Construction Focus, Vol 16, No 1, (2023) 61 – 73

AN ASSESSMENT OF STAKEHOLDERS' UNETHICAL PRACTICES IN BUILDING CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS

OGUCHE Usman Joshua, MUHAMMAD Shehu[1] and SAAD Mohammed Mustapha[1]

Department of Building, Ahmadu Bello University Zaria, Nigeria

Correspondence: usmanjoshuaoguche@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

Despite the existence of national building codes and regulatory bodies, unethical practices remain a national problem that has led to a surge in the number of building collapses, resulting in the loss of lives, and properties, and health and safety catastrophes that cause damage to the environment. The study assessed professionals' perceptions of stakeholders' unethical practices in building construction projects to mitigate the severity of the misconduct. The study is aimed at identifying the most common forms of unethical practices at the pre-construction and construction stages of building construction projects. The study used survey methods through a structured questionnaire. Purposive sampling technique was used and the sample size was 77 for the survey. The major findings at the pre-construction and construction stages are collusive tendering (bid rigging) at 4.70 (75.36%); bribery and cash inducement at 4.55 (68.12%); and illegal award of tender at 4.54 (65.22%). At the construction stage, report falsification at 4.51 (57.97%); non-adherence to welfare, health, and safety at 4.48 (56.07%); and overlapping and ghosting at 4.45 (56.07%). The study concluded that stakeholders should stand for their integrity due to the significance of the major findings recorded at the pre-construction and construction stages of building projects. The study recommended that stakeholders should exhibit the hallmark of professional excellence by adhering to professional values to mitigate the severity of the misconduct.

KEYWORDS*: Bribery, Construction, Projects, Stakeholders and Unethical Practices*

INTRODUCTION

Building industry has been facing growing concerns regarding ethical violations despite the existence of the national building code and ethical knowledge among its stakeholders. Reports of misconduct continue to increase, calling into question the Poor strategic vision in the Nigerian construction sector that has subjected most construction participants to ethical violations (Odole, 2018; Omange & Matawal, 2016). These acts not only result in colossal financial losses but also often in human lives, such as in the case of deaths resulting from the collapse of sub-standard structures (CIOB, 2010). The enforcement of ethical standards is necessary to protect the credibility of the entire profession because lapses in ethical behaviour among construction stakeholders endanger the industry (Hamza at al., 2010).

The construction industry is a significant player and a key driver of economic and employment growth in most countries, yet it faces a long list of negative ethical behaviours (Somachandra & Sylva 2018). The impact of unethical practices presents a strong case for mitigation, especially in the construction sector where the ethical violation is pervasive and complex among construction stakeholders at various levels. The divergent interests of these practitioners have led to unethical acts because of their direct influence on construction projects (Aigbavboa at al., 2016; Adah, 2020). Unethical acts within the construction industry are not limited to certain countries but are rather a global phenomenon (Lee and Cullen, 2018).

Different studies have attempted to find out issues related to unethical acts with limited studies on the most common forms of

unethical practices at different stages of building construction projects The procurement process of construction is perceived to be very much susceptible to unethical practices than others stages (Abdulrazaq, 2021). Bribery is rated high and has been extensively associated with the tendering phase of the construction project process (Abdulrazaq, 2021; Chan and Owusu, 2017). Therefore, a detailed study needs to be conducted on various stages to ascertain their unethical practices references.

This research seeks to gain a deeper understanding of the issues and offer insight that can lead to positive change by identifying the most ethical violations in building projects to develop recommendations for improvement. To address this challenges, we need to unearth a sound framework through an empirical inquiry to provide a basis for guided action against unethical practices so that mitigation efforts are appropriately applied.

Statement of the Problem

The proliferation of unethical behaviours within building construction projects has precipitated a marked increase in building collapses, resulting in numerous fatalities, property losses, health and safety crises, and environmental harm (Somachandra & Sylva, 2018; Aigbavboa at al., 2016). Le at al. (2014) identify unethical practices as a prevalent challenge in both developed and developing nations while various studies have identified the prevalence of unethical practices among stakeholders (Abdulrazaq, 2021; Zulu & Muleya, 2019; Ameh, 2018). There remains a dearth of empirical research that adequately pinpoints the most common forms of unethical acts at pre-construction and construction stages of projects. This gap undermines efforts to address unethical acts, which can detrimentally impact employees well-being, the integrity of the built environment, and public trust in the construction industry. Hence, this study intends to discern and categorise the most prevalent forms of unethical practices at the pre-construction and construction stages of building construction projects.

Significance of the Study

The misbehaviour and discrepancy between ethical obligations and actual behaviour in the construction sector are growing. With an emphasis on service delivery methods and orientation modalities, this study attempts to detect prevalent unethical activities among building stakeholders. Identifying vulnerabilities and setting priorities for immediate action, will be beneficial to all relevant stakeholders like academic researchers, professional bodies, practitioners, and students.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Stakeholders in the Construction Industry

A stakeholder in an organization, according to Fremann (1984), is any group or individual who can affect or is affected by the achievement of the organization's project objectives. However, Stakeholders in construction are divided into internal stakeholders (primary stakeholders) and external stakeholders (secondary stakeholders) (Rajeev & Kothai, 2014). A construction stakeholder is an individual (or group of individuals) who has a significant impact on the success of a project (Muhammad. 2022). Stakeholder engagement in building production is more likely to be successful, especially in the long term, if it takes into consideration the expectations of the stakeholders and endeavours to meet their needs (Magassouba at al., 2019; Muhammad at al., 2022). Stakeholders can help or hinder a project based on their power and objectives to influence results by their concerns and expectations (Dağlı, 2018).

Internal stakeholders are "the stakeholders who are formally members of the project coalition and usually support the project." The concept of internal stakeholders is oftentimes used with the concepts of primary and direct stakeholders. Direct stakeholders are formally members of the project coalition. That is, they are directly involved in an organization's decision-making processes. Examples are clients, consultants, project managers, project management team, designers, subcontractors, suppliers, banks, sponsors, insurance

companies, and external stakeholders are not formal members of the project coalition but may affect or be affected by the project. Such groups are often referred to as secondary stakeholders. Examples are local communities, government, potential users, regulators, legal authorities, community representatives, nongovernmental organizations, research institutes, land owners, city councils, agencies or licensing bodies, unions, competitors, and employees (Magassouba at al., 2019; Muhammad at al., 2022).

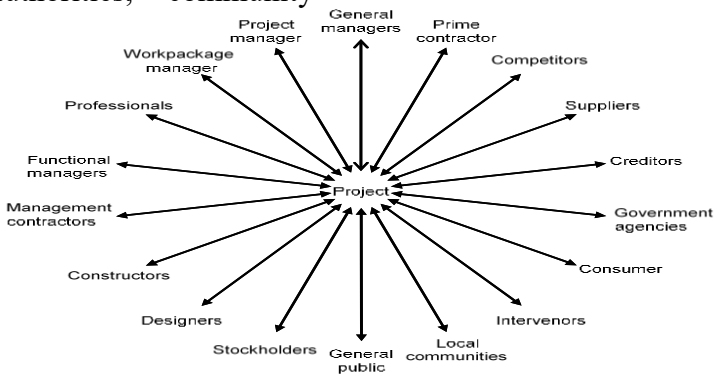

Figure 1 Stakeholder model
Source: (Cleland, 1986)

Overview of Unethical Practices in the Construction Industry

Unethical practices are one of the major impediments to the development of developing countries and infringe on the quality of life in developed countries (Akinrata, 2019). The existence of unethical practices within the construction industry is a global phenomenon (Lee & Cullen, 2018). The occurrence of unethical acts cuts across all countries, and no construction project is immune to unethical practices (Stansbury & Stansbury, 2018).

A company's success and sustainability may be negatively affected when strategies and policies put in place fail to address unethical practices (Ukessays, 2017). Corrupt practices are found in every phase of a building project **(**Zulu & Muleya, 2019; Abdulrazaq, 2021). Ethical infringement causes certifiable issues for owners (Akinrata, 2019; Adah, 2020). A company's success and sustainability may be negatively affected when ethical strategies and policies put in place fail to curb unethical practices (UK Essays, 2017). This can only be reduced through strict and rigid rules and regulations. Since the building profession has a direct effect on the lives of people, these professionals owe special moral responsibility to the public and society rather than only their clients. Babatunde and Pheng (2015) expressed that unethical conduct is taking a developing toll on the notoriety of the industry around the world.

Organizational expenditures in the recent decades recorded by the U.S. alone have been up to $70 billion and over $130 billion worldwide on leadership and ethical training annually (O'Leonard, 2014), yet U.S. companies still lose approximately $52 billion per year to employee theft (Gino, 2015). Evidence of misconduct is found in developed and many developing countries like Australia (Brown & Loosemore, 2015), South Africa (Aigbavboa at al., 2016), and Nigeria (Adeyemo and Amade, 2016). According to CIOB (2015), corruption and wrongdoing may always exist. By nature, it is very hard to eradicate, but it must be leaned against continuously through developing transparency, meaningful discipline, and punishment. (Mihelic at al., 2010).

Common Unethical Practice Forms in Construction Firms

Bribery and Inducement: Manu at al. (2019) explained bribery as the "offering, giving, receiving, or soliciting of anything of value to influence the action of an official in the

procurement. Akpomiemie at al. (2018) presented bribery as a sharp practice to gain some advantages."

Ghosting and overlapping: This means an entity (either an individual or a unit) made up for fraudulent acts or deception (Brown & Loosemore, 2015).

Breach of Confidentiality: A breach of confidentiality is referred to as a secret agreement between two or more parties for a fraudulent reason' (Le at al., 2014). It is also an act of giving out sensitive documents illegally to influence personal means (Kang at al., 2017).

Collusive Tendering (Bid Rigging): Bid rigging alludes to a collusive act in which willing participants decide on the results of a bid process beforehand and also an act that includes compensation to unsuccessful bidders (Ibrahim at al., 2019; Lee & Cullen, 2018; Aigbavboa at al., 2016). Ameyaw at al. (2017) indicated that collusive tendering is a secret agreement between two or more parties engaged in fraudulent activity during the tendering phases of project development.

Favouritism: Favoritism is the act of offering unusual treatment to either an individual or a group of persons, which often takes the form of awarding a contract, honoring, hiring, or receiving benefits, among others, even if the person may not necessarily be qualified for the position or contract offered. (Wibowo & Wilhelm, 2014).

Nepotism: Nepotism is corrupt conduct whereby a person may provide aid to a tenderer who has relational links, such as a common race or the same origins (Manu at al., 2019).

Professional Negligence: Negligence is the failure to exercise a degree of care, which the law requires of you for the protection of others to avoid breach of care. These include insufficient safety specifications and poor process supervision (Maseko, 2017; Chan & Owusu, 2017; NBRRI, 2019).

Conflict of Interest: A conflict of interest is an ethical malpractice in which someone in a position of trust has personal interests that could make it difficult to fulfill his or her duties impartially (NBRRI, 2019; Manu at al., 2019).

Illegal Award of Tender: Ethical malpractice may manifest itself when someone obtains illegal benefits from awarding public contracts because of their powerful positions in government (Ibrahim at al., 2019; Manu at al., 2019; Maseko, 2017).

Overbilling: Increasing unit prices for activities that are planned to occur earlier in the project will raise the cash flow (Legae & Adeyemi, 2017; Shah & Alotaibi, 2018).

Other Unethical Practices are as follows: Non-adherence to welfare, health, and safety, theft, Non-compliance with the approved plans, Reports Falsification, Falsification of experience and capacity, Absence of a building permit, Non-adherence to supervision (Aigbavboa at al., 2016; Ameyaw at al., 2017; Maseko, 2017; NBRRI, 2019).

Table 1: Summary of unethical practices

SN	Unethical Practices	Sources from the literature
1	Bribery and cash inducement	(Akpomiemie at al., 2018; 2018; Manu at al.,., 2019)
2	Theft	(Aigbavboa at al.,., 2016; Maseko, 2017; NBRRI, 2019)
3	Ghosting & Overlapping	(Brown & Loosemore, 2015)
4	Collusive tendering	Lee & Cullen, 2018; Ibrahim at al.,., 2019; Lee &Cullenl, 2018; Aigbavboa at al.,.,2016; Akpomiemie at al.,., 2018)
5	Breach of confidentiality	(Le at al.,., 2014; Kang at al.,., 2017)
6	Connivance	(Chan & Owusu, 2017; Manu at al.,., 2019)
7	Nepotism	(Manu at al.,., 2019)
8	Professional Negligence	(Maseko, 2017; Chan & Owusu, 2017; NBRRI, 2019)
9	Conflict of Interest	(NBRRI, 2019; Manu at al., 2019)
10	Reports Falsification	(Ameyaw at al., 2017 and Maseko, 2017)
11	Overbilling	(Legae & Adeyemi, 2017; Shah & Alotaibi, 2018)
12	Unapproved variations	(Ferrell & Weaver,1978)
13	Engagement of Quacks & Incompetent personnel	(Lee & Cullen, 2018; NBRRI, 2014 & 2019: Aigbavboa at al.,., 2016; Ameyaw at al.,., 2017)
14	Non-Adherence to Welfare, Health &Safety	(Aigbavboa at al.,., 2016; Ameyaw at al.,., 2017; Maseko, 2017; NBRRI, 2019).
15	Non-compliance with the approved plans	(Aigbavboa at al.,., 2016; Ameyaw at al.,., 2017; Maseko, 2017; NBRRI, 2019).
16	Falsification of experience and capacity	(Aigbavboa at al.,., 2016; Ameyaw at al.,., 2017; Maseko, 2017; NBRRI, 2019).
17	Absence of building permit	(Aigbavboa at al., 2016; Maseko, 2017; NBRRI, 2019).
18	Non-Adherence to supervision	(Ameyaw at al.,., 2017; Maseko, 2017; NBRRI, 2019)
19	Illegal award of tender	(Ibrahim at al.,., 2019; Maseko, 2017; Manu at al.,., 2019)
20	Favouritism	(Wibowo and Wilhelm, 2014)

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research was conducted using a quantitative approach. The target population for this study comprised of building professionals who are supervisors with a minimum of 8 years of construction experience. They are required to possess essential skills for effective information. The target population of the professionals was not known. Thus, the population is considered to be infinite, and the formula: $n=PQ/V^2$. Using the 95% confidence level, the critical value t = 1.96, $\alpha = 0.1$, V^2 = the standard of error (0.05), and the 20% proportion represents the entire study population. A minimum sample size of 64 was determined. Seventy-seven (77) questionnaires were distributed after adding 20% over the minimum sample size to account for invalid or non-responses. Closed-ended questionnaires were used. The respondents were selected using the purposive sampling technique after satisfying certain criteria. The questionnaires were administered in Abuja and Lagos states of Nigeria because there is an appreciable level of construction activities, a high concentration of professionals, and they have witnessed incidences of buildings collapse within the selected places. Out of the distributed questionnaires, 75 were filled and returned, but only 69 (90%) were found fit for analysis. Descriptive statistics were used to analyse the data. Respondent demographics were analysed using percentages. Mean was used to Rate the scale

Pilot testing of the questionnaire was carried out to determine if the organisational structure of the instrument was fit for the survey, and also to ensure content validity. The questionnaires were evaluated by 12 stakeholders, comprised of 6 construction experts (consultants and contractors) from Kaduna state and 6 academic researchers one each from the departments of Architecture, Building, Structural Engineers, Quantity

Surveying, Electrical, and Mechanical Engineering) in the Faculty of Environmental Design and Engineering, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria. Cronbach's alpha was adopted for the study. Alpha values less than 0.60 are said to be weak, and values greater than 0.60 are regarded as strong (Chima at al., 2021). Akinrata (2019) reported that the acceptable values of α should range from 0.70 to 0.95. The Cronbach's alpha in this survey was 0.861, which indicated a very high degree of reliability for the study.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 2: Respondents‟ profile

General information	Frequency	Percentage
Professional Affiliation		
Architecture	6	8.70%
structural Engineering	14	20.30%
Mechanical Engineering	11	15.90%
Electrical Engineering	9	13.00%
Quantity Surveying	14	20.30%
Building	15	21.70%
Total	**69**	**100%**
Academic Qualification of Respondents		
PhD	1	1.40%
MSc	17	24.60%
BSc/HND	49	71.00%
Others	2	2.90%
Total	**69**	**100%**
Professional Membership Grades		
Fellow	8	11.60%
Member	36	52.20%
Cooperate	11	15.90%
Graduate	13	18.80%
Associate	1	1.40%
Total	**69**	**100%**
Organisation Type		
Contracting	24	34/78%
Consulting	21	30.43%
Public Service	24	34.80%
Total	**69**	**100.00%**
Managerial position		
Top management	11	15.90%
Middle management	47	68.10%
Lower management	11	15.90%
Total	**69**	**100%**
Years of experience		
1-5 years	2	2.90%
6-10 years	5	7.20%
11-15 years	25	36.20%
16-20 years	26	37.70%
Above 20 years	11	15.90%
Total	**69**	**100%**

Professional Affiliation

In terms of professionals' affiliations, 8.70% are in architecture, 20.30% are in structural engineering, 15.90% are in mechanical engineering, 13.00% are in electrical engineering, 20.30% are in quantity surveying, and 21.70% are in building. In terms of educational qualification, 1.40% are PhD holders, 24.60% are Master's degree (MSc) holders, 71.00% are BSc/HND holders, and others are 2.90% of respondents. In terms of professional membership grades, 11.60% are fellows of their respective associations, 52.20% are members, 15.90% are corporate members, 18.80% are graduate members, and Associate is only 1.40%. Concerning organizational associations, 40.60% are in contracting organizations, 24.60% are in consulting organizations, and 34.80% are in public service. In terms of managerial positions, 15.90% are in the top managerial positions, 68.10% are in the middle managerial positions, and 15.90% are in the lower managerial positions. Those between 1 and 5 years old are 2.90%, those between 6 and 10 years old are 7.20%, those between 11 and 15 years old are 36.20%, those between 16 and 20 years old are 37.70%, and those above 20 years old are 15.90%. This implies that the majority of respondents (37.70%) are between 16 and 20 years old. The average working experience of respondents was 12.44 years; this suggests that respondents have reasonable and adequate experience to provide reliable opinions.

Table 3: Administered questionnaires and responses across Abuja (FCT) and Lagos state

Location	Number Distributed	Number of Responses	Percentage (%) of Distributed	Percentage (%) of Respondents
Lagos	47	42	61%	55%
Abuja (FCT)	30	27	39%	35%
Total	**77**	**69**	**100%**	**90%**

Based on the response rate of this study, ninety percent (90%) 75 questionnaires were filled and returned out of 77 distributed but only 69 were fit for the study. Returned questionnaires of this study is considered significant since the response rate is greater than 30%. (Dairu at al., 2013).

Table 4: Most common forms of unethical practices at the pre-construction stage

	Pre-construction	Frequency of Response						∑fx	Mean	SD	RII	Rank
S/N		**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**∑f**					
1	Collusive tendering (Bid Rigging)	1	0	1	15	52	69	324	4.70	0.65	0.94	1st
2	Bribery and cash inducement	0	2	5	15	47	69	314	4.55	0.76	0.91	2nd
3	Illegal award of tender	1	1	3	19	45	69	313	4.54	0.78	0.91	3rd
4	Overbilling	1	2	7	21	38	69	300	4.35	0.89	0.87	4th
5	Nepotism	0	3	6	30	30	69	294	4.26	0.80	0.85	5th
6	Conflict of interest	0	1	13	39	16	69	277	4.01	0.70	0.80	6th
7	Report falsification	0	8	10	25	26	69	276	4.00	1.00	0.80	7th
8	Favoritism	0	1	15	40	13	69	272	3.94	0.68	0.79	8th
9	Breach of confidentiality	1	0	14	44	10	69	269	3.90	0.69	0.78	9th
10	Absence of building permit	0	4	21	34	10	69	257	3.72	0.78	0.74	10th
11	Theft of all kinds	1	7	27	26	8	69	240	3.48	0.89	0.70	11th
12	Connivance	0	7	31	29	2	69	233	3.38	0.71	0.68	12th
13	Non-compliance with the approved design	4	9	27	28	1	69	220	3.19	0.90	0.64	13th
14	Professional negligence	1	7	44	14	3	69	218	3.16	0.72	0.63	14th
15	Unapproved variations	2	10	35	19	3	69	218	3.16	0.83	0.63	15th
16	Falsification of experience and capacity	2	17	30	14	6	69	212	3.07	0.96	0.61	16th
17	Non-adherence to welfare, Health and Safety	5	21	22	12	9	69	206	2.99	1.14	0.60	17th
18	Non-adherence to supervision plan	11	22	15	12	9	69	193	2.80	1.28	0.56	18th
19	Overlapping and Ghosting	8	17	33	8	3	69	188	2.72	0.97	0.54	19th
20	Engagement of quacks and incompetent workers	11	18	24	11	5	69	188	2.72	1.14	0.54	2oth

{Hint: (1) =Never, (2) = Rarely, (3) =Sometimes, (4) =Often, (5) =Always, SD = Standard deviation, RII = Relative Important Index}.

Tables 4 above shows how severely and widely the nature of unethical acts is occurring at the pre-construction stage of building projects. The most severe top three rankings of the mean to the percentage of respondents are as follows: 1st, is collusive tendering (bid rigging) 4.70 (75.36%); 2nd, overlaying and ghosting 4.55 (68.12%) and 3rd, engagement of This work agrees with the study of Owusu at al. (2019), that said project selection, tendering, and prequalification stages were the most susceptible. Evidenced of unethical practices by the findings of this study as Bribery and cash inducement is often used to quacks and incompetent workers 4.54(65.22%) respectively. The least frequently occurring incidents are 18th, non-adherence to the supervision at 2.80 (31.88%); 19th overlapping and ghosting at 2.72 (47.83%) and (20th) engagement of quacks and incompetent workers at 2.72. (34.78%) out of the 69 respondents.

obtain contracts through illegal tender awards. In most cases, beneficiaries are sometimes compelled to induce officers who have been entrusted with the responsibility of deciding whom to give the projects to (Amenyaw at al., 2017).

Table 5: Most common forms of unethical practices at the construction stage

	Construction	Frequency of Responses						∑fx	Mean	SD	RII	Rank
S/N	ITEMS	1	2	3	4	5	∑f					
1	Report falsification	0	2	1	26	40	69	311	4.51	0.68	0.901	1st
2	Non-Adherence to welfare, Health & safety	0	0	5	26	38	69	309	4.48	0.63	0.896	2nd
3	Overlapping and Ghosting	0	2	3	26	38	69	307	4.45	0.72	0.890	3rd
4	Theft of all kinds	0	4	5	19	41	69	304	4.41	0.86	0.881	4th
5	Falsification of experience and capacity	1	0	3	35	30	69	300	4.35	0.70	0.870	5th
6	Engagement of quacks and incompetent personnel	1	1	6	28	33	69	298	4.32	0.81	0.864	6th
7	Nepotism	0	2	13	24	30	69	289	4.19	0.85	0.838	7th
8	Conflict of interest	0	2	11	34	22	69	283	4.10	0.77	0.820	8th
9	Professional negligence	0	1	12	37	19	69	281	4.07	0.71	0.814	9th
10	Favoritism	0	3	13	30	23	69	280	4.06	0.84	0.812	10th
11	Non-adherence to supervision plan	1	3	11	36	18	69	274	3.97	0.86	0.794	11th
12	Connivance	0	1	15	41	12	69	271	3.93	0.67	0.786	12th
13	Bribery and cash inducement	1	3	19	27	19	69	267	3.87	0.92	0.774	13th
14	Unapproved variations	1	0	28	25	15	69	260	3.77	0.84	0.754	14th
15	Non-compliance with the approved design	0	3	21	37	8	69	257	3.72	0.73	0.745	15th
16	Illegal award of tender	1	5	38	13	12	69	237	3.43	0.92	0.687	16th
17	Absence of building permit	1	9	33	15	11	69	233	3.38	0.96	0.675	17th
18	Breach of confidentiality	5	13	36	9	6	69	205	2.97	0.99	0.594	18th
19	Collusive tendering (Bid Rigging)	8	33	11	5	12	69	187	2.71	1.29	0.542	19th
20	Overbilling	15	32	12	5	5	69	160	2.32	1.12	0.464	20th

{Hint: (1) =Never, (2) =Rarely, (3) =Sometimes, (4) =Often, (5) =Always SD = Standard deviation, RII = Relative Important Index}.)

Tables 5 above shows the top three significant misconducts as follows 1st, report falsification, with the mean to the percentage of respondents 4.51 (57.97%); 2nd, non-adherence to welfare, health, and safety at 4.48 (56.07%); and 3rd, overlapping and ghosting at 4.45 (56.07%) out of the 69 respondents. The least frequently occurring incidents are as follows: (18th) Breach of confidentiality at 2.97 (52.17%); (19th) Collusive tendering (bid rigging) at 2.71 (47.83%); and lastly (20th) Overbilling at 2.32 (46.38%) out of the 69 respondents. Globally, the construction industry has been reported as having poor ethical performance due to corrupt practices (Somachandra & Sylva, 2018). A survey carried out in the USA revealed that 84% of the respondents witnessed construction industry-related unethical acts (Somachandra & Sylva, 2018).

Within the broader construction industry, unethical practices exist due to several factors, such as greed (Aigbavboa at al., 2016), conflict of interest among construction stakeholders (Shah & Alotaibi, 2017) and lastly, Late and short payment of workers' salaries, according to Paul at al. (2021). Lee and Cullen (2018) noted that construction industry is the most fraudulent sector globally and the acts numerously occur at all stages of construction projects (CIOB, 2015).

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Conclusion

Top three severe unethical acts assessed by respondents at the pre-construction stage are 1st, collusive tendering (bid rigging) at 75.36%; 2nd, bribery and cash inducement at 68.12%; and 3rd, illegal award of the tender at 65.22% while the first top three also at the construction stage are: 1st, report falsification at 57.97%; 2nd, non-adherence to welfare, health, and safety at 56.07%; and 3rd, overlapping and ghosting at 56.07%. Conclusions were drawn from the major findings based on the study ratings. It was observed that the top three severe unethical practices at both stages will continue to be on the rise if construction stakeholders do not take a radical change against the acts and stand for their integrity.

Recommendation

This study also recommended that the root causes of the acts must be targeted. The role of politics in the award of building projects should be clearly defined to minimize political interference and promote integrity in the award of contracts. Effective monitoring and sanctioning of violations of moral conduct should be strictly implemented to mitigate the acts. The study focused on internal stakeholders who are directly involved in the project coalition. It is recommended that, further studies can be carried out on external stakeholders to gain a better understanding of stakeholders' involvement in unethical practices.

REFERENCES

Abdulrazaq, A. T. (2021). Assessing the Prevalence of Corruption at Different Stages of Building Construction Projects A thesis is submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirement for Degree of Master of Science in Building. Construction Management. Ahmodu Bello University Zaria.

Adah, C. A. (2020). A Review of Unethical Practices among Construction Professionals and Measures to curb them. Kaduna State University Environmental Science Journal (KESJ), 1(1), 30-39.

Adeyemo, A.A. and Amade, B. (2016), "Corruption and construction projects in Nigeria: manifestations and solutions", PM World Journal, Vol. 5 No. 10, October 2016.

Adnan, H., Hashim, N., Yusuwan, N.M., & Ahmad, N. (2012). Ethical issues in the Construction Industry: Contractor's Perspective. Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences, 35, 719 – 727.

Aigbavboa, C., Oke, A., & Tyali, S. (2016). Unethical practices in South African Construction Industry. In F. Emuze (Ed.), 5th Construction Management Conference (15-29). Port Elizabeth: Department of Construction Management, Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University. South Africa, November 2016

Akinrata, E. B. (2019). Evaluating the Level of Unethical Behavior by Quantity Surveyors in the Nigerian Construction Industry. International Journal of Management & Entrepreneurship Research, 1(5) 217-220.

Akpomiemie, C. O., Adedokun, A. O., & Aje, I. O. (2018). Quantity Surveyors' compliance with the ethical standards. In Proceedings of the International Conference on Professionalism and Ethics in Construction, London, United Kingdom (349-62). South Bank University

Ameh, O. (2018). Ethical ideology and Nigerian Building Professionals' ambivalence towards ethical Issues. In C. A. Egbu, G. Ofori (Eds.), Proceedings of the International Conference on Professionalism and Ethics in Construction (286-295). London South Bank University.

Ameyaw, E.E., Pärn, E., Chan, A.P.C., Owusu-Manu, D., Edwards, D.J., & Darko, A. (2017). Corrupt practices in the construction industry: a survey of Ghanaian experience. Journal of Management in Engineering, 33 (6). 1-11.

Babatunde, Y., and Phengi S. (2015). TQM Implementation through ISO 9001; findings from Chinese construction firms in Nigeria. The TQM Journal, 27 (6) 671-682.

Brown, J., and Loosemore, M. (2015). "Behavioural factors influencing corrupt action in the Australian construction industry", Engineering, Construction, and Architectural Management, 22 (4) 372-389, doi: 10.1108/ECAM-03-2015-003

Chan, A. P., and Owusu, E. K., (2017). "Corruption Forms in the Construction Industry: Literature Review" J. Constr. Eng. Manage., 10.1061/(ASCE)CO.1943-7862.0001353.

Chima., Okolie., Ifeanyichukwu., Callista and Okwudili (2021). Current Issues Associated with Public Building Maintenance in South-East Nigeria., Engineering & Technology. 8, 235 – 240 International Journal of Innovative Science.

CIOB (2010). "Code of Practice for Project Management for Construction and Development." 4th ed. Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell.

CIOB (2015). Understanding the value of professionals and professional bodies (1st ed). CIOB, 1 Arlington Square, Downshire Way, Bracknell, RG12 1WA, UK.

Cleland, D.I., 1986. Project stakeholder management. Project Management Journal, 17(4), 36-44.

Dağlı, O. B. (2018). Stakeholder Management in Project Success: Is it an Object or Subject: PM World Journal, 7(4), 1-6.

Dahiru, D., AbdulAzeez, A.D. & Haruna, E.O (2013). An Appraisal of Buildability Practice in the Nigerian Construction Industry In: Laryea, S. and Agyepong, S. (Eds) procs 5th West Africa Built Environment Research (WABER) Conference Accra, Ghana, 111-121.

Dindi, A. (2016). Ethics in Construction. IQSK Magazine, The Quantity Surveyor, 20(1), 2–6.

Ferrell, O.C. and Weaver, K.M., 1978. Ethical beliefs of marketing managers. Journal of Marketing, (42) 69-73. https://

Freeman, R. E. (1984) Strategic management: A stakeholder approach, Freeman Edward. doi: 10.2139/ssrn.263511.

Gino, F. (2015). Understanding ordinary unethical behavior: why people who value morality act immorally. Current Opinion in Behavioral Sciences, 3, 107-111

Hamzah, A, Wang, C. and Yap, X. 2010. 'How professional ethics impact construction quality: perception and evidence in a fast-developing economy, scientific research, and essays, 5 (23) 3742-3749.

Ibrahim, Z., Hamzah, N., & Khoiry, M. A. (2019). Research on the unethical conducts and practices among professionals in the Construction Industry. International Journal of Recent Technology and Engineering (IJRTE), 8, 1130-1136.

Kang, B.G., Long, K., Zhang, C., and Hao, J.L. (2017). "Comparative study on the ethical perceptions of contractors and designers in the China construction industry." IOP Conf. Series, Materials Science and Engineering, 291, 1-7.

Le, Y., Shan, M., Chan, A.P.C., and Hu, Y. (2014). "Investigating the causal relationships between causes of and vulnerabilities to corruption in the Chinese public construction sector." J. Constr. Eng. Manage., 140 (9), 1-11.

Lee, C.C.T., & Cullen, D. (2018). An empirical comparison of ethical perceptions among the consultant's Quantity Surveyor and contractor's Quantity Surveyor in the UK Construction Industry. Proceedings of COBRA RICS. Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS).

Legae, O. and Adeyemi, A.Y., 2017. A Survey of the Prevalent Forms of Corruption in the Construction Industry in Botswana. Journal for the Advancement of Performance Information and Value, 9(1) 67-85.

Magassouba, S. M., Tambi, A. M. B. A., Alkhlaifat, B. I., & Abdullah, A. A. Bin. (2019). Influence of Stakeholders Involvement on Development Project Performance in Guinea. International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences, 9(1), 1111–1120.

Manu, P., Agyekum, K., Mahamadu, A. M., Olomolaiye, P., & Adinyira, E. (2019). Differences in stakeholder ability in addressing unethical practices: Insights from the surveying profession. Journal of Professional Issues in Engineering Education and Practice, 145(4), (4-28).

Maseko, C. M. (2017). Literature on theory and practice on unethical practices in the construction of projects: A case of an emerging economy. Risk Governance and Control: Financial Markets & Institutions, 7(4-2), 214-224. http://doi.org/10.22495/rgc7i4c2art4

Mihelic, K.K., Lipicnik, B., & Tekavcic, M. (2010). "Ethical Leadership" International journal of management & information systems (IJMIS), 14(5) 33-36.

Muhammad, W., Asadullah, K., Ahmed, Z. A., Shahryar, S., and Mehfooz U, (2022). Stakeholder Management in Public Sector Infrastructure Projects. Journal of Engineering, Project, and Production Management 12(3), 188-201.

NBRRI (2019). Technical Report No 44: Collapsed of Building in Nigeria Technical Report On the Collapsed of Building Hall/Office Complex for Nigerian Medical Association (Nma) at Gura Zot B, Kwang Jos South Plateau State, Nigeria. February. (2-55).

O'Leonard, Karen (2014). The corporate learning: Benchmarks, trends, and analysis of the U.S. training market. Bureau of Labor Statistics. Retrieved from http://www.bls.gov/ bersin.com

Odole. E. B. (2018). Factors that Encourage Unethical Practices by Organizational Leaders in Nigeria (Doctoral Dissertation, Walden Universit).

Omange, G.N. and Matawal, D.S. (2016). Assessment of building collapse phenomenon in Nigeria: a case study of Abuja and its environs. proceedings of NBRRI International Conference 2016. Nbrri publication (15-65).

Rajeev, S.; Kothai, P.S. (2014). Study on the influence of stakeholders in construction projects. Journal of Construction Engineering and Project Management, 4, 8–11.

Shah, R. K., & Alotaibi, M. (2018). A study of unethical practices in the construction industry and potential preventive measures. Journal of Advanced College of Engineering and Management, 3, 55-77. ISSN 2392-4853.

Somachandra, V., & Sylva, K (2018). "Ethical Management Practice", As A Construction Tool to Ensure the Corporate Sustainability of Construction Industry: A Conceptual Review. International Conference on Technology Management (INCOTEM). University of Moratuwa. 3-7.

Stansbury, C., & Stansbury, N. (2018). Preventing corruption in the construction sector. In C. A. Egbu, G. Ofori (Eds.), Proceedings of the International Conference on Professionalism and Ethics in Construction 30-38. London: London South Bank University.

UKessays (2017). Structural Causes of Unethical Behaviour within an Organization. Retrieved from the World Wide Web: https://www.ukessays.com/essays/commerce/structural-causes-of-unethical-behavior-within-an-organization-commerce-essay.php.

Vee, C. and Skitmore, M. (2003), "Professional ethics in the construction industry", Engineering, Construction and Architectural Management, 10 (2), 117-127.

Wibowo, A., and Wilhelm Alfen, H. (2014). "Identifying macro-environmental critical success factors and key areas for improvement to promote public-private partnerships in infrastructure: Indonesia's perspective." Eng. Constr. Archit. Manage., 21(4), 383–402.

Zulu, S., & Muleya, F., (2019). A student perspective of ethics in the Zambian construction industry. Journal of Engineering, Design and Technology. 17 (2). 266-282. DOI 10.1108/JEDT-04-2018-0074s.