

CONSTRUCTION DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES, WITH EMPHASIS ON  
THE PLANNING AND USE OF BUILDING MATERIALS  
EMPLOYING LOCAL PRODUCTION FACTORS

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## THE DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY OF THE BUILDING MATERIALS AND CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY :

The shortage of building materials restricts development of the building industry and strains the economy of the country on imports. Construction can be sometimes tailored as a small-scale activity. In developing countries construction is at the fore front development because many require basic facilities such as infrastructure (highways, bridges), buildings, irrigation projects, airports etc. If the materials were to be imported the impact and effect of such an activity can be far reaching. Apart from basic materials such as cement and aggregates; the country needs to develop the structural steel, glass and fitting (electrical etc.); materials, the contribution of such material production can be seen from the proportion attributed to each category of materials.

The promotion of the cottage industry as production strategy can circumvent the problems presented by the multi-national/international industries. The main feature being that cottage industries are aimed at the subsistence economy where a lot of poor building materials exist. It is not enough however, merely to make the building material cheaper, it is necessarily however to raise the economic generation with the groups. Although this may not be the immediate objective of developing the construction industry; it is our duty to recognize that an affluent society consumes more.

Beside traditional materials no other material can meet the level of expected development. In this paper some reflection on suggested ways of containing this situation is discussed. The construction industry in most developing countries is non-existent or very disorganized. In the developing region financial liquidity is the biggest problem, it is essential to find technology which can utilize the prevailing situations of the economy. A large portion of the construction is bedecked with shortages of materials and critical lack of management skills. The uncertainty caused by lack of the future role of construction industry, delay in payments and poor material base does not allow for a clear planning strategy.

It is significant that part of the disorganization and lack of effectiveness in the construction sector comes about through the in appropriate policy and development plans. It is felt that if the spatial location of the industries is carefully thought out, for example; if most of the food processing and agricultural plants are established in the country side. We would expect a flow of domestic construction to follow such industrial plants. Effectively cost/benefit calculations suggest that the promotion of the indigenous construction is a good strategy in developing the industry. In no other words, indigenous means self-reliant building activities to resolve balance of trade due to importation. Construction 'parse' is not an end in itself, it has complex inter-relationship with diverse industries. Its improvement is often tied to other sectors of the national economy.

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It is reckoned that construction contributes between 40 to 60% of the gross capital formation, which increases with the per capita income. In return 50% of the total value of construction is attributed directly to the building materials. It is often argued that construction is a good indicator of development, the fact whether construction instigates development or the converse is a highly debatable issue. The true situation can only be obtained by ascertaining the role of construction in the economic set up the country.

The construction set is shrouded in cloudy complex relationship with other sectors of the economy, "construction industry" is a conglomerate of various sub-activities ranging from building materials production to the construction of complex structures such as nuclear facilities. In spite of its complex nature, it plays a strategic importance in the development of the regions, by abstracting some key aspects concerning the building materials it is possible to indicate why the construction industry is important. Since building materials account for 50% of the value added in construction an attempt will be made to analysis the key aspects, nevertheless the biggest problem of construction is its inability to be forecasted or planned for. This is so because of the diversification of the sub-activities ranging from the human settlements, to industrial concerns involved in the construction.

The low value/weight ratio of building materials has been known to limit building materials to given radius of marketing thus constraining its wider application in given regions. Construction is very sensitive to effects from other related sectors which are necessary for its development, such that an omission of one can stall the building activity considerably. It only proceeds when all the components are available and are easily integrated to realise the building activity. It is possible that construction being so easily affected by other area could indicate its importance in the economic development of the region, in the following sector we try to allude why construction is a significant activity in the economic development.