Promoting Sustainable Construction Projects through Ecological Economics

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SUMMARY

Ecological economics (EE) is the study of interactions and impact of human activities on the environment which is an aspect of sustainable concept. To encourage the adoption of EE, this article examined various drivers as well as measures of mitigating environmental impact of construction activities in the South African construction industry. Primary data was collected using a well-structured questionnaire that was designed based on information obtained from secondary source, that is, existing literature materials that were reviewed. The questionnaires were administered on contractors, clients and construction professionals in the construction industry. Using convenience sampling approach, 70 questionnaires were distributed to the respondents, 55 were received while 5 of the questionnaires were not properly completed and unfit for analysis. Findings from reviewed literature reveals a low level of awareness and adoption of ecological economics concept in the construction industry. In other to promote and ensure the adoption of this practice, findings from the 50 properly completed questionnaires indicated that the inauguration of EE through communicating new ideas and incentivizing ideas for change relating to greener construction are the major drivers of promoting the concept in the construction industry. These will assist clients, construction professionals, contractors and other stakeholders in overcoming the roadblocks to the adoption of the practice of EE in the South African construction industry. For this reason, stakeholders in the construction industry needs to educate themselves with the knowledge of ecology and information relating to sustainable practices at large. In furtherance to this study, further specific and detailed research can be conducted to examine the benefits, drivers, barriers as well as the methods of overcoming the roadblocks to to adopting the concept of EE for sustainable construction