



THE INFLUENCE OF ISLAMIC CULTURAL AND RELIGIOUS VALUES ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF CONTRACTUAL RELATIONSHIPS AMONG PARTIES IN CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS IN NORTHERN NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

Islam, among the Muslims is a complete way of life. The behavior and conduct of the Muslims is guided by the tenets enshrined in the Muslims' holy book, the Quran and the traditions of the Holy prophet. Good relationships among other things, between parties are therefore guided by these tenets. In the construction industry, this is vital for the success of any organization. However, in Nigeria, and particularly during the last two decades of democratic dispensation, several projects suffered setbacks due to a number of bad client/contractor relationships leading to project suspensions,

Introduction

Nigeria, a federal republic with a population of over 200 million people as at 2019 (NPC 2020), and over 270 different tribal and cultural groups, presents a unique, but a diverse territorial entity. It is a country where more than 50% of the total population are Muslims. Nigeria is a promising and rapidly growing economy. The Nigerian construction industry, one of the major sectors of the country's economy is important to the sustenance of the nation's economic growth. A cursory look at the metro and cosmopolitan cities of Nigeria reflects the depth of exposure and activities in the construction industry within the years. For a country as vast and resourceful as Nigeria, opportunities in the construction industry are enormous. This is because Nigeria is a developing nation and an evolving economy with a lot of potentials in both human and natural resources. There are significant infrastructural developments in all the sectors of the economy. However, during the last two decades of democratic dispensation, several projects suffered setbacks due to a number of bad client /contractor relationships leading to project suspensions, terminations and disputes (Sani, 2022). A survey conducted in the six north western states of Nigeria covered by this research indicated among others, the influence of religious factors on contractor/client relationships in the Nigerian construction industry. The nature and effects of the different Religious backgrounds of the parties on the performance of contracts and successful project execution in the region were investigated.



terminations and disputes. This work aims to investigate the influence of Islamic religion, the religion of the larger population of the people of this region, on the development of good and lasting contractual relationships among parties in the construction industry. The population for this research comprised of stake holders in the construction companies operating in the North West geo-political zone of Northern Nigeria. Purposive sampling technique was used for the study. Six different case studies of construction projects consisting of 70 interviews were undertaken. Data collection involving-structured interviews and questionnaires were adopted to satisfy the requirements of the study. Questionnaires and interviews were administered randomly on the management, other employees of the construction companies and construction stake holders in the study area. The results of the statistical analysis have shown that Islamic cultural and religious values have played significant roles. The analysis of variance (ANOVA) results shows that Good relationships among construction parties developed from the interplay of a number of religious values. Religious etiquettes and Hausa Fulani cultural emotions were very important in relationship development. This study recommends that religious values and emotions should continue to be respected by parties for mutual understanding and successful relationships. The Islamic tenets and the Christian values should remain to be the basic guiding principles for the major religious groups of the region. Contractual agreements should be guided by religious provisions among the Muslims and Christians of the region. Further research should aim at assessing the strength of the various Islamic religious and cultural values on the development and promotion of successful contractual relationships among parties in the study area.

Keywords: Construction Projects, Norms, Northern Nigeria, Parties, Religious Influences

Studies on how good relationships were influenced within construction projects have been undertaken elsewhere in Europe and some countries in Asia. Nasruddin (2010) reported that a number of studies have been carried out to address the importance of partnering in the UK, US and Hong Kong provided in the works of Barlow *et al*, (1997), Larson, (1997), Cheng and Li (2002). In Australia, studies have focused on alliancing as well as integration and collaboration in the construction supply chain (consider the works of. Walker & Hampson, 2003; Briscoe and Dainty, 2005). However, literature on this subject matter is meager or at least very few among African researchers particularly when it concerns African cultural and religious background. Most of the scholars evaluated different conditions based on regional peculiarities, conditions and circumstances. These norms differ and vary generally. Most importantly, in most of these studies (except in Nasruddin, 2010) religion was not considered as an important driving factor in the development of relations among parties. In Northern Nigeria particularly, with varied religious and cultural background, most relationships may be influenced by factors linked to cultural and religious affiliations in addition to political, economic and other factors. Moreover, factors considered in most of these works elsewhere do not bear universal application as to bear relevance to situations obtained in this region. This research is intended to overcome the several shortcomings of the existing research particularly in the Nigerian and African socio cultural setting. It is therefore an attempt to investigate the Nigerian situation.



The Research Methodology

This research aims to evaluate the Religious factors that influence relationships among parties in the Nigerian construction industry. The case study approach was adopted for the study. The population for the research was made up of stake holders in the construction companies operating in the North West geo-political zone of Northern Nigeria. Because an acceptable sample frame of contractors in the research area could not be obtained, questionnaires were administered purposively. Sample frames obtained from government ministries, departments and agencies do not distinguish between existing and closed or other kinds of contracting organizations. Secondly, contactors' contacts obtainable from these sources are not all current, making it impracticable to administer questionnaire on them. It is probable that some of the contractors in the lists obtained from these sources have either relocated or they have gone out of business. The researcher therefore used purposive sampling technique for the study. A total of 70 questionnaires and interviews each were administered on respondents from six different case studies of construction projects. Data collection involving-structured interviews and questionnaires for a number of selected project case studies were adopted to satisfy the requirements of the study. Questionnaires and interviews were administered randomly on the management and other employees of the construction companies. Data generated comprising of both qualitative and quantitative variables were sorted, summarized and a set of descriptive statistical techniques (percentiles and averages) were used to present the results. Data generated was statistically analyzed for differences using Analysis of variance (ANOVA).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Summary of Questionnaire responses

Table 1 Gender of respondents

Case Study Number	Male	Female	Total
1	12	0	12
2	11	1	12
3	14	0	14
4	10	1	11
5	11	0	11
6	10	0	10
Total	68	2	70

Table 2 Marital Status of the respondents

Case Study Number	Married	Single	Widowed	Total
1	11	4	0	15
2	9	1	0	10
3	9	3	0	12
4	12	3	0	15
5	8	2	0	10
6	6	2	0	08
Total	55	15	0	70



Table 3 Highest Educational Qualification

Case Number	Study	Diploma/Certificate	Degree	Higher Degree	Total
1		3	7	3	13
2		2	8	0	10
3		4	7	2	13
4		2	6	2	10
5		3	7	1	11
6		5	6	2	13
Total		19	41	10	70

Table 4 Membership of Professional Associations

Case Study Number	Member	Non Member	Total
1	4	7	11
2	5	8	13
3	3	7	10
4	5	9	14
5	3	6	09
6	4	9	13
Total	24	46	70

Table 5 Profession of the Respondents

Case Study Number	Architect	Quantity surveyor	Builder	Structural Engineers	Others (specify)	Service Engineers	Total
1	3	3	3	0	0	2	11
2	2	3	1	1	3	1	11
3	1	1	2	0	2	2	08
4	3	2	3	0	2	0	10
5	2	3	3	1	3	1	13
6	3	2	1	1	4	0	11
Total	14	20	13	3	14	06	70

Table 6 Nature of Organization

Case Study Number	Contractor	Consultant	Supplier	Client	Total
1	6	2	1	3	12
2	8	3	1	1	13
3	8	3	2	2	15
4	4	1	2	2	09
5	5	2	2	1	10
6	7	2	0	2	11
Total	38	13	8	11	70

Table 7 Respondent's Status/Position in the Organization

Case Study Number	Top management	Middle management	Lower management	Advisory	Total
1	2	6	2	0	10
2	2	5	5	1	13
3	2	6	4	1	13
4	1	4	6	2	13



5	3	4	7	0	14
6	1	3	3	1	08
Total	11	28	27	4	70

Table 8 Respondent's Years of Experience

Case Study Number	Less than 5 Years	6 to 10 Years	11 to 15 Years	Greater than 15 Years	Total
1	1	5	3	3	12
2	5	3	1	2	11
3	3	5	3	1	12
4	5	3	2	3	13
5	5	4	1	2	12
6	3	3	1	3	10
Total	22	23	11	14	70

Table 9 Scope of the Projects undertaken by the Respondents

Case Study Number	Small scale	Medium scale	Large scale	All of the above	Total
1	3	1	0	4	08
2	3	5	2	4	14
3	5	5	1	0	11
4	1	7	3	0	11
5	5	6	0	1	12
6	6	5	0	3	14
Total	23	29	06	12	70

Table 10 Type of projects undertaken by the Respondents

Case Study Number	Public	Private	Both	Total
1	3	2	05	10
2	2	1	08	11
3	0	0	13	13
4	1	2	09	12
5	0	0	10	10
6	2	0	12	14
Total	8	5	57	70

Table 11 Nature of the projects handled by Respondents

Case Study Number	Civil Engineering Construction	Building Construction	Heavy Eng.	a and b	a and c	b and c	All of the above	Total
1	1	3	0	5	0	0	2	15
2	2	5	1	4	0	1	0	15
3	1	3	0	5	1	0	0	15
4	1	6	0	4	1	1	0	15



5	2	10	0	2	0	0	0	15
6	0	5	1	2	0	0	1	15
Total	07	32	2	22	2	2	3	70

Table 12 Islamic Cultural and Religious Values that Influences Relationships among Parties in Construction Projects in Northern Nigeria

S. No.	Cultural and religious values	CASE STUDIES						Total (n=70)
		1 (n=9)	2 (n=11)	3 (n=13)	4 (n=12)	5 (n=14)	6 (n=11)	
1	Respect for elders	7	8	11	8	12	9	55
2	Fear of God	9	11	12	12	14	11	69
3	Spirituality/ faith in God	9	9	13	12	14	11	68
4	Sense of belonging	7	6	8	7	9	7	44
5	Brotherhood	7	9	10	8	8	8	60
6	Face/self-respect	6	7	8	7	9	5	49
7	Generosity	7	4	8	5	6	6	36
8	Politeness	5	8	12	9	7	7	48
9	Relationships	5	5	13	8	8	9	48
10	Khunya (Shame)	8	8	9	9	9	7	50
11	Sincerity	8	9	12	10	11	9	59
12	Considerate	8	5	7	7	10	10	47
13	Honesty	9	10	12	11	13	11	66
14	Amanah (Trust)	9	11	14	12	14	11	71
15	Paternalism	9	6	10	8	12	9	54
16	Inter-Personal Relationship	7	5	11	7	13	9	54
17	Sensitivity and Respect of the Feelings of others	6	10	10	8	12	10	56

Table 13 Norms that Influences Relations among Parties in the Nigerian Construction Industry

S. No.	Norm	CASE STUDIES						Total f(n=70)
		1 f(n=15)	2 f(n=15)	3 f(n=15)	4 f(n=15)	5 f(n=15)	6 f(n=15)	
1	Role integrity	6	8	13	8	13	13	61
2	Reciprocity,	8	6	12	12	12	14	64
3	Implementation of planning	9	7	14	11	13	12	66
4	Effectuation of consent	9	12	15	13	14	13	66
5	Flexibility	6	9	11	10	12	13	61



6	Contractual solidarity	8	13	14	13	14	14	76
7	Restraint of power	5	12	14	13	12	12	68
8	Propriety of means	7	13	12	12	13	12	69
9	The linking norms (restitution, reliance & expectation interest) and harmonization with the social matrix	9	14	15	14	14	13	79

Discussions of the results

The influence of Islamic cultural and religious values in the development of relationships among parties in the Nigerian construction industry in northern Nigeria has been evaluated; both statistically and literally. The results of the statistical analysis have shown that Islam was the major religion of the construction parties in all the six case studies covered by this research. This is largely due to the religious background of the region with the largest of the population Muslims. The Islamic cultural and religious back grounds of the parties have been observed to play great roles in the development of good relationships. These values influence the relationships among parties in construction projects in northern Nigeria. This is evidently clear from the results of the analysis of Variance with a p-value $p = 0.000$ which is less than the critical value 0.05 ($p - \text{value} < 0.05$) and shows that the result is significant, and we accept that Islamic religious values influence the relationships among parties in construction projects in northern Nigeria. Several of the Hausa and Fulani norms which have their basis in Islamic religion have played significant roles in influencing relationships among the parties. All of the norms assessed have significant effects on the parties. The analysis of variance (ANOVA) results shows that the result is significant, and we accept that the Hausa Fulani Islamic Norms influence the relations among parties in the Nigerian Construction Industry.

Summary

The northern Nigeria is as multi-religious as it is a much more multi-cultural region of with largely Muslim majority population. Religious values of the Muslims and cultural values of the Hausa Fulani of the region largely influenced by Islamic religion have played significant roles in development of relations among parties in the Nigerian construction industry. The gender compositions of the construction parties in the study area have presented an interesting pattern. Of the 70 (100%) respondents involved in the study, 68 were male while 2 were female. With respect to the respondents' marital status, 55 were married, 15 were singles. This also presented a favorable composition of different classes of participants in the study.



The academic composition of the participants is similar to those obtained by other researchers elsewhere. 19 of the respondents were holders of Diploma and other Certificates, 41 were holders of a Degree or its equivalent while 10 were holders of higher degrees. Respondents in the study area were largely not registered with their professional associations. 46 of the respondents were not registered while only 24 were duly registered with their professional associations.

The compositions of the respondents have shown a favorable representation of the parties in the construction industry. The study results have shown that 20 were Quantity surveyors, 14 were Architects, 13 were Builders, 3 were Structural engineers, 6 were services Engineers while the remaining 14 were other professionals. Of the 70 participants in the study, 38 were contractors, 13 were Consultants, 8 were Suppliers while 11 were Clients. Of this composition, 11 were top management members in their organizations, 28 were middle management members, 27 were members of the lower management in their organizations while 4 occupy advisory statuses in the organizations.

Of the total research population, 22 of the 70 participants have working experience of between 1 to 5 years, 23 have worked for between 6 to 10 years, 11 have working experience of between 11 to 15 years while the remaining 14 have worked for greater than 15 years in the construction industry.

On the scope of the projects undertaken by the participants, 23 of the participants were involved in small scale projects, 29 were involved in medium scale projects, 6 undertake large scale construction projects while 12 undertake all scope and kinds of projects in the study area. Of this research population, 7 undertake civil engineering construction, 32 undertake building construction, 2 were involved in heavy engineering, 22 were involved in both civil and building construction works, 2 were involved in both civil and heavy engineering, 2 undertake both building and heavy engineering works while the remaining 3 undertake all types of construction works.

Islamic religious values have played significant roles in relationship development among the participants. In order of significance, fear of God, Honesty, *Amanah* (Trust), Spirituality and faith in God were the most significant religious values. Other values of higher significance are Sensitivity and Respect of the Feelings of others and being considerate. Respect for elders, Paternalism, interpersonal relationships and sincerity were also important. Brotherhood, sense of belonging, politeness, *Khunya* (Shame), generosity and self-respect were less important compared to the other values.

The Hausa Fulani religio-cultural norms that have shown most significant effects were the linking norms (restitution, reliance & expectation interest) and harmonization with the social matrix with 59 of the 70 respondents agreeing to its significance in shaping relationships. This is followed by Contractual solidarity with a frequency of 58/70; Propriety of means has a frequency of 49/70, Restraint of power with a frequency of 48/70, Restraint of power and implementation of planning with frequencies of 46/70 each, reciprocity with a frequency of 44/70 and lastly Role integrity with a frequency of 41/70.



Conclusion

In similarity to the findings of other scholars such as in the works of Nasruddin (2010) in his works in Malaysia, this study similarly found the significant role of emotions and values guided by religious beliefs as major factors that influence the development of good relationships in construction projects in Northern Nigeria. Nasruddin (2010) argued that it was these emotions and values that form people's attitude and behavior and this is true in the religious and cultural values of the Hausa/ Fulanis of the study area.

This study found that good relationships among construction parties in northern Nigeria developed from the interplay of a number of cultural and religious values. Religious etiquettes dictated by Islam were very important in relationship development. The most important values include fear of God, Honesty, *Amanah* (Trust), Spirituality and faith in God were the most significant religious values. Other values of higher significance are Sensitivity and Respect of the feelings of others and being considerate referred to as *Dattako* among the Hausas. Respect for elders, Paternalism (*Dangantaka*), interpersonal relationships and sincerity were also important. Brotherhood, sense of belonging, politeness, *Khunya* (Shame), generosity and self-respect. These values play significant roles at both the prior contract stage and the contract stage. This was similar to the findings of Nasruddin (2010) in his research in Malaysia.

Recommendations

The influence of religion in inter-personal relationship is a social virtue among human beings since time immemorial. The need also for good relationships among parties in a contract is paramount for the success of any Endeavour. To achieve among the Hausa Fulani Muslims of northern Nigeria, this research provides a number of recommendations for contractual parties to develop successful relationships in the study area.

1. Religious values and emotions should continue to be respected by parties for mutual understanding and successful relationships. The Islamic tenets and the Christian values should remain the basic guiding principles for the major religious groups of the region.
2. Contractual agreements should be guided by religious provisions among the Muslims and Christians of the region.
3. Further research should aim at assessing the strength of the various Islamic religious and cultural values on the development and promotion of successful contractual relationships among parties in the study area.

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