

Editorial

As before, this issue accommodates articles around the world covering a wide range of topics that are related to the construction industry of developing countries, but with one slight change to the content. Beginning this issue, the Journal of Construction in Developing Countries now includes a special note section. It is reserved for eminent scholars to express their opinion about the state of the art regarding their fields of their expertise and pockets of areas which should be further explored. The inaugural special note is provided by George Ofori, who is acknowledged worldwide as the specialist on construction in developing countries.

Moza and Kumar Paul analysed construction claims with the aim of improving India's Central Public Works Department's General Conditions of Contracts (GCC). Twenty-two real life disputes brought to arbitration became the case studies of the research. The various types of disputes were classified into categories and analysed according to frequency, monetary value of claims and percentage of amount awarded against amount claimed. They propose changes in certain clauses in the GCC to minimise claims.

Building Information Modelling (BIM) is taking hold in developing countries. However its success hinges on the collaboration and information sharing of every project team member. From Nigeria, Olugboyega studied the specific input builders should provide. From questionnaire survey, he found that their main roles are to detect information clashes and simulate the construction process in a sequential order.

Developing countries suffering from internal conflicts pose unique challenges to construction. From Yemen, Mohammed Alashwal and Al-Sabahi identified significant risk variables in construction projects during the political unrest period. Their questionnaire-based approach revealed that indeed revolution, as an external variable, was ranked top. The strategies of risk response and risk allocation they generated can be applied during unrest periods as well as during normal situations.

Cost slippage is a perennial problem for construction projects. Still on risk, in India Renuka and Umarani examined critical risk factors which lead to cost deviation for medium sized construction projects. The results from logistic regression found that cost deviation was significantly associated with (1) project scope and evaluation risk, (2) work environment risk, (3) knowledge sharing risk, (4) lean construction risk, (5) constructional an operational risk and (6) resource productivity risk.

Pockets of gated neighbourhoods have mushroomed in towns and cities in developing countries to cater to the affluent populace. Using space syntax literature to analyse this phenomenon, Kaushik focused on the configuration of sectors in one Indian city. He found that the sector which was developed completely from government planning exercise is more intelligible and have higher synergy value than the sector developed entirely by developers. His study does not shed good light on gated developments as they malign easy accessibility and navigation.

Environmental and man-made disasters happen all around the world. Enshassi, Shakalah and Alkilani found that effective community participation strategies for local communities in the Gaza Strip in the pre-disaster stage are preparing effective coordination and management plans, preparing information and knowledge system and providing early warning and communication plans. The government and NGOs should incorporate their findings in their disaster management practice.

From Iran, Saleki and Bahramani designed a low-carbon educational building using the Low Carbon Building LCB Method. This method is just one of several life cycle assessment tools used in the construction industry. Investigated at different stages, the amount of carbon emissions from pre-assessment of the building project was estimated to be just over a third lesser than a baseline building.

From Iran also, Sadafi and Sharifi used the descriptive analytic survey to analyse traditional architecture in bazaars and shopping centres. They found that the two bazaar case studies lack traditional architectural features and naturalism. They recommend that designers pay attention to psychological and subjective features of elements as well as the visual and physical aspects of a space.

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