



SKILLS AND COMPETENCIES FOR SURVIVAL IN THE MODERN CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY: STUDENTS' PERSPECTIVE IN NIGERIA

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The nature and dynamism of the construction industry has made it one of the most competitive industries. Changes due to technological advancement and the need for innovation has caused a paradigm shift in the nature of skills and competencies needed for survival in the industry. Studies noted a gradual drift of job opportunities in the industry from knowledge based to competency based with no reciprocating change in the training of students in the built environment Programmes. This creates a huge gap between the competencies possessed by graduates of the built environment Programmes and the requirements of the industry. This paper assessed the perception of final year students in the built environment Programmes on the importance of key skills and competencies needed to survive in the industry, as well as the extent to which they possess such skills and competencies. A quantitative research approach was adopted, with questionnaires distributed to elicit data from the respondents. The data was analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistics. Self-confidence, qualitative reasoning, and self-awareness were found to be the most relevant competencies for survival in the construction industry. Whereas, self-confidence, time consciousness and collaboration skills were found to be the most acquired competencies amongst the students. The findings of the study give a comparative view on the relevant competencies in the construction industry and the acquired competencies by graduates of the built environment Programmes. The study provides an insight into the gap between the required and acquired competencies, and recommends that the built environment Programmes improve their efforts towards ensuring active participation of students in practical industry cases which will improve the student's capabilities and provide graduates with requisite skills for survival in the industry.

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