RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CANDIDATE SELECTION AND CONTRACT AWARD AND SERVICE DELIVERY. A DESCRIPTIVE CROSS-SECTIONAL SURVEY IN KABALE DISTRICT LOCAL GOVERNMENT.

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ABSTRACT.

Background.

This study aims to determine the relationship between candidate selection & contract award and service delivery in Kabale District Local Government.

Methodology.

This study employed descriptive, correlational, and cross-sectional survey design. The study further adopted a mixed approach whereby both qualitative and quantitative techniques were used to analyze the data to reach a logical conclusion about the findings. A target population of 85 respondents was used from which 70 respondents were selected. Data was collected using questionnaires and interviews and analyzed using SPSS.

Results.

The correlation between candidate selection and contract award and service delivery was 0.356 with a significance value of 0.000. The findings revealed that 87.7% of the respondents agree that the experience of the candidates is essential in selecting candidates to provide quality services, the study findings showed that during candidate selection, the academic qualifications of the contractors are considerable to ascertain the skills and knowledge of contractors in performing given tasks, the experience of the candidates is essential in selecting candidates because it helps to select contractors with knowledge and with ability to provide quality services, contract award are based on democratic vote by Procurement committee members of Kabale District Local government hence candidates with good marks based on members ranks are recommended the best for the job.

Conclusion.

There was a positive significant relationship between the candidate selection and contract award and service delivery in Kabale district local government. This means that the candidate selection and contract award are an integral part of the contract award process and service delivery in the Kabale district local government.

Recommendation.

The Kabale district local government council should also ensure that candidates provide additional information on performance, experience, academic qualifications, and financial statements as this will help them to ensure quality services are provided on time.

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BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY.

Bigogne (2014) analyzed the selection of public officials in local government. Specifically, it looks at the relationship between selection procedures, recruitment criteria, and service delivery. It discusses how local governments can employ reasonable and effective selection criteria to ensure that the most suitable candidates are recruited. It also argues that recruiting only well-qualified individuals, with the right skills and knowledge, is essential to successful service delivery.

Smallwood (2006) examined the selection strategies in local government. It explores how selection standards, such as tests, interviews, and backgrounds, may or may not affect service delivery. The author noted that recruitment strategies should be developed to ensure strong service delivery and at the same time to promote access to top talent. Moreover, the article provides an assessment of service delivery quality based on the quality of the selection process and the quality of the chosen candidates.

Singelmann (2009) examined the relationship between service delivery and citizen satisfaction in local

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government. It reveals that citizens rate their service delivery more positively when there is minimal political interference in local government operations. Moreover, the authors found that citizen satisfaction is also associated with the quality of personnel selection and employment. They concluded that greater local government autonomy can lead to better service delivery and greater citizen satisfaction.

Fernandez (2018) explored the types of personnel selection strategies used in local government. It finds that local government officials often use multiple methods to identify and recruit service personnel. It also emphasizes the importance of measuring the effectiveness of selection processes to develop a system that produces high-quality employees and delivers better services to the public. The article suggests that local governments can use selection criteria such as skills, experience, and education qualifications to hire personnel with the best performance potential.

Morrison (2013) explored the impact that the selection of candidates for service positions in local governments can have on the quality of services delivered by these organizations. His study compared selection practices used in two different local government organizations to determine the effectiveness of each process and how those processes impacted service delivery outcomes. The paper investigated the source of the pools of potential candidates, the methods used to select the most qualified applicants, and how the decisions ultimately affected decision-making and service delivery. It also considers the cost of the selection processes and the extent to which they influence employee retention. The paper concludes that the selection of candidates is an important factor in improving service delivery outcomes within local governments.

Subramanian (2016) examined the relationship between service delivery and local government performance in South Asia. Using a panel data set, the study analyzed the factors that influence service delivery in the region. Specifically, it focused on the role played by the selection of candidates and how it related to both service delivery and local government performance. The results showed that the selection of candidates is a major factor influencing service delivery and performance. The study revealed that the level of selection activity and its impacts on the region's performance is further strengthened by the performance of local governments themselves.

Coles (2013) examined the role of candidate selection in the improvement of local government services. It focuses on the influence of applicant selection such as qualifications, expertise, and relative level of responsiveness on the service quality at the local level. Specifically, the article identifies two primary strategies used by local governments to improve services: (1) a selection stage assessment process to identify the most qualified individuals, and (2) the development of comprehensive service delivery models. The findings suggest that both candidate selection and service delivery

models can positively contribute to the effectiveness of local government services.

Michalopoulos (2020) provided an in-depth investigation regarding the selection of municipal candidates and decentralization in developing countries. He suggested that local-level decentralization can improve the quality of service delivery, and emphasize the importance of the selection of candidates at the local level. The authors discussed the importance of selecting municipalities with competent candidates, as well as the interventions required to ensure a fair and transparent process.

Simard (2017) examined the politics and dynamics of candidate selection in local government, specifically in Canadian municipalities. The authors discussed how the context of who governs affects the service delivery process in many ways. The authors also argued that the selection of candidates for municipal office has implications for the quality of service delivery. Additionally, they suggested ways to improve candidate selection, such as increasing performance-based selection processes and encouraging more diverse candidates to run for office.

This study aims to determine the relationship between candidate selection contract award and service delivery in the Kabale district local government.

METHODOLOGY.

Research Design.

This study employed a descriptive, correlational, and cross-sectional survey design. The study was based on a mixed approach whereby both qualitative and quantitative techniques were used to analyze the data to reach a logical conclusion about the findings. The quantitative technique provided a detailed numerical analysis of the research problem and investigated the relationship between the research variables, while the qualitative approach collected information on the attitudes and behaviors of the study elements.

Study Population.

The study population included staff at the Kabale district local government, service providers in the Kabale district, and members of the public (opinion leaders). A target population of 85 respondents was used as the study population and comprised of; 34 administrators, 12 members of procurement committee, 05 parish chiefs, 14 service providers, and 11 opinion leaders.

Determination of Sample Size.

A representative sample size of respondents from selected respondents was determined by using the table provided by Krejecie & Morgan R, (1970). A sample size of 70 was selected from a population of 85 as shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Table for determining sample size techniques to be used for the study

Samples Category	Population Target	Sample Size	Selection Technique
Administrators	34	32	Simple random sampling
Members of the procurement committee	15	12	Purposive sampling
Parish chiefs	09	05	Purposive sampling
Service providers	14	10	Simple random sampling
(Successful candidates before)			
Opinion leaders	13	11	Census
Total	85	70	

Source: Kabale District Chief Administrative Office (2022)

Sampling Techniques Procedure.

The study used a purposive sampling technique for members of the procurement committee and Parish chiefs. Simple random sampling was used to select administrators and service providers. The researcher used purposive sampling because it ensured that only the useful respondents were selected and it also saved time. Simple random sampling was used to eliminate bias in selecting service providers and administrators.

Data Sources.

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Data was selected from both primary and secondary sources:

Primary Sources.

According to Victor (2017), primary data is original and unique data, which is directly collected by the researcher from sources like observations, questionnaires, case studies, and interviews. Primary data was obtained by use of questionnaires and interview guides to look for information about the study directly from the field by the researcher.

Secondary sources.

Cook and Campbell; (1979) define secondary sources as the use of second-hand information that is obtained from available records. Secondary data was obtained from journals, reports brochures, newsletters, libraries, internet research, newspapers, and written literature by earlier scholars on the effects of procurement contract processes on service delivery.

Data Collection Instruments.

Three research instruments were used in conducting the study. The instruments were questionnaires, interview guides, and documentary reviews. The questionnaire was the main instrument and the interview guide was used to gain an in-depth understanding of the subject and the interface with the respondents. Documentary review intended to obtain a framework for interpretation of the

findings to arrive at realistic conclusions and recommendations.

Questionnaires.

Questionnaires were sent to respondents to obtain primary data. This made it more convenient and easier to collect data from respondents with busy schedules like administrators, Parish chiefs, Members of the procurement committee, and Service providers as they answered the questions at leisure while consulting documents, the instrument also ensured a high response rate and elicit the required information on a wide range of issues on the effects of procurement contract processes on service delivery. Closed-ended questions using Likert scales were used to enhance the simplicity of straightforward questions. Open-ended questions on the other hand were intended to permit a greater depth of response on specialized issues of the interview.

Interview Guides.

An interview method was used to secure the depth of information from the interviewees by the researcher. A probe with additional questions and gathering supplemental information enabled the researcher to crosscheck the accuracy of the data collected as recommended by Sekaran (2004). The interviews were conducted for about 5 minutes on average among the Opinion leaders. They were mainly conducted using face-to-face techniques but when respondents were busy; the researcher used telephone calls to obtain clarity on certain issues.

Documentary checklist.

The study was conducted on a wide documentary review to help the researcher avoid unnecessary and unintentional duplication of studies and provide a framework within which the research findings were interpreted as stated by (Mugenda and Mugenda, 2003). Data was gathered using this method and was secondary from a critical examination of public and private recorded information

related to the issue under investigation. The documentary evidence method was used to get dependable data as it was permanent and reliable information. The researcher reviewed reports, minutes of meetings held with beneficiaries, procurement work plans, and newspaper articles from the library together with other relevant written material on the study.

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Data Quality Control.

These will be the steps and measures taken to ensure that the instruments used will be good and clear enough to give the right findings of the study. To control the quality of the data, the researcher will carry out validity and reliability tests of the instrument as reflected below:

Validity.

According to Amin (2005), the validity of an instrument is when it measures what it is supposed to measure; that the data is collected honestly and accurately represents the respondents' opinions. The internal validity of the instrument will be measured based on the Alpha Cronbach test and a score above 0.70 will be accepted. The validity of the questionnaire will be determined by pre-testing the questions on a group of ten staff who will have expertise in the field of research but out of the intended sample. They will be required to fill out the questionnaires and comment on the clarity of the questions.

Structured interviews will be used to overcome biases and the researcher pledged confidentiality of the information given by respondents. Content Validity will be calculated using the formula below:

 $\begin{array}{c} \text{Content Validity Index=} \, \underline{\text{Number of relevant questions}} \\ \text{Total number of items} \end{array}$

(Jachi & Mandongwe)

Reliability.

Reliability is the measure of the degree to which a research instrument yields consistent results if administered on different occasions. According to Amin (2005), reliability is dependability, trustworthiness or the degree to which an instrument yields consistent results after repeated trials. The researcher will administer the questionnaire to only target groups and will be used for selective data which will only be relevant to the research objectives to minimize the errors and increase its reliability. A pretest will be done whereby the research instrument to be used will be tested with ten respondents in order to find out its accuracy and relevance to the research topic.

Using Cronbach's Alpha (1951), as a measure of the reliability of the variables the following model

will be utilized; $\propto \frac{K1}{K-1} \left[\frac{-\Sigma \sigma 2k}{\sigma 2}\right]$

Where:

 α = Reliability, Alpha Coefficient (Cronbach) K = Number of items in the instrument $\Sigma \sigma 2k$ = Variance of individual items σ^2 = Variance of the total instrument

Data Collection Procedures.

After obtaining an introductory letter, the researcher will seek permission from the relevant respondents of the Kabale district local government to start the data collection by physically delivering questionnaires. Follow-ups with respondents will be made after the agreed period to find out if the researcher can collect the questionnaires. Interviews will be conducted to verify the data provided in the questionnaires. For procedures of obtaining secondary data, inquiries will be made about access and availability of the information. A critical analysis of documents will be made to squeeze out the required data.

Measurements of Variables.

The study will use both nominal and ordinal scales to measure the variables. The nominal scale of measurement will mainly be used to measure demographic data which will comprise items with the same set of characteristics such as gender, age, education levels, and period of working at Kabale district local government. The rest of the items in the questionnaire will be measured using the ordinal scale in which the five-point Likert scale ranging from 5-strongly agree, 4-agree, 3-no sure, 2- disagree, and 1-strongly disagree will be used to measure both the independent and dependent variables against each other. The independent variables of the procurement contract process will include requests for bids/ proposals, selection of candidates, contract signing, and contract monitoring while the dependent variable will be efficiency, quality, and timeliness.

Data Analysis.

Data collected will be edited, coded, and later analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Scientists (SPSS) version 17 computer program. Quantitative data will be analyzed using tables, correlation analysis to show the relationships, and regression analysis to show the influence of performance audits and governance. Pearson's correlation coefficients (r) and significance (p) will be used to identify the significance levels to test the hypotheses at the 99 and 95 confidence levels in the correlation analysis. This will involve running a bivariate correlation analysis using Pearson's correlation analysis allowing it to find any significant relationship at 2-tailed. The adjusted R2, t-value beta, and significance values will be used to measure the influence of the independent variables on the dependent variable in the regression analysis.

Ethical considerations.

 The researcher will seek an introductory letter from the school of graduate studies and research of Team University that will introduce her to the concerned authorities for permission to collect data for this study.

- ii. He will also solicit permission through a written request to the concerned officials of the selected Departments included in the study.
- iii. The researcher will then request the respondents to sign the *Consent Form*.
- iv. Acknowledge the authors quoted in this study through citations and referencing.
- v. Confidentiality: The researcher ensured confidentiality and anonymity of the information collected and the information given was used for academic purposes.

the total number of research questionnaires issued to the respondents.

Response rate=Received Questionnaires *100
Total number of issued questionnaires

Response rate
$$= 65$$
 *100

Response rate= 92.8%

According to the findings, 5 respondents did not return the questionnaires hence reducing the response rate by 7.2% the response rate for this study was 92.8%. However, the response rate was too small to change the study results hence the research continued with the study.

RESULTS.

Response Rate.

To determine the response rate, the researcher adopted a formula where she divided the received questionnaires by

Table 2: Gender of the Respondents

Gender	Frequency	Percent (%)
Males	45	69.2
Females	20	30.8
Total	65	100

Source: Primary (2023).

According to the table 2. 45 (69.2%) of the respondents were males and 20 (30.8%) of the respondents were females. Therefore, majority of the respondents were males and thus there is gender inequality in procurement systems in Kabale District Local Government.

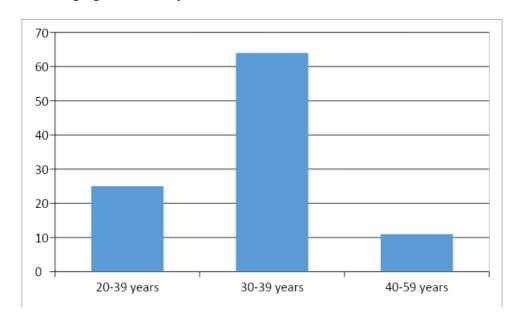
Demographic characteristics of respondents.

Gender of the respondents

Age of the respondents.

The respondents selected for this study were 20 years and above. This is because Kabale district employment policy doesn't allow minors to work or be awarded contracts. Further no person above 59 years was selected for this study since they are considered retirees.

Figure 1: showing age of the respondents



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Source: Primary (2023).

Figure 1 shows that majority of the respondents were aged 30 to 39 years, followed by those aged 20-39 years and 40-59 years. This shows that majority of the stakeholders in the procurement are energetic and productive to ensure

quality of service delivery in Kabale District Local Government.

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Level of education of the respondents.

Table 3: Level of education

Level of education	Frequency	Percent (%)
Secondary	9	13.8
Tertiary	13	20
University	43	66.2
Total	65	100

According to table 3, 43 of the respondents had University Education, 13 of the respondents had tertiary education and 9 respondents had secondary education. Therefore majority (66.2%) of the respondents had University education and the least educated respondents (13.8%) had secondary education. Further, the findings indicate that the staff at Kabale District has the Qualification to perform procurement services diligently.

Procurement contract award process.

- For this section, the researcher used findings from interviews that were conducted with opinion leaders, members of the District Procurement committee, and a few senior technical procurement staff of the district. The procurement process was as follows;
- Identifying the Need: The local government identifies a need for goods, services, or construction. This could be anything from office supplies to infrastructure development projects.
- Determine Procurement Method: The local government determines the appropriate procurement method for the specific project. This could include methods such as open competitive bidding, requests for proposals (RFPs), or requests for quotations (RFQs).
- Advertising or Solicitation: The local government advertises the project and solicits proposals from potential vendors. This could involve publishing advertisements in local newspapers, posting on government procurement websites, or sending invitations to known vendors.
- Vendor Submissions: Interested vendors submit their bids, proposals, or quotations in response to the advertising or solicitation. They provide the required documents and information as specified in the procurement documents.
- Evaluation of Submissions: The local government evaluates the submissions received

- from vendors based on predetermined evaluation criteria. This could include factors like price, quality, experience, past performance, and compliance with specified requirements.
- Selection of Preferred Vendor: Based on the evaluation results, the local government selects a preferred vendor or a shortlist of vendors who meet the criteria and requirements of the project.
- Negotiation (if applicable): In some cases, the local government may enter into negotiations with the preferred vendor to finalize the contract terms, such as pricing, delivery schedules, and requirements.
- viii. Contract Award: After negotiations (if applicable) are completed, the local government awards the contract to the selected vendor. This is typically done through a formal contract award letter or notification.
- Contract Execution: Once the contract is awarded, both the local government and the vendor execute the contract by signing the necessary documents. This formalizes the agreement and establishes the legal relationship between the two parties.
- Contract Management: The local government manages the awarded contract throughout its duration. This includes monitoring vendor performance, ensuring compliance with contract terms and conditions, resolving any disputes or issues that may arise, and administering payments.

Quality of services.

The researcher asked respondents to rate the quality of services in Kabale District. Their opinions were ranked as (1-39) % = poor, (40-59) % = Fair (60-75) = good, and (76-100) = Excellent. The findings are shown in Table 4.

Table 4: Quality of service delivery							
Mean		36%					
Range		10-70 %					
Quality of services (%)	Frequ	iency	Percentage				
1-39	3	9	60				
40-59	23		35.4				
60-75	3		3 4.6		4.6		
76-100	()	0				

According to table 4, 60% (39) of the respondents rated the quality of services to be poor, 35.4% of the respondents rated it to be fair and 4.6% of the respondents rated to be good. Further, the findings indicated an average of 36% in service delivery. Therefore, the quality of service delivery in Kabale District was relatively poor and needs to addressed.

Total

The researcher used Likert scale for this particular section of the study where the responses were on a scale of 1-5. Where 1 = Strongly Agree, 2= Agree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Disagree and 5 = Strongly Disagree. The table below shows a summary of the participant's responses basing on percentages (%), frequency (F), standard deviation (Std) and mean;

100

Candidate selection and contract award and service delivery in Kabale District Local Government.

Table 5: Descriptive findings on Candidate selection and contract award and service delivery in Kabale District Local Government.

Statement	SA	A	N	D	SD	Mean	std
During candidate selection, the academic qualifications of the contractors are considerable as they show ones skills and knowledge in providing the required services.		48 78.8	7 10.8			4.0	0.3
The experience of the candidates is essential selecting candidates to provide quality services		31 47.7	8 12.3			4.3	0.2
During the selection of candidates, Bank statements are essential in determining the capability of candidates to provide goods and services Kabale District				29 44.6		2.5	0.8
Contract award are based on democratic vote by Procurement committee members of Kabale District Local government		36 55.4		2 3.1		4.1	0.5
Contracts are awarded based on experience and ability to deliver on contract terms in Kabale District				23 35.4		1.7	0.4

Source: Primary (2023)

According to findings in Table 5 on the statement "During candidate selection, the academic qualifications of the contractors are considerable as they show one skill and knowledge in providing the required services", the average response was 4.0 with a standard deviation of 0.3. Further, the findings revealed that 94% (58) of the respondents agree that during candidate selection, the academic qualifications of the contractors are

considerable as they show one's skills and knowledge in providing the required services.

According to the findings, the mean response was 4.3 with a standard deviation of 0.2 on the statement "The experience of the candidates is essential in selecting candidates to provide quality services". Further, the findings revealed that 87.7% of the respondents agree that the experience of the candidates is essential in selecting candidates to provide quality services

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On the statement "During the selection of candidates, Bank statements are essential in determining the capability of candidates to provide goods and services Kabale District", the average response was 2.5 with a standard deviation of 0.8. Further, the findings showed 44.6% of the respondents disagree that during the selection of candidates, Bank statements are not essential in determining the capability of candidates to provide goods and services Kabale District

On the statement "Contract awards are based on a democratic vote by Procurement committee members of Kabale District Local government", the average response was 4.1 with a standard deviation of 0.05. Further, the findings revealed that 83.6% of the respondents agreed with the statement that contract awards are based on a democratic vote by Procurement committee members of the Kabale District Local government

On the statement "Contracts are awarded based on experience and ability to deliver on contract terms in Kabale District", the average response was 1.7 with a standard deviation of 0.4. Further, the findings revealed that 81.5% of the respondents agree that contracts are awarded based on experience and ability to deliver on contract terms in the Kabale District

Therefore the study findings showed that during candidate selection, the academic qualifications of the contractors are considerable to ascertain the skills and knowledge of contractors in performing given tasks, the experience of the candidates is essential in selecting candidates because it helps to select contractors with knowledge and with ability to provide quality services, contract award are based on democratic vote by Procurement committee members of Kabale District Local government hence candidates with good marks based on members ranks are the best for the job.

However, their study was ignored during the selection of candidates, and bank statements are sometimes ignored hence contracts may be awarded to contractors with no resources to provide the required services, and contracts are not awarded based on experience and ability to deliver on contract terms hence failure of clients to meet set deadlines and standards in Kabale District

Table 6. Correlational findings on candidate selection and contract award and service delivery in Kabale District Local Government

Candidate selection and contract award	Pearson Correlation Coefficient		.356*
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	65	65
Service delivery	Pearson Correlation Coefficient	.356*	1.000
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	65	65

Source: Primary (2022)

According to the findings in Table 6, the correlation between candidate selection and contract award and service delivery was 0.356 with a significance value of 0.000. Therefore, there is a positive significant relationship between candidate selection and contract award and service delivery in Kabale district local government. This means that candidate selection and the contract award are an integral part of the contract award process and service delivery in Kabale district local government.

DISCUSSION.

The majority of the respondents (69.2%) were males and thus there was gender inequality in procurement systems in Kabale District Local Government. Also, the majority of the respondents were aged 30 to 39 years, followed by those aged 20-39 years and 40-59 years. The majority (66.2%) of the respondents had University education and

the least educated respondents (13.8%) had secondary education. Further, the findings indicated that the staff at Kabale District has the Qualification to perform procurement services diligently.

60% (39) of the respondents rated the quality of services to be poor, 35.4% of the respondents rated it to be fair and 4.6% of the respondents rated it to be good. Further, the findings indicated an average of 36% in service delivery. Therefore, the quality of service delivery in Kabale District was relatively poor and needs to be addressed. Findings showed that during candidate selection, the academic qualifications of the contractors are considerable to ascertain the skills and knowledge of contractors in performing given tasks, the experience of the candidates is essential in selecting candidates because it helps to select contractors with knowledge and with ability to provide quality services, contract award are based on democratic vote by Procurement committee members of Kabale District Local government hence

candidates with good marks based on members ranks are the best for the job.

Smallwood (2006) examined the selection strategies in local government. It explores how selection standards, such as tests, interviews, and backgrounds, may or may not affect service delivery. The author noted that recruitment strategies should be developed to ensure strong service delivery and at the same time to promote access to top talent. Moreover, the article provides an assessment of service delivery quality based on the quality of the selection process and the quality of the chosen candidates. This study ignored requests for bank statements to measure financial capability and their level of experience as measures of their ability to deliver quality services.

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Michalopoulos (2020) examined the selection of municipal candidates and decentralization in developing countries. He suggested that local-level decentralization can improve the quality of service delivery, and emphasize the importance of the selection of candidates at the local level. The authors discussed the importance of selecting municipalities with competent candidates, as well as the interventions required to ensure a fair and transparent process. However, this study was silent on the criteria of candidate selection especially candidates' academic qualifications, skills, and knowledge about performing given. Also, their study did not cover contract award and candidate selection as a democratic process where procurement committee members of Local government choose their contractors for quality services. However, the findings showed that the selection of candidates does not require bank statements hence contracts may be awarded to contractors with no resources to provide the required services, and contracts are not awarded based on experience and ability to deliver on contract terms hence failure of clients to meet set deadlines and standards in Kabale District

The correlation between candidate selection and contract award and service delivery was 0.356 with a significance value of 0.000. Therefore, there is a positive significant relationship between candidate selection and contract award and service delivery in Kabale district local government. This means that candidate selection and the contract award are an integral part of the contract award process and service delivery in Kabale district local government.

CONCLUSION.

There was a positive significant relationship between candidate selection and contract award and service delivery in Kabale district local government. This means that candidate selection and the contract award are an integral part of the contract award process and service delivery in Kabale district local government.

RECOMMENDATION.

The district local government council should also ensure that candidates provide additional information on performance, experience, academic qualifications, and financial statements as this will help them to ensure quality services are provided on time

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS.

LG Local government NSDS National Service Delivery Survey PPDA Public Procurement and Disposal of Public Assets TOR Terms of Reference SOW Statement of Work OCFS Office of Children and Family Services UNDP United Nations Development Programme

SOURCE OF FUNDING.

The study was not funded

CONFLICT OF INTEREST.

The author had no conflict of interest.

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