

**KWAME NKRUMAH UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY,
KUMASI, GHANA**

**Towards the Improvement of Works Procurement Planning by District
Assemblies in Ghana**

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Economics)**

**A Thesis submitted to the Department of Building Technology, College of
Art and Built Environment in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for
the Degree of**

MASTER OF SCIENCE

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DECLARATION AND CERTIFICATION

I hereby declare that this submission is my own work towards the MSc Procurement Management and that, to the best of my knowledge, it contains no material previously published by another person, nor material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree of the University, except where due acknowledgment has been made in the text.

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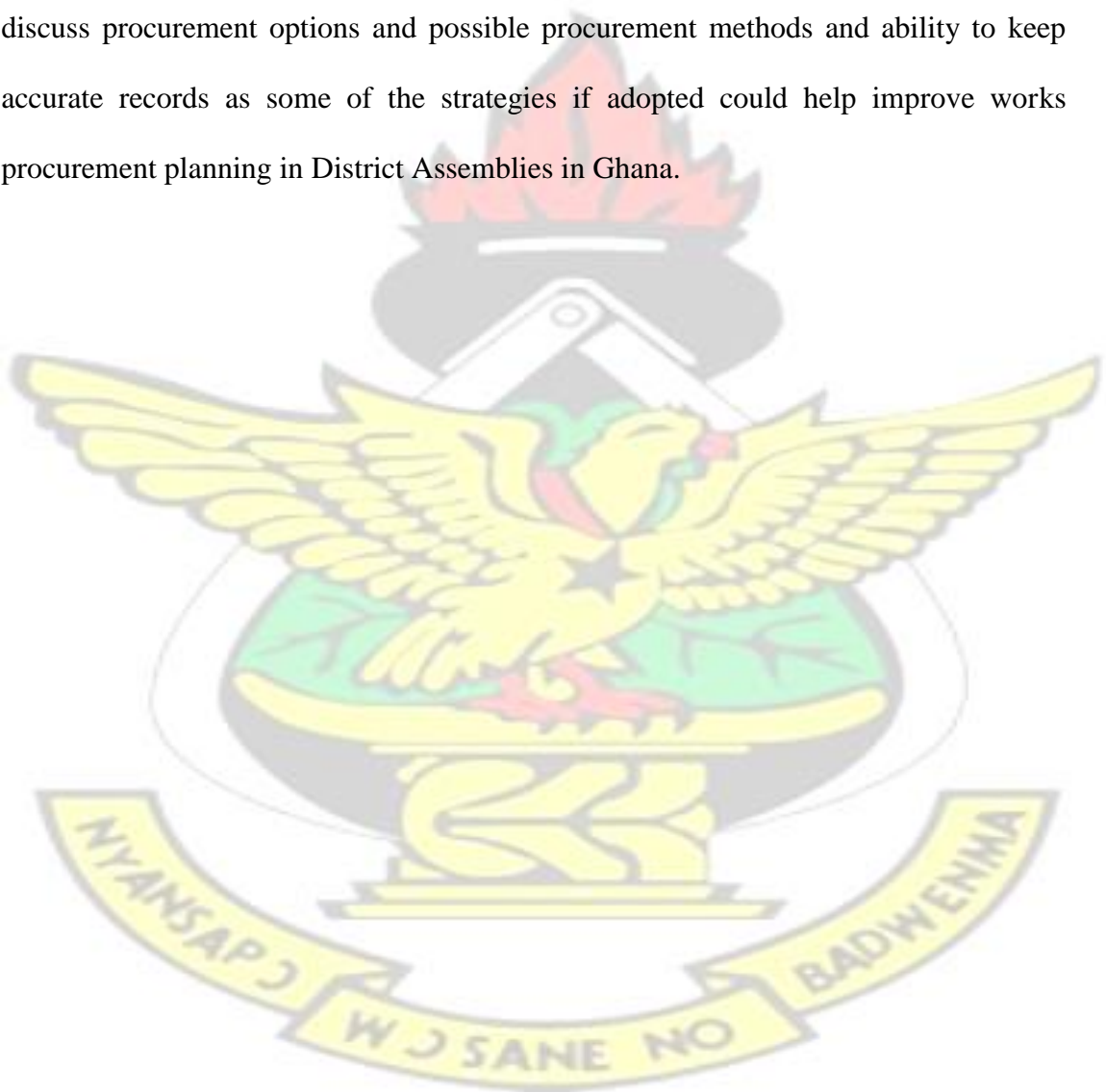
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ABSTRACT

There is a lot of public expenditure made by the various public institutions in Ghana in the area of procurement of works. The Local Government Bodies in the country which include the Metropolitan, Municipal and District Assemblies are no exception to the huge expenditure made in the procurement of works. Value for money, which is the foremost principle of procurement, is very much needed in the processes leading up to the procurement of these various works. The development and the implementation of effective and efficient procurement plans can lead to the optimization of allocated resources. However, the development of very sound procurement plan for the procurement of works has always been a problem to most people responsible for Procurement Activities within the Local Government setup in Ghana. The aim of this research therefore was to investigate towards the ways of improving works procurement planning by District Assemblies in Ghana. Hence, the specific objectives of the study included: the documentation of the processes and procedures adopted by District Assemblies in the preparation of their works procurement plans, the identification of key challenges associated with the procedures and processes documented and the identification of strategies to improve works procurement planning in the District Assemblies in Ghana. Quantitative approach was adopted for data collection from targeted respondents. Data generated from the survey were analyzed accordingly, using descriptive statistics as well as mean score ranking. The findings of the study indicates that drafting of procurement plan, acceptance of input from relevant agents (internal), requisition of input to the procurement plan, acceptance of input from relevant external agents, approval of procurement plan, review of procurement plan, updating of procurement plan, and publication of procurement plan were the processes and procedures adopted by District Assemblies in Ghana in the preparation of their works procurement plans. It also identified political interference, corrupt procurement

practices, delay in release of funds, diversion of funds meant for scheduled procurement, unrealistic timelines, lack of adequate knowledge and skills in procurement and weak enforcement of Procurement Act as some of the key challenges affecting the processes and procedures in procurement planning in District Assemblies in Ghana. Finally, the study revealed, strict enforcement of procurement laws, interdepartmental coordination on developing plan, training and education procurement staff, minimal political interference, complete understanding of what is to be purchased, discuss procurement options and possible procurement methods and ability to keep accurate records as some of the strategies if adopted could help improve works procurement planning in District Assemblies in Ghana.



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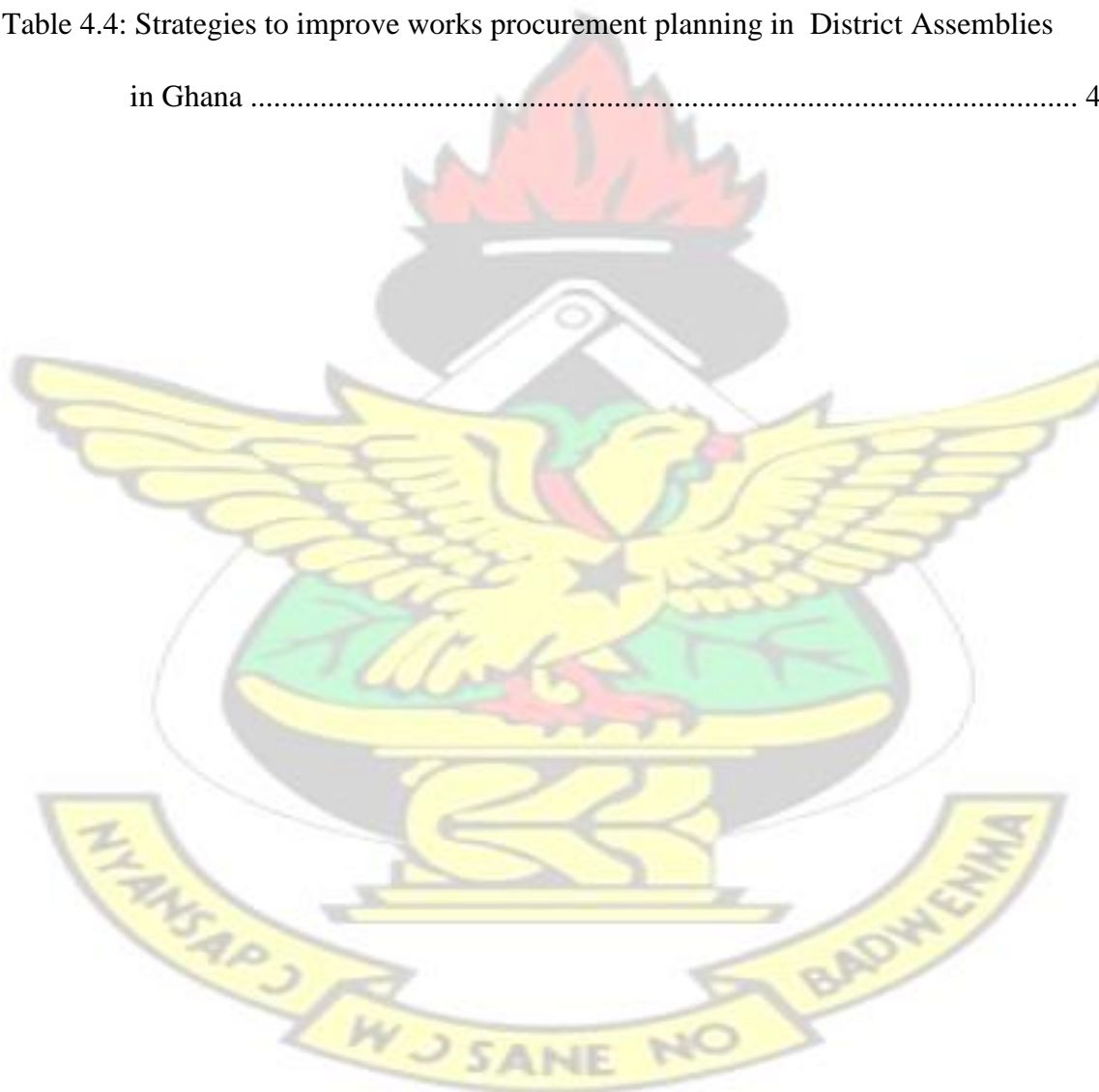
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DEDICATION

I dedicate this work first of all to my Lord Jesus Christ for the strength, grace and mercy He has giving to me so far in my life. This work is also dedicated to my mother, Hellen Gbene for been there for me throughout my education.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND

There is a lot of public expenditure made by the various public institutions in Ghana in the area of procurement of works. According to Adjei (2006), the public procurement expenditure in Ghana constitutes as much as 24% of total public expenditure, that is 50% - 70% of the entire country's budgetary allocation goes into public procurement.

This further translates into about 14% of the Gross Domestic

Product. The local government bodies in the country which include the Metropolitan Municipal and District Assemblies also have very huge components of their expenditure going into Procurement Activities. Value for money, which is the foremost principle of procurement, is very much needed to be ensured in the processes leading up to the procurement of these various works.

Procurement Planning entails a step by step approach to effectively organize the entire procurement process so as to ensure that the foremost principle of procurement, which is value for money, is achieved. Procurement planning can be summarily described as a means through which the available scarce resources are efficiently utilized to accomplish the objectives of which the entire procurement process is supposed to achieve (Willy & Njeru, 2014). The Public Procurement Act of Ghana, Act 663 (2003), clearly makes it compulsory for all entities in the procurement process to make a procurement plan to aid them in their procurement Function.

Procurement starts with a particular need to be met. At the onset of the entire procurement process, specific objectives to be met are clearly stated to serve as a guide.

The unavailability of adequate resources to meet the general needs of an organization should serve as a guide so as to prevent the organization from misusing resources, thus,

the needs to be met should be very important to the operations of the organization (Nakamura, 2004). Effective and detailed preparation and planning including implementation greatly aids in the equitable distribution of scarce resources amongst all parties or agents (Willy & Njeru, 2014).

The aid in procuring the right works, services or goods, the statement of need or the requirement have to be clearly stated and understandable by parties in the procurement process. Statement of needs during procurement planning gives a good sense of direction for the entire procurement process and ensures in the right delivery of the needed goods, works or services. It is therefore of utmost importance that the exact specifications for the required need are stated when developing procurement plans (Shaw, 2010). The physical make up, the technical composition and intended use should be very critical areas that as much as possible must be stated in the statement of needs (Thai *et al*, 2005). For the achievement of the prime aims of the procurement role of any set up, early and good planning is very necessary (Sowah, 2014).

However, inadequate planning during the procurement process can cause misalignment in the allocation made in prepared budgets for the particular need in the procurement process (Agaba & Shipman, 2007). Inadequate planning during the procurement process breeds abuse of the entire process and prides grounds for corrupt practices in the entire procurement process (Sowah, 2015; Agaba & Shipman 2007). In view of some of the problems being faced during the procurement planning stage, Ghana requires, an operative and well-organized procurement structure anchored on safeguarding suitable procurement planning (Sowah, 2015).

1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT

The beginning of an entire procurement process is the development of a procurement plan (Davis, 2014). The Public Procurement Act of Ghana, Act 663 (2003), clearly compels all procurement entities to prepare procurement plans to aid them in their procurement function. Notwithstanding the compulsion as well as the importance of procurement planning, little or no study has been conducted in contributing towards improving works procurement planning in the District Assemblies of Ghana. Effective procurement planning will ensure value for money (Thai *et al.*, 2005). Efforts have been made in the implementation of procurement plans drawn to help optimize the entire procurement process for most public institutions of Ghana. However, this has had several challenges with regards to the implementation and operation of these plans. The development of very sound procurement plans for the procurement of works has always been a problem to most people responsible for procurement within the District Assembly setup (Obeng-Mensah, 2014).

Nonexistence of sound procurement planning by many public institutions can result in unfair and corrupt practices during the entire process leading to cost overruns and outrageous cost implications to the public bodies concerned, of which the District Assemblies are not exonerated from (Nakamura, 2004).

This study was therefore undertaken to contribute towards ways of improving on works procurement planning in the District Assemblies in Ghana.

1.3 AIM AND OBJECTIVES

1.3.1 Aim

The aim of this research was to investigate towards the ways of improving works procurement planning by District Assemblies in Ghana.

1.3.2 Objectives

As a means to achieving the aim stated above, the following objectives were espoused:

- To document the processes and procedures adopted by District Assemblies in the preparation of their works procurement plans;
- To identify the key challenges associated with the procedures and processes documented in (1) above; and
- To identify strategies to improve works procurement planning in the District Assemblies in Ghana.

1.4 SCOPE OF STUDY

The geographical scope of this study was limited to the District Assemblies in the Upper West Region of Ghana. This included one (1) Municipal Assembly and 10 other District Assemblies, all located within the same Region. The contextual scope consisted mainly of people who were involved in procurement planning activities within the various District Assemblies. The theoretical boundaries of this study was limited to the processes and procedures adopted by the District Assemblies in the preparation of their works procurement plan, the key challenges associated with the procedures and processes as well as the identification of strategies to improve the works procurement planning of the various District Assemblies involved in the study.

1.5 METHODOLOGY

The research strategy adopted for this study was the Quantitative research strategy. This was employed because of the ability of the strategy to aid the researcher upon earlier works that employed a similar strategy which has established principles that aided the researcher to decide on the information needs of this very research.

Structured questionnaires were sent to solicit the views of targeted respondents. The collation of information was from both primary and secondary sources. As part of the

methodology of this particular study, applicable and relevant literature was reviewed meticulously. This aided the researcher in the identification of studies done in time past, valuable thoughts made, disparagements offered, confines, applications and very recent findings. The questionnaires structured mainly focused on the stated aim and objectives stated in to order to collect relevant information from the field. The various respondents apart from their profile were asked to rate the variables in the questionnaires on a 5-point Likert scale. Descriptive statistics was employed to analyze the profile data whereas the mean score ranking was employed to rank the various variables identified.

1.6 SIGNIFICANCE

This study is very essential for procurement specialists especially in the area of works procurement planning. The findings will serve as a means of upgrading the already existing knowledge of practitioners works procurement planning. The outcome of this study will always be available for the reference by procurement professionals and other interested parties. This is also relevant not just to District Assemblies but to public bodies in general in the implementation of practices relating to procurement planning in their various organisations. This will increase knowledge available for procurement planning and to academia generally. This will also stimulate further studies in this field of knowledge by interested academicians.

1.7 ORGANIZATION OF STUDY

This study was organized into five major sections (Chapters). The first section which was the first chapter gives a general introduction to the study. It further expatiated on the problem statement, the aims and objectives of this study, a brief overview of the methodology and significance of this study. Relevant literature was reviewed in the chapter two of this study. This consisted of past knowledge about the subject of study. The third chapter presented a detailed explanation to the methodology adopted for the

study including the analysis of the data acquired. Results and discussion of analysed data was presented in the fourth chapter whereas the final section, which was the fifth chapter presented the conclusion, summary and recommendation.

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CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The preceding section of this work gave a general background about this study. This included the aim and objectives of this study, the problem statement, the scope of this study and a brief introduction of the methodology that was employed for the purposes of this research.

This chapter reviews pertinent and relevant literature regarding the subject matter of research. This includes a review into public procurement generally, procurement planning and procurement within the local government structure. It also takes dive into the processes and procedures in works procurement planning, key challenges with regards to works procurement planning and strategies to improve upon works procurement planning.

2.2 OVERVIEW OF PUBLIC PROCUREMENT

Andrew (2005), defined procurement as “the business management function that ensures identification, sourcing, access and management of the external resources that an organisation needs or may need to fulfil its strategic objectives”. Due to the unavailability of adequate resources, the procurement function within any organisation must be carried out to meet objectives that are very relevant to the core activities of that organization (Willy & Njeru. 2014). Items involved in procurement could range from very simple services or goods to very complex works and technology goods (Elsie. 2014). Procurement thus, can also be described as the purchase of goods, services and works. It covers all parts of the purchase and supply of goods services or works, covering the entire agreement life cycle era (Sowah, 2015). There is a lot of expenditure

in the area of procurement especially amongst governments in developing countries (Adjei, 2006). Although this area is riddled with a lot of problems including political interference and also the “looting” of funds made available for the conduct of procurement related activities (Musanzikwa, 2013).

With reference to the issue of abuse of the procurement process, political interference and corruption amongst a whole lot of other problems, procurement is perceived to be full of waste (Nakamura, 2004). Regardless of all these challenges, procurement still forms a huge part of public expenses in most developing countries and this has resulted in procurement been increasingly acknowledged as important to “service delivery” (Davis, 2014; Adjei, 2006).

Ogubala & Kiarie, (2014) noted that, since a lot of money is involved in public sector procurement, the processes of drawing up budgets should be established. They also stated that, there is the need to remove all “bottlenecks” that will delay the processes involved in the budget preparation as well as decision making concerning procurement issues. Also, they stated that, procurement departments must ensure value for money as the expenses made are from the pockets of the tax payers. The Public Procurement Act of Ghana, Act 663 (2003), clearly makes it compulsory for all entities in the procurement process to make a procurement plan to aid them in their procurement function. Planning the procurement process has a lot of positive effects on the entire procurement process (Kiage, 2013).

The unavailability of adequate resources to meet the general needs of an organization should serve as a guide so as to prevent the organization from misusing resources, thus, the needs to be met should be very important to the operations of the organization (Nakamura, 2004). Shaw (2010) indicated that, it is therefore of utmost importance that

the exact specifications for the required need are stated when developing procurement plan. The physical make up , the technical composition and intended use of the end good/ service should be very critical areas that as much as possible must be stated in the statement of needs (Thai *et al.*, 2005).

Inadequate planning during the procurement process breeds abuse of the entire process and constructs grounds for corrupt practices in the entire procurement process (Sowah, 2015; Agaba & Shipman 2007). Ampofo (2013), further went on to support the assertion by indicating that, the budgeting stage of the procurement planning process is one of the stages that is very much abused for corrupt practices by both practitioners and politicians. There is the temptation by politicians and procurement practitioners to inflate the budgeted cost of each item to be procured. Procurement planning is not an activity but involves a series of events leading up to the complete development of a good plan (Elsie, 2014). The procurement planning stage should therefore be conducted with all professionalism and seriousness by the personnel involved. A disturbing event however noted about the procurement planning process, is the involvement of untrained personnel to undertake this all important activity (Tookey *et al.*, 2001).

Public procurement is defined as the purchase of services, goods and works by public sector establishments or government (Uyarra & Flanagan 2010). The main purpose of procurement is to achieve value of money, which is buying the highest quality at the lowest price at the right time and place (Jervis, 1973). Public procurement takes a large chunk of government budget. In Ghana, this accounts for between 50% to 70% of the national budget. This has a very critical implication on the socio economic development of the country (Elsie, 2014; Adjei, 2006). The great expenditure involved in public procurement in both developed and developing countries need a very careful administration to guarantee value for money (Rendon & Rendon, 2016). They went on

to state that ensuring accountability in the public procurement process has a far reaching effect on society in general.

The foremost principle of procurement which is Value for money, is not attained in public procurement in Ghana due to the acts of corruption (Osei-Tutu *et al.*, 2010). Corruption in public procurement is also endemic even in donor funded projects. The promotion of transparency in procurement in the public procurement process is critical to the overall success of the public procurement process corruption (Osei-Tutu *et al* 2010). Increasingly, the requirement to putting measurement systems on the entire public procurement process has deepened as there is a high request for probity and accountability in the public sector (Raymond,2008). The Public Accounts Committee in Ghana in recent times has taking it upon itself to probe into all financial irregularities cited in the Auditor's General report by public bodies of which public procurement processes have taking the center stage of most of the inquires.

Professionalism in the public procurement process is very critical. This is not limited only to the qualification of the persons involved but also the conduct of these practitioners in the execution of their duty (Ogubala & Kiarie, 2014). Public procurement systems need to be guided by laws and regulations to keep practitioners in line (Davis, 2014). This is to prevent the abuse of the system by people, especially politicians who are reported to have benefited greatly through questionable public procurement deals (Raymond, 2008).

A major setback in public procurement however include the poor preparation and administration of the procurement process which includes difficulty in the identification of pertinent needs for which the procurement is conducted as well as the setting of impracticable budgets and the short in skills of people in charge of public Procurement

Actives (Mamiro, 2010). The institutional theory is the customary methodology that is used to scrutinize components of public procurement (Davis, 2014; Obanda, 2010). Essential elements of good governance are very good public procurement practices and policies (Davis, 2014).

2.3 THE PROCUREMENT CYCLE

According to Tan (2013), the public procurement cycle goes through six basic steps.

They include the following:

1. Procurement planning;
2. Solicitation planning;
3. Solicitation;
4. Source selection;
5. Contract management; and
6. Contract closure

These steps are the most economical manner by which procurement can be conducted effectively (Tan, 2013; Sowah 2015). However, Kusi *et al.* (2014), documented the procurement cycle to include:

1. Need identification;
2. Specifications;
3. Evaluation;
4. Negotiation;
5. Order;
6. Delivery ; and
7. Payment; and
8. Review



Figure 2.1 Procurement Cycle Source: Kusi *et al.* (2014)

Elsie (2014) intimated that there is the necessity to understand the procurement cycle “as it is the basis for proper execution of roles and responsibilities by the various key stake holders in an entity” and “the procurement cycle summaries the process through which a local council procures any needs”. This totally underscores the benefit of the procurement cycle and need for procurement staff to have a complete comprehension of the entire cycle before the procurement process commences.

Going by the Public Procurement Act of Ghana (663), the Tender Committees are mandated to review all activities and events pertaining to each step within the procurement cycle (Benjamin, 2014). The principle of value for money is whitewashed whenever bribery and fraud takes place in any part within the procurement cycle (Benjamin, 2014).

2.4 OVERVIEW OF PROCUREMENT WITHIN THE GHANAIAN CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY

The construction sector is key to the development of many economies the world over (Ofori, 2012). Many developed and developing countries like Ghana have had their

governments identify the construction industry as a significant area for foreign and local investments (Osei-Tutu *et al.*, 2010). Ghana like most other countries along the West-African Sub-region has identified the construction industry as major component to its economic growth and thus, has had the construction industry growing progressively (Osei-Tutu *et al.*, 2010; Anvuur & Kumaraswamy, 2006).

The construction sector in Ghana has been developed along two major sectors; these include the formal and the informal sector both of which adopt very different routes of procurement (Anvuur & Kumaraswamy, 2006). Public procurement in the construction sector in most countries is however very prone to corrupt practices of which Ghana is no exception (Osei-Tutu *et al.*, 2010). To achieve a more sanitized system where Procurement Activities especially in the construction sector can be conducted without the incidence of corruption, the Public Procurement Act (663) was passed in Ghana; all though the principal aim for which this act may have been instituted has not been fully achieved (Osei-Tutu *et al.*, 2010).

In order for the country Ghana to realize its true potential of being a great example to most countries in the sub-region, there is the need for good infrastructural development. This will attract foreign direct investment into the country and the cost of most firms in the country will reduce, thereby giving them a competitive edge globally (Ofori, 2012). Ofori (2012), also went on to say that, high quality excellent infrastructure will earn the country income as “the ports of Tema and Takoradi could be transshipment hubs”. Public Procurement is key to service delivery in every economy (Basheka, 2008). Hence, the need for the activities to be streamline.

2.5 PROCUREMENT PLANNING

Procurement planning can be defined as “the ability to utilize available resources to achieve overall procurement objectives” The procurement planning is the beginning of

all the activities on the procurement cycle (Abu, *et al.*, 2010). The procurement planning process has been identified by Tan (2013), as the foremost step to start with in the entire procurement process.

Procurement planning is an area that has been noted to be very problematic for most procurement entities particularly in developing countries around the world (Ernest, 2015). This is not very different in the case of Ghana. Sound procurement planning and operation contributes greatly to equitable sharing of a country's resources (Willy & Njeru, 2014). Inadequate procurement planning can gravely result in the misalignment of procurement with budgetary portion (Agaba & Shipman, 2007). Unsound procurement practices create conducive environment for corruption and other procurement malpractices (Agaba & Shipman, 2007).

The over use of direct procurement or sole-sourcing and the inability of procurement entities to justify for budgetary allocation made for Procurement Activities has been linked to the poor procurement planning of which Ghana is no exception (Obanda, 2010; Agaba & Shipman, 2007; Sowah, 2015). The delays experienced in procurement and the sometimes knee jerk Procurement Activities undertaken by entities could be attributed to the lack of adequate procurement staff to adequately develop comprehensive procurement plans (Obanda, 2010). The level of competency of procurement staff affects the quality of the procurement plan (Ogubala & Kiarie, 2014). There is a very strong connection between procurement planning and the performance of the entire procurement process (Willy & Njeru, 2014). Inaccessibility of resources for the procurement process is one of the main snags of procurement planning (Tookey *et al.*, 2001). Procurement planning is very essential to "service delivery" (Davis, 2014).

2.6 PROCUREMENT STRUCTURES WITHIN THE DISTRICT ASSEMBLY SYSTEM IN GHANA

The Procurement Act of Ghana (663) clearly stipulates the procurement structures that have to be set up to facilitate procurement processes amongst public bodies which also include the District Assembly. This is stated in part II of the Act. The structures to be put in place as stated in the act include the following:

- The Procurement Entity (with a Head);
- The Procurement Unit (with a Head);
- Entity Tender Committees;
- The Entity Tender Review Board (District); and ➤ Tender Evaluation Panel.

The following structure is mandated by the Act to be set-up within the various public organizations. The main aim it to aid in activities relating to procurement within such bodies. The Public Procurement Authority is the mother body that is mandated by law under the Act to oversee all public Procurement Activities within the country (Ghana). All the other bodies are required by law to abide by the guidelines and regulations offered by the Public Procurement Authority. The functions of the bodies are stated in in section 3 of the Procurement Act. It is mandated amongst several other functions to do capacity building in the area of public procurement in Ghana as well as organizing and participating in administrative review issues brought before it by any complainant. It is also mandated to monitor compliance of bodies to the procurement law.

The Procurement Entity can be described as the public body with the legal mandate to undertake procurement (Chapter 2.2, Procurement Manual) . The head of each entity is responsible for taking decision on procurement activities within the organization (Part II Section 15(2), Act 663). The head of the Procurement Entity is mandated to set up a

procurement unit to solely handle procurement for the body. He is also expected to appoint qualified staff to advice and carry out Procurement Activities on behalf of the procurement entity (Section 15, Act 663).

The procurement unit is an ensemble in a procurement entity with the responsibility to superintend procurement. The head of the Unit will be accountable for undertaking and organizing all comprehensive procurement undertakings with the procurement entity.

The role of the District Tender Committee includes making sure that the procedures set out in the Act are followed through at every point in a particular procurement process (Section 17, Act 663). They are also required to “exercise sound judgements in making procurement decisions”. There are various thresholds set out for the Tender Committee; as a matter of fact they are to refer all procurement thresholds that are above their thresholds to the Tender Review Board for approval.

Any approval made above the Entity committee’s threshold is considered a “one stop approval”. They committee members are expected to meet at least once in a quarter, with two week notices made to committee members prior to the set date for the meeting.

The Procurement Entity is required by the law to set up a tender evaluation panel.

This is supposed to comprise of people with the “required” expertise to do evaluation of submitted tenders as well as assist the Tender Committee in its work (Section 19).

They are expected to advance with their tasks in harmony to set and published evaluation standards. The Tender Review Board is expected to review every step in the lead up to the selection of a particular tenderer by the Entity (Section 20). It is also within their responsibilities to give a concurrent approval for the Entity to continue the Procurement Activity. They can involve independent “consultants” if need be, to advice

the board on decisions of a specialized nature so as to ensure efficient discharge of their duties.

2.7 PUBLIC PROCUREMENT WITHIN THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT LEVEL

Local Government structures the world over are established mainly for ensuring “effective service delivery at the local level” (Basheka, 2008). A great deal of local government expenses in Africa is done on procurement of goods, works and services. In Uganda for example, there is an assessed 34% of entire government expenditure being made at the local government level (Agaba& Shipman 2007). Though been one of the principal places believed to be riddled with a lot of corrupt practices in the public procurement practice, purchases in goods, works and services continue to surpass 20% of local government expenditure (Basheka, 2008). Ghana also, cannot be an exception to these happenings. It is not very shocking that numerous procurement entities even at the local level have not adopted the practice of taking planning seriously (Ogubala & Kiarie, 2014). A very core function that can advance upon operations of local government is the effective practice of procurement planning (Basheka, 2008). Budgeting as well as development planning are before now, incorporated into the local government system in Ghana of which procurement planning is already integrated into the traditional planning practices (Elsie, 2014). For a particular financial year, local government purchase of works, goods and services could be directed by a procurement plan that is developed as an outcome of the several stages in the local government procurement process. In Ghana as well as many places around the world, though legally local authorities are allowed to work in a semi-autonomous manner, they are almost always still under the control of the central government since they are not totally

autonomous (Wilso & Game, 2006). This could greatly affect the ability of the local authorities to make very concrete plans concerning their procurement needs.

2.8 PROCESSES AND PROCEDURES ADOPTED IN THE PREPARATION OF WORKS PROCUREMENT PLANS.

Public procurement in developing countries like Ghana accounts for a very large amount of the entire total expenditure of government (Davis, 2014). Procurement planning is to aid in the effective utilization of the scarce resources available (Willy & Njeru, 2014). Procurement planning involves a series of procedures and processes leading up to the complete development of an elaborate plan (Elsie, 2014). The development of a procurement plan before the actual procurement takes place is mandated by the procurement law of Ghana. With reference to Section 3.2 of the Public Procurement Authority's Manual (2006) it indicates clearly that the; "preparation of the annual procurement plan should be commenced at least four months before the start of the financial year to allow sufficient time for a realistic and accurately costed plan to be compiled". The preparation of the plan must go through certain processes and procedures for it to be effectively prepared (Sowah, 2015).

In a similar fashion there may be very critical consequences should mistakes be made in the planning procedure of the procurement plan on the organization or procurement entity (Basheka, 2008). The procurement planning processes and the procedures as a matter of fact should be conducted with all seriousness and care to avoid very expensive mistakes in the end.

2.8.1 Identification of needs

The entire procurement process in an organization or entity starts with the identification and determination of needs (Kural & Alsac, 2006). It is the identification of the needs

of the organization or entity that kick starts the entire process of procurement planning (Tan, 2013) .The unavailability of adequate resources to meet the general needs of an organization should serve as a guide so as to prevent the organization from misusing resources, thus, the needs to be met should be very important to the operations of the organization (Nakamura, 2004). Effective and detailed preparation and planning including implementation greatly aids in the equitable distribution of scarce resources amongst all parties or agents (Willy & Njeru, 2014).

2.8.2 Requisition of input to the procurement plan

The various departments under the procurement entity has to make decisions regarding their needs. These needs are supposed to be solicited for by the procurement unit to enable them make provision for all the departments under the same procurement unit, in this case the District Assembly concerned (Elsie, 2014).

There is the need to insist on getting accurate needs of the various departments concerned as this ensures that a good procurement plan is drafted as well as efficient utilization of already scarce resources (Basheka, 2008). Decisions that will be made later will be based on the inputs made by the respective departments under the procurement unit.

2.8.3 Acceptance of input from internal sources

Input request sent out to the internal organizations under the procurement unit is supposed to give enough information about the particular needs of the department, so that, adequate provision can be made to those needs (Elsie, 2014). The information requested are also to enable the procurement department to aggregate like needs of the entire organization so as to enjoy economies of scale (Sowah, 2015). This is to ensure that value for money is achieved. Inadequate information on departmental needs can

cause misalignment in the allocation made in prepared budgets for the particular need in the procurement process (Agaba & Shipman, 2007).

2.8.4 Acceptance of input from External sources (Market Research)

Requisition of input into the procurement plan is not sent only to internal departments, but also to other external sources. This is necessitated by the fact that there is the need for the procurement department to acquire information on the availability of the “means” to solve the respective needs and also information about the potential suppliers of such, goods, works or services (Tan, 2013). Also, according to the Anon (2010), soliciting for inputs from external sources or conducting market research is done with intent of acquiring adequate information and awareness about the need, be it product, service or works. There is therefore the need for procurement units as part of their processes and procedures to developing an effective procurement plan to consider strongly, the inputs of external sources through market research.

2.8.5 Drafting the Procurement Plan

Part 3 section 21 of the Procurement Act of Ghana (Act 663, 2003), makes provision for the procurement plan. Under this provision, procurement entities are required to prepare procurement plans. The procurement plan must have information concerning the following as stated below

- the contract packages to be procured;
- the estimated cost of each of the packages stated in one (1) above;
- the method of procurement to be used; and
- the processing procedure including the timelines involved for each package.

Just as the name suggests, this is a draft procurement plan and would require approval before it can be implemented. Therefore, it will require the entity responsible for the

procurement to; submit the draft procurement plan to the tender committee for approval. This must be done not later than a month from the time of the end of the financial year. This is to enable the procurement plan to be adequately catered for in the new financial year. Also ,as a requirement, the prepared procurement plans need to be updated quarterly (Ghana *Public Procurement Act* 663, 2003). The aggregation of the needs into the packages allows the economies of scale to be enjoyed by the concerned entities, which in a way ensures that value for money is achieved (Sowah, 2015). The achievement of economies of scale must be deliberately worked for. People with very low qualifications and capacity are normally involved and required to develop standard procurement plans. This sadly is the situation of Ghana (Hardcastle, 2007). The drafting of the procurement plan involves much research which must be conducted to avoid unnecessary mistakes (Tan, 2013). Mistakes made in the preparation can carry a lot of very expensive repercussions and therefore must be done with much care and all seriousness (Elsie, 2014). In drafting the plan, aggregation of similar needs must be done to enhance economies of scale. According to the Public Procurement Authority of Ghana (2003), in doing aggregation of needs on the draft plan, the similarity of items , the expected delivery times, the facility and its availability, the storage life of items, amongst several other factors must be taken into consideration. The plan as a matter of fact must take the total time of procurement into consideration for procurement to be successful (Basheka, 2008).

2.8.6 Approval of procurement plan

After the draft procurement plan is made, there is the need for approval to be sought from the necessary and appropriate authority. In Ghana, it is required by law under the Public Procurement Act 663 (2003) for approval to be sought on a procurement plan before it can be implemented. According to the Act, Part III Section 21 (1) the “User

Department must prepare a work plan for procurement based on the approved budget and submit it to the tender committee not later than one month to the end of the financial year the procurement plan for the following year for approval” (Elsie, 2014 & *Public Procurement Act, 663, 2003*).

2.8.7 Review of procurement plan/Updating of procurement plan

According to the Public Procurement Act 663 (2003), Ghana, the procurement plan must be reviewed and updated and submitted to the tender committee. This review is done to make sure the procurement plan is in line with current happenings concerning procurement in the organization.

The measure of the real performance of the procurement is done through review and update of the procurement plan (Sowah, 2015). There is room to make all necessary changes especially to the timelines of already planned procurement (Sowah, 2015). The review and the update of a procurement plan was identified as one of the very critical steps in developing a procurement plan (Basheka, 2008). This should also identify very high risk factors in the procurement plan that could affect the effective implementation of the plan (Agaba & Shipman 2007). The modifications that may be made on the original plan does not necessarily mean the plan was flawed, but it is a strategy to ensure that the plan Procurement Activities are effectively carried out (Ernest, 2015). It is therefore of utmost importance that the exact specifications for the required need are stated when developing procurement plans (Shaw, 2010). The unavailability of adequate resources to meet the general needs of an organization should serve as a guide so as to prevent the organization from misusing resources, thus, the needs to be met should be very important to the operations of the organization (Nakamura, 2004).

2.9 KEY CHALLENGES ASSOCIATED WITH THE PROCEDURES AND PROCESSES IN WORKS PROCUREMENT PLANNING

Sowah (2015), indicated that, political interference was one of the key challenges that hinder the procurement planning process. He intimated that, there is the tendency for procurement plan budgets to be inflated to unrealistic levels so that politicians can benefit in the end. These he further indicated were mostly engineered by the politicians themselves. Ampofo (2013), further went on to support the assertion by indicating that, the budget stage of the procurement planning is one of the stages in the drafting of the report that is very much abused for corrupt practices by both practitioners and politicians. It has been reported that, public procurement is so much infested with corruption (Musanzikwa, 2013). This is very disturbing considering the fact that most of the expenditure of government in most developing countries passes through the public procurement system (Davis, 2014). Corruption can be described as “perversion of authority”, interestingly, corrupt activities take place most at very grassroots of the decentralized governance system, thus, at the local government level (Saviour, 2014). He also intimated that, corruption is also quite popular amongst high level senior civil servants, describing the looting of funds meant for procurement as denying “the needed development of the grassroots a tall dream”. For this reason, public procurement is been perceived by many people as been wasteful (Shaw, 2010). Various reports have been made about corruption in the award of government contracts (Nakamura, 2004). The issue of corruption is a major headache for professionals and non-professionals alike involved in public procurement (Musanzikwa, 2013). A major area that is been used by way of corruption is public procurement (Elsie, 2014; Musanzikwa, 2013).

Political interference and corrupt practices amongst various players in public procurement hinders effective procurement planning (Sowah, 2015). Corruption therefore is one of the key challenges associated with procurement planning.

Furthermore, poor record keeping and management leading to lack of effective coordination between departments is also one of the major challenges (Sowah, 2015). In his study, Poor record keeping leads to ineffective procurement planning (Benjamin, 2014) .

The rapid change and modification of technology have greatly created a complexity in the purpose of public procurement of which the procurement planning process is no exception (Davis, 2014). Rapid change in technology coupled with the bureaucracy in the civil service system all make it very complex for effective procurement planning to be done, especially with regards technology goods. The procurement planning process normally is carried out by personnel with average skills and inadequate knowledge in the procurement process (Hardcastle, 2007). Not enough funds are provided for the development of the needed human capital in procurement planning leading to inefficiencies in the procurement process (Tookey *et al.*, 2001). The procurement planning process will be much effective if the right human capital is involved in the activities of the procurement process (Sowah, 2015). Public procurement is a very complex undertaken that needs the input of people with the right set of skills (Thai *et al.*, 2005). There is also the argument that, the unavailability of the right set of people in the procurement planning process is not the only problem, but also other refusal of the well trained professionals to carry out their duty professionally (Obanda, 2010). People involved in public procurement need to be trained intensively so as to sharpen their skills in Procurement Activities (Thai *et al.*, 2005).

Additionally, there is a lot of exploitation of the system with “impunity” largely due to mix of the predictability and reluctance to enforce existing rules to ensure sanity in the system (Hunja, 2001). The weak enforcement of existing laws has made the system very loose for practitioners who take advantage of the situation to their will. This has affected negatively, the procurement planning process and procedure.

In addition, delay in the release of funds due to challenges in funding, insufficient regulatory requirements, problems with the mode of approval of the procurement plan, Failure to coordinate procurement schedule with funds release date, Inability to determine the duration of each step of the procurement cycle and unrealistic timelines as well as inadequate information of need are some of the key challenges in the procurement planning process and procedure (Tookey *et al*, 2001). In the initiation of the procurement process requires that clear timelines for the implementation or delivery be set. The timelines enable the monitoring and evaluation of the procurement plan to be very effective. However the determination of the procurement timelines can be very complicated when preparing a procurement plan (Tookey *et al*, 2001). This could be attributed to varying reasons including the unavailability of complete documentation for accurate time lines to be put on the procurement process.

In the preparation of the procurement plan the information gotten from the various department may not be completely correct, it will therefore be advisable not to completely on such information (Tookey *et al*, 2001). This can be attributed to the miscommunication of needs of by the various departments or the unavailability of complete documentations especially for the procurement of works. Diversion of funds meant for scheduled procurement to and the inability to recognize potential internal and external constraints to an organization can greatly hamper the procurement planning process (Gerald, 2014). Finding a very good strategy to mitigate likely internal and

external constraints is a great challenge in the effective development of a good procurement plan (Shaw, 2010).

2.10 STRATEGIES TO IMPROVE WORKS PROCUREMENT PLANNING

There is the need to improve on procurement planning if much efficiency in the entire procurement outcome it to be realized. Unavailability of funds for the procurement process is one of the major problems of procurement planning (Tookey *et al.*, 2001). To improve on procurement planning therefore, there is the need for timing and the availability of the necessary funds for the procurement process to be identified (Hardcastle, 2007). there is the need for the understanding of the items to be procured for which the procurement is planned for, before the procurement plan is drawn (Shaw, 2010).

The complete understanding of the needs is necessary and can be achieved by market research. The procurement unit should not only depend on the information provided by the requisition department, but should do further research to clearly understand the need. Shaw (2010) further stated that, this information about the need should clearly include the time of delivery. The ability to discuss and clarify unclear information is key to the development of an effective procurement plan. Good record keeping is a measure of professionalism (Sowah, 2015). Sound record keeping enables efficient information tracking which is very important to the development of very good procurement plans.

There also the need for all parties involved in the procurement, especially the beneficiaries of the goods, works or services to be procured to fully deal with any constraints that may have a negative bearing on the procurement process (Tookey *et al.*,

2001). The procurement unit must as much as possible open channels for easy communication between the unit and all other departments within the organization.

There is the need to review and confirm necessary aspects of procurement requisition (Anon, 2010).

There should be extensive discussion on the time of delivery, the cost components, the specifications of the need and other such issues that may have a negative impact on the entire procurement process (Kural & Alsac, 2006). Complete understanding of what is to be purchased is very necessary. this can be achieved through effective market research (Tan, 2013). Thai et al. (2005), also indicated that, in other for sound procurement planning to be carried out, there is the need to for intensive and extensive training of procurement workers.

Attracting and maintaining procurement workers with the requisite experience and skills can be very challenging (Thai et al., 2005). There is also the need to encourage already trained workers to conduct themselves professionally, as this can be real challenge, considering the fact that even the trained procurement staff sometimes refuse to act professionally (Obanda, 2010). There is the need for the local government authority to invest in training works of sound procurement practices and processes (Basheka, 2008). Political interference in the procurement process is a major problem in almost every part of the World (Sowah, 2015). A lot of procurement officials have noted this very challenge as inhibiting their work and mostly render them powerless in their professional conduct (Thai *et al.*, 2005). There is therefore the need for political interference to be minimized especially in the preparation of procurement plans. Though it may seem an impossible task to achieve, sound accountability systems and

the rigorous enforcement of procurement laws can greatly curtail this ill (Ampofo, 2013; Obanda, 2010).

Obanda (2010), indicated that miscommunication between the end users and the procurement units has been in most instances the reason why procurement plans are poorly prepared or not even prepared at all. The speed of flow of information and the effectiveness as well as how smooth communication within an organization is, is very important in the preparation of procurement plans (Tan, 2013). Ability to communicate clearly opinions about what is possible or not based on prior experience and coordination and sharing of information between departments can improve on the preparation of procurement plans (Tan, 2013).

2.11 CHAPTER SUMMARY

Public procurement in developing countries like Ghana accounts for a very large amount of the entire total expenditure of government (Davis, 2014). Procurement planning is to aid in the effective utilization of the scarce resources available (Willy & Njeru, 2014). Also, as a requirement, the prepared procurement plans need to be updated quarterly (*Ghana Public Procurement Act 663, 2003*). The aggregation of the needs into the packages allows the economies of scale to be enjoyed by the concerned entities, which in a way ensures that value for money is achieved (Sowah, 2015). However, amongst several other challenges, political interference was one of the key challenges that hinder the procurement planning process (Sowah, 2015). Including, poor record keeping, rapid change in technological developments, lack of adequate knowledge and skills in procurement, weak enforcement of Procurement Act, delay in release of funds, diversion of funds meant for scheduled procurement, Corrupt procurement practices and insufficient regulatory requirements. Regardless of these

challenges however, effective strategies could be adopted to improve on the procurement planning processes and procedures. These include minimal political interference, strict enforcement of procurement laws, increase in speed of information flow and Ability to keep accurate records.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This section of the work discusses the methodology used in the research. It concerns matters preceding the analysis of data gathered on the research subject matter. These include the research design, process and strategy. The chapter also explains the methods used in the collection, collation and analysis of data. This includes all the techniques that were employed in the study.

3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN

A research design is the framework or plan for a study used as a guide in gathering and inferring data (Al-Moghany, 2006). It is a sequence of stages relating study inquiries to the information collated. Nachmias & Nachmias (1992) intimated that, research design is a strategy that leads the researcher in the process of obtaining, evaluating and concluding observations. It is a normal procedure of substantiation that allows the researcher to close conclusions concerning fundamental associations between the variables being examined (Nachmias & Nachmias 1996). According to Al-Moghany (2006), it is a draft for a research that challenges at least four problems: what queries to make, what information is relevant, what information to accumulate and how to examine outcomes.

Research design is a used to get responses to queries being considered (Al-Moghany, 2006; Polit and Hungler, 1999). It is also used to satisfy some of the experiments that may be run into in the course of the research process (Al-Moghany, 2006; Polit and Hungler, 1999; Naoum, 1998). According to Polit and Hungler (1999), the research design usually assert on which research method is to be adopted and how the researcher proposes to put into exercise methodical controls to increase the interpretability of the results. Research has revealed that there are diverse designs of survey that may be utilized to put up with changing vital needs and difficulties if those encounters are predicted in the planning of the review (Al-Moghany, 2006;Weisberg & Bowen 1977). Also, Naoum (1998), asserted that, one of the most broadly used techniques in data collection and in the conduct of surveys in order to find out specifics, thoughts and views of people is the structured questionnaire. The research design adopted for this study was the quantitative research design. This was adopted as a result of the nature of the agenda and the features of the measurements. The quantitative research strategy was the most suitable to adopt in measurement of the key challenges and this was the most consistently adopted design.

3.2.1 Research Approach

A much more potent means of enhancing the rationality of any social research is to demonstrate the approach of the research(Creswell, 2003). The approach adopted for this research was the deductive method. This enabled the examination of the cogency of expectations or theories/hypotheses in hand. The deductive approach was also used to help the researcher to decide on the theories that show noteworthy facets of the problem research. This easily enhanced the identification of concepts which were easily converted into observables to augment measureable practical analysis.

3.2.2 Research Strategy

Quantitative research strategy was adopted. Structured questionnaire survey approach was employed in the study. This was to allow the researcher put to bear the generalization that will invariably augment the concept and permit the investigator to prognosticate, clarify and understand phenomenon.(Naoum, 2002)

3.3 RESEARCH PROCESS

The review of literature presented in the previous chapter extensively covered the pertinent hypothetical context to embark on this study. The philosophical view point was considered in designing this research. This also included the research strategy, activities, research approach and methods. The stated objectives of this study were very much put into consideration in the design.

3.4 POPULATION

This involves workers within the District Assembly set-up who are involved in the procurement of works and the preparation of tender and contract documentations. The 11 District Assemblies within the Upper West Region of Ghana were selected for the purposes of this study.

3.4.1 Sample Size

The sample size for this study was 50 respondents. The respondents were selected with the aid of the sampling technique. The main target was Procurement personnel and workers involved in Procurement Activities within the selected District Assemblies.

3.4.2 Sampling Technique

The sampling technique adopted for this study was the Purposive sampling technique. This was to aid the researcher to gain information based on the experience and/or the expertise of the respondents. The Snowball technique led the researcher to other

respondents with similar characteristics being sought for. This led to a representative sample size of fifty (50) respondents.

3.5 SOURCES OF DATA

Two main sources of data are used for the purposes of this research. Primary data sources, which included the collection of information by the use of questionnaires. The use of books, recognized magazines, journals, internet sources, etc. constituted the secondary sources of data as used for this study.

3.6 DATA COLLECTION

The data for this study was acquired principally by the employment of well-structured questionnaires.

3.6.1 Design of Questionnaire

The questionnaires was divided into two parts. The background information of the respondent was solicited through the use of the first part of the questionnaire. The second aspect of the questionnaire also sought to solicit the views of the respondent with regards to their ranking of the provided variables on a 1 to 5 Likert scale. This section was divided in 3 sub-sections in order to effectively address the on-set objectives of this particular study.

3.6.2 Administering of Questionnaires

The developed questionnaires were issued out to the concerned respondents through various means of communication including the electronic mail and in-person presentation. The questionnaires were retrieved from the respondents in the same manner as it was given out after the completion of the questionnaires.

3.7 ANALYSIS OF DATA

In the analysis of the data, questionnaires gathered from the acquisition of data were cross-checked to guarantee completeness. The data was thereafter input on the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) to aid in easy analysis of the data obtained. The Mean Score Ranking was employed to aid in ranking the variables in the questionnaire as per the response of the various participants in the study. Descriptive statistics was also used to vividly give a correct description of the kind of data obtained from the study.



CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This section of the research focused mainly on data analysis and further discussions on the results of the analysis made, using the mean score ranking for accurate ranking of the variables in the questionnaire with respect to the responses received from the various participants in the study. Descriptive statistics has been employed to vividly give a thorough picture on the demographic data obtained from the various respondents in the study. This is done with the help of the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). The research objectives that were made at the onset of this work in chapter one have been addressed by the interpretations drawn from the analysis of this data. The results of the analysis are further discussed in view of the relevant literature reviewed in the chapter two of this same study.

4.2 RESPONDENTS' RESPONSE

The demographic data of respondents obtained are graphically represented in the first section of this work. The rest of the work gives a detailed and thorough analysis of the set specific objectives of this study. 76 percent (38 out of the 50) questionnaires issued to respondents in 10 districts and 1 municipality across the Upper West region of Ghana were well completed and retrieved for this study. It was based on these retrieved questionnaires that the whole of the analysis were conducted.

4.3 DEMOGRAPHIC DATA ANALYSIS

Descriptive statistical analysis of collected data has been vividly presented in this section of the work. This was done with the main aim of giving a good understanding and overview of the caliber and nature of the respondents to this study. This was an

attempt to give a general profile of the nature of the respondents in the study. This was done to help increase confidence in the veracity and dependability of the collected data for this study.

4.3.1 Respondents Profession

The figure 4.1 as shown below depicts the percentages of the professions of the various respondents to the study. As seen below, the District Planners formed the highest chunk of the respondents who participated in the study. They constituted 34% of all the respondents in the study. A further 24% of the respondents were Procurement Offices as well as Budget officers. The final 18 percent of the respondents were the District Works Engineers. This implies that, the information provided by the respondents can be trusted as it typically represents the right combination of people involved in procurement planning within the various Assemblies.

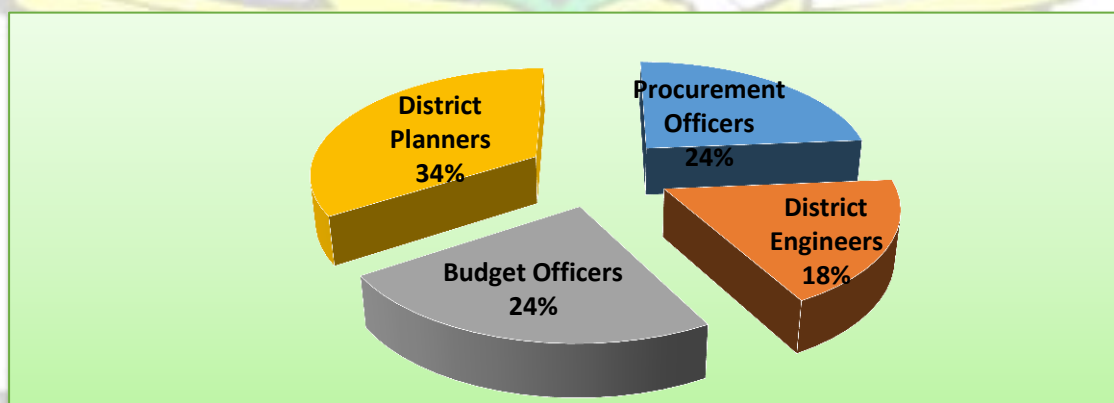


Figure 4.1: Professions of Respondents

Source: Authors fieldwork (2016)

4.3.2 Respondents' Level of Experience

The level of experience of the various respondents to the study was also solicited. The figure 4.2 below depicts clearly the distribution of the level of experience of the various respondents to the study. The highest level of experience by the respondents is 11- 15 years, which constitutes about 39% of the entire data, whereas the 8% of the

respondents stated they had between 16-20 years of experience. 24% of the respondents have between 5-10 years of experience whilst 18 percent of the respondents have less than 5 years' experience. The highest level of experience, which is respondents with above 20 years constituted 11%. Though quite a low percentage (11%) in terms of level of experience, it can generally be said that the level of experience of the respondents is quite good considering the fact that, a combined percentage of 71% of the total number of respondents have between 5-20 years of experience. The inference to this study is that, the respondents have had enough experience on the subject matter and therefore can be considered knowledgeable enough to in the field of study.

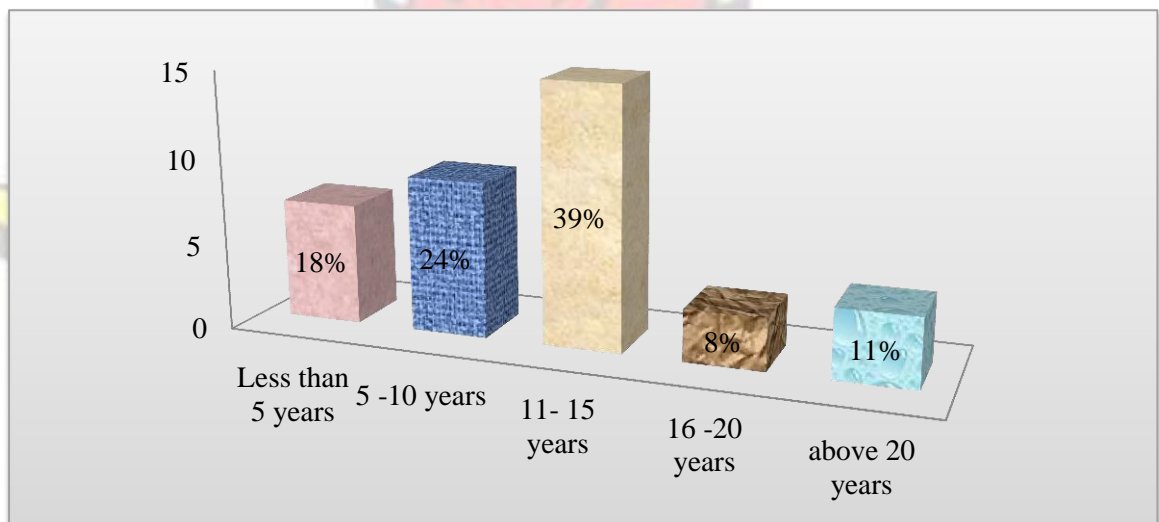


Figure 4.2: Respondents Level of Experience

Source: Authors fieldwork (2016)

4.3.2 Level of Education of respondents

This part of the work sought to enquire from the respondents their level of education. As depicted in Table 4.1 below, 7 of the respondents which represents 18.42% of the respondents have Higher National Diplomas (HND) qualifications. The highest percentage of the respondents has at least a Bachelor's Degree. This constitutes about 60.53% of the total number of respondents who participated whilst 21.05% of the respondents have a qualification in masters or above. This implies that, the participants

in the study have relevant qualifications to make meaningful contribution the subject of study.

Table 4.1: Level of Education of Respondents

Level of Education	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Higher National Diploma (HND)	7	18.42	18.42
Degree (BA/BSc/BTech)	23	60.53	78.95
MA/MSc/MPhil/PhD	8	21.05	100.00
Total	38	100.0	

Source: Authors fieldwork (2016)

4.3.3 Formal Education in Procurement

This part of the work also sought to solicit from the participants as to whether they have had any formal training in Procurement. The Figure 4.3 below shows the distribution of responses obtained from the respondents. As seen below, 58% of the respondents indicated that they have had some formal education in procurement whereas the remaining 42% have not. The implication of this to this study is that, majority of the respondents have some form of formal training in procurement and therefore can provide reliable information for the purposes of this study. Though about 42% have indicated to have not had any formal training in procurement, they are actively involved in some or all processes leading up to procurement in their various Assemblies and thus, can also provide very useful information for this study.

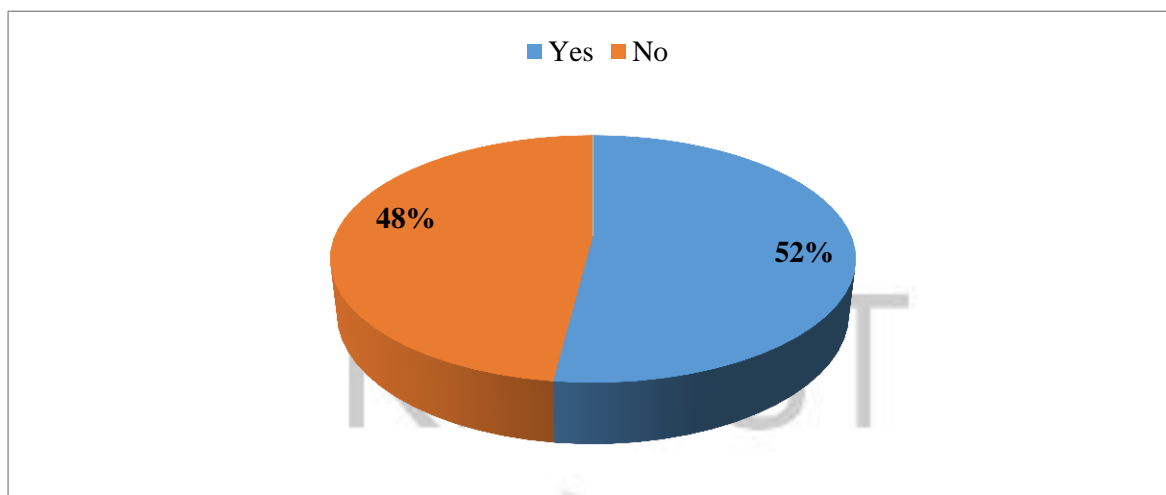


Figure 4.3: Formal Education in Procurement

Source: Authors fieldwork (2016)

4.4. PROCESSES AND PROCEDURES ADOPTED BY DISTRICT ASSEMBLIES IN THE PREPARATION OF THEIR WORKS PROCUREMENT PLANS.

In this part of the work, the respective respondents to the questionnaires were required to rank the processes and procedures adopted by their respective Assemblies in the preparation of their works procurement plans on a five –point Likert scale. These were ranked from the weakest being “not important” to the strongest been “Very important”. The respective five scale points and their interpretations are 1, been “Not important”; 2 equivalent to “Less important”; 3 equals to “Moderately Important”; 4 also being “important” and 5 being “Very important”. Mean Score Ranking was also used to rank the information gathered. The respective mean scores as well as the standard deviation of the respondents were analysed and the results shown in the table below.

Table 4.2: *Processes and Procedures Adopted in the Preparation of Works Procurement Plans*

Processes and Procedures	Mean	Std. Deviation	Ranking
Identification of need	4.57	0.234	1

Drafting of procurement plan	4.32	0.789	2
Requisition of input to the procurement plan	4.10	1.012	3
Acceptance of input from relevant agents (internal)	4.02	0.483	4
Approval of procurement plan	3.97	0.694	5
Review of procurement plan	3.87	0.884	6
Updating of procurement plan	3.62	0.284	7
Publication of procurement plan	3.34	1.124	8
Acceptance of input from relevant external agents	2.34	0.989	9

Source: Authors fieldwork (2016)

The mean score as well as the standard deviation of the various variables aided in the ranking of the various variables.

The various ranking saw *identification of need* coming out as being ranked the 1st thus, the most important process and procedure adopted in the preparation of works procurement plan by the various District Assemblies. This scored a mean of 4.57 and had a standard deviation of 0.234. In accordance to literature, Tan (2013) indicated that, it is the identification of the needs of the organization or entity that kicks start the entire process of procurement planning. Kural & Alsac (2006) also supported this assertion by indicating that, the entire procurement process in an organization or entity starts with the identification and determination of needs. This process is very significant and must be done with utmost care in order to prevent the wastage of already limited organizational resources (Nakamura, 2004).

Drafting of procurement plan came second with a mean of 4.32 and a standard deviation of 0.789. Though ranked the second most important process, Hardcastle (2007) intimated that, people with very low combination of the right qualifications and capacity are normally involved and required to develop standard procurement plans.

This might not be very different in the case of Ghana, and for that matter, the District Assemblies.

Furthermore, *Requisition of input to the procurement plan* was ranked 3rd with a mean score of 4.10. There is the need to insist on getting accurate needs of the various departments concerned as this ensures that a good procurement plan is drafted as well as efficient utilization of already scarce resources (Basheka, 2008). On the other hand, *Acceptance of input from relevant external agents (internal)* was ranked as the 4th most important variable with a mean score of 4.02 and a standard deviation of 0.483. Agaba & Shipman (2007) clearly articulated that, inadequate information on departmental needs can cause misalignment in the allocation made in prepared budgets for the particular need in the procurement process. Various departments need to furnish the procurement unit accurately with their various needs.

The 5th ranked was *Approval of procurement plan* with a mean score of 3.97 and a standard deviation of 0.694 whilst *Review of procurement plan* ranked 6th with a mean score of 3.87 and a standard deviation 0.884. *Updating of procurement plan* ranked 7th with a mean score of 3.62 and a standard deviation of 0.284. *Publication of procurement plan* was ranked as the 8th most important process also with a mean score of 3.34 and a standard deviation of 1.124 Surprisingly, *Acceptance of input from relevant external agents* was ranked as the 9th most important process. This scored a mean of 2.34 and a standard deviation of 0.989. This particular process is necessitated by the fact that there is the need for the procurement department to acquire information on the availability of the “means” to solve the respective needs and also information about the potential suppliers of such, goods, works or services (Tan, 2013). This ideally should precede most of the processes and procedures ranked above.

4.5. KEY CHALLENGES ASSOCIATED WITH WORKS PROCUREMENT PLANNING BY DISTRICT ASSEMBLIES IN GHANA

In this section of the work also, the respective respondents to the questionnaires were required to rank the key challenges associated with the procedures and processes in works procurement planning by District Assemblies in Ghana on a five –point Likert scale. These were ranked from the weakest being “not severe” to the strongest being “Very severe”. The respective five scale points and their interpretations are 1,being “Not severe”; 2 equivalent to “Less severe”; 3 equals to “Moderately severe”; 4 also being “severe” and 5 being “Very severe”. Mean Score ranking was also used to interpret the information gathered. The respective mean scores as well as the standard deviation of the respondents were analysed and the results shown in the table below. The mean score as well as the standard deviation of the various variables aided in the ranking of the various variables. *Political Interference* was ranked the 1st meaning, it was considered by the respondents as the most severe challenge. This scored a mean of 4.78 and has a standard deviation of 0.796. According to literature, Ernest (2015), indicated that, political interference was one of the key challenges that hinder the procurement planning process. He intimated that, there is the tendency for procurement plan budgets to be inflated to unrealistic levels so as politicians can benefit in the end. These he further indicated were mostly engineered by the politicians themselves.

Corrupt procurement practices came second with a mean of 4.67 and a standard deviation of 0.693. Saviour (2014), intimated that, corruption is quite popular amongst high level senior civil servants, describing the looting of funds meant for procurement as denying development for those in the grass root level. Musanzikwa (2013) supported this assertion by indicating that, the issue of corruption is a major headache for professionals and non-professionals alike involved in public procurement.

Table 4.3: *key challenges associated with works procurement planning by District Assemblies in Ghana*

Processes and Procedures	Mean	Std. Deviation	Ranking
Political Interference	4.78	0.796	1
Corrupt procurement practices	4.67	0.693	2
Delay in release of funds	4.51	0.697	3
Diversion of funds meant for scheduled procurement	3.98	0.794	4
Unrealistic timelines	3.97	0.772	5
Lack of adequate knowledge and skills in procurement	3.95	0.770	6
Weak enforcement of Procurement Act	3.84	0.725	7
Poor record keeping	3.79	0.773	8
Incomplete documentations for projects	3.77	0.716	9
Inability to determine the duration of each step of the procurement cycle	3.76	0.754	10
Failure to coordinate procurement schedule with funds release date	3.74	0.745	11
Delays in confirmation of availability of funds	3.62	0.735	12
Insufficient regulatory requirements	3.52	0.785	13
Poor prioritization of requirements	3.50	0.783	14
Inability to recognize potential internal and external constraints	3.48	0.745	15
Miscommunication of needs of organization/departments	3.45	0.734	16
Rapid change in technological developments	3.42	0.738	17

Source: Authors fieldwork (2016)

Delay in release of funds was ranked 3rd with a mean score of 4.51 whereas *Diversion of funds meant for scheduled procurement* was ranked as the 4th most important variable with a mean score of 3.98 and a standard deviation of 0.794. Literature indicated that,

diversion of funds meant for scheduled procurement and the inability to recognize potential internal and external constraints to an organization can greatly hamper the procurement planning process (Gerald, 2014).

The 5th ranked was *Unrealistic timelines* with a mean score of 3.97 and a standard deviation of 0.772. Literature here also indicated that, the timelines enable the monitoring and evaluation of the procurement plan to be very effective. However the determination of the procurement timelines can be very complicated when preparing a procurement plan (Tookey *et al.*, 2001). Much effort need to be put in the determination of accurate timelines. With procurement of works, necessary professional help need to be sort from the right sources so as to get accurate timelines with respect to the different stages of the procurement process. An effective management of the timelines can give a great boost to the procurement plan.

On the other hand, *Lack of adequate knowledge and skills in procurement* was ranked 6th with a mean score of 3.95 and a standard deviation 0.770. Literature supported this assertion by indicating that, the procurement planning process normally is carried out by personnel with average skills and inadequate knowledge in the procurement process (Hardcastle, 2007). The procurement planning process will be much effective if the right human capital is involved in the activities of the procurement process (Sowah, 2015). Public procurement is a very complex undertaken that needs the input of people with the right set of skills (Thai *et al.*, 2005). There is also the argument that, the unavailability of the right set of people in the procurement planning process is not the only problem, but also the refusal of the well trained professionals to carry out their duty professionally (Obanda, 2010). There is therefore the need to train people involved

in procurement planning to increase their skills towards effective works procurement planning (Thai *et al.*, 2005).

Furthermore *Weak enforcement of Procurement Act* was ranked 7th with a mean score of 3.84 and a standard deviation of 0.725. Literature indicated that, there is a lot of exploitation of the system with “impunity” largely due to mix of the predictability and reluctance to enforce existing rules to ensure sanity in the system (Hunja, 2001). There is therefore the need for strict administration of the public procurement law here in Ghana.

At the bottom of the ranking is *Rapid change in technological developments*, which came 17th with a mean score of 3.42 and a standard deviation of 0.738.

4.6. STRATEGIES TO IMPROVE WORKS PROCUREMENT PLANNING IN DISTRICT ASSEMBLIES IN GHANA.

Similarly as in the preceding sections, in this section of also, respondents to the questionnaires were asked to rank the strategies to improve works procurement planning in District Assemblies in Ghana. This was also based also on a five –point Likert scale. These were ranked from the weakest being “not significant” to the strongest being “Very significant”. The respective five scale points and their interpretations are 1,being “**Not** significant”; 2 equivalent to “Less significant”; 3 equals to “Moderately significant”; 4 also being “severe” and 5 being “Very significant”. Mean Score ranking was also used to interpret the information obtained. The respective mean scores as well as the standard deviation of the respondents were also analysed and the results shown in the table below. The mean score as well as the standard deviation of the various variables aided in the ranking of the various variables. *Strict Enforcement of procurement laws* was ranked the 1st. This scored a mean of 4.88

and has a standard deviation of 0.796. literature indicated that, there is a lot of exploitation of the system with “impunity” largely due to mix of the predictability and reluctance to enforce existing rules to ensure sanity in the system (Hunja, 2001). This particular variable was considered by the respondents as the most significant strategy to consider in improving works procurement planning.

Interdepartmental coordination on developing plan came second with a mean of 4.76 and a standard deviation of 0.783. Literature indicated that, the ability to communicate clearly opinions about what is possible or not based on prior experience and coordination and sharing of information between departments can improve on the preparation of procurement plans (Tan, 2013). It is imperative that the all hands on deck approach be adopted, thus the involvement of all departments within the District Assembly.

Training and education of procurement staff was ranked 3rd with a mean score of 4.65. Attracting and maintaining competent procurement workers with the requisite experience and skills can be very challenging (Thai *et al.*, 2005). There is the need for the local government authority to invest in training works of sound procurement practices and processes (Basheka, 2008).

Not all, *Minimal political interference* was ranked as the 4th most important variable with a mean score of 4.54 and a standard deviation of 0.773. From the literature, a lot of procurement officials have noted this very challenge as inhibiting their work and mostly render them powerless in their professional conduct (Thai *et al.*, 2005). Though it may seem an impossible task to achieve, sound accountability systems and the rigorous enforcement of procurement laws can greatly curtail this problem (Ampofo, 2013; Obanda, 2010).

The 5th ranked was *complete understanding of what is to be purchased* with a mean score of 4.41 and a standard deviation of 0.741. There is the need for the understanding of the items to be procured for which the procurement is planned for, before the procurement plan is drawn (Shaw, 2010). The complete understanding of the needs is necessary and can be achieved by market research. The procurement unit should not only depend on the information provided by the requisition department, but should do further research to clearly understand the need. Also, *Discuss procurement options and possible procurement methods* ranked 6th with a mean score of 3.95 and a standard deviation 0.753. Literature revealed that, the ability to communicate clearly opinions about what is possible or not based on prior experience and coordination and sharing of information between departments can improve on the preparation of procurement plans (Tan, 2013). The procurement unit must as much as possible open channels for easy communication between the unit and all other departments within the organization. There is the need to review and confirm necessary aspects of the procurement requisition (Anon, 2010).

Ability to keep accurate records ranked 7th with a mean score of 3.89 and a standard deviation of 0.696. Good record keeping is a measure of professionalism (Sowah, 2015). Sound record keeping enables efficient information tracking which is very important to the development of very good procurement plans.

At the bottom of the ranking was *Consistency in procurement plan with funds release dates*, which came 13th with a mean score of 3.32 and a standard deviation of 0.773.

Though ranked the lowest amongst several other factors, unavailability of funds for the procurement process is one of the major problems of procurement planning (Tookey *et al.*, 2001). To improve on procurement planning therefore, there is the need for the

timing and the availability of the necessary funds for the procurement process to be identified (Hardcastle, 2007).

Table 4.4: *strategies to improve works procurement planning in District Assemblies in Ghana*

Strategies	Mean	Std. Deviation	Ranking
Strict Enforcement of procurement laws	4.88	0.796	1
Interdepartmental coordination on developing plan	4.76	0.683	2
Training and education procurement staff	4.61	0.687	3
Minimal political interference	4.54	0.773	4
Complete understanding of what is to be purchased	4.41	0.741	5
Discuss procurement options and possible procurement methods	3.95	0.753	6
Ability to keep accurate records	3.89	0.696	7
Speed of information flow	3.78	0.667	8
Review and confirm necessary aspects of procurement requisition	3.76	0.695	9
Complete understanding of what is to be purchased	3.72	0.643	10
Ability to discuss and clarify unclear information	3.68	0.745	11
Uncover and discuss information that may have constraints on the project	3.42	0.733	12
Consistency in procurement plan with funds release dates	3.32	0.773	13

Source: Authors fieldwork (2016)

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter gives a round off of findings to this research as well as gives conclusions and recommendations on the subject matter of study. The summary of the findings are made based on the information collated from the field. Conclusion and recommendations are also made towards the improvement of works procurement planning by District Assemblies in Ghana.

5.2 ACHIEVEMENT OF RESEARCH OBJECTIVES 5.2.1: The processes and procedures adopted by District Assemblies in the preparation of their works procurement plans

Mean Score ranking was used in the analysis of the data collated. At the end of the analysis, the following were ranked in descending order as the most important processes and procedures adopted by District Assemblies in the preparation of a works procurement plan:

- ❖ Drafting of procurement plan
- ❖ Acceptance of input from relevant agents (internal)
- ❖ Requisition of input to the procurement plan
- ❖ Acceptance of input from relevant external agents
- ❖ Approval of procurement plan
- ❖ Review of procurement plan
- ❖ Updating of procurement plan
- ❖ Publication of procurement plan

5.2.2: Key Challenges Associated with the Procedures and Processes in Works

Procurement Planning by District Assemblies in Ghana

Similarly, the Mean Score ranking was used in the analysis of the data collated. At the end of the analysis, the following were ranked in descending order as key challenges with procedures and processes in works procurement planning by District Assemblies in Ghana:

- ❖ Political Interference
- ❖ Corrupt procurement practices
- ❖ Delay in release of funds
- ❖ Diversion of funds meant for scheduled procurement
- ❖ Unrealistic timelines
- ❖ Lack of adequate knowledge and skills in procurement
- ❖ Weak enforcement of Procurement Act

In an ascending order however, they were ranked as follows;

- ❖ Rapid change in technological developments
- ❖ Miscommunication of needs of organization/departments
- ❖ Inability to recognize potential internal and external constraints
- ❖ Poor prioritization of requirements
- ❖ Insufficient regulatory requirements
- ❖ Delays in confirmation of availability of funds
- ❖ Failure to coordinate procurement schedule with funds release date

5.2.3: Strategies to Improve Works Procurement Planning in the District

Assemblies in Ghana

Again, the Mean Score ranking was used in the analysis of the data collated. At the end of the analysis, the following were ranked in descending order as strategies to improve works procurement planning in the District Assemblies in Ghana;

- ❖ Strict Enforcement of procurement laws
- ❖ Interdepartmental coordination on developing plan
- ❖ Training and education procurement staff
- ❖ Minimal political interference
- ❖ Complete understanding of what is to be purchased
- ❖ Discuss procurement options and possible procurement methods
- ❖ Ability to keep accurate records

Then again, in an ascending order however, they were ranked as follows:

- ❖ Consistency in procurement plan with funds release dates;
- ❖ Ability to discuss and clarify unclear information ;
- ❖ Uncover and discuss information that may have constraints on the project;
- ❖ Complete understanding of what is to be purchased;
- ❖ Review and confirm necessary aspects of procurement requisition;
- ❖ Speed of information flow; and
- ❖ Ability to keep accurate records

5.3 CONCLUSION

Procurement Planning especially, is a very important step in the entire procurement process for any organization or department. There is therefore the need for very

qualified professionals to be engaged in, in the preparation of procurement plans, especially in procurement of works plan since it involves issues that may be quite technical in nature, there is also the need to update and review procurement plans.

5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

5.4.1. District Assemblies

1. The District Assemblies should engage Competent and qualified personnel in the preparation of works procurement plans.
2. Funds should be readily made available to meet procurement timelines as planned for in the procurement plans.
3. There is also the need for personnel involved in procurement planning to be trained periodically to upgrade and sharpen their planning skills.

5.4.2. Procurement Unit

1. Good records keeping systems must be put in place by procurement units to aid them in easy tracking of records for future use
2. The needs of the end user departments must be carefully solicited. This is to avoid any future problems regarding the use of the procured goods, services or works.
3. Credible external agents should be contacted for information which will be include in the procurement plan
4. Information from external sources must be scrutinized to enable the unit prepare very accurate plans

5.4.3. Public Procurement Authority

1. Finally, the rigorous enforcement of procurement laws must be ensured to deter the abuse of the procurement process by people directly or indirectly involved in the procurement process.
2. The Procurement Authority should organize periodic workshops for procurement staff so as to keep them abreast with latest developments in the practice

The implementation of the above stated recommendations by the various stakeholders, can aid the various procurement departments within the Assemblies to draw very effective and efficient works procurement plans.



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APPENDIX

KWAME NKRUMAH UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY COLLEGE OF ART AND BUILT ENVIRONMENT DEPARTMENT OF BUILDING TECHNOLOGY

QUESTIONNAIRE

TOPIC: “TOWARDS THE IMPROVEMENT OF WORKS PROCUREMENT PLANNING BY DISTRICT ASSEMBLIES IN GHANA”

I am a postgraduate student of the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST) conducting a research on the improvement of works procurement planning by District Assemblies in Ghana. The aim of this research is to find ways to improve on works procurement planning by District Assemblies in Ghana. This is purely for academic purposes and all information will be treated with strict confidentiality. Your response would be highly appreciated for the success of the research. Kindly respond to the question by ticking the appropriate box for each item.

PART ONE: RESPONDENT PROFILE

1. Please indicate the category of your profession

- ☐ Procurement Officer
- ☐ Budget Officer
- ☐ District Planner
- ☐ District Works Engineer
- ☐ Other (Please specify).....

2. How long have you been working?

- ☐ Less than 5 years
- ☐ 5 – 10 years

- [] 11 – 15 years
[] 16 – 20 years
[] Above 20 years

3. What is your level of Education?

- [] Higher National Diploma
[] B.A/ BSc
[] M.A/MSc/M.Phil/PhD

4. Have you had any formal training in public procurement?

- [] Yes [] No

PART TWO: PROCESSES AND PROCEDURES ADOPTED BY DISTRICT ASSEMBLIES IN THE PREPARATION OF THEIR WORKS PROCUREMENT PLANS.

Please indicate the level of importance of the following procurement planning processes and procedures using the following Likert scale. [1=Not important; 2=Less important; 3=Moderately Important; 4=Important; 5=Very important]. Please tick (✓) in the space provided.

No	PROCESSES AND PROCEDURES	1	2	3	4	5
1	Updating of procurement plan					
2	Review of procurement plan					
3	Approval of procurement plan					
4	Drafting of procurement plan					
5	Requisition of input to the procurement plan					
6	Publication of procurement plan					
7	Acceptance of input from relevant agents (internal)					

8	Acceptance of input from relevant external agents (market research)					
9	Identification of need					
	<i>Any other, please state and rank</i>					

PART THREE: KEY CHALLENGES ASSOCIATED WITH THE PROCEDURES AND PROCESSES IN WORKS PROCUREMENT PLANNING BY DISTRICT ASSEMBLIES IN GHANA

Please indicate the level of severity of the following key challenges associated with the procedures and processes in works procurement using the following Likert scale. [1=Not severe; 2=Less severe; 3=Moderately severe; 4=Severe; 5=Very severe]. Please tick (✓) in the space provided.

No	CHALLENGES	1	2	3	4	5
1	Political Interference					
2	Poor record keeping					
3	Rapid change in technological developments					
4	Lack of adequate knowledge and skills in procurement					
5	Weak enforcement of Procurement Act					
6	Delay in release of funds					
7	Diversion of funds meant for scheduled procurement					
8	Corrupt procurement practices					
9	Insufficient regulatory requirements					

10	Delays in confirmation of availability of funds					
11	Poor prioritization of requirements					
12	Miscommunication of needs of organization/departments					
13	Unrealistic timelines					
14	Incomplete documentations for projects					
15	Inability to determine the duration of each step of the procurement cycle					
16	Inability to recognize potential internal and external constraints					
17	Failure to coordinate procurement schedule with funds release date					
18						
19						
	<i>Any other, please state and rank</i>					

PART FOUR: STRATEGIES TO IMPROVE WORKS PROCUREMENT PLANNING IN THE DISTRICT ASSEMBLIES IN GHANA.

Please indicate the level of significance of the following strategies to improve works procurement planning using the following Likert scale. [1=Not significant; 2=Less significant; 3=Moderately significant; 4= Significant; 5=Very significant]. Please tick (✓) in the space provided.

No	STRATEGIES	1	2	3	4	5
1	Review and confirm necessary aspects of procurement requisition					
2	Complete understanding of what is to be purchased					
3	Uncover and discuss information that may have constraints on the project					
4	Ability to communicate clearly opinions about what is possible or not based on prior experience					
5	Discuss procurement options and possible procurement methods					
6	Interdepartmental coordination on developing plan					
7	Training and education procurement staff					
8	Ability to discuss and clarify unclear information					
9	Ability to keep accurate records					
10	Consistency in procurement plan with funds release dates					
11	Speed of information flow					
12	Strict Enforcement of procurement laws					
13	Minimal political interference					
	<i>Any other, please state and rank</i>					