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A Study on Impact of Contractors' Selection Criteria on Sustainable Infrastructure Project Delivery in Nigeria

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Abstract

Sustainable development has become a global phenomenon and infrastructure project delivery is not left out in this aspect of global calling. Achieving sustainable infrastructure project is multifaceted and contractors' selection process is an important segment. Sustainable Infrastructures can be achieved through effective contractors' selection processes. This study therefore, reflected on the impact of contractors' selection criteria for sustainable infrastructure project delivery in Nigeria. The study objectives are to determine the relationship as well as evaluate the impact of contractors' selection criteria on sustainable infrastructure project delivery. Structured questionnaires were distributed to the targeted respondents. The five (5) leading criteria for contractors' selection were identified and considered in this study. A total number of twenty five (25) sub-criteria were also identified. These criteria were subjected to respondent's opinion through the construction of a pilot survey. The sub-criteria were subjected to the acceptance or rejection of the respondents as to whether they have positive impact on the sustainable infrastructure project delivery in Nigeria. Percentile was adopted in analyzing the data relating to demographic information. Correlation coefficient was used to evaluate the relationship between the contractors' selection criteria and sustainable infrastructure project delivery while relative important index was used to analyze the data in respect of the impact criteria leading to sustainable infrastructure project by ranking. The criteria considered in this study are contractors' financial capability, technical ability, management capability, and functional health/safety policy template and contractor reputation. These were found to have various level of impact on sustainable infrastructure project delivery. The outcome of the evaluation using relative important index revealed that the criteria have very high positive impact with the average mean value for each criteria above the threshold of 3 as established from Likert of 5-scale. It is therefore

concluded that, the consultants should concentrate on the criteria that have greater and direct relationship and impact with sustainable infrastructure project delivery to be complimented by other criteria in the contractor selection process. Part of the recommendation in this study is that contractors' financial soundness should be evaluated using appropriate measure such as Zeta model analyses as well as technical competence of the contractors' in relation to experiences, availability of plant and equipment and adequacy of personnel in the contractors' selection process.

Key words: Contractor, Selection Criteria, Sustainable Infrastructure, Project, Nigeria.

Introduction

Construction industry plays indispensable role on infrastructure project development in any developed and developing nation. Infrastructure projects encompasses civil and heavy/industrial engineering works that requires heavy capital investment. In any developing countries especially, Nigeria, these have attracted huge amount of capital investment across the six geo-political zones (Muhammed and Bashir, 2019). Westerberg & Erickson (2011) and Oufisayo (2020) opined that the provision of infrastructures have not only become highly complex to deal with but, their nature and delivery processes are connected with many uncertainties. Francom et *al*., (2014) viewed infrastructure projects as currently increasingly subjected to performance demand from the clients which typically call for contractors to deliver projects using limited resources over a shorter duration while retaining a high level of quality.

In the construction industry, selecting the most suitable contractor to handle the delivery of any infrastructure project in accordance with pre-determined quality standard, time and cost depends on the infrastructure project type, nature, magnitude and time available for the project execution. It is a common practice in the Nigerian construction industry that the contractors are evaluated based on certain criteria before employment to handle any proposed infrastructure project development. The concept of sustainable development which are considered very vital in infrastructure project due to its implication not only on the economy aspect but social and environmental aspects of the project. It is imperative to assess the efficacy of contractors' selection criteria with respect sustainable infrastructure project delivery. In most cases, the primary consideration in the selection of contractors for infrastructure projects commonly practiced in the developing countries is often based on the economic aspect with little or almost no consideration for the social and environmental aspect. This is evident in the work of Babatunde and Low (2013), Reuben et al., (2022) and Isiyaku & Ajator (2024) who pointed out that criteria for selecting contractor for public-private partnership infrastructure projects in Nigeria is limited to economy. However this is not in line with the provision of the United Nation that emphasized the need to incorporate social factor of sustainability in the infrastructure projects procurement process

in order to enhance sustainable development. There are several factors that contribute to infrastructure projects success. One of these factors is the procurement process which involves essentially the contractor selection processes (Morote & Villa, 2012 and Isiyaku & Ajator, 2024). The principal objectives of the procurement Act (2007) is ensuring the application of fair, competitive, transparent, cost effectiveness, professionalism, effective standard and practice with pre-established criteria for contractor evaluation leading to final selection of contractor (Procurement Act, 2007). Despite the existence of contractor selection process with its considerable pre-established criteria for infrastructure project delivery, the performance of the construction industry has declined as many infrastructure projects end up with such sub-standard work, delay and record of cost over-run (Isiyaku & Ajator, 2024).

Ajayi (2010) is also of the opinion that in Nigeria, a large number of infrastructure construction projects have failed due to lack of competence, capability and ability of the contractor and this may have been caused by the absence of appropriate contractor selection criteria which allow the selection of wrong and incompetence contractor. Zedan (1996) in his work pointed out that the cause of this is the inappropriateness of the awarded contractor where the principles of the award system is dominated by the acceptance of the lowest price. This is supported by Puri and Tiwari (2014) that the acceptance of lowest price for the award of contract is in most cases affects the quality of the finished project. El-Abbasy (2013) viewed selection of contractor as one of the most important issues in construction project and can be argued that the success level of any construction project largely depends on selecting the most appropriate contractor. Poor implementation of the contractor selection process always result to poor project performance with major consequences of unsustainable project and lack value for money spent (Daniel and Humphrey, 2018)

Contractor selection criteria are the set of requisite indicators that entail series of decision attributes that guide the project owners to select the capable contractor out of the lot for a given construction project. Despite the existence of contractor selection process with its considerable pre-established criteria for construction project delivery, the performance of the construction industry has declined as many infrastructures projects end up with such sub-standard work, delay and record of cost over-run. Sidik (2010) in his study pointed out that there is no commensurate improvement in infrastructure construction project success despite all the procurement and the selection methods adopted. Procuring infrastructure project therefore, deserves careful and thorough processes to enhance project performance and its sustainability. Many infrastructure projects in Nigeria have failed due to poor application of contractor selection criteria. Nerija and Andrius (2006) posited that there are three prime of inadequate contractor selection which are: inadequate criteria are selected when evaluating contractor's qualification, inappropriate significance is attributed to some criteria and inappropriate methodology is applied for the contractor evaluation and selection task.

Therefore, the aim of this work is to study the impact of contractors' selection criteria as currently practice on sustainable infrastructure project delivery in Nigeria with the specific objective as: to evaluate the level significance of the current practice of contractor selection

criteria for sustainable infrastructure project delivery and to assess relationship between current practice of contractor selection criteria and sustainable infrastructure project.

Brief Overview of Contractors' Selection Criteria and Construction Sustainability

Infrastructure project development usually require several decision making process. One of the decisions will have to do with selecting the appropriate and competent contractor for a given proposed infrastructure project development. No matter how difficult and tight schedule in the development of the contract, defective contractor selection for infrastructure project execution will create enormous problem during and after the project execution. In order to prevent such occurrence, competent contractor who will be able to execute the proposed infrastructure project within cost, time, and quality standard is to be employed. This can only be overcome through effective application contractors' selection criteria.

Research has shown that selecting a contractor based on the traditional approach where economy criteria is considered alone does not entail long-term interest for the clients Babatrunde and Low (2013). Therefore, selecting the most qualified contractor require the use of the comprehensive set of criteria and indices (Ehsan *et al.,* 2018). With the huge capital investment in infrastructure construction project in Nigeria, the success of infrastructure project delivery coupled with it sustainability is in no doubt a catalyst to any Nation economic and social growth. Therefore, selection of contractor for such sensitive area of investment deserves careful attention as a wrong selection leads to poor project performance in all its ramifications. Asebiomo (2020) pointed out that study have shown that in the prequalification exercise and the final selection of contractor, most clients still faced some challenges as some contractors have been reported to demonstrate incompetency and failed to deliver project on scheduled and or within budget. Alasedi *et al* in Asebiomo (2020) equally noted that quality of work can only be guaranteed from the contractor with the objectives of the project and that of the client realized if the contractor capability are effectively assessed at the selection and tender/evaluation stage. Over the years the government of Nigeria has expended huge capital in infrastructure projects investment and the achievement of effective performance from such project has been like a case of chasing shadow. There has been a record of unsatisfactory and unsustainability of infrastructure project in Nigeria with it high total capital cost, high cost of subsequent maintenance, unsustainable value for money spent due to poor quality, lengthy period of infrastructure development, flagrant abuse of procurement procedures, unsatisfactory performance of contractor, holistic unsatisfactory infrastructure construction project delivery.

The principal objectives of any infrastructure project is to delivered to be cost, time and quality, value and functional effective and be able to satisfy the purpose of construction and yield maximum value for money. Achieving this success is hugely anchored on the quality of the selected contractor. The quality of the selected contractor is evaluated through the established criteria. Adewole (2014) pointed out that the construction industry has been criticized for its high costs, inefficiency, ineffectiveness and delay in construction project development due to procurement process and the selection criteria been adopted. This is also

observed in Othman (2016) work who pointed out that a large number of construction project development has been delayed and a lot have failed due to lack of proficiency and inability of the contractor which is as a result of the absence of adequate selection criteria used for the selection of contractor. These prompted this work intends to explore information through literature directing its focus to the current practice on contractors' selection criteria and establishing the extent of their impact on sustainable infrastructure project delivery. The leading contractors' selection criteria as identified are shown in Table 1 below;

Table 1: identified contractor selection criteria as currently practiced

	Olufisayo (2020)	**Ehsan *et al*., (2018)**	**Adejo *et al.*, (2023)**	**Isiyaku & Ajator (2024)**	**Reuben *et al*., (2022)**	**Virenda *et al*., (2023)**	**Kurnan & Manahan (2023)**	**Harrison *et al*., (2024)**
Technical Ability	↙	↙			↙			
Financial capability	↙			↙	↙			
Management Capability			↙			↙		
Health/Safety							↙	↙
Reputation	↙	↙	↙					

The Concept of Sustainable Infrastructure Construction

Sustainable infrastructure refers to infrastructure project that are planned, designed, constructed, operated and decommissioned in a manner to ensure economic and financial, social, environmental and institutional sustainability over the entire life cycle of the project (Bak *et al.,* 2017). Sustainable infrastructure construction is a subset of sustainable development which is used to describe the application of sustainable development to the construction industry by the infrastructure construction stakeholders to address the environmental, social and economic issues of a building and infrastructure construction in the context of its community (Kibert, 2013). The concept of sustainability is concern with the responsibility of the construction sector for creating the built environment in a sustainable manner. Population growth, Migration and settlement have changed dramatically in Nigeria and it is expected to be higher in the nearest future with it corresponding industrialization. This has led to demand in expansion and increase in infrastructure projects. Sustainable construction is best described as the subset of sustainable development and its application to the construction industry involves all who plan, develop produce, design, alter or maintain the built environment. This includes manufactures and suppliers of construction materials, client constructor's consultants and end users of facilities building and its processes have been well established. Developing infrastructure projects bring economic benefits alongside social and environmental problems. It is now a wide spread believe that adopting sustainable practices will have significant potential to solving the problem.

The Concepts of Sustainable Development

Sustainability is a topic of discussion across the globe, despite this, the clear understanding of sustainability is still ambiguous subject to varied interpretations. This is attributed to the different level of economic, social and environmental development requirements. Hill and Bowen (1997) viewed Sustainable development as a development endeavor to solve social needs with measures that minimize potential environmental impacts. British Standard (2010) defined sustainable development as 'an enduring, balanced approach to economic activity, environmental responsibility and social progresses. The definition of Sustainable Development given by the World Commission on Environment and Development (1987) is given as "development which meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs", has since become the most accepted definition for Sustainable Development (Sourani and Sohail, 2015). Though Sourani and Sohail (2015) and Hill and Bowen (1997) argued that although, discourse on sustainability have been extended beyond economy, social and environmental attributes, however, extensive literature reveal that the 'triple bottom line (economic, social and environmental) remain a simplified approach to sustainability.

Economic Sustainability

The economic dimension of sustainability is rooted in environmental economics and promotes the establishment of a strong, responsive and competitive economy (Mebratu, 2018). It is an approach whereby economic activities are conducted in such a way as to preserve and promote long-term economic well-being. In practice its aims to create a balance between economic growth, resource efficiency, social equity and financial stability. Economic sustainability requires that available resources are utilized in the most efficient way. Economic products must be within an affordable rate by the end users (Dunmade, 2012). In Nigeria, construction industry play a dominant role in the economic activities and accounting for about 60% of the national capital investment and 30% of the gross domestic product.

Environmental Sustainability

This is the ability to preserve and protect the natural environment over time through appropriate practices and policies meeting the present needs without compromising the availability of resources in the future. The key issues in environmental sustainability is that available natural resources are consumed at a sustainable rate. In the work of Ashley *et al.,* (2003), they pointed out that environmental sustainability focuses on the strategies towards efficient use of natural resources and effective management of environmental impacts that include waste control. One of the critical environmental issues in construction sustainability in Nigeria is that of over dependent on foreign manpower and construction materials. Promotion of locally sourced materials and service provision are essential to sustain both the environment and economy (Ashley *et al.,* 2003). Wanamaker (2018) identified critical environmental principles of sustainability as follows:

a. Improvement of human quality of life through effective management of climate and natural disaster
b. Effective pollution management
c. Effective and efficient preservation of the natural environment for human comfort
d. Efficient utilization of environmental resources

Social Sustainability

This involve a focus on the well-being of people and communities. Its aims to create inclusive societies, reduce inequality and ensure long term well-being for all people while preserving social cohesion and justice. Social sustainability is the capacity to maintain the good social well-being for a long period by continuous improvement in the quality of life. Social sustainability is associated with adequate distribution of well-being for the present and future generation (Thome *et al.,* 2016). According to Sourani and Sohail (2015) social sustainability covers areas such as social equity; labour right, human right, community development, health and safety and social responsibility, equity and better welfare package. Social sustainability makes provision for capacity enhancement and skills acquisition in business practices (Ashley *et al.,* 2003).Hill and Bowen (1997) identified critical social principles of sustainability to include:

a. Improvement of human quality of life by providing basic human needs (food, clothing, and shelter)
b. Provision of social self-determination and cultural diversity in development

c. Protection and promotion of human health through a healthy and safe working environment

d. Implementation of skills training and capacity enhancement

e. Seek equitable distribution of the social benefits of construction and, where this is not achieved in the intended use of a facility; seek to optimize benefits which arise during the construction process, such as employment opportunities.

f. Seek intergenerational equity so that significant social, biophysical and financial costs of current construction are not passed on to future generations

The social and economic sustainability are symbiotic in nature with one acting as a driver of the other. For instance, the social principles listed above act as drivers of economic sustainability, therefore, social sustainability drives economic sustenance by creating enabling environment for economic sustainability. With the advancement of public-private partnership in Nigeria, there is need to key in adequate strategy to achieve best value for money in public infrastructure delivery. In addition, therefor, the need to include the attributes of sustainable development features, that is, social sustainability, economic sustainability and environmental

sustainability in the contractors' pre-qualification and selection criteria is critical to achieve sustainable infrastructure construction delivery in Nigeria and this form the basis for this study . Over time, the social value has been promoted in the public infrastructure especially in a developed economy, therefore, contractors are not pre-qualified only on the basis of having the competency to deliver quality infrastructure but also required to demonstrate the level of contribution of procurement process. In 2013, Social Value Act was introduced in the United Kingdom and the act regulates government agencies to weigh 10 to 20% of tender on social value. This is to showcase the percentage of the local that would benefit of gaining employment with the contractors' organization. These trends demonstrate how the scopes of criteria for contractors' per-qualification have evolved over time and broadened beyond convectional economic factors (Walraven and de Vries, 2009).

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

For the purpose of this study, ten (10) consultancy organizations comprising of six (6) quantity surveying, two (2) architectural, one (1) project management and one (1) contracting organization directly involves in contractors selection process were visited within the north central zone of Nigeria. This study was conducted by the means of a survey questionnaire which was distributed to the targeted respondents. From literature, five (5) leading criteria for contractors' selection were identified and considered in this study. A total number of twenty five (25) sub-criteria were also identified in this study. These criteria and the sub-criteria were subjected to respondent's opinion through the construction of a pilot survey and expert opinion. The sub-criteria were subjected to the acceptance or rejection of the respondents as to whether they have any positive influence on the sustainable infrastructure project delivery in Nigeria. The respondents were asked to rate the criteria and the extent of influence using the scale provided. In order to achieve the ordinal data needed, scoring was between 1 and 5 in each case with 1 accorded the least and 5 the highest rating while like items have been grouped to ease assessment. Their degree of significance is based on the Likert scale of 1-5: 1- Strongly Insignificant, 2-Insignificant, 3-Neutral, 4-Significant and 5- Strongly Significant. Percentile was adopted in analyzing the data relating to demographic information. Correlation coefficient was used to assess the relationship between the contractors' selection criteria and sustainable infrastructure project delivery in Nigeria while relative important index was used to analyze by ranking the level of significance of the criteria respect to the impact on infrastructure project sustainability.

Correlation coefficient (r) is defined in this study as $= \frac{Exy}{/Ex^2Ey^2}$

Where x and y are the two distributions of observations. And the relative important index (RII) is defined as $= \frac{5N_5 + 4N_4 + 3N_3 + 2N_2 + 1N_1}{N}$

Where N_n is the number of response in each category of the given scale and N is the total number of the respondents

Table 2: Response Rate According to Respondents

Respondent	Distribution (No)	Responses(No)	Response rate (%)
Consultancy organization	110	96	87.3
contracting organization	10	6	60.0
Total	120	102	85.0

Source: Field Survey, 2025

Table 2 above indicate that out of one hundred and twenty (120) questionnaires that were distributed to the respondents from the consultancy and contracting organization only one hundred and two (102) were retrieved for analysis amounting to approximately 85% response rate. This response rate as used in the final analysis of this study is measured suitable when linked to the 44.33% achieved by Chovichien and Nguyen (2013). This representation therefore depicts primary parties directly involved in the contractors' selection process in Nigeria, thus depicting adequate participation for this study.

Table 3: Years of Experience in Construction Activities

Years of experience	No of Respondents (f)	Average year of experience (x)	Fx
1-10	27	5.5	148.5
11-20	33	15.5	511.5
21-30	32	25.5	816
31-40	10	35.5	355
Total	**102**		**1831**

Source: Author's calculation, 2025

Average year of experience of the respondents in construction activities = fx/n = 1831/102 approximately 18years

The above table 3 shows the respondent's years of experience in the construction industry and found the mean year to be approximately 18. This shows that the respondents have adequate experiences appropriately to respond to the study enquiry.

Table 4: To evaluate by level of significance of the impact of current practice of contractor selection criteria for sustainable infrastructure project delivery

	5	4	3	2	1	AVM	RII	Rank
Criteria								
Financial soundness	76	26	-	-	-	4.75	0.950	1
Management capability	77	16	9	-	-	4.66	0.932	3
Technical ability	80	15	5	2	-	4.70	0.940	2
Contractor' reputation	68	10	24	-	-	4.43	0.886	5
Functional health/safety policy template	71	20	6	5	-	4.58	0.916	4

Source: field survey 2025

Form Table 4 above, to evaluate by level significance of the impact of current practice of contractor selection criteria for sustainable infrastructure project delivery in Nigeria by ranking. The outcome of the evaluation shows that the contractor selection criteria considered in this study has positive impact on the sustainable infrastructure project delivery with varying degree of influence with contractor's financial soundness taking the lead from the evaluation with relative important index of 0.950. This is followed by technical ability, management capability and functional quality/safety template with relative important index of 0.940, 0.932 and 0.916. Contractor's reputation taking the least with relative important index of 0.886. The average mean of each of the contractor selection criteria as considered in this study is found to be greater than the threshold value of 3 as established from the 5 Likert scale. This shown that these contractor selection criteria are significant and critical to sustainable infrastructure project delivery in Nigeria. The result from this Table 4 is in agreement with the analysis done using the correlation coefficient to determine the relationship between the selection criteria and sustainable infrastructure project delivery (Table 5).

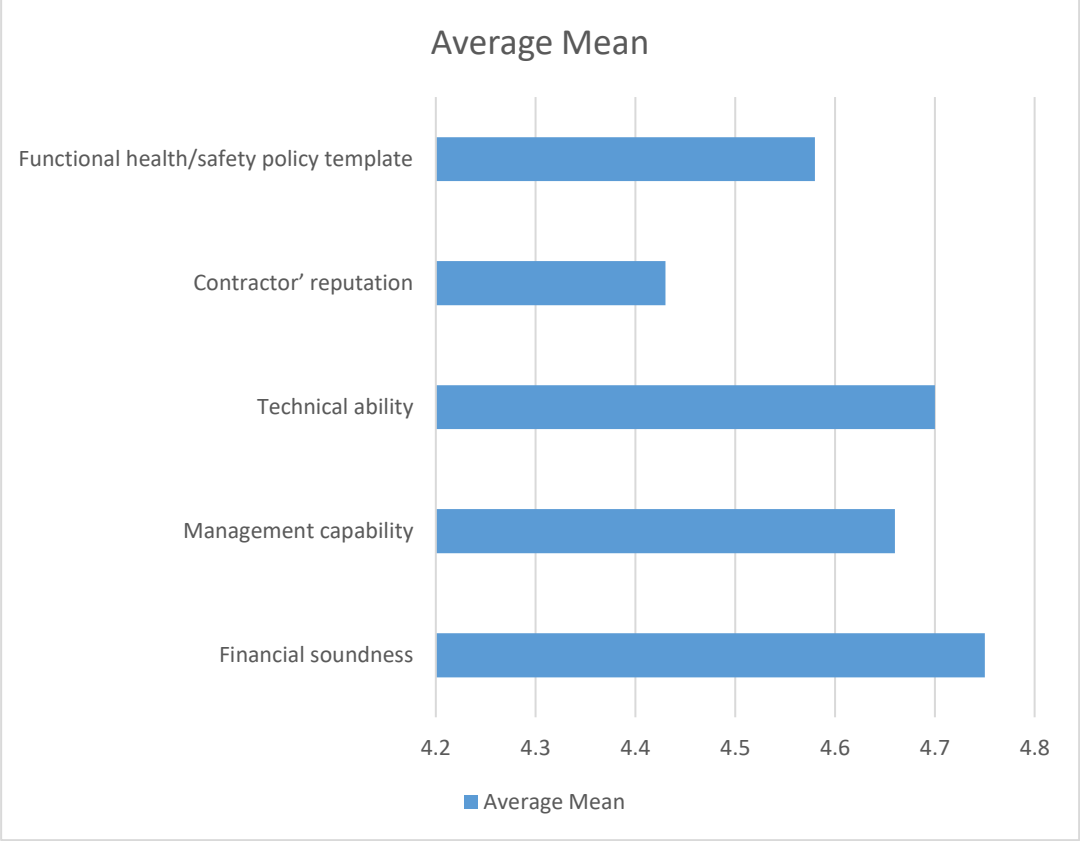


Figure 1: level of significance CSC for sustainable infrastructure delivery

Figure 1 above depicts the presentation of the studied contractors' selection criteria in a bar chart showing their level of significance to sustainable infrastructure project delivery with respective to their individual average mean value.

Table 5. Analysis of the relationship between contractor's selection criteria and infrastructure project sustainability using correlation coefficient

Financial Soundness (Attributes enhances sustainable infrastructure project)	**Y x**	**N y**	x_i	y_i	x_i^2	y_i^2	xy
Effective cash flow and management	96	4	3	-2.6	9	6.76	-7.8
Timely provision of construction materials	90	8	-3	1.4	9	1.96	-4.2
Consistency working and effective output	93	7	0	0.4	0	0.16	0
Timely payment to operative	88	12	-5	5.4	25	29.16	-27
Motivation	98	3	5	-4.6	25	21.16	-23
						r = 0.962	
Technical ability **(Attributes enhances sustainable infrastructure project)**							
Past experience of the contractor	94	6	2.4	-2	5.76	4	-4.8
Prompt availability of plant/equipment and management	96	4	4.4	-4	19.86	16	-17.6
Timely project completion	93	8	1.4	0	1.96	0	0
Effective construction resource management	90	10	-1.6	2	2.56	4	-3.2
Quality project assurance and delivery	85	12	-6.6	4	43.56	16	-26.4
						r = 0.961	
Management capability **(Attributes enhances sustainable infrastructure project)**							
Quality control system	94	6	2.6	-0.8	6.76	0.64	-2.08
Quality policy system	95	6	3.6	-0.8	12.96	0.64	-2.88
Effective project management system	93	5	1.6	-1.8	2.56	3.24	-2.88
Effective project monitoring and evaluation	90	7	-1.4	0.2	1.96	0.04	-0.28
Project quality assurance	85	10	-6.4	3.2	40.96	10.24	-20.48
						r = 0.921	
Functional health/safety policy template **(Attributes enhances sustainable infrastructure project)**							
Quality assurances	96	5	2.8	-2	7.84	4	-5.6
Safety assurance	94	6	0.8	-1	0.64	1	-.0.8
Quality programme implementation	95	7	1.8	0	3.24	0	0
Safety policy implementation	92	8	-1.2	1	1.44	1	-1.2
Quality project sustainability	89	9	-4.2	2	17.64	4	-8.4
						r = 0.912	
Contractor's reputation **(Attributes enhances sustainable infrastructure project)**							
Efficient past record of performance	92	8	1.6	-0.6	2.56	0.36	0.96
Effective communication	90	10	-.04	1.4	0.16	1.96	0.56
Good working relationship	91	6	0.6	-2.6	0.36	6.76	1.56
Personal/organizational integrity	89	11	-1.4	2.4	1.96	5.76	3.36
Maximum loyalty	90	8	-0.4	0.6	0.16	0.36	0.24
						r = 0.751	

Table 5 above shown the analysis of the relationship between the contractors' selection criteria and sustainable infrastructure project delivery using the correlation coefficient. The results of the analysis shown that there is a strong relationship between contractors' selection criteria and sustainable infrastructure project delivery with all the criteria under consideration having correlation coefficient much above average with financial soundness of the contractor taking the lead with correlation coefficient value of 0.962. This is followed by technical ability, management capability and functional health/safety policy with correlation coefficient value of 0.961, 0.921 and 0.912 respectively with contractor's reputation taking the least value of 0.751.

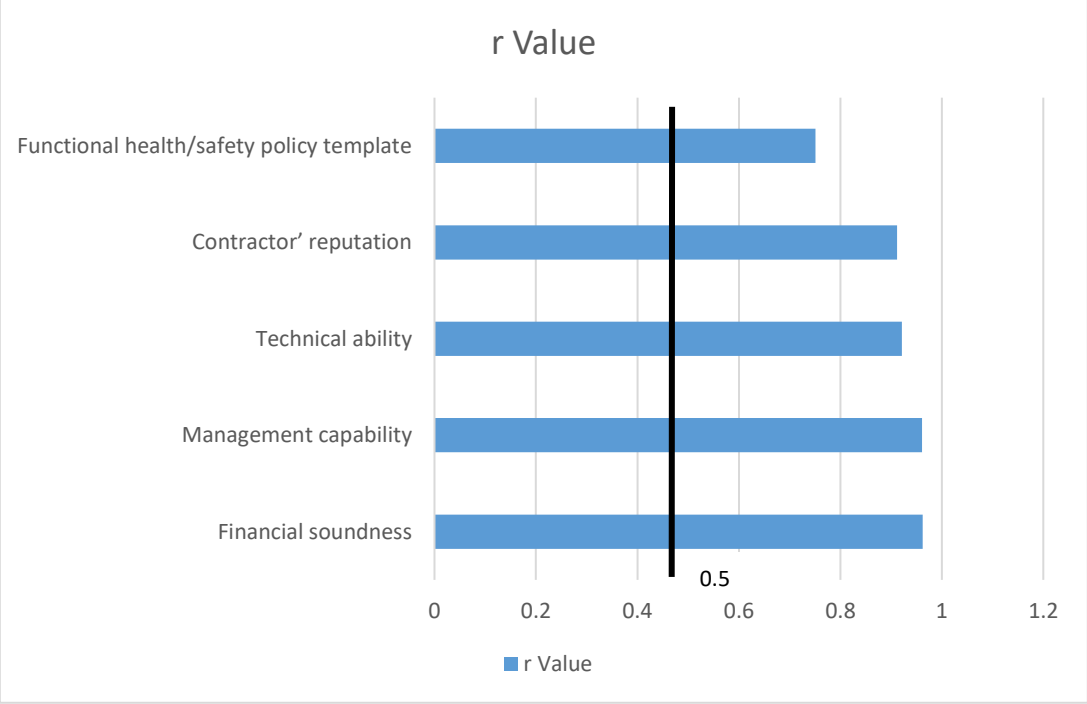


Figure 2: Coefficient of correlation (r) value of each CSC to sustainable infrastructure project

Figure 2 above shows the Coefficient of correlation (r) value of each CSC to sustainable infrastructure project delivery. By interpretation, the higher the value, the more the relationship. The r value of each of the criteria is far beyond average of 0.5 revealing s a strong relationship between the studied criteria and sustainable infrastructure project delivery

Impact of Contractors' Selection Criteria on Sustainable Infrastructure Project

Table 4 above, shows the evaluation of the impact of contractors' selection criteria on sustainable infrastructure project delivery. The results revealed that each of the criteria considered in this study shows very high positive impact with the contractors' financial soundness having the highest value of the relative important index of 0.950. Technical ability, management capability, functional quality/safety policy and contractors' reputation also

shows positive impact with the sustainability of infrastructure project with relative important index value of 0.940, 0.932, 0.916. and 0.886 respectively.

Relationship between Contractor's Selection Criteria and Sustainable Infrastructure Project

Table 5 above reveals the relationship between the contractors' selection criteria and the sustainable infrastructure project delivery. The use of correlation coefficient to analysis their relationship reveals positive relationship with a very high value in each of the criteria considered in this study with financial soundness having the highest value of 0.962. Further, the analysis also revealed that there is a strong positive relationship between contractors' selection criteria and sustainable infrastructure project delivery with criteria under consideration having correlation coefficient much above average. The contractors' technical ability, management capability, functional health/safety policy and contractors' reputation with correlation coefficient value of 0.961, 0.921, 0.912 and 0.751 respectively.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study has been able to reflect perception on the impact of contractors' selection criteria on the sustainable infrastructure project in Nigeria. Some criteria for contractors' selection were studied in terms of their level of influence on the sustainability of the infrastructure projects. Though, the criteria considered in this study have various degree of influence on sustainable infrastructure projects. Such criteria as contractors' financial soundness, technical ability, management capability, and functional health/safety policy template and contractor reputation. With analyses using correlation coefficient, these criteria have strong positive relationship with the sustainable infrastructure project delivery in Nigeria. This means that, if these criteria are adequately observed and applied in the selection of contractor, there is high tendency of achieving sustainable infrastructure. In the same vein, relative important index were used to evaluate the impact of the criteria on the sustainability of infrastructure projects. The outcome of the evaluation revealed that the criteria has very high positive impact. Though no single criteria can produce the desired outcome in the selection of contractor for infrastructure project development. The criteria complement one another to produce the desired result. Therefore, the following recommendation are proffered:

- In view of the outcome of the study, the consultants should concentrate on the criteria that have greater positive relationship and impact in the contractors' to be complimented by others.
- Contractors' financial soundness should be evaluated using appropriate measure such as Zeta model analyses as this will reveals the financial strength of the contractors
- Technical competence of the contractors' in relation to experiences, availability of plant and equipment as well as adequacy of personnel must be thoroughly scrutinized in the contractors' selection process as this will help in selecting the appropriate contractor.

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