

Responsiveness of Contractors' Bids for Public Construction Projects in Nigeria

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Abstract

Many construction firms in Nigeria are folding-up due to unsuccessful tendering consequent upon noncompliance with the bid solicitation requirements. Reversal of this ugly trend is imperative for the country to achieve sustainable development in construction. Hence, the main aim of this study was to examine the tenders submitted by contractors in competition for public construction projects in Nigeria with a view to determining their compliance with the bids' solicitation notice requirements – responsiveness and the deficient parts of the tenders needing the bidders' attention for compliance. Towards this end, primary data were collected through two sets of questionnaires. The first set were administered through email (due to ravaging covid-19 pandemic) on chief executive officers/managing directors (CEO/MD) of a sample of sixty-three (63) construction companies selected randomly from eighty-five (85) members of the full membership category in the register of Federation of Construction Industry (FOCI) (FOCI, 2019). The second set were administered on the principal partners of a sample of one hundred and eighteen (118) quantity surveying firms that were responsible for the evaluation of the contractors' tenders submitted in competition for construction projects across the country. The quantity surveying firms were selected from three-hundred and eighty-eight (388) members on the list of registered firms in the register of Quantity Surveyors Registration Board of Nigeria (QSRBN) (QSRBN, 2019) using systematic random sampling technique. The data obtained were subjected to both descriptive and inferential statistics such as means, percentages, mean item score (MIS) and t-test. IBM Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 25 was employed for the analysis. The results revealed that the responsiveness of tenders submitted by the contractors in competition for construction works in Nigeria are 36% corporately (as business entity) and 38% competitively among other contractors. The result further revealed that the tenders are not entirely compliant with the clients' tenders' requirements due to frequent violation of bid submittal requirements (MIS = 4.3), payment of VAT and tax (MIS = 4.1), compliance with staff retirement scheme (MIS = 3.9), signing of price bid form and price schedule (MIS = 3.6) and eligibility requirements (MIS = 3.6). The paper concluded that the submitted tenders are poorly responsive to the tender requirements of the clients.

Keywords: bids, compliance, construction projects, contractors, responsiveness, submittal requirements.

Introduction

Responsiveness to clients' bid requirements is prerequisite and essential for tender success. It is a necessary (even though not sufficient) condition for tender success. Hence, apart from a contractor being responsible, majority of his bids for construction works must be substantially responsive to obtain adequate number of projects that will enable him to at least break-even and remain in business. According to Banki, Esmaeeli and Ravanshadnia (2008) and Ayangade, Wahab and Alake (2009), contractors' sustainable corporate success and survival is dependent on bidding and winning contracts. In the opinion of Kimms (2007) in addition to the bids being low enough to win the contract and marked-up adequately to achieve the expected profit margin, must conform with the requirements of the bid solicitation notice (be responsive).

In Nigeria however, selection of contractors for construction works is often than not through tenders submitted by prospective contractors in competition (Standard Bidding Document (SBD), 2011). This competition is becoming more fierce and keener according to Musa, Oyeibisi and Babalola (2009), due to the prevalent global economic meltdown and the various ameliorating measures being taken such as drastic cut in public expenditure and high interest rate which had reduced considerably the volume of construction works available for competition among the

teaming contractors in the country. Similarly, Aje, Oladinrin and Nwaole (2016) argued that the provision of Public Procurement Act (PPA) (2007) of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (Clause 24(i)) that procurement of the few available ones must be through open competitive bidding has increase the intensity of the competition. Consequently, Barr (1990) opined that a contractor cannot afford to haphazardly bid for projects, he must formulate strategic approach to obtain required volume of works at profitable prices. Thus, contractors are becoming more desperate and critical to submit winning tenders that will not only give them competitive advantage over the other bidders at any available opportunity, but also guarantee them the required profit.

Unfortunately, according to Kims (2007) and Aje, Oladinrin and Nwaole (2016), the contractors are facing challenges of bidding successfully in this highly competitive environment. And in the opinion of Ayodele and Alabi (2011) and Ibronke, Oladinrin, Adeniyi and Eboime (2013) many contractors have failed in their bids to procure construction projects in Nigeria even when they have been pre-qualified. The consequence of this dismal performance of contractors in bidding is that many construction firms; the bedrock of economic development in the country, fall out of business within the first five years of their establishments (Grosskopf, 2005).

According to Quezon, Letarge and Macarubo (2016), the two major criteria for successful bidding are that the bidders are sufficiently well qualified to undertake the contract (Responsible) and the bids are fully responsive to the clients' bid requirements (Responsiveness). Since the major purpose of pre-qualification is to determine and select responsible bidders, Hatush and Skitmore (1997) described them as bidders that have the financial strength to sustain the cash flows likely to arise during the project; the experience of the similar nature of projects, the competency and plant capacity to complete the project within the constraints of the contract; the technical capability (including human resources) sufficient to satisfy the requirements of the contract; a complete understanding of similar project scopes and the ability to absorb subsequent changes; the facilities (testing, quality control, etc.) necessary to establish assurance of quality; and comply in all respects with health and safety regulations. Consequently, it could be inferred from the submission of Ayodele and Alabi (2011) and Ibronke et. al. (2013) that the failure of the contractors in bidding successfully can be attributed to the irresponsiveness of their bids.

In view of the significance of the construction sector to the economic development and growth of the nation, as well as the focal position of these key construction stakeholders (contractors) which Bakhshi and Bioki (2013) described as the most significant executive agents in the industry, it is pertinent to address this unpleasant trend with a view to enhancing their bid success rate and put the sector in a good stead for effective and efficient performance. A right step in this wise according to Aje, Oladinrin and Nwaole (2016), is for the contractors to reduce the risks associated with bidding process, understand and manage the various factors that contribute to bid success in the industry. In this wise, knowledge and understanding of the basis for the evaluation and selection of contractor prior to tendering, extent of conformity of their tenders with the tender solicitation notice as well as their areas of deficiencies are imperative for preparation and subsequent submission of responsive tenders. Hence, the aim of this study is to assess the compliance of tenders submitted in competition by contractors for public construction projects in Nigeria with solicitation notice's requirements with a view to providing information that could enhance their tender success rates. Studies on bid abound. These include the studies of Zedan and Skitmore (1997), Ng (1992), Merna and Smith (1990) and Russell (1988) whose focus were on bidding process and studies on prequalification of contractors: Patil, Waghmare and Gawande (2016), Moselhi (1993) and Herbert and Biggart (1993) etc. Others, such as Prajapati, Pitroda, Bhavsar (2015), Bagies and Fortune (2006) and Herbsman and Ellis (1992) etc. were focused on bid/no bid decision and bidding strategies. A detail examination of these studies revealed that majority of them such as Waara and Bröchner (2006), Shen et al. (2004), Wong et al. (2001), Kumaraswamy and Walker (2000); and Hatush and Skitmore (1997) were geared towards helping the clients to set appropriate evaluation criteria and weightings and subsequently select a suitable contractor. Other studies such as Danso and Ayyette (2018), Patil, Waghmare and Gawande (2016), Aje et al. (2016), Musa and Dada (2015), Banki et al. (2008), Oberlender and Trost (2001) and Tavakoli and Utomo (1989) that pay attention to how the contractors would submit responsive tenders laid emphasis on contractors' selection criteria and their contributions to bid success and bidding strategies. However, studies on responsiveness of contractors' tenders to solicitation notice requirements are sparse; hence, this is the major gap this study would fill. The aim of this study, therefore, is to examine the tenders submitted in competition for public

construction projects in Nigeria with a view to determining their responsiveness to the clients' tender notices requirements. In addition, the study identified the areas and extent of deviation of the bids from the requirements.

The major objectives of any construction firm (contractor) are to obtain works and execute such works to the satisfaction of the clients with adequate returns on investment (Musa, 2009). According to Banki, Esmaeeli and Ravanshadnia (2008), the only possible way for a contracting firm to survive, remain in business and achieve its corporate objectives is through winning tenders and making profit. Thus, Wallwork (1999) argued that contractors' abilities to win the right projects and determine the 'right' price level are of equal importance for survival of their organizations and subsequently making a profit. As tendering either or not in competition remains the only route for contractors to obtain construction works in the industry, Drew et al. (2001), Prajapati, Pitroda and Bhavsar (2015) argued that construction companies must have the capability to deal with various bidding situations successfully in today's highly competitive construction markets. Thus, Barr (1990) opined that contractors cannot afford to haphazardly bid on job but must formulate some economic approach to obtaining work that will provide them the right volume at profitable prices.

Hence, when tendering, contractors often employed various strategies that would enhance and guarantee their winning chances on one hand and on the other enable them to meet the clients' bid requirements profitably. In the opinion of Elsayah and Mukhtar (2000) contractors should pay more attention to meeting the clients' tender requirements. In this wise, knowledge and understanding of the basis for the evaluation and selection of contractor prior to tendering is imperative for preparation and submission of responsive tender. Nevertheless, clients usually set criteria or requirements upon which the contractors would be evaluated for an objective selection decision (Musa and Dada, 2015 and Onwusonye, 2004) that maximizes clients' returns on investment (Quezon et al., 2016). These contractors' selection criteria or requirements are established in order to ensure fairness and impartiality in competition. Lin et al. (2003) argued that in addition to the afore-mentioned benefits derivable from setting such criteria, they must sufficiently curtail the contractors' opportunistic bidding behavior to be effective. They are often contained in the bid solicitation notice of the client and in the opinion of United State Department of Justice (USDOJ) (2016) should include a complete, clear, accurate, and realistic specification or purchase description of the clients' needs. According to SBD (2011), National Procurement and Tender Administration (NPTA) (2009), Public and Private Development Center (PPDC) (2008) and CIDB (2006), they are the bases for the evaluation of contractors' tenders.

Previous studies focusing on contractors' bidding efforts are many. They include studies such as Ahmad et al. (1988), Eastham et al. (1993), Drew and Skitmore (1997), Skitmore et al. (2001), Bagies and Fortunes (2006), Enshassi et al. (2010), Prajapati et al. (2015) and Ajayi (2016) among others were aimed at aiding the contractors to decide either to bid or not and adopt winning strategies that optimize their profit. According to Banki et al. (2008), each of these studies contributed immensely to contractors' bidding and mark-up decisions. In addition, studies of Danso and Ayyette (2018), Patil, Waghmare and Gawande (2016), Aje et al. (2016), Musa and Dada (2016), Banki et al. (2008), Oberlender and Trost (2001) and Tavakoli and Utomo (1989) paid attention to how the contractors would submit responsive tenders and laid emphasis on contractors' selection criteria and their contributions to bid success and bidding strategies. According to Marzouk et al. (2013), knowledge of the clients' bid evaluation and selection criteria are very important and critical to the contractors for preparation and submission of responsive tenders because they are the bases for the examination and evaluation of the bids.

The main purpose of bid examination and evaluation is to determine the lowest evaluated substantially responsive bid and responsible bidder among the bids submitted before the bid closing time on the date specified in the bid solicitation notice. According to Onwusonye (2005), 'Due Process' recommended four (4) weeks as the tender period. Upon submission of bids in accordance with the rules and regulations stipulated in the bid solicitation notice/documents (either electronically or manually), the bids will be opened on the date, time and at the place specified in the notice. Thereafter, the bids will be subjected to preliminary examination to determine whether they are completely in conformity with the tender notification requirements (substantially responsive) before conducting further detailed evaluation to determine whether the bidder of the apparent responsive bid is responsible (PPDC, 2008 and NPTA, 2009).

A substantially responsive tender according to CIDB (2008), is a tender that complies in all ramifications with the terms, conditions, specifications and requirements of the tender notice without material deviations or reservations or omissions. Any tender with material deviations, or reservations or omissions in relation to these tender notice requirements according to NPTA (2009) and SBD (2011), will not be processed further and would be declared irresponsible and out-rightly rejected.

What constitutes material deviations, reservations and omissions vary from clients to clients and are project specific. They depend among other things on the criteria put forward in the tender solicitation notice by the clients and the project needs. According to Musa and Dada (2015), clients usually set and consider criteria that would afford them necessary and sufficient bases to determine responsiveness of the contractors' bids without prejudice or favor and afford them wide range of feasible and viable contractors selection decisions. Thus, the essence of commercial evaluation or preliminary examination of bids is to determine whether the bids received were completely in accordance with the tender notification requirements (substantially responsive), before conducting further detailed evaluation.

A deviation, reservation or omission in tender submitted by a contractor would be considered as material and cause a bid to be non-responsive according to CIDB (2008) and NPTA (2009) if it affects significantly or substantially the scope, quality, or performance of the goods and related services specified in the tender and contract documents; or inconsistent with the bidding documents and significantly limits the clients' rights or the bidders' obligations under the contract; or if rectified, would unfairly affect the competitive position of other bidders presenting substantially responsive bids. In the opinion of New York (2015) any deviation, reservation or omission that affects price, quality, quantity and delivery of a project and other requirements that are mandatory in the solicitation notice are material. It is necessary therefore to examine the tenders one after the other to determine whether the submitted documents and its format are in conformity with the tender notice requirements.

Patil et al. (2016) and Elswa and Mukhtar (2000) had highlighted some irregularities in bids that are material or significant/substantial to justify rejection of the tenders. These include failure to sign the bid form and price Schedules by the authorized person or persons in the firm; failure to satisfy eligibility requirements; failure to submit a bid security as specified in the bidding documents; failure to satisfy the bid validity period; failure to comply with minimum experience criteria as specified in the bidding documents; submission of conditional bids, and failure to submit major supporting documents required by the bidding documents to determine substantial responsiveness of a bid. Stanley and Kevin (2018) expanded these to include non-submission of the bid in the right form and at the specified place and time.

In Nigeria however, in addition to the above conditions, Oladele (2019) noted that non-registration with Corporate Affairs Commission (CAC) and the establishment/organization, non-payment and remittance of tax and value added tax (VAT) and non-payment of the required fees are enough ground to declare a tender non-responsive. Similarly, Federal Tenders Journal (2008) included failure to provide evidence for complying with Industrial Training requirements and workers' retirement scheme as additional conditions for non-responsiveness of a bid. The extent of compliance (responsiveness) of the tenders submitted by the construction companies in Nigeria bidding for public construction projects with these conditions is explored in the next section. It is measured as the ratio of numbers of responsive tenders to the total number of tenders submitted for a project or to the number of tenders submitted by a contractor in a particular period. While the former measures the performance of a contractor among other contractors, the latter measures the performance of the contractor's firm as a business entity. It ranges between 0 and 1, where zero (0) represents perfect irresponsiveness/non-responsiveness and one (1) stands for perfect responsiveness (an ideal case of total conformity with the tender notice). In between these two extremes lies various degrees of responsiveness.

Research Methodology

The study adopted both qualitative and quantitative research methods to seek and verify the opinion of the

respondents. Data pertinent to the study were collected from both primary and secondary sources. The primary data were collected through two sets of questionnaires. The first set was administered through email due to ravaging covid-19 pandemic on chief executive officers/managing directors (CEO/MD) of a sample of sixty-three (63) construction companies. Using random sampling technique, the companies were selected from eighty-five (85) members of the full membership category of Federation of Construction Industry (FOCI) (FOCI, 2019). The second set of questionnaires was administered through the same mode on the principal partners of a sample of one hundred and eighteen (118) quantity surveying firms that were responsible for the evaluation of the contractors' tenders submitted in competition for construction projects across the country. The quantity surveying firms were selected from three-hundred and eighty-eight (388) firms in the register of Quantity Surveyors Registration Board of Nigeria (QSRBN) (QSRBN, 2019) using systematic random sampling technique. Secondary data were extracted from one-hundred and six (106) tenders' evaluation reports received from the quantity surveying firms to complement the primary data. Forty-seven (47) and eighty-six (86) properly completed questionnaires representing 74.6% and 72.9% return rate were received via email from the construction and quantity surveying firms respectively. The data obtained were analyzed with descriptive and inferential statistics such as means, percentages, mean item score (MIS) and t-test statistical techniques. IBM Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 25 was employed for the analysis.

Data Analysis and Evaluation of Results

The results obtained from the analysis of the data were presented and discussed in the following passages.

Particulars of the Respondents

The respondents were asked to indicate the years their organizations commenced business and their years of experiences in the Nigerian construction industry, the responses are presented in Tables 1 and 2.

Table 1: The Year Respondents' Organization Started Business

Firms	1-5yrs ago	6-10yrs ago	11-15yrs ago	16-20yrs ago	Over 20yrs ago	Total	Mean	S. D
Construction	0	3	4	28	12	47	19	3.6
Quantity Surveying	0	6	17	56	7	86	17	3.3
Total	0	9	21	84	19	133	18	3.7

Table 2: Years of Experience of the Respondents in the Construction Industry

Firms/Years	1-5yrs	6-10yrs	11-15yrs	16-20yrs	Over 20yrs	Total	Mean	S. D
Construction	0	0	1	31	15	47	20	2.3
Quantity Surveying	0	4	7	58	17	86	18	3.3
Total	0	4	8	89	32	133	19	3.1

Table 1 revealed that averagely the respondents' organizations commenced business between 15 and 22 years ago (18 ± 3.7) and Table 2 revealed that the respondents have between 16 and 22 years of experience (19 ± 3.1) averagely in the Nigerian construction industry. The implications of these results are that some of the respondents had been working in the industry before starting their own businesses. In addition, as proprietors of their respective firms with such several years of experience in construction, information obtained from them would be reliable, accurate and authentic.

Participation of the Respondents in Construction Works in the Past Five Years

The respondents from the construction firms were asked to indicate the number of projects they tendered for, the

numbers their tenders were adjudged responsive and were successful in the past five years. Their responses are shown in Tables 3 and 4

Table 3: Number of Projects Tendered for by the Construction Firms

No. of Projects/ Firms	1-10	11-20	21-30	31-40	Over 40	Total	Mean	S. D
No of firms		1	6	11	29	47	39.5	8.1

Table 4: Number of Projects in which Construction Firms' Tenders were Responsive and Successful

No. of Projects/ Firms	1-10	11-20	21-30	31-40	Over 40	Total	Mean	S. D
No of firms	11	28	6	2	0	47	15.2	7.1

Tables 3 revealed that each of the construction firms tendered for approximately forty (40) projects in the past five years (Equivalent to eight (8) projects yearly) and Table 4 revealed that their tenders were responsive and successful in only fifteen (15) projects averagely (three (3) projects per year). Since tendering for construction works is mutually exclusive, it is discernible from these results that paltry volume of construction works is available for execution in the country resulting in keener competition among the construction firms. This re-affirms the submission of Musa, Oyeibisi and Babalola (2009) and Aje, Oladinrin and Nwaole (2016) about the meagerness of available construction works in the country.

Similarly, the principal partners of the quantity surveying firms were asked to indicate the number of projects they were involved in the past five years, the number of tenders they received and adjudged responsive per project. Their responses are as presented in Tables 5, 6 and 7

Table 5: Number of Projects the Quantity Surveying Firms were Involved in the Past Five years

No. of Projects/ Firms	1-10	11-20	21-30	31-40	Over 40	Total	Mean	S. D
No of firms	8	22	30	21	5	86	24.7	10.5

Table 6: Number of Tenders Received Per Project involving the Quantity Surveying Firms

No. of Tenders/ Firms	1-5	6-10	11-15	16-20	Over 20	Total	Mean	S. D
No of firms	9	45	18	8	6	86	11	5

Table 5 revealed that the quantity surveying firms were involved in an average of 25 projects in the space of five (5) years, corresponding to an average of 5 projects yearly. In addition, Table 6 revealed that an average of eleven (11) contractors were tendering for a project during the period. This implies that for every tender notice in respect of construction works/projects, there are as many as eleven (11) construction firms submitting bids for the project. This finding supports the submission of Aje, Oladinrin and Nwaole (2016) that there is keen competition among the construction firms for the few available works in Nigeria.

Table 7: Number of Tenders Adjudged Responsive Per Project involving the Quantity Surveying Firms

No. of Tenders/ Firms	1-5	6-10	11-15	16-20	Over 20	Total	Mean	S. D
No of firms	67	16	3	-	-	86	4	2.5

From Tables 6 and 7, it is discernible that from every eleven (11) tenders submitted in competition by construction firms in Nigeria only four (4) are responsive to tender solicitation requirements.

Responsiveness of Contractors' Bids

Responsiveness of contractors' bids to tender solicitation requirements were measured in two ways. Firstly, responsiveness of each firm's tenders to the clients' tender notice requirements and it is measured as the ratio of the number of the construction firms' responsive tenders to the total number of bids submitted in a particular period. Hence, from Tables 3 and 4, it is evident that the total number of projects a construction firm tendered for is forty (40) averagely and the numbers of responsive tenders are fifteen (15). Consequently, responsiveness of the firm's tender R is given

$$\text{as } R1 = \frac{\text{Number of responsive tenders}}{\text{Number of projects tendered for}} = \frac{15}{40} = 0.38 \quad \dots\dots\dots \text{eqn. 1}$$

Secondly, it is measured competitively as the ratio of the responsive bids to the total numbers of tender submitted for a project. From Tables 6 and 7, it is discernible that the number of tenders adjudged responsive per project are four (4) averagely and the number of tenders received per project are eleven (11) averagely. So, responsiveness is given as

$$R2 = \frac{\text{Number of responsive tenders}}{\text{Number of tenders received for a project}} = \frac{4}{11} = 0.36 \quad \dots\dots\dots \text{eqn. 2}$$

Although the two indices R1 and R2 measured the same concept (Responsiveness) from different perspectives, hence, may be expected to be the same but different with R1 greater than R2. Consequently, the two indices were subjected to students' t-test to determine the significance of the difference between them. The result obtained from the analysis is presented in Table 8

Table 8 revealed that the difference between the two measures of responsiveness (R1 & R2) is significant ($p = .02 < .05$). The two indices are indispensable decision aiding tools to the contractors. The former (R1) measures the corporate performance of a contractor/contracting firm in tendering competitively for a particular period. As measured above, it showed that 36% of the tenders submitted by the contracting firm for public building projects in a period were responsive to the clients' tender solicitation requirements. The latter; R2 measured the performance of a contractor/contracting firms among other contractors/contracting firms in tendering and can be used to predict the likelihood of the contractor's bid being responsive.

For example, the value of R2 as measured above gave the probability of the tender submitted by a contractor in Nigeria being responsive. It showed that there is 38% chance (probability) that the contractor's tenders would be responsive to clients' tender notice requirements for public building projects in Nigeria. In addition, it showed that 38% of the bids of the contractors bidding for public building projects in the country would be responsive to tender solicitation notice requirements.

Table 8: Significance of the Difference between the Two Responsiveness Measures (R₁ & R₂)

Paired Samples Test									
Paired Differences									
95% Confidence Interval of the Difference									
	M	SD	S E M	Lower	Upper	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	
Pair 1 R ₁ - R ₂	-.121	.343	.050	-.222	-.020	-2.42	46	.02	

In either way, 0.36 (36%) and 0.38 (38%) responsiveness are poor performances to the contractors/contracting firms in tendering both corporately and competitively and as such the contractors' bids could be described as generally poorly responsive. These dismal performances vividly explained the submission of Kims (2007) and Aje et al. (2016) that the contractors are facing challenges of bidding successfully in the construction industry's highly competitive environment and the conclusions of Ayodele and Alabi (2011) and Ibiro et al. (2013) that many contractors have failed in their bids to procure construction projects in Nigeria even when they have been pre-qualified.

Tenders' Requirements to which the Contractors' Bids were Irresponsive

The respondents were asked to identify the tenders' requirements their bids were irresponsive to (non-compliant with/violation of) from the lists generated from the literature and obtained from the respondents' responses and rank the frequency of the bids' violation of the requirements. The rankings were based on five points Likert scale with values 1,2,3,4 and 5 representing 'not at all', 'rarely', 'sometimes', 'often' and 'very often' respectively. The results obtained from the analysis of their responses using mean item score (MIS) are presented in Table 9.

Table 9 revealed that the respondents were unanimous in ranking the bid submittal requirements, payment of VAT and tax and contractors' compliance with Staffs' Retirement Scheme as the foremost tenders' requirements the contractors' bid often violated (Irresponsive to) with overall mean item score (MIS) of 4.3, 4.1 and 3.9 respectively. These results corroborate the opinion of New York (2015) that listed improper labelling of bid, improper bid delivery, wrong bid package, submission of wrong number of copies of bids as well as late submission of bids among others as common errors/mistakes of contractors that could render their bids irresponsive. A close examination of the items listed revealed that they are components of bid submittal requirements.

Conversely, the respondents also unanimously ranked registration with CAC and compliance with industrial training scheme as the requirements the contractors' tenders were least violated/not violated at all (responsive to) with overall MIS of 1.3 and 1.2 respectively. The contractors' compliance with these requirements was expected as no firm can transact construction business in Nigeria without due registration with corporate affairs commission (CAC) and evidence of engagement of students on industrial training scheme (IT) is one of the prerequisites for

Table 9: Tenders' Requirements to which the Contractors' Bids were Irresponsive

S/N	Requirements' Descriptions	Quantity Surveyors		Contractors		Overall	
		MIS	Rank	MIS	Rank	MIS	Rank
1	Bid Submittal Requirements	4.5	1 st	4.1	1 st	4.3	1 st
2	Payment of VAT and Tax	4.1	2 nd	3.8	2 nd	4.1	2 nd
3	Compliance with Staffs' Retirement Scheme	3.8	3 rd	3.7	3 rd	3.9	3 rd
4	Signing of Price Bid form and Price Schedule	2.6	6 th	1.8	10 th	3.6	4 th *
5	Eligibility Requirements	3.5	4 th	2.6	7 th	3.6	4 th *
6	Submission of the required tender supporting documents	3.2	5 th	3.1	5 th	3.2	6 th
7	Submission of Bid Security	2.4	8 th	1.9	9 th	2.8	7 th
8	Registration with Organization	2.5	7 th	2.4	8 th	2.5	8 th
9	Payment of Required Fees	1.9	10 th	2.9	6 th	2.4	9 th *
10	Bid Validity Period	2.1	9 th	3.3	4 th	2.2	10 th *
11	Registration with CAC	1.2	11 th	1.4	11 th	1.3	11 th
12	Compliance with IT scheme	1.1	12 th	1.3	12 th	1.2	12 th

*Difference in the Ranking of the Two Respondents are significant

renewal of their registration certificates. It is however, important to note that apart from the three requirements the respondents were unanimous upon as often violated, eligibility requirements and signing of price bid forms and price schedules are also often violated (MIS = 3.6 each) even though the two groups of respondents ranked them significantly different. According to New York (2015) contractors must pay special attention to these essential tender solicitation requirements that their tenders often violated (nonresponsive to) to enhance their chances of winning the contract.

Conclusion

The paper had examined the responsiveness of the tenders submitted by contractors in competition for public construction projects in Nigeria. The results obtained revealed among other things that there is paucity of construction works available for execution in the country with attendant large numbers of contractors competing keenly among themselves and resulting in survival of the fittest. As the competition is becoming fiercer, so the contractors are becoming more desperate to submit tenders that are responsive to the clients' stringent tender requirements. The responsiveness of 36% corporately as business entity and 38% competitively among other contractors are indication that the tenders submitted by the contractors are poorly responsive to the clients tender requirements, rarely responsive to bid submittal requirements, payment of VAT and tax, compliance with staff retirement scheme signing of price bid form and price schedule and eligibility requirement and often responsive to registration with CAC and compliance with industrial training scheme.

The paper concluded that the tenders submitted by the contractors in competition for construction works in Nigeria are poorly responsive to the tender requirements of the clients due to frequent violation of bid submittal requirements, payment of VAT and tax, compliance with staff retirement scheme, signing of price bid form and price schedule and eligibility requirements. The paper therefore recommended that the contractors have to pay special attention to these five often violated tender requirements to improve the responsiveness of their tenders and hence enhance the chance of their tenders' success.

The implication of this study is that, it provides feed-back indicators for construction firms to measure their performances in tendering and provide information on aspects of the tenders with material deviation from the tender solicitation requirements. Prior knowledge of these area of (material deviations) deficiencies of contractors' tenders which informed/are responsible for their poor responsiveness to the clients' tender requirements for public construction works in the study area, will afford them the opportunity to pay special attention to these grave areas. This will result in improved responsiveness and attendant increment in the probability of the tenders' success. This study is limited to public construction projects in the study area, there is need for further studies on responsiveness of contractors' bids to clients' tenders' requirements for privately owned construction projects in the study area.

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