

Maturity Level of Knowledge Management in Whole Life Costing in the UK Construction Industry: An Empirical Study

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Abstract : The UK construction industry has been under pressure for many years to produce economical buildings which offer value for money, not only during the construction phase, but more importantly, during the full life of the building. Whole life costing is considered as an economic analysis tool that takes into account the total investment cost in and ownership, operation and subsequent disposal of a product or system to which the whole life costing method is being applied. In spite of its importance, the practice is still crippled by the lack of tangible evidence, 'know-how' skills and knowledge of the practice i.e. the lack of professionals with the knowledge and training on the use of the practice in construction project, this situation is compounded by the absence of available data on whole life costing from relevant projects, lack of data collection mechanisms and so on. The aforementioned problems has forced many construction organisations to adopt project enhancement initiatives to boost their performance on the use of whole life costing techniques so as to produce economical buildings which offer value for money during the construction stage also the whole life of the building/asset. The management of knowledge in whole life costing is considered as one of the many project enhancement initiative and it is becoming imperative in the performance and sustainability of an organisation. Procuring building projects using whole life costing technique is heavily reliant on the knowledge, experience, ideas and skills of workers, which comes from many sources including other individuals, electronic media and documents. Due to the diversity of knowledge, capabilities and skills of employees that vary across an organisation, it is significant that they are directed and coordinated efficiently so as to capture, retrieve and share knowledge in order to improve the performance of the organisation. The implementation of knowledge management concept has different levels in each organisation. Measuring the maturity level of knowledge management in whole life costing practice will paint a comprehensible picture of how knowledge is managed in construction organisations. Purpose: The purpose of this study is to identify knowledge management maturity in UK construction organisations adopting whole life costing in construction project. Design/methodology/approach: This study adopted a survey method and conducted by distributing questionnaires to large construction companies that implement knowledge management activities in whole life costing practice in construction project. Four level of knowledge management maturity was proposed on this study. Findings: From the results obtained in the study shows that 34 contractors at the practiced level, 26 contractors at managed level and 12 contractors at continuously improved level.

Keywords : knowledge management, whole life costing, construction industry, knowledge

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