Abstract

The rapid changing needs and expectations of the clients of construction industry have posed a challenge. Coupled with the current economic downturn, there is a pressing need for the industry to search for a new key to economic success e.g., profitability. The construction enterprises must acquire an entirely new understanding of the purpose of business. This study attempts to explore the application of the concept of Customer Orientation within the local construction industry. The purpose is to examine the extent to which local construction firms have recognized the need to identify and respond to customer needs as part of their adjustment to a rapidly changing economy. The work begins with an overview of the literature on customer orientation. Based on a conceptual framework by Jaworski and Kohli (1990), this dissertation then poses and tests the hypotheses in the framework, and discusses the results and implications. Surveys and interviews are used to collect data from the industry. Correlation and Regression techniques are employed to establish the relationships among the various variables.

As the existing literature relating to Customer Orientation is devoted almost exclusively to the Western business settings, this study would provide an interesting insight to the local construction scene. Overall, the study suggests that improving business performance is associated not only with the application of Customer Orientation but is also affected by the culture, values and beliefs of the construction industry.