

ABSTRACT

Title: Performance and Satisfaction in the Irish Construction Industry

Sub-Title: An Appraisal of Increasing Project Performance and Commercial Client Satisfaction through Procurement Selection and Value Management Theories

Researcher: Thomas Horan

Supervisor: Robert Smyth

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Purpose: The purpose of this research is to identify a theory or a means of increasing client satisfaction and construction project performance. As such, the theories of Value Management (VM) were identified as being the opportunities to remove unnecessary costs whilst ensuring that quality, reliability, performance, and other critical factors meet or exceed the client's requirements. In addition, the research suggests that the traditional perception of project success is no longer sufficient with respect to "experienced clients". The research successfully set out to prove that a realistic understanding of the client's investment objectives at the inception stage of construction projects, supported by optimal procurement selection and the theory of VM, will increase project performance and client satisfaction.

Methodology: An analytical review of the literature relating to construction project management, clients in construction, procurement selection and VM theories was conducted. The research strategy employed was primarily qualitative with some quantitative and as such, this research remained within the remit of non-probability. Therefore, the sampling was restricted to Expert Purposive in order to extract the views of persons who have specific expertise in Construction Project Management (CPM). In order to isolate the underlying research topic the methodologies employed were case studies and evaluation research. This was supported by a multi-method approach including semi-structured interviews and case studies. The primary research methods, supported by the literature review equated to the theoretical and practical aspects of the research conducted.

Findings: The research found that the traditional procurement options and perceptions of the term "client" within construction were hampering the potential for increased project success and client satisfaction. The reason it has not materialised as a problem before is, for the last 15 years issues such as value for money (VFM) and functionality within construction were back-benched whilst Return on Investments (ROI), profit margins and greed prevailed. Theoretically, VM theory is the solution as it prioritises the client's needs and functionality, However, theoretical recommendations would not be sufficient and there was a need to identify a practical application to resolve the problems. Therefore, through the primary research conducted, Design Manage Construct (DMC) and Early Contractor Involvement (ECI) procurement were identified as two possible solutions to overcome this issue. The research proved the hypothesis and concluded with four recommendations which call for radical change in CPM professionals' ethics, procurement and tendering procedures. In addition, the research recommended that functionality must be included in the measure of project success, to supplement Time, Cost and Quality.

Keywords: client satisfaction, construction project management, procurement selection, value for money, value management.