Appraisal of Measures in Enhancing Professionalism and Ethical Conducts among Quantity Surveyors in Nigerian Construction Industry

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Abstract

Quantity Surveyors are one of the main professionals in the construction industry; they render service to construction clients which incorporate Architects, building proprietors, Investors, government organizations, Engineers, and contractual workers. They engage in evaluating, cost administration, obtainment administration, cost planning, contract organization, plausibility studies, resource monetary administration, all exercises identified by making money in the construction industry. Recently, Quantity surveying profession in Nigeria has one way or the other influenced by unethical practices display by its members. Due to the development, this paper aims to evaluate the measures in improving professionalism and ethical behaviours among Quantity Surveyors in Nigerian construction industry with a viable way to deal with a moral appraisal of Quantity Surveyors in the Nigerian construction industry in an approach to upgrading moral standard among them. It was uncovered in the findings that that transparency & accountability in contract administration, leaders serving as role models and constant supervision of ethics are the most notable measures to enhance ethical conducts among Quantity Surveyors. The study recommends that powerful disciplines like punishments, withdrawal of authentication or even cancellation of the permit on dull infringement might be presented by Nigerian Institute of Quantity Surveyors (NIQS) to minimized unethical practices among its members.

Keywords
Unethical, Professionalism, Quantity Surveyors (QS), Construction industry, Behaviour, Professional.

1. Introduction

Quantity surveyors are specialists who worry with budgetary trustworthiness, authoritative issues, acquirement, procurement and conveying an incentive for the clients' resources invested in the construction industry. They play out the part of cost administration for the duration of the life of a construction project from start to finish and even sometimes after the finish. Quantity Surveyor in the part of cost administrator is a competent and skilled individual who will shield the client's interest and deal with the procedure in limiting legally binding cases and unforeseen budgetary weights on the financial plan. They add esteem fundamental to the monetary and legally binding administration of construction project at the pre-construction, construction and post-construction stages. They add to general construction project execution by getting, creating and conveying suitable capabilities (Nkado and Meyer, 2001). Quantity Surveyors are one of the main professionals in the construction industry; they render service to their clients which incorporate Architects, building proprietors, Investors, Designers, government organizations, financial specialists, protection assessors, Engineers, and contractual workers. They can be engaged with evaluating, cost administration, obtainment administration, cost planning, contract organization, plausibility studies and resource monetary administration and all exercises identified with making money related task of the property and construction businesses as successful and effective for the different stakeholders. As per (Dada and Jagboro, 2012), the profession of quantity surveying is practiced in Nigeria along the same pattern as in the United Kingdom and other Commonwealth countries The Regulated and Other Professions (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1978 of Nigeria.
recognized Quantity Surveying profession as one of the scheduled Professions while Decree No. 31 of 1986 gave legal backing to the profession and also set up the Quantity Surveying Registration Board of Nigeria (QSRBN) to regulate it.

As indicated by Greenhalgh (1997), professionalism can be characterized as the ownership and self-sufficient control of a body of specialised knowledge, which when joined with honorific status, presents control upon its holders. Professionalism in professions suggests the significance of trust in financial relations in current social orders with a propelled division of work. In the Nigerian construction industry, clients find it very difficult to put their trust in construction professionals; this means that professionals within the construction must add on confidential knowledge and trust in their dealing with clients. Professionalism, along these lines, requires those functioning as professionals in the Nigerian construction industry must be worthy of that trust, to put clients to start with, to keep up privacy and not utilize their insight for deceitful purposes. As an end-result of professionalism in customer/client relations, a few professionals are compensated with expert, special prizes and high status. With the ascent in unethical issues in the construction industry, society everywhere feels exceptionally baffled and sold out by these professionals who claim to have more specific aptitudes and are believed to be abler than the basic layman (Othman 2012). This brings about how the level of professionalism in the industry can be improved (Vee and Skitmore, 2003). Professionals have dependably been connected with the idea of ‘service’ so that a profession is depicted as a gathering of individuals sorted out to serve an assortment of particular information in light of a legitimate concern for society in light of the apparent relationship (Appelbaum and Lawton, 1990).

There are numerous measures taken to build the ethical standards and honesty among the professionals in the construction industries around the world. As indicated by Adjei, et al. (2015), the administrative/ regulatory professional acts identifying with the built environment professional sector Ghana were completely overhauled in the late 1990's and another suite of professional acts were proclaimed in 2000 to improve the professionalism. In the meantime, in America, the construction management association of America had refreshed its code of ethics to incorporate a more extensive scope of professional administrations and additionally professional services among construction players (Rahman et al., 2013). This paper aims to evaluate the measures in improving professionalism and ethical behaviours among Quantity Surveyors in Nigerian construction industry with a viable way to deal with a moral appraisal of Quantity Surveyors in the Nigerian construction industry in an approach to upgrading moral standard among them.

2. Literature Review

The Nigerian construction industry has one way or the other influenced by unethical practices, which is because of heterogeneous nature of the industry which makes it basic for construction professionals to display abnormal state of professional ethics. One of aversion of significant advancement in the Nigerian Construction Industry is the risk of debasement and degenerate practices the investigation quantitatively controlled by poll and the examination demonstrated the reasons for corruption as: destitution, extreme love for cash (eagerness), governmental issues in the honor of agreement, professional indiscipline, benefit expansion by Contractor worker, deception, drop out of endemic societal debasement and preference (Olusegun et al., 2011). An investigation conveyed by Ssegawa and Abueng (2006) to check the view of contractual workers saw predominance in unethical conduct in the industry, and if the new code is compelling in battling unethical behaviours, the outcome concurs with the principal articulation and negative for the code.

Vee and Skitmore (2003) expressed that the principal kinds of unethical conduct inside construction industry to be: Hiding of construction blames and taking another person's illustration; Misrepresenting knowledge and scholarly accomplishments in resumes and applications for commissions; Charging clients for work not done, costs not incurred or exaggerated; Bogus guarantees of movement as rehearsed by a few architects; Deluding clients in project administration; Inclusion in irreconcilable situation. Ameh and Odusami (2010) Studies have demonstrated that half of building disappointment cases in Nigeria is traceable to configuration shortcomings (heedlessness and carelessness), 40% to construction deficiencies (professional inadequacy and fake practices), and 10% to item disappointments. leaking data about the project spending plan for a few temporary contractors is shape another unethical conduct by Quantity surveyors in the construction industry {Vee and Skidmore, 2003; Pearl et al. (2005); Oyewobi et al. (2011)}.
The presentation of the Due process by the Nigerian Government is a noteworthy positive improvement to check unethical execution inside the construction industry (Olugbekan, 2001). This is adapted towards tackling a portion of those issues related with the honour of agreements and guaranteeing that due procedure is followed in executing projects in Nigeria. Olugbekan (2001) additionally placed that the increases are logical from the due procedure as are per the following: Great administration of public cash and resources because of diminishment in degenerate practices; Productive and successful project administration; Change in liquidity administration of open assets; Upgrade of straightforwardness, responsibility and integrity in government; Change in project cost administration, use and institutional control and Change in specialized proficiency in administration and use of assets. Nawaz and Ikram (2013) discovered likewise that, so as to strike a reasonable level of professionalism, straightforwardness and genuineness in the construction industry, there is need to embrace certain measures which can offer lift to its professional stature, in which five choices were short recorded, these are pioneers as a good example, monetary motivating forces, actualizing code of ethics, ethics training programs and by correctional measures.

Ameh and Odusami (2010) evaluated the view of construction professionals in moral issues the outcome shows that the most well-known unethical conduct is a budgetary gift and furthermore there is an extraordinary weight on construction chiefs to act unethically, unfortunate professional behaviour and professional carelessness. Professional moral lapses often lead to project abandonment, capital flight, and colossal financial misfortune as the extra cost of activities, which runs in the vicinity of 40 and 60% of granted contract entirety. This makes Dabson et al. (2007) call attention to that a demonstration of one professional in a specific profession has a capacity to discolour the name of the whole profession. This demonstrates that every single person who is a piece of a profession conveys the notoriety of himself as well as of the calling in general. In any case, it was underscored that ethics comprehended by an individual could be named as being subjective, where good and bad may vary from certain person's view. This contention in the impression of ethics is a decent sign that a foundation of a standard level of conduct for all professionals is of principal significance.

Transparency International (2006) prescribed the accompanying instruments in battling debasement inside the pharmaceuticals industry and these could also be adjusted for the construction industry: these are, straightforwardness; sets of accepted rules; common society investment and oversight; informant assurance; decreasing motivating forces for corruption; irreconcilable circumstance rules; respectability agreements and debarment; thorough arraignment. As per Aigbavboa et al. (2016), lawful activity through authoritative laws spells out discipline for any unethical practice, which is a basic measure for the training in the industry. Rothwell and Baldwin (2007) proposed that the construction industry requires a high level of supervision to manage representative conduct, uphold gauges and report unfortunate ethical activities. Nonetheless, Bowen et al. (2007) recognized South Africa as one of the countries with an abundance of legislative laws but largely lacks the capacity to enforce. The whistle-blowing instrument is observed to be less successful measure; this is substantiated by Chiu (2003) and also Lewis and Uys (2007) that the whistleblowing component is inadequately secured its ineffectualness henceforth throughout the years.

As indicated by Lundin et al., 2015, the construction industry is an impeccable situation for moral pickles, with its low-value state of mind, vicious contention, and paper-thin edge. Babatunde and Pheng (2015) expressed that unethical conduct is taking a developing toll on the notoriety of the industry over the world. Reviews led by researchers, in Australia Vee and Skitmore (2003) and in Ghana Adjei et al. (2015) distinguished a few unethical behaviors and moral problems in the construction industry, for example, debasement, carelessness, pay off, irreconcilable circumstance, offer cutting, underbidding, tricky offering, cover value, front stacking, offer shopping, withdrawal of offer, and installment amusement. It is apparent that there exist critical territories of concern relating to the moral behaviours rehearsed by the construction professionals. Fabarebo (2004) have opined that moral conduct in business characterizes legitimate conduct and gathering of good standards or set of qualities managing what is correct or wrong, great or terrible.

As per Abdul-Rahmam et al. (2011), in dealing with unethical practice in the construction industry, it is essential for professionals' bodies and their administrative organizations to enhance their current code of code and look for better intends to implement, sanction members found culpable of breaching them. Babalola and Anifowose (2015) and Aigbavboa et al. (2016) opined that construction organizations should hire the right personnel, be worried about their welfare and guarantee appropriate and timely training. King et al. (2008) proposed that yearly business ethics training ought to likewise be set up for representatives and managers in the construction firms for appropriate awareness and adequate knowledge of the best way to conduct themselves in offering their services. All the more in this way, whistle-blower insurance components should be enhanced to improve its execution and adequacy in the
construction industry (Aigbavboa et al. 2016). Other conceivable arrangements in limiting unethical conduct and unprofessionalism honed by Quantity Surveyors in are: Making the unethical demonstration a criminal action and pioneers filling in as good examples (Babalola and Anifowose (2015); obligatory preparing and projects on professional ethics; law, direction and authorization by the NIQS; heavier punishments and Thorough arraignment (kings et al. 2008 and Babalola and Anifowose, 2015).

3. Research Methodology

The survey explores the opinions of a sample of Nigerian construction professionals with to the aim of the study. To achieve this aim, information gathered via a questionnaire survey covering the outcomes of unethical practices by Quantity Surveyors in the construction industry was empirically tested. A well-structured questionnaire was used for the data collection. The professions represented included Architects, Quantity Surveyors, Civil / Structural engineers, builders and contractors. As the questionnaire is the most widely used data collection technique for conducting surveys, it is widely used for descriptive and analytical surveys in order to find out facts, opinions and views. One hundred and thirty-two questionnaire packages were purposively sent out to the direct stakeholder on the identified projects. Stakeholders like the Architects, Quantity surveyors, Builders and engineers were consulted. Both financial and material incentives were implored to improve questionnaire response rate. In total, 114 questionnaires were returned out of 132 dispatched, representing 83 per cent overall response rate which was considered satisfactory (Fellows and Liu, (2003) recommended a minimum response rate of 30 per cent from a minimum sample size of 107). Initially, a reliability analysis was attempted to decide the consistency of components and dependability of the review instrument using Cronbach's α model. From the aftereffect of the examination, the general Cronbach’s α unwavering quality for the 16 results was 0.869, showing satisfactory interior dependability and consistency of informational index. Furthermore, in light of the fact that the information gathered for the investigation were ordinal in nature. Mean item score (MIS) and Standard Deviation (SD) were led on the example information to rank the results as per how they influence the construction industry in the investigation region. This investigation received ≥ 3.50 mean score as the cut-off point. MIS was utilized to rank all the measures while SD was likewise used in situations where two variables have similar MIS esteem.

4. Results

The review of the literature on measures in upgrading moral behaviours among Quantity Surveyors revealed sixteen (16) measures to moral lead among Quantity Surveyors on the construction industry in the investigation territory. The respondents to the poll were likewise required to assess the agreement level of the identified measures on a five-point Likert scale. The mean analysis of the respondent’s perceptions were presented in Table I. In examining the measures, transparency and accountability in contract administration has the highest mean and was ranked first (1st) with the mean of 4.17 and a standard deviation of 0.75 which implies that it enhances and measure the ethical conducts among Quantity Surveyor in the construction industry ; it is then followed by leaders serving as role models with the mean of 4.14 with the standard deviation of 0.72 and was ranked second (2nd), it implies that it measures the ethical conducts among Quantity Surveyors. Constant supervision of ethics was ranked third (3rd) it enhances the ethical conducts among Quantity Surveyors in construction industry with the mean of 4.13 with the standard deviation of 0.80, this was buttressed by Rothwell and Baldwin (2007) who suggested that the construction industry requires a high level of supervision to regulate employee behaviour, enforce standards and report ethical misconducts.

The outcome additionally demonstrated that rebuffing the offenders will also enhance the ethical conducts among Quantity Surveyor in the construction industry by fourth (4th) with the mean of 4.11 and standard deviation of 0.79. The fifth was effective communication with the mean of 4.09 and has the standard deviation of 0.71; it means that there is a need for more effective communication in measuring and enhancing the ethical conducts among Quantity Surveyors in the construction industry. Surprisingly, a whistle-blowing mechanism with mean score 4.03 was ranked 9th; this is because the whistle-blowing mechanism is found to be less effective measure by respondents, this is substantiated by Chiu (2003) as well as Lewis and Uys (2007) that the whistle-blowing mechanism is poorly protected hence its ineffectiveness over the years. The least ranked on Table I, according to respondents’ view on measures in enhancing ethical conducts among Quantity Surveyors in the construction industry is verbally promote the ethical environment and relentlessly which was ranked 16th with the mean of 3.83 and the standard deviation of 0.94.
In any case, it could be demonstrated that transparency and accountability in contract administration; leaders serving as role models and constant supervision of ethics is the major to measure and enhance the ethical conducts among Nigerian Quantity surveyors in the construction industry. Moreover, the analysis of the respondent’s perceptions showed that the identified measures are relevant and will be the best measures for enhancing ethical conduct. These measures are relevant because the mean between the highest rank (transparency and accountability in contract administration) and lowest rank (verbally promote the ethical environment and relentlessly) is very small. All these measures are compatible with Ameh and Odusami (2010), Alutu and Udawuwe (2009), Hassim et al. (2010), Azhar et al. (2011), FMI/CMAA (2004), Olusegun et al. (2011), Ehsan et al. (2009) and Moylan (2008) results, as unethical issues are widespread all over the sectors in the construction industry, these measures must be taken to reduce this behaviour and give rules to follow to improve working in this industry.

Table I: Measures to enhance ethical conducts among Quantity Surveyors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measures</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Ranking</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Transparency and accountability in contract administration</td>
<td>4.17</td>
<td>0.75</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leaders serving as role models</td>
<td>4.14</td>
<td>0.70</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant supervision of ethics</td>
<td>4.13</td>
<td>0.80</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Punish offender</td>
<td>4.11</td>
<td>0.79</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effective communication</td>
<td>4.09</td>
<td>0.71</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development of honest and ethical construction culture</td>
<td>4.06</td>
<td>0.99</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Initiation of regular and random ethics checks</td>
<td>4.05</td>
<td>0.75</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legislative laws that spell out punishment for any unethical practice</td>
<td>4.04</td>
<td>0.84</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good whistle-blowing mechanism</td>
<td>4.03</td>
<td>0.87</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Take action on ethical violation</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>0.86</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Establishment of annual business ethics training for employees and employers</td>
<td>3.98</td>
<td>0.74</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implementation of ethical guidelines and policy</td>
<td>3.94</td>
<td>0.98</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Benchmark of effective ways of improving adherence to ethics in the construction industry in the state</td>
<td>3.93</td>
<td>0.79</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review, monitor and report ethical construction culture</td>
<td>3.92</td>
<td>0.77</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hiring right personnel</td>
<td>3.91</td>
<td>0.86</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verbally promote the ethical environment and relentlessly</td>
<td>3.83</td>
<td>0.94</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5. Conclusions and Recommendations

Unethical conduct by Quantity Surveyors has one way or the other expedite negative impact on the nature of construction. The supposition of construction professionals (Architects, Builders and Civil/Structural engineers) concerning the measures in upgrading moral conduct among Quantity Surveyors is high in the area of experience Quantity Surveyors serving as a role model. It was additionally uncovered in the findings that that transparency & accountability in contract administration and constant supervision of ethics are the most notable measures to enhance ethical conducts among Quantity Surveyors. Moreover, to conquer unethical practices among Quantity Surveyors in the construction industry, prompt advances must be taken to guarantee that all contract administration must be straightforward, accountable and responsible. In like manner pioneers and experienced Quantity Surveyors should fill in as a great good example to youthful graduate ones. Most Quantity surveying organizations are led by experienced QS who are formally trained in professional ethics, and construction organizations must stress on issues of professional ethics and enforce it on all young Quantity Surveyors. It is a clear fact that leadership serves as role model to enhance
professionalism, Leaders should serve as a role model among the young Quantity Surveyors as their conducts will influence the whole company because all eyes look no them in day-to-day practice.

The investigation suggested that Pioneers and experienced Quantity Surveyors should fill in as a great good example to youthful graduate ones. When codes of ethics have been evolved, and sufficient training has been carried out, it is the moral obligation of top experienced Quantity Surveyors to set personal examples in the display of ethical conduct at the workplace. They must extend all-out support towards enforcement of codes of ethics across the board. To this end, motivating forces and corrective measures can be utilized as apparatuses by the pioneers and experienced Quantity surveyors to keep away from, dispose of or alleviate the likelihood and event of unethical practices in their quantity surveying firms. Construction professionals in Nigeria should endeavour to carry on with professional respectability and sensible care. In the event that everybody in this division has their influence well, unethical conduct will be limit and annihilated. Also, powerful disciplines, for example, punishments, withdrawal of authentication or even cancellation of the permit on dull infringement might be presented by Nigerian Institute of Quantity Surveyors (NIQS). The developed protocol is additionally on the suggestion to the NIQS to proactively use their energy and impact over the quantity surveying firms which will empower them to discover techniques for altogether executing their Code of Conduct, in an activity to enhance the moral conduct showed by rehearsing Quantity Surveyors. Such developed protocol is Continuing Professional Development (CPD), which can be adapted to enhance the professional skills and ensure that all registered professionals maintain their competence throughout their period of registration.

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