Judgment model for relationship quality in New Zealand construction projects

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Relationship quality as a measure and evaluation of working relationships in construction has been associated with four general factors of trust, commitment, teamwork, and performance satisfaction. The factors have been previously explored within New Zealand construction sector through comprehensive literature search and exhaustive interviews. Although these factors are identified but there is ambiguities as to what are the values or preference of parties involve and how would these factors be traded of in a real cases. Basically based on what criteria does the industry practitioner judge its relationship quality with other parties. Data is collected from New Zealand industry participants through a conjoint full profile questionnaire technique. Via conjoint and cluster analysis a judgment model for relationship quality is extracted. The overall aggregate conjoint analysis suggests that performance satisfaction is significantly the most important factor in judging relationship quality in construction activities and the other three factors attained a relatively large importance index inferring that all are valuable factors. However by assessing the conjoint measurements and utilities generated at individual level it is understood that different patterns of judgment exists. With the aid of hierarchical cluster analysis three main clusters are identified with radically different importance indexes. The largest cluster had performance satisfaction as their main decisive factor followed by commitment and teamwork; accordingly trust had least importance. Conversely the second cluster had trust and teamwork as the decisive factors with performance satisfaction as the least important and finally the smallest cluster regarded trust and performance to be the decisive factors in their judgment of relationship quality. this is a clear indication that different patterns of judgment and decision making exists for Relationship quality among construction practitioners and perhaps more detailed assessment is required. The judgment model provides utility values for each factor level of relationship quality and consequently evaluation of any potential relationship scenario using the benchmarks set by these utility values becomes achievable.

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