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Trust factor in construction alliances

A. B. Ngowi & E. Pienaar

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Abstract

In any strategic alliance, there are cooperation and competition aspects between the parties involved. The propensity to pursue vigorously either of them depends on the confidence each party has that the partner(s) will not act opportunistically. A study in Botswana was undertaken to determine the role of trust on the propensity to pursue the competition aspect of the alliance. Using structured interviews on five construction alliances, it was found that the firms tended to pursue the competition aspect when trust between the partners was low, but strengthened the cooperation aspect when trust was high. It was concluded that if construction alliances are to achieve their principal aims, then the partners need to nurture a high level of trust between themselves. A framework for doing this is proposed and tested on a case study.

Dans toute alliance stratégique, les parties concernées entretiennent des relations de coopération et de concurrence. La propension à favoriser l'une ou l'autre de ces facettes dépend de la confiance que chaque partie accorde à l'autre qu'il n'agira pas de

manière opportuniste. Une étude a été menée au Botswana pour définir le rôle de la confiance dans la propension à poursuivre l'aspect compétitif de l'alliance. Il ressort d'interviews conduites dans le cadre de cinq alliances dans le secteur de la construction que les entreprises ont tendance à favoriser l'aspect compétitif lorsque le niveau de confiance entre les partenaires est peu élevé; au contraire, l'aspect coopératif se trouve renforcé lorsque la confiance règne entre les partenaires. On en a conclu que pour atteindre leurs principaux objectifs, les partenaires d'alliances signées dans le secteur de la construction devaient favoriser la création d'un climat de confiance réciproque. Un cadre proposé à cet effet est mis à l'épreuve dans une étude de cas.

Keywords:

construction alliance | construction firm | opportunism | partnering | strategic alliance | trust | Botswana

Mots clés:

Alliance dans le secteur de la construction | entreprise de construction | opportunisme | partenariat | alliance stratégique | confiance | Botswana

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