The Importance of Stakeholders' Engagement in the Implementation and Adoption of E-Procurement in Building Construction Projects in the Federal Capital Territory

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Abstract

Incorporating stakeholders' engagement is essential for the successful implementation and adoption of e-procurement in building construction projects across the Federal Capital Territory (FCT). As digital technologies revolutionise the construction industry, e-procurement offers numerous benefits, including increased efficiency, transparency, cost savings, and streamlined procurement processes. However, achieving these advantages depends on the active involvement of key stakeholders, such as government agencies,

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construction firms, suppliers, policymakers, and technology providers. This study aims to explore the impact of stakeholders' engagement on e-procurement adoption in the Federal Capital Territory (FCT). The study adopts mixed-methods in data collection and analysis. The participants are stakeholders involved in the e-procurement implementation within FCT Administration. The findings from the study revealed high correlation between stakeholders' engagement and e-procurement adoption. The key obstacles to e-procurement adoption include resistance to change, insufficient technological infrastructure, inadequate digital literacy, and concerns about cybersecurity. Additionally, the study found that the advantages of e-procurement include shorter procurement cycle times, reduced risks of corruption, improved contract administration, and enhanced project efficiency. The study recommends stakeholders' education, policy alignment, structured communication systems, and leadership support as strategies to address e-procurement implementation challenges. Collaboration is also emphasised to build trust and facilitate the widespread acceptance of digital procurement solutions. The study serves as a guide to top management towards the adoption of e-procurement.

Keywords: Stakeholders' Engagement, E-procurement, Construction Projects, Federal Capital Territory, Digital Transformation

Introduction

In today's increasingly digital world, organisations are undergoing significant transformations driven by innovations that enhance operational efficiency, transparency, and productivity. Among these advancements, e-procurement has emerged as a pivotal technology, fundamentally altering the procurement processes that organisations employ. E-procurement refers to the use of electronic systems for the management of purchasing and supply chain activities, allowing organisations to streamline their procurement operations. This shift not only leads to cost reductions but also diminishes delays and

enhances transaction visibility, making procurement more accessible and efficient.

Despite these substantial advantages, the successful implementation and adoption of e-procurement systems are not assured. Realising the intended benefits requires more than just the integration of advanced technology; it involves the active participation and engagement of all relevant stakeholders throughout the process. Stakeholders encompass a broad range of individuals and groups, including internal participants, such as employees, managers, and IT personnel, and external partners like suppliers, vendors, and even customers. Each stakeholder brings distinct perspectives, concerns, and insights that can significantly impact the progression and success of e-procurement initiatives. If organisations fail to engage these stakeholders effectively, they risk facing serious challenges, including resistance to change, operational inefficiencies, and low levels of system utilisation, all of which can thwart their ability to realise the potential benefits of e-procurement.

Understanding the critical role that stakeholders play in this context shifts the focus from technology alone to the interpersonal and relational dynamics that underpin successful implementation. Stakeholders' engagement should not be viewed merely as a procedural requirement; instead, it is a strategic imperative that fosters collaboration, builds trust, and secures commitment from all parties involved. By prioritising stakeholders' engagement, organisations can cultivate an environment that encourages enthusiastic participation in e-procurement initiatives, thereby ensuring their long-term viability and success.

This research paper aims to delve into the significance of stakeholders' engagement in the implementation and adoption of e-procurement systems within organisations. Through a thorough examination of existing research findings, relevant theoretical frameworks, and practical case studies, this paper seeks to provide a comprehensive understanding of effective strategies and best practices for engaging stakeholders. By highlighting the intricate relationship between technology adoption and human collaboration, this study aspires to contribute meaningfully to the ongoing discourse on digital transformation within organisations and the indispensable role of stakeholders' involvement.

Ultimately, this paper asserts that stakeholders' engagement is not merely an ancillary aspect of e-procurement implementation; rather, it is a central driver of success. By addressing the challenges and opportunities associated with stakeholders' participation, organisations can fully leverage the transformative potential of e-procurement, creating significant value not only for themselves but also for the broader ecosystem in which they operate.

The construction sector is essential for economic advancement, as it supports infrastructure growth and job creation. Globally, the shift towards electronic procurement (e-procurement) in construction projects is becoming prevalent due to its capacity to improve efficiency, transparency, and accountability (Adjei-Bamfo et al., 2019). Within Nigeria's Federal Capital Territory (FCT), the introduction of e-procurement in building construction projects aims to tackle issues such as delays, corruption, and inefficiencies associated with traditional procurement practices (Ahmed & Mohamed, 2022).

Incorporating stakeholders is vital for successfully implementing and adopting e-procurement. Engaging stakeholders enhances decision-making, builds trust, and ensures the system aligns with users' needs (Freeman, 1984). Despite its importance, the role of stakeholders' participation in the e-procurement process for construction projects in the FCT is still underexplored.

E-procurement adoption in building construction within the FCT faces numerous obstacles, such as resistance to change, a lack of technical expertise, and insufficient stakeholders' inclusion (Okoro et al., 2020). While governmental initiatives have sought to encourage the adoption of e-procurement, inadequate engagement with critical stakeholders— including contractors, suppliers, and regulatory authorities— continues to impede progress. Moreover, existing studies provide limited evidence on the influence of stakeholders' participation in overcoming challenges to e-procurement adoption. Addressing this gap is essential in facilitating the seamless integration of e-procurement systems in construction projects.

The study aims to emphasise the value of stakeholders' participation in the introduction and application of e-procurement in building projects within the FCT. Its objectives include: Examining the current status of e-procurement implementation in construction projects; Identifying key

stakeholders in the e-procurement process; Investigating challenges linked to stakeholders' engagement in adopting e-procurement; and suggesting strategies that can strengthen stakeholders' participation in e-procurement initiatives.

This study is valuable for several reasons. First, it contributes to existing research on e-procurement by exploring how stakeholders' engagement impacts the successful implementation of e-procurement. Second, the results will offer practical insights to policymakers, construction professionals, and other relevant actors on fostering collaboration. Lastly, the study underscores the socio-economic benefits of efficient procurement practices, such as reducing delays and promoting transparency.

Literature Review

Definitions of Stakeholders' Engagement

Kujala et al. (2022) define stakeholders' engagement as a dynamic process that involves building and maintaining relationships with stakeholders to achieve mutual benefits. They emphasise its role in fostering trust, collaboration, and value creation in organisational contexts. Häberlein and Hövel (2023) describe stakeholders' engagement as a participatory approach that involves identifying stakeholders, understanding their needs, and involving them in decision-making processes. They highlight its importance in ethical governance and responsible innovation. Khankeh et al. (2024) define stakeholders' engagement as the active involvement of stakeholders in research and decision-making processes to ensure inclusivity, transparency, and ethical outcomes. They focus on its application in healthcare and clinical research.

Definitions of E-Procurement

Chan and Owusu (2022) define e-procurement as the use of electronic systems and tools to manage procurement processes, transforming traditional methods into more intelligent and efficient operations. They emphasise its role in revolutionising commerce and infrastructure projects. Shahin et al. (2022) describe e-procurement as a crucial component of supply chain management that reduces lead time, enhances agility, and adds strategic, operational, and opportunity value to firms. Taherdoost (2023) defines e-

procurement as the process of purchasing products and services online, integrating it into e-business to reduce transaction costs, improve operational effectiveness, and enhance transparency. Mavidis and Folinas (2022) define e-procurement as a digital transformation tool that optimises public procurement processes by enhancing transparency, accessibility, and efficiency. They emphasise its role in combating corruption and improving resource management in public administration. Boafo et al. (2020) describe e-procurement as a strategic decision that integrates technology into procurement processes to improve transparency, record management, and supplier relationships. They highlight its potential to enhance competitive advantage in developing countries.

Types of Electronic Procurement Systems

i. Supplier Portals

These are comprehensive online platforms tailored for suppliers to interact with procurement systems seamlessly. Suppliers can use these portals to access a variety of procurement opportunities, submit their bids or proposals, and monitor the progress of their applications. By fostering transparency and ensuring effective communication, supplier portals serve as a critical tool for building trust and engagement between buyers and suppliers.

ii. E-Invoicing Systems

Electronic invoicing systems allow suppliers and buyers to process invoices digitally. Stakeholders can create, submit, review, and track invoices online, eliminating the inefficiencies of manual paperwork. This automated process ensures reduced errors, faster payment cycles, and greater financial transparency, all of which contribute to improved relationships among stakeholders.

iii. Spend Analysis Tools

These digital tools collect and analyse procurement-related data to offer valuable insights into organisational spending patterns. Stakeholders, including procurement managers and finance teams, can use these insights to identify cost-saving opportunities, eliminate unnecessary expenditures, and optimise budgets. By aligning spending with strategic goals, these tools help in informed decision-making and effective collaboration.

iv. E-Sourcing Platforms

E-sourcing systems enable organisations to source goods and services through a fully electronic process. Buyers can issue invitations to tender or request for quotations, while suppliers can submit their bids online. By ensuring a transparent and fair process for all parties involved, e-sourcing strengthens trust and engagement between internal and external stakeholders.

v. Supplier Performance Management Systems

These platforms focus on evaluating and monitoring supplier performance using defined metrics, such as timely delivery, quality of goods or services, and cost efficiency. By keeping all stakeholders accountable, these systems improve procurement outcomes, enhance trust, and maintain long-term, productive relationships with suppliers.

vi. Blockchain-Based Procurement

Leveraging blockchain technology, these systems provide a highly secure, decentralised, and tamper-proof record of procurement transactions. By offering full visibility into every step of the procurement process, blockchain fosters trust, accountability, and transparency among stakeholders, which are especially valuable in high-stake procurement operations.

vii. Mobile Procurement Applications

Mobile apps designed for procurement processes make it easier for stakeholders to stay engaged and connected while on the move. Through these apps, stakeholders can approve requests, track orders, and receive real-time updates. This flexibility enhances responsiveness and ensures continuous engagement across procurement teams.

viii. E-Contracting Platforms

These platforms facilitate the creation, negotiation, and management of contracts digitally. Stakeholders can collaborate efficiently to draft terms, track contract performance, and ensure compliance with legal and organisational requirements. E-contracting systems simplify complex processes while encouraging alignment and cooperation among all parties.

Importance of Stakeholders' Engagement

i. Enhancement of System Adoption

Research consistently emphasises the critical role of stakeholders' engagement in the successful implementation of e-procurement systems. Early involvement of stakeholders during the planning and decision-making phases fosters a sense of ownership and reduces resistance to change (Musa et al., 2024). For instance, organisations that prioritise stakeholders' engagement often experience higher levels of system adoption and utilisation (Ibem et al., 2020). Engaging stakeholders from the outset not only builds trust but also enhances collaborative efforts, leading to smoother transitions to e-procurement systems.

ii. Addressing Resistance to Change

Resistance to change remains a significant barrier to the adoption of e-procurement systems. This resistance is often rooted in psychological factors, including fear of job loss, disruption to established workflows, and unfamiliarity with new systems (Davis, 1989). Effective stakeholders' engagement strategies that incorporate transparent communication and participatory decision-making can alleviate these concerns. Research indicates that stakeholders who receive regular updates and have opportunities for input are more likely to support e-procurement initiatives (Chan & Owusu, 2022).

iii. Training and Capacity Building

Training is vital for enhancing stakeholders' engagement and system utilisation. Participants who undergo targeted training programmes report higher confidence levels in using e-procurement systems. For example, survey results show that stakeholders who receive adequate training are significantly more comfortable navigating the system compared to those who do not (Akaba et al., 2020). Therefore, investing in stakeholders' education is essential to bridging the gap between technological advancements and user proficiency

Theoretical Frameworks

Stakeholder Theory

Stakeholder theory, as articulated by Freeman (1984), posits that organisations must consider the interests and needs of all stakeholders to

achieve sustainable success. This theory is particularly pertinent in the context of e-procurement, where effective stakeholders' engagement is crucial for aligning procurement systems with organisational objectives. Recent studies have integrated stakeholder theory with the Technology-Organisation-Environment (TOE) framework, which categorises factors influencing e-procurement adoption into three dimensions: technological, organisational, and environmental (Mohungoo et al., 2020). This integration underscores the necessity of addressing stakeholders' concerns to ensure successful implementation.

Technology Acceptance Model (TAM)

The Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), developed by Davis (1989), provides insights into how perceived ease of use and perceived usefulness affect users' acceptance of technology. In the realm of e-procurement, researchers have applied TAM to highlight the importance of engaging stakeholders in addressing their concerns and improving system usability (Ibem et al., 2020). The model suggests that when stakeholders perceive the e-procurement system as beneficial and user-friendly, their acceptance and utilisation rates significantly increase.

Research Gaps

Engaging stakeholders is crucial for the successful implementation of e-procurement in building construction projects in the Federal Capital Territory. However, significant gaps in research remain. These include a lack of focus on the region's specific characteristics, insufficient examination of challenges faced by various stakeholders, and limited understanding of cultural and behavioural influences. Additionally, little attention is given to long-term impacts, effective engagement strategies, and comparative analyses with other regions. Filling these gaps can improve practices and encourage greater stakeholders' involvement.

Methodology

This section details the methodology employed in researching stakeholders' engagement during the implementation and adoption of e-procurement systems within the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) Procurement Department. The methodology encompasses several critical components,

including research design, study population and sampling technique, data collection methods, data analysis, and ethical considerations. This comprehensive methodology provided a robust framework for examining stakeholders' engagement in the implementation and adoption of e-procurement systems. By integrating qualitative and quantitative approaches, this research aimed to capture the complexities of stakeholders' interactions and generate actionable insights that can inform future e-procurement initiatives.

A mixed-methods research design was adopted to achieve a comprehensive understanding of stakeholders' engagement in e-procurement. This approach was enabled to combine both qualitative and quantitative data, offering a richer context for analysing the intricacies of stakeholders' interactions and the factors affecting e-procurement adoption. By using this design, the aim is to triangulate findings, thereby enhancing the validity and reliability of the results.

Study Population and Sampling Technique

The study focused on stakeholders involved in the e-procurement implementation within FCT Administration. Purposive sampling was utilised to select participants who had direct experience and knowledge of e-procurement systems. This method ensured that the participants were relevant to the research objectives.

To further enrich data collection, snowball sampling was utilised, where initial participants suggested additional stakeholders who could provide valuable insights. This approach led to a diverse sample of 60 participants, representing various stakeholder groups, including procurement officers, IT specialists, management personnel, suppliers, and vendors. This diversity was essential for capturing a comprehensive view of stakeholders' engagement in the e-procurement process.

Data Collection Methods

Data were collected through three main methods: semi-structured interviews, surveys, and document analysis. Each method was selected to address specific research questions and gather multifaceted data.

Semi-Structured Interviews

In-depth semi-structured interviews were conducted with 30 key stakeholders to explore their experiences, perceptions, and attitudes toward stakeholders' engagement in e-procurement. The interviews were guided by a set of open-ended questions, allowing flexibility and the opportunity to delve deeper into specific topics as they emerged. This qualitative approach enabled the researchers to capture nuanced insights and personal stories that quantitative methods might miss.

Survey

To complement the qualitative data, structured survey was distributed to 35 participants. The survey included closed-ended questions designed to quantify various aspects of stakeholders' engagement, such as involvement levels, satisfaction rates, trust in the e-procurement system, and perceived benefits. This quantitative data provided a solid foundation for statistical analysis, allowing the researchers to identify trends and correlations among stakeholders' engagement variables.

Data Analysis

Data Analysis presents a comprehensive analysis of the data collected from 60 respondents, focusing on the impact of stakeholders' engagement in the implementation and adoption of e-procurement for building construction projects within the Federal Capital Territory (FCT). The analysis incorporates quantitative statistics, inferential correlations, and qualitative thematic insights, offering a multi-faceted approach to evaluating stakeholders' participation and its influence on digital procurement adoption.

The findings examine demographics, awareness levels, challenges, the correlation between engagement and adoption rates, regression analysis, and stakeholders' perspectives, providing a structured breakdown of key themes.

Results and Discussions

This section presents the findings derived from the data collected through semi-structured interviews, surveys, and document analysis regarding stakeholders' engagement in the implementation and adoption of e-procurement systems within the Federal Capital Territory Administration.

The outcomes are discussed in relation to the research objectives, emphasising key themes, patterns, and their implications for practice.

Interview Results

I. Thematic Analysis of Stakeholders' Perspectives on Factors Influencing E-Procurement Adoption

i. Key Themes Identified

i. **Trust and Collaboration**: Many stakeholders emphasised the need for transparency and mutual trust, suggesting that open communication and inclusive decision-making strengthen adoption processes.

ii. **Regulatory Frameworks:** Concerns over policy inconsistencies were prevalent, signalling the importance of harmonised regulations to prevent implementation delays.

iii. **Capacity Building:** Digital competency gaps were frequently mentioned, underscoring the necessity of ongoing training programmes to improve e-procurement literacy.

iv. **Cybersecurity Protection:** Stakeholders emphasised the importance of robust security protocols, advocating for enhanced data encryption and fraud prevention measures.

Descriptive Statistics

i. Stakeholders' Distribution in the Study

Table 1 Breakdown of Respondents by Stakeholders' Categories

Stakeholder Categories	**Number of Respondents (N = 60)**	**Percentage (%)**
Government Officials	14	23.3
Contractors	16	26.7
Suppliers	12	20.0
Procurement Officers	10	16.7
Technology Providers	8	13.3

Table 1 presents the breakdown of respondents by stakeholders' categories, reflecting the composition of participants in construction procurement activities.

Contractors formed the largest group (26.7%), followed by government officials (23.3%), suppliers (20.0%), procurement officers (16.7%), and technology providers (13.3%). This distribution highlights the inclusion of critical players in procurement decision-making processes.

ii. Stakeholder Awareness of E-Procurement

Stakeholders' awareness is pivotal in assessing readiness for digital transformation within procurement systems.

Table 2: Familiarity Levels of E-Procurement among Respondents.

Awareness Level	Number of Respondents (N = 60)	Percentage (%)
High Awareness	28	46.7
Moderate Awareness	20	33.3
Low Awareness	12	20.0

Table 2 presents stakeholders' awareness of e-procurement. The results indicate that nearly half (46.7%) of the respondents demonstrated high awareness, while 33.3% had moderate familiarity, and 20.0% displayed low awareness. Despite strong stakeholders' understanding, capacity-building programmes are necessary to reinforce knowledge and drive effective adoption.

iii. Challenges in E-Procurement Adoption

Respondents identified several obstacles affecting e-procurement implementation in construction projects, ranked on a five-point Likert scale (1 = Least challenging, 5 = Most challenging).

Table 3: Challenges in E- Procurement Adoption

Challenges	Mean Score	Standard Deviation
Resistance to Change	4.2	0.89
Inadequate Technological Infrastructure	4.5	0.95
Limited Digital Literacy	4.0	1.02
Cybersecurity Concerns	3.8	1.10

The results in Table 3 identified technological infrastructure deficiencies (4.5 mean score) as the most significant barrier, highlighting concerns regarding digital tool availability and network connectivity limitations. Resistance to change (4.2 mean score) was also a major issue, with stakeholders expressing hesitation due to uncertainties regarding workflow efficiency. Limited digital literacy (4.0 mean score) and cybersecurity risks (3.8 mean score) further emphasised the need for targeted interventions to foster smooth e-procurement integration.

iv. Perceived Benefits of E-Procurement

Respondents identified several key benefits associated with e-procurement, including enhanced efficiency, increased transparency, and significant cost savings. More than 80% of participants acknowledged that e-procurement systems streamline procurement operations, reduce reliance on paper-based processes, and improve visibility in transactions. However, qualitative data gathered from interviews revealed that while stakeholders recognised these advantages, many expressed concerns regarding the challenges of transitioning to the new system and the adequacy of training provided during this process.

v. Challenges to Stakeholders' Engagement

The analysis identified several barriers that hinder effective stakeholders' engagement. Key barriers included resistance to change, a lack of awareness about the e-procurement system, and insufficient support from management. Approximately 65% of survey respondents cited resistance to change as a significant obstacle to adoption. Qualitative interviews revealed that many stakeholders were concerned about potential job losses

and disruptions to established workflows, contributing to their reluctance to fully engage with the new system.

Relationship between Stakeholders' Engagement and E-Procurement Adoption

Table 4 Relationship between Stakeholders' Engagement Levels and E-procurement Adoption rates

Stakeholders' Engagement Level	E-Procurement Adoption Rate (%)
High Engagement	78.5
Moderate Engagement	55.3
Low Engagement	30.2

Table 4 presents the relationship between stakeholders' engagement levels and e-procurement adoption rates. The findings reveal a direct positive correlation between stakeholders' engagement and adoption rates, indicating that greater participation fosters the successful implementation of e-procurement initiatives.

Regression Analysis: Key Predictors of E-Procurement Implementation

Table 5: Factors Influencing E-Procurement Adoption

Independent Variable	Beta Coefficient	p-Value	Significance
Stakeholders' Engagement	0.72	0.001	| Significant
Digital Infrastructure	0.65	0.004	| Significant
Policy and Regulations	0.58	| 0.008	| Significant
Training and Capacity Building	0.47	0.015	| Significant

Table 5 presents a regression model that evaluates factors significantly influencing e-procurement adoption.

Findings confirm that stakeholders' engagement, infrastructure development, policy alignment, and training programmes significantly drive e-procurement implementation, reinforcing the necessity of strategic interventions.

The survey results revealed a diverse range of stakeholders' engagement levels across various groups involved in the e-procurement process. Approximately 75% of participants indicated that they felt actively engaged in the implementation process. Notably, procurement officers and IT specialists reported the highest levels of engagement, reflecting their direct involvement and influence in the system's deployment. Conversely, only 52% of external stakeholders, such as suppliers and vendors, expressed feeling adequately involved, highlighting a potential gap in communication and participation that could hinder the overall effectiveness of the e-procurement initiative.

Table 6: Summary of results on Stakeholders' Engagement Levels, Perceived Benefits of E-Procurement and Training and Capacity Building

Category	**Metric**	**Percentage**	**Key Insights**
Stakeholders' Engagement Levels	Actively Engaged	75%	Procurement officers and IT specialists exhibited the highest levels of engagement
	Not Actively Engaged	25%	External stakeholders, including suppliers and vendors, demonstrated lower involvement, with only 52% feeling engaged.

Perceived Benefits of E-Procurement	Enhanced Efficiency	>80%	E-procurement optimises operations and minimises paper-based activities.
	Increased Transparency	>80%	Enhance visibility and accountability in procurement transactions.
	Cost Savings	>80%	Reduces overall costs associated with procurement processes.
Training and Capacity Building	Confidence after Training	78%	Comprehensive training positively influenced stakeholders' confidence in system usage.
	Confidence without Training	40%	Absence of training limited confidence and effectiveness in utilising the system.

Table 7: Barriers to E-Procurement Implementation

Table 7 presents barriers to E-Procurement Implementation. Stakeholders identified several obstacles to integrating e-procurement into construction projects, rated on a five-point Likert scale (1 = Least challenging, 5 = Most challenging).

Challenges	**Average Score**	**Standard Deviation**
Resistance to Change	4.2	0.89
Limited Technological Infrastructure	4.5	0.95
Inadequate Digital Skills	4.0	1.02
Cybersecurity Concerns	3.8	1.10

Key findings from the results are explained below:

Technological limitations (4.5 mean score) emerged as the primary challenge, highlighting difficulties in integrating digital procurement tools.

Reluctance to change (4.2 mean score) illustrates stakeholders' hesitancy to transition from traditional procurement methods.

Digital literacy gaps (4.0 mean score) suggest the necessity of training programmes to boost competency.

Concerns regarding cybersecurity (3.8 mean score) reinforce the importance of robust security measures in e-procurement systems.

Implications of Findings

The findings underscore the critical importance of proactive stakeholders' engagement in the successful implementation of e-procurement systems. The high levels of perceived benefits reported by stakeholders suggest that e-procurement has the potential to substantially enhance procurement efficiency and transparency. However, the concerns raised regarding training and communication highlight essential areas that require attention to ensure effective engagement.

Effective training programmes are vital for empowering stakeholders and preparing them to utilise the e-procurement system successfully. The stark contrast in confidence levels between trained and untrained participants indicates that organisations must prioritise comprehensive training initiatives to facilitate smoother transitions and higher adoption rates. Investing in training not only builds users' competence but also fosters a culture of continuous learning and adaptation.

Additionally, the role of trust and communication is paramount. Stakeholders who felt informed and included were more likely to engage positively with the e-procurement system. Therefore, organisations should establish clear communication strategies that provide regular updates, encourage feedback, and foster an atmosphere of transparency and trust. Engaging stakeholders in meaningful dialogue about the implementation process can significantly enhance their commitment and willingness to participate actively.

Addressing Resistance to Change

The identified resistance to change poses a significant challenge that organisations must address to enhance stakeholders' engagement. Many stakeholders voiced concerns about job security and potential disruptions to established workflows. To alleviate these fears, it is crucial for management to actively involve stakeholders in the decision-making process. By engaging stakeholders in discussions about the transition to e-procurement, organisations can mitigate apprehensions and encourage a more collaborative approach to implementation. Creating an environment where stakeholders feel valued and heard can transform resistance into support.

The conclusion of the results of this study highlights the critical role of stakeholders' engagement in the successful implementation and adoption of e-procurement systems within the FCT Procurement Department. The findings emphasise the need for effective training, open communication, and strong management support in fostering stakeholders' involvement. Addressing these factors will not only facilitate higher adoption rates but also contribute to the overall success of e-procurement initiatives. Future research should continue to explore the long-term impacts of these engagement strategies and identify best practices for involving stakeholders in procurement processes, ensuring that e-procurement systems are effectively integrated and utilised.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Conclusion

This investigation into stakeholders' engagement in e-procurement uncovered important insights regarding the varying levels of participation among different groups. The findings indicate that Procurement Officers and IT Specialists are considerably more engaged compared to Suppliers and Vendors. This gap suggests that while the former groups understand and support the e-procurement system's features and advantages, the latter may lack a comprehensive understanding of its significance.

The evaluation of perceived benefits revealed that stakeholders acknowledge e-procurement's ability to enhance efficiency and improve transparency in procurement processes. However, the low engagement levels among Suppliers and Vendors pose challenges that could undermine

the successful implementation of these systems. Addressing these concerns is essential to fully leverage the benefits of e-procurement.

Recommendations

To boost engagement and facilitate the successful adoption of e-procurement, there is need to employ the following comprehensive strategies.

i. Enhance Communication and Training:

- **Targeted Training Initiatives**: Create and deliver training programmes specifically for Suppliers and Vendors. These sessions should focus on explaining the e-procurement system's functionalities, streamlining their operations, and highlighting the advantages of active participation. Interactive workshops and webinars can serve as effective formats.
- **Consistent Communication**: Develop a regular communication plan to keep all stakeholders updated on system enhancements, new features, and best practices. Utilising newsletters, emails, and dedicated webinars can help ensure that Suppliers and Vendors feel included and appreciated.

ii. Stakeholders' Involvement:

- **Inclusive Participation**: Provide opportunities for all stakeholders to engage in the e-procurement implementation process. Establish focus groups or advisory committees that include representatives from various stakeholder categories to gather diverse insights and promote a sense of ownership.
- **Feedback-Driven Development**: Actively seek input from Suppliers and Vendors during the e-procurement rollout. Their feedback can help identify potential challenges and lead to improvements that enhance user experience.

iii. Feedback Mechanisms:

- **Establish Accessible Channels**: Create multiple avenues for stakeholders to provide feedback, such as surveys, suggestion boxes, and regular meetings. Ensure these channels are easy to access and encourage open and constructive responses.

- **Respond to Feedback**: Demonstrating that feedback is valued and acted upon will build trust and encourage ongoing participation. Share how stakeholders' input has led to tangible changes in the e-procurement process.

iv. Highlight Success Stories

- **Showcase Case Studies**: Document and share success stories from engaged stakeholders who have experienced benefits from the e-procurement system. Real-world examples can provide compelling evidence of the system's effectiveness and inspire others to participate.
- **Recognition Programme**: Implement a recognition programme for stakeholders who actively engage with the e-procurement system. Public acknowledgments of their contributions can foster a positive culture around participation.

v. Monitor and Evaluate:

- **Ongoing Monitoring**: Set key performance indicators (KPIs) to assess engagement levels and the effectiveness of the e-procurement system. Regularly track these metrics to identify trends and areas for improvement.
- **Periodic Assessments**: Conduct formal evaluations at regular intervals (e.g., quarterly or bi-annually) to review the system's performance and stakeholders' engagement. Use these assessments to refine strategies and make informed decisions.

Final Thoughts

By implementing these recommendations, organisations can significantly enhance stakeholders' engagement in e-procurement processes. This improvement will lead to a more efficient procurement system and foster a collaborative environment where all stakeholders feel valued and empowered. Ultimately, boosting engagement is crucial for maximising the potential of e-procurement, achieving cost saving, and enhancing transparency in purchasing practices.

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