff, procurement officers, academic staff, and student representatives. Descriptive statistics, Pearson product-moment correlation (PPMC), regression analysis, and independent sample t-tests were used to analyze 350 valid responses using SPSS Version 26. The results revealed a very strong positive association between stakeholder engagement and procurement transparency ( $r = 0.782$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ). Regression analysis revealed that stakeholder involvement accounted for 61.1% of the variance in procurement transparency ( $R^2 = 0.611$ ). This indicates that inclusive procurement governance greatly enhances transparency and accountability

**Keywords:** Stakeholder involvement, procurement transparency, public procurement, e-procurement, procurement governance, federal polytechnics.

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## 1.0. INTRODUCTION

Public procurement plays a key role in public sector governance and is essential for national economic development. Public procurement constitutes a significant proportion of government spending in Nigeria and significantly affects infrastructure development, service delivery, and institutional performance (Asuquo et al., 2021). The Public Procurement Act 2007 was enacted to enhance transparency, accountability, competitiveness, and value for money in public procurement processes (Okotie & Tafamel, 2021:42). However, in some public institutions in Nigeria, challenges encountered in procurement processes appear to include corruption, inadequate regulation enforcement, lack of transparency in contract awarding, and limited stakeholder participation (Ama et al., 2023).

Federal polytechnics are strategically located in Nigeria's learning and technical development architecture. An efficient procurement process is required for these institutions to obtain educational infrastructure, laboratory equipment, technological facilities, and administrative services. However, institutional effectiveness and public confidence in procurement governance have likely been compromised by the existence of procurement irregularities, procurement inflation, abandoned projects, and inadequate stakeholder involvement (Akinola et al., 2024). Stakeholder engagement has also been emphasized as a way to improve accountability and transparency in public procurement systems (Fombad, 2014:10). Good engagement of procurement officers, administration, academics, students, contractors, and oversight agencies can enhance the results of needs assessment, procurement planning, contract monitoring, and project implementation. Transparency in the procurement process can also encourage open competition, minimize the possibility of corruption, and enhance public trust (Sama 2022:6).

While some studies have been conducted in the past on the procurement challenges in the public sector of Nigeria, empirical studies linking stakeholder participation with its level of transparency in procurement in federal polytechnics in Southeast Nigeria are still few. Hence, this study investigates the role of stakeholders' participation in procurement transparency and governance at Federal Polytechnic Nekede and Federal Polytechnic Oko. This study aims to fill the gap between theory and practice and provide insights into the effects of institutional governance on the successful implementation of institutional development goals and objectives. In particular, the effects of specific institutional structures, such as tender evaluation systems and decision-making processes, on the successful attainment of institutional development goals and objectives, in order to provide a more nuanced understanding of the effect of institutional governance on the successful attainment of institutional development goals and objectives (Maduekeh & Obinwa, 2022:89; Oboh et al., 2026).

## 2.0. LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1. Procurement Stakeholder Engagement

Stakeholder involvement is achieved by engaging and actively involving people and groups concerned with the outcomes of procurement processes. This participation helps to enhance decision-making quality, accountability, procurement planning, and ensure that the goods or services procured are suitable for institutional needs. Freeman's Stakeholder Theory argues that success of an organization is determined by who the stakeholders are, and their balance of interests rather than the views of administrative actors.



Empirical research has found that stakeholder involvement has a strong connection to the performance of the procurement process (Rokas, 2005a; Rokas, 2005b; Amid, 2005). For instance, Chioma et al. (Year) discovered that stakeholder consultation was the most important tool for minimizing procurement delays and cost overruns in Nigerian universities. Similarly, Year and Oluwaseun reported that stakeholder engagement enhances project delivery in local government procurement processes.

**2.2. Transparency in Procurement**

Thus, in general terms, procurement transparency refers to the complete and open dissemination of the necessary information to stakeholders and the public (Tavares & Cruz, 2017, p. 101250). This includes regular reporting on procurement plans, defining bidding opportunities, stating evaluation criteria, announcing the award of contracts, and extensive reports on the implementation of projects (Naidoo et al., 2018:24). Therefore, transparent systems are supposed to minimize corruption, build trust among suppliers, and maximize value for money by a continuous process of encouraging openness (Kramer, 2017:16; Sama et al., 2022:136). Transparency mechanisms play an important role in combating corruption in developing economies (Cormier, 2022:302). Simultaneously, procurement transparency is positively related to improved accountability and a decrease in procurement irregularities in public institutions in Nigeria (Tyoakosu et al., 2026).

**2.3. The Theoretical Framework**

The theoretical bases of this study are Stakeholder Theory and Agency Theory. Stakeholder Theory rests on the idea of inclusive governance and the involvement of stakeholders' views in organizational decisions (Colenbrander et al., 2017:549). Agency Theory is used as an analytical tool to understand the interaction between principals and agents and to emphasize the need for transparency and accountability to minimize information asymmetry and opportunistic actions of the agents (Araújo & Romero, 2016:329; Riaz et al., 2022:412).

**3.0. METHODOLOGY**

A quantitative survey research design was used in this study. The target was the staff of the Federal Polytechnic Nekede and Federal Polytechnic Oko, Academic staff, and student representatives from the polytechnic. Using Taro Yamane’s formula, a sample size of 384 respondents was arrived at, and 350 valid responses were analyzed.

Structured questionnaires based on a 5-point Likert scale were used to collect data. The internal consistency of the three scales was deemed to be good, with a Cronbach’s alpha in the range of 0.83-0.86. Descriptive statistics, Pearson product-moment correlation (PPMC), regression analysis, and independent sample t-tests were used to analyze the data using SPSS Version 26.

**Table 1: Reliability Statistics for Study Variables**

Variable	Cronbach Alpha	Interpretation
Stakeholders Involvement	0.86	Reliable
Procurement Transparency	0.89	Highly Reliable
Barrier to Transparency	0.83	Reliable

## 4.0. PRESENTATION OF RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### 4.1. Demographic Characteristics

The study recorded a response rate was 91.1 percent. Academic staff constituted the highest respondent category (61.43 percent), while procurement officers accounted for 12 percent of the respondents. Most respondents possessed substantial institutional experience, with over 64 percent having more than ten years of work experience.

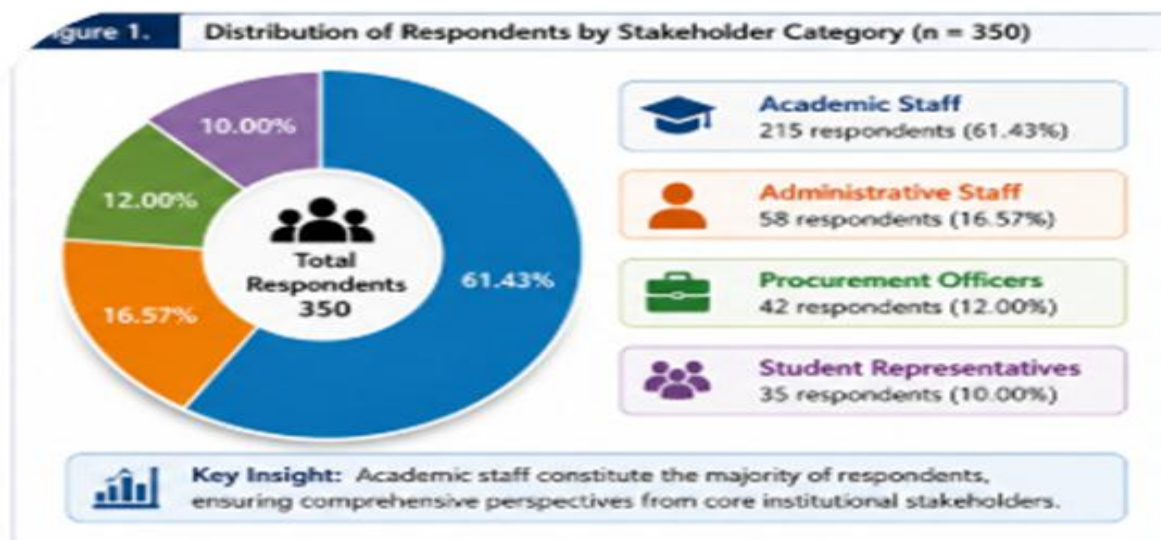


Figure 1: Distribution of Respondents by Stakeholder Category

### 4.2. Stakeholder Involvement in Procurement

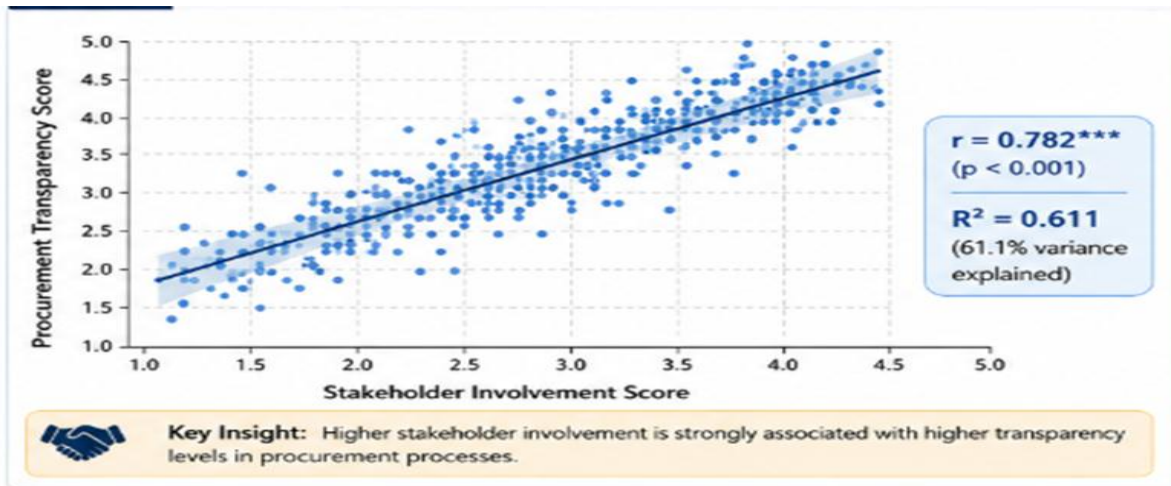
The findings revealed a high level of stakeholder involvement in procurement. According to the respondents, stakeholder consultation occurred during procurement planning, contract monitoring, vendor selection, and project evaluation processes. Procurement committees were seen as having diverse representation of stakeholders, although student participation remained comparatively limited.

### 4.3. Procurement Transparency

The study revealed a high level of procurement transparency in both the institutions. Procurement plans were generally published, bidding opportunities were advertised, and evaluation criteria were disclosed. Although stakeholders have access to contract award decisions and procurement records, some inconsistencies remain in emergency procurement disclosures and project performance reporting.

### 4.4. Relationship between Stakeholder Involvement and Procurement Transparency

Pearson correlation analysis revealed a strong positive relationship between stakeholder involvement and procurement transparency ( $r = 0.782$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ). Furthermore, regression analysis suggested that stakeholder involvement significantly predicted procurement transparency, accounting for 61.1% of the variance in transparency levels ( $R^2 = 0.611$ ).



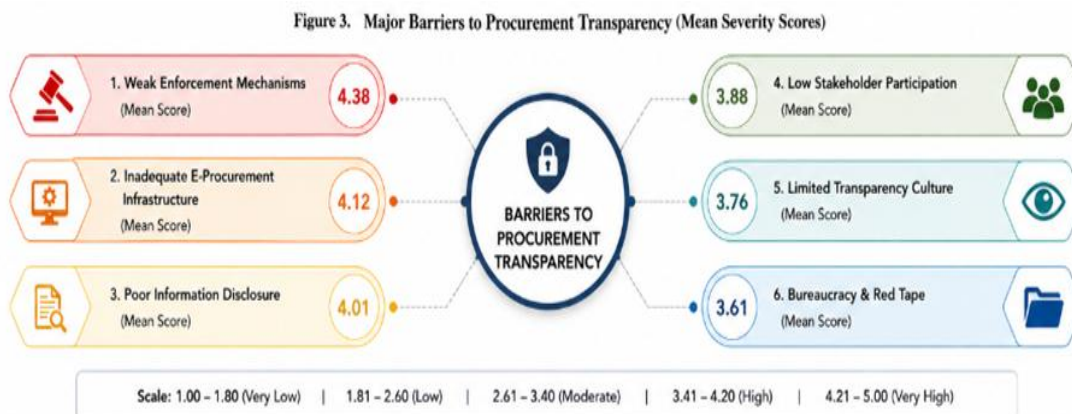
**Figure 2:** Relationship between Stakeholder Involvement and Procurement Transparency

These findings tentatively point to a greater role for stakeholders in procurement to improve accountability, information disclosure, and institutional oversight. This finding appears to support Stakeholder Theory, which emphasizes the need for inclusive governance mechanisms as an important means of increasing organizational legitimacy and accountability.

#### 4.5. Barriers to Procurement Transparency

The major barriers identified include weak regulatory enforcement, inadequate e-procurement systems, poor stakeholder awareness, limited information disclosure, resistance to stakeholder participation, and institutional bureaucracy

These challenges hinder effective procurement governance in Nigerian tertiary institutions. Moreover, the prevalence of these barriers indicates that the technical infrastructure and regulatory frameworks are currently insufficient to support the transparency required to reduce corruption and increase public trust in institutional spending (Imoni et al., 2023, p. 229; Okotie & Tafamel, 2021, p. 43).



**Figure 3:** Major Barriers Affecting Procurement Transparency in Federal Polytechnics



#### 4.6. DISCUSSIONS

This investigation clarifies the relationship between stakeholder involvement and procurement transparency in selected federal polytechnics in Southeast Nigeria (for example, Federal Polytechnic Nekede, Owerri, and Federal Polytechnic Oko, Anambra State). Findings The findings show that stakeholder involvement is key to improving procurement transparency, accountability, and governance. This study contributes significantly to the procurement governance literature by empirically validating the theoretical assumptions of stakeholder and agency theories in the context of Nigerian tertiary institutions.

The demographic analysis showed that the majority of respondents were academic staff, followed by administrative staff, procurement officers, and student representatives. This distribution thus reaffirms the study's capturing of responses from key institutional stakeholders directly impacted by procurement decisions, notably those related to educational facilities, laboratory equipment, infrastructure projects, and service delivery. The high response rate of 91.1% may also be an indication of the interest of the stakeholders in the procurement governance issues in these institutions.

Similarly, the results of the first research question show a high level of stakeholders' involvement in the procurement processes in the selected federal polytechnics. Respondents generally agreed that stakeholders were informed about procurement activities, consulted during needs assessment and planning, involved in vendor selection, and included in contract monitoring. Student participation in decision-making was lower than that of administrative and academic staff, although procurement committees were perceived to have representatives from different stakeholder groups.

Moreover, the study found relatively high levels of procurement transparency in the selected institution. Most respondents agreed that there was a public announcement of procurement plans, proper advertisement of bidding opportunities, provision of evaluation criteria before the bidding process, and public announcement of contract awards. These findings validate the existing literature that transparency leads to enhanced accountability, reduced corruption risks, and higher public confidence in procurement systems (Mahuwi & Israel, 2024:20).

Similarly, these findings are consistent with the aims of the Public Procurement Act, which emphasizes the significance of transparency, competitiveness, and accessibility of procurement information (Okotie & Tafamel, 2021:42). However, despite these positive results, the study noted some transparency gaps, especially in the disclosure of emergency procurement, reporting on project performance, and the public's right to full access to procurement records. These findings indicate that transparency mechanisms may still suffer from administrative bureaucracy, weak monitoring systems, and institutional reluctance to disclose information.

One of the main findings was the significant positive correlation between stakeholder involvement and procurement transparency, showing that higher levels of participation lead to a significant increase in transparency in procurement systems. The study found that stakeholder involvement explained 61.1 percent of the variation in procurement transparency. The regression analysis largely confirmed this and established stakeholder engagement as an important factor in procurement governance effectiveness.



This is supported by Stakeholder Theory, which suggests that the active involvement of stakeholders in governance processes can improve the accountability and legitimacy of organizations (Jastram & Berberyan, 2023). The findings further support Agency Theory, as they suggest that wider stakeholder supervision is likely to reduce information asymmetry between institutional management and procurement actors, minimizing the likelihood of irregularities and unethical practices (Abdi et al., 2025:11).

In addition, the study noted several obstacles to effective stakeholder engagement and transparency. The main challenges were weak enforcement, weak e-procurement infrastructure, poor information disclosure practices, low stakeholder participation, and high institutional bureaucracy. These findings are corroborated by Adeyemi and Adeleke, who identified weak enforcement of regulations and poor compliance monitoring as key barriers to procurement reform in Nigerian tertiary institutions (Maduekeh & Obinwa, 2022, p. 94). Similarly, Chidi and Amara discovered that poor technological infrastructure and low digital literacy are significant barriers to the adoption of e-procurement in the Nigerian public sector (Bangura & Qutieshat, 2025).

The existence of the Bureau of Public Procurement and the Public Procurement Act, along with the severity of weak enforcement mechanisms, indicates inconsistent regulatory implementation across public institutions. Weak institutional oversight usually allows for administrative discretion, favoritism, contract inflation, and non-transparent practices. Moreover, poor e-procurement infrastructure may limit the availability of information, slow down the procurement process, and restrict opportunities for effective monitoring of stakeholders.

Differences in the levels of stakeholder participation and transparency in the institutions were also observed between Federal Polytechnic Nekede and Federal Polytechnic Oko. Federal Polytechnic Nekede exhibited significantly higher levels of governance practice than Federal Polytechnic Oko. This suggests that institutional leadership commitment, organizational culture, administrative efficiency, and governance structures may be key drivers of transparency outcomes beyond formal regulatory requirements.

In general, these findings emphasize the importance of stakeholder participation in attaining transparent, accountable, and efficient procurement systems in Nigerian federal polytechnics. Effective governance in procurement requires not only legal and institutional frameworks but also active stakeholder participation, robust information disclosure mechanisms, technological innovation, and strong regulatory enforcement. Therefore, improving stakeholder engagement mechanisms, institutionalizing e-procurement systems, increasing information accessibility, and improving regulatory compliance may go a long way in improving procurement transparency and governance effectiveness in tertiary institutions in Southeast Nigeria.

The current findings reinforce the assertion that stakeholder engagement is a core pillar of organizational legitimacy and institutional value creation (Langrafe et al., 2020:306). In addition, the empirical findings support the notion that consistent access to procurement information for stakeholders is a prerequisite for the curtailment of bid manipulation and the fostering of competitive supplier participation (Tyokosuo et al., 2026). However, infrastructural instability and uneven digital literacy often impede the effective realization of these benefits, obstructing the operationalization of robust e-procurement frameworks (Oboh et al., 2026).



## 5.0. CONCLUSION

The study revealed that stakeholder participation has a significant impact on procurement transparency in federal polytechnics in Southeast Nigeria. These systems promote inclusive governance and enhance accountability, project monitoring, and overall institutional effectiveness. Moreover, the results reveal that stakeholder engagement could be a strategy to alleviate procurement irregularities and enhance governance frameworks (Kpodo & Haruna, 2026; Maliganya, 2025). The study therefore suggests that effective procurement governance may require not only strong legal frameworks but also strong institutional commitment to openness, accountability, active stakeholder participation, transparent information disclosure (Tyoakosu et al., 2026), and technological innovation (Oboh et al., 2026).

## Conflict of Interest

The authors declare that no conflict of interest exist in this manuscript.

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