

# Regulatory Awareness and Understanding, Organizational Culture and Compliance on the Procurement Process of National Government Agencies (NGAs) in Region XII

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**Abstract**— Transparency, accountability, and effectiveness use of government resources plays an important role in the procurement compliance. Previous studies have indicated that individual awareness and organizational culture impact compliance behavior; however, there is limited evidence in Region XII (South Cotabato), Philippines. This quantitative research analyzed how awareness and understanding and organizational culture influence the procurement compliance among national government agencies in South Cotabato, Philippines. Accomplished adapted questionnaire from procurement personnel was utilized to gather data for the research. The relationships between awareness and understanding, organizational culture, and compliance with procurement process were analyzed using the descriptive statistics and Pearson correlation analysis. Findings have shown that both awareness and understanding, and organizational culture have significant influence in the procurement compliance. The result of Pearson correlation analysis reveal that a moderate positive correlation exists between awareness and understanding with procurement process compliance ( $r = 0.56$ ) as well as between organizational culture and compliance with procurement process ( $r=0.59$ ). The result of Pearson correlation analysis reveal that a moderate positive correlation exists between awareness and understanding with procurement process compliance ( $r = 0.56$ ) as well as between organizational culture and compliance with procurement process ( $r=0.59$ ). The results suggest that procurement process compliance can be significantly influenced by spreading more awareness of procurement rules and regulations among procurement and adequate organizational support. Government agencies should incorporate targeted training into Individual Development Plans (IDPs), especially in areas related to pre-procurement planning, documentation, and compliance with the Philippine Government Electronic Procurement System (PhilGEPS). Additionally, to bolster procurement oversight and operational efficiency, it is important to address staffing limitations, promote transparent leadership, and invest in automated tracking systems.

**Index Terms**—Government Procurement, Organizational Culture, Procurement Compliance, Health Workforce Education, PhilGEPS.

## 1. Introduction

Increased adherence to procurement policies is believed to

enhance management and promote best practices within government organizations (Jaafar, 2016). Transparency, accountability, and effectiveness use of government resources plays an important role in the procurement compliance. Research have examined the relationships among procurement policy awareness (Dagohoy, 2023), organizational culture (Nguyen, 2016), and regulatory compliance (Mithamo, 2011). In the Philippines, the central portal for public procurement that provides comprehensive information on procurement opportunities is called Government Procurement Electronic Procurement System (PhilGEPS). This platform was enactment from Republic Act No. 9184 also known as Government Procurement Reform Act, this law enables posting bids, notices, awards and contracts to enhance transparency and efficiency procurement in the Philippine government. According to the report of the Development Academy of the Philippines – Technical Secretariat and Resource Institution in 2022, 57 agencies have failed to comply with the PhilGEPS posting requirements. This implies that majority of the agencies often neglect to comply with the posting of invitations to Bid, Request for Quotation and Notice of Award of which deprive the stakeholders' scrutiny and fair supplier access to information.

Inefficiencies in service quality, transparency, and competition is the result of lack of regulatory awareness among procurement personnel (Navarro, 2023). Knowledge with procurement principles significantly impacts individual behavior. Research shows that knowledge of government procurement compliance is more important than financial resources (Sönnichsen, 2020). Organizational culture profoundly influences procurement processes, affecting efficacy and ethical standards through implicit norms (Gyamfi, 2021). Cultivating a culture of ethics, openness, and responsibility promotes legal procurement practices. A research in Obuasi found that involvement and adaptability influenced compliance, while consistency was less significant (Gyamfi, 2021). The culture of flexibility helps enhance procurement compliance, however it impedes efficiency if it depends on

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informal decision-making (Jones, 2010). Promoting a culture prioritizing rule compliance is crucial to ensure effective procurement reforms. Understanding compliance factors in the procurement processes of National Government Agencies (NGAs) in South Cotabato Region XII, Philippines, fosters transparency, accountability, and practical resource use. To improve compliance, training workshops on procurement law and regulations should be organized for all personnel involved in the procurement process within government entities (Jaafar, 2016).

Moreover, a straightforward process for users and a simple adoption strategy to make it user-friendly (Calleja, 2015). Fostering a culture of transparency and integrity reinforces compliance by emphasizing ethical conduct and incentivizing adherence. Utilizing technology, such as procurement management software, strengthens compliance through task automation and better efficiency tracking. Collaboration among stakeholders—government, industry, and civil society—encourages joint problem-solving for systemic compliance issues. Embracing a culture of continuous improvement enables procurement practices to align with changing regulations and organizational needs, supported by stakeholder insights and lessons from previous experiences.

This research greatly benefits from its significance in procurement compliance, government, and education. It showcases the crucial role targeted training courses play in enhancing procurement compliance. The research advocates for the inclusion of training on essential procurement activities, such as pre-procurement planning, proper documentation, and PhilGEPS posting rules, within the Individual Development Plans (IDPs) of Bids and Awards Committee (BAC) members, the BAC Secretariat, and Technical Working Groups. The research emphasizes the significance of a strong foundation in procurement procedures, particularly for younger government employees, highlighting the necessity for accessible training.

This research recommends that government agencies tackle personnel challenges, including staffing constraints and workload assessments. Hiring qualified staff, implementing cross-training for government employees, and assigning temporary personnel during peak season that require increased resources to enhance efficiency and compliance are important. Additionally, the research promotes the appropriate leadership culture by promoting open communication, providing anonymous reporting options, and ensuring the immediate resolution of compliance issues within the procurement process. It also advocates investing in automated procurement tracking systems to improve oversight, minimize manual errors, and ensure timely PhilGEPS submissions.

The research also recommends that tools like procurement calendars and checklists effectively ensure organized and compliant processes. The researcher enhances their academic development by gaining an in-depth understanding of procurement practices, regulatory compliance, and the organizational culture within the government sector. The research enhances existing literature through academic publications, policy briefs, and conferences. This development strengthens the researcher's profile and fosters evidence-based

policymaking. Additionally, it lays the groundwork for future investigations, serving as a resource to explore the effects of leadership, the difficulties in policy implementation, and the digital transformation of procurement. Future studies can leverage these contributions by refining methodologies that promote transparency, efficiency, and accountability in public sector procurement.

## 2. Literature Review

The research literature resembles the agency theory regarding PhilGEPS postings regarding adherence to government procurement regulations. In government procurement, information asymmetry occurs when the principal is unable to verify the agent's compliance with procurement rules, laws, and regulations, even retrospectively. The principal cannot verify PhilGEPS posting compliance, which promotes transparency in government transactions. (Bergen, 1992) Argue that self-interest may make the agent reluctant to share information, potentially leading to false claims. In cases of non-compliance, an employee might falsely assert that PhilGEPS postings have been met. The principal cannot confidently ascertain if this claim is true or if it aims to conceal non-compliance. Additionally, information asymmetry arises from the lack of visibility in procurement spending. Government agencies often lack detailed information at the item level regarding expenditures, purchasers, suppliers, and compliance with the Approved Procurement Plan (APP).

Research and reports emphasize underspending visibility issues across various government organizations (Cuenca, 2020; Navarro, 2017), and spending visibility is particularly problematic in government settings (Monsod, 2016). This is partly due to the slow adoption of e-procurement systems (Calleja, 2015). However, Essig (2012) suggests that government procurement faces obstacles related to inadequate management information, exacerbated by multiple distinct financial and procurement systems that hinder data integration. This research significantly contributes to public procurement, governance, and education. It highlights the crucial role of targeted training programs in improving government agencies' procurement compliance. By integrating training on key activities—like pre-procurement planning, documentation, and PhilGEPS guidelines—into the Individual Development Plans (IDPs) of Bids and Awards Committee (BAC) members, BAC Secretariat, and Technical Working Groups, the research emphasizes their importance.

## 3. Hypothesis Development

### A. Regulatory Awareness and Understanding

The term "Red Tape" first appeared during the reign of Charles V, King of Spain, in the early 16th century, when he used red tape to streamline administrative procedures within his jurisdiction (Dickson, 2015). Exploring their historical origins is crucial to understanding the modern regulatory background and the challenges they encounter, the phrase "Red Tape" serves as a significant historical reference point. This practice binds important documents, distinguishing them from ordinary

matters and expediting discussions in the Council of State. The use of red tape quickly spread among European monarchs, reflecting its role in streamlining bureaucracy. The "regulatory state" concept emerged in the late 20th century in response to public sector reforms in industrialized nations. Scholars examined shifts in state functions and governance styles, with the regulatory state representing changes in institutional structures and policy mechanisms used by governments to regulate economic and social activities.

While serving as an analytical framework, "regulatory state" highlights the significant effects of regulatory changes on governance (Yeung, 2010). During these challenges, governments respond by issuing regulations to correct market inefficiencies and restore functionality to create equilibrium. Historically, the regulation of economic activities arose from recognizing market failures that required government intervention. Government regulation values fairness, transparency, and good value for money in procuring goods and services (Trepte, 2005). Regulatory awareness means recognizing and following legal frameworks to ensure fairness and transparency in procurement. Effective programs enhance compliance by informing employees about pertinent regulations and their consequences. Moreover, organizations with strong compliance cultures invest in ongoing training and communication to promote a culture of compliance from top management to frontline employees.

*H1: There is no significant relationship between regulatory awareness and understanding and compliance in the procurement process.*

#### B. Organizational Culture

Analyzing the link between organizational culture and procurement compliance depends much on the Competing Values Model and Neo-institutional Theory (Cameron, 2016). Compliance shows out as several isomorphism forms: driven by the requirement to follow rules for legitimacy, coercive isomorphism results from demands to comply with laws and regulations (Interligi, 2010). Mimetic isomorphism is the result of uncertainty driving companies to copy successful colleagues using industry best practices to guarantee survival (Interligi, 2010). Professional standards affect normative isomorphism; so, respect and validity depend on following ethical regulations (Interligi, 2010). Institutional logic is the set of beliefs that direct conduct inside an institution, hence forming organizational culture by defining suitable behavior. For instance, an innovative culture according to standards promotes creativity and matches behaviors with cultural ideals.

Decoupling happens when companies use formal compliance systems to seem respectable while their internal practices line with cultural beliefs contradict each other. Clan cultures rely on shared values, adhocracy fosters adaptive compliance, market culture stresses rigorous adherence to rules for competitiveness, and hierarchy prioritizes order through thorough procedures; the Competing Values Model shows how organizational cultures approach compliance. Combining these models demonstrates the equilibrium between internal and external forces on companies. While the Competing Values Model

emphasizes internal dynamics affecting compliance implementation, Neo-institutional Theory emphasizes outside coercive, mimetic, and normative influences. Compliance is methodical and under control in a hierarchical culture; in an adhocracy it adjusts to encourage creativity.

Neo-institutional theory is fundamentally based on legitimacy; the Competing Values Model reveals how societies aim for it. Whereas clan culture embeds conformity in values, market culture seeks legitimacy through performance and guarantees tight compliance. Lack of a compliance-oriented culture in organizations could result in lower regulatory knowledge, so fostering non-compliance or misbehavior. Furthermore, influencing the communication and adherence to regulatory rules is organizational culture.

*H2: There is no significant relationship between organizational culture and compliance in the procurement process.*

### 4. Methodology

This quantitative research examined how awareness and organizational culture affect procurement compliance in South Cotabato's national government agencies. The sample included 42 respondents from various national government agencies in Region XII, South Cotabato. The questionnaires were organized with unique identification numbers for efficient tracking during data entry. This numbering scheme reduces the potential risk of data errors and tracking individual responses.

It also facilitated a comprehensive quality control process, allowing for the careful identification of duplicate entries and anomalies. After the numerical assignments, the researcher thoroughly reviewed each response for completeness and internal consistency. Incomplete responses were flagged for further review to ensure dataset integrity. Descriptive statistics were used to summarize data characteristics, transforming Likert scale responses into numerical values for the study. While percentages indicated answer dispersion, measures such as the mean highlighted core patterns. The standard deviation was calculated from the responses collected through adapted questionnaires.

The Pearson correlation evaluated the relationship between independent and dependent variables in inferential analysis, determining how changes in one variable relate to another. This clarified potential relationships, aiding in hypothesis testing. Frequency counts examined respondents' demographics, while a correlation test explored the interconnections among variables. A weighted mean evaluated compliance levels, organizational culture, and awareness of procurement compliance. A Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test checked data normality. As the data were not normally distributed, a nonparametric test was used. Spearman's rho correlation assessed the relationship between awareness and compliance and organizational culture and compliance, with all tests conducted at a 0.05 significance level.

### 5. Results and Discussion

Table 1 rates compliance to procurement activities as only

Table 1  
Level of awareness with procurement compliance

Indicators	Mean	Remarks
1 I am aware of the procurement rules and guidelines.	3.88	High
2 I understand the procedures. My organization provides adequate training on procurement compliance.	3.85	High
3 I feel confident in my ability to comply with procurement regulations.	3.41	High
4 I have encountered challenges in understanding procurement requirements	3.90	High
5 Time constraints hinder full compliance with procurement processes.	3.92	High
6 My organization provides clear guidance when compliance issues arise.	3.83	High
<b>Level of Awareness</b>	<b>3.89</b>	<b>High</b>

Table 2  
Organizational culture and compliance with PhilGEPS posting requirements

Indicators	Mean	Remarks
1 The organization's culture supports compliance with procurement policies.	3.97	High
2 There is a strong commitment from leadership to ensure compliance with procurement regulations.	4.12	High
3 Compliance with PhilGEPS posting is strictly monitored.	4.14	High
4 Employees feel encouraged to report procurement compliance issues.	3.93	High
5 The organization provides sufficient resources to ensure compliance with PhilGEPS requirements.	3.90	High
6 Employees have a clear understanding of the ethical standards in procurement.	3.76	High
7 There is open communication regarding procurement concerns and compliance.	3.94	High
8 Organizational policies align with national procurement regulations.	4.17	High
9 Training and development programs promote a culture of compliance.	3.96	High
10 The organization fosters accountability in procurement decision-making.	4.11	High
<b>Overall Mean</b>	<b>3.96</b>	<b>High</b>

modest. This observation shows a significant congruence with the recommendations developed by the End-User, the BAC Secretariat, BAC Members, and the BAC Technical Working Group. This points to a rudimentary knowledge of procurement policies, hence training, rules, and monitoring have to be improved to reach total compliance.

The statement "I have encountered challenges in understanding procurement requirements" received the highest mean score, whereas the statement "I feel confident in my ability to comply with procurement regulations" received the lowest mean score. These findings indicate a prevailing sense of uncertainty and unreliability within procurement processes. The elevated average score for the first statement implies that numerous individuals experience difficulties with procurement guidelines. Conversely, the low score raises concerns regarding the fulfillment of legal requirements, thereby heightening the risk of non-compliance and ineffective policies. This underscores the necessity for more straightforward regulations, enhanced training, and improved support systems. Ensuring compliance, operational efficiency, and the enhancement of staff morale and performance are contingent upon addressing these issues.

Table 2 shows rather good congruence between organizational culture and adherence to PhilGEPS posting requirements. This emphasizes the need of creating a more inclusive culture even if it shows a great dedication to compliance procedures and leadership. Staff members should be informed, participated in the process empowered, active. More training, better communication, and more ethical awareness are required if compliance from modest to high is to rise. The lowest mean score went to "Employees have a clear understanding of the ethical standards in procurement"; the highest mean score went to "Compliance with PhilGEPS posting is strictly monitored."

This demonstrates both a commitment to the PhilGEPS compliance and strict regulatory supervision. On the other hand, the inadequate understanding of ethical values points to a

concerning lack of ethical awareness among the procurement personnel. This situation raises questions about the potential for unethical behavior even in cases of technical compliance, as it suggests a likely discrepancy between moral standards and adherence to practices. The findings highlight the need to strike a compromise between rigorous policies and thorough ethical education in order to maintain procurement that is honest and fair. Furthermore, this situation accentuates information asymmetry, which would let agents hide actions, thereby complicating the validation of compliance, especially for systems like PhilGEPS that stress openness (Bergen, 1992). Lack of visibility into expenses aggravates this problem even more since a poor knowledge of expenditure limits efficient monitoring (Cuenca, 2020).

Table 3 shows that the mean of compliance with procurement activities is high. This implies that BAC member, BAC secretariat, BAC Technical Working Group and end-users are dedicated to follow correct procurement procedures and regulatory guidelines. The categories "Completion and Acceptance" and "Documentation and Reporting" scored highest mean. The finalization and documentation show the highlights of high application of procurement processes. With a mean of the lowest among all, "Pre-Procurement Planning" implies that the first phase of procurement, market study, and strategy development still has space for development. Recent studies show that difficulties in canvassing, market research, and documentation still exist in government procurement and that creation of strategy has to be in place to handle this issue (Dagohoy, 2023).

With a p-value of 0.000, Table 4 shows the relationship between awareness and compliance in the procurement process whereby awareness can significantly affect the compliance in the procurement process. With a modest positive association indicated by the correlation coefficient of  $r_s = 0.6746$ , changes in awareness most certainly translate into improved compliance behavior.

Those who grasp ethical norms and procurement policies

Table 3  
Level of compliance with procurement activities

	Indicators	Mean	Remarks
1	Pre-Procurement Planning	4.14	High
2	Procurement Preparation	4.43	High
3	Publication (Advertisement/ of Invitation to Bid)	4.27	High
4	Pre-Procurement Conference	4.29	High
5	Pre-Bid Conference	4.31	High
6	Submission And Receipt of Bids	4.50	Very High
7	Bid Opening Evaluation	4.39	High
8	Post Qualification	4.47	High
9	Awarding Of Contract	4.48	High
10	Implementation And Monitoring	4.44	High
11	Completion And Acceptance	4.57	Very High
12	Documentation And Reporting	4.57	Very High
	<b>Level of Compliance</b>	<b>4.44</b>	<b>High</b>

Table 4  
Significant relationship between the level of awareness and the level of compliance

Variables	Mean	r <sub>s</sub>	Degree of Relationship	p-value*	Remark
Awareness	3.90	0.6746	Positive Moderate Relationship	0.0000	Significant
Compliance	4.53				

\*Tested at 0.05 level of significance

more deeply will probably follow correct procedures. Thus, efforts to enhance compliance should concentrate on raising awareness among all procurement personnel. This may include strengthening training programmes, creating user-friendly materials, and fostering a culture of transparency and accountability. By prioritizing awareness, organizations can expect higher compliance rates, reduced risks of irregularities, more efficient operations, and improved alignment with legal and ethical standards.

Also, in Table 4, the statistical outcome shows a p-value of 0.000, below the significance threshold of 0.05, indicating a significant relationship between the organization's culture and adherence to the procurement process. This implies that organizational culture is vital for effective compliance with procurement rules.

Moreover, the correlation coefficient of  $r_s = 0.5852$  indicates a moderate positive correlation, demonstrating that compliance tends to increase as the quality of organizational culture improves. Cultivating a strong organizational culture—characterized by ethical behavior, accountability, and transparency—can enhance adherence to procurement regulations. Therefore, organisations should prioritize cultural values like integrity, discipline, and responsibility that support compliance.

This can be achieved through exemplary leadership, ongoing training, performance incentives, and clear communication of expectations. Embedding compliance with the organizational culture becomes a shared norm rather than a procedural obligation, leading to more consistent and sustainable procurement practices.

Particularly in the areas of Completion and Acceptance, Documentation, and Bid Submission, a survey of 42 procurement personnel from National Government Agencies in South Cotabato, Region XII shows great compliance with procurement process. Pre-procurement planning was observed as a less developed area needing work, nevertheless. Respondents were only minimally aware of procurement policies; their early planning and documentation showed evidence of need for more training.

Though ethics knowledge, staff involvement, and communication still need improvement, organizational culture only moderately helps compliance with obvious leadership commitment. Greater awareness and a strong culture help to increase adherence to standards, according to statistical study revealing somewhat favorable relationships between awareness and organizational culture with procurement compliance.

The study emphasizes the need to tackle non-compliance by means of improved planning for good government, more training, and a stronger culture. Findings revealed that most procurement members were between 25 and 34 years old, suggesting they are gaining knowledge of procurement regulations (Van Deursen, 2015). The lowest mean score for "Pre-procurement Planning" indicates an adhocracy culture (Cameron, 2016) and coercive isomorphism (Interligi, 2010). Regulatory demands, such as compliance or PhilGEPS posting requirements, force procurement firms to change. As in survey compliance levels, where "pre-procurement planning" had the lowest score, a lack of a planned procedure can result in inefficiencies and wasted costs. In adhocratic societies, low awareness and coercive isomorphism have consequences that include higher underspending and non-compliance concerns, usually resulting from poor procurement planning. Flexible and creative, adhocratic societies usually lack systematic methods for effective procurement, and external compliance pressure without a strong framework raises risks, therefore causing inefficiencies and lost possibilities for resource optimization.

The study points up macro viewpoint limits that might ignore subtle micro-level phenomena. It recognizes the complexity of organizational culture, which develops and is influenced by shared values; so, accurate assessment becomes difficult, especially in terms of long-term consequences. Therefore, even if the research is important, its findings could be limited in settings that need thorough cultural studies. Future studies should investigate elements impacting procurement compliance, including organizational capacity, leadership commitment, regulatory enforcement, and stakeholder involvement. Examining the relevance of this study over several Philippine provinces is crucial because of differences in



government, culture, and behavior. Such studies would improve knowledge of procurement compliance at the national level. Particularly with regard to the required PhilGEPS posting, non-compliance with procurement rules could point to systematic problems in procurement management that call for an analysis of underlying causes, including organizational awareness gaps, cultural misalignments, and structural inefficiencies. Dealing with these needs means enhancing support systems for frequent training courses, updates on legislative changes, and proactive procurement management of cultural hazards. Alignment, openness, and responsibility across the procurement life cycle depend on open lines of contact between the Bids and Awards Committee (BAC) and end users.

## 6. Conclusion

The study found in procurement awareness, understanding, corporate culture, and compliance a favorable correlation. It emphasizes the importance of a compliance-oriented culture and sufficient regulatory understanding among government workers to raise their adherence to procurement rules. When public sector staff members follow procurement guidelines—especially RA 9184 and PhilGEPS—and operate in a culture that values responsibility, openness, and ethics, their degrees of compliance greatly rise. These features support decisions and behavior during the purchase process. Consequently, the researcher rejects the null hypothesis, so verifying that procurement compliance is influenced by awareness, knowledge, and culture, so affecting public sector management and training programs. Compliance results can be improved by reforms supporting ethical standards and clarity in procurement as well as by support of leaders. All things considered, the studies help to clarify the behavioral and cultural aspects of procurement and encourage changes in public sector operations by means of focused education and reforms.

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