



CONCEPTUALISATION OF LACK OF DISCIPLINE AND PROBITY AS THE MAIN CAUSE TOWARDS GOOD GOVERNANCE PRACTICE

Abdul-Kahar Adam¹⁺

Ebi Shahrin Bin
Suleiman²

Nasser Salim Moh.
Alsadi³

¹Universiti Teknologi Malaysia (UTM), Azman Hashim International Business School, Skudai, 81310 Johor Bahru, Malaysia; University of Education, Winneba, Business School, Central Region, Ghana

Email: aka11@live.co.uk

^{2,3}Universiti Teknologi Malaysia (UTM), Azman Hashim International Business School, Skudai, 81310 Johor Bahru, Malaysia

²Email: m-sahrin@utm.my

³Email: nasseralsaadi2020@hotmail.com



(+ Corresponding author)

ABSTRACT

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This is a qualitative paper which is to present the facts and literature findings on the causes of good governance practice in Ghana conceptually. It is noted that discipline and probity are the backbone of good governance. Every country in this modern era want to achieve good governance so that there will be improvement in the economic fortunes but this cannot be achieved if there is lack of discipline and lack of probity in the practice. Hence, literature reveals that there are some relationships between discipline (independent variable), probity (mediating variable) and good governance (dependent variable). Good governance is the main important factor to eradicating poverty and advancing development, said by the UN former Secretary General – Kofi Annan (Court, 2001). This research is purely a conceptual research and a model/conceptual framework has been proposed for future scientific research. Hypothesis has been proposed which need to be developed and tested for effective and efficient conclusion in future findings as such. This research only proposes the concepts that are associated with good governance practice – discipline and probity; the methods used are the secondary sources of data findings were analyzed. Future research findings, analysis and recommendation is eminent on this proposed concept model for future researchers. Therefore, a strong methodology is needed to support all the findings and interpretations of the hypothesis. In this instance, quantitative and qualitative study as a mixed method would be suitable for future research to test relationships and hypothesis that are been identified in the proposed conceptual model.

Contribution/Originality: The aim of this conceptual paper is to contribute to the burning issues of the lack of discipline and probity as a deterrent in the developing world from achieving good governance. This study contributes in the existing literature of the concepts needed in practice to improve good governance for development.

1. INTRODUCTION

According to Champagne (2016) Ghana remains as a strategic country with the EU by promoting good governance and peace in West Africa. But public finance management deficiencies are been exposed in recent economic crises together with low confidence of government ability to deal with deficits, energy crisis and

unemployment and corruption. These are the key factors in distracting development as recently exposed in the media which raised several awareness of the canker.

Ghana as a developing country has these challenges of governance whereby it tries to adapt to the various models discussed in [United Nations Development Program \(1997\)](#) Policy Document [UN \(2001\)](#) and [Heywood \(1997\)](#). These three models are the most popularly practiced theory across governance settings. Each of the models enlightens the different aspects of factors of good governance. But these models are inadequate as one considers the contents due to its limitations of the factors. And many of these factors are well practiced in the advanced countries not in the developing nations ([Doe, 2005](#)). This research is proposing to investigate into antecedents of good governance. The essence or purpose also is to bring to bear what other past research has not been able to answer certain scientific questions about good governance in their research(s).

For the purpose of this research concept paper, it's obvious to make distinctions as to; how the following terms are been used in the content - government, governance, good governance, corporate governance, and public sector administration/management? Governance is the exercise and practice of the use of power in decision-making in all sectors of government ([Gumedé and Dipholo, 2014](#)) and it involves stakeholders in public policy direction such as the ruling political elites, supranational organizations like the World Bank, the World Trade Organisation, the UN, the IMF, and the private sector. According to UNDP, governance is the process by which decisions are made and the process of implementing those decisions or not being implemented.

According to [International Fund for Agricultural Development \(1999\)](#) defined good governance as the manner in which power is exercised in the management of a country's social and economic resources for development. According to the [University of Edinburgh \(2018\)](#) Public Sector Administration includes the central government, non-departmental bodies, devolved government and regional e.g. Ghana Government and Local government, whereas public administration is the implementation of policies from government. Government is the system or group of people governing a community that is organized like a state. Corporate Governance simply refers to the environment of ethics, trust, moral values and confidence which are synergic efforts of all the constituent parts namely the stakeholders, the government, the general public, professionals, the corporate sector, and service providers ([Crowther and Seifi, 2011](#); [Adam, 2013](#)). In other words it is the system by which companies are directed, controlled and regulated by a state.

2. BACKGROUND OF THE RESEARCH

[Tronvoll \(2011\)](#) indicated the relationship between citizens and political leaders as the most important factors affecting good governance. Some components of corruption such as transparency and fighting corruption is seen as the real meaning of good governance, which is only supported a very low responses of 28 percent and this then indicates that improving the performance of good governance is not just about fighting corruption but also putting measures like anti-corruption strategies as the major problem that needs to be implemented ([Tronvoll, 2011](#)).

According to [Dayanandan \(2013\)](#) indicated that institutions effectiveness is based on certain good governance pillars namely transparency, predictability, rule of law, participation and accountability. And that effective participation of members in the institutions serves as vigilance and creates some kind of responsibility in the organisation. The research showed the following as reasons for weak performance, that is poor responsiveness, poor democracy, inadequate business participation, lack of management awareness, corruption, double responsibility and poor sense of ownership ([Dayanandan, 2013](#)). Among all these factors only four (4) of the predictor were found significant on the institutional performance, which calls for due attention by the stakeholders namely accountability, transparency, participation and the rule of law. Predictability was not found as significant due to the primary data analysis quantitatively. It was not scientifically proven as significant factor.

Empirical research have shown that several reforms were initiated in the areas of efficient and trustworthy, excellent work culture, code of work ethics, integration of Islamic values, ISO9000 and clients charter in Malaysia

for its vision 2020 agenda (Khalid *et al.*, 2016). Whereas the Malaysian Institute of Integrity (MII) main role was to generate knowledgeable resources and a compulsory human capital within the civil sector of the country (Rusnah *et al.*, 2011; Khalid *et al.*, 2016).

In implementing good governance by governments, there is the need to pay attention to the complaints made by the general public that; practices are inefficient, lack of flexibility, red tape, poor performance and ineffective accountability, even though, the Anti-Corruption Agency in Malaysia is the institution to deal with corrupt practices and other societal mismanagements (Siddiquee, 2006; Khalid *et al.*, 2016). The following have been identified as the factors of good governance namely Strategic Alliance, Strategic Planning, Risk Management, Audit, Fraud Control, Quality Performance, Financial Resourcing, Human Resource Management, and Infrastructure and Facilities (Khalid *et al.*, 2016). The findings showed that they practice with different good governance factors but only 60% agreed on fraud control and 81% practiced risk management whereas financial resourcing and auditing scored very low (Khalid *et al.*, 2016). And this is about lack of discipline and probity.

With these previous studies, much emphasis is placed on accountability, transparency, citizens' participation, and efficiency, but not on trustworthy, culture, code of ethics and poor performance in governance and these are categorized as lack of discipline and probity in practice. These are associated with the governance problems and therefore there is the need to investigate further into the governance issues for the causes. The most frequently used definition of governance by the World Bank is that Governance is "the traditions and institutions by which authority in a country is exercised. This includes: (1) the process by which governments are selected, monitored, and replaced, (2) the capacity of the government to effectively formulate and implement sound policies, and (3) the respect of citizens and the state for the institutions that govern economic and social interactions among them (Kaufmann *et al.*, 2004). Above all this, there is the need to gather literature findings on both discipline and probity in correlation to good governance.

3. PROBLEM STATEMENT

Currently, there have been several reports in Ghana on various intense discourse discussions about Ghana governance and political leadership in perspectives (Akwasi, 2015). The paper indicated that Ghana is now 61 years old from independence but there are still many complaints and citizens anguish on the poor and bad government performance, which many always blame slavery and colonialism, but this may be otherwise not true (Akwasi, 2015). Developments in Ghana still remain a mystery because it has almost all the natural resources which at least should have translated into good governance for advancement. Court (2001) argued that the quality of governance is now a major concern increasing in countries around the world i.e. both developing and developed countries, and therefore Ghana is not an exception to this new phenomenon. That good governance is the main important factor to eradicating poverty and advancing development as said by the UN Secretary General (Court, 2001).

Even beyond the continental level but it's been constrained with sufficient amount of governance challenges and difficulties. Therefore, it causes the paradox that with all the huge resources in Ghana, it still remains poor in terms of standards of living. These are the governance challenges that affect the living standards of the people of Ghana such as high unemployment rate, unstable electricity, unpaid allowances, poor health facilities, very huge constant public debts, and instability of political history of coup de tats up until 1992 democratic dispensation.

Fukuyama (2013) argued that the poor state of empirical measures of quality of states such as executives, branches and bureaucracies where much of the problems are conceptual matters. Because there is very little agreement on what makes good or high quality government. The research paper rejected measurements by output and rather suggested a two way dimensional framework of using capacity and autonomy as a measure of executive branch quality. And this framework points out clearly the reasons why the low income countries are been advised to reduce bureaucratic autonomy whiles the high income countries seek to increasing bureaucracy.

Although, corruption occurs as a result of poor governance which is a global phenomenon or canker, it is still a big challenge affecting good governance in Ghana. The facts about corruption are that it breeds economic inefficiencies, misallocation of resources, distortion and destruction to development. It widens the gap between the rich and the poor. More interestingly, the institutions that are set up to check on corrupt practices by exposing and punishing victims are by themselves concomitantly involves one way or the other in such wrongful act (Akwasi, 2015). The emergence of developed countries is as a result of effective central bureaucracy and they have centralized administration with strict recruitment procedures in recruitments, which intend produce less corruption and bribery cases. Ironically, many people in Ghana are employed based on the political party they belong to and not about the qualification or their competencies. More so, appointment of commissioners and board of directors are based on change in government which is partisanship appointments and it does not inure to long term benefits for the development of the country.

Akwasi (2015) noted that there is lack of discipline and unskillful administration personnel's to be able to implement national development plans and its visions. Also, there are inadequate Statesmanship (citizenship) in Ghana which is a deficit to good governance and leadership in practice. By and large, families of political parties, members of the parties, and ethnic tribes/groups are always given preferential treatment across board. Hence forth, bad governance and leadership in Ghana is a problem leading to lack of infrastructural capacity and ignorance of the effects of the mismanagement and malpractices. There is the need for pragmatic measures if not; Ghana will continue to face difficulties and challenges of good governance that existed before and after its independence.

From the above empirical statements, it is clear that Ghana has a challenge of good governance which is caused by several factors, few of which are relevant to this research are lack of discipline and probity. These then posed the challenge as the antecedent of the factors affecting good governance. But is it all these factors identified that causes good governance? Therefore, further empirical evidence would be investigated to establish the major variables that are not yet investigated substantially to establish a clear hypothesis and research framework and model.

According to Court *et al.* (2002) stated that if governance really matters it implies that the need for reliable and valid data is essential. They argued that there is still debate over how best and meaningful governance can be measured because many researchers believe that current indicators are poorly measured of key governance processes. Moreover, there is no agreement on how best governance is researched in terms of identifying quality of governance which varies across the world and this is critical issue. Ghana government has taken some initiatives to curb the numerous problems or challenges that affect the full benefits of good governance. But the question still remains whether that is all the factors that government is tackling and providing solution to? Or whether the solutions are also achieving the needed results is a matter that needs to be investigated since good governance is not an end to itself but a process and constant practice for perfection (Akwasi, 2015).

4. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The following are the main research questions that this research seeks to address:

- a) What are the current status of good governance with regards to discipline and probity?
- b) Is there any relationship between good governance and discipline and/or probity?

5. OBJECTIVES

- a) To find out the current status of good governance with regards to discipline and probity.
- b) To propose the relationships between good governance and discipline and/or probity.
- c) To propose a model/conceptual framework of the study.

6. LITERATURE REVIEW

According to Sridhar (2015) argued that “Mere good governance is not enough; it has to be pro-people and pro-active. Good governance is putting people at the centre of the development process.” And that governance does not mean the GDP growth but providing a basic amenity to the people. Governance is the process by which institutions make decisions and exercise authority in a country. And it rests on two major values of accountability and inclusiveness.

Good Governance is seen as the most controversial research area that receives more attention from scholars around the world, international organisation/institutions, and local government services. Since good governance affects nationally, advanced development and sustainability. Therefore, governance simply refers to the systems and processes through which state resources are managed by those in power managing governance activities for political and socio-economic challenges (Natufe, 2006; Adegbami and Uche, 2016). Good governance is defined as improvement in accountability, capacity, and eradicating corruption (Kaufman, 2005; Adegbami and Uche, 2016).

The UNDP Ghana (2018) argued that change initiatives recognizes that the government relationship among private sector and the civil society are the key determinants as to whether a country is able to sustain and create equitable opportunities for its citizens. For instance, if a government does not function efficiently and effectively, then scarce resources will be wasted. And if the state does not have trustworthiness in the eyes of the people, it cannot achieve its goals or the citizens' goals.

6.1. Discipline

This is referred to as field of activity or control or correction. Good governance is the interlocking of disciplinary practices in the sense that the society disciplines the state and the state also in turn discipline the society (Williams, 1996). Good governance is introduced by the World Bank and it is best understood by discipline across board.

Empirical findings have showed that the operation of modern laws between the concept of Foucault's nature or system of government and discipline (Tadros, 1998). This provides specific directions through which the decisions of government can be adjusted within the relationships of disciplinary institutions. And that 'modern power' can also be termed as 'bio-power' since this relates to the lives of individuals in a society. According to Tadros (1998) that bio-power is identified with two factors namely discipline and probity. That, discipline operates on some groups of individuals within a particular space whereby information is being solicited regarding the individual and action taken accordingly. This form of discipline takes place in institutions the world over.

Tadros (1998) gathered that there are four main differences between disciplinary power and judicial power, and these are stated as below:

- a) Discipline represses and also intensifies meaning that judicial operates through interdiction, which controls actions by denying the facts whereas discipline operates directly in two directions at once. That is, discipline on one hand discourages undisciplined action and likewise also, it encourages discipline action and this may take in a number of forms of actions within an organisation set up.
- b) Discipline homogenizes via activities, meaning that judicial power is achieved by firing a limit between two opposing activities, whereas discipline identifies a norm that one is hopeful of achieving and one does not disobey or transgress but rather deviates or underachieves. Discipline is known to have a perpetual penalty which traverses issues and supervises every matter in instant disciplinary institutions and to be precise this can be quantified by a qualification of behaviours to allow diverse comparisons in which hierarchical values can be developed in a displayed format.
- c) Discipline Acts within Producing other Subjects meaning that in judicial point of view it is only the defendant who is encourage to investigate its self by confessions but in other words discipline

is more direct in terms of the subject matters are concern because there is a norm. And if one deviates from this norm then should not be classified as a minor transgression. And with this the research have showed that discipline don't just control particular acts or prevent them but it produces some subjects who may be doing what they wouldn't like to do but will always act in a particular way or manner that it is expected of them.

- d) Disciplinary Power Application is Invisible meaning that judicial power is attached to visible exercise of power whereas disciplinary power attempt to cast light away from itself and the person and that is exercising power to enable you see without being seen, through observation alone – termed as Panopticism principle.

In this case of the empirical findings, disciplinary power fills the gaps that judicial network has treated with indifference because discipline organizes individual actions positively and productive manner whereas the judicial network is deductive in nature (Tadros, 1998). Disciplinary techniques could exist alongside the law. Whitton (2001) indicated that both civil and public servants or officials are expected to strengthen and maintain trust and confidence from the public whiles in government and thereby demonstrating very high standards of professional competence, upholding the constitution and the laws of the country, display efficiency and effectiveness and also seeking to advance the public good at all times.

6.2. Probity

Probity is very important in governance as it is an important requirement for efficiency and effectiveness of governance systems and socio-economic development (Khanna, 2001). It is seen as a risk management tool for measuring procedural integrity, that is, prevention of corruption and other menace (NCOSS, 2015). It also means openness, transparent and honesty.

According to the Oxford Dictionary, define probity as “the quality or condition of having strong moral principles, integrity, good character, honesty, decency.” It is the act of paying attention to the major principles and ideals and to be able to avoid dishonesty and corrupt conduct. Probity offers a balanced opportunity of service to the entire community and not about individual self-interest. For the sake of public funding are subjective to scrutiny and auditing and this is to show trustworthiness since good governance is against conflict of interest and corruption, it encourages future litigation free (NCOSS, 2015).

According to NCOSS (2015) there is no specific standard list of probity principles but the following principles are generally included such as accountability, transparency, impartiality, confidentiality, and conflict of interest. Therefore, probity checking is a way of understanding the character, integrity, and honesty of a prospective employee as well as anybody to be engaged in a working environment. Probity check can be a legislative instrument as far as governance is concern; this is even enshrined in Ghana's 1992 constitution. Therefore, there are several strategies through which it can be developed to avoid potential concerns and people perception of any work to be done or organized. These are Conflict of Interest Policy, Declaration of Interest Form, Code of Conduct, and Delegations Chart. Probity is a Latin word *probus* meaning good and its relations to procurement means everything about the transaction must based on the principle of open and fair competition. Which means notes taken or recorded and all evidence in support of the decisions must be kept for future retrieval.

According to Osezua and Julius (2013) described probity as a complete truthfulness, honesty, and reliability and in other words that transparency and probity means to be more open without secrecy, deceit, shadiness, accountability, trust, and virtues of good stewardship. By and large, they asserted that both transparency and probity is the framework by which policies and programmes are formulated and implemented – good governance. With transparency and probity are the art of governance which demands the fiscal monetary transactions of government are executed properly as organized and planned and reported to the general public with all sincerity

(Oshionebo, 2004; Osezua and Julius, 2013). The findings also showed that there must be guidelines in order to check on governance efficiency of the resources management through proper communications channel rigidly at all times, since it is the responsibility of the government to constantly and routinely inform the citizens of its decisions that affect their daily lives (Osezua and Julius, 2013).

Also, for effective existence of both transparency and probity, subjects every government decision-making to a wider consultation of the entire population for proper participation of views and thoughts for considerations (Osezua and Julius, 2013). Since transparency is there to provide absolute guide and protection of budget preparation and expenditure implementation and monitoring of every government, so is the same for the ultimate provision of probity guidelines for checks and balances of every decision that government makes on behalf of the citizens. In addition to the empirical findings, it is clear that transparency and probity checks on public workers as service men and women since they are those managing the general affairs of the government for all to be conducted in an open manner (Osezua and Julius, 2013).

The following are been considered as the few dimensions of transparency and/or probity practices as far as good governance is concern (Obadan, 2004; Osezua and Julius, 2013):

- a) Information on government business intentions and future forecasts must be reliably provided to the people or public.
- b) Information on government operations detail data must be provided for proper accounts to the people, hence, must publish all transactions and project decisions made.
- c) Conflict of interest must be well defined and controlled by public officers and also meeting the freedom of information requirements.

The empirical findings of Osezua and Julius (2013) recommended that the following must be observed and implemented in the role of governance in relation to transparency and probity: that the conduct of the affairs of government must be subject to the verification and scrutiny of the public; duties of the public officers must be carried out by them through the relevant codes of the country; decisions taking by government on national budgets and other expenditures must be integrated with the stakeholders consultation; and allowing people to read and understand government activities through openness and access to government information. Research has shown that civil and public servants or officials must use resources and power in the interest of the public good under the policies of government, and also must be accountable for the decisions they take and must be prepared to justify their actions and inactions for any occurrence (Whitton, 2001).

7. METHOD

This is a conceptual research and so therefore it adapted literature in the context of secondary sources that facilitated the findings suitable for the objectives. In this case, bare facts of the findings represented the data sources for discussion and conclusion. Several theories are been cited and referenced to support the ideal research questions been raised in the introductory stage of this concept paper. The paper consulted journal articles and public documents as qualitative secondary sources. Qualitative research is a naturalistic process of inquiry which seeks for in-depth understanding of social phenomena as they are in their natural settings and it focuses on the "why" instead "what" of that social phenomena. It does not base on logical and statistical procedures rather qualitative researchers use multiple methods and systems of inquiry for the study of human phenomena such as case study, biography, historical analysis, ethnography, discourse analysis, grounded theory and phenomenology (Creswell, 1998).

8. DISCUSSION

As presented in the literature above, according to Fukuyama (2013) argued that the empirical form of measures of a country with regards to the executives (presidency), ministries, local governments, other branches and the

bureaucracies are basically the conceptual problems in general of good governance. This is of the view that there is very little to agree on what makes a government good or higher quality. Hence, they proposed the use of capacity and autonomy of government as a form of measure of the executives in governance and branch quality as a two way dimensional framework. Good Governance practice in Ghana faces a lot of intense discussions in the perspective of political leadership and poor governance systems and structures (Akwas, 2015).

In this regard, Discipline and Probity are been suggested in the literature as the main solutions of variables that can propagate good governance practice in Ghana. As Williams (1996) explained that good governance is the interlocking of disciplinary practices for both the citizenry and the state officials and the executive arms of government. Good governance was introduced by the World Bank and that best explains discipline matters across nations. Hence, Tadros (1998) argued that duo power can only be identified with two common factors such as discipline and probity in practices.

According to Khanna (2001) argued that Probity is very important in governance processes as it promote efficiency and effectiveness of governance systems and socio-economic development. That Probity is seen as risk management tool for measuring procedural integrity, that is, to prevent corruption and other menace (NCOSS, 2015). Probity brings about openness, transparency and honesty. Probity check is also a legislative instrument as far as good governance is concerned. Probity is enshrined in the Ghana's 1992 constitution and that shows how important it is in the interplay of good governance delivery to a nation. Ideally, where there is a practice of Probity there is also a practice of Discipline of measures towards achieving socio-economic development to present good governance in practice.

9. CONCLUSION

Generally, it can be concluded that Good Governance and Discipline and Probity are interrelated in so many grounds of theories for national development. Literature reviews have proved that without efficient and effective implementation and practice of Probity and Discipline measures within governance practices, then, it breeds corruption which affects the development plans of a nation. So therefore, in order to achieve Good Governance means that both the citizenry and the government elect into the administrative function of a country must both be discipline at their respected responsibilities. Moreover, the government must show more Probity measures to curb corrupt practices which negatively affects development agendas of any developing nation. That is why it is argued that both Discipline and Probity are seen as risk management tools in order to achieve Good Governance (NCOSS, 2015).

10. RECOMMENDATION

As the findings and conclusion depicts, it is clear that in determining the conceptual framework of the lack of discipline and probity as causes of good governance practice in Ghana, the following are recommended and proposed as appropriate for future research. Discipline is an independent variable (IV), Probity is a mediating variable (MV), and Good Governance is the dependent variable (DV). A proposed conceptual framework/model is as below:

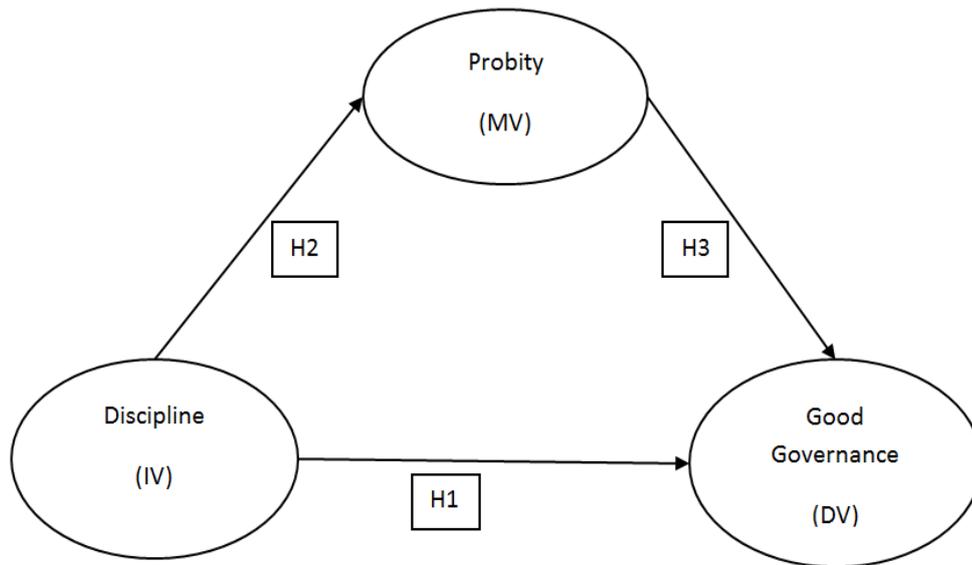


Figure-1. Proposed Model/Conceptual Framework

From the figure 1 above, it shows that there is the need for future research to consider a clear mixed method (both quantitative and qualitative) study with a target population that has all the key functions and actors within governance circles. And by so adaption, the research should test empirically the hypothesis identified in the model above where a typical data analysis or computerise tool or software must be used to determine the scientific significance of the model relationships. Future research findings, analysis and recommendation is eminent on this propose concept as model for future researchers. Therefore, a strong methodology is needed to support all the findings and interpretations.

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