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DEPARTMENT OF QUANTITY SURVEYING

AN ANALYSIS OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF CONFLICT RESOLUTION
TECHNIQUES USED ON ZIMBABWEAN CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS

By

SAMANTHA T DZORO (N0110059R)

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ABSTRACT

In the Zimbabwean Construction Industry, public and private projects have faced problems that relate to successful delivery of the projects due to poor conflict resolution techniques. Most, if not all the projects have had cost overruns, construction delays and substandard quality due to challenges in conflict resolution. The construction industry has been a leader in both conflict incidents and conflict resolution systems for many years. While this may or may not be a desirable position, the industry has managed to develop and adopt many unique ways to address the potential risks of conflicts. However, the justification for implementing these procedures has been based primarily upon contractual requirements, governmental regulations, court orders, limited previous experience, or basic reactionary instinct, and not on measured cost and time savings. This dissertation presents a descriptive and analytical effort that analyses the effectiveness of the conflict resolution techniques used in the construction industry. This was helped by collecting data on the true costs and times spend in resolving disputes in the Zimbabwean construction industry. To achieve these objectives, the researcher sent out a total of 36 questionnaires to construction consultants, contractors, clients as well as Trade Unionists and also conducted 4 case studies. From the findings, the resolving of conflicts in the construction industry is expensive no matter which conflict resolution technique is selected. Also findings on the causes of conflicts proved that, delay in payments; variations as well as incompetence of contractors are on the top list of being sources of conflict. Based on the findings, the conclusion that is made is that conflict resolution has an impact on successful project delivery as they cause cost overruns, construction delays as well as termination of contacts. However, the identification and quantification of transactional conflict resolution costs may provide sufficient encouragement towards both the further adoption of cost and time efficient conflict resolution techniques.