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EFFECTS OF BUYER-SUPPLIER COMMUNICATION ON THE PERFORMANCE OF PROCUREMENT FUNCTIONS IN TANZANIA: A CASE STUDY OF TANZANIA ELECTRIC SUPPLY COMPANY LIMITED - ARUSHA OFFICE

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Abstract:
Given that good communication between suppliers and buyers is crucial to procurement operations, it is frequently ignored or underestimated, which makes it more difficult to accomplish procurement objectives. This study aimed to examine the impact of buyer-supplier communication on procurement performance in the Arusha region of Tanzania Electric Supply Company Limited. Social exchange and network theories served as the foundation for the study. In this study, a cross-sectional design was employed. Purposive sampling was used to choose a sample size of 57. Questionnaires were used to collect primary data, while document reviews were used to collect secondary data. Descriptive statistics, factor analysis (using Bartlett's Test of Sphericity and Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy), regression analysis, and correlation analysis (Pearson Correlations) were all used in the data analysis, which was carried out using SPSS V.22. The findings demonstrated that, at a significance level of 0.000 (P<0.05), buyer-supplier communication significantly and favorably affects value for money. The study came to the conclusion that communication between buyers and suppliers has a big impact on public procurement performance. It was suggested that in order to improve procurement performance in the public sector, TANESCO, legislators, and other stakeholders instruct clients and contract managers on the value of clear communication.

Keywords:
Buyer-supplier communication, procurement function, procurement performance

1. Introduction
Achieving value for money in public procurement requires effective communication between buyers and suppliers (Meng, 2012). Due to changes in the business environment, such as completion and a shortage of contractors, particularly for strategic projects, there has been a recent emphasis on the benefits of long-term client-contractor relationships during contact management (Pawar, Jain & Gaikwad, 2015, Fredson, 2018; Kelvin-Iloafu, 2016; Femi, 2014). Achieving VFM in works contracts depends on the effectiveness of client-contractor relationships, which in turn improve supply chain management relationships (Abdullah & Musa, 2014).

According to Meng & Boyd (2017), contract managers are essential to maintaining productive team connections and enhancing procurement performance. The study emphasized that new approaches to work procurement should replace conventional ones, emphasizing cooperation, planning, and control. Effective client-contractor communication is crucial to achieving value for money in public procurement in terms of economy, efficiency, and effectiveness (URT, 2010).

The majority of Tanzanian government agencies fall short in optimizing procurement performance to meet their goals in terms of cost, time, quality, and the quantity of variations involved. This has a detrimental effect on the works' value for money (Abdullah & Musa, 2014). For a number of reasons, most notably ineffective communication between the client and contractor management teams, many procurement contracts fail to provide the necessary value for the money. This is due to management's inability to manage procurement contracts independently and frequent disregard for the advantages of good communication during contract execution (Abdullah & Musa, 2014).

According to a Tanzanian empirical study by Ndandode (2019), a lack of a solid rapport between the client and contractor project management teams is one of the main causes of construction project failure. The project management team in the majority of building projects lacks dedication and collaboration. Additionally, Fredson (2018) showed that inadequate communication between contractors and clients lowers value for money in public work procurement, which impedes the provision of services to residents. The value of communication in the acquisition of work has been overstated in Tanzania. Value for money (VFM) suffers as a result of the concurrent emphasis on financial resources, procurement process compliance, and hiring qualified contractors and contract managers. Value for money cannot be achieved without good communication between the contractor management teams and the customer, regardless matter how well procedures and contracts are designed (Femi, 2014).

A study on the impact of buyer-seller communication on the performance of micro-retail enterprises in Tanzania was carried out by Fredson (2018). According to the study, communication and Tanzanian small retail enterprises' performance are significantly positively correlated. A study on the difficulties of managing buyer-seller relationships in Tanzanian private enterprises was carried out by Mwasamila (2013). The findings showed that unfavorable prices, improper document approval processes, late payments to suppliers, and a lack of win-win relationships among the parties all weakened the relationship, which often has an impact on business performance.

Msemwa, Luoja, and Kazungu (2017) examined the impact of communication on buyer-seller relationships and the Hai District maize market's performance in Tanzania. Reliability, credibility, timeliness, readiness to spread information, and responsiveness to share important information were the communication characteristics in BSR that were found to be associated with the functioning of the maize market. Additionally, the study discovered that Tanzania's maize market is significantly impacted by communication. A study by Mussa (2017) evaluated the effect of relationship management on organizational performance in Tanzanian construction companies. The findings demonstrated a favorable and significant association between organizational success and trust, cooperation, and commitment.

Efficiency, effectiveness, and economy are the metrics used to determine value for money in public procurement of works (URT, 2011). Additionally, it is necessary to guarantee excellent communication in order to ensure that value for money is obtained in public procurement of works. encompassing information exchange, collaborative problem-solving, an appropriate communication route, and the character of their connection (Coltman et al.).

The effects of client-contractor communication on value for money were not the focus of many empirical studies on client-contractor communication, including Fredson (2018), who looked at how buyer-supplier communication affected the business performance of small retail shops in Tanzania, Mussa (2017), who investigated how relationship management affected organizational performance in Tanzania, and other studies like Msemwa, Luoja, and Kazungu (2017), Mwasamila (2013), and Coltman et al. (2011). Furthermore, Mlula (2020) studied how relationship management affected the execution of construction projects, but she did not look at how client-contractor communication affected maximizing value for money (VFM). As a result, research on how client-contractor communication affects value-for-money procurement in Tanzania is scarce. Additionally, little is known about how client-contract communication affects getting value for money, particularly at Tanzania Electric Supply Company Limited, according to the reviewed literature. By evaluating the impact of client-contractor communication on value for money in the TANESCO-Arusha region, this study seeks to close this gap.

2. Literature review

2.1 Study Area

The study was conducted in the TANESCO-Arusha region. This area was relevant to the study because it involves a large amount of financial resources being spent on procurement. Since TANESCO-Arusha spends significant financial and other resources, the value for money is critically important. The study used a quantitative research design as a method to gather appropriate data. (Bowen, 2017).

2.2 Sampling Methods

Employees of TANESCO in the Arusha region served as the study's unit of analysis. The TANESCO staff assists the study in gaining an understanding of how the client-contractor interaction impacts Tanzania's attainment of value for money. 190 employees of TANESCO in the Arusha region made up the target population. These workers, who are mostly employed by the procurement department, user departments, tender boards, accounting officers, staff

members from the finance and accounts departments, contractors, and surveyors, are directly involved in the procurement process. Purposive sampling, a non-probabilistic sampling methodology, was employed in this study to choose a sample that would enable conclusions on the connection between value for money and client-contractor communication (Bowen, 2017).
Yamane's 1967 formula yielded a sample size of 57 for the study.

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)2}$$

Where,
n = sample size for stratum
N= Population size for stratum,
e= Sampling error

$$n = \frac{190}{1 + 190(0.05)2}$$

n=57

2.3 Data Sources and Methods
We used both primary and secondary sources. The researcher exploited the primary data to gather unique information that had never been gathered before. According to Rajasekhar (2014), secondary data include those that have already been gathered, presented, and documented, as well as those that have undergone statistical processing and conclusions have been reached. Questionnaires were used to collect primary data, while document reviews were used to collect secondary data. In order to get data for the study and accomplish its goals, documentary information was gathered from organizations, published reports, and unpublished sources. Secondary data can be gathered from a number of sources, including government sources, electronic databases, external data-syndicated sources, and audit reports from PPRA and GAG.

2.4 Measurement of Variables
The study included procurement performance as the dependent variable and buyer-supplier communication as the independent variable. An ordinal scale derived from a 5-point Likert scale (1 being strongly disagree) was used to quantify both factors. 2. I disagree 3. Indifferent4. Concur 5. I wholeheartedly concur. Three sub-variables (time, cost, and quality) were used to measure the procurement performance, while five sub-variables (appropriate communication channel, effective communication system, exchange of information, prompt feedback responses, and clear instructions) were used to evaluate the effectiveness of communication among the buyer-supplier team in execution works procurement projects.

2.5 Reliability and Validity Test
2.5.1 Reliability test
Internal consistency reliability was assessed using Cronbach's Alpha test. The degree to which an instrument measures consistently when used with the same individuals under the same settings is known as reliability. The degree to which data collection techniques produce consistent outcomes is known as reliability (Bolarinwa, 2016). The Cronbach's Alpha test was used to conduct the test in that note. Because of its power to identify and exclude unreliable constructs before moving on to further in-depth analysis, the Cronbach's Alpha test is used to assess the reliability of the data. The general guidelines state that an alpha value greater than 0.7 is appropriate. The reliability test results are shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Reliability test

Variables	No. of items	Cronbanch'salpha	Conclusion
Buyer-supplier communication	5	.893	Acceptable

Procurement performance	3	.742	Acceptable

Source: Field Data (2025)

2.5.2 Validity

To guarantee that the research instruments are measuring what they are supposed to measure, a pilot study was conducted to pre-test the instruments on a small number of respondents. This ensured the validity of the study (Taber, 2018). Additionally, by creating relevant and unambiguous questions, coding them, and utilizing many research tools, including a questionnaire and documentary review, the study's validity was established.

2.6 Data Analysis

Using descriptive statistics like mean and standard deviation, the average mean and standard deviations were used to determine respondents' overall perceptions. To ascertain the degree of association between the variables under investigation, the researcher favored correlation analysis. Correlation analysis must be used after descriptive analysis to determine whether the study variables are correlated. By using Pearson correlation analysis, this study was able to determine the direction and intensity of the individual link between the independent and dependent variables (Goes and Simon, 2012). To examine the current relationship between the independent factors and the dependent variable, linear regression analysis was used. According to research by Alvin, Christensen, and William (2012), linear regression analysis is straightforward to use and understand. Multiple regression analysis makes the study more valuable and allows for the drawing of sound conclusions. The researcher used multiple regression analysis to examine the connection between value for money and client-contractor communication. The following is the presentation of the basic regression equation:

$$Y = \beta 0 + \beta 1\ X1 + \varepsilon, \text{ where: -}$$

$Y = \beta 0 + \beta 1\ X1 + \varepsilon$, where: -

Y Value for money in public procurement of works
$\beta 0$ = Regression Constant
X1 Buyer supplier communication
$\beta 1$ = Coefficient of X1
ε = Error term

3. Results and Discussion

3.1.1 Descriptive statistics for buyer-supplier communication

The impact of buyer-supplier communication on procurement performance in the Tanzanian works procurement was evaluated using descriptive analysis. Five sub-variables were used to evaluate this goal: clear instructions, prompt feedback, information sharing, an efficient communication system, and an appropriate communication channel. Standard deviations and means served as the foundation for descriptive statistics. Descriptive data are shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Buyer-supplier client communication

Descriptive Statistics			
Description	**N**	**Mean**	**Std. Deviation**
Proper communication channel	57	3.4	1.063
Effective communication system	57	3.13	1.095
Exchange of information	57	2.49	1.298
Quick feedback responses	57	3.30	1.329
Clear instructions	57	2.80	1.356
Average	57	3.024	1.228

Source: Field Data (2025)

The majority of respondents agreed that a proper communication channel between a client and a contractor improves the relationship between the two parties and ultimately results in high VFM in terms of economy, efficiency, and effectiveness, as shown by Table 2, which shows a mean of 3.4 and a standard deviation of 1.063. The results also demonstrate that the majority of respondents felt that an effective communication system has a considerable impact on procurement performance, with a mean of 3.13 and a standard deviation of 1.095. The mean was 2.49 with a standard deviation of 1.298, but there was no high diversion rate in the standard deviation, which further suggested that most respondents did not agree that information sharing between client contractors has no impact on attaining VFM in Tanzanian work procurement. The mean of 3.30 and the standard deviation of 1.329, which are within the acceptable range, further demonstrated that prompt feedback answers have a beneficial impact on the value for money in public procurement of works.

Furthermore, Researchers also sought to understand how the buyer-supplier relationship affected procurement performance. The findings indicated that the majority of respondents disagreed that clear instructions strengthen the bonds between the parties and, as a result, help the procurement goals be met. An average mean of 3.024 and a standard deviation of 1.228 indicated that most respondents generally agreed that buyer-supplier communication has a significant impact on achieving value for money in Tanzanian public sector procurement of works. As a result, it is crucial for organizations to increase buyer-supplier communication in order to build relationships, which in turn increases value for money in terms of economy, efficiency, and effectiveness.

The majority of respondents agreed that improved buyer-supplier communication leads to high value for money, as demonstrated by the descriptive results in chapter four, which showed that buyer-supplier communication is crucial to attaining procurement performance in Tanzania. The average mean score was 3.024, and the standard deviation was 1.228. These findings supported the findings of Harman's (2008) study, which proposed that communication is a crucial component of any business's success. Accordingly, in order to increase value for money in the procurement of works, the contract management team, which consists of the client and contractors, should make sure that there is effective communication between them, which may enhance the economy, efficiency, and effectiveness of the construction projects that are carried out.

3.1.2 Procurement performance

Value for money in public sector work procurement was evaluated by descriptive analysis. Economy, efficiency, and effectiveness were used to measure the dependent variable, or procurement performance. Standard deviations and means served as the foundation for descriptive statistics. For further information, see Table 3.

Table 3: Value for money achievement

Descriptive Statistics

Descriptions	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Time	57	3.77	1.426
Cost	57	3.71	1.162
Quality	57	3.87	1.081
Average	57	3.78	1.223

Source: Field Data (2025)

3.2 Factor Analysis

Before conducting correlation and multiple regression analysis, dependent and independent variables were subjected to factor analysis in order to determine sampling adequacy, significance of the study, and to remove poorly loading sub-variables. In this scenario, the item with a value greater than 0.6 was accepted and considered for further analysis.

3.2.1 Factor Analysis for Client-Contractor Communication

Client-contractor communication was measured using five sub-variables (items). The purpose of factor analysis was to compute the KMO and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity to check the sampling adequacy and significance of the study.

Table 4: KMO and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.764
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	569.836
	df	10
	Sig.	.000

Source: Field Data (2025)

According to the following descriptive study, Tanzania's public sector purchases goods and services using economy, effectiveness, and efficiency as metrics of value for money. According to the findings, the majority of respondents concurred that a positive client-contractor relationship results in economy, efficiency, and effectiveness in the procurement of work, all of which contribute to high value for money.

The sub-variables shown in Table 4.11 above have respective means of 3.77, 3.71, and 3.87 with standard deviations of.973, 1.162, and 1.081, supporting this finding. With an average mean of 3.78 and a standard deviation of 1.223, respectively, the majority of respondents generally stated that there is value for money in the procurement of works because of the existence of economy, efficiency, and effectiveness. The results similarly supported the findings of Jefferies et al. (2006), who investigated the role of communication in obtaining value for money in Austrian building projects.

Based on the findings from the table above indicate that the KMO IS 0.764, which is greater than the cut-off point (0.6), which implies that there is adequate sampling adequacy, and since the P-value is 0.000 justifies that the study is significant as the value is less than 0.05.

Table 5: Client-Contractor Communication

Item description	Initial std factor loading	Final std factor loading	Status
Proper communication channel	0.67	0.68	Retained
Effective communication system	0.86	0.88	Retained
Exchange of information	0.73	0.74	Retained
Quick feedback responses	0.68	0.65	Retained
Clear instructions	0.90	0.91	Retained

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis
Source: Field Data (2025)

All of the sub-variables with codes V201, V202, V203, V204, and V205 have values above the cutoff point of 0.6, as indicated in Table 5. As a result, they are heavily loaded together and positively contributed to the accomplishment of value for money on the procurement of works. All of these sub-variables were calculated in this way and utilized for additional research, including correlation and regression analysis.

3.2.2 Factor analysis for Value for Money Achievement

The dependent variable was subjected to factor analysis prior to regression and correlation analysis. Understanding the high and low loading sub-variables is crucial to factor analysis, as the high loading factor is calculated for additional analysis, including multiple regression and correlation, while the poor loading factor is eliminated. The study's importance and sample adequacy were established by the factor analysis. Take a look at Table 6

Table 6: KMO and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.651
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	119.888
	df	3
	Sig.	.000

Source: Field Data (2025)

The results from Table 7 indicate that the KMO is.651which is greater than the cut-off point (0.6), which implies that there is adequate sampling adequacy, and since the P-value is 0.000 justifies that the study is significant as the value is less than 0.05.

Table 7: Procurement performance

Item description	Initial loading factor	Final std factor loading	Status
Time	.781	.711	Retained
Cost	.791	.731	Retained
Quality	.634	.643	Retained

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Source: Field Data (2025)

Table 7 demonstrates that every sub-variable with the codes V601, V602, and V603 has a value higher than 0.6, the cutoff point that indicates that client-contractor communication, trust, commitment, and independence all contribute to value for money in the procurement of works. Accordingly, all of these sub-variables were calculated and applied to correlation and regression analysis.

3.3 Correlation analysis

In order to statistically determine the importance, magnitude, and direction of the impact of buyer-supplier communication on value for money, researchers also attempted to establish the relationship between these two variables. The variables are perfectly positively connected when the correlation coefficient value is +1, and perfectly negatively correlated when the correlation coefficient value is -1.

Table 8: Correlations

		Buyer-supplier communication	Procurement performance
Buyer-supplier communication	Pearson Correlation	1	.876**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	167	167
Procurement performance	Pearson Correlation	.876**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	

	N	167	167

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Value for money and buyer-supplier communication have a substantial positive association (r=.876), as shown in Table 8, indicating that buyer-supplier communication improves procurement performance. Improved communication between buyers and suppliers has a beneficial impact on improved procurement performance, as demonstrated by the study's statistical significance at P-value = 0.000, which is below the 0.05 confidence level. Given that the data has a significant value of 0.000, or less than 0.05, the results showed that there is a strong and positive association between buyer-supplier communication and getting value for money when purchasing work.

3.4 Regression Analysis

After factor analysis, the sub-variables that were kept were calculated and placed through the study's regression analysis. The link between independent variables, like buyer-supplier communication (V200), and dependent variables, like value for money (V600), was evaluated using regression analysis. In order to determine whether to accept or reject the null hypothesis, the hypothesis was tested with the use of the linear regression analysis. The model summary, analysis of variance (ANOVA), and regression coefficient are among the results of the multiple regression analysis.

3.4.1 Model Summary

Regression analysis's model summary tells us how much the independent variable affects the dependent variable, or how buyer-supplier communication impacts value for money in Tanzania's public sector procurement of works. The value of R-squared is used to calculate the total contribution of independent variables to the dependent variable.

Table 9: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.876[a]	.768	.766	.21574

a. Predictors: (Constant), Buyer-supplier communication

Source: Field Data (2025)

According to the R-squared (coefficient of determination) results, the value was 768. This suggests that there is a significant 76.8% change in the dependent variable for every change in the independent variable. This indicates that client-contractor communication influences 76.8% of the value for money, leaving 24.2% inexplicable.

3.4.2 Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)

Analysis of variance was performed in order to determine the statistical significance of the results obtained in the field and make a decision with regard to the null hypothesis.

Table 10: ANOVA[a]

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	25.381	1	25.381	545.343	.000[b]
	Residual	7.679	165	.047		
	Total	33.061	166			

a. Dependent Variable: Value for money

b. Predictors: (Constant), Buyer-supplier communication

Source: Field Data (2025)

The aforementioned table's results show that the p-value was less than 0.05, demonstrating the regression model's eligibility to forecast the impact of buyer-supplier communication and value for money. Therefore, communication between the client and the contractor is important to achieving value for money. Frost (2014) backed this up by stating that if the P-value is less than 0.05, the regression model's results are considered significant.

3.4.3 Coefficients of regressions

The purpose of the coefficient of regression results is to examine how each independent variable affects the dependent variable. Each independent variable's contribution to the dependent variable is shown using unstandardized coefficients of regression. The importance of the study variables is also determined by the coefficient of regression; a study is considered significant if its value is less than 0.05. Examine Table 11.

Table 11: Coefficients of Correlation

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.596	.161		3.700	.000
	Buyer-supplier communication	.874	.037	.876	23.353	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Procurement performance

Source: Field Data (2025)

According to Table 11 findings, the buyer-supplier communication added approximately.874 to the value for money of the job procurement when all other factors were held constant. As evidenced by the P-value of 0.000, which is less than 0.05, the results also showed that buyer-supplier communication has a positive and significant role in achieving value for money when purchasing work.

The linear regression equation is hereby presented below: -

$Y = .596 + .874X1$

These findings supported the findings of Harman's (2008) study, which proposed that communication is a crucial component of any business's success. Accordingly, in order to increase value for money in the procurement of works, the contract management team, which consists of the client and contractors, should make sure that there is effective communication between them. This will help to improve the economy, efficiency, and effectiveness of the construction projects that are carried out.

The study's objective was to evaluate the hypothesis when the analysis was finished. Pallant (2010) states that if the significance level is smaller than the significance value of 0.05, the hypothesis is accepted. The direction of the association between the independent and dependent variables was ascertained using the Unstandardized Beta coefficient. Below is a presentation of the study hypothesis: -

HI: Buyer-supplier communication has a positive effect on procurement performance in the public sector

The findings from linear regression analysis indicated that buyer-supplier communication had a significant value of 0.05 with an unstandardized coefficient of value of .874, which indicated that effective communication among the client and contractor's team has a positive and significant effect on value for money achievements. Therefore, the hypothesis was accepted.

4. Conclusion And Recommendation

4.1 Conclusion

The first objective of the study was to examine the effect of buyer-supplier communication on achieving value for money creation. With an average mean of 3.024 and standard deviation of 1.228, the study found that client-contractor communication through appropriate channels, an efficient communication system, information exchange, prompt feedback responses, and clear instructions increases value for money in the procurement of works. With a significant value of 0.000 ($P<0.05$), the study also found that client-contractor communication is important and has a favorable impact on value for money. As a result, it is necessary to enhance buyer-supplier communication in works procurement in order to increase procurement.

4.2 Recommendations

The study offers suggestions to important stakeholders based on its findings that can enhance communication between buyers and suppliers, hence improving procurement performance. The following suggestions were made by the study.

According to the study, TANESCO's management should make sure that proper client-contractor communication is in place before signing procurement contracts for work. This includes having an appropriate channel of communication, an efficient system for exchanging information, prompt feedback responses, and clear instructions. In order to achieve value for money, TANESCO benefits from improved client-contractor communication during the works procurement process. Policy makers would benefit from this study since they have a big say in how much money is spent on projects. The study should be used by policymakers to create a unified policy that directs the contract management team (buyer-supplier team) to develop efficient communication in order to improve procurement performance.

When it comes to implementing all regulations, policies, and procedures pertaining to client-contractor communication and obtaining value for money, procurement professionals are invaluable resources. In order to accomplish procurement goals, competent procurement experts ensure that buyer-supplier communication is implemented well and efficiently. Also, procurement professionals should apply their skills, knowledge, and best practices depending on the nature of the scenario in developing effective communication between buyer and supplier for the aim of accomplishing procurement objectives through time, cost, and quality.

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