

Professionalism, Knowledge and Skills in Public Procurement

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Professionalism vs. Professionalization

The early work of Carr-Saunders & Wilson (1927) made a distinction between professionalism and professionalization. In his perception, **professionalism is linked to individuals**, while **professionalization is associated with the development of bodies** that establish qualifications for entrance to a professional practice or activity.

(A. M. Carr-Saunders, & P. A. Wilson, P.A. [1927], *The Professions*, Oxford University Press).

■ Five Attributes of A Profession

Provincial
authority

Presence of
systematic
theory

Community
(Association)
sanction

Adherence to
ethical codes

Grounded culture
with a
professional
orientation

Five Attributes of a Profession

1. Presence of systematic theory: Professionals have extensive formal education
2. Provincial authority: professionals have significant control over the nature and extent of the services that they render
3. Community (Association) sanction: professionals are subject to licensure or certification
4. Adherence to ethical codes
5. Grounded culture with a professional orientation: Professionals enjoy job satisfaction, from not only monetary rewards, but also symbols such as titles and awards

(E. Greenwood (1957), “The Attributes of a Profession. “ *Social Work*, 2: 44–55)

Knowledge and Skills in Public Procurement

A profession should have a body of knowledge and skills that is commonly recognized.

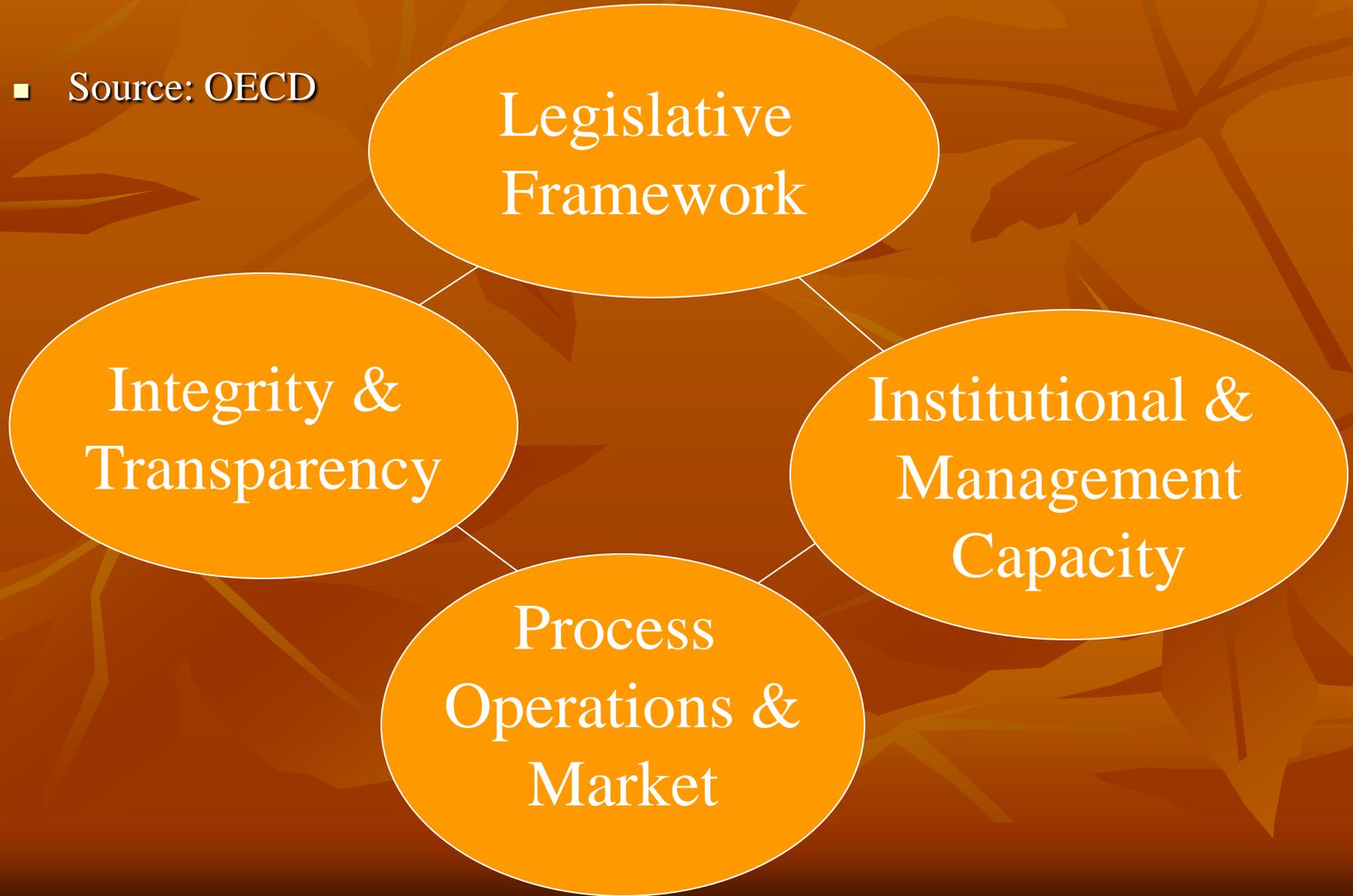
- **Is there a commonly recognized body of knowledge and skills in public procurement?**
- **The main problem, however, is an absence of a common body of knowledge**

Challenges

- Search for a Body of Knowledge
- Making this body of knowledge commonly recognized

A Conceptual Framework for PP Knowledge Building

- Source: OECD



Remark

“Public procurement is an extremely complicated function of government, as analyzed above, and public procurement requires interdisciplinary skills and knowledge (or multiple disciplines), including economics, political science, public administration, accounting, marketing, law, operations research, engineering, and architecture, among others.” (Thai, 2001)

Current State of Higher Education in PP

- While there are a lot of universities that offer courses in supply and purchasing management and public procurement laws for the private sector, public procurement remains a neglected area of education
- But there are some recent PP programs offered

How to Build A Body of PP Knowledge?

- Academic Journals: Procurement law journals
- Academic journals: JoPP (2001)
- Textbooks
- Conferences. Three types:
 - Practitioner-oriented conferences (Annual meetings and trade shows)
 - Academics-oriented conferences: International Research Study of Public Procurement or IRSPP (2003)
 - A combination of the two types: International Public Procurement Conference or IPPC (2004) www.ippa.org)