Influence of Compliance with Ethical Procurement Practices on Management of Public Secondary School Resources in Mandera County, Kenya

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Abstract The purpose of this study was to analyze the influence of compliance with ethical procurement practices on management of public secondary school resources in Mandera County, Kenya. The study was guided by The Procurement Transaction and Resource Based View Theories. Mixed methods approach was used and thus the study adopted concurrent triangulation design. Stratified sampling was used to create 6 different strata based on number of sub-counties in Mandera County. The tendering and procurement committee members were 13 and 30 members of school Board of Management were selected using simple random sampling. This procedure enabled the researcher to sample 13 principals, 76 tendering and procurement committee members, 176 members of school Board of Management and 2 QASOs. Questionnaires, Focus Group Discussion and Interviews were used. Qualitative data was analyzed thematically and presented in narrative forms whereas quantitative data was descriptively analyzed and inferentially using ANOVA. The study revealed that 103(59.9%) of the members of School Board of Management strongly agreed with the view that secondary schools rarely comply with moral ethics in procurement which has not enhanced financial prudence, staff relations, curriculum support resources and infrastructural development in secondary schools. It also indicates that the results were statistically significant (p-value=0.034<0.05) and that there was significant difference between frequency of compliance with ethical practices in procurement and means of wastages in vote heads set for infrastructural development, staffing and curriculum support resources. The study also established that secondary schools rarely comply with ethical practices in procurement despite an express requirement that all school staff members comply with all the ethical procurement practices. The study recommends that ethical levels of behavior of procurement staff must be ensured as it influences the performance in the school.

Keywords: influence, compliance, school resources, ethical procurement practices and management


1. Introduction

Procurement is the acquisition of goods, services or works from an external source. Ethics has been defined as the activity of examining the moral standards of a society and asking how these standards apply to one’s life and whether these standards are reasonable [1]. Ethics constitute: a system of moral principles by which human actions and proposals may be judged good or bad, or right or wrong; and the rules of conduct recognized in respect of a particular class of human actions and moral principles as of an individual.

Ethical codes alone are insufficient to ensure ethical conduct and they need to be complimented with the assignment of functional responsibility and employer training [2]. Ethical procurement prohibits breach of the public’s trust by discouraging a public employee from attempting to realize personal gain through conduct inconsistent with the proper discharge of the employee’s duties. Corporations and public bodies often define processes intended to promote fair and open competition for their business while minimizing exposure to fraud and collusion, [3]. After identifying the suppliers, a request for bids, proposals, quotes, and information can be made. However, direct contact with bidders can also be made instead of advertising the above requests. After selecting the suitable bidders, a quality check is essential in order to confirm the suitability of the goods in question. The concept of the linking ethical procurement practices to supply chain performance help in the better understanding of the system of supply chain performance and the introduction of common standards.

According to Hughes, [4], ethics are the moral guiding principles or values that guide officials in all aspects of their work and so ethical behavior encompasses the concepts of honesty, integrity, probity, diligence, fairness,
trust and respect. Ethical behavior includes amongst other things avoiding conflicts of interest, and not making improper use of an individual’s position. [5] noted that capturing these best practices and sharing them more widely with anyone responsible for procurement in the public sector can have a real impact on standards and change. In Kenya, understanding the concept of ethics within procurement process is of greater importance in order to get a better understanding of the real cost involved with attaining any ethical procurement process [6].

Contextually, In a study carried out in Kisumu East Sub-county, [7] found, however, that many public procurement activities suffer from neglect, lack of open competition and transparency; differing levels of corruption and most importantly various conflict of interest arising from stakeholders and personnel involved in handling a procurement process yet are expected to manage such procurements, in a professional, timely and cost-effective manner. [7] noted that the impact of transparency and accountability on service delivery has always been the underlying motif in the management of public secondary school resources. In most secondary schools in Uasin Gishu County, the scenario is similar. [8] posits that the great part about having an ethics policy is that the rules are in tangible and indisputable form. [8] indicated that the cornerstone of a public procurement system operating with integrity is the availability of mechanisms and capacity for ensuring effective internal control and audit. The Government of Kenya in 2003 began to implement reforms to address inefficiency in the use of public resources and weak institutions of governance especially in the education sector. Ethical procurement must deliver value for money since this is the core principle of any viable procurement. Organizations strive to maximize overall ‘value for money’ for citizens. This requires consideration of issues such as client satisfaction, the public interest, fair play, honesty and equity. Recent theorists also point to the importance of public administration as a moral and ethical concern and recognize that administrative action is permeated by moral choices and are therefore models of not only technical and professional competencies but also of moral behavior [9].

2. Statement of the Problem

Procurement practices are important tools for enhancing management of resources in any learning institution. That is, procurement practices enhance prudent use of resources, accountability, financial controls and improved institutional efficiency. However, in most public secondary schools in Mandera County, this has not been the case. In recent times, wastage and pilferage of school financial resources, inefficiency and lack of controls have been on the rise against the backdrop of the government’s insistence on adherence to the Public Procurement Disposal Act 2007 [10]. The flouting of these regulations has led to misappropriation and embezzlement of public funds. Consequently, the authorities have resorted to unceremonious transfers of heads, recommended for changes of the procurement committees over acrimony within and between the procurement committees and the principals and attending to complaints from stakeholders over irregular procurement practices. Despite these observations, little has been done to bring procurement practices and procedures into perspective and how they contribute towards management of public secondary school resources. In other words, little has been done to interrogate the influence of tendering methods, training of procurement committees, adoption of e-procurement practices, monitoring and evaluation and compliance with ethical practices in enhancing prudent use of resources, guarantee accountability, internal controls and improve efficiency; a situation which informed the researcher’s intention to analyze the influence of procurement practices on management in secondary school resources in Mandera County, Kenya.

3. Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to evaluate the influence of compliance with ethical procurement practices on management of public secondary school resources in Mandera County, Kenya.

4. Research Question

How does compliance to ethical procurement practices influence management of public secondary school resources in Mandera County, Kenya?

5. Literature Review

The core skills are in the areas of budgeting, scheduling, and resource allocation as well the key tools related to these areas such as resource loading networks and resource - loading chats. Management of customer satisfaction which involves identifying who the customer is and understanding what leads to customer satisfaction [11]. [12] explains that it is not evident, though, that the various individuals who play a role in procurement see themselves as part of a large procuring entity, a cohesive team, because a procuring team is often an abstract as the team members see only part. [13] also argues that bribery and other unethical practices in procurement has largely been an empirical one and as such has missed out the normative dimension [14].

Even if it is that the benefits of bribery outweigh the costs in terms of loss of trust and reputation that would not tell us whether it is competent. [13] also emphasizes that to be effective through a procurement performance, management system must focus on “measuring the correct things” (Procurement competences). There has been little specific discussion on public procurement performance management. [12] advocated that when designing performance metrics, it is important to consider the audience, even though in their development of metrics they do not appear to have consulted with procuring organizations. [3] provided a case study on the application of a balanced scorecard approach; although that scorecard included “leadership”, “policy and strategy” in procurement. The
study by [15] it appears to imply that procurement’s customers are actually internal departments. However, it is a key element to support fundamental principles of the public procurement system, especially competition and integrity [16]. All suppliers should be treated fairly and even-handedly at all stages of the procurement process.

This means being open with all those involved, so that everyone, especially suppliers, understands the elements of the process, that is, the procedures, timescales, expectations, requirements, criteria for selection and so on. According to [17], secondary school supplier confidentiality should be safe-guarded, and unsuccessful suppliers should be debriefed with as much transparency about the procurement process as can be provided, for example, on the weaker aspects of their tender. Secondary schools need to find an adequate balance between the objectives of ensuring transparency; it also requires that the selection and award processes are based on known criteria [17]. This means that the criteria for assessing the suitability of bidders and for assessing the tenders in order to award a contract must form part of the minimum information contained in the letter of invitation or contract notice.

It also means that, where the award was made to the most economically advantageous tender, all criteria the contracting authority is intending to apply must be stipulated, where possible, in descending order of importance providing equal opportunities for bidders, and other concerns, in particular efficiency [2]. [18] stated that a sound public procurement system needs to have good procurement laws and regulations. In practice and theory, public procurement laws and regulations have been considered as one of the most important pillars of a sound procurement system. Procurement laws and regulations lead to procurement efficiency or inefficiency.

There has always been a debate about a procurement legal framework that hinders or helps procurement discretion. Ideally, procurement laws and regulations should be clear, consistent, comprehensive, and flexible [18]. Procurement policies are rules and regulations for governing procurement procedures in an organization. A properly designed and implemented procurement policy plays a pivotal role in providing a guiding framework for the implementation of effective procurement practices [19].

In most countries in Sub-Saharan Africa, [20] posits that integrity in the context of public procurement implies that procurement procedures are transparent and promote fair and equal treatment for bidders. [20] argues that public secondary school resources linked to public procurement are used in accordance with intended purposes. In a study conducted in Morocco, [21] report that a very important objective of many public procurement systems and of public procurement regulation is to ensure integrity in the system. This refers, first, to the idea that procurement should be carried out without any influence of corruption. [21] revealed that ethical procurement best practices start with the employees in procurement following an ethical code which dictates their behavior and actions while conducting school business. [21] affirm that ethical procurement practices should be extended to all stakeholders in the procurement cycle. Ethical procurement should also include an understanding of suppliers’ operations and the procurement professional should offer guidance and support when improvement is necessary or appropriate. This points to the fact that maintaining confidentiality in a procurement process ensures success of the whole procuring procedures thus confidentiality is a fundamental arm of ethical procurement practice.

Entities should consider whether the nature of the procurement may raise confidentiality issues for potential suppliers. Such issues can arise in a number of ways including where: potential suppliers include commercially sensitive information as part of a submission; the preferred supplier sought to protect commercially sensitive information contained in the contract; or the preferred supplier sought to protect commercially sensitive information during and after the performance of the contract. In Algeria, [22] report that where procurement may give rise to specific claims confidentiality by potential suppliers, the planning of the procurement should take account of this by managing the extent to which potential suppliers are required to submit commercially sensitive information in their submissions; assessing whether any potential claims to confidentiality would be consistent with the requirements of the particular procurement. [22] further note, for example, if an entity is engaging a consultant to write a report that the entity intends to publish or use in other ways, a potential claim for confidentiality by a supplier to protect intellectual property in relation to the report would be inconsistent with the entity’s requirements for a published work; assessing the longer-term implications of protecting information as confidential.

In Uganda, there is recognition that public procurement is increasingly being recognized as a profession that plays a significant role in the successful management of public secondary school resources [5]. For example, in a study conducted in schools in Tororo Province, [23] revealed that in the last decade reform efforts have often occurred in cycles, as public procurement has gone through substantial changes in terms of priorities, needs and capacity. As countries have become more aware of the importance of procurement as an area vulnerable to mismanagement and potentially corruption, they have recently initiated efforts to integrate procurement in a more strategic view of government actions [23]. This has also led some countries to recognize procurement as a strategic profession rather than simply an administrative function.

This requires specific guidelines as well as restrictions and prohibitions to ensure that public funds are used for the purposes intended, public officials to adapt in a changing environment and minimize the potential for corruption. However, [23] and [5] noted that secondary schools and other procurement departments within the education sector face real challenges in delivering good quality products and services, including challenges of mounting debt and budget cuts. This is indicative of the fact that good ethical practices do exist, however, despite mounting debt and budget cuts. This is indicative of the fact that good ethical practices do exist, however, despite
concept of ethics within procurement process is of greater importance in order to get a better understanding of the real cost involved with attaining any ethical procurement process [6].

In a study carried out in Kisumu East Sub-county, [7] found, however, that many public procurement activities suffer from neglect, lack of open competition and transparency; differing levels of corruption and most importantly various conflict of interest arising from stakeholders and personnel involved in handling a procurement process yet are expected to manage such procurements, in a professional, timely and cost-effective manner. [7] noted that the impact of transparency and accountability on service delivery has always been the underlying motif in the management of public secondary school resources. However, [7] argued that the contribution of procurement policy in facilitating an efficient and effective use of public secondary school resources is generally undisputed in both developed and developing countries. Its contribution can be at both central and local government levels of public sector management. This is thus indicative of the fact that one of the major setbacks in public procurement is poor planning and management of the procurement process which include needs that are not well identified and estimated, unrealistic budgets and inadequacy of the skills of staff responsible for procurement. In other words, when planning is properly conceived and implemented, it can serve as an important mechanism for extracting, distributing and allocating resources. Besides, planning generally enhances the gathering, evaluating and interpreting of essential data and information in order to produce knowledge relevant to good policy making.

Furthermore, mechanisms for lodging complaints and challenging administrative decisions contribute to ensuring the fairness of the process [8]. In order to respond to citizens’ demands for greater accountability in the management of public expenditures, some governments have also introduced direct social control mechanisms by closely involving stakeholders not only the private sector but also end-users, civil society, the media or the public at large - in scrutinizing integrity in procurement. [24] argues that when defining priorities, secondary school principals need to decide what stakeholders’ public procurement primarily serves end-users, government, the private sector, the media, or the public at large. Public procurement is increasingly regarded as a core element of accountability of the government to the public on how public funds are managed. [24] further asserts that governments have reinforced their control and accountability mechanisms on public procurement in recent years. A key challenge is to define a clear chain of approval and responsibility in the public procurement process in a context of devolved procurement.

Effective implementation of procurement practices is determined by the level of compliance with procurement regulations, minimization of procurement expenditure, transparency and accountability of procurement funds and quality of procured goods and services [25]. In 2010, the Transparency International (TI) carried out the Kenya Education Sector Integrity study, and observed that concerns on accountability continued to emerge in the way the schools managed the funds received from the government or collected by schools internally. The study concluded that procuring of services, goods and works is a major field that is prone to mismanagement attributable to the inadequate skills and information on procurement guideline and non-compliance with such directives even if known. The report further states that direct sourcing of services, goods and works remained widespread practices in many schools; whereas in other schools, the principals colluded with the board of management and community heads in subverting the procurement and tender processes [26]. These findings raised concerns about the degree to which the fresh procurement regulation has taken roots in public secondary schools.

Studies conducted jointly by the state and the World Bank in 1986 and 1997 unearthed grave weaknesses in procurement systems, which led to mismanagement of public funds through malpractices such as selective invitation of preferred bidders, designing tender documents to favor particular bidders and inflating the value of contracts, among others.

The procurement reform was begun to boost influence and reducing the huge loss in public funds. Underperformance of heads in fiscal management could have resulted from employment of unqualified staff in accounting that maintain wanting record and who fail to comply with accounting procedure [27]. The report further observed that private secondary school in contrast demonstrate better financial mismanagement because of sound accountability system. [28] concluded that there was deficiency in professional ethics in the management of finances of the schools and called for competent staff in managing school funds.

It is important for school administration to recognize that schools are investments that may ultimately pay back to the state [29]. Transparency is one of the tenets on which the Procurement Act operates. Studies commissioned by the government and the World Bank in 1986 and 1997 revealed serious shortcomings in the procurement system, leading to loss of public funds [29]. Procurement reforms were initiated to enhance efficiency and minimize loss of public resources. Even though the reforms process was initiated about a decade earlier, little had been documented about the extent of unethical practices in public secondary schools and its effect on school financial management.

In a study commissioned by PPOA, key informants were asked to indicate how the Procurement Act ensures transparency in the process [27]. The informants indicated that to a very large extent the Procurement Act ensures transparency in the procedures. The key informants strongly agreed that the Act had brought cost-influence and efficiency in the use of government funds due to strong competition in procurement activities. Value for money is often primarily established through the competitive process. According to the key informants, contracts are duly advertised and published to the general public through national media for the general public [29].

This act is an indication of transparency in procurement procedure and this revelation affirms the assertion by that transparency enables the creation of open, fair and transparent procedures. This is the case too, with secondary school open tenders that are advertised widely in the national media should it meet the necessary threshold. Effective implementation of ethical procurement practices entails implementation of strategies to be
followed when making organization purchasing decisions. According to existing studies there is a relationship between the level of accessibility to ethical guidelines and practices and adherence to the same and therefore where the person charged with the role of procurement can have access to the guidelines and regulations, they are more likely to carry out procurement as outlined by these guidelines and regulations [30].

According to [31] rising awareness of procurement ethics and practice as well as the accessibility of the Procurement Act through different media like, the internet, mobile phones, media etc have been related with increased implementation of the procurement Act which has brought notable improvement in management of institutions. [32] avers that the implementation of the Act has also benefited from the decentralization of the processes of procurement e.g. a secondary school where this role is delegated to the tendering committees which are already in place. Therefore, it has been observed that there is a correlation between the adherence of ethical practices and improvement of management of public institutions. The Procurement Act ensures efficiency, influence, and value for money and reducing extravagance. A strong competition from a vibrant market delivers a value for money and saves cost. This is because awareness of ethical practices reduces chances of corruption since it is more difficult to compromise a group than an individual. This applies where the BoM or PA has a committee that is tasked with the procurements that fall on to them. As such, it contributes to improving the implementation of projects by enabling proper management and improved performance. [31] notes that controlling the performance of the procurement function and ensuring its efficiency and influence is essential to the management of the procurement process. It is vital to evaluate how well the procurement ethics are being adhered to, identify any weaknesses or problems and agree actions to prevent similar problems in the future. Evaluation may include a formal procurement audit which may help uncover any irregularities. Procurement monitoring is an essential part of procurement management and control linked to compliance with Act 663 and performance outcomes such as value for money, professionalism and code of conduct in procurement. This may involve the management of entity, staff of PPA, private sector, oversight bodies (internal and external audit), civil society (including NGOs), project beneficiaries, and media [33].

Ethics is concerned with moral principles and values which govern our beliefs, actions and decisions. Ethical approach implies exemplary approach to all procurement processes that cannot be questioned or criticized. Transparency means that the same rules apply to all suppliers of goods, works and services and that these rules are publicized as the basis of procurement decisions prior to their use. Transparent procurement procedures can contribute to a more efficient allocation of resources through increased competition, higher quality procurement and budgetary savings for governments and thus for taxpayers. To avoid corruption in the public procurement systems there is the need to publish calls for tenders, notifying contract awards in the media, including the successful bidder’s name and final price, and making award criteria more transparent and accountable. These are some of the basic principles of transparency in government procurement which directly affect corrupt practices [34]. Amongst all ethical practices in procurements which are important for ensuring effective management of resources transparency and accountability is the cornerstone of other practices this is because good public procurement systems are central to the influence of development expenditure. According to [4], ethics are the moral guiding principles or values that guide officials in all aspects of their work and so ethical behavior encompasses the concepts of honesty, integrity, probity, diligence, fairness, trust and respect. Ethical behavior includes amongst other things avoiding conflicts of interest, and not making improper use of an individual’s position. Transparency and accountability supports openness and accountability in procurement with the result that suppliers have confidence in participating in organization especially in schools where there are different stakeholders who include Parents, students, teachers, BOMs, PAs etc.

Ethical behavior in school procurement process is very important in management of school resources. Ethical behavior supports openness and accountability in a procurement process that enables every stake holder has confidence in the procurement processes. In case of a school, a transparent and effective public procurement system is important to combat bribery and corruption where in this case a clear rules and practices need to be established and communicated to all stakeholders. In Kenya, [35] assert that procurement mainstreaming, capacity development and benchmarking, monitoring and evaluation are the key themes that reflect an awareness that sustainable improvements in procurement outcomes are derived from efforts that appreciate the role of procurement in the broader context of public financial management and delivery of government services, and are designed to develop the skills and processes needed to respond to a country’s specific needs.

The central theme in virtue ethics is shaping people into morally good and responsible creatures. In Mandera County, duty ethics is based on certain rules/norms, virtue ethics is based on certain virtues [36]. Care ethics emphasizes that the development of morals is not caused by learning moral principles. Instead people should learn norms and values in specific contexts. By contacting other people, and by placing yourself in their shoes, you should learn what is good or bad at a particular time. The solution of moral problems must always be focused on maintaining the relationships between people. So, the connectedness of people is the key. Ethics are the guidelines or rules of conduct by which we aim to live on. Organizations like individuals have ethical standards and frequently ethical codes. The ethical standards of an organization are judged by its actions and the actions of its employees, not by pious statements of intent put out in its name [37].

According to [35], with the official launch of Public Procurement Reforms, the country set on the reform road in the area of public procurement by putting in place a unified legal framework to guide the reforms. This was realized through the gazettement of the Exchequer and Audit Act Public Procurement, Regulations [38], which harmonized all the treasury circulars and manuals governing procurement in the public sector, putting in place an institution to oversee development and implementation of
the public procurement policy in Kenya and improve transparency. However, studies by [36] and [35] have not clearly articulated how adherence to procurement ethics influences management of organizations such as schools. It was not clear how adherence to ethical practices guarantees financial accountability, controls and prudent use of resources within schools.

6. Research Methodology

This study, mixed methods approach was applied. This was suitable since this study involved collection and analysis of both quantitative and qualitative methods. According to [39], in quantitative data, the researcher asks specific questions and collects quantifiable data from a large number of participants. The study adopted concurrent triangulation research design which is a single-phase design in which quantitative and qualitative methods are separately used, but at the same time with equal weight. This design facilitates the attainment of differing yet corresponding data on the research problem so as to understand it best [40]. The target population was 888 comprising of 42 principals, 588 (14 per school) Members of School Board of Management, 6 Quality Assurance and Standards Officers and 252 (6 per school) School Tendering and Procurement Committee Members. The study used questionnaires for members of school Board of Management and interview schedules for principals and QASOs and focus group discussions (FGD) guide for tendering and procurement committee members. Qualitative data was analyzed thematically along the study objectives and presented in narrative forms whereas the quantitative data was analyzed descriptively using frequencies and percentages and inferentially using ANOVA with the help of Statistical Packages for Social Science (SPSS Version 23) and presented using tables and graphs. The procedure of data analysis was as shown in Table 1.

7. Data Analysis

7.1. Compliance to Ethical Practices and Management of Secondary School Resources

The study also sought to examine different ethical practices in procurement and how such ethical practices influence management of public secondary school resources. Descriptive data was collected from members of School Board of Management and results are shown in Table 1;

Table 1. Frequency of Compliance to Ethical Practices in Procurement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethical Practices in Procurement</th>
<th>Very Often</th>
<th>Often</th>
<th>Rarely</th>
<th>Not Often</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Duty ethics</td>
<td>70.4</td>
<td>7.7</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>2.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moral ethics</td>
<td>30.7</td>
<td>13.5</td>
<td>49.8</td>
<td>6.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Code of conduct</td>
<td>27.4</td>
<td>16.9</td>
<td>51.3</td>
<td>4.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Researcher (2019)

Table 1 indicates that 121(70.4%) of the members of school Board of Management indicated that secondary schools very often comply with duty ethics in procurement, 13(7.7%) indicated that schools often comply, 34(20.0%) indicated that secondary schools rarely comply whereas a small 5(2.9%) noted that secondary schools do not often comply with duty ethics in procurement. However, only 53 (30.7%) of the members of school Board of Management reported that secondary schools very often comply with moral ethics in procurement, 23(13.5%) indicated that schools often comply, 86(49.8%) indicated schools rarely comply whereas 10(6.0%) indicated that secondary schools do not often comply with moral ethics in procurement. In the same vein, 47(27.4%) of the members of school Board of Management indicated that secondary schools very often comply with code of conduct of procurement, 29(16.9%) noted that schools often comply. However, 88(51.3%) of the members of school Board of Management indicated that secondary schools comply with procurement code of conduct whereas only 8(4.4%) indicated that secondary schools do not often comply.

These findings lend credence to the assertions of [25] that effective implementation of procurement practices is determined by the level of compliance with procurement regulations, minimization of procurement expenditure, transparency and accountability of procurement funds and quality of procured goods and services. This point to the fact that ethics is concerned with moral principles and values which govern our beliefs, actions and decisions. That is, ethical approach implies exemplary approach to all procurement processes that cannot be questioned or criticized.

Table 2. Views of Members of School Board of Management on the Influence of Compliance to Ethical Practices on Management of School Resources

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Summary of Test Items</th>
<th>SA %</th>
<th>A %</th>
<th>U %</th>
<th>D %</th>
<th>SD %</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>St. Dev.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Compliance with duty ethics has not enhanced management of school resources</td>
<td>70.3</td>
<td>14.1</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>10.2</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>4.281</td>
<td>0.927</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary schools rarely comply with moral ethics in procurement which has not enhanced management of school resources</td>
<td>59.9</td>
<td>22.4</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>7.8</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>3.648</td>
<td>0.789</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary schools rarely comply with procurement code of conduct and has not enhanced financial prudence and staff relations in secondary schools</td>
<td>71.4</td>
<td>13.3</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>8.8</td>
<td>4.471</td>
<td>1.007</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Secondary schools rarely comply with procurement code of conduct and has not enhanced management of school resources

| Source: Researcher (2019) |

Table 2 reveals that 121(70.3%) of the members of School Board of Management strongly agreed with the view that compliance with duty ethics has not enhanced financial prudence, staff relations, curriculum support resources and infrastructural development in secondary schools. At the same time, 24(14.1%) agreed. On the contrary, only a small proportion of 4(2.3%) of the members of School Board of Management were undecided, 18(10.2%) disagreed whereas 5(3.1%) strongly disagreed. These findings lend credence to the assertions of [37] that ethics are the guidelines or rules of conduct by which we aim to live on. Secondary schools like individuals have ethical standards and frequently ethical codes.

These findings affirm the fact that the ethical standards of an organization are judged by its actions and the actions of its employees, not by pious statements of intent put out in its name. The study also revealed that 103(59.9%) of the members of School Board of Management strongly agreed with the view that secondary schools rarely comply with moral ethics in procurement which has not enhanced financial prudence, staff relations, curriculum support resources and infrastructural development in secondary schools as did 39(22.4%) of the members of school Board of Management. However, 7(4.3%) of the members of School Board of Management were undecided, 13(7.8%) disagreed whereas 10(5.6%) strongly disagreed.

These findings corroborate the assertions of [34] that amongst all ethical practices in procurements which are important for ensuring effective management of resources transparency and accountability is the cornerstone of other practices this is because good public procurement systems are central to the influence of development expenditure. The study also found out that 123(71.4%) of the members of School Board of Management strongly agreed with the view that secondary schools rarely comply with procurement code of conduct and has not enhanced financial prudence and staff relations in secondary schools as did 23(13.3%) of the members of School Board of Management who agreed. However, 5(2.6%) of the members of School Board of Management were undecided, 7(3.9%) disagreed whereas 14(8.8%) strongly disagreed.

A third 115(66.7%) of the members of School Board of Management strongly agreed with the view that secondary schools rarely comply with procurement code of conduct and has not enhanced curriculum support resources and infrastructural development in secondary schools as did 28(16.4%) of the members of School Board of Management. However, 8(4.5%) of the members of School Board of Management were undecided, 14(8.3%) disagreed whereas 7(4.1%) strongly disagreed.

These findings are not in agreement with the requirements of [35] in Kenya which holds that procurement mainstreaming, capacity development and benchmarking and compliance to ethical practices are the key themes that reflect an awareness that sustainable improvements in procurement outcomes are derived from efforts that appreciate the role of procurement in the broader context of public financial management and delivery of government services, and are designed to develop the skills and processes needed to respond to a country’s specific needs. In other words, the central theme in virtue ethics is shaping people into morally good and responsible creatures.

7.2. Inferential Findings on the Influence of Compliance to Ethical Practices on Management of Public Secondary School Resources

To verify the possibility of difference between compliance with ethical practices in procurement and management of public secondary school resources, data was collected on how often secondary schools comply with ethical requirements in procurement, wastages in vote heads for infrastructural development, staffing and curriculum support resources and results are shown in Table 2:

Table 3. Results of Frequency of Compliance with Ethical Practices in Procurement and Wastages in School Vote Heads on Infrastructure, Staffing and Curriculum Support Resources

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency of Compliance with Ethical Practices</th>
<th>Wastages in Management of School Resources (Kshs.)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Infrastructure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>77,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>54,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>32,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Sub-county Directors of Education, Mandera County (2019)

Table 4. ANOVA Analysis of the Difference between Frequency of Compliance with Ethical Practices in Procurement and Means of Wastages in School Vote Heads on Infrastructural Development, Staffing and Curriculum Support Resources

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency of Compliance with Ethical Practices</th>
<th>Sum of Squares</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Mean Square</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Sig</th>
</tr>
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<td>1357036890.056</td>
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Table 3 indicates that secondary schools where there is frequent compliance with the duty, moral and code of conduct ethics, there is reduced and minimal cases of wastage of school resources in infrastructural development, staffing and curriculum support resources materials. These results also corroborate the arguments of [18] who stated that a sound public procurement system needs to have good procurement laws and regulations. In practice and theory, public procurement laws and regulations have been considered as one of the most important pillars of a sound procurement system. These Procurement laws and regulations lead to procurement efficiency or inefficiency. These results were subjected to ANOVA and results are indicated in Table 4.

From the ANOVA Statistics in Table 4, the processed data, generated a significance level of 0.034 which shows that the data is ideal for making a conclusion on the population’s parameter as the value of significance (p-value of 0.034) is less than 5%, that is, p-value=0.034<0.05. It also indicates that the results were statistically significant and that there is significant difference between frequency of compliance with ethical practices in procurement and means of wastages in vote heads set for infrastructural development, staffing and curriculum support resources. This point to the fact that, in secondary schools where there is compliance with duty, moral and code of conduct ethics, there is reduced and minimal cases of wastage of school resources in infrastructural development, staffing and curriculum support resources materials. These results were consistent with the findings of a study conducted by [4] which generated a p-value of 0.029<0.05. These findings thus affirm the fact that compliance with ethical practices is critical in management of school resources.

Ethics are the moral guiding principles or values that guide officials in all aspects of their work and so ethical behavior encompasses the concepts of honesty, integrity, probity, diligence, fairness, trust and respect. To minimize instances of wastage of school resources in infrastructural development, staffing and curriculum support resources materials, secondary schools ought to comply with ethical practices, that is, duty, moral and code of conduct in procurement.

7.3. Thematic Analysis of Qualitative Findings on the Influence of Compliance to Ethical Practices on Management of Public Secondary School Resources

On the contrary, secondary principals who were interviewed indicated secondary schools comply with ethical practices in procurement. Principal, P5, indicated, “In my secondary school, all staff members are duty-bound to comply with duty and moral ethics and procurement code of conduct. This has ensured improved financial prudence, staff relations, curriculum support resources and infrastructural development in our secondary school”.

During interviews, quality assurance officers did not agree with the principals. They noted that, despite a requirement that all school staff members comply with all the ethical procurement practices, in most cases, they don’t. QASO5, remarked, “In certain instances, a messenger or school cashier buys goods and services for a secondary school without minding to keep the receipts and other documentation for auditing purposes. So, it becomes difficult for any auditor to ascertain how certain vote heads were spent and on which goods and services”.

In the same vein, during focus discussions with the tendering and procurement committee members, the researcher noted that most members were not willing to confirm or deny whether there is compliance with ethical practices. These views further support the requirements of [35] which view ethics as the guidelines or rules of conduct by which every school stakeholder aim to live on. During FGD, TPCM5, reported, “There are always cases of conflicts of interests where some members award themselves and their cronies tenders to procure goods and services. Cases of bribes and canvassing for contracts are a common phenomenon. This has often caused acrimony amongst the committee members”.

Just like quantitative findings, these views further affirm the fact that the ethical standards of an organization are judged by its actions and the actions of its employees, not by pious statements of intent put out in its name. These views further affirm the fact that all ethical practices in procurements which are important for ensuring effective management of resources transparency and accountability is the cornerstone of other practices this is because good public procurement systems are central to the influence of development expenditure.

8. Summary of Research Findings

The study established that ethical standards of a school are judged by its actions and the actions of its staff. Mixed findings further point to the fact that all ethical practices in procurements which are important for ensuring effective management of resources transparency and accountability is the cornerstone of other practices this is because good public procurement systems are central to the influence of development expenditure.

These findings point to the fact that lack of professional training on tendering and procurement functions and lack of continuous training on implementation of best procurement practices hinders the procurement staff in public sector organizations to effectively execute procurement procedures.

In other words, these findings are indicative of the training methods involve the expected benefits and a comprehensive evaluation that measures the influence and worth of the training to the organization. Training and knowledge in procurement is critical since it is required that competitors are made to submit their tender documents to the procurement entity for proper evaluation and
scrutiny. This further point to the fact that lack of training on application of sustainable procurement strategies for school procurement committee has been known to hinder implementation of effective procurement practices in secondary schools. This means that effective execution of school’s procurement procedures greatly depends on the level of school committees’ training since lack of professional trained committee on procurement functions limits the ability of the organizations to embrace procurement best practices through benchmarking.

9. Conclusions

Drawing from the above findings, it is evident that secondary schools rarely adopt open tendering method. Instead, there is too much single-sourcing which has impacted negatively on schools’ financial prudence, staff relations, curriculum support resources and management of school infrastructure, in secondary schools. Inadequacy of corporate electronic procurement system in public sectors entity means that they found it a challenge in analyzing the expenditure on a macro-economic level. From the findings, it is also evident that secondary schools rarely comply with ethical practices in procurement. This has impacted on their ability to enhance financial prudence, staff relations, curriculum support resources and infrastructural development in our secondary school.

10. Recommendations

On compliance with ethical practices, the study recommends that the National procurement policy or rules and regulations should be reviewed to put into place clauses that will lead to flexibility for the inclusion of emerging trends in the procurement process as procurement is an involving profession. The organization code of ethics should be well put in place and adhered to; in order to guide the daily operations of school tendering committee and to provide them with guiding principles.

Ethical levels of behavior of procurement staff must be ensured as it influences the performance in the school. In cases of conflicts of interests, the school management should adhere to ethical requirements and thus disqualify themselves from awarding themselves contracts.

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References

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