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Understanding the ‘good’ in ‘good public procurement’: A survey of the perspectives of public procurement specialists

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Public procurement is an area that until recently has received relatively little theoretical attention. While things have improved within the last decade, there are still considerable gaps in the literature. In this paper the researchers deconstruct the existing body of literature on the economic, political and social impacts of public procurement and public procurement reforms, domestically and internationally. Based on survey data the paper identifies what public procurement specialist believe ‘good’ procurement should attain. The study delineates several perspective dimensions and culturally sensitive attitude patterns that are useful in depicting the expectations of a ‘good’ public procurement process. The researchers argue that the visibility and significance of public procurement process is only expected to grow and appropriate procurement reforms can lead to significant economic, political and social benefits. The financial dimension of public procurement within a country’s economic activity makes responsible and effective public procurement practices and processes an essential aspect of economic growth and of good governance.

Understanding the expectations of public procurement reform: Identifying the dimensions for public procurement reform evaluation using a global survey of public procurement specialists.

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Background

- Public Procurement Reforms (PPRs) are indispensable in terms of ability of government to deal with increasing social, economic and political pressures.
- Despite the current global wave of PPRs, there does not seem to be a complete agreement in terms of the evaluation criteria.
- Limited number of empirical studies in the area.
- What are the benefits of PPRs? What are the expectations of public procurement professionals in terms of what a PPR should successfully address?

Purpose

- Develop a clear understanding of the design and implementation expectations in regards to PPRs.
- Identify expectation dimensions based on survey responses.
- Make policy suggestions.
- Suggest measurement criteria.

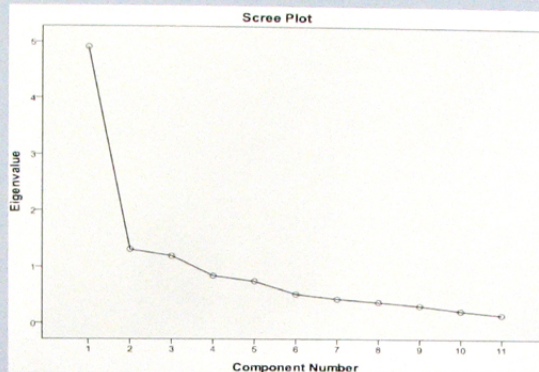
Method

- Principal Component Factor Analysis employing varimax rotation

Data

- Email surveys of procurement specialists by Inter-American Development Bank.
- The survey was pretested for validity and accuracy.
- The survey was administered in English and Spanish.
- The survey was constructed using Likert type items and open ended questions. The survey was constructed of 64 total variables.
- A total of 76 valid responses were received.
- This is an unique data set.

Diagrams



Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	4.908	44.615	44.615	4.908	44.615	44.615	2.784	25.313	25.313
2	1.305	11.865	56.480	1.305	11.865	56.480	2.323	21.122	46.435
3	1.193	10.842	67.322	1.193	10.842	67.322	2.298	20.887	67.322
4	.841	7.644	74.966						
5	.746	6.782	81.748						
6	.515	4.685	86.433						
7	.432	3.924	90.357						
8	.377	3.431	93.788						
9	.312	2.832	96.620						
10	.220	2.001	98.622						
11	.152	1.378	100.000						

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis

Rotated Component Matrix*

	Component		
	1	2	3
V23	.839		
V22	.824		
V18	.628		
V24	.628		
V16	.537		
V6		.782	
V7		.753	
V5		.624	
V12		.586	
V4			.895
V3			.868

Results

- Variables loaded significantly on three factors. The three factors can be interpreted as:
- PPR as Tool for Economic Intervention
- PPR concern with Financial Effectiveness
- PPR a Reflection/Channel of Democratic Considerations.

Conclusions

- All three factors cannot be maximized simultaneously – Decisional Triangle.
- Increased academic attention should be directed towards understanding governance implications of PPRs. This aspect of PPRs is underrepresented within the literature.
- Reforms need to be evaluated along their ability to address aspects within the three dimensions.

Decisional Triangle

