



**THE DETERMINANTS OF YOUTH ACCESS TO PUBLIC PROCUREMENT OPPORTUNITIES IN STATE CORPORATIONS IN KENYA**

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**Accepted: May 11, 2021**

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**ABSTRACT**

*The objective of this study was to find out the determinants for youth access to procurement opportunities in Kenya. The research design employed in this study was descriptive. The target population was 748 respondents comprising of the Supply chain managers of from 187 state corporations in Kenya. Stratified random sampling was used with sample size of 30% of the target population, which comprised of 224 respondents. The researcher collected data using questionnaires. The study adopted both qualitative and quantitative data analysis techniques. The researcher used statistical package for social sciences, SPSS Version 21 and Microsoft word tools to aid in data analysis. Descriptive statistics such as mean and standard deviation were used to analyze the data. On the extent of the youth's uptake of government procurement opportunities in government ministries in Kenya, the study concluded that the youth's uptake of government procurement opportunities in government ministries in Kenya were to a large extent. On the factors that influence the youth's uptake of government procurement opportunities, the study concluded that Access to information, Access to Finance, Legal Framework and Ethics in Procurement were the key underlying factors that influence youth's uptake government procurement opportunities in government ministries in Kenya. In regard to the relationship between the underlying factors identified and the youth's uptake of government procurement opportunities, the study concluded that there is a strong and positive relationship between the factors identified and the youth's uptake of government procurement opportunities in government ministries in Kenya. The underlying factors accounted for or explained 81% of the total variance in uptake of procurement opportunities by the youth. This study recommended that the government should continuously train the youths on how to exploit the procurement opportunities set aside for them by the state and should come up with regulations to ensure the youth can access finance, information and fairness. The greatest limitation faced by the researcher was that most of the respondents approached were reluctant in giving some information fearing that the information sought would be used to intimidate them or create a negative image of the ministries they work for. On suggestions for further research, a research into the uptake of government procurement opportunities by the youth in other government institutions should be explored.*

**Key Words:** Access to Information, Access to Finance, Legal Framework, Ethics in Procurement

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**CITATION:** Okasida, A. O., & Moronge, M. (2021). The determinants of youth access to public procurement opportunities in state corporations in Kenya. *The Strategic Journal of Business & Change Management*, 8 (2), 237 – 368.

## INTRODUCTION

The Youth have the potential to accelerate productivity growth, but left idle, can represent a risk to social stability and in the longer term a risk to development of the nation's economy (RoK, 2016). Ensuring that youths are successfully integrated into the economy through procurement will improve Kenya's competitiveness, raise household incomes, reduce poverty, and create a circle of investment and growth, (Gitari & Kabare, 2017). The Government of Kenya established Access to procurement opportunities (AGPO) programme, under the National Treasury Public Procurement Directorate in line with Article 2 of the PPDR of 2013 and Article 27 of the Constitution of Kenya, (MOYAS, 2019). The aim of AGPO Program is to facilitate the youth, women and persons with disability-owned enterprises to participate in government procurement (RoK, 2016). This was made possible through the implementation of the Presidential Directive that 30% of procurement opportunities be set aside specifically for these enterprises. It is affirmative action aimed at empowering youth, women and persons with disability-owned enterprises by giving them more opportunities to do business with Government, (Munyu, 2016).

According to (World Bank, 2016), the Chinese Government procurement offers a unique, fiscally responsible route to empower youth and women, combat poverty and promote inclusive economic growth. In 2009, Chinese Taipei's Council of Labor Affairs established the Phoenix Micro Startup Plan to boost the number of youth and women participating in the labour force by encouraging them to start their own businesses, (International Trade Centre, 2016). The programme also offers digital courses, internships and company visits. In recent years, Chinese Taipei has initiated a number of other plans and programmes to support women entrepreneurs. They include the Female Entrepreneurship Guidance Plan, the Female Entrepreneurial Elite Plan and the Flying Geese Program, (International Trade Centre, 2016).

Preferential treatment to the disadvantaged groups, among them the youth, women and persons with disabilities, is slowly taking shape in Africa through enactment of various procurement laws and regulations, (Naira, 2018). In 2013, the Botswana Ministry of Trade and Industry endorsed new guidelines on the registration of micro and small businesses owned by the youth and women that address some of the barriers to their participation in the formal sector. The new guidelines exempt those businesses from stringent licensing requirements, which are perceived as a deterrent to setting up of their businesses. In endorsing the new guidelines, the ministry permanent secretary explained that the ministry viewed 'micro and small businesses as foundations for business development and ideal vehicles for economic growth and diversification' (BOPA, 2013, ITC, 2016).

In Kenya, youth unemployment has become a huge challenge for the country, (World Bank 2018). The overall unemployment rate for the youth is double the adult average, at about 21%. The only option left for most youths is to engage in start-ups and small and micro-enterprises (SMEs) to earn a living. Statistics on joblessness suggest that the magnitude of unemployment problem is larger for youth with 38% of the youth neither in school nor work aggregating the rates of unemployment and inactivity (RoK, 2016). The Public Procurement and Disposal Act, 2015 and the Public Procurement and Disposal (Preference and Reservations) Regulations, 2011, apply to procurements by public entities when soliciting tenders from the following target groups: Disadvantaged Groups (Youth, Women, and Persons with Disability), Small Enterprises, Micro Enterprises, Citizen Contractors, local Contractors and Citizen Contractors in Joint-venture or Sub-contracting arrangements with foreign suppliers, (PPOA, 2016).

Kenya has a host of financial instruments being offered by various institutions, including local purchase order (LPO) financing and invoice discounting. There is also the Uwezo Fund and the

youth and women enterprise fund, yet processing an invoice takes months, (Naira, 2018). The Public Procurement and disposal Act, (2015) defines procurement as the acquisition by purchase, lease, hire purchase, rent or any other legal means of goods, services including livestock. Public procurement therefore has a huge impact on the economy of Kenya. For instance, independent procurement review Kenya (IPRK, 2019) established that in the period between the years 2017 to the year 2018, the value of government procurement in Kenya has been growing in leaps and bounds. With constant growth of the GDP, the amount expended in government procurement continues to rise and in the year 2019, it was estimated to be about 30% of the Ksh. 1.6 trillion Kenyan National budget (Hansard, 2019).

This huge amount if well managed could drive economic growth. OECD (2016), notes that involving the youth in the public procurement could spur entrepreneurship among the largely unemployed youth in developing nations through their small and micro enterprises. The government of a country is the biggest procurer since most of its expenditure goes to public procurement. According to Aketch, (2017) public procurement plays a key role in the generation of country's wealth as it accounts for approximately 16% of most countries' GDPs. According to Calendar & Mathews, (2015) estimates of the financial activities of government procurement managers are believed to be in the order of 10% – 30 % of GNP in all countries in the world. For instance in the year 2016/17, the Government of Kenya spent about 70% of the 1.6 trillion shillings budget on procurement of goods and services.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Youth Unemployment Statistics indicate that 60% of the Kenyan population is under the age of 35 and the rate of Kenyan unemployment is approximately 40% while an estimated 64% of unemployed Kenyans are youth, (KNBS 2015). This clearly indicates that unemployment in Kenya is a youth problem, (Njonjo, 2018; Gitari & Kabare, 2017). In

the past, the government attempted to address youth unemployment through policies, programs, and projects such as policy on the development of medium and small business enterprises. However, there are a number of emerging challenges faced in the process of implementing such policies, strategies and program, (Gitari & Kabare, 2017). In 2013, the Government of Kenya enforced procurement regulations which began the Access to procurement opportunities (AGPO) programme, under the National Treasury Public Procurement Directorate. youth and other marginalized groups were allowed to procure 30% of public goods and services in line with Article 2 of the PPDR of 2013 and Article 27 of the Constitution of Kenya, 2010, on equality and freedom from discrimination, (MOYAS, 2019).

The sole purpose of the AGPO was to ensure that youth, women and discriminated groups actively participate in public procurement, (MOYAS, 2019). According to the National Treasury, all the Ministries had set aside Ksh. 21,382,976,758 to be awarded to Youth, Women and Persons with Disabilities enterprises in the 2015/2016 financial year. From this amount, a total of Ksh 9,553,656,259 worth of tenders was awarded to these categories representing 44.68% of the performance contract targets. Further, all the ministries, State Law Office, Judicial Service Commission and Parliamentary Service Commission spent Ksh 210,185,874,908 on procurement during the financial year. This means that the special categories were awarded 4.45% of the total procurement spend against the required minimum of 30%. The Ministry of East African Community, Labour and Social Protection awarded a total of Ksh 63,998,539 against a total procurement spend of Ksh 963,692,885 representing 4 6.64%, Gatere & Shale, (2017).

According to Aketch, (2017) public procurement plays a key role in the generation of country's wealth as it accounts for approximately 16% of most countries' GDPs. OECD (2016), notes that involving the youth in the public procurement could

spur entrepreneurship among the largely unemployed youth in developing nations through their small and micro enterprises. Lack of adequate resources to run youth programs and Structures and attitudes within public and private sectors that do not provide an enabling environment for the youth to participate in decision-making, planning and implementation process is detrimental to the youth empowerment initiatives,(MOYAS,2019; Gitari & Kabare, 2017) .

Gatere & Shale, (2017) in their study concluded that the Technical Capability has a duty to facilitate the implementation of access to procurement opportunities for Special Interest groups in Kenya but failed to look at the determinants of youth access to these opportunities.(Munyu, 2016), looked at communication, planning, funding and monitoring and evaluation as the factors influencing youth access to government procurement , Mwangi *et al*,2018 studied the access to finance by special groups and implementation of preference and reservation scheme in tertiary institutions he failed to look at the determinants of youth access to procurement opportunities.(Otieno,2017), assessed the effects of public procurement in participation of the youth in public procurement, Munyao, 2017, Ndege,2018, Wamoto,2017, Njeri &Getuno,2016, Beke *et al*,2017,Naira,2018, Ngure & Simba,2015,Onchari,2019 looked at giving preferences to youth and women business to access of procurement opportunities but failed to consider the influence of Ethical issues, technical capacity, Information Availability and Financial capability to the youth access to the procurement opportunities in Kenya. It is against this backdrop that i intend to fill the gap left

### **Objectives Of the study**

The General objective of this study was to find out the determinants for youth access to procurement opportunities in Kenya. The study was guided by the following specific objectives;

- To determine the effects of Ethical issues to youth access to procurement opportunities in Kenya
- To establish the influence of Technical capacity on youth access to procurement opportunities in Kenya
- To assess the effects of Financial capability on youth access to procurement opportunities in Kenya
- To determine the influence of Information Availability on youth access to procurement opportunities in Kenya

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Theoretical Review**

#### **Institutional theory**

Researchers such as Meyer and Rowan (1991), DiMaggio and Powell (1983) are some of the institutional theorists who assert that the institutional environment can strongly influence the development of formal structures in an organization, often more profoundly than market pressures. The basic concepts and premises of the institutional theory approach provide useful guidelines for analyzing organization-environment relationships with an emphasis on the social rules, expectations, norms, and values as the sources of pressure on organizations. This theory is built on the concept of legitimacy rather than efficiency or effectiveness as the primary organizational goal, (Doug & Scott, 2004).

The organization being dependent on external resources and the organization's ability to adapt to or even change its environment (Doug & Scott, 2004).Institutional theory is usually utilized to study public procurement from a different viewpoint (Obanda, 2011). Najeeb (2014) asserts that the study of institutions traverses the academic fields of economics, sociology, political science and organizational theory. According to Kaufman (2011), the common denominator for institutionalism in various disciplines appears to be that of, institutions matter. Hence, "organizational practices are either a direct reflection of, or response to, rules and structures built into their

larger environment" (Paauwe & Boselie, 2003). In public procurement, different institutions interact in order to meet the needs of each other while abiding to the set rules and regulations established by the government. There are three pillars of institutions as regulatory, normative and cultural cognitive as identified by Scott (2004).

### **Social – Economic Theory**

The social- economic theory was propounded by Sutinen & Kuperan (1999). The socioeconomic theory of compliance was formulated by integrating economic theory with theories from psychology and sociology to account for moral obligation and social influence as causes of individuals' decisions on adherence to the set standards. According to Lisa (2010) Social–Economic perspectives provide a basis for the success or failure of organizational compliance. Wilmshurst and Frost (2000) also add that the legitimacy theory postulates that the organization is responsible to disclose its practices to the stakeholders, especially to the public and justify its existence within the boundaries of society. Social and economic indicators can be applied in both the temporal and spatial contexts. They can be used to graph the growth and development of a nation during a particular span of time, or to map the economic and social attributes of the various territorial units that make up a nation.

### **Resource – Based View Theory**

The Resource-Based View Theory (RBV) was proposed by (Barney, 1991 & Penrose, 1959). It analyzes and interprets internal resources of the organization and emphasizes resources and capabilities in formulating strategy to achieve sustainable competitive advantages, (Paul, Lawson, Petersen & Fugate, 2019, Erkul, Kaynak & Montiel, 2015). RBV is an economic theory that suggests that firm performance is a function of the types of resources and capabilities controlled by firms, (Paulet *al*, 2019). A resource is a relatively observable, tradable asset that contributes to a firm's market position by improving customer value or lowering cost (or both); and a capability denotes

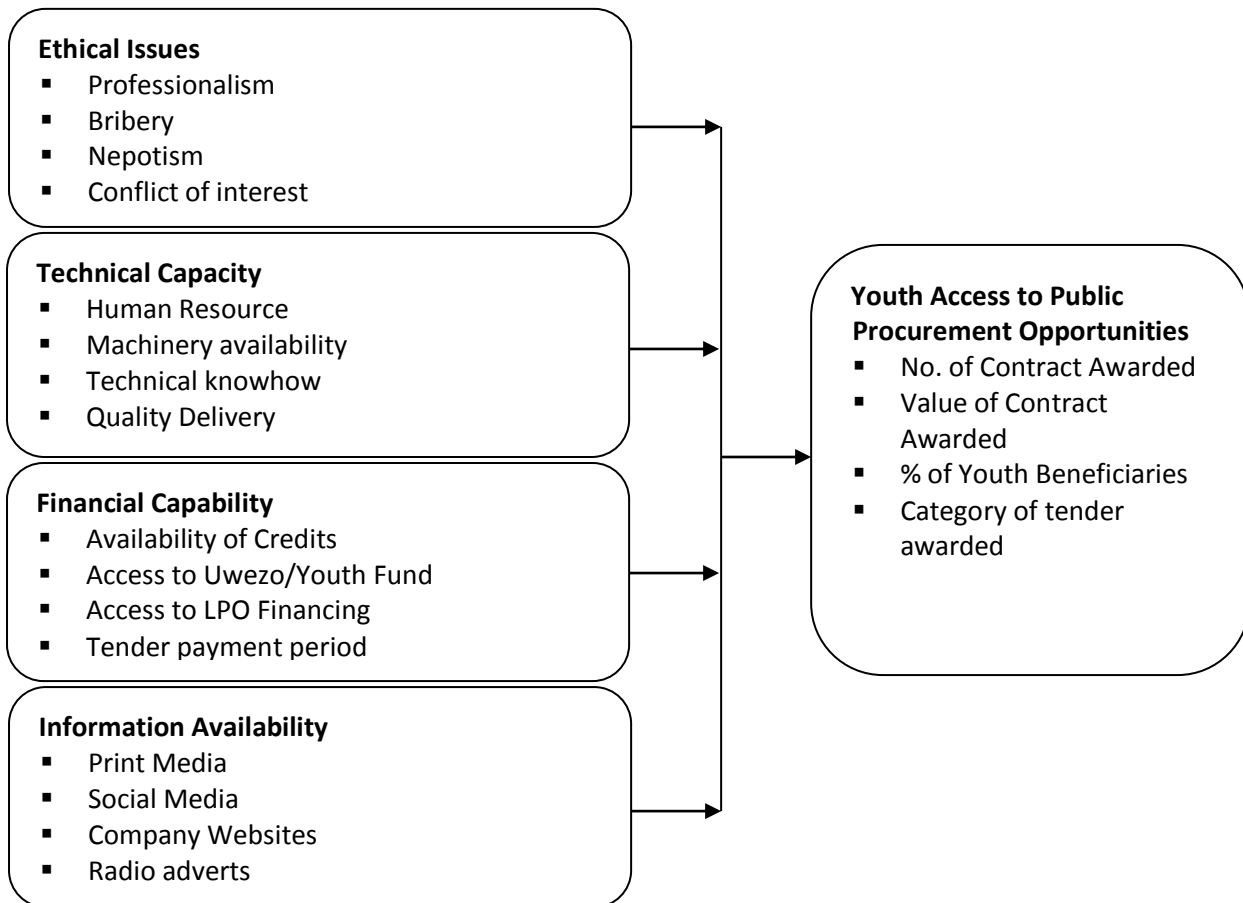
the ability of a firm to accomplish tasks that are linked to higher economic performance by increasing value, decreasing cost, or both, (Walker, 2004). Barney & Hesterly (2008) also describe resources as tangible and intangible assets a firm uses to conceive of and implement its strategies; and capabilities as a subset of resources that enable a firm to take advantage of its other resources.

### **Empowerment Theory**

Empowerment Theory was proposed by Zimmerman in the year 1984, Zimmerman argues that empowered individuals have the characteristics of high self-esteem, self-efficacy, control over their life and increased socio-political and civic access. According to Tones and Tilford (2001), Empowerment theory has been identified as a principal theory across various disciplines. Rappaport (1987), adapted it to community psychology studies. Ever since, the theory has found its way into social studies as a key concept in remedying inequalities and towards achieving better and fairer distribution of resources for communities, (Rose, 2001). According to the theory, empowerment refers to the ability of people to gain understanding and control over personal, social, economic and political forces in order to take action to improve their life situations, (Njeri & Getuno, 2016).

### **System Theory**

System theory was proposed in the 1940s' by biologist Ludwig Von Bertalanffy (General system theory, 1968) and furthered by Ross Ashby, (Introduction to Cybernetics, 1956). It is an interdisciplinary theory concerning every system in nature, in society and in many scientific domains as well as a framework with which we can investigate phenomena from holistic approach (Capra, 1997). An organization is a system of integrated parts that work together to achieve a common function. System Theory is applicable in this study because the study argues the role integration of governments' activities in ensuring policy decisions are implemented across all the ministries.



**Independent Variables**

**Dependent Variable**

**Figure 1: Conceptual Framework**

**Empirical Review**

Organizations have ethical standards and ethical codes guiding their day to day running of affairs. The ethical standards of an organization are judged by its actions and the actions of its employees, (World Bank, 2018). In many OECD countries, significant corruption risks arise from conflict of interest in decision-making, which may distort the allocation of resources through public procurement. Moreover, bid-rigging and cartelism may further undermine the procurement process, (OECD, 2016). Professionalism is a key concept in the sociologies of work, occupations, professions and organizations. But professionalism is changing and being changed, (Evetts, 2015). Professionalism in public procurement allows for functionality, transparency and significant savings in public expenditure, (Nganga, 2018).

The technical readiness of the bidders is an important characteristic in public procurement.

Technical readiness in this study would consider aspects such as Human resource capability, Availability of machinery, Technical knowhow and quality delivery. Aspects such as financial capability, training in public procurement procedures, being conversant with procurement laws and experience, largely determines a supplier’s capability to fulfill procurement obligations, (Jacque, 2018). The Kenyan government recognizes that women and youth entrepreneurs have not been on an equal footing when it comes to their access to opportunities and assets but it has yet to effectively address the barriers facing women and youth in business, (Ndege, 2018). Quality control system plays a pivotal role in enhancing procurement performance. Procurement performance is achieved when goods or services are procured at the best possible cost to meet the needs of the purchaser in terms of quality, quantity, time and location, (Singok & Noor, 2016).

Quality control policies in procurement play a pivotal role in influencing service delivery. It acts as a primary function of procurement with a potential of contributing to the success of government operations and improved service delivery (Naira, 2018). Procurement essentially encompasses the whole process of acquiring property and or services. It begins when an agency has identified a need and decided on its procurement requirement, (Munyu, 2016). Procurement continues through the processes of risk assessment, seeking and evaluating alternative solutions, contract award, delivery of and payment for the property and or services and, where relevant, the ongoing management of a contract and consideration of options related to the contract, (Wamoto, 2017).

According to (Njeri & Getuno, 2016, Naira, 2018), the ability of SMEs to grow depends highly on their potential to invest in innovation and qualification. All of these investments need capital and therefore access to finance is critical in public procurement. Women and youth entrepreneurs in Kenya put up with lack of confidence, lack of strong individual involvement and unwillingness to take risks. The Kenyan government has had an uphill task for youth and women groups to play in the big-ticket leagues of public procurement as they may not have the financial capacity, (Owino, 2013, Naira, 2018). Fortunately, there are a host of financial instruments being offered by various institutions, including local purchase order (LPO) financing and invoice discounting. There is also the Uwezo Fund and the youth and women enterprise fund, (Ndege, 2018).

Most youth organizations are not able to supply the government because of the quantities required are often very large, the capital requirement can be high yet processing an invoice can take months or years, (Wamoto, 2017). The development of small and medium enterprises run by specialized groups is very important to the national economy. Snider (2014) argues that the high proportion of women in the poverty group in the third world makes efforts at development fruitless. This is because the

investment threshold for the third world has pushed far above the current levels of funding to a point where local level development is the only feasible alternative solution.

Improved information availability mostly through the implementation of e-procurement by the government institutions can help improve the efficiency of special groups' capability as they compete for government contracts with big players, (Ndege, 2018). Information and communication technology has been increasingly used by governments around the world in the acquisition of goods and services, the allocation of contracts to bidders and in contract management, (UNTAD, 2019). The benefits of information and communication technology are many and include improvements in market access and competition, promotion of integrity, reduced information costs; easier access to information, and increased transparency and accountability, among others. In this study, information availability is looked at having the capacity to prevent and reduce the opportunities for corruption in the different stages of public procurement, (Ndege, 2018).

For instance, A sample of tenders worth Kshs. 5M and above, issued between 2013 – 2016, show that only 7.71% of tenders were awarded under AGPO in the period. This proportion is significantly lower than the prescribed 30% specified by law. Out of the possible 2,232 tenders, only 172 were awarded to AGPO registered firms. Additionally, out of a possible KES 183 Billion, only KES 7 million was allocated to AGPO listed firms. This is a mere 4.1% of the total tenders awarded, which is even lower than when compared in absolute values. This was established using the amounts indicated for each tender. The AGPO initiative is also largely found to be benefitting well informed urban Youth, Women and Persons with Disability disproportionately more than their rural counterparts, (Wamoto, 2017).

Participation of disadvantaged Groups in Public procurement is a vital function of all governments for a number of reasons (Baker *et al.*, 2011). The first reason is that, the Disadvantaged Groups sheer



magnitude in procurement expenditures has an immense impact on the country's economy and necessitates to be managed well, (Mwangi *et al*, 2018). USAID Micro Enterprise Development (2013) reported that in order to make sure that the micro enterprises contribution to national economies and chief sub-sectors is maximized, a conducive allowing environment which helps instead of inhibiting participation in public procurement is vital. One of the strategies is to unlock the potential of the youth, women and PWDs by empowering and offering them additional opportunities to perform business with the government, (PPOA, 2015).

### METHODOLOGY

The research problem was studied through the use of a descriptive research design. The study population of this research included 748 Supply chain officers and procurement officers drawn from each state corporation. The study used random stratified sampling technique to select the sampled population. Primary data for the study was obtained through self-administered questionnaires. Secondary data was obtained from journals, official government records and from county government procurement records. This study applied both qualitative and quantitative research approaches of data analysis and presentation. SPSS Version 21 and Microsoft Excel were used to conduct data analysis. This helped in the generation of quantitative reports through tabulations, percentages, and measures of central tendency. The regression was calculated using the regression model below;

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \beta_4 X_4 + \epsilon$$

Where;

Y = Youth Access to Public Procurement Opportunities

B<sub>0</sub> = Constant term

B<sub>1</sub>, β<sub>2</sub>, β<sub>3</sub>, β<sub>4</sub>=Beta Coefficient

X<sub>1</sub> = Ethical issues

X<sub>2</sub> = Technical Capacity

X<sub>3</sub> = Financial Capability

X<sub>4</sub> = Information Availability

ε =Error Term

### FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

#### Extent of Youth Access to Procurement Opportunities

The study sought to establish the extent of the youth's uptake of procurement opportunities in government ministries in Kenya.

According to the study 53.3% of the respondents, the youth access to procurement opportunities was to a large extent while 40% reported the uptake was to a moderate extent. According to 6.7% of the respondents, the uptake was to a small extent. This indicated that there is a moderately high uptake of procurement opportunities by the youth. These findings corroborated the findings of Wangai (2014) who conducted a study on the uptake of government tenders by youth-owned small and micro enterprises in Nairobi County and found out that the youth in Nairobi County participated in government tenders to a moderate extent.

The study sought to know whether the government ministries set aside the statutory 30% of procurement opportunities for the youth and whether the youth up took all the opportunities. The study established that all the government ministries set aside 30% of procurement opportunities for youth. On whether the youth access all the procurement opportunities set aside by the government ministries, the study established that 80% the respondents said no while 20% said yes. The study established that the key challenges hindering uptake of the procurement opportunities were: bureaucracy, lack of finances, lack of information, lack of portfolio value and complexities of tenders. These findings contradicted the findings of Abadi (2014) in his research on the constraints (collateral and registration rules) affecting the youth in accessing the procurement market were examined by. The study argued that under the current bureaucratic structures, it is impossible to implement the promise of allocating 30% of all public tenders to the youth.

## Factors Influencing Youth Access to Procurement Opportunities

The study sought to find out the factors that influence youth access to Procurement opportunities. The respondents were asked to rate 31 items which were indicators of the factors influencing youth access to procurement

opportunities on a Likert scale of 1 – 5 where 1 was No extent at all and 5 was Very large extent. The 31 items were subjected to factor analysis using principal component analysis with VARIMAX rotation. The results obtained of the study were as shown in Table 1.

**Table 1: Total Variance Explained**

Component	Total	Initial Eigen values		Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings		
		% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	5.927	35.118	35.118	5.927	35.118	35.118
2	4.648	19.993	55.111	4.648	19.993	55.111
3	3.985	13.854	68.965	3.985	13.854	68.965
4	3.538	10.117	79.082	3.538	10.117	79.082
6	.818	8.156	87.641			
7	.709	7.578	95.219			
8	.688	4.781	100.000			

### Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Source: Research Data (2021).

### Factor Analysis

Factor analysis conducted on 31 statements measuring the influence on youth access to procurement opportunities indicated that only four factors could be extracted. The extracted factors accounted for 79.082% of the total variance. The extracted factors used the basis of KaiserMeyer-Olkin (KMO) maximum criteria which indicated that an Eigen value of more than one constitutes a factor. From the results, the variables identified were: Technical Capability, Ethics in Public Procurement, Access to Finance and Access to Information. Overall, all statements loaded heavily (loadings were above 0.5).

The Technical Capability factor loadings from the component matrix indicated that the statement “The ministry adheres to the legal requirement of setting aside 30% of procurement opportunities to the youth” recorded the highest factor loading of 0.991 followed by the statement “The constitution of Kenya makes it favorable for the youth to be empowered” which registered a factor loading of 0.981. The statement “The regulations on tender

evaluation criteria for special groups such as the youth is inadequate” attracted the lowest factor loading of 0.863. Overall, all statements loaded heavily (loadings were above 0.5) on the factor Technical Capability.

The Ethics in Public Procurement factor loadings indicated that the statement “The award of government procurement tender is done in an open and fair process” attracted a factor loading of 0.974. The second statement “procurement opportunities are vulnerable to corruption” attracted a factor loading of 0.965. The statement “Existence of political interference in our organization is an impediment to transparent public procurement.” attracted a factor loading of 0.964 while the statement” The state officers and the youths caught engaging in procurement malpractices are prosecuted according to the law” had a factor loading of 0.963. Overall, all statements loaded heavily (loadings were above 0.5) on the factor Ethics in Public Procurement.

The Access to Finance factor loadings indicated that the statement “The youths trying to access

procurement opportunities are limited by their financial capabilities” attracted the highest factor loading of 0.982. The statement “Financial institutions are always willing to finance the youths who have won procurement opportunities.” attracted the second highest factor loading of 0.958. The statement “The youths are trained on how to access financing for their supplies companies” had the lowest factor loading of 0.888. Overall, all statements loaded heavily (loadings were above 0.5) on the factor Access to Finance.

The Access to information factor loadings from the component matrix indicated that the statement “Information about the award of government procurement tenders is accessible by all interested parties” registered the highest factor loading of 0.960 followed by the statement “The youths are well sensitized on the availability of procurement opportunities” with a factor loading of 0.917. The statement “Information about the availability of procurement opportunities is readily accessible” attracted the lowest factor loading of 0.886. Overall, all statements loaded heavily (loadings were above 0.5) on the factor.

### Regression Analysis

The study sought to determine the relationship between the factors identified and the youth’s uptake of procurement opportunities in government ministries in Kenya. The scores to be regressed were computed through data reduction (factor analysis) and then saved as dummy variables. The researcher then conducted a regression analysis to explain this relationship using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 25. Regression analysis was conducted.

### Regression Coefficients

At 95% confidence level, it was evident that the underlying factors have a combined positive effect on the Uptake of Procurement Opportunities by the youth. Positive effect was reported for all the independent variables (Access to information, Access to Finance, Technical Capability, and Ethics in Procurement). Access to information (t= 3.112, p= 0.005), Access to Finance (t= 2.756, p= 0.011), Technical Capability (t= 3.865, p = 0.001), and Ethics in Procurement (t= 5.658, p=0.000) produced statistically significant values for this study with (t-values > t-critical value (1.812), p ≤ 0.05).

**Table 2: Regression Coefficients**

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		(p-value)
	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
1 (Constant)	0.123	024348		10.164	0.000
Access to information	0.612	0.32633	0.510	3.112	0.005
Access to Finance	0.548	0.20661	0.499	2.756	0.011
Technical Capability	0.563	0.26065	0.328	3.865	0.001
Ethics in Procurement	0.544	0.13687	0.425	5.658	0.000

a. Dependent Variable: Uptake of Procurement Opportunities

T-critical value: 1.812

**Source: Research Data (2021).**

The constant value (0.123) showed that if Access to information, Access to Finance, Technical capability and Ethics in Procurement were all rated zero,

Uptake of Procurement Opportunities by the youth would be 0.123 which is so dismal. In this study,

stochastic error term was assumed to be zero. The equation for the regression was expressed as:

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \beta_4 X_4 + \epsilon$$

$$Y = 0.123 + 0.612X_1 + 0.548X_2 + X_3 + 0.544X_4$$

Y= Youth Access to Public Procurement Opportunities (Dependent variable)

$\beta_0$ = Constant of the Model

$\beta_1 - \beta_4$ = Factors Coefficients

$X_1$ = Access to information

$X_2$ = Access to Finance

$X_3$ = Technical Capability

$X_4$ = Ethics in Procurement

$\epsilon$ = Error Estimate

**Table 3: Model Summary**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	0.911a	0.830	0.810	0.77261389

a. Predictors: (Constant), Access to information, Access to Finance, Technical Capability, Ethics in Procurement

b. Dependent Variable: Youth Access to Public Procurement Opportunities

Source: Research Data (2021).

The study sought to determine the relationship between the factors identified and the youth's uptake of procurement opportunities in government ministries in Kenya. The key underlying factors were: Access to information, Access to Finance, Technical Capability, and Ethics in Procurement. The research findings indicated that there was a strong relationship ( $R = 0.911$ ) between underlying factors and Uptake of Procurement Opportunities. The result of the study also indicated that the value of adjusted R-squared is 0.810. This means that the underlying factors accounts for or explains 81% of the total variance in uptake of procurement opportunities by the youth. The

remaining 19% are explained by other variables which were not considered in this study.

#### Analysis of Variance

The study further sought to verify the goodness of fit of the regression model through ANOVA statistics. From the ANOVA statistics, the study established that the regression model had a significance level of 3.1% which was an indication that the model was ideal for making future Predictions since the value of significance (p-value) was less than 5%. The model derived was therefore fit for the data collected.

**Table 4: Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)**

Model		ANOVA <sup>b</sup>				Sig.
		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	
1	Regression	.257	4	.0643	4.145	.031 <sup>a</sup>
	Residual	.155	10	.0155		
	Total	.412	14			

a. Predictors: (Constant), Access to information, Access to Finance, Technical Capability, Ethics in Procurement

b. Dependent Variable: Youth Access to Public Procurement Opportunities

Source: Research Data (2021).

## CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

On the extent of the youth's uptake of procurement opportunities in government ministries in Kenya, the study concludes that the youths' uptake procurement opportunities in government ministries in Kenya are to a large extent. On the factors that influence the youth's uptake of procurement opportunities, the study concluded that Access to information, Access to Finance, Technical Capability and Ethics in Procurement are the key underlying factors that influence youth's uptake procurement opportunities in government ministries in Kenya.

In regard to the relationship between the underlying factors identified and the youth's uptake of procurement opportunities, the study concluded that there is a strong and positive relationship between the factors identified and the youth's uptake of procurement opportunities in government ministries in Kenya. The underlying factors accounts for or explains 81% of the total variance in uptake of procurement opportunities by the youth.

The study found that ethical issues in Procurement were statistically significant to uptake of procurement opportunities by the youth in Kenya. This implied that a unit increase in Ethical Issues will lead to an improvement in uptake of procurement opportunities by the youth in Kenya. The study concludes that Ethical Issues is positively related to uptake of procurement opportunities by the youth in Kenya. From the forgoing, it can be concluded that an improvement in Ethical Issues in Procurement leads to a positive improvement in uptake of procurement opportunities by the youth in Kenya.

The study found that technical capacity was statistically significant to uptake of procurement opportunities by the youth in Kenya. This implied that a unit increase in technical capacity will lead to an improvement in uptake of procurement opportunities by the youth in Kenya. The study concluded that technical capacity is positively related to uptake of procurement opportunities by

the youth in Kenya. From the forgoing, it can be concluded that an improvement in technical capacity leads to a positive improvement in uptake of procurement opportunities by the youth in Kenya.

The study found that financial capability was statistically significant to uptake of procurement opportunities by the youth in Kenya. This implied that a unit increase financial capability will lead to an improvement in uptake of procurement opportunities by the youth in Kenya. The study concluded that financial capability is positively related to uptake of procurement opportunities by the youth in Kenya. From the forgoing, it can be concluded that an improvement in financial capability leads to a positive improvement in uptake of procurement opportunities by the youth in Kenya.

The study found that information availability was statistically significant to uptake of procurement opportunities by the youth in Kenya. This implied that a unit increase information availability will lead to an improvement in uptake of procurement opportunities by the youth in Kenya. The study concluded that information availability is positively related to uptake of procurement opportunities by the youth in Kenya. From the forgoing, it can be concluded that an improvement in information availability leads to a positive improvement in, uptake of procurement opportunities by the youth in Kenya.

This study recommended the following measures to ensure continued improvement in the youth's uptake of procurement opportunities in government ministries in Kenya: The government should continuously train the youths on how to exploit the procurement opportunities set aside for them by the state.

The study concluded that access to information, access to finance, Technical Capability and ethics in procurement are the key underlying factors that influence positively youth's uptake of procurement opportunities in government ministries in Kenya. The government should come up with regulations

to ensure the youth can access finance, information and fairness.

### Areas for Further Research

The following directions for future research should be adopted in relation to uptake of procurement

opportunities by the youth. A research into the uptake of procurement opportunities by the youth in other government institutions should be explored.

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