AN INDEX METHOD FOR MEASUREMENT OF KNOWLEDGE AWARENESS OF CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY OUTPUTS: GENDER PERCEPTIONS

Nicholas Chileshe and Theo Haupt
n.chileshe@shu.ac.uk, hautt@cput.ac.za

Faculty of Development and Society, Built Environment Division
City Campus, Howard Street
Sheffield Hallam University, UK

Southern African Built Environment Research Centre, Faculty of Engineering
Cape Peninsula University of Technology, South Africa

ABSTRACT

This study sought to investigate the knowledge of high school students on what constitutes as the products of the construction industry and whether gender has an influence on the knowledge awareness. The research uses a postal survey questionnaire for primary data collection. Literature review is used to identify the products (outputs) of the construction industry, which are then incorporated into the design of the survey instrument. The questionnaire is administered via a postal survey and information was collected from 599 male and 491 female high school students in the Western Cape Province. Survey response data is subjected to descriptive statistics and subsequently parametric tests and analysis of variance (ANOVA). Of the 18 construction industry outputs, students rated houses, schools, hotels, factories and airports as the predominant features of construction industry whereas taxi ranks, dams, oil refineries and night clubs (discos) were less likely to be linked to the construction industry. The findings further suggest that there are significant differences between male and female high school students on what constitutes as construction outputs with males demonstrating a higher knowledge awareness level than the females. The research limitation of the cross-sectional data made it difficult to generalise the findings. In terms of originality, the paper identifies the student's knowledge base of the construction industry outputs. The findings indicate that those structures such as school, hotels and factories that involve stakeholders other than typical building contractors were more likely to be linked to the construction industry than the dams, oil refineries and harbours. These installations by their nature are typically large and complex and seen less frequently being erected. The study makes a significant contribution as there are few studies which try to investigate the construction industry outputs knowledge awareness of high school students in an African environment. This study contributes to bridging that gap.

Keywords: Construction Outputs, gender differences, knowledge, South Africa

INTRODUCTION

The aim of this paper is to investigate the knowledge awareness of high school students on what constitutes as construction products. Prior to that the paper discusses the approach undertaken in the development of an index method for the measurement of construction knowledge awareness. The paper questions whether gender is linked to