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## **THE PROCESS OF PROCUREMENT DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC PERIOD: A CASE STUDY OF SABARAGAMUWA UNIVERSITY**

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### **Abstract**

Health can be recognized as a main factor, which directly governs the overall economy and development of a nation. The current global crisis of Corona (COVID-19) pandemic has also provided better evidence to that. Based on a pilot study, the monthly progress of the procurement process during the COVID-19 pandemic period at many of the government institutes in Sri Lanka was identified as below the average level. Accordingly, this study was conducted as a case study concerning the Sabaragamuwa University of Sri Lanka in identifying the ways of continuing the procurement processes in government sector institutes during the COVID-19 pandemic, and then to provide recommendations. Fifty individuals were randomly selected as respondents that included procurement officers, administrative officers related to the procurement in the university, project coordinators, and activity coordinators of the projects within the Sabaragamuwa University of Sri Lanka. According to the findings of this study, it was found out that there is a possibility to continue the procurement process as usual with the help of technology (i.e., e-procurement) within any institute during a crisis like the COVID-19 pandemic as done in many countries in the world. As a recommendation, this study suggests developing the infrastructure related to Information and Communication Technology within government sector organizations in Sri Lanka, while enhancing the capacity of using digital technology and making the employees familiar to cope with technology to go ahead with entirely electronic procurement in the future.

**Keywords:** COVID-19, procurement, e-procurement, Technical evaluation