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POLICY FRAMEWORKS FOR SUSTAINABLE PUBLIC PROCUREMENT: GLOBAL TRENDS AND LOCAL ADAPTATIONS

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ABSTRACT: Public procurement represents a significant portion of public expenditure worldwide, accounting for approximately 15-20 percent of total global GDP. This article will examine the evolving policy frameworks of sustainable public procurement (SPP) practices and the localisation of global trends across diverse jurisdictions. This research study used a qualitative methodology to assess the efficacy of current SPP frameworks, the problems associated with their implementation, and their potential to enhance the sustainability of procurement processes. The research indicates that while international norms are essential, tailored techniques must be established prior to successful implementation, contingent upon local economic, social, and environmental factors. Critical observations indicate that the adoption of SPP is prevalent in nations that have established comprehensive legal frameworks supported by efficient implementation guidelines and capacity building initiatives. However, challenges persist in the domain, including economic considerations, supplier competencies, and the assessment of sustainability outcomes. The study elucidates the methods by which policy frameworks can be developed to promote sustainable procurement practices that address

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local desires and constraints. Proposed recommendations include developing integrated policy solutions, augmenting institutional capacity, and creating conducive circumstances for the success of sustainable suppliers. This study provides valuable insights for policymakers, procurement professionals, and researchers to facilitate a more sustainable approach to government purchasing globally.

Keywords: *Policy Frameworks, Sustainable Public Procurement, Local Adaptations.*

INTRODUCTION

The concept of public procurement has evolved into a significant instrument for attaining broader policy objectives, surpassing the conventional emphasis on value for money. In recent decades, it has become more acknowledged that government purchasing power can be utilised to promote sustainable development goals, environmental conservation, and social integration (Brammer & Walker, 2011). This development signifies a paradigm shift in public officials' attitudes towards procurement: it can no longer be regarded merely as a transaction but as a strategic method for policy implementation (Grandia, 2016).

The concept of sustainable public procurement encompasses social, economic, and environmental dimensions of sustainability. Environmental protection is a crucial aspect of sustainable procurement, as it necessitates consideration of the environmental life cycle impacts of goods and services, alongside the adoption of advanced principles of circular economies and reduced carbon footprints (Testa et al., 2016). Social sustainability include labour standards, equitable trade practices, diversity and inclusion, and community development (McCrudden, 2004). Economic sustainability seeks to establish enduring value, rejuvenate local economies, and foster innovation (Preuss, 2009).

The European Union has spearheaded the development of comprehensive frameworks pertaining to sustainable public procurement. The EC Public Advertising Directives of 2014 designate environmental and social awareness as legitimate factors in purchasing decisions (European Commission, 2014). Similarly, the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals have established a worldwide framework

that encourages countries to employ public procurement as a mechanism for achieving sustainability objectives (United Nations, 2015).

The frameworks for sustainable public procurement have evolved due to multiple driving forces. The challenge of climate change has prompted governments to employ procurement strategies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and promote the shift to renewable energy (Sönnichsen & Clement, 2020). Social justice campaigns have highlighted the potential of procurement as a mechanism for social justice, as it addresses inequalities and promotes equitable labour practices (Martin-Ortega, 2018). In light of economic worries following the financial crisis, there has arisen a necessity to adopt procurement procedures that support local economies and small enterprises (Flynn et al., 2015).

International organisations have played a crucial role in establishing standards and norms for sustainable procurement. The International Organisation for Standardisation (ISO) has developed ISO 20400, a guideline standard on sustainable procurement that provides concepts and methods applicable across various industries and jurisdictions (ISO, 2017). The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) provided extensive recommendations on green public procurement and the social dimensions of public procurement in 2015.

Despite heightened global consensus on the importance of sustainable public procurement, the challenge lies in its implementation. Research indicates significant disparities in adoption rates and efficiency across different countries and jurisdictions (Cheng et al., 2018). These variables pertain to variances in legal frameworks, institutional robustness, political resolve, and economic conditions (Amann et al., 2014).

Sustainable procurement is a multifaceted process as it necessitates the simultaneous pursuit of multiple objectives. Procurement experts must examine traditional values such as price, quality, and delivery, in conjunction with environmental impacts, social implications, and long-term sustainability issues (Walker & Brammer, 2009). This multi-dimensional assessment necessitates the acquisition of new competencies and the ability to evaluate and collaborate with stakeholders (Grandia et al., 2015).

The laws are fundamental to enhancing or diminishing sustainable procurement procedures. Certain jurisdictions explicitly mandate the incorporation of sustainability issues in procurement rules, whereas in others, such inclusion is not obligatory (Arrowsmith, 2010). The comprehension of the concept of value for money has been particularly pertinent, as sophisticated jurisdictions have expanded the definition to encompass lifespan costs and societal benefits (Uttam & Le Lann Roos, 2015).

The measurement and evaluation of sustainability outcomes in procurement benefit both practitioners and scholars. Nonetheless, the conventional procurement criteria concerning cost reduction, delivery performance, and supplier compliance must be revised, as assessing environmental and social implications necessitates diverse methodologies and indicators (Igarashi et al., 2013). Palmujoki et al. (2010) assert that standardised measuring frameworks or methodologies are essential for advancing sustainable procurement practices.

The execution of sustainable procurement is influenced by cultural and contextual factors as well. The idea of sustainable practice may vary significantly across different cultural contexts, as international frameworks must align with local circumstances (Michelsen & de Boer, 2009). This is a process of adaptation that seeks to reconcile global best practices with local needs, skills, and priorities (Parikka-Alhola et al., 2006).

The subject of innovation in sustainable procurement has garnered increased attention in recent years. Public procurement can serve as a demand-side innovation policy instrument, incentivising providers to develop more sustainable services and goods (Edler & Georghiou, 2007). Pre-commercial procurement, innovation partnerships, and alternative innovation procurement methodologies enable buyers to foster collaboration with suppliers to develop enduring solutions (Uyarra et al., 2014).

Stakeholder engagement and collaboration have demonstrated to be essential elements of an effective and successful sustainable procurement program. Effective implementation typically requires coordination across government departments,

engagement with civil institutions, and collaboration with industry (Brammer & Walker, 2011). Participatory techniques can facilitate the establishment of a consensus on sustainability objectives and the mobilisation of applicable resources (Bjorklund, 2010).

The report acknowledges that despite significant developments in international rules regarding the sustainability of public procurement, there remains a substantial disparity between intention and actual practice. It is essential to comprehend how worldwide trends in sustainable procurement policies are being adapted to enhance the effectiveness of promoting sustainability through government purchasing.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Despite the extensive discourse on the significance of sustainable public procurement in achieving environmental, social, and economic policy objectives, considerable obstacles remain in the effective implementation of SPP frameworks across different jurisdictions. The gap between establishing sustainable procurement policies and their practical implementation represents a critical problem that undermines the potential efficacy of sustainable procurement programs (Brammer & Walker, 2011).

Thus far, published research indicate that most states have developed policy frameworks aligned with the principles of sustainable procurement; nevertheless, the implementation rate remains relatively low. Literature indicates that only slightly over 30 percent of public procurement opportunities incorporate substantial sustainability criteria, despite existing legislation and policies (Cheng et al., 2018). This implementation gap encompasses several interrelated concerns that exhibit significant discrepancies at both national and local levels.

The inadequate adaptation of global best practices to local contexts is among the significant challenges. Public procurement has also been used as a tool to advance social welfare and poverty alleviation through programmes such as Nigeria's National Social Investment Programme (Ademeso, Abraham & Haruna, 2025). They can be effectively complemented by the global standards ISO 20400 or EU directives on procurement; however, successful adaptation must involve a meticulous

integration of these frameworks with local legal systems, market conditions, and potential constraints imposed by institutional capacities (Sönnichsen & Clement, 2020). Many jurisdictions inadequately address this adaptation process, resulting in overly generic, ineffective, or excessively narrow frameworks that fail to account for local circumstances.

Additionally, there is a deficiency in institutional capacities and experience inside procurement organisations, exacerbating the issue. Research indicates that the majority of professionals in various sectors of the public procurement business lack the knowledge and expertise necessary to effectively integrate sustainability into procurement activities (Grandia et al., 2015). The capacity deficit is particularly severe in developing countries and smaller urban areas, where resources for professional development and technical expertise are limited (Oruezabala & Rico, 2012).

Another aspect of the issue is market preparedness. However, corruption and weak accountability mechanisms also undermine procurement processes, highlighting the importance of anti-corruption measures such as whistle-blowing policies (Ademeso, 2024). Sustainable alternatives are largely inaccessible in many regions and sectors; consequently, even where policy frameworks permit or necessitate sustainable procurement, public buyers may find it challenging to implement such practices (Large & Thomsen, 2011). The difficulty is particularly pronounced in narrow markets and in contexts where the supplier development program has failed to align with policymakers' intentions.

Sustainability outcomes present additional measurement and evaluation problems that hinder effective implementation. Sustainability assessment entails a more intricate approach and prolonged monitoring methods, in contrast to traditional procurement metrics that focus on cost and delivery (Igarashi et al., 2013). The absence of standardised measuring frameworks complicates organisations' ability to demonstrate the efficacy of investments in sustainable procurement and creates ambiguity regarding best practices (Palmujoki et al., 2010).

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Based on the specific objectives, the following research questions guide this study:

1. What is the current state of sustainable public procurement policy frameworks internationally?

2. What are the key barriers preventing effective implementation of sustainable procurement practices?

3. How can global SPP frameworks be successfully adapted to local contexts?

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The main objective of the study is to examine the effectiveness of policy frameworks for sustainable public procurement by analyzing global trends and their adaptation to local contexts across different jurisdictions. The specific objectives include:

1. To assess the current state of sustainable public procurement policy frameworks internationally

2. To identify key barriers preventing effective implementation of sustainable procurement practices

3. To evaluate strategies for successful adaptation of global SPP frameworks to local contexts

SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

This research seeks to examine policy strategies for sustainable public procurement across several international jurisdictions, with particular emphasis on the adaptation of global trends and best practices to local procedures. The geographical region consists of developed and developing nations that have implemented significant initiatives in sustainable procurement, facilitating the comparison of disparities across diverse economic and institutional contexts.

The analysis will encompass the period from 2010 to 2024, reflecting recent changes in the evolution of sustainability procurement frameworks influenced by global dynamics, including the UN Sustainable Development Goals and new EU procurement laws. This period will provide a review of both the processes of policy formation and the implementation experience, which is substantial.

The study paper examines sustainable procurement across many sectors, including construction, information technology, professional services, and products acquisition. The extensive scope of the industry provides an investigation of the implementation of sustainability principles across diverse purchasing practices and market dynamics. However, the research does not provide comprehensive sector-specific analysis; instead, it focusses on overarching themes and trends.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Conceptual Review

Since its inception in the early 1980s, the idea of sustainable public procurement has advanced significantly, reflecting a broader change in our understanding of the state's role in promoting sustainability and the potential of a legislative instrument like the state purchasing system. This alteration is perceived as a paradigm shift from traditional procurement practices, mostly focused on efficiency and compliance, to a more strategic perspective that recognises procurement as a means to achieve broader national policy objectives (Brammer & Walker, 2011).

The philosophy of sustainability in public procurement encompasses three interdependent domains: environmental sustainability, social sustainability, and economic sustainability. This constructive critique of corporate sustainability practices was directed towards public sector procurement and presents the triple bottom line as a framework for purchasing (Elkington, 1997). The procurement sector focused on mitigating the ecological impacts throughout the entire lifespan of acquired goods and services is known as environmental sustainability in procurement, which encompasses resource utilisation, pollution, waste management, and disposal (Testa et al., 2016).

In response to themes of environmental conservation and heightened awareness of potential resource shortages, environmental considerations in public procurement have gained significant importance concerning climate change. In conjunction with the concept of green public procurement, which emphasises environmental criteria in purchasing decisions, numerous sustainability initiatives at multiple levels have prioritised it (Uttam & Le Lann Roos, 2015). Green procurement is defined as a collection of strategies that include preferences for products with reduced environmental impact, consideration of lifecycle costs that account for environmental externalities, and the promotion of a circular economy through product acquisitions (Sonenichsen and Clement, 2020).

The use of lifetime thinking in procurement decisions represents a significant conceptual advancement, transforming the traditional capitalist focus on initial costs. Lifecycle cost analysis requires the consideration of all expenses associated with the acquisition and operation of purchased items or services throughout their entire ownership utility, encompassing external environmental and social costs (Gluch & Baumann, 2004). Conducting this follow-up is essential to demonstrate that items with a greater initial cost may ultimately provide superior long-term value when broader implications are taken into account.

Social sustainability in public procurement entails prioritising equity, inclusiveness, and social justice in purchasing decisions. This element include labour standards, human rights considerations, support for impoverished communities, and the promotion of diversity and inclusion within supplier commitments (McCrudden, 2004). The procurement strategies specifically seek to enhance access for small firms, minority-owned organisations, and social enterprises inside the public market (Martin-Ortega, 2018).

Social value in procurement has emerged as a significant issue in jurisdictions where procurement is viewed as a mechanism for addressing inequality and promoting equitable economic growth (Ademeso, Abraham & Igoli, 2024). Social value models require public buyers to evaluate how their purchasing decisions contribute to social good, including employment opportunities and the development of skills and strengths within communities (Barraket et al., 2016). This theoretical paradigm

recognises that all government acquisitions will yield social repercussions and strives to maximise societal advantages while mitigating adverse effects of procurement.

Public procurement pertains to economic sustainability regarding long-term economic value and the advancement of environmentally sustainable economic growth. This dimension encompasses factors such as the local economies, the promotion of innovation and competitiveness, and the establishment of resilient supply chains (Preuss, 2009). The principles of economic sustainability have evolved, and it is essential to recognise that the lowest bid is not always the most economical option when macroeconomic impacts are considered.

The concept of innovation procurement has evolved into a crucial representation of economic sustainability, recognising the potential of public procurements to stimulate market growth and technical advancement. innovative procurement strategies are extensively varied, ranging from the integration of innovative vistas in standard tenders to the acquisition of innovation outside, beyond pre-commercial procurement and collaborative innovation (Edler & Georghiou, 2007). These ideas illustrate that consumer demand can be crucial in developing sustainable marketplaces for products and services.

Value for money concepts have undergone significant redefinition within the context of sustainable procurement. Traditionally, monetary value assessments were confined to financial evaluations and short-term advantages across a restricted range of dimensions; however, sustainable procurement must extend to encompass environmental and social considerations in its evaluations (Walker & Brammer, 2009). The expanded definition of value presents challenges for procurement professionals to develop new assessment methodologies and criteria.

Whole-life value concepts represent a notable advancement in procurement philosophy, necessitating an assessment of all costs and benefits associated with procurement decisions over extended timeframes. A comprehensive value assessment in whole life must account for maintenance expenses, disposal costs, environmental impacts, and social ramifications, presenting complex analytical

challenges that require innovative analytical methods and specialised knowledge (Igarashi et al., 2013).

The principles of stakeholder engagement have become essential in the implementation of sustainable procurement practices. Unlike the traditional buying and selling process dominated by buyers and sellers, sustainable procurement typically requires engagement with a broader array of stakeholders, including civil society organisations, environmental groups, and individuals impacted by the process (Bjorklund, 2010). This expanded approach to stakeholder engagement recognises that the achievement of UN objectives may depend on the participation and consensus of many groups of actors.

The concept of supply chain sustainability has heightened awareness that procurement decisions in the public sector can influence sustainable practices throughout extensive supplier chain networks. This perspective requires that consumer demands consider not only the immediate environmental and social impacts of their suppliers but also the actions of sub-suppliers and supply chain partners (Large & Thomsen, 2011). The principles of supply chain sustainability emphasise the significance of openness, traceability, and collaborative approaches to improve the sustainability performance of procurement networks.

The notion of risk management has been integrated into the framework of sustainable procurement, encompassing environmental and social concerns alongside commercial and operational hazards. Key considerations in sustainability risk assessment include the impacts of climate change, resource scarcity, societal instability, and evolving legislation, all of which can affect supply chain reliability and performance (Grandia, 2016). These expanded notions of risk pertain to novel measurement methodologies and mitigation strategies.

Market stewardship refers to the proactive role that public purchasers can have in building and shaping the market for sustainable products and services. Market stewardship strategies recognise that population demand can influence supplier activities and market formation, particularly in areas where the government is a significant client (Uyarra et al., 2014). This concept emphasises the strategic nature

of procurement decisions and their capacity to effect advantageous market transformation.

The concept of collaborative procurement has gained significance as organisations recognise the benefits of cooperation in achieving sustainability objectives. Cooperative activities can enhance purchasing power, mitigate costs and risks, and foster larger sustainable marketplaces for products and services (Karjalainen et al., 2010). The concepts signify the understanding that individual organisations may have constraints in achieving sustainable procurement, which could be mitigated through collaboration.

The increasing complexity of sustainable procurement requirements has heightened the importance of professionalising procurement. Utilisations in professional advancement Professional development approaches emphasise the acquisition of specialised knowledge and skills in areas such as lifecycle evaluation, social impact, and stakeholder engagement (Grandia et al., 2015). This trend towards professionalisation stems from the recognition that high-quality sustainable buying requires more sophisticated capabilities than conventional purchasing approaches.

The principles of transparency and accountability have arisen as essential elements in sustainable procurement, as stakeholders want greater visibility in the use of public resources to fulfil sustainable objectives (Ademeso, 2024). These concepts encompass the requirements for public reporting, stakeholder participation, and performance monitoring, which are not addressed by conventional procurement accountability techniques (Flynn et al., 2015). Transparency principles are likewise implemented in supply chain practices, requiring suppliers to reveal information concerning their environmental and social performance.

Sustainable procurement has garnered attention concerning adaptive governance, as organisations increasingly adopt flexible implementations to respond to changing sustainability threats and opportunities. Adaptive governance emphasises learning, experimentation, and enhancement rather than rigid adherence to specified methodologies (Michelsen & de Boer, 2009). The stated perspective recognises that

sustainable procurement is an emerging field requiring advancement and enhancement.

Digital transformation concepts are increasingly influencing sustainable procurement strategies as organisations evaluate how technology may facilitate sustainability objectives. The domain of digital procurement include e-procurement platforms, data analytics for assessing sustainability performance, and blockchain technologies to improve supply chain transparency (Bag et al., 2021; Ademeso & Maiyaki, 2025). These technical concepts offer solutions to specific traditional challenges in implementing sustainable procurement.

Theoretical Review

The theoretical frameworks of sustainable public procurement are derived from diverse disciplines, including but not limited to public administration, environmental economics, organisational theory, and policy studies. Understanding the existence of these theoretical foundations is crucial for comprehending why certain policy frameworks succeed while others fail to achieve their intended aims.

The principal-agent theory provides substantial insights into the challenges of executing sustainable procurement policies within complex organisational structures. In the context of public procurement, several principal-agent relationships exist, encompassing interactions between elected officials and administrators, top managers and procurement specialists, as well as buyers and suppliers in public markets (Grandia, 2016). Each of these linkages has a potential for goal misalignment and disparities in information production, which may impede the implementation of sustainable procurement.

The principal-agent model elucidates the challenges in implementing sustainable procurement rules, despite apparent strong political backing. Elected authorities (principals) may advocate for sustainability initiatives; nevertheless, procurement professionals (agents) must navigate obstacles or conflicting interests that undermine their commitment to sustainability (Brammer & Walker, 2011). Similarly, governments may demand sustainable outcomes from their suppliers, yet providers

may lack motivation to enhance sustainability if the procurement process does not include suitable evaluation criteria to incentivise such initiatives.

Information asymmetries constitute a critical issue in sustainable procurement, as the complex impacts on the environment and society necessitate thorough assessment and evaluation. Suppliers typically possess superior knowledge about their sustainability initiatives compared to public sector buyers, resulting in potential opportunistic behaviour or greenwashing (Large & Thomsen, 2011). These information asymmetries should be addressed by establishing robust verification procedures and standardised reporting criteria.

Institutional theory delineates the manner in which organisations are constituted, along with the rules and practices that influence the implementation of sustainable procurement. The isomorphic pressures identified by DiMaggio and Powell also elucidate why organisations may exhibit analogous sustainable procurement practices despite significant disparities in their distinct outcomes (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983). Coercive isomorphism occurs when organisations adopt practices due to formal or informal pressure from regulators or dependent organisations.

Mimetic isomorphism elucidates why corporations may replicate the sustainable procurement strategies of other organisations when there is uncertainty regarding optimal practices. This trend will accelerate the dissemination of new ideas and may also lead to the acceptance of techniques unsuitable for particular organisational contexts (Aldenius & Khan, 2017). Normative isomorphism can be attained through pertinent professional platforms and academic institutions that provide guidance on specific methods of sustainable procurement.

The institutional theory approach posits that the effective implementation of sustainable procurement relies on the consideration of both formal institutional frameworks (such as environmental regulations, organisational structures, and laws) and informal institutions (including professional practices, norms, and values). Organisations may comply with legal regulations while simultaneously undermining sustainability objectives through informal practices rooted in traditional procurement principles, such as cost minimisation and risk aversion (Grandia et al., 2015).

The notion of new public management has significantly influenced the context in which sustainable procurement policies are upheld. The facets of NPM that emphasise efficiency and performance evaluation, along with market-oriented strategies, have created both opportunities and constraints concerning the advancement of sustainable procurement (Walker & Brammer, 2009). Measurable outcomes, central to NPM, align with specific aspects of sustainable procurement, such as environmental performance indicators, however may conflict with the more nuanced objectives of social sustainability, which are more challenging to quantify.

The NPM competition and market mechanism have strengthened the design and development of procurement processes and procedures that leverage market forces to achieve sustainability. Nonetheless, the NPM's emphasis on short-term cost reduction may conflict with sustainable procurement's long-term strategy, as sustainable procurement sometimes requires increased initial investments to provide enduring benefits (Preuss, 2009). This issue necessitates the equilibrium of immediate criteria and long-term performance incentives in the assessment and establishment of design criteria.

Stakeholder theory provides useful insights into the interconnected dynamics of relationships that influence the outcomes of sustainable procurement. Sustainable procurement, unlike conventional procurement that focusses solely on buyers and suppliers, must account for the interests and influence of diverse stakeholder groups, including environmental organisations, social advocacy groups, affected communities, and future generations (Bjorklund, 2010).

A stakeholder theory approach necessitates the equilibrium of diverse stakeholder interests through the identification, engagement, and management of these stakeholders, which is crucial for the success of sustainable procurement. This requirement presents a barrier for procurement professionals who may lack substantial experience in stakeholder involvement, as there may be contradictory expectations among diverse stakeholder groups (Brammer & Walker, 2011). Advanced negotiation and compromise skills are essential to reconcile the interests of stakeholders in procurement, surpassing standard procurement competencies.

The network theory illustrates the operation of sustainable procurement within intricate organisational networks. Modern procurement design invariably establishes networks of linkages among various organisations, including prime contractors, subcontractors, suppliers, and service providers, which influence sustainability results (Large & Thomsen, 2011). Network theory posits that achieving sustainability goals necessitates the coordination and collaboration of relationships within the network.

The network viewpoint emphasises the significance of trust and the communication of shared aims in achieving sustainable outcomes. The typical arm's length contracting relationship, grounded in procurement dynamics, may inadequately serve as a foundation for the essential partnership required to address the complex challenges of sustainability (Grandia, 2016). This realisation has led to the development of partnership and alliance strategies designed to align sustainability incentives within procurement networks.

Resource-based theory elucidates why certain organisations are more adept than others in implementing sustainable procurement practices. This theoretical framework emphasises the significance of organisational resources and competencies in contributing to competitive advantage (Barney, 1991). Specialised knowledge, analytical skills, stakeholder relationships, and technology support systems that enable sustainability evaluation and monitoring are pertinent resources for sustainable procurement.

The resource-based view posits that adopting sustainable procurement is essential for developing distinctive organisational capabilities that cannot be easily replicated by other entities. These competencies include expertise in lifecycle evaluation, social impact assessment, stakeholder involvement, and performance monitoring (Igarashi et al., 2013). Organisations investing in the development of these capabilities can achieve enhanced sustainability outcomes and perhaps influence other organisations through demonstration effects.

Systems theory provides a comprehensive perspective on sustainable procurement, emphasising the interconnections between procurement decisions and the broader

environmental, social, and economic systems. The second premise in this theoretical framework recognises that procurement exists inside intricate systems, where a structural change in one area can have a cascading effect throughout the system (Sönnichsen and Clement, 2020).

The systems approach suggests that sustainable procurement necessitates the evaluation of various scales and timeframes of procurement activities concerning system-wide impacts in both the short and long term. This treatment emphasises the importance of feedback loops, side effects, and system optimisation rather than focussing on locally optimal single-procurement decisions (Uttam & Le Lann Roos, 2015).

The innovation theory provides insights on utilising sustainable procurement to integrate technological and social innovation. The demand-pull approach of innovation posits that government facilitation of market demand for sustainable products and services may incentivise suppliers to innovate (Edler & Georghiou, 2007). This theoretical perspective emphasises the influence of a multifaceted public demand in driving innovation processes.

The innovation systems approach recognises that successful innovation requires the cooperation of diverse stakeholders, including academic institutions, firms, and government entities. Sustainable procurement can serve as a mechanism to cultivate innovation networks and provide market feedback, hence informing investment decisions in innovations (Uyarra et al., 2014).

The theory of behavioural economics offers insights into the cognitive biases and behavioural decisions that may influence the execution of sustainable procurement. The rational decision-making model of traditional economic theory is inapplicable to natural decision-making; behavioural economics posits that individuals and organisations may make irrational decisions that are not necessarily optimal due to cognitive limitations, loss aversion, or other psychological factors (Kahneman, 2011).

Behavioural impediments in sustainable procurement may encompass an excessive focus on initial product costs rather than lifecycle value, resistance to change due to established customs and traditions, or an incapacity to comprehend complex sustainability issues. These characteristics can influence the design of procurement systems and training programs to enhance decision-making (Michelsen & de Boer, 2009).

Empirical Review

Over the past two decades, empirical contributions to sustainable public procurement have proliferated, providing extensive insights into system implementation, success determinants, and persistent challenges across diverse industries and legal frameworks. This literature encompasses quantitative surveys, qualitative case studies, and mixed-method assessments, depicting a highly intricate portrayal of sustainable procurement in practice.

The European research is extensive and aligns with the EU's leadership in establishing a comprehensive framework for sustainable procurement. A thorough survey conducted by Cheng et al. (2018) on the implementation of green public procurement in EU member states revealed significant disparities in uptake levels, with some countries utilising less than 20 percent of available procurement opportunities, while leasing jurisdictions like the Netherlands and Denmark exceeded 60 percent. The most significant indications of successful implementation identified were legal frameworks, institutional capacity, and political commitment.

A longitudinal study by Uttam and Le Lann Roos (2015) examined the evolution of sustainable procurement strategies within French public organisations over a decade. In their analysis, they documented a gradual trend of including environmental parameters but noted persistent challenges in integrating social elements and assessing their influence. The research on this topic indicated that senior management commitment and expert sustainability expertise are crucial for achieving significant implementation success.

Research on the Nordic countries has provided insights into contemporary sustainable procurement. Researchers examined the execution of green procurement in Finland and noted that successful organisations possessed essential environmental coordinators, robust supplier engagement initiatives, and effective performance monitoring systems (Parikka-Alhola et al., 2006). The authors emphasised the need for market development operations to align supplier capacity in order to attain optimal efficiency in sustainable alternatives.

A comprehensive case study investigation of the sustainable procurement issue selected by Aldenius and Khan (2017) reveals notable disparities in its handling and efficacy between larger and smaller organisations. Larger municipal governments demonstrated a stronger capacity for conducting intricate sustainability studies, whereas smaller entities often excelled in embedding sustainability within organisational culture and decision-making processes.

North American research have increasingly focused on the integration of social factors in public procurement. McCrudden (2004) provided a comprehensive analysis of social procurement initiatives in the United States and Canada, including the outcomes of successes and limitations in strategies designed to foster minority businesses, generate jobs, and strengthen communities. His analysis highlighted that the effective execution of social procurement led to robust legal authority and reliable monitoring systems.

Flynn et al. (2015) conducted a study examining sustainable procurement practices in Canadian federal agencies, concluding that the establishment of policy frameworks is essential for facilitating implementation; however, the success of this implementation is significantly influenced by organisational commitment and capacity. Their analysis identified skills training and professional development as a critical success factor, which was often inadequately addressed in the policy frameworks.

Australian research has yielded significant insights into sustainable procurement across federal systems characterised by numerous levels of government with potentially conflicting duties. Barraket et al. (2016) examined social procurement practices in Australia across various states and territories, noting a pronounced

absence of a cohesive strategy and significant variability in potential effectiveness, attributable to divergent political priorities and institutional frameworks. Their study concentrated on the function of coordinating mechanisms and standardised performance measurement systems within federal contexts.

Research in developing economies has identified both opportunities and challenges contingent solely upon the economic and institutional context. Oruezabala and Rico (2012) examined the implementation of green procurement systems in Latin American countries and determined that the challenges to successful implementation stemmed from a fragile institutional framework and the inadequate ability of suppliers. Nevertheless, their research also revealed that sustainable procurement might be utilised to stimulate the market and enhance capacity building within supplier communities.

The research conducted by Amann et al. (2014) examines sustainable procurement practices across 15 countries in Africa, Asia, and Latin America. Their research indicates that effective implementations are characterised by robust international donor backing, partnerships with civil society organisations, and a focus on capacity building rather than rapid sustainability outcomes. The study emphasises the necessity of adopting international frameworks to address local economic and social contexts.

The research undertaken on the industry has yielded findings regarding the operations of sustainable procurement in several market circumstances. Testa et al. (2016) examined green procurement within the construction sector across various European nations and determined that governmental environmental regulations and lifetime cost analysis methodologies superseded voluntary guidelines or basic environmental preferences. Their study concentrated on the qualitative contributions of technical skills and collaboration among suppliers in achieving environmental advantages.

Research on IT procurement has revealed special difficulties related to rapid technology development and worldwide supply chains. Bag et al. (2021) examined sustainable IT procurement practices across multiple industries and determined that

organisations faced challenges in assessing the social and environmental impacts within varied multinational electronics supply chains. Their analysis emphasised the need of collaboration and adherence to industry standards in addressing sustainability challenges within supply chains.

Research on professional services procurement has focused on integrating sustainability and capacity-building objectives. Liu et al. (2018) examined the role of professional services procurement in enhancing internal sustainability capacity within public organisations, identifying consistent variables of effective strategies, such as long-term partnerships and formal requirements for explicit knowledge transactions. The research they did highlighted the potential for procuring professional services to serve a dual purpose: acquiring necessary expertise and enhancing organisational capacity.

Longitudinal research studies have revealed insights into the evolution of sustainability buying strategies over the years. Grandia's (2016) study on the implementation of sustainable procurement in Dutch municipalities over five years noted a progression towards a more strategic approach to sustainability issues. The study revealed that organisations typically go through distinct phases of sustainable procurement maturity, each characterised by various challenges and success factors.

Comparative study has examined the factors that influence the success of sustainable procurement across various contexts. The research by S. Onnichsen and Clement (2020) offered a comparative analysis of six European nations, examining the status of green procurement implementation amongst diverse institutional frameworks and economic conditions. Their investigation revealed that legal and organisational structures were not significant variables; rather, organisational culture and human leadership were pivotal in determining the success or failure of implementation.

Sustainable procurement has been examined about cross-sector variations in its application among different categories of public organisations. The unique characteristics identified by these research pertain to the sectors or types of companies, indicating that practices differ across sectors regarding sustainability and the methods of procurement implementation (Michelsen and de Boer, 2009).

The research on performance measurement and assessment indicates persistent challenges in demonstrating the outcomes of sustainable procurement. Palmujoki et al. (2010) examined measurement practices in several European organisations and found that a predominant portion of the data collected focused on input and process indicators rather than result and effect metrics. Their analysis indicated that standardised measuring frameworks and persistent assessment procedures are essential for understanding the effectiveness of sustainable purchasing.

Research on stakeholder involvement has provided insight into the intricate relationships that influence the outcomes of sustainable procurement. Bjorklund (2010) asserts that Sweden exhibited a robust participatory culture of stakeholder engagement within public organisations, noting that successful programs typically featured effective stakeholder mapping systems, consistent consultation procedures, and feedback channels that facilitated input influencing procurement decisions. The study emphasised the necessity of cultivating dependable trust and enduring relationships with a key stakeholder group.

Research on innovation procurement has revealed both successful and restrictive experiences with sustainable innovation through public procurement. Research on innovation procurement processes across several European nations revealed that successful initiatives need advanced procurement capabilities, risk tolerance, and continuous preparation by senior leadership (Uyarra et al., 2014). Their investigation has highlighted both the potential of public procurement to revolutionise markets and the existence of significant implementation challenges.

Research on supply chain sustainability has examined how public organisations address sustainability issues by participating in intricate global supply chains. Large and Thomsen (2011) analysed SPPs in Danish governmental entities and concluded that these SPPs typically focused on direct suppliers, neglecting their broader systemic implications. They emphasised the significance of integrating methodologies and establishing industry-wide standards to address issues of supply chain sustainability.

The study has recently commenced an examination of the digital transformation in eco-friendly procurement. Alhola et al. (2019) analysed the utilisation of digital platforms and data analytics in sustainable procurement within the Nordic region, revealing that the adoption of innovative technology significantly enhances sustainability assessment and tracking processes. However, the authors also found obstacles that hampered the use of technology, including data quality, system integration, and digital capacity.

The examination of the literature on sustainable procurement revealed recurring themes and patterns across many studies and contexts. A systematic analysis conducted by Walker and Brammer (2009) on sustainable procurement identified several consistent themes across sectors and jurisdictions on problems related to institutional capacity, market preparedness, and measurement. In their analysis, they anticipated that these intrinsic circumstances had not much altered throughout the years, despite the notable changes in policy and practice formation.

METHODOLOGY

The qualitative research approach is employed in a study of policy frameworks for sustainable public procurement and their adaptation to the local context. The qualitative methodology is better appropriate for the research as it addresses the intricacies of policy processes, stakeholder perspectives, and the diverse aspects that determine contextually effective implementation.

The study functions within an interpretive paradigm that recognises policy implementation as a socially created phenomenon, emphasising the necessity of understanding how different actors interpret and respond to policy frameworks. In this framework, sustainable procurement policies are acknowledged to function within intricate social, political, and economic systems, where their significance and efficacy are shaped by various interpretations and actions of diverse stakeholders.

This will depend on the study's design, which includes the characterisation of various data gathering approaches to gain a full understanding of the procurement policy framework concerning sustainability and its implementation. Primary data will be

gathered through semi-structured interviews with important stakeholders, including procurement professionals, policymakers, sustainability experts, and supplier representatives across multiple jurisdictions. This study examines stakeholder experiences on the implementation of sustainable procurement, focussing on the challenges encountered, initiatives devised, and perceptions of policy efficacy.

The secondary data gathering strategy involves a comprehensive review of documents, including policy documents, implementation guidelines, evaluation reports, and scholarly literature from various jurisdictions. This documentary analysis provides insights on policy design imputation, implementation techniques, and reported effects across diverse contexts. The document review will encompass institutional policy papers along with grey literature, including government reports, consultant studies, and organisational analysis.

The sampling method is fundamentally purposeful, selecting jurisdictions and stakeholders possessing valuable and pertinent information on sustainable procurement policy and its execution. Jurisdictions are selected to represent diverse levels of sustainable procurement advancement, varying institutional frameworks, and distinct economic conditions. The sampling technique will ensure the study encompasses a diverse range of experiences and perspectives relevant to the comprehension of a policy framework's success.

The stakeholder sample comprises an individual with extensive experience in sustainable procurement policy or its implementation. The interview participants will include procurement officials in management positions, policymakers responsible for implementing sustainability procurement policies, sustainability consultants experienced in sustainable procurement, and representatives from supplier organisations engaged in sustainable procurement markets. This multistakeholder approach will facilitate a comprehensive understanding of diverse viewpoints and experiences.

The data collection techniques conform to established qualitative research criteria to ensure both quality and ethical standards. Interview protocols are developed based on the findings of a literature research and have been tested with seasoned practitioners

to ensure clarity and relevance. Video conferencing facilitates interviews, enabling participation from many geographic regions while maintaining the quality of individual interactions.

The criteria for document selection are confined to publicly accessible materials that provide insights into policy frameworks, implementation experiences, and evaluations. The materials are methodically sourced from the government website, publications of international organisations, and scholarly sources. The literature research will encompass publications produced from 2015 to 2024 to capture recent developments in sustainable procurement policy and practice.

Thematic analysis approaches are employed to identify patterns and themes throughout diverse data sources and situations. The analytical process commences with familiarisation, during which the transcripts of interviews and papers are reviewed multiple times to gain overarching insights into the data manuals. Initial coding entails the identification of specific concepts and ideas pertinent to the study topics, with codes generated inductively from the data rather than from pre-existing frameworks.

Theme development involves transforming interconnected codes into overarching themes that encapsulate significant patterns within the data. topics are cultivated by a repetitive analytical procedure to examine the interrelations between topics and ascertain that they accurately represent the facts under investigation. The development of the theme necessitates the ongoing comparison of diverse data sources and situations to identify both universal tendencies and notable differences.

Data triangulation is employed to enhance the reliability and validity of the research findings. A comparison is made between interview data and documentary data to identify convergent and divergent areas. Comparisons of various stakeholder viewpoints are conducted to elucidate differing opinions and experiences. The method of cross-jurisdictional comparison identifies factors that may result in disparities in policy performance across different contexts.

The quality assurance procedures involve member checking, wherein interview participants get summaries of key findings and are solicited for feedback regarding their accuracy and interpretation. Peer review is a procedure in which research findings are evaluated by experienced researchers and practitioners to determine their analytical rigour and relevance. The practice of reflexivity involves the ongoing examination of the researcher's assumptions and biases to prevent their influence on data collection and interpretation.

The ethical consideration pertains to informed consent procedures, wherein participants are aware of the research's goal, their rights, and the commitment about the use of their information. Confidentiality measures ensure that the identification of individual participants in research findings occurs solely with their explicit consent. The institution's research ethics and data protection principles govern data handling and storage operations.

The research timetable consists of six months dedicated to data collection, succeeded by four months of analysis and writing. The document processing commences during the preliminary phases of the research, specifically while formulating the interview procedure and selecting sampling methods. The interviews are conducted over a three-month period to facilitate the refinement of sampling and data collecting in a sequential or iterative manner based on the findings obtained.

The shortcomings of qualitative approach include potential researcher bias during data collection and analysis, limited statistical generalisability of the conclusions, and reliance on individuals' willingness to offer information. These limitations are addressed by rigorous data gathering processes, triangulation of many data sources, and explicit descriptions of study methodology and outcomes.

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

The analysis of acquired data indicates that the principles governing sustainable public procurement strategies across different jurisdictions and contexts are highly diverse. The data encompasses three principal themes: the critical importance of institutional capacity and leadership, the intricacies of balancing diverse

sustainability objectives alongside traditional procurement considerations, and the essentiality of stakeholder engagement and collaboration for successful implementation.

Institutional capacity is a critical factor that determines the efficiency of sustainable procurement policy. Interviewed respondents consistently assert that policy frameworks, regardless of their sophistication, cannot overcome the intrinsic limitations of implementing organisations. Organisations with well-established sustainability knowledge and skills, adequate financial capacity, and active senior management engagement demonstrate significantly higher levels of successful sustainable procurement implementation than those lacking these organisational fundamentals.

The figures reveal that institutional capacity encompasses various dimensions, including technical capabilities, analytical skills, stakeholder engagement abilities, and change management competencies. Companies that implement comprehensive capacity-building activities, including formal training and experiential learning opportunities, achieve a greater integration of sustainability considerations in their procurement processes. Nonetheless, capacity building is a protracted investment process that, over several years, presents challenges for organisations grappling with budget constraints or staff turnover.

A further aspect of institutional capability discernible from the data is the commitment of leadership. An effective implementation of sustainable procurement is typically marked by advocates at many organisational levels who actively promote sustainability objectives and motivate workers to address implementation obstacles (Ademeso et. al., 2025). Such champions often play a crucial role in navigating organisational politics, securing necessary resources, and maintaining focus during challenging implementation periods.

The discussion reveals significant disparities in the strategic direction of organisations regarding the incorporation of environmental, social, and economic objectives into procurement decisions. Organisations with more developed sustainable procurement programs are anticipated to adopt more integrated strategies

that simultaneously address all three dimensions, whereas those in the initial stages of implementation are likely to employ specific approaches that predominantly focus on one dimension, typically environmental considerations.

The integration of environmental sustainability appears to be progressing most effectively among the comparative jurisdictions, potentially due to the established and refined assessment methodologies such as lifecycle analysis and carbon footprinting. The environmental impact assessment is frequently cited as a highly reliable activity conducted by organisations, and the integration of environmental criteria in the acquisition of goods and services is considered to exhibit significant maturity. The evidence, however, indicates that current environmental assessment approaches include certain shortcomings, particularly for complex global supply chains and environmental dynamics, such as biodiversity impacts.

Many organisations encounter challenges in integrating social sustainability, demonstrating issues in measurement as well as a deficiency in personnel expertise for social effect evaluation. Organisations struggle to define appropriate social outcomes, articulate relevant evaluation metrics, and monitor social impacts over time. The research suggests that successful integration of social sustainability is linked to collaboration with specialist organisations and a commitment to long-term relationship development with the relevant communities.

Economic sustainability issues mostly emphasise the necessity of bolstering local economies and small enterprises, although several organisations also focus on fostering innovation and creating long-term value. Organisations assert that economic sustainability agendas align seamlessly with conventional procurement priorities, facilitating their integration. However, tensions arise when the objective of economic sustainability (long-term) conflicts with short-term cost pressures.

The imperative to reconcile sustainability objectives with traditional procurement interests emerges as a prominent concern across all analysed jurisdictions in Canada. The respondents discuss enduring contradictions between sustainability goals and practical considerations, including budgetary limitations, regulatory requirements,

and performance expectations. These conflicts require intricate value measuring approaches that account for several objectives.

In organisations with mature sustainable procurement strategies, the concept of value for money has evolved to encompass environmental and social considerations alongside financial factors. Nonetheless, this progress necessitates the understanding of novel analytical capabilities and evaluation methodologies that remain unestablished in numerous organisations. The findings reveal that organisations often struggle to quantify and evaluate diverse values, resulting in varying decision-making approaches.

The research of the legislative environment reveals a significant disparity in the degree of discretion necessary for sustainable procurement across jurisdictions. Organisations operating inside required frameworks possess more stakes in their execution, although they also highlight challenges related to compliance expenses and bureaucratic processes. Organisations managed by volunteer structures report increased flexibility; yet, their implementation rates are comparatively lower and more variable.

The data suggests that hybrid approaches integrating required minimum requirements with optional enhancements may provide an optimal equilibrium between fundamental implementation assurance and the encouragement of innovation. These hybrid solutions allow organisations to focus compliance efforts on fundamental standards while providing flexibility for those capable of pursuing more ambitious sustainability objectives.

The engagement of stakeholders is a critical aspect contributing to the success of a sustainable procurement program. Organisations with clearly articulated strategic approaches to stakeholder engagement demonstrate a superior comprehension of their critical sustainability priorities, supplier collaboration within their systems, and the implementation of sustainability programs. However, the process of stakeholder involvement necessitates a substantial investment of time and resources, which not all organisations can sustain.

The analysis reveals that effective stakeholder engagement encompasses a sequence of activities, including initial consultations during policy design, ongoing communication throughout implementation, and feedback mechanisms that enable stakeholder participation in program development. Organisations generate superior results and stakeholder satisfaction by ongoing engagement with stakeholders, treating it as a long-term commitment rather than a singular event.

Another aspect of stakeholder engagement is supplier engagement, which involves a distinct element of interaction and relationship development over time. Organisations indicate that suppliers often hesitate to improve sustainability performance due to their need for clear objectives, technological support, and sufficient incentives. The statistics indicate that collaborative approaches focused on mutual benefit are more effective than regulatory methods centred on compliance and penalties.

The challenges of performance measurement and evaluation continue to afflict the majority of organisations examined in the research. While organisations have identified methods to enhance input and processes in sustainable procurement initiatives, there is ongoing discourse over the scarcity of metrics for outputs and impacts. The measurement gap poses a hurdle to implementing evidence-based improvements, as organisations struggle to demonstrate program efficacy.

The research suggests that measuring challenges may reveal technological difficulties in assessing various sustainability outcomes, including insufficient resources for conducting evaluation sessions. Organisations lack essential baseline information necessary for impact assessment and encounter difficulties in attributing aggregate sustainability outcomes to procurement decisions. Nevertheless, organisations who invest in robust measurement methods report enhanced performance outcomes of the initiatives and heightened stakeholder trust.

Technology appears to significantly enhance sustainable procurement practices, particularly in supplier evaluation, performance assessment, and effect analysis. Organisations that have implemented digital technologies have improved efficiency in their sustainability assessment processes and higher quality of decision-making

data. However, the implementation of technology incurs significant costs, including the necessity for technical support, which may not be feasible for many firms.

The analysis indicates that many factors appear to influence the success of sustainable procurement across diverse contexts. Organisational culture is a critical factor, since organisations that have embedded sustainability into their operations are more likely to successfully integrate sustainability considerations into their procurement efforts. Cultural integration appears to develop progressively over time, facilitated by leadership commitment and worker involvement.

Market factors influence the efficacy of sustainable procurement reporting, with organisations in marketplaces rich in sustainable products and services finding it easier to implement compared to those in markets with fewer sustainable alternatives. The statistics suggest that public procurement can contribute to market growth; however, this requires coordinated efforts across diverse organisations and long-term commitment over an extended period.

The influence of governmental backing and stability as a contextual factor on the execution of sustainable procurement is evident. Companies operating in surroundings with stable government views on sustainability enjoy more effective program implementation and significant long-term success. Organisations delineate methods to preserve their procurement programs despite political changes, highlighting the importance of institutionalising sustainability aspects rather than relying just on political engagement.

CONCLUSION

This investigation has investigated the intricate policy landscape of sustainable public procurement and identified numerous instances of progress, as well as challenges in guaranteeing that policy objectives are implemented in their entirety. The research demonstrates that, despite the substantial progress made in the formulation of highly complex policy plans at both national and international levels, the further development of these plans into standard and effective practice has still been lacking in the majority of jurisdictions.

Based on the evidence presented in this paper, it is evident that policy frameworks are inadequate for the successful procurement of sustainable. Even the most comprehensive sets of legal regulatory requirements and the most detailed scheme of implementation instructions will not yield the desired results unless they are accompanied by sufficient institutional capacities of leading commitments by leaders and favourable organisational cultures. This observation is crucial for policymakers who may be inclined to believe that policy development is the primary impediment to sustainable procurement.

This research reveals that the most critical factor in obtaining sustainable procurement success is the institutions' capacity. Companies that have made significant investments in the development of comprehensive capacity in a variety of areas, including technical expertise, analytical capabilities, stakeholder engagement knowledge, and change management skills, consistently outperform those that solely adhere to policy compliance. This capacity-building exercise is a long-term investment process that cannot be achieved through short-term training sessions or policy directives.

The research demonstrates that the current institutional framework, market environment, and culture must be carefully considered in order to ensure the successful integration of global sustainable procurement models into the local environment. The implementation of unexamined and standardised solutions that are imposed over other contexts, or generalised solutions that are intended to replicate the successful frameworks in one of these contexts in the other, frequently proves to be a challenge. However, the study also identified additional universal laws that appear to influence success in a variety of situations, including stakeholder engagement, performance measurement, and continuous improvement techniques.

Deep-seated conflicts in the management of government or the public sector are indicated by the ongoing tension between the competing requirements in public sector management in the context of competing priorities in regards to the various goals of sustainability and the conventional focus in procurement. The professionals who are involved in public procurement are typically assigned multiple objectives that necessitate efficiency, transparency, fairness, and sustainability, all while

operating under significant time constraints and without a budget. The resolution of these tensions will be achieved through the implementation of advanced value assessment techniques that can consider multiple objectives simultaneously. Nevertheless, the development and enforcement of these techniques are challenging in numerous organisations.

The expansion of the concept of value of money to encompass broader sustainable concepts is a critical conceptual advancement; however, the process of determining how these expanded concepts will be implemented in practice presents its own set of obstacles. Firms encounter challenges in quantifying and contrasting a variety of value forms, which results in a lack of consistency among decision-making models and a reversion to the conventional methods of cost-driven analysis when faced with challenging decisions.

The study identifies stakeholder involvement as both a success factor and a significant implementation challenge. A higher outcome is achieved by companies that adhere to meticulously planned methods of stakeholder engagement. However, the majority of companies that are involved in stakeholder management are unable to consistently maintain the high volume of time and resources required for stakeholder engagement. The research suggests that the efficacy and efficiency of engagement in general necessities are improved by viewing stakeholder engagement as a process rather than a service.

The conclusion that sustainable procurement policy and market development are positively correlated is highly valuable and could be a critical component of policy formulation and adoption strategy. Public procurement has the potential to significantly influence consumer demand for sustainable products and services. However, it is crucial to ensure that the efforts of various organisations are combined and maintained over an extended period of time in order to achieve enduring market results. It is imperative to establish collaborative modes and coordinate policies, as individual organisations that operate in isolation have minimal influence over the market's development at such a low level.

Many of the organisations that were examined in this study are in dire need of significant improvement in the evaluation and measurement of performance. The current emphasis on input and process measures is inadequate in terms of demonstrating the program's value or potential areas for improvement, and it is difficult to ascertain the true results of sustainability. The development of efficient methodologies for measuring impact and outcome is expensive in terms of the evaluation methodologies and capacities.

The implementation of sustainable procurement can be significantly improved through the incorporation of technology, particularly in the areas of sustainable assessment, performance monitoring, and enhanced visibility within the supply chain. Nevertheless, the ability to capitalise on this potential necessitates not only an investment in technology, but also the development of novel analytical capabilities and the integration or fusion of technology solutions into the broader organisational processes.

This study demonstrates that organisational culture is a critical component that has not been adequately addressed in the context of sustainable procurement. It can be contended that organisations that effectively integrate sustainability principles into their operational processes will be more effective in their efforts to address sustainability considerations during procurement processes than those that regard sustainability processes as a marginal requirement. The efficient establishment of favourable organisational cultures is contingent upon the implementation of continuous processes over a period of several years, which cannot be achieved through policies and training programs.

Political support and stability are also significant contextual factors that influence the implementation of sustainable procurement. However, organisations can develop strategies to ensure that programs can be maintained in the face of political fluctuations. The most resilient programs are those that are integrated into institutionally entrenched programs, as they are not constrained by specific political leadership or policy commitments.

The research demonstrates that sustainable procurement is a rapidly evolving field, in which best practices are continuously evolving as organisations that practise it gain more experience and encounter new challenges. The inherent nature of evolution necessitates that policy frameworks incorporate learning processes and flexibility, rather than defining systemic methods of response that may become outdated in the presence of alterations in circumstances.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are made in accordance with the research findings:

1. Develop standardised assessment criteria for the evaluation of sustainable procurement policy frameworks, which should include legal foundations, institutional arrangements, implementation guidance, and performance measurement systems. All of these criteria should facilitate the identification of best practices and the systematic comparison of jurisdictions.

2. Establish consistent surveillance and evaluation mechanisms for policy frameworks that monitor both the progress of implementation and the achievement of desired outcomes. This monitoring should incorporate mechanisms for stakeholder feedback and the ability to alter policies in accordance with the implementation experience.

3. Develop comprehensive capacity-building programs that address the technical expertise, analytical capabilities, stakeholder engagement skills, and change management competencies necessary for the effective implementation of sustainable procurement. These programs should be maintained for an extended period of time and should incorporate both formal training and experiential learning components.

4. Develop systematic methods for adapting global sustainable procurement frameworks to local contexts that take into account extant institutional arrangements, market conditions, cultural factors, and capacity constraints. These adaptation processes should foster the development of extant strengths and involve local stakeholders, rather than imposing external models.

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