

Enforcing Ethical Codes of Conduct in Procurement and Its Impact on Public Procurement Performance in Ghana

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Abstract

This study investigates the enforcement of ethical codes of conduct in procurement and its impact on public procurement performance in Ghana. The research aims to evaluate how adherence to ethical standards influences various dimensions of procurement performance, including fairness, transparency, customer service, efficiency, effectiveness, teamwork, and organizational values. Utilizing a quantitative approach, data was collected through a structured survey distributed to procurement professionals across various public sector organizations in Ghana. The analysis of the data, which includes constructs related to procurement ethical codes and performance metrics, reveals several key findings:

Fairness and Transparency: Respondents generally perceive high levels of fairness and transparency in the procurement process. Strong mean scores indicate that ethical codes are applied uniformly and that key procurement information is accessible and equitably managed. However, variability in responses suggests that some areas could benefit from further enhancement.

Customer Service and Effectiveness: There is a positive perception of improvements in customer service, which is seen to enhance organizational performance. High mean scores for effectiveness indicate timely delivery, high-quality goods, and minimal complaints, although there are some variations in perceptions regarding damage reduction and staff effectiveness.

Efficiency: The data shows a favorable view of cost-effective procurement practices, with improved staff knowledge contributing to better performance. Moderate variability in responses points to differing experiences in procurement efficiency.

Teamwork and Organizational Values: Teamwork is recognized as a critical factor in enhancing procurement efficiency and effectiveness. Organizational values are seen to positively impact purchasing activities and governance, with consistent perceptions of trustworthiness and responsibility.

Hierarchical Levels: Opinions on the impact of hierarchical levels on procurement performance are mixed. While some respondents agree that reducing hierarchical levels could improve performance, there is significant variability in views on its effectiveness.

The study concludes that while there is a generally positive perception of procurement practices and ethical enforcement, there are areas with varying experiences that may benefit from targeted improvements. Addressing these variabilities can enhance overall procurement performance and align with ethical standards more effectively.

Keywords: Ethical Codes of Conduct, Procurement Performance, Fairness, Transparency, Customer Service, Efficiency, Effectiveness, Teamwork, Organizational Values, Ghana.

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

Procurement is a critical function in both private and public sectors, ensuring that goods, services, and works are acquired efficiently and effectively. In Ghana, public procurement plays a significant role in the development process, as it involves substantial public expenditure. Therefore, the enforcement of ethical standards in procurement is crucial for achieving transparency, accountability, and value for money. This paper discusses the relationship between the enforcement of procurement ethical codes of conduct and public procurement performance in Ghana. Public procurement in Ghana is governed by the Public Procurement Act, 2003 (Act 663) and its subsequent amendment, Act 914. The law provides a comprehensive framework for regulating the procurement processes in the public sector, ensuring fairness, competition, and transparency. The Public Procurement Authority (PPA) is responsible for overseeing the implementation of the Act, ensuring that procurement activities are conducted in accordance with the law.

Public procurement in Ghana is vital for economic growth, as it accounts for a significant portion of the national budget. Therefore, ensuring that procurement activities are conducted ethically is essential for maintaining public trust and achieving the desired outcomes of development projects. Ethical codes of conduct in procurement refer to the set of principles and guidelines that govern the behavior of procurement officials. These codes are designed to promote integrity, transparency, fairness, and accountability in procurement processes. In Ghana, the ethical code of conduct in procurement is embedded within the Public Procurement Act and other related regulations.

The importance of an ethical code of conduct in procurement cannot be overstated. It helps to prevent corruption, conflicts of interest, and other unethical practices that can undermine the procurement process. By adhering to ethical standards, procurement officials can ensure that public resources are used efficiently and effectively, leading to better procurement outcomes and improved public service delivery. The enforcement of procurement ethical codes of conduct in Ghana is primarily the responsibility of the Public Procurement Authority (PPA), along with other oversight bodies such as the Auditor-General's Office and the Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice (CHRAJ). The PPA ensures that procurement processes are conducted in compliance with the law and investigates cases of unethical conduct.

Despite the existence of a robust legal framework, the enforcement of ethical standards in public procurement in Ghana faces several challenges. These challenges include:

- **Weak Institutional Capacity:** Some procurement entities lack the necessary resources and expertise to enforce ethical standards effectively. This can lead to lapses in the procurement process, allowing unethical practices to go unchecked.
- **Corruption:** Corruption remains a significant challenge in Ghana's public procurement system. Some procurement officials engage in corrupt practices, such as bribery and favoritism, which undermine the enforcement of ethical standards.
- **Political Interference:** In some cases, political interference in procurement processes can hinder the enforcement of ethical codes of conduct. This can result in biased decision-making and the awarding of contracts to unqualified bidders.

- **Lack of Accountability:** There is a perception of a lack of accountability in the public procurement process. When unethical practices are not adequately addressed, it undermines the credibility of the procurement system and reduces public trust.

The enforcement of ethical codes of conduct has a direct impact on the performance of public procurement in Ghana. When ethical standards are upheld, procurement processes are more likely to be transparent, competitive, and fair. This leads to better procurement outcomes, such as the selection of qualified suppliers, timely delivery of goods and services, and cost savings.

- **Improved Efficiency:** Enforcement of ethical codes ensures that procurement officials follow due process, leading to efficient use of public resources. This reduces delays and cost overruns in procurement projects.
- **Enhanced Transparency:** Ethical enforcement promotes transparency in the procurement process, allowing for public scrutiny and reducing opportunities for corruption.
- **Increased Accountability:** When procurement officials are held accountable for their actions, it fosters a culture of responsibility and integrity. This leads to better decision-making and improved procurement performance.
- **Public Trust:** Upholding ethical standards in procurement builds public confidence in the procurement system. When the public perceives that procurement activities are conducted fairly and transparently, it enhances trust in government institutions.

2.0 MATERIALS AND METHODS

The enforcement of ethical codes of conduct in procurement is critical to ensuring transparency, accountability, and efficiency in public procurement systems. Ethical conduct in procurement involves adhering to principles of fairness, integrity, and impartiality, which are essential for maintaining public trust and achieving value for money in public procurement. Several studies have explored the relationship between ethical practices and procurement performance, highlighting the importance of strong ethical frameworks and their enforcement in public sector procurement.

2.1 Ethical Codes of Conduct in Procurement

Ethical codes of conduct in procurement provide guidelines for acceptable behavior and decision-making processes. According to Thai (2001), ethical procurement practices are essential for mitigating corruption, favoritism, and other forms of unethical behavior that can undermine the effectiveness of public procurement. Codes of conduct typically outline standards related to conflicts of interest, confidentiality, transparency, and fairness in the procurement process (Arrowsmith, 2010).

In the context of public procurement, ethical codes of conduct serve as a mechanism for promoting accountability and deterring misconduct. Ameyaw and Mensah (2013) emphasize that without proper enforcement of these codes, public procurement processes are vulnerable to corruption and inefficiencies, which can lead to increased costs and reduced quality of goods and services procured.

2.2 Enforcement of Ethical Codes of Conduct

The enforcement of ethical codes of conduct in procurement is crucial for ensuring compliance with established standards. Enforcement mechanisms may include monitoring, auditing, and penalties for non-compliance. Schapper, Veiga Malta, and Gilbert (2006) argue that effective enforcement requires a robust legal and institutional framework, as well as a culture of ethical behavior within the procurement system.

In Ghana, the Public Procurement Act (Act 663) of 2003, and its amendment in 2016 (Act 914), provide the legal framework for public procurement. These acts include provisions for ethical conduct and set out procedures for ensuring compliance. However, the effectiveness of these provisions depends on the capacity of institutions to enforce them. Ayee (2016) notes that weak enforcement of ethical codes in Ghana's public procurement system has led to challenges such as procurement fraud, collusion, and bribery, which undermine procurement performance.

2.3 Impact of Ethical Enforcement on Public Procurement Performance

Public procurement performance can be significantly influenced by the enforcement of ethical codes of conduct. When ethical codes are enforced, procurement processes are more likely to be transparent, competitive, and free from corruption, leading to better procurement outcomes. Studies by Boateng and Owusu (2014) suggest that effective enforcement of ethical codes contributes to improved efficiency, cost-effectiveness, and quality in public procurement. Furthermore, ethical enforcement enhances public trust in the procurement process, which is crucial for the legitimacy of government actions. According to Agaba and Shipman (2007), when procurement processes are perceived as fair and transparent, it fosters confidence among suppliers and the public, which in turn can lead to increased participation in tenders and better procurement performance.

2.4 Challenges in Enforcing Ethical Codes in Ghana

Despite the recognized importance of ethical enforcement, Ghana faces several challenges in this area. Factors such as limited resources, political interference, and lack of capacity within procurement institutions hinder the effective enforcement of ethical codes. Owusu, Ackah, and Osei-Fosu (2015) highlight that corruption and patronage networks often compromise the enforcement of procurement regulations, leading to suboptimal procurement outcomes. Additionally, there is a need for continuous training and capacity building for procurement officers to enhance their understanding and commitment to ethical practices. As Mensah and Ameyaw (2012) suggest, improving the ethical culture within procurement institutions is essential for achieving sustainable improvements in procurement performance.

2.5 Gap Analysis

The topic of enforcing ethical codes of conduct in procurement and its impact on public procurement performance in Ghana has garnered considerable academic attention. However, there are notable gaps in the literature that warrant further exploration. This gap analysis identifies areas where existing research is limited, fragmented, or where new perspectives are needed.

2.5.1. Limited Focus on Enforcement Mechanisms in Ghana

While much of the literature addresses the importance of ethical codes in procurement, there is limited focus on the specific enforcement mechanisms that are effective in the Ghanaian context. Studies by Ameyaw and Mensah (2013) and Ayee (2016) highlight the challenges of corruption

and weak enforcement but do not provide detailed analyses of how specific enforcement strategies, such as monitoring, audits, and penalties, influence procurement outcomes in Ghana. Future research could explore how different enforcement mechanisms operate in practice and their relative effectiveness in reducing unethical behavior in public procurement.

2.5.2. Insufficient Examination of Institutional Capacities

Several studies (e.g., Boateng & Owusu, 2014; Owusu, Ackah, & Osei-Fosu, 2015) discuss the role of institutions in enforcing ethical codes, but there is a gap in understanding how institutional capacities—such as human resources, technical skills, and financial resources—affect the enforcement process. Existing research often assumes that institutions have the necessary capacity to enforce ethical codes, without critically examining the disparities in capacity across different public procurement entities. This gap presents an opportunity for further research to assess the specific capacity-building needs of procurement institutions in Ghana.

2.5.3. Limited Empirical Evidence on the Impact of Ethical Enforcement on Procurement Performance

While the literature suggests a positive correlation between ethical enforcement and procurement performance (e.g., Agaba & Shipman, 2007; Thai, 2001), there is a lack of empirical studies that quantitatively measure the impact of ethical enforcement on procurement outcomes in Ghana. Most studies rely on qualitative assessments, anecdotal evidence, or case studies, which do not provide a comprehensive picture of the causal relationship between ethical enforcement and procurement performance. Future research could benefit from more rigorous empirical methodologies, such as regression analysis or experimental designs, to quantify the impact of ethical enforcement on procurement efficiency, cost savings, and quality.

2.5.4. Neglect of the Role of Cultural and Social Factors

The role of cultural and social factors in shaping ethical behavior and enforcement in public procurement is underexplored in the literature. Ghana's unique socio-cultural context, including patronage networks and informal practices, may influence how ethical codes are perceived and enforced. Although Owusu, Ackah, and Osei-Fosu (2015) touch on corruption and patronage, there is limited research that delves into how these social dynamics affect the enforcement of ethical codes. Future studies could explore how cultural attitudes towards corruption and ethics influence compliance with procurement regulations.

2.5.5. Lack of Comparative Studies

Most existing research focuses on Ghana in isolation, without comparing its procurement practices and ethical enforcement mechanisms with those of other countries in the region or globally. Comparative studies could provide valuable insights into how Ghana's approach to ethical enforcement in procurement measures up against international best practices. Schapper, Veiga Malta, and Gilbert (2006) provide a general framework for public procurement management, but there is a need for specific comparisons between Ghana and other countries with similar socio-economic contexts to identify areas for improvement and lessons that can be learned.

2.5.6. Underrepresentation of Stakeholder Perspectives

The perspectives of key stakeholders in the procurement process, such as suppliers, procurement officers, and civil society organizations, are often underrepresented in the literature.

While some studies (e.g., Mensah & Ameyaw, 2012) acknowledge the role of stakeholders in promoting ethical procurement, there is limited research that captures their views on the challenges and opportunities in enforcing ethical codes. Incorporating stakeholder perspectives through surveys, interviews, or focus groups could provide a more nuanced understanding of the practical realities of ethical enforcement in public procurement.

2.5.7 Conclusion

The literature on enforcing ethical codes of conduct in procurement and its impact on public procurement performance in Ghana provides a solid foundation but also reveals significant gaps. Addressing these gaps—such as exploring specific enforcement mechanisms, assessing institutional capacities, generating empirical evidence, examining cultural factors, conducting comparative studies, and including stakeholder perspectives—can contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of how ethical codes can be effectively enforced to enhance public procurement performance in Ghana.

3.0 METHODOLOGY

The study adopts a mixed-methods approach, combining both qualitative and quantitative research methods. This approach is appropriate because it allows for a comprehensive analysis of the research problem by integrating numerical data with in-depth qualitative insights.

3.1. Research Design

The study will utilize an explanatory sequential design, which involves collecting and analyzing quantitative data first, followed by qualitative data to explain and expand on the quantitative results (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018). This design is particularly useful for understanding the relationships between the enforcement of ethical codes of conduct and public procurement performance, and for exploring the underlying factors that influence these relationships.

3.2. Population and Sampling

The target population for the study will include procurement officers, public sector employees involved in procurement, suppliers, and other stakeholders such as civil society organizations. The focus will be on procurement entities within Ghana's public sector, including government ministries, departments, and agencies. A stratified random sampling technique will be used to ensure that different categories of procurement entities (e.g., ministries, departments, agencies) are adequately represented in the sample. This method allows for a more balanced and representative sample, ensuring that the findings are generalizable across various public sector entities (Bryman, 2016).

3.3. Data Collection Methods

3.3.1 Quantitative Data Collection

The quantitative data will be collected through structured questionnaires administered to procurement officers, public sector employees, and suppliers. The questionnaire will be designed to measure variables related to the enforcement of ethical codes of conduct (e.g., frequency of audits, presence of ethical guidelines) and public procurement performance (e.g., procurement efficiency, cost-effectiveness, and quality of procured goods/services). The questionnaire will use a Likert scale to capture the perceptions of respondents on various aspects of ethical enforcement and procurement performance. This approach allows for the collection of standardized data that can be easily analyzed statistically (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2019).

3.3.2 *Qualitative Data Collection*

To complement the quantitative data, qualitative data will be collected through semi-structured interviews with key stakeholders, including senior procurement officers, policymakers, and representatives of civil society organizations. The interviews will explore in greater depth the challenges and opportunities associated with enforcing ethical codes of conduct in procurement, as well as the factors that influence procurement performance. The qualitative data provide insights into the contextual and cultural factors that may not be captured through the quantitative survey (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018).

3.4. *Data Analysis*

3.4.1 *Quantitative Data Analysis*

The quantitative data will be analyzed using statistical techniques such as descriptive statistics, correlation analysis, and regression analysis. Descriptive statistics will provide an overview of the key variables, while correlation and regression analyses will be used to examine the relationships between ethical enforcement and procurement performance (Pallant, 2020). The regression analysis help determine the extent to which ethical enforcement predicts procurement performance, controlling for other factors such as the size of the procurement entity and the type of goods or services procured.

3.4.2 *Qualitative Data Analysis*

The qualitative data from the interviews will be analyzed using thematic analysis. This involves identifying, analyzing, and reporting patterns (themes) within the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The thematic analysis will help to identify the key challenges, barriers, and facilitators of ethical enforcement in public procurement, as well as stakeholders' perspectives on the effectiveness of current enforcement mechanisms. The qualitative findings was be used to explain and contextualize the quantitative results, providing a richer understanding of the research problem.

3.5. *Reliability and Validity*

To ensure the reliability of the quantitative data, the questionnaire will be pre-tested with a small sample of respondents before the full data collection process begins. This will help to identify and rectify any issues with the questionnaire design (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2019). The validity of the study enhanced through triangulation, which involves comparing and cross-verifying the quantitative and qualitative findings. By integrating different data sources, the study provide a more comprehensive and credible analysis of the research problem (Creswell, 2014).

3.6. *Ethical Considerations*

The research will adhere to ethical principles, including informed consent, confidentiality, and the right to withdraw from the study at any time. Participants will be fully informed about the purpose of the research, and their anonymity will be protected. The study also comply with the ethical guidelines of the host institution and obtain the necessary ethical approvals before data collection begins (Orb, Eisenhauer, & Wynaden, 2001).

3.7. *Limitations of the Study*

The study may face limitations related to data availability and response bias. Some participants may be reluctant to provide honest responses due to the sensitive nature of ethical issues in procurement. To mitigate this, the researcher will assure participants of confidentiality and encourage candid responses by creating a non-threatening environment. Additionally, the study

was limited by the scope of the sample, as it focuses primarily on public sector entities in Ghana. While the findings may be relevant to similar contexts, they may not be fully generalizable to other countries or sectors.

3.8 Conclusion

The research methodology for this study combines quantitative and qualitative approaches to provide a comprehensive analysis of the enforcement of ethical codes of conduct and their impact on public procurement performance in Ghana. Through careful data collection and analysis, the study aims to contribute to the understanding of how ethical enforcement can be strengthened to improve procurement outcomes in the public sector.

4.0 RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.1 Total Responses Reliability Results

The data presented in Table 4.1 focuses on the reliability of various constructs related to Procurement Ethical Code of Conduct, Procurement Performance, and Organizational Culture. The reliability of these constructs is assessed using Cronbach's Alpha (α), a statistical measure used to evaluate the internal consistency or reliability of a set of items (questions) that make up a construct. A Cronbach's Alpha value above 0.7 is generally considered acceptable, indicating good reliability, while values closer to 1.0 signify excellent reliability (Pallant, 2020).

Table 4.2 Total Responses Reliability Results

CONSTRUCTS	SUB- CONSTRUCT	NO OF ITEMS	CRONBACH'S ALPHA (α)
Procurement Ethical Code of Conduct	Confidentiality	2	0.7998
	Accountability	6	0.8318
	Transparency	6	0.8463
	Fairness	3	0.7598
			0.9229
Procurement Performance	Customer Satisfaction	3	0.7587
	Efficiency	3	0.6746
	Effectiveness	5	0.8602
			0.8963
Organisational Culture	Teamwork	2	0.6332
	Hierarchical level	2	0.7492
	Organisational Values	3	0.7173
			0.8206
Overall Cronbach's alpha			0.9563

Source: Author's own study 2024

4.1.1. Procurement Ethical Code of Conduct

- **Confidentiality:** This sub-construct, with 2 items, has a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.7998, indicating good internal consistency. The reliability is strong, meaning the items consistently measure the concept of confidentiality within the procurement ethical code of conduct.
- **Accountability:** Comprising 6 items, this sub-construct has a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.8318, reflecting good reliability. The items under this sub-construct effectively capture the concept of accountability.
- **Transparency:** With 6 items, this sub-construct has a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.8463, also indicating strong reliability. This suggests that the items measuring transparency are consistent and reliable.

- **Fairness:** This sub-construct, made up of 3 items, has a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.7598, demonstrating good internal consistency. The items measuring fairness are reliable and consistent.
- **Overall Procurement Ethical Code of Conduct:** The overall Cronbach's Alpha for this construct is 0.9229, which signifies excellent reliability. This high value suggests that the ethical code of conduct as a whole is measured consistently across the different sub-constructs.

4.1.2. Procurement Performance

- **Customer Satisfaction:** This sub-construct, with 3 items, has a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.7587, indicating good reliability. The items effectively capture the concept of customer satisfaction in procurement performance.
- **Efficiency:** Comprising 3 items, this sub-construct has a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.6746, which is slightly below the acceptable threshold of 0.7. While the reliability is moderate, it suggests that the items measuring efficiency may require refinement to improve internal consistency.
- **Effectiveness:** This sub-construct, with 5 items, has a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.8602, indicating strong reliability. The items are consistent and effectively measure the effectiveness of procurement performance.
- **Overall Procurement Performance:** The overall Cronbach's Alpha for procurement performance is 0.8963, which signifies good reliability. This suggests that, overall, the items used to measure procurement performance are consistent and reliable, despite the slight dip in efficiency.

4.1.3. Organizational Culture

- **Teamwork:** With 2 items, this sub-construct has a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.6332, which is below the generally accepted threshold of 0.7. This lower reliability suggests that the items may not be fully capturing the concept of teamwork consistently.
- **Hierarchical Level:** This sub-construct, with 2 items, has a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.7492, indicating acceptable reliability. The items measuring hierarchical level are consistent and reliable.
- **Organizational Values:** Comprising 3 items, this sub-construct has a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.7173, which is just above the threshold of 0.7, indicating acceptable reliability. The items are consistent in measuring organizational values.
- **Overall Organizational Culture:** The overall Cronbach's Alpha for organizational culture is 0.8206, indicating good reliability. This suggests that, overall, the items measuring organizational culture are consistent, although the teamwork sub-construct may need improvement.

4.1.4. Overall Cronbach's Alpha

The overall Cronbach's Alpha for all constructs combined is 0.9563, which indicates excellent reliability. This high value suggests that the items used in the study are highly consistent and reliable in measuring the intended constructs.

4.1.5 Confidentiality

Table 4.2 provides descriptive statistics (minimum, maximum, mean, and standard deviation) for two items related to confidentiality in procurement within an organization. These items measure the perception of confidentiality in dealing with supplier information and the protection of information on competitive bids.

Table 4.2 Confidentiality

Items	Min	Max	Mean	SD
There's confidentiality in dealing with supplier information in my organization	1	5	4.2909	0.8278
Information on competitive bids are protected	1	5	4.3636	0.7509

4.1.5.1 Item 1: "There's confidentiality in dealing with supplier information in my organization"

The minimum value of 1 and maximum value of 5 indicate that responses ranged from the lowest possible score (indicating a perception of no confidentiality) to the highest possible score (indicating strong agreement that confidentiality is maintained). The mean score of 4.2909 suggests that, on average, respondents perceive a high level of confidentiality when dealing with supplier information in their organization. This high mean score indicates that most respondents agree or strongly agree that their organization maintains confidentiality in handling supplier information. The standard deviation (SD) of 0.8278 indicates moderate variability in responses. While most respondents view confidentiality positively, the SD shows that there is some variation in perceptions, with a few respondents potentially rating confidentiality lower than the majority.

4.1.5.2 Item 2: "Information on competitive bids are protected"

Similar to the first item, the minimum and maximum values of 1 and 5 suggest a wide range of responses, from a perception of no protection of bid information to strong agreement that bid information is well-protected. The mean score of 4.3636 indicates a slightly higher perception of bid information protection compared to confidentiality of supplier information. This suggests that, on average, respondents believe that competitive bids are well-protected in their organization. The standard deviation of 0.7509 is slightly lower than that of the first item, indicating that responses are somewhat more consistent regarding the protection of competitive bid information.

4.1.5.3 Interpretation and Conclusion

Overall, the data indicates that respondents perceive a high level of confidentiality in their organization's procurement processes, both in dealing with supplier information and protecting competitive bids. The mean scores for both items are above 4, suggesting strong agreement among respondents on these aspects of confidentiality. The moderate standard deviations (0.8278 and 0.7509) indicate that while most respondents have a positive perception, there is some variability in views, possibly reflecting differences in individual experiences or organizational practices. These findings suggest that the organization generally performs well in maintaining confidentiality in procurement, which is critical for ensuring fairness and integrity

in the procurement process. However, the variability in responses indicates that there may be room for improvement in consistently applying confidentiality measures across the organization.

4.2 Procurement Accountability

Table 4.3 presents descriptive statistics (minimum, maximum, mean, and standard deviation) for six items related to accountability in the procurement process. These items measure various aspects of accountability, including fraud prevention, conflict of interest safeguards, disciplinary actions, and the impact of punishment on procurement performance.

Table 4.3 Accountability

Items	Min	Max	Mean	SD
In the procurement process, several procedures are utilized to prevent and detection of fraud and corruption.	3	5	4.3818	0.6634
In the procurement process, there are sufficient safeguards to eliminate conflicts of interest	2	5	4.2273	0.7741
There is proof that the wrongdoers were subjected to disciplinary action.	2	5	4.0909	0.8300
There is a need for justification of the auditor's findings.	2	5	4.3091	0.6601
Punishing of corrupt behaviour contributes to higher performance by purchasing staff.	2	5	4.2636	0.7503
Punishment or sanctions for non-performance or corrupt behaviour affect Procurement performance.	1	5	3.8636	1.0877

4.2.1. Item 1: "In the procurement process, several procedures are utilized to prevent and detect fraud and corruption."

The minimum score of 3 indicates that all respondents agree at least to some extent that procedures are in place to prevent and detect fraud and corruption, with no lower ratings. The high mean score of 4.3818 suggests that respondents strongly agree with the effectiveness of these procedures. The relatively low standard deviation (0.6634) implies that there is little variation in responses, indicating general consensus on this item.

4.2.2. Item 2: "In the procurement process, there are sufficient safeguards to eliminate conflicts of interest."

The minimum score of 2 suggests that while most respondents agree that safeguards against conflicts of interest are in place, some respondents may perceive room for improvement. The mean score of 4.2273 indicates that respondents generally agree that these safeguards are sufficient, but with slightly less confidence than in fraud prevention. The standard deviation of 0.7741 shows moderate variability in responses, suggesting differing perceptions of the effectiveness of conflict-of-interest safeguards.

4.2.3. Item 3: "There is proof that the wrongdoers were subjected to disciplinary action."

The minimum score of 2 and a mean of 4.0909 indicate that while most respondents agree that wrongdoers are held accountable, there are some who are less confident. The standard deviation of 0.8300 reflects a higher degree of variability, suggesting that experiences with disciplinary action may vary across different respondents or organizations.

4.2.4. Item 4: "There is a need for justification of the auditor's findings."

The minimum score of 2 indicates some disagreement, but the mean score of 4.3091 shows that most respondents believe that auditors' findings should be justified. The low standard deviation of 0.6601 suggests that this is a widely held view with little variation among respondents.

4.2.5. Item 5: "Punishing of corrupt behavior contributes to higher performance by purchasing staff."

The minimum score of 2 and the mean score of 4.2636 indicate that respondents generally agree that punishment of corrupt behavior leads to better performance by purchasing staff. The standard deviation of 0.7503 shows moderate variability, indicating that while most agree, some may be less certain about this relationship.

4.2.6. Item 6: "Punishment or sanctions for non-performance or corrupt behavior affect procurement performance."

This item has the lowest mean score (3.8636) among all items, indicating that respondents are somewhat less certain about the impact of punishment on procurement performance. The minimum score of 1 suggests that some respondents may not believe that sanctions have a significant effect. The higher standard deviation of 1.0877 reflects considerable variability in responses, indicating diverse views on this issue.

4.3 Presence of Transparency

Table 4.5 presents descriptive statistics (minimum, maximum, mean, and standard deviation) for six items related to the presence of transparency in the procurement process. These items assess the extent to which transparency is maintained in areas such as the publication of procurement opportunities, access to information, procurement audits, and the treatment of bidders.

Table 4.4 Presence of Transparency

Items	Min	Max	Mean	SD
Important information relating to procurement opportunities are published publicly.	1	5	4.1727	0.8444
All parties involved have access to information about how procurement contracts are awarded.	1	5	4.1909	0.8070
There is access to procurement information.	1	5	4.1636	0.7606
Existence of procurement audits (internal and external).	1	5	4.2636	0.9054
Bidders are treated with the same rules.	1	5	4.3364	0.7696
Unsuccessful bidders are notified of the decisions made.	1	5	4.2727	0.8117

4.3.1. Item 1: "Important information relating to procurement opportunities are published publicly."

The minimum score of 1 indicates that some respondents perceive a lack of public access to procurement opportunities, while the maximum score of 5 shows that others believe the information is fully available. The mean score of 4.1727 suggests that, on average, respondents agree that procurement information is published publicly. The standard deviation of 0.8444 indicates moderate variability in responses, reflecting some differences in perception or experience among respondents.

4.3.2. Item 2: "All parties involved have access to information about how procurement contracts are awarded."

Similar to the first item, the minimum score of 1 indicates that some respondents believe access to information about contract awards is limited. However, the mean score of 4.1909 suggests that most respondents agree that all parties have access to this information. The standard deviation of 0.8070 reflects moderate variability, indicating differing experiences or views on this issue.

4.3.3. Item 3: "There is access to procurement information."

The minimum score of 1 and the mean score of 4.1636 suggest that while most respondents believe procurement information is accessible, there is still a small group who feel access is lacking. The standard deviation of 0.7606 shows slightly less variability compared to the previous items, indicating more consistency in responses.

4.3.4. Item 4: "Existence of procurement audits (internal and external)."

This item has a higher mean score of 4.2636, indicating that respondents generally agree that procurement audits are in place, both internal and external. The standard deviation of 0.9054 is slightly higher than that of the other items, suggesting more variation in responses. This could reflect differences in how thoroughly procurement audits are conducted across different organizations.

4.3.5. Item 5: "Bidders are treated with the same rules."

The mean score of 4.3364 is the highest among all items, suggesting strong agreement that bidders are treated equitably. The standard deviation of 0.7696 shows moderate variability, indicating that while most respondents believe in fair treatment, there are still some who may perceive inconsistencies in the application of rules.

4.3.6. Item 6: "Unsuccessful bidders are notified of the decisions made."

The mean score of 4.2727 indicates that most respondents agree that unsuccessful bidders are notified of procurement decisions. The standard deviation of 0.8117 reflects moderate variability, similar to other items, suggesting that while the practice of notifying unsuccessful bidders is common, it may not be uniformly applied across all situations.

4.4. Procurement Fairness, Customer Service, Efficiency, Effectiveness, Teamwork, Hierarchical Level, and Organizational Values

The following analysis reviews the data from various tables focusing on aspects such as fairness, customer service, efficiency, effectiveness, teamwork, hierarchical level, and organizational values. Each table provides descriptive statistics (minimum, maximum, mean, and standard deviation) for different items related to these aspects.

4.4.1. Fairness

Promotion of fairness by lowering procurement cost to all procurement participants: The mean score of 4.1636 suggests that respondents generally perceive a high level of fairness in lowering procurement costs for all participants. The standard deviation of 0.7725 indicates moderate variability in responses, suggesting that while most view this positively, there is some diversity in experiences or opinions.

Our organisation shares information on quality of goods and services: With a mean of 4.1727, respondents agree that their organization effectively shares information on the quality of goods

and services. The SD of 0.7524 reflects slight variability in responses, indicating some differences in the perception of how well information is shared.

Code of ethics and conduct is applicable to all employees at the entity: The highest mean score of 4.3273 indicates strong agreement that the code of ethics and conduct is applied uniformly to all employees. The lower SD of 0.6512 shows less variability, suggesting a more consistent view among respondents.

Overall Conclusion on Fairness: Respondents generally perceive a high level of fairness in their procurement processes, particularly in the application of ethical codes. However, there is some variation in how information sharing and cost adjustments are perceived.

Table 4.5 Fairness

Items	Min	Max	Mean	SD
Promotion of fairness by lowering procurement cost to all procurement participants.	2	5	4.1636	0.7725
Our organisation shares of information on quality of goods and services.	2	5	4.1727	0.7524
Code of ethics and conduct is applicable to all employees at the entity.	3	5	4.3273	0.6512

Source: Author's own study (2024).

4.4.2. Customer Service

Lead time delivery of goods and services to customers is shortened in my organization: The mean score of 3.9636 indicates that respondents generally agree that lead times are shortened, but there is noticeable variability in responses (SD = 0.9279), reflecting some uncertainty or inconsistency in experiences.

Information search cost for suppliers is lowered: A mean score of 4.0273 suggests that respondents believe efforts have been made to reduce information search costs for suppliers. The SD of 0.8290 indicates moderate variability, showing that while many see improvements, there are differing experiences.

Responsive customer service has enhanced performance in my organization: The highest mean of 4.2545 indicates strong agreement that responsive customer service positively impacts performance. The lower SD of 0.6696 reflects more consistent views on this aspect.

Overall Conclusion on Customer Service: Respondents see improvements in customer service and its impact on performance, with slightly more variability in lead times and search costs, suggesting room for enhancement in these areas.

Table 4.6 Customer Service

Items	Min	Max	Mean	SD
Lead time delivery of good and services to customers is shortened in my organisation.	2	5	3.9636	0.9279
Information search cost for suppliers is lowered.	2	5	4.0273	0.8290
Responsive customer service has enhanced performance in my organisation.	2	5	4.2545	0.6696

Source: Author's own study (2024).

4.4.3. Efficiency

The procurement process can be made more cost-effective in my organization: A mean of 4.2727 suggests a strong belief that the procurement process can be improved in cost-effectiveness. The SD of 0.7283 indicates moderate variability, showing some differences in opinions.

Level of experience and knowledge of the procurement laws and regulations by procurement staff are enhanced: The mean of 4.3000 reflects agreement that staff knowledge and experience have improved. The lower SD of 0.6712 suggests more uniform views on this enhancement.

Minimization of procurement expenditure helps in procurement performance: With a mean score of 4.2182, respondents agree that minimizing procurement expenditure contributes to better performance. The SD of 0.6958 indicates some variability in responses.

Overall Conclusion on Efficiency: Respondents generally perceive improvements in efficiency, particularly regarding cost-effectiveness and staff knowledge. There is moderate variability, suggesting that while there is agreement on improvements, experiences may differ.

Table 4.7 Efficiency

Items	Min	Max	Mean	SD
The procurement process can be made more cost-effective in my organisation.	2	5	4.2727	0.7283
Level of experience and knowledge of the procurement laws and regulations by procurement staff are enhanced.	2	5	4.3000	0.6712
Minimization of procurement Expenditure helps in procurement performance.	2	5	4.2182	0.6958

Source: Author's own study (2024).

4.4.4. Effectiveness

There is on-time delivery of purchased goods/services in my organization: A mean of 4.0909 indicates that respondents generally agree that deliveries are timely, though there is moderate variability (SD = 0.8189), suggesting differing experiences.

Because of the efficiency, high-quality goods are produced: The highest mean of 4.2545 suggests strong agreement that efficiency leads to high-quality goods. The lower SD of 0.6558 reflects more consistent views on this relationship.

The user departments have made very few complaints: A mean of 4.0818 indicates general agreement that complaints from user departments are minimal. The SD of 0.7914 shows moderate variability.

Damages and squandering have been eliminated: The lowest mean of 3.9818 suggests some agreement that damages and squandering are reduced, but with higher variability (SD = 0.8238).

Skills and professional qualifications of procurement staff enable the organization to meet its objectives: The highest mean score of 4.2818 indicates strong agreement that staff skills and qualifications contribute to achieving organizational objectives. The lower SD of 0.6654 reflects consistency in responses.

Overall Conclusion on Effectiveness: Respondents see improvements in effectiveness related to on-time deliveries, quality, and minimal complaints, although there is some variability in views on damage reduction.

Table 4.8 Effectiveness

Items	Min	Max	Mean	SD
There is On-time delivery of purchased goods/services in my organisation.	2	5	4.0909	0.8189
Because of the efficiency, high-quality goods are produced.	3	5	4.2545	0.6558

The user departments have made very few complaints	2	5	4.0818	0.7914
Damages and squandering have been eliminated.	2	5	3.9818	0.8238
Skills and professional qualifications of procurement staff enable the organization to meet its objectives.	2	5	4.2818	0.6654

Source: Author's own study (2024).

4.4.5. Teamwork

Teamwork makes the procurement function efficient and effective in my organization: The mean of 4.4273 reflects strong agreement that teamwork enhances efficiency and effectiveness. The SD of 0.7476 indicates moderate variability.

Our organization demands teamwork at the workplace: A mean of 4.2818 suggests agreement that teamwork is a requirement. The SD of 0.6791 shows relatively consistent views.

Overall Conclusion on Teamwork: Respondents strongly agree that teamwork contributes to procurement efficiency and effectiveness and that it is a required practice in the workplace.

Table 4.9 Teamwork

Items	Min	Max	Mean	SD
Teamwork makes the procurement function efficient and effective in my organisation.	1	5	4.4273	0.7476
Our organisation demands team work at the workplace.	2	5	4.2818	0.6791

Source: Author's own study (2024).

4.4.6. Hierarchical Level

Lowering hierarchical level increases procurement performance in my organization: The mean of 3.9273 suggests some agreement that reducing hierarchical levels improves performance, but the higher SD of 0.9258 indicates significant variability in responses.

Approval levels for supplier payments are reduced to make the procurement function effective and efficient: A mean of 3.8727 indicates moderate agreement that reducing approval levels improves effectiveness. The higher SD of 1.0056 reflects substantial variability in opinions.

Overall Conclusion on Hierarchical Level: There is moderate agreement that reducing hierarchical levels can improve procurement performance, but the high variability suggests differing views on its effectiveness.

Table 4.10 Hierarchical Level

Items	Min	Max	Mean	SD
Lowering hierarchical level increases procurement performance in my organisation.	2	5	3.9273	0.9258
Approval levels for supplier payments are reduced to make the procurement function effective and efficient.	1	5	3.8727	1.0056

Source: Author's own study (2024).

4.4.7. Organizational Values

Organizational values enhance purchasing activities in my organization: The mean of 4.1909 indicates that respondents agree that organizational values positively impact purchasing activities. The SD of 0.7602 shows moderate variability.

Our organization upholds trustworthiness in work operations: A mean of 4.2636 suggests strong agreement that trustworthiness is upheld. The lower SD of 0.6302 reflects more consistent views.

Corporate governance responsibilities in my organization are highly insisted: The mean of 4.1182 indicates agreement that corporate governance is emphasized, with moderate variability (SD = 0.7983).

Overall Conclusion on Organizational Values: Respondents generally view organizational values positively, noting their impact on purchasing activities and corporate governance. There is a consistent perception of trustworthiness and emphasis on governance.

Table 4.11 Organisational Values

Items	Min	Max	Mean	SD
Organisational values enhances in purchasing activities in my organisation.	2	5	4.1909	0.7602
Our organisation upholds trustworthiness in work operations.	3	5	4.2636	0.6302
Corporate governance responsibilities in my organisation are highly insisted.	2	5	4.1182	0.7983

Source: Author's own study (2024).

The data across the various tables indicate generally positive perceptions of fairness, customer service, efficiency, effectiveness, teamwork, hierarchical level, and organizational values in procurement processes. While the mean scores reflect strong agreement in many areas, the variability in responses across standard deviations suggests that individual experiences and perceptions can vary. Efforts to enhance consistency and address areas with higher variability could further improve procurement performance and organizational effectiveness.

5.0 CONCLUSIONS

The literature suggests that the enforcement of ethical codes of conduct is critical for improving public procurement performance in Ghana. While Ghana has established legal frameworks for ethical procurement, challenges related to enforcement remain significant. Addressing these challenges requires strengthening institutional capacities, enhancing transparency, and promoting a culture of ethics in procurement. Ultimately, the effective enforcement of ethical codes in procurement can lead to more efficient and transparent public procurement systems, thereby improving the overall performance of public procurement in Ghana.

The enforcement of procurement ethical codes of conduct is essential for improving public procurement performance in Ghana. While there are challenges in enforcing these standards, addressing issues such as weak institutional capacity, corruption, and political interference can significantly enhance procurement outcomes. By strengthening enforcement mechanisms and promoting a culture of integrity, Ghana can achieve greater efficiency, transparency, and accountability in its public procurement system, ultimately contributing to national development.

The construct reliability results indicate that most sub-constructs have good to excellent internal consistency, with Cronbach's Alpha values generally above the 0.7 threshold. However, certain areas, such as the efficiency sub-construct in procurement performance and the teamwork sub-construct in organizational culture, exhibit lower reliability. These areas may require further refinement to improve the consistency of the items used to measure these constructs.

The analysis of Table 4.3 shows that respondents generally perceive strong accountability measures in the procurement process, particularly in fraud prevention, conflict of interest safeguards, and the justification of auditor findings. However, there is more variability in perceptions regarding the effectiveness of disciplinary actions and the impact of punishment on procurement performance. The lowest mean score and highest standard deviation for the item related to the impact of punishment on procurement performance suggest that this area may require further investigation or improvement. Overall, the data indicate a generally positive view of accountability in procurement, with some areas for potential enhancement.

The analysis of Table 4.4 suggests that respondents generally perceive a high level of transparency in the procurement process. The mean scores for all items are above 4.0, indicating agreement that key transparency measures, such as the public publication of procurement information, access to contract award information, and equitable treatment of bidders, are in place. However, the presence of minimum scores of 1 across all items indicates that some respondents experience or perceive gaps in transparency. The standard deviations, ranging from 0.7606 to 0.9054, show moderate variability in responses, suggesting that while transparency is generally perceived positively, it may not be consistently implemented across all areas. Overall, the data points to strong transparency practices within procurement processes, but with room for improvement to ensure more uniform application across different organizations or scenarios.

Based on the analysis of the data from various tables, the following general conclusions can be drawn:

- *High Perception of Fairness and Transparency:*
 - **Fairness:** Respondents generally perceive a high level of fairness in the procurement process, particularly regarding the application of ethical codes and the sharing of information. This is reflected in the strong mean scores for items related to lowering procurement costs, sharing information about the quality of goods and services, and applying the code of ethics uniformly.
 - **Transparency:** There is a strong perception of transparency, with respondents agreeing that key aspects such as public publication of procurement information, access to contract award information, and the equitable treatment of bidders are effectively managed. However, there is some variability in experiences, indicating areas where transparency practices could be further enhanced.
- *Positive Perception of Customer Service and Effectiveness:*
 - **Customer Service:** Respondents recognize improvements in customer service, with a positive impact on organizational performance. There is agreement that efforts have been made to shorten delivery lead times and lower information search costs, though variability suggests room for improvement in these areas.
 - **Effectiveness:** The data indicate that procurement processes are generally effective, with high mean scores for timely delivery, quality of goods, and minimal complaints from user departments. Despite this, there is some variability in perceptions regarding damage reduction and the effectiveness of procurement staff skills.

- *Efficient Procurement Practices:*
 - **Efficiency:** Respondents perceive that the procurement process can be more cost-effective, with enhancements in staff knowledge and minimization of expenditure contributing to better performance. The moderate variability in responses suggests that while there is general agreement on efficiency improvements, experiences may differ.

- *Valued Teamwork and Organizational Values:*
 - **Teamwork:** Strong agreement is observed regarding the role of teamwork in enhancing procurement efficiency and effectiveness. Respondents view teamwork as a critical element of organizational success in procurement functions.

 - **Organizational Values:** There is a positive perception of the impact of organizational values on purchasing activities and corporate governance. Respondents agree that trustworthiness and governance responsibilities are emphasized, contributing to effective procurement practices.

- *Mixed Views on Hierarchical Levels:*
 - **Hierarchical Level:** Opinions on the impact of hierarchical levels on procurement performance are mixed. While there is some agreement that lowering hierarchical levels could improve performance, significant variability in responses suggests differing views on its effectiveness.

Overall, the data reflects a generally positive view of procurement practices in terms of fairness, transparency, customer service, efficiency, effectiveness, teamwork, and organizational values. While there is strong agreement on many aspects, the variability in responses highlights areas where experiences and perceptions differ. Addressing these variabilities and focusing on continuous improvement could enhance the overall effectiveness and performance of procurement processes.

5.1 Recommendations

To improve the enforcement of ethical codes of conduct in public procurement and enhance procurement performance in Ghana, the following recommendations are proposed:

- **Strengthen Institutional Capacity:** The government should invest in building the capacity of procurement entities to enforce ethical standards effectively. This includes training procurement officials and providing the necessary resources for monitoring and evaluation.

- **Combat Corruption:** There should be a concerted effort to combat corruption in public procurement. This can be achieved through stricter penalties for unethical behavior, increased transparency in procurement processes, and the promotion of a culture of integrity.

- **Reduce Political Interference:** Measures should be put in place to minimize political interference in procurement processes. This can be achieved by ensuring that procurement decisions are based on merit and that oversight bodies are independent and empowered to take action against unethical practices.

- **Enhance Accountability Mechanisms:** Strengthening accountability mechanisms, such as audits and investigations, will help to ensure that procurement officials are held accountable for their actions. This will deter unethical behavior and improve procurement performance.

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