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INFLUENCE OF PROCUREMENT EXPERTISE ON PROCUREMENT REGULATORY COMPLIANCE LEVEL IN PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES IN KENYA

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: This research focused on the influence of procurement expertise on procurement regulatory compliance level in public universities in Kenya.

Methodology: This study adopted the ex-post facto survey research design. The target population was a total of thirty one chartered public universities in Kenya, which acted as the unit of analysis. The study sample comprised of 333 respondents with respect to the unit of observation which included, chief procurement officers, Principal procurement officers, senior procurement officers and procurement officers. This study adopted a census because the sample size of the study was small. This study further used questionnaires to collect primary data similar to the previous research projects. Questionnaires contained closed and open-ended questions. The pilot study was conducted at Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology. Data collected from the field was coded and cleaned to remove outliers or missing values and categorized manually according to the questionnaire items using frequency distribution tables and percentages. The researcher used both descriptive and inferential statistics with the help of statistical package of Social Science (SPSS) version 24 to analyze the data.

Results and Findings: Regression of coefficients results revealed that procurement expertise and procurement regulatory compliance level are positively and significantly related ($\beta = 0.667$, $p=0.000$). The findings indicated that there have been a low number of training sessions conducted on procurement. The deficient professionals in the department may have contributed to the low compliance level to the regulation of procurement and performance of procurement in the public universities. The findings revealed that most of the staff are not certified to be procurement expertise through certification and registration with higher professional bodies who oversee the skills of the members and therefore ensure the members are well equipped with procurement knowledge.

Unique contribution to theory, policy and practice: It's essential to raise the level of professionalism in the procurement practices. The education of the employees guarantees that the procurement officers can read and understand the set guidelines in procurement in order to comply with the guidelines as set. Occurrences of missed deadlines in the procurement department should

be minimized. Certification and registration with higher professional bodies who oversee the skills of the members ensure the members are well equipped with procurement knowledge. Procurement expertise was found to have a significant effect on the procurement regulatory compliance level.

Key words: *procurement expertise, procurement compliance level, procurement regulatory, public universities.*

INTRODUCTION

Background of the study

In state institution in the developing nations, open acquirement is picking up confidence as a necessary part in administration conveyance as per (Basheka & Bisangabasaija, 2017), and it represents a major degree of total consumption. For instance, public acquirement represents 60% of the aggregate spending plan in Kenya (Akech, 2015), 40% in Malawi, 58% in Angola and 70% of Uganda open use, (Wittig, 2017). This is enormous when contrasted with a worldwide normal of 12-20 % (Froystad, 2016). Because of the extensive measure of cash engaged with government obtainment and the way that such cash originates from the citizens, there is interest for responsibility and straightforwardness.

Surprisingly, numerous administration services and organizations have from that point forward neglected to watch recommended obtainment laws and practices (Agaba & Shipman, 2017). Obtainment reviews did by the Public Procurement and Oversight Authority, uncovered that out of 322 contracts analyzed only 7 (2%) were assessed and ensured as consistent,(Public Procurement and Oversight Authority,2016). Based on the aforementioned information it is evident that governments all over the world are focusing towards ensuring that there is effective, efficient and transparent procurement process in their public institutions, including schools so that they can obtain value for their money, (De Boer, 2017)

The compliance level review is viewed as powerful in the event that it accomplishes the planned reason for supporting great administration and successful responsibility in the administration of public assets. This is just genuine whenever done, opportune, with insignificant expense, and creates quality reports with clear control holes and proposals, cures and not to be done in a non-reasonable way. Such consistence level reviews ought to likewise deliver obstruction measures to misrepresentation.

College training is a prominent part of the Education Department in Kenya's fastest extended subsection (Ministry of Education 2018). The need for university training continued to increase with many students who cannot invest in universities in Kenya pursuing admission in foreign universities (Commission of Education, 2018).The number of university entry students has increased significantly over the last 14 years; enrolment has increased from 30,000 in 2005 to more than 100,000 in 2018 University Enrolment. From,2003 the government of Kenya, introduced various reforms in education sector, including establishment of free primary education for all Kenyan children. In,2006 saw the Government of Kenya, through the Ministry Of Education steadily increase its support to the public universities and further fund expenditure for the development to ensure sustainability. Consequently, since 2005 the Government of Kenya has elevated numerous technical colleges to university status to accommodate the growing enrollment, Ministry Of Education, 2017).

Problem statement

Public procurement assumes a key job in the age of nations riches as it represents around 60% of most nations GDPs according to Akech (2015). In Uganda, for example, general society obtaining represents up to 70% of aggregate government spending. Malawi spends over 40% of its financial plan on acquirement and procurement while it is assessed that between US\$ 30-43 billion in the acquisition showcase is probably going to be abused in Sub-Saharan Africa because of procurement inappropriateness (Agaba & Shipman, 2017). With the end goal to enhance administration of open acquirement tasks, numerous nations concocted changes activities in the most recent years of the twentieth century (Eyaa *et al.*, 2016).

Getuno *et al.*, (2015) these changes were started by the World Bank in effort to advance productivity, economy, responsibility and straightforwardness in the general population acquirement framework. In Uganda, an expected US\$ 300 billion, comparable to Ksh. 10 billion are lost yearly as indicated by African Peer Review Mechanism report (2017). Kenya Institute of Supply chain Management, (2018) affirms that the general population part free over Kshs.8billion yearly because of low compliance levels with acquisition requirements. In any case, as indicated by the Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission (2018) report, the government lost over Ksh. 23 billion through spurned acquisition tasks with the Ministry of Education accounting for 45% of the detailed cases.

Public Procurement and Oversight Authority report (2017) note that acquired goods and services in the public sector was underneath 30% compliance level with the Ministry of Education representing 10% underneath the Ministries of Youth and Gender at 15% and Ministry of Transport at 20%. Njeru *et al.*, (2016) opines that low compliance levels in overall speaking acquisition rehearses in most state funded colleges in Kenya contribute to a loss of over Kshs.80 Million yearly and this has remained to a great extent unaltered since 2006. Victor (2015), proposes that organization acquisition expenses could be lessened through watching a higher procurement compliance level.

There are prior studies conducted on procurement compliance level in the public sector which incorporate, Onyinkwa *et al.*, (2016), Getuno *et al.*, (2015), (Migosi, Ombuki & Evusa,2015). However, none clarifies why the reforms started way back in the most recent decade of the twentieth century have neglected to pay and emerge. Further, Odhiambo & Kamau (2015) recommend that the negative effects on reforms might be clarified, to some degree, by the accompanying precursors of acquisition compliance level among them absence of expertise. This study therefore, was embraced to plug this study gap.

Objective of the study

To establish the influence of procurement expertise on procurement regulatory compliance level in public universities in Kenya.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical Review

Skills Theory

It was postulated by Katz (1955), to investigate the variable, procurement expertise. The study adopted the Skill theory since it was considered relevant in understanding the influence of procurement expertise of staffs on implementation of procurement regulation in public universities in Kenya and hence provided the theoretical background for this study. The finding corroborates with Harvard Business Review article, (2017), which observed that professional expertise are quite different from traits/qualities of leaders. Expertise are what leaders can accomplish, whereas traits are who leaders are such as their innate characteristics, as echoed by (Millerson *et al.*, 2017). Leadership skills or expertise are defined as the ability to use one knowledge and competencies to accomplish a set of goals or objectives, (Dobler & Burt, 2017).

These leadership expertise can be acquired and leaders can be trained to develop them. Skills theorists sought to discover the skills and abilities that made leaders effective. Similar to trait theory, skills theories are leader-centric, focused on what characteristics make leaders more powerful. The two essential speculations to create from an aptitudes approach were Katz's three-ability approach and Mumford's abilities model of initiative (Yang, Lu, Haider & Marlow, 2017). The three-ability approach contended that powerful and able initiative required three mastery. Technical expertise refers to proficiency in a specific activity or type of work.

Human expertise refers to being able to work with people and conceptual expertise refers to the ability to work with broad concepts and ideas, (Wanyama, 2017). The three-skill approach concurs that, while all expertise were important for leaders, their level of importance varies contingent upon the levels of authoritative of pioneers which incorporate key, strategic and operational. As pioneers travel through the levels of the organization (from lower to upper), expertise importance moves from technical to human to conceptual (Miles, Huberman & Saldaña, 2018).

Procurement required by obtainment proficient have changed because of the job move of the acquisition work itself, (Daniel, 2016). The job has transformed from that of a purchaser to that of an expert supervisor directing long term, key and complex understanding between inward partners and providers (Carr & Smeltzer, 2016). Subsequently, acquisition experts require an unpredictable arrangement of administrative and specialized proficient ability. These job shifts influence experts in focal and neighborhood government frameworks and in addition those in people in general and private area situations. For acquisition to be at a vital level, obtaining experts need to represents an arrangement of skill, capacities and capabilities, (Carr & Smeltzer, 2016). Skills theory supported the variable procurement expertise because it seeks to discover the five components that make leaders more effective and proficient in a specific activity (competencies, career experiences, individual attributes, outcomes and environmental influences) or type of work, (Burkus, 2018).

Empirical Review

Procurement regulations ascertain that procurement professionals are equipped with appropriate training so as to serve effectively and efficiently in procurement, as cited by a (Public Procurement and Oversight Authority, 2017). Procurement staffs have two major tasks namely, making sure

that their organization comply with rules and regulations guiding procurement practices and participate in procurement activities of their agencies according to the approved budgets, (Obanda, 2017). As cited by Lysons & Farrington (2016) procurement expertise is a necessary requisite in procurement as it influences making the right and strategic purchasing decision with confidence and within a short time.

A study by Public Procurement and Oversight Authority, (2014) found a scaring deficits in procurement expertise in most public entities despite sound strides for building up an expert acquisition workforce, (Onyinkwa, Charles & Iravo, 2015). Njeru (2015), takes note of that acquisition procedure has been debilitated by the general absence of acquirement learning. Public procurement still undergoes fraud and misconduct, in spite of the intense procurement reforms rolled by the government, (Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission, 2017).

Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission, (2016) study revealed that procurement officials flouts purchasing rules and regulations in order to limit the contribution of intrigued firms in acquirement. The examination likewise revealed that fleeting preparing and workshops on acquisition aptitude were deficient in spite of the fact that it was noticed that Public Procurement and Oversight Authority was on a strong campaign to sensitize PEs to facilitate workshops and seminars for purchasing officers, (Kenya Institute of Supply chain Management, 2018).

A study by Raymond, (2018) in USA Health sector asserts that lack of procurement expertise and ethics in broad daylight acquisition prompts defilement which eventually blocks consistence level. Procurement officers must be prepared and made mindful of all the Procurement mastery and morals, and directions in connection to obtainment and related methods, (Hui *et al.*, 2017). The moral code is not just the hindrance of erroneous conduct yet in addition an empowering agent for all individuals from the association to protect the moral heritage of the firm (Rossi, 2017).

A work team that is not satisfactorily taught in procurement matters will prompt hindering results including rupture of the set of principles, (Victor, 2015). Demonstrable skill openly acquirement identifies with not just training level and capabilities of the workforce yet in addition to the expert gauges in the lead of business movement (Raymond, 2018). Raymond also that there are around 500,000 expert obtaining individuals in the United States and just about 10% of these are enrolled individuals from expert bodies and the rest over 90% are not in any case mindful that there are moral and legitimate norms associated with acquisition.

METHODOLOGY

This study adopted the ex-post facto survey research design. The Ex-post facto design enabled the researcher to examine cause-and-effect relationship(s) where it was not allowed to manipulate the independent variable. The casual comparative method or ex post facto method of research seek to establish casual relationships between events and circumstances. The target population was a total of thirty one chartered public universities in Kenya which acted as the unit of analysis. Public universities were selected since they have a well structure of administration, coupled with an adequate financial resource from the taxpayers. The number of procurement staffs was obtained from the payroll department through the Integrated Personnel Payroll Data. A sample was drawn from this sampling frame which comprised of 31 public universities. The study sample comprised of 333 respondents with respect to the unit of observation which included, 31 chief procurement

officers, 31 Principal procurement officers, 31 Senior procurement officers and 240 procurement officers in 31 Kenya public universities. The study only considered procurement staffs since they are the ones accountable for speeding up key procurement decisions and thus plentifully supplied with wanted specialized information and aptitudes on the antecedents of procurement regulatory compliance level in public universities in Kenya.

This study adopted a census because the sample size of the study was small. This study further used questionnaires to collect primary data similarly to the previous research projects. Questionnaires containing closed and open ended questions was issued to procurement staffs in the university. The pilot study was conducted at Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology. The validity of the questionnaires was approved using a panel of experts familiar with the construct of the research. Data collected from the field was coded and cleaned to remove outliers or missing values and categorized manually according to the questionnaire items using frequency distribution tables and percentages. The researcher used both descriptive and inferential statistics with the help of statistical package of Social Science (SPSS) version 24 to analyze the data.

RESULTS AND FINDINGS

Response Rate

A total of 309 questionnaires were duly completed and returned out of the 333 questionnaires sent to the respondents representing 93% of the response rate, which according to Mugenda and Mugenda (2013), above 70 percent response rate is ideal for evaluating.

Table 1 Response rate

Questionnaires	Number	Percentage
Duly filled and returned	309	93
Uncollected/ unfilled	24	7
Total	333	100

Registration with Professional Body

The study assessed the status of registration of the procurement body in the public universities with any existing professional body in the nation. From the outcomes in Table 2 below, majority (84%) of the procurement departments in the public universities have not been registered with any professional body specialized in procuring activities

Table 2 Registration with Professional Body

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	45	15.8
No	264	84.2
Total	309	100

Employees trainings on procurement practices

The study sought to access how often the employees are trained on the necessary and vital procurement practices. As illustrated in Table 3, majority (75%) of the respondents indicated that the trainings on procurement never happen in the procurement departments in the public universities, 19% of the respondents indicated that the trainings happen but rarely. 2% indicated that the trainings happen often. The study concurs with that of Getuno, Awino, Ngugi and Ondiek (2015) that looked into public procurement legal framework implementation and performance of State Corporation in Kenya. The study identified inadequate experience and ICT access as some of the impediment of procurement compliance.

Table 3 Trainings on procurement frequency

Statement	Frequency	Percent
Very often	4	1.2
Often	4	1.2
Rarely	61	19
Never	240	74.8
Total	309	96.3

Professional qualification

The study focused to obtain the professionalism of the employees in procurement field. The illustrations are as given in Table 4. Majority (77%) of the respondents had no professionalism specialization in the field of procurement. The certificate holders were 1.3%, diploma holders were 2.6%, bachelors level holders were 3.2%, KISM holders were 7.4% whereas CIPS holders were 7.8%. The findings concur with the research done by Harvard Business Review article (2017) and found out that professional expertise are quite different from traits/qualities of leaders where traits are acquired academically. The study further argued that the expertise are what leaders can accomplish, whereas traits are who leaders are such as their innate characteristics of the individual.

Table 4 Professionalism qualification

Qualification	Frequency	Percent
CIPS	24	7.8
KISM	23	7.4
Bachelor	10	3.2
Diploma	8	2.6
Certificate	4	1.3
None	240	77.7
Total	309	100

Education level

The research survey collected the education level details of the survey participants. This was in effort to reveal the qualification entities of the employees in the procurement department in public universities. The illustrations were given in Table 5. The findings reveal that majority (80%) of

the employees had gone up to the university level in their education, 10% had gone up to college level, 9% were post graduates whereas less than 1% had attained a maximum of secondary school certificate qualification.

Table 5 Education level

Qualification	Frequency	Percent
Secondary Education	1	0.3
College level	31	10
University level	247	79.9
Post-graduate	30	9.7
Total	309	100

The findings are in line with a research by Western Cape Education Department (2016) on the government through education ministry. It was found that in South Africa, the government formulated a fundamental financial manual for public education institution.

Procurement expertise and procurement regulatory compliance level

The outcomes of the influence of procurement expertise on procurement regulatory compliance level were as shown in Table 6. The outcomes revealed that majority of the survey participants (97%) were in agreement, 1% were undecided whereas 2% disagreed with the statement that procurement staffs often fail to meet the set schedule dates of procurement activities. The mean of the assessment was high at 4.91 and the standard deviation was 0.55, which is low.

More than 96% of the respondents were in agreement with the opinion that procurement staffs lack adequate qualification in procurement matters. 1% of the survey participants had a neutral opinion on the statement. The rest of the respondents (3%) disagreed with the statement. The mean of the opinion was 4.91 whereas the standard deviation was 0.55. The results were found to concur with Hunja (2017) who concluded that preparation on polished skill to people working in an organization with open acquirement and qualifications is a key in guaranteeing adherence to moral standards and therefore skill on to do the assigned duties to boost performance.

An opinion poll was conducted on the statement that procurement staffs have few years of experience which was agreed on by the majority of the survey participants (89%). 3% of the survey participants had a neutral opinion over the statement. 8% of the participants disagreed with the statement. The mean of the statement opinion was 4.58 while the standard deviation was low at 1.02. Similar results were obtained in a study by Burkus (2018) who revealed that the experience in the procurement field is directly proportional to the legality of the procurement activities.

The study findings revealed that majority (89%) strongly agreed to the statement that very few procurement staffs are members of professional bodies while further 7% agreed with the statement. 2% of the respondents had not made up their mind on their opinion whereas 2% of the respondents totally disagreed with the statement. The mean of the statement opinion was 4.83 and had a low standard deviation of 0.6. The results were in contrary to the findings of a research by Public Procurement and Oversight Authority who revealed that procurement regulations ascertain that procurement professionals are equipped with appropriate training so as to serve effectively

and efficiently in procurement by enjoining to their professional service providers (Public Procurement and Oversight Authority, 2017)

Table 6 Procurement expertise

Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean	Std Dev
Procurement staffs miss deadlines in their schedule date	1.62%	0.32%	0.65%	0.00%	97.41%	4.91	0.55
Procurement staffs lack adequate qualification in procurement matters	0.97%	1.94%	0.97%	3.24%	92.88%	4.85	0.62
Procurement staffs have few years of experience	4.21%	3.88%	3.24%	6.80%	81.88%	4.58	1.02
Very few procurement staffs are members of professional bodies	0.97%	0.97%	1.94%	6.47%	89.64%	4.83	0.6

Experience in Procurement Field

The study assessed the level of experience of the staff in the procurement by taking consideration the number of years they have been in procurement field. The results were presented as shown in Table 7. most of the staff members (65%) were in the field less than 5 years, 20% of the respondents had worked between 6 and 10 years in their working positions, 8% had worked between 11 to 15 years. 3% of the respondents had worked between 16 to 20 years whereas less than 1% of the respondents recorded that they have more than 21 years in the field of procurement. This study was in agreement with that of Ameyaw, Mensah and Osei-Tutu (2013) cited in (Basheka 2015). They observed that procurement staffs mobilize various resources which are tangible and abstract and therefore require complex and advanced set of expertise to enable them make informed decision which reduce frauds to the entities.

Table 7: Experience in Procurement Field

Year of experience	Frequency	Percent
Less than 5 years	208	64.8
6 - 10 years	65	20.2
11 - 15 years	25	7.8
16 - 20 years	10	3.1
21 and above years	1	0.3
Total	309	100

Correlation Analysis

The study focused to obtain the relationship that exists between procurement expertise and procurement regulatory compliance level.

Table 8 Correlation test of procurement expertise

		procurement expertise	procurement regulatory compliance level
procurement expertise	Pearson Correlation	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)		
procurement regulatory compliance level	Pearson Correlation	.667**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The results in Table 8 revealed that there was a positive and significant association between procurement expertise and procurement regulatory compliance level ($r = 0.667$, $p = 0.000$). This implies that procurement expertise factors have contributed to the resulted to the level of compliance to the procurement regulatory. This correlation coefficient value was between 0.6 and 0.7 indicating a strong positive correlation as a factor of procurement regulatory compliance level. A 2-tailed test at 95% level of confidence had a probability value of less than 0.05 which implied that there was a significant correlation between procurement expertise and procurement regulatory compliance level in public universities.

Regression Analysis

Regression analysis was done to determine the influence of procurement expertise on procurement regulatory compliance level. Results were presented in **Table 9**.

Table 9 ANOVA for Procurement expertise

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	16.156	1	16.156	246.098	.000b
	Residual	20.154	307	0.066		
Total		36.31	308			

a Dependent Variable: *procurement regulatory compliance level*

b Predictors: (Constant), *procurement expertise*

Table 9 provided the results on the analysis of the variance (ANOVA). The results indicated that the model was statistically significant. This was supported by an F statistic of 246.098 and the reported p value (0.000) which was less than the conventional probability of 0.05 significance level. The results implied that procurement expertise is a good predictor of procurement regulatory compliance level. The findings also agreed with that of Raymond, (2018) in USA Health sector asserts that lack of procurement expertise and ethics in broad daylight acquisition prompts defilement which eventually blocks consistence level.

Table 10 Regression of coefficients for procurement expertise

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	2.15	0.175		12.304	0.000
	Procurement expertise	0.57	0.036	0.667	15.688	0.000

a Dependent Variable: *procurement regulatory compliance level*

Regression of coefficients results in Table 10 revealed that procurement expertise and procurement regulatory compliance level are positively and significantly related ($\beta = 0.667$, $p = 0.000$). This implies that a unit increase in procurement expertise would lead to increase in procurement regulatory compliance level by 0.667. The findings also were in agreement with that of Rossi (2017) that the expertise quality is not just the hindrance of erroneous conduct yet in addition an empowering agent for all individuals from the association to protect and uphold the quality services and moral heritage of the firm. Procurement expertise is a necessary requisite in procurement as it influences making the right and strategic purchasing decision with confidence and within a short time (Lysons & Farrington, 2016).

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

The objective of the study aimed at determining the influence of procurement expertise on procurement regulatory compliance level in public universities in Kenya. The correlation analysis revealed that there was a positive and significant association between procurement expertise and procurement regulatory compliance level ($r = 0.667$, $p = 0.000$). This implies that procurement expertise factors have contributed to the resulted to the level of compliance to the procurement regulatory. This correlation coefficient value was between 0.6 and 0.7 indicating a strong positive correlation as a factor of procurement regulatory compliance level. A 2-tailed test at 95% level of confidence had a probability value of less than 0.05 which implied that there was a significant correlation between procurement expertise and procurement regulatory compliance level in public universities. Regression of coefficients results revealed that procurement expertise and procurement regulatory compliance level are positively and significantly related ($\beta = 0.667$, $p = 0.000$). This implies that a unit increase in procurement expertise would lead to increase in procurement regulatory compliance level by 0.667.

The findings indicated that there have been a low number of training sessions conducted on procurement. In most instances, it was revealed that public universities they never do the trainings at all. This implies that there is low level of professionalism in the procurement practices that are essential. The deficient professionals in the department may have contributed to the low compliance level to the regulation of procurement and performance of procurement in the public universities. However, education level of the staff was found to be averagely satisfactory in the

procurement area in the universities. Further, there are often occurrences of missed deadlines in the procurement department. Majority of the procurement staff have few years in the operations of procurement. The findings revealed that most of the staff are not certified to be procurement expertise through certification and registration with higher professional bodies who oversee the skills of the members and therefore ensure the members are well equipped with procurement knowledge.

Conclusion

Procurement expertise and procurement regulatory compliance level are positively and significantly related. Procurement expertise was found to be satisfactory in contribution as a factor to procurement regulatory compliance level. Further, it is a necessary requisite in procurement. Procurement expertise prompts consistency and influence making the right and strategic purchasing decision.

Recommendations

The study concluded that seminars to staff and expertise of the employees have an influence on the procurement regulatory compliance role. It's essential to raise level of professionalism in the procurement practices. The education of the employees guarantees that the procurement officers can read and understand the set guidelines in procurement in order to comply with the guidelines as set. Occurrences of missed deadlines in the procurement department should be minimized. Certification and registration with higher professional bodies who oversee the skills of the members ensure the members are well equipped with procurement knowledge. Procurement expertise was found to have a significant effect on the procurement regulatory compliance level.

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