

An Empirical Investigation of Factors Influencing Construction Project Selection Processes within the Nigeria Public Sector

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Abstract : Globally, there is increasing interest in project management due to a shortage in infrastructure services supply capability. Hence, it is of utmost importance that organisations understand that choosing a particular project over another is an opportunity cost - tying up the organisations resources. In order to devise constructive ways to bring direction, structure, and oversight to the process of project selection has led to the development of tools and techniques by researchers and practitioners. However, despite the development of various frameworks to assist in the appraisal and selection of government projects, failures are still being recorded with government projects. In developing countries, where frameworks are rarely used, the problems are compounded. To improve the situation, this study will investigate the current practice of construction project selection processes within the Nigeria public sector in order to inform theories of decision making from the perspective of developing nations and project management practice. Unlike other research around construction projects in Nigeria this research concentrate on factors influencing the selection process within the Nigeria public sector, which has received limited study. The authors report the findings of semi-structured interviews of top management in the Nigerian public sector and draw conclusions in terms of decision making extant theory and current practice. Preliminary results from the data analysis show that groups make project selection decisions and this forces sub-optimal decisions due to pressure on time, clashes of interest, lack of standardised framework for selecting projects, lack of accountability and poor leadership. Consequently, because decision maker is usually drawn from different fields, religious beliefs, ethnic group and with different languages. The choice of a project by an individual will be greatly influence by experience, political precedence than by realistic investigation as well as his understanding of the desired outcome of the project, in other words, the individual's ideology and their level of fairness.

Keywords : factors influencing project selection, public sector construction project selection, projects portfolio selection, strategic decision-making

Conference Title : ICCPM 2017 : International Conference on Construction and Project Management

Conference Location : Cape Town, South Africa

Conference Dates : November 02-03, 2017