

## Comparing Productivity of the Foreign versus Local Construction Workers Based on Their Level of Technical Training and Cultural Characteristics: Case Study of Kish Island, Iran

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**Abstract :** This study considers the employment of foreign workforce in Kish Free Trade and Industrial Zone and aims to investigate the productivity of foreign construction labours as compared to their local counterpart. Moreover, this study compares work skills and experience of foreign and local Iranian construction workers to optimize construction working conditions. The results and findings have been effectively applied to develop a training program to optimize and promote Iranian workforce productivity and effectiveness in construction industry in comparison with foreign workforce. It is hoped that the accumulated findings contribute to decrease demand for foreign workers and skills shortages in construction sectors. Therefore, job vacancies for local residents in Kish and other looking for job people in main lands will be increased. The method of collecting data has been conducted by distributing a questionnaire and interviewing most foreign construction workers, local Iranian construction works and the project managers of five mega projects in Kish Island including Mica mall, Basak, Persian, Damoon and Sarina mall. All data have been analyzed by SPSS and Excel software. A topic-related survey was conducted through a structured questionnaire including 54 employers, 20 contractors and 13 consultants. About 56 factors were identified. After implementing the context validity test, 52 factors were stated in 52 questions based on five major groups consist of: (1) economical, (2) social and cultural, (3) individual, (4) technical, (5) organizational, environmental and legal. Based on the quantified Relative Importance Index, the ten most important factors, ten less important factors, and three most important categories were identified. To date, there is not any comprehensive study that explores the important critical factors in mega construction projects on Kish Island to identify the major problems to decrease demand for foreign workers.

**Keywords :** cultural characteristics, foreign worker, local construction workers, productivity, technical training

**Conference Title :** ICCCEM 2018 : International Conference on Construction and Civil Engineering Management

**Conference Location :** Dubai, United Arab Emirates

**Conference Dates :** November 19-20, 2018