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Beyond Bias and Culture: Exploring the Role of Sustainable Procurement Orientation in Vendor Selection and Procurement Performance in the Construction Industry

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Abstract: This study aims to examine the influence of Organisational Culture, Perceived Risk, Status Quo Bias, and Sustainable Procurement Orientation on Vendor Selection and Procurement Performance in the construction industry, and to assess the mediating role of Vendor Selection. A quantitative approach was applied using survey data from 112 employees involved in procurement activities at a construction company in Indonesia, and the data were analysed using Partial Least Squares–Structural Equation Modelling. All constructs met the criteria for reliability and both convergent and discriminant validity. Organizational Culture emerged as the strongest predictor of Vendor Selection and Procurement Performance, followed by Sustainable Procurement Orientation. Contrary to theoretical expectations, Perceived Risk and Status Quo Bias showed positive effects on Vendor Selection, indicating the strategic importance of caution and stability in high-risk construction environments. Vendor Selection significantly mediated all examined relationships. These findings enhance the understanding of behavioral dynamics in supply chains and sustainable procurement by demonstrating how psychological, cultural, and sustainability-oriented factors collectively shape vendor decision-making and influence procurement outcomes.

Keywords: Organizational Culture, Perceived Risk, Status Quo Bias, Sustainable Procurement, Procurement Performance.

INTRODUCTION

The construction industry operates within a supply chain environment characterized by high complexity, interdependence, and uncertainty, making procurement performance a critical determinant of project success (Riadi, 2023). Vendor selection decisions are rarely shaped solely by technical or financial considerations; rather, they are influenced by internal organizational conditions such as prevailing cultural norms, individual perceptions of risk, and decision-makers' tendencies to rely on established suppliers. These behavioural and contextual factors may reduce neutrality in procurement judgments, particularly in project-based environments

where uncertainty and execution risk are pronounced (Damayanti et al., 2022; Akbar, 2019; Li et al., 2023).

While classical procurement theory assumes rational decision-making focused on efficiency, price, and technical capability, a growing body of behavioural research suggests that procurement decisions are often shaped by cognitive tendencies and social norms embedded within organizations. However, much of the existing literature frames such behavioural influences—particularly perceived risk and status quo bias—as distortions that undermine optimal decision-making. This perspective implicitly assumes stable environments with low switching costs and manageable project risks, assumptions that are increasingly misaligned with the realities of construction supply chains.

Elevated concerns regarding supplier reliability and execution risk frequently lead organizations to prefer existing vendors, reflecting a behavioural tendency commonly described as status quo bias (Zhang & Chen, 2022; John et al., 2023). In prior studies, status quo bias and risk aversion are often associated with negative outcomes such as reduced competition, supplier lock-in, and innovation stagnation. Yet, in high-risk construction contexts, reliance on familiar suppliers may represent an adaptive response aimed at minimizing uncertainty, safeguarding delivery reliability, and preserving relational capital accumulated through prior collaboration.

At the same time, the growing prominence of sustainability agendas has reshaped procurement priorities, requiring organizations to integrate environmental, social, and ethical considerations into supplier evaluation processes. Sustainable procurement orientation emphasizes long-term value creation supported by transparency, accountability, and responsible sourcing practices (Jahani et al., 2021; Kellner & Utz, 2019; Olaleye et al., 2024). Despite the institutionalization of sustainability frameworks—such as ESG mandates, green procurement guidelines, and ethical sourcing standards empirical studies often conceptualise sustainable procurement as a compliance-driven policy outcome rather than as a behavioural orientation shaping individual decision-making. Consequently, sustainability is rarely examined alongside cognitive bias and organizational culture within a unified analytical framework.

Although these issues have gained increasing scholarly attention, empirical evidence that jointly examines organizational culture, perceived risk, status quo bias, and sustainable procurement orientation in shaping vendor selection decisions remains limited, particularly within emerging economies and construction supply chains. Existing studies tend to address these dimensions in isolation: organizational culture research emphasizes shared values and governance mechanisms, behavioural studies focus on cognitive bias as decision distortions, and sustainability research highlights ethical or environmental criteria as normative requirements. This fragmented approach offers only partial explanations of procurement behaviour and fails to capture how cultural norms, behavioural tendencies, and sustainability orientation converge within real-world decision-making processes.

This gap is especially critical given that vendor selection directly influences key procurement outcomes, including cost efficiency, delivery reliability, material quality, and continuity of supply. In high-risk, project-based industries such as construction, vendor selection represents a strategic judgment that balances risk exposure, relational stability, and long-term collaboration. Under such conditions, behavioural tendencies often labelled as bias may function as adaptive mechanisms rather than sources of inefficiency.

Addressing this gap, the present study integrates organizational culture, perceived risk, status quo bias, and sustainable procurement orientation into a unified empirical model, positioning vendor selection as a mediating behavioural mechanism linking these antecedents to procurement performance. By reconceptualizing perceived risk and status quo bias as potentially constructive decision drivers under uncertainty, and by framing sustainable procurement orientation as a behavioural decision framework rather than a compliance outcome, this study moves beyond descriptive accounts of procurement bias. In doing so, it

offers a context-sensitive explanation of how cultural, behavioural, and sustainability-oriented factors collectively shape vendor selection and procurement performance within the construction industry.

METHOD

Based on the reviewed literature, a conceptual framework was developed to examine how organizational culture, perceived risk, status quo bias, and sustainable procurement orientation influence procurement performance, with vendor selection positioned as a mediating mechanism. This research applied a quantitative explanatory design to analyze causal relationships among organizational culture, perceived risk, status quo bias, sustainable procurement orientation, vendor selection, and procurement performance within a major construction company in Indonesia. The study was conducted at PT Wijaya Karya Bangunan Gedung Tbk during the 2025 period, involving 133 employees engaged in procurement activities, from which 112 valid responses were collected through an online questionnaire using a seven-point Likert scale. The sample size satisfied both Slovin's calculation and the "10 times rule," ensuring adequacy for the use of Partial Least Squares–Structural Equation Modelling.

All variables were measured reflectively using indicators adapted from established literature and adjusted to the construction procurement context. Data collection consisted of a literature review to formulate the conceptual framework and a structured survey to obtain primary data. The measurement quality was examined through convergent and discriminant validity tests as well as reliability assessments.

PLS-SEM was selected due to its suitability for theory development, predictive analysis, and robustness with complex models and relatively small sample sizes. Data analysis employed PLS-SEM with SmartPLS to evaluate the measurement model and structural model, enabling the estimation of direct, indirect, and mediating effects. This methodological approach provides empirical support for understanding behavioral, cultural, and sustainability-related factors that shape procurement decision-making in the construction industry.

To address potential common method bias, a Harman's single-factor test was conducted, indicating that no single factor accounted for the majority of variance, suggesting that common method bias was unlikely to be a significant concern. In addition, full collinearity variance inflation factor (VIF) values were examined and found to be below the recommended threshold, further confirming the absence of serious common method bias. These procedures enhance the robustness of the measurement model and reduce the risk of systematic response bias.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Convergent validity was confirmed as all outer loadings exceeded the threshold of 0.70 and the AVE values were greater than 0.50, indicating that the indicators consistently represented their respective latent constructs.

Table 1. Convergent Validity:Outer Loadings and AVE

Construct	Outer Loading Range	AVE	Status
Organizational Culture	0.83–0.90	>0.50	Valid
Perceived Risk	0.81–0.89	>0.50	Valid
Status Quo Bias	0.83–0.90	>0.50	Valid
Sustainable Procurement Orientation	0.79–0.88	>0.50	Valid
Vendor Selection	0.85–0.90	>0.50	Valid
Procurement Performance	0.89–0.93	>0.50	Valid

Source: Research data

Discriminant validity was also supported through the Fornell–Larcker criterion, where the square root of each construct's AVE was higher than its correlations with other constructs, confirming adequate construct distinctiveness.

Table 2. Discriminant Validity (Fornell-Larcker Criterion)

OC	PR	SQB	SPO	VS	PP
0.873	—	—	—	—	—
0.769	**0.867**	—	—	—	—
0.699	0.717	**0.712**	—	—	—
0.662	0.715	0.721	**0.802**	—	—
0.759	0.781	0.731	0.717	**0.850**	—
0.785	0.781	0.703	0.732	0.869	**0.892**

Source: Research data

Further analysis of the structural model revealed strong explanatory power. Vendor Selection achieved an R^2 value of 0.727, indicating that Organizational Culture, Perceived Risk, Status Quo Bias, and Sustainable Procurement Orientation jointly explained 72.7% of its variance. Procurement Performance reached an R^2 of 0.707, demonstrating that Vendor Selection and selected antecedents explained 70.7% of its variance.

Table 3. Structural Model Results (R-Square)

Endogenous Variable	R^2	R^2 Adjusted
Vendor Selection	0.727	0.717
Procurement Performance	0.707	0.699

Source: Research data

The hypothesis testing results showed that all proposed relationships were statistically significant, confirming that each predictor contributed meaningfully to the model. Organizational Culture had significant positive effects on both Vendor Selection and Procurement Performance, demonstrating that cultural strength within the organization enhances decision quality and operational execution. Perceived Risk and Status Quo Bias also significantly influenced Vendor Selection, suggesting that cautious evaluation and familiarity with existing vendors may be advantageous in risk-intensive construction environments. Sustainable Procurement Orientation had significant effects on both Vendor Selection and Procurement Performance, emphasizing the importance of integrating environmental and social criteria in supplier management. Vendor Selection itself had a strong positive effect on Procurement Performance, validating its central role in delivering cost efficiency, quality compliance, timely execution, and supply continuity.

Table 4. Path Coefficients and Hypothesis Testing

Relationship	Coefficient	t-value	p-value	Result
OC → VS	0.243	3.833	0.001	Supported
OC → PP	0.368	4.442	0.000	Supported
PR → VS	0.280	3.059	0.003	Supported
SQB → VS	0.210	3.428	0.001	Supported
SPO → VS	0.210	3.028	0.003	Supported

SPO → PP	0.200	3.027	0.004	Supported
VS → PP	0.355	4.371	0.000	Supported

Source: Research data

The mediation analysis further demonstrated that Vendor Selection served as a significant intermediary in translating the influence of Organizational Culture, Perceived Risk, Status Quo Bias, and Sustainable Procurement Orientation into Procurement Performance. This confirms that effective supplier assessment acts as the primary channel through which internal organizational factors and sustainability commitments are operationalized into measurable outcomes.

Table 5. Mediation Analysis

Mediation Path	Indirect Effect	t-value	p-value	Mediation Type
OC → VS → PP	0.086	2.637	0.009	Partial
PR → VS → PP	0.099	3.128	0.001	Partial
SQB → VS → PP	0.075	2.927	0.003	Partial
SPO → VS → PP	0.075	2.804	0.005	Partial

Source: Research data

The bootstrapping results, which include T-statistics, factor loadings, and path coefficients, visually confirm the statistical strength of the structural relationships, further validating the robustness of the model.

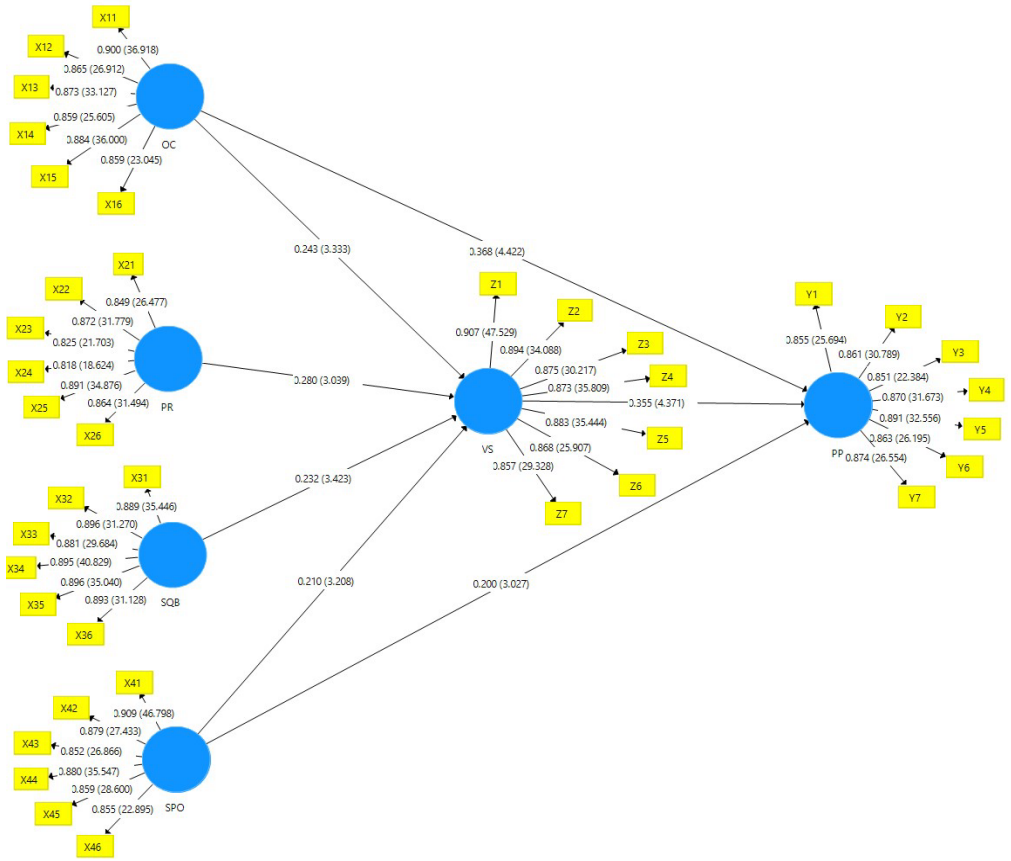

Figure 1. Bootstrapping Results: Including T-Statistics, Factor Loadings, and Path Coefficients Source: Research data

Beyond statistical significance, the structural relationships identified in this study reveal important behavioral and managerial insights into procurement decision-making within construction supply chains.

1. **Organizational Culture → Vendor Selection & Procurement Performance:**
   The strong positive effect of Organizational Culture on both Vendor Selection and Procurement Performance indicates that shared values, leadership commitment, and collaborative norms play a foundational role in shaping procurement behavior. In construction environments characterized by interdependence and long project cycles, a strong organizational culture provides cognitive alignment among procurement actors, reducing ambiguity and enhancing consistency in supplier evaluation.
   This finding suggests that procurement effectiveness is not solely driven by formal procedures, but by the extent to which cultural norms encourage disciplined evaluation, cross-functional coordination, and accountability in supplier decisions. As such, Organizational Culture functions as a behavioral governance mechanism that stabilizes decision-making under uncertainty.
2. **Perceived Risk → Vendor Selection (Positive Effect):**
   Contrary to conventional assumptions that higher perceived risk inhibits decision quality, the positive relationship observed in this study suggests that risk awareness may enhance vendor selection rigour in construction contexts. When procurement professionals perceive higher levels of risk, they may engage in more cautious, information-intensive evaluation processes, thereby improving the quality of supplier assessment. In project-based industries where failures can result in significant cost overruns and delays, heightened risk perception appears to function as a corrective mechanism rather than a deterrent, reinforcing due diligence and risk mitigation behaviors.
3. **Status Quo Bias → Vendor Selection (Positive Effect):**
   The positive influence of Status Quo Bias on Vendor Selection challenges the dominant narrative that habitual decision-making necessarily undermines procurement performance. In construction supply chains, reliance on familiar vendors may reflect accumulated trust, proven capability, and relational capital rather than irrational inertia.
   This result indicates that status quo bias can operate as a stabilizing behavioral mechanism, particularly in high-risk environments where supplier reliability and experiential knowledge are critical. Rather than constraining decision-making, familiarity may reduce coordination costs, learning curves, and execution uncertainty.
4. **Sustainable Procurement Orientation → Vendor Selection & Procurement Performance:**
   The significant effects of Sustainable Procurement Orientation on both Vendor Selection and Procurement Performance highlight the growing integration of sustainability considerations into core procurement logic. This finding suggests that environmental, ethical, and social criteria are no longer peripheral, but actively shape supplier evaluation and operational outcomes. Organizations with strong sustainability orientation appear more capable of aligning long-term value creation with supplier selection decisions, leading to improved compliance, reputational stability, and performance consistency.
5. **Vendor Selection → Procurement Performance:**
   The strong relationship between Vendor Selection and Procurement Performance confirms its central role as the primary operational mechanism through which organizational values, behavioral tendencies, and strategic orientations are translated into measurable outcomes.

Effective vendor selection enhances procurement performance by ensuring alignment between supplier capabilities and project requirements, thereby improving cost efficiency, delivery reliability, quality conformity, and supply continuity.

6. **Mediation Effects: Vendor Selection as a Transmission Mechanism:**

The mediation analysis demonstrates that Vendor Selection serves as a critical transmission channel through which Organizational Culture, Perceived Risk, Status Quo Bias, and Sustainable Procurement Orientation influence Procurement Performance. This indicates that internal organizational and behavioral factors do not directly translate into performance unless they are operationalized through structured supplier evaluation processes. These findings position vendor selection not merely as an administrative step, but as a strategic behavioral interface linking organizational context to performance outcomes.

The findings collectively validate all proposed hypotheses. The significant positive effect of Organizational Culture on Vendor Selection and Procurement Performance supports the argument that shared values, collaborative norms, and leadership support shape procurement behavior and outcomes. The acceptance of the hypotheses involving Perceived Risk and Status Quo Bias suggests that, contrary to traditional assumptions, both constructs can positively influence decision-making in environments where operational reliability and risk mitigation are critical. The hypotheses related to Sustainable Procurement Orientation are supported, indicating that environmental stewardship, ethical compliance, and long-term resource efficiency increasingly influence vendor decisions and organizational performance. The acceptance of the hypothesis linking Vendor Selection to Procurement Performance confirms its strategic importance as a mechanism for aligning organizational objectives with supplier capabilities. Finally, the acceptance of all mediating hypotheses demonstrates that Vendor Selection is the key operational pathway through which psychological, cultural, and sustainability-based antecedents enhance procurement outcomes.

The results indicate that organizational, psychological, and sustainability-related factors collectively shape procurement decision-making in the construction sector. Organizational Culture emerged as a key determinant of both vendor evaluation and procurement outcomes, suggesting that supportive norms, leadership commitment, and openness to innovation strengthen the objectivity and effectiveness of supplier selection. Interestingly, Perceived Risk and Status Quo Bias showed positive effects on Vendor Selection, a pattern that differs from conventional expectations but aligns with the high-risk, specification-driven nature of construction projects. While previous behavioural procurement studies predominantly report negative effects of perceived risk and status quo bias on decision quality, the findings of this study suggest a context-dependent reinterpretation. In high-risk construction environments, these behavioural tendencies appear to function as adaptive mechanisms that reinforce caution, trust preservation, and execution stability, aligning with relational procurement theories rather than classical rational-choice assumptions. In such environments, reliance on familiar vendors and cautious decision-making may help reduce operational disruptions and improve delivery reliability. Sustainable Procurement Orientation also demonstrated strong influence on both Vendor Selection and Procurement Performance, highlighting the growing strategic importance of environmental and social considerations in supplier management. Vendor Selection was confirmed as a mediating factor, indicating that procurement performance improves when organizational values, risk perceptions, and sustainability principles are translated into a structured and objective supplier assessment process. Overall, the findings emphasize the need for construction firms to enhance cultural alignment, strengthen analytical evaluation mechanisms, and embed sustainability criteria into procurement governance to achieve consistent and superior performance.

Beyond the internal interpretation of the empirical results, a broader discussion is required to position these findings within global procurement and sustainability literature. This study provides empirical evidence that procurement performance in the construction industry is shaped by the interaction of organizational culture, behavioural tendencies, and sustainability-oriented decision frameworks. Rather than operating independently, these factors collectively influence how procurement actors evaluate suppliers and translate strategic intentions into operational outcomes.

The finding that Organizational Culture exerts the strongest influence on both Vendor Selection and Procurement Performance is consistent with global studies emphasizing culture as a behavioural governance mechanism in complex supply chains. Prior research has shown that shared norms, leadership commitment, and collaborative values enhance coordination and decision consistency across organizational boundaries (Hartnell et al., 2019; Li et al., 2023).

In the context of construction projects where uncertainty, interdependence, and long execution cycles prevail a strong organizational culture reduces interpretive ambiguity in procurement decisions. This reinforces disciplined supplier evaluation and mitigates opportunistic behaviour, thereby strengthening procurement performance.

Contrary to much of the behavioural procurement literature that portrays perceived risk and status quo bias as sources of inefficiency, the positive effects observed in this study suggest a more nuanced role. In high-risk construction environments, heightened risk awareness may prompt more rigorous scrutiny of supplier capabilities, contractual reliability, and past performance, ultimately improving vendor selection outcomes.

Similarly, status quo bias often criticized for discouraging innovation may function as a trust-preserving mechanism when prior supplier relationships have demonstrated reliability. This aligns with relational procurement theories, which argue that accumulated experiential knowledge and reputational capital can reduce coordination costs and execution risk (Nyamah et al., 2022; Imafuku et al., 2022).

These findings challenge the assumption that behavioural bias is inherently detrimental, suggesting instead that its impact is context-dependent. In emerging economies and projectbased industries, bias may serve as an adaptive response to institutional uncertainty rather than a deviation from rationality.

The significant influence of Sustainable Procurement Orientation on both Vendor Selection and Procurement Performance underscores the strategic role of sustainability in contemporary procurement governance. This result supports global evidence indicating that sustainability-oriented firms are better positioned to align supplier practices with long-term value creation, regulatory compliance, and reputational stability (Amann et al., 2021; Zhu & Sarkis, 2023).

Importantly, this study extends prior research by demonstrating that sustainability orientation does not operate in isolation from behavioural factors. Instead, it interacts with organizational culture and decision-maker tendencies, reinforcing the integration of environmental and social criteria into routine procurement judgments.

From a policy perspective, this finding resonates with international frameworks such as ISO 20400 and Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 12, which emphasize responsible consumption and production through supplier engagement rather than compliance alone.

The mediating role of Vendor Selection highlights its function as a behavioural transmission mechanism linking internal organizational conditions to performance outcomes. Organizational culture, risk perception, bias, and sustainability commitments influence procurement performance only when they are operationalized through structured and disciplined supplier evaluation processes.

This finding reinforces the argument that vendor selection is not merely an administrative procedure, but a strategic interface where behavioural, cultural, and sustainability considerations converge.

For procurement leaders in construction firms, these findings suggest that improving procurement performance requires more than refining evaluation criteria or adopting sustainability policies. Organizations must actively cultivate cultural alignment, strengthen risk-aware decision frameworks, and recognize the constructive role of experiential judgment in supplier selection.

Rather than attempting to eliminate bias entirely, managers should focus on institutionalizing governance mechanisms such as standardized evaluation processes, crossfunctional review, and sustainability-based supplier audits that channel behavioural tendencies toward consistent and accountable decision-making.

CONCLUSION

The results of this study demonstrate that procurement performance in the construction industry is shaped by the combined influence of organizational culture, risk-related behavioural mechanisms, and sustainability-oriented practices, with vendor selection functioning as the primary pathway through which these factors exert their impact. The analysis confirms that organizational culture plays the most substantial role in determining both the quality of vendor selection and the resulting procurement outcomes, suggesting that strong shared values, leadership support, and adaptive norms enable organizations to evaluate suppliers more accurately and manage procurement processes more effectively. Vendor selection itself emerged as a critical determinant of procurement performance, reinforcing its centrality in achieving efficiency, quality compliance, and supply stability within complex project environments. Although perceived risk and status quo tendencies were initially expected to impede vendor decision-making, the results indicate that cautious evaluation and reliance on established suppliers may contribute positively to decision stability in high-uncertainty construction contexts. Furthermore, sustainable procurement orientation contributes to the integration of environmental and ethical considerations into supplier evaluation, supporting long-term organizational performance even though its direct influence is comparatively modest.

Collectively, these findings confirm that procurement performance is not driven solely by technical assessment, but by the organization's ability to translate cultural strength, behavioural tendencies, and sustainability commitments into a structured and objective vendor selection process.

This study contributes to the broader field of behavioural and sustainable supply chain management by demonstrating how internal organizational dynamics are operationalized within procurement decisions, thereby offering empirical insights that advance both theory and practice in construction industry procurement.

Future research may extend this model by applying longitudinal designs to observe how behavioural and sustainability orientations evolve across project life cycles. Comparative studies across different countries or construction sectors could further examine the contextual boundary conditions of adaptive bias in procurement decision-making. Additionally, future studies may incorporate objective performance indicators or multi-source data to further reduce self-report bias and strengthen causal inference. Such extensions would enhance the generalizability of behavioural and sustainable procurement research beyond single organizational settings.

Theoretically, this study advances behavioural procurement literature by reconceptualizing perceived risk and status quo bias not merely as cognitive distortions, but as adaptive decision mechanisms that can enhance vendor selection under conditions of high uncertainty. In addition, by positioning sustainable procurement orientation as a behavioural

decision framework integrated with organizational culture rather than a compliance-driven policy construct, this research extends sustainable supply chain theory within project-based construction contexts.

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