

## IMPEDIMENTS TO MARKETING THE QUANTITY SURVEYOR'S SERVICES

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### **ABSTRACT**

*A cross sectional survey was conducted within Sokoto, Kebbi and Zamfara states to investigate impediments to marketing of quantity surveyors services. The population for the study included 100 Senior Quantity Surveyors working in public and private organizations in Birnin-kebbi, Sokoto and Zamfara states. Convenient sampling technique was used in selecting respondents. The data collected were subjected to relative importance index (RII) analyses. Five factors were identified as being the major barriers to marketing Quantity Surveyor's services namely, lack of market research, lack of marketing department, political difference, marketing treated with levity and lack of clear strategic plan for marketing in the profession.. It was concluded that Quantity Surveyors marketing impediments must be identified and assessed because of the value of marketing if the profession is to survive and remain competitive in the Nigeria construction industry. It is therefore, recommended that Quantity surveying organization (public and private) should establish Marketing Department in their organizations to build a strong relationship with prospect clients.*

**Key words:** construction, market, impediments, marketing, services, Quantity Surveyor

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

Competition in the Nigerian construction market has increased; and being fueled by higher client expectations, poor state of the Nigerian economy, the privatization drive, and the impact of globalization have made the construction industry very volatile, more competitive and less profitable, thus making survival in the industry highly challenging (Aniekwu, 2006). To survive therefore, quantity surveyors need to uncover the impediments to marketing their services. Marketing is a science that embraces skill and strategy to sell a certain commodity successfully in a target market where the prospects are turned in to clients. It is the oldest profession practice formally and informally around the globe (Rwelamila et al., 1996). Marketing is essential for increasing market shares, building long-term relationships, and satisfying clients, ensuring profitability, strengthening competitive advantage and achieving firm performance (Kanagal, 2013). Marketing plays an important role in the overall success of companies and is critical for any business to grow in the competitive environment (Polat & Donmez, 2010). The quantity surveyor, being one of the experts in the construction sector, has the responsibility to address financial and contractual issues of the construction process. These issues and processes are always influenced by environmental parameters, which are very sensitive to change and unique for every project (Senaratne & Sabesan, 2008).

Marketing in quantity surveying (QS) practice in Nigeria has been proven to be faced with barriers for its implementation as a result of lack of market research, clear market strategy, dependency on the public sector for patronage and lack identifying QS services to market (Chukwuemeka, 2015). These of course have hampered competitiveness and threatened continued survival firms. Although, a number of studies such as Jaafar and Wai (2008), Kadiri and Ayodele (2013) identified the impediment factors for marketing quantity surveying services in Nigeria, there is lack of available studies in relation to identifying the impediments to marketing quantity surveyor's services in North Western Nigeria. The study will allow for a greater understanding of marketing impediments in quantity surveying profession in North-Western Nigeria and has potential to accelerate efforts to bring marketing to construction works in both public and private sectors.

This paper aims to investigate the major impediment factors in marketing QS services in Sokoto, Kebbi and Zamfara states. The impediment factors will be investigated from the perception of two important stakeholders in the Quantity Surveying organisation; the Public Quantity surveyor (government) and the consultant Quantity surveyor (private).

### **2. LITERATURE REVIEW**

It is observed in practice that marketing in professional QS firms, is viewed as less important to the management and survival of the firm than finance and personnel issues (Morgan, 1992). Such difficulty was observed even when QS firms fail to make marketing a key management tool for the achievement of firm performance. Moreover, some difficulties observed in implementation of marketing in quantity surveying firms, have been identified to include good marketing strategies in QS firms (Kadiri & Ayodele, 2013), marketing is not viewed as a legitimate management activity in most

QS firm (Tarawneh, 2013), lack of management commitment, understanding and acceptance of the marketing concept, and the incompatibility of marketing with ‘professional ethics (Jaafar & Wai, 2008). According to Ally (2003) identifying targeted market plays a very importance role in investigating barriers to marketing professional’s services.

A number of studies have also been conducted to examine marketing strategy and performance in construction industry in developing countries. For example, Ally (2003) Marketing and Architect in South Africa, and reported that majority of Architectural firms in South Africa do not have a targeted market that is defined but they are using marketing tools effectively. Some researchers questioned the benefits and utilization of marketing in Architect profession and how marketing practices affect Architect survival and business in South Africa.

Grace (2011) studied effective marketing strategies and the Nigerian construction professionals and found the level of practice of marketing among professionals in Nigerian construction industry was very low and inadequate compared to the level and keenness of competition among other professionals. Similarly, Chukwuemeka, (2015) examined application of marketing strategies in Nigerian quantity surveying firms and found that a reorientation is lacking in QS firms to make marketing a key management tool for the achievement of firm performance. These studies identified and proposed a range of approaches that have helped the quantity surveying firms, professionals and client in the building industry to manage marketing in their organizations. The study has its limitation in lack of identifying the potential barriers to marketing of the quantity surveyors services and also on the location as each area is peculiar in terms of availability of Quantity surveyors and works.

**3. METHODOLOGY**

The target respondents for the study were Senior Quantity Surveyors working in public and private organizations. One hundred copies of the questionnaire were administered and seventy two were completed and returned. On a four point Likert type scale, respondents were asked to rate the impediment inhibiting effective marketing of their services.

The first part of the questionnaire asked for general information about the respondents and their organizations. In the second part, each respondent was asked to rate the impediment factors to marketing quantity surveying services. Small and medium sized construction outfits located in Sokoto and Kebbi states were studied. Convenient sampling technique was used in selecting the construction companies. A total of 15 companies participated in the study.

Descriptive method of analysis was adopted in analyzing the data collected from the questionnaire survey. The Relative Importance Index (RII) was used in determining the rank of each item. The index (RII) developed by Lil (1992) was calculated for each item in order to establish the relative importance of the variable using the formula:

$$RII = \frac{3n_1 + 2n_2 + 1n_3 + 0n_4}{4N}$$

Where n1 = number of respondents for very important; n2= number of respondents for important n3== number of respondents for fairly importantn4== number of respondents for not important and N= Total number of respondents

**4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

Table 1: Questionnaire Distribution and Response

Distribution	Public quantity surveyors	Consultant’s quantity surveyors	Total	%
Number administered	50	50	100	100
Number returned	40 (80%)	32 (64%)	72	72
Number unreturned	10 (20%)	18 (36%)	28	28

Source: field survey, 2016

Table 1 shows that out of the 100 copies of the questionnaire administered, 72 (72%) were fully completed and returned. The response rate for public quantity surveyors is 40 (80%) while that of the consultant is 32 (64%). This sample size is considered adequate and in line with the central limit theorem, which states that as the size of the sample approaches thirty, the distribution of that sample assumes a normal or symmetrical distribution. (Datoogem, 2006).

Table 2: Working Experience

Years	Frequency	Percentage
1-5 years	8	11
6-10 years	28	39
11-15 years	19	26
16-20 years	11	15
Above 20 years	6	9
<b>Total</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Field Survey, 2016

Table 2 shows the working experience of the respondents. It reveals that 15% of the respondents have 16-20 years working experience, 39% have 6-10 years working experience, and 26% have 11-15 years working experience, while 9% have more than 20 years working experience. This shows that majority of the respondents have experience in construction works.

Table 3: Presence of marketing department

Presence of marketing department in the organization	Freq Public %	Private %
Yes		
No	40	100
Total	40	100

Source: Field Survey 2016

Table 3 shows that majority of the respondents from the public and private sectors indicated lack of marketing units in their organizations.

Table 4: Impediments to marketing QS services

S/N	Impediments	Public quantity surveyors (N = 40)			Consultants quantity surveyors (N = 32)			Average RII of both groups	
		Mean	RII	Rnk	Mean	RII	Rnk	RII	Overall
1	Clear strategic plan for marketing	2.80	0.450	4	2.90	0.47	5	0.460	5
2	Political difference	3.04	0.500	3	3.10	0.57	2	0.534	3
3	Lack of market research	3.05	0.510	2	3.15	0.60	1	0.555	1
4	Dependency on the private sector for patronage	2.27	0.430	6	2.83	0.44	7	0.435	7
5	Treated with levity	2.64	0.410	7	2.98	0.52	4	0.465	4
6	Marketing interest	2.76	0.440	5	2.85	0.55	3	0.445	6
7	Lack of management commitment	2.12	0.300	12	1.98	0.22	12	0.260	12
8	Understanding and acceptance of the marketing concept	2.20	0.301	11	2.30	0.32	10	0.311	10
9	Incompatibility of marketing with professional ethics	2.60	0.400	8	2.50	0.35	9	0.375	9
10	Absence of prof to manage marketing department	1.72	0.180	14	1.60	0.18	13	0.180	14
11	Difficult to switch to offering of other services	2.04	0.260	13	1.53	0.13	14	0.195	13
12	Difficulty in measuring return on marketing	2.44	0.360	9	2.80	0.41	8	0.385	8
13	Not knowing what to markets	2.32	0.330	10	2.12	0.28	11	0.305	11
14	Lack of marketing depart	3.16	0.540	1	3.07	0.45	6	0.545	2

Source: Field Survey, 2016

Table 4 presents the analysis of impediments factors to marketing of quantity surveyors services. Quantity surveyors were asked to rank the level of impact on marketing of QS services as it

affects both groups. Public quantity surveyors ranked lack of marketing department, lack of conducting market research and political difference with an RII of 0.540, 0.510 each and 0.500 and rank 1, 2 and 3 respectively. The lowest ranked factors are lack of management commitment, difficult to switch to offering of other services and absence of professionals to manage marketing department. Similarly, the responses of the private quantity surveyors, also shows that lack of market research, political difference and marketing interest with an RII 0.6, 0.57 and 0.55 each and rank 1, 2 and 3 respectively. Lowest ranked factors are lack of management commitment, absence of professionals to manage marketing department and difficult to switch to offering of other services. The overall ranking shows that lack of market research followed by lack of marketing department and political difference, with an RII of 0.55, 0.545 and 0.34 each with a rank of 1, 2 and 3 respectively.

The overall ranking of the impediment factors shows that lack of market research is one of the major impediments to marketing quantity surveyors services in the selected areas. This coincides with the finding of Grace (2011) that the professionals in Nigerian construction allow for the use of research and promotion as marketing strategies within the context of the professional ethics as they could be adopted for improved quality and productivity of professional services in Nigeria. The implication could be market research provided insights into the interplay between strategy and research, while hinting at a complex interaction between decision makers, strategic intent and organizational politics.

Lack of marketing department was rank second. This agrees with Ally (2003) finding that establishment of marketing Department will explain how marketing affect survival of any profession in the construction industry. This shows that majority of the quantity surveying firms in Sokoto, Kebbi and Zamfara states do not have Marketing Department which makes it difficult to sell their services and/or create awareness to the public about their services in the affected states.

The third ranking factor was political difference. This suggest that issue of tenure ship and political difference was among the major impediment factors to marketing quantity surveyors services in the area of study. The lowest rank factors are lack of management commitment, difficult to switch to offering of other services and absence of professionals to manage marketing department.

Table 5: Reasons for marketing QS services

S/N	Reasons	Public quantity surveyors (N = 40)			Consultants quantity surveyors (N = 32)			Average RII of both groups	
		Mean	RII	Rnk	Mean	RII	Rnk	RII	Overall Rank
1	Market fluctuation	2.80	0.450	4	2.90	0.47	5	0.46	5
2	Increase market profitability and Stand for competition	3.04	0.500	3	3.10	0.57	2	0.534	3
3	Create awareness about the profession	3.05	0.510	2	3.15	0.60	1	0.555	1
4	effect of marketing on performance	2.27	0.430	6	2.83	0.44	7	0.435	7
5	Improved quality of services	2.64	0.410	7	2.98	0.52	4	0.465	4
6	Improved productivity of QS professional	2.76	0.440	5	2.85	0.55	3	0.445	6
7	increase efficiency of the services of the quantity surveyor	2.12	0.300	12	1.98	0.22	12	0.260	12
8	Achieve faster growth of the main business	2.20	0.301	11	2.30	0.32	10	0.311	10
9	Environmental uncertainty	2.60	0.400	8	2.50	0.35	9	0.375	9
10	Provide greater sense of job security	1.72	0.180	14	1.60	0.18	13	0.180	14
11	Acquire more contract	2.04	0.260	13	1.53	0.13	14	0.195	13
12	Direct resources to area of needs	2.44	0.360	9	2.80	0.41	8	0.385	8
13	Continuous relationship with the client( public and private)	2.32	0.330	10	2.12	0.28	11	0.305	11
14	Sustain flow of projects	3.16	0.540	1	3.07	0.45	6	0.545	2

Source; Field Survey, 2006

Table 5 presents the reasons for marketing quantity surveyors services. Private and public quantity surveyors were asked to rank the level of importance of the factors as perceived by both groups. Public quantity surveyors ranked create awareness about the profession, increase market profitability and stand for competition and improved productivity of professional services with RII 0.540, 0.510 and 0.500 each ranked 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup>. The lowest ranked factors are continuous

relationship with the client (public and private), achieve faster growth of the main business and increase efficiency of the services of the quantity surveyor. Similarly, the responses of the private quantity surveyors, in table 5 shows that create awareness about the profession, to increase market profitability and improved productivity of professional services, with RII of 0.60, 0.57 and 0.55 and rank 1, 2 and 3. Increase efficiency of the services of the quantity surveyor, provide greater sense of job security and acquire more contract are the lowest rank factors. However, the overall ranking of the reasons shows that to create awareness about the profession was rank first, followed by to sustain flow of projects and the third reason was to increase market profitability with a RII of 0.555, 0.545 and 0.534 and rank 1, 2 and 3 respectively.

To create awareness about the profession was ranked first among the major reasons quantity surveyors must market their services. This agrees with Ally (2003) findings that large percentage of construction firms does not find marketing necessary. The implication could be that marketing explain the survival and effect on any professions or organization which in turns improves performance.

The second rank reason was continuous relationship with the both public and private clients. This coincides with the findings of David, and Michael (2005) that marketing improves effectiveness of services.

The third reason is to increase market profitability. This supports the findings of Grace (2011) effective marketing will result into acquiring more contracts, creating more awareness about their services and continuous relationship with their clients. The implication is that effective marketing improves profitability of the firms and professionals as well. The lowest rank factors are increase efficiency of the services of the quantity surveyor, Acquire more contract and provide greater sense of job security.

## 5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The main objective of the study was to investigate factors that impede marketing quantity surveyors services within Sokoto, Kebbi and Zamfara states. The study concludes that quantity surveyors marketing impediments must be identified and assessed because of the value of marketing, if the profession is to survive and remain competitive in the Nigeria construction industry. The study has its limitation of the bias of self-selection, which is always present in a self-administered questionnaire.

The following recommendations are made based on the findings of the study

1. Quantity surveying organisations (public and private) should established Marketing Department in their organization to build a good lasting relationship with prospect clients and create mean of awareness about the profession.
2. Quantity surveying organisation should embrace market research to learn the nature of their client's strategic intention with a view to improve their effectiveness.
3. Quantity surveying organisation should depend on public and private sector for the supply of works within the study area.

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