

## **Assessment of the Strategic Role of Procurement Professionalism on Ethical Sourcing in Kenya**

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### **Abstract**

The objectives of public procurement reforms in Kenya has been; to create value for money, to increase public participation, ensure transparency and accountability, ensure fair treatment of all suppliers, improve the economy and build the capacity of local suppliers. Hence an inclination towards a more ethical sourcing centered procurement process. The strategic role of procurement professionalism in ethical sourcing cannot therefore be wished away since every procurement activity, irrespective of size or scope, impacts in some way on the environment in which the organization operates. 60% of all government expenditure is realized through procurement. Despite the overregulated procurement operations, the public procurement system in Kenya has received a lot of negative publicity in the recent past. This paper therefore explores the strategic role that procurement professionals can play in promoting ethical sourcing in Kenyan public procuring entities. The researchers surveyed 96 procurement professionals working in Kiambu County through use of semi structured questionnaires to collect data which was analyzed using SPSS. An in-depth review of existing literature was carried out to give an informed opinion on the subject matter. The study reviews that procurement still enjoys a "back-office" position despite majority of the respondents admitting it plays a critical role in their organizations' operations. The researchers propose a repositioning of the procurement function through lobbying and continuous training so as to grow the necessary key skills and overcome the ever growing supply chain management challenges. The study proposes that developing a strategic approach on procurement, the public and private sector at large can increase the likelihood of obtaining best value for money spent and foster sustainable economic development.

**Keywords:** *Ethical sourcing, Professionalism, Strategic positioning, Procurement professionalism*