

Lecture Notes in Operations Research

Hongling Guo
Dongping Fang
Weisheng Lu
Yi Peng *Editors*

Proceedings of the 26th
International Symposium
on Advancement of
Construction Management
and Real Estate

Lecture Notes in Operations Research

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Editors

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ISSN 2731-040X

ISSN 2731-0418 (electronic)

Lecture Notes in Operations Research

ISBN 978-981-19-5255-5

ISBN 978-981-19-5256-2 (eBook)

<https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-19-5256-2>

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This Springer imprint is published by the registered company Springer Nature Singapore Pte Ltd. The registered company address is: 152 Beach Road, #21-01/04 Gateway East, Singapore 189721, Singapore

Preface

This book presents the proceedings of CRIOCM2021, 26th International Conference on Advancement of Construction Management and Real Estate, sharing the latest developments in real estate and construction management around the globe. The conference was organized by the Chinese Research Institute of Construction Management (CRIOCM) working in close collaboration with the Tsinghua University. Written by international academics and professionals, the proceedings discusses the latest achievements, research findings and advances in frontier disciplines in the field of construction management and real estate. Covering a wide range of topics, including building information modelling, big data, geographic information systems, housing policies, management of infrastructure projects, intelligent construction and smart city, real estate finance and economics, urban planning and sustainability, the discussions provide valuable insights into the implementation of advanced construction project management and the real estate market in China and abroad. The book offers an outstanding resource for academics and professionals.

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Contents

BIM and Emerging Technologies

Barriers and Risks in BIM-Embedded Design Collaboration: A Two-Mode Social Network Analysis	3
Wei Zhang	
‘Engineering Brain’ of the AECO Industry: A Safety Management System for the Life Cycle of Prefabricated Buildings Based on ‘BIM +’	14
Yu Zhen, Clyde Zhengdao Li, Zhenchao Guo, Shanyang Li, Meiqin Xiong, and Limei Zhang	
How to Facilitate the Integration Between Building Information Modelling and Life Cycle Assessment Tools in Building Sector	26
Yijun Zhou, Vivian W. Y. Tam, Khoa N. Le, Jun Wang, Liyin Shen, and Chethana Illankoon	
A Generic Framework for BIM Component Naming	39
Jinfeng Lou, Jinying Xu, Weisheng Lu, and Fan Xue	
Research on the Influencing Factors of BIM Technology Adoption Based on Theory of Planned Behavior	49
Dan Zhang and Kejun Xiong	
An Investigation on the Cost and Benefit of BIM Application Among Suzhou Construction Professionals	58
Jinpeng Wang, Shang Zhang, Lilin Zhao, and Liqun Zhou	
Tunneling Risk Visualization Using BIM and Dynamic Bayesian Network	75
Ting Deng, DongDong Tang, Shuaishuai Jin, and Yi Tan	
An Automatic Classification and Storage Method of Construction Images Based on YOLOv5	87
Songchun Chen and Hongling Guo	

Science Mapping of BIM-Based Automated Compliance Checking Studies: A Bibliometric Approach 96
Shengqu Xu, Zhikun Ding, Xinping Wen, Zhan Wang, and Zhiyu Zhang

Intelligent BIM-Based Monitoring of Construction Tower Cranes 109
Yufan Zhang, Yu Xie, Fang Yue, Fenhan Liu, Yongqi Mai, and Zhenxin Huang

Evolution of Building Information Modelling (BIM) Policy: The Case of Hong Kong 127
Sujuan Zhang, Kwadwo Oti-Sarpong, and Roine Leiringer

Health Building Information Modeling (HBIM)-Based Facility Management: A Conceptual Framework 136
Tan Tan, Zigeng Fang, Yuanwei Zheng, and Yufeng Yang

Harness-Wearing Detection of Construction Workers Based on Deep Learning 147
Sensen Fan, Jinshan Liu, and Yujie Lu

A Forewarning Method for Falling Hazard from Hole Based on Instance Segmentation and Regional Invasion Detection 157
Rui Wang, Yujie Lu, Shuai Huang, Jinshan Liu, and Mingkang Wang

Built Environment

Study on the Relationship Between Built-Up Area and PM_{2.5} Concentration in Jiangsu Province 177
Yuyuan Fu, Sheng Zheng, and Yuzhe Wu

Estimation of Greenhouse Gas Emissions from Road in China: A Province-Level and Hierarchical Analysis 191
Yuyao Liu, Kunhui Ye, Liu Wu, Dingding Chen, and Liang Xiao

A Critical Review of Recycling Facility Location and Optimization Methods for Construction and Demolition Waste 203
Kunlun Wu and Zhiqi Gong

Impacts of Urban Form on CO₂ Emissions in Cities in the Yangtze River Economic Belt: An Analysis Based on the Spatial Econometrics Model 212
Fangchen Shi, Nan Yang, and Xia Liao

Evaluation of Health Benefits from China IV Construction Diesel Machinery for Residents of Beijing 226
Xi Chen

A Study on Spatiotemporal Performances of the Urban Atmospheric Environment Carrying Capacity in 35 Large Chinese Cities from 2015 to 2019 237
 Zhenchuan Yang

Comparison Research on Construction Environment and Policy in Brazil and China: Case Study on Xingu-Rio UHV Transmission Line Project 253
 Chenhao Jin, Mengxia Jin, Xiaorong Sun, and Shinae Jang

Construction Waste Management

A Review of Research on Supply Chain Resilience in the Construction Industry 265
 Lirong Quan, Chuan Yang, and Longhui Liao

Spatial and Temporal Characteristics and Prediction of C&DW in Shenzhen 284
 Meiqin Xiong, Clyde Zhengdao Li, Bing Xiao, Vivian W. Y. Tam, Shanyang Li, and Zhenchao Guo

Research on the Correlation Between Construction Waste Output and GDP: A Case Study of Chongqing 295
 Zhiyu Huang, Hongxia Li, Yan Li, and Ye Liu

Prefabrication in Hong Kong’s High-Rise Residential Construction: Evolution and Effect on Waste Minimization 308
 Wendy M. W. Lee, Weisheng Lu, and Fan Xue

Treatment Paths of Construction and Demolition Waste in Mainland China 324
 Qiaoqiao Yong, Jiayuan Wang, Huanyu Wu, and Bo Yu

Reducing Construction Waste Through Modular Construction 339
 Yang Zhang and Wei Pan

Study on the Influencing Factors of the Site Selection of Construction Waste Recycling Enterprises 348
 Zhiyu Huang, Yan Li, Hongxia Li, and Qili Li

CSR and Industry Governance

Effects of Boundary-Spanning Roles and Interface Management Practices on Inter-organizational Communication in Construction Projects: Perspective of the Owner 361
 Lisha Wu, Yujia Weng, Wenxin Shen, and Wenzhe Tang

Impacts of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Construction Industry: A Comparison Between Hong Kong and Singapore 372
 Jinying Xu, Zhongze Yang, Weisheng Lu, and Fan Xue

A Study on the Impact of Real Estate Firm Characteristics on the Exit Mode of Private Equity Investors Based on Logistics Regression Model 386
 Tian Luo

A Study of the Relationship Between Debt Ratio and Profitability of the Real Estate Companies—Evidence from China 395
 Jiahui Liu

Corporate Social Responsibility Activities in CHina’s Construction Industry: From the Perspective of Sustainability 404
 Yuqing Zhang, Meiyue Sang, Fanqi Chen, and Kunhui Ye

Investigating the Job Satisfaction and Turnover Intention of Real Estate Practitioners: A Case Study in Suzhou 419
 Mingsen Dai, Shang Zhang, Min Qiu, and Ruiyong Wang

Construction Contractor Selection by Using AHP Combined with Topsis 434
 Van Hieu Tran and Hang Yan

Cognitive Modular Building to Enhance User Wellbeing: An Insight from Literature Review on Potential Benefits, Design Considerations and Opportunities 448
 Frank Ato Ghansah, Weisheng Lu, and Xu Jinying

Green Building

Embodied Carbon Footprint Analysis of Prefabricated Buildings Considering Assembly Schemes 463
 Xulu Lai, Clyde Zhengdao Li, Limei Zhang, Bing Xiao, and Vivian W. Y. Tam

The Research Development of Construction Carbon Emissions: A Visual Literature Review by Citespace 480
 Xinyi Luo, Junjie Qian, Zhiyu Dong, and Peng Mao

A Comprehensive Review on Building Energy Saving During the Past Decade 489
 Limei Zhang, Clyde Zhengdao Li, Xulu Lai, Bing Xiao, and Vivian W. Y. Tam

Research on Carbon Emission of 5G Base Station Construction Based on LCA: A Case Study in Shenzhen City 503
 Yangxue Ding and Huabo Duan

Comparing Global Warming Impact of Asphalt Pavement Preservation at Maintenance and Use Stages Using Dynamic Life-Cycle Assessment 513
 Na Wang, Dan Chong, and Xiang Fei

Risk Assessment of Green Retrofit Projects in Old Residential Districts from the Perspective of Whole Life Cycle 523
 Hao Xue, Xiaosen Huo, and Liudan Jiao

Walking the Talk? Exploring the Relationship Between Corporate Social Responsibility Disclosure and Green Building Performance of Chinese Listed Real Estate Companies..... 536
 Meng Ye and Bin Chi

Improving Energy Efficiency of Indoor Lighting System Based on Computer Vision 547
 Penglu Chen, Ruying Cai, and Yi Tan

A Scenario Based Analysis of Incentive Schemes to Promote the Social Acceptance of Smart Energy Home in China..... 559
 Weiyu Ji and Edwin H. W. Chan

A Multi-view Learning-Based Approach for Handling Missing Values in Building Energy Data 573
 Yutian Lei, Cheng Fan, Xinghua Wang, and Bufu Huang

Sustainability Design and Evaluation of High-Performance Concrete Joint Reticulated Shell Structure Based on LCA..... 588
 Wei Wei, Yujie Lu, and Peixian Li

Housing Price and Policy

How Do Landscape Views and Storey Levels Affect Public Housing Prices Within the Community? Evidence from the Home Ownership Scheme Secondary Market in Hong Kong 605
 Chenxin He and Lin Deng

Effects of Housing Pathway on the Subjective Well-Being of Migrant Workers in China 619
 Lizhi Guo and Li Tao

Research on Second-Hand Housing Prices in Guangzhou Based on CHAID Algorithm and POI Data 635
 Zikui Yuan, Jiayuan Wang, and Zhaoyang Qiu

Research on the Influence of Talent Subsidy Policy on Housing Price: A Case of Hangzhou 651
 Yi Luo and Wei Wang

The Way Out of Sustainable Operation Mechanism of Public Rental Housing in Chongqing: Transforming to Common Property Right House 662
 Qingqing Wang

Research on the Impact of Land Supply Structure on House Prices—Taking the New First-Tier Cities as an Example 675
Wen He and Botong Song

Analysis on the Housing Price Spatial Linkage Network of Cities in Sichuan Province Based on Gravity Model 684
Kehao Chen

Innovation of Construction Management Theory and Practice

Investigating the Relationship Between Critical Success Factors 701
Ting Wang, Qinghua He, Zidan Tian, Jin Li, and Delei Yang

The Management Mechanism Design of Operational Monitoring and Risk Early Warning for Large-Scale Spoil Yard: Based on Integration of Beidou Navigation Satellite System and Big Data Technologies 711
Ao Ma, Jie Lin, and YuLong Li

Intelligent Decision Techniques for Construction Engineering Management Research: A Science Mapping Analysis and Future Trends 721
Chuan Yang, Lirong Quan, and Longhui Liao

Design for Excellence in Architecture, Engineering, and Construction: A Multi-stakeholder Model 737
Vikrom Laovisutthichai, Weisheng Lu, and Stephen Siu Yu Lau

Smart Contract: Is it Really Smart in Construction? 751
Liupengfei Wu, Weisheng Lu, Rui Zhao, and Fan Xue

BBN-Based Approach for Identifying the Governance Factors of Megaprojects 760
Lan Luo, Fenghao Gu, Yue Yang, and Qiushi Bo

A Review of Smart Healthcare System Re-construction in the Post-epidemic Era: Conceptual Framework and Challenges 778
Xiaojing Zhao and Beibei Ge

System Dynamics-Based Identification of Mechanical Factors for Metro Construction Schedule Management 788
Can Yin and Yi Tan

Study Blockchain-Based Supply Chain Finance System of the Construction Industrialization 804
Yuanxin Zhang, LiuJun Xu, Zaijing Gong, Yueren Wang, and Zeyu Wang

Knowledge Graph-Based Construction Accidents Detection and Hazard Correction System 817
Wanyu Shen, Yujie Lu, and Na Wang

**Intelligent Construction Assessment for Construction Projects:
Toward an Evaluation Framework** 829
Hui Gao, Yujie Lu, and Huicang Wu

Land Use and Transportation

**A Spatial Autocorrelation Analysis for Land Use Change in the
Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area** 847
Xiao Tang, Clyde Zhengdao Li, Lin Jiang, Xulu Lai, and Limei Zhang

**Elasticity of Substitution Between Capital and Land in Housing
Market, the Case of Xi’an, China** 859
Chengjie Zhang, Sheng Zheng, and Yuzhe Wu

**Resilience Evaluation of Transportation Infrastructures Based
on Simulations: A Case Study of Fozuling Metro Station in China** 871
Xinya Peng and Ruidong Chang

**Research on the Effect of Land Transfer Mode on Land Price
in Changsha** 881
Haihua Wu and Botong Song

**Research on Operational Efficiency of Urban Rail Transit in China
by Super-SBM Model** 894
Fengyan Wu, Liudan Jiao, Yu Zhang, and Ya Wu

**Verify the Interactive Coercing Relationship Between Rail Transit
and Bus** 907
Luo Fenglian, Liudan Jiao, Ya Wu, and Yu Zhang

**Analysis of the Influencing Factors of Urban Rail Transit Discounts
Before Morning Peak Hours from the Perspective of Residents** 917
Qiudie Luo, Liudan Jiao, Xiangnan Song, and Yu Zhang

**Research on Residents’ Choice Behavior of Public Transport
Travel Mode During the Post-epidemic Period** 929
Lian Tang, Liudan Jiao, Xiaosen Huo, and Yu Zhang

**Efficiency and Optimal Allocation of Industrial Land Use in
Urban Agglomerations** 943
Fan Yang, Clyde Zhengdao Li, Bing Xiao, and Vivian W. Y. Tam

**Research on Integrated Management of Urban Rail Transit
Project Based on Digital Twin** 954
Dongyi Li, Jiayuan Wang, and Kunyang Chen

**Analysis of Subway Station Setting Based on Passenger Flow
Attraction Model** 972
Meng-Nan Li, Xueqing Wang, Ru-Xi Ding, and Jin-Tao Cai

Coupling of Operational Risks of Urban Rail Transit Based on N-K Model 985
 Xu Hui, Liao Huiming, Yue Jingchuan, and Tan Yongtao

On Optimization of Industrial Land Transfer Procedure: A Case Study of the Standard Land in Deqing of China 995
 Huiqiong Zhu, Haijun Bao, and Yuzhe Wu

New Construction Technology and Application

Performance of Prefabricated Construction: A Critical Review From 2010 to 2020 1013
 Shanyang Li, Clyde Zhengdao Li, Meiqin Xiong, Yu Zhen, and Zhenchao Guo

A Review of Application of Sensing Technology in Structural Health Monitoring for Civil Infrastructure 1028
 Zhenchao Guo, Clyde Zhengdao Li, Dong Su, Yu Zhen, Meiqin Xiong, and Shanyang Li

A Critical Review of Interaction Design Between Smart Home Devices and the Elderly 1041
 Yifei Liang, Lirong Quan, Chuan Yang, and Longhui Liao

Critical Indicators for Evaluating the Sustainability of Recycled Aggregated Concrete Industry: An Analysis from Stakeholders’ Perspective 1055
 Kelin Li, Clyde Zhengdao Li, Bing Xiao, and Vivian W. Y. Tam

An Overview of Existing Application of Recycled Concrete in China 1065
 Mingxue Ma, Vivian W. Y. Tam, Khoa N. Le, and Robert Osei-Kyei

Cost and Carbon Emission Savings of Recycled Aggregate Concrete Made in Australia: A Case Study 1080
 Weiqi Xing, Vivian W. Y. Tam, Khoa N. Le, and Jian Li Hao

A Study on Protocols of Cross-Chain Data Synchronization for Permission Blockchain for Construction Management 1090
 Rui Zhao, Liupengfei Wu, Zhe Chen, Maohong Tang, Weisheng Lu, and Fan Xue

A Review of Optimization Algorithms Applied to Prefabricated Building Construction 1102
 Xiao Gao and Jiayuan Wang

A GIS - Based Location Selection Method for Prefabricated Component Factory 1114
 Yang Sun and Zhiqi Gong

A Eulerian Video Magnification Based Structural Damage Identification Method for Scaffold 1122
 Zhen-yu Liang, Hao-long Chen, Jia-hao Hua, and Yi-chuan Deng

Latent Dirichlet Allocation-Based Approach for Automatically Mapping Components to Tasks in Modular Construction 1133
 Xiao Li, Chengke Wu, Weisheng Lu, and Fan Xue

Application of Terrestrial Laser Scanning in Inspection of Indoor Wall Surface Flatness 1146
 Shuaishuai Jin, Ting Deng, Dongdong Tang, Limei Chen, and Yi Tan

Analysis of Influencing Factors of Prefabricated Building in Rural Areas Based on SEM 1157
 Yingbo Ji, Mengyuan Cheng, and Fuyi Yao

Research on Promotion Strategy of Assembly Decoration in China Based on Evolutionary Game Theory 1171
 Xin Wen, Yingbo Ji, and Fuyi Yao

Non-intrusive Indoor Occupancy Detection Methods Based on Machine Learning Techniques 1186
 Weilin He, Yuanyuan Ma, Cheng Fan, Xinghua Wang, and Bufu Huang

A Sensor-Based Method to Detect Near-Miss Struck-By on Construction Site 1202
 Xiao Lin and Hongling Guo

New-Type Urbanization

Can China’s Transferable Development Rights Programme (The Link Policy) Increase Farmers’ Income? Evidence from the Land Coupon Programme in Chongqing 1221
 Zhengchun Xu, Xinhai Lu, and Long Cheng

On Position of Future Community Construction in China 1246
 Chunting Wu and Yuzhe Wu

A Review of 10 years Research on Barriers in the Whole Process of Building Retrofit: Stakeholders’ Perception 1259
 Rui Zhang and Jiayuan Wang

Dilemmas, Directions and Paths of Macrocosm Urbanization in Zhejiang Province: An Analysis Framework Based on Agglomeration Index 1276
 Yuhang Ren and Yuzhe Wu

Evaluation of Housing Purchase Restriction Policy Based on Natural Experiment: A Perspective from Beijing’s Online Judicial Auction of Houses 1289
Anmiao Yu

Review of Local Major Construction Project Management Policy in China’s Urbanization 1297
Yi Hu and Fan Chen

The Coordination Analysis on the Spatiotemporal Evolution Between Population and Economic Concentration: A Case Study of Chengdu-Chongqing Urban Agglomeration 1307
Jun Xiao

The Regional Heterogeneity Effect of Urban Village Renovation on Neighborhood Housing Prices in Shenzhen 1323
Yuxin Zhu and Botong Song

A Theoretical Framework About Formation Mechanism of New Generation of Construction Workers’ Unsafe Behavior 1333
Guodong Ni, Lei Lv, Heng Xu, Yaqi Fang, and Qi Zhang

Rural China in the Digital Era: Evolution, Opportunities and Challenges 1347
Yitian Ren

Occupational Safety and Health

Review of Ergonomics Application on HSE Management Research for Construction Workers 1361
Kuian Liao, Chuan Yang, Lirong Quan, and Longhui Liao

Investigating the Voluntary Turnover Intention of Architectural Designers: A Case Study in Suzhou 1375
Lilin Zhao, Shang Zhang, Jinpeng Wang, and Nan Li

Learning Stress of Construction Management Students and Its Impact on Learning Performance: A Case Study in Suzhou 1391
Jiakang Li, Shang Zhang, Huimin Zhang, and Ruiyong Wang

Research on Job Stress and Coping Strategies of Construction Professionals: A Case Study in Suzhou 1403
Zihao Wang, Shang Zhang, Tianze Tang, and Hao Zhou

Study on the Influence of the Working Environment of Engineering Consultants on Their Mental Health and Countermeasures 1416
Haoliang Li, Shang Zhang, Qianqian Xu, and Hao Zhou

Research on “Nine Dimensions” Teaching Organization Mode of Integrating Course-Based Ideological and Political Education into Blended Teaching—Taking Engineering Estimation Serial Courses as an Example 1432
 Binbin Lai, Zhangsheng Liu, Dongxiang Zhang, and Guihai Liu

A Study of Construction Workers’ Hazard Recognition Process Based on EEG Experiment. 1441
 Zhiyu Zhang, Zhikun Ding, and Weilin Chen

Research on Spatial Cognition of Engineering Management Students Based on Virtual Simulation Teaching 1454
 Xia Liu and Zezhou Wu

Urban Regeneration

Research on the Sustainability Evaluation of “Medical-Nursing Combined Care” Community of Smart Pension 1467
 Haize Pan, Zhuoran Zhang, and Yufan Yang

Development of a Post-occupancy Evaluation Framework for Modular Student Housing – A Case Study in the Netherlands. 1481
 Huiying Hou, Joseph H. K Lai, and Dadi Zhang

Social Benefit Evaluation of Shantytown Reconstruction Based on DEA: A Case Study of xi'an, China 1496
 Siqi Hu, Donglang Yang, Junyao Zheng, Xingyi Zheng, Zixin Xu, and Zijing Wang

Auditing Australian Construction Industry’s Dependency on China to Improve Construction Supply Chain Resilience. 1512
 Jinyun Liu, Toong Khuan Chan, and Guilherme Luz Tortorella

An In-Depth Case Study on the Residential Second Renovation Waste in Shenzhen, China 1524
 Zhikun Ding, Xinping Wen, Shengqu Xu, Zhiyu Zhang, and Zhan Wang

Analysis of the Themes and Evolution Trends of Urban Renewal Policies in Hangzhou—Based on a Text Mining of the Policy Documents from 2002 to 2021 1539
 Jieyu Su, Kexi Xu, Fan Zhou, Chun Jiang, and Hui Gao

Exploring Investment Strategy of Technical Transformation of Power Grid Over-Aged Assets: A Approach of Dynamic Programming 1551
 G. E. Yanqin, Yinghua Chen, Yaping Wang, Xuesong Xu, Hanyu Deng, and Zhenyu Zhao

Urban Resilience

The Openness of China's Gated Communities from the Reflective Perspective of Border Vacuums 1563

Wenzheng Lu and Yuzhe Wu

Increasing Resilience of Utility Tunnel PPP Projects Through Risk Management: A Case on in Shiyan City 1577

Lin Yang, Jiaming Lou, and Xinran Hu

Comprehensive Evaluation of High Quality Development of Construction Industry Based on Entropy Method Taking Three Provinces and One City in Yangtze River Delta as Example 1592

Xiaoman Peng

Research on Evaluation of Urban Resilience Level Based on Barrel Index 1608

Lvwen Wang, Liudan Jiao, Ya Wu, and Xiaosen Huo

Analysis on the Coordination Between Tourism Activities and Tourism Supporting Facilities: A Case Study in China 1621

Hongman He, Daoyuan Li, and Xiaoxuan Wei

Suitability Evaluation of Healthy Real Estate – A Case Study of Zhuhai City 1636

Yu Yan

Analysis of Human Resources Carrying Capacity for Urban Sustainable Development – A Case Study of Chongqing 1644

Yi Yang

Evaluation on the Integrated Development Level of Chengdu-Chongqing Economic Circle 1659

Yueyan Lai

Correction to: BBN-Based Approach for Identifying the Governance Factors of Megaprojects C1

Lan Luo, Fenghao Gu, Yue Yang, and Qiushi Bo

Correction to: Intelligent BIM-Based Monitoring of Construction Tower Cranes C2

Yufan Zhang, Yu Xie, Fang Yue, Fenhan Liu, Yongqi Mai, and Zhenxin Huang

Author Index 1677

BIM and Emerging Technologies



Barriers and Risks in BIM-Embedded Design Collaboration: A Two-Mode Social Network Analysis

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Abstract. The construction industry has always been criticized for fragmentation arising from the separated design and construction processes. Although Building Information Modeling (BIM) is considered to be beneficial for effective collaboration through the lifecycle of construction projects, the BIM-embedded design collaboration is still problematic. The aims of this study are a) investigating the relationships between the key risks and barriers in GBA setting from users' perspective, and b) applying the Social Network Analysis (SNA) methods to visualize the barriers and risks in network structure.

This paper applies a two-mode social network analysis (SNA) to investigate the key barriers and risks and to understand their relationship in BIM-embedded design collaboration in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area (GBA) context. Two independent construction projects were investigated, and five face-to-face and online semi-structured interviews were conducted with experienced design management team members. In this study, the barriers are the reasons that cause the risks, and the risks indicate the poor project performance in BIM-embedded collaboration. Based on the collected dataset, six key barriers as actors and ten risks as the events have been considered; the resultant matrix for investigation is a 6×10 matrix, representing a two-mode social network.

The results suggest that promoting a collaborative culture is vital for project managers to deliver construction projects in the BIM vision in the company-level. On this basis, the evaluation of company internal design coordination should be taken into account when BIM integration. Moreover, the findings of this research highlight the key barriers as lack of trust and share, fragmented work, multiple silos and different understanding of BIM; plus, the risks of the difficulty in model management, miscommunication and increased short-term reworks received more impacts on impeding BIM-embedded design collaborations. Recommendations were given at the end of this paper for breaking the chains of unfavorable causations for high-quality construction project management.

Keywords: BIM-embedded collaboration · Social Network Analysis (SNA) · Design management · Two-mode network

1 Introduction

Digital technologies have been acknowledged for enabling better collaboration and data-driven decision making in design management [1, 2]. Many design and construction companies are adopting Building Information Modeling (BIM) to reduce exposure to risks and additional project cost for the client, significantly improve the effectiveness of operations and activities during design management [3, 4]. However, in the construction industry, the opinions among the design management professionals on the benefits of BIM-embedded collaboration is very sporadic. Although the current literature indicates numerous barriers and risks recognized by construction practitioners associated with BIM implementation, how these barriers hinder the benefits and causes risks is not entirely known among professionals.

Meanwhile, the increasing complexity in modern construction projects and the involvement of the multitude stakeholders require substantial information technology (IT) capabilities to support collaboration design works among design team members. However, how these IT capabilities create the practical benefits for design management remains unclear in the architecture, engineering, construction and operations (AECO) industry [5, 6]. BIM has been considered as a critical technology-oriented process innovation in the last decade [7]. Especially BIM-embedded construction projects are extremely expected to achieve highly efficient coordination and to alleviate multiple silos works. Therefore, in order to understand the relationship of risks and barriers related BIM integration, investigating the underlying impediments is highly crucial for making informed decisions in BIM-embedded design coordination.

Given the fact that the aims of the Greater Bay Area (GBA) city cluster are to establish close links between nine provincial cities in Guangdong province and the Hong Kong and Macao, and to develop an economic zone which will be a crucial component in the next phase of China's economic development. Therefore, substantial buildings and infrastructure must be put in place to connect the various areas of this complex and diverse region. Meanwhile, it is also an opportunity for Hong Kong to capitalise on the expertise and experience it has obtained in the construction field over the past decades. However, a lot of construction projects in GBA are or will be delivered through cooperation between mainland China teams and Hong Kong teams. It is difficult to deliver a positive outcome for all sides, especially regarding to reach agreements in various regulations and industry codes of practice. Thus, this collaboration is very important and understanding the risks and barriers in BIM-embedded collaboration in different parts of the GBA will be crucial to achieve the true benefits of BIM implementation for companies.

Existing studies have pointed out that improved communication techniques for construction design management might only contribute slightly to cohesion and coordination in the construction project team [8–10]. For example, Al Hattab and Hamzeh [11] indicate that the positive benefits of BIM for design management are primarily limited to the technological level, and the essential factors that are inhibiting BIM integration are still the people-related factors, such as lack of information sharing and collective culture. Thus, understanding the patterns of barriers and risks associated with BIM integration have a significant influence on design collaboration. In this study, the barriers

are the reasons that cause the risks, and the risks indicate the poor project performance in BIM-embedded collaboration.

The aims of this study are a) investigating the relationships between the key risks and barriers in GBA setting from users' perspective, and b) applying the Social Network Analysis (SNA) methods to visualize the barriers and risks in network structure. The remainder of this paper is organized as follows. Section 2 briefs the application of Social Network Analysis (SNA) and the three steps of this study. Six barriers and ten risks are mapped in Sect. 3 as network models. Results and analyses of the SNA are presented in Sect. 4. Discussion and conclusion appear in Sects. 5 and 7, respectively.

2 Application of Social Network Analysis (SNA)

Social Network Analysis (SNA) applies graph theories and network modelling techniques to investigate the characteristics of social networks. A social network is a set of relevant nodes connected by one or more relations [12]. In other words, a social network comprises a finite sets of nodes and the relations defined on them. In the construction industry, social network analysis is progressively used by researchers because of the multitude participants collaborating and interrelating for various complex construction projects with intense communications [13, 14]. Therefore, social network analysis provides a unique platform to integrate barriers and risks of BIM-embedded collaboration.

Nodes, links and network attributes are three vital concepts to understand social network analysis. In the network, 'nodes' or actors could represent persons, groups or events as entities in the investigated network. The 'links' or relations between the nodes represent the various kinds of relationships such as exchange information, friendships, trust bonding or money transfers [15]. One crucial characteristic of a network is the node 'degree centrality', which is a measurement of the number of links or ties that the node has. Networks might have one or several central nodes with links to other nodes, representing high or low 'degree centrality'. If the links have direction, which called directed network, then two separate measures of degree centrality are defined, specifically, indegree and outdegree. A central position within the network signifies the importance throughout the network and the capability for accessing other nodes [5, 16]. Consequently, which different structure positions (such as central, connecting, isolate) of nodes, SNA could be applied to map the relevant networks and to examine the prominence of different nodes.

Conventionally, one-mode SNA was implemented in the literature. Most networks are defined as one-mode network because of the similar kind of nodes in the networks. Numerous pieces of literature have discussed the analysis process of one-mode network [11, 17]. One-mode network analysis depicts every node interact with each other in a square matrix. This kind of network is very useful to identify the social connection between nodes and to study the network measures such as influence, power and cluster etc. However, some studies require analyzing two kinds of nodes, typically events and attendees or group members and groups, which eventually result in a two-mode network (i.e., affiliation or bipartite networks).

This study aims to apply a two-mode SNA to the key barriers and risks in the GBA setting from the users’ perspective. With intense communication and multifaceted activities among project team members, the power of SNA provides a visual network structure for investigating the various links and complicated interactions between the processes of construction project delivery.

Regarding the various perceptions of BIM-embedded collaboration for design management, based on the previous literature and the interviews in this study. Six key barriers as actors and ten risks as the events have been considered. The resultant two-mode SNA matrix for investigation is a 6×10 matrix. These factors are mapped based on the interviewees’ understanding of the interactions between the barriers and risks in the BIM integration context.

2.1 Research Steps

Two assumptions were formed to fulfill the propose of this study. Hypothesis 1: Currently, BIM-embedded collaboration in design management still problematic as some key barriers related to people. Hypothesis 2: Benefits of BIM integration in design management are governed by multiple layers of interdependent factors associated with the BIM-embedded collaboration barriers and risks network.

Figure 1 shows the case study approach adopted in this paper. It is, overall, an exploratory study of finding prominence of barriers that cause risks; therefore a case study approach is appropriate for investigating such a contemporary phenomenon within some real-life context [18]. The three steps are data collection, network modeling and network analysis.

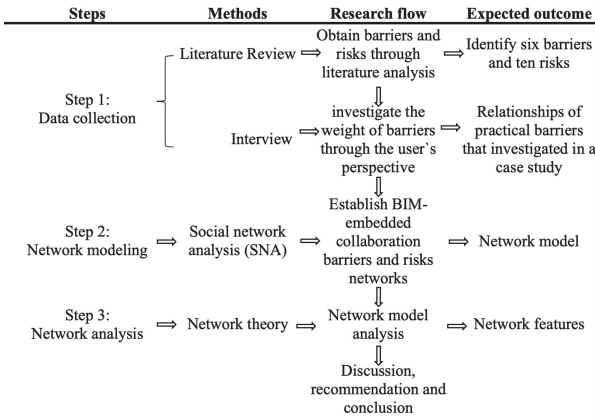


Fig. 1. Research steps and methods

Two cases were investigated, from two independent construction projects located at the GBA, as listed in Table 1. The types of barriers and risks were collected from the related literature, and verified with five semi-structured interviews and documentation review. The interviews were conducted with design management team members who

have had at least of 3-years of BIM-embedded collaboration experience. Before commencing the interview, the interviewees were requested to complete a questionnaire using a 5-point Likert scale to preliminarily answer the weight of barriers through the user's perspective. After the interview, interviewees were required to review the questionnaire again to ensure their final opinions were reflected.

Table 1. Overview of the project information

	Project A	Project B
Project type	Office & Hotel	Residential Buildings
Duration (still ongoing)	3 years	5 years
Procurement models	Design–bid–build (DBB)	Design–bid–build (DBB)
GFA	130,134 sq ^m	502,660 sq ^m
Finance	Private	Private

3 The Network Models

Table 2 illustrates the six key barriers and the ten key risks investigated in this study, which are the nodes in the investigated networks. In this study, the barriers are the reasons that cause the risks, and the risks indicate the poor project performance in BIM-embedded collaboration. The first step of modelling networks is mapping these nodes regarding their impacts and influence on one another in the BIM integration process. In this research, the key barriers and the key risks were associated using a 5-point Likert scale. Six key barriers being the actors and ten risks being the events. The resultant matrix for investigation is a 6x10 matrix which is naturally an affiliated network or two-mode network. Each respondent was required to fill the questionnaire about the weight of links between the barriers and risks. Table 3 demonstrates the average weights of links in the 6x10 unsymmetrical matrix. The BIM-embedded collaboration barriers and risks network was established.

Table 2. Key barriers and risks associated with BIM-embedded collaboration

Key Barriers	Key Risks
B1: Reluctance to learn something new	R1: Rise in short term cost
B2: Lack of trust and share	R2: Difficulty in model management
B3: Different understanding of BIM	R3: Increased short-term reworks
B4: Fragmented work, multiple silos	R4: Difficulty in design changes management
B5: Blame others	R5: Lack of skilled personnel

(continued)

Table 2. (continued)

Key Barriers	Key Risks
B6: Reluctance to follow BIM standards	R6: Unclear contracts liability
	R7: Difficult to trackback
	R8: Miscommunication
	R9: Difficulty in Workflow transition
	R10: Outsourcing modelling servicers

Table 3. The 6x10 unsymmetrical matrix

	R1	R2	R3	R4	R5	R6	R7	R8	R9	R10
B1	2.167	3.833	3.500	2.000	3.833	1.333	2.833	2.333	2.333	2.167
B2	2.667	3.167	3.167	2.333	2.167	3.167	3.500	4.000	2.500	1.667
B3	2.667	3.167	3.167	2.000	2.833	2.667	2.000	3.333	3.167	2.000
B4	2.333	3.167	2.833	2.833	2.667	1.333	3.000	2.333	3.167	3.500
B5	1.500	3.000	2.500	2.333	2.000	3.333	3.500	3.500	3.333	1.667
B6	2.333	3.333	2.833	2.333	2.833	3.333	2.167	3.000	3.167	1.500

4 Analytical Results

4.1 Affiliation Analysis Between Barriers and Risks

Design professionals have reached a consensus that understanding various barriers and risks of BIM-embedded collaboration is vital to delivering efficient design management [19, 20]. However, how the barriers, especially factors related to people, causes risks of BIM integration are quite important to investigate. Affiliation network analysis provides a useful method to establish the relations between the risks and the barriers which have influences on the events. Based on the SNA methodology, the bipartite network is easy to visualize by implementing the affiliation analysis on the two-mode matrix [12].

Figure 2 illustrates the network structures between six barriers and ten risks factors within BIM-embedded collaboration in construction projects. Seemingly, the green dots are the six barriers, and the red dots are the ten risks, and the sizes of the dots represent the prominence of each node within the interactions. The directions and links represent the influence between the barriers and the risks, and the thickness of the links represent the weight of impacts from one barrier to one risk as illustrated by the arrows. Therefore, the links and arrows in the figure demonstrate to what extent the barriers related to people causing the risks for BIM integration. Based on SNA measures, such prominence and criticality of both barriers and risks can be quantified as the weighted degree.

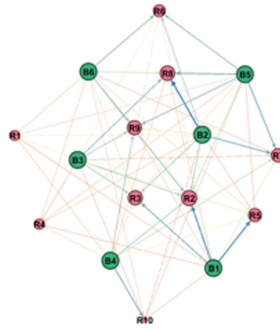


Fig. 2. Relationship between barriers and risks in the network map

Table 4 demonstrates the respective weighted degree of all barriers and risks derived from the network analysis. Evidently, the most crucial barriers related to people in BIM-embedded collaboration corresponding to the highest weighted degree values were found to be B2 (Lack of trust and share), B4 (Fragmented work, multiple silos) and B3 (Different understanding of BIM). Similarly, R2 (Difficulty in model management), R8 (Miscommunication), R3 (Increased short-term reworks), R9 (Difficulty in Workflow transition) and R7 (Difficult to trackback) with higher weighted degree values were found to be highly affected risks in the BIM implementation context. On the other extreme, B1 (Reluctance to learn something new), B5 (Blame others) and B6 (Reluctance to follow BIM standards) with lower weighted degree values are the least critical barriers in the BIM-embedded collaboration process. Correspondingly, R10 (Outsourcing modelling servicers), R1 (Rise in short term cost), R4 (Difficulty in design changes management), R6 (Unclear contracts liability) and R5 (Lack of skilled personnel) with the lowest weighted degree values were found to be the least influential risks for implementing BIM for design management.

Table 4. Weighted degree of barriers and risks in two-mode network analysis

Key Barriers	weighted out-degree	Key Risks	weighted in-degree
B2	28.335	R2	19.667
B4	27.166	R8	18.499
B3	27.001	R3	18
B6	26.832	R9	17.667
B5	26.666	R7	17
B1	26.332	R5	16.333
		R6	15.166
		R4	13.832
		R1	13.667
		R10	12.501

Figure 3 demonstrates the circular layout of the barriers and risks of a BIM-embedded collaboration network. One advantage of a circular layout is its neutrality. No node is placed at a privileged position because all vertices are put at equal distances from each other. It is evidently to show the thickness of the links, which represent the weights of influence from barriers to risks in BIM implementation. As seen in Fig. 4 and Fig. 5, the strongest impacts between barriers and risks corresponding to the largest weight of link were found to be B2 (Lack of trust and share) to R8 (Miscommunication), B1 (Reluctance to learn something new) to R2 (Difficulty in model management) and B1 (Reluctance to learn something new) to R5 (Lack of skilled personnel). Similarly, B1 (Reluctance to learn something new) to R6 (Unclear contracts liability), B4 (Fragmented work, multiple silos) to R6 (Unclear contracts liability), B5 (Blame others) to R1 (Rise in short term cost) and B6 (Reluctance to follow BIM standards) to R10 (Outsourcing modelling servicers) with a smaller weight of link were found to be weaker impacts between barriers and risks for BIM-embedded collaboration.

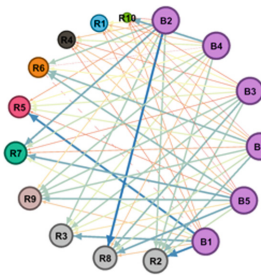


Fig. 3. Circular layout of the barriers and risks network(left)

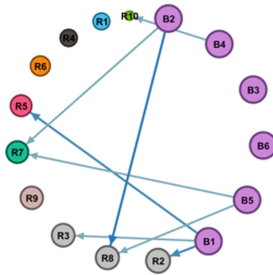


Fig. 4. larger weight of links in the network (middle)

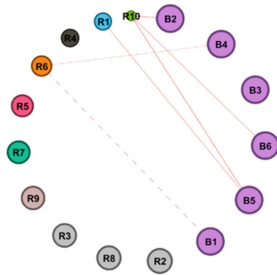


Fig. 5. smaller weight of links in the network (right)

4.2 Modularity Analysis

Modularity analysis was performed to understand the clustering effects of both barriers and risks within the network structure. As seen in Fig. 6, the biggest group contains three barriers (B2, B6 and B5) and five risk instances (R8, R7, R9, R6 and R1). The second big group comprising two barriers (B3 and B1) and three risks (R2, R3 and R5). The remaining barrier B4 and two risks, namely R4 and R10, formed the smallest group.

These findings indicate how the combined impacts of the barriers and risks can affect the construction projects from a collective perspective. Moreover, these results might provide a better basis for decision making in BIM-embedded design management. Regarding the interactions of barriers and risks of BIM integration with the group’s analysis, decision-makers might apply reasonable strategies to ensure higher effectiveness and improve the performance of design management.