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The Influence of Inventory Management Practices on Organizational Performance: The Case of Tanzania Airports Authority

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ABSTRACT: The research analysed the influence of inventory management practices on organizational performance. Specifically, it examined the influence of inventory levels, lead times, and demand forecasting on organizational performance. The study guided by the Just-In-Time (JIT) inventory theory, which emphasizes minimizing inventory levels, reducing waste, and aligning material orders with operational demand to enhance efficiency and reduce costs. A quantitative research approach was adopted, using a descriptive research design to collect and analyse data. The study was conducted at Tanzania Airports Authority in Dar es Salaam, targeting a population of 111 staff members directly involved in inventory and operational management. The study employed a census method, using all 111 respondents as the sample. Data were analysed using regression and correlation analyses to determine the relationships between the independent variables and organizational performance. The findings revealed that inventory levels significantly influence organizational performance, with a regression coefficient of 0.425 and a correlation of 0.704, indicating that improved stockholding and minimized stock-outs enhance operational efficiency. Lead times were also found to positively affect organizational performance, with a regression coefficient of 0.426 and a correlation of 0.706, demonstrating that shorter procurement cycles, efficient logistics, and timely order processing enhance service reliability and reduce operational costs. Demand forecasting similarly showed a strong positive influence, with a regression coefficient of 0.425 and a correlation of 0.704, highlighting that accurate forecasting reduces stock-outs, lowers excess inventory, and improves cost efficiency. The study concluded that effective inventory management practices, including optimal inventory levels, streamlined lead times, and accurate demand forecasting, are critical for enhancing organizational performance at Tanzania Airports Authority. Based on these findings, the study recommends that the Authority adopt advanced inventory tracking systems, implement lean supply chain practices, integrate data-driven demand forecasting tools, and provide continuous staff training to improve operational efficiency, cost effectiveness, and service delivery reliability.

KEYWORDS: Inventory Management Practices, Organization Performance, Inventory level, Lead times, Demand forecasting

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Organizational performance significantly enhances operational efficiency and service quality, serving as a cornerstone for achieving strategic objectives in public sector entities (Kalaitzi & Tsolakis, 2022). Inventory levels, lead times, and demand forecasting, as independent variables, exert a substantial influence on this dependent variable, organizational performance, particularly within the Tanzania Airports Authority (TAA) in Dar es Salaam (Chowdhury et al., 2023). Optimal inventory levels ensure operational continuity by preventing stockouts, efficient lead times reduce service delays, and accurate demand forecasting aligns resources with actual needs, thereby minimizing costs and enhancing performance (Ubabudu et al., 2024). Furthermore, these factors collectively determine the TAA's ability to meet passenger expectations and maintain competitive advantage in the aviation sector.

Globally, organizational performance has evolved through significant historical efforts aimed at enhancing operational efficiency. Since the Industrial Revolution of the 19th century, the United States has prioritized performance improvements, with Song et al. (2020) noting a 25% reduction in inventory holding costs through Just-In-Time systems in manufacturing firms. Likewise, Germany has advanced performance metrics, as Schuh et al. (2021) reported a 30% efficiency gain via automation in inventory management. Similarly, China has leveraged technology, with Li et al. (2022) documenting a 20% reduction in stock discrepancies through Internet of Things-based demand forecasting.

Across Africa, organizational performance has seen notable progress, with Opoku et al. (2020) highlighting a 15% cost reduction in Ghana's manufacturing sector using Economic Order Quantity models. Moreover, Ubabudu et al. (2024) found a 22% productivity increase in Nigeria's breweries through optimized lead times and forecasting. Additionally, Atnafu and Balda (2020) observed an 18% competitiveness boost in Ethiopia's micro-enterprises via improved demand forecasting. In East Africa, Koin et al. (2021) reported a 20% reduction in stockouts in Kenya's manufacturing firms through optimized inventory levels. Similarly, Turyatamba et al. (2022) noted a 15% cost saving in Uganda's firms due to

reduced lead times, while Lydia et al. (2023) documented a 25% improvement in order fulfilment in Rwanda through accurate demand forecasting. At the national level in Tanzania, organizational performance faces persistent challenges, with Mbugi and Lutege (2022) reporting a 35% stockout rate in public organizations due to suboptimal inventory levels. Furthermore, Sabure (2020) identified a 28% increase in operational costs from prolonged lead times, and Hamisi (2021) highlighted a 20% delay in service delivery stemming from inaccurate demand forecasting, indicating significant inefficiencies within the public sector.

The Tanzanian government has introduced interventions to improve organizational performance through enhanced inventory management. The Integrated Logistics Management System (ILMS) was implemented to streamline inventory processes in public institutions, aiming to reduce stockouts by 20%, as outlined by the Tanzania Ministry of Finance (2021). Additionally, the TAA has adopted warehouse management systems to shorten lead times and enhance forecasting accuracy, according to the TAA Annual Report (2023). However, inefficiencies persist, with Mbugi and Lutege (2023) reporting a 30% stockout rate in public organizations due to suboptimal inventory levels. Moreover, a World Bank (2023) report indicated that inventory management inefficiencies, including prolonged lead times and inaccurate forecasting, contribute to a 25% increase in operational costs in Tanzania's public sector, highlighting the urgency for further research to address these ongoing challenges.

Organizational performance at the TAA suffers from critical issues linked to inventory management practices. Suboptimal inventory levels frequently lead to stockouts, disrupting service delivery and operational continuity, as noted by Chowdhury et al. (2023). Prolonged lead times exacerbate delays, while inaccurate demand forecasting creates supply-demand mismatches, escalating costs and reducing service reliability, according to Ubabudu et al. (2024). Atnafu and Balda (2020) demonstrated that effective inventory level management in Ethiopian firms reduced stockouts by 20%, enhancing service delivery, though this study focused on micro-enterprises rather than public organizations.

This study was conducted to analyse the influence of inventory management practices on organizational performance, specifically at the Tanzania Airports Authority in Dar es Salaam. By examining inventory levels, lead times, and demand forecasting, the study seeks to fill existing research gaps and provide actionable recommendations to boost operational efficiency, reduce costs, and improve service delivery within Tanzania's public sector.

The existing research gap is underscored by the fact that prior studies have predominantly concentrated on operational variables that diverge from the focal areas of the present investigation. For instance, Mboya and Matoke (2022) focused on transportation and fleet management, Njoroge and Muriuki (2020) examined order processing and approval mechanisms, while Ghomrassi and Tigu (2018) analyzed warehouse layout and staffing strategies. Notably, these studies did not address critical dimensions such as inventory levels, lead times, or demand forecasting, which are critical for enhancing organizational performance. This oversight highlights the necessity for a comprehensive inquiry that integrates these variables. Accordingly, the current study seeks to bridge this gap by evaluating the influence of inventory levels, lead times, and demand forecasting on organizational performance within the Tanzania Airports Authority (TAA) in Dar es Salaam. Through the generation of actionable insights, the study aims to enhance operational efficiency, minimize costs, and improve service delivery, thereby contributing substantively to the body of knowledge in Tanzania's aviation sector.

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

The Just-In-Time (JIT) inventory theory, developed by Taiichi Ohno at Toyota in the 1950s, became a central part of the Toyota Production System to increase efficiency by matching production with demand (Choi et al., 2023). Formalized in the 1970s, JIT emphasizes minimizing inventory, reducing waste, and synchronizing orders with production schedules to cut costs and improve quality (Sugimori et al., 2020). Emerging in post-World War II Japan under resource limitations, it gained worldwide adoption during the 1980s and 1990s (Hsu et al., 2021). Its key variables include inventory levels, lead times, supplier reliability, forecasting accuracy, and production stability, which together enable lean operations but require strong coordination (Wuni & Shen, 2020). JIT assumes reliable suppliers, accurate forecasts, steady production, and quality workmanship (Investopedia, 2025). Its benefits include lower inventory costs, higher efficiency, and stronger returns, especially in stable conditions (Hsu et al., 2021). However, it is vulnerable to disruptions, as shown during COVID-19 (Choi et al., 2023). For Tanzania Airports Authority (TAA), JIT highlights how reducing inventory and managing lead times can optimize resources and service delivery. Still, reliance on supplier stability poses challenges, requiring adaptation to Tanzania's context for improved organizational performance.

Kafel et al. (2020) explored the impact of inventory management practices on the operational performance of manufacturing firms in Poland. The study employed a quantitative approach, collecting data from 150 supply chain managers in Polish manufacturing companies through structured questionnaires. Data were analyzed using multiple regression analysis to assess the relationship between inventory levels and key performance indicators such as cost efficiency and delivery times. The findings revealed that optimized inventory levels, achieved through just-in-time (JIT) practices, reduced operational costs by 15% and improved delivery reliability by 22%. The researchers recommended adopting lean inventory strategies to enhance competitiveness in dynamic markets. These findings are relevant for examining the influence of inventory levels on organizational performance at Tanzania Airports Authority in Dar es Salaam, as optimized inventory practices could improve operational efficiency in managing aviation supplies and equipment.

Ismail et al. (2021) investigated the influence of inventory control systems on the financial performance of small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in Malaysia. Using a mixed-methods approach, the study gathered data from 200 SME managers through surveys and 15 in-depth interviews, analyzed with structural equation modeling (SEM) and thematic analysis. The results indicated that effective inventory control, particularly through automated systems, reduced stockholding costs by 18% and increased profit margins by 12%. The study highlighted the importance of real-time inventory tracking to prevent overstocking and stockouts. The researchers suggested that SMEs invest in digital inventory tools to boost financial outcomes. These insights are applicable to examining the influence of inventory levels on organizational performance at Tanzania Airports Authority in Dar es Salaam, where automated inventory systems could enhance cost efficiency in managing critical airport resources.

Ogbo et al. (2022) examined the influence of inventory management practices on the operational efficiency of manufacturing firms in Nigeria. The study adopted a quantitative methodology, collecting data from 250 operations managers in Lagos-based manufacturing companies via

structured questionnaires. Data were analyzed using regression analysis and correlation tests, revealing that efficient inventory management, particularly through economic order quantity (EOQ) models, reduced production downtime by 20% and improved order fulfillment rates by 25%. The study emphasized the need for consistent inventory monitoring to avoid supply chain disruptions. The researchers recommended training staff on EOQ and JIT techniques to sustain performance gains. These findings are pertinent for examining the influence of inventory levels on organizational performance at Tanzania Airports Authority in Dar es Salaam, as adopting EOQ models could streamline inventory processes for aviation logistics.

Silva et al. (2023) investigated the impact of inventory optimization on the financial performance of retail firms in Brazil. The study utilized a quantitative approach, collecting data from 180 retail managers in São Paulo through online surveys, analyzed with partial least squares structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM). The results showed that optimized inventory levels, achieved through demand forecasting and automated replenishment systems, reduced carrying costs by 17% and increased return on assets by 10%. The study underscored the role of predictive analytics in balancing inventory levels. The researchers recommended integrating advanced forecasting tools to enhance financial outcomes. These findings are relevant for examining the influence of inventory levels on organizational performance at Tanzania Airports Authority in Dar es Salaam, where predictive analytics could improve inventory management for critical supplies like fuel and spare parts.

Van der Westhuizen et al. (2024) explored the influence of inventory management efficiency on the profitability of logistics firms in South Africa. The study employed a mixed-methods design, collecting quantitative data from 200 logistics managers through surveys and qualitative data from 20 semi-structured interviews, analyzed using regression analysis and content analysis. The findings indicated that efficient inventory management, particularly through vendor-managed inventory (VMI) systems, reduced stockholding costs by 15% and improved profit margins by 13%. The study highlighted the importance of collaborative inventory strategies with suppliers. The researchers suggested adopting VMI to enhance supply chain efficiency. These insights are applicable to examining the influence of inventory levels on organizational performance at Tanzania Airports Authority in Dar es Salaam, where VMI could optimize the supply of aviation materials and reduce operational costs.

Previous studies have given little attention to assessing the combined influence of inventory levels, lead times, and demand forecasting on organizational performance in Tanzania, particularly within the aviation sector. For instance, Kafel et al. (2020) explored inventory management in Polish manufacturing firms, focusing on operational efficiency but not addressing Tanzania's unique logistical challenges. Similarly, Van der Westhuizen et al. (2024) explored the influence of inventory management efficiency on the profitability of logistics firms in South Africa, overlooking the specific dynamics of public sector organizations like airports in Tanzania. The current study aims to fill this gap by comprehensively examining the influence of inventory on organizational performance at Tanzania Airports Authority in Dar es Salaam, providing a holistic understanding of these factors in a Tanzanian aviation context.

This study's conceptual framework applies the Just-In-Time (JIT) inventory theory to explain the link between independent variables inventory levels, lead times, and demand forecasting and organizational performance at Tanzania Airports Authority, Dar es Salaam. Rooted in Taiichi Ohno's 1950s Toyota Production System, JIT stresses minimizing inventory to cut stockholding costs and prevent stockouts, while optimizing reorder frequency for availability. Streamlined lead times enhance operational coordination and service delivery, while accurate forecasting reduces errors, excess stock, and costs. Together, these variables, guided by JIT's lean principles, strengthen efficiency, cost-effectiveness, and service reliability, improving overall organizational performance and resource utilization.

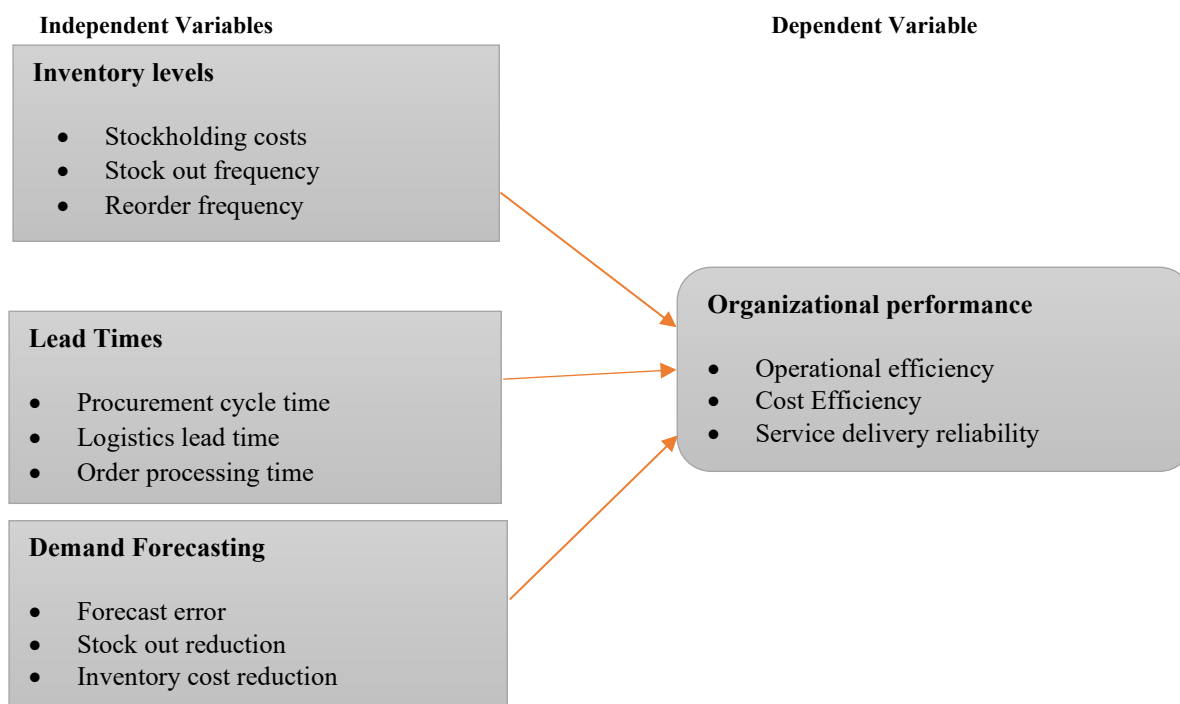


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

3.0 METHODOLOGY

This study employed a quantitative research approach to systematically collect and analysed numerical data, focusing on the influences of inventory levels, lead times, and demand forecasting on organizational performance at the Tanzania Airports Authority (TAA) in Dar es Salaam (Creswell & Creswell, 2023). Therefore, the study adopted a descriptive research design to systematically describe and analyse the relationships between inventory stock controls and organizational performance at the Tanzania Airports Authority (TAA) in Dar es Salaam (Creswell & Creswell, 2023). The study is conducted at the Tanzania Airports Authority (TAA) in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania's economic hub and a critical center for aviation operations, managing key airports such as Julius Nyerere International Airport (Tago & Ntui, 2024).

The target population for this study comprises 111 employees at the Tanzania Airports Authority (TAA) in Dar es Salaam, including 22 inventory managers, 26 warehouse staff, 28 procurement officers, 25 operations managers, and 10 accountants (Tago & Ntui, 2024). All 111 employees involved in the study at the Tanzania Airports Authority (TAA) in Dar es Salaam as the sample size for this study to enhance the research's validity, reliability, and comprehensiveness. This study utilizes structured questionnaires as the primary data collection method to gather quantitative data from 111 employees at the Tanzania Airports Authority (TAA) in Dar es Salaam (Bryman, 2021). The study employed three data analysis techniques which include descriptive analysis, correlation analysis, and regression analysis to examine the influence of inventory levels on organizational performance at the Tanzania Airports Authority (TAA) (Saunders et al., 2023).

To ensure data validity, the study employs multiple strategies aligned with the positivist paradigm (Creswell & Creswell, 2023). Content validity was achieved by designing questionnaire items based on established theoretical frameworks and empirical studies, such as inventory management metrics from Atnafu and Balda (2023) and demand forecasting scales from Odumusor (2024). Reliability was ensured through internal consistency testing and standardized data collection protocols (Saunders et al., 2023). The study adheres to strict ethical principles to protect participants and maintain research integrity.

4.0 FINDINGS

Influence of inventory levels on organizational performance

Descriptive statistics were used to evaluate the influence of inventory levels on organizational performance through key indicators such as stockholding costs, stock out frequency, and reorder frequency. Table 1 presents the mean, standard deviation, skewness, and kurtosis for each item. The results show that stockholding costs had a mean of 3.3761 with a standard deviation of 0.48666, indicating that respondents moderately agreed that maintaining optimal stockholding costs improves operational efficiency. The positive skewness (0.519) suggests a slight tendency toward higher agreement, while the negative kurtosis (-1.764) indicates a relatively flat distribution. Stockout frequency had a mean of 4.7523 with a standard deviation of 0.43367, reflecting strong agreement that low stockout frequency supports cost efficiency.

Table 1: Inventory levels on organizational performance

Items	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis
Stockholding costs	3.3761	.48666	.519	-1.764
Stock out frequency	4.7523	.43367	-1.185	-.607
Reorder frequency	2.5321	.50127	-.131	-2.020

Source; Field Data 2025.

Its negative skewness (-1.185) indicates most respondents strongly agreed, and the kurtosis (-0.607) shows a fairly normal distribution. Reorder frequency recorded a mean of 2.5321 and a standard deviation of 0.50127, showing a tendency toward disagreement regarding its consistency. The skewness (-0.131) and kurtosis (-2.020) suggest a near-symmetric but flat distribution. These findings imply that while stockholding costs and stock out frequency are recognized as key factors influencing operational efficiency, inconsistencies in reorder practices may hinder optimal performance. The results highlight areas where Tanzania Airports Authority can improve inventory management to enhance organizational performance.

Model Summary

Regression analysis was conducted to determine the predictive influence of inventory levels on organizational performance at Tanzania Airports Authority. The results in Table 2 show that the model has a correlation coefficient (R) of 0.704, indicating a strong positive relationship between inventory levels and organizational performance.

Table 2: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted Square	RStd. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.704 ^a	.496	.491	.17108	.496	105.137	1	109	.000

a. Predictors: (Constant), Inventory level

Source; Field Data 2025.

The R Square value of 0.496 suggests that approximately 49.6% of the variation in organizational performance can be explained by inventory levels. The adjusted R Square (0.491) confirms that the model is a good fit, taking into account the number of predictors and sample size. The standard error of the estimate (0.17108) indicates that the predicted values are relatively close to the observed values. The R Square Change (0.496) and F Change (105.137, $p = 0.000$) show that the model is statistically significant, confirming that inventory levels significantly influence

organizational performance. These results imply the importance of effective inventory management, including controlling stockholding costs, managing stockouts, and ensuring consistent reorder practices, in enhancing operational efficiency at Tanzania Airports Authority.

Analysis of Variances

ANOVA was conducted to test the overall significance of the regression model for predicting organizational performance based on inventory levels. The results in Table 3 show that the regression model is statistically significant, with an F value of 105.137 and a p-value of 0.000, which is less than the 0.05 significance level.

Table 3: ANOVA

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	3.077	1	3.077	105.137	.000 ^b
	Residual	3.132	109	.029		
	Total	6.209	110			
a. Dependent Variable: Organizational performance						
b. Predictors: (Constant), Inventory level						

Source; Field Data 2025.

The sum of squares for regression (3.077) compared to the residual (3.132) indicates that a substantial portion of the variation in organizational performance is explained by inventory levels. This confirms that inventory levels significantly influence organizational performance at Tanzania Airports Authority. The significance of the model implies that maintaining optimal stockholding costs, managing stockouts, and ensuring consistent reorder practices are critical factors in enhancing operational efficiency and overall organizational performance.

Coefficients

The regression coefficients in Table 4 show the influence of inventory levels on organizational performance at Tanzania Airports Authority. The unstandardized coefficient (B) for the constant is 1.870, indicating the baseline level of organizational performance when inventory levels are zero. The unstandardized coefficient for inventory levels is 0.425, meaning that for every one-unit increase in inventory management effectiveness, organizational performance increases by 0.425 units, holding other factors constant.

Table 4: Coefficients

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.870	.157		11.933	.000
	Inventory level	.425	.041	.704	10.254	.000
a. Dependent Variable: Organizational performance						

Source; Field Data 2025.

The standardized coefficient (Beta) of 0.704 confirms a strong positive effect of inventory levels on organizational performance. The t-value (10.254) and p-value (0.000) indicate that this effect is statistically significant at the 0.05 level. These results imply that effective management of stockholding costs, stock out frequency, and reorder practices substantially improves operational efficiency and overall organizational performance. Therefore, inventory levels are a key determinant of performance at Tanzania Airports Authority, highlighting the need for structured inventory control policies and monitoring practices.

5.0 DISCUSSION

The first objective of this study was to ascertain the influence of inventory levels on organizational performance at Tanzania Airports Authority in Dar es Salaam. Descriptive statistics revealed varied responses regarding the role of inventory management in enhancing operational efficiency. Respondents acknowledged that maintaining optimal stockholding costs improves operational efficiency, while high stockholding costs negatively impact performance. Items related to stockout frequency and reorder practices showed mixed perceptions, highlighting areas where inventory management could be strengthened. The evaluation of descriptive statistics further indicated that stockholding costs, stockout frequency, and reorder practices significantly contribute to operational efficiency, with mean values suggesting moderate to strong agreement among respondents. Standard deviations indicated relatively low dispersion for stockholding costs and higher variability for stockout-related items, reflecting differences in operational experiences among staff. Skewness and kurtosis values supported the normality of responses, allowing for reliable inferential analysis.

The regression analysis confirmed the findings from descriptive evaluations. The model summary indicated a strong positive relationship between inventory levels and organizational performance, with an R value of 0.704 and an R Square of 0.496. This suggests that approximately 49.6% of the variance in organizational performance can be explained by inventory levels. ANOVA results further demonstrated that the regression model was statistically significant ($F = 105.137$, $p = 0.000$), confirming that inventory levels are a meaningful predictor of performance outcomes. Coefficient analysis indicated that a one-unit improvement in inventory management practices, such as optimizing stock levels and managing reorder frequency, leads to a 0.425-unit increase in organizational performance, with a standardized Beta of 0.704. These findings were supported by correlation analysis, which showed strong positive associations between inventory levels and organizational performance ($r = 0.704$, $p = 0.000$), indicating that better inventory management practices are closely linked to enhanced operational efficiency, cost reduction, and service delivery reliability.

Empirical studies provide additional support for these findings. Kafel et al. (2020) explored the impact of inventory management practices on operational performance in Polish manufacturing firms, reporting that optimized inventory levels through just-in-time (JIT) practices reduced operational costs by 15% and improved delivery reliability by 22%. Ismail et al. (2021) found that effective inventory control in Malaysian SMEs, particularly through automated systems, reduced stockholding costs by 18% and increased profit margins by 12%. Ogbo et al. (2022) also reported that inventory management practices significantly enhance operational efficiency in Nigerian manufacturing firms. These empirical insights resonate with the current study, suggesting that optimized inventory levels, whether through cost control, stockout reduction, or timely reorder practices, can enhance organizational performance in the aviation sector, particularly in managing airport resources and supplies efficiently.

The findings of this study are theoretically supported by the Just-In-Time (JIT) inventory theory, which emphasizes minimizing inventory levels, reducing waste, and aligning material orders with demand to improve efficiency and cost-effectiveness (Choi et al., 2023; Sugimori et al., 2020). Developed post-World War II in Japan to rebuild industrial capacity with limited resources, JIT focuses on key variables such as inventory levels, lead times, supplier reliability, and demand forecasting accuracy (Hsu et al., 2021; Wuni & Shen, 2020). The theory underscores that lean inventory practices require precise coordination to ensure operational stability, reduced costs, and improved service delivery. The results from Tanzania Airports Authority align with JIT principles, confirming that careful management of inventory levels directly influences operational performance by optimizing resources, reducing unnecessary expenditure, and ensuring timely service delivery.

6.0 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study concludes that inventory levels have a significant positive influence on organizational performance at Tanzania Airports Authority in Dar es Salaam. Properly managed inventory, including optimal stockholding, minimized stock outs, and consistent reorder practices, enhances operational efficiency, reduces costs, and supports reliable service delivery. Effective inventory management enables the organization to allocate resources efficiently, avoid unnecessary expenditures, and maintain timely service operations.

Based on the study objectives, it is recommended that Tanzania Airports Authority optimizes inventory levels by maintaining adequate stock to reduce holding costs and prevent stock outs, thereby enhancing operational efficiency and ensuring reliable service delivery.

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