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Advancing Multidisciplinary Approaches for Sustainable Construction and Project Management

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Introduction

The construction industry is undergoing a profound transformation driven by rapid advances in digital technologies, heightened sustainability imperatives, and increasing pressures for resilience, efficiency, and accountability. Across both developed and developing economies, these forces are reshaping how construction projects are conceived, delivered, and managed. Yet, the pace and nature of this transformation remain uneven, particularly in contexts characterised by institutional constraints, fragmented industry structures, and resource limitations. It is against this backdrop that this special issue of the *Journal of Construction Business and Management (JCBM)* was conceived.

Discussion of the Papers

This special issue, drawn from a selection of original and peer-reviewed articles from the 2025 CBPM conference, addresses contemporary challenges and innovations in construction business and project management. As Guest Editors, we are particularly pleased with the coherence and relevance of the contributions assembled in this issue. Collectively, the contributions address a growing need for empirically grounded, contextually sensitive research that advances both theory and practice, particularly in the Global South. The papers reflect JCBM's commitment to methodological diversity and intellectual rigour, drawing on quantitative, qualitative, and mixed-methods approaches to illuminate complex industry phenomena.

A central theme running through this issue is the role of digital and emerging technologies in enhancing construction performance. Several articles (Aju and Mokgohloa, 2026; Osundiran and Tshehla, 2026; Anugwo et al., 2026; Amiri and Saghatforoush, 2026) explore the adoption, integration, and impact of tools such as artificial intelligence, blockchain, Building Information Modelling (BIM), the Internet of Things, and smart building technologies. These studies do not merely commend technological potential; rather, they critically examine the barriers, risks, and organisational dynamics that shape technology uptake, especially in environments where regulatory uncertainty, skills gaps, and cost constraints are significant. In doing so, the authors offer nuanced insights into why technological transformation in construction often lags other sectors, and what can be done to address this challenge.

Equally prominent in this special issue are contributions (Moyo et al., 2026; Ngoy et al., 2026; Harinarain and Babalola, 2026) that address sustainability, resilience, and risk management. From renewable energy financing (Wamuziri, 2026) and sustainable building technologies (Ngoy et al., 2026) to infrastructure resilience and policy constraints (Abudu et al., 2026), the papers engage with pressing questions about how the construction sector can contribute to long-term socio-economic and environmental goals. Importantly, these discussions are grounded in real-world contexts across Africa (Ghana, Nigeria, South Africa, Zimbabwe) and other emerging economies, highlighting the interplay between global sustainability agendas and local institutional, economic, and cultural realities.

Beyond technology and sustainability, the issue also foregrounds critical business and management concerns (Aiyetan et al., 2026; Harinarain and Babalola, 2026; Osundiran and Tshehla,2026; Abudu et al., 2026 Moyo et al., 2026), including procurement practices, client influence, supply chain efficiency, and user satisfaction in the built

environment. Together, these studies reinforce the view that construction performance is not determined solely by technical solutions, but by the alignment of organisational strategies, stakeholder relationships, and governance frameworks. While each article stands on its own merit, collectively they advance a shared conversation about how construction business and management research can better respond to contemporary industry challenges. The insights presented here will be of value to academics seeking to extend theoretical frontiers, policymakers aiming to craft enabling regulatory environments, and practitioners striving to improve project outcomes in increasingly complex settings.

Conclusion

We would like to express our sincere appreciation to the authors for their high-quality submissions and to the reviewers for their constructive and timely feedback, which has been instrumental in strengthening the papers. We are also grateful to the Editor-in-Chief, the editorial team, and the University of Cape Town Libraries for their support in bringing this special issue to fruition. It is our hope that this special issue will stimulate further research, dialogue, and collaboration across disciplines and regions, and that it will contribute meaningfully to the ongoing transformation of the construction industry toward greater innovation, sustainability, and resilience.

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