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Professional development of project management for contractor in the construction project: a review

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Abstract

Professional development programmed can improve the effectiveness and capability of the contractor. A well organized development programme is a critical strategy for construction companies. In coming years, professional development was increasingly playing a significant role in organizational success. Based on the literature and previous research, the study explores the correlation professional development in employee training and motivation practices with task improvement in construction project. It is anticipated that the discussion of these factors will provide a basis for future strategies to promote the development of construction industry and also provide a useful reference for other industry which face similar problems in promoting the applications of professional construction project management in the construction industry. Professional development programmed had gone through the necessary project management training and sufficient knowledge, skills and experience to manage a project successfully.

Keywords: professional development, contractor, construction project

1. Introduction

Construction project often suffer from poor performance in terms of time delays, cost overruns and quality defects. The reasons behind these problems have attracted the attention of construction practitioners and researchers. (Hamzah et al., 2011). These problems can overcome and reduced with having a well organized and effective professional development programme. It is one of the most important assets of a company, directly impacting its fruitfulness and long term viability as a company (Ling et al., 2006). The importance of involving project management in development, planning and implementation of competency based strategies has been emphasized by researcher. Contractors Management Training Program is to increase the capacity and to ensure that contractors are truly competent in undertaking the jobs and construction activities of a project. This training program encompassed

technical management aspect that is closely related with construction activities, using modules developed together with the industry experts (Dai et al., 2006).

Improving productivity performance is a primary driver of the economic performance and long-term sustainable competitiveness (Palaneeswaran et al., 2006). Accordingly, a previous researcher has developed a strategy for improving productivity, which focuses on 5 key drivers: improving competition, promoting enterprise, supporting science and innovation, raising skills, and encouraging investment (Jung et al., 2006). For example, the Sector Skills Development Agency (SSDA) Strategic Plan 2005/08 (SSDA, 2005, p. 9) stated clearly that increasing participation levels in training which is one of the common skills indicators adopted by the government) by 5 per cent points could increase productivity by 4 per cent – boosting GDP by £40 billion (Lee et al., 2006).

The review was commissioned in order to assess the skills in order to remain competitive in a rapidly changing global economy. It has to be noted that this was a clear indication of the importance given to skills development and training in policy discourse as a means of improving productivity across all sectors of the economy (Chan et al., 1999). There were no similar reviews carried out with respect to the other four drivers, mentioned above, in relation to their potential impact on improving productivity performance across different sectors of the economy. There is a direct correlation between skills, productivity and employment (Nepal et al., 2006). The UK government set-up a network of Sector Skills Councils (SSCs) in 2003 in order to promote its skills agenda within the context of all sectors of the economy. It given the government's emphasis on sectoral perspective in implementing its skills and productivity agenda, this research examines the trend of construction industry productivity performance in relation to its skills profile, over the period 1995-2006 – through analysing the most up-to-date published construction statistics. This study commences with a literature review, which discusses the relationship between skills development and productivity performance (Kim et al., 2000).

2. Training and Development

Training is generally stated as being a systematic and planned effort to develop knowledge, attitudes, abilities and skills through learning experience, to attain effective performance in an activity or a range of activities (Clarke., 1999). Findings from the interviews with the quantity surveyor and contractor revealed that they both considered a large portion of rework costs as attributable to the poor skill levels of the client's project manager, and of the design team and subcontractors. The main causes of rework identified as a result of poor skills were defective workmanship, disturbances in personnel planning, delays and alterations (Han et al., 2007). Managers, executives, and supervisors can have a significant constructive impact on the transfer of knowledge and skills [26]. The training of extension personnel contributes directly to the development of human resources within extension organizations (Chua et al., 2003). One of the most important factors in implementing HRM in construction industry is the need for effective training. Managers also need to develop ways to measure the performance of their workers (Chen et al., 2010). A system of performance measures is needed in order to monitor improvements among construction teams. They advice managers to display quality indicators, which creates encourages the participants to achieve improvement (Clarke., 2010).

On the other hand, the external sources of labour (subcontractors, agency temporaries, and self employed) are very common in construction industry. In fact, it is accepted that construction firms face a lot of difficulties in the training and development of labour and staff (Davidson & Rowe., 2009). Two significant methods of training construction workers are on-the-job and off-the-job training. In the traditional model of on-the-job training (OJT), to promote new practices, workers would typically receive a pre-prepared course on the new regulations, procedures, or processes, often at a different location than their place of work, and be expected to apply this abstracted knowledge later in their workplace. OJT and experience are probably the most common methods of employee development used at all levels of the organization (Fuller et al., 2011). Where organizations utilize a large number of skilled bricklayers, carpenters, plumbers, armature workers, welders, etc. they may utilize a special type of OJT called apprenticeship training. This training is mostly done under standards which are established (i.e. curriculum, number of hours, and affirmative action goals) by governmental parts (Henderson., 2008). Popular OJT methods include job rotation and understudy assignments. Job rotation involves lateral transfers that enable employees to work at different jobs. Both job rotation and understudy assignments apply to the learning of technical skills (Huff., 2008). Interpersonal and problem-solving skills are acquired more effectively by training that takes place off the job.

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