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The Impact of Procurement Practices on Construction Project Effectiveness in Tanzania: A Partial Analysis of Public Projects

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ABSTRACT: This study explored how procurement processes influence the effectiveness of public building projects in Tanzania. A quantitative research approach was used to analyse the key factors affecting procurement practices and their impact on project outcomes. The findings showed that procurement practices significantly affect project efficiency, productivity, and quality within the construction sector. The study also identified various challenges and opportunities in Tanzania's construction industry and recommended improvements in procurement methods to boost overall project performance.

KEYWORDS: Procurement practices, construction projects, public sector

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INTRODUCTION

The Government of Tanzania has promoted the construction of public buildings as part of its plan to reach middle-income status by 2025 (Adam & Kamuzora, 2018). Developing public infrastructure boosts economic growth by providing residential, commercial, and service facilities that enhance productivity and living standards. After independence, the government launched several initiatives to expand public infrastructure to support employment, increase local production, and improve competitiveness in both domestic and international markets **(**Odilo, 2019). However, the successful and timely completion of public building projects largely depends on effective procurement processes and procedures (Athumani & Minja, 2015). Therefore, the study aimed to evaluate the role of procurement professionals in effectively managing public construction projects by analyzing procurement approaches, procedures, and challenges encountered during implementation.

Although the Government has recognised the importance of strong policies, strategies, and plans for securing effective public building construction, several policies and strategies have been implemented to support infrastructure development in the country (Ayoyi & Mukoswa, 2015). One of the key policies is the Sustainable Industrial Development Policy for Tanzania (SIDP-2020), which was officially adopted in 1996 to promote sustainable industrial and infrastructure development. However, many studies have demonstrated that robust procurement procedures play a crucial role in accelerating and ensuring the efficiency of public building projects.

Procurement managers and departments

Procurement managers are responsible for ensuring their organisations acquire goods and services that best support the achievement of organisational objectives. Generally, this involves identifying supplier partners that effectively balance quality and cost. Additionally, procurement managers are tasked with evaluating the organisation's previous purchases. This evaluation focuses on vendor performance, regulatory compliance, and the organisation's overall return on investment (ROI) (Ameh & Odusami, 2020).

In recent years, the roles and responsibilities of procurement departments have evolved and expanded significantly. Traditionally, procurement functions focused primarily on sourcing goods and services to meet internal organisational needs. However, organisations are increasingly recognizing the strategic value and insights that procurement managers contribute to project success.

As a result, procurement practitioners play a crucial role in organisational success by reducing costs, improving project outcomes, and establishing strategic partnerships (Ibrahim & Minja, 2015).

Based on the evidence, procurement departments must lead in promoting efficient public building construction. To achieve the best results, procurement managers should collaborate effectively with all organisational units. However, scepticism and doubts about procurement professionals' roles can hinder organisational support. These perceptions might also cause procurement managers to engage in unauthorised or covert procurement activities.

The idea of dark purchasing

The term "dark purchasing" describes procurement activities carried out outside established procedures and that are not easily traceable to capital expenditure or material inventory. This includes hidden, tail, unmanaged, and maverick spending. Rogue spending refers to any purchase made outside the formal procurement process. Consequently, when public buildings are constructed using ineffective procurement methods, this can lead to inefficiencies in the construction process (Eriksson, 2007).

This highlights the importance of a capable procurement department staffed by well-trained, ethically grounded personnel. The government's poor management of public building projects continues, partly due to the lack of efficient procurement departments with sufficient autonomy to support construction activities in the public sector (Kadima, Douglas, Kibet, & Manase, 2013).

The construction industry

IIn many countries worldwide, the construction industry contributes between 7 and 10 per cent to the gross domestic product. Furthermore, construction products and processes greatly impact safety, health, and environmental conditions (Baily, Farmer, Jessop, & Jones, 2005). People in modern societies are directly influenced by the processes and products of the construction industry, and their significance cannot be overstated (Ngai, Drew, Lo & Skitmore, 2002). However, construction projects cannot achieve their full effectiveness unless procurement methods and procedures are properly followed.

Procurement process

The procurement process remains crucial because it emphasises efficient methods for managing products and materials and adopts an integrated approach to supervise supplier relationships, processes, and outcomes. Effective construction project management generates profit through cost savings achieved through well-planned, carefully executed procurement (Baily, Farmer, & Jessop, 2005).

According to Engebø, Klakegg, Lohne, Bohne, Fyhn and Lædre (2022), gaining a deeper understanding of how different procurement processes affect various aspects of project performance is crucial to improving project completion and overall success. The procurement process encompasses activities such as purchasing, transportation, storage, and supply (Solochi & Mwiya, 2024). This study investigated the categories and processes that directly influence the management of construction projects in public organisations.

An effective procurement process is essential for the successful construction of public buildings, as it directly impacts quality, cost, and the timely delivery of projects. However, the construction sector in many countries often faces criticism for issues such as poor quality, customer dissatisfaction, frequent conflicts and disputes among stakeholders, and cost and schedule overruns (Barasa, 2014). In this context, it is clear that the procurement process significantly influences construction project management outcomes, both positively and negatively.

Complexity, unpredictability, and time constraints

According to Anvuur (2019), the increased complexity, unpredictability, and time constraints in construction projects have amplified the need for collaboration among various stakeholders involved in project delivery. Challenges in construction projects are often associated with inadequate procurement methods that prioritise short-term individual gains over the long-term performance of the project team (Kadima, Douglas, Kibet, & Manase, 2013). Therefore, within the scope of this study, it is crucial that stakeholders, including procurement officers and engineers, actively participate in the oversight and management of public infrastructure projects. Barasa (2014) argues that selecting the appropriate procurement procedure is essential to achieving successful outcomes in building projects. Similarly, Jeptepkeny (2015) examined how procurement procedures, specifically specification definition, bid invitation, bid evaluation, and contract negotiation, impact project performance at the Kenya Ports Authority in Mombasa. The findings indicated a significant and positive relationship between procurement processes and the successful completion of projects. As a result, the study concluded that procurement methods have a somewhat positive effect on project completion. Therefore, it is important for organisations to adhere to established procurement procedures to ensure effective implementation and successful project delivery.

Despite strict regulations, financial losses from public funds persist and are directly linked to inefficiencies in public procurement. A KPMG study (2008) found that only a very small proportion of procurements were conducted through open tendering. Furthermore, the field of public procurement continues to be affected by fraud and misconduct.

Role of Public Officials

In a subsequent investigation by the Kenya Anti-Corruption Commission (KACC), it was found that public officials manipulate legislation to limit the participation of interested companies in procurement processes or to influence the outcomes of bidding procedures (KACC, 2007). These procurement inefficiencies significantly contribute to poor management of public-sector construction projects. Consistent with this, procurement procedures have a significant impact on construction project outcomes. Furthermore, a study conducted by Konzo (2019) on the causes and effects of delays in construction projects at TANROADS in the urban area of Dar es Salaam revealed that inadequate design, insufficient consultation, and limited contractor capacity are among the key factors contributing to the failure of many projects.

Furthermore, the procurement process is recognised as a key factor in construction delays, mainly due to lengthy procurement procedures that delay material funding. There have also been cases of favouritism in bidder selection, leading to the appointment of contractors who may lack the capacity to carry out construction projects effectively. Delays in project completion often led to budget overruns, higher costs, and poor-quality public infrastructure. Therefore, this study aims to evaluate the role of procurement practitioners in the efficient management of public building projects in Tanzania, with a specific focus on the Public Service Social Security Fund (PSSSF) as a case study.

Furthermore, public procurement is a strategic practice that plays a crucial role in promoting good governance in the management of public funds. Additionally, public procurement is recognised as a government policy tool that influences economic, social, and environmental change. Therefore, public procurement must adhere to the principles of good governance and ensure the delivery of high-quality goods and services at reasonable costs through appropriate procurement policies, legal frameworks, institutional arrangements, and regulatory mechanisms (Lloyd & McCue, 2004).

Non-compliant practices

Although various instruments have been established to ensure ethical compliance, practitioners often deviate from these standards and engage in noncompliant practices (Alfred & Sealza, 2018). From the bidding process to the procurement of construction materials, the procurement procedure also supports the efficient construction of buildings. Consequently, it helps select suitable contractors and consultants for effective construction management. This study analysed various PSSSF projects to determine the role of procurement professionals in their successful completion. The government has often incurred additional and unwarranted construction costs. For example, the final cost of the NSSF building in Mwanza (Mafaohouse) exceeded the initial budget by 46%. Although the government has made efforts to ensure that effective procurement procedures are followed to improve the efficiency of public building management (Anvuur, 2019), A study by Gidigah et al. (2024) indicates that public procurement still faces unethical practices such as corruption, favouritism, and unfair competition among bidders. This results in poor management of public construction projects, leading to delays and the completion of incomplete or substandard public buildings.

Public expenditure and value for money

As a result, public expenditure does not represent value for money, especially given that public procurement makes up over 70% of total public spending. In many instances, procurement contracts are violated, and the cost of items does not align with market prices, resulting in additional expenses for the government (Alfred, & Sealza, 2018). Consequently, procurement functions have been criticised for contributing to poor project management in various African countries. This study also aimed to show how unethical procurement practices can adversely affect construction project outcomes.

Public Procurement challenges

The Government has implemented measures to address the challenges outlined above by enacting the Public Procurement Act of 2011 and its 2013 Regulations, which were later amended in 2016. It also established the Public Procurement Regulatory Authority (PPRA) to oversee and enforce the procurement code of conduct in Tanzania. However, reports of unethical practices in public procurement continue, resulting in poor management of construction projects for public buildings such as schools, hospitals, and police stations (Athumani & Minja, 2015). This situation has led to an investigation into how procurement practices influence the success of construction projects in Tanzania, focusing on a case study of the Public Service Social Security Fund (PSSSF).

Construction Management Theory

This article explores a "toolkit of concepts and relationships" developed to improve the productivity and quality of construction outputs. At the heart of the proposed theory is the distinction between the traditional construction management (CM) approach, in which contractors are tasked with delivering projects, and the concept of a manufacturing, product-oriented company. Consequently, a key goal of the theory is to shift perspectives in construction management from focusing solely on individual projects to broader organisational operations.

Additionally, Morkan (2020) states that the theory was introduced independently, without relying heavily on general management theories; instead, it focuses specifically on projects and activities within the construction industry. This focus makes these principles essential to understanding their CM theory and its application. The principles include the outcomes and processes of construction,

organisations, experiences, relationships, learning, and effectiveness. The main factors involve communication, feedback loops, and the degree to which relationships are well established.

The concept emphasises “taking responsibility for the performance of a construction organisation," which is assessed by effectiveness. Effectiveness is inversely related to waste caused by complexity and external interference that prevent organisations from achieving their agreed objectives. These concepts and definitions are essential to the study of construction management (CM) theory. Through a series of propositions about CM, CM teams (task groups), and relevant efficiency conditions, the theory provides a detailed description of construction organisations, processes, and management practices. This leads to the development of basic principles expressed mathematically, utilised to evaluate construction features that significantly influence CM decisions.

The six inherent indicators of difficulty (IDIs) are crucial variables in construction management (CM) theory and are used to determine the most appropriate CM strategy. These IDIs include:

i. Established relationships – consistent connections between teams that interacted prior to the start of the project.
ii. Relationship fluctuation – variations in project durations when working with or without pre-established team relationships.
iii. Relationship quality – how well teams have collaborated successfully in the past.
iv. Relationship configuration – the frequency and pattern of team interactions throughout the project; this is a complex measure because it can vary significantly over time during project execution.
v. Performance variability – fluctuations in group output across different projects.
vi. External interference – factors beyond the control of project managers that affect project performance.

Project size

The size of the project is determined by the number of team days because construction management (CM) involves selecting and organising the team. This results in five size categories, from small (100 team-days) to regular (5,000 team-days), and up to super (25,000 team-days). The theory then guides the selection of an appropriate CM strategy for a project, and the inherent indicators of difficulty (IDIs) are used to evaluate the impact of that choice. In this context, the project execution methodology refers to CM techniques and the five main CM strategies commonly used in practice.

Modern architecture

Modern architecture encompasses the "crafted traditional building” or architect-led model of the United Kingdom and the United States (specialist contractor design) and the European model (architect and engineer design). Design-based approaches establish a single point of responsibility for project delivery. Management strategies involve teams functioning under general client guidance (Jia, Hendry, & Stevenson, 2022).

Partnership approaches

Partnership approaches focus on building effective relationships rather than rigid roles and responsibilities, and they can be either strategic or long-term. Total construction service refers to industrialized building inspired by the automobile manufacturing industry, with a strong emphasis on reliability, quality, and continuous improvement. Anyone familiar with John Bennett's work over the past twenty years would not be surprised to see the Japanese construction industry included in discussions on comprehensive construction services. The "Big Five” companies and automated homebuilders are prime examples of complete service systems and their management. A case study of a large, family-owned German construction firm illustrates this concept, as they firmly believe this represents the future of the industry, although the theory itself does not fully support this view.

Each construction management (CM) method is thoroughly explained and analysed. A hypothetical project is then evaluated to identify the six inherent indicators of difficulty (IDIs), and a forecast of the project's success probability is made based on these values. These discussions demonstrate the theoretical application and practical usefulness of IDIs. However, whether this framework qualifies as a scientific theory with strong predictive power remains a matter of debate. As more data are collected across projects and the sample size increases, the model's ability to predict the likelihood of completing projects as planned becomes more apparent. Therefore, this theory underpins the arguments of this study, which aims to understand how design, management, consultancy, and contractor factors influence effective construction management of public buildings in Tanzania.

METHODOLOGY

The study employed a questionnaire to gather primary field data. The data were analysed using a quantitative approach with inferential statistical techniques. Simple and multiple linear regression models were utilised to explore the relationship between the dependent and independent variables. Multiple Linear Regression (MLR) was utilised to predict the dependent variable (Marill, 2004). Regression analysis was therefore employed to examine the link between the dependent variable and multiple independent variables. The MLR was expressed as:

$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1$ *(open tender)* $+ \beta_2$ *(restricted tender)* $+ \beta_3$ *(competitive tender)* $+ \beta_4$ *(force account)* $+ e$

Where:

Y = Effective building project performance

β_0 = Constant
β_1–β_4 = Regression coefficients
e = Error term
Table 4.1 shows the results of a simple linear regression analysis examining how procurement procedures affect effective construction project management. The results illustrate how procurement procedures serve as a predictor variable, impacting the efficiency of construction project management.

Table 4.1: Procurement procedures on effective construction project management

	Model				
Variable	***B***	***SE***	**t**	***p***	**95%CI**
Constant	18.064	.628	28.762	.000	[16.816, 19.313]
Procure. procedures	.136	.028	4.930	**.000*****	[.081, .191]
R2	.218				
F	24.307			**.000*****	
Df	1				

*Dependent variable: effective construction project management; N = 89; Residual df = 87.*p < 0.05, **p < 0.01, ***p < 0.001.*

The findings of the regression analysis presented in Table 4.1 elucidate the model equation under examination and confirm its statistical significance [F (1,87) = 24.307, p < 0.05] in describing the relationship between procurement practices and the effectiveness of construction project management. The model's goodness-of-fit is further supported by an R-squared of 0.218 (around 22%), indicating that approximately 22% of the variation in effective construction project management can be accounted for by the procurement procedures employed.
The coefficient for procurement procedures indicates that effective construction project management is strongly influenced by procurement processes (β = 0.136, p = 0.000). Specifically, a positive beta value of 0.136 suggests that for each unit increase in compliance with defined procurement procedures, there is approximately a 13.6% rise in overall project management efficiency. This highlights a strong and positive relationship between adherence to procurement procedures and the effectiveness of construction project management within the Public Service Social Security Fund (PSSSF) context. This link is particularly significant because procurement procedures directly impact effective construction project management, as they determine how resources, contracts, and project activities are planned, implemented, and monitored to achieve cost efficiency, quality, and timely completion.
PSSSF operates within strict public sector legal and regulatory frameworks. Adherence to established procurement procedures guarantees compliance with these regulations, thus aligning projects with governance standards that emphasise ethical and accountable practices. Additionally, because the PSSSF is responsible for safeguarding public resources, transparency remains vital. Well-structured procurement procedures foster transparency and boost stakeholder confidence in the fund's dedication to fair resource allocation and responsible spending.
Furthermore, the PSSSF's mandate includes careful risk management and financial transparency. Procurement procedures enhance the organisation's ability to assess risks, conduct proper due diligence in supplier selection, and ensure accountability in project implementation. By following standardized procurement practices, the PSSSF ensures that materials, labour, and services meet the required quality standards. This focus on quality is especially important for projects aligned with the fund's purpose of supporting public welfare.
Within the PSSSF framework, these findings align with existing research and contribute to the wider academic debate. For instance, Kashiwagi, Johnson, and Williams (2015) emphasise the strategic importance of adhering to procurement procedures to optimize project outcomes, a principle consistent with the PSSSF's focus on public interest. Likewise, Smith (2013) highlights the link between procurement practices and project quality, which strongly supports the fund's aim of delivering efficient public services.
Furthermore, Ebekozien, Samsurijan, Aigbavboa, Awe, Amadi, and Emuchay (2022) highlight that carefully selecting suitable procurement methods, guided by established procedures, can reduce project costs and enhance overall project success. Faraji, Rashidi, and Sorooshnia, (2020) also contend that procurement management and its processes significantly influence the success of construction projects. They emphasise that adhering to procurement procedures and developing strong outsourcing systems are vital for project success and the growth of construction firms. Overall, these studies collectively reinforce the idea that following procurement procedures is essential for the effective management of construction projects.

Barriers to Effective Implementation of Construction Projects
Barriers to effective construction project management can negatively affect project performance by causing delays, cost overruns, poor quality, and inefficiencies in resource use. These barriers often stem from inadequate planning, weak procurement systems, limited stakeholder coordination, insufficient technical capacity, and poor regulatory compliance, ultimately undermining the

successful delivery of construction projects. Table 4.2 below summarizes the results of multiple linear regressions on proposed procurement barriers that hinder effective construction project management.

Table 4.2: Procurement barriers and implementation of construction projects

	Model				
Variable	***B***	***SE***	**t**	***p***	**95%CI**
Constant	18.643	.593	31.445	.000	[17.464, 19.822]
Timeline for tendering	1.137	.493	2.307	**.024***	[.157, 2.118]
Low contractor's capacity	.483	.476	1.015	.313	[-.463, 1.429]
Costs overruns	1.998	.471	4.240	**.000*****	[1.061,2.934]
Favoritism	.208	.469	.443	.659	[-.725, 1.142]
R2	.237				
F	6.510			**.000*****	
Df	4				

*Dependent variable: effective construction project management; N = 89; Residual df = 84. *p < 0.05, **p < 0.01, ***p < 0.001.*

The regression analysis results shown in Table 4.2 above explain the model equation under review and demonstrate its statistical significance [F (4,84) = 6.510, p < 0.05] in explaining the link between barriers faced and effective construction project management. The model's fit is further supported by the R-squared value of 0.237, indicating that approximately 24% of the variation in poor construction project management can be attributed to barriers encountered in procurement practices.

Tendering timeline

The beta value of 1.137, along with its statistical significance (p < 0.024), highlights the notable influence of the tendering timetable as a potential obstacle to project implementation. This indicates a positive correlation between a longer tendering period and the challenges faced during project execution, with an estimated increase of about 1.137 units in project difficulties per additional unit of tendering duration. Such barriers may impact the implementation of the Public Sector Social Security Fund (PSSSF) in various contexts. Within the PSSSF environment, the fund operates in a dynamic setting where responsiveness is vital. However, extended tendering durations can impair efficiency and flexibility by delaying procurement activities, postponing project commencement, and potentially causing operational inefficiencies.

Additionally, extended tendering periods can immobilize critical resources, such as financial capital and human resources. This may limit the PSSSF's ability to pursue alternative investment opportunities. Furthermore, longer timelines might strain stakeholder relationships, as participants endure prolonged decision-making processes. Efficient tendering procedures, therefore, support timely coordination and effective collaboration among stakeholders, aligning with the PSSSF's objectives. The current findings align with those reported by Ling, Zhang, and Yew. (2022), who noted that project owners often delay awarding contracts or initiating tenders because prices exceed allocated budgets. Such delays in the tendering process can significantly affect the feasibility, scope, design, budget, and scheduling of projects, ultimately reducing the overall effectiveness of construction.

A similar phenomenon was reported by Ottou, Baiden, and Nani (2020), who highlighted inefficiencies in competitive tendering procedures that can cause delays and poor outcomes in infrastructure project implementation. Overall, the existing literature collectively supports the view that tendering barriers, especially delays in the tendering process, negatively impact the effectiveness of construction projects. Such delays have significant implications for project timelines, budgets, and outcomes, resulting in inefficiencies and challenges in project management.

The contractor's capacity

A p-value greater than 0.313 indicates that contractors' limited capacity does not significantly affect the successful execution of building projects under the PSSSF framework. This suggests that contractor capacity is not a major obstacle to project success. It may also reflect that the PSSSF enforces a rigorous pre-qualification process when selecting contractors. The study's findings show that the beta coefficient of 0.483 supports the notion that only competent contractors with the necessary technical expertise and financial capacity are awarded projects.

Therefore, limited contractor capacity might decrease, thereby reducing the impact of this constraint. Additionally, the PSSSF could have allocated resources to implement capacity-building programmes for contractors. Training sessions, workshops, and ongoing engagement might have been used to improve contractors' technical and financial skills, thereby easing challenges related to limited capacity. It is advisable for the PSSSF to adopt effective project monitoring and performance evaluation systems. These tools would enable the timely identification of contractors facing capacity issues and offer the necessary support to ensure successful project delivery.

Several previous studies (Zeng, Zhang, Wang, & Zhou, 2018; Jia, Hendry, & Stevenson, 2022) support the view that effective management of supplier or contractor capacity is vital for the successful execution of construction projects. These studies suggest that project managers can enhance project outcomes and ensure successful implementation by assessing supplier competencies, providing incentives, encouraging innovation, and strengthening contractor–supplier relationships.

Costs overrun

The statistically significant beta coefficient ($\beta = 1.998$, $p < 0.000$) indicates a strong effect of cost overruns as a deterrent to the successful completion of construction projects. The result suggests that for every one-unit increase in cost overruns, there is an approximate 1.998-unit increase in the hindrance of project success. These findings show that cost overruns are recurring challenges that negatively influence project schedules, financial resources, and overall project outcomes. The factors contributing to this effect are numerous and interconnected. Among the organisations considered is the PSSSF, which operates within predefined budget allocations often subject to legal and financial constraints.

Cost overruns directly impact these allocated funds and may lead to financial deficits, limiting the fund's ability to meet other obligations or invest in additional projects. Furthermore, financial strain can undermine the fund's long-term financial stability and reduce its capacity to achieve broader institutional objectives. In response to unexpected cost increases, there may also be a need to implement cost-cutting measures, which can result in reductions in resource allocation, labour input, or design quality. Such compromises in quality may negatively affect the durability, safety, and overall effectiveness of construction projects.

The main goal of the PSSSF mission, which seeks to promote public welfare, is hindered by subpar outcomes that directly diminish the expected benefits of constructed public buildings. Additionally, cost overruns can potentially undermine trust among key stakeholders, including beneficiaries, regulatory authorities, and the wider public. Stakeholders might doubt the fund's capacity to manage projects effectively, allocate resources, and meet financial targets. This loss of trust can seriously damage the fund's reputation and relationships with stakeholders. The literature indicates that properly managing cost overruns is essential to minimising the risk of project failure within organisations. Rauzana (2016) highlights several factors that contribute to cost overruns in construction projects, such as inaccurate cost estimation, implementation challenges, working relationships, and project documentation. The author emphasises the importance of effective project management in reducing cost overruns and delays during project execution.

According to Saidu and Shakantu (2016), material waste on construction sites can also cause cost overruns; however, the precise extent of its impact remains uncertain. The authors also argue that effective management of material supply and flow can help reduce such unnecessary costs. Therefore, it is essential for the PSSSF to address this challenge effectively to uphold its mission, ensure financial stability, and continue serving its beneficiaries.

Favoritism

The presence of favoritism among contractors was found to have a negligible and non-significant impact ($\beta = 0.208$, $p > 0.659$) on overall project success. This suggests that favoritism does not substantially affect the successful execution of projects. The findings also indicate that there is no significant bias in contractor selection within the PSSSF programme. Even when occasional instances of favoritism occur, they do not meaningfully influence the successful delivery of construction projects. This outcome may be due to several factors. Firstly, the PSSSF has likely implemented clear and strict procurement procedures to minimize the influence of bias. The use of robust procurement systems, including objective evaluation criteria, transparent processes, and fair competition, helps ensure that contract awards are based on merit rather than personal relationships.

Additionally, regulatory bodies responsible for overseeing public projects may enforce strict regulations to ensure fairness and transparency. Such measures can discourage favouritism, as non-compliance may lead to serious consequences, including legal action and disqualification from the project. Furthermore, the PSSSF may have implemented accountability mechanisms to prevent biased practices. These could include regular audits, independent external reviews, and robust systems for reporting unethical behaviour. These measures can effectively identify and address instances of partiality. Finally, the PSSSF's organisational culture and values may strongly emphasise integrity, fairness, and ethical conduct. This cultural foundation helps deter bias and encourages adherence to ethical standards.

Several previous studies support the view that impartial contractor selection based on appropriate criteria significantly increases the likelihood of successful project outcomes. Ayettey and Danso (2018) provide a comprehensive review of contractor selection criteria in the construction industry, emphasising the importance of choosing competent contractors without bias to reduce the risk of contractor default and enhance project success. A similar finding was reported by Abedin et al. (2021), who highlight the importance of unbiased contractor selection in achieving successful project outcomes. They also suggest that structured contractor selection frameworks can help both public and private project owners identify and select the most suitable contractors for their projects.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In summary, the study examines procurement dynamics within the PSSSF by analyzing procurement methods, procedures, and barriers that affect construction project outcomes. The findings show that procurement approaches significantly impact project performance, emphasising the need for effective procurement practices. Major barriers, such as lengthy tendering processes and cost overruns, are identified as key factors affecting project success, highlighting the complex relationship between procurement challenges and outcomes. The study emphasises that procurement professionals should adopt appropriate strategies and manage these challenges effectively to enhance project performance.

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