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FACULTY OF THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

DEPARTMENT OF QUANTITY SURVEYING

An Analysis of the Impact of Construction Activities on Environment in Zimbabwe

By

Fungisai Mahaso

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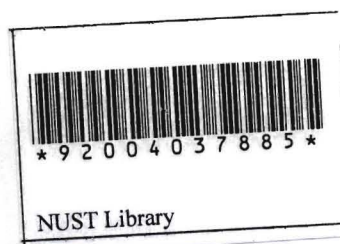
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Abstract

Construction Industry plays a substantial role in a country's national economy, regardless of the level of economic development. However, construction activities on sites and off sites have significant impact on the environment from initiation to handover. Zimbabwe is full of natural resources but is facing environmental degradation which include air pollution, deforestation, water pollution, ecosystem degradation etc. Living organisms depends on water, air, land and climate, therefore there are laws and measures to be implemented to protect the environment. Environmental impact can occur if inadequate mitigation measures are taken. However, construction companies are facing challenges in implementing environmental laws and measures. This study analyses the impact of construction activities on the environment in Zimbabwe. Questionnaires and interviews were used to get information from the respondents. Random selection was done and 21 questionnaires were distributed to selected construction companies and 17 were returned. Semi-structured interview was conducted amongst purposively selected organizations and all the interviews were successfully done. Respondents were asked to identify the major on site construction activities and their impacts to the environment of Zimbabwe and results were analyzed using relative importance index and severity index respectively. Air pollution was identified as the major impact of construction activities on environment in Zimbabwe. Respondents were also asked to identify challenges faced by construction companies in effort to implement environmental laws and mitigation measures. Lack of financial resources was found to be the major barrier to the implementation of environmental laws. The study recommends that there should be communication between government, city council, EMA and construction companies for every construction project in order to minimize environmental degradation from construction activities.