

Capturing construction client values

ABSTRACT: To improve the delivery of construction services, it is important to understand client values. The research aims to capture construction client values. To help achieve this, a systematic literature review was used. The research identifies a knowledge gap in current construction literature and provides a research direction to address the identified gap. As a theoretical contribution to the existing body of knowledge in the construction management domain, this paper focuses on a concept that can help in managing the relationships and the service transactions between clients and service providers. This theoretical work provides an essential basis for satisfying client values.

1 Introduction

In the construction literature, the term construction “refers to a process of delivering value to the client through a temporary production system” and the term client “is a representative for a number of – often conflicting – values, interests and time perspectives” (Bertelsen and Emmitt, 2005).

The provision of satisfactory delivery of construction services with respect to time, cost, and quality has been accepted as clients’ expectations within contractual relationships. However, clients dissatisfaction can be occurred even though explicit time, cost and quality criteria have been achieved (Torbica and Stroh, 2001). This is because clients hold numerous values, with varying degrees of importance.

Continuous improvement of construction services requires a concerted effort to deliver on client values (Egan, 1998; Ahmed and Kangari, 1995). Thus, client values should be the key point of reference for key project participants throughout the project life cycle (British Standard Institute, 2014).

2 Research method

A comprehensive review of relevant literature on client values was conducted to review cutting-edge scholarly contributions in the literature during the last 20 years. Using systematic reviews, 171 (out of 898) research studies were critically analysed to explore the client values. Further details, including the sample-selection procedure, can be found in Aliakbarlou et al., (2017b).

3 Finding

The significance of understanding construction client values has been widely highlighted by a research team at The University of Auckland (Aliakbarlou et al., 2017a; Aliakbarlou et al., 2017b; Aliakbarlou et al., 2017c;

Aliakbarlou et al., 2017d, Aliakbarlou et al., 2017e, Aliakbarlou et al., 2017f, Aliakbarlou et al., 2017g, Aliakbarlou et al., 2017h, Aliakbarlou et al., 2017i). In addition, through a lens of client values, client needs and requirements, reported in the literature, have been identified by Aliakbarlou et al. (2017b). Their findings addressed the client values by which a service provider can manage the relationships and the service transaction in order to develop a system for managing construction delivery practice. Considering the definitions and constituent attributes in the ambit of construction, they argue that there is no broad-brush adherence to the value theory or other related theories by construction scholars.

4 Future Research Direction

Having acknowledged the presence of various subjective and objective preferences on and around the concept of “value” in construction scholarship, future research can aim to build definitions and construct theories around client values. In addition, developing project management strategies to satisfy client values within construction services is an important future research area.

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