

# E-Tendering and Procurement Performance of the County Government of Nairobi

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## ABSTRACT

Electronic tendering (e-tendering) has become an integral component of digital procurement systems due to its potential to improve procurement efficiency, transparency, accountability, and overall organizational performance. Despite continued investments in electronic procurement technologies by county governments in Kenya, procurement performance remains below expectations, as evidenced by procurement delays, high transaction costs, limited transparency, procurement disputes, and inefficiencies in supplier selection and contract award processes. Nairobi City County Government continues to experience procurement challenges despite implementing electronic tendering through the Integrated Financial Management Information System (IFMIS). Existing empirical studies have largely concentrated on the general adoption of e-procurement while providing limited evidence on the specific contribution of e-tendering to procurement performance within county governments in Kenya. This study therefore examined the effect of electronic tendering on procurement performance in Nairobi City County Government. The study was anchored on the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) and employed a descriptive research design. The target population comprised employees involved in procurement-related functions within Nairobi City County Government. Primary data were collected using structured questionnaires, while Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 26 was used to generate descriptive and inferential statistics. Diagnostic tests were conducted to confirm compliance with the assumptions of regression analysis before hypothesis testing. Descriptive statistics indicated that respondents generally agreed that electronic tendering had enhanced transparency, improved supplier participation, accelerated procurement processes, and strengthened fairness in tender evaluation and award. Regression analysis further established that electronic tendering had a positive and statistically significant effect on procurement performance ( $\beta = [\text{insert standardized beta}], p < 0.05$ ), leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis. The findings demonstrate that effective implementation of electronic tendering significantly enhances procurement performance by reducing procurement cycle time, improving transparency, increasing operational efficiency, and promoting value for money. The study concludes that electronic tendering is a critical digital procurement practice for enhancing procurement performance within county governments. The study recommends that Nairobi City County Government should strengthen electronic tendering infrastructure, enhance staff capacity through continuous training, improve system integration, and formulate policies that encourage full compliance with electronic tendering procedures to maximize procurement performance.

**Keywords:** Electronic Tendering, E-Procurement, Procurement Performance, Digital Procurement, Public Procurement, Nairobi City County Government, Kenya.

## INTRODUCTION

Procurement performance refers to the efficiency, effectiveness, and transparency of procurement processes in achieving organizational and policy objectives. In the public sector, strong procurement performance is essential for ensuring value for money, reducing operational costs, and enhancing service delivery. Key performance indicators (KPIs) for procurement include cost savings, procurement cycle time, supplier competitiveness, compliance with regulations, and transparency (OECD, 2023). Governments worldwide have recognized the

role of procurement performance in fostering economic growth and minimizing resource wastage, leading to widespread reforms and the adoption of digital procurement solutions.

The United States serves as a global leader in e-procurement adoption and innovation, with its federal procurement system processing over \$700 billion annually through digital platforms. The country's advanced e-procurement ecosystem, anchored by systems like the Federal Procurement Data System, has achieved significant efficiency gains, reducing average procurement cycle times by 40-60% compared to traditional methods (Amakye, 2023). This digital transformation has yielded substantial cost savings, with the federal government reporting \$27 billion in procurement efficiencies in financial year 2022 alone through competitive e-sourcing and automated contract management. The U.S. model demonstrates how robust digital infrastructure, comprehensive training programs, and strict compliance monitoring can optimize procurement performance, though challenges remain in cybersecurity threats and ensuring equitable access for small businesses. These achievements provide valuable benchmarks for developing nations like Kenya, while also highlighting the importance of sustained investment and policy support for successful e-procurement implementation.

In Africa, procurement inefficiencies have historically resulted in excessive delays, inflated costs, and procurement-related corruption (AfDB, 2022). Many governments struggle with poor contract management, delayed supplier payments, and non-compliance with procurement laws, leading to inefficiencies that impact service delivery. E-procurement has been positioned as a solution to these challenges, with studies indicating that digitized procurement systems enhance procurement efficiency by reducing paperwork, automating approvals, and increasing supplier participation (World Bank, 2021). However, successful procurement performance depends not just on adopting e-procurement but also on addressing broader governance and institutional weaknesses.

In Kenya, procurement performance at both the national and county levels remain a significant concern, with challenges such as budgetary constraints, weak enforcement of procurement laws, and inefficiencies in contract execution (KIPPRA, 2023). Nairobi City County, being the largest devolved unit, handles substantial procurement volumes, making its procurement performance critical to service delivery and economic governance. While the implementation of e-procurement through IFMIS aims to improve efficiency, delays, technical failures, and resistance from procurement officers have hindered its full potential. This study seeks to examine the extent to which e-procurement implementation has influenced procurement performance in Nairobi County, identifying gaps and proposing strategies for enhancing procurement outcomes.

## Statement of the Problem

Public procurement is a central pillar of economic governance, accounting for a substantial share of government expenditure. However, inefficiencies, inflated costs, and procedural delays continue to undermine procurement performance in many public institutions, particularly at the county government level (Chebet & Kihara, 2020). These challenges not only weaken institutional capacity but also compromise the timely delivery of essential public services, erode public trust, and reduce value for taxpayers' money. In Kenya, the problem is especially evident in devolved units where procurement inefficiencies hinder the realization of devolution's objectives of equitable development and improved service delivery.

Nairobi City County, the largest devolved unit in Kenya, faces persistent procurement challenges despite the adoption of e-procurement through the Integrated Financial Management Information System (IFMIS). The system was introduced to enhance efficiency, promote cost savings, and improve transparency in public procurement (Dorasamy & Fagbadebo, 2021). However, evidence from the 2023 KIPPRA Public Sector Procurement Assessment Report reveals that the county continues to experience frequent system downtime averaging 17.3% of operational time monthly, inadequate staff training with only 29% of procurement personnel trained, and ICT infrastructure gaps where 41% of offices lack the minimum system requirements. These operational bottlenecks have resulted in lengthy procurement cycles, high transaction costs, irregularities in contract execution, and delayed supplier payments, ultimately inflating operational expenses and compromising service delivery.

Public procurement in Kenya accounts for over KES 2.5 trillion annually, with substantial financial losses attributed to inefficiencies and weak systems. According to the Public Procurement Regulatory Authority (PPRA) Annual Report (2023), an estimated KES 500 billion to KES 750 billion is lost each year through procurement-related leakages such as inflated costs, delays, and irregular contracting. At the county level, the Office of the Auditor-General Reports (2022–2024) indicate that Nairobi City County recorded irregular procurement expenditures exceeding KES 8.7 billion and pending bills of over KES 100 billion, largely linked to delayed procurement processes and weak contract management. Despite the adoption of IFMIS e-procurement, the KIPPRA Public Sector Procurement Assessment Report (2023) highlights persistent operational challenges, reinforcing the need for empirical evaluation of the system's effectiveness at the county level.

While e-procurement has the potential to streamline procurement operations, automate approvals, enable real-time tracking, and improve supplier integration, its actual impact on procurement performance at the county government level remains unclear and underexplored. Most existing studies, such as those by Chebet & Kihara (2022), Masudin et al. (2021), and Chen et al. (2022), have concentrated on manufacturing firms and national government institutions, leaving a gap in county-specific contexts. Furthermore, although research by Trofimovskaya & Vershinina (2022) and Chen et al. (2022) highlights the relationship between digital procurement systems and procurement performance, there is limited examination of how specific functionalities—such as automation, real-time tracking, and supplier integration—contribute to efficiency, cost savings, and effectiveness in county governments.

In addition, while scholars including Mugo & Ndung'u (2024), Mutesi & Safari (2021), and Mebrate & Shumet (2024) emphasize the role of procurement training in enhancing performance, there is limited empirical evidence on the effectiveness of digital procurement training in improving efficiency and reducing costs in devolved units. This knowledge gap makes it difficult for Nairobi City County and other devolved governments to determine whether the current e-procurement framework is delivering its intended outcomes. Addressing this gap is essential for enhancing procurement performance, ensuring optimal use of public resources, and achieving the economic governance objectives envisioned under Kenya's devolved system.

## Research Hypothesis

**H0:** There is no significant effect of E-tendering on procurement performance of the county government of Nairobi, Kenya.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### Resource Based View (RBV) Theory

The Resource-Based View (RBV) theory, originally introduced by Penrose in 1959 and later refined by Wernerfelt, emphasizes the significance of an organization's internal resources as the primary source of competitive advantage. According to the RBV, resources that are rare, valuable, and hard to replicate contribute significantly to an organization's ability to perform better, exploit market opportunities, and mitigate emerging risks (Barney, 2021). In the context of county governments such as Nairobi, this theory provides a useful framework for understanding the strategic implementation of e-tendering systems.

The RBV suggests that resources—including technological capabilities like digital procurement platforms—can enhance internal operational processes, which are considered core organizational resources. When county governments adopt e-tendering platforms, they are leveraging a technological resource to streamline procurement functions, improve transparency, and enhance accountability (Mutua & Wanjiru, 2022). This digital shift allows governments to align with industry best practices by automating tasks such as tender advertisement, supplier selection, and contract awarding, thereby improving efficiency in service delivery.

Furthermore, the effectiveness of e-tendering as a strategic resource lies in its ability to create value and enable county entities to outperform others by reducing corruption, shortening procurement cycles, and ensuring compliance with procurement regulations (Kariuki & Ngugi, 2023). In line with the RBV, when Nairobi City

County integrates such platforms into its procurement processes, it not only optimizes internal procedures but also builds a sustainable advantage through improved service delivery mechanisms.

Ultimately, the RBV underscores the importance of deploying technology as a resource to strengthen procurement performance. In Nairobi County's case, the implementation of e-tendering systems reflects a strategic response aimed at enhancing procurement efficiency, a key driver of public sector performance (Odhiambo & Kihara, 2024).

## Theoretical Foundation

### Empirical Review

E-tendering has gained prominence globally as a mechanism for enhancing transparency, accountability, and efficiency in public procurement. In the United States, Wilson and Carter (2021), in their study titled "Evaluating the Impact of E-Tendering Systems on Procurement Efficiency in the California Department of General Services," employed a quasi-experimental design using pre- and post-implementation procurement data from various departments. Their findings indicated a 32% reduction in procurement cycle time and a notable increase in supplier diversity, which they attributed to improved transparency and real-time access to tender documents. However, the study was conducted in a highly digitized and well-resourced public sector environment, limiting its applicability to developing country contexts that face infrastructural and capacity challenges.

In India, Chatterjee and Patel (2020), in their study titled "Performance Evaluation of the Government e-Marketplace (GeM) Platform in Enhancing Public Procurement Processes," adopted a mixed-methods approach that combined interviews with key procurement officers and analysis of procurement performance data. They observed that the e-tendering system reduced bid rigging, promoted supplier competitiveness, and significantly shortened the tender evaluation period. While the study provides valuable insights into how centralized e-tendering platforms can improve procurement outcomes, it did not explore the complexities and constraints present in decentralized systems like Kenya's county governments, which operate under varied levels of ICT capacity, staff training, and administrative autonomy.

In Nigeria, Okonjo and Uche (2022), in their study titled "Effect of E-Tendering on Project Delivery in Lagos State Public Infrastructure Projects," employed a cross-sectional survey design targeting procurement officers and project managers within state departments. The study found a significant positive relationship between the adoption of e-tendering and the timely implementation of projects, attributed to improved prequalification and bid evaluation standards. However, the study did not assess broader aspects of procurement performance such as cost savings, procurement cycle time, or supplier satisfaction.

A similar limitation was observed in Tanzania, where Nchimbi and Mbwapo (2023), through their study titled "E-Tendering and Procurement Compliance in Local Government Authorities: A Case of Arusha City Council," conducted longitudinal research using procurement reports and compliance audits spanning three fiscal years. They found that e-tendering significantly improved audit outcomes, reduced manipulation in tender evaluations, and strengthened adherence to procurement laws. Nonetheless, the study focused narrowly on regulatory compliance and did not consider user experience, departmental adoption variability, or technological implementation barriers.

In Kenya, Otieno and Kamau (2022), in their study titled "Influence of E-Tendering Systems on Procurement Performance in Kisumu County Government," applied a descriptive survey design targeting procurement officials across selected departments. Their findings indicated that e-tendering enhanced responsiveness and reduced delays associated with manual procurement procedures. However, the study was confined to a single, mid-sized county and did not examine the institutional or technical challenges experienced in larger and more complex counties such as Nairobi. These limitations present a contextual and empirical gap that this study aims to fill by analyzing the impact of e-tendering on procurement performance across multiple departments within Nairobi County Government.

## METHODOLOGY

A research design is a plan that specifies the approach and procedures for conducting a study, including the methods for collecting, analyzing, and interpreting data (Kipyegon, Ikamari, & Makau, 2025). This study adopted a descriptive research design because it enabled the collection of quantitative data to examine the effect of electronic tendering on procurement performance in Nairobi City County Government. The design was considered appropriate as it facilitates the systematic description of existing procurement practices and establishes relationships between study variables without manipulating the research environment.

The study was conducted at Nairobi City County Government, which has implemented electronic procurement through the Integrated Financial Management Information System (IFMIS) in compliance with the Public Procurement and Asset Disposal Act (2015). The target population comprised employees directly involved in procurement processes, including procurement officers, finance officers, heads of user departments, members of tender evaluation committees, and contract management personnel. These officers were considered suitable respondents because they possess adequate knowledge and practical experience regarding the implementation of electronic tendering within the County Government.

The study employed structured questionnaires to collect primary data from the respondents. A pilot study was conducted to assess the validity and reliability of the research instrument before the main data collection exercise. Diagnostic tests, including normality, multicollinearity, heteroscedasticity, and linearity tests, were performed to ensure that the data satisfied the assumptions of regression analysis. The collected data were coded and analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) Version 26 to generate descriptive and inferential statistics. Descriptive statistics, including frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations, were used to summarize the responses, while inferential statistics were used to determine the effect of electronic tendering on procurement performance. The findings were presented using tables and explanatory narratives.

The study employed the following simple linear regression model:

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \varepsilon$$

Where:

$Y$  = Procurement Performance

$\beta_0$  = Constant (coefficient of intercept)

$X_1$  = Electronic Tendering

$\beta_1$  = Regression coefficient of Electronic Tendering

$\varepsilon$  = Error term

The model was used to determine the extent to which electronic tendering influences procurement performance in Nairobi City County Government. The null hypothesis was tested at a 5% level of significance ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ). The null hypothesis was rejected where the p-value was less than 0.05, indicating that electronic tendering had a statistically significant effect on procurement performance.

## Research Results

### Descriptive Statistics

This section presents the descriptive statistics of the study variables. The respondents were requested to indicate their level of agreement with statements relating to e-tendering, e-invoicing, e-ordering, e-catalogue, and procurement performance using a five-point Likert scale where 1 = Strongly Disagree (SD), 2 = Disagree (D), 3 = Neutral (N), 4 = Agree (A), and 5 = Strongly Agree (SA). The responses were analyzed using frequencies,

percentages, means, and standard deviations. The mean was used to indicate the average level of agreement with each statement, while the standard deviation measured the extent of variation in respondents' opinions.

**Table 4.1: Descriptive Statistics for E-Tendering**

| Statement                                                              | N  | 1 (%) | 2(%) | 3(%) | 4(%) | 5(%) | Mean | S.D  |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|-------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| The e-tendering system has enhanced transparency in bid evaluation.    | 78 | 2.6   | 5.1  | 10.3 | 47.4 | 34.6 | 4.06 | 0.91 |
| Online bid submission has improved procurement efficiency.             | 78 | 1.3   | 6.4  | 12.3 | 43.6 | 35.9 | 4.06 | 0.94 |
| E-tendering has reduced tender processing time.                        | 78 | 3.8   | 6.4  | 11.5 | 46.2 | 32.1 | 3.96 | 0.99 |
| E-tendering has minimized procurement irregularities                   | 78 | 2.6   | 7.7  | 14.1 | 42.3 | 33.3 | 3.96 | 0.98 |
| The county effectively utilizes e-tendering in procurement activities. | 78 | 5.1   | 9.0  | 10.3 | 43.6 | 32.0 | 3.88 | 1.08 |
| Aggregate Mean/Standard Deviation                                      | 78 |       |      |      |      |      | 3.98 | 0.98 |

The findings in Table 4.1 indicate that 82.0% of the respondents (47.4% agreed and 34.6% strongly agreed) acknowledged that the e-tendering system has enhanced transparency in bid evaluation. Only 7.7% (2.6% strongly disagreed and 5.1% disagreed) expressed contrary opinions, while 10.3% remained neutral. The statement recorded a mean score of 4.06 and a standard deviation of 0.91, indicating that respondents generally agreed that e-tendering has enhanced transparency in procurement processes and that their responses exhibited low variability.

Similarly, 79.5% of the respondents (43.6% agreed and 35.9% strongly agreed) indicated that online bid submission has improved procurement efficiency. In contrast, only 7.7% disagreed with the statement, while 12.8% were undecided. The statement attained a mean score of 4.06 and a standard deviation of 0.94, implying that respondents agreed that electronic submission of bids has streamlined procurement operations by reducing paperwork and accelerating procurement procedures.

Regarding whether e-tendering has reduced tender processing time, 78.3% of the respondents (46.2% agreed and 32.1% strongly agreed) expressed agreement, whereas 10.2% disagreed and 11.5% were neutral. The statement registered a mean score of 3.96 and a standard deviation of 0.99, suggesting that respondents generally perceived e-tendering as having shortened procurement cycle times.

The results further reveal that 75.6% of the respondents (42.3% agreed and 33.3% strongly agreed) agreed that e-tendering has minimized procurement irregularities. However, 10.3% disagreed with the statement, while 14.1% remained neutral. The statement achieved a mean score of 3.96 with a standard deviation of 0.98, indicating general agreement that the adoption of e-tendering has enhanced accountability and reduced opportunities for procurement malpractice.

Finally, 75.6% of the respondents (43.6% agreed and 32.0% strongly agreed) agreed that the Nairobi County Government effectively utilizes e-tendering in procurement activities. Conversely, 14.1% disagreed, while 10.3% neither agreed nor disagreed. Although this statement recorded the lowest mean score (3.88) and the highest standard deviation (1.08) among the e-tendering indicators, the findings still suggest that respondents generally perceived the implementation of e-tendering positively, albeit with relatively more diverse opinions regarding its level of utilization.

Overall, the variable recorded an aggregate mean of 3.98 and an aggregate standard deviation of 0.98, indicating that respondents generally agreed that e-tendering positively influences procurement performance in the Nairobi County Government. The relatively low standard deviation demonstrates that respondents' opinions were fairly consistent across the five indicators, suggesting broad consensus regarding the effectiveness of e-tendering practices.

These findings correspond with the empirical findings reported by Wilson and Carter (2021), who established that e-tendering enhanced transparency and procurement efficiency through electronic bid submission;

Chatterjee and Patel (2020), who found that e-tendering reduced procurement cycle time while improving fairness and competitiveness in public procurement; and Otieno and Kamau (2022), who concluded that effective implementation of e-tendering significantly improved procurement performance among county governments in Kenya.

### Inferential Statistical Analysis

#### There is no statistically significant effect of E-Tendering on Procurement Performance in the Nairobi County Government

This test was based on the objective to assess the effect of e-tendering on procurement performance in the Nairobi County Government. The overall appropriateness of the model was tested using Karl Pearson's correlation coefficient, while the extent of the relationship between e-tendering and procurement performance was tested using the univariate regression model.

#### Test of Model Appropriateness

The test was conducted using Karl Pearson's correlation coefficient to determine the strength and direction of the relationship between e-tendering and procurement performance. The correlation analysis established that e-tendering had a strong positive and statistically significant relationship with procurement performance ( $r = 0.712$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ), indicating that improvements in e-tendering practices are associated with improved procurement performance within the Nairobi County Government.

**Table 4.2: Model Summary of E-Tendering and Procurement Performance**

| Model | R     | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate |
|-------|-------|----------|-------------------|----------------------------|
| 1     | .712a | .507     | .501              | 0.46                       |

Predictors: (Constant), E-Tendering

Dependent Variable: Procurement Performance

Source: Research Data (2026)

Table 4.2 shows an R-square value of 0.507, indicating that e-tendering explains 50.7% of the variation in procurement performance in the Nairobi County Government. This implies that e-tendering is a significant predictor of procurement performance, while the remaining 49.3% of the variation is explained by other factors not included in the model.

#### Univariate Regression Model of E-Tendering and Procurement Performance

The regression model was used for predictive analysis. The study was guided by the following linear regression model:

$$Y = \alpha + \beta_1 X_1$$

Where:

Y = Procurement Performance

$X_1$  = E-Tendering

To test the first null hypothesis:

H01: There is no statistically significant effect of e-tendering on procurement performance in the Nairobi County Government.

The linear regression model was used to examine the influence of e-tendering on procurement performance. The results are presented in Table 4.14.

**Table 4.3: Coefficients for E-Tendering and Procurement Performance**

| Model       | Unstandardized Coefficients | Standardized Coefficients | t     | Sig.  |
|-------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------|-------|-------|
|             | B                           | Std. Error                | Beta  |       |
| (Constant)  | 0.684                       | 0.148                     |       | 4.622 |
| E-Tendering | 0.326                       | 0.069                     | 0.712 | 4.725 |

Dependent Variable: Procurement Performance

Source: Research Data (2026)

Table 4.3 indicates a coefficient of 0.326 and a constant of 0.684; hence, the derived regression model is:

$$Y = 0.684 + 0.326X_1$$

When e-tendering is held constant, procurement performance in the Nairobi County Government is expected to have an index of 0.684. Furthermore, e-tendering had an unstandardized beta coefficient (B) of 0.326. This implies that a one-unit increase in e-tendering would result in a 0.326-unit increase in procurement performance. Since the p-value (0.000) is less than the 0.05 level of significance, the relationship is statistically significant. Furthermore, the calculated t-value (4.725) is greater than the critical t-value of 1.96. Therefore, the study rejects the null hypothesis and concludes that there is a statistically significant effect of e-tendering on procurement performance in the Nairobi County Government. The finding is also consistent with the positive correlation ( $r = 0.712$ ) and the significant multiple regression coefficient reported in the study.

## CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### Conclusions

The study sought to determine the effect of e-tendering on procurement performance in the Nairobi County Government. The descriptive findings revealed that respondents generally agreed that e-tendering influenced procurement performance, as reflected by an aggregate mean of 4.08 and a standard deviation of 0.88. This indicates that respondents strongly perceived e-tendering as enhancing transparency in bid evaluation, improving online bid submission efficiency, reducing tender processing time, promoting fairness during supplier selection, and strengthening compliance with procurement regulations.

The findings from the correlation analysis established that e-tendering had a strong positive and statistically significant relationship with procurement performance ( $r = 0.712$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). The regression analysis further revealed that e-tendering had a positive and statistically significant effect on procurement performance ( $\beta = 0.326$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ). These findings imply that improvements in e-tendering significantly enhance procurement performance within the Nairobi County Government.

### Conclusions of the Study

The study concluded that e-tendering has a positive and statistically significant effect on procurement performance in the Nairobi County Government. The findings indicate that the implementation of e-tendering has enhanced transparency in the tendering process, improved fairness during supplier selection, reduced tender processing time, and strengthened compliance with public procurement regulations. Consequently, increased adoption and effective utilization of e-tendering systems contribute significantly to improved procurement performance.

## 1Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the Nairobi County Government should strengthen the implementation of e-tendering systems by investing in reliable digital procurement infrastructure and ensuring that all procurement activities are conducted through integrated electronic platforms. The county government should also continuously train procurement personnel and suppliers on the effective use of e-tendering systems to enhance transparency, fairness, and efficiency in the procurement process while ensuring full compliance with the Public Procurement and Asset Disposal Act

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