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**STRATEGIC PROCUREMENT PRACTICES AND PROCUREMENT PERFORMANCE OF STATE CORPORATIONS IN KENYA**

**<sup>1\*</sup>Grace Awuor Owino & <sup>2</sup>Dr. Denis Juma**

<sup>1\*</sup>Scholar, Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology, Kenya

<sup>2</sup>Lecturer, Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology, Kenya

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**Abstract**

In today's competitive business environment, many companies are trying to find new ways to achieve competitive advantage. The business environment is constantly changing and becoming more complex, organizations. Strategic management is concerned with defining and achieving long-term goals and objectives by effective interaction and adaptation with dynamic environment in a continuous basis within limit of resources. The aim of this study was to investigate the effect of strategic procurement practices on the procurement performance in state corporations. The objectives of the study are to examine the effect of strategic sourcing on the procurement performance of state corporations in Kenya and to establish the effect of strategic negotiation on the procurement performance of state corporations in Kenya. The study uses the descriptive survey design and the population is 96 state corporations. Data was collected structured questionnaire. The data was analysed using descriptive statistics mainly the means, standard deviation, frequencies. The study also used multiple regression to test the relationship between the variables. The study found that the state corporations in Kenya employ the strategic sourcing practices to a great extent which had a positive significant effect on procurement performance. The study also found that the corporations largely employed the strategic negotiation practices which had a positive and significant effect on the procurement performance. The researcher recommends that the management of the state corporations should do more of the strategic sourcing where they get the best services from the experts and concentrate on their core to enhance the procurement performance. The management should engage more in them negotiation so as to gain more from the practice and enhance the procurement performance.

**Keywords:** *Strategic Sourcing, Strategic Negotiation, Procurement Performance, State Corporations*

**INTRODUCTION**

In today's competitive business environment, many companies are trying to find new ways to achieve competitive advantage. The business environment is constantly changing and becoming more complex, organizations. Organizations are therefore forced to continue searching for new ways to remain relevant and competitive in their operations. Many changes have happened in the view point of companies about the functions of purchasing. Purchasing has commenced to play a

more significant role in the strategy of the firm during the past few years. In the recent evolution of purchasing expanded from “buying” to “procurement” (Eldin et al., 2019). The strategic role of purchasing as an important contributor to the strategic success of the company is receiving enhanced attention.

Strategic management is concerned with defining and achieving long-term goals and objectives by effective interaction and adaptation with dynamic environment in a continuous basis within limit of resources. It mainly involves strategy design, operationalization and monitoring. According to Pearce and Robinson (2017), it is the act of making choices, which result in designing and administration of game plans tailored to realize long range plans of the firm. Giunipero and Sawchuck (2013) observed that procurement involves the measures adopted by the purchasing organization to incorporate supply chain so as to reduce on costs and time and increase the output. Strategic procurement is the process of creating alignment and consistency of action that establishes the long-range objectives and overall strategy or course of action by which procurement function fulfills its mission. Strategic procurement entails the transformation of an organization’s mission, goals, and objectives into measurable activities to be used to plan, budget and manage the procurement functions (Mahmood, 2014). It has thus emerged to become essential elements in the competitive strategies of organizations which are faced with the problem of cutting down their costs and raising their efficiency, without compromising quality and customer service.

The public institutions including state corporations seeking more strategic perspective, reflecting its distinction from the procurement units of other organizations in other sectors particularly the private sector. Procurement is considered as a strategic aspect in the value chain as it represents one of the largest expense items in a firm’s cost structure. The environment in which organizations and their procurement departments’ operate in has changed dramatically in recent years. Globalization has created new markets for both sales and purchasing. Organizations are now able to buy from suppliers outside their traditional domestic markets and their growing global businesses require suppliers that have global coverage. This may pose a challenge to a majority of the organizations particularly the public institutions which are facing stiff competition from their private counterparts. Due to this turbulent business environment, procurement strategies have become an area of interest in modern organization since it enables firms to better manage various costs and wastes thus leading to high customer satisfaction and value generation to the stake holders (Odalo & Omwenga, 2019).

In European countries, public procurement (PP) represents a large portion of public spending each year and has been estimated to be around 19.4 per cent of the gross domestic product across 27 European Union (EU) member states (EU Com, 2012). It is the process by which central, regional and local government and public authorities, bodies and agencies governed by public law and regulation, purchase and commission services, public works and associated goods and materials (Aschhoff & Sofka, 2019). The PP process has generally been intended as a rigid process narrowly aimed at non-discrimination, cost efficiency and the achievement of transparency goals (EU, 2014).

Likewise in the African, the current regimes have established procurement regulations based on the rationale that a regulated public expenditure is the cornerstone to effective and efficient public service delivery and satisfaction. This view is shared by Heald (2017) who alluded that unregulated public expenditure is a fodder to procurement frauds which mint millions of shillings from public coffers hence leading to unrests.

In Kenya, public procurement has surely evolved from the annals where the public expenditure was rarely regulated to independent procurement structures and regulating bodies. Migai (2018) gives credit to public procurement reforms and regulations in Kenya to competitiveness and transparency in acquisition of government services and goods, wider stakeholders' consultations, improved processes and procedures, improved accountability, elimination of collusion and corruption among supply agents and eradication of non-value added purchasing methods. Public procurement often constitutes the largest domestic market in developing countries.

Public procurement in Kenya has undergone major reforms such as the Public Procurement and Disposal Act, of 2005 which was assented to on 26th October 2005 and was revised in 2009 to establish procedures for procurement and the disposal of unserviceable, obsolete or surplus stores and equipment by public entities (Mwangi, 2013). With the gazetting of the subsidiary legislation, the PPDR of 2006, the law became operational on 1<sup>st</sup> January, 2007 (Kirugu, 2010). The Act established three independent bodies to regulate the act; National treasury, the Public Procurement Regulatory Authority (PPRA) and the Public Procurement Administrative Review Board (PPARB). Also, Public Procurement and Asset Disposal Act (PPADDA) 2015 was enacted in January 2016.

### **Statement of the problem**

Government-owned companies in Kenya have become ineffective and the Government has been required to take heavy burdens on procurement (Mokogi, Mairura & Ombui, 2015). According to a study conducted by Atieno (2017) parastatals in Kenya are characterized by ineffectiveness in their operations, substantial financial losses, and inadequate delivery of products and services. This is attributed to poor governance, poor financial management, bureaucratic waste and parastatal pilfering, all of which then lead to high public budgetary burdens (Mwaura, 2017). According to PPOA (2019) around Ksh. 234 billion a year is expended on procurement by the central Government out of which Ksh. 121 billion is lost annually due to inflated procurement quotes which is approximately 17 percent of the national Budget. The Public Procurement and Asset Disposal Act (2020) indicated that, the bulk of tendered products and services in many parastatals are up 60% on their market prices. The Systems Audit for State law Office (SLO), 2015/2016 Report revealed losses of Kshs. 18,291,430 through irregular procurements in financial year (FY) 2015/2016. Earlier, in FY 2013/2014, SLO had lost Kshs. 8,495,968.00 due to inefficiencies.

Several studies have been done on strategic procurement and the procurement performance which produced various results. In a study conducted by Murray (2017), the findings show that Strategic procurement offers numerous advantages to a company and the strategic organizational position. Hemmatfar (2016) found that strategic procurement help to coordinate purchasing processes that lead to more considerable savings and improved service from vendors. Locally too, studies have been done. For instance, a study by Wachira, Kiarie and Marendi (2018) and Kitavi, Ochieg and Sang (2020) was basically on the effect of strategic procurement practices on performance of the County Governments of Nyandarua and Machakos respectively. Further, Ngunyi (2014) was on effect of the procurement practices on the performance of parastatals in Kenya. Another study, Kamotho (2014) investigated the effect of e-procurement on the procurement performance of state corporations in Kenya. Kwasira and Muiga (2016) studied strategic procurement practices in realization of corporate goals in public secondary schools in Kenya and Mairura (2015) on procurement practices and the performance of commercial state-owned enterprises. Despite to positive impact of the strategic procurement on performance, limited studies exist on the effect of strategic procurement practices on the performance of the

state corporations as the existing studies have been done in other sectors. Therefore, the current study seeks to examine the effect of strategic procurement practices on the procurement performance of state corporations in Kenya.

### **Objective of the Study**

1. To examine the effect of strategic sourcing on the procurement performance of state corporations in Kenya
2. To establish the effect of strategic negotiation on the procurement performance of state corporations in Kenya

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Theoretical Framework**

Strategic choice theory was brought forth by (Jemison, 1981). It argues that there is need for harmonious interrelationship between all activities involved in procurement process (DeRond & Thietart, 2007). This optimizes allocation of resources within an organization and eliminate conflict amongst its departments. Through this theory an organization would be better placed to understand its internal and external operating environment. Owing to organization interrelationship, management choices are anchored to respond to prevailing conditions (Child, 1997). Strategic choice is viewed as an ongoing process in which the planned management of uncertainty plays a crucial role. It focuses on decisions to be made in a particular planning situation, whatever their timescale and whatever their substance. It highlights the subtle judgements involved in agreeing how to handle the uncertainties which surround the decision to be addressed - whether these be technical, political or procedural. The approach is an incremental one, rather than one which looks towards an end product of a comprehensive strategy at some future point in time. This principle is expressed through a framework known as a 'commitment package'. In this, an explicit balance is agreed between decisions to be made now and those to be left open until specified time horizons in the future. The approach is interactive, in the sense that it is designed not for use by experts in a backroom setting, but as a framework for communication and collaboration between people with different backgrounds and skills (Jemison, 1981).

The major strength of strategic choice theory is its ability to synchronize organization operational guidelines to be in tandem with its needs. Secondly, the theory enhances proactiveness and innovation on organization operational guidelines (Nollet et al., 2005). Incorporation of new procurement practices would create efficient production process and stabilize investment portfolio (Shook et al., 2009). The major drawback to this theory is its failure to provide choice criterion to optimize resources mix towards management need. This would erode value gain anticipated from strategic choice made in an organization. The theory is relevant for the study since strategic sourcing is pegged on organization ability to interlink organization structure on decision making and optimize benefits to be accrued. Also, there is need for participatory decision making while selecting suppliers, evaluating them and developing them in public corporations. There is need to source resources from suppliers who optimizes allocation of government scarce resources and aid in achievement of government social and economic goal.

### **Empirical Review**

Kaufmann and Carter (2014) conducted a study on the role of strategic sourcing and performance of many large companies in the US and Europe. The study adopted descriptive survey design and t test was employed to decide relationship between the factors. It was built up that numerous firms utilize key sourcing which supply directors expect continued development within the

future. In key sourcing, suppliers compete powerfully, in real-time, for a buyer's commerce and regularly offered down the cost of a thing to be obtained. Utilizing the web, providers yield numerous electronic offers amid a settled time period, frequently 30 minutes or less. Strategic sourcing can diminish buy costs, spare time, streamline the bidding process, and empower suppliers from anyplace within the world to compete for a buyer's commerce.

Mueni (2018) focused on the influence of strategic sourcing practices on performance of parastatals in Kenya: a case of Kenya Airport Authority. The study also concluded that inventory management did not have a significant influence on performance of parastatals in Kenya. This was more pronounced when inventory management was combined with other strategic procurement practices (Strategic Outsourcing, Reverse Logistics, and Knowledge Management) and was found to have no significant contribution to performance of parastatals in Kenya.

Munanu (2017) studied impacts of key sourcing on organization execution in Kenya, a case study of organization police preparing college officer stores Embakasi. The study built up that outsourcing at APS some way or another emphatically contributed to moved forward efficiency. It was set up that key sourcing at emphatically contributed to productivity. It was concluded that outsourcing emphatically influences Execution APS. It was prescribed that vital sourcing at ought to be made strides in arrange to move forward on taken a toll proficiency. Vital sourcing ought to be made strides in arrange to make strides efficiency. Strategic sourcing at APS ought to be moved forward in arrange to make strides profitability.

Kihanya (2015) studied the part of strategic sourcing on organization's execution: a case consider of Jomo Kenyatta College of Farming and Innovation. The performance of strategic sourcing was shown as being influenced by destitute arranging, disappointment to follow to procurement plans and lacking financing. It was concluded that quality products and administrations played a really major part in deciding the organization execution due to its tall rating by the respondents. It was moreover concluded that the taken a toll of merchandise and administrations influenced its competitiveness.

Strategic negotiation is the process of planning, reviewing, analyzing and discussing the information between the buyer and the seller, to arrive at an acceptable agreement (Lysons & Farrington, 2016). Negotiation is the process by which two or more entities come together to discuss common and conflicting interests in order to reach an agreement of mutual benefit (Black, 2019). During negotiations the process involves balancing matters between two parties so that the negotiator not only get what he wants but also get what he wants in the best possible way (Forsyth, 2019). Thus, the government agencies should set clear objectives before going negotiating.

Ajike (2015) on effects of negotiation on sales performance of an organization found out that in sales management negotiation is a crucial element in resolving conflicts that might arise in case things are not clearly communicated to any stakeholder. The findings concluded that there is positive significant relationship between negotiations and sales performance, thence sales force should uphold negotiation in order to enhance performance. A case study of the Kenyan national police service was used by Waiganjo and Wakabira (2017) to show how procurement practices affect the performance of corporate organizations in the country. The variables that were looked at in this case study were procurement planning, procurement controls, procurement, and staff training. Kenya's National Police Service does well when it has good procurement planning, controls, monitoring, and training for its employees about how to do it right.



## METHODOLOGY

The research design for the study is a descriptive survey. The population of the study was 766 employees in the procurement department in the state corporations in Kenya. The study employed multistage sampling techniques, starting with stratified sampling based on the target population's heterogeneous makeup, which was divided into the various corporations to ensure that all instances are fairly represented. According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2013), a sample size of 10% of a large population and 30% of a small population are both deemed appropriate. As a result, 15% of 766 was chosen. Therefore, 150 procurement employees in the state corporations in Kenya made up the study sample size. Primary sources was used to acquire the data, and structured questionnaires was used to collect the data from these sources. The completed and returned surveys were reviewed for completeness after data collection, coded, and entered into the most recent Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). The analysis was done using descriptive and inferential statistical analysis.

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

### Response Rate

The Overall response rate was 76.7%. Kothari recommends a response rate of 50% as average, and 60-70% as adequate while anything above 70% as excellent response rate. This response rate was therefore considered excellent and thus a good representative of the respondents to provide information for analysis and derive conclusions.

### Descriptive Analysis

#### Descriptive Statistics for Strategic Sourcing

The respondents were asked to state the extent to which they agreed with the statements regarding the use of strategic sourcing by the organization on a scale of strongly disagree, disagree, neither agree nor disagree, agree and strongly agree. The researcher used the measures of dispersion of mean and standard deviation to present the findings. The scale 0.0 to 1.0 represents the score strongly disagree, scale 1.1 to 2.0 represent disagree, scale 2.1 to 3.0 represent neither agree nor disagree, scale 3.1 to 4.0 represent agree and scale 4.1 to 50 represent strongly agree. The results are presented in Table 1.

**Table 1: Strategic Sourcing**

	N	Mean	Std. Dev
The organization considers strategic sourcing a strategic tool towards achieving growth	115	3.87	.743
Strategic sourcing has enabled the organization achieve strategic advantage	115	4.00	.535
Strategic sourcing leads to an increase in the quality of goods procured	115	3.53	1.125
Strategic sourcing leads to cost reduction for the organization.	115	3.07	1.100
Strategic sourcing increases the competitive advantage of the corporation	115	3.60	.828
Strategic sourcing leads to waste reduction within the organization	115	3.33	1.291
Strategic sourcing leads to improved workflow.	115	3.73	.594
Strategic sourcing has increased efficiency within the organization	115	3.67	1.113
Strategic sourcing has led to higher profits.	115	3.47	1.125

The results show that the respondents generally agreed with the statement that the organization considers strategic sourcing a strategic tool towards achieving growth (mean 3.87, SD = 0.743). Respondents also agreed with the statement that strategic sourcing has enabled the organization achieve strategic advantage (mean 4.00, SD = 0.535). The results show that respondents agreed that strategic sourcing leads to an increase in the quality of goods procured (mean 3.53, SD = 1.125). Further, respondents agreed that strategic sourcing increases the competitive advantage of the corporation (mean 3.60, SD = 0.828). The findings in general show that the respondents were in agreement with the statements regarding the use and benefits of strategic sourcing by the state corporations (mean ranged from 3.07 to 4.00). There were a few variances in some of the responses (SD > 1).

### **Descriptive Statistics for strategic Negotiation**

The respondents were asked to state the extent to which they agreed with the statements regarding the use strategic negotiation by the organization on a scale of strongly disagree, disagree, neither agree nor disagree, agree and strongly agree. The findings are presented in Table 2.

**Table 2: Strategic Negotiation**

	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std Dev</b>
All the employees are aware of the negotiation strategies	115	2.42	1.142
Preparations prior to negotiation impact positively on the outcome	115	4.16	0.805
Pre-knowledge of supplier cost, delivery and delivery time makes negotiation effective	115	4.28	0.797
Supplier should be categorized based on their capacity for effective negotiation	115	4.06	0.85
In negotiation, both parties must win	115	3.5	1.171
Negotiation works better when focus is on agreement rather than differences	115	4.11	0.827
Team based approach to negotiation is better than individual approach	115	4.01	0.862
Effective negotiation has an impact in realization of procurement goals	115	4.36	0.765

The study findings show that the respondents generally strongly agreed with the statement that preparations prior to negotiation impact positively on the outcome (mean 4.16, SD = 0.805). The results also show that respondents strongly agreed with the statement that pre-knowledge of supplier cost, delivery and delivery time makes negotiation effective (mean 4.28, SD =0.797). Respondents strongly agreed with statement that negotiation works better when focus is on agreement rather than differences (mean 4.11, SD = 0.827). From the results therefore the respondents generally agreed with the statements on the strategic negotiation.

### **Descriptive Statistics for Procurement Performance**

The respondents were asked to state the extent to which they agreed with the statements regarding procurement performance by the organization on a scale of strongly disagree, disagree, neither agree nor disagree, agree and strongly agree. The results are presented in Table 3.

**Table 3: Procurement Performance**

	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std. Dev</b>
The corporations procurement strategy leads to quality goods and services being offered by suppliers to the corporation.	115	3.80	.862

Supplier relationship management leads to delivery of goods and services just in time as planned by the corporation.	115	3.80	1.146
Supplier relationship management leads to reliability of supplies to corporation.	115	3.60	1.121
Spend management leads to cost reduction of purchases in the corporation.	115	3.27	.961
The corporation's procurement strategies leverage on strengths which leads to high procurement productivity	115	3.67	.900
The procurement measurement plan continuously gives progress on procurement activities hence improved procurement productivity.	115	3.73	.961
The rate of productivity has increased in the last five years	115	3.60	.910
There has been enhanced quality of goods, services and works offered and supplied	115	3.67	1.113
The customer satisfaction has improved in the last five years	115	4.02	1.124
The goods, services and works supplied and completed just in time	115	3.87	.834

The results of the study show that the respondents generally agreed with the statement that the corporations procurement strategy leads to quality goods and services being offered by suppliers to the corporation (mean 3.80, SD = 0.862). The results further show that the respondents also agreed with statement that supplier relationship management leads to delivery of goods and services just in time as planned by the corporation (mean 3.80, SD = 1.146). Also, respondents agreed with the statement that supplier relationship management leads to reliability of supplies to corporation (mean 3.60, SD = 1.121) and the customer satisfaction has improved in the last five years (mean 4.02, SD = 1.124). The results show that generally the respondents agreed with the statements regarding the procurement performance (mean ranging from 3.27 to 4.02).

### Regression Analysis

The goal of the study was to determine how strategic procurement practices affected the procurement performance of the state corporations in Kenya.

**Table 4: Combined Effect Model Summary**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.883 <sup>a</sup>	.779	.755	.331

a. Predictors: (Constant), strategic sourcing, strategic negotiation

The study's findings indicate that the R squared coefficient of determination was 0.779.

This suggests that the strategic sourcing and strategic negotiation collectively account for 77.9% of the variation in the procurement performance of the state corporations. Other factors not covered by the study can be used to explain the remaining share, which is 22.1%.

**Table 5: Combined Effect ANOVA**

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	17.422	5	3.484	31.796	.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	4.931	45	.110		
	Total	22.353	50			

a. Dependent Variable: ROA

b. Predictors: (Constant), Strategic Sourcing, Strategic Negotiation

The ANOVA results in Table 6 show that the multiple regression model, which describes the association between strategic sourcing and strategic negotiation and procurement performance, is statistically significant. (F= 31.796, p = 0.000). The regression model was significant according



to the ANOVA results, which also show the robustness and goodness of fit of the model in describing how the variables contribute to the financial performance of the listed organizations.

**Table 7: Beta Coefficients**

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients Beta	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error			
(Constant)	.573	.222		2.587	.013
Strategic sourcing	.153	.055	.238	2.769	.008
Strategic negotiation	.463	.092	.568	5.030	.000

$$P = \beta_0 + \beta_1SS + \beta_2SN + e$$

Substituting

$$P = 0.573 + 0.153X_2 + 0.463X_4$$

The findings mean that with everything held constant, procurement performance of the state corporations would still change positively with a proportion of 0.573. The results show that strategic sourcing has a positive and significant effect on the procurement performance of the state corporations ( $\beta=0.153$ ,  $p\text{-value}<0.05$ ). The results revealed that the strategic negotiation had a positive and significant effect on the procurement performance of the state corporations ( $\beta=0.463$ ,  $p\text{-value}<0.05$ ). The study findings further imply that a unit change in strategic sourcing will result into a 0.153 change in the procurement performance of the state corporations and a unit change in strategic negotiations will result into a 0.463 change in the procurement performance of the state corporations.

### Conclusions

The study concludes that the state corporations in Kenya employ the strategic sourcing practices to a great extent which had a positive significant effect on procurement performance. The study also found that the corporations largely employed the strategic negotiation practices which had a positive and significant effect on the procurement performance. The study therefore concludes that the strategic procurement practices by the state corporations in Kenya have a positive significant effect on the procurement performance.

### Recommendations

The researcher recommends that the management of the state corporations should do more of the strategic sourcing where they get the best services from the experts and concentrate on their core to enhance the procurement performance.

The study recommends that the management of the state corporations should engage more in the negotiation so as to gain more from the practice and enhance the procurement performance. Training and development should be prioritized to further enhance the negotiation skills of employees. A focus on pre-negotiation preparation and a thorough understanding of suppliers should be integral to negotiation strategies.

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