

Supplier Management Practices and Procurement Performance in Kyenjojo District Local Government

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ABSTRACT

The common market scenario today for many firms: is dependence on their suppliers to satisfy their internal production needs and market demands. This means that the role of suppliers in any firm's operations cannot be underrated, however some firms have evidently failed to manage the unique part of external relations that directly influence quality of service delivery. This study was conducted purposely to examine the effect of supplier management practices on procurement performance of Kyenjojo District local government. The study had three specific objectives: to examine the influence of supplier selection on procurement performance; to assess the effect of supplier relationship management on procurement performance and lastly, to determine the influence of supplier development on procurement performance. Given the time constraints, a cross-sectional survey design was adopted to collect quantitative data from different categories of officers (i.e accounting officers, suppliers' committee staff, procurement and disposal unit staff, technical planning committees staff and service providers) and qualitative data from the senior procurement officers, the heads of human resource department, the heads of stores, heads of the production department and the heads of finance). The study used multiple linear regression technique to analyse quantitative data whereas content analysis was used to process interview data into quotations to supplement the quantitative findings. Findings revealed that supplier selection has a significant positive relationship with procurement performance (Beta= .132, $p < 0.05$). A similar positive significant relationship was observed between supplier relationship management and procurement performance (Beta =.304, $p < 0.05$) and also between supplier development and procurement performance (Beta= .395, $p < 0.05$). Previous studies paid less attention to the predictive power of supplier management practices on procurement performance in a local government context. The present study provides evidence on the extent to which supplier management practices influence procurement performance in local governments. It therefore means that supplier selection, supplier relationship management and supplier development should be maximized to enhance procurement performance outcomes.

Keywords: Procurement Performance, Supplier, Supplier Management, Local Governments, Kyenjojo District, Uganda.

JEL Classification Codes: H32; H57; J18; L91; M21

INTRODUCTION

With passage of time procurement experts get divided on choices between faster procurement and compliance to internal procurement rules and regulations (Kortukova et al., 2023; Haase, 2019). Whereas different procurement situations may dictate reduction in procurement time especially in emergency or crisis scenarios, evidences show that this orientation opens doors for violation of regulatory safeguards leading to corruption tendencies (Said, Alam and Aziz, 2015). Many a time local governments find themselves at crossroads of satisfying immediate procurement needs and adherence to bureaucratic procedure. This possess a big problem for local government entities having to balance procurement responsiveness especially in times of crisis (disaster situations) and procurement regulation. Whereas this study is not largely looking at procurement time and speed, these are some of critical issues that affect procurement performance in public institutions especially when

supplier environment has to urgently respond to internal procurement needs. This study defines procurement performance as *“the degree of achievement of certain procurement effort or undertaking by an organization”* (Chitkara, 2015). *“It is about getting value for money from procurement activities”* (Thai, 2014). Other streams of literature have invariably placed consideration on specific organisational procurement parameters including timeliness, cost efficiency and quality (Arinaitwe & Otim, 2025; Singh & Chan, 2022), yet others have looked at procurement performance to mean meeting or exceeding procurement goals and objective (Masudin et al., 2021). Prominent scholars in procurement like Hallikas, Immonen & Brax, (2021) deeply affirm that as a firm attains capability to reduce procurement cost, shorten lead time, adhere to its procurement plans and honestly achieves its purchase tasks, it increases its chances of attaining market competitiveness. A critical reflection on these definitional elements of procurement performance portray a tendency to suggest that no procurement decision situation should compromise due diligence (Prier, McCue & Csáki, 2021). The study specifically looked at procurement performance in terms of procurement efficiency, procurement effectiveness and procurement reliability.

Procurement performance has been widely researched but different perspectives have been used for example Namwanje et al., (2024) who looked at procurement planning practices, Murali & George, (2016) looked at supply chain practices while others selectively considered supplier selection and assessment (Kannan & Tan, 2002); supplier selection and buyer–supplier engagement (Kannan & Tan, 2006); supply chain management practices (Li et al., 2006); supplier capability (Sarkar & Mohapatra, 2019); supply chain collaboration (Simchi-Levi, Kaminsky & Daugherty, 2022); supplier management (Prajogo et al., 2020) and outsourcing (Logistics) Services (Kalinzi, 2019). It remains worrying that even when these interventions have been proposed, procurement performance has remained wanting. Procurement performance in local governments still remains low despite government of Uganda’s policy efforts to identify and handle structural bottlenecks that still lie along different stages of the supply chain. According to Kyenjojo District Annual Report, (2022), there are still delayed deliveries, poor quality outputs due to faulty specifications, duplication of supplies and continued threats of litigation by the suppliers due to delayed payments. More still the procurement performance trend at Kyenjojo district has been unsatisfactory for the last three years standing at 46% in 2020/21, 47% in 2021/22 and 49% in 2022/23 according to annual audit reports for these years. All this notwithstanding, the Advocates Coalition for Development and Environment (ACODE), reported a complete lack of clear power relations and accountability at district level leaders which leads to failure of many districts to deliver services to the population (Daily Monitor, September 15, 2016). The same source advises that the role of suppliers’ committees and procurement and disposal units should be reviewed as part of seeking solutions to failing supplier relationship. Contrastingly, again in Uganda the international suppliers are allegedly reluctant to take advantage of the government’s market place partly because of low value tenders, leaving local firms into prey despite their low capacity leading to shoddy work especially in road, bridges, schools and other construction works. This is so amidst another claim that a few local suppliers are reportedly overloaded with work (Khuan, Shee & Suan See, 2023) rendering them unable to meet deadlines or causing related delays in submission of procurement returns per quota to Public Accounts Committee (PAC) which also has many eventual negative outcomes including commencement of works lately, or even late procurement of supplies and services, and reporting many unspent balances by the end of the financial year. How else should the PAC which is the sole national regulatory and monitoring body intervene to resolve these challenges in all Procurement and Disposal Entities (PDE) including District local governments? It is an issue that future procurement scholars can seek to interrogate.

These issues partly remind the researchers the importance of supplier management which this study considers as a solution to the above highlighted procurement performance challenges. In one way or the other we are left to think that Kyenjojo district could have equally not fully attended to supplier relationship management. However, since Mendes Primo et al., (2007) tend to associate suppliers’ failure to fulfil supply obligations to internal firm processes, we believe that procurement performance outcomes will improve if every firm has a clear strategy to manage supplier affairs.

Supplier management has been presented in literature to refer to a business process which enables a company to *“adequately select its vendors and negotiate the best prices for goods and services that it purchases”* (Jodlbauer et al., 2023). The concept relates to an ideal procurement scenario where procurement managers diligently

monitor the supply chain and aim at ensuring that vendors get familiarized with the company's operating activities and manufacturing processes. Communication aspect comes in picture here and presumes that an organisational procurement information timely reaches vendors and there is no information asymmetry, however apparently, there happens to be an alleged arms-length relationship manifested between most suppliers and the end users which ultimately leads to not only gaps in communication, but also leads to projects completion delays, corruption and consequential substandard works or services in public entities (Prier, McCue & Csáki, 2021). The study hence force predicts that better supplier selection and appraisal, supplier relationship management and supplier development contribute to better procurement performance. Impliedly, supplier management practices in this study were specifically measured by supplier selection, supplier relationship and supplier development (Akamp & Müller, 2013; van der Westhuizen and Ntshingila, 2020; Maestrini et al., 2018). This conceptualisation is premised on the belief that for any organization to achieve good procurement performance results in today's highly competitive and uncertain business environment, it must aim at efficient delivery of goods/services, optimizing cost, time, quality and value for money through systematic supplier selection, supplier development and good supplier relationship management (Kisakye & Mwesigwa, 2025; Agbeka, Quagrainie & Kabalan, 2024).

Seen from a broad lens, the role of suppliers in any firm's operations cannot be underrated. Naturally, firms exist by sourcing from outside environment to satisfy their internal production needs and market demands. It is observed that public sector organisations including ministries, parastatals, commissions, schools and hospitals use outside companies or individuals to supply certain non-core functions like catering services, information technology, cleaning services, car repairs, consultancy, couriers' services, security, and waste management to improve their operational efficiency and effectiveness. No doubt right supplier choices lead to not only desired quality but also meeting delivery timelines, and competitive pricing, whereas wrong supplier choices lead to increased costs, operational inefficiencies and supply chain disruptions (Changalima et al., 2022). Effective supplier selection methods if not backed with efforts to manage the established relationship may lead to failing procurement partnerships (Johnson et al., 2021) meaning that relationship management is as important as supplier screening process. However other streams of literature have reiterated on the importance of supplier development as having linkages with supplier selection and relationship maintenance. For example, Van der Westhuizen and Ntshingila, (2020) find supplier selection futile if successfully screened suppliers are not integrated in the internal processes through capacity building. They argue that an organisation must make strategic investment in elevating the knowledge levels of suppliers to improve their areas of weakness and position them to deliver better procurement services that meet internal procurement needs and requirements: including but not limited to -having plans to improve suppliers' performance in terms of improved supply quality, reduced costs, increased responsiveness and alignment to organisational purpose which is altogether part of the broad supplier development definition. As authors we see supplier management as a call to management of a unique part of external relations that directly influence quality of service delivery. Relatedly, Chow et al., (2018) find it not only as a critical aspect of competitive advantage but also a sure way towards effective management of upstream supply chains which is the focus of this study. It makes great sense owing from the dependence that firms currently have on their suppliers (Kannan & Tan, 2012). Allegedly supplier relationship management has multiple impact on firms' operations and business levels. Even when a broad range of supplier management practices are reflected in literature to impact on an array of performance measures, Supplier selection, Supplier relationship and Supplier development (Parameswaran, Vanathi, 2026; Yehualaa, 2023; Chileshe & Phiri, 2022; Prajogo et al., 2012) figure most the reason why this study picked interest in them in the context of local government. Whereas previous studies into supplier management practices-procurement performance relationship have yielded inconclusive results, they also exhibit context differences (for example see Ogendo et al., (2025) in public Universities, Namwanje et al., (2024) in the banking sector, Naibor & Moronge, (2018) in a manufacturing industry; Kavinya & Kihara, (2018) in the oil and gas sector) an indication that such results cannot be generalised. The purpose of the study therefore was to examine the effect of supplier management practices on procurement performance of Kyenjojo District Local Government. Theoretically this study contributes to literature by testing the application of the resource-based theory in the local government context, explaining the extent to which supplier management practices affect procurement performance. In terms of paper organisation, literature review follows after introduction and other sections i.e methods, results, discussion, conclusion and recommendation follow.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Previous studies and hypothesis development

Theoretical Review

It's common for researchers to leverage the potential of certain theories to explain the relationships under study. In this procurement performance study resource-based theory one of the old theories has been used to explain Kyenjojo case. As a district it has a bundle of resources and capabilities on which it bases its strategy to achieve its mandate. Contenders of this theory assumed that a firm's ability to have an appropriate combination of resources i.e assets, capabilities, firm attributes, organizational processes, information and knowledge determines its extent of satisfying its stakeholders' needs (Barney, 1991). The study considers good supplier management practices as one of the specific internal processes (resources) which can be blended and configured into the district procurement service delivery process inputs (for example capital, equipment, the skills of individual employees, patents, finance, relationships, and talented managers) to form a capability that enhances procurement performance landscape (Caldeira and Ward, 2011; Rosetti and Choi, 2015). This is part of the internal capability frameworks that Barney coined as an input-process-output model where in this case supplier management processes serve as inputs facilitating managerial procurement decisions that help improve procurement performance. It is these resources, and the way that they are used, that allow Kyenjojo District Local Government to provide service delivery to its community.

Empirical Review

The study is concerned with the way in which firms manage upstream supplier relationships, for, their effect on overall procurement performance has not been good. Could it be the imperative of rapidly satisfying immediate procurement needs (procurement speed), compliance to bureaucratic pressures that is a source of most visible procurement performance challenges! How well can procurement goals be met without compromising time, cost, quality! (Chitkara, 2015). This study appreciates the importance of supplier management as one of the paramount management functions that has the potential of helping a firm achieve sustainable competitive advantage. It is a foundation for firms to get right supply quality as they try to serve not only disparate but also fluctuating markets (Prajogo et al., 2012) considering the intensification of competition in local and global markets. The study places emphasis on swift management of supply chains as a precursor for improved firm performance. In this dispensation a good understanding of supply management practices is a game changer especially in the deepening complex and competitive nature of markets. The study strongly believes that supply chain level management of competition takes precedence over individual firm level competition management because as markets get fragmented firms have to exist through partnerships and alliances (Yadav & Dedha, 2026; Ahmad Dar, 2022). It means that supply chain partners assume key roles initially under firm level management. The advantage is that as firms relinquish their non-core activities to external partners, they focus more on their core competence and strategic operations which gives them the capability to exist through and with supply chain actors to achieve their procurement goals timely and at less cost. Perhaps if Kyenjojo district understood these dynamics it wouldn't have experienced persistent supplier failures to meet required specifications, or even suffering from long lead times, or poor quality of services delivered (IGG, 2010).

Literature presents evidences on studies that have predicted procurement performance using different perspectives, for example, Murali and George, (2016) using supply chain practices; Namwanje et al., (2024) using procurement planning practices; supply chain management practices (Li et al., 2006); supply chain collaboration (Simchi-Levi, Kaminsky & Daugherty, 2022); supplier selection (Ogendo et al., 2025); outsourcing (Logistics) Services (Kalinzi, 2019); supplier management (Prajogo et al., 2020); supplier capability (Sarkar & Mohapatra, 2019); supplier selection criteria (Naibor & Moronge, 2018); supplier selection and buyer-supplier engagement (Kannan & Tan, 2006); supplier selection and assessment (Kannan & Tan, 2002) and supplier appraisal criteria (Kavinya & Kihara, 2018). Additionally, studies by Kabugho, (2024) and Manyega & Okibo, (2015) observe that effective supplier selection impacts significantly on procurement performance in terms of cost or operational efficiency, procurement activity sustainability and achievement of product quality.

A thorough scrutiny on these studies shows that only a few have picked interest in local government supplier management practices which exhibit a knowledge gap justifying partly a motivation for this study. The study focuses on the upstream side of the supply chain ostensibly considered to be neglected in procurement performance literature.

Supplier management and procurement performance relationship literature exists, partly agreeing and partly disagreeing. Study by Kirema, Muleke & Ooko, (2025); Habanabakize and Wabala, (2024); Kabughu, (2024); Eya and Muhwezi (2023); Muhwezi and Ahimbisibwe, (2023); Changelima et al., (2022); Kibogo and Mwangangi, (2022) and Manyega & Okibo, (2015) confirm an existent relationship between supplier management and procurement performance. The only differences is the context they studied i.e Eya and Muhwezi who investigated state owned enterprises in Uganda, Kabughu, (2024) studied local governments but used a purely quantitative approach for field data collection and analysis. Despite these agreeing voices regarding the effect of supplier management practices on procurement performance, other streams of literature have stated otherwise, for example Asa et al., (2023) who observed marginal significant effects of supplier relationship management on procurement performance. They argue that even when a firm invests in supplier relationship strategies the outcomes may not be worthwhile necessitating unceasing review of their supplier relationship strategy structures and the need to aim at detecting and improving weak links therein. Gudda, Keitany & Ombok, (2023) while studying steel manufacturing firms, adopted a positivist approach and tested for both direct and joint effects of the variables but supplier integration showed negative effects on procurement performance. Even when no consensus has been reached on a sustainable solution to procurement performance challenges, it does not erase the fact that other streams of literature have supported the view that effective supplier management is a solution to most procurement performance challenges. The analysis is based on the tact that existing evidence is in specific contexts for example Ogendo et al., (2025) in public higher education sector, Kirema, Muleke & Ooko, (2025) among level 6 hospitals; Namwanje et al., (2024) in the banking sector, Naibor & Moronge, (2018) in a manufacturing industry; Kavinya & Kihara, (2018) in the oil and gas sector; Cheboss, Namusonge & Nambuswa, (2017) in a sugar company. Whereas these works evidence an existing relationship between supplier management practices and procurement performance, one may not generalise their findings due to variations in their study context: supply requirements differ across entities, one desiring this and not the other. Such variations in views show a high degree of inconclusiveness regarding the extent to which supplier management affects procurement performance. Hence this study hypothesised:

H1: Supplier management practices have a positive relationship with procurement performance of Kyenjojo District

H2: Supplier selection has a positive relationship with procurement performance of Kyenjojo District

H3: Supplier relationship management has a positive relationship with procurement performance of Kyenjojo District

H4: Supplier development has a positive relationship with procurement performance of Kyenjojo District

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study was carried out in Kyenjojo district local government one of the nine districts in Rwenzori region. Kyenjojo district is one of the 145 districts found in Uganda. As a district it has overtime experienced different procurement performance challenges including but not limited to: long lead times, poor quality of services delivered, and high levels of supplier violations (IGG, 2010). Among others this formed a basis of the motivation to study supplier management practices in the same district. Cross sectional design was used to study the variables stated. Concurrent mixed methods approach was used to collect quantitative data from different categories of officers (i.e accounting officers, suppliers' committee staff, procurement and disposal unit staff, technical planning committees staff and service providers) and qualitative data from the senior procurement officers, heads of human resource department, heads of stores, heads of the production department and the heads of finance) at a point in time (Bell et al., 2018). Opinions of 70 respondents were considered for the

quantitative design to whom questionnaires were administered in the month of May 2024 whereas saturation level was reached at 13th respondent for the qualitative study. The study adhered to research ethical procedures by seeking administrative approvals, besides seeking consent from respondents and ensuring confidentiality at data processing and at reporting stage where dummy names were only used.

A five-point likert scale was used ranging from 1 for strongly disagree to 5 for strongly agree in accordance with Leung et al., (2011)'s recommendations. Accordingly, the research instruments were validated by both academic and industry experts and the resultant validity and reliability test results fell within acceptable range (Field, 2017; Saunders et al., 2009). Pearson correlation technique was used to analyse quantitative data whereas content analysis was used to process interview data.

RESULTS

Response rate and demographic characteristics

Response rate

The study ascertained response rate as shown in table 1 below;

Table 1 Response rate for Questionnaires

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Returned	66	94.3%
Unreturned	4	5.7%
Total	70	100%

Source: Primary Data, 2024

A sample of 70 managers received questionnaires as evidenced in *table 1* below, however, only 66, fully filled and returned, yielding an overall response rate of 94.3%. Only 13 qualitative in-depth interviews were conducted.

Demographic characteristics of respondents

The study tried to ascertain respondent characteristics as shown in *table 2* below

Table 2: Respondent characteristics

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Respondent's gender	Male	36	45.5	45.5	45.5
	Female	30	54.5	54.5	100
	Total	66	100.0	100.0	
Respondent's age	Below 25	7	10.6	10.6	10.6
	26-34	29	43.9	43.9	54.5
	35-45	25	37.9	37.9	92.4
	Above 45	5	7.6	7.6	100
	Total	66	100.0	100.0	
Highest level of education	Primary	2	3.0	3.0	3.0
	Diploma	4	6.1	6.1	9.1
	University Degree	55	80.3	80.3	89.4
	Masters	7	10.6	10.6	100
	Secondary	0	0	0	100
	Total	66	100.0	100.0	
	Senior managers	10	15.2	15.2	15.2

Current position in the District	Middle managers	35	53	53	68.2
	Lower Officers	15	22.7	22.7	90.9
	Support staff	6	9.1	9.1	100
	Total	66	100.0	100.0	
Work experience	Below 5 years	10	15.2	15.2	15.2
	6-10 years	39	59.1	59.1	64.3
	11-15 years	11	16.7	16.7	90.9
	15 and above years	6	9.1	9.1	100
	Total	66	100.0	100.0	

Out of 66 respondents 54.5% were males while 45.5% were females. This implies that the males dominated most of the positions held in Kyenjojo District Local Government and were more willing to respond to the questionnaires provided. Also as per this study majority of the respondents (43.9%) were within the age bracket of 26-34 whereas the least were in the age bracket of 45 and above (7.6%) meaning that the study involved different respondents with varying ages, which provided the researchers with the current and long-time information about supplier management and procurement performance in Kyenjojo District. In terms of education, the majority respondents (80.3%) were university graduates with a bachelor's Degree. Since majority respondents were elites they were more informed about the variables under investigation, which helped to obtain reliable information. In terms of position held in the district by the respondent, 53% held middle management position, and 59.1% had worked at the district for a period between 6-10 years.

Multiple Linear Regression Analysis Results

Table 3: Multiple Linear Regression Analysis Results for Supplier Management and Financial performance

Variables Regressed	Adjusted R ²	F-value	Sig.	Interpretation	Decision on Ho
Supplier management Vs. procurement performance	.511	24.119	.000 ^a	Significant effect	Rejected
Coefficients	Standardized Beta	t			
(Constant)	.745	3.465	.000	Significant effect	Rejected
Supplier selection	.132	1.004	.000	Significant effect	Rejected
supplier relationship	.304	2.966	.003	Significant effect	Rejected
supplier development	.395	4.739	.001	Significant effect	Rejected

Source: Researcher's computation (2024)

The above *Table 3* regression analysis results indicate a positive and significant relationship between supplier management practices and procurement performance (Beta=.511, $p < 0.05$), providing evidence that supports hypothesis one (H1). The study also established that supplier selection has a significant positive relationship with procurement performance (Beta=.132, $p < 0.05$), supporting the study hypothesis two (H2). The study also confirmed positive relationships between supplier relationship management and procurement performance (Beta=.304, $p < 0.05$), and also between supplier development and procurement performance (Beta=.395, $p < 0.05$). These two findings helped the study to confirm hypothesis three and four.

DISCUSSION

This study findings (*Table 3*) depict a significant effect of supplier management practices on procurement performance of Kyenjojo District local government (Beta=.511, $p < 0.05$). In the real world context, this finding

implies that effective and efficient supplier management has multiple positive effects on firms' procurement performance improvement. We see this finding agreeing with existing literature especially studies by Eya and Muhwezi (2023), Kabugho, (2024), Muhwezi and Ahimbisibwe, 2023; Kibogo, and Mwangangi, (2022) and Manyega & Okibo, (2015). These scholars anonymously agree that as procurement managers put in place diligent measures to monitor the supply chain, to adequately select their vendors and negotiate the best prices for goods and services that they purchase, nothing else can stop them from achieving their procurement objectives. A related literature is that from Prier, McCue & Csáki, (2021) who advise entity procurement managers to avoid arms-length relationship and aim at extended collaborations that have not only short term benefits but also long term benefits. This finding call on procurement managers to focus carefully on supplier selection, supplier relationship and supplier development (Akamp & Müller, 2013; van der Westhuizen and Ntshingila, 2020; Maestrini et al.,2018).

As we scrutinise the in-depth interviews we find agreement with the above quantitative results.

More related details are revealed from the in-depth interview extracts below;

"[....]..... we aim at getting best suppliers from the market, though the process is tedious and time consuming....[.....]" (Respondent number 2).

"[....]... The district has always organised workshops for our suppliers to prepare them a head of contract implementation. [.....]...this is so despite the hard reality of some suppliers failing to meet the stated supply terms and conditions" (Respondent number 5)

".. []....Due diligence is done on our suppliers,..[...]. though not all is okay ...[....] in due course of implementing the contract poor quality outputs continue to exhibit" [..] (Respondent number 11)

The study also found out an existent positive and significant relationship between supplier selection and procurement performance ($\text{Beta}=.132, p<0.05$). It implies that pre-supplier activities if managed appropriately can change the whole procurement process outcomes of an organisation. This is a big contribution in terms of reminding procurement managers on the attention they have to put to needs identification, specification, selection of a procurement strategy, preparation and issuance of bid documents, evaluation of bids, award of supplier contract, appointment of supplier managers and implementation of the supplier management plan (Camillus & Rosenthal 2010; and Trent and Monczka, 2012). Carefulness should be observed in terms of identifying supplier needs, specifications or statement of works and also in taking key decisions on whether to enter into a single or multiple supplier relationships. Results showed that user departments participate in the supplier selection (mean= 4.65) and supplier management plans preparation (mean = 4.70) which however leaves researchers wondering why there are still delayed deliveries, duplication of supplies and poor quality outputs due to faulty specifications.

Additionally, this study confirmed a significant effect of supplier relationship management on procurement performance ($\text{Beta}=.304, p<0.05$). This finding agrees with another study by Kirema, Muleke & Ooko, (2025). One of the implications of this finding is that firms in attempt to achieve their procurement objectives should aim at extended relationship with suppliers beyond mere contract closures. This way the firm can access and tap from outside a number of resources e.g financial, legal, physical, human, organizational, relational, and informational (vein, Hunt and Morgan (1995). It means that firms which pursue supplier relationship strategy achieve many long term partnership benefits being able not only to win but also to retain businesses (Mandiyambira, 2012). It is wrong to see suppliers as mere vendors, tapping external resources is associated with the whole arrangement. The window frame used here to analyse supply relationship is beyond the transactional purchasing arrangement and very much opposed to the idea of suppliers and firms operating independently. The argument tends to favour the fact that buyers and suppliers must harmoniously work together, for, it is advantageous in terms of enhanced quality and reduced expenses (Krajewski & Ritzman, 2017). This does not mean however that firm which have pursued competitive models have not achieved their purchasing goals (Bensaou, 2000), meaning that both partnership and competitive models may yield benefits for a firm depending on which business environment they are operating in.

Last but not least this study observed a positive relationship between supplier development and procurement performance ($\text{Beta}=.395$, $p<0.05$). This finding implies that a firm which develops programs to educate and empower its suppliers achieves sustainable continuous improvement in its supply processes. Procurement practitioners learn a lot from this finding to always aim at leveraging the benefits of improving their suppliers by investing in processes that lead to improvement in their suppliers' performance. Such results agree with scholars like Gudda, Keitany & Ombok, (2023) who argue that firms working with capable and competent supplier networks generate greater value from such relationships.

CONCLUSION

In line with the study purpose, this study confirmed a positive and significant association between the three constructs of supplier management practices (i.e supplier selection, supplier relationship and supplier development) taken individually or taken together with procurement performance in Kyenjojo District local government. This paper's contribution to literature is seen in using the resource-based theory to explain the complex relationship among studied variables. The paper appreciates that a mix of firm's resources (for example capital, equipment, the skills of individual employees, patents, finance, relationships, and talented managers) can enable it to improve its procurement service delivery processes, a capability that enhances its procurement performance landscape (Caldeira and Ward, 2011; Rosetti and Choi, 2015).

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