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# An empirical investigation of influence of procurement governance on procurement performance of SMEs in Nairobi, Kenya

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#### ABSTRACT

**Purpose:** This paper analyzed the influence procurement governance on procurement performance of SMEs in Nairobi Central Business District, Kenya. To accomplish the objective, the study set out five specific objectives which included; determining the effect of Procurement planning, procurement and disposal procedures, procurement record management, procurement code of ethics and complaints review mechanism on procurement performance of SMEs in Nairobi CBD.

**Design/ Methodology/Approach:** The study adopted a descriptive research design of a cross sectional type approach and sampled forty (40) SMEs out of the total number of four hundred (400) SMEs in Nairobi CBD through random sampling to take part in the research. Correlation and regression analysis results were generated using SPSS (version 2).

**Findings:** Regression analysis revealed that Procurement governance has a positive effect on Procurement performance with all the variables (Procurement planning, Procurement Disposal procedures, Procurement Record management, Procurement Code of ethics, Complaints Review mechanism) hence all these variables have a statistically significant effect on Procurement performance.

**Contribution to policy and practice:** The study recommends all SMEs in Nairobi CBD to adopt Procurement governance practices such as Procurement planning, Procurement Disposal procedures, Procurement Record management, Procurement Code of ethics and Complaints Review mechanism

**Originality/Value:** The study contributes to the academic understanding of how procurement practices might improve or hinder procurement effectiveness. As such, the present research may assist scholars to move beyond a simple dyadic context and toward examining complete supply networks.

# Background

Procurement governance in any organization is very important given that it handles quite a great amount of the organization's resources. Procurement and purchasing are often regarded as identical terms. Procurement remains the acquisition of goods or services in any

#### Mwikali (2018)

method including force or pillage. The process comprises planning and processing of requirements as well as the end delivery and authorization of payment (Lysons, 2015). Public procurement accounts for at least fifteen percent of global GDP and it is the largest share of government spending (Kwakkenbos, 2012), making it a very vital tool to achieve social, economic and other goals (Thai, 2001). According to Nakamura (2004), Public procurement is always seen as a part of waste and corruption becauseof many reasons for instance greater inspection of taxpayers and competing traders, thus leading to close monitoring which is essential in ensuring good governance.

Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) has many challenges, which include lack of finances and inadequate information (Nkonge, 2013). As a result SMEs are not recognized especially when participating in government bidding regardless of their education, sizes and level of production. To avoid this, it is the responsibility of all stakeholders (suppliers, procuring, financiers and beneficiaries of the procurement) to ensure an efficient, effective and transparent public procurement system. A government procurement contract in Kenya just like in other nations covers a broad range of supplies, works and services. Public procurement being part of Public Supply chains, need to be effectively managed to enhance performance, continuity and shared sense of value within the whole organization (Mc Adam et al., 2005). To sum up, Procurement both in public and private sectors. Some of the specific limitations SMEs face is strongly related to Public procuring practices. It is no surprise then, that involvement of SMEs in Procurement is one of the points of concern of Public procurement regulations and practices.

On the other hand, procurement systems have other shortcomings that not only challenge its ability for carrying out its mandate successfully but also lead to a public opinion that, it is not giving maximum value for money spent on procurement. Public sectors are more complex since they have so many departments and partners within the Supply chain structure where Procurement is part of it. This has called for a highly integrated, co-ordinate mechanism and procedural arrangement to ensure that procurement process applies appropriately to levels of control and probity within the sector that is procurement governance (Shakya, 2011).

Many studies on Public Procurement carried out are mainly on commercial and private sector both locally and globally. For example, Blowfield (2010), and Kasomi (2012) have found different impacts of Procurement governance on procurement performance. In Kenya, majority of reviewed studies focus on developed economies and no study has been directed towards analyzing the impact of Procurement governance, and especially among SMEs in Nairobi CBD. Thus, the study sought to bridge the knowledge gap by evaluating whether Procurement governance has an impact on Procurement performance on SMEs in Nairobi CBD. Locally, Wanjohi (2008) posited that, lack of adequate market information as a big challenge to small enterprises. This is as a result of failure to interpret and analyze the statistical data and poor internet connectivity particularly in rural areas. Aleri (2012), on his study, "The Perceived Effects of public procurement effectiveness among parastatals in Kisumu County", established that, the law has a major influence on procurement performance in parastatals. Jackinda (2011) did an investigation on, "the effectiveness of the Procurement performance measurement systems of large manufacturing companies in Nairobi" but did not address the factors affecting Procurement performance of SMEs in Nairobi CBD. This paper addresses the question whether procurement planning, procurement and disposal procedure, procurement record management, and procurement code of ethics affect performance of SMEs in Nairobi CBD,

After testing and correcting for the selection and self-report bias, the study found that procurement planning, procurement disposal procedures, procurement record management, procurement code of ethics, complaints review mechanisms govern the procurement of SMEs in Nairobi CBD. The variables had a statistically significant effect on performance of SMEs, because they improve procurement performance, which in turn ensures that there are no loopholes through which public resources can be misappropriated.

# **Literature Review**

#### Procurement Governance

According to Klakegg and Williams (2009), governance is related with words like administration, leading and control. Control means being able to make decisions, define limitations or delegate authority. Thus, governance is a word that has diverse meanings. Its increase to importance originates from the difficulties of hierarchical synchronization by firms or the state (Miller & Lessard, 2000). It also refers to the overall systems and procedural arrangement to ensure that procurement process applies appropriately to levels of control and probity. Good governance means competent management of a country's resource which is open, transparent, accountable and equitable. Accountability is one of the important tools of good governance where SAI Bangladesh played important role as its constitutional obligations (GOB, 2011). It provides the assurance that the policy process (policy formulation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation) is operating optimally with effectiveness, efficiency, and economy, and is underpinned by broader principles such as rule of law, transparency, accountability and integrity (OECD, 2014).

All sectors of government are influenced by the public procurement. Good governance in the public sector is instilled by improving general strategy of public procurement (Ogot, 2009). The government seeks to come up with a framework which will integrate Procurement plans, to connect both the internal and external customers (Crisan, 2012). The structure is a division of state authority focusing on reasonable public procurement policies and practices which are necessary essentials of good governance (KIPPRA, 2006). According to Aliza et al., (2011) the authority structure should guarantee accountability and transparency of the decisions made in giving the right contract to the right contractor.

Lack of legalized public sector SCM, affects service delivery negatively (Fuzille, 2015). The search for effective methods of fighting corruption has led to a progressively more wide acknowledgment that corruption is essentially a setback of governance (Hellman et al., 2000). Otieno (2004) clarifies that, public resources are misappropriated by irregular procurement activities in public institutions. In view of this, procurement governance consists of the following; procurement planning, procurement disposal procedures, procurement record management, procurement code of ethics and complaints review mechanism.

#### **Procurement Planning**

It is a process of choosing what to purchase, when to purchase and from what source. It is seen in terms of quality, cost and elasticity, which include a force on the viable capacity of the firm to meet client necessities. It is through the procurement planning procedure, that a procurement system is assigned after which the prospects for fulfillment of procurement requirements are determined. Thus the vital goal of the planning is to have a synchronized and incorporated act to meet the requirements for goods and services at a reasonable cost (OECD, 2006). It is the planning stage where most savings in the procurement process are achieved. Positive actions can be taken to guarantee emergency planning and preparedness to address

forthcoming procurement needs such as emergencies, even in institutions where planning is difficulty (Arrowshmith et al., 2000). The Public Procurement and Disposal Act (2005), section 26, states that, "All procurements shall be made within the approved budget of the procuring entity concerned through an annual procurement plan". A good planning is fundamental in optimizing the role of the procurement function towards achieving the general goals of the organization.

## Procurement and disposal procedures

The PPDA, 2015 repealed the PPDA, 2005 which requires that, "an Act of Parliament be enacted to prescribe a framework within which policies relating to Procurement and Asset disposal in respect of a State organ or any other public entity shall be implemented" (PPDA, 2015). This Act applies to all State organs and public entities with reverence to procurement planning, procurement processing, inventory and asset management, disposal of assets and contract management. It proceeds to list the entities that would fall under the definition of a "public entity" including but not limited to the National and County governments, the Central Bank of Kenya, state corporations and companies owned by public entities.

#### Procurement record management

The new Public Procurement and Disposal Act (2015) call for, "all procuring entities to handle procurement records appropriately and ensure transparency and accountability in the Public Procurement process" Enhanced record keeping practices ensures an orderly, efficient and effective manner with which the procurement transactions are conducted. It further reduces exposure of the procuring entity to legal challenge, financial loss and promotes efficacy in terms of human resources (PPDA, 2005).

## Procurement code of ethics and conduct

Ethics is the branch of understanding which is concerned with moral values and it is the basis with which most of the procurement related principles are based. Professional values of ethical conduct, no matter the organization, contain distinctive characteristics including commitments to; behave honorably in all aspects of work and professional activity, avoid practices made to take unwarranted advantage of others or the system, directing oneself in such a manner as to maintain trust and confidence in the integrity of the acquisition process, avoiding conflict of interest, sustaining the organizational standards and policies and all relevant legislation (CIPS,2013).

#### Complaints review mechanism

The PPARB Act, 2005 is a "continuation of the Public Procurement Complaints, Review and Appeals Board which was established under the Exchequer and Audit (Public Procurement) Regulations, 2001". It provides an overall complaints and grievances mechanism covering all aspects of projects hence stating that, "Powers should be given to an independent body or bodies (Administrative or courts) to review cases and demand corrective action (possibly using the threat of penalties for non-compliance)". However, the power to compensate harms remains with the judges (Sigma, 2000).

# Procurement Performance

Many organizations today are looking into a blend of objectives and initiatives to ensure that their procurement function is effective and efficient. Any procurement department can do well if he or she applies the five main elements to their processes which are; supplier performance, customer service, professionalism, cost performance and future direction setting. With the evolution in procurement, it is significant that, whatever is measured in not only essential to the organization but also to all the basic areas of procurement (Kakwezi, 2006). In Procurement, measurement yields profit to firms such as cost minimization, improved productivity and guaranteed provisions as was noted by Batenburg and Versendaal, (2006).

#### Procurement Governance and Procurement Performance

The increased demand for superior services in the public sector leads to the need to effectively succeed in public procurement to enhance performance, continuity and shared sense of value within the whole organization (Davis, 2008). But still the problem is not yet resolved especially in developing countries. Thus there is information gap to find out how the procurement procedure can contribute to an improved procurement function. Otieno, (2004) studied that; "irregular procurement activities in public institutions provide the biggest loophole through which public resources are misappropriated". He emphasized that, the government should exhibit efficiency in achieving goals and producing the types of services that the public needs through procurement governance.

Barden (2012) studied, "the challenges of procurement in South Africa" whereby a supply chain management system was adopted in South Africa in 2003 that would initiate procurement best practices. The system was granted a constitutional standing and has since then existed to deal with former unfair policies and practices. The study also revealed the challenges limiting effective and efficient implementation of public procurement. He further recommended for increase in competency through customized training and programs of stakeholders and the employment of good strategic sourcing practices. According to Aleri (2012), the law has improved procurement performance in parastatals. This can be established when you compare the number of procurement officers who agree with what the law has achieved compared with those that disagree with the same as per the findings of his study.

Muraguri (2013) examined policy in Public procurement implementation of the youth preference and reservations. The researcher found out that the youth preference and reservations policy on public procurement had not been fully implemented. The researcher also established that legislations and institutional challenges have a negative influence on the implementation of the youth preference and reservations policy in public procurement. He then recommended that, the government should run an awareness campaign among the procurement practitioners and budget holders on the reservations policy which calls for institutionalizing monitoring and training in all the enterprises and also including the practitioners in review of the public procurement legislation.

# **Materials and Methods**

The study adopted a cross-sectional research approach and sampled forty (40) SMEs out of the total number of four hundred (400) SMEs in Nairobi operating in CBD through random sampling method to take part in the research. Semi-structured questionnaires was used to gather primary data from respondents; procurement managers, procurement officers and stores clerks working in telecommunication, service, pharmaceuticals and food and beverages SIMEs operating in Nairobi CBD. Descriptive statistics and linear regression was used to draw inferences.

# Results

#### **Descriptive Statistics**

Descriptive statistics (**Table 1**) were used to determine the extent to which SMEs in Nairobi CBD applied procurement governance measures. The means were interpreted as follows: 1-1.49=strongly agree; 1.5-2.49=Agree; 2.5-3.49; Neutral; 3.5-4.49=Disagree; 4.5-5.0=Strongly Disagree.

<b>Table 1 Correlation</b>	Results
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Procurement Governance Constructs	Mean	SD
Effective Procurement plan saves time and money	2.36	0.449
Effective Procurement plan provide a framework to direct Procurement officers in the achievement of their tasks and duties	2.45	0.487
Good supply planning practices are used to ensure timely Procurement of goods and services	2.48	0.507
ffective Procurement plan ensures compliance with regulatory policies	2.68	0.541
Procurement and disposal of goods and equipment by Procurement entities are carried out in accordance with the laid down procedures in the Public Procurement Act, 2015	2.30	0.635
Disposal of assets should be based on a fair market value for each surplus item	2.57	0.662
Procurement entities dispose of their goods and equipment in a method that is efficient, consistent, and equitable according to the principles of the Public Procurement Act.	2.65	0.775
Asset disposal decisions, and the reasons for taking them, should be documented.	2.83	0.567
Record management helps in retrieving of crucial information when required	2.00	0.302
Record management reduces the time to allocate suppliers hence reduced cycle time	2.00	0.302
Good management enhances co-ordination of information use, maintenance and control of records	2.00	0.662
Good record keeping promotes efficiency of human resources.	2.04	0.515
Proper record keeping practices reduce vulnerability to legal challenges	2.09	0.562
Adoption of good practices and ethical standards help achieve value for money	2.04	0.475
Suppliers are treated fairly and equally throughout the Procurement process	2.13	0.548
Good practices and ethical standard enhances open and effective competition	2.13	0.626
The code of ethics adequately and clearly states the principles of integrity, professionalism, high standards, optimal use of resources and compliance with the legal framework	2.35	0.635
Procurement Governance discourages corrupt practices	2.35	0.647
PPARB fairly resolves disputes arising from disadvantaged candidates have suffered loss or damages due to the breach of a duty imposed on a Procuring entity	2.52	0.544
Complaints Review Mechanism plays a significant role in ensuring the enforcement of Procurement rules.	2.70	0.599
Complaints Review Mechanism enhances transparency in awarding contracts	2.70	0.599
Complaints Review Mechanism provides adequate legal remedy to aggrieved suppliers	2.70	0.599

Table 1 describe the responses on the procurement governance by SMEs in Nairobi CBD. An average mean score of less than 2.49 implied that, the respondents generally agreed with the procurement governance statements. They specifically agreed that an effective Procurement plan saves time and money(M=2.36, SD=0.449), that an effective Procurement plan provides a framework to guide Procurement officers in the achievement of their tasks and obligations(M=2.45, SD=0.487) and that good supply planning practices are used to ensure timely Procurement of goods and services (M=2.48, SD=0.507). However, they are neutral on whether an effective Procurement plan ensures compliance with the regulatory

policies (M=2.68, SD=0.541). Arrowshmith et al., (2000) also established that, procurement planning has a positive influence on the performance of procurement

#### **Regression Analysis**

Multivariate regression analysis was used to determine the significance of the relationship between the dependent variable and all the independent variables pooled together. **Table 2** shows the model summary.

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	
1	. 892ª	.795	.784	.112	

a) Predictors: (Constant), Procurement planning , Procurement disposal procedures, Procurement Record Management, Procurement code of ethics, Complaints Review Mechanism

b) Dependent Variable: procurement performance

**Table 2** show that R is the square root of R-Squared which correlate with observed and projected values of dependent variable suggesting that there was association of 0.892 between procurement performance and procurement governance. Adjusted R squared show the procurement performance varied with difference in procurement governance. The value of adjusted R-Squared (0.784) indicating a variation of 78.4% in procurement governance and procurement performance at a confidence level of 95%. Table 3 presents the Analysis of Variance results which indicates that independent variables are significant predictors of procurement performance (F statistics = 143.696, p=0.000 < 0.05). Table 4 shows the regression results.

Model		Sum Squares	of	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	7.21		4	1.803	143.696	.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	2.183		174	0.013		
	Total	9.393		178			

#### **Table 3 ANOVA Results**

a) Predictors: (Constant), Green Purchasing, Supplier Partnering, Adoption of Information Technology and Purchasing Ethics

b) Dependent Variable: procurement performance

As shown in Table 4, regression coefficients indicate that all the independent variables have a positive effect on Procurement performance. This is indicated by Procurement planning (t=3.296, p=0.001), Procurement disposal procedures (t=3.41, p=0.003), Procurement record management (t=2.587, p=0.016), Procurement code of ethics (t=2.212, p=0.001) and complaints Review Mechanism (t=2.025, p=0.013), meaning that all independent variables have a statistically significant effect.

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		В	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	2.871	0.460		5.635	0.000
	Procurement planning	0.349	0.119	0.053	3.296	0.001
	Procurement proposal procedures	0.455	0.119	0.062	3.414	0.003
	Procurement record management	0.343	0.151	0.706	2.587	0.016
	Procurement code of ethics	0.692	0.185	0.143	2.212	0.013
	Complaints review mechanism	0.243	0.120	0.292	2.025	0.013

#### **Table 4 Regression Results**

a) Predictors: (Constant), Green Purchasing, Supplier Partnering, Adoption of Information Technology and Purchasing Ethics

b) Dependent Variable: procurement performance

 $\beta$  values for all the independent variables have the following implication on the dependent variable: Holding all other factors constant, a unit increase in Procurement planning increases Procurement performance by 0.349 units; a unit increase in Procurement disposal procedures increases Procurement performance by0.455 units; a unit increase in Procurement Record management increases Procurement by 0.343 units; a unit increase in Procurement code of ethics increases Procurement performance by 0.692 units and finally a unit increase in Complaints Review Mechanism by 0.243 units. The constant value implies that holding all other factors constant, Procurement performance would be at 2.871 units.

# Conclusion

The study concluded that indeed Procurement governance has a positive effect on Procurement performance. It was established that Procurement planning affects Procurement performance with respondents agreeing that an effective Procurement plan saves time and money. They also pointed out that an effective Procurement plan provides a framework to guide Procurement officers in the achievement of their tasks and duties. Additionally, the study concludes that an effective Procurement and disposal procedure affects Procurement performance especially when they are carried out in accordance with the laid down procedures in the Public Procurement Act of 2015. The study also concludes that asset disposal decisions and the reasons for taking them should be documented. Furthermore, the study concludes that Procurement Record management is vital in the procuring process and consequently affects Procurement performance. Record management helps in retrieving crucial information whenever it is required and this makes Procurement effective. It also reduces the time needed to allocate suppliers thereby increasing Procurement performance. The study also concludes that Procurement codes of ethics are a necessary part of any procuring entity. The adoption of good practices and ethical standards help achieve both value for money and an open and effective competition which is healthy for purposes of improving the procuring process. Finally, the study concludes that a complaints review mechanism affects the Procurement performance of SMEs in Nairobi CBD. Finally, it was revealed that Complaints Review Mechanism plays a

significant role in ensuring the enforcement of Procurement rules. Moreover, it enhances transparency in awarding contracts.

## Areas for Further Research and recommendations

Based on the conclusion, this study recommends all SME's in Nairobi CBD to adopt Procurement governance practices such as Procurement planning, Procurement Disposal procedures, Procurement Record management, Procurement Code of ethics and Complaints Review mechanism. This is because these practices improve Procurement performance which in turn ensures that there are no loopholes through which public resources can be misappropriated. Through Procurement planning, SMEs will improve the quality, cost and flexibility of their entire procuring process which has a direct influence on the competitive capability of the SMEs to meet customer needs. An effective Procurement Disposable procedure transparency and accountability which reduces wastage of public resources. A will ensure well-managed Procurement record system is a sign of good management. Additionally, proper record management is a vital aspect of ensuring transparency and accountability. On the other hand, maintaining the right Procurement Code of ethics that is based on integrity, fairness and transparency fosters professionalism, which in turn improves Procurement performance. Finally, an overall complaints and grievances mechanism that covers all aspects of a Procurement project serves to provide adequate legal remedies to aggrieved suppliers as well as enhancing transparency and accountability.

#### **Declaration of Interests**

The author declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

# Author Statement

The authors declare that all of us have seen and approved the final version of the manuscript being submitted. They warrant that the article is the authors' original work, hasn't received prior publication and isn't under consideration for publication elsewhere.

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