

**DETERMINANTS OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PUBLIC
PROCUREMENT PREFERENCE AND RESERVATION
SCHEME IN TANA-RIVER COUNTY**

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**A RESEARCH PROJECT SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF
THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF MASTER OF SCIENCE OF
DEGREE IN PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLIES MANAGEMENT OF
MOUNT KENYA UNIVERSITY**

JULY 2024

DECLARATION AND APPROVAL

This project is my original work and has not been presented for a degree or any other award in any other University.

Signed:



Date: 7th July 2024

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I confirm that this proposal was prepared by the candidate under my supervision.

Signed



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DEDICATION

I dedicate this research project to my family as evidence of the output of their great support; as well as colleagues at work County Government of Tana River.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I wish to register my profound gratitude to Almighty Allah for giving me strength during my research writing. Further I register my acknowledgement to my supervisor Dr kamoni peter, who through his guidance and direction I managed my research project. I sincerely thank him. I would also like to extend special regards to my family and mom for their support. In addition, my special gratitude goes to my colleagues at County Government of Tana River and my friends at Mount Kenya University for the support and encouragement. Likewise I also appreciate all my amazing lecturers for their lectures and guidance.



ABSTRACT

Public procurement is estimated to account for a huge percentage of government expenditure. For instance, it is estimated to account for 12% of the GDP of OECD countries. This huge expenditure presents opportunity for governments to use public procurement to promote local industry and disadvantaged groups in an economy; through the application of preference and reservation schemes in public procurement. In Kenya, reports indicate that whilst public procuring have not achieved to implement the preference and reservation scheme of 30% for enterprises owned by youth, women and persons living with disability (PWDs). This study therefore seeks to examine the determinants: Access to Funding; Technical Capacity; Access to Procurement information; and Ethical Issues; of the implementation of the preference and reservation scheme in Kenya. The study examined the variables from the lenses of the: Empowerment theory, legitimacy theory, and the AHP model; and reviewed relevant empirical literature that established that little empirical examination has been done in marginalized counties of Kenya as pertains the preference and reservation scheme implementation. Adopting a descriptive research design, the study implemented a census survey approach that collected data from 28 procuring entities in the County of Tana River. The study established that Access to funding does not have significant and substantial effect on implementation of the preference and reservation scheme, while technical capacity, access to procurement information, and ethical issues have significant and substantial effect on implementation of the preference and reservation scheme in the County of Tana River. The study recommends setting aside more lucrative tenders for the special interest groups to stimulate interest in the preference and reservation scheme. The study further recommends adoption of strategies to enable publicizing procurement information on social media; enhanced capacity building of interest groups in procurement, and additional levels of verification of eligibility for the government procurement opportunities. These would enhance the Implementation of the Preference and Reservation Scheme.

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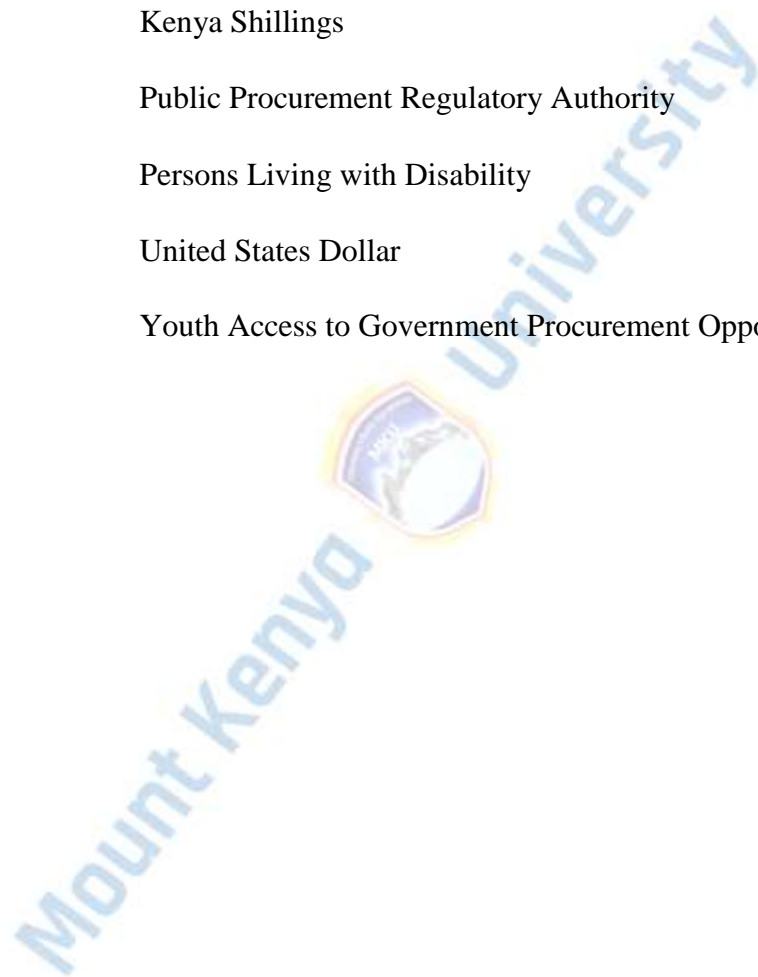
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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AGPO:	Access to Government Procurement Opportunities
AHP:	Analytic Hierarchy Process
E.U	European Union
GDP:	Gross Domestic Product
OECD:	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
KES:	Kenya Shillings
PPRA:	Public Procurement Regulatory Authority
PWD:	Persons Living with Disability
USD:	United States Dollar
YAGPO:	Youth Access to Government Procurement Opportunities



CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction

This chapter provides an insightful background on public procurement, the preference and reservation scheme in public procurement and the research objectives.

1.1 Public Procurement

Public procurement, often described as the acquisition of goods, works and services by public entities, is the conduit for delivery of services, including roads infrastructure, health, education, energy, by a government. It is estimated to account for a huge percentage of government expenditure. For instance, it is estimated to account for 12% of the GDP of OECD countries (2019). In the United Kingdom, public procurement accounts for about a third of all government expenditure or about Pounds 290 Billion (Couzens 2021). In the United States, the federal government was reported to have spent 1.5 Trillion Dollars on State, local and Education contracts in the year 2019 (Deltek 2020). It can thus be argued that public procurement is among the single largest expenditure of developed nations; It thus attracts huge interest from citizens and residents of these nations and portends great effect to the economies of these nations.

Similarly, in Sub-Saharan Africa public procurement accounts for a huge portion of government expenditure. According to Bosio et al (2022), in Eritrea public procurement accounts for 33 percent of GDP, while In Angola, the share is 26 percent of GDP. Public procurement is estimated to account for 11% of the country's GDP in South Africa and in Kenya (AFDB 2021). Thus it can be concluded that in almost all nations of the world, public procurement accounts for a large percentage of government

expenditure. In-fact, global public procurement is estimated at USD 13Trillion Dollars (Swan & Manka, 2024). Due to the sheer size public procurement, its effect on the market, and its multi-stakeholder environment, it is thus legislated in most nations in a bid to enhance efficiency (Swan & Manka, 2024). Consensus can thus be noted that public procurement is a huge expenditure in developed and developing nations alike.

These huge amounts are primarily spent in the acquisition of critical infrastructure such as roads, hospitals, schools, and other essential facilities vital for the well-being of society. Moreover, the funds are also utilized for procuring goods and services that are essential for providing various services like security to its citizens. This allocation of resources becomes even more crucial given the significant infrastructure and fundamental developmental requirements prevalent in most developing nations. It is essential to note that the efficiency of the public procurement process plays a pivotal role in determining the successful accomplishment of various developmental objectives set by these nations. Furthermore, governments utilize public procurement not only as a means to address developmental needs but also to fulfill broader objectives including promoting inclusive growth, ensuring sustainability, and driving socio-economic progress.

The significance of public procurement extends beyond mere acquisition processes and serves as a strategic tool for governments worldwide to tackle issues such as poverty alleviation and fostering job creation. This underscores the reliance of governments globally on the public procurement system to effectively implement socio-economic initiatives, including the establishment of schemes like public procurement preferences and reservations, which are known by different names but serve similar purposes across nations worldwide.

1.1.1 Preference and reservation in public procurement

One of the socio economic uses of public procurement is promotion of local industry and disadvantaged groups in an economy; through the application of preference and reservation schemes in public procurement. According to Ali (2022) Public procurement preference and reservation has existed in the U.S from the time of the great depression through the Buy American Act of 1933 and the 1953 Small Business Administration that required federal government to purchase local products and support local industry. The case of use of public procurement to achieve social goals is also explicit in the European Union. Arrowsmith (2010) posits that the European Union procurement policy promotes preference for domestic suppliers as well as reservation for special interest groups.

This application of preference and reservation in public procurement to achieve socio-economic developmental objectives has also been observed in Australia, India, and Jamaica. These nations use the procurement policy to promote preference and reservation for the special interest groups such as Small and Medium enterprises, and Women in Entrepreneurship. (Kirton 2013). In these nations, the procurement system makes it easy for the disadvantaged groups, and small businesses to access government tenders. However, Kirton (2013) documents that a gap between policy for inclusion and its practice in India, Jamaica and Australia; this, the author explains, is resultant of the fact that the persons for whom inclusion is sought by policy, are minimally educated and work in the informal sector. This implies that in these nations, the literacy required to understand the public procurement system is low, and thus inhibits their participation. Consequently, to improve their participation in the preference and

reservation schemes, more sensitization and access to credit has often been recommended.

The use of the public procurement system to drive socio-economic development has also been documented in the developing nations of Africa. For instance, in South Africa, targeted procurement is applied in the form of direct preference or direct participation. The targeted procurement system seeks to achieve, among other things equity for race disparity in the postapartheid regime; and participation of women, and disabled persons (Moronge & Ratemo, 2022). Draw backs of the targeted procurement systems have been linked to low access to capital, low interest, and corruption. These are often linked lack of collateral by the special interest groups, as well as the low value of procurement set aside for the special interest groups-that diminish interest due to the low value returns from these low value contracts. According to Otim (2020), the procurement law of Uganda specifically provides for preference and reservation. This is intended to promote the use of local expertise and materials and participation of local communities and organizations as well as local bidders.

Furthermore, the discrepancy between policy intentions and the actual implementation of preferential procurement practices is a pervasive issue not only in Ghana and Kenya but also in many other nations around the world. In Ghana, despite the government's efforts to support local businesses through preferential public procurement outlined in section 60 of the procurement law, the lofty objective remains largely unattained. This is primarily due to challenges such as inadequate equipment, financial resources, and stiff competition from foreign companies, as highlighted by Amoah and Shakantu's findings in 2017. Similarly, in Kenya, the legal framework for preference and reservation in public procurement, as enshrined in the Constitution of Kenya 2010 in article 227, is intended to boost the participation of disadvantaged groups like youth,

women, small and medium enterprises, and women-owned businesses. The framework, delineated in the Public Procurement and Asset Disposal Act (PPADA) of 2015 and the public procurement and disposal (preference and reservations) Regulations of 2011, mandates procuring entities to allocate a minimum of 30% of government procurement opportunities to these marginalized groups, as per Moturi's analysis in 2018.

This strategic employment of public procurement as a tool to attain social development objectives in Kenya serves as a fundamental approach to fostering progress within the economy. This strategy places a particular emphasis on creating employment opportunities for marginalized members of society, thereby addressing their vulnerabilities and fostering inclusivity. Moreover, the initiative plays a crucial role in curbing potential security threats stemming from high levels of unemployment by offering a pathway to stability and economic empowerment for those at risk. By harnessing the power of public procurement, the government endeavors to proactively tackle social challenges and stimulate economic growth, ultimately paving the way towards a more sustainable and equitable society. This multi-faceted approach, as identified by Mwangi (2019) not only aims to combat negative social phenomena but also seeks to drive investment, boost economic prosperity, and elevate the living standards of underserved populations.

This application has achieved success particularly in developed nation; where vulnerable groups have benefited immensely in the special procurement schemes. However, as espoused in various reports, the preference and reservation schemes in public procurement systems in developing nations are yet to achieve much results. The situation in numerous countries, reveals the existence of a stark divide between policy articulation and actual practice in preferential procurement. According to PPRA's assessments in 2018, only 18.2% of Kenya's colossal annual procurement budget of

approximately KES 256 billion was designated for disadvantaged groups, falling short of the stipulated 30% target. Disturbingly, as revealed by PPRA in 2018, contracts meant for the specified groups were diverted to county executives and various ineligible individuals, undermining the intended objectives of the preferential procurement policies. Looking at more recent data from 2019, it emerges that out of the 183 procuring entities that submitted reports, only 127 entities adhered to the 30% procurement allocation to enterprises owned by youth, women, and persons living with disabilities, as reported by PPRA in 2019. Consequently, 55 entities failed to meet this minimum threshold, indicating a substantial proportion of procurement bodies neglecting to reserve contracts for the target groups. PPRA's findings underscore the prevalent issues of non-reservation, erroneous contract awards, and limited uptake among intended beneficiaries. This disconnect between the legal framework's intentions and the practical implementation of preferential procurement mechanisms signifies a systemic challenge that warrants earnest attention and remedial actions to bridge the gap and realize the socioeconomic benefits intended by these policies.

1.1.2 Public Procuring Entities in Tana River County

The county of Tana River is located in the former Coast Province of Kenya (County Government of Tana River, 2024). The county host various public entities. The most notable is the County Government of Tana River County, and the Hola county referral hospital. The county also hosts other smaller entities ranging from schools to dispensaries.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Public procurement is often used by governments to achieve other objectives such as inclusive growth, sustainability, and as a lever to drive socio-economic development

(OECD 2019), particularly as a vehicle for poverty alleviation and job creation. The use of procurement to strategically achieve social goals in Kenya is premised on the need to create employment for this group that accounts for a large percentage of the population could pose security threats; Public procurement provides opportunity to decrease social evils, increase investment and income in this group of citizens (Mwangi 2019). Like other Nations, Kenya has a robust public procurement policy on Preference and reservation in public procurement. These initiatives often target small, micro and medium enterprises; Women; Persons Living with Physical Challenges; and Youth. However, a stark divide is evident between policy stipulations and implementation status. For instance in Kenya, most of the reports indicate that the preference and reservation scheme is performing poorly. Kenya is yet to achieve 100% compliance to the policy of reserving awarding 30% of all government procurement to the targeted groups. For instance, in the year 2018, the contracts awarded to these groups accounted for only 18.3% of total government procurement (PPRA 2018). In the following year, that is the year 2019, analysis of data reveals that fifty five out of the one hundred and eighty three public procurement entities that submitted reports to the public procurement regulatory authority did not comply with the requirement to set aside and award thirty percent of procurement opportunities to special interest groups. Additionally non reservation and award to not target groups was rife. This means that the opportunity to use public procurement to achieve employment, equity and social support is failing.

Several studies have examined the concept of the preference and reservation schemes in the county and region; such as Kimemia and Senelwa (2019), have focused on institutional factors affecting YAGPO in state corporation; while Moronge and Ratemo (2022), and Jepkosgei and Kibet (2019) have studied AGPO in Marakwet and

Nakuru county respectively. Little evidence exists of study on determinants of YAGPO implementation in Tana River County. There is little empirical analysis of the public procurement preference and reservation scheme in traditionally marginal counties of Kenya. This study therefore sought to study the factors that influence implementation of preference and Reservation scheme in Tana River County.

1.3 Research Objectives

The main objective of this study was to examine the determinants of implementation of the public procurement preference and reservation scheme in Tana River County.

1.4 Specific Objectives

- i. To examine the effect access to funding on implementation of the public procurement preference and reservations scheme in Tana River County
- ii. To assess the effect of technical capacity on implementation of the public procurement preference and reservations scheme in Tana River County
- iii. To examine the effect of access to procurement information implementation of the public procurement preference and reservations scheme in Tana River County.
- iv. To determine the effect of ethical issues on implementation of the public procurement preference and reservations scheme in Tana River County.

1.5 Research Questions

- i. What is the effect access to funding on implementation of the public procurement preference and reservations scheme in Tana River County?
- ii. What is the effect of technical capacity on implementation of the public procurement preference and reservations scheme in Tana River County?

- iii. What is the effect of access to procurement information implementation of the public procurement preference and reservations scheme in Tana River County?
- iv. What is the effect of ethical issues on implementation of the public procurement preference and reservations scheme in Tana River County?

1.6 Scope of the Study

The scope of this study could be defined from two perspectives: Geographical and concept: firstly, the primary objective of this research endeavor was to comprehensively analyze the influential factors that affect the successful implementation of the preference and reservation scheme specifically within the geographical boundaries of Tana River County. Being geographically confined to this particular region, the study predominantly consisted of a detailed examination through surveys conducted amongst various public procuring entities of the County of Tana River in order to obtain a comprehensive overview of their perspectives and practices. Secondly, the study acknowledges the possibility of additional determinants that may impact the implementation of the preference and reservation scheme, it primarily focused on investigating the following key conceptualized determinants: Access to Funding, Technical Capacity, Access to Procurement Information, and Ethical Issues. This meticulous approach was adopted to ensure that a holistic understanding of the determinants influencing this scheme's execution was achieved, facilitating the development of well-informed strategies and policies aimed at enhancing its effectiveness and impact within Tana River County.

1.7 Significance of the study

The study appeals to the policy makers involved in the development and implementation of public procurement policy; particularly the Public procurement

Regulatory Authority (PPRA) and the County Governments of Kenya, charged with monitoring and managing the public procurement system, by providing a deeper understanding of the level of implementation of the preference and reservation scheme in the counties and thus provide a good basis to institute strategies to spur implementation of the preference and reservation scheme. The study findings expand understanding of the preference and reservation scheme in the counties. This provides additional input to regulators and implementers of the public procurement preference scheme; input that will inform policy to spur implementation related to improving access to funding; models of disseminating procurement information; and strategies to up-skill the special interest groups in procurement. Further, the study provides intriguing findings such as the one related to access to funding that could be examined further by researchers and academicians. This presents grounds for further research into other determinants and implementation strategies.

1.8 Limitations of the Study

This study sought to examine only four determinants; Access to Funding; Technical Capacity; Access to Procurement information; and Ethical Issues; of implementation of the preference and reservation scheme in Tana River County. This provides opportunity for other researchers and scholars to explore other determinants and also in other counties and different sectors of the economy. The study acknowledges a potential challenge related to resistance to respond to the study questionnaire owing to confidentiality policies of many Procuring Entities. To mitigate this challenge, the study relied on the introductory letter from the university. This letter clearly stated that the data being collected through the survey serves an academic purpose exclusively,

thereby assuring respondents that their information will be handled with the utmost discretion and confidentiality.

The study further anticipated the challenge of respondents withholding information as public procurement is a sensitive matter. The study sought to alleviate concerns by furnishing respondents with an insightful introduction letter. The letter, issued by the university, expressly reassured participants that all data gathered in the survey was intended solely for academic research purposes, guaranteeing them that their responses would be strictly confidential and treated with the utmost privacy.



1.9 Operational Definition of Terms

Funding: These are the resources available at the disposal of special interest groups. This includes resources the groups can acquire from financial institutions such as banks or micro-finance institutions for the purpose of financing the resultant contracts.

Technical Capacity: Technical capacity is particular technical capabilities such as knowledge and skills. (Techniques) required for an individual and organization to elaborate on their tasks

Preference: an arrangement where advantage is given to local bidders when procuring works, goods and services in a public procurement process

Procurement Information: This refers to invitation of special interest groups to participate in the public procuring proceedings and includes information about the procurement need and other instructions. It is provided by the procuring entities normally through adverts on print and website media.

Reservation: A reservation scheme serves to exclude potential bidders from a particular procurement proceeding by "reserving" the procurement for specified bidders

CHAPTER TWO LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

This section provides the theoretical framework underpinning this study, as well as the empirical review of the study. The section further provides the conceptual framework for this study.

2.1 Theoretical Framework

2.1.1 Empowerment Theory

The empowerment theory has been used by Waitwika (2013), and Ani et al (2018) across various disciplines. Waitwika (2013) posits that it was originally described by Zimmerman, Zimmerman's (1984) work, later adopted by Rappaport (1987) into community psychology studies. It has since been adopted into various fields, especially in social sciences to explain the concept of empowerment: the ability of people to gain understanding and control over personal, social, economic and political forces in order to take action to improve their life situations. Succinctly described in Nicholas (2019), empowerment is evident when individuals, and communities are enabled to take power and act effectively in gaining greater control, efficacy, and social justice in changing their lives and their environment. According to Zimmerman (2000), the originator of this powerful theory, empowered individuals exhibit key characteristics such as high levels of self-esteem, self-efficacy, a strong sense of control over their life, and an increased engagement in socio-political and civic activities. When we examine the preference and reservation scheme through the lens of this theory, we can clearly see how public procurement can serve as a strategic tool for achieving important social objectives.

In Kenya, the utilization of public procurement to strategically pursue social goals is motivated by the imperative to generate employment opportunities for a significant segment of the population which faces high levels of unemployment, thereby offsetting potential security challenges. By leveraging public procurement, there is a unique opportunity to combat prevalent social ills, boost investments, and enhance income prospects for this vulnerable group of citizens as highlighted in the work of Mwangi (2019). This initiative aims to rectify the existing disparities in the procurement system that often disproportionately favor large corporations over the youth, thus disrupting their ability to secure tenders and gain meaningful employment.

Aligned with the essence of empowerment theory, the overarching goal of empowering individuals to transform their lives and achieve their aspirations is vividly illustrated through the implementation of the preference and reservation scheme. By offering financial support and disseminating relevant information, the scheme serves as a catalyst for empowering individuals to build their capabilities, enhance their self-perception, and ultimately progress towards attaining greater success and recognition in society. This holistic approach to empowerment underscores the fundamental principles of the theory, emphasizing the importance of providing individuals with the necessary resources and knowledge to unlock their potential, realize their ambitions, and break barriers to progress. This theory thus gives ample basis for organizing knowledge on financial capacity and access to procurement information as drivers of preference and reservation scheme in public procurement.

2.1.2 The analytical hierarchical process on supplier selection process

Supplier selection process represents a complex problem and thus a multi-attribute decision making (MADM) problem. The analytic hierarchy process (AHP) model,

pioneered by Wind and Saaty in 1980, stands out as a vital technique frequently implemented with success in the realms of supplier selection and evaluation within various industries. This model proves particularly beneficial for companies dealing with objectives featuring a myriad of facets that often conflict with one another. Through the application of AHP, decision-makers can pinpoint priorities and make well-informed choices, taking into account both the quantitative and qualitative dimensions of decision-making. AHP, as a multi-attribute decision-making process, excels at helping individuals navigate intricate decision landscapes by enabling them to establish clear priorities and arrive at optimal outcomes. This approach encompasses three fundamental functions — structuring complexity, measuring on a rational scale, and synthesizing — each integral to its effectiveness in resolving complex decision scenarios, as noted by Salvati et al (2016).

Furthermore, the utility of AHP transcends its initial application in supplier selection, finding relevance in diverse fields such as logistics and supply chain management, marketing, engineering, education, and economics, as outlined by Salem (2017). When embracing the AHP model, one is compelled to recognize the pivotal role that supplier capacity plays in the selection process. This acknowledgement underscores the significance of ensuring adequate funding, a prerequisite for granting tenders to the youth, and thereby sets the stage for exploring how accessibility to funding impacts the target groups participating in reservation and preference schemes within the context of Kenya. By considering the implications of this theory, this study seeks to hypothesize on the critical importance of funding accessibility to these designated groups, shedding light on the interplay between financial support and the success of youth involved in such programs. Strategies to enhance access to funding could thus be explored.

2.2.3 Legitimacy Theory

Derived from the concept of organizational legitimacy, Olateju et al (2021) posit that the legitimacy theory was originally defined by Dowling and Pfeffer (1975) as a condition existing when an entity's value system is in line with the value system of the larger social system of which the entity is a part. It is thus then responsibility of organizations to disclose its practices to the society within which it exist, in-order to justify its presence and existence in this society (Wilmshurst &Frost 2000). The primary focus of the legitimacy theory lies in examining the intricate relationship and dynamic interactions that exist between an organization and the society it operates within. This theory serves as a valuable analytical framework through which one can investigate the correlation between ethical considerations and the execution of policies such as the preference and reservation scheme in the specific context of Kenya. Essentially, legitimacy theory suggests the existence of a social contract that underpins the relationship between the government and the citizens, asserting that failure to adhere to this contract can culminate in its erosion or breakdown.

Within the sphere of public procurement, a plethora of issues can potentially undermine the legitimacy of this social contract, with factors like cronyism and corruption representing significant challenges. Any deviation from the principles outlined in the social contract, particularly in terms of ensuring the responsible management of public funds, can be interpreted as detrimental to the sustained implementation of governmental strategies, including critical development projects and ambitious policy agendas such as large-scale infrastructure initiatives. (Lema & Mrope, 2018). The presence of ethical issues could thus be seen as a potential inhibitor to the achievement

of the objectives of the implementation of the presence and reservation scheme, and ultimately the objectives of the scheme.

2.2 Empirical Review

2.2.1 Access to Funding

Khaemba and Otinga (2019) examined the determinants of procurement performance in the county government of Bungoma, Kenya. The study titled “Influence of Supplier Financial Capability and Evaluation on Procurement Performance” established that supplier financial capability significantly influences procurement performance in the sense that supplier who had adequate financial resource power would effectively deliver procured goods and services with minimal fail. The study recommended thorough assessment of suppliers before being awarded tenders as this will ensures that qualified suppliers deliver quality goods and services. This study highlights the importance of supplier financial capability and links the financial capability to contract performance. Whilst the study recommends thorough assessment of supplier’s financial capability; the study however fails to illuminate the constituent of this study: the public procurement preference and reservation group.

A similar study by Ndege and Karanja (2018) sought to establish the influence of financial capacity on accessibility of the preferential public procurement opportunities among youth groups in Nakuru town sub-county. The study concluded that financial capacity has a positive influence on the accessibility of the preferential public procurement opportunities among youth groups in Nakuru Town sub-county. The study

recommends a deeper look into the influence of the various metrics used to examine the influence of financial capacity on accessibility of the preferential public procurement opportunities among youth groups in Nakuru Town sub-county. The study differs with the study by Khaemba and Otinga (2019); in that it is examining an aspect of interest to this study; therefore this study affirms the conceptual model of this study.

In, Wachiuri (2020) delved into the correlation between the financial viability of suppliers and the performance of state corporations in Kenya. The research findings unequivocally pointed towards a strong positive relationship between supplier financial viability and the overall performance of state entities. One of the pivotal recommendations arising from this study was the necessity for suppliers to meticulously craft robust financial plans that can guarantee sustained financial viability, thereby fostering a more stable and fruitful partnership with state corporations. Delving into a related aspect, Waitwika and Getuno (2013) conducted a comprehensive study focusing on the determinants impeding youth access to government procurement opportunities within the judiciary of Kenya. Their research highlighted that a significant number of youths face the barrier of insufficient financial resources, which poses a formidable challenge in their quest to avail themselves of government procurement opportunities. This constraint often stems from the inherent difficulty many youths encounter in raising the requisite capital to fund contracts even after successfully securing them, thereby perpetuating a cycle of restricted access.

Consequently, drawing attention to the issue of youth participation in government procurement, Wleh (2015) undertook a study aimed at scrutinizing the factors influencing the uptake of procurement opportunities by youths in government ministries in Kenya. The outcomes of this research affirmed that the primary obstacle hindering youth engagement in the preferential procurement scheme is limited access

to financing. This financial bottleneck significantly curtails the active involvement of youths in leveraging government procurement opportunities, underscoring the indispensable role of financial support mechanisms in facilitating their participation.

Another relevant inquiry by, Mwangi, Kiarie, and Nyaboke (2019) directed their research towards evaluating the challenges impeding the effective implementation of preference and reservation schemes for special groups in public procurement within tertiary institutions. Their study revealed a multitude of obstacles, such as the lack of collateral and credibility - especially pertaining to debt financing, absence of established businesses, inadequate personal savings and resources, and unfavorable credit scoring among other issues. These formidable barriers collectively contribute to limiting the accessibility of government procurement opportunities for special interest groups, thereby necessitating strategic interventions to address these systemic challenges and promote inclusivity in public procurement practices for all stakeholders.

2.2.2 Technical Capacity

On aspects of Technical Capacity, various studies have been conducted. For instance, Wachiuri (2020) examined the influence of supplier Technical capacity on the performance of state corporations in Kenya. The research conducted by Waitwika and Getuno (2013) unveiled a crucial connection between technical capacity and performance within state corporations, emphasizing the essential role that competent technical abilities play in delivering high-quality products and services. These findings underscore the need for suppliers to continually enhance their technical skills to meet the demands of the market effectively. Notably, the study highlighted that most youth bidders in the judiciary of Kenya possess the necessary technical know-how to engage

in bidding processes, reflecting a promising outlook for youth participation in government procurement opportunities.

Furthermore, Arunga and Paul's (2019) investigation into the factors influencing the implementation of the 30% preference and reservation directive in government procurement shed light on the challenges faced by disadvantaged groups, particularly the poor, in accessing procurement opportunities. Their study revealed that limited knowledge of the procurement and tendering processes significantly hinders the participation of these groups in government tenders. By targeting 197 prequalified entities, the research brought to light the pressing need for increased support and capacity-building initiatives to empower disadvantaged groups and enhance their inclusion in procurement activities.

Moreover, a study conducted by Mwangi, Kiarie, and Nyaboke (2019) examined the hurdles hindering the effective implementation of preference and reservation schemes for special groups in public procurement within tertiary institutions. The study emphasized the positive impact of training initiatives on special groups' ability to engage meaningfully in procurement processes, highlighting the importance of ongoing capacity development efforts. To address these challenges, the researchers recommended a comprehensive review of the public procurement framework to establish an independent regulatory body dedicated to facilitating continuous capacity building for disadvantaged groups. This proposed approach aims to create a more inclusive and supportive environment that fosters equal participation in procurement opportunities across all sectors. These studies provide explanation on the various aspects of the study; but fail to illuminate strategies that could be used to up-skill the target constituents of this study to enhance their participation in the public procurement preference and reservation schemes.

2.2.3 Access to Procurement Information

In the study conducted by Waitwika and Getuno (2013), which focused on exploring the determinants of Youth access to government procurement opportunities in the judiciary of Kenya, it was discovered that information regarding procurement opportunities is indeed widely available for the youth to access. Nevertheless, a significant observation was made regarding the predominant use of print media for advertising such opportunities, a platform that may not inherently attract the interest of the youth as much as social media does. Adding to this body of research, Wleth (2015) delved into the realm of youth uptake of government procurement opportunities within government ministries in Kenya, shedding light on the various factors influencing the youth's decision to partake in such opportunities and establishing a correlation between these influencing factors and the actual uptake by the youth. Notably, the presence of information on preferential invitations to procurement played a pivotal role in encouraging more youth to engage in public procurement processes. These studies examine access procurement information, they however, fail to examine quantitatively the strategies used to enhance access to procurement information.

Further contributing to this field, Owiti and Kihara (2017) emphasized the factors that impact the implementation of Preference and Reservation Procurement Policy in State Corporations in Kenya, with a particular case study on the Kenya Railway Corporation revealing that limited access to procurement information specifically tailored for target groups hindered the effective implementation of the policy. The study provided a crucial recommendation for enhancing the dissemination of information through online platforms facilitated by Kenya Railways. Building upon this, Arunga and Paul (2019) tackled a study aiming to understand the factors affecting the implementation of the

30% preference and reservation directive on government procurement opportunities in Kenya, using the Central Bank of Kenya as a case study. Through the examination of 197 prequalified entities, the study underscored the transformative impact of procurement opportunity awareness and sensitization in fostering increased access and participation of target groups in government procurement opportunities. Similarly, these studies provide excellent insights to the aspects of this study on access to procurement information, but they do not examine quantitatively the strategies applied to enhance access to procurement information.

In summary, these studies collectively highlight the importance of access to information, targeted awareness campaigns, and the utilization of diverse communication channels in enhancing the engagement of youth and other target groups in government procurement processes within the context of Kenya.

2.2.4 Ethical Issues

Wleh's (2015) research delved into scrutinizing the participation of youths in seizing government procurement opportunities within government ministries in Kenya. The study aimed to explore the various factors that influence the youths' decision to engage in government procurement opportunities and to establish a correlation between the identified factors and the actual uptake of these opportunities by the youths. Noteworthy findings from the study indicated that the presence of procurement malpractices and political influence posed significant hindrances to the effective execution of the preference and reservation scheme within government ministries in Kenya. Another study by Owiti and Kihara (2017) examined the various factors that impact the implementation of the Preference and Reservation Procurement Policy in Kenya's State Corporations. Their research revealed that the professionalism of

procurement staff and the legislative framework had a distinctly positive and influential effect on the successful execution of the preference and reservation Scheme within these State Corporations.

In a separate study, Thairu and Chirchir (2016) aimed to assess the effectiveness of the youth preference and reservations policy within public procurement. The study uncovered that institutional challenges, such as corruption and political interference, played a significant role in impeding the proper uptake and implementation of Youth access to government procurement opportunities. To address these challenges, the study recommended enhancing information sharing and ensuring transparency throughout the procurement process. Similarly, Arunga and Paul (2019) conducted a study to investigate the factors influencing the implementation of the 30% preference and reservation directive concerning government procurement opportunities in Kenya, specifically focusing on the Central Bank of Kenya. The study, which examined 197 prequalified entities, highlighted that ethical and compliance issues, including conflicts of interest and collusion between procurement professionals and non-target group suppliers, were identified as factors that hindered the access and participation of target groups in government procurement opportunities.

Furthermore, a related study by Mwangi, Kiarie, and Nyaboke (2019) aimed to evaluate the challenges affecting the implementation of the preference and reservation scheme for special groups in public procurement within tertiary institutions. The findings of the study underscored that non-compliance with regulations significantly negatively affected the special access groups' ability to access government procurement opportunities. To address this issue, the study recommended a review of the Public Procurement Act to establish a supportive regulatory framework. This framework would include the establishment of an independent body to facilitate continuous

capacity development for disadvantaged groups and the implementation of mechanisms for regular compliance audits, given the current regulations' lack of clarity on actions to be taken in cases of non-compliance.

2.3 Research Summary and Gap

The examination of various studies on the implementation of preference and reservation schemes in Kenya provides valuable insights into different sectors. Notable researchers such as Owiti and Kihara (2017), Wleh (2015), and Wachiuri (2020) have delved into the application of these schemes within state corporations in the country. Similarly, Waitwika and Getuno (2013), Mwangi et al. (2019), and Arunga and Paul (2019) have explored the reservation and preference schemes within the judiciary, tertiary institutions, and the Central Bank of Kenya, respectively. While these studies offer significant contributions to understanding the subject matter, they have a common limitation in that they do not thoroughly cover the implementation of preference and reservation schemes in the devolved units of Kenya. In seeking to fill this gap, it is crucial to consider studies that specifically address the implementation of these schemes in various counties. For instance, the works of Khaemba and Otinga (2019) shed light on the preference and reservation scheme within Nakuru County, while Ndege and Kihara (2018) provide insights into Bungoma County. Despite these valuable contributions, there is still a need for extensive research that comprehensively addresses the implementation of preference and reservation schemes in all counties, including Tana River County.

Understanding how these schemes are implemented at the county level is essential for gaining a holistic perspective on their effectiveness and impact. Therefore, future research should aim to bridge the existing gaps by focusing on counties that have not

been extensively studied in relation to preference and reservation schemes. By expanding the scope of investigation to include a wider geographical spread within Kenya, researchers can contribute significantly to the body of knowledge on this crucial subject matter.

2.4 Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework provides a visual representation of the relationship between the study variable. This section, provides in figure 2.1, this pictorial representation of the expected relationship between the dependent variable (Implementation of the public procurement preference and reservation scheme in the County of Tana River); and the Independent Variables (the Determinants of Implementation: Access to Funding; Technical capacity; access to procurement information and ethical issues). Additionally, the conceptual framework presents the operationalization of variables of the study: that details the aspect of the variables to be measured. This assisted the study in developing data collection instrument and strategy.

Dependent Variables

Independent Variables

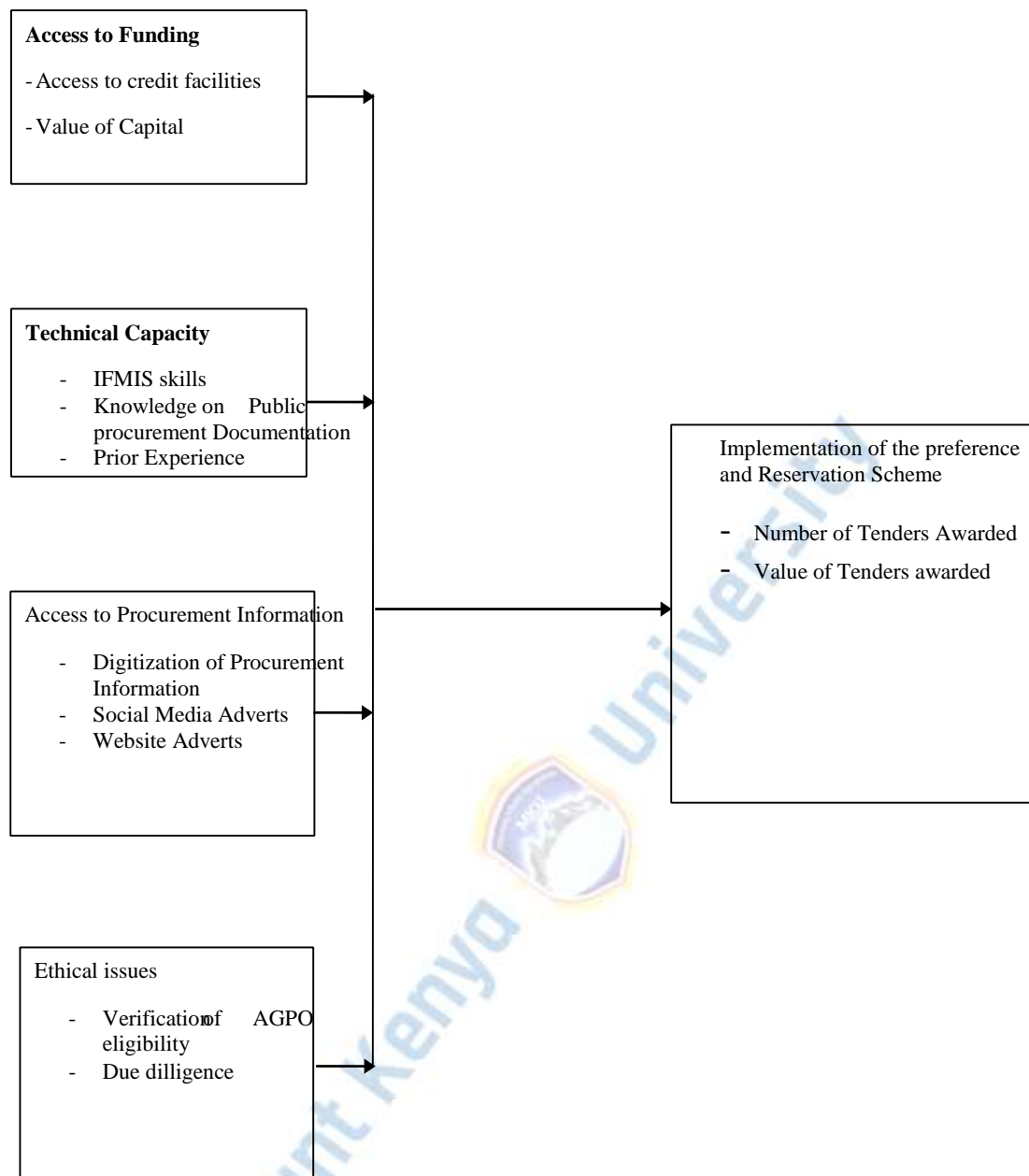


Figure 2.1: Conceptual framework

2.4.1 Access to Funding

The study postulates that the availability of financial resources will be a critical factor affecting the operational capacity of specialized interest groups as they engage with government procurement contracts. Specifically, the study will examine how the accessibility of funding may impact the efficiency and effectiveness of these groups in

securing and executing such contracts. Access to funding will be assessed through various parameters, including the financial assets owned by these interest groups and their viability in obtaining credit from reputable financial institutions like banks or micro-finance entities. Additionally, the research will delve into the interconnectedness of financial stability and project success for these groups, highlighting the significance of sound financial strategies and resource management in navigating the complexities of government procurement processes. Considering the intricate relationship between funding availability and operational capabilities, the study aims to provide valuable insights into how financing influences the dynamics of special interest groups operating within the realm of government procurement, shedding light on potential avenues for enhancing their sustainability and competitiveness in securing lucrative contract opportunities.

2.4.2 Technical Capacity

The technical capacity of individuals within the special interest group plays a vital role in navigating the intricacies of the procurement regulatory regime and procedures, as well as in understanding the documentation process. The study proposes a hypothesis suggesting that the level of technical expertise possessed by these individuals can directly impact their ability to effectively engage with procurement entities. This, in turn, may act as a hindrance to their full utilization of the opportunities designated for special interest groups. In essence, individuals with enhanced technical skills are better equipped to exploit the set-aside opportunities, while those lacking in technical know-how may face challenges in maximizing the benefits available to them. Therefore, examining the correlation between technical capacity and the level of interaction with procuring entities is crucial in identifying ways to enhance the participation of special

interest individuals in procurement processes. By focusing on strengthening technical competencies and knowledge among this group, organizations can foster a more inclusive and efficient procurement environment that optimally benefits all stakeholders involved.

2.4.3 Access to Procurement information

The variable in question focuses on analyzing the different modes used by public procuring entities to disseminate procurement information. The study suggests that the predominant approach adopted by organizations is limited to the traditional and obligatory channels such as newspaper and website advertisements. However, it is important to note that a substantial portion of the general public, especially members of special interest groups, can be categorized as active "netizens". These individuals are more inclined to actively seek out procurement information through social media platforms compared to other demographic segments. By leveraging social media, public procuring entities can potentially reach a wider audience and engage with stakeholders in a more effective manner. It is crucial for organizations to adapt to the evolving digital landscape and explore innovative communication strategies that resonate with the preferences of modern-day consumers. This shift towards digital platforms not only aligns with changing consumer behaviors but also reflects a proactive approach towards enhancing transparency and accessibility in procurement processes. Embracing social media as a viable channel for disseminating procurement information could lead to increased public engagement, improved visibility, and ultimately contribute to fostering greater trust and accountability within the procurement ecosystem.

2.4.4 Ethical issues

The study delves deeply into the meticulous processes and procedures involved in the verification methods implemented to guarantee that exclusive access to government procurement opportunities earmarked for the Youth and various special interest groups is indeed limited to those intended beneficiaries alone. The central hypothesis posited by the study postulates that the stringent verification protocols could serve as a vital mechanism in mitigating the issue of overcrowding commonly encountered by special interest groups, ultimately resulting in a significant augmentation of their involvement and engagement in the realm of government procurement opportunities. By scrutinizing the effectiveness and impact of verification measures on facilitating a more streamlined and inclusive distribution of procurement opportunities, the study aims to shed light on the crucial role that verification plays in both safeguarding the interests of designated beneficiaries and fostering a more conducive environment for their active participation and contribution to the procurement process.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter describes the research design, the population of study, the data collection and analysis method to be used in this study.

3.2 Research Design

Cresswell (2014) describes research design as an outline of research procedures and methods for empirical inquiry. In that sense it could be seen as a blue print to guide data collection and analysis necessary to answer the research questions, and thus achieve the study objectives. This study aimed to delve into the intricacies surrounding the determinants influencing the application of the public procurement preference and reservation scheme within Tana River County of Kenya. In order to achieve this objective, the study employed a specific research methodology known as a descriptive research design. Descriptive research design, as outlined by Aggarwal and Ranganathan (2019), is a framework that focuses on portraying the distribution of one or more variables. By utilizing this method, the analysis will be able to present a comprehensive overview of the factors that contribute to the successful or unsuccessful implementation of the preference and reservation scheme in Tana River County. This approach will allow for a detailed examination of the key elements influencing the adoption and execution of the procurement initiative in this particular region, thereby shedding light on the challenges, successes, and potential areas for improvement within the public procurement sector of Tana River County.

3.2 Population of study

A population is the list of all items with the characteristics that one wishes to study (Maina, 2012). In this sense it could be viewed as all the elements that have similar characteristics to a study. This study sought to examine the implementation of the public procurement preference and reservation scheme in Tana River County. The element of interest in this study is the entities that are funded from the exchequer, as described in the public procurement and asset disposal authority. These are the public procuring entities that are domiciled in the county of Tana River.

Therefore the study population was the 33 public procuring entities in Tana River County, shown in appendix 2. Therefore in this study, these were the unit of analysis. The data required in this study was sourced from the employee in-charge of the public procurement process; who have intricate knowledge of the public procurement process: therefore, the unit of observation was the procurement managers of these entities. These are often referred to as the respondents of the study.

3.3 Census Survey

Whilst sampling is often necessary when undertaking a study where the population is large; it's often not recommended when the population is relatively small, and can permit collection of data on all items of the study population (Bhattacharjee, 2012). In this study on determinants of the implementation of the preference and reservation scheme, the population consisted of thirty three public procuring entities in the County of Tana River. Therefore, since the study population is relatively small, the study collected data from all the thirty three public procuring entities in the county of Tana River. Thus this adopted a census approach. According to Bhattacharjee (2012), a census is a systematic data collection method that gathers detailed information about

every individual within a population. This comprehensive approach is highly advantageous as it facilitates in-depth analysis of various demographic characteristics. One of the key strengths of utilizing a census lies in its ability to ensure a high level of precision and reliability, especially in situations where the population size is relatively small. By encompassing the entire population, researchers can obtain a holistic view of the community, enabling them to draw more robust conclusions, formulate targeted interventions, and make informed decisions based on accurate and representative data.

3.5 Data collection

Data collection could be achieved through application of various techniques and tools. These include the use of observation; interviews or even lab tests. These are however dependent on the nature of study and data sought (Maina, 2012). This study sought primary data about the implementation of public procurement preference and reservation scheme. Therefore, this study relied on primary data in the analysis of the determinants of implementation of the public procurement preference and reservations scheme in Tana River County. Primary data is original in its description of phenomenon. (Maina 2012). This data was collected using semi structured questionnaires. The questionnaire will be developed to collect information on each of the study objectives. This entailed careful design that incorporated the need to collect both qualitative and quantitative data that would be necessary to undertake specified data analysis techniques. The study questionnaire was designed in a simple manner to allow respondents to provide information for each aspect of the study. The data was collected through drop and pick method of administering questionnaires. This method of data collection allows ample time for the respondent to interact with the questionnaire and consider all aspects of the questionnaire.

3.6 Pilot study

In order to test ensure validity and reliability of the questionnaire, the instrument was administered a select group of respondents. According to Brotherton (2018), the accuracy of data to be collected largely depended on the data collection instruments in terms of validity and reliability.

3.6.1 Validity

Validity refers to the degree to which results obtained from the analysis of the data actually represents the phenomenon under study (Maina, 2012). Ensuring the accuracy and reliability of data collection is a critical step in research methodology. One effective way to achieve this is by meticulously crafting a questionnaire that has been objectively designed and thoroughly piloted. This study instrument was presented to supply chain experts. This enabled the study to identify and rectify ambiguous, awkward, or potentially offensive questions or techniques, in line with the guidance provided by Cooper and Schindler (2011).

3.6.2 Reliability

The study instrument was administered to respondents in five public procuring entities to examine reliability. According to Dikko (2016), Reliability, which refers to the consistency of results obtained from a research questionnaire, plays a crucial role in the validity of study findings. In this research study, the assessment of reliability was tested using the widely applied test of reliability; the Cronbach's alpha (α) statistic. This statistical measure, introduced by Cronbach in 1951, offers insights into how effectively a group of test items captures a singular underlying trait or concept. The commonly recommended Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.7 or higher was used as an

indicator of acceptable reliability, as per the recommendations Cooper and Schindler (2011). The reliability analysis outcomes, along with detailed findings and the ensuing discussions, were presented in the chapter on research findings and discussion- the analysis indicate that all elements of the questionnaire achieved the recommended threshold.

3.7 Data analysis and presentation

This study put forward four key questions of the study: What is the effect access to funding on implementation of the public procurement preference and reservations scheme in Tana River County?; What is the effect of technical capacity on implementation of the public procurement preference and reservations scheme in Tana River County?; What is the effect of access to procurement information implementation of the public procurement preference and reservations scheme in Tana River County?; and What is the effect of ethical issues on implementation of the public procurement preference and reservations scheme in Tana River County? To enable the researcher answer these questions, the study sought to assign meaning to data collected and assign meaning to the data collected by will applying both qualitative and quantitative techniques. Descriptive statistics, including measures of central tendency like mean and median, as well as measures of dispersion such as standard deviation and variance, will be utilized.

Additionally, multiple regression analysis was employed to delve deeper into understanding the significance and effects of the determinants influencing the implementation of public procurement preference and reservation policies in Tana River County. These were essential in understanding the data on implementation of the preference and reservation scheme: and thus enable the study answer the research

questions. According to Fields (2013), multiple regression is used in to predict the dependent variable from a known value of independent variable(s). The following regression model: $Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \beta_4 X_4 + \epsilon$; Where; Y = Implementation of Preference and Reservation scheme; β_0 = constant (coefficient of intercept); X_1, X_2, X_3, X_4 , are independent variables: access to funding, technical capacity, access to procurement information, and Ethical issues ; and $\beta_1, \beta_2, \beta_3, \beta_4$; are regression coefficient of four variables. The data was coded and input into the SPSS program for production of descriptive and inferential statistics.

3.8 Ethical Consideration

The study adhered to all the ethical provisions necessary as stipulated by the university policy. The study acquired ethical clearance from the university as evidence by the appended ERC approval; while research license was sought and granted from the National Commission of Science and Technology. The study also sought respondent's approval through a letter of introduction that explained the type of data sought; and its use.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

The study examined the determinants of the implementation of preference and reservation scheme in the county of Tana River in Kenya. This entailed an inquiry in the 33 public institutions in the county of Tana River in Kenya about the effect of: Access to funding; access to Procurement information; Ethical Issues; and Technical capacity; on the implementation of the preference and reservation scheme in the County of Tana River. The results of the analysis is provided in this chapter.

4.2 Results of the Pilot Study

The study conducted a pilot study that involved five public institutions in the County of Mombasa. The study computed the Chronbachs Alpha; where the cut-off for reliability was 0.7. The results of the analysis indicates a Chron-Bachs Alpha of 0.767. The results of the analysis is shown in table 4.1.

Table 4.1: Chronbach's Alpha of the 5 items of the Questionnaire

Items	Chronbach's Alpha
5 Items	0.767

The calculated Chronbach's Alpha revealed a value exceeding the threshold of 0.7. This indicates a high level of internal consistency within the questionnaire utilized in this study. This level of reliability, in accordance with the recommendation by Cooper and Schindler (2011), suggests that the data collected through the questionnaire can be deemed trustworthy and consistent. This reflects the agreement and stability of the questionnaire items in measuring the intended constructs.

4.3 Response Rate

The study targeted 33 public institutions. The unit of observation in each institution was the procurement manager or their equivalent. As such, thirty three questionnaires were issued to the respondents in each of the thirty three institutions. A total of 28 questionnaires were collected from the respondents, fully filled. The analysis of response rate thus indicates a response rate of 84.85% as shown in table 4.2.

Table 4.2: Response Rate

	Questionnaires issued	Questionnaires returned	Non-responsive
Frequency	33	28	5
Percentage	100	84.85	15.15

The response rate met the criteria recommended by Aggarwal and Ranganathan (2019) regarding statistical significance, specifically emphasizing a threshold of 60% as an acceptable standard for conducting meaningful analysis. This aligns with the assertion made by the authors that response rates exceeding this benchmark are considered adequate for the purposes of conducting rigorous statistical analyses, thereby supporting the validity and reliability of the study findings.

The non-response arose out of unreturned questionnaires or poorly filled questionnaires.

4.4 Access to Funding and Implementation of preference and reservation Schemes.

The study sought to examine the effect of access to funding; by special interest groups that are targeted by the access to government procurement initiative; on implementation of the preference and reservation scheme. The following section presents the findings on the effect of access to funding on implementation of the preference and reservation scheme.

4.4.1 Descriptive Findings on access to Funding and Implementation of the Preference and Reservation Scheme in County of Tana River.

The study sought to examine the effect of access to funding on implementation of the preference and reservation scheme. The study examined the value in terms of financial resources the groups are able to source from the credit market. The results of the analysis indicates that in the County of Tana River, the mean funds accessible to special interest groups bidding for the access government procurement opportunities is KES 625,000, with a standard deviation of 186,339 as shown in Table 4.3. This shows that a substantial number of special interest persons have a low access to funds necessary to undertake contracts set out for the youth, women, and people living with disability.

Table 4.3: Descriptive findings on Access to Funding

	N	Average Funds Accessed	Std. Dev.
Access to Funding	28	625,000	186,339

This assertion can be seen on further, analysis that shows that 64.3% of the special interest groups have access to funding below KES500, 000, while 21.4% and 14.3% have access to between KES500,000 to 1,000,000, and above 1,000,000 respectively.

This analysis is shown in pie chart 4.1

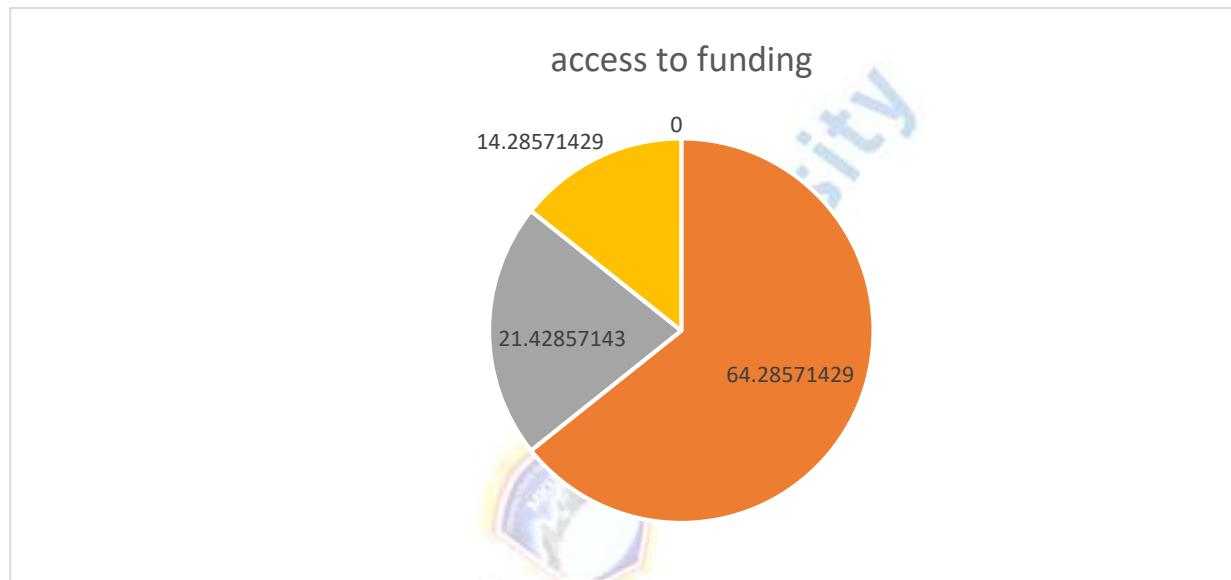


Figure 4.1: Analysis of Access to funding.

Based on this analysis, it is evident that a significant portion of the special access group lacks the essential financial resources needed to effectively execute contracts within the government procurement opportunities framework. This finding aligns with the conclusions drawn by Waitwika and Getuno (2013), who highlighted the challenges faced by the majority of youth groups in securing sufficient funding to participate in contracts under AGPO. Thus, it is clear that a substantial gap exists in the capacity to access adequate funds for engaging in government procurement initiatives among the special interest persons for whom the preference and reservation scheme is established.

4.4.2 Inferential Statistics on Access to Funding and Implementation of Preference and Reservation Scheme

The study further sought to examine the effect that access to funding has on implementation of the preference and reservation scheme. The study examine this relationship using linear regression analysis. Using quantitative data on level of implementation of preference and reservation scheme and access to funding; the study used the following linear regression to estimate the effect of access to funding on implementation of the preference and reservation scheme. : $Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \epsilon$; where Y = Implementation of Preference and Reservation scheme; β_0 = constant (coefficient of intercept); X_1 =access to funding; and β_1 = regression coefficient of the access to funding variable. The analysis yielded: A coefficient of determination of 0.003 (R squared= 0.003), and a P-Value of .783. This means that access to funding does not have a substantial and significant effect on implementation of the preference and reservation scheme in the county of Tana River. The Finding disagrees with findings of previous research such as Khaemba and Otinga (2019) and Ndege and Karanja (2018) who established substantial and significant effect of access to funding on implementation of preference and reservation schemes in Kenya. The result of the analysis is presented in Table 4.4.

Table 4.4: Regression analysis of Implementation of Preference and Reservation Scheme on

Access to Funding	
R-Squared	P-value
.003	.783

4.4.3 Discussion of Findings on Access to Funding and Implementation of the Preference and Reservation Scheme

The findings of the study indicate groups targeted by the access to government opportunities in the preference and reservation scheme have a low access to financing. The study findings collaborate the findings of Mwangi, Kiarie and Nyaboke (2019) that revealed that most groups of interest lack of securities and credibility (for debt financing), lack of existing business, lack of personal savings and resources, low credit scoring among others; and thus have limited access to funding. Further analysis of the effect of access to Funding on Implementation of preference and reservation scheme in the County of Tana River established that Access to funding does not affect, significantly and substantially, the implementation of the preference and reservation scheme in county of Tana River. This finding disagrees with the study of Wleh (2015) who established that access to financing was the greatest impediment to youth participation in the preferential procurement scheme.

It is highly likely that the reason for the lack of financial commitment associated with invitations to bid directed towards special interest groups lies in the fact that these contracts typically involve minimal financial requirements for participation. According to Briton (2023), the tenders designated for special interest groups are generally characterized by being of low value and low profit potential. Consequently, the absence of significant financial investments needed to bid for and execute these contracts can be attributed to their relatively modest economic returns. While these contracts may not necessitate substantial financial resources to engage with, they also do not offer substantial returns, leading to a scenario where their involvement could be a key factor

contributing to the limited adoption of the preference and reservation scheme in the County of Tana River and throughout Kenya as a whole.

4.5 Technical Capacity and Implementation of the Preference and Reservation Scheme

The analysis of access to procurement information focused on examining the procuring entities strategy to build technical capacity of bidders targeted by the preference and reservation scheme; and examination of the effect it has on implementation of the preference and reservation scheme. The study collected data on the number and types of activities conducted by entities aimed at improving the capacity of these target bidders in the following areas: IFMIS, Procurement documentations and Procurement laws. The findings are presented below

4.5.1 Descriptive findings on Technical Capacity and Implementation of preference and reservation Schemes.

The descriptive analysis reveals that 14.3% of the procurement entities did not organize any training seminar to build technical capacity of the target bidders; while 14.3% organized 1 and 2 seminars respectively in the year. Majority of the procuring entities, 21.4% & 17.9%, organized three and four training seminars respectively. 7.1%, 2 of the entities, organized five training seminars in the year. The analysis is presented in table 4.5.

Table 4.5: Descriptive statistics on Technical Capacity

Procuring Entities	Number of Training seminars	Percentage
4	0	14.3
4	1	14.3
4	2	14.3
6	3	21.4
5	4	17.9
2	5	7.1
3	6	10.7

This analysis suggests that in realization of the low technical skills in procurement among special interest bidders, procuring entities are actively formulating strategies to involve potential bidders in specialized capacity enhancement programs. These initiatives resonate with the conclusions drawn by Mwangi, Kiarie, and Nyaboke (2019), emphasizing the inadequacy of technical expertise among most AGPO bidders and the pressing need for procuring entities to prioritize capacity-building efforts. It is imperative for these entities to proactively address this deficiency by providing tailored training and support to bidders, thereby fostering a more competitive and capable pool of suppliers. By recognizing and addressing this shortfall in technical skills, procuring entities can effectively enhance the overall quality and efficiency of their procurement processes, ultimately benefiting both the entities and the bidders involved in the procurement ecosystem.

4.5.2 Inferential Analysis of Technical Capacity and Implementation of preference and reservation Schemes.

Analysis of the relationship between technical capacity and implementation of the preference and reservation scheme entailed a regression of percentage of tenders awarded to bidders in the target group on number of training seminars held by the

procuring entity to build capacity of the target bidders. The regression model $Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \varepsilon$; Where; Y = Implementation of Preference and Reservation scheme; β_0 = constant (coefficient of intercept); X_1 , is independent technical capacity; and β_1 is the regression coefficient of the independent Variable. The analysis yielded the following statistics: R-Square .676; P-value .000; β_0 9.008; and β_1 3.007. This means that Technical Capacity has a significant and substantial effect on the implementation of the preference and reservation scheme. The analysis yields the following regression model: $Y = 9.008 + 3.007X_1 + \varepsilon$. The results of the analysis is provided in table 4.6.

Tbale 4.6: Regression analysis of Implementation of the preference and reservation scheme on Tehcnical Capacity

R-Square	β_0	β_1	P-Value
.676	9.008	3.007	.000

These findings collaborate the findings of Arunga and Paul (2019) that assert the importance of technical capacity in the implementation of the preference and reservation scheme. This finding means that persons who have no proper understanding of the procurement laws, procedures and tendering requirement often find the process difficult or are unable to meet the requirements. This thus could be seen as a limiting factor to the implementation of the public procurement preference and reservation scheme.

4.5.3 Discussion of Findings on Technical Capacity and Implementation of the Preference and Reservation Scheme in County of Tana River

The comprehensive study conducted on entities within Tana River County revealed that a significant portion of them have actively involved bidders identified by the Access to

Government Procurement Opportunities (AGPO) program in capacity-building seminars. This aligns perfectly with the findings of previous research like the work by Arunga and Paul (2019), which highlighted that bidders targeted by AGPO lack sufficient knowledge about the intricacies of the procurement and tendering processes, as well as the requirements for tender evaluation. This knowledge gap serves as a barrier, restricting the participation and access of these target groups to government procurement opportunities.

Therefore, the imperative need to provide training and skill development programs specifically tailored for the targeted bidders is underscored. Additionally, the study brings to light the fact that a considerable number of procuring entities have not yet embraced any form of capacitybuilding initiatives. It is evident that there remains a critical need to actively engage and support these entities in enhancing their capabilities to ensure effective participation in government procurement processes. This study has also established that technical capacity; inform of capacity building by procuring entities has a substantial and significant on the implementation of the preference and reservation scheme. An increase in the number of capacity building training results in an increase in the percentage of tenders awarded to bidders in the preference and reservation scheme. This augers well with findings of the study by Mwangi, Kiarie and Nyaboke (2019) that revealed that training of special groups on procurement has a positive and significant effect on implementation of preference and reservation scheme; and recommended a review of Public Procurement to provide supportive regulatory framework which will establish an independent body that will facilitate continuous capacity developments of the disadvantages groups.

A review of the regulatory regime will effectively motivate and bolster the enforcement of the preference and reservation scheme. In practical terms, this review would exert

pressure on the various entities located in the county of Tana River that have so far neglected participation in capacity-building initiatives to align with regulations, thereby significantly reinforcing the execution of the reservation scheme within the region. Such a legal review would thus serve as a catalyst for organizations within the County of Tana River, and other organizations in the public procurement sphere, to prioritize capacity development activities, ultimately streamlining the application of the reservation policy and promoting equitable opportunities for all stakeholders involved.

4.6 Access to Procurement Information and Implementation of preference and reservation Schemes.

The analysis of access to procurement information focused on the medium of communication used to advertise procurement information to special interest groups targeted by the preference and reservation scheme. Further an analysis of the relationship between access to procurement information is presented.

4.6.1 Descriptive Analysis of Access to Procurement Information and Implementation of the Preference and Reservation Scheme

The study sought to examine the various media used to advertise invitation to bids and related procurement information to the target groups; and further establish the effect of the choice of the media on implementation of the preference and reservation scheme. Descriptive analysis of the study established that 64.3% of the procuring entities in the County of Tana River used main stream media only; consisting of Newspaper and MY Gov media and Website; while 35.7% used mainstream media and social media (Twitter, facebook) to publicize opportunities available to the special interest groups. This analysis is presented in table 4.6.

Table 4.6: Descriptive Statistics on Access to Procurement Information

N	Main Stream media only	Mainstream and Social Media
10		37.5%
18	64.3%	

The results of this study are consistent with the conclusions drawn in the research conducted by Arunga and Paul (2019). Their findings indicate a trend among public institutions where adherence to conventional, legally required advertising practices persists. This indicates that public procuring entities are yet to onboard the cost effective social media communication tools; yet the law does not hinder its use. This continuation of traditional approaches to disseminating procurement information appears predominant across various public organizations. This study provides empirical evidence that suggests that use of social media strategies could enhance the spread and access of procurement information by the special interest groups, and thus enhance success of the preference and reservation scheme. This study it highlights a reluctance to adopt more contemporary methods of information sharing.

4.6.2 Inferential Statistics on Access to Procurement Information and Implementation of Preference and Reservation Scheme

The study performed a regression analysis to examine the relationship between the effect of access to information and implementation of the preference and reservation scheme in the county of Tana River. The analysis examined the effect of advertising only on mainstream Viz a Viz the use of mainstream media and social media to publicize procurement opportunities to the target groups. Analysis of the regression of implementation of the preference and reservation scheme; in-terms of percentage of

Tenders awarded to special interest groups); on Publishing of information on main stream media only yielded the following statistics: R-Squared (.245), PValue (.007), coefficient (-6.944). This implies that the access to information by special interest groups has a substantial and significant effect on implementation of the preference and reservation scheme. Additionally it implies that Publishing information on main stream media and social media has more impact that when using main stream media only. The results of this analysis are presented in Table 4.8.

Table 4.8: Regression of implementation of preference and reservation scheme on Access to procurement information

(R-Square=.245)	Coefficients	P-Value
Constant	19.944	.0000
Pro. Info. = Mainstream Only	-6.944	.007

These findings that show significant effect of access to procurement information on implementation of the preservation scheme support previous research studies; for instance Owiti and Kihara (2017) who established that access to information is a major factor influencing success of the preference and reservation scheme in Kenya.

4.6.3 Discussion on Access to Procurement Information and Implementation of Preference and Reservation Scheme

The analysis conducted in this study established that majority of the organizations in the County of Tana River advertise only on main stream media; with the minority using social media as well as main stream media. The findings from the research conducted by Waitwika and Getuno (2013) provide significant support for the argument that the lack of broadcasting procurement information through media channels preferred by

special interest groups can pose a considerable challenge. This is especially true in the case of younger demographics who tend to show less interest in traditional mainstream media platforms and are more attracted to social media channels. Consequently, this means that procurement information aimed at special interest groups may not be reaching its intended audience effectively.

Moreover, when analyzing the impact of solely relying on mainstream media for dissemination, the data suggest that this approach is not as effective when compared to utilizing both mainstream and social media platforms. Hence, integrating social media into the strategy of sharing procurement information with target groups could greatly enhance the implementation of the preference and reservation scheme. By leveraging social media channels, more potential bidders within the target range would have access to vital information, thereby potentially leading to increased participation and engagement with the procurement process. These findings are supported by Arunga and Paul (2019) who established that procurement opportunity awareness and sensitization enhances access and participation of target groups in government procurement opportunities.

4.7 Ethical Issues and Implementation of the Preference and reservation

Scheme

The study set out to examine the effect of ethical issues on the implementation of the preference and reservation scheme. This entailed an examination of verification of AGPO registration as required by law; and additional verification of Membership and Leadership. The analysis is presented below.

4.7.1 Descriptive Statistics of Ethical Issues and Implementation of the Preference and Reservation Scheme

The study examined the process of verifying eligibility for accessing preference and reservation opportunities. This comprehensive investigation involved requesting respondents to specify the type of verification required. Subsequently, two distinct categories of verification emerged from the responses received: the first being verification limited to AGPO certification only, and the second encompassing verification of AGPO certification, as well as confirmation of membership and leadership within the bidding groups. Analysis of the data shows that about 46.4% of the procuring entities surveyed were observed to conduct verification solely on the basis of AGPO registration, whereas the remaining 53.6% of entities practiced a more thorough verification process that included not only AGPO certification but also scrutinizing the leadership credentials of the bidding groups to ensure adherence to the eligibility criteria. Further details on these statistics and the breakdown of verification practices among different entities can be found in Table 4.9, which offers a clearer visualization of the distribution and trends discovered through the study.

Table 4.9: Descriptive Statistics on Ethical Issues (Verification of Eligibility)

No of Entities	AGPO Verification Only	AGPO+Leadership & Membership Verification
13	46.4%	
15		53.6%

This implies that more organizations are increasing layers of verification, perhaps out of realization that non-eligible bidders could fashion their application to fit eligibility.

4.7.3 Regression of Implementation of Preference and Reservation scheme on Ethical Issues

The study conducted a regression analysis, to establish the relationship effect of additional layer of verification on the implementation of the preference and reservation scheme. This entailed transformation of the variable (Verification) to create dummy variable to enable the study run a regression analysis. The results of the regression analysis are as follows: R-Squared .318; P value .002; β_0 13.933; and β_1 7.605. The results are presented in Table 4.10.

Table 4.10: Regression Analysis: Implementation of the Preference and reservation Scheme on Ethical Issues

R-Square	β_0	β_1	P-Value
.676	9.008	3.007	.000

The study findings indicate that verification process of eligibility is crucial when considering the successful implementation of the preference and reservation scheme. By verifying the eligibility of individuals bidding for the special interest procurement opportunities ring fences these special interest groups from unfair competition from citizen bidders. The presence of multiple layers of verification has been found to be more influential in ensuring the integrity of the scheme compared to having just a single layer of verification. This indicates that incorporating additional checks and balances enhances the effectiveness of the verification process and ultimately contributes to the scheme's success. In essence, the verification of eligibility plays a pivotal role in determining the success of the preference and reservation scheme. The implementation of multiple layers of verification further reinforces the reliability and

fairness of the process, thereby increasing the scheme's overall efficiency and effectiveness in achieving its intended objectives.

4.7.3 Discussion of Findings on Ethical Issues and Implementation of the Preference and Reservation Scheme.

The study established that Procuring entities conduct at least one layer of verification of eligibility; with the majority of the entities conducting more layers of verification. This is in bid to ensure that only eligible bidders are involved in the preference and reservation scheme that has been targeted by non-eligible bidders as reported in Owiti and Kihara (2017). The study highlighted the importance of implementing multiple layers of eligibility verification, indicating a substantial and positive impact on the preference and reservation scheme.

This observation is in line with the research conducted by Arunga and Paul (2019), underscoring the significance of addressing ethical and compliance concerns such as conflicts of interest and collusion in government procurement processes. These factors can restrict the participation of target groups in procurement opportunities. Consequently, the presence of additional verification processes could serve to enhance the involvement of these groups in the preference and reservation scheme within Tana River County. By emphasizing the role of robust verification mechanisms, organizations can foster a more inclusive and equitable procurement environment, benefiting both target groups and the overall efficiency of the scheme.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

The study set out to examine the determinants of implementation of the preference and reservation scheme in the County of Tana River. This section provides the summary, conclusions and recommendation from the study.

5.2 Summary

The study examined the effect of access to funding, Technical capacity, access to procurement information, and ethical issues; on the implementation of the preference and reservation scheme in the county of Tana River. The comprehensive research was anchored on the Analytical Hierarchical Process methodology, which effectively guided the study to identify key elements crucial in the selection of suppliers, with a particular focus on financial capacity as a critical factor influencing the successful choice of a supplier. Moreover, the foundational principles of the Empowerment and legitimacy theories underpinned the study, providing valuable insights into the intricate dynamics at play in public procurement processes. Specifically, the Empowerment theory shed light on how financial capacity and access to procurement information significantly influence preference and reservation schemes, illuminating the selection criteria. On the other hand, the legitimacy theory offered a unique perspective on the ethical considerations tied to implementing preference and reservation schemes within the context of Kenya.

Through an extensive empirical examination, the study uncovered a significant gap in existing literature regarding the real-world implementation of these schemes in Kenya's devolved units. The study developed objectively prepared questionnaires that addressed

the set of four objectives. These questionnaires were issued to procurement managers (or their equivalent) in the public procuring entities in the county of Tana River. Data gathered from 33 distinct public procuring entities situated in the Tana River county was used to produce statistics that described the implementation status of preference and reservation schemes. The study managed to attain an impressive response rate of 84.8%, ensuring robust data collection for subsequent analysis. The collected data was coded and subjected to in-depth statistical analysis using the powerful SPSS software. Through the application of various statistical techniques, including regression analysis, the study aimed to describe the relationships and factors influencing the successful implementation of preference and reservation schemes within the unique public procurement landscape of Kenya. The study established that: Access to funding; Technical Capacity; Access to Procurement information; and Ethical issues have significant effect on the implementation of the preference and reservation scheme in the county of Tana River. The Summary of the findings is presented below:

5.2.1 Access to Funding and Implementation of the Preference and Reservation Scheme

The study revealed that most of the special interest groups of the county of Tana River have poor access to credit or financial resources. Typically, being targeted for government procurement opportunities, have limited access to credit below KES 500,000. This financial limitation could be seen as hindering their ability to secure the necessary funds for executing contracts related to government procurement initiatives; and thus could largely affect the implementation of the preference and reservation scheme in the county of Tana River. Surprisingly, the regression analysis conducted on the implementation of the preference and reservation scheme uncovered a rather

unexpected outcome - the study found that the level of access to funding did not yield a significant or substantial impact on how the preference and reservation scheme was put into practice within the Tana River county.

This result starkly contrasts with the prevailing literature on the subject, challenging existing beliefs and shedding new light on the dynamics at play in the implementation of such schemes .However the study noted that this was most likely because the contracts set apart for the special interest groups are often low value tenders that are often not lucrative and this could contribute to low interest from special interest groups. Additional inquiry into the intricacies of the relationship between access to funding, size of procurement contracts, and implementation of the preference and reservation scheme in the county of Tana River could be necessary to shed more light on this finding.

5.2.2 Technical Capacity and Implementation of the Preference and Reservation Scheme

The study established that most procuring entities realize target bidders in AGPO are limited in knowledge of the procurement process, tendering process, and requirements for tender evaluation; which limit access and participation of target groups in government procurement opportunities; and underscores the need to train the bidders in the target group. Most procuring entities, as part of their operational strategy, typically plan and host at least one dedicated training seminar each year specifically tailored to address the needs of special access groups within the financial sector. It is worth noting, however, that a considerable portion of procuring entities may not engage in any form of capacity building activities, potentially missing out on valuable opportunities to enhance the skills and knowledge base of the target constituent-the

youth, women, persons living with disabilities; and small and micro medium enterprises.

The regression analysis revealed that technical capacity building initiatives play a pivotal role in driving the successful implementation of preference and reservation schemes, particularly within the regional context of Tana River County. Extant literature supports this finding; and underscores the importance of skills on tender filling, tender submission, and documentation as well as knowledge of the procurement rules and procedures. This analysis highlighted a strong and statistically significant correlation between the frequency of capacity building training sessions and the subsequent performance of preference and reservation programs. The data indicated that an incremental increase in the number of capacity building exercises directly contributes to a higher percentage of tenders being awarded to eligible bidders participating in the preference and reservation schemes.

This signifies the critical importance of ongoing training and skill development in empowering both procuring entities and special access groups to effectively navigate and leverage the opportunities afforded by preference and reservation frameworks; and thus calls for a review of the procurement policy framework to enhance the strategies to up-skill this targeted population in a bid to improve the implementation of the public procurement preference and reservation scheme and thus achievement of the objectives of the preference and reservation scheme.

5.2.3 Access to procurement Information and Implementation of the Preference and Reservation Scheme

The study established that Most Procuring Entities in the county of Tana River use only mainstream Media; consisting of My Gov Newspaper; While a few procuring entities

advertise on My Gov as per legal requirements but also publicize procurement opportunities on social media which is more accessible to the special interest groups. The results from the regression analysis have established that the degree of access to information by special interest groups plays a defining role in determining the effectiveness of the preference and reservation scheme's implementation. The statistics of the study suggests that implementation of the public procurement preference and reservation scheme could be enhanced by enhancing access to procurement information; by advertising this information on the social media platforms-that are accessible by the special interest groups- as well as the legally mandated methods of advertisement.

The research findings suggest that disseminating information through both mainstream and social media platforms yields a more substantial impact compared to using mainstream media alone. Harnessing the potential of social media to distribute procurement-related information to specific target groups could ultimately lead to a notable enhancement in the execution of the preference and reservation scheme. This strategic approach holds the promise of better reaching and engaging with a broader pool of eligible bidders within the identified target demographic, thereby facilitating greater awareness and participation in the procurement process. Emphasizing this multi-faceted dissemination strategy not only bolsters the transparency and efficiency of the procurement system but also serves as a catalyst for fostering increased competition and fairness among the participating bidders.

In essence, integrating social media channels into the communication framework for broadcasting procurement details demonstrates a proactive and forward-thinking stance that aims to democratize access to critical information, thereby ultimately contributing to the overall efficacy and success of the preference and reservation scheme.

5.2.4 Ethical Issues and Implementation of the Preference and Reservation Scheme

The study established that Procuring entities conduct at least one layer of verification of eligibility; with the majority of the entities conducting more layers of verification. This is in bid to ensure that only eligible bidders are involved in the preference and reservation scheme that has been targeted by non-eligible bidders. The study established that more layers of verification of eligibility have a positive, substantial, and significant effect on the implementation of the preference and reservation scheme. The findings imply that more layers of verification promote the participation of the target groups in the preference and reservation scheme in the county of Tana River.

The findings of the study underscore the significance of addressing ethical and compliance concerns such as conflicts of interest and collusion in government procurement processes. These factors can restrict the participation of target groups in procurement opportunities. Consequently, the presence of additional verification processes could serve to enhance the involvement of these groups in the preference and reservation scheme within Tana River County. By emphasizing the role of robust verification mechanisms, organizations can foster a more inclusive and equitable procurement environment, benefiting both target groups and the overall efficiency of the scheme.

5.3 Conclusion

The study concludes that Technical capacity, access to procurement information and Ethical issues have significant and substantial effect on the implementation of

preference and reservation scheme in the County of Tana River. The study also concludes that Access to funding doesn't have a significant effect on the implementation of the Preference and reservation scheme. The Conclusions are provided below:

5.3.1 Access to Funding and Implementation of the Preference and Reservation Scheme

The study concludes that most special interest groups in the County of Tana River have a relatively low access to funding or credit facility to be able to execute contracts under the preference and reservation scheme. In addition to the findings mentioned above, the study highlights that the limited value of contracts designated for special interest groups in the County of Tana River plays a crucial role in the lack of impact from funding access on the preference and reservation scheme implementation. These contracts, being of low monetary value, do not necessitate substantial financial resources for their execution.

Consequently, the study suggests that this aspect contributes to a reduced level of interest among stakeholders in pursuing procurement opportunities entailing preference and reservation policies, thereby impeding the effective rollout and adoption of the scheme in practice. The study underscores the necessity for a reevaluation of the financial dynamics surrounding the preference and reservation scheme to address existing barriers and enhance stakeholder engagement in order to maximize the scheme's effectiveness in promoting inclusivity and equitable resource allocation within the County of Tana River.

5.3.2 Technical Capacity and Implementation of the Preference and Reservation Scheme

The study concludes that technical capacity building exercises have a substantial and significant effect on the implementation of the preference and reservation scheme in the county of Tana River. The study concludes that with a rise in the number of capacity building training programs, the likelihood of bidders in the preference and reservation scheme winning tenders also increases. The study provides empirical evidence that links the ability of bidders with the enhanced engagement in government procurement opportunities and, consequently, enhancing the execution of the preference and reservation scheme. This results from the increased skills and knowledge acquired through the training sessions, enabling bidders to submit stronger proposals and secure more contracts.

Ultimately, the improved capacity of these bidders contributes to a more efficient and effective implementation of the preference and reservation scheme, fostering transparency and fairness in the procurement process. The study concludes that the training programs aimed at up-skilling the special interest groups has a positive and significant effect on the implementation of the public procurement preference and reservation scheme in the County of Tana River.

5.3.3 Access to procurement Information and Implementation of the Preference and Reservation Scheme

The study concludes that few procuring entities in the county of Tana River publicize procurement information on social media which is more accessible to the special interest groups than the main stream media. The study's findings suggest that the access to information by special interest groups plays a crucial role in influencing the

successful implementation of the preference and reservation scheme. Evidence from the county of Tana River on implementation of the public procurement preference and reservation indicates suggests that disseminating information through various platforms, such as mainstream media and social media, can yield different levels of impact. The data shows that combining both mainstream media and social media for information dissemination tends to have a greater influence compared to relying solely on traditional media channels.

The study provides evidence that adopting the use of social media as a tool for disseminating procurement information to targeted groups has positive and significant influence on the effectiveness of the preference and reservation scheme. It could be greatly enhanced. This strategic approach could potentially lead to increased participation from eligible bidders within the specified target range, as it provides greater accessibility to the crucial information needed for successful implementation of the scheme. Ultimately, the study underscores the importance of leveraging multiple communication channels to optimize the dissemination of critical information and improve the overall compliance and success of the preference and reservation scheme.

5.3.4 Ethical issues and Implementation of the Preference and Reservation Scheme

The study concludes that more layers of verification of eligibility have a positive, substantial, and significant effect on the implementation of the preference and reservation scheme. The findings imply that more layers of verification promote the participation of the target groups in the preference and reservation scheme in the county of Tana River. The findings from the study suggest an important implication which highlights the necessity of implementing measures to control and prevent

potential conflicts of interest and collusion among procurement professionals and suppliers not focusing on target groups. Such measures are crucial because they serve to safeguard the fairness and integrity of the procurement process, ultimately promoting transparency and equal access for all stakeholders involved.

By addressing these issues effectively, barriers that currently hinder the participation of target groups in government procurement opportunities can be alleviated, ensuring a more inclusive and competitive environment where only targeted bidders can compete on a level playing field, ultimately benefiting the broader community through increased innovation, efficiency, and value for money in public procurement practices. The findings imply that more layers of verification promote the participation of the target groups in the preference and reservation scheme in the county of Tana River.

The findings of the study underscores the significance of addressing ethical and compliance concerns such as conflicts of interest and collusion in government procurement processes. These factors can restrict the participation of target groups in procurement opportunities. Consequently, the presence of additional verification processes could serve to enhance the involvement of these groups in the preference and reservation scheme within Tana River County. By emphasizing the role of robust verification mechanisms, organizations can foster a more inclusive and equitable procurement environment, benefiting both target groups and the overall efficiency of the scheme.

5.4 Recommendations

The study provides the following recommendations:

5.4.1 Access to Funding and Implementation of the Preference and Reservation Scheme

The study found that special interest groups targeted by the preference and reservation scheme have low access to funding. Therefore the study recommends to policy makers to enhance mechanisms that can alleviate the low access to credit by special interest groups. This the study reckons, would enhance their participation in government procurement opportunities. Further, the study found that access to funding does not have a significant effect on implementation of the preference and reservation scheme. The lack of interest in the preference and reservation scheme within the County of Tana River is primarily attributed to the insufficient value of procurement opportunities allocated to special interest groups. This discrepancy results in a general disengagement among these groups towards participating in procurement processes.

As a result, the study recommends that Procuring entities take proactive measures to bolster the value of the procurement opportunities designated for special interest groups in the County of Tana River. By doing so, Procuring entities can effectively spark interest from the special interest groups in the access to government procurement opportunities by increasing the average value of procurement opportunities. This study alludes that Higher value-Higher return contracts would attract more bidders into the scheme. This strategic adjustment has the potential to not only enhance the overall effectiveness of procurement initiatives within the county but also promote inclusivity and equitable access to economic opportunities for special interest groups. Procuring entities could use this approach to foster a more inclusive and participatory procurement environment in the County of Tana River, ultimately contributing to socio-economic empowerment and development.

5.4.2 Technical Capacity and Implementation of the Preference and Reservation Scheme

The study established that a substantial number of entities in county of Tana River have engaged bidders targeted by the Access to Government Procurement Opportunities in capacity building Seminars. However, a substantial number of Procuring entities in the County of Tana River do not engage in capacity building exercises. The study based on the finding that an increase in the number of capacity building training would result in an increase in the percentage of tenders awarded to bidders in the preference and reservation scheme; recommends a review of Public Procurement to provide supportive regulatory framework which will establish an independent body that will facilitate continuous capacity developments of the disadvantages groups. This would greatly enhance the successful implementation of the preference and reservation scheme within the county of Tana River.

A comprehensive review of the regulatory regime would catalyze initiatives aimed at up-skilling the special interest groups that are demotivated from participating in the public procurement preference and reservation scheme by the deficiency in skills and knowledge of the public procurement process. The research findings establish a significant and valid connection between technical capacity and implementation of the preference and reservation scheme in the count of Tana River. Strategies to enhance the proficiency of bidders should be adopted by public procuring entities as this would increase the involvement of special interest groups in government procurement opportunities, and ultimately contribute to the enhanced execution of the preference and reservation scheme. such strategies could include simple, yet effective training workshops and seminars.

These would empower bidders to craft more compelling proposals, strengthening their ability to secure lucrative contracts within the procurement framework, thus perpetuating a cycle of continuous improvement and success in the government procurement landscape.

5.4.3 Access to Procurement information and implementation of the preference and reservation scheme

The study concludes that few procuring entities in the county of Tana River publicize procurement information on social media which is more accessible to the special interest groups than the main stream media; and that access to information by special interest groups has a substantial and significant effect on implementation of the preference and reservation scheme. This highlights the importance of adapting procurement information dissemination methods to align with the media consumption habits of different interest groups. Failure to utilize channels that cater to the preferences of special interest groups, such as the youth who tend to favor social media over traditional outlets, presents a significant obstacle. The lack of visibility on preferred platforms could result in a limited audience for procurement information among these target demographics.

To overcome this challenge and effectively implement the preference and reservation scheme, the research suggests the need for a thorough policy reassessment and adoption of strategies aimed at maximizing the use of social media for broadcasting procurement details to the intended groups could substantially enhance the scheme's execution. By increasing the likelihood of eligible bidders within the target demographic accessing the relevant information, the implementation of the preference and reservation strategy stands to benefit significantly. The study recommends to the

public procuring entities to adopt social media communication strategies that increase the likelihood of procurement information reaching the target groups and thus enhancing participation of more individuals; thus increasing the socio-economic effect of the preference and reservation scheme.

5.4.4 Ethical Issues and Implementation of the Preference and Reservation Scheme

The findings from the study imply that more layers of verification promote the participation of the target groups in the preference and reservation scheme in the county of Tana River; as this limit proliferation of conflict of interest, and collusion between procurement professionals and non-target group suppliers; which limit the access and participation of target groups in government procurement opportunities. The findings imply that more layers of verification promote the participation of the target groups in the preference and reservation scheme in the county of Tana River. The findings from the study suggest an important implication which highlights the necessity of implementing measures to control and prevent potential conflicts of interest and collusion among procurement professionals and suppliers not focusing on target groups.

Such measures are crucial because they serve to safeguard the fairness and integrity of the procurement process, ultimately promoting transparency and equal access for all stakeholders involved. The study thus recommends to procuring entities to enhance levels of verification of eligibility of special interest bidders. This would limit competition from citizen contractors, who are better able to compete owing to their experience in the public procurement process; and financial muscle; thus providing

more opportunity for the targeted bidders to compete fairly. This would improve the implementation of the public procurement preference and reservation scheme.

5.5 Implication to Research

This study broadens literature and contributes to filling the gap in literature on determinants of implementation of public procurement preference and reservation scheme in Marginalized zones in Kenya such as in the County of Tana River, in Kenya. The study provides empirical evidence that publicizing procurement information on social media makes the opportunities more accessible to special interest groups such as youth; than the plain use of main-stream media as recommended by the law. This supports extant literature on the effect of access to procurement information by special interest group. This study seeks to contribute to the debate on strategies that could enhance access to procurement information by the special interest group by proposing expansion of the scope of advertisement of procurement information by public procurement information-to include mandatory use of social media; through policy review. Further, the study findings on access to funding disagrees with extant literature. This creates a need to review context of extant literature and conduct further study to examine this long held norm that access to funding significantly influences participation of special interest groups in government procurement. This study opines that the low value of individual procurement opportunities set aside for the special interest groups could be contributing to the low interest; and thus poor implementation of the public procurement preference and reservation scheme.

5.5.1 Recommendation for Future Research

The study found that special interest groups targeted by the preference and reservation scheme have low access to funding. Therefore the study recommends research on

policy solutions to enhance mechanisms that can alleviate the low access to credit by special interest groups. This, the study reckons, would enhance their participation in government procurement opportunities. Further, the study found that access to funding does not have a significant effect on implementation of the preference and reservation scheme. This the study alludes, is because of the low value of procurement opportunities that are set aside for the special interest groups in the County of Tana River. There is need to examine, empirically, the hypothesis that this scenario causes disinterest in the public procurement preference and reservation scheme in Kenya, and thus the poor implementation of the preference and reservation scheme. Further to enhance implementation of the preference and reservation scheme, the study invites further research into policy and strategies that would enhance adoption of social media to publicize procurement information to target groups. This could translate to improved implementation of the preference and reservation scheme; as more eligible bidders in the target range would access the information.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX I: QUESTIONNAIRE

This questionnaire is aimed at collecting data required for a study titled *‘Determinants of the implementation of the public procurement preference and reservation Scheme in Tana River County.’*. Your participation in completing the questionnaire is essential to this study. You are kindly requested to complete the questionnaire and give any additional information you might feel is necessary for the study. The information you provide will be used for academic purposes and will be treated with utmost confidentiality.

SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

1. How long have you worked in the organization?

Less than 5 years []

6-10 Years []

11-15 years []

Above 15 years []

SECTION B: STUDY VARIABLES

1. ACCESS TO FUNDING

The following are statement relating to access to Funding by the target groups of the public procurement preference and reservation scheme.

Indicate the estimated average level of access to funding by special interest group in your organization.

Type Of Credit/Level	Below 500,000 KES	500,000-1,000,000	1,000,000 & Above
Long-Term Credit			
Short-Term Credit			
Mobile Loans			

2. Access to Procurement information.

The following are statement relating to access to procurement information by the target groups of the public procurement preference and reservation scheme. Indicate the level that applies to each of the following Statement relating to advertisement of AGPO Bids and procurement information

Nature of Information/Percentage	0% T0	11% 20	21% 30	31% 40	& Above
Target groups access published on Daily Newspaper					41
Target groups access published on Social media sites (Twitter, Whatsapp, facebook etc)					
Target groups access prompts on Social media sites (Twitter, Whatsapp, facebook etc)					

3. Ethical Issues

The following are statement relating to Ethical issues and the implementation of the public procurement preference and reservation scheme. Tick the elements of verification used by the organization.

	Element	Tick
1	Verification of Membership ID cards to verify age	
2	AGPO registration	
3	Leadership verification	
4		

4. Technical capacity

The following are statement relating to Technical Capacity and the implementation of the preference and reservation scheme.

5. The following are statement relating to capacity building of Target Bidders. Indicate the one that most suits your organization.

	FY 2022/2023
Number of Training seminars on IFMIS	
Number of training seminars on procurement documentation	
Number of sensitization seminars on Procurement Laws	

5. Implementation of the Preference and Reservation Scheme in Tana River County

The following are statements of the Preference and Reservation Scheme in Tana River County.

Please provide the appropriate answers to the questions that follow.

N O		2023/2043
2 1	Percentage of Tenders awarded to Target Groups	

6. What, in your opinion, hinders implementation of the preference and reservation scheme in Tana River County in public procurement?

**APPENDIX II: LIST OF PUBLIC ENTITIES IN THE COUNTY OF
TANA RIVER**

	Name	Category	Source of Funds	Sector
1	County Government of Tana River	Public Entity	Internal revenue and Exchequer	County Govt
2	Kenya Wildlife	Public Entity	Internal revenue and Exchequer	National Govt
3	KENHA	Public Entity	Internal revenue and Exchequer	National Govt
4	Garsen Technical and Vocational College	Public Entity	Internal revenue and Exchequer	National Govt
5	National Council of Persons with Disability	Public Entity	Internal revenue and Exchequer	National Govt
6	6. Kenya National Audit Office	Public Entity	Internal revenue and Exchequer	National Govt
7	Hirimani Secondary School	Public Entity	Internal revenue and Exchequer	Education
8	Garsen High School	Public Entity	Internal revenue and Exchequer	Education
9	Ngao High School	Public Entity	Internal revenue and Exchequer	Education
10	Hola Secondary School	Public Entity	Internal revenue and Exchequer	Education
11	Kipini Secondary School	Public Entity	Internal revenue and Exchequer	Education
12	Hola County Referral Hospital	Public Entity	Internal revenue and Exchequer	Health
13	Rhoka Dispensary	Public Entity	Internal revenue and Exchequer	Health

14	St Raphael Emmaus	Public Entity	Internal revenue and Exchequer	Health
15	Majengo Dispensary	Public Entity	Internal revenue and Exchequer	Health
16	Haroresa Dispensary	Public Entity	Internal revenue and Exchequer	Health
17	AIC Daba Dispensary	Public Entity	Internal revenue and Exchequer	Health
18	Chifiri Dispensary	Public Entity	Internal revenue and Exchequer	Health
19	Bura Sub County Hosp	Public Entity	Internal revenue and Exchequer	Health
20	Nanighi Dispensary	Public Entity	Internal revenue and Exchequer	Health
21	Charidede Dispensary	Public Entity	Internal revenue and Exchequer	Health
22	Mbalabala Dispensary	Public Entity	Internal revenue and Exchequer	Health
23	Buwa Dispensary	Public Entity	Internal revenue and Exchequer	Health
24	Madogo Health Centre.	Public Entity	Internal revenue and Exchequer	Health
25	Mary Knoll Dispensary	Public Entity	Internal revenue and Exchequer	Health
26	Ngao Sub county Hospital	Public Entity	Internal revenue and Exchequer	Health
27	Garsen Health Centre	Public Entity	Internal revenue and Exchequer	Health
28	Maziwa Dispensary	Public Entity	Internal revenue and Exchequer	Health
29	Wema Dispensary	Public Entity	Internal revenue and Exchequer	Health
30	Kipini Health Centre	Public Entity	Internal revenue and Exchequer	Health
31	Semikaro Dispensary	Public Entity	Internal revenue and Exchequer	Health
32	Tarasaa Dispensary	Public Entity	Internal revenue and Exchequer	Health
33	Idsowe Dispensary	Public Entity	Internal revenue and Exchequer	Health

APPENDIX III: INTRODUCTION LETTER

Mohamed Korane,
Mount Kenya University.

The Procurement Administrators,

Dear Sir/Madam,

RE: RESPONDENTS' QUESTIONNAIRE

I make reference to the above subject.

The questionnaire presented to you is to collect data about the procuring entity's practices on preference and reservation scheme; for a study titled Determinants of implementation of the Public Procurement and preference scheme in Kenya.

The study is a prerequisite for the award of the Master of Science degree in Procurement and Supplies Management.

The study has received NACOSTI approval, and data collected will be used for academic purpose only, and will be treated with utmost confidentiality.

Yours Faithfully,

Mohamed Korane
Masters' Student,
Mount Kenya University.

APPENDIX IV: CONSENT FORM

This study seeks to examine the implementation of the public of procurement preference and reservation scheme, as part of study for the award of a Master degree in Procurement and Supplies of Mt Kenya University.

Your participation in filling the questionnaire for this study is essential in fulfilling this study successfully. The output of the study will have policy and practice implication aimed at enhancing participation of the special interest groups in public procurement preference and reservation schemes.


This is to therefore seek your consent in filling this study by appending your signature below. For further information please reach me on: 0722587094.

CONSENT


I have read and understood this form and got the opportunity to ask questions. I agree to participate in this study without coercion.

Respondent's Signature.....
Date.....

APPENDIX V: NACOSTI APPROVAL


REPUBLIC OF KENYA

Ref No: **443826**




Date of Issue **21/December/**



This is to Certify that Mr. MOHAMED ALIKORANE of Mount Kenya University has been licensed to conduct research as per the provision of the Science, Technology and Innovation Act, 2013 (Rev.2014) in Tana River on the topic: Determinants of the implementation of the public procurement preference and reservation scheme in Tana River County for the period ending 21/December/2024.

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APPENDIX VI: UNIVERSITY INTRODUCTION LETTER



DIRECTORATE OF GRADUATE STUDIES

MPSM/2021/66686

1st December, 2023

*National Commission for Science Technology & Innovation (NACOSTI)
Off Waiyaki Way, Upper Kabete,
P.O Box 30623- 00100
NAIROBI, KENYA*

Dear Sir/Madam,

RE: MOHAMED ALI KORANE- REGISTRATION NO. MPSM/2020/66686


The purpose of this letter is to introduce the above named student who is pursuing **Master of Science in Procurement and Supplies Management** in the **Department of Management** in the school of **Business and Economics**

The title of the research is **"Determinants of the Implementation of the Public Procurement Preference and Reservation Scheme in Tana River County."** It has been cleared by the University's Ethics Review Committee (Certificate attached) and now has to proceed to the field to collect data between **December, 2023 and January, 2024.**

Any assistance accorded to the student will be highly appreciated.

Thank you.

Mount Kenya University
P.O. Box 342-01000, THIKA
Office of the Director,
Graduate Studies


Dr. Samuel M. Karenga, Ph.D
Director, Graduate Studies
Enc.

APPENDIX VII: PLAGIARISM SCAN

PROJECT-KORANE 2.docx

by Mohamed KORANE

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