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# Effects of Workers Motivation on Construction Productivity

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## ABSTRACT

*The issue of construction workers motivation becomes a subject of debate among construction project management professionals. Therefore, there are diverse opinions on whether motivation of construction workers positively impacts construction workers performance or rather adversely affects the general performance of construction labours. This brings about different motivation concepts and principle by researchers towards improvement of construction workforce performance. The paper takes into cognisance the perception of construction practitioners on motivation in relation with construction productivity towards achieving construction project objectives. In order to obtain a viable result of the study, the study adopts quantitative research approach on construction workforce motivation with project managers, contract managers, site managers, contractors, and site supervisors. Quantitative data obtained was analysed with SPSS statistical tools. The perception of construction practitioners was explored on motivation drives of construction workforce. However, it was found that motivation is important for construction workers performance, giving bonus to workers is important to improve workers efficiency and there is a need for construction workers recognition by management. The adequate application of recommendation of this study will enhance construction labour productivity, reduce wastes in construction, improve general construction performance and ultimately heightens customer's satisfaction.*



**Keywords:** *Construction productivity, Construction workforce, Project management, Project objectives, Workers motivation*

## INTRODUCTION

The issue of construction workers motivation has become a subject of debate among construction project management professionals. This, has consequently unveils diverse opinions on whether motivation of construction workers positively impacts construction workers performance or rather dampens the performance of general productivity of construction workforce. However, awareness of the need for workers motivation is not the ultimate for construction workers performance, but motivation strategies is more expedient to afford the expected productivity.

## AIM OF THE STUDY

The aim of the study is to identify the commitment of construction organisations towards motivation of construction workforce.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### Workers motivation

Motivation is expressed as “*the characteristic of an individual willing to expend effort towards a particular set of behaviour*” (Tabassi and Abu Bakar, 2009). Apparently, the study conducted by Uwakweh, (2005) noted that workers motivation is significant to improvement of construction productivity. In a broader perspective, Schermerhorn, Hunt, Osborn and Uhl-Bien, (2011) pointed out content and process theories of motivation. Schermerhorn *et al* express content process of motivation as individual need which comprises psychological needs that need to be satisfied. Similarly, process theory focuses on the thought that runs through the mind of individual workers and affects their performance. In most of the existing industries, where construction industry is not an exception, Kazaz, Manisali, and Ulubeyli, (2008) stated that productivity is related with workers motivations, while workers motivation is directly linked to construction productivity.

Moreover, Kazaz *et al* buttress Parkin, Tutesigensi and Buyukalp (2009) that construction workers can be more productive by adopting the right system of motivation. Also, vast knowledge of construction managers on workers motivation can help construction management to develop approaches to improving construction workers motivation (Parkin, 2009:110). Besides, the quality of human performance is significantly dependent on motivation and an increased motivation brings increased productivity and vice-versa (Kazaz *et al* 2008). Therefore, motivation plays a significant role in the construction industry, while managers need to understand individual needs to create a better working environment for construction employees (Schermerhorn *et al*, 2011).

The study conducted by Olabosipo *et al* (2011) revealed that construction workers motivation can be in form of money, employee participation in various decision making, job security and giving bonus to employee. Irrespective of the fact that money motivates employee and improve their commitment to work, Parkin (2009) therefore stated that the financial buoyancy of an organisation is an important factor to be considered when using money as a motivating factor. However, Tabassi and Abu Bakar (2009) opined that construction worker recognition by the employer is a significant non-financial motivation. Obviously, every individual within an organisation have different needs which could include; team belonging or workers participation. Thus, the effectiveness of employee motivation significantly relies on management ability to devise a means of identifying the needs of individual construction worker and meet the need accordingly (Tabassi and Abu Bakar, 2009). Parkin, *et al* (2009) supported that individuals may have a different level of propensity for growth and development. Therefore, to enable individuals or groups to be willing to work effectively, there must be a driving force which has to be recognised by the employers. Nonetheless, Parkin *et al* (2009) argues that once a need has been satisfied, the particular need ceases to play an effective role in motivating the particular worker. Hence, there is a necessity to consistently evaluate individual need of employee at a particular time by construction managers.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Data obtained for the study was generated through the design of a structured closed ended questionnaire survey. The questionnaire survey was conducted within Western Cape Province, Cape Town, South Africa. The study is a preliminary investigation as an integral part of an on-going research towards improvement of construction workforce productivity. Through review of relevant literature, construction organisation motivation factors was explored and tested through questionnaire survey. The population of the study include; contract manager, foremen, site manager, project manager and construction clients. The questionnaire survey adopts “level of importance” on a four point scale where 1 = Not important, 2 = Important, 3 = Very important and 4 = Extremely important. Among the questionnaires distributed for the survey, 35% were retrieved, 4% were invalid and 31% valid questionnaires were analysed accordingly. Contract manager, foremen, site manager, project manager and construction clients are survey participants.

RESULTS

Table 1: Motivation Impact on Construction Workforce Productivity

MOTIVATION DRIVES	Sum	%	Rank
Do you personally feel that motivation is important for construction workers performance?	36	90	1
Do you think giving bonus to workers is important?	31	77.5	2
How important does your organisation takes employee motivation?	30	75	3
How important is the need for construction workers recognition by management?	28	70	4
How important is reward giving to workers in your organisation?	27	67.5	5
How important is workers motivation base on individual need?	26	65	6
What is the level of general workers motivation to your organisation?	25	62.5	7
What is the level of importance of incentive to your organisation?	24	60	8
How important is workers transportation to your firm	23	57.5	9
How does your firm consider labours input in decision making?	20	50	10

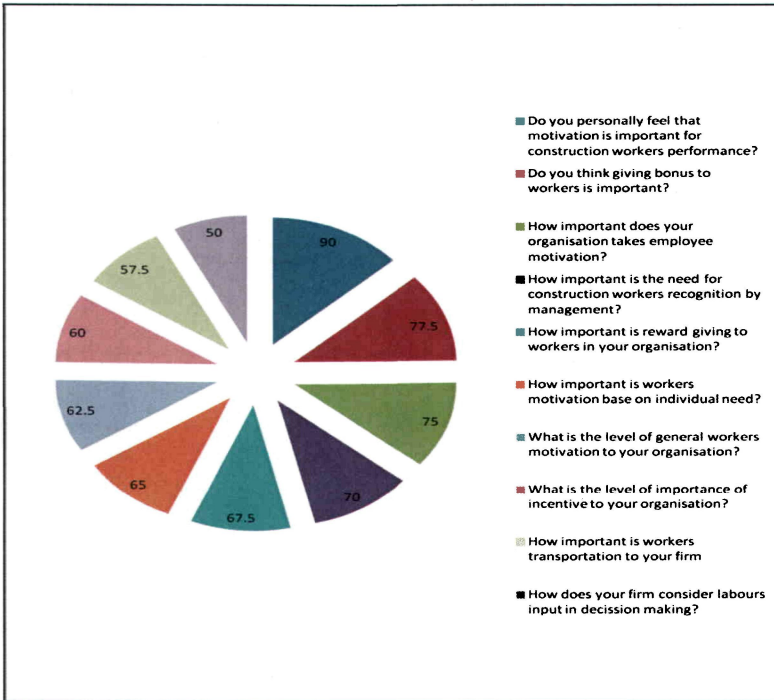


Figure 1: Motivation Impact on Construction Workforce Productivity

Table 1 presents the importance of motivation to construction workers performance. The perceptions of survey participants are tabulate, where 60% of respondents indicated that motivation is Extremely Important and 40% indicated Very Important. From table 3, giving bonus to construction workers is the second important factor, where 20% of respondent indicated Extremely Important, 70% indicated Very Important and 10% indicated Important. Table 4 reveals the attitude of construction organisations to employee motivation. It was found that, 10% of the respondent indicated that construction organisations takes employee motivation Extremely Important, 80% indicated Very Important and 10% indicated Important. Table 2 presents the perceptions of respondents on the need for recognition of construction employee by management. 80% respondents expressed employee recognition by management is Very Important, while 20% respondent indicated Important. From Table 1, the study reveals labours input in decision making and workers transportation as the least important factors to construction organisation with 50% and 57.5% respectively.

Table 2: Do You Personally Feel that Motivation is Important for Construction Workers Performance?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Extremely important	6	60.0	60.0	60.0
	Very important	4	40.0	40.0	100.0
	Total	10	100.0	100.0	

Table 3: Do You Think Giving Bonus to Workers is Important?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Extremely important	2	20.0	20.0	20.0
	Very important	7	70.0	70.0	90.0
	Important	1	10.0	10.0	100.0
	Total	10	100.0	100.0	

Table 4: How Important does Your Organisation Takes Employee Motivation?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Extremely important	1	10.0	10.0	10.0
	Very important	8	80.0	80.0	90.0
	Important	1	10.0	10.0	100.0
	Total	10	100.0	100.0	

Table 5: How Important is The Need for Construction Workers Recognition by Management?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Very important	8	80.0	80.0	80.0
	Important	2	20.0	20.0	100.0
	Total	10	100.0	100.0	



## **CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION**

Construction workforce motivation is found to be significant to performance in the construction sector. However, the level at which construction organisations reckon which motivation of their workforce does not commensurate with the significance of construction workforce motivation. Also, the input of construction labour has been ignored and considered irrelevant in decision making. Therefore, construction stakeholders should consider motivation of employee as a key factor to productivity enhancement, and give allowance for construction labour input as a means of motivation that will enable better performance.

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