

UNIVERSITI TEKNOLOGI MARA

**A FRAMEWORK OF
TRANSPARENCY INITIATIVE (TI)
TO FIGHT CORRUPTION FOR
PUBLIC CONSTRUCTION
PROJECTS**

RUMAIZAH BINTI MOHD NORDIN

Thesis submitted in fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

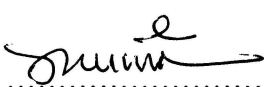
Faculty of Architecture, Planning & Surveying

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AUTHOR'S DECLARATION

I declare that the work in this thesis was carried out in accordance with the regulations of Universiti Teknologi MARA. It is original and is the result of my own work, unless otherwise indicated or acknowledged as referenced work. This thesis has not been submitted to any other academic institution or non-academic institution for any degree or qualification.

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Name of student	:	Rumaizah binti Mohd Nordin
Student I.D. No	:	2010212916
Programme	:	PhD (Specialism of the Built Environment)
Faculty	:	Faculty of Architecture, Planning and Surveying
Title	:	A Framework of Transparency Initiative (TI) to Fight Corruption For Public Construction Projects
Signature of Student	:	
Date	:	July 2015

ABSTRACT

Transparency is defined as the open flow of information and an essential element of the Government primary approach to reduce corruption. The prime reason for dealing with corruption problem is to promote transparency for all businesses. In Malaysia, fighting corruption is one of the National Key Results Area (NKRA) under the Government Transformation Program (GTP). Corruption is a fiduciary crime that is believed to penetrate the construction sectors in countries around the world. Given the intrinsically secretive nature of corrupt activities, the construction industry has a worldwide reputation for incidences of corruption and as for Malaysia; the issue of corruption in construction is at a serious level. Despite corruption exists in every stage of project life cycle, most of the issue of corruption focused at the procurement phase. Besides, sources of corruption can be divided into technical and behavioural issues. Undoubtedly corrupt practices have a lot of adverse effects on the industry as corruption may cause inefficiency and ineffectiveness on project performance. In recent years, anti-corruption strategy has been high on agenda in many parts of the world but relatively little examines the problem in a sector specific way. Regardless of many strategies in combating corruption has been undertaken in Malaysia, there is a need to revise for a more drastic anti-corruption strategies to implement it effectively. The failure in coping with corruption partly stems from our lacking adequate analytical framework that would allow us to sufficiently understand its nature and causal linkage to economic development. Moreover, at present there is no framework of TI formulated to provide a systematic reading on the issues of corruption and means to reduce it especially in construction sector in Malaysia. Thus, the aim of this research is to develop a framework of transparency initiative (TI) to fight corruption for public construction projects. The empirical research was undertaken in two phases; *Preliminary Study* (i.e., exploratory interviews - 8 respondents, a brain-storming workshop - 72 participants, and document analysis - 4 documents) and *Main Survey* (i.e., questionnaire – 71 responses) with respondents from Government agencies, contractors and consultants. The data from the Preliminary Study was analysed utilising thematic content analysis and qualitative software (Atlas t.i version 7) whilst the questionnaire survey was analysed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software version 21. The findings from the research were used to develop a framework to fight corruption through TI which was validated to confirm its external validity. The findings confirmed that the level of corruption is *high* in Malaysian construction industry and *procurement phase* is the most vulnerable area for corrupt practices. Besides, *transparency* was found to be important in reducing corruption in term of creating norms for ethical *behaviour* or in improvement of process of work. However, the research reveals that behavioural issue is one of the important sources of corruption that is negatively related to transparency improvement in order to fight corruption. The framework of TI to fight corruption may serve as a guideline for project stakeholders in achieving better performance of construction project with reduced corruption.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CONFIRMATION BY PANEL OF EXAMINERS	ii
AUTHOR'S DECLARATION	iii
ABSTRACT	iv
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	v
TABLE OF CONTENTS	vi
LIST OF TABLES	xiii
LIST OF FIGURES	xvi
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS	xviii

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 Background Of The Research	1
1.1.1 Construction	3
1.1.2 Construction And Corruption	4
1.1.3 Corruption	6
1.1.4 Anti-Corruption Effort	7
1.1.5 Transparency Initiative (Ti)	7
1.2 Problems Statement	8
1.3 Research Questions	14
1.4 Research Aim And Objectives	14
1.5 Research Hypotheses	17
1.6 Significance Of Study	18
1.7 Scope And Limitation Of The Research	19
1.8 Research Process And Methodology	21
1.9 Thesis Layout	24
 CHAPTER TWO: CONSTRUCTION AND CORRUPTION	 27
2.1 Introduction	27
2.2 Construction	27
2.2.1 Overview Of Construction Industry In Malaysia	28

2.3	Corruption In Construction	29
2.3.1	Corruption Definitions	30
2.3.1.1	Abuse Of Power By Public Officials	31
2.3.1.2	Deviant Behaviour Violating Ethics	33
2.3.1.3	Relationship Of Complexity	34
2.4	Corruption Accross Project Phases	36
2.4.1	Construction Project Phases And Vulnerable Areas For Corruption	39
2.4.2	Sources Of Corruption (Technical) Across Project Phases	40
2.4.3	Sources Of Corruption (Behavioural)	46
2.4.4	Corruption Measurement	54
2.4.5	Corruption Perception	57
2.4.6	Extent (Scenario) Of Corruption In Construction	58
2.4.7	Effects Of Corruption	60
2.5	Project Performance	65
2.5.1	Time, Cost, And Quality	66
2.5.2	Project Effectiveness	68
2.6	Summary	71

CHAPTER THREE: ANTI-CORRUPTION STRATEGIES AND TRANSPARENCY INITIATIVES

3.1	Introduction	73
3.2	Section 1: Strategies To Fight Corruption	74
3.2.1	Strategies To Fight Corruption - By Gebel (2012), Kenny (2009), Loughman And Sibery (2012) And Mccusker (2006)	74
3.2.2	Strategies To Fight Corruption - Lesson Learnt From Tanzania, Singapore, Hong Kong, Thailand, Australia, Indonesia And Vietnam	78
3.2.3	Strategies To Fight Corruption - In Malaysia	85
3.3	Section 2: Transparency	91
3.3.1	Definition	91
3.3.2	Relationship Of Transparency And Corruption	93
3.3.3	Relationship Of Transparency, Integrity And Accountability	95
3.3.4	Transparency In Construction	97
3.3.5	Transparency Improvements	98