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Original Article

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PROCUREMENT NEEDS ASSESSMENT AND PERFORMANCE OF THE PROCUREMENT AND DISPOSAL UNITS IN UGANDA MINISTRY OF DEFENSE AND VETERAN AFFAIRS (MODVA). A CROSS-SECTIONAL STUDY.

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Abstract

Background.

Most public procurement and disposal entities (PDEs) in Uganda today are known for their poor performance and corruption resulting from non-adherence to public procurement processes and procedures, poor resource utilization, and poor personnel management and training. This study intends to assess the relationship between procurement needs assessment and the performance of the procurement and disposal units in Uganda's Ministry of Defense and Veteran Affairs (MODVA)

Methodology.

The study adopted a cross-sectional study design and a selected size of 44 was used. Primary data was collected from procurement officers and staff from the accounts/ finance department using both questionnaires and an interview guide. Secondary data was mainly obtained from annual reports, manuals, the PPDA Act, 2003, policy guidelines, and journals. The data analysis was done using regression and correlation models to test the predetermined hypotheses of this study.

Results.

60% of the participants were aged between 30-39 years, and 65.7% were Bachelor's degree graduates. The majority 49% of the respondents agreed that specifications are developed by competent persons. There is a positive significant relationship between procurement needs identification and the performance of MODVA's PDU with a correlation coefficient of 0.206(**) at a significance level of 0.000. 69.5% of variations in the performance of MODVA PDU are attributed to procurement needs identification. The R-value is 0.704, which represents the strong correlation and therefore, indicates a high degree of correlation.

Conclusions.

Conducting procurement needs assessment and planning procedures contributes to the timely delivery of; and spending on the right goods, services/works.

Recommendation.

The government should empower and build the capacity of its procurement officers through training and sanitization on various aspects especially the PPDA Act 2003 and other international procurement procedures.

Keywords: *Procurement Needs Assessment, Procurement and Disposal Units, Uganda, Ministry of Defense and Veteran Affairs (MODVA).*
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Background.

Procurement planning is the primary function that sets the stage for subsequent procurement activities and, it fuels and then ignites the engine of the procurement process. Arrowsmith and Hartley (2002) explain that procurement planning is the process of determining the procurement needs of an entity. Mamiro (2010) asserts that one of the major setbacks in public procurement is poor procurement planning and management of the procurement procedures, which include needs that are not well identified and estimated, unrealistic budgets, and inadequacy of skills of procurement staff responsible for procurement. Procurement performance is not usually measured in most public entities compared to human resource and finance functions. Poor needs identification has a significant negative effect on public procurement entities. Failure to

establish the performance of the procurement function can significantly lead to irregular and biased decisions that have costly consequences for any public procuring entity (Arrowsmith and Hartley, 2002).

A comprehensive procurement performance has been described as a function of an all-inclusive procurement planning process that analyzes all the variables in a specific environment (Thai, 2004). About the above discussion, the various studies and the institutional theory that this study adopts have established the value of, procurement needs assessment especially the value of procurement needs identification, determination of terms of reference (ToR), and scope of work or specification. They, however, fail to highlight in clear terms the role of the above values of procurement needs assessment on the performance of a public procurement unit as an entity or institution.

Efficient public procurement systems are essential to the best performance of public procurement units within public institutions. However, public procurement needs assessment is a key element to the overall efficiency of public sector management because it can contribute to a better allocation of resources and improved performance of PDUs in the public sector. Weak and corrupted procurement plans often lead to a waste of public financial resources, time wastage, and higher transaction costs and, therefore, undermine development efforts. Effective procurement planning should acknowledge complexity, identify the right needs and organize the work, manage the timetable effectively, follow sound bid evaluation methods, and develop a smart, fair contract. Effective procurement planning requires organized teamwork: authorities, responsibilities, schedule, and resources (Arrowsmith and Hartley, 2002).

Basheka (2004) argues that procurement planning is one of the primary functions of procurement with the potential to contribute to the success of any public procurement entity's operations and improved service delivery. It is a function that sets in motion the entire acquisition/procurement process of acquiring services in a PDU. Mullins (2003) asserts that the contribution of procurement needs assessment in facilitating efficient and effective service delivery in the public sector is generally undisputed in both developed and developing countries. Its contribution to the performance of public procurement entities can be both at institutional and departmental procurement levels. Mullins's study revealed a significant positive relationship between procurement needs assessment as a variable of public procurement planning and performance in PDEs (Mullins, 2003). These results are compared to international research findings, and suggestions are offered for management, policy-making, and future research.

Thornton et al., (2012) argue that societies are inter-institutional systems, with each of the institutional orders having their central logic. In any society, at any given point in time, different 'Leitideen' or 'substances' provide value orientations and criteria of rationality with complex interdependencies and overlapping domains of jurisdiction (Friedland, 2009). Greenwood et al. (2014) strongly endorse the institutional logics perspective, but take issue with the predominant field-level approach of most current work along these lines. Instead, they encourage the studying of differences between organizations and to 'compare across institutions to identify the differences in their archetypal organizational forms'.

While the researcher is convinced that much value lies in such theorizing, he believes that restricting research to the institutional level with PDUs as a dependent variable deprives this perspective of its full potential to provide insights into the interrelationship of procurement planning and the performance of PDUs as institutions. Especially the literature on institutional complexity has inspired a plethora of studies that focus on coexisting or competing logic in public procurement planning (Greenwood et al., 2011). It has inspired scholars to such an extent that we currently face a vast and increasingly confusing mound of research on divergent issues and phenomena in public procurement, from differing institutions and settings. Recent elaboration of the institutional theoretical framework has certainly contributed to more clarity; nonetheless, 'institutional logic' has become the new buzzword in institutional research, especially in the public procurement field (Thornton et al., 2012). What is, however, missing, is an encompassing systematization that would help to accumulate findings and knowledge. This study intended to assess the relationship between procurement needs assessment and the performance of the procurement and disposal units in Uganda's Ministry of Defense and Veteran Affairs (MODVA).

Methodology.

Research design

This study adopted a Cross-Sectional study design. In with Kothari (2004), cross-sectional data was collected mainly using questionnaires and structured interviews that helped capture quantitative and qualitative data at a single point in time. This involved the researcher comparing two different groups within the same parameters. The cross-sectional study design enabled a researcher to closely examine the data within a specific context. Whereas other research designs like case study design were partially used, the cross-sectional survey design was chosen because it is time-saving also less costly since a researcher went to the field once. This involved the use of questionnaires as a quantitative approach and interviews as a qualitative approaches.

Study Population

Target population

A population refers to an entire group of individuals, events, or objects having a common observable characteristic (Mugenda and Mugenda, 2003). The population of the study comprised about 50 people (staff specifically within the MODVA's PDU). The researcher selected this population because it was at the center of all issues raised in this study regarding the performance of the PDU and so they were believed to have answers to this research questions. The population included; officials in the PDU, and key officials in the finance and administration department. Sekaran, (2005) also asserts that a target population is a group of individuals, objects, or items from which samples are taken for measurement or it is an entire group of persons or elements that have at least one thing in common. Given the nature and scope of this study, the population provided a representative sample that in turn provided reliable data in respect of the subject under study.

Determination of the Sample Size

A sample is a portion or part of the population of interest. Mugenda and Mugenda, (2003) assert that sampling is part of the statistical practice concerned with the selection of individuals or observations intended to yield some knowledge about a population of concern, especially for statistical inferences. Based on Krejcie and Morgan's [1970] table, the sample size of this study was 44 respondents and, of these, 37 were questionnaire participants while 7 were interviewees.

Sampling Techniques and Procedure

The study employed probability-based sampling and non-probability sampling techniques.

Probability-based Sampling

Using the simple random sampling technique, the researcher selected respondents from user departments at the MODVAs' PDU as recommended by (Kothari, 2004). These included Procurement and Logistics Officers from the MODVA headquarters (including procurement officers and user department staff members). By this technique, all members in user departments stood an equal opportunity to be selected and included in the sample size. A sample will therefore be selected using a probabilistic algorithm. These respondents were categorized according to user departments. In probability-based sampling, the first step was to decide on the population of interest, that is, the population the researcher wanted the results about, the second step involved establishing a frame – listing all the units of that population and selecting a sample from the frame using algorithm (Orodho, 2005).

In this study the geographical area (MODVA headquarters Mbuya Kampala) was selected first, the MODVAs' PDU as the dwelling inside this area was selected, and, finally, people mainly working within the PDU at MODVA headquarters were randomly selected. Respondents were categorized according to sections and positions in terms of hierarchy and based on responsibility.

Non-probability-based Sampling

With non-probability sampling, population elements are selected based on their availability and authority to provide key information on the subject under study (Kothari, 2004). In this case, the researcher employed the purposively selected technique in the case of key respondents especially some key officials from the finance and Administration department and senior procurement officials (Head of procurement/chairperson and secretary contracts committees). This is because the researcher intentionally wanted to choose the size and content of this sample to maximize the results of the study. In making the selections, the researcher chose not only which people to include in this study, but also what times, venues, or interactions about the study subject.

Specific to this study, the researcher adopted a convenience sampling technique to select the sample primarily based on what the researcher can access within the available time frame and resources.

Data Collection Methods

The questionnaire method, interviewing, and documentary review analysis were used to collect both primary and secondary data. Self-administered questionnaires and interview methods enabled the researcher to collect primary data while documentary review analysis enabled the researcher to collect secondary data.

Questionnaire Method

The questionnaire was used to collect primary data from lower cadre staff in the procurement department and some key user departments. This method was opted because it is a cheaper and quicker way of data collection from a range of respondents in the shortest time possible. According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2003), structured or close-ended questions are easier to analyze since they are in an immediate usable form. They are easier to administer as possible answers follow each item. Since this study was time bound this category of questionnaire was useful to the study and helped to ease the task at hand for the researcher.

Interview Guide

Interviews are discussions, usually one-on-one between an interviewer and an individual, meant to gather in-depth

information on a specific set of topics (Mugenda and Mugenda. 2003). Interviews can be conducted in person or over the phone. According to Kothari (2004), interviews are often used in mixed-method studies to generate confirmatory results. Interview data usually gather more in-depth insights into participant attitudes, thoughts, and actions (Kendall, 2008).

An interview guide was used to conduct face-to-face interviews and enable the collection of primary data from key respondents from the MODVA PDU. According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2003), face-to-face interviews provide in-depth data, which is not possible to get using a questionnaire. Brookhart & Durkin (2003) observe that interviewers can take advantage of the interview situation to get further clarification on a response given by the respondent thereby enriching the research findings. Therefore, the 7 interviews done were key in establishing the relationship between procurement planning and the performance of the PDU at MODVA.

Documentary Review/Analysis

Document analysis is a form of qualitative research in which documents are interpreted by the researcher to give voice and meaning to an assessment topic (Brookhart & Durkin, 2003). According to Lai & Waltman (2008), analyzing documents incorporates coding content into themes similar to how focus groups or interview transcripts are analyzed. Secondary data was obtained through the use of both published and unpublished data. Kothari, (2004) states that when the researcher utilizes secondary data then he/she has to look into various sources where he is certain to obtain the data. For the researcher to avoid problems associated with the collection and analysis of original data, a review of relevant documents to gather data from previous works was done, which helped in the compilation of findings and gave credibility to the findings. The researcher reviewed reports at the MODVAs' PDU and other relevant online reports, journals, newspaper articles, and Uganda National Budget abstracts. All this is aimed at easing the researcher's work. According to Mugenda and Mugenda, (2003), using this method helps the researcher to avoid duplication of work done by other researchers. These documents were accessed from the PDU at the Ministry of Defense and Veteran Affairs, different libraries, online (internet), journals, and other research.

Data Collection Instruments

Three instruments were used; questionnaires, interview guide, and documentary review checklist.

Questionnaires

A questionnaire is a formulated written set of questions to which respondents record their answers, usually within closely defined alternatives. A set of questionnaires was administered to respondents from MODVAs' PDUs. The questionnaire was composed of purely structured questions whose variables were measured on a 5-point Likert scale (5 Strongly Agree,4 Agree, 3 Not Sure, 2 Disagree, and 1 Strongly Disagree). The 5-point Likert scale was the most appropriate way to formulate the different questions for measuring different variables. This enabled quantitative data collection and made it possible to collect adequate data and opinions from respondents quickly. Questionnaires were preferred because the target respondents were literate and experienced in responding to written questions. The researcher chose the questionnaire as an instrument because the study was virtually descriptive and the tool was an efficient method of data collection. Questions in the research questionnaire were developed based on the research objectives and guided by the hypotheses, conceptual framework, and literature reviewed. The following steps were followed when designing and administering the questionnaire; defining the objectives of the study, defining the target respondents and methods to reach them, designing the questionnaire, pilot testing the questionnaire and finally administering it and compiling the findings.

Interview guide

Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) stated that an interview schedule is a set of questions that the interviewer asks when interviewing. Open-ended interviews were carried out to supplement the questionnaires. Due to the busy schedules of the workforce at the MODVAs' PDU, purposive selection interviews were conducted with key respondents predominantly to collect information from the key procurement officials in the PDU. Since interviews allow full expression of respondents' opinions, the researcher was able to obtain in-depth information. Questions in the interview guide were developed based on the research objectives and guided by the hypotheses, conceptual framework, and literature reviewed.

Documentary analysis checklist

The documentary review checklist was used to collect secondary data from various sources that included records and reports from the MODVAs' PDU, Auditor General's annual reports, journals, and articles among others. This data was analyzed from 2020 to 2024 to establish the procurement planning and performance of the PDU. According to Amin (2005), documents can be helpful in the research design of subsequent primary research and can

provide a baseline with which the collected primary data results can be compared to other methods.

Data sources

Primary source

The study used primary data. This was collected from the sample size under study. The source was used because it could provide first-hand and reliable information where information was collected using self-administered questionnaires and the interview guide.

Secondary source

Secondary data was obtained through the review of documents that included annual, biannual, and periodic reports from the PDU, Office of the Auditor General, other research reports, journals, newspapers, and others. In the secondary analysis of qualitative data, good documentation could not be underestimated as it provided the necessary background and the much-needed context both of which made re-use a more worthwhile and systematic endeavor (Kothari, 2004). Secondary data was obtained through the use of published and unpublished documents. This was done to prevent duplication and augment the research findings.

Validity and Reliability

Validity

Validity refers to the truthfulness of findings or the extent to which the instrument is relevant in measuring what it is supposed to measure (Amin, 2005). It is also the degree to which results obtained from analysis of the data represent the phenomenon under study (Mugenda and Mugenda, 2003). To ascertain the validity of the instrument, the Content Validity Index (CVI) of each questionnaire was computed to determine the validity by using the formula:

$$CVI = \frac{\text{Total number of items rated as valid}}{\text{Total number of items on the instrument}} x100$$

Validity Pretest Results for Questionnaire

The content validity test was computed using two expert judges namely Judge 1 and 2 and yielded results over and above 0.70. The recommended validity is 0.70(70%), Krejcie and Morgan (1970), therefore given that the values of content validity (Assessment of Procurement Needs = 0.823; Procurement Budgeting = 0.891; Compliance with Procurement Planning Procedures = 0.822 and Performance of PDUs 0.835) for all the variables were above the recommended value 0.70, the instrument was declared valid.

Validity Pretest Results for the Interviews Guide

These validity test results were computed using the Content Validity Index (CVI). The CVI test revealed that both the independent and dependent variables had the following validity test results; procurement needs assessment was 0.833, procurement budgeting was 0.811, compliance with procurement planning procedures was 0.802, and performance of PDUs was 0.804. All these variables had validity test results over and above the standard value of 0.70 (70%). This implies that all items in the interview instruments were valid.

Reliability

According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2003), reliability is the degree to which research instruments yield consistent results of data after repeated trials. In testing reliability errors are the deviation from true measurements because have not been effectively addressed by the researchers. The instrument was pre-tested with a sample of ten (10) respondents from the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Development to help the questionnaires have the same meaning of questions to all the respondents. The researcher computed the information from the field using Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) computer software. According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2003), the recommended reliability test should range between 0.70 and above. Based on the Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient test results conducted by the researcher, the scales for all the variables were above the standard value of .70 as seen in Table 3.4 below.

Reliability Pretest Results for Questionnaire

The CVI test revealed that both the independent and dependent variables had the following reliability test results; procurement needs assessment was 0.889, procurement budgeting was 0.879, compliance with procurement planning procedures was 0.854, and performance of PDUs was 0.866. All these variables had reliability test results over and above the standard value of 0.70 (70%). This implies that all items in the interview instruments were reliable.

Reliability Pretest Results for the Interview Guide

The CVI test revealed that both the independent and dependent variables had the following reliability test results; procurement needs assessment was 0.799, procurement budgeting was 0.798, compliance with procurement planning procedures was 0.800, and performance of PDUs was 0.810. All these variables had reliability test results over and above the standard value of 0.70 (70%). This implies that all items in the interview instruments were reliable.

Procedure of Data Collection

The researcher obtained a letter of introduction from the Team University School of Graduate Studies confirming that the researcher is ready to do research. The letter was used to introduce the researcher to the respondents especially, key procurement, and Finance and Administration officials at the MODVA PDU offices. After obtaining authority from the Ministry of Defense, the researcher then personally administered the questionnaires to help clarify difficult questions, save time, and ensure quick response. The researcher then picked the completed questionnaires from the respondents personally for analysis.

Data Analysis

Data analysis is the process of bringing order, structure, and meaning to the mass of information collected. Sekaram, (2003) asserts that there are three objectives in data analysis; getting a feel for the data, testing the goodness of the data, and answering the research question. The process involved organizing data in a meaningful pattern; editing, coding, and thematic presentations (Mugenda and Mugenda, 2003). Data analysis therefore involved both quantitative and qualitative analysis.

Quantitative data analysis

After gathering data from questionnaire schedules, they were checked adequately for reliability and clarification. The data was analyzed using quantitative techniques, whereby the findings were presented in the form of frequency and percentage distribution tables, descriptive statistics, charts, and regression tables. The data collected was entered into a computer and analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Scientists (SPSS). The software packages enabled the researcher to analyze the data into percentages, means, and standard deviations.

Regression analyses were computed to give various outputs like the model summary, the ANOVA table, and coefficients results among others. This was used to make interpretations and discussions of the study and upon which conclusions were drawn. The results were presented in the form of frequency tables and charts.

Qualitative Data Analysis

The qualitative data gathered was analyzed in the following way. Data from each respondent was read several times to identify common themes that relate to the research questions. Common ideas and patterns that appeared repeatedly in the data were identified and coded into themes according to each research question.

The data was continuously manually analyzed throughout the research using the themes and code categories. During this process, a list of key beliefs, opinions, ideas, statements, and attitudes expressed for each theme of the interview was made. The statements were coded in the left margins of the interview reports and comments were put on the right-side margin and further categorized. Answers from different respondents were compared to establish the most occurring and quite similar responses. The data was summarized in a narrative form and most importantly presented in chapter four. Relevant and reviewed literature was also used to triangulate the findings of the study.

Measurement of variables

Procurement Planning

Procurement planning, which was the independent variable was measured using the CobiT framework. In other words, a five-scale point Likert reliability rating system was used ranging from strong agreement represented by 1 to strong disagreement represented by 5 and, these were held constant. This was done through the assessment of responses from the different respondents based on a five-scale point reliability rating scale system (the CobiT framework) as recommended by Mugenda and Mugenda, (2003).

Procurement Performance of MODVAS' PDU

Procurement performance was also measured according to the CobiT framework using the five-scale point Likert reliability rating system. However, being the dependent variable, it was further measured using the average relative reliability, the weighted average reliability rating (WARR), whereby each indicator of service delivery was assigned a weight ranging from 5 to 1 in ratings of strongly agree, agree, not sure, disagree, and strongly disagree and; very dissatisfied, dissatisfied, uncertain, satisfied and very satisfied as recommended by Mugenda and Mugenda, (2003).

Ethical Considerations

According to Saunders et al. (2003), ethical considerations in research concern the dilemmas that arise over the proper way to execute research, more specifically not to create harmful conditions for the subjects of inquiry, humans, in the research process. The researcher therefore ensured that respondents' informed consent was obtained through a letter that specified what the research was about, including laid down procedures the participants expected to follow. The researcher also will ensure objectivity, integrity, anonymity, and confidentiality by withholding the respondent's names.

Informed Consent

Verbal consent was sought from the respondents after the explanation of the study topic to them. The respondents were assured of their right to freely consent. Confidentiality was assured to the respondents and the participants in the

study. Code numbers were used instead of patient names as an assurance that no one else would know from whom the information was collected.

Results.

Findings on the Background Characteristics

This part of the chapter covers the distribution of respondents by category, sex, age group, level of education, role in the MODVAs' PDU, period of service in the PDU, and term of employment.

Table 1: Respondents' Background Characteristics

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Respondents' Distribution by Category		
Procurement officials	34	90
Finance and Administration officials	8	10
Total	**42**	**100**
Respondents' Distribution by Sex		
Male	24	68.6
Female	11	31.4
Total	**35**	**100.0**
Respondents Distribution by Age Group		
20 and below	1	2.9
21-29 Years	13	37.1
30-39 Years	21	60.0
Total	**35**	**100.0**
Respondents Distribution by Level of Education		
Diploma	5	14.3
Degree	23	65.7
PGD/Masters/Others	7	20.0
Total	**35**	**100.0**
Respondents' Distribution by Marital Status		
Single	14	40.0
Married	18	51.4
Others	3	8.6
Total	**35**	**100.0**
Respondents Distribution by Period of Service at the MODVA PDU		
Less than 1 Year	2	5.7
1-5 Years	28	80.0
6-10 Years	5	14.3
Total	**35**	**100.0**
Respondents Distribution by Term of Employment		
Temporary	8	22.9
Contract	17	48.6
Permanent	10	28.6
Total	**35**	**100.0**

Source: Primary Data (2024)

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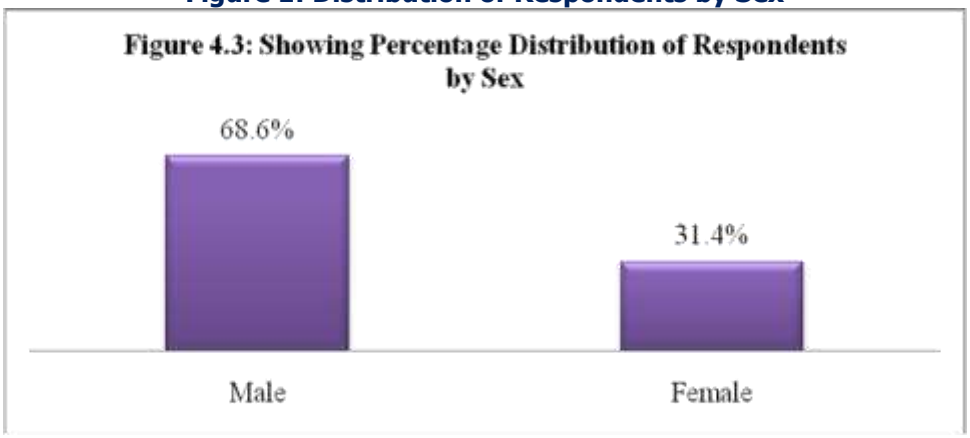
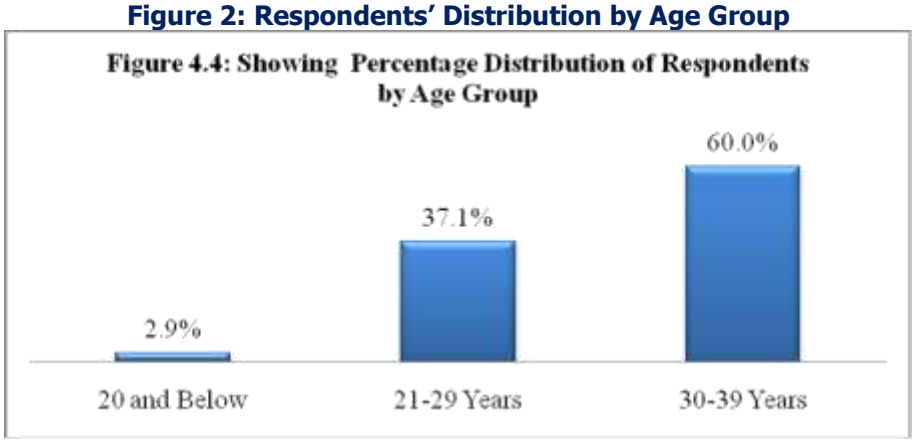
Figure 1: Distribution of Respondents by Sex



Source: Primary Data (2024)

Figure 1: shows that, 24 representing 68.6% were male while 11, representing 31.4% were female, indicating that in this study, there was a gender imbalance in respondents' representation because more males significantly participated than female respondents.

Figure 2: Respondents' Distribution by Age Group



Source: Primary Data (2024)

Figure 2, shows that the majority (21) of the respondents, representing 60% were aged between 30-39 years, 13 representing 37.1% were between 21-29 years of age and 1 (2.9%) was in the age of 20 years and below. The majority of the participants in this study were mature enough to provide reliable information regarding the subject under study given their age thus, giving an assurance on the reliability of the study findings.

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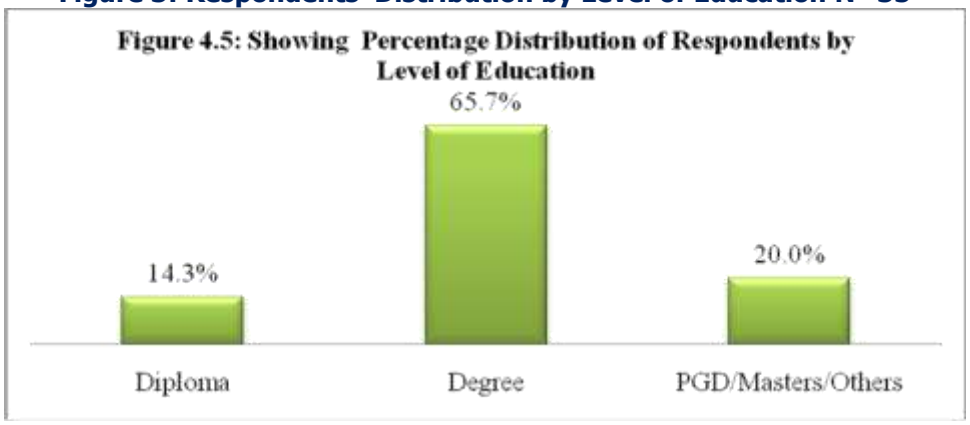
Figure 3: Respondents' Distribution by Level of Education N=35



Source: Primary Data (2024)

Figure 3: shows that the majority (23), representing 65.7% were Bachelor's degree graduates; 7, representing 20% had an additional qualification of a Post Graduate Diplomas, Master's Degree, or other professional certificate/qualification, and; 5 of the respondents representing 14.3% were Diploma graduates. This indicates that all respondents in this study had an acceptable level of education. This therefore implies that the MODVAs' PDU had competent staff that could understand the subject under study and provide relevant and reliable information needed for this study.

Figure 4: Respondents' Distribution by Marital Status

Source: Primary Data (2024)

Figure 4: shows that the Majority (18) of these, representing 51.4% were married; 14, representing 40% were single whilst 3, representing 8.6% were of another marital status.

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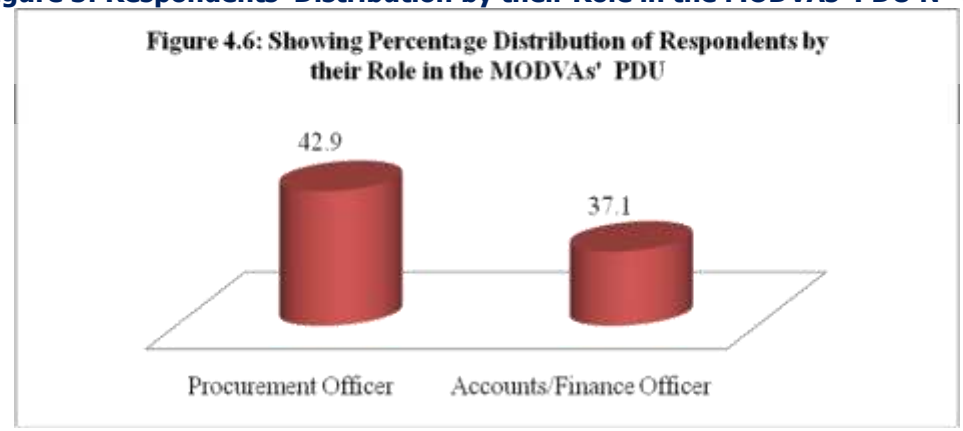
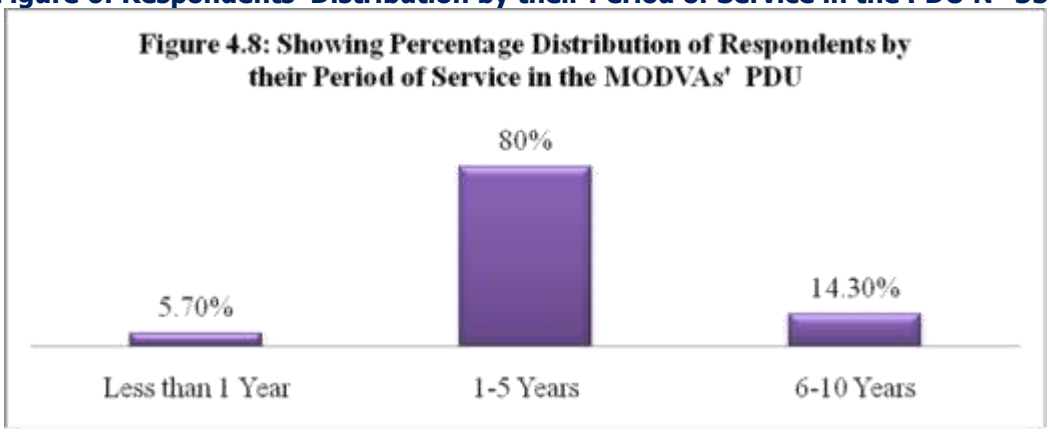
Figure 5: Respondents' Distribution by their Role in the MODVAs' PDU N=35



Source: Primary Data (2024)

Figure 5: shows that the majority (34), representing 42.9% were procurement staff within the PDU; 8, representing 37.1% were from the accounts/finance office.

Figure 6: Respondents' Distribution by their Period of Service in the PDU N=35.



Source: Primary Data (2024)

Figure 6: shows that the majority (28) representing 80% had been in service with the PDU for a period ranging between 1-5 years; 5, representing 14.3% had served between 6-10 years whilst 2, representing 5.7% had worked with the PDU for less than 1 year. The study covered respondents who had enough experience in public procurement, especially with the PDU, which gives assurance that the information provided is reliable and valid for the study.

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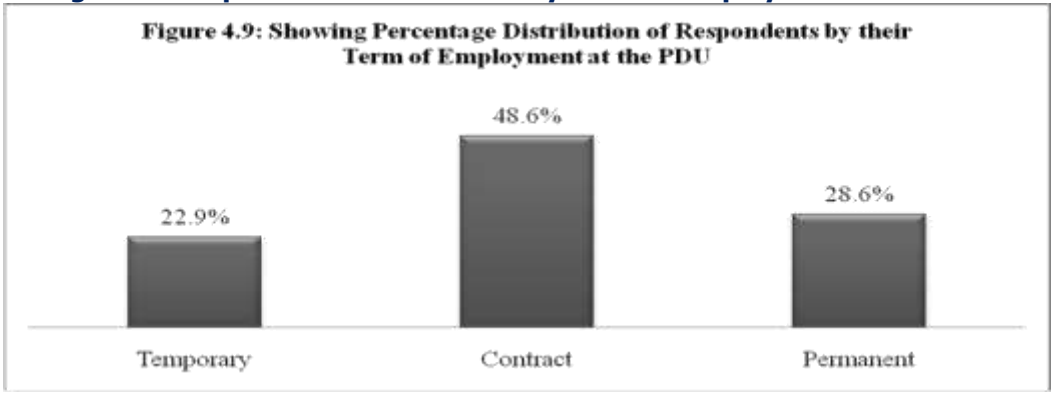
Figure 7: Respondents' Distribution by Term of Employment N=35.



Source: Primary Data (2024)

Figure 7: shows that the majority of the respondents, (17) representing 48.6% were on contract with the PDU; 10, representing 28.6% were permanent employees of the PDU while 8, representing 22.9% were staff members of the PDU. The majority of the staff in the PDU are on contract while others are temporary. This implies that they are hypothetically most likely to act in accordance and in compliance with the PPDA Act 2003 to secure their position in the PDU.

The relationship between procurement needs assessment and the performance of the PDU at the MODVA.

In this section, respondents were expected to give their views on the preconceived views about the relationship between procurement needs identification and the performance of the MODVA as a PDU.

Table 2: Opinion of Respondents on Procurement Needs Identification

Reasons	SA	A	NS	D	SD
Procurement Needs Identification involves all Users Departments	15(43%)	18(51%)	0(0%)	2(6%)	0%
Procurement Needs Assessed upon Budget Approval	17(49%)	6(17%)	8(23%)	2(6%)	2(6%)
Procurement Needs Identification is Based on Demand	13(37%)	19(54%)	3(9%)	0(0%)	0(0%)
Needs assessment is based on the prevailing market environment	9(26%)	18(51%)	5(14%)	0%	3(9%)
Procurement Needs Identification is based on Annual Budget	10(29%)	15(43%)	7(20%)	3(8%)	0(0%)

Source: Primary Data (2024)

Table 2, indicates that most respondents agreed that procurement needs assessment at MODVA PDU involves all user departments, is assessed upon budget approval, and is based on demand, prevailing market environment, and annual budget. The general implication in this table is that the higher the frequency and percentage the bigger the number of respondents who either strongly agreed, agreed, disagreed, strongly disagreed, or were unsure about the preconceived statement regarding the variables under study.

Table 3: Opinion of Respondents on Determination of Terms of Reference (ToRs)

Reasons	SA	A	NS	D	SD
Determination of Terms of Reference is in Compliance with the PPDA Act, 2003	9(26%)	18(51%)	5(14%)	3(9%)	0(0%)
Determination of TOR involves all User Departments	17(49%)	15(43%)	3(8%)	0(0%)	0(0%)
Determination of TOR is Transparent	15(43%)	18(51%)	2(6%)	0(0%)	0(0%)
Determination of TOR is not Solely Determined by Procurement Officers	10(29%)	14(40%)	11(31%)	0(0%)	0(0%)
Determination of TOR is an Integral Part of Procurement Planning at the PDU	14(40%)	12(34%)	2(6%)	7(20%)	0(0%)

Source: Primary Data (2024)

Table 4: shows that the majority of the respondents agreed that the Determination of Terms of Reference are in Compliance with the PPDA Act, 2003; involving all user departments; that it is transparent; but not solely determined by MODVA's PDU procurement officers, and; that it is an integral part of the procurement planning process at the PDU. The general implication in this table is that the higher the frequency and percentage the bigger the number of respondents who either strongly agreed, agreed, disagreed, strongly disagreed, or were unsure about the preconceived statement regarding the variables under study.

Table 4: Respondents' Opinion on Specification of Goods at MODVAs' PDU

	SA	A	NS	D	SD
Specifications are Developed by Competent Persons	16(45%)	17(49%)	2(6%)	0(0%)	0(0%)
Specifications are Fully Managed by PDU Officers	13(38%)	18(51%)	4(11%)	0(0%)	0(0%)
Specifications are Key in Value for Money Determination	14(40%)	13(37%)	6(17%)	2(6%)	0(0%)
Annual Budget is Important in Specification Development	0(0%)	0(0%)	5(13%)	20(56%)	10(31%)
Specifications are done for Genuine Reasons and in Compliance with the PPDA Act, 2003.	19(54%)	8(23%)	6(17%)	2(6%)	0(0%)

Source: Primary Data (2024)

Table 4: shows that the majority of the respondents agreed that specifications are developed by competent persons; fully managed by MODVA's PDU officers; that they are key in value for money determination and that specifications are done for genuine reasons and in compliance with PPDA Act, 2003. It was, however, disagreed that the annual budget is not important in specification development at MODVA's PDU. The general implication in this table is that the higher the frequency and percentage the bigger the number of respondents who either strongly agreed, agreed, disagreed, strongly disagreed, or were unsure about the preconceived statement regarding the variables under study.

In line with the above descriptive analysis results, a procurement officer from the MODVAs' PDU asserted that;

True, all user departments are involved in the need identification process because it is the end users who produce specifications, but in case the specifications produced are unclear or not detailed, the PDU sends them back for improvements, which sometimes leads to delays.

In a bid to find out whether the procurement needs identification was compliant with the PPDA Act 2003, several respondents confirmed in an interview. For example, one procurement officer from the procurement department said;

User departments use standard documents while compiling such works and, the process is based on demand within the user department and annual budget.

Some respondents, however, decried the process as being hectic and prolonged as one respondent noted;

The process of needs identification takes a very long period, which affects the delivery time due to unnecessary delays.

He, however, said that;

User departments know what they need/ require of other departments thus, making the process more appropriate.

In that line, key informants from the PDU informed the researcher that;

Procurement needs identification is based on the prevailing market environment.

Broadly commenting on the issue of the specification of goods at the MODVAs' PDU in an interview, one procurement officer from the procurement department noted that;

The PDU has competent staff that is responsible for developing all specifications for any procurement including TOR. Therefore, it is true the PDU has competent procurement staff and it is this staff that develops TOR.

Additionally, he informed the researcher that;

The PDU staff manages specifications to ensure that there is adherence to standards for value for money.

These findings are in line with the analysis results presented, as the senior procurement official asserted that;

The primary objective of developing and managing specifications by the PDU itself is to ensure that there is value for money. This calls for compliance and adherence to the PPDA guidelines.

In a related response, another official from the PDU informed this study that;

The MODVA has a competent team of qualified procurement officers who are charged with the development of specifications for all goods procured by the PDU. He added that the specifications are done by the PPDA Act preferably for genuine reasons and within the limits of the annual budgets for every accounting period.

Hypothesis Testing One:

There is a significant positive relationship between Procurement Needs Identification
and Performance of MODVA's PDU.

The hypothesis was verified using the Pearson correlation coefficient and the results of the hypothesis are given below.

Table 5: Correlation Matrix for Procurement Needs Identification and Performance of MODVAs' PDU

Correlations			
		Procurement Needs Identification	Performance of MODVA's PDU
Procurement Needs Identification	Pearson Correlation	1	.206**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	35	35
Performance of MODVA's PDU	Pearson Correlation	.206**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	35	35
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).			

Source: Primary Data (2024)

Table 5: shows that the correlation coefficient is 0.206(**) at a significance level of 0.000. This implies that the performance of MODVA's PDU is significantly attributed to procurement needs identification access. Therefore, according to the results, there is a positive significant relationship between procurement needs identification and the performance of MODVA's PDU.

Based on these results, the alternative hypothesis that was earlier postulated is upheld.

Table 6: Regression Analysis for Procurement Needs Identification and Performance of the MODVAs' PDU

Model	R	R^2	Adjusted R^2	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.704[a]	.695	.469	.673

a. Predictors: (Constant), Procurement Needs Identification

Source: Primary Data (2024)

Table 6 shows that: 69.5% variations in the performance of MODVA PDU are attributed to procurement needs identification. This table provides the R and R2 values. The R-value is 0.704, which represents the strong correlation and therefore, indicates a high degree of correlation. The R2 value indicates how much of the dependent variable (performance of MODVA's PDU) is attributed to the independent variable (procurement needs identification). The standard error of estimate is .673 and the adjusted R square value is .695. This value, therefore, implies that procurement needs identification positively predicts the performance of PDUs in Uganda. Based on the results of this regression analysis, the performance of MODVA's PDU is dependent on procurement needs identification by 69.5%.

Discussion of results.

The objective of this study was to establish the relationship between procurement needs assessment and the performance of MODVAs' PDU. The results revealed that 69.5% of the respondents indicated that there is a significant positive relationship between procurement needs assessment and the performance of MODVAs' PDU. This is in line with Rotich (2011) who asserts that public procurement needs assessment is a key element to the overall efficiency of public sector procurement performance because it can contribute to a better allocation of resources and improved performance of PDUs in the public sector. In a similar study, Mullins (2003) found that procurement needs assessment facilitates an efficient and effective service delivery in PDUs asserting that its contribution to the performance of PDEs can be both at institutional and departmental procurement levels. Mullins's study supports the above findings in the sense that his study also revealed a significant positive relationship between procurement needs assessment as a variable of public procurement planning and the performance of PDEs.

Regarding the above results, it suffices to note that procurement needs identification, which involves all user departments and is assessed upon budget approvals, based on demand and the prevailing market environment significantly has a positive relationship with the performance of the MODVAs' PDU. From the regression model, a unit increase in any of the procurement assessment variables above will lead to a 0.695 increase in procurement performance at the MODVAs' PDU. This implies that procurement needs assessment can greatly affect variations in procurement performance at the MODVAs' PDU. Basheka, (2008) in his findings concluded that planning is a process that consists of many steps and the bottom line is that planning is not concerned with future decisions but rather with the future impact of decisions made today. The results further revealed that the departments prepared annual procurement plans and that the procurement plans were prepared and the goals set participatory. Procurement needs assessment in the planning process therefore influences procurement performance in the sense that it provides focused and efficient utilization of available resources, and helps in improving delivery time. In that regard, with adequate provision of funds due to planned and assessed procurement needs, performance is assured.

Conclusion.

Various researchers put procurement planning effect on PDUs' performance at different percentages, however, according to this study, procurement needs assessment explains about 69% of the variations in procurement performance while budgeting and compliance with procurement planning procedures; needs identification, and specification of goods/services and works, determination of TORs respectively explain a positive significant relationship between procurement planning and performance of the MODVAs' PDU.

From the above findings it therefore, suffices to conclude that procurement officers participate in the procurement planning process involving procurement needs assessment and budgeting processes within the MODVAs' PDU for compliance with the PPDA Act 2003. This was found to be positively related to improvements in the general performance of the PDU especially in terms of compliance with the PPDA Act 2003, acceptable budget spending, and timely delivery.

Recommendations.

Given the fact that the entire process of procurement needs assessment is not solely handled and managed by the MODVAs' PDU officers, it is time the government empowered and built the capacity of its procurement officers through training and sanitization on various aspects especially the PPDA Act 2003 and other international procurement procedures, methods, and processes to enable them to have the capacity and empowered to handle any complex procurement independently without external influence. Also, the government should facilitate the PDU with all necessary resources both financial and material including human resources. This should help the PDU with its staff to manage all procurements irrespective of scope, context, and delivery time.

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List of abbreviations.

MODVA: Ministry of Defence and Veterans Affairs
GoU: Government of Uganda
PDEs: Procurement and Disposal Entities
PPDA: Public Procurement and Disposal of Public Assets Authority
PPDA Act: Public Procurement and Disposal of Public Assets Act, 2003.
PDU: Procurement and Disposal Unit
SPSS: Statistical Package for Social Scientists
SSA: Sub-Sahara Africa
UGX: Uganda Shilling.

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The authors declare no conflicting interest.

Availability of data.

Data used in this study is available upon request from the corresponding author.

Authors contribution.

MK designed the study, conducted data collection, cleaned and analyzed data, and drafted the manuscript and SM supervised all stages of the study from conceptualization of the topic to manuscript writing and submission.

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