

## EVALUATION OF PROCUREMENT PROCESS IN UNIVERSAL BASIC EDUCATION BOARD IN NIGERIA

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### ABSTRACT

Before the year 2007, Nigerian government has been managing unprofitable contractual situations, most of which lacked the needed value for money. Some of which also were negative due to the very little monitoring habit that coursed general project abandonment for which in a general view those projects had suffered a great setback in terms of quality and sustainability. Furthermore, the government had made series of efforts trying to subdue these impending problems during which ample consultations were made; many programmes were designed in the bid to stop the menace. However, it was in the course of this that in the year 2007 the government came up with an agency that was shouldered with responsibility of checkmating these issues to appropriately monitor the quality of jobs being done and making sure that such works were actually captured in the year's budget and therefore executing them accordingly. The government witnessed a tremendous achievement with this effort and thereby felt the need to improve on it and then transformed it into a well-organized outfit with autonomous control over all MDAs in the case of contract execution. This giant step has helped the Universal Basic Education Board to also have the long needed control over their numerous contracts across the country. It brought a great sanity into their ways of engagement concerning every contract process putting in mind the now introduced procurement law. The Universal Basic Education Board has therefore adopted all necessary medium in their ways of conducting all contract proceedings adhering with the procurement law put in place. The daring need therefore to completely abolish all past errors brought the need to adopt and practice the present procurement processes. Therefore, the extent of achievements of these processes needed to be abreast which in turn brought the need for the procurement process of the Universal Basic Education Board. It is very important that all parties must be satisfied with the quality of the project as well as timely payment by the client if satisfied for the overall performance. It is recommended that the pre-qualification process should be supported by laws which will guide against the people that might try to hijack the process. The whole process should be overhaul to avoid those who will try to use power in trying force professionals or official assign in carrying out the pre-qualification task.

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### BACKGROUND

Between the year 2000 to 2007, there were problems encountered that are associated with the contract awarded to a contractor for construction of multiple blocks of classrooms in some areas of the country. However, most of the buildings constructed suffered

structural defects and some collapsed shortly after being used by clients (pupils). Investigations into the matter was promptly organised and carried out by joint committee from Ministry of Works and Ministry of Education during which it was revealed that the project was executed by an incompetent contractor

whose only reason for winning the contract was because the price was the lowest.

Therefore, this study is aimed at assessing procurement processes in Universal Basic Education Board, with a view to developing strategies for effective contract administrations. This is to identify the various procurement methods used in UBE project and to examine the procedures used in the various procurement methods in order to determine the problems arising from the procurement methods and procedures used.

Haftman (1993) and Olatunji (2008) stated that Building generally is an enclosure of space designed and built according to any given specification and for a purpose. The concept of building therefore is subjected to the initiative of the national owner (client) to be designed by an Architect and constructed by builders. It is therefore good to say that a good building is that with a good design and built by the right Engineer in accordance with standard practice provisions and specifications.

Buildings' constructions in Nigeria have been found to be sometimes subjected to the challenges of failure due to the seemingly attitude of non-involvement of the right professionals to execute those projects, which in the long run give rise to numerous effects such as collapse, and subsequent loss of resources (unnecessarily) for rectification hence the need to cultivate suitable methods and processes for making sure that things are done well at every stage of the project right from inception to completion viz: Universal Basic Education Board is the sole client on behalf of the government that shoulders the responsibility of providing primary schools with every needed facilities ranging from classrooms, and other buildings to other necessities like water and furniture. In line with their activities as mentioned above, over the years, the clientship (UBEB) have also met numerous challenges following some short-comings either from the part of government and/or the end users in such cases like poor design concept, execution by incompetent contractors and sometimes even inadequate funding – poor construction however remains the leading menace to date (Masterman, 2002).

In the light of the above, it is pertinent to mention that the factors responsible for any negative result have been identified and therefore requires a most suitable approach to be able to safe-guard and eradicate the continuous re-occurrences of these problems, hence the need for good procurement processes. Aje and Olatunji (2012) in the same vein, the pre-bid contractor selection tasks, such as pre-qualification and short-listing to an optimum member of bidders' proposals are potentially significant in contributing to the achievement of ultimate 'best value'.

Weele (2010) stated that procurement is the acquisition of goods or services. Goods/services are appropriate and that they are procured at the best possible cost to meet the needs of the purchaser in terms of quality, quantity, time and location. Corporations and public bodies often define their processes which are intended to promote fair and open competition of their business while minimizing exposure to fraud and collusion.

Pre-qualification, a set objective towards achieving selection of a good tender is of paramount importance in procurement proceedings. Ashworth (1991) defined a procurement system as a type of contract that states the obligations, rights and liabilities of the parties involved, which include clients, consultants and contractors on the other hand. Turner (1999) defined it as the participation of Three important parties: Clients, Consultants and Contractors who work together to provide practical guidance on decisions regarding the actual procurement direction.

It is also achieved by the adoption of some standardised methods or approaches, most common of which is the "COMPETITIVE" where bidding is required as it is the deliberate process of providing window of equal and simultaneous opportunity for prospective contractors to offer price, terms and conditions of carrying out the works. A good outcome therefore can only be achieved with good process, because having it will no doubt give ample changes to provide the following factor of value:

- (1) Openness
- (2) Transparency
- (3) Fairness
- (4) Accountability
- (5) Probity
- (6) Value for money

(7) Market driven.

The above factors of value are equally achieved by good evaluation which fundamentally involves a conscious examination of the submission of bidders in order to find out compliances with the law and requirements of each contract so as to arrive at the justifiable choice of a responsive lowest evaluated price for executing the works, or supplying goods and services, which at long run give value for money. It is therefore pertinent that we study the prevailing procurement situation so as to apply the right procedure under the existing public procurement law, without which the chances of upholding the desired goals of getting value for money would be lost.

Some potential value vectors which emphasize the nature of the dominant forces associated with ‘best value’ method selection from the contractor’s selection perspective are given in figure 1. Pre-

qualification as a commonly used pre-tender process for a task involves a whole range of criteria for which information is often qualitative or subjective. It is used to identify a pool of competitive, competent and capable contractors from who tenders may be sought (Cohen *et al*, 2000). It is a method of ensuring that a contractor is able to execute the assigned project in accordance with the client and project objectives. Pre-qualification and bid evaluation are currently practiced in many countries. In Nigeria, for instance, this exercise is termed the “Due Process” and involves different types of criteria to evaluate the overall suitability of contractors.

Ramus *et al.* (2006), pre-qualification systems operate in two stages. Firstly, the scope of the work and contract type is defined, and secondly a list of suitable bidders is identified.

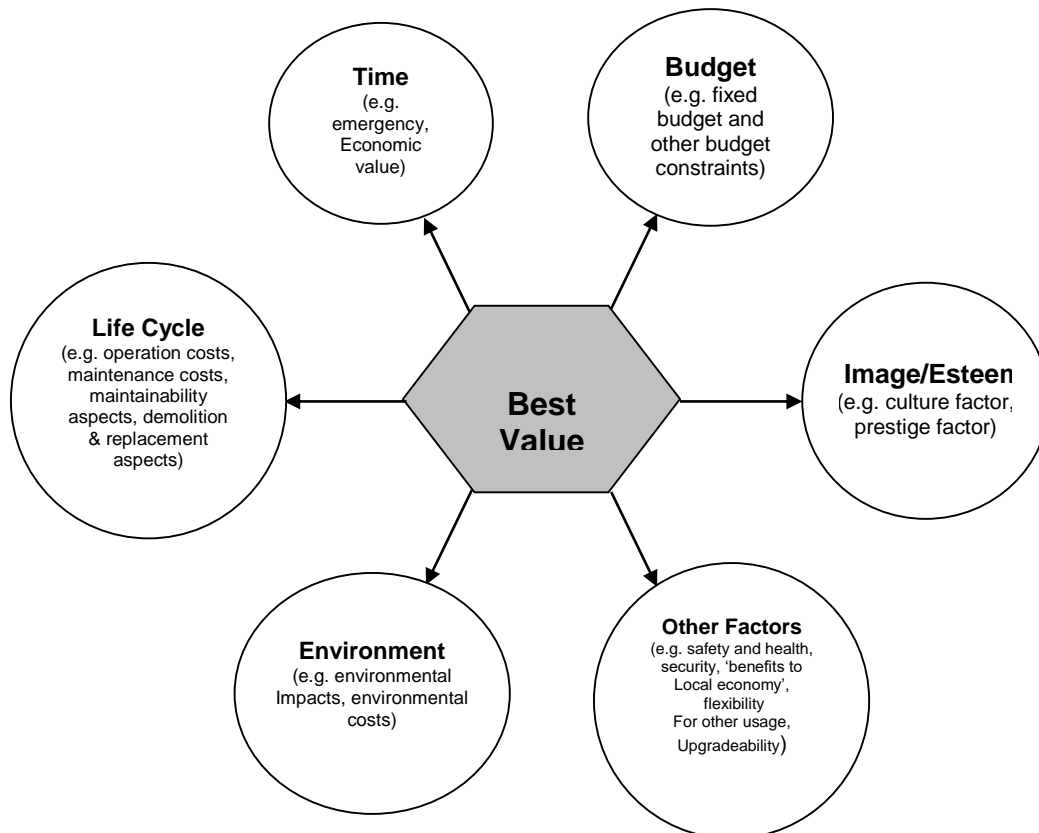
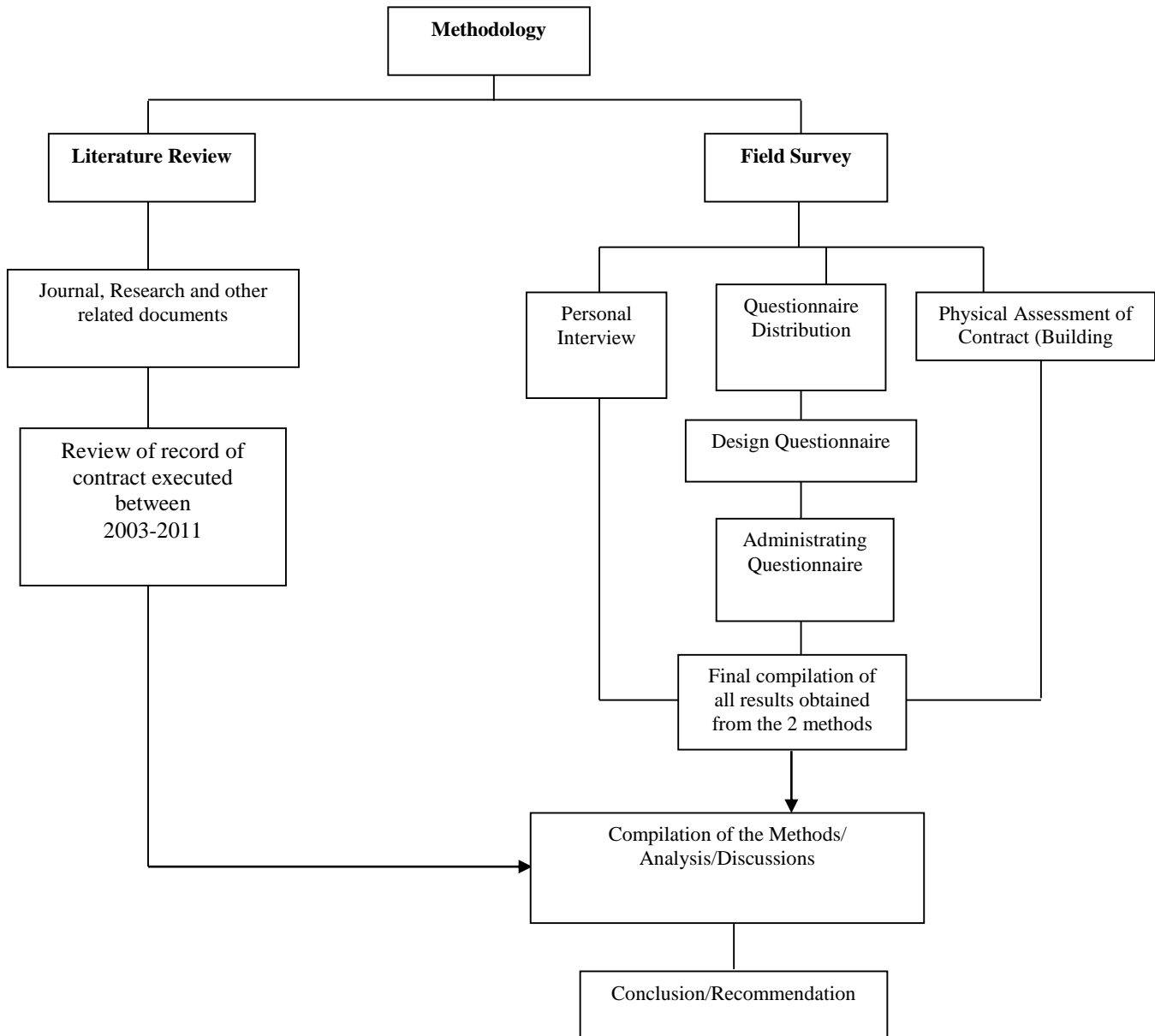


Figure 1: Best Value Factors of Pre-qualification

**METHODOLOGY**

Mixed method which basically involves field survey and literature review is adopted study to provide adequate information and solution to the problem as illustrated in figure 2.



**Figure 2:** Stages in the Methodology Used

**RESULTS**

Table 1 shows the number of contractors and the %age of project completion within the range of time for the contract of building classrooms.

**Table 1: Number of contractors that were able to finish work within the stipulated time**

S/N	No. of weeks	No. of Contractors	% Completion period within Range
1.	0-12	11	7.69
2.	13-24	21	14.68
3.	25-36	35	24.47
4.	37-48	16	11.18
5.	49-60	5	3.49
6.	61-72	14	9.79
7.	73-84	22	15.38
8.	85-96	7	4.89
9.	97-108	7	4.89
10.	109-120	2	1.39
11.	121-132	1	0.69
12.	133-144	1	0.69
13.	145-156	1	0.69

Table 2 shows how the respondents considered the condition / state of building elements. Physical observations were carried out in 16 selected schools to observe the extent of the damage. The scale rate description indicates:

**Scale 1:** Asset has been constructed badly; serious structural problem; general appearance is very poor, poor supervision and workmanship, significant number of major defects exists.

**Scale 2:** Asset has been constructed badly; deteriorated surface significant attention; need service because of bad workmanship.

**Scale 3:** Asset is in average condition; no serious structural problems; deteriorated surface require attention.

**Scale 4:** Asset is habitable and exhibits superficial wear and tear, minor defects, does not require major nor major defects exist.

**Scale 5:** Asset has no defect; appearance is new no problems, defects or need for attention, its new, habitable and conducive.

For wall; the mean score of 1.48 relative to the question can be deemed to be very poor with the question because it falls between 1.00 and 1.50 which represents 81.25% of the respondents that scale very poor and poor. The implication is that the position of wall finish, colour and replastering is rated to be very poor.

For floor; the mean score of 1.40 relative to the question can be deemed to be very poor with the question because it falls between 1.00 and 1.50 which represents 93.75% of the respondents that scale very poor and poor. The implication is that the position of terrazzo floor screeding is rated to be very poor.

For window; the mean score of 1.48 relative to the question can be deemed to be very poor with the question because it falls between 1.00 and 1.50 which represents 81.25% of the respondents that scale very poor and poor. The implication is that the position of window frame, locks and replacement is rated to be very poor.

For doors; the mean score of 1.42 relative to the question can be deemed to be very poor with the question because it falls between 1.00 and 1.50 which represents 87.50% of the respondents that scale very poor and poor. The implication is that the position of door handle, locks door and door frame is rated to be very poor.

For roof; the mean score of 1.57 relative to the question can be deemed to be poor with the question because it falls between 1.51 and 2.49 which represents 75.00% of the respondents that scale very poor and poor. The implication is that the position of roofing sheet and roof colour is rated to be poor.

For ceiling; the mean score of 1.42 relative to the question can be deemed to be very poor with the question because it falls between 1.00 and 1.50 which represents 87.50% of the respondents that scale very poor and poor. The implication is that the position of ceiling finish and colour of ceiling is rated to be very poor.

For structural element fittings; the mean score of 1.57 relative to the question can be deemed to be poor with the question because it falls between 1.51 and 2.49

which represents 75.00% of the respondents that scale very poor and poor. The implication is that the position of beam and columns is rated to be poor.

For furniture; the mean score of 1.40 relative to the question can be deemed to be very poor with the question because it falls between 1.00 and 1.50 which represents 93.75% of the respondents that scale very poor and poor. The implication is that the position of chairs, tables, L/T, classroom seats and blackboards is rated to be very poor.

**Table 2:** Condition / State of Building Elements

Building Element	Detailed Component	Very Poor (1)	Poor (2)	Fair (3)	Good (4)	Excellent (5)	Valid response	Mean
Wall	Wall finish, Color, replastering	50.0	31.3	12.4	6.3	0	16	1.48
Floor	Terrazzo floor screeding	75.0	18.8	6.2	0	0	16	1.40
Windows	Window frame, Locks, replacement	56.3	25.0	12.5	6.2	0	16	1.48
Doors	Door handle, Locks Door, Door frame	56.3	31.3	12.4	0	0	16	1.42
Roof	Eaves, Fascia board, Roofing sheet, Roof colour	37.5	37.5	12.4	6.3	6.3	16	1.57
Ceiling	Ceiling finish, Colour of ceiling	50	37.5	0	12.4	0	16	1.42
Structural element	Beams and Columns	56.3	18.8	12.4	12.5	0	16	1.57
Fittings and furniture	Chairs, Tables, L/T, Classroom seats, blackboards	68.8	25	6.2	0	0	16	1.40

Table 3 shows respondents' opinion for the overall performance.

For the respondents' opinion on the overall performance as related to: "timely delivery of project to the client by the contractors under the specification

terms of agreement"; the mean score of 4.68 relative to the question can be deemed to be very important with the overall performance because it falls above

4.50 which represents 89.00% of the respondents that scale very important and important. It means that the timely delivery of project to the client by the contractors under the specification terms of agreement is very important for the overall performance.

For the respondents’ opinion on the overall performance as related to: “all parties must be satisfied with the quality of the project as well as timely

payment by the client if satisfied”; the mean score of 4.71 relative to the question can be deemed to be very important with the overall performance because it falls above 4.50 which represents 97.90% of the respondents that scale very important and important. It means that it is very important that all parties must be satisfied with the quality of the project as well as timely payment by the client if satisfied for the overall performance.

**Table 3:** Overall Performance

Opinion	Not very important	Not Important	Neutral	Important	Very Important	Valid response	Mean
The timely delivery of project to the client by the contractors under the specification terms of agreement	0.5	7.7	2.8	33.5	55.5	418	4.68
All parties must be satisfied with the quality of the project as well as timely payment by the client if satisfied	0.5	1.2	0.5	45.7	52.1	413	4.71

**DISCUSSION**

Findings from this study indicated that 80 % of the respondents are male while 20 % are female. This shows a preponderance of male sex over the female in construction industry. It shows that 20 % of the respondents are within the bracket age of 20-30, 20 % of the respondents are within 30-39 age group, 20 % are within 40-49 age group while 40 % are above 50 years. It shows that majority of the respondent are above 50 years.

The analysis shows that 20 % of the respondents are client to Universal Basic Education Board, while 80 % of the respondents are contractor to Universal Basic Education Board, the analysis shows that majority of the respondent are contractors to the Board. 40 % of the respondent has HND, 40 % of the respondent has BSC while 20 % has MSC. It shows that majority of the respondent are either HND or BSC holder. It also shows that 40 % of the respondents are civil engineering, 20 % are Quantity Surveyor, none of the respondent is Architecture, and none is Builder while

40 % are belonging to other profession like people in general business and politicians.

The analysis also indicates that 40 % of the respondents are not professional in construction industry. It shows that 20 % of the respondents have about 1-5 years working experience, 40 % has 6-10 years while 40 % has above 20 years’ experience.

**CONCLUSION**

Based on the result obtained in this research, it was observed that there is no standard format followed in pre-qualification process, all the existing procedures were always flawed, there are so many interference in the process of selection of contractor and which eventually lead to the award of contract to incompetent contractor.

Also, the position of wall finish, colour and re-plastering, the position of terrazzo floor screeding, the position of window frame, locks and replacement, the position of door handle, locks door and door frame, the position of roofing sheet and roof colour, the position

of ceiling finish and colour of ceiling, implication is that the position of beam and columns and the position of chairs, tables, L/T, classroom seats and blackboards are all rated to be very poor.

Furthermore, the number of professional or personnel to execute a project, the magnitude of work to be carried by the contractor, the number of lots has bided for that is the number of project he wants to execute, and the contractor ability to adhere to the use of quality materials in executing the project are all very important quality control.

Also, the company manuals in terms of plants' maintenance and equipment, and the contractor ability to adhere to the detailed methodology of executing the project are very important quality control. The number of years the contractors has spent in the construction industry, the contractors' knowledge of the environment in the construction industry, the contractors' knowledge of the specification of materials required for executing such project in the construction industry and the contractors' knowledge of relationship of the various firms / company and their employees within the environment where the site is located are all important areas responsible for the management expertise.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

The pre-qualification process should be supported by laws which will guide against the people that might try to hijack the process. The whole process should be overhaul to avoid those who will try to use power in trying force professionals or official assign in carrying out the pre-qualification exercise do their own wish.

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