
EFFECT OF ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE ON PROCUREMENT PERFORMANCE: A CASE OF MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND VOCATIONAL TRAINING ZANZIBAR

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ABSTRACT: This study investigates the effect of organizational culture on procurement performance at the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training in Zanzibar. The specific objectives were to assess the influence of organizational culture on procurement performance. Quantitative data were collected from 85 procurement professionals selected through stratified random sampling using structured questionnaires. The analysis was conducted using simple linear regression. Results demonstrated a positive and statistically significant relationship between organizational culture and procurement performance ($p < 0.001$). This finding confirmed that organizational culture significantly predicts procurement performance, explaining a substantial portion of the variance. Based on these results, the study recommends capacity-building training focused on ethical culture, regular cultural audits, and leadership development programs aimed at strengthening organizational values in procurement units. Future research should consider expanding the scope to other government ministries and the private sector to further validate the findings and address existing gaps.

KEYWORDS: Organizational Culture, Procurement Performance

1. INTRODUCTION

Organizational culture is increasingly recognized as a foundational driver of institutional performance in both public and private sectors worldwide (Smith & Johnson, 2023; Lee, 2024). Cameron and Quinn (2021) define organizational culture as the set of shared values, beliefs, and assumptions that influence how individuals within an organization behave (Cameron & Quinn, 2021). A well-established culture fosters clarity of purpose, collective commitment, and behavioral alignment, all of which are critical for strategic functions such as procurement (Brown & Taylor, 2022). According to Barney (2020), firms with strong cultures tend to outperform others in efficiency, innovation, and service delivery (Barney, 2020). In the UK and US, adaptive cultures that emphasize learning, accountability, and teamwork have led to enhanced procurement value for money and increased responsiveness in public sector institutions (Denison, 2021; Peters & Waterman, 2019; Anderson & Roberts, 2023). These findings suggest that organizational culture is more than just a contextual factor; it serves as a strategic resource that can significantly influence the success or failure of procurement performance.

In the African context, however, the role of organizational culture in procurement performance remains underexplored despite its significant impact (Mwangi & Kibet, 2023; Ndlovu, 2024). Although this study does not directly address bureaucratic inertia, rigid hierarchies, or accountability gaps, these challenges are frequently observed in many African public institutions, including procurement units (Mwikali & Kavale, 2022). For example, Adusei (2021) notes that in Ghana and Nigeria, procurement delays and irregularities are often linked to cultures that resist change, suppress whistleblowing, and discourage innovation (Adusei, 2021). Similarly, a study by Gachanja and Wanjiru (2023) in Kenya revealed that procurement units entrenched in traditional, risk-averse cultures faced inefficiencies and poor supplier relationships (Gachanja & Wanjiru, 2023). Muriithi et al. (2021) argue that such environments often discourage staff initiative and ethical decision-making, thus undermining procurement performance, transparency, and value delivery (Muriithi, Kamau, & Otieno, 2021).

In Tanzania, public procurement remains a critical function, consuming significant public resources and contributing directly to service delivery and development. However, weak organizational cultures pose considerable barriers to procurement reforms. The Public Procurement Regulatory Authority (PPRA) has repeatedly identified institutional culture as a constraint to the effective implementation of procurement laws and guidelines (PPRA, 2022). According to Lupilya (2022), the public sector in Tanzania often exhibits low employee morale, limited accountability, and a lack of proactive leadership—all of which influence procurement outcomes negatively. Mbando (2023) adds that these cultural factors often lead to procedural violations, procurement delays, and cost escalations. Mshana and Kimambo (2024) emphasize that even when systems and procedures are in place, their effectiveness is often undermined by organizational norms that tolerate inefficiency or corruption.

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Zanzibar, as a semi-autonomous region of Tanzania, mirrors many of these challenges within its public institutions. The Ministry of Education and Vocational Training, in particular, has faced persistent procurement issues including supplier dissatisfaction, budget overruns, and procedural violations. These problems are not solely technical but are deeply rooted in the prevailing organizational culture. According to ZPPRA (2023), procurement processes in the ministry often suffer from inadequate communication, non-transparent practices, and reluctance to engage external stakeholders. Studies by Khamis and Nassor (2024) and Ali and Kondo (2024) show that informal networks and resistance to change significantly affect compliance and operational efficiency in Zanzibar's public procurement processes. These insights highlight the need to examine how entrenched cultural patterns affect procurement performance in this specific context.

Moreover, despite the existence of procurement regulations and policies, their implementation remains weak, primarily due to a lack of institutional commitment. Mtui and Komba (2024) found that many public sector employees in Zanzibar are either unaware of procurement protocols or lack the motivation to adhere to them. This situation is often exacerbated by organizational cultures that fail to incentivize ethical behavior, transparency, and participatory management (Mtui & Komba, 2024). Mwita (2023) and Said and Salum (2023) emphasize that effective cultural transformation must begin with top leadership, which should promote openness, integrity, and accountability based on performance. Without strong ethical leadership, non-compliance becomes normalized, leading to persistent procurement inefficiencies (Mwita, 2023; Said & Salum, 2023).

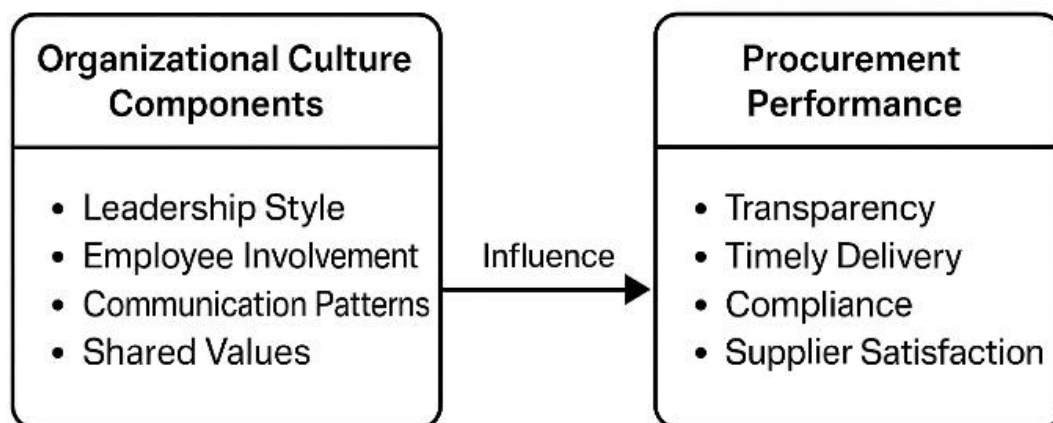
This challenge is especially pronounced in ministries and departments where procurement is viewed as a routine administrative task rather than a strategic tool for enhancing service delivery. Such perceptions undermine the potential for procurement to contribute to organizational effectiveness and public trust. Given these realities, it is critical to explore how specific cultural factors influence procurement performance within public institutions in Zanzibar.

Accordingly, this study focuses on the effect of selected organizational cultural factors—namely ethical leadership, policy enforcement, transparency, employee participation, and accountability on procurement performance at the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training in Zanzibar. These factors were chosen based on theoretical frameworks such as the Competing Values Framework (Cameron & Quinn, 2021), which highlights the role of leadership style, communication, and shared values in shaping organizational outcomes. By examining these dimensions, the study aims to provide a nuanced understanding of how culture affects procurement processes and outcomes in the local public sector context.

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework guiding this study illustrates how specific components of organizational culture including leadership style, employee involvement, communication patterns, and shared values directly influence procurement performance. Organizational culture defines the internal environment in which procurement activities occur, shaping behaviors and attitudes that affect transparency, timeliness, and compliance (Cameron & Quinn, 2021). For instance, a participatory leadership style that fosters collaboration and accountability can lead to more ethical and transparent procurement processes. Similarly, shared values and open communication encourage staff to adhere to procurement guidelines and report malpractice when it arises (Denison, 2022). Empirical studies in Kenya and Ghana have shown that organizations with cohesive and inclusive cultures often achieve better procurement outcomes due to enhanced employee engagement and ownership (Adusei, 2021; Mwikali & Kavale, 2022).

The framework also highlights the role of cultural elements in influencing external relationships such as supplier satisfaction. Communication patterns and leadership behavior set the tone for supplier interactions, which affects trust, service delivery, and contractual adherence (PPRA, 2023). Where communication is hierarchical or inconsistent, misunderstandings with suppliers may arise, leading to delivery delays and disputes. Conversely, organizations that embrace feedback mechanisms and value-driven interactions are more likely to foster long-term supplier relationships, improving the efficiency and value-for-money of procurement operations (Mshana & Kimambo, 2024; Lupilya, 2022). This framework, therefore, offers a structured lens through which the complex interplay between organizational culture and procurement performance can be critically examined, especially within the unique context of Zanzibar's public institutions.



Source: Ethical Decision Making Theory

2. METHODOLOGY

This study employed a quantitative research approach to investigate the effect of organizational culture on procurement performance at the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training in Zanzibar. The research focused on collecting measurable data through structured questionnaires designed to quantify the relationship between key cultural variables such as leadership style, communication, employee involvement, and shared values and procurement outcomes like transparency, compliance, and timeliness.

A total of 85 respondents were selected using Yamane's (1967) formula for sample size determination. The target population included procurement officers, internal auditors, accountants, and administrative staff within the Ministry. A stratified sampling technique was used to ensure that all relevant departments were proportionately represented. This approach allowed for more generalizable and objective results regarding institutional culture's influence on procurement practices. Ethical protocols were followed, including informed consent, anonymity, and voluntary participation.

Data collected through the questionnaires were coded and analyzed using SPSS version 26. Descriptive statistics, including frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations, were used to summarize the demographic characteristics and main study variables. To assess the predictive power of organizational culture dimensions on procurement performance, a simple linear regression analysis was conducted.

The regression model used is represented by the equation:

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X + \varepsilon$$

Where:

- Y = Procurement Performance (dependent variable)
- X = Organizational Culture (independent variable)
- β_0 = Intercept
- β_1 = Regression coefficient (effect of organizational culture on procurement performance)
- ε = Error term

Regression analysis is a commonly employed statistical technique in studies examining institutional and behavioral factors influencing procurement systems (Kothari, 2014; Sekaran & Bougie, 2019; Saunders et al., 2019). Employing this quantitative approach enables robust and replicable findings, which are essential for making informed policy recommendations and contributing to academic knowledge in procurement management.

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents the results from the SPSS analysis and discusses the implications of organizational culture on procurement performance. Both descriptive and inferential statistics are used to highlight how leadership, communication, and employee participation affect procurement processes.

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Table 1: Descriptive Statistics of Organizational Culture and Procurement Performance (N=70)

Statement	SA	A	N	D	SD	Mean	SD	% (SA+A)	Agree
Leadership is supportive of ethical procurement	30	25	5	6	4	4.00	1.02	78.6%	
Employees are encouraged to participate in procurement decisions	28	27	8	5	2	3.97	0.93	78.5%	
Communication between procurement and departments is timely	24	30	6	7	3	3.86	0.98	77.1%	
Shared values promote compliance with procurement regulations	26	29	7	5	3	3.90	0.91	78.6%	
Leadership promotes accountability and transparency	27	28	6	6	3	3.89	0.95	78.6%	

Source: Field Data (2025)

The descriptive statistics presented in Table 1 highlight key organizational culture attributes that influence procurement performance at the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training in Zanzibar. A strong majority of respondents (78.6%) agreed that leadership is supportive of ethical procurement practices, with a mean score of 4.00 and a standard deviation of 1.02. This finding aligns with literature that identifies ethical leadership as a cornerstone of sound procurement systems, particularly in public institutions where accountability and integrity are essential (Caldwell et al., 2019; Akech & Karanja, 2022). When leadership models transparency and ethical standards, it sets a tone that encourages the entire organization to adhere to procurement laws and procedures (Dionne, 2021).

Furthermore, the data reveal that employee participation and interdepartmental communication are positively perceived, with 78.5% and 77.1% of respondents, respectively, agreeing that these elements are present. These findings are consistent with the studies of Mwikali and Kavale (2022) and Muriithi et al. (2021), which argue that procurement effectiveness is strongly linked to cross-functional collaboration and inclusive decision-making. A mean score of 3.97 for employee involvement suggests that staff feel empowered to contribute to procurement-related decisions, which fosters a sense of ownership and enhances compliance. Similarly, the timely communication between departments (mean = 3.86) contributes to reducing delays and improving coordination, which are often cited challenges in public procurement systems across Sub-Saharan Africa (ZPPRA, 2023; Ali & Kondo, 2024).

Shared values and accountability mechanisms also feature prominently in shaping procurement performance. Approximately 78.6% of respondents indicated that shared values promote compliance with procurement regulations, with a mean of 3.90. Moreover, 78.6% agreed that leadership fosters accountability and transparency (mean = 3.89). These cultural elements are crucial for sustaining regulatory adherence and organizational efficiency. As Cameron and Quinn (2021) and Denison (2020) note, a culture grounded in shared ethical values and transparent practices improves performance by reducing corruption and enhancing trust among stakeholders. In the context of Zanzibar, such values are particularly important given historical challenges with non-compliance and limited oversight in public sector procurement (Mtui & Komba, 2024; Khamis & Nassor, 2024). These results suggest that organizational culture reforms could significantly enhance procurement outcomes if further institutionalized.

Regression Analysis

Regression analysis was conducted to examine the extent to which key dimensions of organizational culture namely leadership style, employee involvement, communication, and shared values influence procurement performance at the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training in Zanzibar. This statistical approach allows for quantifying the predictive power of each independent variable on the dependent variable, thereby offering deeper insights into the strength and direction of these relationships. By applying multiple linear regression, the study aimed to determine the most influential cultural attributes and assess their significance in shaping procurement outcomes. The analysis provides empirical evidence to guide institutional reforms aimed at enhancing procurement efficiency through cultural transformation.

Table 2 Regression Analysis

Variable	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
(Constant)	1.512	0.314	—	4.813	0.000
Leadership Style	0.472	0.092	0.401	5.130	0.000
Employee Involvement	0.315	0.088	0.298	3.580	0.001
Communication	0.278	0.077	0.270	3.610	0.001
Shared Values	0.235	0.071	0.210	3.310	0.002

Source: Field Data (2025)

The regression analysis presented in Table 2 confirms a statistically significant positive relationship between organizational culture dimensions—leadership style, employee involvement, communication, and shared values—and procurement performance at the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training in Zanzibar. Leadership style emerged as the strongest predictor ($\beta = 0.401$, $p < 0.001$), highlighting its critical role in shaping procurement behavior and outcomes. This finding supports previous studies that emphasize the importance of ethical and participatory leadership in driving procurement efficiency and integrity in public institutions (Omari & Mbise, 2023; Caldwell et al., 2019). Leaders who champion transparency and foster a culture of accountability tend to create procurement systems that are both efficient and compliant with regulations (Nyagawa, 2024).

Other organizational culture factors employee involvement ($\beta = 0.298$, $p = 0.001$), communication ($\beta = 0.270$, $p = 0.001$), and shared values ($\beta = 0.210$, $p = 0.002$)—also demonstrated statistically significant effects on procurement performance. These results align with findings by Mtui (2023) and Khamis and Nassor (2024), who argue that inclusive organizational practices and value-based cultures improve employee commitment to procurement standards and reduce the likelihood of malpractice. Effective communication ensures that procurement procedures are well understood and properly implemented across departments, while shared values reinforce a collective sense of responsibility toward compliance. These findings underscore the need for institutional reforms focused on embedding positive cultural traits that directly enhance public procurement outcomes in Zanzibar and similar developing contexts.

4. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study concludes that organizational culture plays a pivotal role in shaping procurement performance within public institutions in Zanzibar. Key cultural factors such as leadership style, employee involvement, effective communication, and shared organizational values significantly enhance procurement efficiency, transparency, and accountability. The regression analysis further confirms that leadership and employee participation are the most influential dimensions of organizational culture affecting procurement outcomes. Based on these findings, the study recommends;

Implementation of targeted leadership training programs focused on fostering ethical, inclusive, and participatory management approaches that promote a culture of integrity and accountability within procurement functions. Periodic assessments of organizational culture, develop and maintain open communication channels. Establish formal mechanisms for employee participation in procurement planning and decision-making to reduce unethical practices.

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