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Modalities for Effective Operations of Regulatory Bodies Involved in Building Construction

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ABSTRACT
Regulatory bodies in the built environment backed by enabling registration Acts play a major role in regulating building construction practices in Nigeria. The paper was aimed at suggesting modalities for effective operations of regulatory bodies in the built environment. Two research objectives have been raised and 1 research hypothesis was raised to guide the study. The study made use of quantitative method of data collection to obtain data from respondents. 421 respondents participated in answering questions administered with a sample size of 382. Questions asked in the questionnaire were based on existing literature and questionnaires were administered on the respondents with the aid of research supports physically and electronically. Responses received through the questionnaire administered were retrieved and analysed. The descriptive research questionnaire was also subjected to validation by selected experienced building construction professionals for accuracy. Descriptive statistics such as simple percentages was used to analyse the breakdown of the questionnaire, the profile of the respondents, their discipline and gender. Data analysed using non-parametric method of data analysis (ranking and mean). The findings of the research revealed that; lack of effective legislation and bureaucracy served as the major barrier affecting the functions of regulatory bodies in the built environment. Updating regulatory standards, effective enforcement of codes and licensing is paramount to the functions of regulatory bodies involved in building construction. Based on the findings, it was recommended that; the Federal Government should make adequate budgetary provision for effective operations of regulatory bodies. Right legislation should be put in place for their operations. Regulatory bodies should not only focus on issuing licenses to building construction professionals but as a matter of priority get involved in updating regulatory standards and organising continuous professional development based on areas of core- competence to enhance knowledge base of professionals.

Keywords: Building Construction, Mentorship, Professionals, Regulation, Regulatory Body, Regulatory Framework

I. INTRODUCTION

Building construction in Nigeria is complex and very competitive consisting of various building construction professionals belonging to regulatory bodies backed by Acts of Laws of the Federation of Nigeria (LFN). The emergence of modern building construction in Nigeria dates back to early 1930's when demands by clients for improved building services increased hence bringing about competition and various areas of specialisation in building construction by professionals. The need to train building construction professionals and rise in awareness by clients to engage the services of professionals involved in building construction gave rise to the establishment of regulatory bodies to regulate their practice in Nigeria (Akinsola, 2020).

In Nigeria, building construction is executed by various building construction professionals namely: Architects, Builders, Engineers, Estate Surveyors and Valuers, Quantity Surveyors, Surveyors and Town Planners (Wahab, 2014; Osuizugbo, 2020). Regulatory bodies backed by enabling registration Acts to regulate the practice of building construction professionals include: Architects Registration Council of Nigeria (ARCON) backed by Act Cap A19, LFN 2004,

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Council of Registered Builders of Nigeria (CORBON), Council for the Regulation of Engineering in Nigeria (COREN) backed by Act Cap 18, LFN 2004, Estate Surveyors and Valuers Registration Board of Nigeria (ESVARBON) backed by Act Cap E13, LFN 2007, Quantity Surveyors Registration Board of Nigeria (QSRBN) backed by Act Cap Q1 LFN 2004, Surveyors Council of Nigeria (SURCON) backed by Act Cap 18, LFN 2004 and Town Planners Registration Council of Nigeria (TOPREC) backed by Act Cap 17 LFN 2004 (Theophilus, 2022).

Regulatory bodies are set up to regulate building standards, provide technical support to building construction professionals with the prime aim of enhancing performance in the built environment (Chattered Institute of Building (CIOB), 2015). Regulatory bodies are also meant to control the practice of building construction professionals through a document referred to as National Building Code (2006) which was prepared by the National Council on Housing and Urban Development with inputs from professionals and built environment regulatory bodies in Nigeria (Ogunbiyi, 2014; Theophilus, 2022). Despite the availability of the National Building Code meant to enhance the performance of building construction professionals in Nigeria, building construction in Nigeria is still characterised by shoddy building construction and structural failures. Section 13 of the National Building Code which deals with building construction requirement has not been complied with by regulatory bodies that were involved in drafting the National Building Code (2006). Regulatory bodies have failed in the area of implementation of codes and standards on practicing members (Jeremiah, 2017). Previous researches on the functions of regulatory bodies in Nigeria (Oloyede, Omoogun & Akinjare, 2010; Oke, 2017; Ruya, Chitumu & Jatau, 2017) show that despite the availability of enabling registration Acts of the Laws of the Federation of Nigeria, ARCON, CORBON, COREN, ESVARBON, QSRBN, SURCON and TOPREC, there has been a failure on the part of regulatory bodies involved in regulating building construction practices to enforce standards and codes on building construction professionals which is responsible for poor quality of building construction in Nigeria. Adegbite (2012) also asserted that there is weak institutional framework to enforce codes and standards on professionals by regulatory bodies in the built environment. Similarly the rules, codes and standards used by regulatory bodies to regulate practice of building construction professionals were adapted from developed nations without taking into consideration peculiar working environment of developing countries like Nigeria (Olojede, Iyoha, Egbide & Erin, 2020).

There are enabling registration Acts backing up regulatory bodies involved in building construction in Nigeria but regulatory bodies have shortcomings in the discharge of their responsibilities due to poor funding. This assertion is contained in a press statement issued by the budget office of Federal Republic of Nigeria to discontinue funding of regulatory bodies from year 2026 (Gbonegun, 2023). This study sets to evaluate the barriers of regulatory bodies involved in building construction and suggest modalities for effective operations of regulatory bodies in Nigeria.

II. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The Acts establishing the seven (7) regulatory bodies of building construction professionals mandate them to regulate the practice of their individual professions in all aspects and ramifications (ARCON, CAP A19, LFN 2004; CORBON, CAP B13, LFN, 2004; COREN. CAP E11, LFN 2004; QSRBN, CAP Q1, LFN, 2004; SURCON, CAP 18, LFN, 2004; TOPREC, CAP 17, LFN, 2004; ESVARBON, CAP E13, LFN, 2007). This mandate has not been fully achieved due to inadequate funding and budgetary provisions by the Federal Government of Nigeria (Gbonegun, 2023). Regulatory bodies involved in building construction have not done well in the area of overseeing the conduct of their members in practice including dissemination of adequate knowledge through continuous professional development (Chigozie & Jide, 2015). Lack of synergy between regulatory bodies and professionals in practice especially in the area of conflicting roles and responsibilities is a major challenge inhibiting the functions of regulatory bodies in the building construction (Uwaegbulam, 2022).

Similarly, regulatory bodies involved in building construction have an obligation to promote mentorship and provide technical aid to members (Wahab, 2014; CIOB, 2015) though Akindoyeni (2012) argues that mentorship and provision of technical aid to building construction professionals has not been effective and adequate. Mentorship amongst building construction professionals is often characterised by ineffective time management in the area of personality differences, lack of mutual communication between the mentor and mentee which has made

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mentorship ineffective and unorganised (Aigbavboa, Oke & Mutshaeni. 2016).

The Acts setting up the seven regulatory bodies in the built environment mandates them to determine the standard of knowledge and skill to be received by persons seeking to become registered with their regulatory body but this knowledge and skill is not clearly defined in the Act. Osuizugbo (2020), Obaju, Fagbenle and Amusan (2021) asserted that the knowledge and skill to be received should be targeted at the core competence of the professional and recent technological advancement in building construction. In line with the research gaps established, this study is aimed at bringing up modalities for effective operations of regulatory bodies involved in building construction thereby bringing up two research objectives of the study.

1. To evaluate the barriers of regulatory bodies involved in building construction.
2. To suggest modalities for effective operations of regulatory bodies involved in building construction.

Research Questions

Answers to the following research questions would be pursued in the study:

1. What are the barriers to effective operations of regulatory bodies involved in building Construction?
2. What are the suggested modalities for effective operations of regulatory bodies involved in building construction?

Null Hypothesis

Null hypothesis showed a strength value of correlation (r =0.238).

Ho: There is no significant relationship between barriers affecting regulatory bodies and performance of building construction professionals in Nigeria.

Research Methodology for the Study

The study population has been restricted to the seven (7) building construction professionals registered by regulatory bodies involved in building construction mandated by law to practice in Nigeria. These professionals include: Architects, Builders, Engineers, Estate Surveyors and Valuers, Quantity Surveyors, Surveyors and Town Planners. 421 respondents participated in answering the survey research questionnaires administered physically and electronically for the purpose of this study based a sample size of 382 using a Table prepared by Cochran (1977) and Krejcie & Morgan (1970) with a margin error of 5% and 95% level of confidence which is acceptable in most environmental and social sciences research. The technique for selecting a population sample are divided into two namely: non-probability sampling and probability sampling (Kothari & Garg, 2019). For the purpose of this study, non-probability sampling method was adopted because the researcher chose respondents based on the research problem (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2009).

Quantitative method of collecting data was adopted for this study. The quantitative method of primary data collection involves the use of structured closed ended questions which are definite, concrete and pre-determined (Naoum, 2019). The responses was on Likert scale of 1-5, based on their significance where the degree of importance was; 5 = strongly agree (SA); 4 = agree (A); 3 = undecided (U); 2=disagree (D); 1= strongly disagree (SD). The contents of the closed ended questions contained in the descriptive survey research questionnaire were also subjected to content validation by selected experienced construction professionals for accuracy. Descriptive statistics such as simple percentages was used to analyse the breakdown of the questionnaire, the profile of the respondents, their educational qualifications and gender. The primary data collected from the respondents were analysed using non-parametric method of data analysis using mean and ranking. The hypothesis of the study was tested using spearman's rank correlation which is acceptable in environmental sciences research.

Table 1 Ranking of Barriers Affecting Regulatory Bodies in the Built Environment

S/N	Research Statement	SD	D	U	A	SA	N	Mean	Rank
1.	Lack of effective legislation and bureaucracy.	4	9	27	179	202	421	4.34	1
2.	Lack of synergy between RB & professionals.	3	14	41	211	152	421	4.18	2
3.	Weak institutional frameworks/enforcement of codes and standards.	5	6	52	223	135	421	4.13	3

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4.	Non-passage of NBC into law of National Assembly	10	15	90	131	175	421	4.06	4
5.	Insufficient budgetary provision to RB	5	28	84	167	137	421	3.96	5
6.	Insufficient manpower to checkmate indiscipline.	5	36	68	177	135	421	3.95	6
7.	Punitive measures by RB to reduce misconduct of members	16	41	102	183	79	421	3.64	7

SD=Strongly Disagree, D=Disagree, U=Undecided, A=Agree, SA=Strongly Agree
N=Number of Respondents
Key: RB = Regulatory Bodies, NBC = National Building Code

Table 1 shows that lack of effective legislation and bureaucracy by government agencies with mean value of 4.34 ranked 1st as the most rated factor in relation to barriers of building construction professionals' regulatory bodies. This is followed by lack of synergy between regulatory bodies and building construction professionals with mean value of 4.18 ranked 2nd. Weak institutional frameworks with mean value of 4.13 including non-passage of National Building Code with mean value of 4.06 and insufficient manpower to checkmate indiscipline amongst building construction professionals with mean value of 3.96 ranked 3rd, 4th and 5th respectively. Insufficient budgetary provision to regulatory bodies in the built environment with mean value of 3.95 ranked 6th. Punitive measures put in place by building construction regulatory bodies to discipline offenders with mean value of 3.64 ranked 7th which is the least amongst all the factors listed based on existing literature.

Table 2: Ranking on Framework and Modalities for Effective Operations of Regulatory Bodies in the Built Environment

S/N	Research Statement	SD	D	U	A	SA	N	Mean	Rank
1.	Updating regulatory standards, effective enforcement/licensing	7	1	13	146	254	421	4.52	1
2.	Setting the conducive environment through well organised CPD	0	2	31	151	237	421	4.48	2
3.	Mentorship through effective communication and training	0	2	18	187	214	421	4.46	3
4.	Updating technical skills and knowledge of mentees	2	0	25	173	221	421	4.45	4
5.	Proper supervision of building construction professionals through technical aid	1	9	22	154	234	421	4.45	5
6.	Synergy between government and building construction regulatory bodies	1	3	24	189	204	421	4.41	6

S/N	Research Statement	SD	D	U	A	SA	N	Mean	Rank
7.	Provision of appropriate automation processes and easy access to NBC	1	9	33	167	211	421	4.37	7
8.	Proper funding, right legislature for regulatory bodies	0	4	27	201	189	421	4.37	8
9.	Review of NBC every 5-10 years	9	12	50	128	222	421	4.36	9
10.	Exposure of building construction professionals to	0	4	64	153	200	421	4.30	10

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	CPD based on core-competence								
11.	Review of building regulations every 5 years	9	12	50	128	222	421	4.29	11
12.	Promoting cognitive reasoning of building construction professionals through formal knowledge.	0	3	54	188	176	421	4.28	12
13.	Performance enhanced by exposure to CPD and certificate based examination	0	3	37	222	159	421	4.28	13
14.	Motivation achieved by right incentives and appropriate reward systems.	6	7	34	205	169	421	4.24	14

SD=Strongly Disagree, D=Disagree, U=Undecided, A=Agree, SA=Strongly Agree
N=Number of Respondents, CPD= Continuous Professional Development

The hypothesis was tested using spearman's rank correlation.

Table 3
Test Result of Hypothesis 1 showing relationship between Barriers Affecting Regulatory Bodies and Performance of Building Construction Professionals in Nigeria

Statistical Package		V	ASE	A	AS
Interval by Interval	Pearson's R	0.217	0.049	4.524	.000[c]
Ordinal by Ordinal	Spearman Correlation	0.238	0.047	5.007	.000[c]
N of Valid Cases		418			

V= Value, ASE=Asymptotic Standard Error[a], A=Approximate T[b], AS=Approximate Significanc

Major Findings of the Study

1. The findings based on research objective 1 shows that lack of effective legislation and bureaucracy by government agencies is the major barrier inhibiting operations of regulatory bodies involved in building construction.
2. The findings based on research objective 2 reveal that updating regulatory standards, effective enforcement of codes and licensing by regulatory bodies plays a key role on the functions of regulatory bodies involved in building construction.
3. The findings based on spearman's rank correlation test on hypothesis 1 showed a significant relationship between barriers of regulatory bodies involved in building construction and performance of building construction professionals.

III. DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Table 1 shows that lack of effective legislation and bureaucracy with mean value of 4.34 was ranked 1st which is very significant. This is followed by absence of synergy between regulatory bodies and building construction professionals with mean value of 4.18 ranked

2nd which is in line with the assertion of Uwaegbulam (2022). Weak institutional framework for enforcement of codes and standards with mean value of 4.13 was ranked 3 rd. These findings are in alignment with findings of Adegbite (2012); Omenihu, Onundi and Alkali (2016). Non- passage of National Building Code into law by the National Assembly with mean value of 4.06 was ranked 4th which aligns with findings of Osegbale, Ikpo and Ajayi (2015) asserting that the code has not been able to yield expected results due to absence of urban and regional planning laws in some states across Nigeria. These findings justifies the need for National Assembly to pass the National Building Code in law for better operations of

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regulatory bodies involved in building construction (Akinsola, 2020; Theophilus, 2022).

Insufficient manpower to checkmate indiscipline with mean value of 3.96, inadequate budgetary provision to building construction professionals regulatory bodies with mean value of 3.95 was ranked 5 th and 6 th in that order. These findings are in line with assertions advocated by Dahiru and Abubakar (2012) and Theophilus (2022) affirming that building construction professionals involved in shoddy practices should be punished. Presently COREN and SURCON are the only regulatory bodies involved in building construction captured in the budget of Nigeria. The Federal Government has approved the discontinuation of budgetary provision to all regulatory bodies involved in building construction (Gbonegun, 2023). Inadequate punitive measures put in place by building construction regulatory bodies to reduce misconduct with mean value of 3.64 was ranked 7 th which is in line with assertions of Dahiru and Abubakar (2012).

Table 2 provided fourteen (14) research statement in line with existing literature for framework and modalities for effective operations of building construction regulatory bodies in Nigeria. Updating regulatory standards, effective enforcement of codes and licensing with mean value of 4.52 ranked 1st and this finding agrees with the assertion advanced by WBG (2015); Tricker and Alford (2022). Setting up a conducive environment for learning through well organised continuous development programme and creation of more work opportunities for building construction professionals in Nigeria was ranked 2nd with mean value of 4.48 which is quite significant. Mentorship through effective communication and regular training with mean value of 4.46 and updating technical skills and knowledge of mentees with mean value of 4.45 was ranked 3rd and 4th respectively. This finding aligns with Ayodeji and Adebayo (2015) asserting that mentors must be updated in their skills to pass the appropriate form of knowledge to mentees.

Proper supervision of building construction professionals through provision of the right technical aid will enhance performance with mean value of 4.45 was ranked 5th which agrees with opinion of CIOB (2015), Wahab (2014) and Chigozie and Jide (2015) on adequate provision of technical aid. Synergy between government supervising agencies in the built environment and building construction regulatory bodies to enhance operations of regulatory bodies and improve supervision with mean value of 4.41 was ranked 6th. Provision of appropriate automation processes and easy accessibility to National Building Code with mean value of 4.37 was ranked 7th which agrees with assertion of World Bank Group report on enforcement of codes and standards in the built environment. Provision of the right enabling environment for operations of regulatory bodies through proper funding, right legislation by government with mean value of 4.37 was ranked 8th. This result agrees with assertions of Mbamali and Okotie (2012) on proper legislation for building construction regulatory bodies, Gbonegun (2023) on appropriate funding for building construction regulatory bodies. Review of the National Building Code every 5-10 years with mean value of 4.36 to improve regulation and practice was ranked 9th in that order. This finding agrees with World Bank Group report on the built environment dwelling on codes and standards (WBG, 2013).

Exposure of building construction professionals to continuous professional development based in areas of core competence with mean value of 4.30, review of building regulations every 5 years with mean value of 4.29, promoting cognitive reasoning of building construction professionals through formal knowledge with mean value of 4.28 was ranked 10 th , 11 th and 12th respectively agrees with opinion of Osuizugbo (2020); Obaju, Fagbenle and Amusan (2021) on the need to expose building construction professionals to areas of core-competence during trainings and project management competency theory PMCD (2017) on promotion of cognitive reasoning of building construction professionals through formal knowledge. Performance enhancement through certificate based examination with mean value of 4.28 and motivation achieved by applying appropriate reward systems and right incentives with mean value of 4.24 was ranked 13th, and 14th respectively. These findings agree with views and opinion of Project Manager Competency Theory PMCD (2017) and need for applying appropriate reward system for building construction professionals as asserted by Badubi (2017).

Table 3 showed the test result of hypothesis 1 showing a significant relationship between barriers affecting regulatory bodies and performance of building construction professionals which is in line with the assertion put forward by Akindoyeni (2012) and Wahab (2014) that factors such as absence of effective legislation and bureaucracy, lack of synergy between regulatory bodies and professionals, weak institutional

frameworks affects the operations of regulatory bodies involved in building construction. The positive correlation r = 0.238 suggest that as the barriers faced by regulatory bodies of building construction professionals increases, the level of performance of building increases weakly. The p value is 0.000 <0.05, hence the null hypothesis is rejected while the alternate is accepted.

IV. CONCLUSION

Conclusively, therefore, regulatory bodies are major stakeholders in the regulation of building construction practice in Nigeria as such the enabling environment to effectively carry out their functions should be put place through appropriate funding and legislation. Enforcement of codes and standards, updating regulatory standards and effective licensing which is the primary responsibility of all regulatory bodies should be given priority.

V. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of the research, the following recommendations were made:

1. The Federal Government should make adequate budgetary provision for regulatory bodies involved in building construction to enable them carry out their responsibilities based on enabling registration Acts.
2. There should be effective synergy between supervising agencies of government and regulatory bodies to enhance the operations of regulatory bodies in the built environment.
3. Regulatory bodies involved in building construction should regularly update regulatory standards, license and properly supervise professionals registered with them in practice. Enforcement of codes and standards should also be giving priority.
4. Continuous professional development offered to building construction professionals should be tied to areas of their core- competences.

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