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Article in Nigerian Journal of Technological Research · December 2019

DOI: 10.4314/njtr.v14i3.13

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# **STAKEHOLDERS' COMPLIANCE LEVEL ON INSURANCE OF BUILDINGS UNDER CONSTRUCTION IN ABUJA-NIGERIA**

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## **Abstract**

Compulsory insurance of buildings under construction revolve around poor compliance structure, ineffective implementation strategy by the insurance regulator and lack of awareness on the part of the Nigerian public. To this extent, the compliance level of the stakeholders with the insurance of building under construction was evaluated in relation to Insurance Act number 37 of 2003 using mixed methods to elicit data. Structured questionnaires were self-administered on 95 randomly selected construction firms and 10 purposively sampled insurance companies. In addition to this, interview was conducted with an official of National Insurance Commission (NAICOM) and proforma document was prepared to obtain historical data from both the insurance companies and NAICOM. Findings indicated that low enforcement level of the Act by NAICOM with a mean score of 4.46 was ranked 1<sup>st</sup>; improper collaboration with the stakeholders involved in compliance was ranked 2<sup>nd</sup> with a mean score of 4.22 and poor or ineffective compliance structure was ranked 3<sup>rd</sup> with a mean score of 3.99. The compliance of the notable section in Insurance Act of 2003 with regards to insurance of property had not been satisfactory due to low enforcement of the punitive measures for non-compliance. Offenders should be punished to serve as deterrent to others who may want to flout the Act.

**Keywords:** Abuja-Nigeria; Compliance level; Insurance Act; Insurance premium; Property

## **Introduction**

The fundamental duties and obligations of any successful government are to provide safety of lives and property of all the citizens that are being governed. Part of the essential needs of human being is adequate shelter to shield against inclement weather. Government has put in place specific rules and regulations required to maintain a sense of safety of buildings to prevent disastrous occurrences (Olaoye, Omoogun & Akinjare, 2012). This is to ensure proper monitoring and inspection of housing development during pre-construction, construction-stage and post-construction stage. The construction industry is responsible for the production of the housing to satisfy the sustainable housing development in Nigeria. Sustainable development

emphasizes the need for development which caters for both present and future need of the human being (European Photovoltaic Industry Association EPIA, 2011).

Risks and uncertainties are synonymous to the construction industry (Patel, Jayeshkumar & Bhavsar, 2013). The insurance industries developed over centuries as people realized that there was a need to reduce risk. It was realized that if a group of people each, chipped in money that was held by someone they trusted, then the money could be used to cover any losses that one of them might incur (Bologi, 2008). According to Ibiwoye (2011), the need for regulating the operation of the insurance companies and other stakeholders directly or indirectly in the insurance sector arises as a result of the need for protection of the interest of the citizens by the government in terms of reducing the uncertainties and losses that may occur due to the failure of the developed properties both movable and immovable, and unexpected loss of humans occupying certain spaces or enclosures attributed to both human and natural occurrences.

In today's litigious society, every construction project poses a risk of claims and litigation arising out of a multitude of sources, including project delays, injured workers, damaged property, increased costs, and defective construction. However, the prudent contractor will make sure that he has effectively managed his risk to the maximum extent possible, including the use of insurance (Hansen, 1990; Charles, 2007). Also, the Nigerian construction industry of today has been identified as an avenue for human tragedies and losses. Successful project deliveries are sometimes difficult to achieve, because of the various challenges encountered, which result in failure of the building structure, total collapse, loss of lives and property as well as unsustainability of our built environment (Kawu, 2013). Guiding against these, Insurance Act Number 37 of 2003 was passed into law. Section 64(1) of the Insurance Act 2003 stipulated that any building under construction above two floors should be insured with a registered insurer in

order to cover the owner/contractor's liability in respect of construction risks caused by his negligence or the negligence of his servants, agents or consultants which may result in bodily injury or loss of life to or damage to property of any workman on the site or of any member of the public (Insurance Act, 2003).

Furthermore, Charles (2007) observed that insurance coverage is needed during construction to cover the value of the building itself, should the building being constructed be damaged since buildings under construction present several special problems from a property insurance standpoint. The problem is dynamic as the work progresses and the value of the property changes virtually on a day-to-day basis. Ensuring effective compliance with rules and regulations is an important factor in creating a well-functioning society and trust in government. It is a key element in safeguarding health and safety, protecting the environment, securing stable state revenue and delivering other essential public goals. This is important from a social perspective and as a foundation of economic growth (Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development OECD, 2013).

Enforcement of regulations is very vital in ensuring the effectiveness of regulations (Nnedinma, Umeokafor, David & Boniface, 2014). The challenge for governments is to develop and apply enforcement strategies that achieve the best possible outcomes by achieving the highest possible levels of compliance, while keeping the costs and burden as low as possible (OECD, 2013). Some of the challenges in the area of compulsory insurance of buildings under construction revolve around poor compliance structure, ineffective implementation strategy by the insurance regulator and lack of awareness on the part of the Nigerian public (Nigerian Business News, 2011). However, in spite of these laudable provisions of the law, majority of the buildings under construction in the country that need to be insured according to the Insurance Act 2003, do not

have insurance cover and this trend has to be reversed in the interest of all stakeholders (Adeusi, n.d.). To this extent, the compliance level of the stakeholders with the insurance of building under construction needs to be evaluated in relation to Insurance Act of 2003 with a view to improving project delivery. Answers were sought to the following research questions:

- What is the compliance level of the contractors and the extent of enforcement by National Insurance Commission (NAICOM) with the provision of part XI, section 64(1-3) No.37 of the Insurance Act 2003?
- What are the factors affecting the compliance level of the contractors with provision of insurance of building under construction (section 64(1), No.37 of 2003)?
- What is the compliance level of the insurance companies with the quarterly payment of 0.25% of the net premium on fire insurance to the fire service management fund as stipulated in section 66, No.37 of Insurance Act 2003?

In line with the above questions, a research hypothesis was formulated that:

- ✓ There is no statistically significant relationship between the number of building insurance policies offered by the insurance companies and the total number of building projects that were more than 2 floors constructed by the contractor from 2004-2014 in Abuja.
- ✓ There is a statistically significant relationship between the number of building insurance policies offered by the insurance companies and the total number of building projects that were more than floors constructed by the contractors from 2004-2014 in Abuja.

### **Insurance Act, (Part XI) No.37 of 2003**

Part XI of Insurance Act 2003 (No.37) stipulated on the insurance of property both movable and immovable property in Nigeria. This emphasises on the need to insure both movable and immovable that is likely subjected to one or other form of man-made and natural hazard in order

to ensure safety and security of lives and property in Nigeria. This part contained on page A33-A37 of the insurance act 2003, consists of 8 sections which are from section 64-71 and with many subsections under each section. Section 64 emphasizes on the need for insurance of building under construction that is more than two floors (Insurance Act, 2003)

Compulsory insurance is a class of insurance made compulsory by law, frequently with the objective of providing protection to third parties and the general public should any of the insured events occur (Festus, 2011; Mansard Insurance, 2015). Between 1945 and 2008, insurance was made compulsory under several laws, regulations and guidelines but the compliance level is still below five percentages in the country. The compulsory insurance policies were set out and implemented in order to ensure maximum safety and security of lives and property that may arise due to natural and man-made hazards (Festus, 2011). Festus (2011) observed that the compulsory public building insurance was meant not only to boost the industry premium, but most importantly to protect lives and property usually lost in building collapses.

Adeusi (n.d.) and Mansard Insurance (2015) opined that the compulsory building insurance will be an avenue to tackle the menace of building collapse in Nigeria. Adeusi (n.d.) added that the compulsory building insurance was enacted as a result of these incessant cases of building collapse and the need to give relief to victims of building disasters by the National Assembly to include provisions on compulsory building insurance in Sections 64 and 65 of the Insurance Act No. 37 of 2003.

### **Factors affecting compliance level with compulsory building insurance legislation in Nigeria**

Compliance with legislation and regulations is one of the basic requirements of both the ISO 14001 and OHSAS 18001 standards. A compliance process enables a company to be proactive

and systematic in handling allegations of non-compliance (Joseph, 2011). There are various factors that could lead to non-compliance as summarised below:

➤ **Inadequate legal framework**

The legislative framework for insurance practice in Nigeria is inadequate and ineffective. The inadequacy makes it impossible to meet the needs of the fast-growing insurance industry (Ujunwa & Modebe, 2011). Often times, the law contains many unenforceable provisions, which, though good on paper, is almost impracticable without strong enforcement provisions (Iyoha & Richard, 2004). This inadequate legal framework makes it completely difficult to enforce the provision considering the fact that legal provisions on compulsory insurances have never been enforced against the public by NAICOM or any regulatory body at their inceptions (Adeusi, n.d.).

➤ **Ineffective implementation strategy**

Implementation is typically a critical step toward compliance, but compliance can occur without implementation; that is, without any effort or action by a government or regulated entity (Raustiala & Slaughter, 2003). Nwagbara (n.d.) has identified ineffective implementation strategy as part of the factors that leads to non-compliance with the compulsory building insurance in Nigeria. There is no gainsaying the fact that economic wastages will reduce in the country if the insuring public complies with the provisions of the law on compulsory insurance covers. For instance, the spate of public building collapse and the consequential human and material losses usually recorded all over the country will reduce considerably if there are laws compelling adherence to sections 64 and 65 of the Insurance Act (Iyoha & Richard, 2004).

➤ **Cultural factors**

Nigerians, according to Obasi (2010), have no trust in the available insurance companies especially on claims payment which has largely resulted into low patronage. This tradition of defaulting in claims translated to some form of bad publicity for the industry and consequently, confidence in the industry is eroded significantly. In spite of the fact that the world we live is daily prone to risks, both to individual and corporate institutions, it is a matter for regret that only few Nigerians understand the value of insurance not to talk of undertaking it (Iyoha & Richard, 2004).

➤ **Low awareness level**

Financial System Strategy 2020 (FSS 2020, 2007) reported that there is no co-coordinated effort on insurance education, customer help line and consumer awareness. The legislation of compulsory building insurance requires serious awareness among the target users of the product. So, government assistance is needed with the help of the regulatory body in order to create awareness and sensitization programme to keep the users informed of the stipulation and to educate them (Ujunwa & Modebe, 2011).

➤ **Lack of proper enforcement of the Act**

The compulsory building insurance has been suffering from low enforcement by the regulatory body - NAICOM and this is not the same way the government has made compliance with the provisions of Pension Reform Act 2004, a pre-condition for every supplier, contractor or consultant bidding or soliciting for contract or business from any Federal Government Ministries, Departments and Agencies (Iyoha & Richard, 2004).



## Research methodology

Mixed methods were used in eliciting for data from the respondents. Ninety-five (95) construction firms and 10 insurance firms were surveyed through self-administration of structured questionnaires using probability random sampling and purposive sampling respectively. In a related development, data were also sourced from NAICOM using structured interview method and proforma document (to get archival data). Also, the records of the compulsory building insurance policies offered by the selected insurance companies from 2004-2014 were collected. Inferential statistics employed included the comparison of the data gotten from the construction firms and the insurance companies for the test of statistical significance using Kendall's tau test for agreement between the number of compulsory building insurance policies offered by the insurance companies date and number of buildings above 2 floors executed by the contractors from 2004-2014.

**Table 1: Questionnaire breakdown and response rate**

Respondents	Questionnaire Administered	Questionnaire Returned	Response rate%
Insurance companies	10	8	9
Construction companies	95	72	70
Total	105	80	79

The respondents' experience background shows that 6% of the respondents had a level of experience less than a year, 30% of the respondents had level of experience between 1-5, 50% of the respondents with level of experience of 6-10, 9% of the respondents had 11-15 years of experience, 4% had a level of experience between 16-20 and the remaining 1% had level of experience greater than 20 in the construction industry. The professional background of the

contractors indicated that 15% of the respondents were Architects, 14% of the respondents were Quantity surveyor, 23% of the respondents were Builders, 16% of the respondents were Civil Engineers and the remaining 32% were other professionals which included Risk-Disaster Managers, Estate Surveyors, Mechanical Engineers, and Project Managers as indicated by the respondents. These results indicated that the respondents had knowledge about the study and their responses could be deemed to be reliable.

**Table 2: Awareness Level of the Contractors with Insurance of Building under construction**

Awareness Level	Number of Contractors	Percentage%
Aware	51	71
Not Aware	21	29
Total	72	100

Out of 72 contractors that responded to the questionnaires, 51 contractors (71%) were aware of the section 64(1), No.37 of the Insurance Act 2003 that stipulated taking insurance premium on the insurance of building under construction above two floors while the remaining 21 contractors (29%) were not aware as shown in Table 2. The reason for the lack of awareness of 29% of the contractors could be due to the possibility that these respondents may be among those that had spent less than 10 years in the industry. As it is common with other laws in the country, the euphoria of laws wane as the years gone by; a classic example is the 2006 National Building Code.

**Table 3: Rating of the Compliance level of Contractors**

Rating	Number of Insurance brokers	Percentage%
Less than 5%	0	0
5-10%	5	62
11-20% years	2	25
More than 20%	1	13

The compliance level of the contractors with the stipulation of section 64(1), No.37 of the Insurance Act 2003 was perceived to be very low by the respondents. From the survey carried out within the insurance companies as indicated in Table 3, 62% of the insurance brokers rated the compliance level of the contractors to be between 5-10%, 25% perceived it to be between 11-20%, and 13% of the respondent perceived to be more than 20%. The compliance level of the contractors based on the perception of the underwriters is as shown. This is consistent with (Ujunwa & Modebe, 2011) who stated that the compliance level of the real property developers with the compulsory building insurance was not satisfactory.

**Table 4: Punitive Measures imposed on Contractors for non-compliance with Insurance of Building under construction**

Measure	Number of Respondents	Percentage %
Yes	0	0
No	8	100
Total	8	100

The extent of enforcement of the Section 64(1), No. 37 of Act 2003 was perceived to be very low from the survey carried out with the registered insurance companies and the regulatory body NAICOM. 100% of the brokers commented that no punitive measures had been imposed so far on the contractors for non-compliance with the stipulation as shown in Table 4. This is worrisome as this will create a lax environment where construction firms are left at their whims and caprices that may result in building collapse.

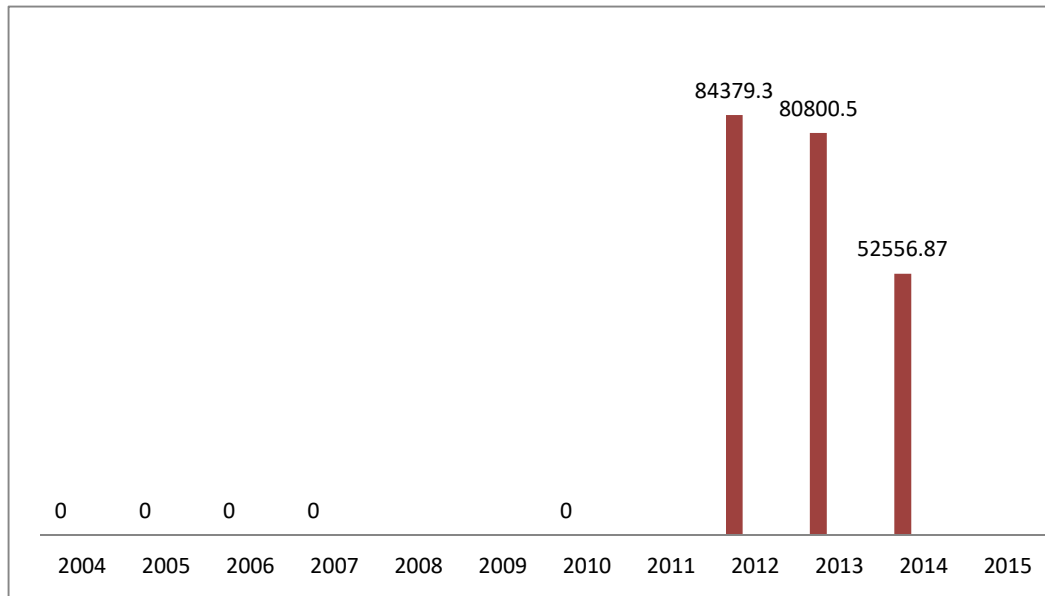
**Table 5: Factors affecting Compliance Level of Contractors**

<b>Factors affecting Compliance Level with section 64(1)</b>	<b>Mean score (insurance firms)</b>	<b>Mean score (construction firms)</b>	<b>Weighted mean</b>	<b>Rank</b>
Ineffective legal framework	3.75	2.93	3.34	8 <sup>th</sup>
Ineffective implementation strategy by NAICOM	3.50	2.51	3.01	10 <sup>th</sup>
Lack of proper understanding by the contractors	2.75	3.04	2.90	11 <sup>th</sup>
Low awareness level among the contractors	3.38	2.82	3.10	9 <sup>th</sup>
Lack of awareness and sensitization program	3.75	3.06	3.41	7 <sup>th</sup>
Improper collaboration with the stakeholders involved in compliance	4.25	4.19	4.22	2 <sup>nd</sup>
Poor or ineffective compliance structure	4.00	3.99	3.99	3 <sup>rd</sup>
Low enforcement level of the Act by NAICOM	4.50	4.43	4.46	1 <sup>st</sup>
Cultural factor	4.25	3.46	3.86	5 <sup>th</sup>
Political factor	4.13	3.54	3.90	4 <sup>th</sup>
Economic factor	3.50	3.41	3.46	6 <sup>th</sup>

All of the factors affecting the compliance level of the contractors were ranked to be the critical factors that could actually lead to non-compliance as shown in Table 5. This was because none of the factors had a mean score that was less than 2.5 which means that there were more than 50% chance or probability that all these aforementioned factors could actually lead to non-compliance of the contractors with the Act. Out of the 11 factors identified, the most three significant factors ranked from 1<sup>st</sup> - 3<sup>rd</sup> with highest mean scores were low enforcement level of the Act by the regulatory body - National Insurance Commission NAICOM, improper collaboration with stakeholders involved in compliance and poor or ineffective compliance structure. Low enforcement level was identified as the most significant with weighted average of 4.46. The second and third identified factors were improper collaboration with the stakeholders

involved in compliance process and poor or ineffective compliance structure with weighted average of 4.22 and 3.99 respectively. The result was in line with the works of Ujunwa and Modebe (2011) that the regulation on compulsory building insurance has been suffering from challenges of the low enforcement of the section 64 and 65, No. 37 of insurance Act 2003 by the regulatory body NAICOM, improper collaboration with the professional bodies and ineffective legal framework. Also, 4<sup>th</sup> - 6<sup>th</sup> factors identified by the respondents were political, cultural factors economical and with weighted average of 3.90, 3.86 and 3.46. Furthermore, 7<sup>th</sup> - 9<sup>th</sup> factors identified by the respondents were lack of awareness and sensitization programme, ineffective legal framework and low awareness level among the contractors with weighted average of 3.41, 3.34 and 3.10. Finally, the last two factors identified at the bottom of the ranking was ineffective implementation strategy by NIACOM and lack of proper understanding by the contractors with weighted average of 3.01 and 2.9 respectively.

Also, low level of enforcement of the Act has been identified by both the contractors and the insurance brokers as the most significant factors affecting the compliance level of the contractors with the insurance of building under construction above two floors as shown in the table, which is consistent with the statement made by the NAICOM officer interviewed though not reported in this paper.



**Figure 1: The payment of fire service management funds by Insurance companies from 2004-2014**

The compliance level of insurance companies with the payment of 0.25% of their net premium on fire insurance was not satisfactory. From the survey carried out, the insurance companies had not been paying this fund since the enactment of the insurance Act 2003 until 2012 when some of the insurance companies paid and a total of two hundred and seventeen thousand, seven hundred and thirty-six (₦273,736.32K) was realised by the commission from 2012-2014 as shown in Figure 1. Finally, the commission had not been enforcing the payment of the fire service management funds so far in line with the provision of section 66(4) of Act No. 37 of 2003, by the insurance companies for the provision of fire services equipment.

**Table 6: Statistical Significance between the number of policies and the building projects constructed above 2 floors**

S/N	Variable	P Value	Significant if $P < \alpha = 0.05$	Kendall's Tau $\tau_b$
1.	Builder's Risk Vs. Building projects	0.010	Significant	0.600
2.	Employer's Compensation Vs. building project	0.102	Not Significant	0.382
3.	Employer's Liabilities Vs. Building project	0.392	Not Significant	-0.200
4.	Others Vs. Building projects	0.016	Significant	0.564

From Table 6, it can be deduced that,  $P_{\text{value}} < \alpha = 0.05$  for cases 1 and 4 with coefficient of concordance Kendall Tau of 0.600 and 0.564 for both cases. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected which stated that there was no significant relationship between the number of policies offered by insurance companies and the number of building projects that were above 2 floors constructed by the contractors from 2004-2014. However, there was statistically significant relationship between Builder's-All-Risk policies and other insurance Policies such as general liabilities insurance, public liabilities, equipment floater insurance etc. offered by the insurance companies and the number of building projects executed by the contractors; and that there is a moderate agreement between these two variables due to the Kendall's tau coefficient of concordance greater than 0.5. Furthermore,  $P_{\text{value}} > \alpha = 0.05$ , for cases 2 and 3 with Kendall's tau coefficient of concordant of 0.382 and -0.200 for both cases. Hence, the null hypothesis is accepted which stated that there was no statistically significant relationship between the number of compulsory building insurance policies offered by the insurance companies and the total number of building projects above two floors handled by the contractors in Abuja. This means

that there was no statistically significant relationship between the number of worker's compensation and employer's liabilities insurance policies offered by the insurance companies and the total number of building projects above 2 floors executed by the contractors in Abuja from 2004-2014. Also, for case 3 with the Kendall's tau coefficient of negative value indicated inverse relationship. Finally, it can be concluded that some of the contractors in Abuja had been purchasing builder's-all-risk and other insurance policies to some extent, in compliance with the stipulation of insurance of building under construction (Part XI Section 64(1), No. 37 of Insurance Act 2003).

### **Conclusion**

The compliance level of the contractors with regards to the stipulation of section 64(1), No.37 of Insurance Act 2003 was very low compared to their high level of awareness with the stipulation. The compliance level was less than 20% compared to the awareness level that was more than 20%. Also, the compliance level of insurance with the payment of fire services management funds for provision of fire service equipment for fire fighting as stipulated in section 66, No.37 of Insurance Act of 2003 was very low. The NAICOM since the commencement of the Act had not been enforcing the stipulation of this Act. Finally, the compliance of the notable section in Insurance Act of 2003 with regards to insurance of property had not been satisfactory due to low enforcement of the punitive measures for non-compliance with the Act and inadequate provision of the Act in terms of enforcement of the provision of the Act by the regulatory body NAICOM. Based on these, the following are hereby recommended towards improving the compliance level of the Act.

- ✓ The National Insurance Commission should collaborate with the relevant professional bodies such as NIOB, CORBON, COREN, ARCON, NIQS and Planning authority



that are involved in the development process of building property in order to improve the implementation process as a whole.

- ✓ The contractors should accept insurance as a complementary tool for improvement in the building and housing sector and cultivate the habit of entrusting the insurance experts by engaging in their policies if the need arises.
- ✓ Offenders should be punished to serve as deterrent to others in order to stem the tide of incessant building collapse

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