

Internship Report

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By

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Internship Report: Understanding Procurement Challenges in the Indian Injectable Pharmaceutical Sector

1. Introduction

This report encapsulates my internship experience at [Name of Organization, if applicable, or state 'an emerging injectable pharmaceutical firm'] during the period of [Start Date] to [End Date]. As a student pursuing an MBA in Pharmaceutical Management, this internship provided an invaluable opportunity to delve into the practicalities of the pharmaceutical industry, specifically focusing on the critical area of procurement within the burgeoning injectable firms in India. My engagement aimed to bridge theoretical knowledge with real-world operational challenges, contributing to a deeper understanding of supply chain dynamics in a highly regulated and competitive environment.

2. Objectives of the Internship

The primary objectives guiding my internship were to:

- **Gain Practical Exposure:** Understand the day-to-day procurement operations within an emerging injectable pharmaceutical company.
- **Identify Key Challenges:** Observe and analyze the specific procurement-related hurdles faced by such firms, including supplier management, regulatory adherence, and cost control.
- **Analyze Supply Chain Vulnerabilities:** Comprehend the impact of raw material shortages, import dependence, and cold-chain logistics complexities on procurement efficiency.
- **Explore Strategic Interventions:** Learn about and evaluate current strategies employed by firms to mitigate procurement risks and enhance resilience.
- **Contribute to Process Improvement:** Provide insights or support initiatives aimed at optimizing procurement processes based on learned best practices and industry trends.

3. Methodology

My internship methodology was primarily observational and research-oriented, complementing the secondary research approach highlighted in the dissertation. I engaged in the following activities:

- **Document Review:** Studied internal reports, standard operating procedures (SOPs), and relevant industry publications to grasp existing procurement frameworks and challenges. This aligned with the dissertation's reliance on existing literature and data (PubMed, Scopus, industry reports).
- **Team Interactions:** Conducted informal discussions with procurement, quality assurance, logistics, and regulatory affairs teams to understand their daily operations, pain points, and cross-functional dependencies.

- **Data Analysis Support:** Assisted in compiling and analyzing procurement data, such as supplier performance metrics, inventory levels, and cost variations, providing practical exposure to data-driven decision-making.
- **Industry Benchmarking:** Researched best practices adopted by larger, established pharmaceutical firms in procurement, as discussed in the dissertation's theoretical perspectives (TCE, JIT, Strategic Sourcing), to identify potential areas for improvement in emerging firms.
- **Problem-Solving Workshops:** Participated in internal meetings or discussions focused on addressing specific procurement challenges, contributing to brainstorming sessions for solutions.

4. Key Learnings and Findings

My internship provided profound insights into the multifaceted procurement landscape:

- **Supplier Relationship Complexity:** I learned firsthand the challenges emerging firms face in establishing reliable supplier relationships. Unlike larger players, the limited bargaining power often leads to less favorable terms, inconsistent quality, and extended lead times for critical raw materials. Diversifying the supplier base and nurturing long-term partnerships are indeed critical, as highlighted in the dissertation.
- **Navigating Regulatory Mazes:** The sheer volume and dynamic nature of regulatory requirements (e.g., GMP, GDP) are immense. I observed the significant resources, expertise, and continuous training needed to ensure compliance, which can be a substantial burden for smaller companies. The emphasis on robust quality management systems (QMS) became very clear.
- **Cold-Chain Imperatives:** Managing temperature-sensitive injectable products presented practical logistical hurdles. The need for specialized equipment, trained personnel, and real-time monitoring (like IoT-enabled systems) for maintaining product integrity throughout the supply chain is paramount and often cost-intensive for emerging firms.
- **Persistent Cost Pressures:** Fluctuations in raw material prices and heavy import dependence indeed exert immense financial strain. I saw how global market volatility, exacerbated by geopolitical factors, directly impacts procurement budgets and requires constant vigilance for cost-effective sourcing.
- **Vulnerability to Shortages:** The reality of supply chain disruptions due to external factors (like pandemics or natural calamities) was evident, reinforcing the dissertation's point about the critical need for resilient supply chains and diversified sourcing to mitigate raw material shortages.
- **Potential of Technology:** While still in early stages for many emerging firms, the transformative potential of digital tools (e.g., procurement platforms, AI/ML for forecasting, blockchain for transparency) to streamline operations and enhance decision-making was consistently discussed and is a key future direction.

5. Contributions of the Internship

During my internship, I aimed to contribute in the following ways:

- **Data Compilation & Analysis:** Assisted in organizing and preliminary analysis of supplier performance data, helping to identify potential reliability issues and areas for negotiation.
- **Process Mapping:** Contributed to documenting existing procurement processes, which can serve as a foundation for future optimization efforts.
- **Research Support:** Conducted focused research on specific regulatory updates and alternative sourcing options, providing the team with summarized insights.
- **Best Practice Dissemination:** Shared insights from my research on collaborative sourcing models and digital tool applications, fostering internal discussions on adopting more strategic procurement approaches.
- **Awareness Building:** By actively engaging with different departments, I helped reinforce the interconnectedness of procurement with quality, logistics, and regulatory compliance, promoting a holistic view of the supply chain.

6. Conclusion

My internship at **IIHMR**, has been an immensely enriching experience, providing me with a comprehensive understanding of the procurement challenges inherent in India's emerging injectable pharmaceutical sector. It reinforced the dissertation's findings that while the industry holds immense promise, its success hinges on strategic interventions in supply chain resilience, regulatory adherence, cost management, and technological integration.

This practical exposure has not only deepened my academic knowledge but also equipped me with valuable skills in problem identification, analysis, and solution-oriented thinking within a complex business environment. I am more confident in my ability to contribute meaningfully to the pharmaceutical industry, especially in optimizing procurement processes, which are undeniably the backbone of any successful pharmaceutical operation. The internship solidified my career aspirations in pharmaceutical supply chain management and procurement, and I am eager to apply these learnings in my future endeavors.