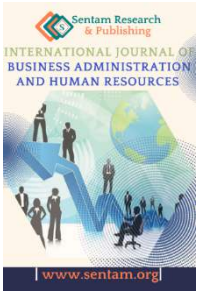
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Procurement Planning and Public Service Delivery: The Moderating Effects of Leadership and Politics - Evidence from Structural Equation Modeling

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ABSTRACT

This study sought to assess the effect of procurement planning on service delivery and also determine whether leadership and political factors moderate that effect among local governments of Uganda through structural equation modeling (SEM). The survey design was employed, and data was collected from 181 respondents from a target sample of 210, drawn from a target population of 455. Data were analyzed using IBM SPSS Statistics 29 and JASP 0.19.3. The measurement model had good psychometric characteristics as indicated by the Cronbach's alpha and McDonald's omega values being above the recommended value of 0.70, the AVE being greater than 0.50, HTMT being less than 0.85, and very good model fit indices (CFI = 0.983, TLI = 0.979, RMSEA = 0.021, SRMR = 0.047). Structural model analysis indicated that all the dimensions of the procurement plan had a significant positive effect on public service delivery, with the Needs Identification dimension having the strongest effect (β = 0.51), followed by Market Assessment (β = 0.42) and Procurement Scheduling (β = 0.39). Furthermore, leadership and political factors significantly strengthened the relationship between procurement planning and public service delivery, indicating that supportive leadership and governance enhance the effectiveness of procurement planning practices. The study finds that procurement planning is an important determinant of public service delivery and that its success is dependent on good leadership and political environment. The study suggests the need to enhance needs assessment, market intelligence, procurement timing, leadership capability, and governance processes, as well as reduce excessive political influence on the procurement process. These results have added to the body of knowledge on public procurement by illustrating the importance of the context in which leadership and politics play a part in improving procurement planning processes.

Keywords:
Procurement planning, needs identification, market assessment, procurement scheduling, leadership, political factors, public service delivery, structural equation modeling, Uganda.

INTRODUCTION

In recent years, procurement planning has shifted from an operational administrative process to a strategic management approach whereby organizations are able to determine their procurement requirements, allocate funds, budget for expenses, and coordinate their procurement process in line with organizational goals (Farrington & Lysons, 2020; Gelderman et al., 2017). Good procurement planning creates more

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value for money, saves time in the procurement process, eliminates wastage, and contributes to better organizational performance (Erridge & McIlroy, 2002; Prier et al., 2016)

Although there have been several attempts at reforms within procurement processes, there are still many developing countries that face challenges in transforming procurement planning into efficient delivery of public services. Weaknesses in procurement planning are related to delays in the procurement process, budget overruns, weak management of contracts, cancellation of projects, and inefficiency in the use of public resources. Thai (2016) argues that procurement processes in developing countries face some institutional constraints, inadequate capacity in terms of technical skills, politics, and governance problems which affect the procurement process. Furthermore, Ambe and Badenhorst-Weiss (2012) state that poor procurement planning is one of the major causes of inefficiencies in procurement processes and public service delivery.

Procurement planning in Uganda is statutory as per the Public Procurement and Disposal of Public Assets and is aimed at ensuring that procurement processes are consistent with budgets and the objectives of organizations. However, procurement problems have continued to hinder public services in many local government units due to factors such as delayed procurement, poor procurement planning, failure to implement contracts, and insufficient capacity building in the institutions. Various studies carried out in Uganda have proved that procurement planning has an impact on service delivery in terms of enhancing resource utilization, efficiency in the procurement process and project implementation (Awanyo, 2019). However, many local government units continue to have problems in implementation.

Procurement planning's effectiveness has become widely acknowledged to be highly dependent on organizational and political environments. The role of leadership in setting strategies, mobilizing resources, instilling ethical behaviors, and adhering to procurement procedures cannot be overstated. Transformative leadership results in better stakeholder coordination and increased capacity to implement procurement procedures effectively (Ahmad, 2026; Van Wart, 2013). On the contrary, politics may aid procurement outcomes or impede them. Although political leadership may help to mobilize necessary resources and implement policies faster, over-politicization of procurement can result in distorted procurement objectives, non-competitive procurement procedures, delayed decision-making, and low accountability levels (Schapper et al., 2006; Ware et al., 2007). Although political factors are commonly anticipated to have negative effect on procurement activities, this study focused on the supportive political oversight, policy commitment, and facilitation of procurement processes rather than political interference or undue influence.

Despite the existence of several empirical investigations which show the positive association between procurement planning and service delivery, they are mainly centered on the direct effects while overlooking the context through which procurement planning influences superior service delivery. Besides, several previous studies have employed conventional statistical techniques such as correlation and multiple regression analysis to examine the relationship between procurement planning and organizational outcomes. For example, Ambe and Badenhorst-Weiss (2012) used correlation analysis to investigate public procurement practices in South Africa and Basheka and Bisangabasaija (2010) employed multiple regression analysis to examine the determinants of procurement performance in public entities in Uganda. Likewise, Obanda (2010) and Nyeko and Kalulu (2022) applied correlation and regression techniques to establish the impact of procurement practices on organizational performance. Although such techniques provide useful information about direct relations between variables, they are limited in the extent to which they can simultaneously estimate measurement

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error, test latent constructs, and explore complex interactions such as moderation effects.

Consequently, this study employed Structural Equation Modeling (SEM), which offers a more robust analytical framework for simultaneously assessing the measurement and structural models while testing the moderating effects of leadership and political factors (Hair et al., 2022; Kline, 2023). SEM offers a superior alternative technique of estimation whereby measurement and structural models are estimated at once considering the latent constructs as well as moderation (Hair & Alamer, 2022; Kline, 2023). The moderating impact of leadership and political factors on procurement planning and public service delivery has not yet been extensively investigated especially in Ugandan local governments.

This study attempts to fill this gap by exploring the impact of procurement planning on public service delivery and studying the moderating role of leadership and politics through structural equation modeling. This study adds to the existing literature in the fields of public procurement and public administration by empirically investigating the impact of contextual governance factors on procurement planning and its efficacy in delivering better service through Ugandan local governments. The results of the study will be useful for policy makers, procurement practitioners, public administrators, and development partners looking to improve their procurement systems and public service delivery.

Hypotheses

H_{1a}: Needs identification has a significant positive effect on service delivery

H_{1b}: Market analysis has a significant positive effect on service delivery

H_{1c}: Procurement scheduling has a significant positive effect on service delivery

H_{1d}: Leadership and political factors have a significant moderation effect on the relationship between needs identification and service delivery.

H_{1e}: Leadership and political factors have a significant moderation effect on the relationship between market analysis and service delivery

H_{1f}: Leadership and political factors have a significant moderation effect on the relationship between procurement scheduling and service delivery

METHODOLOGY

The study adopted quantitative study approach involving a cross-sectional survey design. It was important to conduct a quantitative study since it is appropriate for measuring objective relationships between the latent variables (Saunders & Darabi, 2024). A cross-sectional survey study design was deemed to be appropriate because the information was collected from participants at one point in time to measure the impact of procurement planning on public service delivery with the moderating effect of leadership and politics (Saunders & Darabi, 2024).

The study was carried out in Jinja City, Uganda, since it is part of the local governments tasked with the responsibility of implementing government policies and providing various public services through public procurement. Planning is an important part of local government activities that helps in the acquisition of goods, works, and services needed in efficient delivery of services.

The target population included those individuals who are actively involved in procurement planning, financial management, and contract management, implementation of projects, administrative decisions, and political leadership in Jinja City. The sample size was calculated using the (Krejcie & Morgan, 1970) Table of Determining Sample Size, a tool used extensively in finite population cases. In total, 210 respondents were selected from a target population of 455 respondents.

Probability and non-probability sampling methods were used together in this study. The simple random sampling method was used in order to ensure that there was enough representation of different categories of

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respondents while purposive sampling was used to choose key respondents (Administrators, procurement officer and community leaders) knowledgeable in procurement planning and leadership and service delivery of organizations.

Primary data were collected using a structured self-administered questionnaire with closed ended questions. The questionnaire had two sections where the first section collected bio data while the second section collected data based on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree.

The measurement items were adapted and modified to suit the Ugandan local government context while maintaining their theoretical meaning. Content validity was achieved based on the evaluation by experts whose academics are specializing in procurement, public administration, and study methodology. The feedback provided was used to enhance the quality of the questions asked in the questionnaire.

Construct validity was checked by means of Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA). Reliability of the indicators was determined by standardized factor loadings with acceptable values of greater than 0.50. Convergent validity was tested using Average Variance Extracted (AVE), which had AVE value above 0.50 being satisfactory convergent validity (Hair et al., 2022). Discriminant validity was measured using the Heterotrait-Monotrait (HTMT) ratio, whose values less than 0.85 were sufficient (Henseler et al., 2015).

The internal consistency was measured by means of Cronbach's Alpha and McDonald's Omega reliabilities. The reliability coefficients of 0.70 or above were deemed acceptable for all constructs under consideration (Hair & Alamer, 2022).

Approval from Kabale University Research Ethics Committee (KABREC) and Uganda National Council for Science and Technology (UNCST) was sought before data collection. Participants were provided with an introductory letter seeking their consent for conducting the study. The purpose of the study was explained to the respondents, and they were told that participation was purely voluntary. Data collection instruments were checked for completion before data entry in statistical software.

IBM SPSS Statistics Version 29 and JASP Version JASP 0.19.3 were used for analyzing the data. A Confirmatory Factor Analysis was used in order to evaluate the measurement model for reliability, convergent validity, and discriminant validity were conducted. Model fit was measured using various fit indices, such Comparative Fit Index (CFI), Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI), Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA), and Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR). Acceptable fit was achieved where CFI and TLI ≥ 0.90, RMSEA ≤ 0.08, and SRMR ≤ 0.08 (Hair & Alamer, 2022; Kline, 2023).

Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) was employed next in an attempt to validate the theoretical relationships between procurement planning, leadership and political factors, and public service delivery. Moderating role of leadership and political factors was investigated through the estimation of the interaction between procurement planning and leadership and political factors in relation to public service delivery. The significance of the moderating role was tested based on standardized path coefficients, critical ratios, p-values, and increments in the coefficient of determination (R^2). The significance level for hypothesis testing was set at $p < .05$.

FINDINGS

The study distributed 210 questionnaires and achieved a response rate of 181 (86.2%), which surpassed the accepted threshold of 70% for survey-based studies (Creswell & Clark, 2023).

Multivariate Normality

Mardia's test was performed to examine whether the study data satisfied the assumption of multivariate normality. As presented in *Table 1*, the multivariate skewness coefficient was 8.242 ($\chi^2 = 812.47$, df = 32,420, $p = 0.173$), while the small sample corrected skewness coefficient was 8.542 ($\chi^2 = 835.32$, df = 32,420, $p = 0.191$). In addition, the multivariate kurtosis coefficient was

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73.286 with a standardized statistic of 0.792 (p = 0.392). Since the p-values associated with both the skewness and kurtosis statistics exceeded the recommended significance level of 0.05, the null hypothesis of multivariate normality was accepted. These findings suggest that the data were approximately multivariate normal and therefore suitable for subsequent multivariate analyses.

Table 1: Mardia's Test of Multivariate Normality

	Value	Statistic	df	p
Skewness	8.242	812.47	32420	> 0.173
Small Sample Skewness	8.542	835.32	32420	> 0.191
Kurtosis	73.286	0.792		> 0.392

Note. The statistic for skewness is assumed to be Chi2-distributed, and the statistic for kurtosis is standard normal.

The findings are consistent with Cain et al. (2017), who demonstrated that Mardia's multivariate skewness and kurtosis statistics provide a reliable assessment of departures from multivariate normality, with non-significant test results indicating that the observed data adequately approximate a multivariate normal distribution.

Convergent Validity of Measurement Scales

Convergent validity was assessed through the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) with a minimum threshold of 0.50, suggesting that a construct accounts for at least 50% of the variance in its indicators (Fornell & Larcker, 1981; Hair et al., 2022). *Table 2* shows that all constructs are above the recommended threshold, with the values of AVE ranging from 0.517 to 0.754. The AVE values were 0.669 for Needs Identification Factor (NIF), 0.517 for Market Assessment Factor (MAF), 0.754 for Procurement Scheduling Factor (PSF), 0.615 for Service Delivery Factor (SDF), and 0.579 for Leadership and Political Factors (LPF). The results show satisfactory convergent validity, meaning that indicators are good representatives of their respective latent constructs. Thus, the measurement model satisfied the recommended threshold for convergent validity and was deemed adequate for the subsequent structural equation modeling analysis.

Table 2: Average variance extracted

Factor	AVE
NIF	0.669
MAF	0.517
PSF	0.754
SDF	0.615
LPF	0.579

Discriminant Validity of Measurement Scales

Discriminant validity of the measurement model was tested using the Heterotrait-Monotrait (HTMT) ratio. The HTMT values ranged from 0.123 to 0.435, which were well below the threshold of 0.85 (Henseler et al., 2015) as shown in *Table 3*. The highest value of HTMT was found between Needs Identification Factor (NIF) and Service Delivery Factor (SDF) (HTMT = 0.435), and the lowest value (HTMT = 0.123) was found between Market Assessment Factor (MAF) and Leadership and Political Factors (LPF) and between Procurement Scheduling Factor (PSF) and Service Delivery Factor (SDF). These results support the empirical uniqueness of all constructs and satisfy discriminant validity. Therefore, the measurement model was accepted to fulfill the required validity criteria and was suitable for the next step of structural equation modeling analysis (Hair et al., 2022; Henseler et al., 2015).

Table 3: Heterotrait-monotrait ratio

NIF	MAF	PSF	SDF	LPF
1.000				
0.303	1.000			
0.200	0.377	1.000		
0.435	0.256	0.123	1.000	
0.288	0.123	0.158	0.126	1.000

Reliability of the Measurement Scales

Table 4 presents the reliability results based on McDonald's omega (ω) and Cronbach's alpha (α). All the constructs revealed good internal consistency, with omega coefficients between 0.739 and 0.893 and Cronbach's alpha values between 0.735 and 0.826, above the recommended level of 0.70 (Hair et al., 2022;

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Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994). The highest reliability was for Service Delivery Factor (ω = 0.893) and the lowest, but acceptable reliability was for the Procurement Scheduling Factor (ω = 0.739; α = 0.735). The overall scale showed satisfactory reliability (ω = 0.819; α = 0.724). The results confirm that the measurement instrument shows adequate internal consistency and is reliable to be used in subsequent structural Equation Modeling.

Table 4: Reliability

	Coefficient ω	Coefficient α
NIF	0.829	0.826
MAF	0.778	0.784
PSF	0.739	0.735
SDF	0.893	0.765
LPF	0.784	0.780
Total	**0.819**	**0.724**

Exploratory Factor Analysis

To determine the suitability of the data for factor analysis, the Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin (KMO) test was used. *Table 5* shows that the overall KMO measure was 0.805, which is above the recommended threshold of 0.60 and indicates good sampling adequacy (Hair & Alamer, 2022; Kaiser, 1974). This result suggests that the correlations between the variables were adequate to yield reliable and distinct factors. Thus, the data were deemed fit for factor analysis and subsequent structural equation modeling.

Table 5: Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) test

Indicator	MSA
Overall	0.805

Bartlett's test of sphericity was used to examine if the correlation matrix is significantly different from the identity matrix. As shown in *Table 6*, the test was statistically significant ($\chi 2 = 2671$, df = 465, $p < .001$) suggesting that the variables were correlated sufficiently to warrant factor analysis (Hair et al., 2022). The important result suggests that the data satisfied the assumption of factorability and thus were appropriate for confirmatory factor analysis and subsequent structural equation modeling.

Table 6: Bartlett's test of sphericity

X^2	df	p
2671	465	< .001

Figure 1 presents the extracted measurement model for the Needs Identification Factor (NIF). *Table 7* presents the factor loadings of the Needs Identification Factor (NIF) after Promax rotation. Four items (NI1, NI2, NI4, and NI7) loaded satisfactorily on the latent construct, with loadings ranging from 0.572 to 0.625, indicating acceptable contributions to the construct. The remaining items (NI3, NI5, NI6, NI8, NI9, and NI10) did not meet the minimum acceptable loading of 0.50 and were thus excluded from the measurement model. The uniqueness values of the retained items ranged from 0.271 to 0.346, suggesting that a considerable amount of variance in these indicators was explained by the latent construct. The retained items were considered sufficient to represent the Needs Identification Factor and appropriate for inclusion in the subsequent confirmatory factor analysis and structural equation modeling.

Table 7: Factor Loadings for Needs Identification Factor (NIF)

	Factor 1	Uniqueness
NI 4	0.625	0.346
NI 7	0.609	0.271
NI 1	0.582	0.277
NI 2	0.572	0.297
NI 3		0.772
NI 5		0.661
NI 6		0.604
NI 8		0.475
NI 10		0.788
NI 9		0.998

Note. Applied rotation method is promax.

Figure 2 presents the extracted measurement model for the Market Assessment Factor (MAF). *Table 8* presents the exploratory factor analysis results of the Market Assessment Factor (MAF) with Promax rotation. Seven items (MA1-MA7) showed satisfactory factor loadings ranging from 0.602 to 0.749 which are above the recommended 0.50 (Hair et al., 2022). MA8, MA9 (0.467) and MA10 (0.469) did not meet the required loading criterion and were therefore removed from the measurement model. Overall, the retained items were adequate to represent the Market Assessment Factor and appropriate for

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subsequent confirmatory factor analysis and structural equation modeling.

Table 8: Factor Loadings for Market Assessment Factor (MAF)

	Factor 1	Factor 2	Uniqueness
MA7	0.749	0.237	0.005
MA5	0.695		0.511
MA2	0.679		0.542
MA3	0.675		0.549
MA1	0.642		0.584
MA6	0.607		0.63
MA4	0.602		0.612
MA10	0.469		0.714
MA9	0.467		0.777
MA8			0.982

Figure 3 presents the extracted measurement model for the Procurement Scheduling Factor (PSF). *Table 9* presents the results of the exploratory factor analysis for the Procurement Scheduling Factor (PSF) using Promax rotation. Six items (PS2, PS3, PS4, PS6, PS7, and PS8) showed good factor loadings (ranging from 0.516 to 0.650) that met the minimum standard of 0.50 (Hair et al., 2022). In contrast, the remaining items (PS1, PS5, PS9, and PS10) had factor loadings below the acceptable threshold and high uniqueness values, and were therefore removed from the measurement model.

Table 9: Factor Loadings for Procurement Scheduling (PSF)

	Factor 1	Uniqueness
PS3	0.65	0.323
PS6	0.624	0.361
PS2	0.562	0.255
PS8	0.544	0.447
PS4	0.527	0.411
PS7	0.516	0.288
PS9	0.463	0.392
PS10	0.437	0.329
PS5	0.419	0.423
PS1		0.251

Note. Applied rotation method is Promax.

Figure 4 presents the extracted measurement model for the Service Delivery Factor (SDF). *Table 10* presents the exploratory factor analysis for the Service Delivery Factor (SDF) with Promax rotation. The results suggest a multidimensional factor structure, as all ten items had acceptable factor loadings exceeding the minimum recommended level of 0.50 (Hair et al., 2022). SD4 had the highest loading (0.927), indicating it was the strongest indicator of the construct. All items met the minimum loading criterion, and therefore no items were removed from the measurement model.

Table 10: Factor Loadings for Public Service Delivery (SDF)

	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Uniqueness
SD4	0.927			0.224
SD5	0.703			0.468
SD1	0.625			0.571
SD6	0.533			0.682
SD7		0.767		0.38
SD9		0.728		0.496
SD10		0.684		0.483
SD8			0.68	0.491
SD2			0.667	0.542
SD3			0.646	0.596

Note. The applied rotation method is promax.

Figure 5 presents the extracted measurement model for the Leadership and Political Factors (LPF). *Table 11* shows the results of the exploratory factor analysis of the Leadership and Political Factors (LPF) construct with Promax rotation. The results indicated a multidimensional factor structure, and all eight items had factor loadings above the recommended threshold of 0.50 (Hair et al., 2022). All indicators exceeded the minimum loading criterion and therefore none were dropped from the measurement model.

Table 11: Factor Loadings for Leadership and Political factors (LPF)

	Factor 1	Factor 2	Uniqueness
LP6	0.831		0.368
LP7	0.793		0.387
LP5	0.746		0.377
LP8	0.725		0.449
LP3		0.836	0.369
LP4		0.674	0.536
LP2		0.664	0.487
LP1		0.664	0.558

Note. Applied rotation method is promax.

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Figure 1: Extracted Needs Identification Measurement Model (NIF)

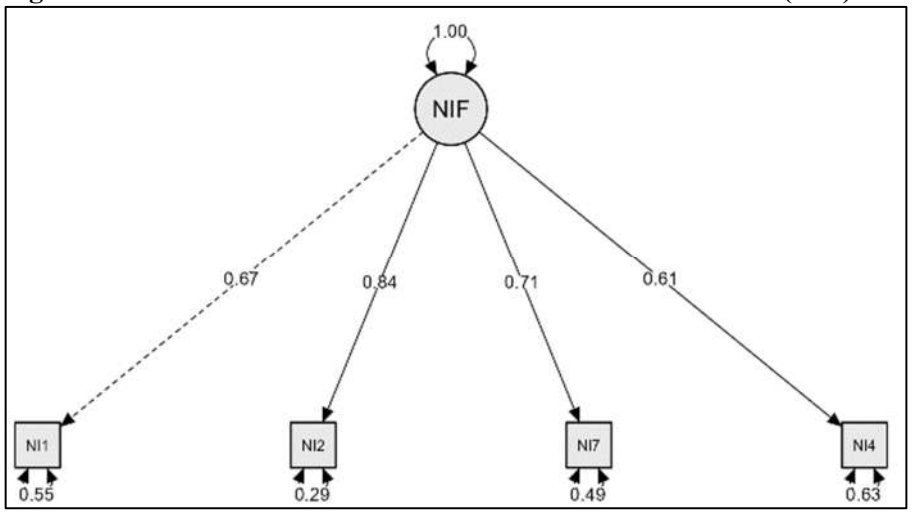


Figure 2: Extracted Needs Market Analysis Measurement Model (MAF)

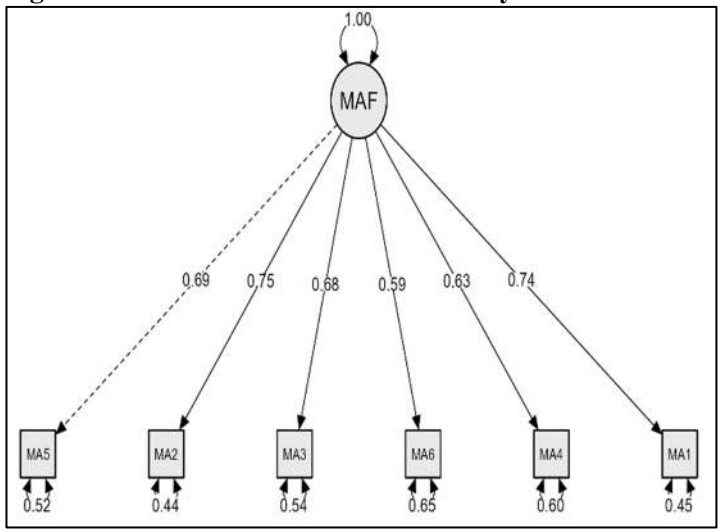


Figure 3: Extracted Procurement Scheduling Measurement Model (PSF)

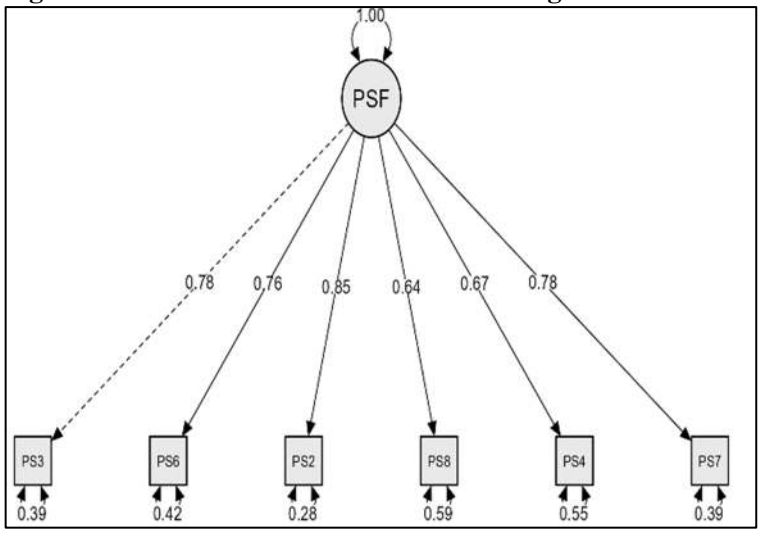
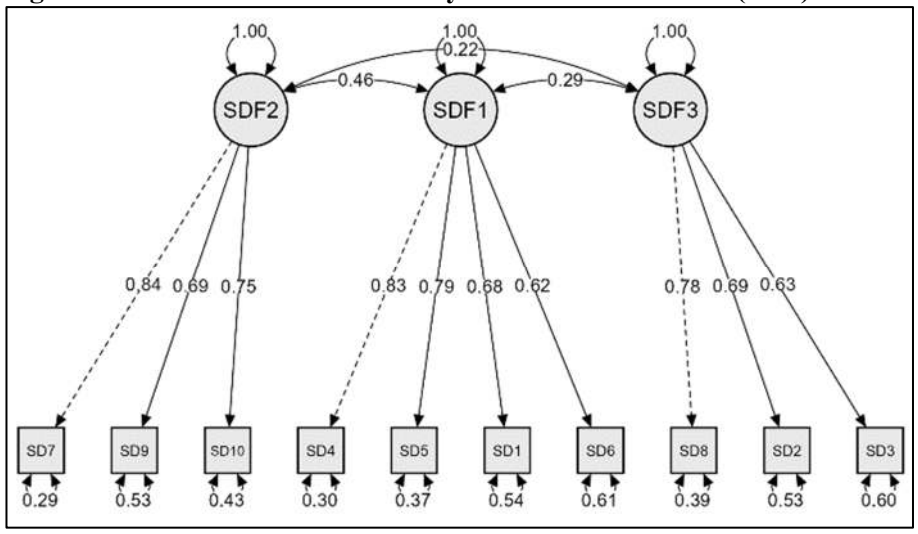


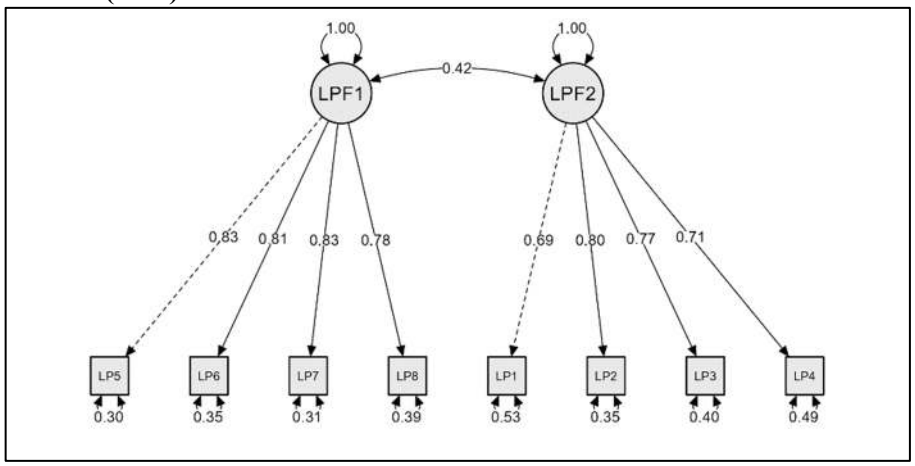
Figure 4: Extracted Service Delivery Measurement Model (SDF)



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Figure 5: Extracted Measurement Model for Leadership and Political Factors (LPF)



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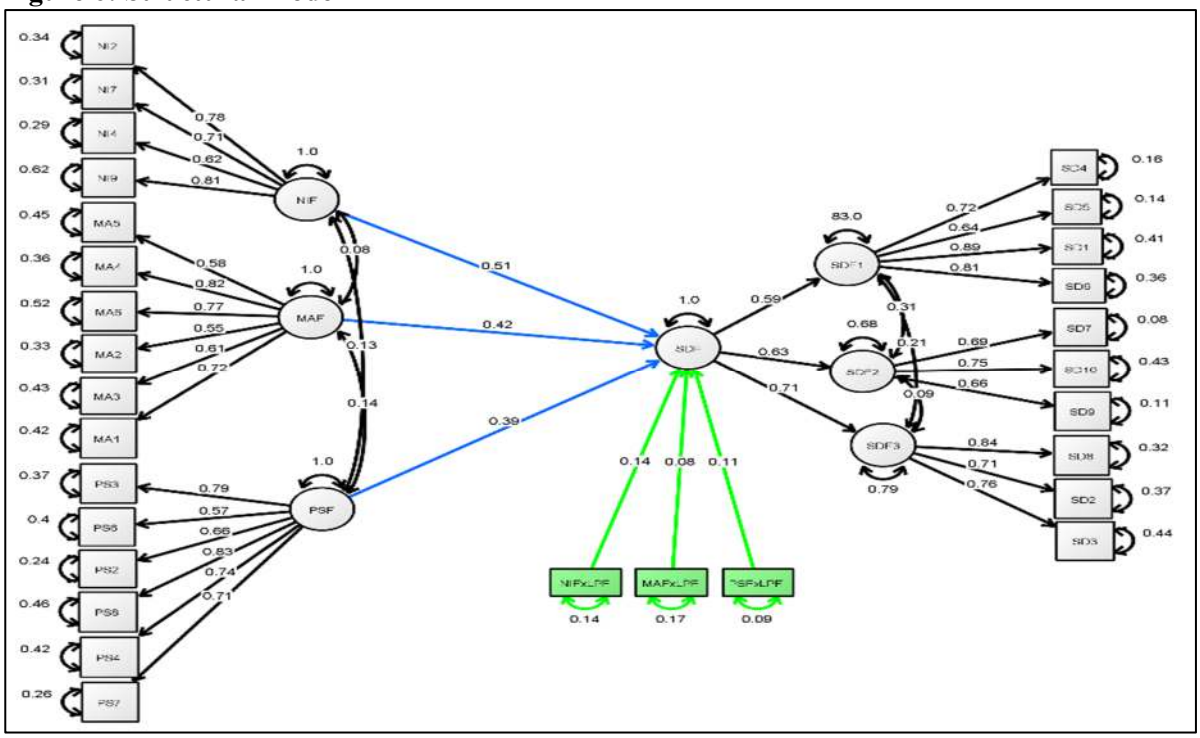
Table 12 shows fit indices of the measurement model. The results show a good fit of the model, with CFI and TLI higher than the suggested cut-off point of 0.90, indicating a very good fit between the hypothesized model and the observed data (Hair et al., 2022; Hu & Bentler, 1999). The RMSEA and the SRMR were both below the recommended cutoff of 0.08, indicating that the approximation error and residual error were minimal. Also, the PNFI was greater than the acceptable threshold of 0.50, indicating that the model had a good balance between fitting the model and parsimony. In conclusion, the results provided evidence that the measurement model matched the data excellently and was thus appropriate for further structural equation modeling.

Table 12: Fit indices

Index	Value
Comparative Fit Index (CFI)	0.983
Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI)	0.979
Parsimony Normed Fit Index (PNFI)	0.685
Root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA)	0.021
Standardized root mean square residual (SRMR)	0.047

Note. Except for the PNFI, the fit indices are scaled because of categorical variables in the data.

Figure 6: Structural Model



The model above depicts the structural model that explores the impact of the dimensions of procurement planning on public service delivery and how leadership and politics moderate this relationship. From the results depicted in the standardized path coefficients above, it is evident that all three dimensions of procurement planning had a positive impact on public service delivery.

Needs Identification (β = 0.51) was found to have the most significant positive effect on public service delivery, indicating that proper identification of procurement needs has a great impact on making public service delivery efficient and effective. It means that where public organizations identify procurement needs prior to procurement, they are more likely to acquire the right goods, works, and services to help achieve their objectives. This result is in agreement with the study by Kuruneri et al. (2026), which showed that the assessment of procurement needs plays a major role in enhancing the success of procurement processes in public institutions. In addition, Weigel and Ruecker (2017) highlight

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the importance of proper needs identification in the strategic planning of procurement.

The Market Assessment Factor (β = 0.42) had another positive impact on public service delivery. This implies that market information, supplier analysis, and price analysis increase procurement efficiency by improving supplier selection and competition. The results support the findings of Warner and Hefetz (2002) who found that market study improves the decision-making process during procurement and significantly boosts procurement performance in public institutions. Similarly, the World Bank (2023) observed that effective market engagement reduces procurement risks, promotes supplier competition, and improves value for money, thereby contributing to better public service delivery through the efficient acquisition of goods and services.

The Procurement Scheduling Factor (β = 0.39) also positively affected the delivery of public services, though its effect was lower than that of needs identification and market assessment. The result implies that proper scheduling of procurement activities ensures efficient use of resources, reduces procurement delays, and helps in the timely completion of projects. Similar results were found by Katamuna et al. (2025), indicating that proper procurement scheduling leads to effective project implementation and organizational performance.

The findings indicate that Leadership and Political Factors positively moderated the relationship between procurement planning and public service delivery. The interaction effects are β = 0.14 for the interaction of Needs Identification and Leadership and Political Factors, β = 0.08 for the interaction of Market Assessment and Leadership and Political Factors, and β = 0.11 for the interaction of Procurement Scheduling and Leadership and Political Factors on public service delivery becomes stronger under favourable leadership and governance conditions. This finding implies that effective procurement planning yields greater improvements in service delivery when organizational leaders provide strategic direction, ensure accountability, allocate adequate resources, and when political leaders support procurement reforms without undermining established procurement procedures.

This study is in line with Thai (2017) who argues that effective leadership is crucial for successful implementation of public procurement reforms because it enhances organizational accountability, strategic coordination, and ethical decision-making and efficient use of organizational resources. Similarly, World Bank (2023) argue that combination of political support and independence leadership lead to higher procurement efficiency through better governance and fewer implementation bottlenecks. Evidence provided by Budiarso and Mir (2012) suggests that leadership effectiveness substantially reinforces the link between public management practices and organizational performance in the public sector.

Hypothesis Testing

As evident from *Table 13*, which represents the results of the structural model analysis, all the hypothesized relationships turned out to be statistically significant. The variable "Needs Identification Factor" was found to have the greatest effect on public service delivery (β = 0.51, p < .001), thus proving H_{1a}. Similarly, the variables "Market Assessment Factor" (β = 0.42, p < .001) and "Procurement Scheduling Factor" (β = 0.39, p < .001) significantly influenced public service delivery, confirming H_{1b} and H_{1c}.

Table 13: Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis	Relationship Tested	β	t-value	Sig.	Decision
H1a	NIF → SDF	0.51	3.2	0.001	Supported
H1b	MAF → SDF	0.42	2.43	0.001	Supported
H1c	PSF → SDF	0.39	4.33	0.001	Supported
H1d	NIF × LPF → SDF	0.14	2.4	0.017	Supported
H1e	MAF × LPF → SDF	0.08	3	0.004	Supported
H1f	PSF × LPF → SDF	0.11	2.67	0.008	Supported

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As regards the moderating hypotheses, there is evidence that the Moderating Effect of Leadership and Political Factors significantly increased the effect of Needs Identification on Public Service Delivery ($\beta = 0.14$, $p = .017$), thus verifying H_{1d}. In a similar vein, the interaction between Market Assessment and Leadership and Political Factors significantly improved the effect on Public Service Delivery ($\beta = 0.08$, $p = .004$). In addition to the above results, the interaction between Procurement Scheduling and Leadership and Political Factors had a significant influence on public service delivery ($\beta = 0.11$, $p = .008$).

CONCLUSION

The study examined the effect of procurement planning on public service delivery and the moderating effect of leadership and political factors in Ugandan local governments using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM). The findings revealed that procurement planning is a major predictor of public service delivery and needs identification, market assessment and procurement scheduling all have positive and statistically significant effects. Needs identification was the strongest predictor of these dimensions, emphasizing the importance of systematically identifying organizational and stakeholder needs before initiating procurement activities.

The study also revealed that leadership and political factors positively moderate the relationship between procurement planning and public service delivery. Thus, effective administrative leadership combined with constructive political oversight strengthens the implementation of procurement planning and improves service delivery

Recommendations

From the study findings, public organizations ought to develop procurement planning through the institutionalization of an effective needs identification process involving all stakeholders, whose plans are consistent with organizational objectives and approved budgets. The local authorities should also improve market evaluation by carrying out frequent evaluations of suppliers and prices to make procurement decision that will maximize value for money. Another area of improvement for procurement agencies includes developing and following a practical schedule in the procurement process to enable timely procurement of goods and services.

Given the significant moderating role of leadership and political factors, policymakers should strengthen constructive political oversight by promoting policy commitment, strategic leadership, adequate resource allocation, and accountability in public procurement. At the same time, institutional safeguards should be reinforced to prevent undue political interference in operational procurement decisions, contract awards, and supplier selection. Procurement decisions should remain professional, transparent, evidence-based, and fully compliant with the Public Procurement and Disposal of Public Assets (PPDA) legal framework.

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