

**COMPETENCY REQUIREMENTS OF PROCUREMENT  
TEAM IN PRE-CONTRACT STAGE TO MINIMISE  
DISPUTES OF PUBLIC CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS  
IN SRI LANKA**

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Sri Lanka

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## DECLARATION

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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. I retain the right to use this content in whole or part in future works (such as articles or books).

.....

S.S.Weerathunge

.....

Date:

The above candidate has carried out research for the Masters dissertation under my supervision. I confirm that the declaration made above by the student is true and correct.

.....

Dr. Tharusha Ranadewa

Dissertation Supervisor

.....

Date:

*To my precious baby,  
for enduring the hard times and bringing joy and inspiration to my life,*

*& to my loving family and friends,  
for your constant encouragement and belief in me....*

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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**Competency requirements of procurement team in pre-contract stage to minimise disputes of public construction projects in Sri Lanka**

In developing countries, public construction procurement represents a substantial proportion of construction procurement. However, it encounters problems that hinder the economic growth of the country. Problems such as poor quality performance, time overruns, cost overruns, risk overruns, fraud and corruption, tender recalls and shortage of qualified and motivated professionals are prevalent in the public procurement process. Root causes of these problems such as inadequate documentation, poor communication among team members, inadequate procurement knowledge and skills of the procurement team members, inadequate knowledge of the procurement regulations, and inadequate planning often originate in the pre-contract phase, leading to problems in the public procurement process, ultimately effect with conflicts and disputes in public construction projects. Therefore, these root causes should be effectively addressed in the pre-contract stage to minimise disputes in the post contract stage, by having a procurement team with the required competencies in the pre-contract phase. Thus, this research focused on investigating the competencies of the procurement team in the pre-contract stage to minimise disputes in public construction projects in Sri Lanka, as well as investigating the professionals who should possess the identified competencies.

This study followed a mixed method approach, starting with a comprehensive literature review, followed by a questionnaire survey and a semi-structured interview with experts. Accordingly, Architects, Engineers and Quantity Surveyors participated in the questionnaire survey, while fifteen industry experts including Architects, Quantity Surveyors and Engineers possessing experience in public procurement were selected through purposive sampling for the semi-structured interviews. The sample was validated through ‘saturation’ to ensure reliability. Data analysis was conducted using Relative Importance Index (RII) for the questionnaire survey, and code based content analysis for the semi-structured interviews. The research findings offered thirty-six (36) root causes of the problems in the pre-contract stage, while forty-three (43) competencies for the pre-contract stage, and the relevant professionals for each competency.

Finally, a competency requirement framework was developed, integrating pre-contract sub-stages, root causes, necessary competencies, and relevant professionals. The framework provides valuable insights aiming to optimise the public procurement process and to minimise disputes in public construction projects in Sri Lanka.

**Keywords: Pre-Contract, RIBA Plan of Work 2020, Procurement Team, Disputes, Public Procurement, Public Construction Projects**

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## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

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BIM	:	Building Information Modelling
BOQ	:	Bill of Quantities
Cons.	:	Construction
CIDA	:	Construction Industry Development Authority
IESL	:	Institution of Engineers Sri Lanka
IQSSL	:	Institute of Quantity Surveyors Sri Lanka
PC	:	Procurement Committee
PE	:	Procurement Entity
QS	:	Quantity Surveyor
RIBA	:	Royal Institute of British Architects
RII	:	Relative Importance Index
SD	:	Standard Deviation
SL	:	Sri Lanka
SLIA		Sri Lanka Institute of Architects
TEC	:	Technical Evaluation Committee