



Navigating Construction Challenges, Claims, Contracts, Materials and Consumer Choices in Emerging Markets

Editorial June 2025

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Introduction

Welcome! This is Issue 1 of Volume 8 of the Journal of Construction Business and Management. The Issue brings together diverse studies that examine emerging-market contexts and how they shape construction management practice. Studies reported in the focus on topical issues ranging from contract drafting and claim handling to material choices and drivers of consumer behaviour. The papers collectively highlight the interdependencies among legal frameworks, project governance, market dynamics, and sustainability imperatives that define emerging markets and developing-country construction landscapes. These articles were contributed by 14 authors from Nigeria, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Tanzania, Thailand and the United Kingdom.

Discussion of the papers

Nyezi (2025) builds their work on a South African context (Grid Electronics vs SM Structures) as they distinguish special damages from general damages in construction contracts. The case note outlines how courts allocate damages in cases of delays and incomplete performance. It also highlights the need for precise contract drafting to allocate risk and clarify what constitutes general versus special damages, including the limits of recovery for rental costs. Practical implications for practitioners revolve around the need to ensure clarity in drafting damage clauses and consider cost-of-completion versus diminution-in-value approaches when quantifying damages.

Hammond (2025) examines the state of participation of women in construction employment and education in South Africa. The study also elicits potential roles of women in digital technologies in enhancing the industry. Stakeholders would find interest in the study's commentary as it contextualises gender dynamics within a broader socio-technical agenda, highlighting barriers and opportunities for women in construction leadership and technical roles, with implications for policy and industry practice.

In Sri Lanka, Manokarajah *et al.* (2025) examine the claims management challenges faced by small and medium-sized contractors during economic upheavals. The study identifies skill gaps, documentation deficiencies, and inadequate delay analysis as key drivers of claims risk, offering strategies to strengthen record-keeping, contractual knowledge, and stakeholder collaboration to build resilience in crises.

Moreover, Alao *et al.* (2025) evaluate end-user decision-making processes for cement brands in a developing-country setting. They found that the choice of cement is shaped by corporate responsibility, technical support, and product attributes. This paper highlights the intersection of supply-chain dynamics, brand reputation, and user perceptions in material selection, with implications for marketing, procurement, and sustainability benchmarking.

Last but certainly not the least, Mahame *et al.* (2025) provide regional insights on sustainable construction materials and practices in Tanzania. The study examines economic and environmental considerations around sustainable construction materials (SBMs) and broader regional determinants for their adoption in housing construction. They report on how economic viability, local availability, and policy contexts influence the uptake of SBMs, and underline the need for context-specific cost-benefit analyses and policy instruments to promote the choice of sustainable materials for construction works.

Conclusion

This issue of the Journal of Construction Business and Management advances our understanding of construction management in emerging markets by connecting legal doctrine with project execution, material choices, and consumer behaviour. The issue provides insight into construction challenges, claims, contracts, materials and consumer choices in emerging markets. The papers collectively remind us that successful construction outcomes depend not only on technical know-how but on sound governance, transparent market dynamics, and policy environments that are inclusive and forward-looking. We congratulate and commend the authors for their work and invite readers to engage with the findings as they navigate the complex and evolving terrain of construction in emerging markets.

We thank the authors for their contributions, the reviewers for their thorough evaluation of the papers and the editorial board for their continued support. We encourage further submissions that extend these themes, especially comparative studies, policy evaluations, and practitioner-led case studies that illuminate the path towards improved resilience, efficiency, and sustainable construction in emerging markets.

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