

**Analysing practical implications of Most Economically Advantageous Tender (MEAT)**

- An empirical study

Research Proposal

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## **2. Introduction**

### *2.1. Contextual Background*

MEAT (Most Economically Advantageous Tender) is referred as an assessment method which is used for the selection procedure. In this procedure, the contracting party is awarded a contract on the basis of all factors related to tender submission not only just price. MEAT was introduced in January 2014 by European Parliament, then public procurement rules are proposed by the European Union Procurement Directives to be applied on any type of public purchases as these were the thresholds for The Public Contracts Regulations (Designingbuildings.co.uk, 2019). The characteristics included in the assessment of MEAT are quality, technical merit, price, accessibility, aesthetic and functional characteristics, after-sales service, delivery conditions, environmental and social characteristics. The factors major among these includes social value in contracts to be considered while contracting authorities (Constructionprocurement.gov.ie, 2011).

There is a Social Value Act, according to which contracting authorities prioritize wellbeing and social considerations over price, achievements in delivery are identified sustainable only if social value is considered in service contracts (Knowhow.ncvo.org.uk, 2019). Sustainability is a new buzz in 21<sup>st</sup> century in construction sector; rise in zero carbon buildings, preference for sourcing of labor and materials by considering considerate constructors scheme are in process and that is why the question has emerged whether the contractor selection processes consider sustainability as an important factor when awarding work to construction clients for construction procurement (Geach, 2016).

## *2.2. Research Aims and Objectives*

### Aim

The aim of the study is to assess the importance of social value and sustainability by identifying the potential implications of MEAT in the construction procurement business and to assess the shift of lowest price tender to MEAT award contractor selection.

### Objectives

- To identify historical nuances of social value and the factors driving social value and sustainability
- To critically analyse MEAT and identify its positive and potential impact on the practices of contractors in future for construction industry.
- To assess the benefits of MEAT for industry practitioners through procurement process for a more sustainable future.
- To identify the shift of lowest pricing awarding to MEAT awarding in construction industry.
- To provide recommendations on how social value and sustainability can be increased in construction by potential implications of MEAT.

## *2.3. Research Problem*

Contracting in general or in MEAT award mechanism have been applied in several projects already and many project have been successful under this mechanism. But, many of the procurement procedures in the construction industry are still reluctant to apply MEAT mechanism

as they face some uncertainties and difficulties in the MEAT mechanism. Furthermore, the competition in price has created an environment which does not empower sustainable behavior (de Nooij, 2019). The scope of this study is to analyse the impact of potential implications of MEAT through procurement process in construction by considering sustainability and social value.

#### *2.4. Research Significance*

The research will be significant for future researchers as there is wide literature gap that identifies the potential MEAT implications specifically in construction sector. It will also be beneficial for the public and private construction industries to evaluate their procurement processes in terms of social value and sustainability.

### **3. Literature Review**

The procurement of road infrastructure is required by the public authorities to be well-functioned. According to the author in the recent years the pressure has been increased more and more for the infrastructure to be sustainable. For this reason, an award method of MEAT evaluation has been developed where in contract awarding the role of quality is also as essential as price. A shift has been observed to MEAT awarding from lower price awarding, but the enhancement in sustainability needs to be enhanced significantly in infrastructure projects. The research has explored if the inclusion of LCA (Life Cycle Assessment) is feasible in tenders or not to influence sustainability and the interpretations of procurers in CO<sub>2</sub> gas reductions for sustainability (de Nooij, 2019).

Another study has identified the lack of implementation of MEAT mechanism as it is identified complicated than a traditional process it has evaluated the best suitable mechanisms of MEAT for the construction industry of Dutch. An empirical approach has been implied to answer the research question by investigating several MEAT types and these all are evaluated on the basis of value price model, the results presented that a system based on high value price ratio is preferred for a suitable MEAT implication Dutch construction industry (Dreschler, 2009).

#### **4. Research Methodology**

##### *4.1. Mixed Methods*

The research will be analysed using mixed methods to analyse the research questions. In mixed methods, the researchers within a same study analyse both types of data, qualitative and quantitative (Shorten and Smith, 2017). Quantitative approach provides an emphasis on the objective measurements as the data is collected through primary sources such as surveys, polls or questionnaires (Nardi, 2018) whereas an approach of collecting information by gathering data through open-ended or conversational communication is known as qualitative approach (Polkinghorne, 2005). Mixed methods research is really effective as it provides potential strengths by evaluating results from both data collection methods qualitative and quantitative (Shorten and Smith, 2017).

##### *4.2. Data Collection*

This research will be carried out using mixed methods in which primary data collection will be conducted by questionnaires and secondary data will be collected through interviews from the related respondents for the study. The data will be collected by a diverse group from public construction organisations, private developers and main contractors.

#### *4.3.Data Analysis*

Data analysis will be performed using the method of thematic analysis since the data collection will be through mixed methods. In this study, data will be analysed using the SPSS software which is a real time and helpful tool to evaluate the questionnaires. Thematic analysis is really effective in mixed methods research as it enables the evaluation of data analysed through statistical tools.

#### *4.4.Research Limitation*

The research is limited to the construction sector and in the number of interviews. Also the research has been conducted only through primary data as the literature available for the relevant topic is very limited.

#### *4.5.Ethical Considerations*

Interviews will be conducted by getting an informed consent from the respective construction organisations to participate in the research study. Furthermore, the confidential

information related to construction firm or main contractors will be hidden for ethical purposes, also the interviews questions will be close-ended to respect the privacy of the interviewees.

5. *Gantt chart*

Task	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	Week 5	Week 6	Week 7	Week 8	Week 9	Week 10
Topic Research										
Proposal										
Chapter: Introduction										
Chapter: Literature Review										
Chapter: Research Methodology										
Chapter: Data Collection										
Chapter: Data analysis										
Conclusion and Recommendation										



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