

**Supplier Selection Process And Product Quality Management. A Case Of Wakiso Local Government**

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**Abstract**

The study was about supplier selection process and product quality management. The objectives of the study were to evaluate the effect of international competitive tendering on quality management, to find out the influence of single source on product quality management, and to establish the relationship between National competitive tendering and product quality management in Wakiso Local Government. A cross sectional research design was undertaken to conduct the study. Primary and secondary data was collected for purposes of the study.

Primary data was collected using the questionnaires and secondary data was extracted from the internet, textbooks, journal articles, and other research publication. The literature review indicated that the process of supplier selection is a very complex one which involves a number of steps to ensure controls, departments, factors that affect it, and individual involvement. A critical analysis showed that there is a marked relationship between supplier selection process and product quality management and of an organization. This relationship was a collection of scholarly arguments stipulated in different reading materials and from the primary data collected from the respondents. From the findings, there was a weak positive statistically significant associate relationship between international competitive tendering and product quality management of  $r=0.526$ ; significant relationship of  $0.003 < 0.05$ . The study recommends continued innovation, sourcing the right of supplies and employee involvement in supplier selection process and product quality management to businesses in the economy. The researcher also suggests that there is need to vary out national competitive tendering since it encourages monitoring, feedback and continuous improvements which can be important in boasting productivity and quality management in an organization.

**Keywords: Supplier, Selection Process, Product Quality and Management**

**Background of the study**

The supplier selection process and effective product quality management are essential aspects that any organization, especially local government, must consider in ensuring value for money through its procurement activities while guaranteeing that the quality of products and services received meet the prescribed standards (Faridah et al. , 2023). As the literature suggests, selecting suitable suppliers based on qualitative and quantitative criteria helps to minimize the risks and costs associated with poor quality items or lack of consistency in meeting delivery deadlines (Racheal et al., 2023). Additionally, implementing robust quality control measures throughout the supplier lifecycle allows for early identification of non-conformities and collaboration with partners to implement corrective actions before serious problems arise (Christopher, Moses, et al., 2022).

Unfortunately, a 2018 performance evaluation of Ugandan local governments found that more than 60% of surveyed municipalities had no formalized supplier pre-qualification methodology in place and very few conducted post-contract evaluation of prime suppliers (Alex et al., 2023). This meant that key attributes such as technical capability, financial stability, previous experience and service level were not rigorously verified for contractors

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who won contracts worth millions of shillings annually in aggregate expenditure (Faridah et al., 2023). This problem was compounded by the fact that less than 15% of local councils had quality inspectors or verification protocols to verify that supplies met the technical specifications and end-user needs as set out in the contracts (Faith et al., 2023).

As one of the five districts that make up the central region of Uganda, Wakiso Local Government is responsible for the provision of various public services and infrastructure projects for a population of over 2 million people in seven districts (Julius, 2024a). Given the large annual budget and the decentralized nature of operations across multiple departments and sub-districts, it is essential to ensure value for money through strategic collaboration with suppliers and quality-focused purchasing. However, an internal government audit of Wakiso Local Government published in 2020, like other municipal governments, found deficiencies in the documentation of evaluation criteria used for pre-qualification of vendors, lack of warranty clauses in contracts and insufficient inspection of delivered goods (Christopher, Muhindo, et al., 2022 ).

Addressing these shortcomings by formalizing standardized supplier selection procedures in line with national procurement regulations and implementing robust post-award contract administration and quality control protocols could help realize potential efficiency savings (Edgar & Moses, 2023). The knowledge that roughly 60% of government spending goes to public procurement has led to increased interest in supplier selection. The intention was for the government to optimize the realization of value from purchased goods and services by following supplier selection best practices (Alex & Moses, 2024). From a global perspective, strategic sourcing involves the processes used to assess the capabilities of possible suppliers before selecting them to set up the homeowner's supply chain for long-term competitive advantage (Musimenta et al., 2017). As businesses increasingly depend on their providers' own capabilities and efficiency. For example, Gonzalez and Quesada (2004) found that the most important supply management approach to achieving product quality was supplier selection. The ability to accompany develop or improve its own capabilities in a strategically important area, such as excellence, by leveraging supplier relationships in quality, meanwhile, may depend on more than its ability to select suppliers (Benard, 2023). Successful supplier selection is a source of competitive advantage; they have a positive effect on the competitive performance of organizations if they are effectively selected (Christopher, Moses, et al., 2022).

#### **Statement of the Problem.**

Although there have been several studies on the process of selecting suppliers in accordance with the relevant international competitive bidding, limited bidding, national competitive bidding, two-stage bidding (Benard, 2023), a separate source of extra. Little attention was paid to product quality management, resulting in poor quality products, failure to meet consumer quality demands and inability to cope with change. Joseph M. Juran defined quality as “fitness for use,” meaning that users of products or services should be able to rely on the product or service 100 percent of the time without any fear of defects (Julius, 2024b). If this were true, the product could be classified as fit for use.

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Product quality management starts with the raw material supplier, who determines the quality of your products (Christopher, Komunda, et al., 2022). It is against this background that the researcher became interested to investigate the relationship between supplier selection process and product quality management in Wakiso Local Government.

**Specific objectives.**

1. To evaluate the effect of international competitive tendering on quality management in Wakiso Local Government.
2. To find out the influence of single source on product quality management in Wakiso Local Government.
3. To establish the relationship between National competitive tendering and product quality management in Wakiso Local Government.

**Research hypothesis**

**H0:** There is no significant relationship between international competitive tendering and product quality management in Wakiso Local Government.

**H1:** There is a significant relationship between international competitive tendering and product quality management in Wakiso Local Government.

**H0:** There is no significant influence of single sourcing on product quality management in Wakiso Local Government.

**H1:** There is a significant influence of single sourcing on product quality management in Wakiso Local Government.

**H0:** There is no significant relationship between national competitive tendering and product quality management in Wakiso Local Government.

**H1:** There is a significant relationship between national competitive tendering and product quality management in Wakiso Local Government.

**Methodology**

This study used a descriptive correlation design. The purpose of employing this method was used to describe the nature of a situation, as it exists at the time of the study and to explore the causes of particular phenomena (Anwar et al., 2022). The descriptive approach is also quick and more practical financially. Moreover, this method allowed for a flexible approach, thus, when important new issues and questions arise during the duration of the study, a further investigation may be allowed (Jallow et al., 2021). The study opted to use this kind of research considering the goal of the study to obtain first-hand data so as to formulate rational and sound conclusions and recommendations for the study. This study ultimately comprised a population size of about 50 of which a sample size of about 50 was used with employees from procurement department, distribution, Finance section, procurement department, general operation, marketing, and inventory section (Nafiu, 2012).

These respondents were selected because majority of them engage in daily transaction of their respective desks/sections in Wakiso local government

**Table 2 showing sample size**

| Category         | Population | Sample size | Sampling technique |
|------------------|------------|-------------|--------------------|
| Management       | 4          | 4           | Purposive sampling |
| Employees        | 40         | 36          | Random sampling    |
| Department heads | 6          | 4           | Purposive sampling |
| Total            | 50         | 44          |                    |

Random sampling method was used in selecting the representative sample so as to give everyone in the targeted population an equal opportunity of being selected for research (Olanrewaju et al., 2021). The reason as to why the researcher used this method is to draw various views from the sub groups in the population under the study in order to arrive at a satisfactory conclusion that proves the hypothesis was a type of sampling where a researcher selects a sample that is just convenient without going through random sampling, this is because some respondents may not give relevant information and through purposive sampling the researcher was able to get the information from the key informants who have the records (Nafiu et al., 2012). The researcher also used purposive sampling for getting information from the management and supervisors/ department heads. Due to time limit of the study, a random sampling technique was purposely undertaken on 40 respondents (Nafiu et al., 2017).

Secondary data was obtained from two areas, the first was the internal source which was within the organisation where several documents were used to reveal needed information, these included quality performance reports, appraisal research reports and reports. The second source was the external source which included information acquired from books, newspapers, and the internet (Nafiu & Ph, 2012). These are an efficient data collection tools when the researcher knows what is required and how to measure the variable of interest. For this particular case, the researcher personally administering the questionnaires to the targeted respondents. The preference for the

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questionnaire was basically that it saved time especially when handling a large study population scattered or hard to reach geographically and can be stored for future reference (Nafiu, 2012). Questionnaires gives straight forward answers and therefore easy to evaluate, code and interpret in line with the study. Data was analyzed in form of tables, frequencies and percentages using SPSS & STATA (Nelson et al., 2022).

## RESULTS

**Table 3: Descriptive statistics on international competitive tendering**

| Statements                                                                                                                          | 1      | 2      | 3       | 4         | 5         | Mean | Std |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------|--------|---------|-----------|-----------|------|-----|
| People who hold strong on International competitive tendering tend to be more Satisfied with the method due to its transparency and | 0 (0%) | 0 (0%) | 2 (6.7) | 8 (26.7%) | 20 (66.7) | 4.40 | 621 |
| fairness, efficiency and value for money                                                                                            |        |        |         |           |           |      |     |

|                                                                                                                                                                      |        |           |         |            |            |      |       |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------|-----------|---------|------------|------------|------|-------|
| International competitive tendering will affect the belief of cultural difference<br>Longer timescale, complexity and high costs<br>For bidders                      | 0 (0%) | 4 (13.4%) | 6 (20%) | 10 (33.3%) | 10 (33.3%) | 3.13 | 1.042 |
| The more they use ICT the<br>More the employees gain<br>Different skills due to the exposure of international<br>Standards and procedures<br>Thus competing globally | 0 (0%) | 0 (0%)    | 0 (0%)  | 6 (20%)    | 24 (80)    | 4.20 | 407   |
| Since ICT is becoming common in the organisation<br>,employees get exposed to various                                                                                | 0 (0%) | 0 (0%)    | 2 (6.7) | 10 (33.3%) | 18 (60%)   | 4.47 | .629  |

|                                                                                                                                                                         |         |         |           |            |            |       |       |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------|---------|-----------|------------|------------|-------|-------|
| cultures, international legalities and Business practices<br>This increases awareness and enable employees to work more effectively with foreign stakeholders           |         |         |           |            |            |       |       |
| ICT enables learning and skill improvement, market expansion, quality improvement in the organization                                                                   | 3 (10%) | 2 (6.7) | 2 (6.7)   | 2 (6.7)    | 21 (70%)   | 3.80  | 1.400 |
| ICT is a process used by organizations and governments to get competitive bids from various suppliers around the world for large scale projects, services, or supplies. | 0 (0%)  | 0 (0%)  | 4 (13.4%) | 10 (33.3%) | 16 (53.3%) | 3.60  | .724  |
| Average /mean                                                                                                                                                           |         |         |           |            |            | 3.933 | .8004 |

Source; Primary Data 2014 According to research findings on the statement that “international competitive tendering will affect in away due to cultural differences, longer timescale, complexity and high costs for bidders”,

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(33.3%) strongly agreed, (33.3%) agreed, those who were not sure are (20%), (13.4%) disagree, (0%) strongly disagreed with the statement. The descriptive statistics indicated a high mean of 3.13 with a high standard deviation of 1.042. This means that international competitive tendering will affect the belief of self-ability, mobility of positing, cognitive and the activities that need to practice in live. (Turyatamba et al., 2022)one of the properties of international competitive tendering is that it is domain related. A person can have high interest in international competitive tendering on one domain, and low interest in international competitive tendering on another. A relevant domain in this study concerns international competitive tendering in terms of purchasing raw materials.

According to the research findings on the statement that “since international competitive tendering becomes a common method in an organization, employees get exposed to different cultures, international legalities, and business practices hence improving on organizational performance In quality management<sup>2</sup>”, (80%) strongly agreed, (20%) agreed, those who were not sure are (0%), (0%) disagree, (0%) strongly disagreed with the statement (Kazaara et al., 2024). The descriptive statistics indicated a very high mean of 4.20 with a low standard deviation of 0.407. This means that the company always emphasizes the aspect of international competitive tendering as a method to be used over time, employees could learn how to deal with the disadvantages that occur in the organisation due to the use of international competitive tendering since many respondents strongly agreed with the statement. Evenett and Hoekman (2005). Certified that many organizations also assumes that their employees understand how their roles directly affect the success of the organization.

According to the research findings on the statement that “The higher the level of international competitive tendering, the more the individuals gain different skills due to the exposure of international standards and procedures necessary to compete at a global level, (60%) strongly agreed, (33.3%) agreed, those who were not sure are (6.7%), (0%) disagreed, (0%) strongly disagreed with the statement. The descriptive statistics indicated a mean of 4.47 with a moderate standard deviation of 0.629 (Nelson et al., 2023). This means that the organisation usually evaluates the customers capacity to repay his debt of the product quality management extended to his business. According to McCrudden (2004) the concept of international competitive tendering as a method explains how individuals’ perceptions about their ability to achieve certain tasks motivate them to achieve their objectives at the workplace and in personal life. The concept of international competitive tendering has widely been used in the supplier selection processes.

According to the research findings on the statement that “international competitive tendering restores the performance by enabling employees learn and improve on their skills, market expansion and quality improvement in production”. (70%) strongly agreed, (6.7%) agreed, those who were not sure are (6.7%), (6.7%) disagreed, (10%) strongly disagreed with the statement. The descriptive statistic indicated a mean of 3.800 with a high standard deviation of 1.400. This means that international competitive tendering restores the performance by increasing job satisfaction and reduce employees’ turnover intentions. Responds strongly agreed with the statement. (Benard, 2023) find international competitive tendering in carrying out academic tasks and stress related to these academic tasks to be related.

Their research concerns the domain of academic tasks among 107 first year college students.

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According to the research findings on the statement that, “international competitive tendering is the method used, that one can successfully execute to gain quality outcome”, (53.3%) strongly agreed, (33.3%) agreed, those who were not sure are (13.4%), (0%) disagreed, (0%) strongly disagreed with the statement. The descriptive statistics indicated a mean of 3.60 with a moderate standard deviation of 0.724. Also related a specific domain of international competitive tendering to stress. They measured international competitive tendering as being able to acquire quality products and market competence.

**Table 4: Correlation on international competitive tendering and product quality management**

|                                     |                                           | international competitive tendering | Product quality management |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| International competitive tendering | Pearson Correlation Sig(tailed)<br>N      | 1<br><br>30                         | .526<br>.003<br>30         |
| Product quality Management          | Pearson Correlation<br>Sig.(2tailed)<br>N | .526**<br>.003<br>30                | 1<br><br>30                |

\*\*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Source: primary data

Table 4 illustrates a weak positive statistically significant associate relationship between international competitive tendering and product quality management of  $r=0.526$ ; significant relationship of  $0.003 < 0.05$  (Nelson et al., 2023). if the relationship is predicted, it means that if international competitive tendering standards are favorable, well set and strictly followed, product quality management will also increase and vice versa.

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In line with the research hypothesis  $H_0$ : which stated that “there is no significant relationship between international competitive tendering and product quality management”, the research found out that there is a weak positive statistically significant associative relationship between international competitive tendering and product quality management of  $r=0.526$  as shows in the table above. Therefore,  $H_1$  was accepted and  $H_0$  has rejected.

**Table 5: ANOVA of international competitive tendering on product quality management**

| Model        | Sum of Squares | Df | Mean Square | F      | Sig. |
|--------------|----------------|----|-------------|--------|------|
| 1 Regression |                |    |             |        |      |
| Residual     | 4.613          | 1  | 4.613       | 10.714 | .003 |
| Total        | 12.054         | 28 | .431        |        |      |
|              | 16.667         | 29 |             |        |      |

Predictors:(Constant), international competitive tendering

The study shows F-value of 10.714 which confirms the significant level of  $P=0.01$ . Since the significant value is less than 0.05, it therefore confirms that there is a relationship between international competitive tendering and product quality management (Ivan et al., 2023)

**Table 6 Descriptive statistics on single sourcing**

| Statements | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | Mean | Std |
|------------|---|---|---|---|---|------|-----|
|            |   |   |   |   |   |      |     |

|                                                                                     |           |              |             |               |             |          |          |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|--------------|-------------|---------------|-------------|----------|----------|
| Single sourcing<br>Ensures consistency of<br>Quality component                      | 0 (0%)    | 0 (0%)       | 2 (6.7%)    | 13<br>(43.3%) | 15<br>(50%) | 4.57     | .626     |
| Average duration of single<br>sourcing<br>contracts                                 | 0<br>(0%) | 4<br>(13.3%) | 0<br>(0%)   | 10<br>(33.3%) | 16 (53.3%)  | 3.7<br>3 | 1.0 15   |
| Cost saving achieved<br>through realized by<br>companies through single<br>sourcing | 0<br>(0%) | 0 (0%)       | 0 (0%)      | 6<br>(20%)    | 24 (80%)    | 4.2<br>0 | .40<br>7 |
| Customer<br>satisfaction ratings                                                    | 0 (0%)    | 0<br>(0%)    | 2<br>(6.7%) | 10<br>(33.3%) | 18 (60%)    | 4.4      | .62      |
|                                                                                     |           |              |             |               |             | 7        | 9        |

|                                                                               |                 |                 |                 |                   |                   |          |          |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-------------------|-------------------|----------|----------|
| Supplier collaboration builds a long-term relationship with a single supplier | 3<br>(10%)      | 2<br>(10%)      | 2<br>(6.7%)     | 2<br>(6.7%)       | 21 (70%)          | 2.8<br>0 | 1.4 00   |
| Single sourcing ensures streamlined communication.                            | 1<br>(3.3<br>%) | 2<br>(6.7<br>%) | 1<br>(3.3<br>%) | 13<br>(43.3<br>%) | 13<br>(43.3<br>%) | 2.8<br>3 | 1.0 20   |
| Average/ mean                                                                 |                 |                 |                 |                   |                   | 3.5<br>3 | .92<br>6 |

Source: primary data

According to the research findings on the statement that, “single sourcing ensures that consistency in the quality of the sourced component or product” (50%) strongly agreed, (43.3%) agreed, those who were not sure are (6.7%), (0%) disagreed, (0%) strongly disagreed with the statement. The descriptive statistics indicated a mean of 4.57 with a moderate standard deviation of 0.626. This means that single sourcing ensures an organization to meet its targets on quality management. Marc Day. (2000) emphasized that the correlations of single sourcing provide consistency in quality management.

According to the research findings on the statement that, “Average duration of single sourcing contracts”, each party knows what to expect from the other and understands how they do carryout their businesses thus product quality management” (53.3%) strongly agreed, (33.3%) agreed, those who were not sure are (0%), (13.3%) disagreed, (0%) strongly disagreed with the statement. The descriptive statistics indicated a mean of 3.73 with a high standard deviation of 1.015. This means that with single sourcing, each party knows what to expect from the other and understands the flow of business procedures in contract thus managing quality. Richard Lamming (1990s) emphasized on the importance of managing supplier relationships and developing collaborative partnerships to enhance performance. This survey also indicated that almost 60% believed turnover in single sourcing had a negative impact on product quality management.



Table 7 showing the dimensions on which product quality management is based

| Product Dimension   |            | SA | A  | D  | SD | TOTAL |
|---------------------|------------|----|----|----|----|-------|
| Product performance | Frequency  | 20 | 40 | 14 | 6  | 80    |
|                     | Percentage | 25 | 50 | 17 | 8  | 100   |
| Perceived Quality   | Frequency  | 17 | 38 | 16 | 9  | 80    |
|                     | Percentage | 21 | 48 | 20 | 11 | 100   |
| Atheistic appeal    | Frequency  |    |    |    |    | 80    |
|                     |            | 12 | 28 | 21 | 19 |       |
|                     | Percentage | 15 | 35 | 26 | 24 | 100   |
| Reliability         | Frequency  | 25 | 46 | 8  | 1  | 80    |
|                     |            |    |    |    |    |       |

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|  |            |    |    |    |   |     |
|--|------------|----|----|----|---|-----|
|  | Percentage | 31 | 57 | 10 | 2 | 100 |
|--|------------|----|----|----|---|-----|

**Source: Primary data**

As shown in table 7, 75% of the respondents agreed of which 25% strongly agreed that product quality is based on product performance. This is because performance relates to the extent to which the product meets its expected operations and whether it functions according to the purpose for which it was designed and manufactured as noted by Morgan (2008). However, 25% of the respondents disagreed of which 8% disagreed with the view that product performance was one the dimension of product quality. This finding implies that product performance is the measure of product quality.

Table 7 also shows that 69% of the respondents agreed of which 21 % strongly agreed that product quality is based on perceived quality. This view is in agreement with Khurram (2003) that perceived quality is closely identified with the reputation of the producer and personal evaluation. For example, wakiso local government products were highly recognized for product quality because of the reputation it enjoys amongst the vast population.

However, 31 % disagreed of which 11 % strongly disagreed with the statement. The results in table 4 (a) reflects that 50% of the respondents agreed of which 15% strongly agreed that product quality was based: m aesthetic appeal. While 50% disagreed of which 24% strongly agreed. From the foregoing therefore, it was noted that aesthetic appeal covers personal judgments about how a product looks, tastes, or smells. Therefore, product design was based on the judgments of the final consumers in conformance to their tastes and preferences as noted by Aaronson (2004).

The findings from table 7 (a) indicates that 88% of the respondents agreed of which 31 % strongly agreed that product reliability is crucial in determining product quality. From the interview it was generally stated that Wakiso local government product in all ways are reliable.

This was because the products can be used for the period for which they were meant to operate without break getting expired. Conversely 12% of the respondents discarded the statement of 2% strongly disagreed. Therefore, one needs to be aware of the reliability of a product when determining product quality. Quality was therefore determined by balancing technical considerations such as fitness for use, performance, safety, and reliability with economic factors including price and availability was therefore optimum quality or the application that was sought, rather than the highest quality. In establishing the quality control mechanisms used in Wakiso local government, the researcher asked the respondents to ascertain whether the organisation regularly measured product quality performance with the quality standards as a means of providing quality products assurance. The respondents were further asked to indicate whether predetermined quality standards were strictly followed in the execution of tasks. The findings obtained were presented as follow:

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**Table 8 Showing whether predetermined quality standards are followed in the execution of task.**

| Response          | Frequency | Percentage |
|-------------------|-----------|------------|
| Strongly agree    | 17        | 37         |
| Agree             | 21        | 46         |
| Disagree          | 16        | 20         |
| Strongly disagree | 20        | 13         |
|                   | 80        | 100        |

**Source: Primary data**

From the table above, 46% agreed and 21 % strongly agreed that predetermined quality standards were strictly followed in the execution of tasks, 20% disagreed and 13% strongly disagreed that predetermined quality standards were strictly followed in the execution of tasks. However, from the interview it was revealed that frequent changes in customer needs and changes in information technology possess a formidable challenge to the company. This concretes what was stated by Terry (2005), that organizations should follow strictly the predetermined quality standards in the execution of tasks although few meet the quality standards. That although the company can continuously improve the quality of its products, following strictly the predetermined standards is hard to maintain in real world. It can therefore note that to a moderate extent Wakiso Local Government follows the predetermined quality standards

**Conclusions****The effect of international competitive tendering on product quality management**

In conclusion, international competitive tendering plays an important part within the Organizations. For instance, acquiring new skills which can be a major factor with product quality management hence enabling the organization to compete in the global market.

**The influence of single source and product quality management**

In conclusion single sourcing is important because organisational success or failure is often dependent upon how much effort employees put forth when completing their job tasks. If employees do not perform well, the organisation will produce low quality products for the same costs of labour. In turn, the organisation will likely have difficulty and hence meeting not their customers' needs.

In conclusion therefore, quality as a requirement, when issuing a tender, the procuring entity can specify certain quality standards or requirements that the products or services must meet.

This ensures that suppliers compete not only on price but also on quality of their offerings.

**Recommendations**

The following recommendations have been stated.

**The effect of international competitive tendering on product quality management**

The researcher recommends that management of Wakiso local Government through its procurement departments to carry out supplier selection process in the organisation in order to identify and remove barriers for international competitive tendering identified by this study that may limit the effectiveness of the organisation.

**The influence of single sourcing and product quality management**

The study also recommends that the management and team leaders must all be keen while carrying out single sourcing since in most times it weakens the buyers negotiating power since they do have no alternatives. Through this it will enable the organisation to perform and manage quality products.

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