

UNIVERSITI TEKNOLOGI MARA

**A GENERIC COMPETENCY
FRAMEWORK FOR ENTRY LEVEL
CONSTRUCTION MANAGERS IN
MALAYSIA**

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of the requirement for the degree of
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AUTHOR'S DECLARATION

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

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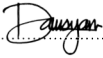
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ABSTRACT

The changes in industry needs have further highlighted the problems of incompetence entry level construction managers and brought significant changes in construction management education. Moreover, culmination from the issues faced in the entry level construction management, it suggests that there is problem relating to the mismatch of generic competency in entry level construction management. The mismatch of generic competency appears when there are changes in industry requirements added with education provision in developing construction management students' generic competency. Furthermore, there's an absence of strategic framework for Malaysian entry level construction managers. The aim of this research is to address part of the problem in construction management generic competency education and construction industry by suggesting an improved generic competency framework of entry level construction managers in Malaysia. This study adopts a mixed method approaches and results from questionnaire survey and interviews which highlight the major issues. Sequential explanatory model are chosen in determining the mismatch. In developing the generic competency framework, this study adapts and improves Spencer & Spencer (1993) competency development model. Responses for questionnaire surveys were collected from contactors and undergraduate construction management students and have been analyzed by inferential statistical analyses using Winsteps. Qualitative analysis was done by validating the framework and explaining the existence of mismatch. Results from this study, manage to develop a generic competency framework for entry level construction managers based on their roles and tasks. This framework consists of 12 generic competencies which are communication, behavioral characteristics, negotiation, teamwork, leadership, problem solving, entrepreneurship, ethics, analytical and critical thinking, flexibility, lifelong learning and relationship building. From this framework, this study determines the mismatch between industry requirement and construction management students expectation towards generic competency. This study find the existence of mismatch are contributed by students attitude, inexperience lecturers and less opportunity in experienced onsite work during internship. The results in general reveal that students attitude play significant roles in the existence of mismatch. Moreover, from the finding, it is suggested that industry and university need to improve their collaboration in exchanging knowledge and experience in enhance the construction management students generic competency.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides an introduction to the research subject and scope of this research. It presents the overview of the research topic, the outline of the research structure, aims and objectives. The research background is a part of the literature review that leads to the research problems and will be discussed in the next chapter. This chapter concludes with the chapter guide for the thesis.

1.2 RESEARCH BACKGROUND

The culmination of literature review converges to highlight the following phenomena of construction and construction management. These are all discussed in details within the literature review in chapter two and three. The gist of literature review, which has been concluded in the background of research, is highlighted as follows.

i. Construction Managers Competency

The job of a construction manager is regarded as being demanding, complex and varied, as well as being heavily dependent on their managerial skills (specifically generic competency) (Love & Haynes, 2001). To achieve the completion of the project as set out in the construction contract, construction managers need the abilities to manage the project well and have the right generic competency to control, support, motivate and lead the team.

Construction managers cannot achieve everything on their own efforts alone (Love & Haynes, 2001). As a construction manager, there is a need to harness the positive skills sufficiently to get along with others and implement the project with the rest of the project team until its successful completion and achieving set goals and objectives (Tan, 2004). However, Shirazi and Hampson (1998) and Guthrie (1994) cited in Love & Haynes (2001) suggested that construction managers generally lack