

Exploring complexity in construction projects

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Abstract

Construction projects involve and generate a number of interfaces between the various parties as these come together to deliver the output. Projects are typically characterised by complexity and previous analyses have been conducted mainly from the technical perspective. Only recently the subject of complexity has been linked to non-technical project aspects such as behavioural, social, cultural and interconnections. This paper is set out to describe the initial findings from 31 interviews with construction Project Managers which were carried out as part of an extensive investigation into socio-organisation complexity and its characteristics as this is created by the interconnection structures. In addition to the interviews, a postal survey and five case studies have been carried out all focusing in the areas of selecting project team members, structuring the project team and the management style followed by the Project Managers. Results indicate that complexity although recognised is not defined and is identified predominantly by the control and mechanistic parts of project management processes.

Keywords

Project Complexity, Complexity Characteristics, Project Performance, Construction