

## The Nexus of Citizen Participation and Value for Money in Procurement of Works: The Moderating and Mediating Role of Perceived Value



Emmanuel Agyekum<sup>1\*</sup>, William Mills Abbey<sup>1</sup>, Gloria Pokuua-Duah<sup>1</sup>, Kenneth Asiamah Appah<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Koforidua Technical University.

\*Corresponding Author's Email:  
[kofiagyekum58@gmail.com](mailto:kofiagyekum58@gmail.com)

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### Abstract

**Aim:** Although citizen participation has been widely studied, few studies assess the moderating and mediating role of perceived value in enhancing value for money in project procurement. The objective of this study was to examine the relationship between citizen participation, perceived value, and value for money in the procurement of works within local government institutions.

**Methods:** Drawing on the theory of citizen participation, the study proposes a research model through which citizen participation influences value for money. The study model was validated using primary data from the field survey of 261 metropolitan, municipal, and district assemblies (MMDAs) through questionnaires. The informants included executive management members of MMDAs and citizen representatives who are assembly members.

**Results:** Using the Smart PLS-SEM analytical tool, a significant finding was that perceived value positively and significantly moderates and mediates the relationship between citizen participation (CP) and value for money (VfM). The study provides theoretical contributions to the theory of citizen participation (TCP) literature and managerial contributions to direct public officials and local community development partners to understand the roles of citizens who perceive value to achieve value for money in project procurement.

**Conclusion:** Empirical evidence demonstrates that perceived value has a moderate positive and significant influence on the relationship between citizen participation and value for money.

**Recommendation:** Citizens should be involved in local government decisions regarding project procurement if value for money is to be achieved.

**Keywords;** *Citizen participation, local government institutions, perceived value, value for money, fitness for purpose, economy*

## 1.0 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Citizen participation (CP) has become a significant topic in public discussions on community project procurement (Chirenje *et al.*, 2013; Willness *et al.*, 2023). Public policy decisions reflect the preferences and interests of citizens' input in local government decision-making regarding project delivery (Lindblom, 1986; Newig *et al.*, 2023). The perspectives of citizens regarding what and how to procure work (Patrucco *et al.*, 2023) are essential for determining the value for money (Bell & Reed, 2021) in work procurement. Citizen participation is *a fundamental right* in procurement processes (Rafique *et al.*, 2023). The interests of citizens in work procurement serve as a precursor to direct or indirect community engagement, allowing individuals to share their input on project procurement decisions, which in turn impacts their social and economic well-being (Eriksson, 2018; Quick & Bryson, 2016, 2022).

While developmental goals encourage citizen engagement, effective participation relies on establishing platforms for community input (Mousavi & Pimenidis, 2014; Aikins & Krane, 2010; Pickard *et al.*, 2022). Regarding citizen involvement, the legislative frameworks of both developed and developing nations emphasize the essential role that citizens' opinions play when formulating public policy within the local government concept (Widodo and Wulandari, 2024). Citizen involvement in project decision-making not only benefits the government (assembly) or citizens/communities but also fosters the creation of social capital (Yokoyama & Sakurai, 2006), enhances social cohesion (Jewett *et al.*, 2021), bolsters the legitimacy of democracy (Butzlaff, 2023; Rijal, 2023) and increases the perceived value of the project's benefits and sacrifices (Lima, 2009; Shukla, 2010). Cogan and Sharp (1986) suggest that citizen input offers valuable information and perspectives regarding the projects that public institutions provide for communities (Box, 1998; Aman *et al.*, 2022).

Public Service Commission (2007) reveals that effective economic procurement practices ensure value for money. Procurement laws aim to eliminate waste, inefficiencies, and unnecessary expenditures, while promoting the efficient use of resources in procurement activities (Adjei-Bamfo, 2017). Hence, value for money (VFM) in procurement activities (goods, works, and services) ensures the development and growth of the nation's economy (Nditi, 2014; Tahiri, 2019). Value for money balances project and facility quality with whole-life costs to meet the needs of end users (HM Treasury, 2006; Park, 2013). The assessment of value for money (VFM) is based on quality/fitness for purpose (FFP) (Morillos & Amekudzi, 2008; Adu-Yeboah, 2021; and Baig, 2023) and economy/cost savings (Babashahi *et al.*, 2023). In project procurement, public sector institutions seek funds or resources and deliver cost-effectiveness, satisfaction, and low risk to optimize benefits (Sani *et al.*, 2023; Jo, 2024) to project stakeholders. Similarly, the VFM principle that underpins public procurement practice balances the quality, quantity, cost, and time of project delivery (Okoli *et al.*, 2014; Guarnieri & Gomes, 2019).

To achieve value for money, citizens' demands, preferences, and interests are established as prerequisites in the participation process for the fitness for purpose, quality, and economy of project delivery (Huang & Feeney, 2016; Sui Pheng, 2019). Timely delivery of projects is essential to meet the needs and demands of citizens (Khan, 2018; World Bank, 2016). The avenue for citizen participation in works procurement is an effective method of resource allocation (Edoka & Stacey, 2020), leading to value for money. Thus, minimizing waste enhances the maximum utilization of resources (taxpayers' money) (Kling, 2008) and reduces the abandonment of works procurement

(Kuoribo *et al.*, 2021), making the role of citizens in project procurement decisions indispensable. Extant studies indicate numerous project failures (Mishmish & El-Sayegh, 2018; Damoah & Akwei, 2017; Catalão *et al.*, 2022) stem from the absence of citizen input in project decisions, leading to project abandonment.

The disparity between the perceived value of a project's benefits and the costs incurred to accomplish it lies in citizens' interests (Lima, 2009; Shukla, 2010). Citizen perceived value reflects the trade-off between the total benefits received and the total sacrifices made by citizens (Boksberger & Melsen, 2011; Lachapelle *et al.*, 2021) such as tax payments (sacrifices) that fund community project development (Abdu & Adem, 2023). Wang *et al.* (2021) assert that perceived value is a crucial aspect of citizens' preference in determining the satisfaction and involvement of end users (citizens) in the decision-making and execution of community projects. Primarily, the happiness and acceptability of projects among community residents are linked to their perceptions of project value (both intrinsic and extrinsic) (Sabiote-Ortiz *et al.*, 2016; Vogel, 2020; Romero-Subia *et al.*, 2022). Perceived value reflects the benefits derived from tax contributions, the costs of participation, and the sacrifices made (monetary and non-monetary resources), leading to value for money (VFM). The fundamental principle governing public sector procurement is value for money (Department of Finance, 2013). Despite the project's decision to optimize value for money, it is contingent on citizens' perceptions of the project's function (Watanabe *et al.*, 2020). Citizen involvement in government projects, as articulated in the social contract and social equity establishes obligations and mutual rights (OECD, 2018) between the government and the community/citizens.

Public sector projects in all countries affect the lives of citizens within society because they represent a significant portion of the foundational elements that support national economic growth (Eja & Ramegowda, 2020; Tahiri, 2019). Governments, particularly in developing countries, frequently encounter failures in the implementation and procurement of works, leading to abandonment (Damoah *et al.*, 2020; Sambasivan & Soon, 2007; Sweis *et al.*, 2008; Shehu *et al.*, 2014), which is detrimental to the country's economic growth and development (Damoah *et al.*, 2017). A failed project does not achieve its intended purpose (Al-Ahmad *et al.*, 2009; Damoah, 2015). Project delivery failures are often linked to government representatives and public officials who unduly restrict citizen involvement in project procurement decisions (Amakye, 2017; Petersen *et al.*, 2022). Subsequently, project failures and abandonment lead to revenue loss and substandard infrastructure project delivery (Abusafiya & Suliman, 2017; Mamman *et al.*, 2022).

The repercussions affect economic growth, resulting in the loss of foreign aid and grants, impose stringent donor regulations, and lead confidence erosion in the state institutions among financial entities, civil society organizations, and others (Eja & Ramegowda, 2020). Despite studies revealing the importance of citizens' participatory role in elections and certain social interventions (Mexicana *et al.*, 2012; Huang & Li, 2020), citizen participation in the procurement of works (PFWs) (Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung Ghana Office, & Institute of Local Government Studies, 2011); ILGS, 2014; Huang & Feeney, 2016; Ibrahim *et al.*, 2017) seldom emphasize the significance of capturing citizens' perceived value. In analyzing the relationship between citizen participation (Bello *et al.*, 2018; Ali *et al.*, 2017) and value for money, it is essential to acknowledge the contingent effect of perceived value (Motahar, 2018; Ismail *et al.*, 2009; Hsin Chang & Wang, 2011) to optimize VFM benefits related to perceived value and citizen participation in works

procurement. The research question proposed is: ‘Does perceived value moderate the relationship between citizen participation and value for money in the procurement of works?’

## 2.0 THEORETICAL REVIEW

### 2.1 The Theory of Citizen Participation (TCP)

This theory highlights the role of citizen interest in influencing community development projects (Lang, 1986; Osborne & Strokosch, 2022). The theory stresses on how private and public individuals or organizations collaborate and influence public decisions. The theory of citizens’ participation is consequential in providing information and ideas on public issues (Criado & Gil-Garcia, 2019) that support decision-making (Haklay *et al.*, 2018; Steiniger *et al.*, 2016; Turnhout *et al.*, 2010). It is also significant in preventing protracted conflict (Azar, 1990; Roberts, 2015) that leads to unnecessary costs and delays in project implementation and inculcates the spirit of cooperation and trust in the citizens to enable them to uphold the goodwill of the public institutions (Cogan & Sharpe, 1986; Yaghi & Yaghi, 2023).

The theory further grants citizens value of anticipation of project delivery to benefit the people in the community (Ferreira *et al.*, 2020; van Ham & Klimmek, 2017; Frantzeskaki, 2019). The theory also requires public officials to consult, inform, or engage citizens (Cortés-Cediel *et al.*, 2021) in community project delivery. This can significantly impact citizens’ livelihoods either directly or indirectly. The TCP emphasizes citizens’ opportunity to participate (Moynihan, 2003; Nabatchi & Amsler, 2014) in a better way that reinforces citizen interest and value perception of VfM in project procurement. The theory therefore advances a model of perceived value moderates the effect of (Shen *et al.*, 2022; Zhao *et al.*, 2023) VfM by the citizen participation in works procurement.

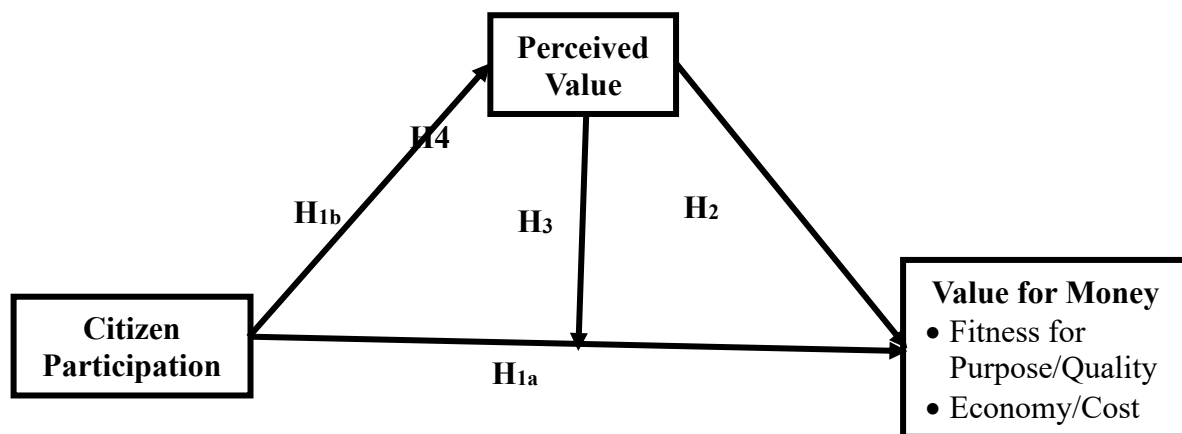


Figure 1: Research model

## 3.0 HYPOTHESIS DEVELOPMENT

### 3.1 Citizen Participation (CP) and Value for Money (VfM)

The relationship between CP and VfM can best be explained within the framework of the theory of citizen participation (TCP). The theory asserts that citizens are mandated to participate in community and national development projects (Janković, 2022; Shahin *et al.*, 2022). The TCP stipulates obligations, responsibilities, and duties of citizens to perform to one another and the

society at large (Ogentho *et al.*, 2021). The theory reiterates conducive principles upon which government policy-decision based (Bozeman, 2009) on the provision of projects and services in line with public interest. This enhances the desire to influence decisions on project procurement to their liking based on quality and fitness for their purpose in economic, social, and value needs, in addition to efficiency and effectiveness towards VfM (Fox, 2009; Jackson, 2012; Jing & Chao, 2021; Hasibuan, 2023). Citizens contribute to project development through monetary (such as taxes) and non-monetary costs (e.g. time, land), which support the achievement of VfM (Nicholas *et al.*, 2021). Public institutions bid to achieve value for money from a citizen perspective (Smith *et al.*, 2023) require to permit their participation in procurement decisions. Due to the above discussions, the study hypothesis is that;

*H<sub>1a</sub>: There is a positive relationship between citizen participation and VfM in the procurement of works*

### **3.2 Citizens Participation and Perceived Value**

The perception of citizens towards public projects is influenced by both subjective and objective norms (Alharbi *et al.*, 2016; Aitalieva & Morelock, 2019). The perceived value of community projects depends on whether citizens are given the opportunity (Bhargava & Manoli, 2015; Hsu & Lu, 2023) to contribute their views and participate in co-creation (Leino & Puumala, 2021). The functions of citizen participation directly affect perceived value through the influence of social, emotional, and functional dimensions of the project. The perceived value of community projects reinforces citizens' stake in project provision and implementation. The purpose of community projects shape citizens' lives through their participation and consumption of the projects. The perceived quality of a project contributes to its perceived value, as citizens consider factors such as durability, convenience, and purpose (Khan & Kadir, 2011).

The integrative re-orientation of the perceived value concept depicts three complementary models: citizen value exchange (cost and benefit model), citizen value build-up (focused on the benefit aspect to citizens), and citizen value dynamics (relating to how citizens evaluate and reflect on dynamics) to the provision of projects by public institutions (Kuitert *et al.*, 2024). Studies suggest the more citizens perceive the value (Kanwal *et al.*, 2022) of projects the more likely they are to participate." in community developmental project activities. Procurement authorities consider citizens' value to avoid difficulties and challenges, such as project procurement cost overruns, and delays in project delivery (Melese *et al.*, 2007; Dai *et al.*, 2022; Rodriguez & Komendantova, 2022; Kundu *et al.*, 2024) and misplacement of priorities on project fitness-for-purpose. Positive value perception fosters trust in government, promoting peaceful coexistence and enhancing institutional reputation and goodwill (Khan *et al.*, 2023) of public institutions in managing public assets and developmental projects (Csoba & Sipos, 2022). The study therefore hypothesis that;

*H<sub>1b</sub>: There is a positive relationship between citizens' participation and perceived value in the procurement of works*

### **3.3 Perceived value and value for money**

Citizens' perceived value is closely related to value for money (VfM) in project delivery (Almarri and Boussabaine, 2017) from the users' perspective. Enhancing perceived value can help public institutions overcome challenges in achieving VfM in procurement activities (Beneke *et al.*, 2013; Olatunji *et al.*, 2017). End users' perceived value of community projects becomes apparent during



the project execution process, as their direct or indirect input is essential for the acceptance of project delivery to the community. Citizens are motivated when they believe their efforts are recognized, either through intrinsic (valuable for its own sake and not for its usefulness) or extrinsic value (“not valuable for its own sake” but based on appearance/aesthetic with desirable end to satisfy needs and wants) (Himes *et al.*, 2024; Yen & Lee, 2024; Rønnow-Rasmussen, 2015; Lee *et al.*, 2024). The elements of perceived value, including social, emotional, and functional values (Lee *et al.*, 2011; Luo *et al.*, 2022), serve as an essential foundation for assessing the extent to which value for money is achieved through the direct influence of government project decisions. Perceived value may influence value for money when public institutions integrate citizens' preferences into project decisions, choices, ideas, requirements, and community needs during the project procurement process and execution (OECD, 2017). Hence, it is a hypothesis that;

*H<sub>2</sub>: There is a positive relationship between perceived value and value for money in the procurement of works.*

### **3.4 Perceived Value Moderates Citizen Participation and Value for Money**

Citizens engage in projects to obtain value returns (Irvin & Stansbury, 2004; Kasymova, 2014). The theory of citizen participation (TCP) integrates the concerns and values of citizens' social and economic lives into the decision-making processes of the public sector (government) (Nabatchi, 2012) and corporate organizations (Creighton, 2005). Thus, citizens' participatory efforts in community projects or programs involve perceived value (Kalkbrenner & Roosen, 2016). Citizens' value perception improves their anticipation of project value satisfaction (Rowlatt, 2017) and their willingness to engage in project delivery (Bernhard *et al.*, 2018; Bamberg, 2015; Kalkbrenner & Roosen, 2016). The perceived value of a project, including sacrifices like costs, influences citizens' intention to use it (Smith & Colgate, 2007; Oyserman, 2015). The greater the willingness of citizens to pay taxes, participate in communal labor, forfeit land and resources, support government and community policies, and make other sacrifices, the more positively this affects their perceived value rewards. Hence, the greater the perceived value citizens assign to their time, energy, and taxes, the more likely they accept public projects to achieve value for money. The influence of perceived value on citizen participation regulates the effects of value-for-money outcomes of public projects (Creighton, 2005).

When citizens perceive costs as unjustifiable (both monetary and non-monetary), foresee challenges in accessing the project, and invest considerable time and energy (McLennan & Eburn, 2014), it will influence their positive value judgment. Tate *et al.* (2023) assert that value perceptions dominate all stages of the procurement process. Therefore, citizens' value perception in the procurement of works process regulates the achievement of value for money (Laws, 2020). Moreover, as citizens' value perception (rights, responsibilities, attributes, performance) of project delivery increases (Hilbers *et al.*, 2022), it better strengthens and enhances the optimal achievement of value for money. However, denying citizens the right to participate (Angraini *et al.*, 2022) in the procurement process distorts value creation to favor government and public institutions over citizens' needs, resulting in a negative impact on value for money (VfM). Thus, public sector agencies become content and satisfied with the value decisions of public projects to the detriment of society (Abbott *et al.*, 2023) as citizens' inputs are not featured in the works procurement process.

The perception of citizen value (Ochoa Rico *et al.*, 2022; Hujran *et al.*, 2020) regarding project delivery participation (Rosilawati *et al.*, 2022) significantly impacts value for money. Citizens' perceived value can moderate the relationship between participation and value for money, either positively or negatively. While citizens' perceived values (functional, social, emotional, and psychological) (Sheth *et al.*, 1991; Sweeney & Souter, 2014) are incorporated into procurement decisions for projects, citizen satisfaction (Cantarero & Potter, 2014) plays a critical role in value for money (VFM). Several studies indicate a positive moderating role of perceived value (Kumar *et al.*, 2020; Lee *et al.*, 2018; Kim *et al.*, 2019; Murshid *et al.*, 2016; Mutahar, 2018; Teas & Agarwal, 2000; Chin *et al.*, 2020) in decision outcomes. However, the perceived value of moderating the relationship between citizen participation and the influence on VFM is yet to be considered. Therefore, this is the gap we aim to investigate. Hence, it is a hypothesis that;

*H<sub>3</sub>: Perceived value has a contingent relationship with citizens' participation and value for money in the procurement of works.*

### **3.5 Perceived Value Mediates Citizen Participation and Value for Money**

Local government projects contribute to citizens' empowerment, motivating their participation in project procurement. Governments must meet citizens' needs through public value projects (Moore, 1997; Eckhard and Friedrich, 2024; Junaidi *et al.*, 2024). Similarly, the involvement of citizens in the provision of community projects serves to enhance their perceived value in local government initiatives. While citizens' perceived value influences value for money, it is ultimately determined by their assessment of the project's quality, suitability, cost, and economy (Omiti & Moi, 2024). The relationship between citizen participation and perceived value affects local government initiatives aimed at generating citizen value. While intrinsic value and intention are crucial, extrinsic constraints, such as insufficient information and communication, may affect citizens' perception of value in achieving value for money. Citizen participation in policy decisions and community project procurement programs enhances the ability to deliver services that meet people's needs and provide value for money (VfM) (Vohland *et al.*, 2021; Yamamura, 2014). Yee and San (2011) assert that the higher the perceived value of a community project among citizens, the greater their expectation to utilize it.

The value of VfM (Mathur & Gangwani, 2021) acts as a guiding principle for citizens' engagement in community projects. Thus, the perception of project value signifies an outcome of value for money, whereby citizens witness the effective implementation of policies for societal projects. Existing literature shows that citizen participation directly affects value for money from the viewpoints of both private and public institutions (Ryan, 2014; Shutt, 2015). Meanwhile, the mediating role of perceived value (Zeithaml & Bitner, 2000; Islam *et al.*, 2024; Yan *et al.*, 2024) has been investigated in only a limited number of studies. It's expected that citizens' willingness to participate is influenced by their perceived value of delivery time, along with the utility and functionality of the facility/project. The citizens' perceived value (CPV) assesses the degree to which project procurement fulfills desired satisfaction (Sharma and Klein, 2020). The concept reflects citizens' responses during project implementation, which influence the facility's appropriateness for its intended purpose (Lee *et al.*, 2018). Citizen acceptance of project execution impacts their evaluation of the project's functionality and characteristics (Lee *et al.*, 2018). Perceived value corresponds with project characteristics, including convenience, usability, aesthetics, and durability (Kardes *et al.*, 2011).

Therefore, citizens' perspectives on value for money (VFM) are shaped by their perceptions of the project's capacity to achieve its intended goals and meet their needs and preferences. Lee et al. (2018) indicate that perceived value has a substantial impact on the relationship between preferred project attributes and usage intention. Meanwhile, CPV regarding the actual use of the facility does not consistently match their satisfaction levels. The assumption about the outcome of citizen perception and attitudes towards public institutions does not consistently align. According to Sirohi et al. (1998) as well as Saut and Bie (2024), citizens' value perception reflects the value for money concerning what they receive for their participation in the project procurement process. Based on the above, it is hypothesis that;

*H4: Perceived value mediates the relationship between citizen participation and value for money in the procurement of works.*

#### 4.0 METHODOLOGY

Citizen participation was measured using four validated items adapted from Haruta and Bianca (2010) adapted from Haruta and Bianca (2010). A total of four measurement items were adapted from a validated source. The perceived value construct assesses a composite of three dimensions: Functional value, emotional value, and social value. Eleven measurement items of perceived value were adapted from Basaran and Aksoy (2017) for this study. Both citizen participation and perceived value constructs are reflective, as the causality originates from the construct to the measurement items (Hanafiah, 2020; Kline, 2023). The measurement items of value for money are considered formative, as the dimensions define the characteristics of value for money; any alteration in a dimension would result in a change in the focal construct (value for money) (Mackenzie *et al.*, 2011; Hanafiah, 2020). The value for money, as a formative construct (Velentzas, & Doukakis, 2020; Rasoolimanesh *et al.*, 2016), is measured by two composite dimensional variables: Fitness for purpose/quality and economy/cost, each consisting of three items. Fitness for purpose/quality variables are measured using questions directed at respondents (citizens) to assess their perceptions of project implementation in their communities.

A five-point Likert scale was employed to assess the items associated with all constructs in the study, where 1 represents "strongly disagree" and 5 signifies "strongly agree." This scale allows respondents to choose from a variety of options ranging from disagreement to agreement (Tanujaya, 2022). The study encompasses sixteen (16) regions, comprising a total of 261 metropolitan, municipal, and district assemblies (MMDAs) in Ghana, which serves as the study population. These assemblies were established by the statutory provision of the Local Government Act 462, 1993, as amended by Act 936, 2016, to enhance governance accessibility for citizens. The informants consist of public officials, government representatives who are executive management members of MMDAs, and citizen representatives who serve as assembly members. The executive members included coordinating directors, and procurement, finance, budget, engineering, and policy planning officers who responded to the questionnaires.

Kothari (2017) asserts that quantitative study data collection requires large geographical coverage, low cost, absence of bias from the researcher (s) or data collector (s), and sufficient time for respondents to complete the questionnaires. The study used a census approach because of the population's manageable size, enabling precise identification and data collection." (Eelens & Maduro, 2001; Chuktu & Eton, 2020) and facilitates the collection and analysis of data from all the assemblies (MMDAs) in Ghana. We chose the census approach because it is more accurate and



reliable, minimizing the possibility of researchers' personal bias in data collection. We utilized the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 27 for descriptive statistics and Smart PLS Structural Equation Modeling version 4 to evaluate the proposed causal relationships (paths) among the constructs. Structural equation modeling analysis software is one of the powerful statistical tools that analyze multiple relationships among constructs using equations similar to multiple regression equations (Hair & Alamer, 2022). Due to the exploratory and theory-building nature of this study, variance-based structural equation modeling was more suitable, making the use of PLS for data analysis appropriate.

## 5.0 DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

### 5.1 Test of Convergent Validity (CV)

According to Carlson & Herdman (2012), convergent validity is the degree to which a common construct can be captured by two measures. Agastya et al. (2022) and Purwanto and Sudargini (2021) also assert convergent validity shows the extent of the relationship between observed variables and latent constructs. Convergent validity indicates that measurement items assessing the same construct should exhibit high correlations with one another. (Campbell & Fiske, 1959; Shrestha, 2021). indicate strong convergent validity, which enhances the accurate measurement of latent variables. To ascertain convergent validity, there is the need to ensure enough composite reliability ( $>0.70$ ), Average Variance Extracted (AVE  $>0.50$ ) (Hair *et al.*, 2021), enough factor loadings ( $> 0.70$ ) per the recommended threshold (Hair & Alamer, 2022) and Cronbach's Alpha. The minimum Cronbach Alpha Value of 0.70 is recommended to ascertain the consistency of the constructs (Cronbach & Meehl, 1955; Dijkstra & Henseler, 2015; Hair *et al.*, 2022). Reflective and formative items with insignificant loadings were excluded from the analysis. Because of the reflective nature of the construct, all those items that failed to load below the recommended level (0.7) although removed from data analysis did not affect managing the constructs (Diamantopoulos & Winklhofer, 2001).

### 5.2 Testing of Discriminant Validity

Test for discriminant validity becomes necessary after the reliability and validity successfully passed the reflective and formative measure of the construct. All the constructs passed the discriminant validity test (Table 1). Discriminant validity denotes 'the test scores that represent different constructs assessed with the same measurement method which are unrelated or demonstrate only small correlations (Koch *et al.*, 2020).

**Table 1: Construct Reliability and Convergent Validity Measurement**

Constructs	Measurement Items	Cronbach's Alpha	rho_A	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
<b>Citizen Participation</b>	CP	0.798	0.821	0.869	0.625
<b>Perceived Value</b>	PFV	0.883	0.883	0.919	0.740
	PEV	0.803	0.805	0.884	0.717
	PSV	0.822	0.829	0.883	0.654
<b>Value for Money</b>	FFPQ	0.897	0.902	0.928	0.764
	ECMC	0.732	0.733	0.882	0.789

## Structural Model Results

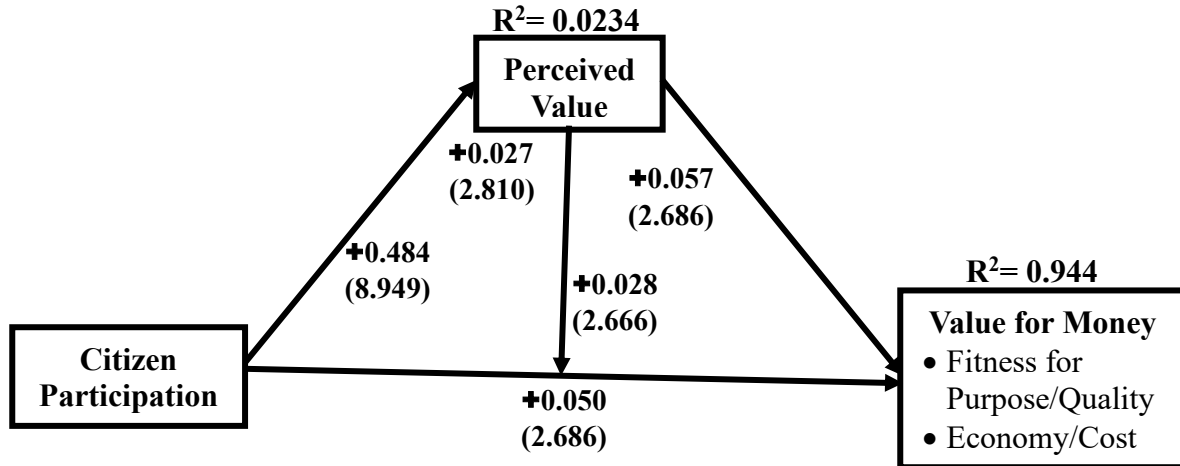


Figure 2: Structural Model

Table 2: Hypothesis Results

Hypothesis	Path	(β)	T Statistics	P Values	Decision
H <sub>1a</sub>	CP -> VfM	0.050	2.686	0.007	Supported
H <sub>1b</sub>	CP -> PV	0.484	8.949	0.000	Supported
H <sub>2</sub>	PV -> VfM	0.057	2.862	0.004	Supported
H <sub>3</sub>	PV * CP -> VfM	0.028	2.666	0.008	supported
H <sub>4</sub>	CP -> PV->VfM	0.027	2.810	0.005	Supported

### 5.3 Test of Hypothesis with Regards to Citizen Participation and Value for Money (H<sub>1a</sub>)

The hypothesis postulates a positive relationship between citizen participation and value for money. The study found that citizen participation has a positive and significant effect on the value for money ( $\beta=0.026$ ;  $t=2.380$ ;  $p<0.017$ ) as depicted in Figure 2 and Table 2. Thus, citizen participation drives value for money in the public sector institutions' works procurement. This confirms the findings of Pandeya and Shrestha (2016) that citizens' participation value from the grassroots fosters quality and equity (VfM) in the developmental projects for communities. Consistent with existing studies, citizen participation addresses citizens' needs, and fit-for-purpose project procurement improves the achievement of VfM (de Jong *et al.*, 2019; Hashim *et al.*, 2012; Penny, 2017) in the African context, particularly Ghana.

However, when citizens' input lack in the planning and execution of projects leads to adverse outcomes in achieving economy and quality (value for money) in works procurement (Pandeya & Shrestha, 2016; Acharya & Zafarullah, 2022; Padilla-Rivera *et al.*, 2016). Meanwhile, Mansuri and Rao's (2013) study revealed that citizen participation results in 'higher quality projects better align with community needs', which describes value for money from the citizens' perspective. The extent of citizen participation in planning community projects, the better it seeks to ensure inclusive management of public scarce resources, as well as higher equity of resources share of the public (MMDAs), projects delivery to communities (Pandeya & Shrestha, 2016; Mingus and

Zhu, 2018). Again, the results support the study of Phelps et al. (2010), and Hayes and Murtinho (2023) as the more citizens participate in community projects, the better to achieve efficiency, equity, and fitness for purpose (VfM).

#### **5.4 Test of Hypothesis with Regards to Citizen Participation and Perceived Value (H<sub>1b</sub>)**

The second hypothesis predicts a positive relationship between citizen participation and the perceived value of project procurement. The study path analysis shows that the citizen participation effect has a positive and significant influence on perceived value ( $\beta=0.484$ ;  $t=8.949$ ;  $p<0.000$ ) as found in Table 2. This study's results indicate that citizen participation directly influences the perceived value of public sector project procurement. This study's findings coincide with Lv and Xie (2017) suggesting that citizen participation influences citizens' project value preferences." The positive relationship between citizen participation and perceived value in the project procurement signifies that citizen evaluation of project attributes, functions, and performance leads to the desired outcome.

Moreover, citizens' perceptions of project value capture the importance of features such as durability, quality, and cost (Stonewall, 1992; Ibrahim *et al.*, 2024). Therefore, society embraces the use of projects on the perception of project value about terms, requirements, and time measuring the value of community projects (Stonewall, 1992; Fobiri *et al.*, 2022). The integrative re-orientation of the perceived value concept depicts three complementary models of citizen value of exchange (cost and benefit model), citizen value build-up (focused on the benefit aspect to citizens), and citizen value dynamics (relates to how citizens evaluate and reflect on dynamics to provision of projects by public institutions).

#### **5.5 Test of Hypothesis about Perceived Value and Value for Money (H<sub>2</sub>)**

The next hypothesis (H<sub>2</sub>) proposes a positive relationship between perceived value and value for money. Perceived value directly influences VfM in project procurement, as noted by Gibovic and Bikfalvi (2021). In Table 2, the results portray a positive significant relationship between perceived value and value for money ( $\beta=0.057$ ;  $t=2.862$ ;  $p<0.004$ ), hence perceived value has a statistically significant effect on VfM. This indicates acceptance of the hypothesis that there is a positive relationship between perceived value and value for money in the procurement of works. Citizens' opinions reflect the value of their tax payments and non-monetary sacrifices, such as land contributions.

Therefore, their expectation from community project implementation on fit for purpose and project quality performance function leads to satisfaction (Chen and Chen, 2010). This confirms the findings of Pandeya and Shrestha (2016) that citizens evaluate the value of participation to foster the quality of developmental projects for communities. This research supports existing studies on citizen perceived value that significantly reveal needs and fit-for-purpose project procurement that improves the achievement of VfM (de Jong *et al.*, 2019; Coaffee & Hawley, 2003; Penny, 2017). The more citizens perceive getting a high value of product/projects, the better desire and continue to be involved in project procurement decision activities and trust repose on public institutions.

### 5.6 Test of Hypothesis about the Moderating Role of Perceived Value for Citizen Participation and Value for Money (H<sub>3</sub>)

This hypothesis posits that perceived value moderates the relationship between citizen participation and value for money in works procurement. Empirical evidence demonstrates that perceived value moderate positive and significant influence on the relationship between citizen participation and value for money ( $\beta = 0.028$ ;  $t = 2.666$ ;  $p < 0.008$ ) statistically depicted in Figure 2 and Table 2. The role of perceived value therefore strengthens the relationship between citizen participation and value for money. Thus, the result depicts that perceived value significantly performs a moderating relationship (Aghimien *et al.*, 2018; Kissi *et al.*, 2020; Alimamy & Gnoth, 2022) between citizen participation (Axelsson *et al.*, 2010) and value for money, hence it an impact to influence the outcome variable of value for money from the citizen perspective. Despite the perceived value construct showing positive and significant moderates the relationship between citizen participation and value for money, this effect may be influenced by external factors such as trust (Cooper *et al.*, 2006; Mahmud, 2021).

The citizen's repose on public institutions allows them to participate in the project procurement process, absence of political interference (Muriu, 2013; Mfuru *et al.*, 2018; Masoud, 2023) to influence works procurement delivery performance on time (Twumasi-Ampofo *et al.*, 2014) and organizational reputation/goodwill (Christensen & Gornitzka, 2019; Hnatiuk, 2021) as institutions responsible to involve citizens in community projects procurement. This study shows that, generally the higher the citizens' value perception on works procurement augments/reinforces to achieve of project quality and fitness for purpose (VfM). As citizens anticipate greater value from projects procured, the better they claim ownership and use the project for the intended purpose.

**Table 3. Magnitude of Mediation**

Paths	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics (O/STDEV)	P-Values
CP→VfM	0.077	0.077	0.019	4.042	0.000
CP→PV→VfM	0.027	0.028	0.010	2.810	0.005

Note: Total effect = direct +indirect effect. Meanwhile, variance accounted for (VAF) = Indirect effect/Total effect \* 100

Therefore: VAF = Indirect effect/Total effect

For CP → VfM (H<sub>4</sub>) =  $(0.027/0.077) * 100 = 0.3506 * (100) = 35.065$  or 35%

### 5.7 Test of Hypothesis with Regards to Mediating Effect of Perceived Value (H<sub>4</sub>)

The study investigates the mediating role of perceived value in the relationship between citizen participation and value for money. Perceived value is hypothesized to indirectly influence the relationship between citizen participation and value for money ( $\beta = 0.041$ ;  $t = 3.877$ ;  $p < 0.000$ ) as shown in Figure 2. Statistically, the results suggest that perceived value mediates citizen participation and value for money. The mediating effect of perceived value is based on Hayes and Preacher (2014) and Hair *et al.* (2014) recommendation analysis procedure. The PLS-SEM application requires checking (1) the significant direct effect established by bootstrapping without the presence of perceived value (mediator) in the model (CP and VfM) while (2) the significance

of indirect effect and associated t-values checked using path coefficient when the mediator (perceived value) is included in the model. Hair et al. (2014, 2021), Ali et al. (2017) and Irimia-Diéguez (2023) stipulate that upon calculations of variance accounted for (VAF) and it is greater than 80% indicates full mediation while values between 20% and 80% show partial mediation but values less than 20% means no mediation effect in the model. The calculations indicate that approximately 35% value of variance accounted for, then the mediator construct thus, PV exhibits a partial mediation effect in the link between citizen participation and value for money. In other words, since the direct and indirect effects are significant, this connotes a partial mediation (Nitzl *et al.*, 2016). Moreover, since the sign of both direct and indirect effects are positive the partial mediation effect can be considered as complementary (Irimia-Diéguez *et al.*, 2023). This study's findings support the fourth (H<sub>4</sub>) hypothesis about the mediation role of perceived value in the Local Government project procurement in achieving value for money.

## **6.0 STUDY CONTRIBUTION**

### **6.1 Theoretical Contribution**

This research's finding adds up to existing studies on value-for-money implementation (Dimitri, 2023; Astiana *et al.*, 2024) through the application of citizen participation and the value-for-money hypothesis. This study provides an extension to the theory of citizen participation through which citizens perceived value influences value for money. The review of citizens' perceived value shows a significant influence of value for money application that offers a positive economic benefit for citizens' role in works procurement.

Works procurement and value for money from citizens' perspective have extensively been treated as theoretical concepts, however, our findings contribute to the increasing testing of empirical studies' significance to public institutions' project delivery. Existing studies neither adopted citizen participation and value for money nor focused on perceived value to establish the influence of the relationship. Thus, the study proposes a robust analytical framework encouraging public institutions to pursue VfM from the citizens' perspective. Moreover, the study findings propose a theoretical framework for the implementation of VfM. Findings indicate that local government officials and citizens collectively influence value for money in project procurement through citizen participation practices.

The study portrays the relationship between value for money, citizen participation, and perceived value. This study extends knowledge of theorizing and testing the idea that perceived value mediates and moderates the relationship between citizen participation and value for money. This relationship potentially provides the mechanisms through which citizen participation achieves value for money manifest.

### **6.2 Policy Implication**

These findings serve as improved policy guidelines for local government project procurement, emphasizing the incorporation of citizens' perceived value. The literature has largely overlooked the role and influence of citizen participation and the value of money (Eadie *et al.*, 2013; Haji Ali Afzali *et al.*, 20216). Although citizens are the primary beneficiaries of community projects, their preferences and needs often remain unaddressed. The study enhances the theory of perceived value to the extent of performing a moderating effect that determines the strength of perceived



value in exerting influence on value for money with regard to citizen participation in works procurement at the local public institutions.

### 6.3 Managerial/Practical Implications

This study recommends the implementation of a citizen participation policy for the practitioners in the public sector because of the indispensable role citizens' value perception plays in the participation of works procurement (WP) provision for the communities. The study provides direction for local government and other public sector managers to focus on the provision of projects to communities, thus, needed most and of value to make required impact to the lives of the citizens.

Policy on citizens' perceived value and involvement in project provision at the local level would open the door to attract both local and foreign donor agencies who offer grants, sponsorship, and loans as well as philanthropist, benevolence/charitable organizations and NGOs, especially to developing countries who seek to achieve citizens' well-being on the bases of the value of money.

### 7.0 CONCLUSION

This study reveals the guiding principle of project procurement. Though cross-sectional data is enough for exploratory research (Asenahabi, 2019; Setia, 2016; Thomas, 2022; Spector, 2019), future research could be carried out using longitudinal data to undertake a study in the relationship between citizen participation, perceived value, and value for money at the Local Government Institutions (MMDAs) to enhance causal inference (Podsakoff *et al.*, 2012).

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