

A survey investigation for the Corruption in Iraqi Construction Projects

¹ Abdunnasser M. Abbas, ² Haleem K. Hussain, ³ Ahmed Sagban Saadon
¹²³ Dept. of Civil Engineering, College of Engineering
¹²³ University of Basrah, Iraq

Abstract: Corruption is the major threaten to the societies, especially in developing countries. It has changeable aspects, among these, that which related to the construction projects. This study presents a survey tested respondent's opinion on corruption of construction projects in Iraq. The survey based mainly on the persons who have personal experience and work in a miscellaneous strips concerning to this field, they divided into three groups; these are university professors (lecturers), engineers and contractors. The majorities of responding who participate strongly in the survey are the engineers; however, the university lecturers come in the second grade, and finally the contractors. The essential objective of this study is to identify the reality of corruption in the Iraqi construction projects and attempting to determine some solutions to minimize this serious issue.

Keywords - Corruption, Constructional, Project, Iraq.

I. INTRODUCTION

The International transparency is a non-governmental organization ranking the global world countries according to the corruption perception index, which is depend mainly on the score of each country. This score is varied from 0 to 100, when the corruption index decreases; this score increased to reach near 100 which mean that the country is very clean from corruption.

Unfortunately, the international transparency in 2017 puts Iraq in a rank of 169/180 with a score of 18/100 [1], this indicates that Iraq is one of the most corrupted countries in the world.

Actually, the corruption pest is not existing in a single sector of the country, it affects all the society aspects. Corruption may be existed as a bribe, Embezzlement, Kickbacks and fraud. However, the dangerous field that the corruption acts on is the construction projects, which costs the country huge amount of money. Therefore, this study conducted to present a specified view on some problems on the corruption of the construction industry in Iraq. In this study, a questionnaire consisting of more than 25 items was prepared and submitted to a community slice worked in the construction projects, they are university lecturers, engineers and the contractors that are working in the construction industry. This study is aimed to improve the awareness against the corruption to construct a basis suitable of the infrastructures in Iraq.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

The definition of corruption that stated by the United Nations is offering, giving, extradite or petition, explicitly or in explicitly anything of worth to affect the behavior of a formal in the procurement or picking operation or in construction contract fulfillment [2]. Over the few decades, many studies have considered on the corruption, in the United Kingdom it is found by CIOB [3] that 51% from a slice consists above 1000 respondents had direct experiments of corruption, and at least on a single opportunity, 41% of the practitioners directly or indirectly offered a bribe. Corruption, as the study found, exists in more than one aspect of the UK construction projects, and hence, to minimize corruption to the lower levels, more action must be done by the government. Thereafter U.K. government responds by introducing the Bribery Act [4] which is become effect in April 2011; this act requires construction associations to confirm their obligation to struggling corruption [5]. However, the Bribery Act [4] carries on company's senior officials the liable for non-resisting corruption.

In fact, Corruption may appear at any stage of the project such in planning, design, inspection, bidder and signing of contract, construction, service providing with operation and finally, the maintenance process as shown in table (1) [6].

Construction industry is known as one of the biggest industries in the whole world [7], However, as compared with the other sectors of industry, constructions projects possess an encouraging credit because it is generally associated with collapse of business and regarding to minimum records linked with incomplete projects because of many matters such as time exceeding and cost, high scale of disputes, and the market environment are highly competitive [8], [9]. In the meantime, there are many factors that affect the construction industries, such as various kinds of stakeholders (designers, employers, suppliers, contractors...etc.), different resources (materials, equipment and labor), political and complete design, and managerial factors and economic, all these factors make the construction industry one of the riskiest business [10].

On the other hand, there are many features that make the sector of construction prone to corruption, these are: 1. Competitive; 2. A huge number of subcontractors; 3. A lot of permits and approvals; 4. It is difficult to contrast pricing of projects when they presented individually; 5. The opportunities for retards and overtakes; and finally 6. The fact that the quality of work may be concealed [11].

Table 1: Corruption forms in the construction project cycle [6]