

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSIONS, RECOMMENDATION AND CONCLUSION

5.1 Introduction

This chapter provides the summary and conclusion of the study and brings together the ideas and elaborations presented in the earlier four chapters. In Chapter 1, the concerns on the lack of participation and involvement of the private sector in PPP was identified, particularly in toll expressway projects. It also explored and identified the different critical success factors (CSFs) for a PPP project, some of which also contribute significantly to the influence on the behavioural intention of the decision makers in the private sector to participate in PPP projects. These provided the fundamental background of the issue, and led to define the more specific aims and objectives of the study.

Chapter 2 provided a literature review on the subject matter and gave more details on the topic, including definitions, concepts, origins and practices of PPP globally, before focusing on PPP in Malaysia. The chapter established the overall setting of PPP practices worldwide, and examined in detail, the PPP practices in Malaysia, from both the historical and within the current context. The review also focused on the current toll expressway projects in Malaysia, and its corresponding trends with regard to the decision makers' behaviour towards involvement in such projects. Then goes on to discuss the concept of social behaviour in the perspective of social exchanges integrate with behavioural intention of the decision makers in the private sector in relation towards involvement in PPP. The study also explored on the

relation of trust between intention to actual behaviour using the underpinning theories of Social Exchange Theory (SET) and theory of planned behaviour (TPB) as the main theoretical model. Aside from the three original latent variables of TPB (attitude, subjective norm and perceived behavioural control), and based on the literature review and the concept of PPP itself, another three contextual constructs were identified and they were under CSFs of PPP which are governmental influence, project viability and trust. Following this, the three contextual constructs were merged into the study's conceptual framework. On top of that, as an innovation, the study introduced a moderator variable, i.e. trust, into the framework.

The methodology and conduct of the research were further outlined and elaborated in Chapter 3, while findings drawn from the data collection were analysed in Chapter 4. The study is also classified as confirmatory.

The final conclusion chapter revisits the objectives of the research and their corresponding findings. It goes on to highlight the potential contribution to the existing body of knowledge, and to the interest of the related stakeholders. At the same time, the chapter, while acknowledging the study's significant outputs, also discusses the limitations of the current study. The thesis concludes with recommendations for enhancement of PPP practices in Malaysia, as well as suggestions for future research.

5.2 Accomplishment of the Research Objectives

Participating in PPP is an opportunity for private companies to expand into new markets and to achieve long-term business growth (Crosslin 1991; Hodge and Greve 2007; Ke et al.2013; Soomro and Zhang 2015), while on the other hand, it presents also a challenge in terms of having to deal with more risks and uncertainties

(Nijkamp and Rienstra 1995; Koppenjan and Enserink 2009). Due to the latter, decision making for involvement in PPP projects is more complex than a traditional investment undertaking (Wibowo and Alfen, 2015).

The aim of this study is to establish the significant factors that influence the decision makers' behaviour towards getting their respective companies involvement in PPP projects. It is also to contribute towards the development of enhanced guidelines for practitioners and policy makers to facilitate better decision making on their involvement, particularly in PPP toll expressway projects. In line with these aims, seven research objectives were identified to govern the study. The research objectives are:

- i. To investigate the effects of decision makers' attitude towards their behavioural intention to participate in PPP toll expressway projects.
- ii. To investigate the effects of subjective norms towards the behavioural intention of the decision makers in the private sector to participate in PPP toll expressway projects.
- iii. To investigate the effects of perceived behavioural control over the behavioural intention of the decision makers in the private sector to participate in PPP toll expressway projects.
- iv. To investigate the effects of governmental influence towards the behavioural intention of the decision makers in the private sector to participate in PPP toll expressway projects.

- v. To investigate the effects of project viability on the behavioural intention of the decision makers in the private sector to participate in PPP toll expressway projects.
- vi. To investigate the effects of the behavioural intention of the decision makers in the private sector on their involvement behaviour in PPP toll expressway projects.
- vii. To investigate whether trust moderates the relationship between the behavioural intention of the decision makers in the private sector and their involvement behaviour in PPP toll expressway projects.

In this chapter, each objective was revisited using the study's hypotheses in order to review the degree of success in achieving each one of them. In addressing the research objectives, the need to understand PPP is crucial. As such, the research explored the concept of PPP and its practices globally, in an attempt to understand the drivers and motivations for governments that have adopted PPP as an alternative approach to finance the infrastructure development. It is to be noted that the rise of PPP was triggered by pressure on governments to provide faster and better national infrastructure initiatives (Nambiar, 2011).

Cooperation and collaboration between public authorities and the private sector in providing infrastructure is not a new phenomenon (Tang et al, 2010). However, the PPP concept had brought this cooperation to a different stature and importance (Li et al., 2005; and Tieman; 2003).

Countries witnessed an increase in participation of the private sector in the public infrastructure development through PPP, and the responsibility to provide public infrastructure, due to PPP, has seen a shift from being a government responsibility, to one shared with the private sector (Akintoye et al., 2015).

In adopting PPP, governments commonly encourage cooperation, and justify it as in line with the promotion of economic diversity (Bernardino et al., 2010). Chapter 2 provides, in detail, the justifications for diversity offered by PPP that attract governments to adopt PPP. The two main justifications are optimisation of risk, resources and responsibilities; and maximisation of value for the public sector. Despite the wide recognition of these two justifications, there are still some concerns on the sincerity of governments who choose to adopt PPP. To address these concerns and create better understanding of the concept, the structure of PPP from a contractual perspective is appraised and elaborated.

While global projects generally see the private sector as the core player in forming a PPP but in the Malaysian context the participation and involvement of private sectors are debatable (Jomo, 2014). Chapter 2 has highlighted that almost 70% of the toll concessionaire companies are in fact owned by government-linked companies (GLCs) and Malaysia's sovereign wealth funds such as Khazanah Nasional Berhad, PNB, EPF, and Kumpulan Wang Persaraan (KWAP). This, in its very essence, contradicts the original spirit and intention of PPP to spur the participation and involvement of private sector companies. Thus, from findings of this study, it could serve as a valuable reference point in shaping the private sector's motivation to participate in PPP.

5.2.1 Discussion on Research Objective 1 –Attitude on PPP

RO1: The effect of the decision makers' attitude towards their behavioural intention towards involvement in PPP toll expressway projects.

H1: The decision makers' attitude has a positive effect on their behavioural intention towards involvement in PPP toll expressway projects.

The results of this study indicated that attitude was the third most significant latent variable affecting the behavioural intention of the decision maker for engagement in PPP toll expressway projects. The link between attitude and behavioural intention had the third highest path coefficient which is 0.205. This can be deduced that the decision maker that has a positive attitude towards PPP might not hesitate to participate in PPP expressway projects. Among the seven factors studied under attitude, establishment of company's reputation and social image (ATT5) was found to be the most dominant factor with the highest factor loading of 0.78.

The results showed that an established company's reputation and social image provide the highest motivation for the decision makers in deciding to participate in PPP toll expressway projects. Thus, this is seen that PPP platform has been used for the purpose of gaining reputation and market share for the big boys, furthermore they believed and take for granted that the government would assist and backing them in ensuring the successful of the project for the interest of people or rakyat. This perception is supported by few cases in Malaysian expressways that required government intervention and bailed out such as Eastern Dispersal Link Expressway (EDL) under Malaysian Resources Corporation Berhad (MRCB) in 2008, and the

North-South Expressway operated by PLUS Expressways Bhd which was originally under Renong Berhad and UEM Bhd, prior to a government directive for Khazanah to take over in 2001 (Gul, 2006).

Previous researchers such as Al-Sari et al. (2012), Begum et al. (2009), Wu, et al. (2016) and Zhang, Y. (2018), have also revealed on their findings that holding positive attitude has a great influence on the intention of an organisation to engage or get involved in a particular decision. Finally, this finding is also in line with Crosslin (1991), Hodge and Greve (2007), and Ke et al. (2013) who have claimed that participating in PPP is an opportunity for private companies to expand into new markets and achieve long-term business growth.

5.2.2 Discussion on Research Objective 2 – Subjective Norm

RO2: The effect of subjective norm on the behavioural intention of the decision makers in the private sector towards involvement in PPP toll expressway projects.

H2: Subjective norm has a positive effect on the behavioural intention of the decision makers in the private sector towards involvement in PPP toll expressway projects.

Subjective norm as presented in Table 4.10 (page 178), shows a path coefficient of 0.030, does not significantly influence on the behavioural intention of the decision maker to get involve in PPP toll expressway projects. This result shows that external parties such as industry associations, competitors, financial institutions, local communities and other private companies having PPP experiences does not have

much influence on the behavioural intention of the decision makers in the private company to engage in PPP toll expressway projects.

This is in line with other research findings such as Tang (2016) which claimed that Chinese private companies are less influenced by subjective norms in their decision making for the bidding of a project. The correlation and regression analyses conducted by Cheng, et al (2016) showed an insignificant relationship between subjective norms and a contractor's intentions to partner in a project. Ye et al. (2017) added that neither institutional environment nor public support have significant effects on companies' willingness to participate in PPP. They also suggested that collecting public opinion not only increases the costs of operational in PPP, but also has a negative influence on making investment decisions. This observation was supported by Ajzen (1991), who stated that subjective norms are external factors that relate more to the impact exerted by "significant others", but do not necessarily affecting internal factors such as behavioural intention.

Despite the finding is supported by previous studies, additional initiative were taken to justify by conducting an interview with three (3) CeO of toll concessionaire companies. Basically, all the answers and comments received through interviews, explained well that subjective norm is not the main factor of influence when considering involvement in PPP toll expressway projects. A very good example of how subjective norms do not have much influence was the controversial RM2.42 billion Kinrara-Damansara Expressway (Kidex) project. In this case, Kidex Sdn Bhd, the developer, had received approval from the federal government and signed the concession agreement (CA) on 15 November 2013. Kidex is a 14.9 km expressway to

connect the areas of Kinrara (south of of the Klang Valley) and Bandar Utama (north of Klang Valley) bypassing Petaling Jaya.

While the approval of Kidex was under the responsibility of the federal government, the Selangor State Government's approval was required for the expressway's construction as per Section 4 of the Land Acquisition Act. The company then proceeded to secure an extension to its concession agreement with federal government until November 2015 even as the project faced strong resistance from residents who were concerned with the expressway's negative impact on the neighbourhood's congestion and pollution rates. The anti-Kidex residents obtained the support of Suruhanjaya Hak Asasi Manusia Malaysia (SUHAKAM), which holds that prior consent of residents as necessary for construction to continue. The residents got the support of some politicians such as from the Bukit Gasing assemblyman, and Puchong Member of Parliament. Consequently, political intervention by opposition parties ruling the Selangor State government resulted in the expressway's development approval being withdrawn in principle, citing that the developer did not meet its conditions by the deadline as the reason of withdrawal. This decision actually came in the wake of public pressure and an independent review, which ultimately showed poor planning and coordination between different government agencies (Chen & Sheridan, 2015).

In this context, the "significant other" stipulated as one of the factors in subjective norms did not have any effect. However, political connections and good rapport with the government of the day at both federal and state levels could help a private company gain valuable and rare support that they would not get from the

market (Li et al.2006). These support become a source of competitive advantage (Barney 1991; Li et al. 2006).

The study's result also indicates that current level of engagement of external parties in PPP projects is quite limited, particularly in the crucial earlier stages, primarily due to issues such as openness, transparency and accountability of the decision-making process and the projects' long-term viability (Cheng et al 2016, and Tang, 2016).

5.2.3 Discussion on Research Objective 3 – Perceived Behavioural Control

RO3: The effect of perceived behavioural control over the behavioural intention of the decision makers in the private sector towards involvement in PPP toll expressway projects.

H3: Perceived behavioural control has a positive effect on the behavioural intention of the decision makers in the private sector towards involvement in PPP toll expressway projects.

The results revealed that perceived behavioural control was the second most significant latent variable affecting the decision makers' behavioural intention to participate in PPP toll expressway projects, with a path coefficient of 0.329. It has been proven that decision makers are willing to participate in PPP toll expressway projects if they have control over their own capabilities and resources.

Among the items under perceived behavioural control, technical strength and capability was found to be the most significant factor influencing the decision makers' behavioural intention with a factor loading reading of 0.81. This finding also implies

that the decision makers in the private sector feels that they must have a good technical expertise and solid knowledge before attempting to participate in PPP toll expressway projects.

The technical strength mentioned above, also include engineering related to knowledge to understand and consider future traffic flows, design of expressway intersections/interchanges, geometric alignment and design, expressway pavement materials and design, structural design of pavement thickness, and pavement maintenance. The Road Engineering Association of Malaysia in 2002 has set up standard for road quality and classified them into six groups (in descending order of hierarchy): R6 to R1 and U6 to U1 for rural and urban areas respectively, where a higher number applies to roads with heavier traffic, and longer travel distance. In England, all highway designs must be carried out by consultants with BS EN ISO9001: Quality Management Systems (Aerts et al. 2016). These examples provide an indication of how quality assessment principles are relevant to expressway design, and the management responsibility to which quality plans and records should be kept. It also explains the competency requirements for the design team in terms of skills, knowledge and ability to understand them.

Having expertise, strong technical knowledge and adequate experience in managing PPP projects could greatly increase the competence and capability of a company (Osei-Kyan and Chan 2015). From the perspective of perceived behavioural control, the critical factors for decision makers to decide on the involvement in PPP may include having experience, strong and productive private consortium (Li et al. 2005); planning and management capabilities for PPP project implementation (Yun et al. 2015; Zhang, X., 2005); necessary organisational form and managerial strategies

(Steijn et al. 2011); technical strengths (Ng et al.2010); and commitment (Zou et al. 2014). These findings are also in line with Zhang, Y., et al. (2018)'s study which concluded that the more capabilities and resources any company has, the higher its willingness to participate in PPP projects.

5.2.4 Discussion on Research Objective 4 – Governmental Influence

RO4: The effect of governmental influence on the behavioural intention of the decision makers in the private sector towards involvement in PPP toll expressway projects

H4: Governmental influence has a positive effect on the behavioural intention of the decision makers in the private sector towards involvement in PPP toll expressway projects.

The study showed governmental influence was the most significant latent variable affecting the decision makers' intention to engage in PPP toll expressway projects. The findings showed governmental influence and behavioural intention having a path coefficient of 0.415. Among the factors under the governmental influence (GI), it was found that to be the most influential with a factor loading of 0.76 was "will not unreasonably interfere with the implementation of the PPP projects". This shows that non-interference of the government in the implementation of PPP projects is seen as a fundamental requirement for the project's success. This is consistent with the spirit of the PPP concept, which promotes the private sector as the forefront player in the partnership. Cheng, Z et al. (2016) views that in the case of China, government intervention increases risks that can result in project failure. Other

researchers such as Boubakri & Cosset (1998), Boycko et al. (1996), Dewenter & Malatesta (2001), Shleifer (1998), Sun & Tong (2002), and Wei & Varela (2003) view that private companies are more competitive and have more incentive to be innovative and continuously contain costs.

Previous studies also showed that many failed PPP projects have been due to unilateral government decisions where they control the partnership. A significant example of such a case is the Changchun Huijin Sewerage Treatment Plant, where dispute happened over the issuance of sewerage treatment fees, which led to the termination of the PPP contract. In the end, the government was forced to bail out the project (Qi et al., 2009).

Lijesen and Shestalova (2007) connote that government intervention can come in different forms, such as financial intervention (taxation, subsidies), regulation (price, quality, environmental), and public provision. In the context of governmental influence, previous studies have shown that governments play an important part in determining the PPP project's success. Intervention by governments can increase the risks that can result in project failure, which in turn have a very important effect on project profitability and recovery of the investments (Mayer, 2007).

Wibowo and Alfen (2015) connotes that an important role played by governments in facilitating successful PPP projects is to eliminate or minimise legal or regulatory constraints and support appropriate private investments. In addition, governments also play a key role in creating a favourable environment that promotes investment, one in which the private sector feels it can obtain appropriate returns. High-quality support from the government will also facilitate improvements in

investment performance of the private sector (Nijmeijer et al. 2014), such as its commitment, revenue guarantee policy, trust, and information transparency (Queiroz et al. 2013, Xu et al. 2014).

Kirama and Mayo (2016), in their study on Tanzania, suggest that for private sector participation to be successful, the government needs to provide support by raising the awareness of the communities and discouraging illegal dumping of waste. On the flip side, government intervention would create risks in PPP projects that could influence the project profitability (Ke et al. 2013) and increase transaction costs as private investors may be required to spend too much time maintaining a good relationship with the government.

In the Malaysian context, governmental influence is crucial for PPP infrastructure projects. For example, the Kuala Lumpur LRT projects failed during its operation phase, which necessitated government takeover of PUTRA-LRT and STAR-LRT from the private sector and transfer to Syarikat Prasarana Negara Berhad – a government-linked company (Rahman et al, 2014).

Thus, from this study, the outcome from the SEM analysis shows that, governmental influence plays a vital role in promoting and influencing the decision maker's behavioural intention to participate in PPP toll expressway projects.

5.2.5 Discussion on Research Objective 5 – Project Viability

RO5: The effect of project viability on the behavioural intention of the decision makers in the private sector towards involvement in PPP toll expressway projects.

H5: Project viability has a positive effect on the behavioural intention of the decision makers in the private sector towards involvement in PPP toll expressway projects.

The result of this hypotheses testing, revealed that project viability does not significantly influence decision maker's intention to participate in PPP toll expressway projects. Table 4.10 shows the project viability path coefficient value of 0.094, indicating that it is not a major consideration for the decision maker's behavioural to participate. This finding however is in contrast with many previous studies such as Cheung et al. (2011), Flyvbjerg, Bruzelius, and Rothengatter (2003), Flyvbjerg, Holm and Buhl (2005), Ngahu et al. (2018), and Semple & Turley (2013), and which had indicated that project viability as one of the critical success factors in PPP.

However, such results need to be screened cautiously and look at the results based on the right perspective; whether public or private and the sectors or types of project that involved. This is supported by Sy et al (2016) who stated that the most concern factors of private investors to engage in PPP strategic investment are: their own capacity, demand issues, legal and political risks, long-term income, and issues related to financial sources, while for public sectors, their main concern are on political risks, enhancement of company's strength in its industry, construction risks, demand issues, and financial viability of the private company.

These previous studies indicate that in certain sectors and country, the viability of the project is not the main consideration for decision maker's intention to participate in PPP projects. This is due to the understanding that they are basically being initiated by the public agency and it is incumbent that all the feasibility studies towards the

project are taking care of by the government. Once this has been established, the exercise of Request for Proposal (RFP) would be issued to the shortlisted private entities. In addition to that, project viability has not been the main concern of assessment by the decision maker in the private sector as their level of dependency on government support is quite high.

In justifying of the hypothesis result, additional initiatives were taken and three (3) CeO of toll concessionaire companies were interviewed. All the feedbacks and comments clearly explained on why viability of the project is not the main concern or consideration in making decision towards participation of PPP toll expressway projects. Therefore, the result indicates that in the perspective of decision makers in the private sector, the intention to participate in PPP toll expressway projects in Malaysia are less concerned with the factors that can affect the project's viability prior to enter into a PPP concession agreement. This relaxed attitude could be due to the perceived notion and confidence in the government's good intentions, where they believe that in any case of failure or losses, the government would come in and provides some kind of assistance through compensation or bail-out instruments. With the offering of numerous incentives such as facilitation funding, capital-guaranteed assistance, special borrowing rates and government guarantee, the companies tend to take things for granted, some to the extent of manipulating the incentives and not giving due attention and study on the viability of a project.

The culture of receiving subsidies and depending on government assistance is still prevalent among the local business communities. A case in view is where Wong, Jomo and Chin (2005) claimed that a number of toll concessionaire companies had to undergo a restructuring exercise, with the government subjected to inject funding

assistance and institute takeovers by GLCs. In 2017, during a Parliamentary debate the Works Minister of Malaysia revealed that Senai-Desaru Expressway Berhad, was facing the risk of bankruptcy, and had sought help from the Government due to a mismatch between cash flow, toll collection and debt obligations. However, on the financial woes faced by toll concessionaires, it all depends on the due diligence to be carried out on the concessionaires' problems. Another significant example of a bail-out is the termination of Eastern Dispersal Link (EDL) Expressway in January 2018, where the government had issued a settlement sum of RM1.325 billion to MRCB. The EDL concession period was originally 34 years, with the signing of the concession agreement on 26 June 2007 (MRCB, Financial Report 1st Quarter 2019).

Another prime example is the acquisition proposal of four toll concessionaires under Gamuda Berhad that being circulated in the media release by Ministry of Finance dated 22 June 2019. Gamuda Berhad is a private sector company that owns 44% stake in LITRAK (the operator of LDP), a 52% stake in SPRINT, a 70% stake in KESAS and a 50% stake in SMART. It was reported by the local media that Finance Minister, Lim Guan Eng had said that the government could decide to take over the four expressways at a total cost of RM6.2 billion.

As indicated in the media release, from a political mileage perspective, this exercise is seen as part of the new government's efforts to fulfil its election manifesto of abolishing toll charges by stages. However, it is also being debated that the proposed plan is not for the public good, rather to save Gamuda Berhad's financial position. It is felt that should the deals materialise, the government would need to fork out RM6.2 billion from its coffers even by way of bond issuance, and at the same time still impose congestion charges to the public. Furthermore, the concession periods of which are

nearing their end – KESAS (18 August 2023), LDP (14 August 2030,) SPRINT (a few components due to end 15 December 2031 and 14 December 2034), and SMART (31 December 2042). A further concern is the non-profitability of the SMART project, compared to the earlier three expressways (Kathy, 2019).

The findings of the study indicate that project viability is not a significant factor in the consideration for involvement in PPP toll expressway projects. At the same time, the result of the analysis had shown a high reading path coefficient for governmental influenc, thus, indicating its significant factor in the consideration to get involved in PPP expressway toll.

In summary, most of the PPP projects in Malaysia are initiated by the government and the viability of the projects are already take into consideration. Thus, the government has to play the very critical role of instituting thorough feasibility study conducted for all PPP toll expressway projects, to ensure the project's sustainability and success.

5.2.6 Discussion on Research Objective 6 – Behavioural Intention

RO6: To determine the relationship between the behavioural intention of the decision makers in the private sector and their involvement behaviour in PPP toll expressway projects.

H6: The behavioural intention of the decision makers in the private sector has a positive effect on their involvement behaviour in PPP toll expressway projects.

As elaborated in Chapter 2, behavioural intention is the assumption to capture the motivational factors that influence decision makers' behaviour, and includes the willingness to try and efforts exerted in order to perform a certain behaviour. This study findings shows that behavioural intention has a positive and significant effect towards involvement behaviour of the decision makers in the private sector in PPP toll expressway projects.

These findings are identical with some previous studies – Karim et al. (2013) on participation separation of food waste at source; Tang (2016) on decision-making on bidding for PPP; Begum et al. (2009) on waste management in the construction industry in Malaysia; Al-Sari et al. (2012) on construction waste management in occupied Palestinian territory; Song, et. al (2016) on behaviour in relation to the choice of tourism destination; and Majid et al. (2018) on entrepreneurial intention.

Looking from an Islamic perspective, intention is at the heart of all acts of mankind. The role of intention is given high emphasis in Islam so much so that every action is to be performed with good intention. A hadith by Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) recorded, *“Actions are judged by their motives (niyyah), so each man will have what he intended”* (narrated by Bukhari and Muslim). This hadith, or words of the Prophet, assists Muslims in evaluating and judging their internal acts (action of hearts) as they go about their daily lives (Badi, 2002). The hadith is proof that Islam places utmost importance on the intention of every action undertaken by a Muslim.

The intention is in fact a requirement in determining one's actions, and it gives a distinction between different acts of worship (Badi, 2002). According to Imam Nawawi in his book *Sharh Arba'een*, niyyah or intention carries two significances in

Islam; first, it affirms that intention is a prerequisite before conducting an act of ibadah or worship, i.e. the daily prayers. Second, the affirmation of intention (niyyah) signifies one's willingness to perform a certain action. The hadith of the Prophet (PBUH) quoted above refers to the latter significance that is of willingness. In this respect, any actual behaviour such as participation, engagement or involvement should derive from the affirmation of intention or niyyah.

From the above elaboration, it can be seen that the results of this study also reveal that behavioural intention is aligned with the Islam perspectives of intention, where it is the affirmation prior to a real action. In this case, the real action is involvement in PPP toll expressway projects.

5.2.7 Discussion on Research Objective 7 - Trust

RO7: To evaluate whether trust moderates the relationship between the behavioural intentions of the decision maker and their involvement behaviour in PPP toll expressway projects.

H7: Trust is a moderator in the relationship between behavioural intention and involvement behaviour.

Theoretically, trust is a social and psychological construct which is used to define the nature and quality of relationships between actors in a social system. It is not simply an interpersonal phenomenon, it is also of relevance in relationships within and between social groups such as communities and organisations (Brewer and Strahorn, 2012). Rousseau et al. (1998) conceptualised trust across a number of disciplines, and defines trust as a reflection the extent to which one party is willing to

accept vulnerability in a social relationship based on perceptions on the honesty, fairness and altruism of another party. Close and Loosemore (2013) noted that research on business community trust in governments is increasingly popular, mainly due to increasing public awareness and knowledge of events which suggest abuses of power and control, poor governance and lack of ethics and honesty.

Trust has therefore been identified in many researches as a moderator in a number of relationships – human resources management practices and employee attitudes (Innocenti et al., 2011), burnout and intention to quit (Trussell, 2015), organisational learning and marketing capabilities (Sanzo, 2012), self-efficacy and workplace outcomes (Ozyilmaz et al., 2018), performance evaluation style and job-related tensions (Ross, 1994), and situational influences in transformational leadership paradigm (Goodwin et al., 2011).

The results of this study reveal that trust moderates the relationship between behavioural intention and involvement behaviour in PPP toll expressway projects. This provides evidence that trust, at its highest level, enables individuals in the organisation to devote their efforts towards the achievement of a meaningful goal, and empowers them to do so without any reservations or doubts.

5.3 Research Contribution

With regards on the research contributions, basically it can categorise into two segments – (i) contribution to the knowledge and (ii) contribution to the policy and practices.

5.3.1 Contribution to Knowledge

This study have made several contributions to different dimensions with regard to knowledge related to PPP:

- i. In the context of global PPP practices, this research adds to the existing body of knowledge on PPP projects. Specifically, it adds valuable information on the limited literature on Malaysian PPP projects, particularly those involving toll expressways. This includes expanding understanding of the current scenario of Malaysian PPP, the government framework of PPP through UKAS, as well as the trends and attitudes of local corporate Malaysian businesses with regard participation in PPP;
- ii. The methodology designed for this research can also be adopted by other researchers to investigate similar problems in different countries;
- iii. At an early stage of this study, it was concluded that understanding of CSFs is an essential element in PPP. CSFs element is very crucial and would be significant element for the decision makers in the private sector to take into consideration before engaging in any particular PPP concession. Despite the relevance of CSFs, it was identified that a gap exists in the decision makers' intention in PPP within the decision-making process;
- iv. This research concluded that the Malaysian PPP approach has been successful in attracting among the decision makers in the private sector to engage in PPP projects, with the intention of achieving sustainability and value for money.

This conclusion contributes to the existing body of knowledge, and provides opportunities for future research;

- v. The introduction of trust as a moderating element in this study proved that it plays a crucial role in PPP, especially in shaping the public and business communities' trust in PPP projects. This finding can contribute to advancements in PPP policies and practices through enabling policies that build trust of the public and business communities in PPP; and
- vi. The study included findings on the relevance of governmental influence in PPP. In reaching this conclusion, the study also brought to light the authority held by individuals in cabinet and political figures in the PPP implementation process, especially authority given to UKAS as the government agency responsible for PPP procurement and administration. This intrinsic authority is the antithesis of good governance, and can lead to administrative abuse and ethical misconduct. The apparent lack of transparency, accountability of practices and crony capitalism are also major concerns noted in this study.

5.3.2 Contribution to Policy and Practice

This research also contributes to policy development and practice, as summarised below:

- i. Drawing on the findings of the study, Chapter 4 presented a framework for practitioners and policy makers to consider to enhance the competitiveness of PPP projects and influence the decision makers' behavioural in a positive way towards PPP projects, particularly in toll expressway projects;

- ii. Good governance is essential in public agencies and the government. The competitive elements discussed under the variable of governmental influence can serve as a guide towards ensuring compliance of relevant laws. The application of these competitive elements is expected to address the ongoing criticisms of political patronage, rent-seeking, unjust awarding of contracts associated with non-competitive government procurement processes. Achieving a higher standard of good governance within the procurement process will improve the government's reputation and image both domestically and internationally, boosting public perception and confidence of potential investors in the Malaysian PPP programme;
- iii. It is important to mention that the implementation of Malaysian PPP toll expressway projects by UKAS is not a smooth journey. PPP is deployed by the government as one of the mechanisms to achieve the aim of the New Economic Policy, which is an ethnicity-based affirmative-action policy designed to re-engineer the socio-economy of the Malaysian people. While there has been criticism of the policy, the roles and responsibilities of the government in its implementation are clearly defined and holistic. In the context of PPP toll expressway projects, the findings from this study suggest that governmental influence role played by UKAS to kick-start the implementation of the PPP programme and drive the industry was very flexible in both its procurement process and its generosity towards private sectors partners. These policies and practices were also fully supported by cabinet ministers. In recent years, the New Economic Policy has been blamed for crony capitalism and for being the cash cow for big industry players. However, this findings from the study

suggest that the problem is not with the PPP policies themselves, rather with the details in its implementation, i.e. lack of priority put on project viability assessment. The current PPP programme, which despite being in progress for many years and has seen some success stories, suffers from lack of credibility and a declining reputation due to slackened governance practices. This calls for a vital restructuring on the governance aspects of PPP procurement and selection of concession companies, in order to rebuild the programme's integrity and transparency in its implementation, and maximise the benefits of PPP in meeting the country's infrastructure needs. Additionally, an improved competitive environment encouraging the participation of reliable and sustainable private partners is essential to safeguard the taxpayers' money;

- iv. The irrelevance of project viability as an influencing factor for the decision makers' behavioural towards involvement in PPP toll expressway projects is, disconcerting. It would seem that Malaysian business leaders have a very relaxed stance with regard to establishing the viability of a PPP project prior to its commencement. This could possibly be due to high dependency and reliance on government support, financial assistance and perceived notion that the government would under any circumstances, extend support for infrastructure projects, in the interest of rakyat; and
- v. The relevance of trust is recognised by most of the PPP practitioners, and has been adopted by advanced practitioners to advance PPP policy and practice by enabling policy makers to better build public and business community trust in PPP projects.

The above findings and conclusions from the study can make a significant contribution to the new body of knowledge and also the enhancement of public policies and practices related to PPP projects.

5.4 Research Limitations

Although due care and thorough attention has been given in conducting this study through application of selected methods and detailed analysis, some limitations should be noted. This study applied a quantitative approach, in which the research model and the survey instrument were developed based on the literature review. Thus, the proposed variables and their corresponding measurements are limited to the findings from the quantitative fieldwork and the literature review. There may be other variables that were not discovered in this study's literature review, and the lack of interviews and case studies conducted. Therefore, future studies may wish to consider exploring a comprehensive qualitative method that includes case studies. Throughout this study, the following challenges were encountered:

- i. Although this research tested the factors of willingness to participate in PPP toll expressway from the decision makers' behavioural perspective, some caution should be administered in generalizing these findings. Firstly, the data is from one country which may have a distinct set of economic, political, cultural, and social environments. Secondly, as some variables were tested using a questionnaire, the validity of the data collected could have been influenced by the respondents' understanding of the questions asked and their willingness to honestly respond to those questions. However, in acknowledging these limitations and reduce their potential effects, the

researcher had enhanced the comparative studies conducted on previous literature and deepened the descriptions in the questions to ease and facilitate respondent's ability to properly interpret and understand them. The logistical model also considered the respondent background and demographics in terms of direct involvement in toll expressway projects and the positions of the respondents in their respective companies, i.e. those who have some level of influence or involvement in the company's business directions;

ii. Attempts were made to seek access to a wide range of materials relevant to the subject matter. However, there was limited access to project files and other internal procedure documents such as concession agreements. With most PPP documentations classified as restricted and confidential, the research design was developed without the planned cross-analysis of critical authoritative documents. On top of that, many of the PPP toll expressway projects in this study are still currently active and ongoing, its documentation is not available for public disclose and is classified as commercially sensitive material. Despite this limitation, the researcher obtained the necessary information using the questionnaire from respondents who have active experience in the PPP industry and directly involve in PPP toll expressway projects; and

iii. Although global best practices were examined, the study focused on PPP in the Malaysian context. PPP policies and practices are largely country-specific, and the frameworks produced by the study are based on the Malaysian scenario, with specific focus on toll expressway projects. As such, application of the proposed framework in other countries might need some refinement to align them with their unique environments. Given the deliberate context-sensitive

nature of the study, there is no attempt to generalise the findings, although countries with a similar environment may adopt what may seem relevant for them.

Despite the listed shortcomings, the research outcomes satisfy the aim and objectives of the research, and its have been validated.

5.5 Future Recommendations

The outcomes of the research are based on a specific aim and specific methodology which have been developed to study an identified gap. The researcher considers this thesis as a first step to future research, where its findings can be used and expanded for further studies. Further research may be conducted to study the perspective of government's priority and driver in PPP implementation, and to study and identify genuine and balancing reasons between PPP partners – government and private entities – in a PPP arrangement.

Although PPP can be a catalyst in achieving infrastructure development goals, there are concerns on the shortcomings of PPP, such as the creation of heavy debt for the country. A possible future study to examine integrating and testing the framework proposed in this study in an actual PPP concession as a case study should be considered. Furthermore, it could possibly shed light on how to address concern of people or rakyat with the paradox of crony capitalism selection of private companies and may make the frameworks more robust.

In line with a study conducted by Zhang, Y., (2018), this study also found that governmental influence, perceived behavioural control and attitude are relevant to the

decision makers' behavioural intention in PPP. The innovation of trust as a moderator variable in this study brings significant contribution and can be further expanded and examined in future research. Further research using different research designs, for example the adoption of multiple case studies or other grounded theories, would be interesting, to see whether the same results are obtained. The results of such studies would benefit the Malaysian PPP industry as a whole. In addition, although the study is centred on Malaysian PPP toll expressway projects, the research design and the framework could be applied to studies in other countries, with the possibility of additional drivers.

5.6 Conclusion

Although PPP is not the only way for governments to meet increasing demands for infrastructure development, it is among the preferred solutions worldwide, as the model offers more diversity than a traditional procurement model. To illustrate, in the traditional setting, the public sector is responsible for financing the proposed infrastructure, while in a PPP setting, this responsibility has been shifted to the private sector. As PPP develops long-term contractual relationships, integrity in selecting the private partner should be assured.

PPP was only being introduced in Malaysia in 2009. However, in prior years, the government had already been promoting and had benefitted from the private sector as a partner in delivering infrastructure for the country. This study confirmed that the government's PPP programme is a continuation of its privatisation and PFI programmes. As such, it is not accurate to label the Malaysian PPP programme as being at the infancy stage.

Looking at the market maturity curve as a benchmark, Malaysia is already midway along the maturity curve in its PPP programme. If the success of the programme is measured by the infrastructure delivered, credit should be given to the government and UKAS for their achievements to date, through working with the private sectors from privatisation to PPP.

Nevertheless, in order to promote more participation from reputable business leaders in PPP projects, this research recommends a much-needed revamp of PPP practices to build public community trust and governmental influence in the PPP, without abandoning any of its drivers. Only then, the benefits of adopting PPP can be maximised.

