Ethical Integrity in Systematic Corruption in Public Procurement of Uganda

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ABSTRACT:

Purpose- On public procurement and corruption, there is enough literature. However, conceptual research that examines public procurement corruption from the perspective of ethical integrity is scarce. This paper seeks to examine systemic corruption toward a corrupt-free public procurement system via the prism of ethical integrity using the case of Uganda.

Design/methodology/approach- Using an umbrella review, the paper does a comprehensive review by methodologically compiling and evaluating numerous systematic reviews and meta-analyses on corruption in relation to ethical integrity. It was applied to deal with the growing quantity of systematic reviews and meta-analyses in the literature on public procurement philosophically.

Findings- According to the results of the philosophical reflection, the systemic corruption that plagues public procurement systems can be eliminated by enforcing the ethical integrity principle at both the individual and organizational levels. Adhering more rigidly to the ethical integrity principles appears to be the best strategy to stop corruption in public procurement.

Originality/value- The role of ethical integrity in the struggle against corruption in the public procurement system has received little if any, attention in research. Accordingly, to the best of the author's knowledge, this is the first study of its sort to analyze the part that ethical integrity plays in public procurement corruption. This paper provides a substantial addition even if it needs to be empirically assessed on a bigger scale given that employees can rely on ethical integrity for the bulk of public procurement reasons, which regrettably has generally attracted insufficient literature.

Keywords: *Corruption, Ethical Integrity, Employees, Ethicists, Service Delivery*

INTRODUCTION

When it comes to dealing with morals, moral principles and right and wrong behavior within their operational environment in compliance with the laws or standards for proper conduct or practice, public procurement actors' ethical integrity is important. Public procurement actors think and act in the public interest as well as their own when ethical values re prioritized over legal requirements. A public procurement actor must behave in accordance with legal requirements and practicable, ethical standards to balance the power of public policy with constraints that stakeholders will accept.

While upholding a good reputation is essential for organizational success, ethical procurement practices also reap major corrupt-free benefits. When it comes to reducing the risks associated with public procurement, ethical

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integrity is essential. Ethical integrity, however, is in danger because of the monetary interests at stake, the volume of transactions, and the close collaboration between the public and private sectors during the procurement and disposal of goods, services and works. In public procurement management, ethical integrity is a fundamental principle, value and research area even though systemic corruption, which is widespread through many nations worldwide, has received little research.

It is impossible to underestimate the global endemic corruption epidemic, which is particularly bad in the domain of public procurement, as it has major implications and consequences for the protection and promotion of human rights, including human happiness (Sikka & Lehman, 2015). It has been said to go from "venality to ideological erosion" (Nye, 1967). Harriss-While and While (1966) claim that the breadth and pervasiveness of corruption have taken on catastrophic significance, despite the fact that this evil can undermine the moral and ethical pillars of civilization. As stated by Nye (1967), corruption is a spiritual divergence from morality in which a decision is made by a person and then carried out by that person. He argues that putting people of integrity in charge of every aspect of national life will go a long way toward eradicating corruption. This is in addition to the effective public procurement system.

The negative repercussions of corruption on economic, political and social growth, which lead to increased costs and fewer access to services like justice, health care and education, disproportionately affect the poorest and most vulnerable individuals. Corruption makes poverty and inequality worse (Addah et al., 2012), taking away the gen of wellness from public procurement as funds meant for the poor and the underprivileged are diverted to line the wallets of the unscrupulous. The vast majority of international research maintains that corruption stifles democracy, threatens social cohesion and destroys economic growth (Uneke, 2010). The majority of federal officials in the USA have corruption as their only conviction, in line with Cordis and Milyo's (2016) study, for instance. The threat of corruption to the general public's acquisition and disposal of goods, services and works that provide a source of living affects both

Ugandans specifically and Africa generally (Berkman, 2013).

Public procurement, however, should be a government purchasing and disposal function free of unethical and corrupt behavior if it is to work and maximize the welfare of the general public. A government should establish rules and procedures based on ethical principles to make sure that it buys these goods, and services and works in an open, competitive and cost-effective manner. But the root of public procurement trouble is corruption. Koto and Kanjere's (2012) findings suggest that public procurement processes are full of scandals and corruption, in some circumstances, it can be difficult to identify these unethical behaviors. They came to the conclusion that officials' proclivity for breaking the law and political meddling were the main causes of corruption in public procurement. Public procurement is one of the areas of government, in line with Basheka's (2012) findings, where corruption is most likely to occur. This is due to the fact that, in addition to the number of transactions and financial interests at risk, the complexity of the process, the close cooperation between organizations and public officials, and the sheer number of participants all raise the likelihood of corruption. Theft, improper influence during the need assessment, bribery of employed officials involved in the awarding process and bid fraud are just a few of the dishonest behaviors that might be utilized as a springboard in Basheka's (2013) analysis of these issues.

When it comes to public procurement, corruption manifests itself in a variety of ways, including kickbacks, bribes and the embezzlement of public funds (Basheka et al., 2009), as well as unfairness, discrimination, a lack of transparency, disregard for the procurement process when awarding contracts, high procurement costs but subpar service and the misappropriation of public resources (Mwelu et al., 2018). Other forms of procurement corruption include conflict of interest, impersonation, inflicting financial or property loss, forging documents, fraudulent accounting, dereliction of duty, securing contracts through corruption, diverting public resources and obtaining illicit enrichment (Wafula & Makokha, 2017). Mould-Iddrisu (2010) has provided a broader framework

for these situations by defining "irregular, unethical, immoral or illegal" behavior as any action that permits individuals or groups to unfairly gain from their affiliations or positions in opposition to the rights and interests of others.

People who participate in the system as contractors, service provides or personnel of procurement entities are frequently those who engage in public procurement corruption. They violate their obligations to their employer and/or other people by using their position(s), role(s), influence(s), power(s), or authority in the organization or in a particular scenario to achieve benefits for themselves (Wells, 2004). Osei-Afoakwa (2012) shows how the consequential and deontological stances have been used as complementary theoretical expositions to explain why corruption may not be beneficial for the public procurement system. It has been argued that if corruption is to be hated because of its consequences, then it may also be stated that corruption may be considered as desirable since it occasionally creates favorable consequences. Even if there are doubts regarding whether corruption impedes economic progress and development, it has been maintained that it is unacceptable and must be avoided at all costs. This is because public procurement is essential to social welfare, and even if occasionally corruption has benefits that outweigh its drawbacks, it is still unethical and should be avoided.

It would therefore be wiser to assume, out of an excess of caution, that corruption is harmful to the public procurement system regardless of its effects. This is due to the fact that corruption is against the law, immoral, unusual and detrimental to the welfare of society and it also violates the corrupt official's duties to the employer. Estimates of losses from procured spending range between 10 and 20 percent (Hafner et al., 2016), even in European Unions with relatively good integrity in their procurement processes. Bosio et al., (2020), the 11 percent of global gross domestic product that comes from public procurement, or roughly 11 trillion United States Dollars annually, could have severe implications on state budgets. The argument is that corruption can worsen growth and increase deficits (Schwartz et al., 2020), among other things, by reducing the quality and/or quantity of infrastructure.

In sub-Saharan Africa, Dza et al., (2015) estimated that over 70 percent of public contracts featured procurement corruption, which in fact increased contractual costs by 20 to 30 percent. According to Okok's (2022) findings, Uganda is still one of the most corrupt nations in the world. An essential component of government expenditures, the procurement cycle, is vulnerable to corruption from planning to implementation and can end up costing the government and its people a lot of money. From Uganda's perspective, corruption is viewed as dishonest conduct committed by public sector workers, whether they be politicians or civil servants, in which they use the authority granted to them to unjustly profit themselves or those close to them. Other actors fit this mold.

To compact pervasive corruption, the Ugandan government has passed a number of laws. These laws include the Inspectorate of Government Act (2002), the Leadership Code Act (2002), the Public Finance and Accountability Act (2003) and the Public Procurement and Disposal of Public Asset Act (2003). Other anti-corruption acts are the Access to Information Act (2005), the Anti-corruption Act (2009), the Audit Act (2008), the Whistle Blowers Protection Act (2010) and the Public Finance Management Act (2013) (Gumisiriza & Mukobi, 2019). Governmental organizations have also been established to address allegations of corruption. The Office of the Auditor General (OAG), the Directorate of Public Prosecution (DPP), the Directorate of Ethics and Integrity (DEI), the Anti-Corruption Court and the State House Anti-Corruption Unit (SACU) are a few of these institutions. The government of Uganda has also implemented and is continuing to implement a variety of domestically developed and internationally proven anti-corruption measures, including revocation of contracts obtained through corrupt means, monetary fines for those implicated in corruption, debarment/backlisting of businesses or people known to have been corrupted in the past, and asset declaration by leaders and government officials to detect and minimize corrupt accumulation of wealth. However, corruption has continued to be a major issue in Uganda's public procurement (Basheka et al., 2015). A substantial amount of research (Basheka et al., 2015; Ntayi et al., 2013, Basheka, 2012) has validated this. However, most of these

studies, like the various laws and government agencies that have only modestly reduced corruption in the system, fail to advocate ethical integrity as a treatment for the corruption sickness that plagues Uganda's public procurement system.

According to reports from the Auditor General's office, public money is being stolen more frequently and using increasingly sophisticated means and corruption is allegedly getting worse in procurement subjects (Inspector General of Government, 2014). In its Corruption Perception Index for 2019, Transparency International ranked 180 countries and territories, and Uganda came in at position 137. Uganda performs worse than regional rivals Burundi and South Sudan but better than Tanzania, Kenya and Rwanda in the Mo Ibrahim Index of African Governance (Mo Ibrahim Foundation, 2018). Uganda also scores below average in comparison to other African nations. IGG's report on the Cost of Corruption in Uganda (IGG, 2021) estimates that around UGX 614 Billion was lost to corruption in procurement in 2019 alone based on administrative records of public procurement spending and the "red flag" methodology. This cost of corruption represented just under 2 percent of total national government spending in 2019, which helps put it into perspective.

The impact of the reforms on the general public's perception of the integrity of the procurement processes in Uganda was assessed by the Public Procurement and Disposal of Public Asset Authority (2016) using a cross-sectional survey of 470 households. 85 percent of the respondents, including 77.5 percent of service providers, 91 percent of households and 87.6 percent of public officials, believed corruption had an effect on procurement choices, it was found. 85 percent of the civil society, 65 percent of families, 51.1 percent of public officials and 86 percent of service providers agree that public procurement is plagued with corruption. The perception index for the existence of corruption in public procurement rose from 69.8 percent to 71 percent in this poll. It is advised that specific policies and processes be set up to address cases with conflicts of interest, particularly those involving members of the contracts committee.

Abdulhasib and Muhamad (2022) assessed the effect of the PPDA authority's advising role on corruption in the Kabale municipal council using a descriptive correlational research approach. They came to the conclusion that the PPDA's advisory role was critical in combating corruption in Kabale municipal council. They encouraged the PPDA authority to consistently carry out and enhance its advisory and compliance monitoring responsibilities while putting pilot programs into place to anticipate their consequences.

Ntayi et al., (2012) investigated the relationship between moral schemas and public procurement corruption. Using information from 474 public procurement professionals, they demonstrated that social identity, ethical egoistic, legislative, amoral and religious moral schemas account for 78.51 percent of the variance in respondents' moral schemas. Each of these schemas as found to be a highly significant predictor and together they accounted for 73.3 percent of corruption in public procurement. To reduce corruption, they encouraged managers of purchase and disposal entities to follow moral principles. Managers are advised to behave morally uprightly in order to promote morality and deals that are good value for money.

Its notorious corrupt activity, which is frequently viewed as a severe ethical issue, is founded on the dishonest acquisition of some kind of advantage. To counter this issue, several anti-corruption activists advise using ethical integrity as a strategy. After all, as Okok and Ssentongo (2020) found in their study, the underlying reason why corruption persists in Uganda is that there is no comprehensive moral value system that can constantly socialize people into integrity. Thus, the question is not whether it can aid in the fight against corruption, but rather if ethical integrity can act as the cornerstone of putting the needed measure into practice. Or, to put it another way, the important question is whether ethical integrity is a reliable system for preventing corruption or if it is more of a flimsy tool that cannot be relied upon in the fight. In Uganda's governmental procurement procedures, is ethical integrity a trustworthy disinfectant against corruption? A philosophical answer to this question is provided by the context of this paper. Consequently, the main goals of this study are to offer a philosophical analysis of corruption in Ugandan public procurement and to present an alternative anti-corruption strategy that is based primarily on an ethical integrity perspective.

The researchers used an umbrella review (Grant & Booth, 2009), which compiles information from many evaluations into a solitary, clear and useful document. The researchers emphasized studies that addressed these interventions and their results in order to focus on the general problem of corruption in public procurement, for which there are conflicting solutions. The following study largely emphasizes ethical integrity as a means of preventing corruption in public procurement. The study illustrates the significance of ethical integrity, even when it serves as supplementary to other measurements. The major line of reasoning here will be an investigation into a deeper comprehension of ethical integrity. Then there will be a demonstration of the fundamental reasons that underlie ethical integrity. It will them be demonstrated what is necessary to comprehend its value. Focus will be placed on critically examining ethical integrity before discussing strategies to improve it. The paper shall have a conclusion.

Ethical Integrity: A Comprehension

The Latin word "Integer," which has an etymological connection to ethical integrity, is defined as "oneness" by Körsgaard (1996). To put it another way, it could be thought of as the state of being "undivided; an integral whole" (McFall, 1987:7). This stands for "wholeness of virtue, wholeness as a person and wholeness in the sense of being an integral part of something larger than the person-the community, the corporation, society, humanity and the cosmos" (Solomon, 1999:38). Even while soundness and purity are sometimes used interchangeably with ethical integrity, there are some minor differences between the two concepts since, at first glance, they seem to add a new aspect whose relationship to unity is not immediately obvious (Audi & Murphy, 2006:8). The reason for this is that "completeness and purity…are by no means equivalent." However, the word "integer" truly implies "untouched", "unhurt" or "undamaged", and something in this condition is "one" and "identical" with itself and as a result, "whole" and "complete".

On the subject of ethical integrity, Dudziski (2004) asserts that it is generally acknowledged to refer to "three distinct but related dimensions: the quality or state of being complete, the entire,

unimpaired or perfect state or quality of anything, and the quality or state of being of sound ethical principles." This implies that morality has intrinsic worth and should be protected. Additionally, it demonstrates that humans are people in the fullest sense of the word, that is, an indivisible whole whose singularity exceeds the sum of its component parts. They are persons, which is a normative term that implies an ethical claim, not merely humans. It follows that acknowledging someone as a person implies acknowledging their ethical and legal inviolability, with the inference that their integrity, particularly their physical or bodily integrity, must not be harmed but rather safeguarded. People lack a value that the market could establish and set a certain price that someone could be prepared to pay as a result. People lack a value that the market could establish and set at a certain price that someone could be prepared to pay as a result. Instead, they are treated with respect, which demands ethical deliberation and grants them legal protections.

A sense of self-worth generated from and founded in personhood that exhibits "a certain kind of unity in character" can also be described as having ethical integrity (Audi & murphy, 2006: 16). This illustrates how ethical integrity provides identity since people who have it are required to adhere strictly to their commitments or "ground projects" (Williams, 1981:2). Furthermore, it suggests that those obligations would lose their integrity if they clashed with the ethical regard for people. As stated by Calhoun (1995:235), ethical integrity results from individuals being "propelled forward by the conatus of desire, project and interest," without which "it is unclear which (they) should go on at all." As a result, while all actions have the power to define a person's identity and shape their character, only actions that are consistent with the moral respect due to others result in personal integrity. In consequence, agents need to have ethical integrity as well as a dedication to keeping their ethical obligations in daily life.

A person's integrity is defined as the realm in which they are able to completely represent who they are in their fundamental capacities as members of certain ethical communities and traditions, as subjects of law, and as members of a specific political community. Although "all persons are entitled to respect just by virtue of

their being persons," they are "deserving of more or less respect by virtue of their personal characteristics," according to Darwall (1977:46). In line with Cox et al., (2001), the similarities between the various professions do not preclude "a common currency with what it is to act with integrity in another context," so professional integrity and personal ethics in the workplace "need not (…) carry over to other professions." They continue by saying that havig a professional integrity "is greater if it involves not only adhering to one's profession's demands but doing so in a way that does not diminish the lives of others."

Interest in ethical integrity began to develop with the goal of promoting and upholding fundamental practice excellence in organizations and preserving public trust. It has gained increasing traction because of a person's ethical "wholeness," as opposed to only their character. It is one's sense of ethical "cohesion," the result of successfully balancing the many parts of life, having convictions and commitments and an essential element of one's well-being (Ladd, 1979). To consider work and home life as one cohesive unit requires persistent, occasionally strenuous efforts. As a result, what is needed "is not an absolute ranking of priorities, but the ability to reconcile competing legitimate demands." (Martin, 2000).

Since widespread corruption and the threat of a second unethical crisis have been linked to the absence of ethical integrity in public procurement, ethical integrity has gained favor in recent years. A few organizations have also considered enhancing employee ethical integrity one of their primary organizational performance goals. The necessity for additional research has been discussed numerous times. The significance of ethical integrity in the fight against unethical activity has been discussed in particular. Even still, there have not been many studies done up to this point, and those that have tried have encountered major difficulties. On organizational ethics, there have been many different kinds of studies. A significant component of comprehending organizational success, in line with Cohen's (1993) study, is analyzing ethical integrity. On the basis of Hatcher and Aragon's (2000) study, the addition of ethical integrity as a variable is essential for organizational efficiency. Ethics-related uses are also possible for integrity.

Supporters of ethical integrity claim that it can render unnecessary most if not all, of the restrictions imposed on public employees. If ethical integrity is the only attribute of good behavior, this application makes a much stronger argument than that claim. Or, to put it another way, ethical integrity becomes a weapon in the struggle against the pervasive unethical behavior committed by some individuals and public servants in all domains.

There are a lot of overly unethical organizations run and populated by people who have no idea that influence that ethical integrity has on their behavior. They have never valued ethical behavior and have no desire to behave ethically (Douglas, 2004). They are instead acting unethically (Warren, 2002). Some argue that improving ethical integrity is the most effective way to decrease corruption and improve the effectiveness of public procurement (Langseth et al., 1998). Greater moral and ethical behavior among public employees leads to better pubic procurement implementation. Some claim that sustaining ethical integrity might help one grow more righteous and charitable (Fandray, 2000). Ethical integrity is fueled by the anxiety described in the section below.

Underlying Motivations for Ethical Integrity

Ethical integrity is a psychological idea that influences behavior. It has been found to be an important trait of successful employees (Craig & Gustafson, 1998), an important factor in determining trust in organizations (Becker, 1998), a component of employee wellness (Harter, 2002), an essential component of fruitful working relationships (Cameroon, 2003) and a fairly reliable predictor of job performance and unproductive behavior (Ones et al., 1993).

The basis of ethical integrity is personal motivation and moral compass. A moral compass ties ethical integrity to a life based on ethical principles and values, that is, remaining loyal to one's values, whatever they may be and acting in accordance with certain norms and ideals. It entails creating a set of internalized values and principles that act as the standards and benchmarks for all of a person's actions and decisions. Lennick and Kiel (2005) defined a moral compass as the individual set of internalized values, principles and beliefs that make up a person. This shows that following a

fundamentally sound set of beliefs and ideals is a necessary part of having a moral compass. The contextual nature of moral compass ultimately determines a person's level of ethical integrity and the desire to behave honorably drives a person to act in accordance with the internalized values, beliefs, norms and principles that constitute their moral compass.

Mason (2001) argues that ethical integrity reflects both fundamental beliefs and accepted values. Ethical integrity includes strong values such as a people-oriented perspective founded on the values of respect and empathy, the desire to live a meaningful and purposeful life, an attitude toward life based on an internal locus of control, and a way of life supported by optimism and enthusiasm. One's level of ethical integrity is related to their inner desires, aspirations, dreams and goals. The inner drive of a person provides the impetus for achievement, growth and difficult effort that uphold ethical integrity. People with a weak sense of ethical integrity are those who simply care about themselves. As a result, ethical integrity is inspired by one's moral compass as well as by internal reasons and ideals, such as one's beliefs and principles.

When self-interest is pursued without regard for the universal principles that comprise the moral compass, it is evident that there is minimal ethical integrity. This gain has the power to weaken one' ethics and morality and persuade one to act egoistically. The necessity of surviving, the necessity of succeeding, the necessity of wealth and success, the necessity of power and the necessity of authority are some of these (Furnham & Taylor, 2004). These motivations are impacted by ethical integrity's cognitive and practical components, which support the development and pursuit of ethical integrity throughout one's life.

Knowing what is right and wrong in a particular situation requires ethical intelligence and self-awareness, both of which are cognitive capacities. Knowledge and comprehension of generally recognized standards and principles, as well as how they may relate to and be significant in a given scenario, are requirements for the ability to discriminate between good and evil (this is ethical knowledge). It is a quality of outstanding character that helps one comprehend why it is important to act ethically by helping one

to prioritize one's ideals. Lickona (2001) refers to this cognitive process as ethical reasoning.

Simons (2002) contends that people can only behave in a way that is consistent with their priorities and preferences when they are aware of them. This connects ethical virtue and self-awareness. In this sense, ethical integrity is the ability to evaluate one's actions in light of universal values and principles including respect, empathy and internal locus of control. Self-reflection is a natural outcome of integrity because integrity is the attribute of making sure that one's behavior is consistent with ethical standards. Even those who are perceived to have a strong moral compass seem to be striving to uphold the highest standards possible. This attempt to choose and act is motivated b conscience and respect for oneself. This creates a link between ethical emotion and the useful roles of ethical integrity (Lickona, 2001).

The conscience weighs a person's actions against their moral compass, and if they do not reflect integrity, unpleasant emotions are produced. But because it defines certain standards that one desires to keep, one's conscience also acts as a pro0active evaluator or motivator. When discussing ethical integrity, the term "self-regard" refers to a rational and upbeat sense of oneself. Because of acknowledged strengths and in spite of perceived limitations, it also entails feeling comfortable with oneself. Exaggerated self-esteem or integrity complexes are the unique foundations of a poor sense of self. When a person has an inflated sense of self-worth, their abilities, skills and traits are overstated. Low self-confidence individuals may make up stories in an effort to gain favor of others.

The Criteria for Ethical Integrity

Having ethical integrity is being entire, whole, undamaged, sound and in perfect shape. Perhaps this needs to be said again. It is vital to understand the conditions that ethical integrity could develop given the high value placed on it, the ethical relevance of it, and the scholarly interest in it. The only way to successfully oppose corruption and unethical behavior, it seems, is to use it as your most potent tool. According to Muscschenga (2001), the terms "ethical integrity to personal integrity," "material concepts of local moral integrity," and more were defined. He

considers moral (ethical) integrity to be the most typical and possibly most significant. Puka (2005) excellently summarizes the Aristotelian view of integrity as the origin of perfection in living, that is, the total integration of our good characteristics and skills into a commendable working virtue system. They demand sound judgment in the selection and execution of tasks, as well as the capacity to act graciously and under pressure in difficult social settings. These wonderful characteristics and skills can be turned into habit with practice. According to him, integrity places a strong focus on the art of living, getting along with others and acting in an ethically upstanding way.

Ethical integrity requires both adherence to a set of societal values and coherence between a collection of ethical principles. Additionally, important is consistency over time and in various social contexts between an employee's conduct and a set of ethical/social standards. It is necessary to satisfy the requirements of internal coherence, external consistency, value-behavior congruence, temporal stability and persistence across roles. When an employee is internally coherent, it indicates that all of his or her behaviors and various convictions are consistent with and cohesive with one another. According to McFall (1987), in order to main personal integrity, a person must uphold a set of consistent principles or commitments. To further what they believe to be the right motives, they must also maintain their ideals or commitments in the face of temptations or challenges. All of these result in internal coherence.

Burton et al., (2006) argues that a varied approach to ethics is helpful. This is because there is a middle ground between relativism and monism, the idea that there are no ethical standards or ideals that apply to everyone, called the fair-minded ethical perspective. In such a pluralistic framework for decision-making, intrinsic goods or principles are first found and then used to guide decisions on the optimal course of action. Then ethical intuition is employed to determine which good or principle is given the highest priority while sill supporting other principles or achieving other goals to the extent that it is practical.

As stated by Peikoff (1991), internal coherence suggests that one'e behavior is consistent with rational standards and ideals. The

rule, according to Becker (1998), is to stick to your convictions and not let any irrational thought trump your reasonable beliefs. According to Dobel (1990), people with integrity are able to give compelling and convincing justifications for how different areas of their lives interact in ways that are consistent with their core convictions. Most of these duties, including those that are imposed by numerous professional frameworks, are not related to the individual. Simply put, Palanski and Yammarino (2007) note that the phrases ethics/ethics, moral/morality and morality all relate to action that is consistent with socially acceptable behavior. External consistency is the basis for bringing an employee's demands under these obligations and his or her set of value decisions closer together.

In line with Gintis et al., (2008), the outcome of the coevolution of genes and cultures that resulted from goodness of fit is human morality. People in the human group who acted in a pro-social manner were more likely to survive than those who did not. Whether they are communal or personal, the organization rewards those who uphold its ideals, but only to the extent that they do so honestly. McFall (1987) makes the observation that such wholeness requires coherence between principle and conduct to provide more specificity. He says that having integrity is the state of being an integrated, entire that is not divided. Its primary requirement is behavioral integrity, which is required for moral consistency in both words and deeds. Integrity and ethical behavior are intimately tied in essential ways because of some substantive or normative restrictions on what it means to act with integrity. This shows that upholding integrity compels a review of the coherence and consistency of the words and deeds of those an employee must interact with.

Employees who are seen as being persons of integrity are those who consistently act in accordance with what they say, profess and promise. The morality of principles (in and of themselves) is not the primary focus of behavioral integrity; rather, it is how closely stated values are judged to line up with behaviors. While a single act may indicate a lack of integrity, Simon (1999) argues, no single act (or, in fact, any number of acts) will conclusively demonstrate a person's integrity. The attribute of consistency throughout time is something that ethical integrity has with

both virtue and character, despite the fact that it cannot be reduced to either. This exemplifies the consistency, rigidity and dependability of ethical integrity. If an employee possesses ethical integrity, they can be relied upon to act consistently throughout time. This is consistent with Schlenker's (2008) opinions, which back up the notion that moral identity serves a critical self-regulatory purpose in linking moral attitudes and behaviors. This is in sharp contrast to the notion that ethical judgment affects ethical action.

Integrity endures across time to the extent that it is a matter of ethical identity, which is largely stable. Integrity defines the strength of the link between ethical views and behavior since it gauges how committed a person is to a core ethical worldview. A vital element of both story and integrity is a consistent temporal thread that connects disparate elements into a coherent whole. Since principles have a situational element, they should be applied independently of personal consequences or self-serving excuses, which is why they must be consistent across roles. While context and circumstance will be relevant when weighing various courses of action, integrity demands that decisions be made based on timeless values regardless of such context and circumstances. According to Furrow (2005), life reduces to nothing more than a collection of unrelated incidents when there is a clear boundary formed between a person and the parts they play or between the different roles that people enact in their daily lives. Since breaking them would mean losing one's stability-related sensations, he argues that there must be certain commitments that are unbreakable. Recognizing and honoring each role one plays while also making sure they are an interconnected is challenging. The complex web of personal integrity, which is made up of numerous subnetworks, is held together by a central network of commitment (Dobel, 1990). As a result, roles and other commitments are linked to the skeleton of a person's personality, with the identity-defining commitments serving as the ethical, intellectual and emotional network that links other commitments related to roles. When an employee pulls or yanks at the guiding ideas in their daily lives, integrity, which is defined as consistency across roles, can help to alleviate the challenges.

Critical Analysis of Ethical Integrity

Morality and ethics are profoundly imprinted with the shame, transgression and ethical approval that are a component of corruption. It does not even have to be illegal (Rose-Ackerman, 2000)- it only needs to be thought of as unethical or immoral. Ethical integrity, which is frequently promoted as an alternative to other measures to prevent corruption and unethical behavior, is actually a genuine measure because it may easily battle these social vices. One good example is that everyone with common sense wants to live respectable lives. Most people are compelled to build their aspirations on these kinds of things: pursuits that satiate their inner desires. This is because these things fulfill their deepest aspiration.

Due to the fact morality is the cornerstone of what it is to be human, each person is unique. It serves the cornerstone for all other qualities and human character, Other human sacrifices that must be constructed atop will be unable to support themselves is flawed. The cornerstone of every virtue is ethical integrity. A moral, as opposed to merely legal, course of action is required for ethical integrity Not just obeying the law, but also upholding a high ethical standard, is involved. The highest ethical principles are consistently upheld by people who have ethical integrity,

thically upright people make choices based on the long-term effects and implications, not on what is convenient or practical, but on what is right in the long run. It means this when it is said that "ethical integrity makes decisions based on eternal implications." Those who are ethically upright always tell the whole truth and nothing but the truth. At sometimes in life, one must face a wall, maintain their composure and climb it. A confession is completely ethically righteous when the whole truth and nothing but the truth is revealed. When this is accomplished, a person's interior horizons are limitless. Justifications or evasions cannot change ethical integrity. It entails keeping one's word and upholding commitments, particularly in trying circumstances. It is unaffected by other people's presence because it is internally motivated rather than externally. Since being loyal means fulfilling one's duties to the person or organization to whom one is loyal, one's own allegiance is the focus of ethical

integrity. An agent's identity, coherence and/or principled purity must be consistent with the beliefs that (in part) make up their ethical integrity.

Employees who are hired to carry out public procurement must demonstrate ethical behavior in their speech, deeds and actions. In other words, those who oppose ethical behavior will occasionally use the term "coercive" to characterize ethical integrity, which is also a description of ethical integrity. Each day, a person who works in public procurement faces uncertainty- real or perceived- about future developments and outcomes that can influence his or her moral judgement or behavior. These come with hazards in terms of ethics. There has to be a solution to this. In this case, ethically upright individuals should respect a consistent set of fundamental ethical principles. Rugeley and Van Wart (2006) assert that an effective argumentator considers the community and society. Such a person strives to offer the best to as many people as they can (Bentham, 1996). Or, to put it another way, according to Teehan (1995), moral standards are viewed as desirable because they are successful at resolving particular ethical dilemmas. Practical demands in ethically troubling situations are connected to ethical principles. He goes on to explain the different in numbers is not the main issue in any serious debate, but rather the question of what sort of person one is to become and what kind of self is being marked. Therefore, ethical integrity is much more than just coherence and consistency when it comes to what it means to be an entire, fully moral person.

High ethical standards require individuals to demonstrate a strong commitment to upholding their own particular ethical principles. The calls for fairness in dealings and agreements, an equitable division and distribution of the benefits and burdens of society, and the creation of a means for everyone to participate (Weigert, 2006). As stated by Manning and Shroud (2007), this must take into account the fact that one cannot act ethically in a vacuum because institutions operate as the cornerstone of one's sense of ethics.

Employees who habitually treat coworkers unfairly because they prioritize justice in their life are not functioning ethically. This speaks to the reality that sustaining the fundamental principle of justice in all of its institutional and personal manifestations is part of being an ethically upright person, in addition to the convergence of ideals and behavior. So, a person of good character has a developed sense of justice or fairness that instinctively discerns conflict and inequity- and is likely to respond in a way to make up for these flaws through the exercise of self-control.

The terrain of ethical conduct necessitates exhibiting a deep appreciation for treating others decently. The major topics of this include relationship with and duties to stakeholders other than the organization itself, communication and reaching consensus, trust and cooperation (Burton & Dunn, 2005). The employee is expected to recognize and cherish relationship for their ethical significance-not in a general sense, but rather in the only way that counts to him or her: personally. Since the idea of a caring person is important, it transfers into the ethics of caring and shapes ideas of what constitutes good or harmful behavior. The ethics of care are more consistent with self-concepts that do not encourage isolation and distancing from one's social connections. From this point on, ethical integrity is critically an issue of sense-making that is mutually constitutive for both parties to a caring relationship and is not just a question of individual temperament, disposition or make-up (Teehan, 1995).

According to Frankfurt (1971), those with ethical integrity are not only savages acting out their primal urges but rather are those whose actions show that they are in support of a purpose. It might be assumed that ethical integrity is a formal connection of coherence between different aspects of a person because a person with ethical integrity is said to be harmonious, undivided, or intact and to truly desire and behave in variety of ways (Dworkin, 1988). Ethical integrity postulates that coherence is comprised of a variety of coherence linkages, including the employee's own values, convictions and ideals. If someone is truly conflicted about keeping a promise in a particular situation, they are not operating with integrity. A person with integrity would also not support a political movement but, instead, would act in opposition to it in the face of mild criticism from others. Again, even if someone donates to a cause they support, doing so would not be an authentic display of that belief if the donation was mostly made under the influence of others or out of guilt.

Williams (1973) claims that an employee's basic values- which may include his or her family, job or most deeply held hobbies or principles- that give their lives a sense of purpose and meaning, create both an ethical identity and a practical identity. The emphasis here is on initiatives or commitments that convey identities. Building a character based on such well-founded projects and staying true to that character when the time is appropriate are therefore necessary for maintaining ethical integrity (Halfon, 1989). As a result, someone with ethical integrity exhibits it in a variety of contexts, particularly with regard to particular political, social, intellectual or religious reasons unrelated to their main objectives (Calhaoun, 1995).

Ethical integrity is a social virtue that is more concerned with maintaining a proper relationship with others than it is with maintaining a proper relationship with oneself. According to Calhoun (1995), acting ethically honest requires speaking up for something Infront of other deliberators since doing so is crucial to the deliberators' shared interest in determining what is worthwhile. While taking into account what others in the community have to say, this kind of individual also speaks up when it is appropriate to do so. He or she serves not just themselves but also other decision-makers who are trying to decide what is worthwhile by doing this. As a result, when someone decides not to adhere to a certain ideal, they are actually violating the norms of the community of people attempting to live a good life, rather than their own internal standards or commitments.

McFall (1987) argues that once a person possesses ethical integrity, it is not necessary to agree with his or her principles or commitments, but one should at the very least acknowledge them as ones that a reasonable person might consider to be of great importance and ones that a reasonable person might be tempted to sacrifice to some lesser but still discernable goods. Graham (2001) contends that having reasonable ideas rather than those that are fundamentally accurate is all that is necessary to be a person of integrity. The existence of objective standards for what comprises what is proper for a person to value is thus supported by ethical integrity. It is a condition of ethical integrity to be objectively correct in moral claims and empirical assumptions. Ashford (2000) suggests that a person's self-concept must be rooted in reality; it cannot be built on the assumption that the person has been materially misinformed about either empirical truths or the moral commitments they actually have. In order to truly live a morally upright life, one must perceive themselves to be morally upright.

A person cannot maintain their integrity while remaining whole. In accordance with McFall's (1987) view of integrity, there are instances in which we would want to commend someone's moral principles even if we disagree with them on a personal level. Ethical integrity is the place to look if ethical justification is what we are after. Nevertheless, following fundamental beliefs is crucial in life. The only quality required for a truly honest living is ethical integrity. Having ethical integrity is defined as telling the whole truth, no matter how challenging it may be (George, 2003). When an employee lacks complete ethical integrity in their interactions, nobody will trust them.

In its entirety, ethical integrity is defined as completeness, purity and wholeness that helps overcome the underdevelopment of ethical aspects of personality, especially the poisonous admixture of ambition that frequently triumphs over good intentions and deficiencies ("impurities") in the dimensions of character that should be governed by ethical virtues. Wakin (1998) states that individuals who possess ethical integrity regularly exhibit a particular character pattern. They are morally upstanding people. People have a right to live their lives whatever they choose, so long as it does not negatively affect the welfare of others, therefore, they do not respect people's autonomy. As free agents, they have the right to exercise their freedom of expression and choice. A key principle governing their existence is the obligation to refrain from harming another person physically or psychologically. They value pledges to advance and improve the wellbeing of others, even if those improvements are unconformable or limit the individual offering the assistance's independence. They treat people properly, assume that everyone deserves to be treated equally and distribute resources fairly. They maintain decency and respect in all relationships with others and are consistently loyal, trustworthy and truthful. If they remain faithful, they can be regarded as trustworthy.

Strategies to Improve Ethical Integrity

Proponents of ethical integrity argue that because employees should be professionals, they should not engage in even the tiniest bit of unethical behavior, contrary to the findings of management and organizational experts. For instance, they can rely on ethical behavior throughout their entire employment cycle; they do not need to confirm that it is relevant; it only needs to be clear in their day-to-day activities. People should rely on their principles, which are presumptively ethical, rather than being surprised. This has been the case, despite the fact that many of them display what could be described as a first-order confusion of ethical behaviors- behaviors that can be internalized and validated. They do not seem to have the mental capacity needed to form ethical judgments.

Employers can enhance their employees' ethical integrity in a variety of ways by promoting and fostering a positive work environment. The management group must communicate with the workforce clearly and effectively. Communication that is a direct and honest helps to build employee trust. This entails establishing an open-door policy that enables personnel to speak with their superiors and allowing for candid feedback on management, policies or activities.

Being informed of what is happening within an organization and keeping the lines of communication open are issues that affect everyone. This makes it possible for followers to feel more connected to you. The management group must confront the harsh truths if the circumstance and promote a culture in which the truth is expressed and the unpleasant realities are acknowledged. Since they should be treated with respect and dignity, employees should always be informed of the truth on recruiting, firing, change initiatives, downsizing and other matters. If the management team can come up with solutions without assuming liability or even acknowledging it, trust and credibility will rise in the process.

The advancement of ethical integrity will benefit from the promotion of a sense of moral obligation (Maxwell & Beaulac, 2013). In order to avert disaster, it protects against abdicating one's obligation. Relationships seem to be getting more and more surface-level as a result of technology, which has given individuals more means to connect than ever before, including social networking instant messaging, cellphones, Skype, blogs, emails, the internet and texting. Character degradation is largely brought on by this tendency since responsibility has significantly lessened as a result of the rise in anonymity. Systems of employee accountability are required to uphold ethical integrity because more people are anonymous than ever before, at more times and in more places. One's privacy is not violated by accountability; instead, it makes it possible for others to interact with the one and gain from the intimacy of the relationships. In actuality, it encourages freedom rather than subjugation. No matter what stage of life they are in or their level of maturity and responsibility, a person constantly needs ongoing moral accountability and correction.

Doing the right thing at all costs contributes to the emergence of character and integrity in society, more so in the procurement work. By acting ethically when addressing smaller duties and tasks, one can make an ethical decision when dealing with larger ones. Even if there may be no opportunity for personal gain, a person operating with ethical integrity must set aside his or her own agenda in favor of the greater good of others. This way of living changes. An ethically upright, well-intentioned and upbeat individuals always act in such a way as to uphold their ethical principles.

Every employee should be aware that their continued employment depends on them upholding a high standard of ethical integrity that others can aspire to. Everyone yearns to be guided by a person who practices what they teach. Since one cannot impart what one does not possess, it is essential for someone to act ethically upright it they wish to be believed. A person who maintains their word and acts in accordance with the principles is much more effective than one who does not. His or her strategies, beliefs, and actions should be driven by an obvious value. Personal convictions are one thing, but consensus on shared norms that everyone will commit to upholding is quite another. Because they promote fervent feelings of individual efficacy, high degrees of loyalty, ethical behavior, awareness of professional norms, and a sense of teamwork, shared values often have a significant impact on how individuals behave and perform at work.

In a variety of public procurement tasks, leveraging human resources can help maintain ethical integrity to ensure that morals and conduct

are consistent. The general culture if the organization depends heavily on human resources activities including hiring, training and recruiting. It is essential to place the right people in the proper jobs. The only way to create an organization with integrity is to hire people who can quickly adopt the core principles and who behave ethically in both personal and professional lives. Employ morally upright people because one cam always develop talent.

A substantial amount of research evidence indicates that the degree of cultural fit and value congruence between job applicants and their organizations greatly impacts both subsequent turnover and job performance, according to Pfeffer and Veiga (1999). The training of new employees should be a priority for any organization that values integrity. Through the training process, job expectations may be defined, technical skills can be gained and education in core values can be updated. The promotion of ethical integrity can be accomplished through performance management, compensation and awards. After putting in place the necessary personnel, integrity-promoting acts must be measured in order to enforce them. Employers who appreciate integrity take it seriously when they pay their employees in a way that recognizes both their performance and their commitment to organization values and behavior. What do you do, for instance, with a procurement employee who constantly exceeds bid targets while being abusive to other team members? Using this strategy, the procurement representative can avoid receiving remuneration for inappropriate activities and develops measures for termination if the behavior does not change. One protects the organization's brand by doing this, which also motivates staff to behave ethically. By assessing individuals based on their performance, conduct and capacity to "walk the walk" promotions can also be used to strengthen integrity.

CONCLUSION

Ethical integrity is a very well-liked concept. It embodies the idea that people are rational, independent decision-makers who are able to rule themselves. There are just a few empirical studies that appear to compare the outcomes of ethical integrity to those of other strategies for preventing corruption and unethical behavior in public procurement under similar conditions. The truth is that people are neither as capable of acting ethically as one might assume nor as likely to do so, according to other statistics, particularly those complied by management professionals. That is, ethical integrity can replace other sorts of measures and even of its "soft" form is underrated, it can nevertheless provide a sizeable portion of the necessary public protection when utilized alone and in the absence of other strategies for combating corruption and unethical activity. Last but not least, it should be noted that from a normative perspective, the difference between integrity and other methods of combating corruption and unethical practices (which the same sources consider anathema) is greater than it initially appears.

Ethical transparency must be demanded in a number of situations in order for it to be provided. Even the most knowledgeable individuals will not be able to comprehend what it implies without a prescription; therefore, it is also necessary, distinct measurements can sometimes be used for distinct purpose though. Some merely provide inspiration to choose a fight. Others just impose a minor fine and leave it up to the employee to determine whether or not to comply. There are significant variation in how laws that explicitly forbid certain actions are carried out. All things considered, there is opportunity for increased, confirmed and thorough ethical integrity (and approve intermediates) for a healthy public procurement environment.

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