

**SOURCES OF DISPUTES IN ROAD CONSTRUCTION  
PROJECTS**

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Degree of Master of Science in Construction Law and Dispute  
Resolution

Department of Building Economics

University of Moratuwa  
Sri Lanka

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Thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of  
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## **Declaration**

I declare that this is my own work and this dissertation does not incorporate without acknowledgement any material previously submitted for a Degree or Diploma in any other University or institute of higher learning and to the best of my knowledge and belief it does not contain any material previously published or written by another person except where the acknowledgement is made in the text.

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Name of the supervisor: Ch.QS Vijitha Disaratna

Signature:

Date:

# **Abstract**

## **Sources of Disputes in Road Construction Projects**

In every industry where people have to work together and cooperate there is a possibility for disputes to arise, and construction industry is not an exception. Often there is a lack of understanding about the reasons behind the disputes, but to avoid disputes from occurring and resolving them if they occur, it is vital to understand the sources of disputes (Love, 2008).

According to Harmon (2003), “Construction projects are comparatively complex, resulting in tedious contract documents. These complex construction can tend to result in complex disputes. Due to the disputed situation a project can deviate from its original scope and lead to complicated litigation or arbitration hence, increased costs, and a breakdown the parties’ relationship”.

The road construction projects are not an exception for disputes. Therefore, identification of factors affecting for disputes in road construction projects are necessary for its smooth execution. This research tried to identify most common sources of disputes which affected to road construction project life and cost.

In this research mixed approach was used to explore the research topic. A detailed literature review was carried out to determine the sources of disputes in construction projects and filtered them through experts’ interview to identify the sources which are more relevant to the road projects.

37 number of sources of disputes were shortlisted with expert’s opinions out of 95 sources of disputes identified through the literature review. The same has tested through questionnaire survey with the road construction experts. Identified 12 number of significant sources of disputes which were affected the road construction projects regularly were identified.

A framework was developed based on the identified common sources of disputes occur in road construction projects regularly. The same framework has recommended the possible actions that can be taken at formulation or at execution of the road projects. The recommended proactive actions may give guidance to the road project parties to avoid or minimize dispute before the dispute hit on the project.

**Keywords:** Source of disputes, Road construction projects, Dispute resolution

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## List of Abbreviations

ADB – Asian Development Bank
BOQ – Bill of Quantities
DAB – Dispute Adjudication Board
RDA – Road Development Authority
VO – Variation Orders