

Effects of Ghana's Public Procurement Act on the Acquisition of Academic Library Resources in Ghana

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ABSTRACT

There is a scarcity of literature on the effects of Ghana's public procurement act on the acquisition of academic library resources. This study therefore sought to address this knowledge gap. A survey approach was adopted for conducting this study and questionnaire was used to collect data. Descriptive statistics was used to analyse data, and findings were presented using tables. Findings suggest that the implementation of the Public Procurement Act has enhanced the procurement structure of academic libraries in Ghana. Effects of the Act were however found to be weak with regards to development of capacity of procurement personnel; dealing with issues of transparency and accountability; and achieving value for money. It was recommended that the Public Procurement Act and the procurement system should be revised and strengthened, and training and development be improved and should target the attitude and morality of the procurement personnel.

Keywords: Public Procurement, Academic Libraries, Library Resources, Ghana

INTRODUCTION

Maximisation of value has always been a major goal of mankind; the quest to derive maximum satisfaction from scarce resources has been the central economic problem of man thousands of years before the coming to the scene of renowned economics theorists like Adam Smith, J.M. Keynes, and Karl Marx. Governments, enterprises, as well as individuals all seek to derive the most out of their resources. A formalised and structured approach to acquisition of public goods, works, and services is one of the means by which governments attempt to maximise the use of their resources. Procurement management has been identified as a key strategy for achieving competitive advantage (Bag, 2012). Public procurement is a government activity that utilises substantial proportion of nations' resources (Thai, 2001; Amann, Roehrich, Ebig, & Harland, 2014; Afonso, Schuknecht, & Tanzi, 2005; OECD, 2012). In the European Union, public procurement spending accounts for about 19% of GDP, an average of 13% of GDP of OECD countries, and even a higher percentage of the GDP of developing countries (Cernat & Kutlina-Dimitrova, 2015; OECD, 2012; UNEP, 2012).

Unethical and unfair business practices have become the order of the day in today's business world (Sharma, 2015). Public procurement in both developed and developing countries has over the years been bedevilled by gross irregularities such as corruption, waste and inefficiencies, and incompetence (DeAses, 2005; Weisheng, Liu, Hongdi, & Zhongbing, 2013; Ren, Kwaw, & Yang, 2012). This situation has been a major driving force for public procurement and in general public sector reforms globally (Ongaro & Valotti, 2008; DeAses, 2005; Ren *et al.*, 2012; Weisheng *et al.*, 2013). Public procurement reforms are often embarked upon to achieve objectives such as; fostering competition, ensuring transparency, achieving value for money, standardising and harmonising procurement procedures, enhancing end-product quality, addressing corruption, and strengthening accountability (Jones, 2013; Ren *et al.*, 2012). A number of challenges have characterised the implementation of public procurement reforms, especially in developing countries (Jones, 2013; Dza, Fisher, & Gapp, 2013; Ameyaw, Mensah, & Osei-Tutu, 2012). These challenges include: lack of effective monitoring and enforcement of provisions of public procurement acts by relevant regulatory institutions, incorrect interpretation and application of some provisions of the procurement law, lack of clear procedures for sole

sourcing and single source procurement, low capacity and competence of procurement professionals, inappropriate procurement practices that result in undue delay of the procurement process, unethical conduct and malpractices by some stakeholders in the procurement process, poor record management; inefficient contract management, poor handling of suppliers' complaints, and high cost of advertisement (Quah, 2003; Jones, 2013).

Studies have been conducted to assess the effects of the implementation of public procurement act on the procurement activities of some public sector entities in a number of developing countries (Ren *et al.*, 2012; Jones, 2013; Dza *et al.*, 2013). In Ghana, many of the studies assessing the effects of public procurement reform on government agencies have rather been general. Only few of these studies have targeted specific procurement activities, and most of these have been in the construction sector (Ameyaw *et al.*, 2012; Anvuur, Kumaraswamy, & Male, 2006). One of the public entities in Ghana about which one is not likely to find academic publications relative to the effects of the Public Procurement Act on acquisition of resources is academic libraries. This study therefore has a general objective of assessing the effects of Ghana's Public Procurement Act, 2003 (Act 663) on the acquisition of academic library resources. Specifically, the study seeks to:

1. assess the beneficial effects of the public procurement act on the acquisition of academic library resources;
2. ascertain the weaknesses of the Act relative to the acquisition of academic library resources.

Significance of the Study

This research has highlighted the strengths and weaknesses of the Public Procurement Act with respect to the acquisition of academic library resources. It has brought to the fore some major hindrances to effective procurement of academic library resources in Ghana; some of which are the slowness and the cumbersome nature of the public procurement process, inability of the procurement system to address the problem of procurement fraud, corruption and irregularities, failure of the Procurement Act to improve value for money, and shortage of requisite procurement skills and competencies. By bringing the strengths and weaknesses of the procurement system to light, this study is providing useful information to relevant bodies such as the Public Procurement Authority, management of academic libraries, and management of higher education institutions in Ghana for appropriate

actions to be taken to address the identified weaknesses and also build on the strengths. Since this is one of the pioneering studies in the area of public procurement and academic libraries in Ghana, it is anticipated that this will set research agenda for more studies to be done in this area of study.

LITERATURE REVIEW

This section provides a review of the concept 'value for money' relative to public procurement. It also gives an overview of Ghana's public procurement act, its purpose, achievements, and challenges. Also treated in this section are the concept of academic libraries, and the acquisition of materials by these libraries.

Public Procurement and the Concept of Value for Money

Public procurement is the acquisition by government or public sector organisations of goods, services and works (OECD, 2013; Uyarra & Flanagan, 2010). It is one of the major economic activities of governments, and accounts for a significant amount of total government expenditure (Thai, 2001; OECD, 2013). The proportion of national budget utilised by public procurement makes it vitally important for this activity to be conducted in such a manner as to ensure efficiency, transparency, and value for money.

The concept of Value for Money (VFM) can be explained as not paying for goods or services more than their quality or availability justify; it is the striking of a balance between economy, efficiency and effectiveness (Glendinning, 1988; Jackson, 2012). In this context 'Economy' refers to the prudent use of resources to minimise expenses; 'Efficiency' means delivery of better results with given resources, or deriving given benefits with less inputs; and 'Effectiveness' is about successful achievement of intended outcomes from an activity (Jackson, 2012). Value for Money is a fundamental concept that underpins all effective public procurement systems and regulatory provisions (Dimitri, 2012; Arrowsmith, 2011), as such recent public procurement reforms emphasise VFM as a fundamental requirement of government procurement (Raymond, 2008; Jones, 2013).

Ghana's Public Procurement Act

The Public Procurement Act, 2003 (Act 663) came into force with the objectives of addressing weaknesses

inherent in the existing public procurement system, which included the absence of a comprehensive public procurement policy and regulation, lack of technical expertise to carry out public procurement functions, and the absence of a central regulatory body to provide requisite administrative functions. The Act was also to harmonise public procurement processes, ensure value for money for public expenditure, and promote transparent and fair public procurement (Public Procurement Authority, 2014).

Assessments of procurement activities of some government entities after the implementation of the Act reveal that: the Act has brought harmony into procurement activities of public institutions; improved the capacity and expertise of public procurement officials through seminars, workshops, and on-the-job training programmes; and also improved record keeping of procurement activities in the public sector. However, the findings indicate that the Act has contributed to undue delays in the public procurement system; the procurement process has become very cumbersome; and the problem of corruption still persists (Avotri, 2012; Ameyaw *et al.*, 2012).

Academic Libraries

Academic libraries refer to libraries that support higher education institutions and research organisations (Kent State University, 2015; Oakleaf, 2011; Boakye, 1994). They have often been described as ‘the heart of the learning community’ (Simmonds & Andaleeb, 2001; Oakleaf, 2011), providing a platform for students, faculty and researchers to do research and advance knowledge. Not long ago, academic libraries were more or less the sole custodians of scholarly information, and their contribution to the *raison d’être* of higher education institutions (HEIs) was so significant that it would have been an absurdity to conceptualise HEIs without giving a thought to academic libraries. In recent times however, though academic libraries continue to play critical roles in HEIs, their methods of service delivery have come under intense pressure to adapt to the current trends and technologies. The advent of new technologies and the internet has brought about new methods of information delivery and access, and this calls for change in the role of academic libraries (Simmonds & Andaleeb, 2001; Moahi, 2002). Other serious challenges that academic libraries are grappling with especially in developing countries are related to resource constraints; whilst demand of the clientele of these libraries has become highly sophisticated and the cost of library materials been

on the ascendency, budgets of these libraries continue to experience downward revision (Moghaddam & Talawar, 2008; Boakye, 1994; Oakleaf, 2011). To live up to these mounting challenges, academic libraries certainly need to be as efficient as possible, and adopt innovative approach to their way of doing things.

Public academic libraries in Ghana are among the best developed and most resourced libraries in the country in terms of professional staff, infrastructure, materials, equipment and services. These libraries have however operated for years under austere conditions (Boakye, 1994). Like many other academic libraries in African countries and other developing countries, public academic libraries in Ghana have over the years operated under severe resource constraints, and their woes appear to be deepening with the passage of time (Antwi, 1997; Boakye, 1994).

Academic Libraries and Material Acquisition

Library acquisition refers to the process and function of obtaining materials for the library (Diedrichs, 1999). It is considered critical to the quality of services delivered by libraries (Ajidahun, 2008). Acquisition of library materials can be by purchase, exchange, or gift (Boakye, 1994). In Africa, about 95% of material acquisition of academic libraries is done by purchase (Ifidon, 1999). The acquisition process basically entails: identification and selection of needed library materials; ordering of materials; and registering of the receipts and invoicing of supplied materials (Siddiqui, 2003). Limited budgetary support has over the years posed serious constraints to acquisition of resources of academic libraries especially in developing countries (Moahi, 2002; Carter & Seaman, 2011; Boakye, 1994). Apart from the problems of limited resource availability, the acquisition process of academic libraries in developing countries especially African countries are saddled with procurement irregularities such as inflated prices of library materials, bribery and corruption, and external especially political influences of the procurement process (Ajidahun, 2008). Some public administration reforms such as the public procurement act, implemented by some African countries appear to have introduced additional bottlenecks in the acquisition process of academic libraries (Mapulanga, 2015).

To address the challenges confronting these libraries, especially the aspect of material acquisition process, a number of suggestions have been made. Among these are: the need of libraries to adopt “just –in- time” model of library acquisition; shifting to electronic materials

rather than hard copies; the use of “pay-as-you use” model of acquisition rather than paying for an entire subscription; and putting in place an effective policy to guide the acquisition process (Moahi, 2002; Boakye, 1994; Siddiqui, 2003).

METHODOLOGY

This aspect of the study discusses the research design, the population of the study, the sampling method used, the data collection instrument and procedure. Also discussed is the data analysis procedure.

The Design

The design of this study is a survey. Survey is a research design which uses questionnaires or structured interviews for data collection, with the intention of using a sample to generalise for a population (Babbie, 1990). The survey focused on librarians of public universities and polytechnics in Ghana, and the purpose was to gather information pertaining to the effects of the Public Procurement Act on library acquisitions of these institutions.

Population and Sampling Method

Nineteen higher education institutions were identified for this study; comprising nine public universities and ten polytechnics. The Universities are The University of Ghana, Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, University of Cape Coast, University of Education, Winneba, University for Development Studies, University of Professional Studies, University of Mines and Technology, University of Health and Allied Sciences, and University of Energy and Natural Resources. All the ten polytechnics were part of this study. 42 librarians of these institutions consisting of head librarians, college librarians, and acquisition librarians were purposively sampled for this study.

Research Instrument and Data Collection Procedure

Questionnaire was the data collection instrument used in this study. A five point Likert scale questionnaire was used to collect information on the perception of librarians relative to the positive effects and weaknesses of the application of the Public Procurement Act to the

procurement of library materials. Respondents were to indicate their perceptions by choosing one of the following responses: Strongly Agree, Agree, Not Sure, Disagree, and Strongly Disagree. Two of the questionnaire items were open-ended, and these were for obtaining information on other advantages and weaknesses not captured in the Likert type questionnaire items.

The questionnaire was administered at a workshop of The Consortium of Academic and Research Libraries in Ghana (CARLIGH) in September 2015. Librarians of the public universities and polytechnics were briefed on the purpose of the study, and the questionnaires were hand-administered. The completed questionnaires were retrieved before the four-day workshop ended. 42 questionnaires were administered and 34 of these were successfully retrieved.

Measures taken to ensure the validity of the research instrument included revisions of the questionnaire by peers and some research fellows. The instrument was also pre-tested among some selected library staff of Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, and Kumasi Polytechnic.

DATA ANALYSIS

Descriptive statistics was used to summarise and derive meaning from the collected data. Mean scores and standard deviations were computed to determine the overall perceptions of the respondents relative to the positive effects and weaknesses of the Public Procurement Act on academic library acquisitions. Scores were allocated to the five-point Likert scale responses: where 1 represents “Strongly Disagree”, 2 represents “Disagree”, 3 “Not Sure”, 4 “Agree”, and 5 “Strongly Agree”. Any score above the mid-point score of 3 is explained as agreement of some degree, and any score below 3 is said to be a disagreement of some extent. Responses to the open-ended questions were transcribed and stated in the research findings. The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software was used to run the data analyses and tables were used to present the data.

Findings of the Study

The findings of the study are captured under four themes: Value for Money, Professional Development, Procurement Structure, and Transparency and Accountability. Tables are used to present findings of the study.

Table 1: Procurement Act and Value for Money

| Value for Money Issues Responded to: | Mean | Standard Deviation |
|--|------|--------------------|
| • The Procurement Act has enabled maximisation of resource usage in Academic Libraries | 2.14 | 0.77 |
| • The Act has contributed to waste reduction | 2.64 | 0.63 |
| • The Act has enhanced cost effectiveness | 2.29 | 0.99 |
| • The Act has improved overall effectiveness of procurement | 2.36 | 0.84 |

Source: Field Data, October, 2015

A mean below the mid-point score 3 indicates respondents' disagreement to issues raised, and a mean score above 3 represents agreement with issues under consideration. From Table 1, respondents disagreed with issues pertaining to achievement of Value for Money (VFM). In other words respondents in this study are of the perception that the Public Procurement Act has failed to bring about improvement relative to VFM in the acquisition of Academic Library resources in Ghana's public academic institutions.

Table 2: The Procurement Act and Professional Development

| Professional Development Issues responded to: | Mean | Standard Deviation |
|---|------|--------------------|
| • The Act has enhanced the supplier selection competence of procurement staff | 2.64 | 0.74 |
| • The Act has enabled procurement staff to effectively implement procurement procedures | 3.57 | 0.94 |
| • The Act has equipped staff with skills for the procurement of quality library resources | 2.21 | 0.80 |
| • The Act has enabled procurement personnel to negotiate for competitive prices | 2.29 | 0.61 |

Source: Field Data, October, 2015

According to Table 2, respondents are of the perception that, the implementation of the Public Procurement Act has enhanced the capability of procurement staff to effectively implement established public procurement procedures. They are however of the view that the implementation of the Act has not led to improvement of staff competence in the following areas: supplier selection; acquisition of quality products; and negotiation for competitive prices.

Table 3: The Act and Procurement Structure

| Procurement Structure Issues responded to: | Mean | Standard Deviation |
|--|------|--------------------|
| • Implementation of the Act has improved the structure and system of procurement of Academic Libraries | 4.00 | 0.55 |
| • The Act has brought about improvement in record management of Academic Libraries | 3.29 | 0.73 |
| • The Act has ensured that established procurement procedures are adhered to | 3.64 | 0.63 |
| • The Procurement Structure established by the Act has improved speed of resource acquisition | 1.64 | 0.74 |

Source: Field Data, October, 2015

Table 3 indicates that the Public Procurement Act has improved the procurement structure of Academic Libraries; it has also brought about improvement in record management of these libraries; and in addition it has ensured that established procurement procedures are adhered to. Respondents are however of the view that the Act has failed to improve speed of acquisition of library resources.

Table 4: The Act and Transparency and Accountability

| Accountability and Transparency issues responded to: | Mean | Standard Deviation |
|--|------|--------------------|
| • The Act has ensured that managers of Academic Libraries are more responsible relative to the use of academic library resources | 3.50 | 0.65 |
| • The Act has brought about improvement in transparency relative to contract award process | 3.43 | 0.65 |
| • The Act has contributed to reduction in fraud in the procurement process | 2.64 | 0.49 |
| • The Act has helped to reduce political and other interferences in contract award process | 2.64 | 0.93 |
| • The Act has brought about reduction in corruption in acquisition process of Academic Libraries | 2.14 | 0.86 |

Source: Field Data, October, 2015

Findings relative to accountability and transparency of resource acquisitions of Academic Libraries indicate that the Act has ensured that managers of these libraries are more accountable in the way they use resources of the libraries. The findings also suggest that the Act has improved transparency in the process of contract award.

Respondents however disagree with the suggestions that: the Act has contributed to reduction of fraud in the procurement process of the libraries; it has reduced political and other negative interferences in contract award process; and has brought about reduction in corruption in acquisition process of Academic Libraries.

Responses to the Open-ended Questionnaire Items

The following are transcriptions of responses to the open-ended questionnaire items:

Advantages of the Act

- ◆ The Public Procurement Act has somehow led to transparency in the library acquisition process;
- ◆ It presents the library with options from registered suppliers;
- ◆ The Act has brought competition in the procurement process;
- ◆ More suppliers are participating in the procurement process.

Weaknesses of the Act

- ◆ The procurement process is now more cumbersome;
- ◆ It has led to much delay in the process;
- ◆ Increases in the prices of goods and services;
- ◆ Incompetent people sometimes get the bid to supply;
- ◆ Gives preference to bidders with the lowest price quotation without regard to the quality of items to be supplied;
- ◆ Provision of inferior materials and equipment;
- ◆ Favouritism and nepotism has increased;
- ◆ A lot of time and money is wasted holding meetings on the procurement processes;
- ◆ There is high corruption;
- ◆ It has limited the initiatives of librarians.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Ghana's Public Procurement Act 2003, Act 663 was enacted for the purpose of harmonising public procurement processes; ensuring value for money; and promoting transparency, fairness and non-discriminatory

procurement (Public Procurement Authority, 2014). This study sought to find out the positive effects of the Act on resource acquisition of public academic libraries in Ghana, and the weaknesses thereof. The findings of the study revealed the following:

Positive Effects of the Act

Responses indicated that the Act has brought improvement in the laid down structure and systems of procurement of public academic libraries. Improvement in structure and organisation of a procurement function ensures a more effective and accountable procurement system, and in effect prevents mismanagement and waste of public funds, thereby ensuring that goods and services of the right nature, quantity and quality are procured (OECD, 2013). One of the fundamental objectives for the enactment of the Act is the provision of a comprehensive procurement structure and system (The Public Procurement Authority, 2014). One of the findings of this study suggests that the Act has improved record management of the academic libraries. This confirms earlier findings by Avotri (2012) and Agbesi (2009). The study also revealed that the Act has ensured that laid down procurement processes are adhered to, and the implementation of the Act has generally improved the laid down structures of procurement of academic libraries in Ghana.

Findings of the study also suggest that the Act has equipped procurement staff with the skills of implementing appropriate procurement procedures in the academic libraries. Moreover, the Act has improved accountability in how library resources are used, and has also enhanced transparency in the award of contract. Furthermore, it has made the procurement process more competitive because it has opened up the process to the participation of more suppliers.

Weaknesses of the Act

One would have expected that improvement in the structure and system of procurement would have impacted positively on other aspects of procurement such as value for money, professional competencies, and transparency and accountability; findings of this study however suggest otherwise. Respondents were of the view that the Act failed to achieve value for money as shown in Table 1; the Act had not succeeded in ensuring maximisation of resource utilisation, minimisation of waste, effectiveness of procurement, and overall cost effectiveness. Value for money is regarded as a pillar on which effective government

procurement rests; there cannot be any effective public procurement in the absence of the principle of value for money (Government of the Republic of South Africa, n.d.; Knight, Harland, Telgen, Callender, Thai, & McKen, 2007). The perception that the Act has failed to achieve value for money in the acquisition process of academic libraries is an indictment on the Act. This perception however, agrees with earlier findings by Ren *et al.*, 2012; Ameyaw *et al.*, 2012. Furthermore, rampant cases of over bloated contract amounts in public sector procurement captured by audit reports and reported by the media are further indications that there could be serious problems with value for money in Ghana's public procurement.

Lack of requisite procurement capacity by public procurement officials has been an age long shortcoming of Ghana's public procurement system, and one of the major objectives of the current public procurement regime was to address this problem of lack of capacity (Public Procurement Authority, 2014). However this capacity problem appears to persist, and remains a major implementation challenge of the Act (Ren *et al.*, 2012; Ameyaw *et al.*, 2012). The findings of this study support the perception that the problem of lack of procurement capacity persists as depicted in Table 2. Respondents disagreed with the assertion that the Act has enhanced supplier selection competence of those who do the selection; that the Act has equipped staff with skills for procuring quality resources; and that the Act has enhanced the negotiation skills of procurement staff for more competitive prices.

Another major weakness of the Act is the slow pace of the procurement process. Findings as shown in Table 3 suggest the Act has not been effective in expediting the procurement process. Responses to the open-ended items of the questionnaire indicated that the Act had made the procurement process slow, thus causing much delay in the acquisition process. This result is consistent with the findings of Berko, Nkuah, and Nangpiire (2014); Ren *et al.* (2012).

Findings of the study also suggest that problems of transparency and accountability continue to plague public sector procurement in Ghana. Table 4 indicates that the Act has not succeeded in reducing fraud in the acquisition of academic library resources; political and other interferences to the procurement process persist; and corruption in the procurement process continues to exist. This revelation is worrying because one of the primary objectives the Public Procurement Act was to tackle issues of corruption, favouritism, and lack of accountability

(Public Procurement Authority, 2014). The persistence of these problems, a decade after the enactment of the Act is certainly a worrisome situation for the country. Accountability constitutes a central pillar of any public procurement system, and the absence of transparent and accountable procurement systems is a recipe for increased corruption and misuse of public funds (UNDP, 2010).

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings made in this study the following conclusions are drawn and recommendations made:

Conclusion

The Procurement Act has facilitated the strengthening of procurement structures in public Academic Libraries in Ghana; it has ensured that established procurement processes are adhered to; and has also improved record management of these libraries. The major weaknesses of the Act pertaining to the procurement structure are the slowness of the system, and the cumbersome nature of the procurement process.

The effect of the Act relative to capacity building and professional development of procurement personnel has generally been weak. The Act has not brought improvement to the supplier selection ability, and negotiation skills of procurement personnel. It has also not improved the competence of staff to procure quality materials. It has however improved the capacity of procurement personnel to implement procurement procedures.

The Act has not been able to effectively tackle the problems of lack of transparency and accountability. The effect of the Act has been weak relative to addressing the problems of procurement corruption and fraud, as well as negative interference with the procurement process of the academic libraries. It has however brought some improvement in transparency in the contract award process, and responsible utilisation of the resources of the libraries.

The Act has been ineffective in achieving value for money with regards to the acquisition of academic library resources. Its effect has been weak relative to: obtaining optimum utility from resources of the libraries; waste minimisation; cost effectiveness; and overall effectiveness of procurement.

Recommendations

To address the weaknesses of delay and complexity of the procurement process it is recommended that the Public Procurement Authority, Management of public sector organisations, and scholars conduct careful analyses of the public procurement process to identify the slacks and bottlenecks which unduly hinder the smooth flow of the procurement process so that these can be removed to achieve a more seamless and effective procurement process.

With regard to the training and development of procurement personnel, it is recommended that the Public Procurement Authority, the Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning, and heads of Public Institutions should step-up their training and professional development activities; they should also appraise their existing training programmes to determine whether they are being effective or not. It is also very important that training should target the attitude of personnel; it should equip personnel with appropriate ethical and moral attitude. This is one of the surest ways to address the problems of corruption, fraud, and other unprofessional procurement practices.

To improve transparency and accountability, electronic procurement should be promoted, and human interface in the procurement process should be reduced as much as possible in order to reduce fraud, corruption and negative interferences. Moreover, the weakness relative to value for money could be addressed by making value for money audit an integral part of the procurement process.

Findings of this study suggest that the Act has brought about improvement in the procurement structure of the academic libraries. One would have expected that this improvement in the regulatory and administrative structure of procurement of these libraries would have enabled them to achieve other procurement objectives such as value for money, transparency and accountability, as well as effective and efficient procurement practices. The other findings however, proved otherwise. This situation is indicative of some fundamental problems with the public procurement system. These problems could be due to ineffectiveness and inefficiencies inherent in the current procurement system, as well as human factor. When the attitude of personnel and officials responsible for public procurement is not right, they would find means of making the procurement structure ineffective in order to perpetuate their personal agenda. This requires the development of right attitude in procurement practitioners through appropriate training and sensitisation. Moreover, if the procurement system lacks the requisite robustness

and thus could be circumvented with relative ease, the system will be of little use for ensuring effective and efficient procurement. Considering the ineffectiveness of the current Public Procurement Act, and the system of procurement, it is recommended that these should be revised and strengthened. It is also recommended that punishments for public procurement offences should be severe enough to deter potential perpetrators.

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