

UNIVERSITI TEKNOLOGI MARA

**PROJECT GOVERNANCE
FRAMEWORK FOR PUBLIC
POVERTY ALLEVIATION
PROJECTS IN MALAYSIA**

**ABDUL MUHAIMIN BIN
ABDUL LATIFF**

PhD

August 2021

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 results 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.

I, hereby, acknowledge that I have been supplied with the Academic Rules and Regulations for Post Graduate, Universiti Teknologi MARA, regulating the conduct of my study and research.


Name of Student : Abdul Muhaimin bin Abdul Latiff

Student I.D. No. : 2017310607

Programme : Doctor of Philosophy (Built Environment) – AP991

Faculty : Architecture, Planning & Surveying

Thesis Title : Project Governance Framework for Public Poverty
Alleviation Projects in Malaysia

Signature of Student : 

Date : August 2021

ABSTRACT

The successful planning, implementation, and operation of poverty alleviation projects are crucial for establishing optimum benefits to its intended target groups. Project governance is identified as a management system that comprises a set of values and structure that could be practiced by the public officials in managing poverty alleviation projects with the ultimate aim to improve the quality of life of poor people. Although numerous programs and projects that have been implemented by the government have contributed to the reduction in poverty incident, there are pressing needs to address the better understanding of project governance at both strategic and operational levels of project organization, particularly from the perspective of public officials through the stewardship theoretical lens. The aim of the research is to explore the governance practices of poverty alleviation projects in Malaysia which subsequently lead to the development of a project governance framework. This research first determined the current state of project governance practices, elements, and issues in Malaysia's poverty alleviation programs through the exploratory study. A qualitative approach through multiple case studies was then utilized as the main data collection method, including interview, document analysis, observation, field notes, and research journal. Five (5) public poverty alleviation projects have been selected, with a total of 31 interviews conducted to investigate the practices of project governance in poverty alleviation projects and its embedded elements. Thematic analysis was adopted to analyze the interview transcripts and documents with NVivo 12 Plus used to manage the coding process. The cross-case and pattern matching discovered eight (8) project governance practices in three (3) project management phases and eight (8) project governance elements in the poverty alleviation projects. From the governance practices and elements, this research proposed a project governance framework that was validated by the public officials expert through the focus group discussion. This research found two (2) main elements, namely altruistic empathy and intrinsic motivation, that drive project governance practices and positively interplayed with six (6) other project governance elements throughout project planning, implementation, and operation. However, political interventions, weak project leadership, transparency issues, and lack of competency significantly influence poverty alleviation projects' governance. This research demonstrates the flexibility of stewardship theory in portraying project governance insights in the poverty alleviation projects towards its successful outcome. A newly constructed framework added depth to the project governance, particularly the elements of altruistic empathy and intrinsic motivation, signifying the unique setup and motivation that drive project governance practices. Besides, the findings offer further integration of project governance within public governance policy substance as the poverty alleviation projects are part of the national development initiatives. Also, exploring public officials' motivation and their subjective meanings demonstrates that empirical findings could be generated from the combination of these research methods and research paradigm. The outcome of the research should enable the adoption of a project governance framework that is ready to be incorporated into the current system and a better understanding of how they are practiced, which could improve the public organizations involved in the poverty alleviation projects in Malaysia.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I wish to thank Allah for giving me the opportunity to embark on my PhD and for completing this long and challenging journey successfully. I am indebted to several people and organizations for their help and support to complete this thesis. First and foremost, I sincerely thank my supervisors, Assoc. Prof. Ts. Dr. Aini Jaapar and Assoc. Prof. Dr. Ir. Che Maznah Mat Isa, whom I learned a lot and the level of knowledge they possessed that I admired of. Their continuous patience toward me and endless encouragement made the challenging and sometimes frustrating research studies a pleasurable one. Their valuable advice and consistent feedback on the work conducted enabled a better research output in completing this work.

The most important acknowledgment is reserved to my family, especially my parents, Dr. Abdul Latiff Awang and Wan Hafsah Wan Mohamad and my parents-in-law, who have filled my life with happiness and has been my source of resilience in difficult times.

I owe a special debt to my wife, Ezridayanty Mohd Idrus, for her endless love and always offering her understanding and support every time I felt discouraged and lacked of motivation. To my children, Zahra, Zulfa and Zafira, not to forget my beloved angel daughter, Zarifa; thank you for your constant encouragement and understanding when I need it most.

I wish to thank all my siblings as well as friends and colleagues in several government ministries and agencies who helped me in various ways. Without them, my study life would be less colorful and pleasurable.

Finally, I wish to express my appreciation to the faculty members of FSPU for giving me the opportunity to explore the knowledge of project governance. Financial support received from the Public Service Department is gratefully acknowledged.

This piece of work is a tribute for faith, love, perseverance and tolerance.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
CONFIRMATION BY PANEL OF EXAMINERS	ii
AUTHOR'S DECLARATION	iii
ABSTRACT	iv
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	v
TABLE OF CONTENTS	vi
LIST OF TABLES	xi
LIST OF FIGURES	xiii
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS	xv
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 Background of the Research	1
1.2 Statement of the Problems	3
1.2.1 Emerging challenges in poverty alleviation	3
1.2.2 Governance practices in poverty alleviation projects are poorly understood	4
1.2.3 Linking project governance and poverty alleviation	5
1.3 Research Questions	7
1.4 Objectives of the Research	8
1.5 Scope and Limitation of the Research	8
1.6 Significance of the Research	9
1.7 Structure of the Thesis	10
1.8 Summary	12
CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF LITERATURE	14
2.1 Introduction	14
2.2 Overview of Governance	16
2.2.1 Corporate Governance	18
2.2.2 Public Governance	20