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**STRENGTHENING CORRUPTION PREVENTION
STRATEGIES IN PUBLIC PROCUREMENT:
A STUDY OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT ORGANIZATIONS
IN SOUTHERN THAILAND**



**DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY
UNIVERSITI UTARA MALAYSIA
2025**

**STRENGTHENING CORRUPTION PREVENTION
STRATEGIES IN PUBLIC PROCUREMENT:
A STUDY OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT ORGANIZATIONS
IN SOUTHERN THAILAND**



**A thesis submitted to the Ghazali Shafie Graduate School of Government
in fulfilment of the requirements for the Doctor of Philosophy
Universiti Utara Malaysia**



Kolej Undang-Undang, Kerajaan dan Pengajian Antarabangsa
(College of Law, Government and International Studies)
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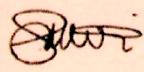
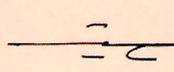
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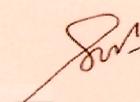
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ABSTRACT

Local government organizations in southern Thailand face significant challenges arising from corruption scandals in public procurement, which have resulted in the loss of public trust, financial mismanagement, and inefficiency in service delivery. This research aims to examine corruption prevention in public procurement within selected local government organizations in the two areas most affected by scandals in southern Thailand. The study focuses on investigating current practices in corruption prevention, evaluating the effects of existing anti-corruption efforts, identifying key impediments to effective prevention, and exploring strategies for improving these efforts. A qualitative approach was employed, using semi-structured interviews with 40 participants. These participants included permanent local public servants, locally elected officials, bidders and contracting companies, anti-corruption bodies, civil society organizations, and mass media representatives. The findings revealed that the selected local governments had made notable progress in complying with procurement laws and regulations. However, certain loopholes remain, preventing the full realization of desired outcomes aligned with the five key principles of corruption prevention in public procurement and international standards. To address these issues, the study proposes 17 practical strategies to strengthen the application of international anti-corruption frameworks in local government procurement. It recommends that local government organizations clearly integrate the five principles — transparency, integrity, accountability, prevention of misconduct, and openness and fair competition — into their procurement practices. This requires moving beyond mere compliance with existing laws and regulations and adapting them to the specific local context of southern Thailand. Furthermore, the research suggests enhancing current prevention efforts by focusing on the system, context, organizational, and individual levels. This includes promoting decentralized control, raising public awareness, strengthening oversight mechanisms, and offering better incentives for procurement officials. Finally, the study recommends that future research expand on these findings through broader quantitative studies and emphasize building a culture of integrity to ensure the sustainability of anti-corruption efforts.

Keywords: Prevention of corruption, Public procurement, Local government organizations, Southern Thailand

ABSTRAK

Organisasi kerajaan tempatan di selatan Thailand menghadapi cabaran besar yang berpunca daripada skandal rasuah dalam perolehan awam, yang telah mengakibatkan hilangnya kepercayaan awam, salah urus kewangan, dan ketidakcekapan dalam penyampaian perkhidmatan. Kajian ini bertujuan untuk mengkaji pencegahan rasuah dalam perolehan awam dalam organisasi kerajaan tempatan terpilih di dua kawasan yang paling terjejas dengan skandal di selatan Thailand. Kajian ini memberi tumpuan kepada menyiasat amalan semasa dalam pencegahan rasuah, menilai kesan usaha pencegahan yang sedia ada, mengenal pasti halangan utama terhadap pencegahan yang berkesan, dan meneroka strategi untuk memperbaiki usaha tersebut. Pendekatan kualitatif telah digunakan, dengan temu bual separa berstruktur melibatkan 40 peserta. Peserta ini termasuk penjawat awam tetap tempatan, pegawai yang dipilih secara tempatan, pembida dan syarikat kontraktor, badan anti-rasuah, organisasi masyarakat sivil, dan wakil media massa. Hasil kajian menunjukkan bahawa kerajaan tempatan yang terpilih telah mencapai kemajuan ketara dalam pematuhan undang-undang dan peraturan perolehan. Walau bagaimanapun, masih wujud beberapa kelompongan yang menghalang pencapaian penuh hasil yang diinginkan selaras dengan lima prinsip utama pencegahan rasuah dalam perolehan awam dan piawai antarabangsa. Bagi menangani isu ini, kajian ini mencadangkan 17 strategi praktikal untuk memperkukuhkan pelaksanaan kerangka anti-rasuah antarabangsa dalam perolehan kerajaan tempatan. Kajian ini mengesyorkan agar organisasi kerajaan tempatan mengintegrasikan secara jelas lima prinsip — ketelusan, integriti, akauntabiliti, pencegahan salah laku, serta keterbukaan dan persaingan yang adil — dalam amalan perolehan mereka. Ini memerlukan pelaksanaan melangkaui sekadar pematuhan kepada undang-undang dan peraturan sedia ada, serta menyesuaikan dengan konteks tempatan di selatan Thailand. Selain itu, kajian ini mencadangkan agar usaha pencegahan semasa dipertingkatkan dengan memberi tumpuan kepada sistem, konteks, organisasi, dan individu. Ini termasuk mempromosikan kawalan secara desentralisasi, meningkatkan kesedaran awam, memperkukuhkan mekanisme pemantauan, dan menawarkan insentif yang lebih baik kepada pegawai perolehan. Akhir sekali, kajian ini mengesyorkan agar penyelidikan akan datang memperluaskan penemuan ini melalui kajian kuantitatif yang lebih menyeluruh dan menekankan kepada pembinaan budaya integriti bagi menjamin kelestarian usaha anti-rasuah.

Kata Kunci: Pencegahan rasuah, Perolehan awam, Organisasi kerajaan tempatan, Selatan Thailand

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

In the context of modern governance, public procurement has emerged as a powerful policy instrument that goes far beyond its traditional administrative role. It is a fundamental function of government at all levels, serving as a strategic tool to advance economic, social, and policy objectives. It encompasses the acquisition of goods, services, and infrastructure essential for delivering public services. Given its significant share of global public expenditure, public procurement serves as a key mechanism for effective public policy implementation. As it involves the management of public funds, the process demands skilled professionals who can ensure transparency, value for money, and responsible resource utilization (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime [UNODC], 2013). Moreover, well-designed procurement systems can promote good governance by reducing opportunities for corruption and enhancing public trust. As governments increasingly face complex challenges, procurement has become a proactive policy tool for addressing cross-cutting development goals, including sustainability, inclusivity, and innovation (Thai, 2009).

From an economic perspective, public procurement plays a vital role in stimulating development by financing infrastructure and supporting small and medium-sized enterprises (Israel & Kazungu, 2019). It also contributes to the long-term sustainability

of local economies and communities (Nijaki & Worrel, 2012). By channeling public spending into local markets, procurement can boost domestic production, create employment opportunities, and reduce regional disparities. Moreover, strategic procurement policies that prioritize innovation and capacity building among SMEs can enhance competitiveness and productivity in the broader economy. In many developing countries, public procurement is among the largest sources of public investment, making it a powerful lever for inclusive economic growth and poverty reduction. Furthermore, aligning procurement practices with national strategies boosts impact by directing public spending to key sectors and strengthening economic resilience.

Beyond economic benefits, public procurement is increasingly recognized as a tool for promoting environmental sustainability and social inclusion. It supports climate change mitigation through reduced emissions and sustainable purchasing practices (Carlsson & Waara, 2006). Socially, it enhances equity by improving access for marginalized groups, including ethnic minorities and women-owned enterprises (Kashap, 2004). Consequently, both developed and developing nations are undertaking procurement reforms to better align with broader sustainability and inclusion agendas. By integrating green and socially responsible criteria into tendering processes, governments can influence market behavior and encourage innovation among suppliers. This shift strengthens public sector accountability and creates competitive advantages for companies aligned with sustainable practices.

However, despite its strategic importance, public procurement remains one of the most corruption-prone areas in the public sector. The large-scale financial transactions involved, often between government and private entities, create ample opportunities

for fraud, favoritism, conflicts of interest, and bribery. Corruption in procurement not only undermines public trust but also wastes taxpayer funds and impairs the delivery of quality public services. As a result, enhancing transparency, accountability, and fairness in procurement processes has become a central focus of governance reform worldwide. Numerous international organizations, including the United Nations and the World Bank, have developed anti-corruption frameworks and tools to support cleaner procurement practices. Many governments are also adopting measures such as electronic procurement systems, integrity pacts, and independent oversight mechanisms to reduce vulnerabilities and promote ethical conduct throughout the procurement cycle.

In line with these global trends, Thailand has sought to modernize its public procurement framework. A major milestone was the enactment of the Public Procurement and Supplies Administration Act of 2017, which replaced the fragmented and outdated regulatory regime that had persisted since the 1932 revolution (Saweangsak, 1999). This law mandates standardized procurement procedures for all government agencies, including local authorities. However, enforcement and compliance remain uneven, particularly at the local level.

Thailand, like many other countries, faces persistent challenges in tackling corruption in public procurement. The issue is particularly serious due to the deeply rooted nature of corruption in Thai society. In response, the Thai government has introduced a series of legislative and institutional reforms since 1992. These include the enactment of laws such as the Private Investments in State Undertakings Act, the Administrative Procedure Act, the Organic Act on Counter Corruption, the Civil Service Code of Ethics, and the Decree of Principle and Procedure for Good Governance. Additionally,

the government has established key anti-corruption institutions, such as the Office of the National Anti-Corruption Commission (NACC), the Supreme Court's Criminal Division for Persons Holding Political Positions, the Office of the Public Sector Anti-Corruption Commission (PACC), and the Department of Special Investigation (DSI) under the Ministry of Justice.

Particularly, the Office of the National Anti-Corruption Commission (NACC) is recognized as the principal agency responsible for formulating comprehensive anti-corruption strategies. These strategies include promoting values, morals, ethics, and discipline across all sectors of Thai society; preventing and combating all forms of corruption; strengthening and empowering anti-corruption institutions; and developing personnel to become professional anti-corruption practitioners. Despite these reform efforts, Thailand continues to face significant challenges in reducing corruption. According to Transparency International's Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) for 2024, Thailand scored only 34 out of 100 and ranked 107th out of 180 countries, reflecting a decline compared to previous years. Thus, Thailand is still perceived as a country with a high corruption situation. Especially, corruption in public procurement is still prevalent in the Thai bureaucratic system. Recently, the new Public Procurement Act has been enacted to make the situation of corruption better.

Amid national-level reforms, local government organizations (LGOs) continue to serve as frontline actors in public procurement. However, procurement-related corruption widely recognizes them as among the most vulnerable. According to the National Anti-Corruption Commission (NACC, 2018) and other oversight bodies, numerous irregularities in procurement practices have been identified, particularly in Thailand's southern provinces. Nakhon Si Thammarat and Songkhla have experienced

a notable rise in complaints. During the fiscal years 2019 to 2024, the central NACC reported a total of 7,473 cases involving procurement-related complaints against local government organizations (LGOs). Notably, more than half of these cases, specifically 4,160, indicated potential corruption. In 2021, Nakhon Si Thammarat led all southern provinces with 137 complaints, 79 of which involved procurement corruption. Songkhla came in second place in 2023 with 130 complaints, 83 of which had to do with procurement. In 2024, the central NACC recorded 1,550 complaints against LGOs nationwide, 915 concerning procurement corruption, solidifying LGOs as the most frequently implicated sector. These trends show that there are persistent systemic weaknesses and stress the need for immediate concentrated studies on procurement integrity at the local government level.

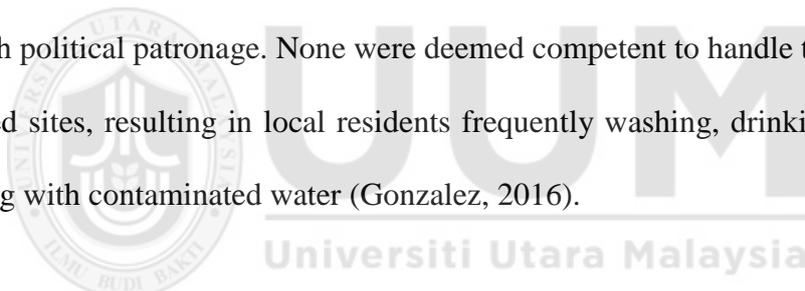
Despite ongoing reform initiatives, there remains a critical lack of practical understanding regarding how to safeguard local procurement processes from corruption. This study focuses on selected LGOs in Nakhon Si Thammarat and Songkhla provinces to investigate this matter. Enhancing procurement transparency and measures for preventing corruption is crucial due to their fundamental significance in public service delivery and community development. These reforms enhance governance results and bolster public confidence and accountability at the local level.

1.2 Problem Statement

Corruption in public procurement continues to present a critical governance challenge in many developing countries, including Thailand. In particular, local government organizations in the southern provinces of Thailand have faced persistent issues in preventing corruption, which has led to severe consequences for public service delivery, economic development, and public trust. An increasing amount of international research has studied the detrimental effects of inadequate corruption prevention in public procurement on national economic development across African and Asian countries. For instance, the lack of effective measures to prevent corruption in public procurement in Uganda has resulted in an estimated annual loss of approximately 10 trillion Ugandan shillings (Mukobi, 2024). In Nigeria, poor management of corruption prevention in public procurement has led to annual revenue losses averaging US\$10 billion (Fagbadebo & Mbada, 2021). Similarly, in Bangladesh, failures to prevent public procurement corruption have resulted in the cancellation of major infrastructure projects and the withdrawal of international financial assistance, ultimately hampering economic growth (Mahmood, 2010; World Bank, 2012). In South Africa, insufficient control over corruption in public procurement has jeopardized more than R750 billion in planned economic investments (Matebese-Notshulwana, 2021).

Beyond economic consequences, several researchers have emphasized that the weakness of procurement oversight severely undermines public welfare and service delivery in various Asian countries. Particularly in India, corruption-linked substandard construction rendered newly constructed school toilets unusable (Reddy & Murali, 2015). Similarly, research has shown a correlation between procurement-related corruption and increased earthquake fatalities in countries such as Iran and

Indonesia, where bribery and lax enforcement undermined building safety standards (Ambraseys & Bilham, 2011). In Bangladesh, the failure to prevent corruption in public procurement has disrupted the delivery of educational services. Each year, approximately twenty-five million secondary school students begin the academic year without textbooks due to procurement delays (Gauri & Vawda, 2003; Meier, 2004). Cases of inadequate corruption prevention in public procurement have also documented environmental consequences. In Ethiopia, low-quality water systems have been linked to collusion between public officials and suppliers (Calow, MacDonald, & Cross, 2012). In Indonesia, procurement-related corruption has fueled illegal logging, exacerbating flood risks and forest fires (Leitão, 2016). In Nigeria, projects and contractors tasked with cleaning up crude oil spill sites were often selected through political patronage. None were deemed competent to handle the most heavily polluted sites, resulting in local residents frequently washing, drinking, fishing, and cooking with contaminated water (Gonzalez, 2016).



By considering local governments, various studies have shown that there are weak areas in the prevention of corruption in public procurement. In the New South Wales State of Australia, it was found that local governments have consistently received more complaints about corruption risks, especially in relation to public procurement, than any other public organizations (Cooke, 2001). A similar situation also occurred in UK local governments, where a number of potential risks and evidence of corruption in public procurement have been considered by their constituency. (Transparency International UK, 2013). In local governments, corruption risks in public procurement can also arise during the procurement process, especially in developing countries such as those in Asia and Africa (Schöberlein & Jenkins, 2019).

In Thailand, several studies and official investigations have consistently revealed the widespread situation of corruption in public procurement, particularly within local government organizations. A wide range of violations and recurring complaints demonstrate the severity of the issue. The State Audit Office and the NACC reveal systemic weaknesses, especially during the pre-bidding phase, with numerous documented violations and complaints. High-profile cases such as the waste management scandal in Ubon Ratchathani, overpriced COVID-19 care kits in Lamphun, and the controversial fire truck procurement in Bangkok show significant financial losses and administrative failures. The Klong Dan wastewater treatment project further illustrates how corruption in procurement can lead not only to massive budgetary waste but also to long-term environmental damage.

In the southern provinces of Thailand, studies have also highlighted the consequences of inadequate prevention of corruption in public procurement, including the widespread abandonment of small-scale construction projects (Vanborsel & Subsomboon, 2018). Substandard buildings and poorly constructed roads pose serious safety risks, particularly for children in early childhood education centers (Thaipublica, 2011; Isranews, 2018). The Thai School Lunch Project has also suffered from procurement fraud, negatively affecting child nutrition in Nakhon Si Thammarat (Department of Local Administration, 2018). In Songkhla, the Department of Local Administration reported 165 procurement-related corruption cases in 2018, of which 39 are currently under active investigation (NACC Region 9, 2018). These ongoing problems undermine the credibility of local governments and erode public trust.

According to the previously described research and investigations, the prevention of corruption in public procurement continues to be a high-risk and predominantly

ineffective area. Despite significant focus on the effects of corruption in public procurement across various contexts, there is a notable lack of studies that contextualize corruption prevention strategies in relation to local governance structures, cultural norms, and administrative practices. Furthermore, a significant portion of the current literature is either theoretical or policy-focused, providing frameworks and suggestions without adequate empirical evidence to assess the real-world implementation of measures in the prevention of procurement corruption (OECD/SIGMA, 2016; Rustiarini et al., 2019; Hunka et al., 2023). Although numerous references in global literature to instruments such as e-procurement, integrity pacts, CoST, and citizen supervision, their actual effectiveness, particularly in low- and middle-income countries, is rarely evaluated (Verma, 2011; Wardani et al., 2021; Saelawong et al., 2023; Gultom, 2024). Moreover, few studies include the perspectives of key stakeholders such as procurement officials, civil society representatives and local citizens, in the formulation and evaluation of corruption prevention strategies, thereby constraining comprehension of the practical obstacles to effective execution (Osei-Tutu et al., 2010; Neupane et al., 2012). In addition, there has been minimal examination of the internal and external obstacles that impede the effective execution of anti-corruption measures in public procurement, such as political intervention, institutional inertia, and deficient accountability systems (Oluka & Ssenoga, 2008; Berkman et al., 2008; Christie, 2014). While corruption in public procurement is widely studied globally, there is limited research focusing on the southern provinces of Thailand, where institutional weaknesses compound the problem.

Therefore, this study aims to examine current practices, evaluate the effectiveness of existing anti-corruption measures, identify implementation barriers, and propose

context-specific strategies to strengthen procurement integrity within selected local government organizations in the southern provinces of Thailand.

1.3 Research Questions

The study endeavours to understand and examine four main research questions as follows:

- i. How are current practices implemented to prevent corruption in public procurement within selected local government organizations in southern Thailand?
- ii. What are the effects of existing anti-corruption efforts in public procurement in these local governments?
- iii. What are the key impediments to effective corruption prevention in local government procurement?
- iv. What strategies can be developed or enhanced to improve corruption prevention in public procurement within selected local government organizations in southern Thailand?

1.4 Research Objectives

The research questions primarily inform the research objectives, as they have a mutual relationship. As a result, thoroughly answering research questions, the finding objectives will be met. Consequently, the research has four main objectives, as follows:

- i. To gain a better understanding of the current practices of corruption prevention in public procurement in selected local government organizations in the provinces of southern Thailand.
- ii. To examine the effects of existing efforts to prevent corruption in public procurement within selected local government organizations.
- iii. To identify the factors that impede effective prevention of corruption in public procurement within selected local government organizations.
- iv. To identify and analyze strategic approaches to enhancing the prevention of corruption in public procurement within selected local government organizations.

1.5 Significance of the Study

This study is expected to contribute meaningfully to both theoretical understanding and practical implementation of corruption prevention in public procurement in selected local government organizations, especially in southern provinces of Thailand, where cases of corruption scandals in public procurement are reportedly on the rise. Thus, the advantages of the study offer implications for academic research, public sector reform, and improved governance practices at the local level.

1.5.1 Significance for Theoretical Perspectives

The benefits of the study are expected to contribute to the growing body of research on corruption prevention in public procurement, particularly within the Southeast Asian context. This study contributes to the theoretical understanding of how public procurement is managed by using institutional theory and principal-agent theory in local governments in a developing country. The research findings offer comprehensive

details about how rules, accountability systems, and decision-making processes work when local governments have more control, which helps us apply these theories to real-world governance contexts. Most existing studies on corruption prevention in public procurement focus on Africa, South Asia, and Europe, with limited empirical research in Southeast Asia—especially at the local level.

Beyond its theoretical relevance, the study also offers direct pedagogical implications; the information from this study could help improve the Bachelor of Public Administration program at Prince of Songkla University, especially in courses like governance and anti-corruption, project management, ethics in policy-making, and policy design and behavior change. Integrating empirical findings into coursework enhances students' comprehension of governance mechanisms and their capacity for critical theoretical analysis. Furthermore, there is a limited number of empirical studies focused on corruption prevention in public procurement within the southern provinces of Thailand. Previous studies such as Watcharothai (2018) and Onnuam and Ruangthamsing (2019) addressed procurement issues in Thailand but lacked focus on anti-corruption strategies within local government contexts, notably in the southern provinces. Thus, this study not only broadens theoretical applications in local governance contexts but also contributes to the pedagogical development of public administration education.

1.5.2 Significance for Practical Perspectives

The practical contribution of this study extends across individual, organizational, and national levels. In Thailand, the campaign against corruption has been continuously recognized as a national agenda by the Royal Thai Government, and procurement system reform has become a key government strategy to address corruption risks. In

light of these developments, the study offers timely information about how local government organizations can navigate procurement procedures while avoiding areas vulnerable to malpractice under the new regulatory framework. Furthermore, the findings can inform updates to codes of conduct and guidelines for procurement committees and public officials. At the policy level, this study offers actionable recommendations for central agencies such as the Comptroller General's Department under the Ministry of Finance, the Office of the National Anti-Corruption Commission, the Office of the National Economic and Social Development Council, and the Office of the Public Sector Anti-Corruption Commission.

Beyond institutional reforms, the study contributes to improving corruption prevention mechanisms at the professional level. Since public procurement constitutes a substantial portion of government expenditure and greatly affects and significantly influences the quality and equity of public service delivery, ensuring greater transparency and accountability in procurement leads to better use of resources, improved infrastructure, and greater public trust—key elements of good governance and sustainable development. In particular, the study delivers context-specific evidence from Thailand's southern provinces, where persistent procurement-related corruption continues to undermine service delivery and public trust. The findings are therefore well positioned to inform targeted policy responses, support equitable public service delivery, and advance the government's reform agenda. These insights may also inform future capacity-building programs and contribute to ongoing efforts in digital procurement transparency.

1.6 Scope of the Study

This study, limited to understanding prevention of corruption in public procurement in selected local government organizations in southern provinces of Thailand, includes Nakhon Si Thammarat Provincial Administrative Organization, Nakhon Si Thammarat City Municipality, Pakpoo Town Municipality, Songkhla Provincial Administrative Organization, Songkhla City Municipality, and Natawee District Municipality. These local government organizations are located in Nakhon Si Thammarat and Songkhla provinces. It is significant to acknowledge that this research focuses on a qualitative research approach, which endeavours to understand deep insight into strategies to prevent corruption in public procurement at the local government level. As Flick (2018) pointed out, qualitative researchers mainly focus on the complete understanding of participants' knowledge and practices.

According to Patton (2015), the qualitative approach generally concentrates in depth on relatively small samples. The participants in this research are limited in number but include various groups of people: local public officials with experience in implementing public procurement through awarding or managing contracts in selected local government organizations; local political leaders who influence decision-making to initiate procurement procedures in these organizations; bidders or business contractors who have previously held contracts with the selected local government organizations; and representatives from anti-corruption bodies, civil society organizations, and media outlets that have experience acting as watchdogs in the public procurement process within these areas. As Creswell and Poth (2018) indicated, one dominant feature of qualitative research is to learn a topic from multiple perspectives in various participants.

1.7 Limitations of the Study

There were some limitations in the conduct of this study. However, these limitations did not significantly effect the overall scope of the study. Firstly, the limitation involved accessibility to participants, since this study involves several participants who are not only from local government organizations but also from civil society organizations, private companies, anti-corruption commission offices, and local media. The participants in each group differ significantly in their styles, personalities, and availability. For instance, most of the private companies declined to give an interview. However, the researcher attempted to use the connection with relatives and friends to access interviews with this group. Simultaneously, it was also difficult to schedule a date and time for interviews with participants ranked as executives of local government organizations because they are frequently occupied with meetings and community visits. As a result, the researcher had to wait for them and postpone the scheduled time for their interviews.

Secondly, the limitation related to the permission to make audio records from some participants, especially the group of media and anti-corruption commission officials, was that the researcher was given limited permission to take notes. However, after finishing the interviews, the researcher immediately took time to review the notes and added more information within the day following each interview.

Lastly, the limitation concerned the sufficiency of empirical evidence for the study. Since preventing corruption in public procurement is a sensitive issue, the researcher can conduct the study in selected local government organizations in the southern provinces of Thailand by collecting information from a small number of participants.

Hence, all the limitations from above will be an essential database for other researchers who prefer to further investigate the area of corruption prevention.

1.8 Summary of the Chapter

This chapter outlines the rationale and significance of the study. It begins by presenting the background of the research, followed by the problem statement, research questions, and objectives. It then discusses the significance of the study from both theoretical and practical perspectives, defines the scope of the research, and addresses its limitations. The following chapter presents a review of the relevant literature on the prevention of corruption in public procurement.



CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter explores previous works of literature in relation to the prevention of corruption in public procurement. It begins by examining the definitions of public procurement. The second section of the chapter concentrates on defining the concept of corruption. Following this, the third and fourth sections discuss the concept of corruption in public procurement and the frameworks for preventing corruption in public procurement, respectively. The final section presents previous studies on the prevention of corruption in public procurement.

2.2 Definitions of Public Procurement

The term of public procurement has been explained by various authors. However, the scope of public procurement definition could be described in fundamental and particular aspects.

According to Cambridge English Dictionary defined public procurement as the process of purchasing of goods and services by government organizations. Similarly, The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development)OECD(mentioned about public procurement as the buying done by governments and public enterprises of goods, services and works. Likewise, Kühn and Sherman)2014(described public procurement

as an activity of acquirement of goods or services by government agencies or any government-related field offices. Furthermore, United Nations Development Program)UNDP, 2007(illustrated public procurement as an entirely on the process of acquirement of goods, public activities and services from the beginning through the end which includes identification of requirement, solicitation and selection from difference sources as well as preparation and award of contract.

Moreover, Kostyo)2006(explained public procurement relevant to the acquisition of consumption from small to big tools and equipment, or investment of lands and properties, or construction of building from simple to complex design, or hire technical consultancy and other acquiring activities related public services which have done by government organizations. While, Prier and McCue)2009(pointed out various scope of definitions in public procurement activities in different government organizations which influence hesitation about appropriate role and function of public procurement officials. However, they advocated three main aspects of definitions which comprises of legal mandate, organization matrix and procurement activities. In short, public procurement refers to all the process of acquisition activities which has been done by government at all levels.

2.3 Definitions of Corruption

The term of corruption has no general agreement of the definition since it has many interpretations from various facets and disciplines)Tanzi, 1998; Begovic, 2005; Brooks et al, 2013(. According to Transparency International)TI(defines corruption as the misapplication of legitimate power for personal gain. Whereas, Tanzi)1995(specified corruption is the behavior of nonconformity with the real market competition in order to gain benefits for individual or group. While, Hughes)2010(examined

corruption is related with a failure in performing of any rules and laws by anyone who is appointed as a public servant position.

2.4 Corruption in Public Procurement

The term public procurement refers to all forms of acquiring goods and services for public purposes, such as purchasing medical supplies for public hospitals or educational materials for public schools (Søreide, 2002). While such procurement is essential for service delivery, it is also widely recognized as one of the most corrupt government functions. Corruption can infiltrate any stage of the procurement cycle—from pre-tendering to post-award—undermining value for money, efficiency, and service quality (Heggstad & Frøystad, 2011). Notably, Søreide (2002) argues that corruption is more prevalent in procurement processes involving high-value contracts, technical complexity, or discretionary decision-making, where accountability mechanisms are often weak. This view is supported by Tanzi and Davoodi (1998), who link procurement-related corruption with systemic inefficiencies and inflated public expenditure. However, the claim that corruption in procurement occurs more frequently than in other governmental activities deserves critical scrutiny. While procurement is undoubtedly vulnerable due to the volume of financial transactions involved, other areas—such as licensing, regulatory enforcement, or public concessions—may exhibit similarly high corruption risks. Additionally, Søreide's claim mainly focuses on structural vulnerabilities (like complexity and discretion) without fully considering how cultural, political, or institutional contexts influence corruption dynamics.

A major shortcoming in early studies, including Søreide (2002), is their limited engagement with empirical evidence from developing countries, where procurement

systems are typically more fragile and informal norms often override formal regulations. Recent studies have attempted to fill this gap by emphasizing that institutional weaknesses—such as poor oversight, political patronage, and weak enforcement mechanisms—enable procurement-related corruption (Heggstad & Frøystad, 2011; OECD, 2016). These insights align with institutional theory, which posits that weak rule enforcement, insufficient transparency, and political interference can distort formal procurement structures. Similarly, principal-agent theory highlights how asymmetries in information and accountability between government actors (principals) and procurement officers or contractors (agents) can lead to opportunistic behaviour.

In practice, corruption in public procurement manifests in various forms, including bid rigging, kickbacks, favouritism, and collusion. For instance, Sreide (2002) illustrates how a local construction firm may provide inducements to public officials to secure a contract. Kühn and Sherman (2014) also point out that public officials might change budget plans and choose projects even before the official procurement process starts—often by altering the rules for who can apply or by adding unfair technical requirements in the tender documents. These acts of corruption frequently take the form of gifts, monetary bribes, personal favours, employment opportunities for family members, or donations to political parties and charitable organizations. These practices are not just one-time events; they reveal broader systemic governance failures, like unclear procurement processes, lack of protection for whistleblowers, and weak oversight organizations.

Ultimately, the consequences of procurement corruption are profound. As Tanzi and Davoodi (1998) emphasize, they include not only the misallocation of public funds but

also diminished public trust, reduced service delivery, and deteriorated infrastructure quality. These outcomes are particularly detrimental in developing countries, such as Thailand, where public procurement represents a significant share of national and subnational government budgets. Understanding these dynamics through the lens of institutional and principal-agent theories offers a more nuanced framework for analyzing the drivers of corruption and informing effective anti-corruption interventions in public procurement systems.

2.5 Frameworks for Corruption Prevention in Public Procurement

This section explores various theoretical and institutional frameworks that aim to prevent corruption in public procurement. Scholars and international organizations have proposed numerous principles that emphasize transparency, accountability, integrity, fairness, and efficiency as key pillars in safeguarding procurement systems from corrupt practices.

Krvinsh and Vilks (2013) identify five foundational principles for mitigating corruption in public procurement: transparency, free competition, equal and fair treatment, effective use of public funds, and risk reduction. The public availability of procurement information, including technical specifications, regulations, reports, and contracts, emphasizes transparency and promotes openness and equal access. The principle of free competition aims to create an inclusive procurement environment by lowering participation costs and encouraging bids from smaller or regional firms. Equal treatment requires impartiality in committee decisions and the exclusion of biased members. Efficient use of public funds involves basing procurement decisions on cost-benefit optimization. Finally, reducing risks across the procurement cycle mitigates potential vulnerabilities that may be exploited for corrupt gain.

Similarly, Kühn and Sherman (2014) propose six elements: integrity, transparency, accountability, fairness, efficiency, and professionalism. Their framework aligns with Krivinsh and Vilks (2013) but adds emphasis on the need for professionalized procurement officers and effective training. They stress that adherence to legal standards and ethical norms—combined with informed decisions and performance-based evaluations—can significantly reduce opportunities for corruption. Moreover, accountability extends beyond government bodies to include private sector actors.

The OECD (2016) expands these frameworks by introducing stakeholder participation and e-procurement. Stakeholder inclusion ensures broader oversight from civil society, private sectors, and the general public, while the use of digital technologies (e-procurement) enhances monitoring and reduces bureaucratic opacity. Their framework also underscores the importance of oversight and control through risk assessment and external audits.

The ADB and OECD (2006) present a four-pronged approach tailored for Asia-Pacific contexts: comprehensive regulations, transparency and fairness, individual integrity, and verification mechanisms. These elements stress harmonization of procurement rules, fair prequalification procedures, and the capacity of oversight bodies—including civil society and the public—to review major procurement decisions. This framework is notable for linking individual conduct with institutional reform, bridging micro- and macro-level approaches.

OECD (2009) further articulates four pillars: transparency, sound management, compliance monitoring, and accountability. These emphasize the need for procurement officials to uphold professional standards and for institutions to ensure

internal and external review mechanisms. Their framework pays particular attention to contract management, often the opaquest stage in procurement cycles.

European legal norms, as outlined by Georgieva (2017) in Directive 2014/24/EU, enshrine the principles of equality, non-discrimination, proportionality, and transparency. These norms aim to codify fair treatment across all procurement phases, especially in transnational contexts.

Lynch and Angel (2013) offer a broad framework including transparency, integrity, economy, openness, fairness, competition, and accountability. Their model is particularly useful for operationalizing anti-corruption principles into actionable procurement guidelines. They also emphasize the right of bidders to challenge processes, an important mechanism for democratic accountability.

The Parliament of Malaysia (2013) contributes a regional perspective, emphasizing public accountability, value for money, transparency, open competition, and fair dealing. Their framework reinforces the necessity for public officials to be answerable to stakeholders and underscores cost-effectiveness and compliance with established policies. Across the literature, there is broad consensus on core principles: transparency, integrity, accountability, and fairness. However, some conceptual overlaps create redundancy. For instance, many frameworks treat transparency both as an end (access to information) and as a means (to improve fairness or reduce discretion), without distinguishing its functional role in different stages of procurement.

Moreover, most models prioritize structural reforms (e.g., rules, audits, and digital tools), but few directly engage with the socio-political contexts in which corruption

occurs. Institutional weaknesses—such as political interference, lack of whistleblower protection, and cultural tolerance of favoritism—are often underexplored. The integration of institutional theory and principal-agent theory could strengthen these frameworks by explaining how formal rules are circumvented due to misaligned incentives, information asymmetries, or weak enforcement.

Another limitation is insufficient consideration of local government contexts, particularly in developing countries where capacity constraints and informal networks significantly shape procurement behaviour. While models like those of the OECD and ADB offer high-level principles, translating these into actionable strategies for local governments remains a challenge.

The core elements that consistently emerge across the various anti-corruption frameworks in public procurement can be synthesized into five key principles. Transparency is fundamental, requiring access to clear, timely, and comprehensive information throughout the procurement cycle. Such transparency ensures that stakeholders, including the public, can scrutinize decisions and processes, thereby discouraging manipulation (ADB & OECD, 2006; OECD, 2009; Parliament of Malaysia, 2013). Integrity emphasizes the need for procurement actors to adhere to ethical standards and comply with legal obligations, promoting honesty, professionalism, and moral conduct in all procurement activities (Kühn & Sherman, 2014; OECD, 2016). Accountability involves clearly defined responsibilities and consequences for actions taken by both public officials and private sector participants, ensuring that individuals and institutions are answerable for their decisions (Lynch & Angel, 2013; Krivinsh & Vilks, 2013). Fairness and open competition are also crucial, requiring equal treatment of all bidders and the removal of discriminatory barriers,

which helps ensure a level playing field and prevents favoritism (Georgieva, 2017; Parliament of Malaysia, 2013). Finally, prevention of misconduct calls for the establishment of robust monitoring, enforcement, and professionalization mechanisms to detect and deter corrupt behavior at every stage of the procurement process (OECD, 2009; Krivinsh & Vilks, 2013). These frameworks help us understand and address corruption risks and strategies to prevent procurement corruption in the local government organizations in the southern provinces of Thailand, which will be discussed in the following chapters.

2.6 Local Governance and Corruption Prevention in Public Procurement

The relationship between local governance and anti-corruption in public procurement has become a significant focus in modern public administration, especially in developing countries where corruption risks are elevated and institutional capacity is frequently constrained. Diverse conceptual frameworks have been suggested to elucidate the mechanics of this interaction. Decentralization theory is arguably the most commonly referenced, presenting a framework for enhanced service delivery and responsiveness through the delegation of responsibilities to local governments. Nevertheless, researchers like Smoke (2003) and Bardhan and Mookherjee (2006) warn that decentralization, although theoretically advantageous, may yield inconsistent results. It may improve local monitoring and community engagement; conversely, it could also reinforce local patronage systems and diminish the effectiveness of official accountability measures. The difficulties are most pronounced in public procurement, where unrestrained local discretion may facilitate rent-seeking and favouritism.

Traditional anti-corruption efforts, typically based on the principal-agent paradigm, characterize corruption as stemming from inadequate oversight and misaligned incentives between citizens (principals) and public officials (agents); nevertheless, this approach has faced criticism for its shortcomings. It assumes the presence of virtuous principals and corrupt agents, a differentiation that becomes ambiguous in contexts where corruption is pervasive or where elites across institutions are interconnected. In light of these constraints, authors including Persson, Rothstein, and Teorell (2013) have proposed the collective action perspective, framing corruption not solely as a deficiency in oversight but as a common societal challenge. In environments where corruption is prevalent, individual agents frequently lack the motivation or ability to effectuate change. As a result, efforts to fight corruption need to go beyond just changing institutions; they should also focus on changing cultural values, building trust in public institutions, and encouraging people to get involved. Although theoretically compelling, collective action models frequently lack practical implementation tools, especially in authoritarian or restricted civic environments.

Concurrently with these theoretical transformations, the good governance paradigm has significantly influenced the formulation of anti-corruption reforms. The good governance model, which focuses on ideas like transparency, responsibility, involvement, and following the law, has helped shape many donor-funded projects aimed at improving procurement processes through tools like e-procurement, open contracting, and public spending tracking (OECD, 2009; UNODC, 2013; World Bank, 2020). While these methods have demonstrated measurable success in certain contexts, critics contend that good governance approaches often overemphasize formal procedures and technical compliance, while neglecting the underlying political and socio-cultural drivers of corruption. Consequently, such reforms may lead to

superficial rule adherence without cultivating authentic institutional integrity or public trust.

In reaction to these constraints, a more comprehensive perspective has developed through the notion of national integrity systems. This approach, supported by Pope (2000), highlights the need for a complete and coordinated system of organizations—like procurement authorities, audit bodies, anti-corruption commissions, civil society, and political leaders—working together to prevent corruption. Political resistance, fragmented institutional mandates, and inadequate enforcement capabilities often hinder the effective implementation of such systems in practice. This viewpoint necessitates both institutional adjustments and robust political will, alongside continuous civic advocacy.

The political economy perspective offers a stark yet pragmatic assessment of procurement corruption, especially at the local level. It underscores the integration of procurement processes within extensive networks of authority, favouritism, and informal influence. Khan (2006) contends that comprehending the political agreements and incentive frameworks influencing local government is crucial for formulating anti-corruption strategies that are both efficacious and politically viable. Despite its thoroughness, political economy analysis is often not used in making policies because it is complicated and hard to turn its findings into practical solutions.

In conclusion, although each conceptual perspective provides useful insights, none is adequate in isolation. A beneficial way to move forward is to combine the strengths of the principal-agent model, the ability of the collective action perspective to influence norms, the consistency of integrity systems, and the practical insights from political

economy analysis. Such an approach must be carefully tailored to local contexts, especially in regions like southern Thailand, where governance frameworks, political dynamics, and community norms converge in distinctive and intricate ways.

2.7 Institutional Factors and Corruption Prevention in Public Procurement

Institutional factors are widely recognized as central to the success of corruption prevention efforts in public procurement. Existing literature underscores that institutions operating with high levels of transparency, accountability, professionalism, and integrity significantly reduce the risks of rent-seeking behaviour and discretionary abuse within procurement processes (OECD, 2009; UNODC, 2013). Nonetheless, many institutional environments—particularly in developing countries—remain fragmented and inconsistent. They often suffer from weak oversight mechanisms, limited human resource capacity, and political interference, all of which undermine the effectiveness of anti-corruption strategies.

One prominent institutional factor frequently discussed is the clarity and consistency of procurement regulations. As Evenett and Hoekman (2005) explain, discrepancies in procurement rules across jurisdictions or agencies create room for subjective interpretation, reduce legal certainty, and erode stakeholder confidence in the system. These inconsistencies may stem from structural variations in federal or decentralized states, but even in unitary states like Thailand, divergences in interpretation and enforcement between national and local authorities continue to pose challenges (Tilleke & Gibbins, 2024). In response, Thailand's 2017 Public Procurement Act aims to establish uniformity by requiring all levels of government, including local agencies, to adhere to a common legal framework.

A second key factor is institutional capacity and professionalization within procurement entities. The presence of trained procurement officers, the application of objective and transparent bid evaluation processes, and the support of independent internal auditing systems are all closely linked with a reduction in corruption risks (OECD, 2009; World Bank, 2024). Nevertheless, challenges persist across various jurisdictions, where procurement bodies often lack sufficient expertise, continuity, and institutional memory. In such settings, ad hoc committees are frequently used in place of professional procurement staff, increasing the vulnerability of the system to informal influence, favoritism, and inefficiency in contract management and oversight.

Inter-agency coordination and the performance of oversight institutions also remain a concern. According to Pope (2000) and Transparency International, an effective “National Integrity System” requires the active cooperation of anti-corruption agencies, audit bodies, civil society organizations, and the judiciary. While some progress has been made—for example, through agencies such as the Public Sector Anti-Corruption Commission (PACC) and the Office of the Auditor General (OAG)—enforcement remains inconsistent and often reactive. Moreover, existing literature points to the lack of institutional independence and insufficient investigative authority, particularly at subnational levels, as critical limitations to enforcement effectiveness (UNODC, 2013; Watcharothai, 2018).

Another fundamental aspect is the role of institutional culture and political incentives. Khan (2006) emphasizes that formal institutions cannot function effectively unless they align with the prevailing political settlement. In many cases, procurement frameworks may appear sound in legislation but are undermined by entrenched informal practices, including political patronage, elite collusion, and interference by

elected officials. Mungiu-Pippidi (2015) further argues for the principle of “ethical universalism,” whereby institutions must apply rules impartially and without favoritism. While measures such as electronic government procurement (e-GP) have increased procedural transparency in some systems, implementation often falters when political resistance or vested interests obstruct reform (World Bank, 2020).

In summary, the literature broadly concurs that institutional quality functions both as an enabler and a limitation in the prevention of corruption in public procurement. However, many studies tend to adopt a normative stance, assuming that formal institutional reform is sufficient to ensure integrity. In reality, institutions are embedded within broader political and economic structures, and reform efforts must therefore confront not only legal and administrative shortcomings but also entrenched informal practices, misaligned incentives, and complex power dynamics. A more integrated, system-wide approach that strengthens institutional capacity, ensures consistent oversight, and reinforces political accountability is essential for achieving sustained corruption control in procurement systems.

2.8 Corruption Prevention Strategies in Public Procurement in Southeast Asia

Public procurement in Southeast Asia accounts for a substantial share of public expenditure, making it particularly vulnerable to corruption. As such, a diverse range of anti-corruption strategies has been adopted across the region. However, the effectiveness of these strategies varies widely depending on institutional capacity, political commitment, and governance culture. This section reviews critically synthesizes scholarly and policy literature to examine key corruption prevention strategies in public procurement in Southeast Asia, focusing on digital procurement,

legal and regulatory reforms, institutional integrity mechanisms, and civil society engagement.

Digitalization is widely considered a cornerstone in reducing corruption by enhancing transparency and reducing human discretion. Countries like Indonesia, Thailand, and the Philippines have made notable strides. Indonesia's LPSE system has shown measurable impacts. Wicaksono et al. (2017) found a positive correlation between e-procurement implementation and a decrease in procurement fraud, especially in high-budget tenders. Puspita and Gultom (2022) used a difference-in-differences analysis to show that e-procurement significantly reduced corruption in high-expenditure provinces. Thailand's e-GP system, according to Rotchanakitumnuai (2013), has increased accountability, improved predictability, and minimized direct contact between bidders and officials. However, implementation disparities between central and local governments hinder uniform effectiveness. The Philippines' Government Procurement Policy Board (GPPB) established the PhilGEPS system to ensure competitive and transparent tendering. Yet, Nisnisan and Salapa (2024) noted that despite system improvements, collusion and bid rigging persist due to weak enforcement. While digital systems enhance procedural transparency, they do not guarantee substantive transparency unless backed by independent auditing and whistleblower protection mechanisms (ADB & OECD, 2006). Moreover, technological reforms often mask deeper issues related to political patronage and rent-seeking behaviors.

Several Southeast Asian countries have revised procurement laws to align with international standards (e.g., UNCITRAL Model Law). Vietnam's Public Procurement Law (2013) and its amendments aim to strengthen competitive bidding and reduce

discretion. Nevertheless, Jones (2007) argued that regulatory improvements are often undermined by fragmented oversight and localized corruption networks. In Malaysia, the Government Procurement Policy emphasizes value for money, transparency, and accountability. Still, studies such as Azmi (2023) found that politically connected firms continue to win public tenders disproportionately. Cambodia adopted the Procurement Manual under MEF guidance, however, research by Springer (2011) demonstrates that procurement is still used by the elite to profit themselves through systemic patronage networks. Legal reforms alone are insufficient unless enforced by independent bodies insulated from political interference. Moreover, vague or overly complex procurement rules may create loopholes that corrupt actors exploit (OECD, 2016).

Anti-corruption agencies and procurement oversight institutions vary in strength and independence. Indonesia's Corruption Eradication Commission (KPK) is regarded as one of the region's strongest. It has investigated numerous high-profile procurement cases, including the e-KTP scandal. Yet, post-2019 revisions to the KPK Law have weakened its autonomy and investigatory powers (Agustino et al., 2021). Thailand's Office of the Auditor General and Anti-Corruption Commission (NACC) play key roles, though limitations in prosecutorial powers and coordination with courts limit their deterrent capacity (Vichit-Vadakan, 2011). Singapore, often lauded for its clean governance, exemplifies the importance of centralized procurement, meritocratic civil service, and swift enforcement through institutions like the Corrupt Practices Investigation Bureau (CPIB) (Quah, 2017). Institutional checks work best when agencies have both autonomy and capacity. In many Southeast Asian states, agencies are politically constrained or under-resourced, resulting in selective or symbolic enforcement (Jones, 2007).

Public and civil society involvement in procurement processes can enhance transparency and accountability. In the Philippines, the Procurement Watch Inc. (PWI) and Bantay Lansangan (Road Watch) project have provided models of successful civil society monitoring in procurement. Cravero (2019) reported that civil monitoring contributed to cost savings and contract performance improvements. Thailand's ACT (Anti-Corruption Organization of Thailand) runs public awareness campaigns and encourages citizen reporting of procurement fraud. However, the impact is often localized and rarely influences systemic reform. In Myanmar, civil society faces restrictions on access to procurement data and lacks formal channels for oversight, limiting impact despite donor-driven capacity building (Prasse-Freeman, 2012). While civic engagement can be powerful, it must be institutionalized in procurement frameworks (e.g., participatory budgeting, third-party monitoring). Without legal protection for whistleblowers and transparent access to procurement data, citizen involvement remains tokenistic.

Risk-based auditing and integrity pacts are increasingly used to manage procurement corruption proactively. Malaysia and Indonesia have implemented Integrity Pacts in selected infrastructure projects, with support from international organizations like the UNDP. These pacts commit all parties to anti-corruption clauses and independent monitoring. However, as noted by Idemudia, Cragg, and Best (2010), such pacts are most effective when embedded in broader procurement and compliance culture.

To sum up, corruption prevention in public procurement across Southeast Asia has seen substantial reform efforts, especially through digitalization and legal updates. However, persistent governance challenges — including weak enforcement, politicized institutions, and fragile civil oversight — undermine these efforts. Effective

corruption prevention demands more than procedural compliance; it requires deep institutional reform, political will, and active citizen engagement. Strategies must be context-sensitive and multi-pronged, combining technological tools, legal clarity, institutional independence, and participatory governance.

2.9 Thailand-Specific Studies on Corruption Prevention in Public Procurement

Thailand's public procurement system has undergone several waves of reform aimed at reducing corruption, enhancing transparency, and promoting accountability. Despite significant improvements, challenges persist due to entrenched patronage networks, uneven local capacity, and limited institutional independence. This review critically examines Thailand-specific literature on corruption prevention in procurement, organized around four key themes: e-procurement and digitalization, legal and regulatory reforms, institutional integrity mechanisms, and local governance dynamics.

Thailand's Electronic Government Procurement (e-GP) platform, launched by the Comptroller General's Department (CGD), is frequently cited as a landmark reform in curbing corruption. Makonglad (2023) found that e-GP significantly increased transparency, reduced direct contact between bidders and officials, and improved auditability. The system reportedly decreased the average time and cost of procurement while enabling public access to procurement data. However, Dyussenov (2023) observed that e-GP's effectiveness is uneven across agencies. Local governments, particularly in rural provinces, often face technical limitations and lack skilled personnel to use the system effectively. As a result, manual or paper-based procurement persists in many subnational units. OECD (2021) echoed these concerns, noting that while digital tools are promising, they must be paired with broader reforms

in oversight and enforcement to deter sophisticated collusion and bid rigging. Digital systems enhance transparency in process, but not in decision-making logic. Without strong institutional oversight, e-procurement risks becoming a procedural formality rather than a substantive check on corruption.

Thailand introduced the Government Procurement and Supplies Management Act (2017) to align with international best practices. The Act emphasizes open competition, value for money, and transparency. Onnuam and Ruangthamsing (2020) notes that the 2017 Act improves procurement integrity by standardizing rules and reducing discretionary authority. It introduces pre-announced procurement plans, tender advertisement requirements, and blacklisting provisions. However, Watcharothai (2018) argues that legal provisions often lack enforcement teeth. Many procurement-related malpractices—such as contract steering or inflated pricing—occur through legal loopholes or collusion in the bidding stage, which are difficult to detect. Moreover, Chomphunuch and Wongwattanaphong (2021) found that legal reforms often fail to account for context-specific vulnerabilities, such as informal patron-client ties in rural procurement committees. Legal reform is necessary but not sufficient. The lack of autonomous enforcement agencies and the persistence of informal political networks undermine implementation, particularly at the local level.

Additionally, Thailand has multiple oversight bodies involved in procurement monitoring, including the Office of the Auditor General (OAG), National Anti-Corruption Commission (NACC), and Public Sector Anti-Corruption Commission (PACC). High-profile procurement scandals like the GT200 bomb detector case and inflated school lunch contracts have been probed by these agencies (Vichit-Vadakan, 2011). Puangngam (2007) argues that fragmented mandates and overlapping

jurisdictions weaken their collective impact. NACC reports (2023) suggest that most procurement corruption cases are discovered reactively through complaints, rather than proactively through risk-based audits. Furthermore, whistleblower protection remains limited. According to Seesai and Samakeetham (2023), fear of retaliation discourages procurement officers and contractors from reporting irregularities. Thailand's anti-corruption bodies have moderate investigatory capacity but lack prosecutorial independence. Their role in procurement oversight is often reactive and hampered by political interference.

Decentralization in Thailand has shifted procurement authority to local governments, which account for a large share of public infrastructure spending. This shift has created both opportunities and risks. Wescott, Bowornwathana, and Jones (2009) warned early on that decentralization without adequate capacity-building would expose procurement to elite capture at the local level. More recently, Mung-On and Wongpreedee (2014) documented that local procurement committees are often composed of individuals with political or business ties, leading to opaque decision-making and favoritism. This is especially prevalent in subdistrict administrative organizations (SAOs). Kanchanakart (2018) emphasized that in community-driven projects, procurement corruption can be minimized through participatory mechanisms such as public budget disclosures and local monitoring boards. Decentralization amplifies procurement risks when local institutions lack transparency safeguards. Political patronage, limited training, and weak citizen oversight make local procurement particularly susceptible to abuse.

In short, Thailand has made important strides in reforming public procurement through e-GP systems and regulatory updates. However, corruption prevention efforts continue

to face structural and cultural challenges, particularly in local governance. The literature highlights several recurring issues: (1) enforcement gaps, (2) limited oversight capacity, (3) informal patronage networks, and (4) uneven implementation of digital tools. Critically, most studies agree that anti-corruption efforts in procurement must go beyond formal legal compliance to include institutional independence, civic participation, and integrity education. Sustainable reform requires a whole-of-government approach backed by strong political will and citizen demand for accountability.

2.10 Conceptual Framework Corruption Prevention in Public Procurement

The conceptual framework integrates Institutional Theory and Principal-Agent Theory to explain the dynamics of corruption in public procurement within Thai local government organizations. Structural weaknesses, political interference, and lack of transparency are identified as root causes that compromise the integrity of procurement processes. By improving procedural integrity through e-procurement, civic participation, and oversight mechanisms, public procurement outcomes can be improved. However, the effectiveness of such interventions is mediated by contextual barriers such as political will and institutional capacity. This framework guides both data collection and the interpretation of findings in subsequent chapters. The conceptual framework corruption prevention in public procurement can be showed in Figure 2.1

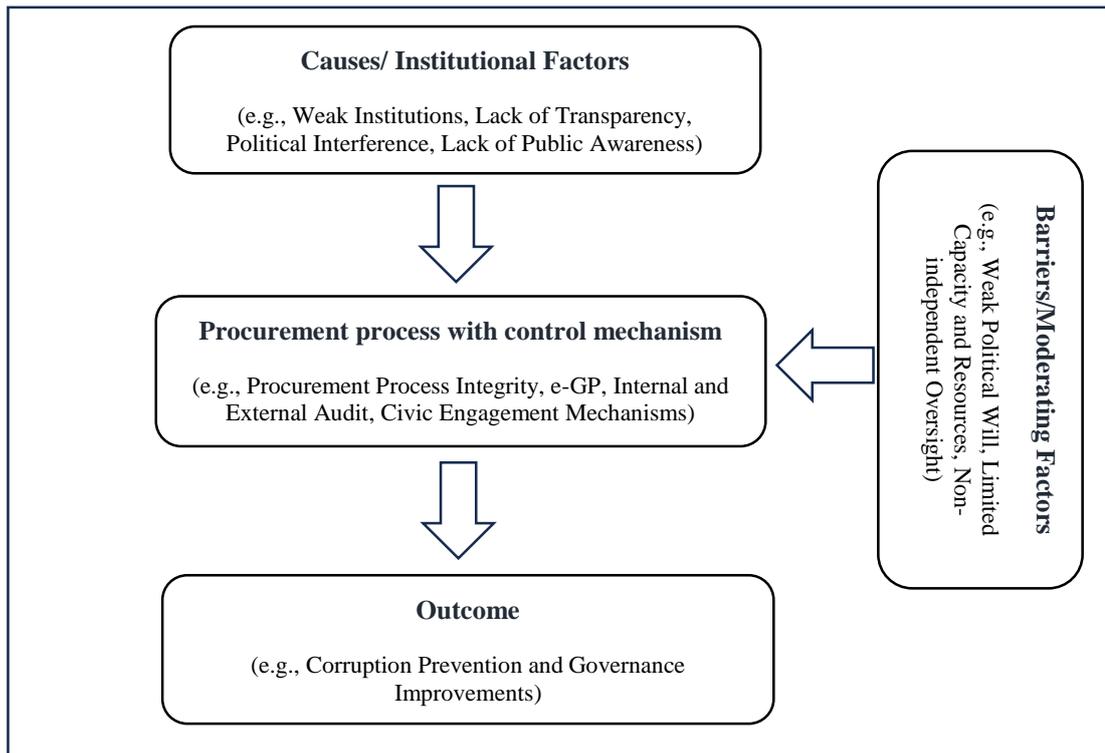


Figure 2.1 Conceptual Framework Corruption Prevention in Public Procurement

2.11 Previous Studies on the Prevention of Corruption in Public Procurement

This section provides an overview of evidence-based empirical studies on the prevention of corruption in public procurement. The first part examines current practices aimed at preventing corruption in public procurement. It then explores research on the effects of existing anti-corruption efforts, as well as studies identifying impediments to effective prevention. The final part focuses on strategies considered effective in preventing corruption in public procurement.

2.11.1 Current Practices in Prevention of Procurement Corruption

Current practices aimed at preventing corruption in public procurement vary across contexts but often converge around core mechanisms such as transparency initiatives, performance-based contracting, professional competency frameworks, and inter-agency collaboration. Numerous studies have examined these practices in public sector

and international organizations, with particular emphasis on local government settings. This section synthesizes empirical evidence from various jurisdictions to highlight dominant themes and emerging trends in contemporary anti-corruption practices in public procurement.

2.11.1.1 Enhancing Transparency and Disclosure Mechanisms

Transparency is widely acknowledged as a cornerstone of corruption prevention. Multiple studies affirm that increased disclosure and accessibility of procurement information are effective deterrents against malpractice. For instance, UNOPS (2012) emphasizes the importance of publicly available procurement plans, tender notices, and contract awards in promoting competition and reducing corruption. Similarly, Oyegoke (2012) and Knutsen-Öy (2015) explore the application of EU directives and national regulations, highlighting the benefits of clarity and accountability but also identifying implementation challenges such as legal restrictions and administrative inertia.

Moreover, Czajkowska (2013) and Gabriel and Castillo (2020) affirm that public procurement systems that incorporate clear technical specifications and competitive bidding criteria are better equipped to prevent favoritism and discrimination. These findings align with broader transparency frameworks, such as the CoST initiative in Thailand, which has demonstrated tangible savings through standardized data disclosure (Saelawong et al., 2023).

2.11.1.2 Institutionalizing Competency and Professionalization

A second key pillar involves strengthening the competencies and ethical standards of procurement professionals. Studies by McKevitt et al. (2012) and Basheka (2010)

highlight the role of professional capacity—ranging from strategic and analytical skills to ethical awareness—in ensuring integrity in procurement operations. Particularly in local government settings, procurement officials often lack formal training, which undermines consistent law enforcement and ethical decision-making. Additionally, Said, Alam, and Johari (2018) examined accountability across public service roles in Malaysia and found variations depending on administrative function, suggesting a need for targeted competency-building initiatives.

2.11.1.3 Leveraging Performance-Based and Shared Services Models

Alternative procurement models such as Output-Based Aid (OBA) and inter-organizational procurement have also emerged as tools for improving efficiency and reducing corruption. Tineo (2007) reports that performance-based contracting under World Bank-funded programs resulted in better cost control and minimized risks by aligning incentives. Gordon Murray et al. (2011) documented that shared services among English local governments allowed smaller councils to leverage pooled resources, though political and institutional limitations were noted. Furthermore, centralized procurement approaches—such as those used in Serbia’s healthcare sector (Mitić, 2013)—offer economies of scale and enhanced oversight, though they also require robust governance systems to overcome institutional resistance and capacity constraints.

2.11.1.4 Strengthening Accountability through Audit and Oversight

Audit mechanisms remain an integral component of current anti-corruption practices. Etse and Asenso-Boakye (2014) emphasize that multi-stage audit processes—pre-audit meetings, stakeholder interviews, and report disclosures—are critical to

maintaining procurement integrity in Ghana. Similarly, Kajimbwa (2018) stresses the role of benchmarking and compliance monitoring as strategies for holding local government procurement officials accountable. Diggs and Roman (2012) add a nuanced view by distinguishing between "broker" and "purist" accountability styles in the U.S., underscoring the need for adaptability in accountability systems depending on institutional culture and political context.

2.11.1.5 Social and Contextual Considerations

Contextual factors such as social inclusion and fairness also shape current practices. Akenroye (2013) highlights the use of social criteria in Nigerian procurement decisions, though he notes these are often underdeveloped and inconsistently applied. In Southeast Asia, studies such as Hasan and Salleh (2018) reveal that limited procedural frameworks hamper the implementation of more inclusive procurement approaches, such as Private Finance Initiatives (PFIs). Similarly, Chrysostom (2019) finds that procurement advertisements in Tanzania frequently fail to comply with established regulations, pointing to the continued challenges of enforcement even where formal structures exist. Collectively, these studies underscore that while diverse practices are in place, the effectiveness of corruption prevention efforts in procurement often depends on: the quality of implementation, the capacity of institutions, and the local governance context. Transparency and competency-building emerge as the most commonly applied strategies, but they must be supported by robust legal frameworks, political will, and mechanisms for public accountability to achieve sustained impact.

2.11.2 Effects of Existing Corruption Prevention Efforts in Procurement

This section evaluates the impact of corruption prevention mechanisms in public procurement across a range of countries and institutional contexts. The effectiveness of these efforts depends not only on the presence of formal reforms but also on how these reforms interact with institutional capacity, political dynamics, and local implementation.

2.11.2.1 Institutional and Governance Impacts

Several studies confirm that anti-corruption reforms have produced improvements in governance and procurement efficiency. For example, Bovis (2008) and Ochrana and Pavel (2013) emphasize that transparency and accountability mechanisms within the European Union have enhanced fairness and competition, thereby contributing to market efficiency and reduced corruption risks. Similarly, Basheka (2009) found that effective procurement planning in Uganda strengthened local governance by improving administrative coordination and resource allocation. Harper et al. (2016), in their regional analysis of Latin America and the Caribbean, found that the establishment of procurement agencies and the implementation of e-procurement systems enhanced transparency and reduced procurement delays. However, inconsistent application of reforms due to institutional disparities continues to pose challenges.

2.11.2.2 Technological Innovations and Their Mixed Outcomes

Digital reforms such as e-procurement and online disclosure platforms are often heralded as game-changers in procurement integrity. Studies in the EU (e.g., Duguay et al., 2023) and Southeast Asia (Wardani et al., 2021; Zahra et al., 2021) show that e-

procurement systems improve efficiency and competition, reduce tendering delays, and enhance monitoring. Notably, Bauhr et al. (2019) distinguish between ex-ante (pre-contract) and ex-post (post-contract) transparency, finding that the former has a stronger effect in reducing single-bid contracts and corruption risks. However, these tools are not universally effective. Ismail et al. (2020) report that while e-government platforms in Indonesia have enhanced service quality, they have not entirely eliminated corruption due to weak internal controls and inadequate professionalization. Similarly, Halonen (2016) highlights the risk of over-transparency in the EU, which can lead to anti-competitive behaviors and compromised confidentiality.

2.11.2.3 Unintended Consequences and Contextual Trade-offs

Several studies draw attention to the unintended side effects of anti-corruption efforts. Mahalingam (2006), for instance, documents how increased vigilance by anti-corruption agencies in India delayed project implementation due to risk aversion among officials. Cisneros et al. (2013) show that fiscal audits in Brazil led to an 11% increase in deforestation as corrupt actors shifted their illicit behavior to less regulated areas. Similarly, Osrecki (2015) describes how stringent compliance mechanisms can lead to "functional deviance," where organizations circumvent rules covertly, diminishing efficiency. Cheeseman and Peiffer (2020) find that anti-corruption messaging in Nigeria can backfire among citizens who already perceive corruption as pervasive, reinforcing political apathy.

2.11.2.4 Sectoral and Economic Effects

At the sectoral level, targeted reforms have demonstrated measurable benefits. Mchopa (2015) showed that improved contract management in Tanzania's municipal

government led to better cost control and value-for-money outcomes. Ferraresi et al. (2021) revealed that procurement centralization in Italy's healthcare sector reduced expenditures by 2–8% without sacrificing service quality, particularly in regions with weaker institutional capacity. Wang (2016), analyzing China's anti-corruption campaign, found short-term negative effects on economic growth due to reduced investment, but emphasized its long-term importance in promoting governance and reducing illicit influence.

2.11.2.5 Enhancing Accountability and Ethical Performance

Some reforms directly target the ethical dimension of procurement. Ogol (2017) found that ethical conduct—particularly regarding conflict of interest—significantly improved procurement outcomes in Kenyan hospitals. Similarly, Nag (2015) identified whistleblower mechanisms and stronger oversight as key enablers of procurement integrity within India's railway sector. Graycar (2019), in a review of 42 corruption cases in New South Wales, identified structural accountability and procurement-specific monitoring as essential strategies for early detection and prevention.

In brief, the literature demonstrates that while formal reforms can significantly enhance transparency, competition, and administrative efficiency, their impact varies depending on local implementation and institutional maturity. Digital solutions and auditing systems are highly effective when paired with strong ethical cultures, responsive oversight, and adequate institutional capacity. However, without contextual tailoring and adaptive flexibility, anti-corruption initiatives risk producing unintended consequences or devolving into symbolic gestures.

2.11.3 Impediments to Effective Prevention of Procurement Corruption

Despite numerous initiatives aimed at curbing corruption in public procurement, persistent structural, political, and cultural impediments continue to undermine reform efforts. This section synthesizes literature that identifies common barriers, grouped into four major categories: political and legal challenges, institutional weaknesses, socio-cultural factors, and enforcement gaps.

2.11.3.1 Political Interference and Regulatory Fragmentation

Political influence remains one of the most cited obstacles in procurement reform. Thai (2001) argued that fragmented procurement systems and lack of political will significantly weaken the ability of governments to implement effective anti-corruption policies. Similarly, Oluka and Ssenoga (2008) found that in Uganda's Kampala District, political interference during the procurement evolution stage creates vulnerabilities that are difficult to mitigate through technical measures alone. This theme recurs in Engelbert, Reit, and Westen's (2012) study on Kenya, where procurement complexity and opaque guidelines leave decision-making open to political manipulation. The absence of harmonized procurement regulations, as seen in Montenegro (Muk et al., 2012) and Jordan (OECD/SIGMA, 2016), further exacerbates governance risks.

2.11.3.2 Institutional Capacity Deficits and Bureaucratic Inefficiencies

A widespread impediment is the lack of institutional capacity among procurement units, particularly at the local level. Matto (2017) found that local government authorities (LGAs) in Tanzania suffer from inadequate staff, weak internal control systems, and low monitoring capacity, which collectively lead to poor procurement

performance. Similar deficiencies are identified in Serbia (Varinac & Ninić, 2014) and Romania (Neamtu & Dragos, 2014), where procurement inefficiencies stem from misaligned processes and insufficient training. Ambaw and Telgen (2017), studying Ethiopia, observed that performance-based contracting tools failed largely due to poor understanding and misapplication by undertrained procurement officials. These findings highlight that even well-designed reforms fail in environments where institutional support structures are weak or absent.

2.11.3.3 Cultural Normalization of Corruption and Behavioral Drivers

Corruption often becomes entrenched when supported by social norms and long-standing behavioral practices. Prabowo and Cooper (2016) highlight how decades of authoritarian governance in Indonesia institutionalized corrupt practices that cannot be dismantled solely through formal rules. Similarly, Chaithongrat et al. (2018) found that administrative corruption and collusive behavior are two dominant forms of procurement corruption in Thailand. Rustiarini et al. (2019) used fraud diamond theory to show that personal motivation—such as perceived opportunity and rationalization—plays a significant role in facilitating corruption. Furthermore, Srirejeki and Putri (2022) discovered that weak enforcement of penalties and perceived benefits of corruption outweigh the deterrent effect of anti-corruption messaging in Indonesia's local governments.

2.11.3.4 Weak Oversight, Inadequate Controls, and Limited Accountability

Several studies critique the ineffectiveness of oversight mechanisms and internal control systems. For example, Sikka and Lehman (2015) argue that internal controls are not sufficient deterrents in environments where private sector actors willingly

engage in corrupt procurement practices to maximize profits. Likewise, Nawawi and Puteh Salin (2018) found that weak internal control systems in Malaysia enabled occupational fraud through falsified claims and lax verification processes. Doig and Sproat (2020), focusing on English local councils, noted that lack of coordination with national government and limited financial resources contributed to inadequate implementation of anti-corruption initiatives. In Kazakhstan, the absence of income and asset disclosure frameworks further impedes accountability (Kazakhstan Agency for Civil Service Affairs, 2019).

Overall, the impediments to effective procurement corruption prevention are deeply interconnected, spanning legal, institutional, behavioral, and systemic domains. Political interference and regulatory fragmentation hinder reform at the policy level, while limited institutional capacity and weak oversight mechanisms obstruct implementation. The cultural normalization of corruption reinforces tolerance for unethical practices, rendering legal instruments ineffective without a parallel transformation in governance values and organizational behavior. Therefore, reform strategies must address not only technical inefficiencies but also the socio-political realities within which procurement systems operate.

2.11.4 Effective Strategies for Preventing Corruption in Procurement

In response to the multifaceted nature of procurement-related corruption, scholars and practitioners have proposed a diverse array of strategies. These range from legal and institutional reforms to behavioral, technological, and participatory approaches. This section synthesizes evidence-based strategies that have shown effectiveness in preventing corruption in public procurement, while highlighting their contextual applicability and limitations.

2.11.4.1 Digital Solutions: E-Procurement and Transparency Platforms

Digital procurement systems are among the most widely recommended tools for enhancing transparency, reducing human discretion, and curbing corruption. Rahim and Bantwal (2011) and Neupane et al. (2012) highlight the role of e-procurement systems in improving efficiency and accountability within local governments in Australia and Nepal. These platforms enhance traceability and reduce face-to-face interactions, limiting opportunities for rent-seeking. Zahra et al. (2021) and Wardani et al. (2021) emphasize that e-purchasing and integrated control systems (e.g., SPIP) improve market access, lower costs, and minimize delays, though these benefits are contingent upon strong oversight and secure infrastructure. Bauhr et al. (2019) add that ex-ante transparency—public disclosure before awarding contracts—is more effective than ex-post measures in reducing corruption and single-bid contracts.

2.11.4.2 Institutional Integrity Systems and Regulatory Reforms

A growing body of literature supports the implementation of integrity systems to combat corruption. Six and Lawton (2013) argue for a configurational approach, where independent oversight bodies, ethical frameworks, and a free media ecosystem function as mutually reinforcing components of integrity. Similarly, Basheka (2021) recommends comprehensive legal reforms, capacity-building, and performance monitoring as pillars of Uganda's procurement reform. EU initiatives, such as Directive 2014/24/EU, demonstrate how legal harmonization can strengthen integrity provisions (Moukiou, 2016). Matic Bošković and Kostić (2021) further advocate for closing legal loopholes and improving anti-corruption measures in public-private partnerships in Serbia.

2.11.4.3 Civil Society and Citizen Participation

Citizen-driven approaches (CDAs) are increasingly recognized as important for bottom-up accountability. Basheka, Oluka, and Mugurusi (2015) show that active civil society involvement, particularly when combined with media engagement and political accountability, helps expose malpractice and deter corrupt practices in Uganda. Similarly, Larsson (2019) finds civil society most effective in EU regions with weak institutional oversight, emphasizing the importance of societal watchdogs where formal mechanisms falter. Williams-Elegbe (2018) and the Center for the Advancement of Public Integrity (2017) also underscore the role of public participation, whistleblower protections, and access to open data in deterring procurement corruption.

2.11.4.4 Behavioral and Cultural Change Strategies

Some scholars advocate for reforms that target the behavioral foundations of corruption. Prabowo and Suhernita (2018) propose transformative learning and “shame-oriented” interventions to unlearn corrupt norms embedded in organizational culture. Similarly, Graycar and Masters (2018) apply situational crime prevention (SCP) techniques that adjust incentives, increase perceived risks, and reward ethical behavior. Meanwhile, Lukito (2016) underscores the need for a strong National Integrity System in Indonesia that addresses both public and private sector behavior. These studies suggest that effective strategies must go beyond compliance and engage with the social and psychological dimensions of corruption.

2.11.4.5 Sector-Specific and Contextual Interventions

Tailoring strategies to sectoral and local contexts is essential. Tátrai et al. (2024) identify procurement design elements—such as contract duration, competitive criteria, and lot division—as critical levers for increasing bidder participation and reducing manipulation. Isroilov et al. (2020) advocate for strong financial controls and internal audits in Uzbekistan, particularly in sectors vulnerable to collusion. The application of religious values in anti-corruption messaging, as explored by Hanini (2021) in Palestine, represents a culturally rooted strategy that could complement legal instruments in certain contexts. Meanwhile, Nwofia (2017) calls for harmonizing national procurement laws with local practices in Nigeria to address inconsistencies that undermine enforcement.

In short, effective corruption prevention in procurement requires a multi-pronged, context-sensitive approach. Digital tools enhance process transparency and efficiency but require institutional maturity to be truly effective. Integrity systems work best when embedded within a culture of accountability and citizen oversight. Behavioral reforms and culturally tailored interventions help address the root causes of corruption beyond procedural fixes. Ultimately, successful strategies are those that align legal frameworks, institutional capabilities, public engagement, and ethical norms into a coherent and enforceable system.

2.12 Summary of the Chapter

This chapter presents a thorough review of existing academic and empirical literature concerning corruption prevention in public procurement, with particular emphasis on local governance and the Thai context. It starts by clarifying the concepts of public procurement and corruption, followed by an in-depth discussion on how corruption

can infiltrate various stages of the procurement process—especially in contexts characterized by high financial stakes or discretionary authority. To explore these dynamics, the chapter draws upon Institutional Theory and Principal-Agent Theory as analytical frameworks.

The chapter also examines various anti-corruption frameworks, highlighting recurring principles such as transparency, accountability, ethical integrity, fairness, and risk management. Models from organizations such as the OECD, ADB, and Malaysia's Parliament are evaluated, with recognition of their conceptual strengths but also noting limitations—particularly their limited adaptability to local contexts and implementation gaps at the subnational level. The discussion then turns to the role of local governance in influencing procurement outcomes. While decentralization is often promoted for its potential to improve responsiveness and accountability, the literature cautions that it can also exacerbate political patronage and weaken oversight, especially when local institutions lack capacity. As such, a balanced approach is needed—one that incorporates collective action perspectives, integrity systems, and political economy insights to address both institutional and informal drivers of corruption.

A review of institutional factors follows, underscoring the significance of clear procurement regulations, well-trained procurement professionals, inter-agency coordination, and political commitment. However, the literature warns that institutional reform alone is not sufficient—success depends on confronting underlying informal norms, power dynamics, and incentive misalignments. The chapter also provides a regional analysis of corruption prevention strategies in Southeast Asia, focusing on technological tools like e-procurement, legislative reform,

institutional oversight mechanisms, and citizen involvement. Despite notable progress in several countries, including Thailand, implementation challenges such as limited local capacity, political interference, and uneven enforcement remain pervasive.

In the Thai context, the chapter examines the impact of initiatives such as the e-GP platform, the 2017 Procurement Act, and the roles of key oversight agencies (e.g., NACC, PACC, OAG). While these reforms have strengthened procedural transparency, issues like fragmented enforcement, informal political networks, and rural disparities continue to undermine overall effectiveness. To structure the study, the chapter introduces a conceptual framework grounded in Institutional and Principal-Agent theories. This framework identifies the institutional causes of corruption, outlines control mechanisms within the procurement process, and considers mediating barriers such as limited political will and institutional capacity—ultimately linking them to expected governance outcomes.

The chapter concludes with a critical review of previous empirical studies, categorized into four key areas: (I) Existing practices – encompassing efforts to enhance transparency, professional standards, and accountability. (II) Impacts of anti-corruption interventions – highlighting both successful reforms and unintended consequences, such as risk aversion and the displacement of corruption. (III) Barriers to effective prevention – covering political, institutional, cultural, and enforcement-related challenges. (IV) Recommended strategies – emphasizing the need for context-specific, multi-dimensional approaches that integrate technology, regulatory measures, civic engagement, and behavioral reform.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

The previous two chapters provided an overview of the background of public procurement and a review of relevant studies. This chapter builds upon that foundation by outlining the research methodology employed in the study. It presents a detailed explanation of the research design, including the sampling strategy, data collection methods, and data analysis procedures, as described in the sections that follow.

3.2 Research Design

The study of corruption prevention in public procurement falls within the domain of administrative ethics research, as it involves sensitive issues within public organizations such as corruption, transparency, integrity, and honesty. Most of the existing literature has emphasized quantitative approaches, which have produced various indicators used to measure and predict ethical conditions for policymakers (Von Maravić, 2008). In contrast, only a limited number of studies have employed qualitative approaches, which focus on describing actual practices in detail to support effective implementation (Von Maravić, 2008). Importantly, since this research emphasizes the prevention of corruption in public procurement—particularly in relation to the implementation process and real-world

practices within specific government organizations (Johnsøn & Søreide, 2013)—a qualitative approach is considered most appropriate.

According to Creswell and Poth (2016), qualitative research is suitable when the researcher seeks to understand the complexities of a situation that cannot be easily quantified. Thus, this study adopts a qualitative approach to examine corruption prevention in public procurement within selected local government organizations in the southern provinces of Thailand. This method is particularly relevant for exploring the intricate and context-dependent nature of procurement processes (Søreide, 2002). Furthermore, qualitative research is well-suited for investigating underexplored issues—an important consideration in this study, as the problem of corruption in public procurement in the southern provinces has not been thoroughly examined.

While many researchers investigating sensitive issues such as the causes and consequences of corruption have relied on quantitative methods (Beck, 2012), these approaches typically produce broad indicators and identify trends at a macro level. However, they often fall short in offering concrete insights into how corruption can be addressed and what strategies are effective for prevention at the implementation level (Beck, 2012). In contrast, qualitative research enables a deeper understanding of the problem by capturing participants' lived experiences and perspectives on preventing corruption within the procurement process (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Myers, 2020).

3.3 Location

This study focuses on the prevention of corruption in public procurement within selected local government organizations in the southern provinces of Thailand. Songkhla and Nakhon Si Thammarat were chosen because they recorded the highest number of public procurement scandals in the region over the past three fiscal years (National Anti-Corruption Commission, 2023). Accordingly, local government organizations from these two provinces were selected as case studies. The selected organizations include: Nakhon Si Thammarat Provincial Administrative Organization, Nakhon Si Thammarat City Municipality, Pak Phun Town Municipality, Ron Phibun Subdistrict Municipality, Songkhla Provincial Administrative Organization, Songkhla City Municipality, Singha Nakhon Town Municipality, and Natawee Subdistrict Municipality.



Figure 3.1 Songkhla and Nakhon Si Thammarat provinces

Source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Thailand_provinces_en.svg

However, the main reason for selecting these specific local government organizations is that all of them have been involved in public procurement scandals. This makes it

particularly interesting to examine how each organization identifies and adopts coping strategies to prevent corruption in public procurement. Another reason for their selection is based on variation in jurisdiction, organizational structure, and budget size. The selected cases represent a cross-section of local government entities: Provincial Administrative Organizations (as the largest), City and Town Municipalities (as medium-sized entities), and Subdistrict Municipalities (as the smallest).

Therefore, this study explores the prevention of corruption in public procurement across eight organizational cases. Each organization operates within a unique context influenced by distinct organizational cultures, leadership styles, local political dynamics, and the role of civil society groups. The use of multiple case studies provides rich and diverse insights into corruption prevention practices within local government organizations in the southern provinces of Thailand.

3.4 Participants

Participants in this study comprise four key groups directly involved in or responsible for overseeing the public procurement process within selected local government organizations. These groups were identified based on their strategic roles within the procurement ecosystem and their relevance to the research questions concerning corruption prevention. Drawing on the principal-agent theory and the demand–supply model of corruption, the study categorizes participants into three broad stakeholder classifications to enable a multi-perspective analysis of corruption dynamics and control mechanisms. The participant groups are as follows:

The first group consists of permanent public servants, including civil servants with direct experience in administering public procurement. Their responsibilities involve

awarding contracts, managing procurement projects, and overseeing compliance procedures. They are vital to this study as they implement procurement policies and are often positioned at the frontline of procurement decision-making. The second group includes local elected officials, who are responsible for initiating or influencing procurement decisions at the policy and political levels. Their perspectives are essential for understanding how political considerations, discretion, and influence affect transparency and accountability in procurement. The third group comprises bidders and business contractors. These are representatives from private companies or suppliers who have participated in procurement processes and contracted with local government organizations. Their experiences provide valuable insights into interactions with public officials, the nature of competitive bidding, and potential corrupt practices such as collusion or bribery. The last group includes oversight and watchdog actors, such as representatives from anti-corruption agencies, civil society organizations (CSOs), investigative media, and other entities involved in monitoring procurement. Their role is to provide external scrutiny and promote transparency and accountability within the procurement process.

In the literature on corruption prevention, scholars often apply the principal-agent framework to explain the dynamics of public procurement corruption (Marquette & Peiffer, 2015; Schoor, 2017). Within this framework, public officials and elected representatives are considered “agents” entrusted by the “principals”—which include the general public, civil society, and oversight bodies—to manage public resources ethically and efficiently. However, when monitoring is weak or incentives misaligned, agents may act in self-interest, facilitating corruption. Neu, Everett, and Rahaman (2015) extend this view by associating public officials and politicians with the demand side of corruption, who may solicit bribes or manipulate procedures for personal gain.

In contrast, business contractors represent the supply side, offering illicit incentives to secure favorable treatment. This distinction provides a more nuanced lens through which to analyze the transactional nature of corruption in procurement. Based on this dual framework, participants in this research are grouped into three analytically meaningful categories:

- Category 1: Demand Side (Agents) – comprising permanent public servants and local elected officials. These individuals are involved in designing, initiating, and implementing procurement decisions and are thus critical to understanding internal vulnerabilities and discretionary power.
- Category 2: Supply Side (Private Sector Actors) – including bidders and business contractors who engage with local authorities through tendering and contractual relationships. Their inclusion helps reveal external inducements, collusion risks, and procedural weaknesses.
- Category 3: Principals (Oversight and Accountability Stakeholders) – consisting of anti-corruption bodies, CSOs, mass media, and, where relevant, informed citizens. These participants play a monitoring role and provide critical perspectives on enforcement, transparency, and civic engagement in public procurement oversight.

As recognized by ADB and OECD (2006), and reiterated by Marquette and Peiffer (2015), effective corruption prevention cannot be achieved by targeting a single actor or organization. Rather, a multi-actor engagement is required—spanning implementers, influencers, beneficiaries, and oversight actors. By including participants from across the public, private, and civic spheres, this study seeks to triangulate perspectives, uncover both systemic and relational vulnerabilities, and

propose comprehensive strategies grounded in lived experiences across the procurement cycle. This classification not only aligns with theoretical models but also enhances the robustness and relevance of the research findings by capturing the interdependent roles of all stakeholders involved in corruption prevention in local government procurement.

3.5 Sampling

Quantitative and qualitative research approaches interpret the concept of sampling differently. In quantitative research, sampling refers to the process of selecting a representative subset from a larger target population to enable statistical inference. In contrast, qualitative research focuses on purposeful sampling, selecting specific individuals, situations, or sites that are information-rich and relevant to the research objectives. This is because qualitative studies aim to understand perspectives, experiences, and opinions—often through subjective or context-specific insights (Patton, 2015). Moreover, many scholars prominent in qualitative research emphasize that sampling in qualitative studies typically involves a small number of cases. The aim is not generalizability but rather to describe, explore, or explain a particular issue in depth. In contrast, quantitative sampling usually involves larger sample sizes intended for testing hypotheses, measuring variables, and ensuring statistical rigor (Emmel, 2013; Rapley, 2014; Patton, 2015). Therefore, the concept of sampling in this research aligns with qualitative research principles, emphasizing depth, contextual understanding, and purposive selection over statistical representation.

There are various alternative sampling techniques that are less frequently used in qualitative research, including convenience sampling, criterion sampling, incidental quota sampling, intensity sampling, deviant case sampling, maximum variation

sampling, and open-ended questionnaire surveys. In contrast, purposive sampling and snowball sampling are among the most commonly used techniques in qualitative research. Particularly, purposive sampling is regarded as a key technique for identifying individuals or groups who possess specialized knowledge or direct experience related to the research topic. As Haynes (2015) pointed out, purposive sampling allows researchers to gain an in-depth understanding of participants' insights and experiences, thereby enhancing the richness and relevance of the data collected.

According to Patton (2015), purposive sampling is suitable for the study of cases that represent either notable successes or clear failures. Furthermore, both Patton (2015) and Flick (2018) advocate for the use of purposive sampling in sensitive contexts or sites, as it enables the collection of rich and relevant information—particularly when resources limit the study to a small number of cases. Therefore, this study adopts the purposive sampling technique, as the topic of corruption prevention in public procurement involves participants with specialized knowledge as well as those with practical experience and professional expertise in procurement processes. This approach is expected to generate in-depth insights and nuanced perspectives relevant to the study's objectives.

Furthermore, a purposive sampling strategy was employed because the two selected provinces in southern Thailand—Songkhla and Nakhon Si Thammarat—exhibit documented vulnerabilities, as reported by the National Anti-Corruption Commission (2023). These provinces were identified as having the highest number of procurement-related scandals among local government organizations in southern Thailand over the past three fiscal years. The reported cases involved various forms of irregularities, including non-transparent bidding processes, conflicts of interest, and weak

enforcement of procurement regulations. Additionally, Songkhla and Nakhon Si Thammarat represent diverse administrative, political, and socio-economic conditions, thereby enhancing the applicability and relevance of the study's findings to other regions facing similar governance challenges.

Given this context, studying these specific cases offers a valuable opportunity to examine the weaknesses in existing practices and, more importantly, to identify effective prevention strategies that may be emerging in response. By focusing on local government organizations with documented procurement irregularities, this study aims to uncover practical and context-specific measures that have been or could be implemented to address corruption. The findings are expected to provide meaningful insights into how corruption in public procurement can be mitigated within the broader context of southern Thailand.

More importantly, although a small sample size is a fundamental characteristic of qualitative research, there is no universally accepted formula for determining the exact number of participants (Patton, 2015). The appropriate sample size varies depending on the specific objectives, context, and methodological approach of each study. As Flick (2017) emphasizes, key factors influencing sample size decisions include the research aim, the theoretical scope of the inquiry, and practical considerations such as time constraints and available resources. In studies addressing sensitive issues—such as corruption prevention or ethical concerns in government procurement—qualitative researchers often recommend a minimum of 20 participants to ensure sufficient depth and diversity of perspectives (Haynes, 2015; Schoor, 2017). Therefore, this study determines its sample size based on the research objectives, the sensitivity of the topic, and the practical limitations of time and resources. In doing so, it aligns with

established guidance from prior qualitative research conducted in similarly sensitive contexts.

3.6 Data Collection

In general, data collection is recognized as the process of gathering information to answer the research questions. In quantitative research, data collection typically involves large volumes of numerical data, which are analyzed using statistical methods for the purposes of measurement and generalization. The most common data collection instruments in quantitative research are structured questionnaires. In contrast, qualitative research focuses on gathering perspectives, experiences, and meanings through interpretative and analytical approaches. In this paradigm, the researcher serves as the primary data collection instrument (Haynes, 2015), facilitating direct engagement with participants to capture contextual and in-depth insights.

However, data collection techniques vary depending on the nature of the research inquiry. In qualitative research, commonly used techniques include interviews, focus groups, observations, and document analysis. Among these, interviewing is considered a central method for data collection (Barrett & Twycross, 2018; Myers, 2020). According to Kothari (2017), interviews represent a systematic approach to asking and listening to questions in order to obtain responses from study participants. Myers (2020) further notes that interviews allow researchers to gather rich, detailed information from individuals occupying different roles and contexts.

3.6.1 Semi-Structured Interviews

Typically, interview techniques in qualitative research are categorized into three main forms: structured interviews, semi-structured interviews, and unstructured interviews.

The choice among these types depends on the nature of the research questions and the specific goals of the study, as each interview format serves different purposes (Schwickerath, Varraich, & Smith, 2016). According to DeJonckheere and Vaughn (2019), semi-structured interviews are especially suitable for qualitative research that seeks open-ended responses and aims to explore participants' opinions, feelings, and beliefs, particularly in studies that address personal or sensitive issues. Schwickerath, Varraich, and Smith (2016) note that semi-structured interviews are particularly useful in two situations: (1) when participants have limited time and (2) when researchers need to gather rich and detailed information within a restricted timeframe.

Since this study focuses on the prevention of corruption in public procurement within selected local government organizations in southern Thailand—a topic involving sensitive issues and expert participants—a semi-structured interview approach is deemed most appropriate. The targeted participants include local public officials, political leaders, business contractors, and representatives from oversight bodies and civil society organizations. These individuals possess direct experience and specialized knowledge of procurement processes. Given their demanding responsibilities and limited availability for repeated interviews, the semi-structured format offers an effective balance between flexibility and depth, enabling the collection of rich, focused insights within a single session.

In order to collect data using the semi-structured interview technique, it is essential to carefully consider the appropriate number of participants. Typically, a minimum of 20 participants is recommended for achieving meaningful insights in qualitative research. Green and Thorogood (2018) assert that, for studies with focused research questions, little new information tends to emerge after interviewing approximately 20

participants. Moreover, several qualitative researchers who have investigated administrative ethics and anti-corruption issues suggest an ideal participant range of 20–30 individuals (Haynes, 2015; Ipadeola, 2016; Schoor, 2017; Dieu Basabose, 2019). In line with this, Morse (2000) proposes around 30 participants as an appropriate sample size for studies employing semi-structured interviews.

However, considering the complexity of corruption in public procurement and the multi-stakeholder nature of this study, a larger sample size is warranted. This research involves four distinct participant groups—public officials, political leaders, business contractors, and oversight actors—each of whom offers a unique perspective on the procurement process. To ensure adequate representation across these categories and to capture the diversity of views, experiences, and contextual dynamics, the study conducted interviews with a total of 40 participants. This decision is grounded in both methodological justification and practical considerations, including the need for thematic saturation, stakeholder inclusivity, and the depth of data required to comprehensively address the research objectives.

Furthermore, the key participants in this research were recruited from three distinct categories. The first group is referred to as the "demand side of corruption" or the "agents"; the second group represents the "supply side of corruption" or the "clients"; and the third group is termed the "principals." This categorization was designed to ensure a well-balanced representation of perspectives in examining the prevention of corruption in the public procurement process. Specifically, the first group comprises 8 local political leaders and 18 local public officials. The second group includes 8 bidders and contractors, while the third group consists of 6 representatives from anti-corruption bodies, civil society organizations, and local media. Most members of the

third group possess expert knowledge and experience in investigating public procurement scandals.

Because this research is conducted using a semi-structured interview technique, it is essential to employ an interview guide, which serves as a valuable tool for organizing key questions aligned with the main research objectives. This study on the prevention of corruption in public procurement within selected local government organizations in the southern provinces of Thailand is guided by four primary research questions. The first question focuses on the current practices in preventing corruption in public procurement. The second explores the effects of existing anti-corruption efforts. The third examines the impediments to effective corruption prevention. The final question addresses potential alternative strategies for preventing corruption in public procurement within these local government organizations. Therefore, the interview guide was developed to comprehensively cover all aspects of these research questions.

In terms of the number of predetermined questions in the interview guide, this research includes approximately 10–12 core questions. However, the number of questions asked during each interview was not fixed; it varied depending on the depth and richness of the information provided in response to the research questions during face-to-face interviews. Moreover, since this study focuses on the issue of corruption in public procurement—which involves sensitive information—it was important to avoid directly using the word “corruption” during interviews. As Beck (2012) pointed out, it is more effective to remain mindful of sensitive areas related to corruption when designing interview questions. This approach helps create a more comfortable and open atmosphere during interviews. For instance, questions may focus on the

implementation of rules and regulations, with an implicit focus on areas vulnerable to manipulation (Beck, 2012).

This research developed the interview guideline based on previous literature on anti-corruption within the field of public procurement. The questions were designed to reflect the study's four core research questions, covering current practices, impacts of existing anti-corruption efforts, impediments to prevention, and potential strategies for preventing corruption in public procurement. The construction of the interview guide was guided by key academic sources on qualitative research design and ethical inquiry, ensuring the questions were open-ended, non-leading, and contextually appropriate. To enhance the credibility and relevance of the interview guide, the instrument underwent a validation process. The initial draft of the guide was reviewed by two academic experts in public administration and governance, as well as by a practitioner with experience in procurement within a local government organization. Their feedback was used to refine the wording, sequencing, and clarity of the questions to ensure they aligned with both theoretical considerations and practical realities.

During the interview sessions, each conversation began with an introduction of the researcher and a clear explanation of the study's objectives. It was essential to inform participants about the nature and purpose of the research, including the rationale for their selection. Given that this study explores the sensitive issue of corruption in public procurement, it was particularly important to build trust and ensure participants' confidence in the research process. Participants were assured of their anonymity and informed that all data would be treated with strict confidentiality. They were also assured that no personal identifiers or real names would be disclosed in the research

report. This ethical approach aimed to foster open and honest dialogue by reducing any fear of potential repercussions (Lee, 1993; Beck, 2012).

Subsequently, the researcher sought permission from each participant to audio-record the interview. If the participant declined, the researcher resorted to taking detailed notes instead. Importantly, various probing techniques were employed to encourage participants to provide more in-depth responses during the interview. These techniques included silent probes, echo probes, phased assertions, head nods, and verbal affirmations such as “Okay, I see...” and frequent “Mmm-hmms.” Before concluding the interview, a closing question was asked to give participants the opportunity to add any additional information or make suggestions related to the topic. Furthermore, the timing and location of each interview were carefully considered to accommodate the participants’ availability and comfort. Each interview typically lasted between 30 minutes and 1.5 hours. Interview locations were selected based on the participants’ convenience to ensure a relaxed and open atmosphere. Moreover, after the conclusion of each interview, the researcher prepared a brief summary of the discussion and promptly sent it to the participant via email to obtain additional comments and feedback. This step was undertaken to enhance the validity of the findings through participant verification. In addition, thank-you letters were sent to all participants as an expression of appreciation for their time and valuable contributions.

3.6.2 A Piloting for Interviews

A pilot interview is recognized as a crucial and valuable step in qualitative research prior to conducting actual interviews (Majid, Othman, Mohamad, Lim, & Yusof, 2017). It enhances the credibility, reliability, and validity of the research design, as it allows for refinement of the interview guide to ensure readiness for the main data

collection process (Malmqvist, Hellberg, Möllås, Rose, & Shevlin, 2019; Harding, 2019). Conducting a pilot interview is essential to assess how participants understand the interview questions. It enables the researcher to identify questions that may need to be removed, revised, or retained for their effectiveness in eliciting meaningful responses (Schwickerath, Varrach, & Smith, 2016). Pilot interviews are typically conducted with peers or volunteers and help identify weaknesses in wording, improve clarity, and strengthen techniques related to active listening (McGrath, Palmgren, & Liljedahl, 2019). Consequently, this study conducted pilot interviews with individuals who were not included in the main study sample. These participants included a procurement officer from a local government organization in Pattani Province, an investigative journalist, a local political representative, and a business sector bidder from the same province. Their diverse perspectives were instrumental in evaluating the clarity, contextual relevance, and sensitivity of the interview guide prior to the formal data collection phase. These sessions tested the effectiveness of the interview guide in generating relevant and insightful responses. Based on the feedback received, minor revisions were made to improve the clarity, sequencing, and sensitivity of specific questions before the full-scale data collection commenced.

3.6.3 Ethical Issues

Ethical considerations are regarded as one of the most important elements in research design and should never be overlooked (Myers, 2020). They are essential to ensure that all participants directly involved in the study are not adversely affected at any stage of the research process (Goodwin, Mays, & Pope, 2019). As Gray (2004) notes, researchers must be cautious about ethical issues from the initial access phase, as there is often a temptation to exert pressure on individuals to participate. Creswell (2014)

emphasizes that qualitative researchers have a duty to protect their participants by fostering trust and confidence, ensuring anonymity, obtaining informed consent, and addressing emerging ethical challenges. Moreover, ethical considerations also contribute to the overall validity of the research design (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2009).

To address ethical concerns in this study, the researcher began by obtaining informed consent from all participants, making it clear that they could withdraw from the study—either partially or fully—at any point. The researcher also communicated with gatekeepers by explaining the importance of the research, its objectives, the type of data being collected, and how participant anonymity would be safeguarded. Given the study's focus on the sensitive issue of corruption, special care was taken during the data collection process. Participants were asked for permission to record the interviews. If they declined, note-taking was used instead. In cases where participants agreed to audio recording, they retained the right to stop the recording when sensitive or risky topics arose. After each interview, a summary of the key points was emailed to the respective participant to confirm the accuracy of the data before analysis commenced.

3.7 Data Analysis

Since this study adopts a qualitative research approach, as mentioned earlier in the chapter, it naturally generates a substantial amount of raw data. This raises a critical question: how should such extensive data be processed and interpreted? (Myers, 2020). Therefore, selecting an appropriate qualitative data analysis technique is essential to ensure that the raw data is meaningfully translated into valuable insights for the intended audience. There are several approaches to qualitative data analysis, including

coding, content analysis, hermeneutics, discourse analysis, analytic induction, and narrative analysis. Among these, content analysis has been widely used for analyzing qualitative data.

Patton (2015) defines content analysis as the process of examining text to identify recurring words or themes. He further elaborates that content analysis refers broadly to any effort aimed at reducing and making sense of qualitative data by identifying core patterns and meanings from a large volume of material (Patton, 2015, p. 541). Additionally, MacNabb (2002) and Myers (2020) suggest that content analysis is particularly useful when the text's meaning is relatively simple, clear, and easily reproducible. In this study, a specific form of content analysis—namely, thematic and template analysis—is applied. These methods are especially suitable for organizing and interpreting data in a structured yet flexible manner, making them well-suited to the complex and context-sensitive nature of corruption prevention in public procurement.

According to King and Brooks (2017, p. 4), “thematic analysis refers to a broad approach for analyzing and interpreting qualitative data within which many different styles or forms exist.” One such style is template analysis, which is particularly well-suited for research conducted in real-world settings (King & Brooks, 2017). Template analysis seeks to strike a balance between flexibility and structure in the handling of textual data. As Schoor (2017) notes, one of the advantages of template analysis is its adaptability, as it does not require a fixed number of coding hierarchy levels. Similarly, King, Horrocks, and Brooks (2019) recommend template analysis for studies involving 10 to 25 interviews, each lasting approximately one hour.

Given that this study involves a multiple-case investigation of local government organizations and focuses on corruption prevention in public procurement, it employs semi-structured interviews with a total of 40 participants, each interview lasting on average one hour. The flexible nature of template analysis makes it particularly appropriate for this type of research, which involves varied participants and interview durations. Therefore, template analysis is adopted as the primary technique for analyzing qualitative data across the eight selected local government organizations. To systematically analyze the data collected from all participants after the completion of the interviews, the researcher employed the following key strategies, detailed in the subsequent section.

3.7.1 Preparing and Organizing the Data

The research process began with transcribing the semi-structured interviews immediately after each day's scheduled sessions. This approach was taken to ensure the accuracy of the transcription, as the researcher's memory of the conversations remained fresh. All interview data were then typed and organized using Microsoft Word to ensure the content was recorded in a format suitable for systematic analysis (Lodico, Spaulding, & Voegtler, 2006; Creswell, 2014). A verbatim transcription technique was employed, capturing every word spoken during the interviews, along with relevant nonverbal cues and emotional expressions. This method is particularly valuable for qualitative analysis, as it allows for a more nuanced interpretation of participant perspectives (Lodico, Spaulding, & Voegtler, 2006). Following transcription, the data were carefully organized and categorized into separate folders based on the type and source of information. This classification facilitated easier retrieval and further analysis in the later stages of the research process.

3.7.2 Reading and Familiarizing with the Data

This stage is essential, as it allows the researcher to become thoroughly familiar with all types of data by reading the transcripts multiple times before proceeding to further analysis (King & Brooks, 2017). Repeated reading helps the researcher gain a deeper understanding of the information, including the main ideas, context, and tone of the participants' expressions (Creswell, 2014). During this phase, the researcher makes notes in the margins of the transcripts or highlights key points of interest when identifying ideas relevant to the research questions (Creswell, 2014; King & Brooks, 2017). In addition, the researcher pays close attention to content that supports predefined themes—whether informed by theoretical frameworks or practical considerations—related to the core research issues (King & Brooks, 2017).

3.7.3 Coding Clustering and Producing Data Template

The next stage involves systematically coding all the data using abbreviated codes to identify descriptive phrases that represent meaningful patterns across the interviews. These codes are then grouped into thematic clusters and organized hierarchically, moving from broader overarching themes to more specific sub-themes (King & Brooks, 2017). This structured coding process facilitates the development of a clear analytical framework. To support this process, the researcher also created diagrams illustrating the hierarchical organization of themes within and across thematic clusters, which helped visualize the relationships and structure of the data (King & Brooks, 2017). In this study, the coding process began after completing and transcribing the first three of the ten planned interviews, allowing the researcher to begin developing an initial template that was iteratively refined as additional interviews were conducted. This iterative approach allowed for early identification of emerging themes and

ensured that subsequent data collection could be informed by evolving analytical insights.

3.8 Research Procedure

To ensure methodological rigor and coherence, this study adopted a structured and sequential research procedure, comprising ten stages. Each stage was essential to achieving the research objectives and was carefully executed in line with qualitative research standards.

3.8.1 Preliminary Literature Review

The research journey began with an extensive review of the existing literature on corruption in public procurement. This review was conducted to deepen the researcher's understanding of the conceptual foundations, prevailing practices, and empirical findings in the field. Scholarly journal articles, institutional reports, government publications, and international frameworks—particularly those focusing on Southeast Asia and local governance—were systematically examined. This process enabled the identification of key issues such as weak institutional enforcement, lack of transparency, and political patronage systems, as well as gaps in existing studies, especially regarding the context of Southern Thailand. The knowledge gained from this review laid the groundwork for subsequent stages, particularly the development of a contextually relevant conceptual framework.

3.8.2 Development of Conceptual Framework

Building upon the insights gathered from the literature, a conceptual framework was developed to guide the research design and analysis. This framework served as a theoretical lens through which corruption in public procurement could be examined in

a structured and coherent manner. It integrated multiple perspectives—including principal-agent theory, good governance principles, and institutional capacity frameworks—to understand the complex interplay of actors and processes in procurement systems. This framework was instrumental in formulating the interview questions, identifying variables of interest, and organizing the eventual data analysis.

3.8.3 Selection of Case Study Sites

The selection of case study sites was undertaken with purposive sampling based on the relevance and richness of contextual data. Two provinces in Southern Thailand were selected due to their documented high incidence of procurement-related irregularities and challenges. These provinces provided a fertile ground for exploring the dynamics of procurement corruption at the local level, considering their unique socio-political environments. The presence of accessible stakeholders—such as local officials, political leaders, and contractors—further justified the site selection. This step was crucial for ensuring the study's contextual relevance and the depth of data collected.

3.8.4 Instrument Development

In alignment with the conceptual framework and research objectives, a semi-structured interview guide was meticulously developed. The guide consisted of open-ended questions aimed at eliciting detailed insights into participants' experiences, perceptions, and reflections on corruption prevention practices in public procurement. Special care was taken to ensure that the questions were clear, non-threatening, and culturally appropriate. To enhance the instrument's validity, expert opinions from academics and practitioners were solicited, leading to several refinements. This tool

was designed to allow flexibility during interviews, enabling the researcher to probe deeper into emerging themes while maintaining consistency across interviews.

3.8.5 Ethical Clearance

Before data collection commenced, the ethical clearance process ensured that the study complied with principles of informed consent, confidentiality, and voluntary participation. Participants were briefed about the purpose of the study, their rights to withdraw at any time, and the measures taken to ensure their anonymity. All interviewees signed consent forms, and no identifying information was included in the transcripts. This step was essential for upholding the ethical integrity of the research and protecting the welfare of all participants.

3.8.6 Pilot Interview

In order to evaluate the clarity and suitability of the interview guide, pilot interviews were carried out with a procurement officer from a local government organization, a local politician, an investigative journalist, and a bidder from the private sector— all of whom were not included in the main study sample. The purpose of this pilot was to assess the comprehensibility and relevance of the interview questions, as well as the overall flow of the conversation. Based on feedback from this interview, minor revisions were made to the wording and sequencing of certain questions to enhance participant understanding and engagement. The pilot also provided insights into appropriate interview pacing and time management, which informed the researcher's approach during actual data collection.

3.8.7 Collection of Data

The primary data collection phase involved conducting in-depth, semi-structured interviews with a purposively selected group of stakeholders. These included local government officials, elected political leaders, private contractors, and representatives from procurement oversight bodies. Interviews were conducted face-to-face, either at participants' workplaces or other agreed-upon locations, and typically lasted between 45 minutes to 1.5 hours. The semi-structured format enabled the researcher to explore both predetermined themes and emergent insights in a conversational yet focused manner. All interviews were audio-recorded—with participants' consent—and notes were taken to capture contextual details.

3.8.8 Transcription and Coding of Data

Following the interviews, all recordings were transcribed verbatim to preserve the richness and authenticity of the data. Each transcript was then carefully reviewed for accuracy. Thematic coding was carried out using both deductive codes (derived from the conceptual framework) and inductive codes (emerging directly from the data). Coding was done manually and iteratively, allowing the researcher to engage deeply with the data. The transcripts were categorized into thematic areas such as “institutional weaknesses,” “political interference,” and “preventive mechanisms,” which facilitated systematic analysis in the next stage.

3.8.9 Analysis of Data

A thematic analysis approach was employed to interpret the coded data. This involved identifying recurring patterns, contrasts, and insights across different stakeholder groups and case study sites. The analysis was guided by the conceptual framework,

which helped structure the interpretation of findings while allowing for the emergence of new concepts. The researcher paid particular attention to how power dynamics, regulatory compliance, and ethical considerations intersected within the procurement process. The analysis aimed to uncover not only the symptoms but also the underlying drivers of corruption, as well as the perceived effectiveness of various preventive strategies.

3.8.10 Reporting

The final stage of the research process involved compiling the findings into a comprehensive narrative that connects empirical data with theoretical concepts and practical implications. The research report was structured to present key themes, supported by direct quotations from participants to enhance credibility and authenticity. The findings were critically discussed in relation to existing literature and the conceptual framework, offering a nuanced understanding of corruption prevention in public procurement. The report also included policy recommendations and identified areas for future research, thereby contributing both to academic knowledge and practical governance reforms.

3.8.11 Timeline of Research Procedure

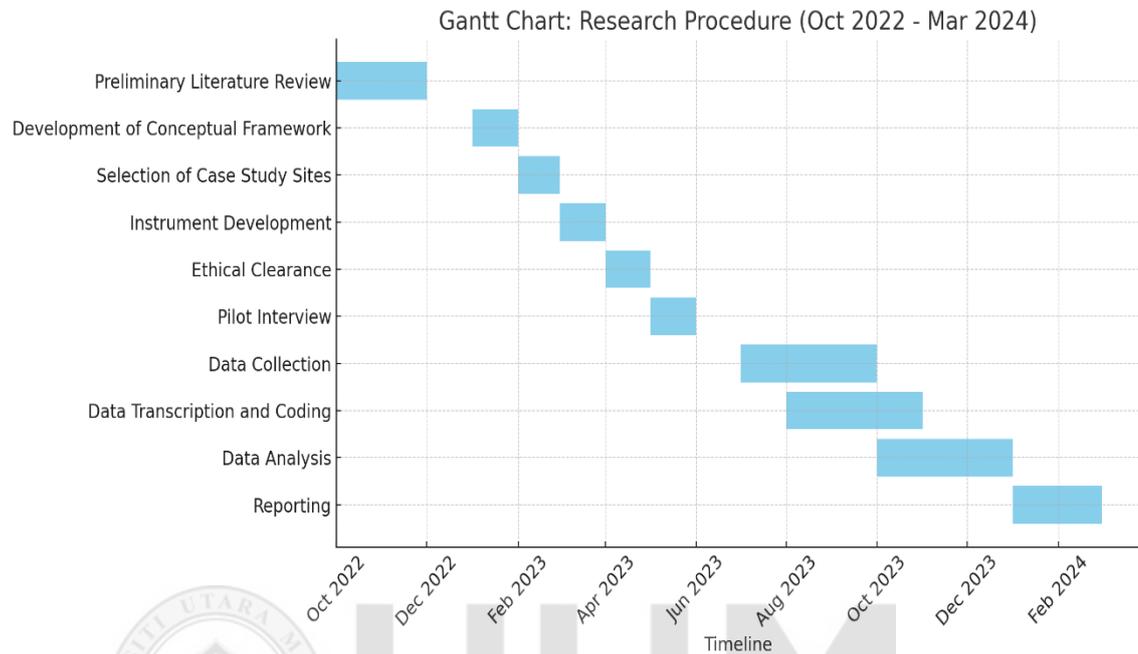


Figure 3.2 Timeline of Research Procedure

3.9 Summary of the Chapter

This chapter presents the research methodology adopted in this study. It begins with an introduction that links the chapter to the broader research objectives. The chapter then explains the research design, emphasizing the appropriateness of a qualitative approach for exploring the complex and context-specific issue of corruption prevention in public procurement. It details the rationale for selecting two southern Thai provinces—Songkhla and Nakhon Si Thammarat—as case study sites due to their history of procurement-related scandals. The chapter describes the participants, who are categorized into three key stakeholder groups: public officials and politicians (demand side), business contractors (supply side), and oversight actors (principals). A purposive sampling strategy was used to identify and select information-rich cases.

The data collection process relied on semi-structured interviews, guided by a carefully developed and pilot-tested interview protocol. Ethical considerations are thoroughly addressed, ensuring informed consent, confidentiality, and voluntary participation. Finally, the chapter presents the data analysis techniques used—specifically thematic and template analysis—and outlines the step-by-step research procedure, from literature review through to reporting. A timeline is also provided to illustrate the chronological flow of research activities.



CHAPTER FOUR

CURRENT PRACTICES IN CORRUPTION PREVENTION IN PUBLIC PROCUREMENT IN SELECTED LOCAL GOVERNMENT ORGANIZATIONS

4.1 Introduction

The preceding chapter focused on the research methodology employed in this study, designed to address the research objectives concerning the prevention of corruption in public procurement within selected local government organizations in the southern provinces of Thailand. Chapters Four through Seven are dedicated to presenting and analyzing the findings in relation to these objectives.

The data presented in Chapters Four and Five were collected from 34 participants, comprising 18 local public servants, 8 local elected officials, and 8 representatives from bidding and contracting companies involved in procurement with the selected local government organizations. Chapter Six draws on data from all 40 participants in the study, encompassing four groups: (1) permanent local public servants, (2) local elected officials, (3) business contractors and bidders, and (4) representatives from anti-corruption bodies, civil society organizations, and the mass media. In Chapter Seven, the data were gathered from a more targeted group, including 18 local public servants, 8 local elected officials, 2 representatives from anti-corruption bodies, 2 from civil society organizations, and 2 from the media.

This chapter focuses on the current practices related to corruption prevention in public procurement within selected local government organizations. The investigation of procurement practices is central to understanding how corruption might be deterred. The findings suggest that these organizations demonstrate a substantial awareness of fundamental procurement procedures, which may serve as a foundation for anti-corruption efforts.

Thus, this chapter addresses the first research question: What are the current practices for preventing corruption in public procurement in selected local government organizations in the southern provinces of Thailand? The analysis is based primarily on the perspectives of two key stakeholder groups—local public servants and local elected officials (representing the demand side or agents)—as well as bidders and business contractors (representing the supply side), who have direct experience participating in procurement activities with these organizations.

4.2 Background Information of Participants

The data presented in this chapter were obtained from 34 participants who were purposively selected based on their direct involvement in public procurement. This group includes local government officials responsible for overseeing procurement procedures and bidders who had previously participated in procurement processes within the selected local government organizations. The purpose of this section is to analyze the background characteristics of the participants, as summarized in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1
The Descriptive Statistics of Participants Background Information

Items	No. Participants	Percentage
Position		
Chief Executive/deputy	2	6
Mayor/deputy	6	18
Municipal Clerk	2	6
Supplies and Property Officer	8	23
Finance Officer	8	23
Business Owner/Dealer	8	23
Working Experiences		
0-5 years	14	41
6-10 years	15	44
More than 10 years	5	15
Sex		
Male	18	53
Female	16	47
Age		
20-29 years old	2	6
30-39 years old	9	27
40-49 years old	12	35
More than 50 years old	11	32
Religion		
Buddhism	24	71
Islam	10	29
Educational Background		
Doctor's degree	2	6
Master's degree	15	44
Bachelor's degree	17	50

Source: Fieldwork 2022 (N=34)

Based on the data, the majority of participants held positions as supplies and property officers, finance officers, business owners, or dealers, each representing 23% of the sample. Participants serving as mayors or deputy mayors accounted for 18%, while only 6% were chief executives, deputy chief executives, or municipal clerks.

Regarding work experience, 44% of participants had between 6–10 years of experience, while 41% had 0–5 years, and only 15% had more than 10 years of experience. In terms of gender, the majority of participants were male (53%), while females accounted for 47%. As for age distribution, the largest group of participants (35%) were aged between 40–49 years, followed by 32% aged over 50, and 27% aged 30–39. Only 6% were between the ages of 20–29.

In terms of religion, the majority of participants identified as Buddhist (71%), while 29% identified as Muslim. Regarding educational background, 50% of participants held a bachelor's degree, 44% held a master's degree, and 6% held a doctoral degree. Each participant is identified by a code throughout this chapter. Codes P1 to P18 refer to local public servants from selected local government organizations in southern Thailand. Codes E1 to E8 and B1 to B8 represent local elected officials and business contractors, respectively, from the same organizations.

4.3 Current Practice in Prevention of Public Procurement Corruption in Relation to Principle of Transparency

This section begins by discussing the importance of transparency in public procurement from the perspectives of local public servants and elected officials (the demand side), as well as bidders and contracting businesses (the supply side). It then examines various approaches for enhancing transparency in the procurement process. The subsequent part identifies key individuals who play a crucial role in promoting transparency in public procurement. Finally, the section highlights the extent to which local government organizations have successfully implemented transparency principles in their procurement practices.

4.3.1 Importance of Principle of Transparency

All participants agreed that transparency is a fundamental principle in preventing corruption in public procurement. They provided various explanations to support this view. A majority of participants emphasized the role of transparency in building public trust and enabling scrutiny over local government procurement activities, as remarked by the participants as follows:

“The principle of transparency in public procurement ensured public trust in public projects...” (B2)

“Transparency raised the level of public trust when people need to know how government activities were managed.” (E7)

“Transparency provided comments on how a contract was awarded...” (E5)

“Transparency maintained organizational trustworthiness, blocking exploitation...” (E4)

“Transparency facilitates public scrutiny...” (P9)

“Transparency promotes the organizational staff and the people can see the public works...” (P5)

These quotations highlight that transparency is widely seen as a mechanism for building public trust and enabling citizen oversight. This aligns with the theoretical perspective of good governance, which emphasizes transparency as a pillar of accountability and public legitimacy. The perceived effectiveness lies in reducing suspicion, enhancing credibility, and increasing the public’s confidence in

procurement processes. However, while trust is mentioned, there is little evidence that such transparency is institutionalized or whether it leads to active civic engagement.

In addition, many participants noted that transparency contributed to achieving value for money and improving the quality of goods and services. As expressed in the participants' statements:

“Transparency encouraged all bidders to offer the highest-quality items.” (B3)

“It benefited local governments and people with high-quality, standardized products.” (E8)

“It promoted effective project management.” (P3)

“Transparency inspired innovative project proposals.” (P15)

“It enhanced the reputation of local governments.” (P16)

“It sustained value for money in public investment.” (P7)

These views reflect an understanding of transparency not just as a control mechanism but as a driver of performance and innovation. When procurement criteria and decisions are open to scrutiny, contractors may improve proposal quality and compete fairly, leading to better outcomes. This resonates with principal-agent theory, where transparency helps reduce information asymmetry and incentivize honest performance. It also reflects OECD's integrity framework which ties transparency to market efficiency.

A smaller group emphasized the administrative benefits of transparency, particularly in supporting compliance and audit readiness. As indicated by the participants below:

“Transparency simplified all procurement evidences.” (P4)

“It allowed for clear reporting to audit bodies.” (P10)

“It provided the right information through the project cycle.” (P14)

“It ensured a reliable reporting system.” (P8)

“It prevented negligence among procurement staff.” (P13)

These statements emphasize transparency as a risk mitigation tool, easing internal controls and protecting procurement officials from accusations of wrongdoing. It shows the practical value of transparency in documenting processes and complying with regulatory frameworks. This is consistent with compliance-based approaches to anti-corruption and reinforces institutional integrity mechanisms.

Another group viewed transparency as essential for legal compliance:

*“We must adhere to transparency under Section 8 of the 2017 Act.”
(P1)*

*“Transparency is stipulated in rules—without it, there’s
punishment.” (P2)*

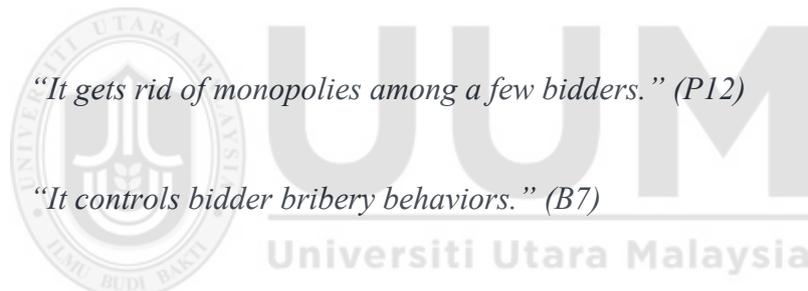
“Executives who follow regulations ensure transparency.” (E1)

“It is an essential component that we must follow.” (P6)

“Transparency is the first image when ensuring compliance.” (P11)

This legalistic framing shows that transparency is often interpreted through a regulatory lens, where adherence to laws serves as both the goal and the standard. While this reinforces rule-based governance, it also risks reducing transparency to a procedural obligation rather than a transformative practice. The effectiveness here depends on how well these legal requirements are enforced and internalized beyond mere formality.

A few participants acknowledged that transparency helps prevent corruption and collusion. As revealed through the perspectives of the participants:



“It gets rid of monopolies among a few bidders.” (P12)

“It controls bidder bribery behaviors.” (B7)

“It encourages check-and-balance procedures between policy actors.” (E3)

These reflections point to the deterrent role of transparency in reducing bid-rigging and elite capture. From an anti-corruption standpoint, this corresponds directly to agency theory and the concept of reducing discretion and increasing scrutiny. However, the limited number of voices in this theme suggests either a gap in enforcement or limited visibility of actual deterrent effects.

A few also linked transparency to fair competition and decision-making efficiency:

“Transparency ensures equal price competition.” (P17)

“It promotes fair competition via uniform channels.” (B1)

“It facilitates decision-making with sufficient information.” (B4)

“It helps bidders submit proposals quickly and efficiently.” (B8)

In this regard, transparency is associated with market fairness and procedural clarity, which are essential in creating a level playing field. This aligns with economic rationality models, where open access to information reduces entry barriers and strengthens competitive bidding. However, further analysis is needed to determine whether such perceived fairness translates into actual equitable access for small or new bidders.

Finally, a rare but insightful group emphasized the political and reputational benefits of transparency. As revealed through the perspectives of the participants:

“It allows politicians to gain public trust and be re-elected.” (P18)

“It protects from social sanctions and public backlash.” (E2)

“It is a right step against procurement scandals.” (E6)

This view presents transparency as a political asset—a tool for legitimacy and protection against reputational risk. While less discussed, it underscores the strategic incentives for transparency, especially for elected officials. This aligns with theories of political accountability, where responsiveness to constituents becomes a motivating factor in public sector integrity.

In some cases, transparency was viewed as a tool to reduce bidder confusion and limit collusion. Based on the opinions of the following participants:

“It clarifies bidder questions.” (B5)

“It mitigates collusive bidding and opens fair competition.” (B6)

This shows a functional use of transparency to enhance clarity and reduce collusive risks, especially during the bidding phase. It aligns with procurement reform objectives that aim to minimize opportunities for anti-competitive behavior. However, the limited voices in this area suggest that while the potential exists, it may not be fully realized in practice. The answers from the participants can be summarized as shown in Figure 4.1.

<p>Participants B2, E7, E5, E4, P9 and P5</p>	<p>Building public trust</p>
<p>Participants B3, E8, P3, P7, P15 and P16</p>	<p>Making efficient public projects with value for public money</p>
<p>Participants P4, P8, P10, P13 and P14</p>	<p>Removing procurement officials’ anxiety in terms of against rules and regulations</p>
<p>Participants P1, P2, P6, P11 and E1</p>	<p>Underlining as a cornerstone of strict adherence to the legal and regulatory framework of public procurement</p>

Continued	
Participants P12, E3 and B7	Avoiding risky to corruption issues as well as sustaining checks and balances system
Participants P17, B1, B4 and B8	Encouraging fair competitive bidding and facilitating all bidders in terms of decision making
Participants P18, E2 and E6	Keeping away from public dishonor especially local politicians who gain trust from their constituents
Participants B5 and B6	Responding key questions in bidding and breaking opportunity for collusion

Figure 4.1 Importance of Principle of Transparency in Public Procurement

To sum up, from the perspectives of all participants, the principle of transparency in public procurement played an integral role in preventing corruption, as reflected across eight key dimensions. Firstly, it built public trust. Secondly, it promoted efficient public projects with value for money. Thirdly, it alleviated procurement officials' anxiety by ensuring compliance with rules and regulations. Fourthly, it served as a cornerstone for strict adherence to the legal and regulatory framework. Fifthly, it reduced the risk of corruption while sustaining checks and balances within local government systems. Sixthly, it encouraged fair competition and supported informed decision-making among bidders. Seventhly, it protected local politicians from public dishonor by reinforcing public trust. Lastly, it addressed bidders' concerns and mitigated opportunities for collusion. In this regard, transparency in public procurement is not only a regulatory requirement but a multidimensional safeguard

that contributes to trust-building, efficiency, fairness, and institutional accountability. While its theoretical value is strongly affirmed, the actual depth of implementation varies, indicating a need for more structured institutionalization and inclusive civic engagement.

4.3.2 Standard Practices for Principle of Transparency

According to the perspectives of all local public servants and local elected officials accepted that the actual practices for making transparency in public procurement were mainly based on laws and regulations. In addition, there were a few local government organizations used their own organizational culture for making transparency in public procurement along with laws and regulations.

A majority of local officials emphasized that the foundation for transparency in public procurement lies in strict adherence to the Public Procurement Act of 2017 and related regulations issued by the Ministry of Finance. According to the views shared by participants:

“The current practice of transparency during pre-tendering phase follows the procurement rules—through annual planning, posting online, and evaluating the plan’s efficiency.” (P1)

“During the tendering phase, we use various channels like our website, the Comptroller General’s site, PA systems, and village heads to disclose information and ensure fairness.” (P2)

“It is easy to make procurement transparent—just follow all the rules.” (P4)

“According to regulations, we’re required to publish monthly procurement reports and use the e-bidding system via the Comptroller General’s Department.” (P6)

“We invite external officials and publish tender information through multiple platforms.” (P2)

These statements reflect the view that transparency is procedural and rule-based, shaped by the legal framework that guides how procurement information must be disclosed and how the process should be implemented, which aligns with the legal-rational model of bureaucracy. However, this rigid application may limit adaptive responses to emerging corruption risks unless supported by proactive oversight mechanisms. Transparency here is used more as a checklist than as an instrument for continuous engagement.

Several participants emphasized that transparency in procurement cannot rely solely on regulations—it must also be supported by an ethical organizational culture and internal integrity systems. As observed in the participants’ responses:

“Even though regulations are followed, corruption can still happen—so we must promote organizational culture for transparency.” (P9)

“We have a declaration system to eliminate conflicts of interest, such as family or friend ties with bidders.” (P10)

“Every procurement committee must declare their conflicts of interest in a specified form.” (P9)

“Dishonest people find ways around rules, so we need self-control and ethical standards.” (P10)

These views underline the limitations of formal controls and the need for integrity-based systems that complement rules with internal ethics, trust, and self-regulation. This aligns with integrity systems theory and reinforces the importance of individual accountability in public procurement.

A number of participants attributed the success of transparency initiatives to committed leadership and active policy directives from executive heads. As expressed in the participants' statements:

“Our mayor provides clear policies for enhancing transparency in every procurement project.” (P18)

“Our chief executive consistently emphasizes the need for transparency in all projects.” (P15)

“We use a variety of techniques based on the leader's policies and good governance principles.” (P15)

These reflections demonstrate that leadership behavior shapes institutional culture and reinforces transparency through policy enactment and modeling. This aligns with transformational leadership theory and the idea that ethical leaders help build integrity-centered organizations.

Many participants stressed the role of external stakeholders—citizens, councils, and other agencies—in maintaining transparency through participatory mechanisms:

“We invite citizens for observation and inspection during construction projects.” (P3)

“We encourage public participation and invite outside experts during the specification stage.” (P13)

“We invite representatives from the community and government departments to procurement committees.” (E7)

“We have checks and balances through council oversight, where procurement can be questioned.” (E8)

This perspective supports participatory governance and social accountability models, which emphasize the importance of involving non-state actors in procurement processes to improve oversight and reduce corruption risk.

Across municipalities and provinces, participants cited diverse platforms for publishing procurement data as key to ensuring transparency. As noted by the participants in the following remarks:

“We post procurement information on our municipal website and provide it via Facebook, Line, and local radio.” (P11)

“We always inform internal and external stakeholders of all procurement data.” (E6)

“Procurement information is disclosed on the Comptroller General’s website and our PAO site.” (P16)

“Procurement results are published monthly; all stages are documented and posted publicly.” (B7)

These practices demonstrate a commitment to open data and multi-channel transparency, consistent with OECD recommendations and e-governance principles that prioritize accessibility and public visibility of procurement decisions.

Contractors confirmed that local government organizations generally provide transparent and timely access to procurement information, aiding in their participation and competitiveness. As revealed through the perspectives of the participants:

“The municipality always publishes tentative projects and estimated prices in advance.” (B1)

“We can check bidding information on the website, including the name list of procurement committee.” (B8)

“Rejected bidders are informed and given time to appeal.” (B8)

“Before issuing invitations, the committee consults experts on estimated prices.” (B6)

These views affirm that transparency enhances bidder confidence, equal access, and the integrity of competition. They reflect World Bank best practices that encourage fairness and competitiveness through proactive information disclosure.

A few participants noted that transparency serves as a protective mechanism against reputational harm, legal consequences, and negative public perception:

“We follow the rules because making a mistake might land us in jail.” (P10)

“Transparency avoids social sanction and protects public property.” (E2)

“It’s the right way to prevent procurement scandals.” (E6)

These perspectives suggest that transparency not only fosters accountability but also acts as a defensive shield against allegations and public backlash, reinforcing reputational risk management and political legitimacy. These are the summarized the standard practices for making transparency in public procurement which gained from the participants are presented in Figure 4.2

Participants P1-P18 and E1-E8	Adhering to the laws and regulations in public procurement
Participants P1,P3,P5,P6,P11, P14 and B8	Posting all procurement information on the local government website
Participants P4, P9, P10 and B3	Declaring themselves from conflict of interest before perform as procurement committees
Participants P2,P3,P14,E1,E3,E6, and E7	Allowing key stakeholders participation in public procurement procedure
Participants P11, P14, P15 and P16	Providing various channels for making transparency
Participants P15 and P18	Encouraging by leadership and organizational culture
Participants E2, E4 and E8	Taking consideration through local government councils
Participants P2, P13 and P18	Establishing different procurement committees for each procurement project

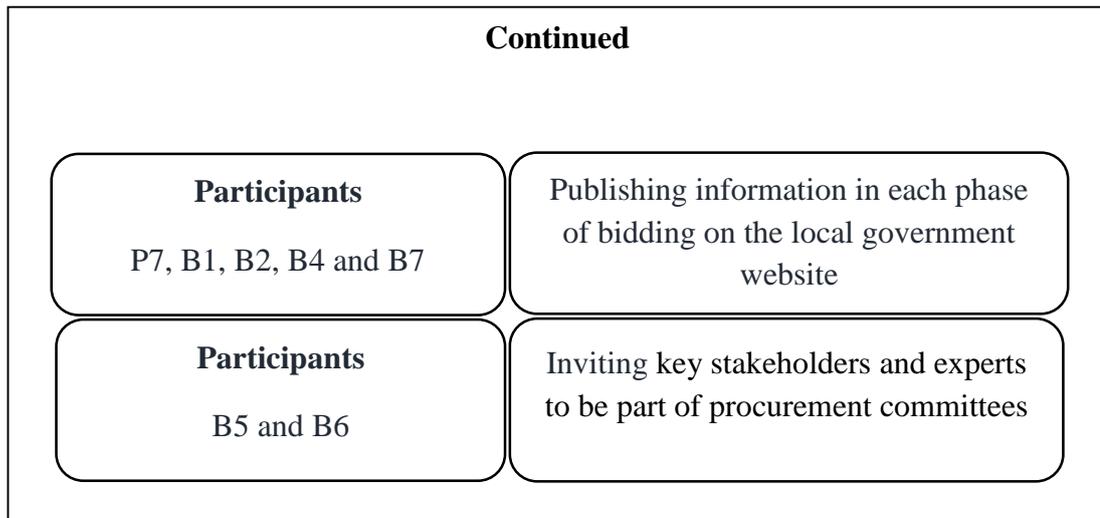


Figure 4.2 The Standard Practices for Principle of Transparency

In conclusion, the standard practices of the selected local governments in applying the principle of transparency in public procurement can be summarized into ten core approaches. Firstly, they adhered to the laws and regulations in public procurement. Secondly, they posted all procurement information on the local government website. Thirdly, they declared themselves from conflict of interest before they performed as procurement committees. Fourthly, they allowed key stakeholders to participate in public procurement procedure. Fifth, they provided various channels for making transparency. Sixth, they were encouraged by leadership and organizational culture. Seventh, they were examined by the councils. Eighth, they established different procurement committees for each procurement project. Ninth, they published information in each phase of bidding on the local government website. Lastly, they invited key stakeholders and experts to be part of procurement committees.

These practices reflect a strong commitment to procedural transparency, primarily anchored in the Public Procurement Act of 2017. However, findings from participants reveal that legal compliance alone is insufficient to ensure genuine transparency.

Without honest personnel, ethical leadership, and meaningful community engagement, transparency risks becoming merely performative. The coexistence of formal mechanisms and informal values signals the necessity of integrated integrity systems, where regulations, professional ethics, and participatory governance reinforce each other. Notably, while implementation varies across organizations, the observed shift from procedural compliance to participatory and value-driven transparency represents a significant step toward achieving sustainable anti-corruption outcomes in local governance.

4.3.3 Actors Related Principle of Transparency

According to all perspectives of participants P1–P18 and E1–E8, local government staff members who are appointed to any position throughout the procurement cycle are the primary actors responsible for enhancing transparency in public procurement. Among these, the ad hoc procurement committees were consistently identified as playing a pivotal role. As remarked by participants:

“Procurement committee comprised of numerous ad hoc committees... I believe that these committees need to be actively involved in promoting transparency in public procurement.” (P1)

“Municipal staff on ad hoc procurement committees must avoid potential conflicts of interest in each phase.” (P5)

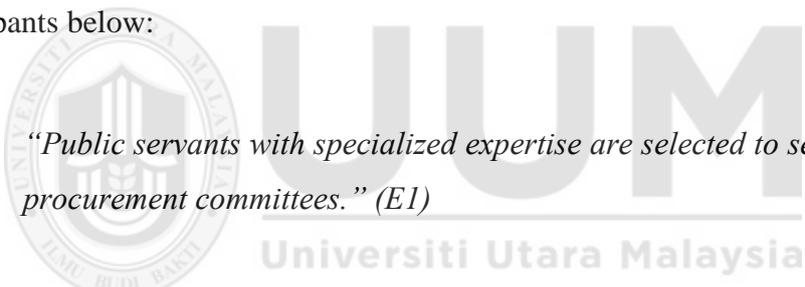
“Since the procurement committee influences the selection of the winning bidder, all selection criteria must be transparent and spelled out in advance.” (P9)

“If any staff member is associated with a bidder, they must resign from the procurement committee.” (P13)

“The evaluation committee must report the bid results along with justifications.” (P16)

These statements emphasize the critical function of internal procurement bodies in preventing bias and enhancing procedural clarity. This reflects compliance-based approaches to transparency, where structured committees act as institutional safeguards (OECD, 2016; UNODC, 2013).

Further, some participants underlined the importance of assigning experienced personnel with technical expertise to procurement roles. These individuals are better equipped to scrutinize procedures and protect the public interest, as viewed by the participants below:



“Public servants with specialized expertise are selected to serve on procurement committees.” (E1)

“Transparency depends on the scrutiny of the procurement committees.” (E1)

“The committee’s awareness of the public budget is key to transparency.” (E4)

“Municipal staff on procurement committees must be cautious with spending and follow regulations.” (E3)

“Transparency takes effect when committees focus on vulnerable areas in bidding requirements.” (E8)

These responses highlight the importance of professional competence and ethical vigilance in procurement oversight. This is consistent with institutional integrity

models, which stress capacity-building and expertise as essential for reducing risks (ADB & OECD, 2006).

A few participants expanded the scope of responsibility to include supply and financial officers, recognizing their roles in ensuring transparent budgeting and financial flows:

“Supply officers and financial officers are equally important as procurement committees for ensuring transparency.” (E2 and E6)

This broader view underscores the interconnectedness of procurement actors and reinforces the concept that transparency requires coordinated institutional effort beyond formal committees.

While procurement committees were widely acknowledged, several participants emphasized that mayors and chief executives play a dominant role in shaping transparency, especially in the context of local political leadership in southern Thailand. Their central influence stems from the political ownership of development projects and the authority vested in them throughout the procurement cycle. As evidenced by the participants views:

“The mayor promotes transparency to advance political advantage during his term.” (P3)

“The mayor, as the top official, influences the final decisions and is responsible for maintaining transparency.” (P7)

“Municipal executives oversee transparency initiatives.” (P11)

“Executive members of the provincial administrative organization are the most powerful authority in enforcing transparency.” (P14)

“The executive team encourages procurement committee members to uphold transparency.” (P15)

These views position local political leaders as pivotal in institutionalizing transparency, reinforcing the notion that executive commitment is essential to drive ethical procurement reforms. Political will and accountability at the leadership level act as catalysts for policy compliance and administrative integrity. Further support came from participants who noted that authorization by the chief executive is required before any procurement phase begins, signaling that transparency begins with leadership commitment. As noted by the participants:

“The mayor or chief executive must sign authorization before starting any procurement process.” (E5 and E7)

This highlights the procedural gatekeeping role of executives, indicating that transparency is not only a technical matter but also a function of governance and leadership ethics. The actors related transparency in public procurement from the perception of the participants can be concluded as shown in Figure 4.3

<p align="center">Participants</p> <p align="center">P1-P18 and E1-E8</p>	<p align="center">All the local government staff members who are appointed as any position in any phase of procurement</p>
<p align="center">Participants</p> <p align="center">P1, P5, P9, P13, P16, E1, E2, E3, E4, E6 and E8</p>	<p align="center">The procurement committees such as the TOR committee, the bid specification committee and the bid evaluation committee</p>
<p align="center">Participants</p> <p align="center">E2 and E6</p>	<p align="center">The supply officers and the financial officers</p>
<p align="center">Participants</p> <p align="center">P3, P7, P11, P14, P15, E5 & E7</p>	<p align="center">The mayor and the chief executive included all the executive team members</p>

Figure 4.3 Actors Related Principle of Transparency in Public Procurement

In summary, participants' perspectives of the primary actors involved in implementing the principle of transparency in public procurement can be categorized into four groups of actors. Firstly, they focused to all the local government staff members who are appointed as any position in any phase of procurement process. Secondly, they considered the procurement committees such as the TOR committee, the bid specification committee and the bid evaluation committee. Thirdly, they concentrated at the supply officers and the financial officers. Lastly, they pointed at the mayor and the chief executive included all the executive team members.

These findings illustrate a dual-actor system, while procurement committees operationalize transparency through compliance and procedural vigilance, political executives shape the strategic and cultural framework within which these practices unfold. This dynamic affirms the theoretical expectation that formal rules must be

embedded within a broader system of ethical leadership, capacity building, and participatory engagement to generate sustainable transparency. The coexistence of both enabling and constraining forces in local government organizations suggests that transparency outcomes are contingent on the interplay between institutional design and human agency. Effective public procurement transparency thus depends not only on statutory frameworks but also on the behaviors, values, and coordination among all involved actors. This reinforces the need for integrated integrity systems that align legal compliance with organizational ethics and stakeholder engagement.

4.3.4 Achievements Related Principle of Transparency

This section presents the findings regarding participants' satisfaction with transparency practices in public procurement within selected local government organizations in southern Thailand. Among the 32 respondents, 62.5% perceived these practices to be at a "very good" level, while 18.75% rated them as "excellent," and 15.62% evaluated them as "good." These evaluations were supported by various justifications that reflect both institutional practices and stakeholder perceptions.

The majority of participants emphasized that successful external audits and evaluations by oversight agencies served as strong indicators of transparency in public procurement. State bodies such as the State Audit Office (provincial branch), the Revenue Department, and other external organizations were cited as key institutions involved in these assessments. As reflected in the following participant statements:

"Our municipality had passed through internal and external scrutiny, and there had never been any problems." (P6)

“The municipality had been guaranteed by the State Audit Office for the practices of transparency in public procurement.” (P5)

“Favorable evaluation findings from outside examiners can be used as evidence of transparency.” (E2)

“Our municipality had been certified by supervision and inspection organizations.” (P11)

“The provincial administrative organization received transparency and public participation awards from King Prajadhipok’s Institute.” (P13)

These statements reflect the importance of third-party verification and audit certifications as mechanisms to legitimize transparency claims. This aligns with global anti-corruption frameworks, which underscore the value of external accountability systems in reinforcing integrity and deterring misconduct (OECD, 2009; UNODC, 2013).

A number of participants highlighted the role of internal oversight mechanisms and hierarchical scrutiny within local government structures in promoting transparency:

“All significant procurement documents are reviewed by everyone from practitioners to executives.” (P8)

“Municipal executives and their subordinates work together to ensure transparency.” (E4)

These insights illustrate the functional role of internal controls and hierarchical accountability, demonstrating how collective responsibility and documentation review

contribute to transparency. This aligns with compliance-based approaches to public administration that emphasize process documentation and supervisory diligence.

Some participants saw stakeholder and citizen involvement as essential for reinforcing transparency in the procurement process. As noted by the participants below:

“Our municipality always invites stakeholders and audit officers to join the evaluation committee at the project termination stage.” (P3)

“Local residents are welcome to participate in municipal activities, including procurement.” (P7)

These responses reveal a commitment to participatory governance in procurement, in which public scrutiny acts as a deterrent to corruption and reinforces public trust. This is consistent with international standards promoting civic engagement as part of procurement transparency (ADB & OECD, 2006).

One participant specifically highlighted the use of public hearings to shape bidding criteria, especially for high-value projects:

“The municipality holds public hearings to gather input from business owners and citizens before setting bid specifications for projects over five million Baht.” (E7)

This practice reflects proactive stakeholder consultation and ensures that procurement terms are not only legally compliant but also socially responsive—minimizing the risk of favoritism or exclusion.

Some participants emphasized the practicality and visibility of transparency practices, citing real implementation and leadership modeling:

“Our municipality can apply the transparency principle in real practices.” (E3)

“Everyone can access municipal information through the mayor’s Facebook page, website, and local radio.” (E6)

These observations highlight the role of leadership communication and symbolic transparency in building public confidence. Leaders serve as role models by making transparency visible and accessible to constituents.

A few participants claimed the use of digital tools and municipal websites as crucial enablers of transparency, ensuring public access to procurement information:

“Since adopting modern technology, bidders can easily access all relevant procurement information.” (B1)

“We can easily search new procurement plans from the municipal website.” (B5)

“Procurement data such as estimated prices, methods, and bid winners are available online.” (B2)

These insights reinforce the value of digital governance in enhancing transparency, reflecting global best practices in e-procurement. Transparency through digital platforms reduces information asymmetry, ensures equal access, and mitigates corruption risks (Rotchanakitumnuai, 2013; Wicaksono et al., 2017; Puspita & Gultom, 2022). The reasons of the achievement for the practice of transparency in public procurement from the opinion of the participants can be summarized in Figure

4.4

Participants P5, P6, P11, P13 and E2	External audit and inspection as validation of transparency
Participants P8 and E4	Internal oversight and chain of command
Participants P3 and P7	Stakeholder engagement and participatory transparency
Participants E7	Bidding criteria had been established through public hearing
Participants E3 and E6	Real-world application and leadership role models
Participants B1, B2 and B5	Digital platforms and information technology for transparency

Figure 4.4 Reasons Related the Achievement for the Practice of the Principle of Transparency in Public Procurement

To sum up, the majority participants' perspectives for the achievements in practicing the principle of transparency in public procurement was at very good level. Their reasons can be identified into five categories. Firstly, they passed the transparency audit conducted by various state agencies. Secondly, they had the effectiveness of internal control through the chain of command. Thirdly, bidding criteria had been established through public hearing. Fourthly, it comes from the role model of leadership. Lastly, the municipalities adopted modern technology. These findings demonstrate a multi-dimensional approach to transparency, driven by formal

compliance, leadership oversight, participatory engagement, and technological innovation. While most practices align with theoretical expectations of transparency-enhancing governance, the diversity of rationales underscores the complex interplay between institutional structures and stakeholder agency in shaping procurement outcomes.

4.4 Current Practice in Prevention of Public Procurement Corruption in Relation to Principle of Integrity

This section makes an effort to examine the importance of integrity in public procurement from local public servants and elected officials (the demand side) and bidders and contracts business companies (supply side) viewpoints. After that, it looks into strategies for promoting integrity in public procurement. The people who are critical to promote the principle of integrity in public procurement are included in the following section. The final section focuses on the satisfactory level of success that local government organizations have attained when they have applied the principle of integrity in public procurement.

4.4.1 Importance of Principle of Integrity

The importance of principle of integrity in public procurement as a key component in preventing corruption in public procurement was acknowledged by all participants. They gave numerous justifications. Participants widely acknowledged the principle of integrity in public procurement as a critical foundation for delivering cost-effective and high-quality public goods and services. Integrity was seen as enhancing the overall effectiveness of public projects, ensuring value for money, and promoting timely and standards-based service delivery. As revealed by the perspectives of the participants:

“The principle of integrity in public procurement resulted in goods and services having reasonable price and quality.” (P1)

“It enabled timely problem solving with standards of goods and services.” (P5)

“It led to value for taxpayers and improved their local development.” (P12)

“It helped reduce spending from all local government projects.” (P14)

These insights emphasize that integrity fosters fiscal discipline, minimizes procurement waste, and supports developmental objectives. This aligns with literature stressing integrity as a cornerstone for ensuring procurement delivers intended outcomes (OECD, 2009; ADB, 2006).

Others emphasized the direct link between integrity and improvements in public service delivery, particularly in sectors traditionally vulnerable to mismanagement:

“Integrity improved the quality of public services, especially road development and maintenance.” (B2)

“It generated public initiatives relevant to current local issues.” (B5)

“It improved the quality of water supply, roads, and footpaths.” (B6)

“Students would have better quality of school lunch.” (E6)

These examples suggest integrity drives tangible, citizen-centered outcomes, especially in infrastructure and education services. This reflects institutional theories

emphasizing how ethical standards contribute to service performance and public welfare.

A significant number of participants highlighted how integrity improves the public image and trustworthiness of local government organizations, particularly those marred by prior scandals. The participants shared the following insights:

“If officials followed integrity, there would be no scandals.” (E2)

*“It boosted public confidence in local government organizations.”
(E3)*

“It ensured organizational trust with local people.” (P7)

These responses show that integrity functions as a reputational safeguard, restoring legitimacy and credibility to local governance. This aligns with public trust theory, where integrity is viewed as central to rebuilding institutional confidence.

Some participants underscored integrity's role in cultivating an ethical culture within local government organizations. As revealed through the perspectives of the participants:

“It preserved organizational culture, promoted transparency, avoided conflict of interest, and eliminated exploitation.” (E8)

“It ensured legal compliance in public projects.” (P3)

“It allowed executives and staff to work together without internal conflicts.” (P10)

These responses show integrity not only as a procedural requirement but also as a normative value system guiding behavior. This reflects compliance and values-based approaches to institutional ethics.

A number of participants emphasized the political value of integrity, noting that it enhances leaders' credibility and public standing. As the opinions of the following participants:

“Political leaders would earn long-term respect and trust.” (P4)

“It helps leaders win in the next election.” (E5)

“It is evidence in front of the public eye.” (E1)

*“It shows the moral and ethical standards of political leaders.”
(P11)*

*“Public money is not mine—I must spend it for maximum benefit.”
(E1)*

In this regard, integrity is framed as both an ethical obligation and a political asset, reinforcing the connection between morality in leadership and democratic legitimacy.

These views resonate with the concept of moral leadership in governance studies.

Participants also linked integrity to improved professionalism and compliance among civil servants throughout procurement phases:

“It emphasized performance in line with the code of conduct.” (P6)

“It minimized misconduct risks.” (P13)

“It ensured scrutiny during need assessment.” (P16)

“It mitigated nepotism and cronyism from early stages.” (E8)

“It gave all bidders confidence in the accountability of staff.” (B7)

These insights reflect the internal control and risk mitigation value of integrity, especially during high-risk procurement stages. It supports theories of bureaucratic professionalism and procedural fairness.

Another group of participants viewed integrity as a mechanism for promoting fair competition and equality among bidders:

“It brings greater resistance to the patronage system.” (P2)

“It might encourage new competitors to participate.” (P8)

“It would appeal to new business dealers.” (B1)

“It results in enhanced value for money.” (P15)

“It combats favoritism and corruption in politics.” (B3)

These statements emphasize open competition and resistance to favoritism, highlighting integrity’s role in leveling the playing field. This supports anti-corruption frameworks advocating transparency and equal access (Transparency International UK., 2013).

Finally, several participants believed that integrity fosters a dynamic, competitive, and innovation-driven procurement environment. As indicated by the participants below:

“We get more attractive pricing through integrity.” (P9)

“It encourages creativity and differentiation in projects.” (E7)

“It brings in expertise and knowledge.” (B4)

“It creates an atmosphere of trust among bidders.” (B8)

These statements highlight integrity’s value in encouraging market efficiency, innovation, and knowledge-sharing—outcomes promoted in economic theories of competitive procurement. According to all the perspective of the participants, Figure 4.5 provides a summary of the importance of principle of integrity in public procurement as follows.

Participants P1, P5, P12 and P14	Integrity as a foundation for efficiency, value, and quality in public procurement
Participants B2, B5 B6 and E6	Enhancing Public Service Delivery Standards
Participants E2, E3 and P7	Rebuilding Trust and Public Image
Participants E8, P3 and P10	Cultivating Ethical Organizational Culture
Participants P4, P11, E1 and E5	Strengthening Political Accountability and Leadership
Participants P6, P13, P16, E8, and B7	Enhancing procurement officials’ professionalism

Continued	
Participants P2, P8, P15, B1 and B3	Promoting equality and fair competition
Participants P2, P8, P15, B1 and B3	Promoting equality and fair competition
Participants P9, E7, B4 and B8	Encouraging a competitive and innovative bidding environment

Figure 4.5 Importance of Principle of Integrity in Public Procurement

To sum up, the participants' perspectives regarding the principle of integrity in public procurement performed an important element in preventing corruption in public procurement can be used to separate six categories. Firstly, it makes the effective of public initiatives that adhere to high standards. Secondly, it improves the image of local government organizations. Thirdly, it increases local people's confidence and faith in the local political leaders. Fourthly, it enhances the performance of local public servant responsibilities in any stages of public procurement. Fifth, it promotes equality to all participating bidders. Lastly, it encourages the competitive environment among all bidders. These findings align with theories of good governance, ethical leadership, and institutional theory.

4.4.2 Standard Practices for Principle of Integrity

From the viewpoints of all local elected officials and public servants, it was recognized that actual situations for implementing the principle of integrity in public procurement

were mainly reliant on rules and regulations. In addition, there were a few local government organizations had established norms and standards inside their own organization for encouraging the principle of integrity in public procurement along with procurement laws and regulations. The majority of participants believed that each individual's internal factors determine whether or not the principle of integrity in public procurement should be adopted. However, local government organizations could perform in a variety of ways.

A group of participants emphasized the promotion of ethical codes of conduct and the recognition of integrity as key practices for fostering integrity in public procurement:

“We must act by abiding by the Songkhla City Municipality's ethical code of conduct.” (P1)

“The municipality honors and recognizes departments and officers who act as role models.” (P2)

“Since day one, all municipal staff are urged to be honest with themselves.” (P17)

“On Municipality Day, we award employees who carry out their duties with integrity.” (P5)

“Our municipality already has an anti-corruption plan that includes promoting integrity.” (P5)

These responses show the role of ethics-based approaches and symbolic recognition in building an integrity culture within local government. Promoting integrity through codes of conduct, commendation programs, and anti-corruption plans aligns with normative institutional theory and integrity systems frameworks. These actions

promote internalization of integrity values and reinforce desired behaviors through positive reinforcement.

Numerous participants pointed to regular training and proactive measures as tools for cultivating integrity and minimizing procurement risks. As evidenced by the participants:

“Integrity risk prevention training is always provided to procurement staff.” (P6)

“We hold training both in our municipality and at external venues.” (P6)

“We provide frequent training on abstaining from misbehavior—sometimes staff are unaware.” (P10)

“All employees must receive public procurement training both within and outside the municipality.” (E1)

“We provide budget support for ongoing procurement training.” (E5)

“All staff involved must have a certificate of public procurement training.” (E7)

These statements affirm the value of continuous training in mitigating integrity risks and increasing technical competence. This aligns with institutional capacity-building theory and OECD best practices, which emphasize knowledge development as a key pillar in sustaining integrity frameworks. Such measures are particularly important in local contexts with limited professional specialization.

Some participants focused on transparency mechanisms such as public oversight, collective evaluation, and independent inspections as safeguards against misconduct:

“We form different procurement committees and invite all bidders to submit bids in public.” (P3)

“We use the ‘four eyes’ approach and evaluate bids as a committee.” (P4)

“Community representatives act as independent inspectors.” (P9)

“The public is allowed to participate during risky stages in procurement.” (P7)

These responses illustrate procedural safeguards designed to reduce discretion and ensure accountability. Approaches such as public bid openings, third-party inspections, and committee-based decision-making reflect core integrity mechanisms grounded in transparency and oversight. These practices align with the principles of participatory governance and the UNODC’s model of collective procurement accountability.

Participants from Pakpoon Town Municipality stressed the role of organizational culture and leadership as a foundation for institutional integrity. As noted by the participants:

“Our leader’s seriousness against misbehavior sets a good example for others.” (P11)

“The integrity culture is strengthened when we respect one another and follow the leader’s direction.” (P11)

“We must maintain well-documented records to demonstrate accountability.” (P12)

“Our town is well-known and scandal-free—staff are proud and motivated.” (P18)

These insights reflect the importance of value-driven leadership and organizational ethos. Culture-building and integrity modeling by leadership foster internal norms of honesty and respect. These practices align with soft governance strategies and institutional theory, where informal norms are as critical as formal regulations.

Some municipalities emphasized the role of internal campaigns, annual training programs, and monitoring procurement committees to uphold ethical standards:

“Our training project on ethics includes all executives and staff annually.” (P13)

“We launched a campaign with signs and mottos promoting integrity.” (P14)

“We enhance the ability of procurement specialists to understand and apply integrity.” (P14)

These practices reflect a blend of ethics promotion and professional development. Campaigns act as continuous reminders of ethical expectations; while monitoring and training strengthen internal controls. These measures mirror the compliance-based and behavioral approaches to anti-corruption.

Several participants emphasized the importance of formal policies aligned with national anti-corruption laws to reinforce procurement integrity. As reflected by the participants:

“Our policy prohibits executives and staff from accepting any gifts or benefits.” (P15)

“We created and communicated an operational plan for integrity in procurement.” (P16)

“Integrity policies originate from political leaders since the election.” (E2)

“We set rules to avoid conflicts of interest from the first sitting.” (E8)

These reflections underscore the role of formal rules and legal frameworks in establishing institutional integrity. Aligning with the 2017 Organic Law, these measures represent compliance-based strategies and demonstrate political commitment. They reflect institutional rational choice theory, where clear rules reduce opportunity for misconduct.

Contractor participants discussed the use of appeals systems as tools to maintain fairness and correct procurement irregularities. As expressed by the participants:

“We can initiate an appeal process if the procurement is unlawful.” (B1)

“There was a case where the bid winner was later canceled due to an appeal.” (B4)

“We can file an appeal if the TOR is misinterpreted.” (B7)

These mechanisms reflect procedural justice and safeguard procurement integrity by providing remedies for grievances. Appeals systems support transparency, fairness, and legal recourse—central components in anti-corruption compliance regimes.

Other contractors highlighted the preventive role of clear, rule-based solicitation documents in curbing misconduct. As indicated by the following statements:

“Bidders are informed that they must not engage in any corrupt behavior.” (B2)

“No collusion between bidders is allowed.” (B3)

“We must register with The Comptroller General’s Department before submitting bids.” (B3)

“Solicitation documents must comply with the 1999 Act against bid rigging.” (B5)

“Submitting abnormally low or high bids is prohibited.” (B8)

These responses point to legal-technical safeguards embedded in procurement documentation. By codifying anti-corruption rules and eligibility standards, local governments reduce ambiguity and enforce bidder accountability. These provisions reinforce rule-of-law principles and support transparency through documentation, aligning with compliance-based models of procurement integrity. The common approaches for implementing the principle of integrity in public procurement, as extracted from the insights of the participants, are shown in Figure 4.6

<p>Participants P1, P2, P5 and P17</p>	<p>Promoting ethical codes and integrity recognition programs</p>
<p>Participants P6, P10, E1, E5 and E7</p>	<p>Capacity building through training and risk prevention</p>
<p>Participants P3, P4, P9 and P7</p>	<p>Openness stakeholder scrutiny, and procedural integrity</p>
<p>Participants P11 P12 and P18</p>	<p>Encouraging integrity culture and the role of leadership as a role model</p>
<p>Participants P13 and P14</p>	<p>Ethical campaigns and internal monitoring</p>
<p>Participants P15, P16, E2 and E8</p>	<p>Clearing institutional policies and legal frameworks</p>
<p>Participants B1, B4 and B7</p>	<p>Providing appeals mechanism and complaint handling</p>
<p>Participants B2, B3, B5 and B8</p>	<p>Inclusion of provisions on corruption and other misbehavior practices in the solicitation</p>

Figure 4.6 The Standard Practices for Principle of Integrity

In brief, the participant viewpoints relating to the application of principle of integrity in public procurement in preventing corruption in public procurement can be broadly divided into seven approaches. Firstly, they adhered and promoted the local government officials' ethical code of conduct. Secondly, they promoted transparency

and public scrutiny from all parties involved. Thirdly, they offered intensive training to all staff members who accountable in procurement process. Fourthly, they formulated clearing procurement policies and plans. Fifth, they encouraged cultural integrity within organization. Sixth, they provided an appeal system after the announcement of bid winner. Seventh, they encouraged ethical campaigns and internal monitoring. Lastly, they included provisions on corruption and other misbehavior practices in the solicitation documents. Overall, the study reveals that local government organizations employ a combination of ethical, procedural, legal, and cultural strategies to uphold integrity in public procurement. These practices reflect both compliance-based and values-based approaches and are largely consistent with international standards and theoretical expectations for anti-corruption in public procurement.

4.4.3 Actors Related Principle of Integrity

Many participants emphasized that the principal actors responsible for implementing the principle of integrity in public procurement are the local government staff members assigned to various procurement roles, particularly those serving on procurement-related ad hoc committees. According to the views shared by participants:

“The procurement committee includes various ad hoc committees appointed for specific procurement stages.” (P3, P7, P13, P15, P18)

“Staff must abstain from conflicts of interest throughout procurement stages.” (P5, P6)

“If a bidder becomes known to a committee member, they must resign.” (P10)

“Bid invitation documents must be clear and transparent.” (P9)

“The bid specification committee must avoid tailoring requirements to specific bidders.” (P14)

These statements reflect the importance of role-specific ethical conduct in procurement implementation. Ad hoc committees—such as TOR, bid evaluation, and acceptance committees—serve as frontline actors whose actions directly shape integrity outcomes. Preventing conflicts of interest, maintaining transparency, and avoiding favoritism align with procedural integrity and compliance-based governance models. These mechanisms serve as safeguards to reduce discretion and enhance fairness.

In addition to committee members, several participants emphasized the critical role of local elected leaders in fostering a culture of integrity within local government organizations. As evidenced by participant testimonies presented below:

“The mayor must evaluate procurement for effectiveness and integrity.” (E1)

“The tone from the top is essential—leaders must clearly express integrity.” (E2)

“The mayor must act sincerely and lead with integrity.” (E5)

“The chief executive must provide tools to promote procurement integrity.” (E8)

These views underscore the importance of leadership in setting ethical standards. Executive commitment to integrity, expressed through actions and policies, fosters a

strong organizational culture. This aligns with the "tone from the top" principle in institutional theory and integrity system frameworks, where leadership behavior shapes the ethical climate of public institutions.

Some participants identified internal control officers and supply officers as critical actors in ensuring procurement integrity:

“Internal control and supply officers are key to overseeing procurement at all stages.” (E4, E7)

These perspectives emphasize technical oversight and administrative monitoring. These actors are responsible for verifying compliance, detecting red flags, and ensuring adherence to regulations. Their role supports institutional accountability and reinforces horizontal checks and balances within the procurement system.

Other participants pointed to the mayor, executive team, municipal clerk, and bidders as influential actors due to their proximity to decision-making authority:

“The mayor and executive team make final procurement decisions.” (P1, P4, P17)

“These individuals are often targets of lobbying by bidders.” (P4)

“Deputy mayors and the clerk are central in final approval processes.” (E6)

These insights reflect power dynamics and the potential for undue influence at the highest administrative levels. The concentration of decision-making authority increases the importance of ethical leadership, regulatory checks, and transparency mechanisms to mitigate risks of favoritism or manipulation.

Finally, some participants emphasized the enduring influence of civil servants in maintaining procurement integrity through long-term institutional memory and rule-based professionalism. As remarked by these statements:

“Civil servants like clerks and division heads must follow procurement regulations.” (P11)

“They understand how to avoid corruption in the procurement process.” (E3)

“Integrity is the first ethical code for civil servants to comply with.” (P14)

These perspectives reinforce the importance of bureaucratic stability and legal-rational authority in safeguarding procurement systems. Civil servants, as non-political and permanent staff, are well-positioned to uphold continuity, apply rules impartially, and model integrity throughout procurement operations.

To conclude, the implementation of integrity in public procurement is multifaceted and actor-dependent, involving ethical leadership, professional committees, technical oversight, and regulatory adherence. The perspectives reflect a mix of compliance-based, value-based, and leadership-driven approaches to public sector integrity, all of which are essential for sustaining transparent and corruption-free procurement processes. These are the conclusion of participants perceptions from above to consider who should be the main actors related principle of integrity in public procurement which are demonstrated in Figure 4.7

<p>Participants P1-P18 and E1-E8</p>	<p>All the local government staff members who are appointed as any position in any phase of procurement process</p>
<p>Participants E1, E2, E5, and E8</p>	<p>The local elected leaders</p>
<p>Participants E4 and E7</p>	<p>The internal control officers and the supply officers</p>
<p>Participants P1, P4, P17, and E6</p>	<p>The mayor and the chief executive included the executive team members and bidders</p>
<p>Participants P11, P14 and E3</p>	<p>The civil servants, such as the municipal clerk and department or division heads</p>

Figure 4.7 Actors Related Principle of Integrity in Public Procurement

In brief, participant's answer who should be the dominant actors involved in applying the principle of integrity in public procurement can be summarized into five groups of actors. Firstly, they directed to all the local government staff members who are appointed as any position in any phase of procurement process. Secondly, they concentrated the local elected leaders. Thirdly, they focused the internal control officers and the supply officers. Fourthly, they attracted the mayor and the chief executive included the executive team members, municipal clerk and bidder or private companies. Lastly, they considered civil servants such as the municipal clerk and directors of divisions or departments. Moreover, the implementation of integrity in public procurement is multifaceted and actor-dependent, involving ethical leadership, professional committees, technical oversight, and regulatory adherence. The

perspectives reflect a mix of compliance-based, value-based, and leadership-driven approaches to public sector integrity, all of which are essential for sustaining transparent and corruption-free procurement processes.

4.4.4 Achievements Related Principle of Integrity

This section examines the satisfaction levels of local civil servants, local elected leaders, and bidders regarding the application of the principle of integrity in public procurement in selected local government organizations in the southern provinces of Thailand. The findings show that the majority of participants—74.5 percent—believed that the principle of integrity in public procurement was applied at a very good level, while 25.5 percent considered it to be applied at a good level. Multiple reasons were provided to support their responses.

Many participants pointed to the absence of complaints and investigations by oversight agencies as a key indicator of satisfaction with the application of integrity in public procurement. As revealed by the participants:

“Our municipality has achieved a very good level of satisfaction due to the absence of complaints from the public and investigations by agencies such as the State Audit Office or the National Anti-Corruption Commission.” (P3)

“Our municipality has never been warned about integrity risks by either the State Audit Office or the National Anti-Corruption Commission.” (P7)

“We consistently pass investigations conducted by both the State Audit Office and the National Anti-Corruption Commission.” (P12)

“There have been no complaints or evidence of corruption. No vulnerabilities have been found.” (P15)

“Positive evaluations from external examiners demonstrate that integrity levels have been attained.” (E2)

“There haven’t been any public complaints or identified risks to integrity.” (E4)

“No evidence of integrity issues has been identified by oversight agencies.” (P17)

These responses highlight the value placed on external validation and the absence of wrongdoing as indicators of integrity. The lack of formal complaints or findings from agencies such as the SAO and NACC is seen by participants as proof of successful implementation. This reflects a compliance-based perception of integrity, where external oversight outcomes serve as proxies for effectiveness.

Several participants attributed their satisfaction to noticeable improvements in staff behavior and awareness of procurement risks. As expressed by these participants:

“All civil servants and municipal employees are actively vigilant against risks in procurement.” (P4)

“Municipal staff make procurement decisions based on a strong understanding of rules.” (P9)

“Civil servants are aware of how to comply with procurement regulations.” (E6)

“Civil servants are interested in training to reduce the risk of corruption.” (P11)

These insights suggest that behavioral change among procurement actors, particularly civil servants, is viewed as a strong signal of integrity improvement. Increased awareness, learning from past mistakes, and proactive risk mitigation efforts illustrate an internalized commitment to ethical conduct, consistent with value-based and institutional ethics models.

Some participants emphasized that improved scores in external assessments reflected their success in applying the principle of integrity. As stated by these viewpoints:

“Compared to previous years, our municipality received greater LPA and ITA scores.” (P1)

“Our procurement integrity is supported by this year’s LPA and ITA scores.” (P5)

“We’ve seen improvement in both LPA and ITA ratings.” (P8)

“Our municipality ranks fourth in the province for LPA and ITA scores.” (P10)

“We have consistently obtained high LPA and ITA scores for years.” (E5)

These responses demonstrate reliance on performance evaluation systems—such as the Local Performance Assessment (LPA) and Integrity and Transparency Assessment (ITA)—as concrete evidence of integrity success. This reflects a metrics-driven

approach to public sector governance, where performance indicators validate institutional reform efforts and integrity commitments.

A few participants pointed to strong leadership and policy direction as factors enhancing satisfaction with integrity practices. As evidenced by the following findings:

“The mayor strictly controls and supervises all public procurement procedures.” (P13)

“The president of the provincial administrative organization provides annual training to raise awareness of integrity risks.” (P18)

“The mayor identifies integrity risks in procurement projects and works to address them.” (E7)

These statements highlight the importance of leadership in influencing institutional behavior and setting standards. Effective leadership not only promotes awareness but also mobilizes preventive actions. This aligns with the “tone from the top” principle, emphasizing the role of elected officials in shaping integrity culture and closing policy-implementation gaps. The reasons of the achievement for the application of the principle of integrity in public procurement from the view of the participants can be summarized in Figure 4.8

<p>Participants</p> <p>P3, P7, P12, P15, P17, E2 and E4</p>	<p>The absence of complaints from the public and relevant agencies during the inspection process</p>
<p>Participants</p> <p>P4, P9, P11, and E6</p>	<p>The changing behavior of civil servants and employees who are keen to prevent corruption</p>
<p>Participants</p> <p>P1, P5, P8, P10 and E5</p>	<p>Increasing scores of the Local Performance Assessment (LPA) and Integrity and Transparency Assessment (ITA)</p>
<p>Participants</p> <p>P13, P18, E7 and B5</p>	<p>Improving leadership performance in the right direction</p>

Figure 4.8 Reasons Related the Achievement for the Application of the Principle of Integrity in Public Procurement

In short, the majority participants' perspectives for the achievements in practicing the principle of integrity in public procurement was at very good level. There are four appearances that best sum up their response. Firstly, the absence of complaints from the public and relevant agencies during the inspection process. Secondly, the changing behavior of civil servants and employees who are keen to prevent corruption. Thirdly, increasing scores of the Local Performance Assessment (LPA) and Integrity and Transparency Assessment (ITA). Lastly, improving leadership performance in the right direction. In addition, the findings suggest that participant satisfaction is grounded in both external validation (such as oversight results and performance metrics) and internal improvements (including staff behavior and leadership direction). This reflects a combination of compliance-based, ethics-based, and

leadership-driven approaches to sustaining procurement integrity in local government organizations.

4.5 Current Practice in Prevention of Public Procurement Corruption in Relation to Principle of Accountability

This section aims to explore the significance of principle of accountability in public procurement from the perspectives of local public servants and elected officials (the demand side), as well as bidders and contracting companies (the supply side). It then delves into strategies for promoting principle of accountability in public procurement. The following section identifies the key actors responsible for fostering accountability in the procurement process. Lastly, the section evaluates the level of success local government organizations have achieved in implementing principle of accountability in public procurement.

4.5.1 Importance of Principle of Accountability

Some participants acknowledged that the principle of accountability ensures that procurement activities comply with laws, regulations, and ethical standards:

“Procurement officials do not make decisions based on their personal views.” (P3)

“Procurement officials treat all bidders equally, without bias.” (P4)

“The principle minimizes the risk of corruption and fraud.” (P9)

“It helps prevent the leakage of sensitive information.” (P13)

These responses affirm that accountability serves as a safeguard against arbitrary and unethical practices. By requiring adherence to legal and ethical standards, the principle constrains discretionary power and aligns with compliance-based anti-corruption models. Participants viewed accountability as foundational to fair and rules-based public procurement.

Another group of participants highlighted that applying the principle of accountability positively influences the quality of public goods and services:

“Roads and footpaths maintain quality if accountability is genuinely applied.” (B1)

“Public initiatives reflect local needs more accurately.” (B3)

“There are noticeable improvements in public buildings and road maintenance.” (B8)

“Students benefit from better nutrition in schools.” (E2)

These views suggest that accountability extends beyond process compliance to outcomes. It enhances service delivery by ensuring public funds are effectively used, thus improving infrastructure and social services. This reflects a results-oriented governance perspective, where ethical procurement contributes to public value.

A few participants emphasized accountability as a tool for strengthening institutional credibility and public confidence. As supported by the evidence presented:

“If local leaders act accountably, local scandals would be reduced.”
(B2)

“Accountability encourages public trust in local government organizations.” (E4)

“It builds trust between the organization and local people.” (P7)

These perspectives highlight the reputational value of accountability. By curbing misconduct and promoting fairness, accountability contributes to restoring the image of local governments often damaged by corruption allegations. This aligns with public trust theories in governance, where transparency and ethical leadership drive legitimacy.

A few participants viewed accountability as essential to fostering ethical organizational norms and mitigating internal conflict. As revealed by the participants:

“Accountability supports transparency, avoids conflicts of interest, and promotes honesty.” (E1)

“It helps public projects comply with laws and regulations.” (P11)

“It allows executives and civil servants to work together without internal conflict.” (P5)

These insights indicate that accountability reinforces a healthy organizational culture based on mutual respect, legal adherence, and collaborative governance. It functions as a normative mechanism to unify public officials toward ethical goals.

Some participants linked accountability with greater public satisfaction and service durability. As evidenced by the following statements:

“Road development ensures long-term use for traffic and transportation.” (P1)

“Sports centers are built to high safety standards.” (E8)

“It ensures public funds are well spent and the quality of goods is maintained.” (E6)

These responses underscore accountability’s role in reinforcing public satisfaction by ensuring high-quality outputs. Effective monitoring and transparent use of funds contribute to sustained improvements in infrastructure and services, supporting citizen-centric governance.

Some participants connected accountability to personal ethics and leadership responsibility. As stated by the participants:

“Accountability reflects the moral value and ethical standards of local leaders.” (P6)

“As a local politician, I’m always aware that public money must be used for maximum benefit.” (E3)

These reflections point to the internalization of ethical values among political leaders. When decision-makers feel morally accountable, they are more likely to act in the public interest, which supports accountability-focused leadership and value-based governance.

Multiple participants stressed accountability’s role in enhancing staff performance across the procurement lifecycle:

“Accountability improves civil servant performance in line with the code of conduct.” (P2)

“It minimizes misconduct risks in procurement.” (P10)

“Thorough needs assessments are conducted under accountable leadership.” (P13)

“It helps reduce nepotism and cronyism, especially in early procurement stages.” (E5)

“It fosters bidder confidence in the accountability and professionalism of civil servants.” (B7)

These insights reflect accountability as both a motivational and structural control mechanism. By emphasizing ethical performance, it fosters diligence and deters favoritism, contributing to improved procedural quality and fair competition.

Several participants associated accountability with fair competition and equal opportunity for vendors. As remarked by the participants:

“It creates resistance to patronage systems.” (P8)

“It encourages new competitors to join bidding processes.” (P11)

“It’s more appealing to new business dealers when accountability is applied.” (B2)

“It ensures better value for money.” (P16)

“It combats favoritism and corruption in local politics.” (B3)

These perspectives suggest that accountability levels the playing field by reducing barriers to entry and fostering a merit-based bidding environment. It enhances procurement legitimacy and aligns with market-based principles of fairness and efficiency.

Finally, some participants highlighted how accountability promotes innovation and competitive pricing. As expressed in the participants' statements:

“Local governments get more attractive pricing through fair competition.” (P9)

“Accountability encourages creativity and differentiation in projects.” (E7)

“We gain more expertise and knowledge from diverse bidders.” (B4)

“Bidders trust the process, knowing it's fair for all parties.” (B8)

These insights reinforce the idea that accountability enhances both competition and innovation. It encourages broader participation, leading to better outcomes for public projects while upholding accountability. According to all the perspective of the participants, Figure 4.9 provides a summary of the importance the principle of accountability in public procurement from participant views as follows.

Participants P3, P4, P9 and P13	Ensuring legal compliance and ethical procurement behavior
Participants E2, B1, B3 and B8	Improving public service quality and infrastructure outcomes
Participants P7, E4 and B2	Restoring public trust and enhancing organizational reputation
Participants P5, P11 and E1	Promoting organizational culture and internal cooperation
Participants P1, E6 and E8	Enhancing citizen satisfaction and quality assurance
Participants P2, P10, P13, E5, and B7	Strengthening civil servant performance and procurement accountability
Participants P8, P11, P16, B2 and B3	Promoting equality and competitive access for bidders
Participants P9, E7, B4 and B8	Encouraging a more competitive and innovative procurement environment

Figure 4.9 Importance of Principle of Accountability in Public Procurement

In conclusion, the participant perspectives regarding the principle of accountability in public procurement performed an important element in preventing corruption in public procurement can be used to separate eight categories. Firstly, it ensures all activities throughout the procurement cycle comply with legal and ethical standards. Secondly, it enhances the reputation of local government organizations. Thirdly, it enhances local

residents' satisfaction with the quality of services. Fourthly, it enhances the performance of local public servant responsibilities in any stages of public procurement. Fifthly, it promotes equality to all participating bidders. Sixth, it encourages the competitive environment among all bidders. Seventh, it improves public service quality and infrastructure outcomes. Lastly, it promotes organizational culture and internal cooperation. Furthermore, participants widely agreed that the principle of accountability is not only a safeguard against corruption but also a foundation for trustworthy, efficient, and equitable public procurement. It enhances institutional legitimacy, supports good governance, and maximizes public value—making it a vital element in strengthening procurement systems at the local level.

4.5.2 Standard Practices for Principle of Accountability

According to the perspectives of local elected officials and public servants, the practical application of the principle of accountability in public procurement primarily hinges on compliance with existing laws and regulations. In addition, there were a few local government organizations also had established internal control system inside their own organization for encouraging the principle of accountability in public procurement along with procurement laws and regulations. Most participants maintained that individual internal factors largely influence whether the principle of accountability in public procurement is adopted. However, local government organizations may approach its implementation in various ways.

Some participants emphasized that accountability in public procurement is grounded in strong regulatory frameworks, reporting mechanisms, and internal control systems:

“We must ensure our work practices align with the Songkhla City Municipality's regulatory framework.” (P1)

“An effective internal control mechanism balances timely decisions with quality assurance.” (P2)

“From day one, all municipal staff must be accountable in their duties.” (P17)

These statements highlight how structured regulations and controls institutionalize accountability. Compliance mechanisms, regular reviews, and performance reporting ensure that procurement activities are transparent, effective, and aligned with both local and national legal standards.

Participants from multiple municipalities pointed to annual training and ethical leadership as key tools in embedding accountability into practice:

“Every year on Municipality Day, we award employees who demonstrate accountability.” (P5)

“We hold integrity risk prevention training regularly, both internally and externally.” (P6)

“All public servants receive training to avoid unconscious mistakes and misconduct.” (P10)

These reflections reveal that ethical reinforcement, recognition systems, and continuous professional development foster an organizational culture that prioritizes accountability. Regular training helps procurement personnel internalize procedures and manage risks responsibly.

Other participants described how accountability is enhanced through stakeholder engagement and visible, transparent procurement procedures:

“We invite all bidders to submit their bids in public.” (P3)

“Bid evaluations are conducted using the ‘four eyes’ approach by a committee.” (P4)

“Community representatives are appointed as independent inspectors.” (P9)

These practices reduce discretion, promote fairness, and align with participatory governance models. Public engagement and collective evaluation act as safeguards that build trust and deter misconduct.

A number of participants stressed the influence of political leadership and cultural norms in promoting accountability. As expressed by these statements:

“Our leader’s seriousness against misbehavior sets an example for all.” (P11)

“All decisions must be well documented and justified to maintain transparency.” (P12)

“Our town is known for being scandal-free—staff are proud and motivated.” (P18)

This perspective reinforces the idea that accountability is sustained through leadership tone and shared values. When leaders model ethical behavior and institutional pride is nurtured, accountability becomes embedded in the organizational culture.

Some participants highlighted the role of clear policies and operational planning in preventing conflict of interest and reinforcing accountability:

“Our chief executive enacted a policy prohibiting staff from accepting gifts or benefits.” (P15)

“We’ve developed and communicated a procurement accountability plan to all stakeholders.” (P16)

“We declared conflict-of-interest prevention rules since the first sitting.” (E8)

These responses reflect a compliance-based approach that uses formal policy tools to set boundaries and expectations for conduct. By promoting clarity and zero-tolerance, these mechanisms strengthen accountability across the procurement cycle.

Participants also emphasized the importance of public involvement and building procurement capacity across departments. As the following remarks:

“We allow citizens to participate during risky stages of procurement.” (P7)

“We include retired experts as subcommittee members during procurement.” (E6)

“All procurement staff must be certified in public procurement.” (E7)

These insights show that accountability is not only procedural but relational. Including stakeholders and enhancing staff qualifications cultivates both trust and professionalism, reducing risks and improving implementation.

Contractors acknowledged that having structured appeal processes is vital to ensuring accountability. As the following statements:

“Bidders can appeal if the procurement process is unlawful.” (B1)

“I witnessed a bid award reversed following an appeal.” (B4)

“We can appeal if the terms of reference were misapplied.” (B7)

These mechanisms enable transparency and legal recourse, reinforcing bidders' trust in the fairness of local government procurement systems.

Finally, several participants emphasized how solicitation documents support accountability through clear rules and enforcement. As evidenced by the following:

“Solicitation documents specify that bidders must not engage in corrupt behavior.” (B2)

“Collusion between bidders is forbidden, and registration is required.” (B3)

“We follow the 1999 Bid Offenses Act, which prohibits cover bidding.” (B5)

“Bids that are unreasonably low or high are not accepted.” (B8)

These statements illustrate how procurement accountability is safeguarded through legally binding documentation. These clauses protect the process from manipulation and ensure consistent enforcement, reflecting international good practices. The common approaches for implementing the principle of accountability in public

procurement, as extracted from the insights of the participants, are shown in Figure 4.10

<p>Participants P1, P2, P13, P14 and P17</p>	<p>Applying institutional frameworks and internal controls</p>
<p>Participants P5, P6 and P10</p>	<p>Encouraging ethics, training, and role modeling</p>
<p>Participants P3, P4 and P9</p>	<p>Prompting public oversight and transparent processes</p>
<p>Participants P11 P12 and P18</p>	<p>Encouraging leadership commitment and cultural values</p>
<p>Participants P15, P16, E2, E4 and E8</p>	<p>Clearing policy clarity and conflict of interest mitigation</p>
<p>Participants P7, P8, P9, P10, E1, E3, E5, E6, and E7</p>	<p>Offering community engagement and capacity building</p>
<p>Participants B1, B4 and B7</p>	<p>Providing an appeal system after the announcement of bid winner</p>
<p>Participants B2, B3, B5 and B8</p>	<p>Inclusion of provisions on corruption and other misbehavior practices in the solicitation documents.</p>

Figure 4.10 The Standard Practices for Principle of Accountability

In brief, the participants' viewpoints relating to the application of the principle of accountability in public procurement in preventing corruption in public procurement can be broadly divided into eight approaches. Firstly, they applied the organizational regulatory framework for functioning control system in procurement. Secondly, they promoted transparency and public scrutiny from all parties involved. Thirdly, they offered intensive training to all staff members who accountable in procurement process. Fourthly, they formulated clearing procurement policies and plans. Fifth, they encouraged leadership commitment and cultural integrity within organization. Sixth, they provided an appeal system after the announcement of bid winner. Seventhly, they included provisions on corruption and other misbehavior practices in the solicitation documents. Lastly, they offered community engagement and capacity building.

Moreover, participants viewed accountability not only as a legal and procedural requirement but also as a moral and institutional value that underpins transparency, trust, and the delivery of high-quality public services. Its effective implementation depends on a combination of clear policies, ethical leadership, public participation, and professional capacity within procurement systems.

4.5.3 Actors Related Principle of Accountability

Many participants identified local government staff, especially those serving on ad hoc procurement committees, as the main actors responsible for implementing the principle of accountability. Based on the opinions of the following participants:

“The procurement committee consists of various ad hoc teams for each procurement stage.” (P3, P7, P13, P15, P18)

“Committee members must avoid conflicts of interest throughout the process.” (P5, P6)

“Bid invitation documents must be clear and transparent from the start.” (P9)

“Committee members must resign if they have any known relationship with a bidder.” (P10)

“Bid specifications must not favor any specific company.” (P14)

These statements highlight that accountability is operationalized through role-specific responsibilities and procedural safeguards. Ad hoc committees, including those overseeing TOR development, bid specification, and evaluation, play a pivotal role in promoting fairness and ensuring that procurement activities follow legal and ethical standards. Their adherence to transparency, impartiality, and ethical conduct is critical in safeguarding the accountability of each procurement phase.

Several participants emphasized the critical role of elected leaders, particularly mayors and chief executives, in setting the ethical tone and guiding accountability in procurement. As revealed by the participant’s perspectives:

“Local elected leaders establish and uphold ethical standards in procurement.” (E1)

“A strong tone from the top discourages staff and bidders from engaging in corruption.” (E2)

“The mayor serves as a role model and must lead with sincerity.” (E5)

“Accountability strengthens when the chief executive provides tools and support.” (E8)

These perspectives reinforce the importance of leadership commitment in cultivating a culture of accountability. When top officials model ethical behavior and articulate clear expectations, they create institutional norms that shape staff actions and deter misconduct. This reflects the “tone from the top” principle, which is widely supported in governance literature as essential to ethical public sector performance.

Some participants emphasized the importance of internal control officers and supply officers as key technical actors ensuring accountability:

“Internal control and supply officers are crucial to all stages of procurement.” (E4, E7)

These roles are integral to monitoring compliance, detecting anomalies, and ensuring procedural integrity. Their technical oversight contributes to minimizing risk and maintaining standards across procurement activities, reinforcing horizontal checks within the system.

Other participants argued that mayors, executive teams, clerks, and even bidders are influential in shaping accountability outcomes. As remarked by these views:

“The mayor, deputy mayors, and municipal clerks hold final decision-making power.” (P1, P4, E6)

“These officials are often targeted by bidders seeking to influence procurement.” (P4)

“The mayor and executives ultimately determine procurement outcomes.” (P17)

These views highlight the potential vulnerability of procurement decisions to external lobbying and undue influence. Because top municipal officials control approval processes, their conduct significantly impacts accountability. Effective checks on their discretion, including transparency measures and public scrutiny, are thus essential.

Some participants recognized civil servants, such as municipal clerks and department heads, as central to sustaining accountability in procurement:

“Civil servants must perform duties according to procurement regulations.” (P11)

“They play a dominant role because they understand how to avoid corruption.” (E3)

“Accountability is the first ethical code that civil servants must comply with.” (P14)

These responses reflect the value of bureaucratic continuity and professional norms in upholding procurement accountability. As permanent actors in the system, civil servants ensure consistency and rule-based implementation, even as elected leadership changes. Their institutional memory and commitment to ethical conduct are vital to embedding accountability across the procurement lifecycle. These are the conclusion of participants perceptions from above to consider who should be the main actors related the principle of accountability in public procurement which are demonstrated in Figure 4.11

Participants P1-P18 and E1-E8	All the local government staff members who are appointed as any position in any phase of procurement
Participants P3, P5, P6 P7, P8, P9, P10 P13, P14, P15 and P18	Procurement committee, included ad hoc committees at each stage of the public procurement process
Participants E1, E2, E5, and E8	The mayor and the chief executive of local government organizations
Participants E4 and E7	The internal control officers and the supply officers
Participants P1, P4, P17, and E6	The mayor and the chief executive included the executive team
Participants P11, P14 and E3	The civil servants, such as the municipal clerk and department or division heads

Figure 4.11 Actors Related Principle of Accountability in Public Procurement

In brief, participant's answer who should be the dominant actors involved in applying the principle of accountability in public procurement can be summarized into six groups of actors. Firstly, they directed to all the local government staff members who are appointed as any position in any phase of procurement process. Secondly, they concentrated the procurement committee, included ad hoc committees at each stage of the public procurement process. Thirdly, they focused the mayor and the chief executive of local government organizations. Fourthly, they pointed at the internal control officers and the financial officers. Fifthly, they attracted the mayor and the chief executive included the executive team members, municipal clerk and bidder or private companies Lastly, they looked at the civil servants, such as the municipal clerk

and department or division heads. In addition, the implementation of accountability in public procurement relies on a multi-actor system. While procurement committees are the frontline enforcers, political leadership sets the tone, internal officers ensure compliance, and civil servants maintain institutional accountability. Together, these actors contribute to a procurement system that is transparent, fair, and resistant to corruption.

4.5.4 Achievements Related Principle of Accountability

This part examined the satisfaction levels of local civil servants, local elected leaders and bidders with regard to the application of the principle of accountability in public procurement in the selected local government organizations in the southern province of Thailand. The findings showed that the majority of participants, or 74.5 percent of the total, thought that the principle of accountability in public procurement was applied at very good level. While, 25.5 percent of participants recognized that the principle of accountability in public procurement was applied at good level. There were multiple reasons in backing their responses.

Several participants highlighted the lack of complaints from the public and absence of findings from oversight agencies as key indicators that the principle of accountability in public procurement is being effectively implemented. All responses are evidenced below:

“Our municipality has achieved a very good level of satisfaction due to the absence of complaints from the public and investigations by oversight agencies.” (P3)

“We have never been warned about oversight weaknesses by the State Audit Office or the National Anti-Corruption Commission.”
(P7)

“We consistently pass investigations by both the State Audit Office and the National Anti-Corruption Commission.” (P12)

“There are no complaints or evidence of corruption—no vulnerabilities have been found.” (P15)

“Positive evaluation findings from external examiners show that accountability objectives have been achieved.” (E2)

“There have been no public complaints or indications of governance risks.” (E4)

“No vulnerabilities have been identified by oversight agencies.”
(P17)



These responses suggest that participants associate external validation and the absence of negative findings with a strong performance in public procurement responsibilities. This reflects a compliance-based mindset, where the success of accountability efforts is measured by the lack of external sanctions or public discontent.

Other participants pointed to changes in staff behavior and increased awareness of procurement rules as signs of growing accountability:

“All civil servants and municipal employees are actively vigilant against procurement risks.” (P4)

“Municipal staff now make procurement decisions with a clear understanding of rules.” (P9)

“Civil servants are aware of how to adhere to procurement regulations.” (E6)

“Staff are increasingly interested in training to reduce corruption risks.” (P11)

These insights suggest that accountability is not only imposed externally but is also being internalized by civil servants. Improved rule comprehension, reflective learning from past mistakes, and proactive participation in training reflect a value-based approach to accountability that complements regulatory enforcement.

Some participants cited improvements in Local Performance Assessment (LPA) and Integrity and Transparency Assessment (ITA) scores as evidence of effective accountability in public procurement. The following responses serve as evidence:

“Our municipality received higher LPA and ITA scores compared to previous years.” (P1)

“Our current LPA and ITA scores support our accountability performance.” (P5)

“We’ve improved our ratings in both LPA and ITA.” (P8)

“Our municipality ranks fourth in the province for LPA and ITA scores.” (P10)

“We’ve consistently achieved high scores over the years.” (E5)

These responses demonstrate a reliance on performance indicators to assess the application of accountability. The use of quantitative assessments aligns with modern

governance trends that emphasize measurable outputs and results-based evaluation of institutional effectiveness.

A few participants emphasized the role of local leadership in advancing procurement accountability through supervision, training, and risk identification:

“The mayor strictly controls and supervises all procurement procedures.” (P13)

“The president of the provincial administrative organization provides annual training on governance risks.” (P18)

“The mayor works to identify and address governance risks in every project.” (E7)

These statements underline the importance of leadership in guiding policy implementation and shaping a culture of accountability. Mayors and senior officials are seen as critical to maintaining high standards through strategic oversight and preventive planning, reinforcing the principle of ethical leadership in public governance. The reasons of the achievement for the application of the principle of accountability in public procurement from the view of the participants can be summarized in Figure 4.12

<p>Participants</p> <p>P3, P7, P12, P15, P17, E2 and E4</p>	<p>Absence of complaints and external investigations as indicators of integrity</p>
<p>Participants</p> <p>P4, P9, P11, and E6</p>	<p>Behavioral change and professional vigilance among civil servants</p>
<p>Participants</p> <p>P1, P5, P8, P10 and E5</p>	<p>Improved LPA and ITA scores as performance benchmarks</p>
<p>Participants</p> <p>P13, P18, E7 and B5</p>	<p>Leadership commitment and strategic oversight</p>

Figure 4.12 Reasons Related the Achievement for the Application of the Principle of Accountability in Public Procurement

In short, the majority participants' perspectives for the achievements in practicing the principle of accountability in public procurement was at very good level. There are four appearances that best sum up their response. Firstly, the absence of complaints from the public and relevant agencies during the inspection process. Secondly, the changing behavior of civil servants and employees who are keen to prevent corruption. Thirdly, increasing scores of the Local Performance Assessment (LPA) and Integrity and Transparency Assessment (ITA). Lastly, improving leadership performance in the right direction. In addition, the evidence provided by participants reflects a combination of compliance, behavior change, performance monitoring, and leadership engagement as key pillars supporting the successful implementation of accountability

in public procurement. Together, these factors contribute to transparent, ethical, and corruption-resistant local governance.

4.6 Current Practice in Prevention of Public Procurement Corruption in Relation to Principle of Prevention of Misconduct

This section makes an effort to examine the importance of principle prevention of misconduct in public procurement from local public servants and elected officials (the demand side) and bidders and contracts business companies (supply side) viewpoints. After that, it looks into strategies for promoting prevention of misconduct in public procurement. The people who are critical to promote the principal prevention of misconduct in public procurement are included in the following section. The final section focuses on the satisfactory level of success that local government organizations have attained when they have applied the principle prevention of misconduct in public procurement.

4.6.1 Importance of Principle of Prevention of Misconduct

The importance of principle prevention of misconduct in public procurement as a key component in preventing corruption in public procurement was acknowledged by all participants. They gave numerous justifications.

Several participants highlighted how preventing misconduct in public procurement directly improves the quality and efficiency of public projects and services:

“Procurement prevention ensures goods and services have reasonable prices and quality.” (P1)

“It enables timely problem-solving while maintaining standards.”

(P5)

“It leads to value for taxpayers and supports local development.”

(P12)

“It reduces unnecessary spending in overall projects.” (P14)

“It improves road quality and maintenance standards.” (B2)

“It boosts the quality of water supply systems, roads, and footpaths.”

(B6)

“School lunches are better when procurement misconduct is prevented.” (E6)

These responses suggest that the prevention of misconduct contributes to more cost-effective, high-quality, and citizen-responsive public service delivery. Participants viewed this principle as essential for maximizing the value of public spending and ensuring services meet acceptable standards.

Some participants noted that preventing misconduct helps repair the poor reputation of local government organizations, often damaged by scandals. As noted by this evidence:

“If chief executives follow this principle, there would be no scandals.” (E2)

“It increases public confidence in local government.” (E3)

“It has helped build trust between the municipality and the community.” (P7)

These statements underscore the reputational benefits of clean procurement practices. Adherence to anti-misconduct principles helps restore public trust and reduce negative perceptions, reinforcing legitimacy and ethical governance.

A few participants emphasized the cultural shift brought about by consistent prevention of misconduct. As reflected by this evidence:

“This principle helps create a culture of transparency and honesty.”
(E8)

“It ensures all projects comply with laws and regulations.” (P3)

“It allows local officials to work together without internal conflict.”
(P10)



These insights reflect how misconduct prevention goes beyond compliance—it shapes organizational behavior. When embedded in daily operations, it fosters mutual accountability and cooperation among staff.

Some participants also linked this principle to the credibility and performance of local political leaders. According to the views shared by participants:

“It builds long-term respect and trust in political leaders.” (P4)

“It ensures electoral success for leaders who follow it.” (E5)

“It provides visible proof of ethical leadership to the public.” (E1)

“It reflects the moral values of the local administrators.” (P11)

These views suggest that misconduct prevention is also a political asset. When consistently applied, it strengthens public confidence in elected officials and enhances political accountability.

Another group of participants emphasized how misconduct prevention improves the conduct of public servants throughout the procurement process:

“It strengthens civil servant performance according to the code of conduct.” (P6)

“It minimizes risks in procurement procedures.” (P13)

“It ensures thorough needs assessments before decisions.” (P16)

“It reduces nepotism and cronyism in procurement planning.” (E8)

These responses point to a professionalization of procurement, where ethical standards guide behavior, especially in critical stages like planning and bidding.

Some participants noted that preventing misconduct promotes equality and fairness in the bidding process. The following perspectives serve as evidence:

“It resists patronage systems and favoritism.” (P2)

“It encourages new bidders to enter the process.” (P8)

“It makes procurement more appealing to small businesses.” (B1)

“It enhances value for money in all local initiatives.” (P15)

“It combats favoritism in local politics.” (B3)

These perspectives reinforce the market-opening effect of ethical procurement, which fosters trust, reduces collusion, and encourages competitive participation from diverse suppliers.

Lastly, participants emphasized that misconduct prevention enhances healthy competition and innovation. As remarked by these viewpoints:

“It results in better pricing from diverse bidders.” (P9)

“It encourages creativity in local government projects.” (E7)

“It brings expertise and knowledge from qualified bidders.” (B4)

“It creates trust and a level playing field.” (B8)

These insights show that misconduct prevention contributes to procurement systems that are transparent, innovative, and competitive, ultimately leading to higher-quality public outcomes. According to all the perspective of the participants, Figure 4.13 provides a summary of the importance of principle prevention of misconduct in public procurement as follows.

<p>Participants</p> <p>P1, P5, P12, P14, E6, B2, B5 and B6</p>	<p>Making effective public initiatives that adhere to high standards</p>
<p>Participants</p> <p>P3, P7, P10, E2, E3 and E8</p>	<p>Improving the image of local government organizations</p>
<p>Participants</p> <p>P4, P11, E1, E4 and E5</p>	<p>Increasing local people's confidence and faith in the local political leaders</p>
<p>Participants</p> <p>P6, P13, P16, E8, and B7</p>	<p>Enhancing the performance of local public servant responsibilities in any stages of public procurement</p>
<p>Participants</p> <p>P2, P8, P15, B1 and B3</p>	<p>Promoting equality to all participating bidders</p>
<p>Participants</p> <p>P9, E7, B4 and B8</p>	<p>Encouraging the competitive environment among all bidders</p>

Figure 4.13 Importance of Principle of Prevention of Misconduct in Public Procurement

To conclude, the participants' perspectives regarding the principle of prevention of misconduct in public procurement performed an important element in preventing corruption in public procurement can be used to separate six categories. Firstly, it made the effective of public initiatives that adhere to high standards. Secondly, it improved the image of local government organizations. Thirdly, it increased local people's confidence and faith in the local political leaders. Fourthly, it enhanced the performance of local public servant responsibilities in any stages of public procurement. Fifthly, it promoted equality to all participating bidders. Lastly, it encouraged the competitive environment among all bidders. Moreover, the principle

of misconduct prevention in public procurement is viewed not only as a legal safeguard but as a foundation for ethical governance, public value, and democratic accountability. Participants recognized it as a key driver of institutional integrity, public trust, and performance in local government administration.

4.6.2 Standard Practices for Principle of Prevention of Misconduct

From the viewpoints of all local elected officials and public servants, it was recognized that actual situations for implementing the principle of prevention of misconduct in public procurement were mainly reliant on rules and regulations. In addition, there were a few local government organizations also had established norms and standard inside their own organization for encouraging the principle of prevention of misconduct in public procurement along with procurement laws and regulations. The majority of participants believed that each individual's internal factors determine whether or not the principle of prevention of misconduct in public procurement should be adopted. However, local government organizations can perform in a variety of ways.

Several participants highlighted the importance of reinforcing ethical standards and institutional culture to prevent misconduct. As evidenced by the following findings:

“We apply the ethical code of conduct in daily work practices.” (P1)

“Municipal staff are honored for integrity and serve as role models.” (P2, P5)

*“Misconduct risk training is offered regularly to all involved staff.”
(P6, P8)*

“All procurement documents are reviewed for anomalies.” (P12)

These responses reflect how internal norms—ethical codes, ongoing training, and recognition—support a culture of integrity in procurement processes.

Others emphasized openness and external scrutiny to ensure procurement integrity:

“We form diverse procurement committees and conduct public bid openings.” (P3)

“The ‘four eyes’ principle is used to assess bids collectively.” (P4)

“Citizens are invited to comment on major projects.” (P7)

These practices ensure stakeholder oversight, encourage transparency, and reduce the risk of biased decisions.

Some participants stressed the importance of leadership and cultural integrity:

*“Municipal leaders lead by example to foster integrity culture.”
(P11)*

“Staff are united around leadership that promotes public service ethics.” (P12, P18)

*“Slogans and campaigns remind staff of their ethical obligations.”
(P14)*

Leadership, symbolism, and collective values help embed ethical standards into everyday operations.

A group of participants emphasized the importance of formal rules and policies:

“We prohibit all forms of gifts and benefits under the 2018 Organic Law for the Prevention and Suppression of Corruption.” (P15)

“Procurement plans are clearly communicated to stakeholders.” (P16)

“We adopt policies to avoid conflicts of interest from the start.” (E8)

These perspectives underscore the value of regulatory clarity and rule-based management in deterring misconduct.

Training and stakeholder participation were also seen as essential safeguards:

“All procurement staff are trained regularly, including with external experts.” (E1, E6)

“Misunderstandings can cause ethical risks, so training is crucial.” (E3)

“We allocate budgets for capacity-building on best procurement practices.” (E5)

“All staff must be certified in public procurement training.” (E7)

Professional development and capacity building strengthen institutional resilience against misconduct.

Others pointed to appeals and legal recourse as deterrents against malpractice:

“Bidders can appeal if procurement seems unlawful.” (B1)

“I’ve seen a winning bid reversed after an appeal.” (B4)

“We use the appeal system if the TOR is violated.” (B7)

These mechanisms promote fairness and allow correction of procedural flaws, reinforcing accountability.

Finally, some participants emphasized that misconduct prevention through preventing conflicts of interest and collusion. The responses were expressed by the participants:

“We instruct all staff to avoid any close interaction with bidders, even informal conversations. Maintaining distance is how we prevent hidden influence or favoritism during the process.” (P9)

“Each year, we update and circulate a conflict-of-interest declaration form to all personnel involved in procurement. It’s a non-negotiable requirement before any evaluation begins.” (E7)

“I’ve seen bids overturned when insiders tried to collude. When there’s a real appeal system and oversight, it discourages others from trying the same tricks.” (B4)

“The rules now are stricter. If we quote an unrealistic price—too high or too low—they immediately flag us. It forces everyone to compete fairly.” (B8)

These insights show that misconduct prevention contributes to procurement systems that are transparent, innovative, and competitive, ultimately leading to higher-quality public outcomes. The common approaches for implementing the principle of

prevention of misconduct in public procurement, as extracted from the insights of the participants, are shown in Figure 4.14

<p>Participants P1, P2, P5, P6, P8 and P12</p>	<p>Reinforcing ethical standards and institutional culture</p>
<p>Participants P3, P4, P7</p>	<p>Ensuring stakeholder oversight</p>
<p>Participants P11, P12, P14, and P18</p>	<p>Promoting leadership and cultural integrity</p>
<p>Participants P15, P16 and E8</p>	<p>Clarity and rule-based management</p>
<p>Participants E1, E3, E5, E6 and E7</p>	<p>Professional development and capacity building strengthen</p>
<p>Participants B1, B4 and B7</p>	<p>Promoting fairness and allowing correction of procedural flaws</p>
<p>Participants P9, E7, B4 and B8</p>	<p>Preventing conflicts of interest and collusion</p>

Figure 4.14 The Standard Practices for Prevention of Misconduct in Public Procurement

In brief, the participants' viewpoints relating to the application of principle of prevention of misconduct in public procurement can be broadly divided into seven approaches. Firstly, they adhered and promoted the local government officials' ethical code of conduct. Secondly, they promoted transparency and public scrutiny from all

parties involved. Thirdly, they offered intensive training to all staff members who accountable in procurement process. Fourthly, they formulated clearing procurement policies and plans. Fifthly, they encouraged cultural integrity within organization. Sixthly, they provided an appeal system after the announcement of bid winner. Lastly, they included provisions on corruption and other misbehavior practices in the solicitation documents. In addition, these participant perspectives highlight how conflict-of-interest management and anti-collusion measures operate across different institutional layers—from civil service codes and administrative controls to bidder-facing enforcement and transparency tools. They demonstrate that effective misconduct prevention requires a mix of behavioral norms, procedural rules, and active oversight.

4.6.3 Actors Related Principle of Prevention of Misconduct

Participants widely acknowledged that preventing misconduct in public procurement requires the involvement of multiple actors across different levels and phases of the procurement process. Most emphasized the central role of procurement committees and designated staff members. As supported by the evidence presented:

“Each committee—like inspection, TOR, or evaluation—is formed by selecting qualified municipal staff. They rotate roles based on the procurement phase to ensure checks and balances.” (P3)

“In our municipality, different ad hoc committees are created to handle specific duties. This separation of responsibilities limits the chance of collusion.” (P15)

These practices highlight the fragmentation of responsibilities among multiple committees—such as bid specification, evaluation, and inspection—which aligns with

the principle of functional segregation, a critical safeguard against misconduct. The design reduces the risk of concentrated influence and promotes procedural fairness.

Several participants emphasized ethical standards and the avoidance of conflicts of interest among committee members. According to these responses:

“We instruct procurement committee members to withdraw themselves if there’s any chance they know a bidder. Even familiarity is grounds for recusal.” (P10)

“The bid specification committee is strictly warned not to write TORs that match a particular supplier. We audit TOR language for bias.” (P14)

“Every stage—from planning to contract award—requires staff to declare any conflict of interest. It’s part of our compliance checklist.” (P6)

These responses reflect adherence to ethical codes and conflict-of-interest protocols, which serve as preventive controls. This aligns with the *integrity pillar* in the OECD’s framework for public procurement prevention of misconduct, where preventive ethics training and monitoring mechanisms are essential.

Some participants underscored the significance of top leadership in fostering a culture of ethical procurement. As indicated by the participants:

“If the mayor takes the lead in promoting anti-corruption, everyone follows. The tone from the top makes a big difference.” (E2)

“Our executive team—especially the mayor—reviews procurement reports regularly. They show seriousness about staying transparent.” (E1)

“Prevention of misconduct needs leadership. Without the mayor’s genuine commitment, the whole system is just paperwork.” (E5)

These perspectives resonate with the “tone-at-the-top” theory, asserting that ethical leadership creates institutional norms that filter downward. When local executives model prevention of misconduct, staff members are more likely to internalize and practice these values, increasing organizational resilience to misconduct.

However, other participants pointed to vulnerabilities stemming from the concentration of power in the hands of municipal executives and their potential ties to private interests:

“The mayor, deputy mayors, and clerk have the final say. If they’re influenced by bidders, the whole process is compromised.” (P1)

“Bidders often try to lobby top officials. That’s where the risk is highest—not with the staff but with the decision-makers.” (E6)

These comments reflect concerns grounded in Principle-Agent theory, where elected or appointed leaders (agents) may pursue private gain at the expense of the public interest (principal). This highlights the need for external oversight and transparency mechanisms, especially at the decision-making level.

Additionally, civil servants were recognized as playing a crucial long-term role due to their continuity and institutional knowledge. As noted in a few perspectives:

“Unlike politicians, civil servants stay. They know the rules and how to steer clear of risky behavior.” (E3)

“It’s our responsibility to follow every regulation to the letter. That’s the backbone of misconduct prevention.” (P11)

These perspectives affirm the role of bureaucratic professionalism in ensuring consistent adherence to procurement rules and values. Their permanence allows them to act as custodians of institutional memory and procedural integrity.

Finally, some participants emphasized misconduct prevention through clear systems for identifying and avoiding collusion or favoritism. As reflected in a few perspectives:

“We instruct all staff to avoid any close interaction with bidders, even informal conversations. Maintaining distance is how we prevent hidden influence or favoritism during the process.” (P9)

“Each year, we update and circulate a conflict-of-interest declaration form to all personnel involved in procurement. It’s a non-negotiable requirement before any evaluation begins.” (E7)

These insights show that proactive risk management, based on structured protocols and ethical boundaries, is vital to preventing procurement misconduct. When implemented effectively, these measures contribute to systems that are transparent, resilient, and resistant to manipulation—enhancing trust and competitiveness in public contracting. These are the conclusion of participants perceptions from above to consider who should be the main actors related principle of prevention of misconduct in public procurement which are demonstrated in Figure 4.15

<p>Participants P1-P18 and E1-E8</p>	<p>All the local government staff members who are appointed as any position in any phase of procurement process</p>
<p>Participants P3, P5, P6 P7, P8, P9, P10 P13, P14, P15 and P18</p>	<p>Procurement committee, included ad hoc committees at each stage of the public procurement process</p>
<p>Participants E1, E2, E5, and E8</p>	<p>The mayor and the chief executive of local government organizations</p>
<p>Participants E4 and E7</p>	<p>The internal control officers and the supply officers</p>
<p>Participants P1, P4, P17, and E6</p>	<p>The mayor and the chief executive included the executive team members</p>
<p>Participants P11, P14 and E3</p>	<p>The civil servants, such as the municipal clerk and department or division heads</p>

Figure 4.15 Actors Related Principle of Prevention of Misconduct in Public Procurement

In brief, participant's answer who should be the dominant actors involved in applying the principle of prevention of misconduct in public procurement can be summarized into six groups of actors. Firstly, they directed to all the local government staff members who are appointed as any position in any phase of procurement process. Secondly, they concentrated the procurement committee, included ad hoc committees at each stage of the public procurement process. Thirdly, they focused the mayor and

the chief executive of local government organizations. Fourthly, they pointed at the internal control officers and the financial officers. Fifth, they attracted the mayor and the chief executive included the executive team members, municipal clerk and bidder or private companies. Lastly, they looked at the civil servants, such as the municipal clerk and department or division heads. Additionally, the findings illustrate that misconduct prevention in local public procurement is not solely a matter of regulations, but a collaborative effort involving administrative structures, ethical behavior, and leadership integrity. When supported by robust internal controls and a strong ethical culture, these practices lead to more transparent and accountable procurement outcomes.

4.6.4 Achievements Related Principle of Prevention of Misconduct

This part examined the satisfaction levels of local civil servants, local elected leaders and bidders with regard to the application of the principle of prevention of misconduct in public procurement in the selected local government organizations in the southern province of Thailand. The findings showed that the majority of participants, or 74.5 percent of the total, thought that the principle of prevention of misconduct in public procurement was applied at very good level. While, 25.5 percent of participants recognized that the principle of prevention of misconduct in public procurement was applied at good level. There were multiple reasons in backing their responses.

Several participants pointed to the absence of complaints and external investigations as key indicators that misconduct prevention efforts were effective in their municipalities:

“Our municipality has achieved a very good level of satisfaction, due to the absence of complaints from the public and investigations by state agencies like the State Audit Office or the National Anti-Corruption Commission.” (P3)

“We’ve never been warned about misconduct risks by either the State Audit Office or the National Anti-Corruption Commission.” (P7)

“There have been no complaints. No evidence of corruption has ever been found, whether by the State Audit Office or the National Anti-Corruption Commission.” (P15)

These accounts suggest that external audit clearance and complaint-free records are perceived as strong proxies for integrity. While this reflects positively on procedural compliance, it also underscores a risk of overreliance on passive indicators rather than active monitoring or whistleblower mechanisms.

Other participants viewed the behavioral change among civil servants as a reflection of strengthened misconduct prevention. As noted in a few viewpoints:

“Our staff are always vigilant about risks in procurement. We’ve learned from past mistakes that led to corruption.” (P4)

“Municipal staff always base procurement decisions on a solid understanding of rules and regulations.” (P9)

“People here now know the possible ways to comply with procurement laws.” (E6)

These insights point to growing institutional learning and rule-based awareness among procurement staff. This aligns with the concept of norm internalization in institutional

theory, where repeated exposure to ethical expectations leads to behavioral change and self-enforcement.

Participants also cited improved performance scores, such as LPA (Local Performance Assessment) and ITA (Integrity and Transparency Assessment), as evidence of success in promoting integrity. As observed in a limited number of responses:

“Compared to previous years, our municipality received greater LPA and ITA scores.” (P1)

“This year’s ITA and LPA scores are strong evidence of our integrity performance in procurement.” (P5)

“We now rank fourth in the province for both LPA and ITA scores.” (P10)

These responses reflect reliance on quantitative performance indicators to demonstrate compliance and ethical conduct. Though such indicators are useful for benchmarking, they must be interpreted alongside qualitative observations to avoid creating a false sense of misconduct based solely on scores.

Finally, a few participants pointed to leadership initiatives as contributing to misconduct risk mitigation. As reflected in the following participant accounts:

“The mayor strictly controls and supervises all procurement processes.” (P13)

“Every year, the president of our provincial organization provides intensive training to raise awareness of misconduct risks.” (P18)

“The mayor actively looks for procurement-related misbehavior risks in every project and works to close those gaps.” (E7)

These accounts underscore the role of executive leadership and capacity-building efforts in preventing misconduct. This reflects the importance of ethical leadership and proactive risk management, both of which are critical components in the OECD’s framework for prevention of misconduct in public procurement.

The reasons of the achievement for the application of the principle of prevention of misconduct in public procurement from the view of the participants can be summarized in Figure 4.16

<p>Participants P3, P7, P12, P15, P17, E2 and E4</p>	<p>The absence of complaints from the public and relevant agencies during the inspection process</p>
<p>Participants P4, P9, P11, and E6</p>	<p>The changing behavior of civil servants and employees who are keen to prevent corruption</p>
<p>Participants P1, P5, P8, P10 and E5</p>	<p>Increasing scores of the Local Performance Assessment (LPA) and Integrity and Transparency Assessment (ITA)</p>
<p>Participants P13, P18, E7 and B5</p>	<p>Improving leadership performance in the right direction</p>

Figure 4.16 Reasons Related the Achievement for the Application of the Principle of Prevention of Misconduct in Public Procurement

In short, the majority participants' perspectives for the achievements in practicing the principle of prevention of misconduct in public procurement was at very good level.

There are four appearances that best sum up their response. Firstly, the absence of complaints from the public and relevant agencies during the inspection process. Secondly, the changing behavior of civil servants and employees who are keen to prevent corruption. Thirdly, increasing scores of the Local Performance Assessment (LPA) and Integrity and Transparency Assessment (ITA). Lastly, improving leadership performance in the right direction. Furthermore, these findings indicate that effective prevention of misconduct is perceived not just through formal compliance, but also through behavioral changes, performance outcomes, and ethical leadership. When taken together, these indicators contribute to a procurement environment that is increasingly transparent, rule-based, and resistant to corruption.

4.7 Current Practice in Prevention of Public Procurement Corruption in Relation to Principle of Openness and Fair Competition

This section aims to explore the importance of openness and fair competition in public procurement from the opinions of local public servants and elected officials (the demand side) and bidders and contracts business companies (supply side). It then examines approaches to encouraging openness and fair competition in public procurement. The following part includes those who are the key to strengthening the principle of openness and fair competition in public procurement. The last part concentrates on the satisfactory level of success that local government organizations have achieved when they implement the principle of openness and fair competition in public procurement.

4.7.1 Importance of Principle of Openness and Fair Competition

All of the participants agreed that principle of openness and fair competition in public procurement serve as key component in preventing corruption in public procurement was acknowledged by all participants. They offered a number of explanations.

A large number of participants recognized that the principle of openness and fair competition in public procurement improved the delivery of public goods and services in alignment with local needs. As expressed in the participants' accounts:

“The principle of openness and fair competition in public procurement led to goods and services having better quality and cost-effective.” (P2)

“It ensured the provision of goods and services that meet local requirements.” (P4)

“It contributed to maximizing value for taxpayers and enhancing local development.” (P7)

“It may enhance the cost-effectiveness of local government organizations' expenditures.” (P10)

These accounts highlight the widespread perception that competitive and transparent procurement processes not only enhance the efficiency of municipal spending but also improve the relevance and quality of services delivered to the public. This aligns with OECD recommendations that competition is central to achieving value-for-money and service quality in procurement systems.

Some participants emphasized tangible outcomes of fair competition in infrastructure quality and public utilities. As demonstrated in the participants' views:

“Road developments, maintenance, and other constructions improve when the principle is seriously adhered to.” (B3)

“We’ve seen better quality sidewalks, lighting systems, and drainage infrastructure.” (B4)

“It encourages new initiatives to address local challenges and saves public funds.” (E4)

“It increases everyone’s quality of life—especially with access to fitness and exercise machines.” (E7)

These views reflect how procurement reforms grounded in openness can translate into visible and equitable improvements in local infrastructure. They also illustrate the connection between procurement fair competition and public satisfaction.

Several participants considered openness in procurement as a catalyst for innovation and modern solutions. As reflected in several viewpoints:

“It’s an alternate strategy for resolving municipal problems, especially environmental ones.” (P1)

“It encourages local start-ups to compete and offer the best solutions.” (P5)

“It motivates youth to present innovative ideas for local development.” (P15)

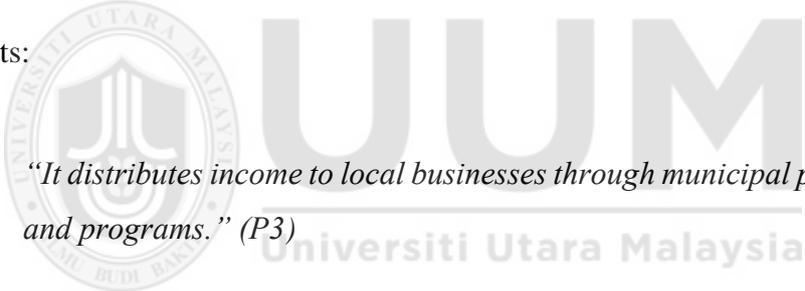
“It preserves local identities through tailored projects like traditional decorations and uniforms.” (E3)

“It allows municipal schools to adopt modern technologies and instructional tools.” (E5)

“It generates new choices from newcomers in various municipal projects.” (B2)

These reflections underscore the principle’s capacity to spur inclusive innovation, stimulate entrepreneurship, and modernize service delivery. This resonates with UNDP guidance on public procurement serving as a driver of sustainable development and innovation.

A smaller group of participants stressed the economic benefits stemming from openness and fair competition in procurement. As shown through the participants’ accounts:



“It distributes income to local businesses through municipal policies and programs.” (P3)

“It encourages employment in the local area.” (P6)

“It helps create new jobs in the local market.” (P11)

“It promotes SMEs when large firms sub-contract local businesses.” (E1)

“It enables start-ups to expand their businesses and enter new markets.” (B8)

These accounts illustrate how public procurement can act as an economic stimulus tool, promoting inclusive growth and supporting small businesses. This is in line with

World Bank and ADB strategies for using public procurement to foster local economic development.

Other participants highlighted the importance of fair competition in ensuring fiscal responsibility and cost-efficiency. As indicated by the participants' responses:

“It helps municipalities receive the best quality at the cheapest price.” (P8)

“It broadens the availability of products and services for best-value selection.” (P16)

“It ensures long-term procurement value for provincial administrative organizations.” (P18)

“It reduces maintenance and saves time through cost-effective acquisitions.” (E2)

“It incorporates environmental criteria in procurement decisions.” (E5)

These responses reflect strong support for open procurement as a mechanism to achieve cost savings, long-term utility, and environmentally sustainable purchasing. These are consistent with green procurement and lifecycle cost assessment principles in sustainable development frameworks.

Several participants emphasized how openness reduces corruption and levels the playing field for all bidders. As highlighted in the following perspectives:

“It encourages new businesses to participate in competitive bidding.” (P9)

“It decreases discrimination issues.” (P10)

“It reduces favoritism and corruption in local politics.” (E8)

“It encourages bidders to develop proposals based on the actual bidding documents.” (B5)

“It gives equal opportunity for all bidders to compete.” (B7)

These perspectives underscore the role of open competition in promoting fairness, transparency, and anti-corruption. The comments reflect theoretical alignment with agency theory and institutional trust-building, key elements emphasized by Transparency International and the OECD.

Finally, a few participants acknowledged how openness in procurement enhances bid quality and improves the planning process. As evidenced by the following statements:

“It supports access to market information for improving project specifications.” (P13)

“It helps municipalities understand market trends and simplifies evaluation.” (P17)

“It allows bidders to prepare their skills and resources accordingly.” (B1)

“It ensures bidders understand requirements clearly before submitting proposals.” (B6)

These statements illustrate how transparency contributes to improved procurement planning, clearer documentation, and a more competitive marketplace. Such

improvements are foundational in building credible procurement systems that are responsive to both public and private sector needs. Figure 4.17 demonstrates brief information regarding the importance of the principles of openness and fair competition in public procurement, as obtained from all participants' viewpoints.

<p>Participants P2, P4, P7, P10, E4, E7, B3 and B4</p>	<p>Enabling public projects to meet achievements that met the demands of local people for reasonable, high-quality products and services</p>
<p>Participants P1, P5, P15, E3, E8 and B2</p>	<p>Initiating innovations in local government organizations</p>
<p>Participants P3, P6, P11, E1 and B8</p>	<p>Contributing to the growth of the local economy</p>
<p>Participants P8, P16, P18, E2, and E5</p>	<p>Ensuring local government organizations could obtain products and services with the best value for public money</p>
<p>Participants P9, P10, E8, B5 and B7</p>	<p>All participating bidders received equal treatment</p>
<p>Participants P13, P17, B1 and B6</p>	<p>Producing beneficial bidding information for improving bidding plan and preparing bidding proposal</p>

Figure 4.17 Importance of Principle of Openness and Fair Competition in Public Procurement

In summary, the participant's perspectives in regarding the principle of openness and fair competition in public procurement played an essential component to prevent

corruption in public procurement could be categorized into six dominant groups. Firstly, it enables public projects to meet achievements that met the demands of local people for reasonable, high-quality products and services. Secondly, it initiates innovations in local government organizations. Thirdly, it contributes to the growth of the local economy. Fourthly, it ensured local government organizations could obtain products and services with the best value for public money. Fifth, it encourages All participating bidders received equal treatment. Lastly, it produces beneficial bidding information for improving bidding plan and preparing bidding proposal. Moreover, the principle of openness and fair competition in public procurement was broadly viewed as a cornerstone for delivering high-quality public services, promoting innovation, supporting local economic growth, and reducing inequity risks. These findings reflect international best practices advocated by organizations such as the OECD and UNDP, and they reinforce the importance of maintaining transparent, inclusive, and accountable procurement systems at the local government level.

4.7.2 Standard Practices for Principle of Openness and Fair Competition

Starting with the perspectives of all local elected officials and public servants, it was acknowledged that public procurement laws and regulations provided the current framework for implementing the principle of openness and fair competition in public procurement. Moreover, there were some local government organizations had initiated criteria of standard inside their own organization for promoting the principle of openness and fair competition in public procurement along with procurement laws and regulations. The majority of participants confirmed that principle of openness and fair competition in public procurement was primarily enforced by public procurement laws and regulations. However, local government organizations had put the principle of

openness and fair competition in public procurement into practice for several of actions.

Numerous participants from various local government organizations emphasized that the implementation of openness and fair competition in public procurement was firmly grounded in adherence to the Public Procurement and Supplies Administration Act of 2017 and The Ministry of Finance Rules and Regulations. As noted by the participants:

“We announce the annual procurement plan on our website and the Comptroller General’s portal, launch bidding documents, allow TOR hearings, and respond to bidder queries within a specific timeframe.” (P1)

“We develop specifications without favoring any particular brand, and all bidders are given the same timeframe to submit their bids.” (P2)

“We notify all bidders by email and letter when there are any changes to the bid documents.” (P17)

“We publish bidding plans and solicitation documents online to help bidders prepare competitive pricing.” (P5)

“We prioritize appropriate procurement methods in line with the regulations.” (P6)

These practices reflect a commitment to procedural transparency and inclusiveness in procurement. By ensuring timely access to bidding documents, equal treatment, and brand-neutral specifications, municipalities align with foundational principles in public procurement governance.

Participants from bid evaluation committees elaborated on how procurement fair competition is maintained through careful scrutiny of bidder relationships and compliance checks. As supported by the following statements:

“All bid documents must be signed by the entire bid evaluation committee.” (P3)

“The committee examines conflicts of interest or collusion and prepares evaluation reports for all bidders.” (P4)

“If the committee finds a bidder obstructing fair competition, they are disqualified.” (P8)

“We declare any conflicts of interest between committee members and bidders.” (P10)

These statements highlight enforcement mechanisms designed to detect and deter bid rigging and favoritism. Evaluators' roles in checking for collusion and reporting outcomes transparently are vital for maintaining bidder trust and legal compliance.

Some participants pointed to the importance of open communication and grievance redress mechanisms in enhancing fairness. As highlighted in the following perspectives:

“We give all bidders the time and place for bid submission in advance.” (P9)

“All bidders may appeal within seven days if they believe there was misconduct.” (P11)

“We share all bidding information without bias towards any bidder.” (P12)

“If a bidder sees a mistake, they can submit an appeal document. We provide a specific timeframe for this.” (E8)

These perspectives underline that openness is not only about initial bid announcements but also involves ongoing transparency, including fair opportunities for redress. This aligns with international standards on accountability and due process in public procurement.

Participants emphasized non-discriminatory practices in TOR development and declarations of interest by procurement actors. As indicated by the participants’ responses:

“We define TORs without favoring any bidder—even friends or family.” (E2)

“Business operators can provide input to TOR drafts.” (E7)

“If a bid evaluation committee member has a relationship with a bidder, they must step down.” (P16)

“All officers involved in procurement must declare conflicts of interest.” (P18)

This highlights the importance of neutrality and ethics in technical design and personnel roles. Avoiding conflicts of interest ensures that procurement remains fair and accountable to public interest.

Bidders and observers also emphasized practical aspects that support openness and fair competition—namely, accessible information and adequate timelines:

“All bid invitations and documents are posted online and on the Comptroller General’s Department portal.” (B1)

“Bidders are given enough time to prepare and submit proposals.” (B3)

“If any change occurs in bid information, we inform all bidders equally.” (P14)

“We use multiple channels—website, newspapers, email—to notify bidders.” (E6)

“All bidders must register in the e-GP system before submission.” (B2)

These practices reflect good governance in procurement communication, as recommended by global standards such as UNODC and the OECD. Ensuring equal access to bid details and sufficient preparation time minimizes entry barriers and promotes fair market participation.

Participants also pointed to processes beyond bid submission that uphold fairness and accountability. As indicated by these responses:

“Bid evaluation results are shared with all bidders and include detailed reasoning.” (P18)

“If a bidder cannot meet contract terms, penalties are enforced.” (E5)

“During contract management, products and services must meet bid requirements without negotiation to reduce standards.” (E4)

“In selective bidding, all documents are signed by the evaluation committee after the process.” (B6)

These responses suggest that fairness extends beyond selection—into implementation, contract enforcement, and post-procurement transparency. This full-cycle in fair competition strengthens public trust in procurement outcomes. The standard methods utilized to implement the principle of openness and fair competition in public procurement, as derived from the responses of the participants, are illustrated in Figure 4.18

<p>Participants P1-P18 and E1-E8</p>	<p>Complying with public procurement laws and regulations</p>
<p>Participants P1, P5, P9, P10, P13, E6 and B1</p>	<p>Announcing the bidding plan and solicitation documents on municipality’s website</p>
<p>Participants P2, P12 and E2</p>	<p>Providing all bidding information to all bidders without showing bias towards a particular bidder, brand</p>
<p>Participants P14 and P17</p>	<p>Notifying some changing bidding information to all bidders via email and letter</p>
<p>Participants P3, P9, P14, E1 and B3</p>	<p>Providing a sufficient time for bid submission</p>

(Continued)

Participants P3, P13, B3	Allowing bidders to submit bid at one time within a specific timeframe
Participants E4, E5 and B7	Assessing bid documents that meet all the requirements
Participants P4, P7, P10, P13, P18 and B8	Examining bid collusion from all bidders
Participants P10, P16 and P18	Declaring any potential conflicts of interest with bidders
Participants P1, P15 and E7	Hearing comments for a draft of the TOR from all bidders
Participants P1, P16 and B5	Allowing to ask additional questions about the details of the bidding process
Participants P2, P13 and P14	Providing an equal time frame to all bidders for submitting bids
Participants P4, P18 and B4	Making a report for bid evaluation result and send it back to all bidders
Participants P11 and E8	Allowing other bidders to submit an appeal document
Participants P3 and B6	Certifying all bid documents after evaluation process

Figure 4.18 The Standard Practices for Principle of Openness and Fair Competition in Public Procurement

In summary, the participant perspectives regarding the practice of principle of openness and fair competition in public procurement in preventing corruption in public

procurement can be categorized into fifteen different approaches as follows. Firstly, they complied with public procurement laws and regulations. Secondly, they announced the bidding plan and solicitation documents on municipality's website. Thirdly, they provided all bidding information to all bidders without showing bias towards a particular bidder, brand and company. Fourthly, they noticed some changing bidding information to all bidders via email and letter. Fifth, they provided a sufficient time for bid submission. Sixth, they allowed bidders to submit bid at one time within a specific timeframe. Seventh, they assessed bid documents that meet all the requirements. Eighth, they examined bid collusion from all bidders. Ninth, they declared themselves from any potential conflicts of interest with bidders. Tenth, they heard comments for a draft of the TOR from all bidders. Eleventh, they allowed all bidders to ask additional questions about the details of the bidding process. Twelfth, they provided an equal time frame to all bidders for submitting bids. Thirteenth, they reported bid evaluation result and sent it back to all bidders. Fourteenth, they allowed other bidders to submit an appeal document. Lastly, they certified all bid documents after evaluation process.

Moreover, these collective accounts demonstrate a consistent and legally grounded approach to implementing the principle of openness and fair competition in public procurement across multiple local government organizations. The emphasis on equal treatment, clear timelines, conflict-of-interest management, bidder communication, and legal compliance reflects international good practice. Such adherence not only strengthens fair competition in procurement but also builds confidence among bidders and the general public.

4.7.3 Actors Related Principle of Openness and Fair Competition

Participants identified multiple actors as crucial to maintaining fairness, transparency, and competitive integrity throughout the public procurement process. These actors include procurement committees, executive leaders, civil servants, and oversight officers, all of whom operate across various procurement stages. According to these responses:

“The procurement committee is made up of ad hoc municipal staff, responsible for tasks like TOR drafting, specification writing, evaluation, and final acceptance.” (P3)

“Procurement committee members must avoid conflicts of interest at every stage of the process.” (P5)

“If a procurement committee member knows a bidder personally after appointment, they must resign from the position.” (P10)

“Bid documents must not be tailored to benefit any specific company.” (P14)

“Bid invitation documents must be clear and transparent before being released.” (P9)

These responses emphasize the importance of impartiality, transparency, and procedural clarity in every phase of procurement. Procurement committees, especially those formed through ad hoc arrangements, are seen as essential enforcers of fair competition by avoiding bias, ensuring equal access, and preventing conflict of interest.

Several participants emphasized that the commitment of top administrators and local elected leaders is central to promoting and institutionalizing the principle of openness and fair competition. As highlighted in the following perspectives:

“The mayor evaluates every procurement project to ensure it’s fair and transparent.” (E1)

“Strong ethical signals from senior executives help prevent staff and bidders from engaging in corruption.” (E2)

“The mayor must be a role model in creating a culture of fair competition.” (E5)

“Success in procurement transparency depends on whether executive leaders provide tools that promote fair and open practices.” (E8)

These perspectives reinforce the notion that leadership plays a decisive role in modeling ethical behavior, setting standards, and empowering systems that prevent favoritism or collusion. This aligns with OECD guidelines on the role of “tone at the top” in ensuring procurement fair competition.

Some participants pointed to the structural concentration of power in the hands of executive officials and raised concerns over the influence of lobbying:

“The mayor and executive team, including the municipal clerk, are the final decision-makers in public procurement.” (P1)

“Bidders often target these individuals to lobby for their interests.” (P4)

“Procurement decisions rest with the mayor and his team, so their seriousness affects fair competition.” (P17)

“This group holds significant power and must act responsibly to uphold procurement openness and fair competition.” (E6)

These responses highlight both the centrality and vulnerability of decision-making authority. Ensuring fairness requires that these actors remain insulated from lobbying and vested interests—a core principle echoed in global anti-corruption frameworks.

Civil servants were seen as critical, long-term actors in institutionalizing openness and competitive fairness, owing to their procedural expertise and permanence in office:

“Clerks and department heads must follow procurement laws to ensure fairness.” (P11)

“Civil servants are the main actors who know how to avoid procurement corruption.” (E3)

“Fair competition is the first ethical standard civil servants must comply with.” (P14)

These comments highlight the bureaucratic backbone of procurement fairness. Unlike political leaders, civil servants provide continuity and operational knowledge that ensure consistent adherence to rules across administrations.

Participants also highlighted the importance of technical and internal control officers who support transparency at all stages of procurement. As remarked by a few participants:

“Internal control officers and supply officers are key in ensuring fairness in every phase.” (E4)

“They help maintain checks and balances in procurement processes.” (E7)

These remarks align with best practices in procurement oversight, ensuring compliance, preventing fraud, and building trust among stakeholders through structured internal review mechanisms. These are the conclusion of participants perceptions from above to consider who should be the main actors related principle of openness and fair competition which are demonstrated in Figure 4.19

<p>Participants P1-P18 and E1-E8</p>	<p>All the local government staff members who are appointed as any position in any phase of procurement process</p>
<p>Participants P3, P5, P6 P7, P8, P9, P10 P13, P14, P15 and P18</p>	<p>Procurement committee, included ad hoc committees at each stage of the public procurement process</p>
<p>Participants E1, E2, E5, and E8</p>	<p>The mayor and the chief executive of local government organizations</p>
<p>Participants E4 and E7</p>	<p>The internal control officers and the supply officers</p>
<p>Participants P1, P4, P17, and E6</p>	<p>The mayor and the chief executive included the executive team members</p>
<p>Participants P11, P14 and E3</p>	<p>The civil servants, such as the municipal clerk and department or division heads</p>

Figure 4.19 Actors Related Openness and Fair Competition in Public Procurement

In brief, participant's answer who should be the dominant actors involved in applying the principle of openness and fair competition in public procurement can be summarized into six groups of actors. Firstly, they directed to all the local government staff members who are appointed as any position in any phase of procurement process. Secondly, they concentrated the procurement committee, included ad hoc committees at each stage of the public procurement process. Thirdly, they focused the mayor and the chief executive of local government organizations. Fourthly, they pointed at the internal control officers and the financial officers. Fifthly, they attracted the mayor and the chief executive included the executive team members, municipal clerk and bidder or private companies. Lastly, they looked at the civil servants, such as the municipal clerk and department or division heads. In addition, these participant perspectives make it clear that the implementation of the principle of openness and fair competition in public procurement is a shared responsibility involving procurement committees, local leaders, civil servants, and oversight officers. Their collective roles ensure that procurement processes are transparent, impartial, and accountable. Strengthening these roles across institutional levels contributes directly to preventing corruption and promoting public trust in procurement systems.

4.7.4 Achievements Related Principle of Openness and Fair Competition

This part examined the satisfaction levels of local civil servants, local elected leaders and bidders with regard to the application of the principle of openness and fair competition in the selected local government organizations in the southern province of Thailand. The findings showed that the majority of participants, or 74.5 percent of the total, thought that the principle of openness and fair competition was applied at very good level. While, 25.5 percent of participants recognized that the principle of

openness and fair competition in public procurement was applied at good level. There were multiple reasons in backing their responses.

Participants shared a range of indicators suggesting that the principle of openness and fair competition has been effectively implemented in their local government procurement processes. These indicators include the absence of complaints or investigations, improved staff behavior, positive assessment scores, and leadership commitment. Many participants regarded the lack of complaints from the public and findings from oversight bodies as strong evidence of open and fair procurement practices. As shown in the following responses:

“Our municipality has achieved a very good level of satisfaction due to no complaints from the public or investigations by oversight agencies.” (P3)

“We have never been warned about risks of unequal treatment by the State Audit Office or the National Anti-Corruption Commission.” (P7)

“We consistently pass all inspections by both national auditing bodies.” (P12)

“There is no evidence suggesting corruption or bias in any area of procurement.” (P15)

“Positive evaluations from external agencies show that openness and fair competition have been achieved.” (E2)

“There have been no public complaints or evidence of bias-related risks.” (E4)

“No discriminatory issues have been raised—oversight agencies have found no vulnerabilities.” (P17)

These responses reflect a compliance-based view of procurement integrity, where the absence of red flags from citizens or oversight bodies is perceived as confirmation that fair competition and transparency have been upheld.

Several participants cited a shift in attitudes and practices among municipal staff as evidence of growing commitment to procurement fairness. As shown through these comments:

“Civil servants and employees are actively vigilant against procurement risks and have learned from past corruption cases.”
(P4)

“Municipal staff make procurement decisions with a strong understanding of rules and regulations.” (P9)

“Staff are aware of how to follow procurement laws effectively.”
(E6)

“There is increasing interest in procurement training to prevent corruption risks.” (P11)

These comments point to the internalization of procurement ethics among staff, emphasizing the role of education, regulation, and experience in promoting rule-bound decision-making and institutional trust.

Some participants referenced higher Local Performance Assessment (LPA) and Integrity and Transparency Assessment (ITA) scores as institutional indicators of openness and fairness. As highlighted in the following perspectives:

“Compared to previous years, our municipality received higher LPA and ITA scores.” (P1)

“This year’s good performance in procurement integrity is clearly shown by our LPA and ITA ratings.” (P5)

“We’ve improved in both assessments.” (P8)

“Our municipality is ranked fourth in the province for LPA and ITA scores.” (P10)

“We’ve maintained consistently high LPA and ITA scores over the years.” (E5)

These perspectives suggest that external performance evaluations are not only used for benchmarking but also serve as a proxy for institutional integrity, reinforcing the importance of measurement in accountability systems.

A few participants pointed to leadership behavior as instrumental in embedding the principles of openness and fair competition in procurement. As noted in a few responses:

“The mayor strictly supervises all public procurement procedures.” (P13)

“The president of the provincial administrative organization conducts intensive training on openness and fairness every fiscal year.” (P18)

“The mayor actively works to identify and close integrity gaps in every procurement project.” (E7)

These responses underscore the critical role of executive leadership in promoting transparency and preventing favoritism. Their proactive engagement reflects the "tone at the top" concept promoted by international governance frameworks like the OECD and UNODC. The reasons of the achievement for the application of openness and fair competition in public procurement from the view of the participants can be summarized in Figure 4.20

<p>Participants P3, P7, P12, P15, P17, E2 and E4</p>	<p>The absence of complaints from the public and relevant agencies during the inspection process</p>
<p>Participants P4, P9, P11, and E6</p>	<p>The changing behavior of civil servants and employees who are keen to prevent corruption</p>
<p>Participants P1, P5, P8, P10 and E5</p>	<p>Increasing scores of the Local Performance Assessment (LPA) and Integrity and Transparency Assessment (ITA)</p>
<p>Participants P13, P18, E7 and B5</p>	<p>Improving leadership performance in the right direction</p>

Figure 4.20 Reasons Related the Achievement for Openness and Fair Competition in Public Procurement

In short, the majority participants' perspectives for the achievements in practicing the the principle of openness and fair competition was at very good level. There are four appearances that best sum up their response. Firstly, the absence of complaints from the public and relevant agencies during the inspection process. Secondly, the changing behavior of civil servants and employees who are keen to prevent corruption. Thirdly, increasing scores of the Local Performance Assessment (LPA) and Integrity and Transparency Assessment (ITA). Lastly, improving leadership performance in the right direction. Furthermore, these accounts demonstrate that procurement fairness is assessed not only by procedural adherence and audit outcomes but also by changes in behavior, external recognition, and leadership engagement. The consistent absence of complaints, commitment to training, and use of performance indicators all contribute to institutionalizing the principle of openness and fair competition in local government procurement.

4.8 Summary of the Chapter

This chapter explores the perspectives on the current practices in prevention of public procurement corruption in selected local government organizations in southern provinces of Thailand. The results of the study addressed to research objective number one by focusing on the implementation of five key principles for prevention of corruption in public procurement: (i) principle of transparency; (ii) principle of integrity; (iii) principle of accountability; (iv) principle of prevention of misconduct and (v) principle of openness and fair competition.

With reference to the principle of transparency, all participants from selected local government organizations acknowledged compliance with laws and regulations in public procurement. However, the majority reported practices such as posting all

procurement information on the local government website, allowing key stakeholders to participate in public procurement procedures, and publishing information at each phase of bidding on the local government website. Additionally, majority participants indicated that the level of transparency in public procurement practices was very good. Meanwhile, some participants rated the level of transparency in public procurement as excellent or good, respectively.

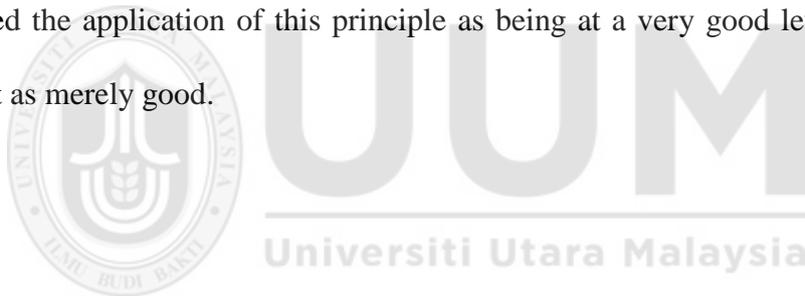
Furthermore, regarding the principle of integrity, the results revealed that the majority of selected local government organizations practiced this principle by adhering to and promoting an ethical code of conduct for local government officials, offering intensive training to all staff members involved in the procurement process, and clarifying procurement policies and plans. Additionally, most participants believed that the principle of integrity in public procurement was applied at a very good level. However, some participants considered it to be only at a good level.

Moreover, concerning the principle of accountability, majority of participants indicated that they applied this principle by promoting the organizational regulatory framework to ensure a functioning control system in procurement and offering intensive training to all staff members who accountable in procurement process. Furthermore, most participants viewed that the principle of accountability in public procurement was applied at a very good level. However, some participants evaluated it to be only at a good level.

As for the practices of the principle of prevention of misconduct in public procurement, the results found that the majority of selected local government organizations practiced this principle by adhering to and promoting an ethical code of conduct for local

government officials, offering intensive training to all staff members involved in the procurement process, and clarifying procurement policies and plans. Additionally, most participants perceived the application of the principle of integrity in public procurement to be at a very good level. However, some participants regarded it as only good.

In addition, regarding the current standards for implementing the principle of openness and fair competition in public procurement, the majority of participants highlighted practices such as publishing the bidding plan and solicitation documents on the municipality's website, allowing sufficient time for bid submission, and thoroughly examining potential bid collusion among all bidders. Furthermore, most participants assessed the application of this principle as being at a very good level, while some rated it as merely good.



CHAPTER FIVE
EFFECTS OF EXISTING PREVENTION OF CORRUPTION
EFFORTS IN PUBLIC PROCUREMENT WITHIN SELECTED
LOCAL GOVERNMENT ORGANIZATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter attempts to examine the effects of existing efforts to prevent corruption in public procurement in selected local government organizations in the provinces of southern Thailand, as the second research objective of this study. The responses were received from thirty-four participants, which included eighteen local public servants, eight local elected officials, and eight bidders or contracts business companies in selected local government organizations. The effects of existing efforts are being investigated in accordance with the five fundamental principles for preventing corruption in public procurement. The analysis of each principle is divided into two main results. First, the perception of all participants regarding the beneficial effects to the existing efforts in prevention of procurement corruption. Second, the opinions of all participants in terms of the undesirable effects to the existing efforts in prevention of procurement corruption.

5.2 The Effects in Promoting Principle of Transparency

This part starts by presenting the viewpoints of participants regarding the beneficial and the undesirable effects to the existing efforts in prevention of public procurement corruption in relation to the promoting principle of transparency.

5.2.1 Beneficial Effects of Promoting Transparency

This section aims to comprehend insights perspective of participants regarding the results after applying principle of transparency in public procurement in their local government organizations.

Numerous participants highlighted that the promotion of transparency in public procurement resulted in stronger public trust, community engagement, and electoral support. As demonstrated in these quotations:

“Local people have shown increased collaboration with the municipality.” (P1)

“The promotion of transparency makes people feel confident in the direction of local development.” (P5)

“Transparency ensures that local people can receive service delivery of the best quality.” (P11, P17)

“The impact of transparency can be seen in elections when local people re-elect the same mayor and executive members.” (P7, P10, P12, E1)

These quotations suggest that transparency contributes not only to procedural openness but also to democratic legitimacy and public value creation. As aligned with the principles of good governance, transparency fosters trust, which is essential for citizen cooperation and sustained development outcomes.

Several participants emphasized that transparency enhances efficient use of public resources and drives innovative practices. As shown through the participants' accounts:

“Public money has been spent for maximum benefit to the community.” (P3)

“Operating transparently enables municipalities to generate innovative projects that solve local challenges.” (P4)

“Transparency promotes new job opportunities in the community.” (P9)

“It facilitates audits by allowing random checks of financial evidence.” (E3)

“It helps save public funds and supports staff development with training and new knowledge.” (E6)

These accounts reveal that transparency supports fiscal responsibility, organizational learning, and innovation, which are in line with New Public Management (NPM) principles emphasizing cost-effectiveness and performance-based governance.

Other participants pointed out that the transparency principle improves confidence in the integrity of procurement systems among all stakeholders: As reflected by the participants:

“All bidders are equal in competition, and everyone can see what the municipality is doing.” (P2)

“Each procurement project follows its criteria consistently.” (P6)

“People can expect service delivery to follow the project timeline.”
(P15)

“Procurement decisions are based on bid specifications, enhancing municipal prestige.” (E5)

“Transparency provides easy access to information and encourages bidders to ask questions.” (B5)

“It encourages new entrepreneurs to offer innovations for improving service quality.” (B8)

These reflections echo the principal-agent theory, where transparency acts as a monitoring mechanism to reduce information asymmetry and ensure accountability, encouraging honest competition and fair treatment in procurement.

Several participants emphasized that transparency can reshape the local governance culture, mitigate favoritism and promote ethical norms: As indicated by these responses:

“Putting transparency into practice mitigates favoritism or cronyism.” (P8)

“It promotes a new culture of political engagement with checks and balances.” (P18)

“Transparency changes traditional practices where bid winners are close to politicians.” (E7)

“It improves professionalism because civil servants must comply with procurement laws.” (B4)

“It encourages staff to explore new technologies and information for procurement planning.” (B7)

This group of responses highlights how transparency contributes to institutional integrity and normative change, aligning with integrity systems theory and reinforcing the role of transparency in cultivating ethical behavior and a rules-based administrative culture.

Participants also noted that transparency improves the image of local procurement and reduces both real and perceived corruption risks. As remarked by the participants:

“It ensures quality standards for all municipal goods and services.”
(P13)

“Qualified bidders can be distinguished from others.” (P16)

“Transparency opens opportunities for SMEs and Startups to participate.” (B1)

“It reduces conflicts of interest in the procurement process.” (B3)

“It decreases suspicion about procurement details.” (B2)

“It motivates bidders to follow rules and specifications.” (B6)

These remarks suggest that transparency reduces perceived corruption, barriers to entry, and discriminatory risks, which supports theories of equitable access and market fairness in public procurement.

Finally, several participants stressed that transparency leads to improved capacity and professionalism among procurement officers. As evidenced by the following findings:

“Procurement officers must be trained in best practices.” (P14)

“Transparency produces new knowledge about purchasing modern equipment.” (E2)

“It leads to the development of effective bid specifications.” (E4)

“It helps manage contracts according to schedule, price, and quality.” (E8)

These findings support organizational capacity-building frameworks, in which transparency is not only an external control mechanism but also an internal enabler of professionalism, technical learning, and improved performance. The answers from the participants for the beneficial effects in promoting transparency in public procurement can be summarized as shown in Figure 5.1

<p>Participants</p> <p>P1, P5, P7, P10, P11, P12, P17 and E1</p>	<p>Enhancing public trust</p>
<p>Participants</p> <p>P3, P4, P9, E3, and E6</p>	<p>Creating efficiency in spending public money</p>
<p>Participants</p> <p>P2, P6, P15, E5, B5 and B8</p>	<p>Increasing confidence regarding procurement system and its integrity among municipality officers, bidders and local people</p>
<p>Participants</p> <p>P8, P18, E7, B4 and B7</p>	<p>Promoting culture of transparency in the local community</p>
<p>Participants</p> <p>P13, P16, B1, B3 B2 and B6</p>	<p>Reducing negative images on the public procurement issues in local governments</p>
<p>Participants</p> <p>P14, E2, E4, and E8</p>	<p>Elevating the professionalism of public procurement officers</p>

Figure 5.1 The Beneficial Effects in Promoting Principle of Transparency

In conclusion, the participant's evidences regarding the beneficial effects in promoting transparency in public procurement can be categorized into six dominant groups. Firstly, it enhances public trust. Secondly, it creates efficiency in spending public money. Thirdly, it increases confidence regarding procurement system and its integrity among municipality officers, bidders and local people. Fourthly, it promotes culture of transparency in the local community. Fifth, it reduces negative images on the public

procurement issues in local governments. Lastly, it elevates the professionalism of public procurement officers. These outcomes reflect the theoretical pillars of good governance, public value theory, and principal-agent accountability. While local officials and contractors/civil society share common ground in valuing transparency, the perceived impacts differ in emphasis: officials view it as a governance tool for institutional legitimacy and performance, whereas contractors see it as a mechanism for ensuring fair market participation and reducing corruption risks. These perspectives, though distinct, mutually reinforce the normative goals of public procurement reform.

5.2.2 Undesirable Effects of Promoting Transparency

This topic focuses on participants' views regarding the negative results after applying principle of transparency in public procurement in their local government organizations.

Many local officials acknowledged that implementing transparency in public procurement leads to heavier administrative workloads, increased procedural steps, and resource consumption. As reflected in the participants' accounts:

“Implementing transparency requires extra administrative resources such as increased paperwork and longer working hours.”
(P2)

“Sometimes we spend more time answering a lot of questions.” (P5)

“A project might begin late due to appeal processes after announcing the winner.” (P8)

“Transparency requires costly training for procurement officials.”

(P9)

“Learning systems like e-GP consumes a significant amount of time.” (P10)

“We have to spend time preparing reports and attending many meetings.” (P14)

“We need to provide extensive details in response to inquiries.”

(P15)

“We require a specialist to manage all procurement documents.”

(P16)

These accounts reflect the administrative overload commonly associated with transparency reforms, consistent with critiques from the New Public Management perspective, which warn that overly proceduralized systems can slow decision-making and diminish responsiveness. Transparency, while essential, can inadvertently increase transaction costs and burden lean public administration systems.

Some participants observed that transparency measures are often misunderstood by the public or bidders, leading to confusion and negative perceptions about procurement processes. As demonstrated in the participants' views:

“Some bidders misinterpret transparency as obstruction in competitive bidding.” (P1)

“Local people sometimes misunderstand delays in service delivery as incompetence.” (P3)

“Wider information accessibility can be misread and misused.” (P6)

“People may have lower expectations due to the complexity of procurement rules.” (P11)

“There is misunderstanding about the limits of transparency within regulations.” (P18)

“Detailed bidding information can cause misconstruction.” (E4)

“Complex bidding criteria confuse stakeholders.” (E5)

*“Misconceptions arise about bidder qualification information.”
(E7)*

These views underscore a gap in public procurement literacy, where stakeholders may not fully grasp the regulatory complexity or limitations of transparency. This aligns with institutional theory, where formal rules without accompanying public education may generate procedural alienation or misaligned expectations.

Several participants reported that increased transparency can have unintended political consequences, including blame, scandal, or conflict within the municipality:

*“Procurement officers were blamed for preferential awarding.”
(P7)*

“Transparency sometimes causes political conflict within the municipality.” (P13)

*“Transparency creates political games and potential scandals.”
(E1)*

“Delays caused by transparency can harm public service reputation.” (E2)

“Opposition parties exploit transparency for political games.” (E3)

“Executives are often criticized for past mistakes.” (E6)

These observations resonate with concerns in public choice theory and political economy, where transparency, while limiting corruption, can be politically weaponized. The findings highlight the double-edged nature of openness—while it increases accountability, it may also expose administrators to strategic blame or opportunistic attacks.

A number of participants noted the challenge of balancing transparency with the need to protect business-sensitive information, which may discourage bidder participation or provoke internal conflict. As indicated by the participants’ responses:

*“Bidders fear their private business information will be leaked.”
(P4)*

“Officials are anxious about balancing legal obligations with transparency.” (P6)

“Transparency can make it difficult to invite bidders.” (P12)

*“Award decisions may be delayed because bidders fear losing.”
(P17)*

These responses highlight the governance dilemma between transparency and confidentiality, particularly in competitive bidding environments. According to

principal - agency theory, too much transparency can distort competitive dynamics by increasing the risk of information leakage, discouraging participation from private-sector actors.

Contractor participants raised serious concerns about transparency leading to potential exposure of proprietary or commercially sensitive information. All responses are evidenced below:

“Transparency could lead to leaking information to competitors.”
(B1)

“We’re anxious about the confidentiality of bidding documents.”
(B4)

“Sensitive information may unintentionally advantage other competitors.” (B6)

“Our business information is at risk of being revealed.” (B7)

From a contractor perspective, transparency—if not carefully calibrated—can result in unintended competitive disadvantages, particularly for SMEs and startups. These concerns are reflected in OECD (2011) warnings about balancing procurement openness with intellectual property protection and market competitiveness. The viewpoints of the participants regarding the undesirable effects of promoting transparency in public procurement are briefly presented in Figure 5.2

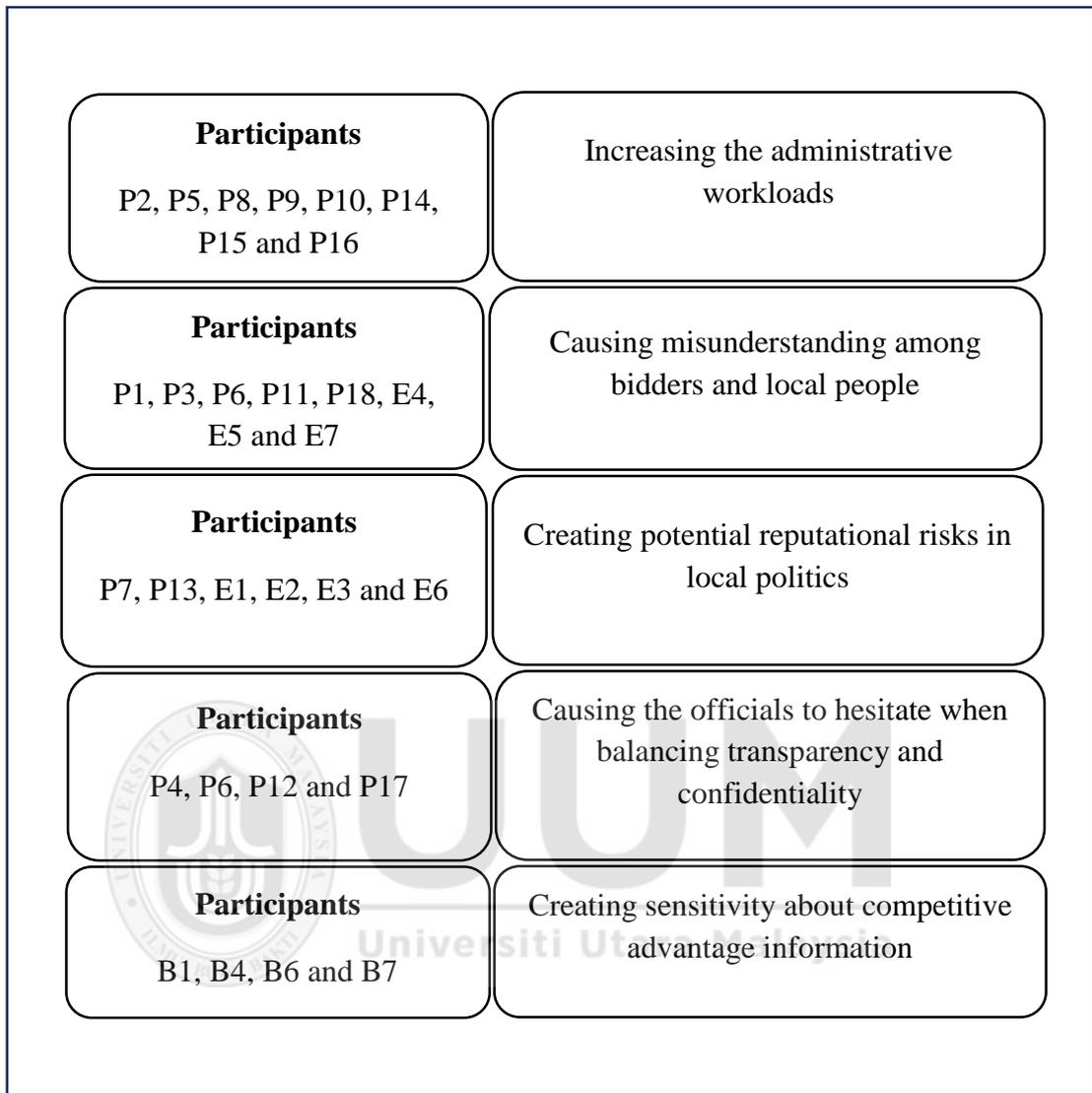


Figure 5.2 The Undesirable Effects in Promoting Principle of Transparency

To sum up, the participant's judgement regarding the undesirable effects in promoting transparency in public procurement can be classified in five categories. Firstly, it increases the administrative workloads. Secondly, it causes misunderstanding among bidders and local people. Thirdly, it creates potential reputational risks in local politics. Fourthly, it causes the officials to hesitate when balancing transparency and confidentiality. Lastly, it creates sensitivity about competitive advantage information. While transparency is foundational for anti-corruption and governance integrity, these

findings emphasize that implementation without contextual adaptation can create new risks. The undesirable effects identified here align with global scholarship on the “paradox of transparency”—where openness may breed administrative overload, political vulnerability, and market hesitancy if not managed within robust institutional safeguards. Moreover, both local officials and contractors/civil society actors expressed concerns about confidentiality risks and barriers to meaningful participation. Administrative burden and reputational risk emerged as distinct concerns for local officials, who are tasked with ensuring compliance, managing communications, and upholding political accountability. In contrast, these issues were not perceived as problematic by contractors, who prioritized competitive access and fairness of outcomes. Contractors tended to emphasize the protection of business-sensitive information, while officials were more concerned about systemic delays and the potential for public misinterpretation of procurement policies.

5.3 The Effects in Promoting Principle of Integrity

This part starts by examining the opinions of participants regarding the beneficial and the undesirable effects to the existing efforts in prevention of public procurement corruption in relation to the promoting principle of integrity.

5.3.1 Beneficial Effects of Promoting Integrity

This section focuses on the point of views of participants regarding the beneficial results after implementing the principle of integrity in public procurement in the selected local government organizations.

Numerous participants from local government organizations, elected representatives, and contractor groups (P1–P18, E1–E8, B1–B8) affirmed that the implementation of

the principle of integrity in public procurement enhances public trust in local government officials and improves the overall delivery of public services. As supported by the following reflections:

“Applying the principle of integrity ensures the value of public money.” (P1)

“Encouraging integrity enables timely problem-solving and maintains the standard of goods and services.” (P5)

“People are more satisfied with service delivery and can stay updated on procurement stages.” (P12, P14)

These reflections emphasize that integrity plays a central role in building citizen confidence, service quality, and procurement transparency. By adhering to ethical standards, local governments foster trust and accountability—core principles in good governance frameworks.

In addition, several participants pointed out that promoting integrity also strengthens the capacity and confidence of procurement officials. They shared the following insights:

“Integrity improves procurement knowledge among local officials.” (P10)

“Officials, especially newcomers, gain more confidence in performing procurement duties.” (P15)

“We developed ethical guidelines for handling dilemmas at every procurement stage.” (E5)

“Conflicts of interest are eliminated from the procurement process.”

(E8)

These insights suggest that integrity contributes not only to external legitimacy but also to internal institutional development. It enhances the ethical culture and competence of procurement committees, enabling officials to act decisively and responsibly—aligned with organizational integrity systems theory.

Moreover, a number of participants observed that the application of integrity significantly reduces complaints and legal scrutiny associated with procurement. As highlighted in the following perspectives:

“Practicing integrity seriously reduces complaints at all procurement stages.” (P16)

“We’ve had no complaints from the State Audit Office regarding financial audits.” (P18)

“It helps avoid investigations from the Anti-Corruption Commission.” (E2)

“Integrity boosts our municipality’s score in the ITA evaluation.” (E4)

“It lowers the number of appeals after announcing bid winners.” (E6)

“It improves complaint handling, helping ensure compliance with bid requirements.” (E7)

These perspectives highlight that institutionalizing integrity reduces administrative vulnerability and legal exposure, while promoting risk mitigation and procedural discipline. This aligns with international standards for public sector integrity and reflects best practices in corruption prevention. The opinions regarding the beneficial effects of promoting integrity in public procurement can be referred to in Figure 5.3

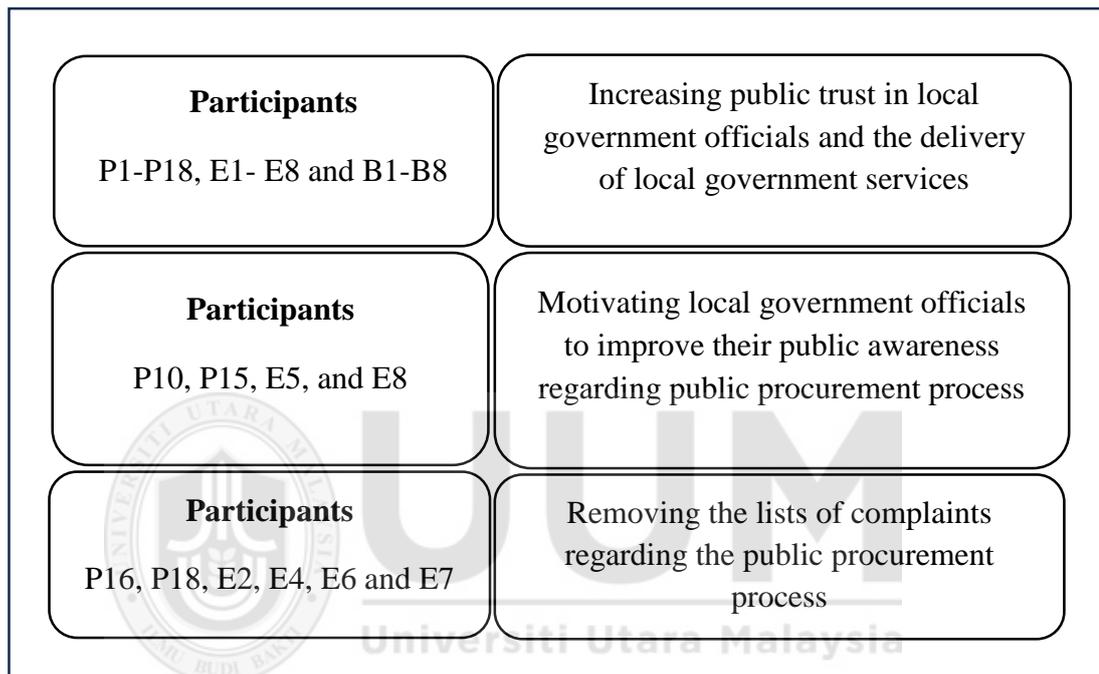


Figure 5.3 The Beneficial Effects in Promoting Principle of Integrity

To conclude, there were three main perspectives of the participants pertaining to the beneficial effects in promoting integrity in public procurement. Firstly, it increases public trust in local government officials and the delivery of local government services. Secondly, it motivates local government officials to improve their public awareness regarding public procurement process. Lastly, it removes the lists of complaints regarding the public procurement process. While the overall perception of the benefits of promoting integrity in public procurement is largely aligned across stakeholder groups, the focus of appreciation differs. Local officials emphasize internal reforms, professional ethics, and institutional outcomes, whereas contractors

and civil society prioritize fairness, transparency, and equal opportunity in procurement access. These perspectives are complementary, reinforcing the principle that integrity is both an internal organizational value and an external guarantee of fair governance.

5.3.2 Undesirable Effects of Promoting Integrity

This section attempts to investigate the participants' perceptions related to the negative results after applying the principle of integrity in public procurement in the selected local government organizations.

Numerous participants from local government organizations and elected representatives (P1–P18, E1–E8) acknowledged that while the principle of integrity is essential, its practical implementation occasionally generates unintended conflicts or dilemmas involving bidders, stakeholders, the public, and internal personnel. These issues often arise across various stages of the procurement process. As supported by the following reflections:

“The outcomes of performing the principle of integrity sometimes create confrontation between procurement officials and some bidders, because some bidders do not understand all purpose of bidding criteria.” (P5)

“The effects of implementing the principle of integrity sometimes result in argument with some stakeholders and local people about the objectives of procurement rules and regulations.” (P14)

“The results of practicing the principle of integrity sometimes clash with some executive members, because in some situations, the perceptions of civil servants and politicians are so different.” (P18)

“The consequences of implementing the principle of integrity create disagreements with some local people, especially in cases of disputes involving family ties.” (E3)

“The effects of operating the principle of integrity sometimes draw criticism from local people who lost the advantages of bidding.” (E7)

These reflections illustrate that integrity initiatives, though well-intentioned, may lead to miscommunication, disputes, and resistance from various stakeholders. Such tensions highlight the need for capacity-building and stakeholder engagement to clarify procurement objectives and reduce misunderstandings—especially where personal interests or power dynamics are involved.

Additionally, participants (P2, P7, E1, E2, E6) noted that integrity-driven procedures may heighten the burden on procurement officials, resulting in increased workload, stress, and resource constraints. The following reflections exemplify these concerns:

“The outcomes of implementing the principle of integrity increase the cost of travel for intensive public procurement training.” (P2)

“The consequences of operating the principle of integrity create anxiety regarding decision-making at all stages of the procurement process.” (P7)

“The effects of practicing the principle of integrity sometimes take up the free time of procurement officials, as they have to hold meetings after working hours.” (E1)

“The results of performing the principle of integrity sometimes create dissatisfaction among some procurement officials because they may have to work on vacations or holidays.” (E2)

“The results of adopting the principle of integrity sometimes lead to misunderstandings among some bidders regarding the scrutiny of bidding document requirements.” (E6)

These viewpoints highlight that implementation of integrity measures may come at a cost—both financially and in terms of staff morale. Ensuring institutional support, adequate staffing, and streamlined procedures could mitigate resistance and make integrity efforts more sustainable.

More importantly, participants (P6, P8, P13, P15, P18) stressed that applying the principle of integrity in dynamic or crisis-prone contexts may be impractical or counterproductive. The following reflections demonstrate this dilemma:

“The results of applying the principle of integrity in emergency situations such as purchasing goods in disasters and accidents circumstances sometimes make it difficult to strictly follow rules and regulations.” (P6)

“The outcomes of performing the principle of integrity cause the officials to feel uncomfortable complying with procurement rules and regulations while addressing unexpected issues.” (P8)

“The effects of practicing the principle of integrity sometimes cause procurement officials to hesitate when dealing with unusual circumstances.” (P13)

“The consequences of operating the principle of integrity create conflicts between service delivery team and public procurement

officials... [due to] unforeseen incidents that limit them from purchasing goods or products according to the legal requirements.”
(P15)

“The results of adopting the principle of integrity sometimes create trade-offs between political decisions and legal direction, which public procurement officials must balance.” (P18)

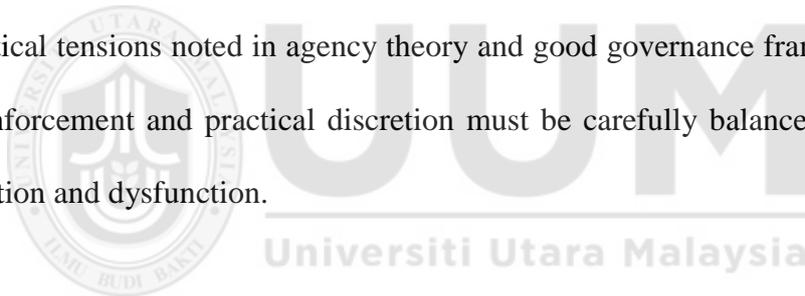
These reflections underline a critical concern: strict compliance with integrity protocols may not always align with situational demands, particularly during emergencies or politically sensitive decisions. Such tensions reflect the limitations of rule-based systems in adaptive governance environments and emphasize the need for flexibility without compromising core ethical standards. The experiences of the participants regarding the undesirable effects of promoting integrity in public procurement can be concluded in Figure 5.4

<p>Participants P1-P18 and E1-E8</p>	<p>Making potential conflicts or misunderstandings with some bidders, stakeholders and local people related to all</p>
<p>Participants P2, P7, E1, E2, and E6</p>	<p>Increasing resistance from civil servants responsible for the procurement process, due to the increased responsibility and workload</p>
<p>Participants P6, P8, P13, P15 and P18</p>	<p>Creating a dilemma in consistently complying with integrity principles in different situations</p>

Figure 5.4 The Undesirable Effects in Promoting Principle of Integrity

In brief, the participants B1-B8 did not express any point of view in relation to the undesirable effects of promoting integrity in public procurement. However, there were

three main categories of experiences among the remaining participants regarding these undesirable effects. Firstly, it makes potential conflicts or misunderstandings with some bidders, stakeholders and local people related to all stages of the procurement process. Secondly, it increases resistance from civil servants responsible for the procurement process, due to the increased responsibility and workload on them. Lastly, it creates a dilemma in consistently complying with integrity principles in different situations. While both local officials and contractors/civil society acknowledge the unintended consequences of promoting integrity in public procurement, their perspectives often diverge in attribution and emphasis. Officials focus on internal strain and operational challenges, whereas contractors and civil society emphasize procedural fairness, access, and transparency risks. This cross-comparison reinforces theoretical tensions noted in agency theory and good governance frameworks, where rule enforcement and practical discretion must be carefully balanced to avoid both corruption and dysfunction.



5.4 The Effects in Promoting Principle of Accountability

This part endeavors to investigate the viewpoints of participants regarding the beneficial and the undesirable effects to the existing efforts in prevention of public procurement corruption in relation to the promoting principle of accountability.

5.4.1 Beneficial Effects of Promoting Accountability

This section concentrates on the participants' standpoints regarding the beneficial results after adopting the principle of accountability in public procurement in the selected local government organizations.

Participants (P1–P18, E1–E8) collectively emphasized that the implementation of the principle of accountability in public procurement yields several desirable outcomes. These include reducing internal anxiety among municipal officials, enhancing service delivery, boosting public trust, and improving transparency and oversight. The following reflections exemplify these perceived impacts:

“The effects of applying the principle of accountability ensure the effective spending of public money.” (P3)

“Adhering to the principle of accountability enables local people to understand and scrutinize the municipality’s overall projects.” (P6)

“The results of adopting the principle of accountability ensure local people can receive excellent service delivery.” (P8)

“The consequences of implementing the principle of accountability enable local people to see the effectiveness of local development from all stages of public procurement.” (E2)

“Accountability in practice fosters professional pride and reduces anxiety among local officials when handling public funds.” (E4)

These perspectives indicate that the application of accountability mechanisms contributes not only to efficient resource utilization but also to enhanced citizen oversight and a sense of ethical fulfillment among civil servants.

In addition, participants (P2, P5, P11, E3, E7) reflected that applying accountability mechanisms leads to improvements in the quality and standards of service delivery and infrastructure development. They also pointed to greater citizen satisfaction and better project outcomes. Their views are as follows:

“Practicing the principle of accountability improves road and footpath constructions in municipal areas.” (P2)

“After seriously implementing the principle of accountability, we received more compliments from local people.” (P5)

“The consequences of performing accountability create higher standards of municipal school buildings in our community.” (P11)

“Implementing accountability increases awareness among public procurement committees.” (E3)

“The results of accountability reduce potential cost and time overruns in most municipal projects.” (E7)

These observations underline that accountability enhances project effectiveness, boosts public satisfaction, and strengthens the procurement committee’s attention to detail, which collectively improve development outcomes.

Furthermore, participants (P7, P9, E1, E2, E5, E7, E8) stressed that the implementation of accountability measures has led to greater transparency, stronger contract enforcement, and improved access to procurement information. These impacts are reflected in the following testimonies:

“Seriously applying the principle of accountability reduces the number of complaints in all stages of the public procurement process.” (P7)

“The consequences of accountability result in the clearance of all financial reports.” (P9)

“Practicing accountability enhances transparency in any stage of the procurement process.” (E1)

“Implementing accountability encourages bidders and local people to gain easier access to all procurement information.” (E2)

“The outcomes of accountability increase the scores on the Integrity and Transparency Assessment (ITA).” (E5)

“The implementation of accountability results in fewer complaints during the procurement process.” (E7)

“Applying the principle of accountability increases the effectiveness of contract management, ensuring compliance with bid requirements.” (E8)

These statements reveal that accountability is closely tied to institutional transparency, public engagement, and performance-based evaluations like the ITA score. It plays a central role in deterring misconduct, improving documentation, and strengthening contract enforcement mechanisms. The viewpoints of the participants regarding the beneficial effects of promoting accountability in public procurement can be summarized in Figure 5.5

<p>Participants P1-P18 and E1- E8</p>	<p>Reducing the feelings of anxiety about suspicions in spending public money and fostering a sense of professional pride</p>
<p>Participants P2, P5, P11, E3, and E7</p>	<p>Increasing the level of quality and standards of service delivery</p>
<p>Participants P7, P9, E1, E2, E5, E7 and E8</p>	<p>Increasing level of transparency and effective enforcement in all stages of procurement cycle</p>

Figure 5.5 The Desirable Effects in Promoting Principle of Accountability

In short, the participants B1-B8 did not express any point of view in relation to the desirable effects of promoting accountability in public procurement. However, there were three main groups of perceptions among the remaining participants regarding the desirable effects. Firstly, it reduces the feelings of anxiety about suspicions in spending public money and fostering a sense of professional pride. Secondly, it increases the level of quality and standards of service delivery. Lastly, it increases level of transparency and effective enforcement in all stages of procurement cycle. While both local government officials and local elected officials perceive accountability as a crucial enabler of transparency, efficiency, and quality, their interpretive lenses differ. Local government officials tend to view accountability through an institutional or internal governance lens—focusing on staff morale, control, and procedural integrity. Local elected officials emphasize external impacts—such as accessibility, fairness, and predictability in service delivery. Despite these nuances, the overall perception is

convergent: accountability is seen as a *positive force* that reinforces good governance in public procurement.

5.4.2 Undesirable Effects of Promoting Accountability

This section attempts to investigate the participants' perceptions in relation to the negative outcomes after adhering the principle of accountability in public procurement in the selected local government organizations.

In contrast to its benefits, several participants emphasized that implementing the principle of accountability may also lead to unintended consequences that affect the efficiency and flexibility of public procurement. Participants (P1, P3, P5, P6, P9) highlighted that promoting accountability could cause delays in decision-making and increase procedural complexity across procurement stages. Their views are as follows:

“Practicing the principle of accountability sometimes creates confrontation between procurement officials and certain contractors, especially when contractors seek negotiations over bidding requirements.” (P1)

“The effects of applying the principle of accountability sometimes result in conflict between procurement officials and executive team members, as officials strictly follow the law while executives focus on responding to local voter demands.” (P3)

“Accountability increases red tape in administration, while some situations require more flexibility to handle immediate issues.” (P5)

“Operating the principle of accountability causes delays in decision-making and requires multiple layers of approval.” (P6)

“Implementing accountability increases the complexity of the chain of command and responsibility, which prevents timely problem resolution in municipalities.” (P9)

These statements demonstrate that while accountability strengthens oversight, it may simultaneously introduce bureaucratic bottlenecks, strain internal coordination, and limit the responsiveness of procurement systems.

Additionally, participants (P11, P14, E3, E5, E8) acknowledged that accountability requirements can at times constrain innovation and burden public procurement operations. Their perspectives include:

“Implementing the principle of accountability increases meeting costs and compensation for public procurement committees.” (P11)

“Accountability raises anxiety during decision-making at every stage of the procurement process.” (P14)

“Accountability discourages officials since procurement-related meetings are often held after working hours.” (E3)

“Strict adherence to accountability creates conflicts in project management, especially when internal control officers become overly rigid.” (E5)

“Accountability mechanisms can lead to misunderstandings among bidders regarding scrutiny of bidding document requirements.” (E8)

These reflections highlight that procedural rigidity and administrative burdens may erode morale, stifle creative problem-solving, and increase the risk of miscommunication with stakeholders.

More importantly, participants (P6, P8, P13, P15, P18) discussed how accountability can create dilemmas during emergency situations or exceptional cases that demand swift action. They observed:

“Applying the principle of accountability during emergencies, such as natural disasters, makes it difficult to comply strictly with procurement regulations.” (P6)

“Accountability makes officials feel uncomfortable applying procurement rules when unexpected problems occur.” (P8)

“The effects of accountability cause procurement officials to hesitate when facing unusual circumstances.” (P13)

“Accountability can create conflict between the service delivery team and procurement officials, as service teams need to act quickly while procurement requires legal compliance.” (P15)

“Accountability sometimes creates trade-offs between legal compliance and political direction, and procurement officials must balance both.” (P18)

These accounts underline a core challenge in public procurement: balancing rule-based accountability with the operational agility needed in unpredictable situations. Excessive rigidity can constrain responsiveness and limit effective service delivery in dynamic environments. The experiences of the participants regarding the undesirable effects of promoting accountability in public procurement can be concluded in Figure 5.6

<p>Participants P1, P3, P5, P6 and P9</p>	<p>Increasing delay in decision making and create complexities at all stage of procurement process</p>
<p>Participants P11, P14, E3, E5, and E8</p>	<p>Contradicting innovations and creativities for the effective of public procurement process</p>
<p>Participants P6, P8, P13, P15 and P18</p>	<p>Creating a dilemma in consistently complying with integrity principles in different situations</p>

Figure 5.6 The Undesirable Effects in Promoting Principle of Accountability

To review, the participants B1-B8 did not mention any point of view in relation to the undesirable effects of promoting accountability in public procurement. However, there were three main categories of opinions among the remaining participants regarding these undesirable effects. Firstly, it increases to delay in decision making and to create complexities at all stage of procurement process. Secondly, it contradicts innovations and creativities for the effective of public procurement process. Lastly, it creates a dilemma in consistently complying with principle of accountability in different situations. While both groups recognize constraints, local officials focus on procedural rigidity and inefficiency, whereas elected officials emphasize political tensions and reduced flexibility in policymaking. Thus, the perceived impact is complementary but contrasting in emphasis.

5.5 The Effects in Promoting Principle of Prevention of Misconduct

This part is intent to explore the opinions of participants in relation to the beneficial and the undesirable effects to the existing efforts in prevention of public procurement corruption in relation to the promoting principle of prevention of misconduct.

5.5.1 Beneficial Effects of Promoting Prevention of Misconduct

This section focuses on presenting the participants' perspectives regarding the beneficial results after adopting the principle of prevention of misconduct in public procurement in the selected local government organizations.

Participants (P2, P5, P8, P14, P15, P17) emphasized that applying the principle of prevention of misconduct builds confidence and moral courage among local government officials, especially in resisting undue influence from political figures or senior administrators. Their views are as follows:

“The effects of applying the principle of prevention of misconduct ensure the operation in public procurement avoids negative influence from the administrators.” (P2)

“The implementation of this principle shows the chief executive’s clear commitment to fighting corruption.” (P8)

“All municipality officials now fear taking part in illegal actions in the procurement process.” (P5)

“Officials are afraid of being involved in misconduct due to increased scrutiny.” (P15)

“The principle helps distribute the risk of misconduct across procurement roles.” (P14)

“It creates a shared responsibility among procurement officials, reducing individual risk.” (P17)

These accounts suggest that promoting misconduct prevention strengthens ethical resolve and distributes accountability, thereby creating a more robust and protected procurement environment.

Additionally, participants (P1, P4, P9, E2, E8) noted that this principle fosters a culture of integrity and professionalism in civil service, enhancing the reputation of local government institutions. Their perspectives include:

“It improves the behavior of procurement officials to act more professionally.” (P1)

“It enhances the municipality’s image, as reflected in compliments from the State Audit Office and citizens.” (P4)

“This principle leads to higher standards in public service delivery.” (P9)

“It raises awareness among procurement committees about the value of public money.” (E2)

“It builds a culture of integrity across all municipal projects.” (E8)

These reflections indicate that misconduct prevention not only curbs corruption but also promotes institutional trust, professional conduct, and civic credibility.

Furthermore, participants (P3, P6, P9, E3, E4, E7, E8) highlighted that the principle contributes to capacity building and stronger procurement controls throughout the procurement cycle. Their statements include:

“It distributes duties among staff and enhances their procurement skills.” (P3)

“It encourages continuous learning among municipal officials.” (P6)

“It boosts the competency levels of local government staff.” (P9)

“It increases bidder and public confidence in the confidentiality of information.” (E3)

“It improves the municipality’s score in the Integrity and Transparency Assessment (ITA).” (E4)

“It supports effective investigations by internal control officers across all procurement stages.” (E7)

“It enhances contract management by ensuring compliance with bid requirements.” (E8)

These insights underscore how the prevention of misconduct improves institutional capacity, internal oversight, and public confidence in the procurement system. The perspectives of the participants in relation to the beneficial effects in promoting principle of prevention of misconduct can be concluded in Figure 5.7

<p>Participants P1-P18</p>	<p>Creating the confidence to local government officials who are responsible in all stages of public procurement process</p>
<p>Participants P1, P4, P9, E2, and E8</p>	<p>Creating the roles model in relation to integrity and professionalism of civil services</p>
<p>Participants P3, P6, P9, E3, E4, E7 and E8</p>	<p>Increasing level of competency of local government officials and security control in all stages of procurement cycle</p>

Figure 5.7 The Desirable Effects in Promoting Principle of Prevention of Misconduct

To sum up, the participants B1-B8 did not express any point of view in relation to the desirable effects of promoting prevention of misconduct in public procurement. However, there were three main groups of perceptions among the remaining participants regarding the desirable effects. Firstly, it creates the confidence to local government officials who are responsible in all stages of public procurement process. Secondly, it creates the roles model in relation to integrity and professionalism of civil services. Lastly, it increases level of competency of local government officials and security control in all stages of procurement cycle. While the perceived impacts are largely similar across stakeholder groups, the differences lie in emphasis—technical and operational for local officials, versus strategic and political for elected representatives.

5.5.2 Undesirable Effects of Promoting Prevention of Misconduct

This section endeavors to examine the participants' perceptions related to the negative results after applying the principle of prevention of misconduct in public procurement in the selected local government organizations.

While the principle of prevention of misconduct aims to enhance integrity and reduce corruption, several participants (P1, P5, P9, P14, P16, P17) highlighted that its implementation can result in conflicts or misunderstandings with key stakeholders involved in the procurement process. Their statements include:

“The effects of practicing the principle of prevention of misconduct create conflicts between procurement officials and some bidders, because there are different expectations regarding flexibility in rules compliances.” (P5)

“The results of applying the principle of prevention of misconduct sometimes lead to conflicts between procurement officials and high-level officers because procurement officials must adhere to rules and regulations.” (P9)

“The outcomes of performing the principle of prevention of misconduct involve interactions with politicians because they tend to prioritize supporting their constituents and may seek flexibility in adhering to rules and regulations.” (P14)

“The results of implementing the principle of prevention of misconduct create contradiction with local people, especially when there are delays in decision-making during emergency situations.” (P16)

“The consequences of practicing the principle of prevention of misconduct draw criticism from local people who lost the advantages of bidding.” (P17)

These statements suggest that strict compliance with procurement rules can lead to tension with politicians, stakeholders, and citizens who may perceive the system as inflexible or unresponsive to situational needs.

Additionally, participants (P2, P7, E1, E2, E6) recognized that the promotion of this principle increases the workload and responsibility for procurement officials, sometimes generating internal resistance. Their accounts include:

“The outcomes of implementing the principle of prevention of misconduct increase the cost of travel for intensive public procurement training.” (P2)

“The consequences of operating the principle of prevention of misconduct create anxiety regarding decision-making at all stages of the procurement process.” (P7)

“The effects of practicing the principle of prevention of misconduct sometimes take up the free time of procurement officials, as they have to hold meetings after working hours.” (E1)

“The results of performing the principle of prevention of misconduct sometimes create dissatisfaction among some procurement officials because they may have to work on vacations or holidays.” (E2)

“The results of adopting the principle of prevention of misconduct sometimes lead to misunderstandings among some bidders regarding the scrutiny of bidding document requirements.” (E6)

These responses underscore how the increased scrutiny and procedural rigidity can cause stress and dissatisfaction among officials, particularly when it interferes with personal time or introduces logistical burdens.

More importantly, participants (P6, P8, P13, P15, P18) highlighted the dilemma of balancing rule compliance with the practical challenges of real-world governance, especially during emergencies or service delivery. They noted:

“The results of applying the principle of prevention of misconduct in emergency situations such as purchasing goods in disasters and accidents circumstances sometimes make it difficult to strictly follow rules and regulations.” (P6)

“The outcomes of performing the principle of prevention of misconduct cause the officials to feel uncomfortable complying with procurement rules and regulations while addressing unexpected issues.” (P8)

“The consequences of operating the principle of prevention of misconduct create conflicts between service delivery team and public procurement officials.” (P15)

“The results of adopting the principle of prevention of misconduct sometimes create trade-offs between political decisions and legal direction, which public procurement officials must balance.” (P18)

These reflections reveal that rigid application of misconduct prevention can clash with the need for responsive, context-sensitive decision-making in local governance—highlighting tensions between legal formalism and administrative flexibility. The experiences of the participants regarding the undesirable effects of promoting prevention of misconduct in public procurement can be concluded in Figure 5.8

<p>Participants P1-P18</p>	<p>Creating conflicts or misunderstandings with some bidders, stakeholders and local officials related to all stages of the</p>
<p>Participants P2, P7, E1, E2, and E6</p>	<p>Increasing resistance from civil servants responsible for the procurement process, due to the increased responsibility and workload on them</p>
<p>Participants P6, P8, P15 and P18</p>	<p>Creating a dilemma in consistently complying with integrity principles in</p>

Figure 5.8 The Undesirable Effects in Promoting Principle of Prevention of Misconduct

In conclusion, the participants B1-B8 did not express any point of view in relation to the undesirable effects of promoting prevention of misconduct in public procurement. However, there were three main categories of experiences among the remaining participants regarding these undesirable effects. Firstly, it makes potential conflicts or misunderstandings with some bidders, stakeholders and local people related to all stages of the procurement process. Secondly, it increases resistance from civil servants responsible for the procurement process, due to the increased responsibility and workload on them. Lastly, it creates a dilemma in consistently complying with integrity principles in different situations. Overall, local officials tend to experience these undesirable effects in operational terms—such as overwork, delays, and compliance challenges—whereas elected officials are more concerned with reputational risks and political accountability, especially when public or bidder expectations conflict with strict regulatory compliance.

5.6 The Effects in Promoting Principle of Openness and Fair Competition

This part attempts to explore the viewpoints of participants regarding the beneficial and the undesirable effects to the existing efforts in prevention of public procurement corruption in relation to the promoting principle of openness and fair competition.

5.6.1 Beneficial Effects of Promoting Openness and Fair Competition

This section concentrates on the participants' standpoints regarding the beneficial results after adopting the principle of openness and fair competition in public procurement in the selected local government organizations.

Several participants emphasized that the principle of openness and fair competition contributes directly to more effective public services and improved development results. This includes increased efficiency in spending and improvements in the quality of municipal outputs:

“The effects of applying the principle of openness and fair competition ensure effective spending of public money.” (P3)

“It ensures that local people can receive excellent service delivery.” (P8)

“It creates higher standards for municipal school buildings.” (P11)

“It guarantees that citizens benefit directly from development projects.” (P17)

“It strengthens contract management by ensuring compliance with bid requirements.” (E8)

These statements reflect a shared belief that transparency and fairness not only ensure efficient allocation of resources but also enhance the tangible outcomes of local government performance.

Another group of participants focused on the principle's role in strengthening transparency and enabling oversight mechanisms. These views reflect how openness reduces complaints, promotes public scrutiny, and improves public confidence:

“Adhering to this principle enables local people to understand and scrutinize municipal projects.” (P6)

“The principle results in clear and transparent financial reports.” (P9)

“It enhances the level of transparency in every stage of the procurement process.” (E1)

“It increases accessibility to procurement information for bidders and local people.” (E2)

“It improves the municipality’s score in the Integrity and Transparency Assessment (ITA).” (E4)

“It helps secure higher ITA scores and reduces the number of complaints.” (E5, E7)

These perspectives highlight the principle’s impact in making procurement more open, inclusive, and verifiable—key components of accountable governance.

A few participants viewed the principle as instrumental in reinforcing internal systems, raising committee awareness, and ensuring procedural consistency throughout the procurement cycle:

“It raises awareness among procurement committees about their responsibilities.” (E3)

“It strengthens contract management by ensuring compliance with bid requirements.” (E8)

Although fewer in number, these statements reveal the internal benefits of openness such as improved oversight functions and capacity building among procurement actors which are essential for long-term institutional integrity. The viewpoints of the participants regarding the beneficial effects of promoting openness and fair competition in public procurement can be summarized in Figure 5.9

<p>Participants P1-P18 and E1- E8</p>	<p>Reducing the feelings of anxiety about suspicions in spending public money and fostering a sense of professional pride</p>
<p>Participants P3, P8, P11, P17, and E8</p>	<p>Enhancing the level of quality and standards of service delivery and development outcomes</p>
<p>Participants P6, P9, E1, E2, E4, E5 and E7</p>	<p>Increasing level of transparency and effective enforcement in all stages of procurement cycle</p>
<p>Participants E3 and E8</p>	<p>Strengthening institutional capacity and internal oversight</p>

Figure 5.9 The Desirable Effects in Promoting Principle of Openness and Fair Competition

In short, participants B1–B8 did not express any views regarding the desirable effects of promoting openness and fair competition in public procurement. However, among the remaining participants, four main themes of perception emerged. First, openness and fair competition were seen as reducing anxiety over potential suspicions concerning the use of public funds and as fostering a sense of professional pride. Second, these principles were believed to enhance the quality and standards of service delivery. Third, they were perceived to increase transparency and strengthen enforcement across all stages of the procurement cycle. Finally, they were viewed as contributing to institutional capacity-building and improving internal oversight. While both local officials and elected representatives perceived the promotion of openness and fair competition as highly beneficial, their emphases differed. Local officials focused primarily on operational integrity and technical improvements, whereas elected officials highlighted public accountability and institutional trustworthiness. These differing perspectives reflect their distinct institutional roles—administrative versus political—yet ultimately converge in their shared support for procurement systems that are fair, efficient, and transparent.

5.6.2 Undesirable Effects of Promoting Openness and Fair Competition

This section attempts to investigate the participants' perceptions related to the negative results after applying the principle of openness and fair competition in public procurement in the selected local government organizations.

Several participants pointed out the undesirable consequences of promoting the principle of openness and fair competition, which manifest in three interrelated challenges: stakeholder tension, operational burdens, and situational dilemmas in compliance. These responses highlight how implementation of the principle, while

normatively positive, may result in unintended complexities for both officials and the public:

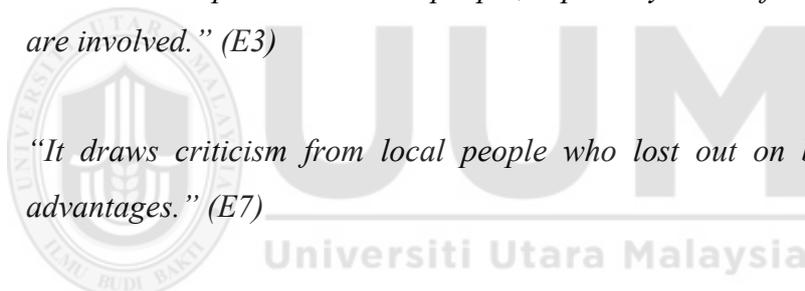
“Sometimes this principle creates confrontation between procurement officials and some bidders who don’t fully understand the purpose of bidding criteria.” (P5)

“It results in arguments with stakeholders and local people about the objectives of procurement regulations.” (P14)

“In certain situations, it clashes with executive members because civil servants and politicians interpret rules differently.” (P18)

“It creates disputes with local people, especially where family ties are involved.” (E3)

“It draws criticism from local people who lost out on bidding advantages.” (E7)



These accounts reveal that stakeholders may perceive openness as exclusionary or overly rigid, particularly when new practices disrupt established informal norms or expectations.

A second group of participants emphasized that openness and fair competition, while beneficial in principle, impose additional workload, psychological stress, and logistical challenges on civil servants responsible for procurement operations.

“The outcomes increase travel costs for procurement training.” (P2)

“It causes anxiety in decision-making at every stage of the process.” (P7)

“Officials must hold meetings outside working hours, reducing their personal time.” (E1)

“It leads to dissatisfaction among officials who must work on weekends or holidays.” (E2)

“There are misunderstandings when bidders interpret the scrutiny of documents as unfair.” (E6)

These reflections indicate that the implementation of openness requires significant investments of time, effort, and resources—often beyond what local procurement units are prepared to handle. Officials report feeling overburdened, especially when required to attend off-site training or engage in extra activities outside normal hours. This points to the operational cost of compliance, where openness, in practice, may generate administrative fatigue and lower morale if not accompanied by adequate institutional support.

A third concern raised by participants involves the practical limitations of consistently enforcing openness and fair competition in urgent or complex situations. In such cases, rigid adherence to rules may impede timely responses or complicate service delivery.

“In emergency situations, such as disasters, Covid -19 protective materials, it becomes difficult to follow rules strictly.” (P6)

“Officials feel uncomfortable complying with rigid regulations when facing unexpected problems.” (P8)

“There are conflicts between the procurement team and service delivery staff due to procurement delays.” (P15)

“There’s a trade-off between political decision-making and legal requirements that officials must balance.” (P18)

These accounts suggest that exceptional contexts—such as natural disasters, public health crises, or political shifts—require flexibility in procurement procedures. However, the strict legalism embedded in openness and fair competition frameworks can limit adaptive responses, forcing officials into ethical or legal dilemmas. For instance, delays in procurement during emergencies may hinder service delivery, while political leaders may expect quicker or more discretionary actions. These challenges reveal that universal application of openness principles may conflict with real-time needs, leading to governance trade-offs that require careful balancing of legality, urgency, and public interest. The experiences of the participants regarding the undesirable effects of promoting openness and fair competition in public procurement can be concluded in Figure 5.10

<p>Participants P1-P18 and E1-E8</p>	<p>Making potential conflicts or misunderstandings with some bidders, stakeholders and local people related to all</p>
<p>Participants P2, P7, E1, E2, and E6</p>	<p>Increasing resistance from civil servants responsible for the procurement process, due to the increased responsibility and workload on them</p>
<p>Participants P6, P8, P15 and P18</p>	<p>Creating a dilemma in consistently complying with integrity principles in different situations</p>

Figure 5.10 The Undesirable Effects in Promoting Principle of Openness and Fair Competition

In brief, participants B1–B8 did not express any views regarding the undesirable effects of promoting openness and fair competition in public procurement. However, among the remaining participants, three main categories of experiences related to such undesirable effects emerged. First, openness and fair competition were perceived to create potential conflicts or misunderstandings with certain bidders, stakeholders, and members of the local community at various stages of the procurement process. Second, these principles were seen as increasing resistance among civil servants responsible for procurement due to the added responsibilities and workload. Lastly, they were viewed as generating dilemmas in consistently adhering to integrity principles across different situations. While both local officials and elected representatives acknowledged that the promotion of openness and fair competition may result in undesirable consequences, their interpretations differed according to their institutional roles. Local officials emphasized operational constraints, administrative burdens, and technical compliance challenges, whereas elected representatives focused more on public perception, political accountability, and the social ramifications of procurement decisions. This divergence highlights the need for integrated solutions that balance procedural rigor with political sensitivity and contextual flexibility.

5.7 Summary of the Chapter

This chapter aims to analyze the impact of current initiatives to prevent corruption in public procurement within selected local government organizations in the southern provinces of Thailand, addressing the second research objective of this study. The findings are organized based on the five core principles in prevention of corruption in public procurement: transparency, integrity, accountability, prevention of misconduct,

and openness and fair competition. These initiatives have had a range of significant effects on efforts to prevent corruption in public procurement.

Firstly, implementing the principle of transparency has several positive effects, such as enhancing public trust, improving spending efficiency, and increasing confidence in the procurement process. It also helps cultivate a culture of transparency and professionalism while reducing negative perceptions of public procurement. On the other hand, there are notable negative effects, including an increased administrative workload, misunderstandings among stakeholders, and reputational risks in local politics. Additionally, challenges arise in maintaining a balance between transparency and confidentiality.

Secondly, applying the principle of integrity has several positive effects, such as building public trust, motivating officials to prioritize ethics, and reducing complaints about procurement practices. Conversely, it also has negative impacts, including potential conflicts with stakeholders, increased workloads for officials, and challenges in consistently applying integrity in various situations.

Thirdly, implementing the principle of accountability delivers several positive outcomes, including alleviating concerns over financial management, improving service quality, and promoting transparency and effective enforcement. On the contrary, it also has drawbacks, such as delays in decision-making, constraints on innovation, and difficulties in sustaining accountability during emergency situations.

Fourthly, promoting the principle of preventing misconduct yields several positive outcomes, such as boosting the confidence of procurement officials, fostering role models of integrity, and enhancing the skills and competencies of local government

staff. However, it also poses challenges, including potential conflicts with bidders and stakeholders, increased resistance from civil servants due to additional responsibilities, and difficulties in complying with regulations during emergency situations.

Lastly, applying the principle of openness and fair competition yields positive outcomes, such as ensuring the effective use of public funds, enhancing service quality, and strengthening transparency and enforcement. Nevertheless, there are some negative effects, including causing misunderstandings, increasing resistance among officials, and presenting challenges in maintaining fair competition across different circumstances.



CHAPTER SIX

IMPEDIMENTS TO EFFECTIVE CORRUPTION PREVENTION IN PUBLIC PROCUREMENT WITHIN SELECTED LOCAL GOVERNMENT ORGANIZATIONS

6.1 Introduction

The previous chapter focused on the effects of existing efforts to prevent corruption in public procurement in selected local government organizations in the provinces of southern Thailand. This chapter mainly focuses on the impediments to effective prevention of corruption in public procurement within selected local government organizations in southern provinces of Thailand. Therefore, this chapter attempts to respond to the third research question regarding the impediment factors for effective public procurement corruption prevention in selected local government organizations in southern provinces of Thailand. By concerning about the opinions all participants of this study which are 16 of local public servants, 8 of local elected officials, 8 bidders, 2 representatives of anti-corruption bodies, 2 representatives of civil society organizations and 2 representatives of mass media. The last three group of participants using code A1-A6.

6.2 Understanding Effective Corruption Prevention in Public Procurement

All participants accepted that the effective prevention of corruption in public procurement involved various components in public procurement process. This includes personnel

related procurement, sound procurement system, organizational culture, procurement law and regulations, conditions and contexts in each local area, and political culture. They provided several further explanations.

Many participants agreed that effective prevention of corruption in public procurement fosters public trust by ensuring transparency, accuracy, and traceability throughout the procurement process. Based on the opinions of the following participants:

“The effective prevention of corruption ensured public trust in public projects if the local government took its role seriously.” (B2)

“It raised the level of public trust when people need to know how government activities were managed.” (E7)

“It provided clarity on how a contract was awarded and built confidence in the procurement criteria used.” (E5)

“It maintained organizational trustworthiness, blocked exploitation, and clarified project management from the public view.” (E4)

“It facilitates public scrutiny of all public projects.” (P9)

“It enables both staff and citizens to see public works without obscuration.” (P5)

These viewpoints reflect a widely shared belief that the effective prevention of corruption in public procurement increases openness and public confidence, aligning with governance theories that emphasize transparency as a key component of legitimacy and institutional credibility.

A considerable number of participants emphasized that the effective prevention of corruption in public procurement improves project outcomes, promotes value for money, and ensures the delivery of standardized goods and services. As noted by the participants:

“It encouraged all bidders to offer the highest-quality products.”
(B3)

“It benefited both local governments and citizens by ensuring high-quality, standardized goods.” (E8)

“It promoted effective project management.” (P3)

“It inspired innovative project proposals.” (P15)

“It enhanced the reputation of local governments for quality service delivery.” (P16)

“It sustained value for money from each baht spent.” (P7)

These reflections demonstrate that anti-corruption efforts are closely tied to procurement performance, supporting literature that links integrity systems to efficiency and cost-effectiveness.

Several participants highlighted the operational benefits for procurement officials, particularly in easing compliance burdens and simplifying audit processes. As shown by the participants below:

“It simplified documentation at each stage of procurement.” (P4)

“It enabled staff to explain procurement procedures when reporting to audit agencies.” (P10)

“It provided accurate information across the project cycle.” (P14)

“It ensured reliable reporting systems to command units.” (P8)

“It prevented accusations of negligence among procurement staff and decision-makers.” (P13)

This shows that effective corruption prevention not only supports external oversight but also strengthens internal administrative confidence, aligning with institutional theories of procedural accountability.

Some participants saw corruption prevention as integral to legal compliance, reinforcing adherence to procurement regulations. As shown through these comments:

“We have to follow corruption prevention according to Section 8 of the 2017 Public Procurement Act.” (P1)

“It is stipulated in our procurement rules—without transparency, we face punishment.” (P2)

“Compliance by executives ensures effective corruption prevention.” (E1)

“It is an essential component of the procurement process.” (P6)

“It is the first image of compliance for procurement officials.” (P11)

These comments reflect a rules-based perspective, where corruption prevention is synonymous with legal integrity and institutional obligation.

A smaller group of participants focused on the role of corruption prevention in avoiding monopolies, preventing bribery, and strengthening internal controls. As noted in a few responses:

“It eliminates monopolies among select bidders.” (P12)

“It controls bidder bribery behavior during procurement.” (B7)

“It encourages check and balance between policy makers and implementers.” (E3)

This highlights the system-level impact of corruption prevention, reinforcing horizontal accountability mechanisms in local governance.

Some participants saw anti-corruption efforts as a mechanism to enhance fairness and bidder equality during the tendering process. As revealed by the perspectives of the participants:

“It ensures price competition and bidder equality.” (P17)

“It promotes fair competition through equal access to information and shared timelines.” (B1)

“It enables convenient decision-making when bidders receive adequate information.” (B4)

“It saves time and resources by facilitating faster proposal submissions.” (B8)

These perspectives point to procedural fairness, resonating with the principles of open competition and non-discrimination in procurement practices.

A few participants emphasized the political benefits of preventing corruption, particularly in protecting reputations and avoiding public backlash. As remarked by the participants:

“It helps local politicians get re-elected by maintaining public trust.” (P18)

“It prevents social sanctions and protects public property.” (E2)

“It is the right way to prevent procurement scandals.” (E6)

This reflects the intersection between procurement integrity and political legitimacy, especially for elected representatives concerned with public perception.

In some cases, corruption prevention was seen as a tool to reduce bidder confusion and limit collusion. Based on the opinions of the following participants:

“It clarifies bidder questions.” (B5)

“It mitigates collusive bidding and opening fair competitiveness for new bidders.” (B6)

This shows a functional use of anti-corruption measures to enhance clarity and reduce collusive risks during the bidding phase. It aligns with procurement reform objectives aimed at minimizing opportunities for anti-competitive behavior. However, the limited voices in this area suggest that while the potential exists, it may not yet be fully realized in practice. The answers from the participants can be concluded as shown in Figure 6.1.

Participants B2, E7, E5, E4, P9 and P5	Keeping a completion, accuracy and transparency record in all process
Participants B3, E8, P3, P7, P15 and P16	Making efficient public projects with value for public money
Participants P4, P8, P10, P13 and P14	Establishing a transparency and fair in bidding process
Participants P1, P2, P6, P11, E1 and A1	Adhering to the legal and regulatory framework of public procurement
Participants P12, E3, B7, and A2	Establishing checks and balances system
Participants P17, B1, B4 and B8	Encouraging fair competitive bidding and facilitating all bidders
Participants B5 and B6	Responding key questions in bidding and breaking opportunity for collusion
Participants P1, P2, P6, P11 and E1	Verifying the qualifications of potential contractors
Participants P11, P12, P18 and A3	Establishing mechanisms for potential challenges procurement process

Figure 6.1 The Understanding of Effective Prevention of Corruption in Public Procurement

To sum up, from the perspectives of all participants, effective prevention of corruption in public procurement can be summarized into nine subjects. Firstly, it keeps a completion, accuracy and transparency record in all procurement process. Secondly, it makes efficient public projects with value for public money. Thirdly, it establishes a transparency and fair in bidding process. Fourthly, it underlined as a cornerstone of strict adherence to the legal and regulatory framework of public procurement. Fifth, it establishes checks and balances system. Sixth, it encourages fair competitive bidding

and facilitating all bidders. Seventh, it responds key questions in bidding and breaking opportunity for collusion. Lastly, it establishes mechanisms for potential challenges procurement process. These varied perspectives indicate a broad consensus on its importance, though some functional areas—such as anti-collusion and political protection—were acknowledged by fewer voices, suggesting room for further development and institutionalization.

6.3 Limitations of the Existing Procurement System in Local Governments

This topic focuses on participants' perspectives regarding the limitations of the existing public procurement system for effective prevention of corruption in public procurement in their local government organizations.

Several participants highlighted that a key limitation of the public procurement system lies in the technical nature of certain procurement items—particularly those involving infrastructure and specialized equipment. As evidenced by the participants views:

“Construction projects involve diverse equipment and standards that are difficult to manage through the procurement system.” (P1)

“We face procurement limitations when purchasing machinery such as trucks and vans.” (P4)

“Items like fire engines and water treatment systems have limited suppliers, making competitive solicitation difficult.” (P6)

“High-cost items like computers or decorative solar-powered lampposts are prone to corruption due to their customization.” (P8)

These views demonstrate that technical complexity and supplier limitations reduce competition and create loopholes in the system, making such procurements vulnerable to price inflation and kickbacks.

Another group of participants raised concerns about how TOR development is handled exclusively by local officials, without sufficient transparency or stakeholder involvement. As reflected by the participants:

“When only local officials develop the TOR, it opens the door to corruption.” (A3)

“There’s no participation from stakeholders in the TOR process.” (A5)

“The TOR stage lacks transparency, which leads to biased specifications.” (A6)

These reflections point to procedural vulnerabilities in the TOR phase—often the entry point for manipulation—where opacity and exclusion of external actors compromise the integrity of procurement design.

Several participants identified the selection and specific procurement methods as high-risk procedures prone to abuse and favoritism. All responses are evidenced below:

“The specific method can incentivize bidders to offer benefits to mayors or local officials.” (P3)

“This method can be used to allow monopolistic bidding.” (P7)

“Both methods often result in bias and exclusion of qualified competitors.” (P11)

“These methods are easy to justify and hard to monitor.” (P13)

“The selection method enables favoritism and collusion under the guise of flexibility.” (P18)

“Their flexibility leaves gaps that foster corruption.” (E7)

These responses reveal a systemic weakness: while intended to accommodate specific contexts, flexible methods often lack adequate oversight, making them ripe for manipulation.

A number of participants underscored that the absence of specialized staff and training is a persistent institutional constraint. The following responses serve as evidence:

“Procurement officers often come from unrelated backgrounds like education or health.” (P5)

“There are too few skilled procurement officials to manage complex projects.” (P9)

“New officials don’t receive consistent training in procurement procedures.” (P10)

“Procurement requires specialized expertise to avoid mistakes and malpractice.” (P12)

“Newly appointed civil servants may unknowingly engage in corruption due to lack of knowledge.” (P14)

These responses stress the need for capacity-building and professional development. Without domain-specific knowledge, procurement staff cannot effectively apply regulations or safeguard integrity.

Some participants warned that the concentration of power in the hands of chief executives or mayors presents a critical risk to procurement integrity. As remarked through a few comments:

“The mayor has too much authority and can override procurement safeguards.” (B2)

“Even a sound system cannot prevent corruption without ethical leadership.” (B5)

“Weak oversight allows executives to bypass procedures unchecked.” (B7)

These comments reflect the role of executive discretion in shaping procurement outcomes. Without accountability mechanisms, strong leadership control becomes a structural vulnerability.

A few participants pointed to the centralized control of procurement data within the Comptroller General’s Department as a transparency barrier. According to the views shared by participants:

“Procurement information is overly centralized, creating bottlenecks.” (A1)

“The Comptroller General’s Department acts like a monopoly, reducing scrutiny.” (A2)

These views highlight how informational monopolies reduce transparency and limit external oversight, particularly when access is restricted or delayed. The participants' opinions regarding limitations of the existing public procurement system for effective prevention of corruption in public procurement are show in Figure 6.2

Participants P1, P4, P6, and P8	Purchasing special items and complexity
Participants A3, A5 and A6	Lack of participation of stakeholders during development of TOR process
Participants P3, P7, P11, P13, P18 and E7	Concerning choices of procurement methods
Participants P5, P9, P10, P12, P14, and E4	There are small number of procurement professionals in local government organizations
Participants B2, B5, and B7	Lack of awareness of decision makers and implementers in procurement process
Participants A1 and A2	Monopoly procurement information at one of central department

Figure 6.2 The Limitations of the Existing Public Procurement System

To summarize, participants expressed a range of perspectives regarding the limitations of the existing public procurement system in effectively preventing corruption. These perspectives can be categorized into six dominant themes. First, concerns were raised about the procurement of specialized items and the management of complex projects.

Second, there is a lack of stakeholder involvement during the development of Terms of Reference (TOR). Third, the selection of procurement methods is viewed as highly sensitive and vulnerable to manipulation. Fourth, there is a shortage of qualified procurement professionals. Fifth, there is limited awareness among decision-makers and implementers regarding their roles and responsibilities in the procurement process. Lastly, the centralization of the procurement information system creates a monopoly, reducing transparency and external scrutiny.

These insights reveal that the current public procurement system faces multi-layered limitations—technical, procedural, human resource-related, and political. Addressing these challenges requires more than regulatory compliance; it demands comprehensive reform focused on decentralization, increased transparency, professionalization, and stronger leadership accountability.

6.4 Unfavorable Conditions in Local Government Context

This section concentrates on participants' opinions in relation to the unfavorable conditions of local government for effective prevention of corruption in public procurement in local government organizations.

Several participants emphasized that entrenched local political culture remains a critical barrier to the effective prevention of corruption in public procurement. This culture, rooted in customary interactions between elected officials and the community, often creates implicit obligations that enable favoritism and informal exchanges. As evidenced by participants:

“Local elected officials are expected to attend social events, which creates chances for bidders to connect with them for future benefits.” (P3)

“Local people expect special favors from politicians, which can lead to bribery.” (P6)

“Gift-giving as a form of appreciation fosters a culture of indebtedness and potential bribery.” (P7)

“There’s a norm of maintaining relationships through benefits, which often opens the door to corruption.” (P12)

These accounts reflect how social norms and political customs shape procurement behavior. The intermingling of political representation with personal obligations blurs the line between public interest and private relationships, complicating efforts to enforce procurement integrity.

Another group of participants identified political gamesmanship and rivalries as a major hindrance to anti-corruption efforts. In many localities, procurement-related scandals are exploited by political opponents to weaken those in power, regardless of whether actual misconduct occurred. As shared by participants:

“Procurement scandals are sometimes traps set by opposition to discredit executive officials.” (P4)

“Some politicians create false procurement cases to attack their rivals.” (P5)

“Intense political competition uses procurement as a tool to eliminate rivals.” (P14)

“Procurement-related attacks are used to gain political advantage.”

(E5)

“Rival politicians create procurement scandals to damage their opponents’ popularity.” (E7)

These accounts suggest that electoral competition weaponizes procurement processes, turning anti-corruption mechanisms into political tools. This distorts accountability structures and weakens institutional credibility in procurement enforcement.

A contrasting concern focused on the occupational background of local executives, particularly those from construction-related businesses. These backgrounds present an inherent conflict of interest, especially when infrastructure projects dominate local procurement budgets. According to participants:

“Mayors who own construction businesses use their office to protect and extend their business interests.” (A1)

“Mayors from construction backgrounds may be biased when awarding infrastructure contracts.” (A2)

“Road construction often benefits companies owned by the mayor’s relatives.” (A4)

“Executives involved in construction equipment businesses tend to steer projects toward their companies.” (A5)

These perspectives highlight the institutional risks of self-dealing in procurement. When business ownership overlaps with political power, impartial procurement

becomes difficult, reinforcing the need for robust conflict-of-interest regulations and asset disclosure.

Some participants pointed to national-level political influence as a structural barrier to local anti-corruption initiatives. Central government policies and the power dynamics between national and local politicians constrain local decision-making in procurement.

As described by participants:

“Special projects from the central government leave no room for local voices.” (P2)

“Local politicians follow the orders of national politicians, even in procurement.” (P9)

“National party support can sway local procurement to benefit associated firms.” (P11)

“Ministry directives sometimes force local governments to buy from a specific brand or company.” (E2)

These experiences underline the tension between decentralization and central control, revealing how top-down directives may override local accountability. The result is reduced local autonomy and vulnerability to political patronage networks.

Lastly, a few participants drew attention to societal norms that implicitly condone or overlook corrupt practices. Deep-rooted cultural acceptance of gift-giving, cronyism, and passive tolerance of wrongdoing weakens anti-corruption efforts. As voiced by participants:

“Receiving benefits from business partners is seen as normal.” (A3)

“Wrongdoing is often accepted or ignored by society.” (A6)

“Cronyism is culturally accepted, and this normalizes private gain.”

(B8)

These views reflect the collective social tolerance for corruption, where informal practices and personal networks undermine ethical standards. Changing such deeply embedded norms requires sustained civic education and institutional reforms. The attitudes of the participants regarding unfavorable conditions of local government for effective prevention of corruption in public procurement can be better summarized in Figure 6.3

Participants P3, P6, P7, and P12	Hindrance of local political culture
Participants P4, P5, P14, E2 and E7	Impediment of political game in local areas
Participants A1, A2, A4 and A5	Obstacle of occupational background of elected officials
Participants P2, P9, P11 and E6	Barrier of influence of politics at national level
Participants A3, A6 and B8	Hindrance of social norms

Figure 6.3 The Unfavorable Conditions of Local Government for Effective Prevention of Corruption in Public Procurement

In conclusion, the participants' concerns regarding the unfavorable conditions of local government for effectively preventing corruption in public procurement can be summarized as five main issues. Firstly, there is hindrance due to local political

culture. Secondly, there is an impediment caused by political games in local areas. Thirdly, there is an obstacle related to the occupational background of elected officials. Fourthly, there is a barrier stemming from the influence of politics at the national level. Lastly, there is a hindrance caused by social norms. These findings point to the need for multi-level reforms: from local political leadership ethics and structural insulation from conflict of interest, to rebalancing central-local authority and shifting public norms toward greater integrity and civic accountability.

6.5 Difficulties in Procurement Cycle in Local Governments

This section concern about participants' expressions in relation to the difficulties in procurement cycle of local government for effective prevention of corruption in public procurement.

Several participants highlighted the stage of selecting procurement methods—particularly the use of selection and specific procedures—as a critical vulnerability in the procurement cycle. According to the participants' responses:

“A critical stage in the procurement cycle... involves the selection of procurement methods. The 2017 Act provides three methods, but the selection and specific methods give officials too much discretionary power. This opens opportunities for favoritism by mayors or executives.” (P7)

“The pre-bidding phase, especially the choice of procurement methods, is a loophole—non-competitive methods are especially vulnerable to corruption.” (P11)

“Deciding on procurement procedures is one of the main challenges in preventing corruption.” (P14)

“The selection and specific methods are possible channels for extensive corruption.” (P16)

“Officials often use the selection and specific procedures under legal exceptions, but they must justify their use—this stage is highly prone to abuse.” (A1)

These responses show that process flexibility, when combined with political discretion, enables favoritism and collusion. While legally sanctioned, such discretion without robust oversight fosters opportunities for abuse, aligning with concerns in principal-agent theory regarding unchecked decision-making authority.

Another group of participants pointed to the development of specifications and TOR as a key stage where corruption risks are embedded. As revealed through the perspectives of the participants:

“This stage allows only procurement officials to write the TOR, which can be tailored to favor specific brands or companies.” (P4)

“Lack of transparency in developing the TOR creates a serious gap—it’s accessible only to procurement officials.” (P13)

“Developing technical specifications is very sensitive—it can be biased toward a certain brand or company.” (B1)

“This is a high-risk stage, especially due to the potential for locked specifications.” (A2)

“Unclear criteria and irrelevant requirements make this stage vulnerable to manipulation.” (A4)

These perspectives reflect how technical opacity, combined with limited stakeholder involvement, enables procurement staff to design bidding conditions that favor certain bidders. This creates institutional opacity—a core enabler of corruption.

A third group of participants identified bid evaluation as one of the most difficult stages for ensuring corruption-free procurement. As indicated by the participants' responses:

“Bid evaluation is difficult because officials may select bidders based on personal relationships.” (P2)

“Without strict controls, bidding information can be leaked to preferred bidders.” (A5)

“Lack of stakeholder participation in evaluation increases the chance of favoritism.” (P10)

“Transparency is lacking—evaluation often occurs between just the committee and bidders, making collusion possible.” (A1)

“Bid rigging can happen at any time during evaluation.” (P5)

These responses reflect process-level vulnerabilities, particularly in closed evaluation environments. When evaluation committees operate in isolation, they become susceptible to informal relationships and elite capture, echoing themes in collective action theory.

Several participants emphasized that contract management—often overlooked in anti-corruption frameworks—is a key risk zone in the procurement process.

“There’s limited involvement at this stage. Only the contractor and monitoring committee are present, and requirements can be renegotiated to lower standards.” (P6)

“Contractors facing financial difficulties can negotiate project extensions or lower costs—this creates room for mutual benefit exchanges.” (A1)

“Monitoring committees may collude with contractors to accept substandard work.” (A3)

“Collusion between contractors and officials allows acceptance of non-compliant goods or services.” (A6)

“If bribes are accepted, this stage makes it easy to negotiate outcomes directly.” (B2)

“When contractors fail to meet deadlines, they appeal for extensions—this opens another loophole.” (B4)

These insights reveal how institutional weaknesses in post-award monitoring create environments where corrupt agreements can be fulfilled. The lack of transparency and external review during contract implementation mirrors the principal-agent problem in long-term service delivery. The expressions of the participants in relation to the difficulties in procurement cycle of local government for effective prevention of corruption in public procurement can be well presented in Figure 6.4.

<p>Participants</p> <p>P7, P11, P14, P16 and A1</p>	<p>The stage of selection of procurement methods</p>
<p>Participants</p> <p>P4, P13, B1, A2 and A4</p>	<p>The stage of development specifications/TOR</p>
<p>Participants</p> <p>P2, P5, P10, A1 and A5</p>	<p>The stage of bid evaluation</p>
<p>Participants</p> <p>P6, A1, A3, A6, B2 and B4</p>	<p>The stage of contract management</p>

Figure 6.4 The Difficulties in Procurement Cycle of Local Government for Effective Prevention of Corruption in Public Procurement

In brief, the opinions of participants regarding the challenges local governments face in the procurement cycle for the effective prevention of corruption can be summarized across four critical stages. First, the selection of procurement methods, particularly the use of non-competitive procedures, was identified as a major vulnerability. Second, the development of Terms of Reference (TOR) and technical specifications raised concerns about the lack of transparency and the potential for specifications to be tailored to favor specific bidders. Third, the bid evaluation stage was seen as susceptible to collusion between contractors and procurement officials, especially in the absence of external oversight. Finally, the contract management stage was highlighted as problematic, as contractors and procurement officials may renegotiate terms—such as materials, timelines, or quality standards—in ways that deviate from the original TOR, creating opportunities for corruption.

These insights suggest that the prevention of corruption in public procurement is hindered not by isolated weaknesses, but by systemic interactions among institutional, procedural, and political factors. Procedural discretion in the selection of procurement methods allows for personalized and potentially politically motivated decision-making. Institutional opacity in the development of technical specifications enables manipulation in favor of predetermined bidders. Weak enforcement and oversight mechanisms during bid evaluation and contract implementation create space for collusion, bribery, and biased decision-making. Furthermore, political influence, particularly from mayors or chief executives, is often intertwined with administrative processes, shaping procurement outcomes beyond formal procedural boundaries.

Importantly, these stages are not discrete—they interact and reinforce one another. Discretionary choices made during the selection of procurement methods can lead to biased TORs, which in turn result in flawed bid evaluations and, ultimately, corrupt renegotiations during contract execution. This cumulative vulnerability underscores the need for integrated anti-corruption strategies that address the entire procurement cycle holistically, rather than treating individual stages in isolation.

6.6 Summary of the Chapter

The chapter mainly investigates obstacles to effectively preventing corruption in public procurement within selected local government organizations in southern Thailand, addressing the third research question of the study. Data was collected from a diverse group of participants, including local government officials, elected representatives, bidders, and representatives from anti-corruption organizations, civil society groups, and the media. The analysis identifies three key barriers and vulnerabilities in preventing corruption in public procurement at the local level.

The first set of barriers and vulnerabilities relates to systemic limitations. These include technical challenges in acquiring specialized items or services, insufficient stakeholder participation in drafting Terms of Reference (TOR), weaknesses in procurement methods (particularly in selection and specific approaches), a shortage of trained procurement professionals, inadequate vigilance and ethical awareness among decision-makers, and centralized control over procurement information, which raises concerns about monopolization.

The second category of barriers and vulnerabilities pertains to political and social challenges. These encompass the impact of local political culture, which facilitates bribery and favoritism; the use of procurement scandals as a tool in political rivalries; conflicts of interest linked to the professional backgrounds of elected officials (e.g., construction); external pressure from national political policies on local procurement activities; and societal norms that normalize corrupt behaviors, such as cronyism and informal transactions.

The final group of barriers and vulnerabilities focus on specific weaknesses in the procurement cycle. These include flaws in procurement methods, such as arbitrary decision-making that promotes favoritism; risks of bias or manipulation when developing specifications or Terms of Reference (TOR) to benefit particular bidders; susceptibility to collusion and lack of transparency during bid evaluations; and inadequate monitoring in contract management, which can result in renegotiations of standards, costs, or timelines. Addressing these challenges requires targeted reforms, improved training programs, and stricter oversight mechanisms to strengthen the procurement process.

Moreover, the findings reveal that corruption in public procurement is not driven by a single factor but rather by the interaction of institutional, political, and procedural weaknesses. Institutional constraints—such as inadequate human resource capacity and technical complexity—undermine the effectiveness of internal controls and informed decision-making. Process-level vulnerabilities, including non-transparent Terms of Reference (TOR) development and the use of flexible procurement methods, create opportunities for manipulation and favoritism. Political influence and centralized authority—particularly when exercised without adequate checks and balances—further enable corruption, even in the presence of formal regulatory frameworks.

These challenges are mutually reinforcing. For example, a technically weak procurement team may defer to powerful executives who exploit procedural flexibility to favor certain bidders, while the lack of transparency in TOR development allows such decisions to proceed unchecked. In this context, even well-designed regulations can be rendered ineffective by poor implementation, role ambiguity, and weak institutional oversight. Addressing these issues requires a holistic reform strategy—one that strengthens institutional capacity, embeds transparency across all stages of the procurement process, and curtails discretionary power through robust accountability mechanisms involving multiple stakeholders. The next chapter presents the study's key findings on strategies for effectively preventing corruption in public procurement within local government organizations in the southern provinces of Thailand.

CHAPTER SEVEN

STRATEGIES TO PREVENT CORRUPTION IN PUBLIC PROCUREMENT WITHIN SELECTED LOCAL GOVERNMENT ORGANIZATIONS

7.1 Introduction

The previous chapter focused on the impediments to effective prevention of corruption in public procurement within selected local government organizations in southern provinces of Thailand. Then this chapter primarily addresses the effective strategies to prevent corruption in public procurement within selected local government organizations in southern provinces of Thailand. Therefore, this chapter attempts to respond to research question number four of this study. The information of this chapter was obtained from 32 participants, comprising 18 local public servants, 8 local elected officials, 2 representatives of anti-corruption bodies, 2 representatives of civil society organizations and 2 representatives of mass media. Each participant is identified by code through this chapter. With reference to code P1 to P18 are the local public servants in selected local government organizations in southern provinces of Thailand. While code E1 to E8 regarding to local elected officials in selected local government organizations in southern provinces of Thailand. In addition, code A1 to A6 are representative of anti-corruption bodies, representative of civil society organizations and representative of mass media in selected local government organizations in southern provinces of Thailand.

The chapter begins with the policy level strategies for the effective prevention of corruption in public procurement in the context of local government organizations in southern provinces of Thailand, followed by the organizational level strategies for the effective prevention of corruption in public procurement in the context local government organization in southern provinces of Thailand, the operational level strategies for the effective prevention of corruption in public procurement cycle in the context local government organization in southern provinces of Thailand, the suggestions of other strategies for enhancing effective prevention of corruption in public procurement in the context local government organization in southern provinces of Thailand and summary of the chapter.

7.2 Policy Strategies to Prevent Corruption in Local Government Procurement

This section explores participants' perspectives on policy-level strategies for effectively preventing corruption in public procurement within local government organizations in the southern provinces of Thailand. The responses emphasize four key dimensions of an efficient anti-corruption system: the legal and regulatory framework, the institutional framework, operational capacity, and the control and oversight structure. Each of these dimensions is elaborated in detail below.

Several participants emphasized that an efficient system for preventing corruption in public procurement within local government organizations in the southern provinces of Thailand must focus on adapting the legal and regulatory framework to local conditions. As expressed by participants:

“The same legal framework cannot guarantee effective prevention of corruption—local political cultures differ significantly.” (P3)

“Legal frameworks should include local social acceptance conditions to be truly effective.” (P5)

“Cultural norms in specific areas must be incorporated into procurement regulations.” (E1)

“Stakeholders should be allowed to participate, especially in selection and specific methods which are prone to favoritism.” (P9)

“Each area has unique geography and social contexts, so the legal framework should be decentralized.” (E2)

“Committees considering procurement appeals should include qualified locals, not only central officials.” (E5)

These views highlight the inadequacy of a one-size-fits-all legal system in managing corruption risk and underscore the need for a decentralized, context-sensitive regulatory framework. This aligns with adaptive governance theory, which stresses tailoring institutional mechanisms to socio-political environments.

Another cluster of participants suggested that the institutional framework is crucial—particularly through decentralized area regulatory agencies that coordinate oversight and ensure cross-agency collaboration. According to their perspectives:

“Area regulatory agencies should include the Comptroller General’s Department, State Audit Office, and even civil society and media.” (P7)

“Local regulatory agencies can reduce the workload of the central monitoring departments.” (P1)

“A single agency should consolidate all procurement data in each area for efficient oversight.” (P11)

“Sound procurement practices guided by area regulatory agencies help both officials and bidders feel more at ease.” (A2)

“Area regulators understand local context, so their oversight leads to better decision-making.” (E3)

These perspectives reinforce the importance of inter-agency collaboration and localized governance for effective anti-corruption systems. This reflects institutional theory that recognizes multi-actor regulatory environments as more resilient and responsive.

Several participants stressed the importance of strengthening operational capacity of local officials as the backbone of an efficient anti-corruption system. They explained:

“Skilled professionals and well-organized procedures are key to an effective procurement function.” (P4)

“Professional development and recognition are practical needs for effective implementation.” (P13)

“Capacity building raises the proficiency of local procurement officials.” (P17)

“Procurement systems need to address operational limitations to build public confidence.” (E8)

“Training should also include local social contexts, not just rules.” (A6)

These insights emphasize that technical competence, ongoing training, and contextual understanding are essential. This supports human resource capacity models, which argue that skilled personnel are a prerequisite for system integrity and effectiveness.

A strong consensus emerged around the importance of multi-actor control structures and integrity mechanisms to reinforce formal rules. Participants stated:

“Control structures should include anti-corruption groups, civil society, and experts from public and private sectors.” (P15)

“Media, experts, and citizens should be embedded in procurement oversight—especially for large projects.” (P2)

“All stakeholders must have access to procurement information and the ability to raise concerns.” (E4)

“Voluntary involvement by retired officials, media, and activists adds strength to the control system.” (A3)

“Political leadership must be brave and consistent in backing anti-corruption efforts.” (A3)

“Corrupt officials won’t dare to act under strong civic oversight.” (A1)

“Collaboration between local governments and private companies is key because many corrupt acts start from private side.” (P18)

“Media and civil society are vital in holding procurement accountable.” (A4)

“Citizen advisory committees should work alongside anti-corruption bodies.” (P6)

These statements underscore the need for broad stakeholder engagement and external scrutiny. This aligns with integrity systems theory, which views corruption prevention as a shared responsibility between state and society.

Finally, one participant highlighted the preventive value of education:

“We must teach youth, businesses, and politicians about the harm caused by corruption and promote compliance with procurement laws.” (A5)

This reflects a normative shift approach, which argues that anti-corruption reforms are sustainable only when they are supported by civic awareness and ethical transformation. The opinions’ participants about the efficient systems for the effective prevention of corruption in public procurement in the context of local government organizations in the southern provinces of Thailand can be concluded in Figure 7.1

<p>Participants</p> <p>P3, P5, P9, E1, E2, and E5</p>	<p>Establishing legal and regulatory framework based on local conditions</p>
<p>Participants</p> <p>P1, P7, P11, E3 and A2</p>	<p>Enhancing institutional framework by setting area regulatory bodies</p>
<p>Participants</p> <p>P4, P13, P17, E8 and A6</p>	<p>Strengthening operational capacity to enhance procurement professionalism</p>
<p>Participants</p> <p>P2, P6, P15, P18, E4, A1, A3 and A4</p>	<p>Strengthening control structures and integrity mechanisms outside the area of public procurement process</p>

Figure 7.1 The Policy Level Strategies for the Effective Prevention of Corruption in Public Procurement

To sum up, the participants' viewpoints on policy-level strategies for the effective prevention of corruption in public procurement within local government organizations in the southern provinces of Thailand can be consolidated into four main strategies. First, the establishment of a legal and regulatory framework tailored to local conditions. Second, the enhancement of the institutional framework through the creation of area-specific regulatory bodies. Third, the strengthening of operational capacity to promote procurement professionalism and improve the efficiency of procurement functions within local government organizations. Lastly, the reinforcement of control structures and integrity mechanisms outside the formal procurement process—these mechanisms involve a range of stakeholders who function as external monitors to help detect and prevent corruption. Among these, the

most frequently recommended strategy was the expansion of inclusive control structures and integrity mechanisms beyond the boundaries of the procurement process, as highlighted by participants across all groups. This was followed by strong calls—particularly from civil servants and elected officials—to reform procurement laws in ways that accommodate the distinct socio-political and administrative contexts of local areas.

7.3 Organizational Strategies to Prevent Corruption in Local Government Procurement

This section explores participants' perspectives on organizational-level strategies for the effective prevention of corruption in public procurement within local government organizations in the southern provinces of Thailand. The responses reveal five key strategic approaches: political leadership, citizen participation, open government facilitated by advanced technologies, efficiency in budget planning, and efficiency in procurement planning. Each of these approaches is discussed in detail below.

Many of participant underscored the organizational-level strategies for the effective prevention of corruption in public procurement in the context local government organization in southern provinces of Thailand should commence with a political commitment to keep away from all forms of corruption in public procurement. As evidenced by the following participant accounts:

“Some local politicians still believe in vote buying and expect returns after being elected.” (P10)

“Vote buying occurs in every local election, so political commitment is needed at all procurement stages.” (P2)

“Changing political leaders’ attitudes toward abuse of power is indispensable.” (E1)

“Political leaders should promote citizen participation in vulnerable methods like selection and specific method.” (P3)

“Anti-corruption campaigns should be central to every election platform.” (A1)

“Leaders must be role models and adhere to transparency in every procurement project.” (A1)

“Campaigns should clearly show political commitment against all forms of procurement corruption.” (P12)

“Most politicians ignore political commitment and secure votes through vote buying.” (E7)

These accounts underline that political leaders play a pivotal role in shaping procurement integrity. Without their genuine commitment, especially in a context where vote buying is normalized, comprehensive anti-corruption measures risk being ineffective or superficial.

Whereas some participants believed that allowing people participation at crucial stages of public procurement process is a significant part of the organizational-level strategies for the effective prevention of corruption in public procurement in the context of local government organization in southern provinces of Thailand. According to the participants’ responses:

“People from diverse backgrounds should be involved in all stages of procurement.” (P5, P7, P11, A4, A5)

“Transparency can be supported by involving anti-corruption officials, retired civil servants, and technical experts.” (A4)

“Participation in key stages enhances trust and transparency.” (P5)

“Public dialogue is essential to enable scrutiny and empower oversight networks.” (A5)

“Online and offline public discussions at crucial stages are necessary.” (P7)

These responses suggest that citizen engagement enhances the transparency and credibility of procurement activities. Participation should be inclusive, structured, and connected to oversight networks to strengthen accountability mechanisms.

A number of participants highlighted the role of new technologies and open government initiatives in sustaining a comprehensive anti-corruption approach. As extracted from the insights of the participants:

“Advanced technologies create transparency and acceptance at all stages.” (A1)

“AI tools can support whistleblowing and risk reporting.” (A3)

“E-bidding through e-GP ensures public disclosure and unbiased evaluations.” (P10, P18)

“Social media like Facebook and Line can reinforce transparency.” (P14)

“Innovations allow broader public access to procurement data.”

(E6)

“Technologies such as e-procurement and watchdog platforms improve scrutiny.” (P1)

“Investing in digital tools helps prevent errors and ensures real-time disclosure.” (E4)

These insights show that technology serves as a powerful enabler of transparency and integrity. From AI-supported alerts to e-GP systems and social platforms, technological innovations foster a more open, traceable procurement environment.

Additionally, several participants underscored internal control system is a significant component of the organizational-level strategies for the effective prevention of corruption in public procurement in the context of local government organization in southern provinces of Thailand. As evidenced in the participants' responses:

“Internal control involves executives, officials, and auditors to enforce regulations.” (P13)

“Sound internal controls prevent repeated violations.” (P4)

“Internal controls are embedded in daily operations.” (P16)

“Internal audits must be independent and free from political interference.” (A2, A3)

“Controls should include segregation of duties, authorization hierarchies, document control, and independent monitoring.” (P6)

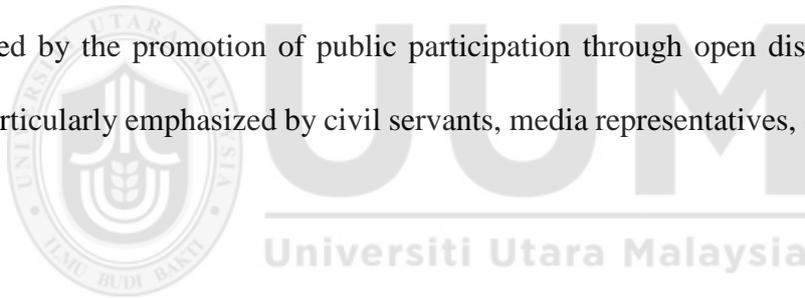
“Executives often confuse internal control with internal audit and shift full responsibility to auditors.” (E2)

These responses illustrate the systemic nature of internal control in fostering procurement integrity. Effective systems rely on organizational-wide participation, clear role separation, and independent auditing. Misunderstandings or negligence among leadership, as noted, undermine the overall effectiveness of such mechanisms. The participants’ attitudes in relation to the organizational-level strategies for the effective prevention of corruption in public procurement in the context of local government organization in southern provinces of Thailand can be summarized in Figure 7.2

<p>Participants P2, P3, P10, P12, E1, E7 and A1</p>	<p>Encouraging political leaders demonstrate political commitment to the public</p>
<p>Participants P5, P7, P11, A4 and A5</p>	<p>Allowing public participation by opening public discussion at the crucial stage of procurement process</p>
<p>Participants P1, P10, P14, P18, E4, E6, A1 and A3</p>	<p>Using advanced technologies for ensuring transparency and preventing mistakes from procurement officials</p>
<p>Participants P4, P6, P13, P16, E2, A2 and A3</p>	<p>Educating the significant of internal control system in local government organizations to the local executives and local officials</p>

Figure 7.2 The Organizational-Level Strategies for the Effective Prevention of Corruption in Public Procurement

To summarize, the participant responses regarding organizational-level strategies for the effective prevention of corruption in public procurement within local government organizations in the southern provinces of Thailand can be categorized into four key approaches. First, political leaders should be encouraged to demonstrate visible political commitment to anti-corruption efforts. Second, public participation should be promoted by facilitating open discussions at critical stages of the procurement process. Third, advanced technologies should be employed to enhance transparency and minimize the risk of errors by procurement officials. Finally, it is essential to educate both local executives and officials on the importance of internal control systems within their organizations. Among these strategies, the use of advanced technologies was the most commonly recommended approach across all participant groups. This was followed by the promotion of public participation through open discussions, which was particularly emphasized by civil servants, media representatives, and civil society actors.



7.4 Operational Strategies to Prevent Corruption in Local Government Procurement Cycle

This part attempts to investigate the participants' responses pertaining to the operational-level strategies for the effective prevention of corruption in public procurement cycle in the context local government organization in southern provinces of Thailand, which can be divided into three phases of the public procurement process: the pre-bidding phase, the bidding phase, and the post-bidding phase. Each phase is further explained in detail.

Many participants emphasized that the pre-bidding phase is a crucial step for the effective prevention of corruption in public procurement cycle in the context local

government organization in southern provinces of Thailand because it involves decisions regarding the planning purchase of goods, products and services for the future periods. Based on the participants' responses:

“The effective prevention of corruption in procurement should start from the pre-bidding phase by allowing local people to participate in identifying community needs and closely observe budget planning and specification development.” (P4)

“Citizens and stakeholders should be involved in proposing community needs and monitoring the decision-making process during the TOR development. Participation should come from diverse occupational groups.” (A1)

“The pre-bidding phase is often neglected by the public and is vulnerable to corruption. Local executives and officials must foster transparency by including stakeholder observation.” (A2)

“This phase is a blind spot because decisions are made without consulting external experts or stakeholders, leading to inflated prices or unnecessary items.” (P11)

“All procurement decisions in the pre-bidding phase are made internally, increasing misconduct risks. Communication channels such as public meetings and social media should be used to gather citizen input.” (E1)

“Discretionary power in this phase must be limited, as procurement information is usually disclosed only at the bid submission stage.” (E6)

“Influential actors like politicians or large companies can interfere when stakeholders are excluded. Important decisions must be stakeholder-driven.” (P1, P15)

“Technical aspects of TOR development require expert and stakeholder oversight to ensure transparency and reduce future corruption risks.” (P2, P12, E2)

These responses collectively underscore that the pre-bidding phase represents a systemic vulnerability in the procurement process. When this phase is dominated by internal actors and lacks oversight, it creates opportunities for undue influence, discretion, and corruption. Participants advocate for the early integration of citizen and stakeholder engagement, expert consultation, and transparent communication channels. Such inclusive approaches are seen as essential not only to mitigate risks but also to build procedural integrity from the outset of procurement.

However, there are some participants considered in the bidding phase is a significant step for the effective prevention of corruption in public procurement cycle in the context local government organization in southern provinces of Thailand. This is because this stage involves responsibilities of the procurement officials for providing equal treatment to all bidders includes disclosing bidding invitation to the public, announcing awarding criteria, declaring conflicts of interest and announcing results of bid evaluation. The following responses illustrate these views:

“The bidding phase must adhere to the highest ethical standards. Local government organizations should provide sufficient training to procurement officials to ensure professionalism.” (P7)

“The bidding phase is critical since it involves compliance with rules and discretionary power. There must be a clear division of roles between mayors and procurement committees, along with a culture of integrity.” (P9)

“Conflicts of interest are common during bidding. Procurement officials and evaluation committees must make impartial and professional decisions.” (P5)

“An integrity pact should be introduced, signed by local government representatives and bidders, with civil society acting as witnesses to ensure transparency during bidding.” (A4)

“Bid evaluation is where corrupt bidders often engage in lobbying. A no-gift policy and allowing civil society and media observers are essential for transparency.” (E4)

These responses underscore that the bidding phase is particularly vulnerable to corruption due to discretionary decision-making and potential conflicts of interest. Strengthening this phase requires not only professional training and clear role separation but also the institutionalization of integrity mechanisms such as no-gift policies and integrity pacts with civil society oversight.

Additionally, there are some participants highlighted in the post-bidding phase is an integral part for the effective prevention of corruption in public procurement cycle in the context local government organization in southern provinces of Thailand. Since this phase involves responsibilities of the procurement officials, particularly procurement acceptance committees by monitoring and overseeing contract management pertain to quality, price and scheduled time. As reflected in the following participant statements:

“Corruption often arises when contractors alter the cost and quality of materials. Acceptance committees must have strong supervision records and allow audits to detect irregularities.” (P13, P17)

“The post-bidding phase is sensitive to integrity risks, especially when acceptance committees fail to supervise properly. Contractors sometimes collude to cut costs or extend project timelines beyond agreed terms.” (P3, P6)

“Collusion between contractors and acceptance committees can result in major deviations from the contract, such as unauthorized extensions or material substitutions.” (A3, E3)

These statements highlight that the post-bidding phase remains particularly vulnerable to breaches of procurement integrity, especially during contract implementation and supervision. Participants emphasized the importance of separating responsibilities between the planning/evaluation and contract acceptance stages to prevent conflicts of interest. They also underscored the need for regular activity reporting, comprehensive documentation, and independent internal or external audits. Strengthening oversight mechanisms during this phase is crucial to ensure that contract terms are fulfilled and public resources are effectively safeguarded. The participants’ responses regarding operational-level strategies for the effective prevention of corruption throughout the public procurement cycle within local government organizations in the southern provinces of Thailand are illustrated in Figure 7.3

<p>Participants</p> <p>P1, P2, P4 P8, P11, P12, P15, E1, E2, E6, A1 and A2</p>	<p>Making transparency by allowing citizens and stakeholders to participate and observe every stage during the pre-bidding phase</p>
<p>Participants</p> <p>P5, P7, P9, E4 and A4</p>	<p>Encouraging sufficient training for public procurement officials, promoting culture of integrity and using integrity pact mechanism during the bidding phase</p>
<p>Participants</p> <p>P3, P6, P13, P17, E3, and A3</p>	<p>Complying with contract agreements, encouraging sufficient supervision records and appointing different officials form prior</p>

Figure 7.3 The Operational- Level Strategies for the Effective Prevention of Corruption in Public Procurement Cycle

In summary, the participant responses regarding to the operational- level strategies for the effective prevention of corruption in public procurement cycle in the context local government organization in southern provinces of Thailand can be categorized into three main areas. Firstly, transparency should be ensured by allowing citizens and stakeholders to participate and observe every stage during the pre-bidding phase. Secondly, sufficient training for public procurement officials should be encouraged, a culture of integrity and integrity pact mechanism should be implemented during the bidding phase. Lastly, contract agreements must be followed, sufficient supervision records maintained and different officials appointed as the procurement committee responsible for each phase of procurement cycle. Moreover, the strategy of promoting transparency by allowing citizens and stakeholders to participate in and observe every stage of the pre-bidding phase was a commonly recommended approach across all participant groups. This was followed by the strategy of ensuring compliance with

contract agreements, maintaining adequate supervision records, and appointing different officials from those involved in earlier phases—also widely endorsed by participants across all groups.

7.5 Supplementary Strategies for Strengthening Corruption Prevention in Local Government Procurement

This section endeavours to present the participants' views on supplementary strategies for strengthening the effective prevention of corruption in public procurement within local government organization in the southern provinces of Thailand. The participants identified six key approaches as particularly useful: financial monitoring, separation of duties and rotation of procurement officials, audits to identify blind spots in procurement process, ensuring the accuracy of information management, strengthening approval process for procurement oversight and enhancing the effectiveness of complaints and investigation mechanisms. The following subsections provide a detailed discussion of each strategy.

Several participants emphasized that strengthening financial monitoring is a critical supplementary strategy for enhancing the effective prevention of corruption in public procurement within local government organizations in the southern provinces of Thailand. This approach was perceived as instrumental in facilitating the early detection of irregularities and mitigating financial misconduct during contract implementation, particularly through continuous oversight of procurement expenditures. This perspective is reflected in the following participant statements:

“Intensifying financial monitoring helps spot not just deviations in contracts but also collusion, like when officials split procurement items with contractors.” (P11)

“If a contractor overuses emergency funds, consistent financial monitoring can detect this early on.” (P2)

“Creating a cumulative financial record helps detect irregular expenditures and boosts transparency.” (P15)

“Maintaining a continuous record of financial transactions allows for the early detection of irregularities.” (P1)

“Without ongoing financial oversight, issues like overbilling and duplicate payments can go unchecked.” (A5)

These statements reflect the participants’ shared belief that sustained and detailed financial monitoring—especially during the contract management phase—serves not only as a preventive mechanism against misuse of funds but also enhances transparency and accountability in procurement practices.

Meanwhile, a number of participants advocated for the separation of duties and rotation of procurement officials as a preventive strategy against favoritism, collusion, and abuse of power. Rotating personnel and avoiding the concentration of responsibilities within a single official were seen as key to disrupting entrenched relationships and reducing corruption risks. As identified by the participants’ insights:

“Officials should not handle more than one function in the procurement process.” (P3)

“Rotation of procurement officers decreases favoritism and collusion.” (P13)

“Switching roles among procurement officials helps prevent the abuse of responsibility.” (P8)

“Shifting responsibilities can reduce the risk of power misuse.” (P6)

“Distributing duties lessens the chance of abuse.” (E6)

“Having one official manage all procurement phases is too risky; positions should rotate.” (E1)

These insights suggest that institutionalizing duty segregation and staff rotation can serve as structural safeguards that disrupt corrupt networks and promote integrity across the procurement cycle.

Other participants recommended internal audits and random internal inspections to detect hidden vulnerabilities and irregularities in the procurement process. These mechanisms were seen as essential for promoting accountability and preventing procurement misconduct. As revealed through the perspectives of the participants:

“Regular internal audits and random inspections reduce the likelihood of misconduct.” (E7)

“Irregular checks diminish integrity risks across procurement processes.” (P5)

“These practices promote continuous improvement.” (P18)

“Internal checks help detect corrupt practices early.” (A1)

“Internal audits are crucial given the high risks of favoritism and nepotism in this region.” (P4)

“Such inspections should be conducted by professionals unaffiliated with the organization.” (E3)

These perspectives underscore the importance of unpredictable oversight mechanisms, which not only expose malpractice but also foster a culture of compliance and improvement.

On the other hand, some participants believed that, the importance of maintaining detailed, secure, and accessible procurement records as a way to improve transparency and traceability, thereby deterring corruption. As revealed by the participants:

“Procurement records must be saved for future reference and oversight.” (A2)

“Public access to procurement files enhances transparency.” (P14)

“Consistent record-keeping helps facilitate audits and prevent corruption.” (P7)

“Recording details during contract management increases public trust.” (P10)

“A robust information system deters malpractice.” (E4)

These comments suggest that good information governance—anchored in transparency and record retention—can substantially enhance anti-corruption outcomes by allowing for easier detection and review of questionable activities.

Moreover, a number of participants emphasized the need to strengthen procurement approval and supervision mechanisms. Inadequate oversight, especially in long-term

contracts managed by the same officials, was seen as a key vulnerability. According to the participants' accounts:

“Long-term officials may manipulate procurement unless approval processes are strengthened.” (P18)

“High-ranking signatories should be involved in approvals.” (A3)

“Oversight during contract management is essential to prevent corruption.” (P9)

“More than two senior officials should approve large-scale projects.” (P12)

“Adequate supervision prevents officials from acting like procurement mafias.” (E2)

“Effective oversight reduces the risks arising from excessive discretion.” (E8)

These accounts suggest that formalized and hierarchical approval systems, coupled with technological oversight tools, can reduce discretion and limit opportunities for corrupt interventions.

Finally, some participants underscored the importance of robust complaints and investigative mechanisms to detect and address corrupt behaviors in a timely and effective manner. Such systems were viewed as necessary for empowering whistleblowers and promoting competitive and fair procurement. As reflected in the participants' viewpoints:

“Effective complaints systems help investigate irregularities and vulnerable points.” (P17)

“Complaint procedures help identify areas of concern.” (P16)

“Officials and bidders must be aware of these procedures to prevent misconduct.” (A6)

“Officials should feel safe reporting misconduct.” (A4)

“Effective complaints and investigation systems build trust and promote competition.” (E5)

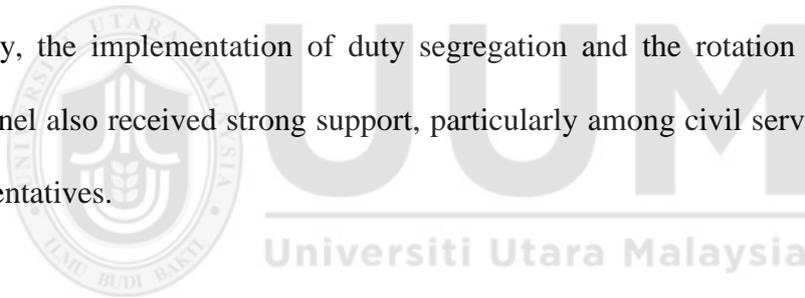
These viewpoints align with global best practices, emphasizing that well-publicized, anonymous, and accessible grievance mechanisms are central to increasing accountability and stakeholder trust in public procurement processes. The participants’ views on supplementary strategies for strengthening effective prevention of corruption in public procurement in the context local government organization in southern provinces of Thailand can be encapsulated in Figure 7.4

<p>Participants P1, P2, P11, P15 and A5</p>	<p>Intensifying financial monitoring</p>
<p>Participants P3, P6, P8, P13, E1, and E6</p>	<p>Implementing the separation of duties and rotation of procurement officials</p>
<p>Participants P4, P5, P18, E3, E7 and A1</p>	<p>Using the audits to identify any blind spots in procurement process</p>
<p>Participants P7, P10, P14, E4 and A2</p>	<p>Ensuring the accuracy of information management for promoting transparency in all stages of public procurement process</p>
<p>Participants P9, P12, P18, E2, E8 and A3</p>	<p>Strengthening approval process in supervision of all procurement activities</p>
<p>Participants P16, P17, E5 A4 and A6</p>	<p>Ensuring the effective of complains and investigation system</p>

Figure 7.4 The Supplementary Strategies for Strengthening the Effective Prevention of Corruption in Public Procurement

To conclude, participants' responses regarding supplementary strategies for strengthening the effective prevention of corruption in public procurement within local government organizations in the southern provinces of Thailand can be summarized into six key approaches. Firstly, financial monitoring should be intensified. Secondly, the separation of duties and the rotation of procurement officials should be systematically implemented. Thirdly, audits should be carried out to identify blind

spots within the procurement process. Fourthly, accurate and reliable information management systems should be established to promote transparency across all stages of the procurement cycle. Fifthly, the procurement approval process should be strengthened to enhance oversight of all procurement activities. Lastly, mechanisms for handling complaints and conducting investigations should be enhanced to ensure effectiveness and credibility. These strategies align with international anti-corruption frameworks that advocate for transparency, accountability, and participatory governance as cornerstones of corruption prevention. Furthermore, the strategy of conducting audits to identify blind spots in the procurement process, along with strengthening the approval process for the supervision of all procurement activities, emerged as strategies consistently recommended across all participant groups. Notably, the implementation of duty segregation and the rotation of procurement personnel also received strong support, particularly among civil servants and elected representatives.



7.6 Summary of the Chapter

This chapter explores strategies for effectively preventing corruption in public procurement within local government organizations in southern Thailand, aligning with the study's fourth research objective. Insights were gathered from 32 participants, including local public officials, elected representatives, and members of anti-corruption organizations, civil society, and the media. The evidence identifies four core strategies for achieving effective corruption prevention.

The first strategy emphasizes the development of efficient systems to combat corruption. This includes adapting legal and regulatory frameworks to local conditions, promoting stakeholder participation, and decentralizing regulatory

functions to increase contextual relevance. It also involves strengthening institutional frameworks through the creation of area-specific regulatory bodies and fostering inter-agency collaboration. Additionally, operational capacity must be enhanced by improving the skills and professionalism of procurement officials through targeted training programs. Finally, this strategy underscores the importance of robust control structures, with active involvement from civil society and the media to ensure integrity and oversight throughout the procurement process.

The second strategy focuses on adopting comprehensive approaches to corruption prevention. It highlights the critical role of political leadership in fostering ethical conduct and political will. Public participation is encouraged to ensure inclusive oversight across all procurement stages. The strategy also advocates for the use of advanced technologies—such as e-procurement and artificial intelligence—to enhance transparency and operational efficiency. Strengthening internal control systems through improved auditing and monitoring mechanisms is also central to this approach.

The third strategy outlines targeted measures within the procurement cycle. In the pre-bidding phase, it stresses the importance of transparency, stakeholder engagement, and participatory drafting of Terms of Reference (TOR). During the bidding phase, it emphasizes ethical standards, training for procurement officials, and the implementation of integrity pacts to mitigate risks. In the post-bidding phase, the strategy focuses on contract management oversight to prevent deviations and ensure compliance with agreed terms and conditions.

The fourth strategy highlights supplementary measures to reinforce anti-corruption efforts. These include enhancing financial monitoring, implementing the separation of

duties through staff rotation, and conducting regular audits to identify hidden vulnerabilities. It also underscores the importance of maintaining reliable procurement records, strengthening approval processes, and ensuring the functionality of complaint and investigation mechanisms to uphold transparency and accountability across the procurement cycle. The next chapter presents a discussion of the study's key findings.



CHAPTER EIGHT

DISCUSSION

8.1 Introduction

This chapter aims to discuss the findings presented in the preceding four chapters. The results in Chapters Four and Five were derived from the perspectives of local public servants, elected officials, and bidders in selected local government organizations. Chapter Six presented findings from all participant groups in the study. Chapter Seven incorporated additional viewpoints from local public servants, elected officials, anti-corruption agencies, civil society organizations, and the media. Accordingly, this chapter synthesizes and discusses all findings in relation to the four research objectives of the study. The first section addresses current practices in the prevention of public procurement corruption within selected local government organizations in the southern provinces of Thailand. The second section examines the effects of existing anti-corruption efforts in public procurement. The third section explores key impediments to effective corruption prevention. The final analytical section presents strategic approaches for preventing corruption in public procurement. The chapter concludes with a summary of key discussion points.

8.2 Current Practices in Prevention of Public Procurement Corruption

This section discusses issues related to current practices in the prevention of public procurement corruption within selected local government organizations. Many of the practices that have raised concerns can be grouped under five core principles. The first area of concern relates to the principle of transparency. The second pertains to the principle of integrity. The third area involves the principle of accountability. The fourth focuses on the principle of prevention of misconduct. Finally, the fifth area of concern is the principle of openness and fair competition.

8.2.1 Practices in Applying Principle of Transparency

This part focuses on discussing standard practices and the role of implementers in preventing corruption in public procurement through the application of the principle of transparency within selected local government organizations in the southern provinces of Thailand. Additionally, it examines the overall perspectives of participants regarding the effectiveness of implementing transparency measures.

The findings of this study revealed that while selected local government organizations (LGOs) in Thailand formally adhere to transparency standards outlined in the Government Procurement Rules and Regulations of 2017, this compliance must be critically examined through the lenses of Institutional Theory and Principal-Agent Theory to fully understand why superficial transparency persists. According to Institutional Theory, formal compliance often obscures deeper adherence to informal norms that ultimately shape organizational behavior (Scott, 2001; Heggstad & Frøystad, 2011). The evidence from this study highlights a cultural-cognitive dimension, suggesting that adherence to transparency rules primarily serves

institutional legitimacy rather than fostering genuine openness or accountability. Such superficial compliance enables LGOs to sustain informal networks rooted in patronage and bureaucratic convenience, thereby protecting entrenched interests from external scrutiny.

This interpretation aligns closely with studies from broader Southeast Asia. For instance, in Cambodia and Malaysia, formal compliance with transparency regulations has similarly failed to dismantle embedded patronage systems that exploit procurement processes for elite enrichment (Azmi, 2023; Springer, 2011). Likewise, in Indonesia, despite robust legal frameworks and digital transparency reforms such as the LPSE e-procurement system, persistent corruption and bid rigging practices indicate that deeper institutional factors such as political interference and weak internal controls significantly undermine formal transparency initiatives (Agustino et al., 2021; Wicaksono et al., 2017).

The Principal–Agent Theory provides additional analytical clarity by highlighting how informational asymmetries facilitate selective transparency. Public officials (agents) often possess incentives to limit substantive transparency to minimize scrutiny from citizens (principals), thereby reducing accountability and enabling moral hazard (Lambsdorff, 2007; OECD, 2009). Such behavior perpetuates a status quo favorable to insiders, enabling continued rent-seeking and corruption under a façade of regulatory compliance. Studies from local government contexts in the Philippines similarly highlight these principal-agent dynamics, noting that transparency platforms often fail due to weak enforcement and deliberate withholding of key documentation such as detailed project specifications and budgetary data (Nisnisan & Salapa, 2024).

A comparative lens with previous research also reveals that the inconsistent implementation of transparency measures is not unique to Thailand but is emblematic of a wider Southeast Asian governance challenge. Jones (2007) argues that despite comprehensive regulatory reforms across Southeast Asia, persistent local political networks and fragmented oversight significantly weaken transparency initiatives. The situation in Thailand parallels the Philippines and Indonesia, where systemic corruption continues to prevail despite robust digital reforms such as PhilGEPS and LPSE due to inadequate enforcement and pervasive informal influence (Nisnisan & Salapa, 2024; Wicaksono et al., 2017).

Moreover, digital procurement initiatives such as Thailand's e-GP have been repeatedly praised for enhancing procedural transparency, yet have consistently fallen short of delivering substantive transparency due to limited institutional capacity, insufficient training, and continued bureaucratic inertia—problems echoed throughout the region (Dyussenov, 2023; OECD, 2021). Such constraints underscore the necessity for complementary reforms targeting institutional independence, political insulation of oversight bodies, and greater civic engagement, aligning closely with strategies advocated by ADB & OECD (2006) and the national integrity systems approach proposed by Pope (2000).

Meanwhile, the theoretical framework in the literature emphasizes integrating Institutional and Principal–Agent theories. Applying these theories critically, this study's findings indicate that institutional constraints—especially informal norms, weak oversight capacity, and insufficient enforcement authority—significantly limit the effectiveness of formal transparency mechanisms. Consequently, the challenges identified resonate with Khan's (2006) political economy analysis, which argues that

successful anti-corruption strategies must consider existing political settlements and informal networks of influence. The apparent disconnect between formal policy and informal practices in the Thai context calls for interventions that extend beyond procedural compliance towards broader socio-political and institutional reform.

The presence of superficially compliant transparency practices also necessitates deeper theoretical engagement with the collective action perspective (Persson, Rothstein & Teorell, 2013). This approach underscores that sustainable corruption prevention requires shifts in societal norms and collective expectations rather than solely institutional rules or incentives. Indeed, as evident from the Philippines and Indonesia, anti-corruption reforms that fail to address cultural normalization of corruption remain fundamentally limited in achieving substantive transparency and accountability (Chaithongrat et al., 2018; Prabowo & Cooper, 2016).

This critical analysis underscores the importance of addressing informal institutional practices and informational asymmetries embedded in the Thai public procurement system. Future interventions must combine strengthened institutional capacities, independent oversight, and systemic cultural shifts toward transparency and integrity. Comparative regional experiences affirm that substantive transparency is not merely procedural; it requires dismantling informal patronage networks and shifting organizational cultures towards genuine openness and public accountability. This multidimensional approach aligns closely with integrated frameworks proposed by Pope (2000) and the political economy perspectives advocated by Khan (2006), emphasizing tailored local solutions sensitive to institutional realities and governance contexts.

Regarding the overall perspectives of participants regarding the effectiveness of implementing transparency measures. The findings of this study reveal that participants perceive standard practices in preventing corruption through transparency in public procurement as formally implemented by selected local government organizations. Specifically, adherence to the Government Procurement Rules and Regulations of 2017 issued by Thailand's Ministry of Finance is consistently cited. However, a deeply critical interpretation of participants' perspectives highlights significant concerns about the depth and authenticity of these practices.

Despite formal mechanisms being in place—such as the posting of procurement information online, conflict-of-interest declarations, and stakeholder engagement—participants reported that these actions often remain procedural and lack meaningful impact. The information disclosed is frequently outdated or incomplete, and documents like Terms of Reference (TORs) are often inaccessible during key decision-making stages. These limitations suggest that transparency, while nominally practiced, often fails to support genuine accountability or public involvement. Participants further observed that the enforcement of transparency measures tends to be inconsistent across departments and projects. Some officials strictly follow procedures, while others treat them as routine checklists, devoid of critical reflection or substantive openness. This inconsistency erodes stakeholder trust and undermines the credibility of transparency claims made by local government organizations.

Additionally, participant insights revealed that transparency efforts are heavily influenced by individual leadership styles. In organizations where top leaders prioritize ethical governance and proactive disclosure, transparency measures tend to be more visible and better implemented. Conversely, in areas where leadership is passive or

politically compromised, transparency practices are often minimal or manipulated to serve vested interests. This reliance on leadership personality rather than institutional stability introduces unpredictability into the system. Participants also acknowledged a disconnect between transparency measures and actual procurement practices. Although rules require public announcements and documentation, there is little effort to ensure that the public understands or can act upon the disclosed information. In many cases, stakeholders—including contractors and citizens—lack the technical knowledge to interpret procurement data, further weakening the practical value of transparency.

Finally, some participants expressed concern that superficial transparency creates a false sense of openness. By fulfilling procedural requirements without genuine engagement or oversight, local government organizations may appear compliant while continuing to operate under opaque decision-making cultures. This performative transparency risks masking systemic problems rather than addressing them, ultimately enabling rather than deterring corruption. These insights suggest that while transparency mechanisms are in place, their effectiveness is frequently undermined by selective implementation, leadership dependency, inadequate public engagement, and a culture of procedural minimalism. Addressing these challenges requires a deeper organizational commitment to openness, beyond mere compliance with regulations.

In conclusion, the examination of transparency practices in public procurement among selected local government organizations in southern Thailand reveals a complex interplay between formal compliance and underlying institutional limitations. While adherence to the Government Procurement Rules and Regulations of 2017 is widely acknowledged, the effectiveness of these transparency measures is significantly

constrained by cultural-cognitive norms, inconsistent enforcement, and reliance on individual leadership rather than systemic reform. The study finds that transparency is often practiced superficially—serving to demonstrate procedural compliance without fostering meaningful public accountability. Key documents remain undisclosed or are shared too late for effective scrutiny, and information dissemination often lacks clarity or practical usability for stakeholders. These limitations reflect a performative model of transparency that upholds institutional legitimacy without challenging entrenched interests or opaque decision-making processes.

Participant perspectives further reveal that the success of transparency efforts is uneven and heavily influenced by local leadership styles. Where leadership is ethically driven and proactive, transparency measures are more robust; where it is passive or politically compromised, transparency is weak or manipulated. Such reliance on individual leaders rather than institutionalized norms underscores the fragility of current anti-corruption practices. From a theoretical standpoint, Institutional Theory explains how informal norms and routines perpetuate superficial transparency, while Principal–Agent dynamics highlight the risks posed by information asymmetry and moral hazard. Comparative cases across Southeast Asia, including Indonesia and the Philippines, demonstrate that Thailand’s challenges are part of a broader regional pattern of formal rule adherence masking systemic governance weaknesses.

While transparency frameworks exist and are formally followed, they often lack the depth, consistency, and institutional support required to achieve their intended anti-corruption objectives. Addressing these limitations will require more than regulatory compliance—it demands the transformation of organizational cultures, stronger

institutional enforcement, civic education, and long-term political commitment to fostering genuine transparency and public trust.

8.2.2 Practices in Applying Principle of Integrity

This section focuses on discussing the standard practices and implementers involved in preventing corruption in public procurement by applying the principle of integrity in selected local government organizations in southern Thailand. It also examines participants' overall perspectives on the achievements of implementing the principle of integrity.

The findings of this study reveal a significant disjunction between formal professions of integrity and actual procurement practices in selected local government organizations (LGOs) in southern Thailand. While these LGOs have adopted standard mechanisms—such as capacity building through training and risk prevention, promoting ethical codes and integrity recognition programs, openness to stakeholder scrutiny, and procedural integrity in compliance with the 2017 Public Procurement Act—these measures frequently function as ceremonial rituals. As one official responsible for public disclosure procedures remarked, “we post procurement details online because the law says so, but no one really checks or responds.” This statement encapsulates the performative nature of integrity in practice, suggesting that these measures serve more to demonstrate procedural conformity than to embed meaningful transparency or accountability.

This superficial engagement aligns with Institutional Theory, particularly Scott's (2001) cultural-cognitive pillar, which posits that organizations adopt formal structures and procedures to secure external legitimacy rather than improve

effectiveness. As such, integrity measures are often reduced to symbolic compliance—performed to satisfy regulatory expectations without fostering genuine institutional or behavioral transformation. The evidence from this study confirms Kühn and Sherman’s (2014) argument that integrity in public procurement entails more than legal adherence; it requires ethical comportment, impartiality, and resistance to undue influence. Yet, in the Thai LGO context, integrity tends to be mechanistically enacted, lacking internalization into organizational culture.

Normatively, integrity entails not only adherence to ethical standards but also the development of institutional mechanisms that promote fairness, transparency, and professionalism among all stakeholders (Kühn & Sherman, 2014; OECD, 2016). While international frameworks—such as those proposed by the ADB and OECD (2006), Lynch and Angel (2013), and the Parliament of Malaysia (2013)—emphasize values such as impartiality and truthfulness, they often neglect the complex realities of implementation within politicized, decentralized governance systems. This gap between idealized frameworks and embedded informal practices is particularly stark in Thailand, where procurement decisions are frequently shaped by personal networks and pre-existing patronage ties. As one participant disclosed, “some projects are already decided before any committee meets.” This reflects the pre-bidding manipulation described by Kühn and Sherman (2014) and exemplifies Khan’s (2006) critique of formal institutions being overridden by underlying political economy incentives.

The persistence of informal norms in procurement behavior was further evident in respondents’ normalization of favoritism. As one participant noted, “some contractors are always the same ones—we know them, they are trusted.” This logic of familiarity

and loyalty mirrors clientelist structures where personal relationships supersede procedural fairness. Theoretical insights from Khan (2006) and Mungiu-Pippidi (2015) caution that in low-governance environments, such informal networks capture procurement processes and render integrity frameworks largely ineffective. Even when formal mechanisms are present, their impact is nullified if they conflict with prevailing incentive structures and elite interests.

Monitoring and enforcement mechanisms also suffer from structural weaknesses. Although procurement committees are regularly rotated, respondents revealed that scrutiny of their decisions is limited, and internal oversight bodies lack both autonomy and capacity. One official remarked, “the same people keep returning as committee members... it depends on whom the mayor trusts.” This illustrates the erosion of procedural safeguards through politicized discretion, echoing Pope’s (2000) concept of a fragmented National Integrity System. The absence of professionalization—despite its emphasis in frameworks by Kühn and Sherman (2014) and the OECD (2009)—further undermines the potential for ethical procurement. Without skilled personnel, independent review systems, and political will, integrity becomes administrative theater rather than institutional reality.

From a Principal–Agent Theory perspective, integrity breaks down when agents—such as procurement officers, politicians, or contractors—exploit information asymmetries and operate without effective monitoring or aligned incentives (Gauri & Vawda, 2003; Tanzi, 1995). Even where performance-based evaluation mechanisms are present (Kühn & Sherman, 2014), systemic pressures and lack of sanctioning capacity allow opportunistic behavior to persist. The emphasis on “individual integrity” in frameworks such as ADB and OECD (2006) fails to account for structural

constraints. Many agents in Thai LGOs lack both the autonomy and institutional protection needed to resist political interference or retaliatory pressures.

Empirical findings from this study also highlight a broader crisis of credibility surrounding integrity mechanisms. Participants—particularly from civil society and the private sector—expressed skepticism about the fairness of procurement processes. As one contractor observed, “we see the same companies winning projects... it’s hard to believe the process is fair.” This perception aligns with Mungiu-Pippidi’s (2015) notion of a credibility trap, where anti-corruption measures exist on paper but fail to inspire public trust. When citizens perceive that officials operate with impunity, institutional legitimacy erodes, and informal coping strategies—such as bribery or collusion—become normalized. The absence of whistleblower protections and civic education, as noted by the UNODC (2013), further entrenches disengagement and reduces bottom-up accountability.

Comparative insights underscore that Thailand’s experience is not isolated. In Malaysia, Azmi (2023) and Azmi and Ismail (2023) document how formal integrity mechanisms are frequently subverted through bureaucratic manipulation and elite collusion, functioning primarily to simulate compliance. Similar patterns are observed in Nigeria, where the introduction of Integrity Pacts was undermined by weak political will and actor collusion (Achua, 2011; Idemudia et al., 2010). In Uganda, Basheka (2010, 2021) emphasizes that sustainable integrity requires not just reforms, but investment in the professionalization of procurement officers and the development of locally rooted ethical codes. These cross-national studies reinforce the conclusion that integrity cannot be institutionalized through structural reforms alone. It must be

socially internalized and politically incentivized to overcome entrenched informal practices.

Regarding the overall perspectives of participants regarding the effectiveness of implementing integrity measures, the findings of this study reveal that participants generally perceive the principle of integrity as a formally acknowledged and widely endorsed pillar of corruption prevention within the public procurement systems of selected LGOs in southern Thailand. Consistent reference was made to adherence to the Government Procurement and Supplies Management Act B.E. 2560 (2017), ethical codes of conduct, procurement committee protocols, and anti-conflict-of-interest declarations as standard practices aimed at embedding integrity across the procurement lifecycle.

However, a deeper critical interpretation of participants' perspectives unveils significant limitations in the depth, authenticity, and sustainability of these integrity practices. While participants described measures such as annual ethical training, declaration of conflicts of interest, and the inclusion of integrity clauses in solicitation documents, these were often implemented in a highly formalistic and episodic manner. The symbolic commitment to integrity often overshadowed actual behavioral transformation, revealing a gap between ethical rhetoric and institutional reality.

Despite the prevalence of compliance-based mechanisms—such as the appointment of procurement committees, mandatory training, and procedural documentation—participants indicated that these practices tend to be ritualistic and vulnerable to circumvention. For example, the mere presence of integrity plans or recognition awards for ethical conduct was insufficient to alter entrenched informal norms. Some

civil servants reportedly continued to interpret rules in a way that preserved bureaucratic discretion, allowing functional deviance and patronage to persist under the guise of formal integrity.

Participants' perspectives further pointed to a critical dependency on leadership personalities rather than institutionalized ethical systems. In municipalities where mayors or executives actively championed integrity—through modeling behavior, launching campaigns, or convening training—a stronger culture of integrity was observed. Conversely, where such leadership was passive or politically motivated, integrity measures were described as mechanical and superficial, offering little protection against favoritism or procurement manipulation. This confirms the precariousness of integrity implementation in a decentralized system: it is uneven, volatile, and highly contingent on the “tone from the top.”

Moreover, while integrity was often equated with the absence of corruption complaints, successful audits, or high ITA/LPA scores, such assessments reflect output indicators rather than process integrity. Participants rarely discussed how integrity measures changed internal decision-making dynamics, reduced collusive practices, or improved bidder confidence substantively. This overreliance on external validation reinforces a metrics-driven governance culture, where institutions prioritize favorable evaluations rather than authentic reform or stakeholder empowerment.

The data also suggest a normative disjuncture between formal standards and lived procurement practices. Several participants mentioned that although civil servants are required to declare conflicts of interest and refrain from accepting gifts, enforcement remains weak. There is little evidence of follow-through when rules are breached, and

appeals systems—though legally available—are seldom activated due to either ignorance, fear of reprisal, or lack of confidence in redress mechanisms. As a result, integrity is upheld more in appearance than in enforceable practice.

Additionally, while some participants recognized the value of integrity in enhancing fair competition, project quality, and public trust, such outcomes were often assumed rather than demonstrated. Contractors spoke positively about integrity measures like transparent TORs and standardized evaluation criteria, yet also hinted at residual skepticism regarding impartiality in bidder selection. This reflects a credibility gap between integrity norms and perceived fairness, especially in contexts where political influence or clientelism remains latent but potent.

Another concerning pattern emerged around the professional and ethical capacity of procurement personnel. Participants frequently emphasized the importance of training and awareness, yet also admitted that without intrinsic ethical commitment, such capacity-building efforts had limited impact. Procurement officials who lack internalized ethical values may comply superficially with rules while still engaging in subtle favoritism or procedural manipulation—underscoring the limits of technical training absent cultural transformation.

Finally, while the procurement integrity framework explicitly includes community participation, social monitoring, and whistleblower mechanisms, participants provided scant evidence of active citizen engagement or bottom-up pressure. Integrity, as experienced in these LGOs, remained elite-driven and technocratic, with minimal grassroots involvement. This neglect of participatory integrity—despite its presence in

policy frameworks—reduces the robustness and legitimacy of integrity initiatives and reveals a blind spot in stakeholder inclusion.

In summary, the evidence reveals that integrity in public procurement within selected local government organizations (LGOs) in southern Thailand remains largely performative and procedural, shaped more by the pursuit of institutional legitimacy than by deeply embedded ethical convictions. Although formal mechanisms—such as conflict-of-interest declarations, committee rotations, ethical training, and adherence to the 2017 Procurement Act—are routinely implemented, these measures often serve ceremonial purposes rather than catalyzing institutional or behavioral change. Participants consistently reported that such mechanisms are vulnerable to circumvention, especially when informal norms, political favoritism, or clientelist relationships dominate decision-making spaces. Theoretical insights from Institutional Theory, particularly Scott’s cultural-cognitive pillar, explain how organizations adopt formal integrity measures to appear legitimate without genuinely transforming internal norms or practices. At the same time, Principal-Agent Theory helps illustrate how weak monitoring, opaque incentive structures, and politicized discretion enable opportunistic behavior to persist. This gap between ethical rhetoric and practical reality is further exacerbated by inconsistent leadership commitment, under-resourced oversight bodies, and the absence of citizen engagement or whistleblower protections. Drawing on comparative experiences from Malaysia, Nigeria, and Uganda, the findings reaffirm that integrity frameworks—no matter how well designed—cannot succeed without cultural internalization, professionalized procurement capacity, and robust political will. Without these foundations, integrity remains a symbolic gesture rather than a transformative force in public procurement governance.

8.2.3 Practices in Applying Principle of Accountability

The focus of this section is on discussing the issue about the standard practices and implementers in prevention of public procurement corruption by applying principle of accountability in public procurement of the selected local government organizations in southern province of Thailand, and also the overall perspective of participants about the achievements for applying principle of accountability.

The findings of this study reveal that although selected local government organizations (LGOs) in southern Thailand formally recognize accountability as a cornerstone of public procurement governance, its implementation remains fragmented, superficial, and frequently hindered by institutional and political inertia. As Diggs and Roman (2012) argue, accountability in procurement extends beyond retrospective reporting to include responsiveness, traceability, and credible sanctioning throughout the procurement cycle. Yet, in practice, accountability measures are inconsistently enforced and selectively applied—functioning more to protect administrative legitimacy than to uphold procurement integrity.

Local officials cited various accountability instruments, including procurement reports, committee decisions, and audit trails. However, these often operate as bureaucratic routines rather than effective mechanisms of transparency or answerability. As one participant noted, “we send the documents to the audit office every year, but there is no feedback, and nothing changes.” This reflects what Pope (2000) terms a “hollow accountability architecture”—formal structures that exist on paper but are not embedded in institutional behavior or enforcement. Similar patterns are observed across Southeast Asia, where procurement reforms are undermined by weak oversight and limited civic vigilance (Azmi, 2023; Agustino et al., 2021).

Despite legal mandates requiring documentation and reporting, the findings underscore a systemic lack of enforcement and minimal consequences for non-compliance. One local executive admitted, “if no one complains, we just go ahead... the paperwork is always ready afterward.” This illustrates a dependence on post-facto justification rather than real-time oversight—what Basheka (2021) refers to as the “legality trap,” where compliance is reduced to verifying documents rather than evaluating legality or ethical conduct. It also echoes Khan’s (2006) critique of formal institutions being overridden by discretionary patronage, where sanctions are rare and often politically expedient.

Although internal audit units and complaint mechanisms are formally in place, they lack authority and are frequently undermined by political interference. Procurement irregularities are often dismissed through administrative reinterpretation rather than addressed through disciplinary action. For example, some participant observed, “if something is flagged, they say it was a misunderstanding or clerical mistake... not corruption.” Such dynamics support Graycar’s (2019) argument that impunity—not merely opportunity—drives procurement corruption. When oversight bodies are weak or politically compromised, their deterrent function collapses. This also aligns with Huberts’ (2010) multi-level corruption theory, which highlights how informal influence and elite immunity sustain misconduct, especially in decentralized systems.

The study further found that accountability mechanisms suffer from fragmentation and overlapping mandates, particularly between elected councils, internal audit units, and external oversight bodies. This institutional complexity leads to what Cravero (2019) calls a “dispersed responsibility problem,” in which accountability is diffused and loopholes persist by design. From an Institutional Theory perspective (Scott, 2001),

this reflects an isomorphic tendency to adopt international models without local adaptation. These borrowed frameworks may appear robust, but their implementation falters due to limited technical capacity, bureaucratic inertia, and entrenched political interests. As Heggstad and Frøystad (2011) emphasize, accountability must be both vertically and horizontally embedded to function meaningfully—an element missing in the studied LGOs.

Across stakeholder groups—particularly civil society actors and contractors—there was deep skepticism regarding the sincerity of accountability mechanisms. One participant remarked, “we file complaints, but it goes nowhere... they [officials] just circle it around and come back with no result.” This perception reflects tokenistic engagement, where citizen participation is encouraged rhetorically but is procedurally marginalized. As Mungiu-Pippidi (2015) warns, selective enforcement erodes public trust and contributes to broken social contracts, where the presence of formal accountability frameworks belies their practical impotence. This is consistent with findings from Nigeria and the Philippines, where accountability tools are ineffective in environments characterized by impunity and limited civic empowerment (Achua, 2011; Gabriel & Castillo, 2020).

Thailand’s challenges in enforcing accountability in public procurement reflect broader regional patterns. As shown from the findings, although LGOs follow formal procedures—such as audits, documentation, and procurement committee oversight—these are often treated as bureaucratic routines with limited follow-up or sanction. Similar issues are seen in Nigeria, where Achua (2011) and Idemudia et al. (2010) report that accountability tools like Integrity Pacts are frequently undermined by collusion and weak institutional enforcement—paralleling Thailand’s limited audit

impact and executive interference in oversight. In Uganda, Basheka (2021) argues that real accountability requires more than rules; it demands professionalized procurement staff and context-specific ethics frameworks. This insight mirrors Thailand's reliance on ad hoc committees and lack of procurement specialization, which weakens the consistency and credibility of oversight.

Regarding the overall perspectives of participants regarding the effectiveness of implementing accountability measures, the findings of this study reveal that participants perceive accountability as a formally instituted and functionally necessary component in preventing corruption within the public procurement systems of selected local government organizations (LGOs) in southern Thailand. Participants across stakeholder groups—local officials, elected leaders, and private contractors—consistently referenced the enforcement of legal compliance, audit trails, reporting systems, and performance monitoring mechanisms as standard practices derived from the Government Procurement and Supplies Management Act B.E. 2560 (2017) and related ministerial regulations.

However, a deeply critical interpretation of participants' perspectives unveils serious limitations regarding the depth, consistency, and institutional authenticity of these accountability measures. While reporting procedures, internal control systems, and ethical training are formally in place, participants' narratives suggest that these mechanisms are often implemented as bureaucratic routines rather than as meaningful instruments for fostering answerability and corrective action. As one participant remarked, "we send the documents to the audit office every year, but there is no feedback, and nothing changes," indicating that accountability, as experienced in practice, is frequently unidirectional and non-responsive.

Despite visible compliance structures—such as procurement documentation, committee oversight, and audit readiness—participants reported that actual accountability remains fragmented and inconsistently enforced. Some officials and committees engage seriously with accountability obligations, while others treat them as administrative formalities, checked off to fulfill procedural requirements. This variability in enforcement reinforces a culture of selective accountability, wherein rules are observed when politically expedient but overlooked when inconvenient. Such behavior aligns with Institutional Theory’s concept of ceremonial conformity, where formal structures exist more to project legitimacy than to guide actual behavior (Scott, 2001).

Participants also emphasized that personal ethics and leadership attitudes often determine whether accountability measures are genuinely implemented or simply mimicked. In municipalities where local leaders, such as mayors or executive teams, actively promoted transparency and ethical conduct, accountability practices were seen as more robust and visible. Conversely, in contexts where leadership was passive or compromised, mechanisms intended to ensure answerability—such as needs assessments, procurement evaluations, or audit responses—were described as ineffectual or manipulated. This dependence on political will introduces volatility into the accountability system and undermines its institutionalization.

Furthermore, although mechanisms for public engagement and external scrutiny were described—such as open bidding, stakeholder invitations, and public procurement hearings—participants rarely cited examples where citizen feedback or contractor complaints resulted in tangible changes. In practice, bottom-up accountability remained largely symbolic, with very limited scope for public influence over

procurement decisions. As several contractors noted, “we are invited to submit bids publicly, but decisions are often already made,” suggesting that such transparency exercises often mask pre-decided outcomes, thereby subverting the spirit of accountability.

The overreliance on performance scores and absence of complaints as evidence of accountability further illustrates a metrics-based approach to governance, where the appearance of accountability is prioritized over substantive responsiveness. Participants frequently cited high scores in the Integrity and Transparency Assessment (ITA) or successful audits as proof of effective accountability. Yet, they offered little reflection on how these mechanisms led to behavioral change, risk reduction, or increased public trust. This instrumentalization of evaluation tools, without genuine feedback loops, reflects principal-agent failures: principals (citizens or oversight bodies) are unable to monitor agents effectively due to informational asymmetries and a lack of sanctioning power (Tanzi, 1995; Gauri & Vawda, 2003).

Moreover, the findings suggest that accountability frameworks lack institutional safeguards for escalation or enforcement. Participants revealed that although accountability requires proper documentation, procurement committees are rarely held responsible for poor decisions, and internal audits seldom result in disciplinary action. As such, mechanisms intended to detect and correct misconduct often function without consequences, reinforcing impunity and bureaucratic inertia. The absence of independent oversight bodies with investigative authority, coupled with the concentration of decision-making power in executive hands, weakens horizontal accountability structures and undermines procurement integrity.

Participants also identified a credibility gap between the rhetoric of accountability and public perceptions. While government officials portrayed their procurement processes as fair and ethical, business contractors and civil society actors voiced skepticism, citing recurring favoritism and non-competitive bidding. This perception gap aligns with Mungiu-Pippidi's (2015) theory of the credibility trap, where formal governance reforms coexist with persistent informal practices, rendering institutional claims of accountability unconvincing and demobilizing for stakeholders.

Finally, while some internal initiatives—such as training programs, codes of conduct, and ethical awards—were highlighted as tools to promote a culture of accountability, participants acknowledged that these remain insufficient in the absence of systemic professionalization and civic literacy. Accountability, in this context, has not yet evolved into an embedded norm but remains contingent, reactive, and externally driven. Without stronger enforcement mechanisms, legal empowerment of stakeholders, and protection for dissenting voices within the procurement system, accountability risks being confined to surface-level compliance.

Overall, the evidence reveals that accountability in public procurement within selected local government organizations (LGOs) in southern Thailand remains fragmented, symbolic, and structurally weak. Although formal mechanisms—such as audit trails, committee reporting, internal control systems, and documentation procedures—are widely implemented under the 2017 Procurement Act, these measures often operate as bureaucratic routines rather than instruments of meaningful oversight. A deeper examination of participants' perspectives uncovers a reliance on post-facto justification, selective enforcement, and metrics-based validation, which prioritize procedural conformity over genuine responsiveness or sanction. The implementation

of accountability is further undermined by politicized leadership discretion, weak oversight institutions, and a lack of follow-through on complaints or audit findings. Drawing on Institutional Theory, this reflects a case of ceremonial compliance, where legitimacy is pursued through formal structures devoid of behavioral substance. Likewise, Principal–Agent Theory helps explain the limited deterrence and information asymmetries that prevent effective monitoring and sanctioning of procurement agents. The presence of overlapping mandates, minimal public influence, and widespread skepticism among contractors and civil society actors signals a credibility deficit that threatens the integrity of procurement systems. Comparative evidence from countries like Malaysia, the Philippines, and Nigeria reinforces the view that without systemic enforcement, political commitment, and citizen empowerment, accountability frameworks remain hollow, incapable of transforming procurement governance in any meaningful way.

8.2.4 Practices in Applying Principle of Prevention of Misconduct

This section focuses on discussing the standard practices and implementation of principle of prevention of misconduct in public procurement of the selected local government organizations in southern province of Thailand, and also the overall viewpoint from participants on the success of applying principle of prevention of misconduct.

The findings of this study reveal that while selected LGOs in southern Thailand claim to implement the principle of misconduct prevention in public procurement, their practices often reflect a fragmented, reactive, and personnel-dependent approach. Despite formal adherence to misconduct prevention mechanisms such as declarations of conflict of interest, ethics training, and internal control measures, these measures

frequently lack systematic enforcement, coherence, and integration into a broader integrity framework. As OECD (2009) and Krivinsh & Vilks (2013) emphasize, genuine misconduct prevention requires robust institutionalized systems that go beyond episodic enforcement to ensure ethical comportment across the procurement cycle.

Many LGOs introduced conflict-of-interest declarations and self-reporting mechanisms aimed at deterring misconduct. However, the evidence suggests these declarations often serve as symbolic compliance rather than functional safeguards. Participants noted that forms are signed ritually, and enforcement is rare. This supports Kühn and Sherman's (2014) argument that integrity measures in procurement are frequently reduced to bureaucratic rituals devoid of moral substance.

From an institutional theory perspective (Scott, 2001), such practices represent normative isomorphism—organizations imitate procedural expectations to appear legitimate without altering informal norms or incentives. Moreover, principal-agent theory illustrates the core problem: agents (procurement officers) retain significant discretion with minimal monitoring, rendering declarations ineffective in deterring misconduct unless paired with real accountability mechanisms (Tanzi & Davoodi, 1998; Heggstad & Frøystad, 2011).

Several LGOs described internal audits, financial oversight, and documentation protocols intended to prevent procurement misconduct. However, participants consistently reported that these controls were either applied inconsistently or bypassed through informal channels. For instance, procurement committees were reshuffled

frequently without proper training, leading to process fragmentation and reduced institutional memory.

As Krivinsh and Vilks (2013) argue, misconduct prevention requires embedded risk assessment and process verification across the procurement lifecycle. The lack of continuity and professionalization observed in these LGOs mirrors broader institutional capacity constraints identified by Evenett and Hoekman (2005) and UNODC (2013). It reflects what Heggstad and Frøystad (2011) call “compliance without capacity”—formal systems exist, but they are poorly resourced, under-enforced, or circumvented through elite collusion.

Some LGOs conducted ethics training or orientation sessions for procurement staff. While participants appreciated these efforts, many expressed skepticism about their long-term efficacy. Training was often described as infrequent, lecture-based, and devoid of practical application. This aligns with criticisms in the literature that educational interventions alone, particularly those lacking in experiential learning and value transformation, have minimal impact on corrupt behavior (OECD, 2016; Kühn & Sherman, 2014).

Moreover, the approach fails to recognize the socio-political context of corruption embedded in local patronage systems (Khan, 2006). Without shifting the incentive structures or strengthening enforcement mechanisms, ethical training risks becoming a symbolic checkbox rather than a tool for institutional transformation. As noted in the literature, misconduct prevention must be supported by systemic integrity-building, not just individual awareness (Lynch & Angel, 2013).

While some participants mentioned the existence of reporting channels for misconduct, very few could recall instances where whistleblower protections were successfully invoked. Fear of retaliation, lack of confidentiality, and institutional inertia were frequently cited as reasons for underreporting. This reflects a pervasive climate of mistrust and limited civic empowerment, which undermines one of the most crucial pillars of misconduct prevention—safe reporting environments.

This reality sharply contrasts with OECD (2009) and ADB & OECD (2006) frameworks that emphasize robust whistleblower protection, including anonymity, independent investigation units, and legal safeguards. Without these protections, misconduct often remains hidden, reinforcing a cycle of impunity. From a collective action perspective (Persson, Rothstein & Teorell, 2013), the absence of credible protection mechanisms signals to officials that reporting is futile, thereby weakening norms of accountability and shared integrity.

The findings reveal that current misconduct prevention practices among LGOs in southern Thailand are heavily shaped by procedural formalism, leadership discretion, and fragmented institutional capacity. There is a discernible gap between the adoption of anti-misconduct rhetoric and the actual behavioral or structural reforms needed to prevent wrongdoing effectively.

Theoretically, this aligns with both institutional theory and principal-agent theory. Formal mechanisms are present but function largely as ceremonial compliance rather than deterrents to misconduct (Scott, 2001). The informational asymmetries and enforcement deficits described by participants demonstrate how agents (officials) exploit weak monitoring and blurred responsibilities to shield corrupt practices from

detection (Tanzi, 1995; Heggstad & Frøystad, 2011). Furthermore, the findings support arguments made by scholars such as Kühn & Sherman (2014) and OECD (2016), who caution against over-reliance on static rules without dynamic systems of integrity, oversight, and ethical reinforcement. The limitations in whistleblower protection and ethical training indicate that these LGOs remain vulnerable to misconduct due to institutional fragmentation and political inertia.

Thailand's challenges in implementing misconduct prevention in public procurement reflect broader patterns seen in other countries. In Malaysia, the Parliament of Malaysia (2013) reports that integrity mechanisms such as codes of ethics and procurement audits often function more as procedural formality than effective safeguards, frequently undermined by political interference. In Uganda, Basheka (2021) argues that misconduct prevention must go beyond rules, requiring professionalization and ethical capacity among procurement staff—conditions similarly lacking in many Thai LGOs. Likewise, in South Africa, Munzhedzi (2016) finds that despite formal procurement reforms, informal networks and politicized oversight weaken enforcement, mirroring Thailand's experience with inconsistent implementation. These cases underscore that preventing misconduct requires more than structural reform; it must involve ethical internalization, institutional support, and political will.

Regarding the overall perspectives of participants regarding the effectiveness of implementing misconduct prevention measures, the findings of this study reveal that participants across stakeholder groups—local officials, elected representatives, and private contractors—largely perceive misconduct prevention measures as functionally embedded but unevenly internalized in the public procurement systems of selected

local government organizations (LGOs) in southern Thailand. Participants consistently referenced routine practices such as procurement training, conflict of interest declarations, committee-based decision-making, and external audit mechanisms as standard methods for preventing misconduct during the procurement cycle. These practices were frequently framed as being derived from the Government Procurement and Supplies Management Act B.E. 2560 (2017), the 1999 Anti-Bid Rigging Act, and related ministerial codes of conduct. However, a deeply critical interpretation of participants' perspectives reveals a complex and often contradictory terrain in which misconduct prevention is formally instituted but inconsistently practiced and weakly institutionalized. While the majority of participants reported the presence of misconduct prevention tools—such as training programs, ethical campaigns, and appeals systems—their implementation appears to be driven more by procedural obligation than by normative commitment to public sector integrity.

Participants from several LGOs described how procurement committees and monitoring mechanisms are regularly convened and documented, but the discussions and decisions often lack critical scrutiny or investigative rigor. This reflects a pattern of symbolic conformity to anti-misconduct policies—where preventive measures are undertaken primarily to satisfy audit requirements or to “cover” administrative processes from external accusations. As one official bluntly noted, “We follow the steps, we submit the report, but no one really questions anything unless something explodes.” This performative implementation echoes concerns raised in the literature that compliance-driven approaches can degenerate into ritualistic routines when not accompanied by real incentives for integrity or sanctions for failure.

Although internal control mechanisms such as separation of duties and whistleblower channels exist on paper, participants acknowledged that these systems are frequently undermined by either poor enforcement or a culture of silence. In smaller LGOs or close-knit administrative environments, there is a prevailing reluctance to report misconduct for fear of professional retaliation or social alienation. “Even if we suspect something, we don’t talk,” one staff member disclosed, illustrating how institutional fear and loyalty norms obstruct enforcement. The literature highlighted that misconduct prevention requires a supportive organizational culture where ethical behavior is valued and wrongdoings can be reported without repercussion (Center for the Advancement of Public Integrity, 2017). However, in practice, these cultural enablers appear absent or severely weakened in many LGOs studied.

Most measures described by participants are post-hoc or reactive in nature—such as audits conducted after procurement is completed, or investigations triggered only after external complaints. Proactive mechanisms—like real-time oversight, pre-bid integrity checks, or ethics vetting—were rarely mentioned or seen as practically relevant. This reinforces the impression that misconduct prevention remains focused on damage control rather than on risk anticipation or ethical foresight. The lack of preventive orientation suggests that LGOs may be fulfilling the minimum statutory obligation rather than cultivating an ethical environment that proactively resists misconduct, which is a core shortfall noted in several anti-corruption frameworks referenced in the literature.

Participants also conveyed that while misconduct prevention frameworks formally apply to all staff and stakeholders, in practice their enforcement is selective and politically mediated. Local elected officials or senior executives, especially those with

political backing, are often shielded from scrutiny. Meanwhile, lower-level employees or technical staff are more likely to be subjected to investigations when issues arise. This reflects a distorted accountability hierarchy, where the rules are unevenly applied and often serve to protect those in power while punishing the vulnerable, a condition which perpetuates impunity and weakens the deterrent effect of misconduct prevention.

Across LGOs, participants indicated that while workshops and ethics trainings are periodically conducted, they are often generic, repetitive, and disconnected from real procurement challenges. Capacity gaps among procurement staff and committee members—especially in interpreting rules, identifying irregularities, and resisting political pressure—were cited as significant barriers to effective implementation. This suggests a gap between institutional design and human resource capacity, reinforcing findings from the literature that highlight how capacity deficits—when unaddressed—undermine even well-designed prevention systems (Basheka, 2021).

To summarize, the evidence reveals that misconduct prevention in public procurement within selected local government organizations (LGOs) in southern Thailand is fragmented, procedural, and largely symbolic. While formal mechanisms—such as conflict-of-interest declarations, ethics training, internal audits, and reporting channels—are formally implemented under the Government Procurement and Supplies Management Act B.E. 2560 (2017), these measures often function as bureaucratic checklists rather than active safeguards against wrongdoing. A closer look at participants' perspectives highlights ritualistic compliance, weak enforcement, and post-hoc responses, where preventive actions lack integration into a coherent integrity framework.

The effectiveness of misconduct prevention is further undermined by political interference, selective enforcement, and insufficient whistleblower protection, all of which discourage reporting and erode trust. From an Institutional Theory perspective, these practices reflect ceremonial compliance, with LGOs aiming to appear legitimate without altering underlying norms. Similarly, Principal–Agent Theory explains how significant discretion and information asymmetry among procurement officials, coupled with limited monitoring, weaken deterrence. Comparative evidence from Malaysia, Uganda, and South Africa underscores that structural measures alone are insufficient. As in these countries, Thailand’s efforts are weakened by inadequate professionalization, political patronage, and lack of ethical internalization. Without systemic enforcement, stronger oversight, and cultural change, misconduct prevention remains a formal façade rather than a transformative governance tool.

8.2.5 Practices in Applying Principle of Openness and Fair Competition

This section aims to discuss issues related to standard practices and implementation efforts in preventing public procurement corruption by applying principle of openness and fair competition in public procurement of the selected local government organizations in southern province of Thailand, and also the overall perspective of participants about the achievements for applying principle of openness and fair competition.

The findings of this study reveal that while selected local government organizations (LGOs) in southern Thailand formally affirm their commitment to openness and fair competition in public procurement, the practical enactment of this principle reveals significant limitations in both institutional scope and behavioral consistency. As Krivinsh and Vilks (2013) argue, fair competition requires the active removal of

discriminatory barriers and the establishment of equal opportunity structures that attract diverse and capable bidders. However, empirical evidence suggests that competitive openness is often constrained by systemic habits, informal gatekeeping, and procedural formalism that undermine its broader objectives.

Although participants routinely reference the enforcement of the 2017 Procurement Act and the use of digital tendering platforms as indicators of open and fair procurement, such mechanisms are frequently implemented as legalistic routines rather than as transformative tools for inclusive market access. According to Kühn and Sherman (2014), the essence of fairness lies not merely in following standardized processes but in cultivating conditions of impartiality, professionalism, and impartial review throughout the procurement cycle. However, many practices observed across the studied LGOs reflect what institutional theory would term “ceremonial compliance”—where structures of fairness are symbolically present but operationally compromised by discretion, influence networks, or under-enforced norms.

Participants across stakeholder groups generally recognized openness and competition as essential for fostering economic efficiency, preventing monopolies, and promoting trust in the procurement system. As participants noted, allowing various suppliers to participate on equal terms ensures quality proposals, competitive pricing, and reduced corruption risk. Nevertheless, a deeper interpretation shows that this emphasis on openness is largely instrumental—valued for improving project delivery rather than for embedding democratic fairness or ensuring market pluralism. This aligns with the economic rationalist view of procurement (OECD, 2016) but departs from more expansive normative frameworks, such as those proposed by Georgieva (2017) and the

Parliament of Malaysia (2013), which define fair competition in terms of proportional access, procedural justice, and redress mechanisms.

The absence of widespread concerns about structural exclusion, bid rigging, or informal collusion in these discussions may indicate either limited participant awareness or the normalization of selective competitiveness—where only a trusted pool of actors is perceived as viable competitors. From a principal-agent lens, this suggests a scenario where discretion remains high, and information asymmetry favors insiders, creating barriers for new or under-resourced bidders (Søreide, 2002; Heggstad & Frøystad, 2011).

Participants pointed to several standardized procedures intended to support open competition, such as e-bidding systems, online dissemination of procurement plans, and pre-announced project schedules. These measures are consistent with the regulatory reforms embedded in the 2017 Procurement Act and echo good governance standards for procedural transparency and non-discrimination (ADB & OECD, 2006). However, the reliance on proceduralism alone masks deeper vulnerabilities. For instance, although the use of digital platforms theoretically broadens access, studies (Rotchanakitumnuai, 2013; Puspita & Gultom, 2022) warn that such platforms can be ineffective without concurrent reforms in oversight, digital literacy, and local capacity. Moreover, while pre-announcements and estimated prices are shared publicly, there is limited evidence of proactive outreach to marginalized or small-scale bidders, who often lack the resources to compete in electronically-mediated systems.

These findings reflect the institutional shortcoming of relying on output-based validation—checking boxes for disclosure and bidding rather than cultivating

inclusive market environments. This corresponds with critiques in the literature that caution against technocratic anti-corruption tools detached from social realities (Mungiu-Pippidi, 2015; Khan, 2006). The study also identifies procurement committees, local executives, and procurement officers as the key actors tasked with ensuring openness and fair competition. While some participants emphasized the importance of ethical behavior and impartial judgment by these actors, others pointed to the discretionary authority of mayors or executives in shaping competitive outcomes.

This dynamic underscores a tension between institutional autonomy and political patronage. In theory, as Kühn and Sherman (2014) note, procurement fairness is contingent on depoliticized, rules-based decision-making by professionalized actors. However, in practice, the central role of local executives—as highlighted by participants—introduces the risk of selective favoritism, especially when procurement decisions align with political cycles or re-election incentives. This reflects the political economy insight that procurement processes are embedded in broader structures of influence and resource distribution (Khan, 2006).

Furthermore, the absence of robust civil society or media oversight in this actor matrix limits the institutional triangulation necessary for open competition. As the OECD (2016) recommends, inclusive procurement requires not just rules and enforcement, but a participatory ecosystem that includes watchdogs, citizen groups, and third-party evaluators. The lack of such actors in this study suggests that openness is often internalized within the bureaucratic apparatus rather than externalized for societal engagement.

While many participants perceived the implementation of fair competition as effective—citing project success, audit approvals, and competitive pricing—this satisfaction appears tied to administrative outputs rather than systemic equity. For example, few participants discussed whether smaller contractors, women-owned businesses, or minority-owned firms could meaningfully participate in tenders. Nor did participants mention the use of redress mechanisms or the transparency of evaluation criteria—key markers of fair process in procurement frameworks (Georgieva, 2017; OECD, 2009).

This suggests a form-substance gap, where the procedural architecture for openness and fairness is in place but is not fully translated into equitable procurement outcomes. As Heggstad and Frøystad (2011) and Søreide (2002) emphasize, corruption can thrive not only in the absence of rules but also under the façade of compliance, particularly when procedural visibility masks underlying capture or collusion. From a collective action perspective (Persson et al., 2013), this limited progress may also reflect the self-reinforcing nature of informal procurement norms. In contexts where a few contractors regularly win bids and networks of mutual benefit dominate procurement practices, even formally fair systems may remain exclusionary or opaque to outsiders.

However, Thailand's challenges in ensuring openness and fair competition in procurement reflect broader regional and global patterns. In Malaysia, studies by Azmi (2023) and Azmi and Ismail (2023) show that despite formal procedures like e-procurement, elite influence and bureaucratic manipulation often distort fair competition, making compliance largely symbolic. This is similar to Thai LGOs, where competitive bidding appears open but tends to favor a limited group of contractors. In Nigeria, Akenroye (2013) and Achua (2011) report that while

regulations promote open access, informal networks and rigged criteria frequently undermine genuine competition. This reflects the Thai context, where technical specifications and decision-making are often tailored to pre-selected suppliers despite official transparency.

By contrast, Uganda presents more constructive lessons. As Basheka (2010, 2021) notes, reforms there emphasize not just procedural change, but also the professionalization of procurement staff and the development of local ethics frameworks. These efforts have helped reduce favoritism and enhance participation—elements still underdeveloped in Thailand’s LGOs. Lastly, Lithuania’s case (Baltrunaite, 2020) illustrates that even in well-regulated systems, political ties and financial influence can compromise fair access—mirroring concerns in Thailand about repeated contractor favoritism. These comparisons suggest that legal compliance alone is insufficient. For openness and fair competition to be effective, they must be backed by institutional integrity, depoliticized enforcement, and broader civic oversight.

Regarding the overall perspectives of participants regarding the effectiveness of implementing openness and fair competition measures, the findings of this study reveal that participants across all stakeholder groups—local officials, elected representatives, and private contractors—generally perceive these measures as structurally mandated but functionally limited within the procurement processes of selected local government organizations (LGOs) in southern Thailand. Participants frequently cited the use of standard competitive bidding procedures, the publication of procurement opportunities, and the enforcement of eligibility and qualification criteria as formal instruments intended to safeguard openness and competitive access.

However, a deeper critical interpretation of participants' perspectives exposes a dual reality. On the surface, openness and fair competition are institutionally enshrined in procurement regulations, but beneath this veneer lies a system in which selective access, information asymmetry, and entrenched networks continue to shape procurement outcomes. Many participants pointed to formal compliance through open bidding announcements and digital disclosure platforms. Nonetheless, they simultaneously acknowledged that these mechanisms are often undermined by insider influence, informal coordination among bidders, and the manipulation of terms of reference to favor pre-determined contractors.

Participants also noted the strategic use of procedural loopholes such as selective bidding or restrictive specifications, which effectively limit real competition while preserving the appearance of openness. Although officials and committee members emphasized fairness in procedural terms, private sector actors expressed skepticism about the neutrality of tender processes, with several referencing patterns of pre-bid collusion and preferential treatment for politically connected firms. This gap between formal regulation and practical experience underscores a pervasive sense of disillusionment, particularly among smaller contractors who perceive the competitive landscape as fundamentally skewed.

Moreover, the implementation of openness measures appears to be heavily reliant on administrative routines rather than proactive transparency or inclusion. For example, while procurement opportunities are publicly posted, several participants highlighted that the critical details—such as evaluation criteria or TOR drafting processes—remain opaque or are disclosed too late for effective engagement. This procedural opacity

restricts the meaningful participation of new entrants and reinforces the advantage of those already embedded in the procurement network.

From an institutional standpoint, participants' views suggest that openness and fair competition are often treated as compliance checkboxes rather than normative commitments to equal opportunity and market integrity. While procurement personnel emphasized their adherence to standardized processes, the underlying culture remains shaped by discretion, familiarity, and risk aversion. As such, the structural frameworks for fair competition are often diluted by informal practices and power asymmetries, resulting in a system that is procedurally open but substantively exclusive.

In brief, the study finds that while openness and fair competition are formally institutionalized through regulatory frameworks—such as the 2017 Procurement Act, digital tendering platforms, and competitive bidding procedures—participants perceive their practical implementation as structurally mandated but functionally constrained. Stakeholders across LGOs—local officials, contractors, and elected representatives—acknowledged the presence of formal procedures, including e-bidding, pre-announced tenders, and eligibility screening. However, a dual reality emerges: these mechanisms are often undermined by informal influence, selective access, and information asymmetries.

Participants noted the use of restrictive specifications, pre-bid collusion, and insider favoritism, which collectively erode genuine competition. Smaller or new bidders are particularly disadvantaged due to opaque terms of reference and limited outreach efforts. The measures in place are frequently procedural rather than transformative, driven more by bureaucratic compliance than by a normative commitment to equitable

access or democratic fairness. As a result, fairness is often symbolic, with rules followed on paper but compromised in practice by entrenched networks and local political discretion.

Moreover, discretionary power of executives, absence of civil society oversight, and lack of focus on inclusivity (e.g., for small or minority-owned firms) further weaken implementation. Participants viewed the outcomes of these measures largely through an administrative and output-based lens (e.g., project success, audit clearance), rather than evaluating their equity or inclusivity. Ultimately, the findings reveal a form–substance gap: procurement systems appear open procedurally but remain exclusionary in effect, constrained by informal norms, limited transparency, and weak external accountability.

8.3 Effects of Existing Efforts to Prevent Corruption in Public Procurement

This previous section discusses the results of the study of the current practices in prevention of corruption in public procurement of the local government organizations. However, this section discusses the issues concerning the effects of existing efforts to prevent corruption in public procurement in selected local government organizations. The effects of existing efforts are being investigated in accordance with the five fundamental principles for preventing corruption in public procurement. The analysis of each principle is divided into two main results. First, the perception of all participants regarding the beneficial effects to the existing efforts in prevention of procurement corruption. Second, the opinions of all participants in terms of the undesirable effects to the existing efforts in prevention of procurement corruption.

8.3.1 The Effects in Promoting Principle of Transparency

This section seeks to explore the effects of promoting transparency in public procurement in selected local government organizations in the southern provinces of Thailand. Additionally, it examines participants' perspectives on the outcomes achieved through the implementation of the principle of transparency in public procurement.

The findings of this study reveal that while selected local government organizations (LGOs) in southern Thailand formally promote transparency as a cornerstone of anti-corruption in public procurement, the implementation outcomes display a dual character—simultaneously fostering normative progress and revealing critical institutional tensions. As discussed in the literature, transparency is widely regarded as a foundational safeguard in public procurement reform, advocated by frameworks from the OECD (2009), ADB & OECD (2006), Parliament of Malaysia (2013), and World Bank (2020) which stress that making procurement information timely, accessible, and comprehensive curtails opportunities for discretion and collusion.

In this study, empirical evidence supports these theoretical claims: participants across all stakeholder groups reported improvements in public trust, procedural fairness, and administrative efficiency. As one participant stated, “Transparency ensures that local people can receive service delivery of the best quality,” while another added, “Operating transparently enables municipalities to generate innovative projects that solve local challenges”. These accounts align with the normative goals of good governance and public value theory, wherein transparency fosters citizen cooperation, enhances institutional legitimacy, and drives service innovation.

More importantly, participants viewed transparency not merely as a procedural requirement but as a transformative mechanism capable of altering entrenched procurement cultures. Echoing Kühn and Sherman's (2014) emphasis on transparency as both a compliance and normative instrument, several participants indicated that transparency "changes traditional practices where bid winners are close to politicians" and "mitigates favoritism or cronyism". These statements support the perspective that transparency can recalibrate the cultural-cognitive norms of local government procurement, aligning with institutional theory's assertion that reform requires shifting both formal structures and informal expectations (Scott, 2001; Heggstad & Frøystad, 2011).

However, the findings temper this optimism. A critical interpretation reveals that transparency, when pursued without sufficient institutional capacity or stakeholder education, can produce unintended consequences—echoing the paradox of transparency discussed in the literature (Halonen, 2016; Bauhr et al., 2019; World Bank, 2024). Participants noted increased administrative workloads, procedural delays, and confusion among citizens and contractors. For example, one noted that implementing transparency demands additional administrative resources, while another observed that it can sometimes lead to political conflict within the municipality. These burdens illustrate the tension between normative aspirations and operational realities. As Adams (2021) argues, the administrative burden of transparency—when inadequately resourced—can demoralize staff and undermine overall effectiveness.

From the theoretical lens of principal-agent theory, these findings underscore a deeper tension. While transparency is designed to reduce information asymmetry and limit

agent opportunism, excessive or poorly managed openness can provoke reputational risks, create performance anxiety among public officials, and inadvertently expose sensitive commercial information (Heggstad & Frøystad, 2011; OECD, 2016). The expressed fear among bidders that “our business information is at risk of being revealed” illustrates this dilemma. Transparency, if implemented as an uncritical procedural ideal, may undermine competitive dynamics by deterring participation—particularly from SMEs—due to confidentiality risks.

Furthermore, institutional theory helps explain the observed implementation gap. Despite the formal promotion of transparency under Thailand’s 2017 Procurement Act, participant narratives suggest that transparency is often interpreted as a compliance obligation rather than a value-driven commitment. As revealed in the data, transparency mechanisms such as online disclosures and audit reports are frequently used as performative tools—rituals to signal legitimacy rather than to enable participatory oversight or systemic change. This reflects what Scott (2008) terms “ceremonial conformity,” where organizations adopt externally imposed reforms for symbolic purposes, without fundamentally altering underlying power relations or decision-making behaviors.

These findings also underscore the lack of adaptive governance strategies that consider contextual complexities, especially in decentralized settings. While frameworks such as those proposed by Krivinsh and Vilks (2013) and the OECD (2009) offer normative guidance, they often overlook the localized political economy in which procurement practices occur. In southern Thailand, where patronage networks and administrative inertia remain entrenched, transparency reforms must be accompanied by targeted capacity-building, procurement literacy initiatives, and political incentives that

encourage behavioral compliance—an insight also emphasized by Khan (2006) and Persson et al. (2013).

Regarding the overall perspectives of participants on the outcomes achieved through the implementation of the principle of transparency in public procurement, the findings of this study reveal a shared perception among stakeholder groups—local officials, elected representatives, and business contractors—that transparency has generated a visible set of institutional improvements, though these outcomes remain uneven, constrained, and occasionally counterproductive in their practical application within selected local government organizations (LGOs) in southern Thailand.

Participants consistently identified the promotion of transparency as a key contributor to strengthening procedural legitimacy, public confidence, and procurement fairness. Local officials described how transparency mechanisms, such as public announcements, e-bidding platforms, and document disclosure, have created opportunities for wider public oversight and reduced perceptions of favoritism or hidden agendas in procurement decisions. For example, participants referenced how making procurement plans publicly available and requiring contractors to disclose information helped deter biased decision-making and political interference. These practices were seen by many as enabling greater citizen trust, enhancing public service responsiveness, and facilitating innovation through fairer market access.

However, a critical interpretation of participant narratives reveals that these outcomes, while acknowledged, are often understood in conditional terms. Transparency is frequently valued more for its symbolic reassurance than for its transformative capacity. While several respondents viewed transparent procurement as a safeguard

against corruption, they also noted that it is not inherently sufficient to eliminate unethical practices, especially when actors learn to manipulate the appearance of transparency to conceal favoritism or pre-determined results. The portrayal of transparency as a “protective shield” rather than an accountability mechanism illustrates how some LGOs rely on it to signal compliance rather than to guarantee ethical procurement outcomes.

Moreover, participants described a set of secondary effects that complicate the transparency narrative. Although openness was generally supported, several respondents noted that it imposed additional workloads, delayed decision-making, and created friction between departments. Contractors, in particular, expressed concerns about the exposure of sensitive business information and perceived that excessive disclosure might discourage competition rather than promote it. Some elected representatives also mentioned that transparency measures inadvertently intensified internal conflicts or led to politically motivated scrutiny that distracted from the procurement’s primary objectives.

These tensions suggest that while the principle of transparency has generated positive procedural effects—such as improved documentation, increased competition, and higher levels of administrative formality—its substantive outcomes are still constrained by deeper organizational limitations. Transparency mechanisms were often implemented as checklist obligations, with limited capacity for interpretation, contextual adaptation, or civic engagement. Consequently, participants’ experiences reflect a pattern where transparency enhances surface-level legitimacy but often lacks the institutional depth to drive sustained accountability or reform entrenched practices.

In sum, the evidence indicates that while selected local government organizations (LGOs) in southern Thailand formally promote transparency in public procurement, the outcomes are marked by both institutional improvements and persistent structural limitations. Participants across stakeholder groups recognized transparency as a tool for enhancing public trust, procedural fairness, and oversight—highlighting mechanisms such as e-bidding and document disclosure. Transparency was also seen as capable of challenging entrenched patronage networks and fostering innovation in service delivery. However, a critical interpretation reveals that these outcomes are uneven and often symbolic. Transparency is frequently treated as a procedural formality rather than a deeply internalized governance value. Participants reported unintended consequences, including administrative burdens, information sensitivity risks, and political tensions. These challenges reflect broader limitations in institutional capacity and cultural readiness. Ultimately, while transparency has increased surface-level legitimacy, its transformative impact is undermined by performative compliance, limited stakeholder engagement, and insufficient adaptation to local contexts.

8.3.2 The Effects in Promoting Principle of Integrity

This section attempts to discuss the effects of promoting integrity in public procurement in selected local government organizations in the southern provinces of Thailand. Furthermore, it evaluates participants' perspectives on the outcomes resulting from the application of the principle of integrity in public procurement.

The findings of this study reveal that while selected local government organizations (LGOs) in southern Thailand formally affirm the principle of integrity in public procurement, the operationalization of this principle exposes a complex interplay

between aspirational ethics and institutional constraints. As Kühn and Sherman (2014) emphasize, integrity is not a static condition of mere legal conformity; rather, it entails the proactive internalization of ethical standards, institutional safeguards, and professional norms across the entire procurement lifecycle. However, evidence from this study suggests that integrity, though broadly endorsed, often functions more as an idealized narrative than as a consistently applied organizational practice.

Participants across stakeholder groups—officials, politicians, and contractors—consistently affirmed that promoting integrity contributes to enhanced public trust and improved service delivery. This perception echoes the normative ideals of good governance theory, which locates integrity at the core of citizen-state relations and views ethical procurement conduct as a foundation for state legitimacy (Krivinsh & Vilks, 2013; OECD, 2009). The reference to increased satisfaction with service delivery and reduced complaints underscores how integrity facilitates procedural clarity and reduces discretionary opacity, thereby strengthening the credibility of procurement processes.

Moreover, integrity was associated with internal organizational development. Participants noted that the principle promotes professional growth, confidence among new procurement staff, and the establishment of ethical guidelines—characteristics in alignment with organizational integrity systems theory (Kühn & Sherman, 2014; UNDP, 2017). This reinforces the idea that integrity is not merely a compliance mechanism but also a source of institutional empowerment, cultivating the ethical competencies necessary to withstand internal and external pressures.

Finally, integrity appears to serve a regulatory buffer, reducing formal complaints, audit scrutiny, and reputational risk. The emphasis on improving ITA scores and avoiding corruption investigations reflects the strategic utility of integrity as a form of reputational governance. In this context, integrity becomes a defensive mechanism—projecting conformity to national standards while minimizing exposure to legal sanctions or political fallout. However, this may also signal the instrumentalization of integrity for bureaucratic or political incentives, raising questions about its substantive depth.

Despite these perceived benefits, the study identifies three sets of undesirable effects that expose the tensions and practical contradictions in applying integrity in complex governance settings.

First, the implementation of integrity often leads to interpersonal conflicts and stakeholder misunderstandings. Participants cited confrontations with bidders, tensions with elected officials, and disputes with citizens—particularly when rules clashed with informal expectations or local patronage ties. These findings are emblematic of institutional theory, which holds that formal norms (like integrity) can provoke resistance when they challenge entrenched informal institutions or local norms (Khan, 2006). The friction between rules-based integrity and relational procurement cultures illustrates that ethical reform is not merely a technical process but a deeply political and cultural shift.

Second, the increased burden on procurement officials—evident in training demands, stress, and reduced personal time—mirrors critiques from the New Public Management (NPM) literature about administrative overload. Integrity reforms, while

well-meaning, may become operationally unsustainable without sufficient institutional support. As noted in the literature (OECD, 2009; Lynch & Angel, 2013; UNDP, 2017), reforms that mandate higher ethical standards must be accompanied by resources, staff capacity, and protection for those enforcing compliance. Otherwise, they risk demotivating frontline officials or creating incentives for passive resistance.

Third, the findings highlight the inflexibility of integrity principles in dynamic or emergency contexts, such as during natural disasters. Several participants pointed to dilemmas where strict adherence to procurement rules inhibited timely service delivery or created internal conflict. This dilemma reflects the limitations of rule-bound approaches in contexts that demand adaptive governance. As Søreide (2002) and Kühn and Sherman (2014) caution, integrity must be balanced with pragmatic flexibility to ensure both legality and responsiveness—especially in high-stakes or politically sensitive environments.

Regarding the overall perspectives of participants on the outcomes achieved through the implementation of the principle of integrity in public procurement, the findings of this study reveal that participants across stakeholder groups—local officials, elected representatives, and private contractors—generally perceive integrity as a foundational value that is officially emphasized and widely incorporated into the formal structure of procurement operations in selected local government organizations (LGOs) in southern Thailand. Participants frequently referenced the presence of ethics guidelines, committee oversight, procurement codes of conduct, and professional conduct policies as standard manifestations of integrity across procurement processes.

From the perspective of many officials and political leaders, integrity was seen as crucial for preserving the legitimacy of procurement decisions, preventing personal liability, and strengthening internal compliance. Participants commonly described integrity initiatives as enhancing internal control, reducing the risk of procurement-related disputes, and contributing to the fair treatment of suppliers. For contractors, integrity measures were associated with greater predictability and fairness in bidding outcomes, even if trust in the system remained conditional. Collectively, these views reflect a shared recognition that integrity—at least as a formal concept—has taken root in the administrative discourse of public procurement and functions as a guiding principle for professional behavior.

However, a more critical interpretation of participants' narratives reveals that the outcomes of integrity implementation are uneven, context-dependent, and often shaped by a tension between normative expectations and bureaucratic realities. While most participants acknowledged the existence of integrity-related practices, their actual implementation was often described as being driven more by regulatory necessity than by deep ethical conviction. Several officials described adhering to integrity frameworks in order to avoid scrutiny or audit findings, rather than as part of a genuine internalization of professional ethics. In this sense, integrity frequently operated as a compliance façade—a performative signal of good governance rather than a substantive transformation of institutional culture.

Participants also raised concerns about the social and organizational trade-offs associated with integrity enforcement. Some reported increased tensions with contractors who resisted procedural transparency or attempted to circumvent ethical guidelines. Others spoke of internal conflicts, fatigue, or fear among procurement

officers who felt exposed when attempting to uphold integrity in politically sensitive contexts. Particularly in smaller LGOs, where power dynamics are personalized and bureaucratic capacity is limited, integrity was often seen as difficult to uphold consistently, especially when it conflicted with implicit expectations of loyalty, patronage, or local political accommodation.

Furthermore, integrity was at times experienced as a rigid framework that constrained discretionary judgment, delayed service delivery, or hindered responsiveness during emergencies. While the commitment to fairness and ethical conduct was broadly endorsed, participants noted that overly stringent adherence to rules could paralyze procurement processes, especially in urgent or exceptional situations. This reveals a fundamental paradox: while integrity is intended to elevate ethical standards and safeguard public interest, its operational effects may inadvertently create friction, delay, or resistance when applied in complex, real-world scenarios.

To conclude, the study reveals that while selected local government organizations (LGOs) in southern Thailand formally endorse the principle of integrity in public procurement, its practical application remains shaped by a tension between aspirational ethics and institutional limitations. Participants across stakeholder groups recognized integrity as central to improving service delivery, enhancing public trust, and fostering professional conduct. Common measures such as ethical guidelines, committee oversight, and codes of conduct were widely referenced as standard tools reinforcing procedural legitimacy and internal compliance. However, a deeper examination of participants' perspectives exposes critical contradictions. Integrity practices were often implemented more out of regulatory obligation than genuine ethical commitment, functioning at times as a symbolic façade rather than a driver of

cultural change. Challenges such as internal conflict, bureaucratic fatigue, and resistance from stakeholders were frequently reported, particularly in settings where integrity measures disrupted entrenched informal norms or political expectations. Moreover, rigid application of integrity rules occasionally obstructed discretionary flexibility and responsiveness, especially in emergency contexts. In addition, while integrity has become a normative fixture within procurement discourse, its implementation remains uneven and contextually fragile—frequently characterized by formal adherence but limited behavioral internalization. The outcomes, though partly positive, are constrained by organizational capacity, cultural inertia, and the strategic instrumentalization of ethics for compliance or reputational purposes.

8.3.3 The Effects in Promoting Principle of Accountability

The aim of this section is to evaluate the issues related to the impacts of implementing the principle of accountability in prevention of public procurement corruption in selected local government organizations in southern province of Thailand. Additionally, this section explores the outcomes resulting from the application of the principle of accountability in public procurement.

The findings of this study reveal that while selected local government organizations (LGOs) in southern Thailand formally profess a commitment to accountability in public procurement, the actual outcomes suggest a complex interplay between normative aspirations and persistent institutional constraints. As Lynch and Angel (2013) and the OECD (2009) emphasize, accountability is not merely about post-hoc scrutiny or regulatory compliance, but rather the proactive assignment of responsibilities, enforcement of consequences, and responsiveness to stakeholder expectations. Yet, the evidence presented in this study suggests that the

implementation of accountability remains uneven and occasionally counterproductive, echoing critiques within the good governance literature that emphasize the over formalization and under-contextualization of reform tools.

Participants widely agreed that the promotion of accountability has improved procurement reliability and public service delivery by clarifying responsibilities and enforcing compliance. Officials, contractors, and elected members alike reported that procedural discipline, documentation accuracy, and adherence to timelines have increased due to clearly assigned roles and oversight mechanisms. These outcomes resonate strongly with the OECD's (2016) notion of accountability as a cornerstone of procurement integrity and with Krivinsh and Vilks's (2013) emphasis on risk reduction through formal control structures.

Moreover, the alignment of accountability practices with institutional transparency and citizen monitoring reflects the synergetic relationship between accountability and other governance principles. For instance, procurement officers' confidence and bidders' trust reportedly increased due to more predictable and traceable procedures, which in turn reinforced community satisfaction and electoral support. These findings illustrate what Kühn and Sherman (2014) describe as "embedded integrity," where accountability functions as both a deterrent and a confidence-building mechanism throughout the procurement cycle.

From a theoretical standpoint, this convergence of perceptions among stakeholders reinforces the principal-agent model's assertion that accountability mechanisms—when properly implemented—can mitigate asymmetries of information and incentive misalignment between officials and the public (Bovis, 2008; Heggstad & Frøystad,

2011; UNOPS, 2012). The findings suggest that accountability, by enhancing documentation, audit preparedness, and performance clarity, helps recalibrate power relationships within the procurement ecosystem toward more equitable outcomes.

Despite its intended benefits, the empirical data also highlight substantial unintended consequences tied to the enforcement of accountability. As reported by multiple participants, the burden of documenting every procurement detail, fear of disciplinary action, and perceived over-surveillance create a culture of procedural rigidity and emotional fatigue among procurement officials. This mirrors critiques by Bauhr et al. (2019) and Halonen (2016), who argue that excessive formalism in anti-corruption strategies can produce a “compliance paradox” where the sheer weight of rules demotivates public servants or leads to superficial box-ticking.

These unintended effects point to a misalignment between the formal mechanisms of accountability and the contextual capacities of local governance systems in Thailand. According to institutional theory, the transplantation of rules without corresponding cultural and structural adaptation often results in ceremonial compliance rather than substantive reform (Mungiu-Pippidi, 2015; Khan, 2006). This was clearly illustrated in participant comments regarding documentation anxiety, hesitation in decision-making, and fears of retrospective penalties—symptoms of a risk-averse institutional culture rather than a confident, performance-oriented procurement environment.

Moreover, these concerns are magnified during emergencies or exceptional procurement situations, where strict rule-following may hinder timely service delivery. Such challenges reflect a tension between accountability and flexibility—highlighted

by ADB & OECD (2006) and UNDP (2007)—where rigid controls, while deterring corruption, may undermine adaptive governance in crisis scenarios.

Another key insight from this section is the divergent emphasis placed on accountability by different stakeholder groups. Local officials, especially procurement staff, tend to associate accountability with bureaucratic exposure and workload intensification. In contrast, elected representatives and contractors largely view it as a fairness and compliance safeguard. This divergence reflects the differential risk calculus across actors—a phenomenon explained by the political economy perspective (Khan, 2006), where actors with differing levels of authority, risk exposure, and incentive alignment interpret accountability structures through distinct strategic lenses.

Such discrepancies suggest that accountability reforms need to be designed with both top-down institutional controls and bottom-up participatory engagement mechanisms. This would allow for more context-sensitive applications of rules, mitigate the perception of punitive oversight, and enhance procedural legitimacy.

Regarding the overall perspectives of participants on the outcomes achieved through the implementation of the principle of accountability in public procurement, the findings of this study reveal a broadly affirmative yet critically nuanced view among local officials, elected representatives, and private contractors. Participants across stakeholder groups widely recognized that accountability mechanisms—such as role delineation, procurement committee oversight, and formal reporting obligations—had contributed to tangible improvements in procurement discipline, procedural clarity, and service reliability within local government organizations (LGOs) in southern Thailand. These mechanisms were credited with reducing ambiguity in procurement

responsibilities, enhancing traceability of decisions, and mitigating opportunities for unchecked discretion, thereby promoting public confidence and internal administrative coherence.

However, a closer interpretation of participants' perspectives uncovers a deeper tension between the perceived benefits of accountability and the practical strains of its enforcement. While many participants valued the sense of order and transparency that accountability tools instilled, procurement staff in particular expressed a growing sense of procedural fatigue and emotional strain. They reported increased workloads stemming from excessive documentation demands, overlapping reporting systems, and heightened fear of retrospective scrutiny. These sentiments point to an emerging paradox: the very instruments intended to enhance responsible governance may also risk undermining morale, initiative, and adaptive responsiveness among procurement actors—especially in smaller municipalities with limited human and technical resources.

Furthermore, the effectiveness of accountability measures appeared to vary by stakeholder position and institutional capacity. Elected officials often viewed these mechanisms as tools for legitimacy and citizen engagement, while contractors saw them as necessary for fair competition. Nevertheless, procurement officials frequently experienced them as burdensome obligations, detached from pragmatic realities. This divergence in perspective suggests that while the outcomes of accountability are generally regarded as positive in principle, their implementation is not uniformly empowering in practice.

Notably, participants highlighted a tendency for accountability measures to promote defensive administrative behavior. Rather than fostering innovation or proactive procurement planning, some officials reported becoming risk-averse, opting for the safest procedural routes even when they compromised efficiency. In this way, the implementation of accountability mechanisms has paradoxically led to both improved documentation and slowed responsiveness, revealing the dual-edge nature of rule-based reforms.

In brief, the implementation of accountability in public procurement across selected LGOs in southern Thailand has yielded both positive outcomes and notable challenges. Participants widely acknowledged improvements in procurement discipline, transparency, and service delivery, crediting accountability mechanisms—such as clear role assignments, oversight committees, and documentation practices—for enhancing procedural clarity and reducing corruption risks. However, a deeper analysis reveals that these gains are tempered by practical burdens, especially for procurement officials who face increased workloads, emotional fatigue, and a risk-averse environment. Stakeholders expressed divergent views: while elected representatives and contractors saw accountability as a tool for fairness and legitimacy, officials experienced it as bureaucratically burdensome. This tension has resulted in defensive behavior, procedural rigidity, and reduced innovation, especially during emergencies. Overall, accountability is seen as valuable but unevenly empowering, highlighting the need for more context-sensitive and participatory reforms.

8.3.4 The Effects in Promoting Principle of Prevention of Misconduct

The emphasis of this section is to address concerns regarding the impacts of implementing the principle of prevention of misconduct in public procurement within

selected local government organizations in the southern provinces of Thailand. It also covers the overall results of applying the principle of prevention of misconduct in public procurement.

In accordance with the results of this study, while selected local government organizations (LGOs) in southern Thailand publicly affirm their commitment to the principle of preventing misconduct in public procurement, their actual implementation demonstrates a fragmented and often ceremonial approach. As Kühn and Sherman (2014) emphasize, misconduct prevention is not solely a matter of compliance with procedural safeguards but requires proactive mechanisms such as ethical training, robust oversight, and internal integrity systems. However, the evidence suggests that in practice, LGOs tend to rely on formalistic measures—such as document checks, post-facto reviews, and administrative audits—without embedding a deeper culture of vigilance or ethical reflection.

Participants across stakeholder groups—officials, politicians, and contractors—reported that promoting misconduct prevention has led to increased legal compliance, enhanced procedural accuracy, and better audit outcomes. This aligns with the frameworks outlined by Krivinsh and Vilks (2013) and UNDP (2017), who assert that misconduct prevention entails reducing risks throughout the procurement cycle by integrating risk-based verification, impartial supervision, and ethics-driven professionalization.

Statements such as "officials are now more cautious with documentation" or "risk of complaint has decreased" reflect a growing procedural discipline. However, these benefits appear concentrated in administrative domains, where the emphasis is on

avoiding litigation and audit sanctions rather than cultivating a genuinely ethical procurement ethos. This reflects what institutional theorists describe as "isomorphic mimicry"—where organizations adopt externally imposed standards without genuine behavioral transformation (Mungiu-Pippidi, 2015).

Moreover, several participants noted that misconduct prevention mechanisms have improved technical and procedural knowledge among procurement personnel. This corresponds with the OECD's (2009) emphasis on internal capacity-building as a core element of corruption prevention, particularly in developing-country settings where procurement officers often lack training in both regulatory compliance and ethical reasoning.

These procedural and capacity benefits suggest partial success. Yet, from a principal-agent theoretical lens, such outcomes still fall short of reducing deep-rooted information asymmetries and opportunistic behavior—particularly where oversight remains weak or politicized. Misconduct prevention, in these cases, functions more as a compliance shield than a behavioral deterrent.

Despite the above gains, participants also reported several undesirable consequences. One recurring theme is administrative fatigue and resistance among procurement staff. As emphasized in UNODC (2013) and OECD (2016) reflected in participant accounts, the burdens of reporting, record-keeping, and procedural conformity often overwhelm limited human resources, resulting in stress, delays, and procedural rigidity. Such unintended burdens are consistent with critiques of technocratic anti-corruption reforms that prioritize compliance over capacity (Khan, 2006).

Participants also noted that misconduct prevention measures can produce friction between civil servants and political executives, particularly when officials seek to enforce rules that constrain discretionary power. This tension resonates with institutional theory, which posits that reform measures often clash with entrenched informal practices, including patronage, favoritism, and elite interference (Søreide, 2002; Khan, 2006). Where political incentives are misaligned with procurement integrity, officials find themselves navigating contradictory pressures—adhering to legal rules while managing executive expectations.

Furthermore, the findings highlight contextual constraints in enforcing misconduct prevention during emergencies, such as natural disasters or political crises. Participants expressed that rigid adherence to rules in these contexts may delay procurement or lead to suboptimal outcomes. This illustrates the limits of “one-size-fits-all” frameworks, particularly in decentralized settings where local discretion is essential for timely service delivery. As Persson et al. (2013) argue, in contexts where corruption is systemic, rule-based strategies alone are insufficient unless they are complemented by cultural change and collective norm shifts.

Regarding participants’ perspectives on the outcomes achieved through the implementation of misconduct prevention measures, the findings of this study reveal a nuanced and ambivalent landscape. Participants across stakeholder groups—local officials, elected representatives, and private contractors—acknowledged a range of both positive and negative effects resulting from the institutionalization of misconduct prevention in public procurement processes within selected local government organizations (LGOs) in southern Thailand.

On the one hand, there was a broad consensus that the adoption of misconduct prevention practices has led to observable improvements in documentation integrity, legal compliance, and procedural accuracy. Participants emphasized that training sessions, pre-procurement checks, and post-procurement audits have collectively enhanced internal awareness of procurement regulations. These measures, according to participants, have contributed to a heightened sense of caution among procurement staff and have reduced overt forms of irregularities in routine purchasing decisions. The outcomes are particularly evident in reduced administrative mistakes and better preparedness for inspection or review. Officials commonly referred to a greater emphasis on "doing things right," highlighting an emerging procedural discipline within procurement teams.

However, a more critical reading of participants' reflections suggests that these outcomes are predominantly procedural rather than transformational. The emphasis on rule-following and documentation appears to stem from fear of sanctions or reputational damage rather than from a deep-seated ethical commitment. Many participants expressed that misconduct prevention has been effective in "cleaning up" surface-level irregularities, but has had limited influence on the deeper behavioral norms or power dynamics that enable misconduct. In several accounts, misconduct prevention was described as a burden or formality rather than an empowering tool—suggesting that implementation is often mechanical and motivated by external compliance pressures.

Moreover, participants highlighted unintended consequences such as administrative overload, stress among staff, and strategic avoidance of complex procurement decisions out of fear of making mistakes. Some officials indicated that rigid adherence

to misconduct prevention protocols has paradoxically led to decision-making paralysis, where even routine procurement processes are delayed due to an excessive preoccupation with avoiding errors or accusations. These concerns point to a potential misalignment between policy intent and practical execution, where the fear of procedural missteps overshadows the goal of cultivating ethical conduct.

Another dimension of participants' insights pertains to the inconsistent application of misconduct prevention measures across departments and projects. While some units have embraced misconduct prevention through training and monitoring, others apply it selectively or superficially. Participants attributed this inconsistency to differences in leadership priorities, resource availability, and local political pressures. As a result, while the structural presence of misconduct prevention is generally acknowledged, its behavioral and cultural entrenchment remains uneven.

In summary, while selected LGOs in southern Thailand formally promote misconduct prevention in public procurement, the actual implementation is often fragmented and ceremonial. Participants acknowledged improvements in legal compliance, documentation quality, and audit preparedness—largely due to increased training, oversight, and administrative discipline. However, these outcomes are primarily procedural and driven by compliance pressures rather than genuine ethical commitment. Critically, misconduct prevention is frequently perceived as a bureaucratic burden rather than an empowering reform, with unintended consequences including administrative overload, decision-making paralysis, and friction between officials and political executives. Implementation is also inconsistent across departments, often shaped by leadership styles and local political dynamics. Overall,

the structural mechanisms of misconduct prevention are in place, but their behavioral and cultural internalization remains limited and uneven.

8.3.5 The Effects in Promoting Principle of Openness and Fair Competition

This section highlights the discussion on the effects of preventing public procurement corruption by applying the principle of openness and fair competition in public procurement within selected local government organizations in the southern province of Thailand. It also examines the overall outcomes after implementing the principle of openness and fair competition.

The findings of this study reveal that while selected local government organizations (LGOs) in southern Thailand publicly affirm a commitment to promoting the principle of openness and fair competition in public procurement, their actual practices reveal structural and contextual limitations that undermine this principle's transformative potential. As Krivinsh and Vilks (2013) underscore, fair competition entails the impartial treatment of all bidders, elimination of discriminatory barriers, and creation of an inclusive bidding environment. Nevertheless, the implementation observed in this study reflects a constrained vision of fairness—dominated by procedural compliance and technological tools—rather than a comprehensive embrace of equitable opportunity and impartiality.

Participants from across stakeholder groups—public officials, elected members, and contractors—reported several positive outcomes resulting from the promotion of fair competition. These include improved bidding diversity, procedural clarity, and enhanced credibility of procurement processes. Statements such as “New

entrepreneurs now have access to procurement opportunities” and “Bid evaluations are based strictly on specifications” reflect a perceived leveling of the playing field.

These findings echo Kühn and Sherman’s (2014) framework, which highlights fairness as essential not only for integrity but for institutional legitimacy. When fair competition is meaningfully implemented, it supports good governance by minimizing favoritism and strengthening public confidence in the procurement process (Lynch & Angel, 2013; Czajkowska, 2013). Furthermore, the study’s accounts demonstrate that digital platforms like the e-GP system have facilitated procedural openness, a phenomenon consistent with the OECD’s (2009) emphasis on using technological tools to reduce discretion and promote equitable participation.

However, these outcomes must be understood as incremental improvements rather than systemic transformation. The perceived benefits—such as standardized criteria, increased bidder engagement, and more predictable timelines—represent a shift toward formal fairness, but not necessarily substantive equity. That is, while rules may be uniformly applied, structural asymmetries—such as unequal access to information, capacity differences among bidders, and informal patronage networks—remain largely unaddressed.

From a theoretical standpoint, these findings align with principal-agent theory, wherein increased procedural clarity and digital oversight reduce the space for discretionary manipulation by procurement agents. Nonetheless, as Søreide (2002) and Heggstad & Frøystad (2011) warn, the existence of rules and platforms alone is insufficient; without robust institutional enforcement and normative change, fair competition risks being ceremonial rather than functional.

Despite the stated benefits, several participants expressed concerns about the unintended consequences of promoting fair competition, particularly when it is pursued without contextual sensitivity or adequate support mechanisms. Reports of “contractor discouragement due to excessive regulation” or “procurement delays caused by complaints over unfair disqualification” suggest that efforts to enforce fairness can backfire when stakeholders perceive the process as either overly rigid or insufficiently transparent.

This paradox is not uncommon in developing procurement systems. As discussed in the literature, ADB & OECD (2006) and OECD (2016) caution that regulatory complexity and formal compliance can inadvertently exclude smaller firms, particularly those lacking technical or legal sophistication. Moreover, overly legalistic approaches may create procedural bottlenecks, discourage innovation, and increase the administrative burden on procurement officers, mirroring critiques from the New Public Management perspective.

In addition, the study highlights a key tension between fairness and local discretion. Participants noted instances where strict adherence to formal rules clashed with local political realities or urgent community needs, such as in emergency procurement or when dealing with community-preferred suppliers. These dilemmas reflect the institutional theory insight that formal rules are often adapted, circumvented, or selectively enforced based on informal norms, political pressures, or administrative capacity (Khan, 2006; Heggstad & Frøystad, 2011; UNDP, 2017).

Notably, some contractors perceived that fairness in name did not always translate into fairness in practice. Complaints about persistent favoring of insiders or hidden criteria

illustrate the problem of symbolic compliance, where procedural forms of fairness are maintained without corresponding substantive impartiality. This aligns with Krivinish and Vilks (2013), who warn that without active oversight, fairness risks becoming a rhetorical device rather than a lived procurement reality.

Regarding the overall perspectives of participants on the outcomes achieved through the implementation of the principle of openness and fair competition, the findings of this study reveal that participants across stakeholder groups—public officials, elected representatives, and private contractors—largely view these efforts as beneficial in enhancing procedural transparency, widening access to procurement opportunities, and mitigating obvious favoritism in the bidding process. Participants consistently referenced measures such as the use of digital platforms (e.g., e-GP), the enforcement of competitive bidding rules, and the public announcement of procurement plans as evidence of meaningful progress in promoting openness and inclusivity within procurement cycles.

However, a deeply critical interpretation of these perspectives exposes an underlying ambivalence: while the formal instruments of fair competition are widely acknowledged and often praised, their operational effectiveness is perceived to be tempered by structural, behavioral, and contextual limitations. Many participants conveyed a belief that openness has enabled new or previously excluded contractors to access procurement opportunities, yet simultaneously emphasized that long-standing informal networks, local patronage relationships, and political interference continue to influence final outcomes—albeit in more concealed forms.

This duality is especially evident in the way participants described the impact of fairness mechanisms. On one hand, they cited clearer rules, reduced bias in evaluations, and standardized criteria as fostering trust and participation. On the other hand, several officials and contractors noted that over-formalization, excessive documentation, and recurring technical disqualifications often created entry barriers for smaller or less experienced bidders—leading some to perceive the system as fair in form but exclusionary in effect.

Additionally, elected representatives expressed concerns that the drive for competitive openness, when executed without adequate discretion or contextual sensitivity, may inadvertently delay project delivery and strain local administrative capacity. For instance, complaints processes and appeals were mentioned as tools to ensure fairness, but also as sources of procurement bottlenecks and budget inefficiencies when abused or politicized. These concerns suggest a pragmatic view among participants: openness is necessary, but only effective when accompanied by responsive support systems and procedural flexibility.

Furthermore, contractors voiced skepticism about the extent to which fair competition translates into real opportunity, especially in environments where certain firms appear to consistently win bids despite ostensibly open processes. This pattern reinforces a shared sentiment that the presence of openness and fairness mechanisms does not automatically eliminate favoritism or collusion but may instead redirect it into more subtle or strategic forms that are harder to detect or challenge.

In conclusion, the findings of this study indicate that although local government organizations (LGOs) in southern Thailand formally promote openness and fair

competition in public procurement, their actual practices remain constrained by structural and contextual challenges. Participants acknowledged several positive developments, including enhanced procedural transparency, expanded access for bidders, and a reduction in overt favoritism—primarily driven by digital platforms and competitive bidding regulations. Nonetheless, a deeper analysis reveals enduring concerns. The implementation of fairness mechanisms often fails to address underlying inequities such as entrenched patronage networks, frequent technical disqualifications, and rigid bureaucratic procedures. As a result, stakeholders perceived these reforms as procedurally sound but, at times, substantively exclusionary—particularly for smaller or less experienced contractors. Ultimately, participants expressed cautious optimism: while they recognized gradual improvements, many remained skeptical that these reforms could fully dismantle longstanding informal practices.

8.4 The Impediment Factors in Public Procurement Corruption Prevention

This section aims to discuss the impediments to the effective prevention of corruption in public procurement within selected local government organizations in the southern provinces of Thailand. The findings revealed 15 key impediment factors, which relate to five core principles essential for preventing corruption in public procurement. These impediments reflect limitations within the existing procurement system, unfavorable conditions specific to local government contexts, and operational challenges throughout the procurement cycle. The 15 impediment factors are presented in Figure 8.1.

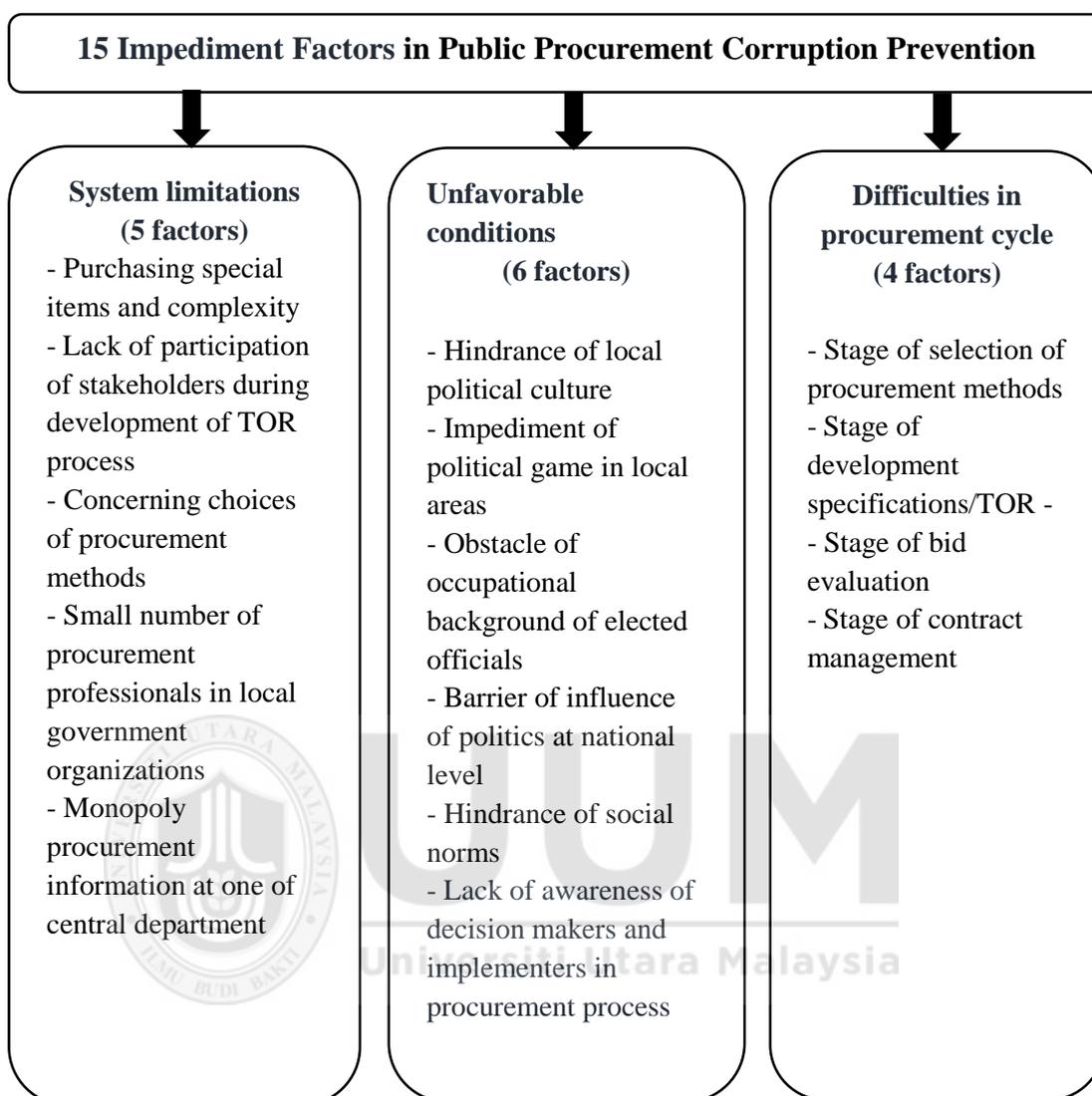


Figure 8.1 Impediment Factors for Effective Public Procurement Corruption Prevention

8.4.1 Public Procurement System Limitations

The findings of the current study identified five major impediments related to the limitations of the public procurement system, which hindered effective corruption prevention in public procurement within selected local government organizations in the southern provinces of Thailand. The first and most significant factor was the lack of stakeholder participation during the development of the Terms of Reference (TOR)

process. This finding is consistent with numerous studies that highlight the requirements development phase as a high-risk stage for corruption. This factor aligned with Transparency International UK (2013) and OECD (2016), which stated that corruption can occur when procurement requirements or technical specifications favor a specific company, selection criteria lack clarity, or stakeholders are not allowed to discuss the criteria. The second limitation of the procurement system was the choice of procurement methods, particularly specific purchasing method, which can increase corruption risks in local governments. This finding concurs with UNODC (2013), which emphasized that procurement methods directly affect corruption risks.

Additionally, the third limitation of the public procurement system was the purchase of special items, where complexity allowed the application of a specific procurement method. This result aligns with UNODC's (2013) suggestion that specific procurement methods related to national defense or security carry the highest risk of corruption and favoritism. Therefore, such methods should only be used in exceptional cases where strictly necessary. However, the fourth limitation related with small number of procurement professionals in local government organizations. The results correspond with the recommendations by Kühn and Sherman (2014), which identified that procurement should be treated as a professional function rather than an administrative duty. When officials receive low pay, inadequate training, or lack a clear career path, the risk of potential corruption increases. The last limitation concerns the monopoly of procurement information within one of the central departments. This result is consistent with UNODC's (2013) findings, which indicated that the central authority cannot oversee everyone. To enhance efficiency, governments need to give line officials the responsibility to supervise each other and offer incentives to encourage them to report issues instead of colluding.

8.4.2 Unfavorable Conditions of Local Government Context

The results of the current study exposed the six major impediment factors related to the unfavorable conditions of local government context which impeded the effective public procurement corruption prevention in selected local government organizations in southern provinces of Thailand. The first was hindrance of local political culture. This study identified a hindering factor that aligns with previous research, indicating that local political culture, especially patronage systems, contributes to corruption risks in the procurement process. Transparency International UK (2013) emphasized this concern, stating that council leaders wield significant patronage power, which can create opportunities for corruption. The second was impediment of political game in local areas. The result correspondent to Jackson and Amundsen (2022) mentioned that certain political figures can exploit and repurpose anti-corruption in public procurement as tools to threaten opponents and competitors while ensuring their own immunity and protection. While, the third was obstacle of occupational background of elected officials. This finding was also reported by the Independent Broad-based Anti-corruption Commission (2019), which identified that executives who engage in business or professional activities are at a high risk of experiencing conflicts of interest.

Besides, the fourth barrier was the influence of politics at the national level. This finding aligned with the study by OECD (2021), which pointed out that national political parties often treat local governments as arenas for political games, testing their power, securing the interests of their personnel at the local level, and engaging in political bargaining. Next, the fifth was hindrance of social norm. The result corresponded with Povitkina (2020), who highlighted that the existence of a social norm making transactional politics acceptable is driven by overlapping social and

economic ties between patron-politicians and client-voters. The last of unfavorable condition was lack of awareness of decision makers and implementers in procurement process. This result also resonated with the investigation by the Independent Broad-based Anti-corruption Commission (2019), which pointed out that a lack of awareness among senior executives leads to poor management of conflicts of interest and is insufficient to prevent corruption.

8.4.3 Difficulties in Public Procurement Cycle

The results of the current study exposed the four major impediment factors related to the difficulties in public procurement cycle which are obstacle the effective public procurement corruption prevention in selected local government organizations in southern provinces of Thailand. The first difficulty was the stage of selection choice of procurement methods. This impediment factor corresponds with the studies by UNODC (2013) and OECD (2016), which revealed that the selection of the procurement procedure is one of the riskiest stages, especially when procurement officers choose negotiated procedures or single-source procurement without proper justification or abuse them based on legal exceptions and special circumstances. Then, the second difficulty was the stage of development specifications/TOR. The finding was also supported by the study conducted by Oluka and Ssenoga (2008), which provided evidence that the stage of product design and document preparation is the most difficult for corruption prevention, as collusion is frequently observed during this stage. Moreover, the OECD (2016) pointed out that the stage of developing specifications often involves tailoring technical specifications for a specific company. Furthermore, the third difficulty was the stage of bid evaluation. This finding aligned with UNODC's (2013) recommendation that bidders should only be evaluated based

on pre-disclosed requirements. Non-responsive bids must be rejected. Procurement rules sometimes allow correction of minor, unintentional errors, but only in exceptional cases. Allowing corrections may unfairly benefit a bidder. However, the last difficulty was stage of contract management. The result corresponded to the finding of UNODC (2013), which highlighted that corruption risks in the procurement cycle increase significantly after a contract has been awarded. Following contract conclusion, the specifications or scope of work are often changed, and contractors often do not fulfill their contractual duties. When there is an agreement between the contractor and a corrupt public official, deviations from the agreed terms, such as substandard performance, may go unaddressed. In addition, Oluka and Ssenoga (2008) referred to the difficulty of the contract management stage, which arises from poor evaluation of contract performance and inadequate oversight of works, leading to corrupt practices such as contractor bribing officials.

Regarding the overall perspectives of participants on the impediments to effective corruption prevention in public procurement. The findings of this study reveal that participants across all stakeholder groups—local officials, elected representatives, private contractors, and civil society actors—perceive the challenges to corruption prevention not as isolated obstacles, but as interdependent, mutually reinforcing constraints embedded within the local procurement ecosystem. While they identify distinct technical, institutional, and political impediments, a closer reading of their accounts reveals that these barriers form a cohesive architecture of vulnerability that undermines integrity efforts across the procurement cycle.

The participants identified a fractured institutional foundation within the public procurement system—characterized by technical complexity, procedural loopholes,

and insufficient professional expertise. Yet these limitations do not exist in silos. For example, the technical intricacies of high-value or specialized procurements, such as machinery and infrastructure, require skilled staff to ensure fairness and competitiveness. However, a chronic shortage of trained procurement professionals means that such complex tenders are often managed by generalists without adequate expertise, leading to errors, oversights, or intentional manipulation.

This capacity vacuum directly interacts with the opaque development of Terms of Reference (TORs), where local officials, acting without stakeholder input or independent review, design specifications that are easily skewed to favor particular bidders. TORs thus become both a product of limited expertise and a vehicle for strategic exclusion. In turn, the vulnerability in TOR design feeds into biased procurement method selection, where officials deploy flexible, legally permissible methods that are poorly regulated, thereby reinforcing favoritism under the guise of procedural compliance.

Moreover, this institutional fragility is exacerbated by the over centralization of procurement information, which diminishes transparency and narrows avenues for scrutiny. When procurement data is monopolized by a central authority, local actors—whether contractors or watchdog organizations—are denied the means to verify decisions or contest irregularities. This not only limits external accountability but also incentivizes internal collusion, since actors are aware that oversight is diffuse or delayed.

Beyond structural weaknesses, participants highlighted the powerful role of local political culture in shaping procurement outcomes. Favor-exchange norms, gift-giving

traditions, and social expectations bind local politicians and community members in informal networks of obligation that undercut formal procurement rules. These relationships normalize the prioritization of private loyalty over public interest, making corruption prevention measures appear misaligned with lived political realities.

The politicization of procurement is further entrenched by rivalrous electoral dynamics, where procurement scandals are deliberately weaponized to damage opponents. This condition disincentivizes genuine transparency, as political actors fear that open processes may be twisted into accusations. Instead of promoting accountability, anti-corruption mechanisms are perceived as tools of political warfare, thereby weakening their legitimacy and encouraging non-cooperation.

Additionally, the conflict of interest inherent in the occupational backgrounds of some local executives—especially those with construction business ties—blurs the boundaries between public office and private enterprise. This convergence creates a dual incentive structure: public office is not just a platform for serving constituents but also a lever for self-enrichment. In such contexts, procurement becomes an extension of private business strategy, and anti-corruption regulations are either bypassed or manipulated.

Importantly, these local conditions are not insulated from national-level dynamics. Participants observed that central government directives often override local discretion, including instructions to use particular suppliers or brands. This top-down interference reduces local ownership of procurement decisions, while also embedding political patronage into procurement outcomes. The result is a dual accountability

failure—local governments cannot assert full control, and citizens cannot hold them accountable for decisions shaped by external actors.

Participants mapped corruption risks across the full procurement cycle, from method selection to contract implementation. However, what emerges is not merely a sequence of risky stages, but a continuum of cascading vulnerabilities, where failure at one stage amplifies risks at the next.

For instance, the discretion granted in selecting procurement methods, particularly selection and specific procedures, sets the tone for favoritism and non-competitive bidding. Once this door is opened, TOR development becomes the next point of manipulation, with narrow or biased specifications ensuring that only certain bidders qualify. This manipulation is often shielded from scrutiny due to lack of stakeholder participation and the technical opacity of specification writing.

Subsequently, bid evaluation occurs in a context already tilted in favor of preselected contractors, and the lack of external observers allows collusion between officials and bidders to flourish. The cycle culminates in contract management, where monitoring bodies may turn a blind eye to substandard performance or renegotiated terms, particularly if the contractor is politically connected. Thus, each stage of the procurement process compounds the failures of the last, forming an ecosystem where corruption is not incidental but structurally enabled.

What becomes evident from the participants' perspectives is that no single impediment operates in isolation. The technical limitations of the system feed into procedural manipulation. These, in turn, are shielded by cultural norms that treat corruption as customary or even expected. Meanwhile, political interests—local and national—

create a volatile environment where procurement decisions are driven by strategic calculations rather than merit. These dynamics interact in feedback loops, producing institutional paralysis.

For example, a weak procurement team might defer to a powerful executive, who then selects a non-competitive procurement method. The TOR is written narrowly, bidders are excluded or discouraged, and only favored contractors remain. During bid evaluation, lack of oversight allows favoritism to continue unchallenged, and the contract is eventually awarded under terms that can be informally adjusted during execution. Each decision, though seemingly legal on its own, becomes part of a coordinated pattern of informal capture.

Ultimately, these insights suggest that corruption in local procurement is not merely a governance failure, but a manifestation of a deeper institutional disorder, where formal rules exist but are regularly overridden by informal practices, weak capacities, and conflicting incentives. Without holistic reform that addresses these layers simultaneously—strengthening professional capacity, insulating technical decisions from political influence, decentralizing control, and challenging entrenched norms—anti-corruption efforts will remain symbolic rather than transformative.

8.5 The Strategies to Prevent Corruption in Public Procurement

This research identified 17 core strategies that the selected local government organizations in southern provinces of Thailand will apply for dealing with the prevention of corruption in public procurement. The participants raised many issues that needed considerations comprised the issues of core strategies in public procurement system, public procurement in local government context, public

procurement steps and other suggestion strategies. The 17 core strategies are summarized in Table 8.1

Table 8.1
The Strategies to Prevent Corruption in Public Procurement

Operative movements	Themes	Strategies
Public procurement system	The efficient systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Establishing legal and regulatory framework based on local conditions - Enhancing institutional framework by setting area regulatory bodies - Strengthening operational capacity to enhance procurement professionalism - Strengthening control structures and integrity mechanisms outside the area of public procurement process



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Operative movements	Themes	Strategies
Public procurement in local government context	The comprehensive approaches	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Encouraging political leaders demonstrate political commitment to the public - Allowing public participation by opening public discussion at the crucial stage of procurement process - Using advanced technologies for ensuring transparency and preventing mistakes from procurement officials - Educating the significant of internal control system in local

government organizations
to the local executives
and local officials

Operative movements	Themes	Strategies
Public procurement practical steps	Procurement cycle	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Making transparency by allowing citizens and stakeholders to participate and observe every stage during the pre-bidding phase - Encouraging sufficient training for public procurement officials - Promoting culture of integrity and using integrity pact mechanism during the bidding phase - Complying with contract agreements - Encouraging sufficient supervision records and appointing different officials form prior phase



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Operative movements	Themes	Strategies
Other suggestions	Additional strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Intensifying financial monitoring - Implementing the separation of duties and rotation of procurement officials - Using the audits to identify any blind spots in procurement process - Ensuring the accuracy of information management for promoting transparency in all stages of public procurement process

-
- Strengthening approval process in supervision of all procurement activities
 - Ensuring the effective of complains and investigation system
-

8.5.1 Movements in Public Procurement System

The component regarding the movements of the public procurement system comprised establishing a legal and regulatory framework based on local conditions, enhancing the institutional framework by setting up regional regulatory bodies, strengthening operational capacity to improve procurement professionalism, and reinforcing control structures and integrity mechanisms outside the public procurement process.

The study revealed the first strategy for strengthening corruption prevention in public procurement was the establishing a legal and regulatory framework based on local conditions by extending to consider the socio-economic context of each area, allowing for stakeholder participation and decentralizing the functions and authorities of committees. This approach contrasted with Basheka's (2009) study, which highlighted the risk of diverse practices and potentially inconsistent regulations emerging in a decentralized system. Ideally, however, bidders should face standardized procedures when competing for contracts nationwide. Next, the second strategy was enhancing the institutional framework by setting up regional regulatory bodies. This mechanism corresponded with the study by Kajimbwa (2018), which found that the establishment of the Public Procurement Regulatory Authority (PPRA) granted oversight powers and responsibilities over all public procurement activities conducted by public bodies in mainland Tanzania.

Besides, the third strategy focused on strengthening operational capacity to enhance procurement professionalism. This finding aligned with the recommendation by the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe (2018), which emphasized the need for highly trained and capable professionals in local government to manage complex procurement processes effectively while safeguarding the public interest. The final strategy focused on strengthening control structures and integrity mechanisms beyond the public procurement process. This finding aligns with the recommendation of UNODC (2013), which emphasized that both the public and private sectors should involve only qualified, honest, and skilled personnel in public procurement. Additionally, staff must receive proper training to navigate complex legal frameworks, including procurement and anti-corruption laws.

8.5.2 Movements in Local Government Context

The strategies concern about the movements in local government context comprised encouraging political leaders demonstrate political commitment to the public, allowing public participation by opening public discussion at the crucial stage of procurement process, using advanced technologies for ensuring transparency and preventing mistakes from procurement officials, educating the significant of internal control system in local government organizations to the local executives and local officials.

The findings revealed the first approach for promoting corruption prevention in public procurement was encouraging political leaders demonstrate political commitment to the public. This result corresponded to the recommendation by OECD (2021), which stated that corruption's political risk factors are hard to address because eliminating them requires not just anti-corruption policies but also a supportive political culture, effective democratic mechanisms, and genuine commitment from political leaders.

The next approach was allowing public participation by opening public discussion at the crucial stage of procurement process. This result conformed to the study of Basheka et al. (2015) which identified that involving citizens at critical stages of the public procurement process is an effective strategy for preventing corruption in public procurement.

Then the third approach focused on using advanced technologies for ensuring transparency and preventing mistakes from procurement officials. This finding aligned with several studies that recognize the adoption of new technologies as an effective strategy for preventing corruption in public procurement (Kühn & Sherman, 2014; Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe, 2018; Schöberlein & Jenkins, 2019). The last approach emphasized educating local executives and officials on the importance of the internal control system in local government organizations. This finding was consistent with the explanation provided by Transparency International UK (2013) and Purcell (2016), which call for strengthening internal control systems and promoting awareness among local executives and officials responsible for procurement, as local governments often exhibit deficiencies in these areas.

8.5.3 Movements in Practical Steps

The mechanism concerning the movements in practical steps consist of the topic of making transparency by allowing citizens and stakeholders to participate and observe every stage during the pre-bidding phase, encouraging sufficient training for public procurement officials, promoting culture of integrity and using integrity pact mechanism during the bidding phase, complying with contract agreements,

encouraging sufficient supervision records and appointing different officials form prior phase.

The findings revealed the first mechanism for facilitating corruption prevention in public procurement was making transparency by allowing citizens and stakeholders to participate and observe every stage during the pre-bidding phase. This mechanism aligned with various studies that have identified direct citizen and stakeholder control at the risky stages of public procurement process as an essential component for the effective of corruption prevention in public procurement (ADB & OECD, 2006; Oluka & Ssenoga, 2008; OECD, 2011; Oyegoke, 2012; OECD, 2016; Schöberlein & Jenkins, 2019; OECD,2021). The following mechanism was encouraging sufficient training for public procurement officials. This mechanism corresponded with a number of researches that have encouraged all local procurement officers as well as local executives to receive adequate training to prevent the misuse of public procurement process (Kühn & Sherman, 2014; Prabowo & Suhernita, 2018; UNDP, 2017; OECD, 2021; Israel, 2021). The next mechanism was promoting culture of integrity and using integrity pact mechanism during the bidding phase. This mechanism resonated with the recommendation by UNDP (2017), which identified the integrity pact as an effective tool for corruption prevention in procurement.

The last mechanism was complying with contract agreements, encouraging sufficient supervision records and appointing different officials form prior phase. The findings of this study were consistent with the recommendations of Kühn and Sherman (2014), who emphasized the importance of limiting or carefully overseeing interactions between bidders and procurement officials or evaluation committee members. They

also advocated for regularly rotating officials in sensitive roles to minimize the risk of undue influence.

8.5.4 Supplementary Movements

The additional strategies for effectively preventing corruption in public procurement involved intensifying financial monitoring, implementing the separation of duties and the rotation of procurement officials, using audits to identify any blind spots in the procurement process, ensuring the accuracy of information management to promote transparency at all stages of the public procurement process, strengthening the approval process for supervising procurement activities, and ensuring the effectiveness of the complaints and investigation system.

The results revealed the first additional strategy was intensifying financial monitoring. This strategy concurred with the recommendation by UNODC (2013) and Isroilov et al. (2020), which stated that transparency and accountability in public finance and the accuracy financial control must be promoted in critical areas of public procurement to effectively prevent corruption. The subsequent additional strategy was implementing the separation of duties and the rotation of procurement officials. This result conformed to the study of Kühn and Sherman (2014), which underlined that procurement official responsible for the planning phase should be separate from those handling other phases of procurement. The next supplementary strategy involved using audits to identify any blind spots in the procurement process. This outcome was in line with IBAC (2019) suggestion that audits and risk assessments be carried out in order to help uncover vulnerable areas that would not have been discovered through regular monitoring procedures.

Then the third additional strategy was ensuring the accuracy of information management at all stages of the public procurement process. This result accorded with various studies that indicated the accuracy of recording and management of procurement information reduce the potential risk of corruption (OECD, 2009; Osei-Tutu et al., 2010; Krivinsh & Vilks, 2013; IBAC, 2019). The last additional strategy related with strengthening the approval process for supervising procurement activities, and ensuring the effectiveness of the complaints and investigation system. The outcomes are consistent with a number of researches that focused establishing sound monitoring and complaints systems (ADB & OECD, 2006; Basheka et al., 2015; OECD, 2016; UNDP, 2017; OECD, 2021).

8.6 Summary of the Chapters

This chapter consolidates findings from the previous chapters to address the four research objectives related to preventing corruption in public procurement within local government organizations in southern Thailand. The study identified current practices based on five core principles. The principle of transparency includes measures such as publishing procurement details online, involving stakeholders, and maintaining conflict-of-interest declarations. Integrity is promoted through ethical codes, staff training, and public scrutiny. Accountability is strengthened by implementing clear policies and robust monitoring systems. The prevention of misconduct is encouraged through fostering cultural integrity and applying strict oversight mechanisms. Finally, openness and fair competition is ensured by adhering to procurement regulations, providing equal access to bidding opportunities, and fostering fairness in the process.

The findings also revealed both positive and negative effects of the existing corruption prevention efforts. Positive effects include enhanced public trust, improved

transparency, and elevated professionalism among officials. On the other hand, negative effects include increased administrative burdens, resistance from staff, and difficulties in balancing transparency with confidentiality. The study further identified 15 key impediments to effective corruption prevention, which were categorized into three dimensions. Systemic limitations include complex procurement methods, a shortage of skilled professionals, and centralized control over procurement information. Unfavorable local conditions involve the influence of political culture, conflicts of interest, and societal norms that tolerate corruption. Procurement cycle challenges include issues in selecting methods, developing specifications, evaluating bids, and managing contracts.

The research proposed 17 strategies to address these challenges, grouped into four categories. System improvements include establishing tailored legal frameworks, enhancing operational capacity, and fostering collaboration among regulatory bodies. Comprehensive approaches involve encouraging political commitment, utilizing advanced technologies, and strengthening internal controls. Practical steps in procurement include promoting stakeholder participation, ensuring transparency at each stage, and implementing integrity pacts. Supplementary measures focus on intensifying financial monitoring, rotating procurement officials, and improving complaint and investigation mechanisms.

In conclusion, the study highlights critical areas for improvement to enhance the effectiveness of corruption prevention in local government organizations in southern Thailand. While many strategies align with international best practices, the findings stress the importance of tailoring solutions to address the unique challenges within the

local context. In the next section, the researcher intends to present on the conclusion and recommendations of the study.



CHAPTER NINE

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

9.1 Introduction

This chapter begins with the summary the findings of the study. The following section provides recommendations for enhancing prevention of corruption in public procurement in the selected local government organizations in southern Thailand. The last section offers some suggestions for future research.

9.2 Summary the Findings

The findings of research objective number one related with the current practices in prevention of public procurement corruption in selected local government organizations in southern provinces of Thailand by focusing on the implementation of five key principles for prevention of corruption in public procurement: (i) principle of transparency; (ii) principle of integrity; (iii) principle of accountability; (iv) principle of prevention of misconduct and (v) principle of openness and fair competition. With reference to the principle of transparency, all participants from selected local government organizations acknowledged compliance with laws and regulations in public procurement. However, the majority reported practices such as posting all procurement information on the local government website, allowing key stakeholders to participate in public procurement procedures, and publishing information at each phase of bidding on the local

government website. Additionally, majority participants indicated that the level of transparency in public procurement practices was very good.

Meanwhile, some participants rated the level of transparency in public procurement as excellent or good, respectively. Furthermore, regarding the principle of integrity, the results revealed that the majority of selected local government organizations practiced this principle by adhering to and promoting an ethical code of conduct for local government officials, offering intensive training to all staff members involved in the procurement process, and clarifying procurement policies and plans. Additionally, most participants believed that the principle of integrity in public procurement was applied at a very good level. However, some participants considered it to be only at a good level. Moreover, concerning the principle of accountability, majority of participants indicated that they applied this principle by promoting the organizational regulatory framework to ensure a functioning control system in procurement and offering intensive training to all staff members who accountable in procurement process. Furthermore, most participants viewed that the principle of accountability in public procurement was applied at a very good level. However, some participants evaluated it to be only at a good level.

As for the practices of the principle of prevention of misconduct in public procurement, the results found that the majority of selected local government organizations practiced this principle by adhering to and promoting an ethical code of conduct for local government officials, offering intensive training to all staff members involved in the procurement process, and clarifying procurement policies and plans. Additionally, most participants perceived the application of the principle of integrity in public procurement to be at a very good level. However, some participants regarded it as only

good. In addition, regarding the current standards for implementing the principle of openness and fair competition in public procurement, the majority of participants highlighted practices such as publishing the bidding plan and solicitation documents on the municipality's website, allowing sufficient time for bid submission, and thoroughly examining potential bid collusion among all bidders. Moreover, most participants assessed the application of this principle as being at a very good level, while some rated it as merely good.

The outcomes of research objective number two involved with the effects of existing efforts to prevent corruption in public procurement in selected local government organizations in the provinces of southern Thailand. The results are structured around five key principles for preventing corruption in public procurement: transparency, integrity, accountability, prevention of misconduct, and promoting openness and fair competition. In relation to the implementing the principle of transparency has several positive effects, such as enhancing public trust, improving spending efficiency, and increasing confidence in the procurement process. It also helps cultivate a culture of transparency and professionalism while reducing negative perceptions of public procurement. On the other hand, there are notable negative effects, including an increased administrative workload, misunderstandings among stakeholders, and reputational risks in local politics. Additionally, challenges arise in maintaining a balance between transparency and confidentiality.

As for the applying the principle of integrity has several positive effects, such as building public trust, motivating officials to prioritize ethics, and reducing complaints about procurement practices. Conversely, it also has negative impacts, including potential conflicts with stakeholders, increased workloads for officials, and challenges

in consistently applying integrity in various situations. Regarding to the implementing the principle of accountability delivers several positive outcomes, including alleviating concerns over financial management, improving service quality, and promoting transparency and effective enforcement. On the contrary, it also has drawbacks, such as delays in decision-making, constraints on innovation, and difficulties in sustaining accountability during emergency situations. With regard to the promoting the principle of preventing misconduct yields several positive outcomes, such as boosting the confidence of procurement officials, fostering role models of integrity, and enhancing the skills and competencies of local government staff. However, it also poses challenges, including potential conflicts with bidders and stakeholders, increased resistance from civil servants due to additional responsibilities, and difficulties in complying with regulations during emergency situations.

As for the applying the principle of openness and fair competition yields positive outcomes, such as ensuring the effective use of public funds, enhancing service quality, and strengthening transparency and enforcement. Nevertheless, there are some negative effects, including causing misunderstandings, increasing resistance among officials, and presenting challenges in maintaining fair competition across different circumstances.

Based on the results of the study in relation to research objective number three concerning on the impediments to effective prevention of corruption in public procurement within selected local government organizations in southern provinces of Thailand. There are three group of key barriers and vulnerabilities in preventing corruption in public procurement at the local level.

The first category of barriers and vulnerabilities concern about systemic limitations. These include technical challenges in acquiring specialized items or services, insufficient stakeholder participation in drafting Terms of Reference (TOR), weaknesses in procurement methods (particularly in selection and specific approaches), a shortage of trained procurement professionals, inadequate vigilance and ethical awareness among decision-makers, and centralized control over procurement information, which raises concerns about monopolization.

The second set of barriers and vulnerabilities related with political and social challenges. These encompass the impact of local political culture, which facilitates bribery and favoritism; the use of procurement scandals as a tool in political rivalries; conflicts of interest linked to the professional backgrounds of elected officials (e.g., construction); external pressure from national political policies on local procurement activities; and societal norms that normalize corrupt behaviors, such as cronyism and informal transactions.

The last group of barriers and vulnerabilities involved specific weaknesses in the procurement cycle. These include flaws in procurement methods, such as arbitrary decision-making that promotes favoritism; risks of bias or manipulation when developing specifications or Terms of Reference (TOR) to benefit particular bidders; susceptibility to collusion and lack of transparency during bid evaluations; and inadequate monitoring in contract management, which can result in renegotiations of standards, costs, or timelines. Addressing these challenges requires targeted reforms, improved training programs, and stricter oversight mechanisms to strengthen the procurement process.

Evidences from the study in relation to research objective four about strategies for effectively preventing corruption in public procurement within local government organizations in southern Thailand. The evidence identifies four core strategies for achieving effective corruption prevention. The first strategy emphasizes the development of efficient systems to combat corruption. This involves tailoring the legal and regulatory framework to local conditions, incorporating stakeholder participation, and decentralizing regulatory functions to enhance relevance and effectiveness. It also includes strengthening the institutional framework by establishing area-specific regulatory bodies and promoting collaboration among oversight agencies. Furthermore, enhancing operational capacity is vital, focusing on improving the skills and professionalism of procurement officials through comprehensive training and development programs. Lastly, the strategy highlights the importance of robust control structures, which involve diverse stakeholders, including civil society and media, to ensure effective oversight and integrity in public procurement processes.

The second strategy focuses on adopting comprehensive approaches to prevent corruption. It emphasizes the role of political leadership in fostering political commitment and ethical conduct to deter corrupt practices. Public participation is also highlighted, encouraging the involvement of citizens and stakeholders at all stages of the procurement process to enhance transparency. Additionally, the strategy underscores the importance of advanced technologies, such as e-procurement systems and artificial intelligence (AI), to promote transparency and improve efficiency. Lastly, it stresses the need to strengthen internal controls by enhancing internal audit systems and monitoring mechanisms to detect and prevent irregularities effectively.

The third strategy outlines practical steps within the procurement cycle to prevent corruption. In the pre-bidding phase, it emphasizes the importance of promoting transparency and engaging stakeholders in needs assessment and the drafting of Terms of Reference (TOR). During the bidding phase, it highlights the need to uphold ethical standards, provide training for procurement officials, and implement integrity pacts to reduce risks. In the post-bidding phase, the strategy focuses on monitoring contract management to prevent deviations and ensure compliance with agreed terms and conditions.

The last but not least strategy highlights additional measures for preventing corruption. Financial monitoring is emphasized as a critical step, focusing on enhancing financial oversight to identify and mitigate potential risks. The separation of duties is also vital, involving the rotation of procurement officials and the division of roles to reduce opportunities for collusion. Regular audits, including random internal checks, are recommended to uncover blind spots in the procurement process. Furthermore, information management plays a vital role, with the maintenance of detailed and accessible procurement records to ensure transparency. Strengthening approval processes is another key aspect, aimed at improving oversight and approvals for all procurement activities. Lastly, the establishment of robust complaint and investigation systems is essential to handle grievances and investigate irregularities effectively, ensuring accountability throughout the procurement process.

9.3 Recommendations

This section focuses on presenting recommendations to enhance the implementation in prevention of public procurement corruption in the selected local government organizations in southern province of Thailand. These recommendations are derived

from the research findings and a comprehensive review of the relevant literature. Furthermore, they are also informed by the valuable input and suggestions provided by the participants.

9.3.1 Recommendations for Enhancing Prevention at the System Level

The results of this research revealed the perspective of participants on the impediments to preventing corruption in public procurement faced by the selected local government organizations. These impediments include technical challenges in acquiring specialized items or services, insufficient stakeholder participation in drafting Terms of Reference (TOR), weaknesses in procurement methods (particularly in selection and specific approaches), a shortage of trained procurement professionals, inadequate vigilance and ethical awareness among decision-makers, and centralized control over procurement information, which raises concerns about monopolization. It is important to highlight that the central government should allow local government organizations to establish a legal and regulatory framework based on local conditions in order to reduce centralized control over procurement information and encourage fair participation. However, the legal and regulatory framework for the public procurement process should be developed with the agreement of various of stakeholders, citizen participation, civil society, and the media in such local area.

Besides, in order to develop and motivate procurement professionals, the central government should facilitate the establishment of training centers for procurement professionals in each region and establish standardized salaries or payments for procurement officials. In terms of stakeholder participation in drafting the Terms of Reference (TOR), the central government should enforce rules and regulations to ensure transparency at every stage of the public procurement process. This includes

encouraging the participation and oversight by stakeholders, citizens, civil society, and the media in the selection of procurement methods.

9.3.2 Recommendations for Enhancing Prevention at the Context Level

In relation to improving corruption prevention in public procurement at the local context level. Since the research findings demonstrated that barriers and vulnerabilities in local context related with political and social challenges. These encompass the impact of local political culture, which facilitates bribery and favoritism; the use of procurement scandals as a tool in political rivalries; conflicts of interest linked to the professional backgrounds of elected officials (e.g., construction); external pressure from national political policies on local procurement activities; and societal norms that normalize corrupt behaviors, such as cronyism and informal transactions. These recommendations were offered based on the perspectives of participants, which suggested encouraging political leaders to demonstrate their commitment to anti-corruption, particularly by requiring all candidates to address anti-corruption issues during their political campaigns before elections.

Furthermore, to prevent the use of procurement scandals as a tool in political rivalries and to avoid conflicts of interest linked to the professional backgrounds of elected officials, the selected local government organizations should promote public participation by opening discussions at crucial stages of the procurement process. Moreover, the selected local government organizations should consistently raise public awareness to strengthen the monitoring and evaluation of local government performance, educate the community on the importance of transparency in the procurement process, and promote the perception of corrupt behavior as abnormal conduct deserving social boycott from family to school.

9.3.3 Recommendations for Enhancing Prevention at the Organization Level

In terms of improving corruption prevention in public procurement at the organization level. Based on the findings of this study found that the impediments involved specific weaknesses in the procurement cycle. These include flaws in procurement methods, such as arbitrary decision-making that promotes favoritism; risks of bias or manipulation when developing specifications or Terms of Reference (TOR) to benefit particular bidders; susceptibility to collusion and lack of transparency during bid evaluations; and inadequate monitoring in contract management, which can result in renegotiations of standards, costs, or timelines.

However, to enhance corruption prevention in public procurement at the organization level, the selected local government organizations should educate the essential of internal control system in local government organizations to the local executives and local officials. In addition, they should adopt advanced technologies for ensuring transparency and preventing mistakes from procurement officials. Moreover, they should provide sufficient training for public procurement officials as well as promoting culture of integrity and using integrity pact mechanism during the bidding phase. Besides, in order to improve monitoring in contract management, the selected local government organizations should strengthen approval processes for supervising all procurement activities and ensure the effectiveness of complaint and investigation systems, especially in cases where political rivalries exploit scandals.

9.3.4 Recommendations for Enhancing Prevention at the Individual Level

With reference to prevent public procurement corruption at the individual level. The results of this study showed that the local government officials who responsible of procurement responsibilities face barriers concerning on an increasing administrative

burden, misunderstandings among stakeholders and local people, and challenges in maintaining procurement principles as well as rules and regulations in procurement process. However, to enhance prevention public procurement corruption at the individual level. It is important to recommend to the central government and the selected local government organizations should increase appropriate salaries and benefits for public procurement officials to reduce incentives for bribery and misbehavior during procurement process.

In addition, the selected local government organizations should conduct audits to identify any gaps in individual responsibilities. They must enforce the separation of duties and implement rotation of procurement officials, particularly by providing intensive training to all the local government officials involved in procurement. Furthermore, they should consistently promote a culture of integrity by motivate and boost morale to the officials who regularly adhering to public procurement rules and regulations.

9.4 Suggestions for Further Researches

Based on the limited number of selected cases of local government organizations in this research, the following recommendations should be considered for further research on the prevention of corruption in public procurement. It is suggested to apply the findings of the present study as a foundation for examining the entire local government system in southern Thailand through a quantitative research approach. This would help assess the effectiveness of the implementation of prevention strategies for procurement corruption.

Additionally, based on the research findings, further study should focus more on developing a holistic culture of integrity. This is especially important because an integrity-driven culture is recognized as a significant mechanism for preventing corruption, particularly in the gray areas of official conduct (Center for the Advancement of Public Integrity, 2017). By addressing these two aspects in future research, the prevention of corruption in public procurement can become more sustainable and effectively resolved.

9.5 Conclusion

The study on the prevention of corruption in public procurement within selected local government organizations in southern Thailand demonstrated that existing prevention strategies are based on public procurement laws and regulations which in alignment with the five principles of corruption prevention in public procurement and international standards. However, there are several areas that need improvement to enhance the effectiveness of these strategies. These include the vulnerabilities within the public procurement system, the influence of social values, and the perception and awareness of individuals involved in the process. To mitigate the risks of corruption in local government procurement, it is essential to ensure the consistent and active adaptation of standard tools and mechanisms by all relevant stakeholder.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A

Interview Guides for Local Public Servants/Elected Officials

Research Titles: Prevention of Corruption in Public Procurement in Selected Local Government Organizations in Southern Province of Thailand.

This study is an essential part for completing Ph.D. Program in Public Management, College of Law, Government and International Studies, University Utara Malaysia

The study aims to 1) gain a better understanding of the current practices corruption prevention in public procurement in selected local government organizations in the provinces of southern Thailand, 2) examine the effects of existing prevention of corruption efforts in public procurement in selected local government organizations in the provinces of southern Thailand, 3) identify the impediment factors for effective prevention of corruption in public procurement in selected local government organizations in southern provinces of Thailand, and explore the strategies for effective prevention of corruption in public procurement in selected local government organizations in southern provinces of Thailand.

The researcher may ask consent of permission to record the conversation with audio and video during the interview session. In addition, your information and opinions will be employed only for academic purpose without disclosing your name.

Mr. Kittipan Ekareesakul, Ph.D. scholar
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SECTION II: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Objective 1 (a) To gain a better understanding of the current practices corruption prevention in public procurement in selected local government organizations in the provinces of southern Thailand in terms of principle of **transparency**.

In your own view, principle of **transparency** is an integral aspect in prevention of corruption in public procurement. Agree/Disagree and why?

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Could you please tell me how your local government organization apply the principle of **transparency** in public procurement?

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Who are the main actors to involve with practice of **transparency** in public procurement? how they can be involved?

.....

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What is the level of your satisfaction for the practices of **transparency** in public procurement in your local government organization? and why?

Practices of transparency	Tick if applicable (✓)	Why? Please support your answer
Excellence		
Very Good		
Good		
Fair		
Poor		

Objective 1 (b) To gain a better understanding of the current practices corruption prevention in public procurement in selected local government organizations in the provinces of southern Thailand in terms of principle of **integrity**.

In your view, principle of **integrity** is an important element in prevention of corruption in public procurement. Agree/Disagree and why?

.....

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.....

Could you please tell me how your local government organization apply the principle of **integrity** in public procurement?

.....

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.....

.....

Who are the main actors to involve with practices of **integrity** in public procurement?
how they can be involved?

.....

.....

.....

.....

What is the level of your satisfaction for the practices of **integrity** in public procurement in your local government organization? and why?

Practices of integrity	Tick if applicable (✓)	Why? Please support your answer
Excellence		
Very Good		
Good		
Fair		
Poor		

Objective 1 (c) To gain a better understanding of the current practices corruption prevention in public procurement in selected local government organizations in the provinces of southern Thailand in terms of principle of **accountability**.

In your view, principle of **accountability** is a crucial point in prevention of corruption in public procurement. Agree/Disagree and why?

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Could you please tell me how your local government organization apply the principle of **accountability** in public procurement?

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Who are the main actors to involve with practices of **accountability** in public procurement? how they can be involved?

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What is the level of your satisfaction for the practices of **accountability** in public procurement in your local government organization? and why?

Practices of accountability	Tick if applicable (✓)	Why? Please support your answer
Excellence		
Very Good		
Good		
Fair		
Poor		

Objective 1 (d) To gain a better understanding of the current practices corruption prevention in public procurement in selected local government organizations in the provinces of southern Thailand in terms of principle of **prevention of misconduct**.

In your view, principle of **prevention of misconduct** is a critical issue in prevention of corruption in public procurement. Agree/Disagree and why?

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Could you please tell me how your local government organization apply the principle of **prevention of misconduct** in public procurement?

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Who are the main actors to involve with practices of **prevention of misconduct** in public procurement? how they can be involved?

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What is the level of your satisfaction for the practices of **prevention of misconduct** in public procurement in your local government organization? and why?

Practices of prevention of misconduct	Tick if applicable (✓)	Why? Please support your answer
Excellence		
Very Good		
Good		
Fair		
Poor		

Objective 1 (e) To gain a better understanding of the current practices corruption prevention in public procurement in selected local government organizations in the provinces of southern Thailand in terms of principle of **openness and fair competition**.

In your view, principle of **openness and fair competition** is an essential part in prevention of corruption in public procurement. Agree/Disagree and why?

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Could you please tell me how your local government organization apply the principle of **openness and fair competition** in public procurement?

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Who are the main actors to involve with practices of **openness and fair competition** in public procurement? how they can be involved?

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What is the level of your satisfaction for the practices of **openness and fair competition** in public procurement in your local government organization? and why?

Practices of openness and fair competition	Tick if applicable (✓)	Why? Please support your answer
Excellence		
Very Good		
Good		
Fair		
Poor		

Objective 2 (a) To examine the effects of existing efforts to prevent corruption in public procurement in selected local government organizations in the provinces of southern Thailand in terms of principle of **transparency**.

In your opinion, what are the beneficial effects for applying principle of **transparency** in public procurement?

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What are the undesirable effects for applying principle of **transparency** in public procurement from your viewpoint?

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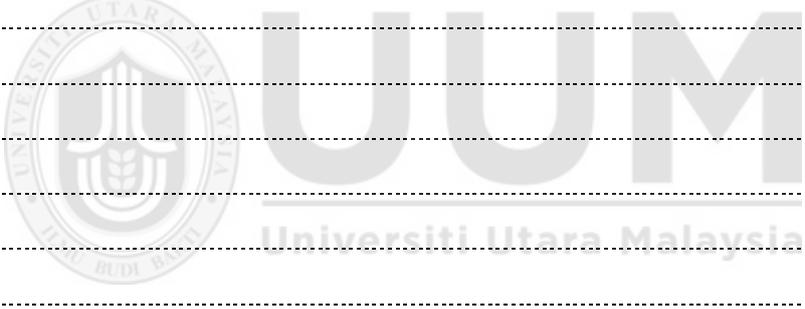
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Objective 2 (b) To examine the effects of existing efforts to prevent corruption in public procurement in selected local government organizations in the provinces of southern Thailand in terms of principle of **integrity**.

In your opinion, what are the beneficial effects for applying principle of **integrity** in public procurement?



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What are the undesirable effects for applying principle of **integrity** in public procurement from your viewpoint?

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Objective 2 (c) To examine the effects of existing efforts to prevent corruption in public procurement in selected local government organizations in the provinces of southern Thailand in terms of principle of **accountability**.

In your opinion, what are the beneficial effects for applying principle of **accountability** in public procurement?

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What are the undesirable effects for applying principle of **accountability** in public procurement from your viewpoint?

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Objective 2 (d) To examine the effects of existing efforts to prevent corruption in public procurement in selected local government organizations in the provinces of southern Thailand in terms of principle of **prevention of misconduct**.

In your opinion, what are the beneficial effects for applying principle of **prevention of misconduct** in public procurement?

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What are the undesirable effects for applying principle of **prevention of misconduct** in public procurement from your viewpoint?

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Objective 2 (e) To examine the effects of existing efforts to prevent corruption in public procurement in selected local government organizations in the provinces of southern Thailand in terms of principle of **openness and fair competition**.

In your opinion, what are the beneficial effects for applying principle of **openness and fair competition** in public procurement?

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What are the undesirable effects for applying principle of **openness and fair competition** in public procurement from your viewpoint?

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Objective 3 To identify the impediment factors for effective prevention of corruption in public procurement in selected local government organizations in southern provinces of Thailand.

In your perception, what do you mean “the effective prevention of corruption in public procurement”?

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What are the limitations for the existing public procurement system that make hindrances or obstacles for the effective prevention of corruption in public procurement? and why?

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What are the conditions in your local government organization that make barriers or difficulties for effective prevention of corruption in public procurement? and why?

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Please tell me, what steps did you find the most difficult for the effective prevention of corruption in public procurement? and why?

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Objective 4 To explore the strategies for effective prevention of corruption in public procurement in selected local government organizations in southern provinces of Thailand.

In your mind, using a variety of appropriate methods is a crucial strategy for the effective prevention of corruption in public procurement. Agree/Disagree and why?

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In your opinion, what are the efficient systems for the effective prevention of corruption in public procurement especially in the context of local government organizations in southern provinces of Thailand?

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What are the comprehensive approaches for the effective prevention of corruption in public procurement for your local government organization in particular?

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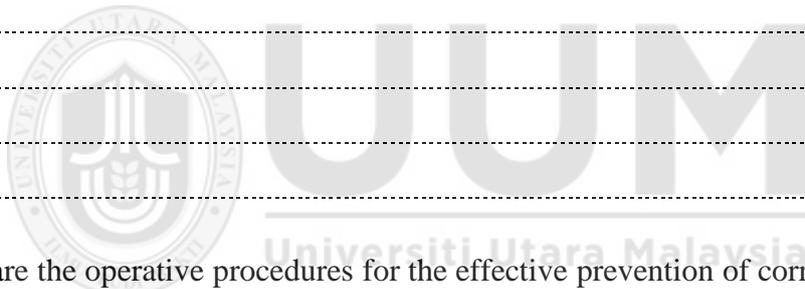
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What are the operative procedures for the effective prevention of corruption in public procurement during public procurement process?

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Appendix B

Interview Guides for Bidders and Contract Companies

Research Titles: Prevention of Corruption in Public Procurement in Selected Local Government Organizations in Southern Province of Thailand.

This study is an essential part for completing Ph.D. Program in Public Management, College of Law, Government and International Studies, University Utara Malaysia

The study objectives to 1) gain a better understanding of the current practices corruption prevention in public procurement in selected local government organizations in the provinces of southern Thailand, 2) examine the effects of existing prevention of corruption efforts in public procurement in selected local government organizations in the provinces of southern Thailand, 3) identify the impediment factors for effective prevention of corruption in public procurement in selected local government organizations in southern provinces of Thailand, and explore the strategies for effective prevention of corruption in public procurement in selected local government organizations in southern provinces of Thailand.

The researcher may ask consent of permission to record the conversation with audio and video during the interview session. In addition, your information and opinions will be employed only for academic purpose without disclosing your name.

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E-mail: sahabat27@gmail.com

SECTION II: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Objective 1 (a) To gain a better understanding of the current practices corruption prevention in public procurement in selected local government organizations in the provinces of southern Thailand in terms of principle of **transparency**.

How did you perceive **transparency** in public procurement of the local government organization?

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Does the local government organization take any **standard practices of the transparency** in public procurement as the follows?

1. Take standard practices..., how does the organization do practices?
2. Do not take any
3. Not Sure

Remarkable Statements	1	2	3	Means?
1. To provide an adequate and timely degree of transparency in each phase of the public procurement cycle.				
2. To provide appropriate transparency in subcontracting relationships and specify at which stage the information needs to be disclosed.				
3. To provide information on public procurement easily accessible for all interested parties, including potential domestic and foreign suppliers, civil society and the general public.				

4. To publish meaningful public procurement information for all stakeholders to use.				
5. To ensure visibility of the flow of public funds, from the beginning of the budgeting process throughout the public procurement cycle.				
6. To establish a comprehensive list of the procurement records and documents related to tendering procedures and contract management that must be kept and available for public inspection.				

What is the level of your satisfaction for the practices of **transparency** in public procurement in the local government organization? and why?

Practices of transparency	Tick if applicable (✓)	Why? Please support your answer
Excellence		
Very Good		
Good		
Fair		
Poor		

Objective 1 (b) To gain a better understanding of the current practices corruption prevention in public procurement in selected local government organizations in the provinces of southern Thailand in terms of principle of **integrity**.

How did you perceive **integrity** in public procurement of the local government organization?

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Does the local government organization take active steps to supervise contractor's performance and integrity? If yes, how does the organization do practices?

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What is the level of your satisfaction for the practices of **integrity** in public procurement in the local government organization? and why?

Practices of integrity	Tick if applicable (✓)	Why? Please support your answer
Excellence		
Very Good		
Good		
Fair		
Poor		

Objective 1 (c) To gain a better understanding of the current practices corruption prevention in public procurement in selected local government organizations in the provinces of southern Thailand in terms of principle of **accountability**.

How did you perceive **accountability** in public procurement of the local government organization?

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Does the local government organization handle complaints in a fair and timely way?
 If yes, how does the organization do practices?

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What is the level of your satisfaction for the practices of **accountability** in public procurement in the local government organization? and why?

Practices of accountability	Tick if applicable (✓)	Why? Please support your answer
Excellence		
Very Good		
Good		
Fair		
Poor		

Objective 1 (d) To gain a better understanding of the current practices corruption prevention in public procurement in selected local government organizations in the provinces of southern Thailand in terms of principle of **prevention of misconduct**.

How did you perceive **prevention of misconduct** in public procurement of the local government organization?

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Does your local government organization implement specific policy, rules and procedures for whistle-blower protection in the area of public procurement? If yes, how does the organization do practices?

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What is the level of your satisfaction for the practices of **prevention of misconduct** in public procurement in the local government organization? and why?

Practices of prevention of misconduct	Tick if applicable (✓)	Why? Please support your answer
Excellence		
Very Good		
Good		
Fair		
Poor		

Objective 1 (e) To gain a better understanding of the current practices corruption prevention in public procurement in selected local government organizations in the provinces of southern Thailand in terms of principle of **openness and fair competition**.

How did you perceive **openness and fair competition** in public procurement of the local government organization?

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Does your local government organization ensure that all parties involved in the procurement process participate fairly, honestly and in good faith? If yes, how does the organization do practices?

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What is the level of your satisfaction for the practices of **openness and fair competition** in public procurement in your local government organization? and why?

Practices of openness and fair competition	Tick if applicable (✓)	Why? Please support your answer
Excellence		
Very Good		
Good		
Fair		
Poor		

Objective 2 (a) To examine the effects of existing efforts to prevent corruption in public procurement in selected local government organizations in the provinces of southern Thailand in terms of principle of **transparency**.

In your opinion, what are the beneficial effects for applying principle of **transparency** in public procurement?

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What are the undesirable effects for applying principle of **transparency** in public procurement from your viewpoint?

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Objective 2 (b) To examine the effects of existing efforts to prevent corruption in public procurement in selected local government organizations in the provinces of southern Thailand in terms of principle of **integrity**.

In your opinion, what are the beneficial effects for applying principle of **integrity** in public procurement?

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What are the undesirable effects for applying principle of **integrity** in public procurement from your viewpoint?

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Objective 2 (c) To examine the effects of existing efforts to prevent corruption in public procurement in selected local government organizations in the provinces of southern Thailand in terms of principle of **accountability**.

In your opinion, what are the beneficial effects for applying principle of **accountability** in public procurement?

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What are the undesirable effects for applying principle of **accountability** in public procurement from your viewpoint?

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Objective 2 (d) To examine the effects of existing efforts to prevent corruption in public procurement in selected local government organizations in the provinces of southern Thailand in terms of principle of **prevention of misconduct**.

In your opinion, what are the beneficial effects for applying principle of **prevention of misconduct** in public procurement?

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What are the undesirable effects for applying principle of **prevention of misconduct** in public procurement from your viewpoint?

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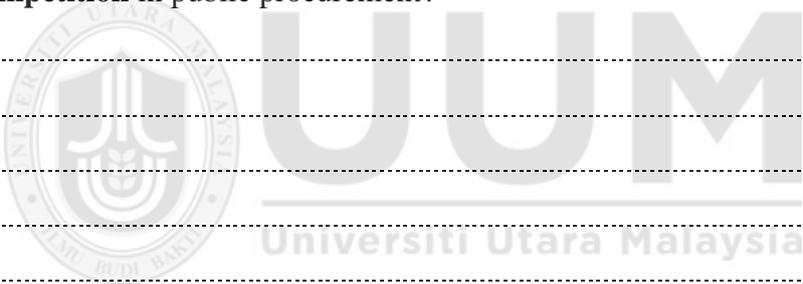
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Objective 2 (e) To examine the effects of existing efforts to prevent corruption in public procurement in selected local government organizations in the provinces of southern Thailand in terms of principle of **openness and fair competition**.

In your opinion, what are the beneficial effects for applying principle of **openness and fair competition** in public procurement?



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What are the undesirable effects for applying principle of **openness and fair competition** in public procurement from your viewpoint?

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Objective 3 To identify the impediment factors for effective prevention of corruption in public procurement in selected local government organizations in southern provinces of Thailand.

What are the limitations for the existing public procurement system that make hindrances or obstacles to get a sound procurement? and why?

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What are the conditions in the local government organization that make barriers or difficulties to construct a good bid? and why?

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Please tell me, what steps did you find the most difficult during procurement process? and why?

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Objective 4 To explore the strategies for effective prevention of corruption in public procurement in selected local government organizations in southern provinces of Thailand.

What suggestions do you have for enhancing effective prevention of corruption in public procurement process in the local government organization?

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Appendix C

Interview Guides for Field Agencies of the Anti-Corruption Bodies, Civil Society Organizations and Mass Media

Research Titles: Prevention of Corruption in Public Procurement in Selected Local Government Organizations in Southern Province of Thailand.

This study is an essential part for completing Ph.D. Program in Public Management, College of Law, Government and International Studies, University Utara Malaysia

The study aims to identify the impediment factors for effective prevention of corruption in public procurement in selected local government organizations in southern provinces of Thailand, and to explore the strategies for effective prevention of corruption in public procurement in selected local government organizations in southern provinces of Thailand.

The researcher may ask consent of permission to record the conversation with audio and video during the interview session. In addition, your information and opinions will be employed only for academic purpose without disclosing your name.

Mr. Kittipan Ekareesakul, Ph.D. scholar
College of Law, Government and International Studies,
University Utara Malaysia

E-mail: sahabat27@gmial.com

SECTION II: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Objective 3 To identify the impediment factors for effective prevention of corruption in public procurement in selected local government organizations in southern provinces of Thailand.

In your perception, what do you mean “the effective prevention of corruption in public procurement”?

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What are the limitations for the existing public procurement system that make hindrances or obstacles for the effective prevention of corruption in public procurement? and why?

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What are the conditions in the local government organization that make barriers or difficulties for effective prevention of corruption in public procurement? and why?

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Please tell me, what steps did you find the most difficult for the effective prevention of corruption in public procurement? and why?

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Objective 4 To explore the strategies for effective prevention of corruption in public procurement in selected local government organizations in southern provinces of Thailand.

In your opinion, what are the efficient systems for the effective prevention of corruption in public procurement especially in the context of local government organizations in southern provinces of Thailand?

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What are the comprehensive approaches for the effective prevention of corruption in public procurement for local government organizations in particular?

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What are the operative procedures for the effective prevention of corruption in public procurement during public procurement process?

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What the other suggestions do you have for enhancing effective prevention of corruption in public procurement in the local government organization?

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