An Empirical Assessment of Employee Integrity in the Public Sector of Malaysia

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Abstract

Purpose - Integrity is a critical issue as it could lead to failures in governance, fraud, inefficacy, corruption, as well as weak financial management particularly in the public sector. At present, the public sector is a matter of global concern due the constant cases of failures in governance, fraud, inefficacy, and corruption. As such, this sector has been pressurized to provide justification of the sources and usages of public resources and to improve their service performance as the public has the right to monitor the public sector management's transparency and efficacy. This study evaluates the state of present integrity practices among public sector employees from various Malaysian service schemes.

Design/methodology/approach – Primary data were collected using a questionnaire survey approach with 194 heads of departments in the Malaysian federal ministries. The collection of data was according to the perspective of 13 factors in integrity practices using a five-point Likert scale. Factor analysis and descriptive statistics were utilized for data analysis. In addition, data reliability was checked by Cronbach's alpha test, data normality was examined by Skewness and Kurtosis tests, and data validity was tested by using Kaiser-Meyer Olkin test and Barlett's test.

Findings - The findings show that 92.6% of the participants reported that they practised integrity within their departments. Nevertheless, the priority for these integrity factors varies according to the service schemes. In general, the departments of finance, audits, and administration had an above average integrity practice level however the practice of the accounting scheme is below the general average level.

Practical/Policy implications - This findings of the study will help policy makers to take necessary steps to improve the practices of integrity in the public sector in order to create a more dependable and efficient public sector in Malaysia.

Originality/value – This is an original study based on primary data that assesses the performance of practicing integrity in the public sector of Malaysia.

Keywords: *Public Sector, Integrity, Factor Analysis, Malaysia*

Introduction

Integrity is an essential human characteristic, which at present, is regarded a significant component of a smooth organizational function in the contemporary world. In the beginning, philosophers of Roman origin created integrity as an idea for moral with the common definition of being morally upright or whole (Bauman, 2013). The Webster's Dictionary defines integrity as a position or quality of completeness, being whole, complete, a morally sound state, upright, honest, unbroken, and sincere. Even though this definition can be a good descriptive starting point, it is not clear if the notion of integrity also requires some action (Trevinyo-Rodriguez, 2007). In addition, the concept of integrity theory has been utilized in many fields besides the ethics field such as psychology, human resource management, leadership, and organizational behaviour (Bauman, 2013; Trevinyo-Rodríguez, 2007).

Based on the organizational perspective, ethical behaviour or integrity describes both corrupt or fraudulent activities as well as the characteristics or quality of an individual or organization's behaviour which reflects the acting quality in line with the standard, rules, and moral values established by the members of an organization and the society (Kolthoff et al., 2010; Bauman, 2013). This is also regarded an issue of consistency as well as coherence of

areas such as the organizational objectives, individual behaviours, and personal beliefs and values (Badaracco & Ellsworth, 1991). Thus, it is considered to influence organizational actions, decisions, and moral choices directly (Treviño-Rodríguez, 2007); as such, the organization's management plays a critical function in developing integrity at the workplace (Kaptein, 2003).

Integrity is a necessary component in building trust and mutual respect in relationships among the board members as well as with the various stakeholders of an organization (Badaracco & Ellsworth, 1991; Chen et al., 2013). It is even more critical for the public sector to be transparent, ethical, highly efficient, with high integrity as the public sector is the connecting agent between the public and the government and represents the public in managing the trust of the government and in offering the necessary services (Maizatun et al., 2016). Aziz et al. (2015) claim that the government's main objective is to protect the public interest by having a governance system that is effective and efficient which ensures that rights of the public are protected, reflects accountability as well as integrity in practising daily tasks by the public sector officers. If this fails, then the system of governance would face failure as well.

According to Mintrop (2012), the government's initiative in motivating ethics, integrity, and moral values affects accountability in a positive manner. Jones (2009) reiterates that the strength of integrity is reflected through a good balance of perceived needs and wants and the values demanded externally that are deeply rooted in the culture connecting the external conduct of responsibilities particularly to the public thus leading to accountability. It is important to allocate resources that develop an organizational environment that builds the levels of democratic perception that support the development of operational and organizational integrity. Employees are stimulated by integrity to adhere to and assist in instilling values that uphold the commitment to ethical conducts (Said et al., 2016). Moreover, it is crucial for an organization to have integrity in order to be placed in a global ranking (Talib et al., 2013).

In public sector organizations, in general, integrity essentially plays a critical function in ensuring the presence transparency and accountability. Thus, this study attempts to examine the level of integrity practice in the Malaysian public sector. Malaysia was chosen for this study because as of late, many issues of concern have been surfacing in the public sector in relation to fraud, corruption, failures in governance, weak financial management, and many others. This has given rise to many questions regarding the public sector's level of integrity in upholding the public's trust. It is hoped that this study would assist the government to identify the factors that would assist in nurturing and promoting the value of integrity in the government sectors. The finding of this study can be utilized to create awareness among the policymakers to motivate and encourage good governance and integrity among the public officers as to uphold the public confidence.

Integrity Challenges Faced by Malaysian Public Sector

The Malaysian government realizes the importance of the public sector as an agency for public administration and management. Thus, to prevent the occurrence of fraud, misconduct, as well as corruption, each department in the public sector is instilled with integrity practices. From the time of independence in 1957, Malaysia has been successfully transforming the country from one that is developing into one that will be developed. The government introduced the strategy known as 'Clean, Efficient and Trustworthy' in the 1980s to replace

the 1950 Prevention of Corruption Ordinance and the 1961 Prevention of Corruption Act with the aim of ensuring the prevention of corruption and increasing the practice of integrity in the public sector's various departments. In addition, in 1967, the Anti-Corruption Agency was established to eliminate corruption and to hinder the act of negligence in the public sector's various departments. It was hoped that by establishing these strategies and programmes, the issues of corruption and fraud arising from non-integrity practices could be properly managed.

Moreover, in order to introduce accountability in spending in the public sector, the government established several control mechanisms, which would limit or eliminate acts of misconduct and negligence in managing the funds in the government. In 2004, the Prime Minister, Abdullah Haji Ahmad Badawi established the Malaysian Institute of Integrity (IIM) that began the initiative of the government to create a nation with a high level of integrity which would be resilient and embody the universal good values. The establishment of the IIM as the coordinating body in the National Integrity Plan (NIP) implementation was a critical step undertaken by the nation to enhance the sense of accountability in the public sector. In addition, the Malaysian Public Complaint Bureau (PCB)¹ is also proactive in offering services that aid the public in directing their complaints, which would contribute towards creating excellence in the public service. Many different auditing methods were carried out yearly by the office of the Auditor General to assess the efficacy of the financial management and other activities of the federal government including Attestation Audit, Performance Audit, Compliance Audit, and Management Audit of Government Companies. In addition, other assessments were carried out by the Malaysian Administrative Modernisation and Management Planning Unit or MAMPU² called the Star Rating System (SSR), whose main objective is to recognize the agencies that have performed well and demonstrated high quality of governance and continued enhancements in the delivery of the public services beginning from the year 2008.

Moreover, in 2009, Prime Minister Mohd Najib established a new method to transform the government and the public sector by emphasizing on the six National Key Results Areas (NKRAs)³ using a program known as the Government Transformation Programs whose primary motive was to transform the machinery of the government to be more efficient in delivering its services and for it to be accountable for results that the public are most concerned about as well as to assist in moving the nation forward towards becoming a developed, just, and united nation with a high quality of living. It has been recognized as the most essential area in benefitting the public and for the nation's progress, and it would be utilized as the means to reform the administration and enhance the accountability of the government while strengthening the public sector at the same time. This is an important step undertaken by the government to implement and execute good governance in the public sector.

¹ Public Complaint Bureau is an agency under Prime Minister Department that accountable in managing public complaint. See <http://www.pcb.gov.my/> for further explanation

² Malaysian Administrative Modernization and Management Planning Unit (MAMPU) is one of the few central agencies in Malaysia, responsible for 'modernizing and reforming' the public sector in the areas of administrative reforms. See <http://www.mampu.gov.my/> for further explanation.

³ The brainchild of Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak and implemented under the purview of the Performance Management and Delivery Unit (PEMANDU), the GTP is deeply rooted in the motto of 1Malaysia of 'People First, Performance Now'. See more at <http://www.pemandu.gov.my/gtp/>

The past Prime Minister, Mahathir Mohamed, pointed out that in order to develop a strong and united country, ethical and moral values must be emphasized, as it is a critical step in moving towards establishing Malaysia as a progressive and united nation. His successor also believed in this idea and later promoted the idea into fruition through the establishment of the Institute Integrity of Malaysia⁴ to surge the public sector in Malaysia towards a path of transparency and accountability. During the presentation of Budget 2013⁵, in his speech at the Parliament, Prime Minister Mohd Najib also emphasized the need for a work culture that practices integrity and values that are swift and accurate. He repeated the same concept during the 2014⁶ Budget speech and emphasized on transforming the public sector to increase the confidence of the public and to maintain this sector's credibility and image.

However, despite the many initiatives in improving the delivery of services in the public sector, complaints and criticisms still exist. Malaysia faces many challenges and obstacles as a multi-racial nation. The public sector has been faced with complaints of inefficiency, bureaucracy, inflexibility, poor accountability, and weak performance for a long time (Siddiquee, 2006). In addition, Malaysians still believe that it is easy for manipulative people to control the public sector and this belief has reduced the confidence of the public on the level of integrity of the government sector along with alleged cases of corruption in procurement in the government, abuse in excising land and fraudulent transfer of land, as well as corruption at the municipality level during business transfers (The Star, 2008). Weak delivery of services has created gaps in terms of accountability, inequality in planning of policies, and inefficient coordination among public agencies, particularly at the ministerial level. This had caused voters in the 2008 election in Malaysia to reflect their dissatisfaction with the government services by giving the Barisan Nasional party, which is the ruling coalition, its worst performance in election since the 1957 independence (Iyer, 2011).

Before the Auditor General's report in 2012, issues such as possible negligence by public officials who do not carry out their responsibilities in placing the government's interests first were also emphasized. The report contained examples of weaknesses observed when audits were carried out including inappropriate payments, work or procurements that did not abide by the required specifications or of low quality; too many delays, too much wastage; and poor revenue and government asset management (National Audit Department, 2013). It was pointed out that the weaknesses were the result of officers' negligence in complying with rules, insufficient monitoring, insufficient skills in project management, and failure in paying attention to the results and effects of projects, activities, and programmes. Consequently, a substantial sum of money had been wasted due to the negligence by the officers.

One such case is the well-known Royal Malaysian Customs Department (RMCD) case on the matter of procurement of shoes for its employees that was handled by the head office from the year 2009 to 2013, which included an expense of RM6.86 million. The audit report revealed that there was still a balance of shoes bought in 2009 that were not distributed with another 7,659 pairs of shoes valued at RM602,089 that were claimed to have been

⁴The Malaysian Institute of Integrity (MII), was established as a coordinating agency for the implementation of the National Integrity Plan (NIP) with the main objective is to develop a nation of high integrity, that is resilient and embraces universal good values. See <http://www.iim.org.my/> for further explanation.

⁵ Full text of the 2013 budget speech can be assessed at http://www.pmo.gov.my/dokumenattached/bajet2013/SPEECH_BUDGET_2013_28092012_E.pdf

⁶ Full text of the 2014 budget speech can be assessed at https://www.pmo.gov.my/?menu=speech&page=1676&news_id=680&speech_cat=2

damaged and disposed (National Audit Department, 2013). The RMCD management in charge of the shoes procurement had caused substantial loss to the government. Although this issue is still being investigated, the government had still incurred a huge cost and it is wondered whether the incident was a result of inefficiency or officers' negligence in carrying out their responsibility in procuring or the fault of those charged with distributing the shoes. Another shocking report was from the Royal Malaysian Police in the discovery of insufficient control in the management of assets, which had resulted in government losses including missing valuable assets such as handcuffs and firearms.

Improperly implemented internal control systems in the management and securing of assets could result in disasters that would be threatening the safety of the public. The National Audit Department in their 2013 Audit Report reported that as many as 309 units of assets valued at RM1.33 million were missing from the year 2010 to 2012. Some of the main assets that were missing were 44 units of firearms, 29 units of vehicles as well as 156 units of handcuffs. Based on the perspective of the Auditor General, the general management of the loss of assets by the Police Head office in Bukit Aman and its three police contingents were unsatisfactory. The findings also created concerns with the public as it spread fear regarding the integrity of the police department and their accountability in protecting the nation's safety when they were even unable to manage their own assets properly. The auditors also found that Defence Ministry's procurement valued at RM1.28 million, which was to be carried out based on a tender process had been divided into four quotations. The officer's failure to follow directions by the Treasury had damaged the ministry's image in particular and the public sector in general.

The 2014 report by the office of the Auditor General again revealed several shortcomings found that were carried out by Heads of Departments related to public money, revenue, valuable items, and public property. As an example, it was found that the Solid Waste and Public Cleansing Management Corporation (PPSPPA) made claims that were not part of their jurisdiction or specified in any agreement. This matter demonstrates the problems with integrity, accountability, morality, honest, and mismanagement that takes place in the public sector.

KPMG carried out an integrity survey in 2013 and it was found that most of the departments in organizations have observed some form of misconduct and the level of these misconducts have remained the same (KPMG Integrity Survey, 2013). In terms of bribery, Malaysia's score was 7.6, which is less than the global average score of 7.8. (A 10 score indicates no bribery at all). This means that Malaysian organizations remain engaged in bribery while carrying out businesses (Bribe Payers Index, 2011). The index for bribery perception reveals the real score as a report shows that small businesses were using about 8-9% of the revenue for the payment of bribes for permits and licenses (The Star, 2015). Thus, the government loses 5% of its Gross Domestic Product (GDP) due to corruption annually (Zainal, 2014).

The above are just a few cases that have been highlighted based on the many weaknesses that have been found the public sector's management. This has caused the public to question the public sector on its management of its employees and the need to properly and honestly manage the public's money while embracing values of integrity, accountability, and responsibility in addition to the implementation of proper governance practices in the service delivery in the public sector. Given the fact that the government is moving towards becoming a developed country, it is critical that heads of departments show integrity and ethics in their

functions in order to achieve the Government Transformation Programme (GTP) and the Economic Transformation Programme (ETP) and make the country prosperous and ensure that the public's well-being is secure.

Research Methodology

Data Collection and Sampling

According to Kaptein and Avelino (2005), there are various approaches the board and management can take to measure integrity in an organization including group sessions, interviews, surveys, fact finding missions, desktop research, and using information systems. This study collected data using a face-to-face questionnaire survey of heads of departments of six Malaysian federal ministries in Jan – June 2016. The six selected ministries include:- (i) the Ministry of Education, (ii) the Ministry of Communication and Multimedia, (iii) the Ministry of Defence, (iv) the Ministry of Health, (v) the Ministry of Rural and Regional Development, and (vi) the Ministry of Agriculture and Agro-Based Industry. These ministries were chosen as these some of the frequently reprimanded ministries in the Auditor General Report for three continuous years from 2012 to 2014 in relation to issues such as integrity, accountability, mismanagement, and ethics.

There are 402 sub-departments in total in these six ministries. The target of the study is 210 samples using the systematic random sampling method using every two listed departments in each ministry. The selection began with a department's second list followed by the fourth list, the sixth list, etc. until reaching 402 and ending up with 210 items in the samples. Lastly, 194 questionnaires from 210 target samples were utilized in the data analysis.

Table 1: Samples of distribution in the ministries and their departments in Malaysia

Ministries & Departments	Amount of Projected Sub- departments	Amount of Actual Samples
The Ministry of Communications and Multimedia		
1. Department of Broadcasting Malaysia	13	10
2. Department of Information Malaysia	10	10
The Ministry of Education		
3. Education Department of Johor	10	10
4. Education Department of Kelantan	10	10
5. Education Department of Labuan	10	10
6. Education Department of Pahang	10	10
7. Education Department of Perak	10	10
8. Education Department of Putrajaya	10	10
9. Education Department of Sabah	10	5
10. Education Department of Selangor	10	10
The Ministry of Health		
11. Health Department of Perlis	6	6
12. Health Department of Selangor	6	6
13. Health Department of Terengganu	6	6
14. Health Department of Sarawak	6	6
15. Health Department of Kuala Lumpur	6	6
16. Health Department of Perak	6	6
17. Health Department of Melaka	6	6
18. Health Department of Kedah	6	6
The Ministry of Defence		

19. Department of Veteran Affairs	7	5
The Ministry of Agriculture and Agro-based Industry		
20. Fishery Department	13	10
21. Agriculture Department	12	12
The Ministry of Rural and Regional Development		
22. Community Development Department	12	12
23. Rubber Industry Smallholders Development Authority	15	12
Total	210	194

Measurements of Variables

The participants were required to offer their perspective on the practices that promote integrity in their department by utilizing a five-point Likert scale that ranged from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The integrity variables (Table 2) were used with some changes from the Malaysian Integrity System (2012) known as the Corporate Integrity Assessment Questionnaire (CIAQ).

Table 2: Factors of integrity measurements in the Malaysian public sector

Code	Description of Items
I1	My department frequently benchmarks its integrity and ethics
I2	My department considers managing integrity an essential leadership competency
I3	My department fully integrates the integrity and ethics aspects into all organizational operations
I4	My department provides concrete guidance for integrity and how to address it
I5	My department can easily identify the integrity and ethics leader among top managers
I6	My department provides policies and guidelines for disciplinary action and rewards on its integrity and ethics are regarded as best practice
I7	My department publishes annual report about integrity and ethics
I8	My department respects the confidentiality of the ethics advisory process at all levels of the organization
I9	My department formally evaluates its ethics training for effectiveness and constantly updates and improves
I10	My department promotes transparency in connection with all of its activities
I11	My department's supervisors and managers receive integrity and ethics training on how to recognize and prevent retaliation
I12	My department supports and assists other department in their integrity and ethics initiatives
I13	My department promotes integrity conduct as part of its activities

Analysis of Data

The collected data was analysed using the descriptive statistics and factor analysis techniques. Descriptive statistics is normally utilized to analyse the overall features of the data while factor analysis is utilized to calculate data consistency in the study. In addition, the data reliability is measured by utilizing the Cronbach's alpha test and data normality is examined by Skewness and Kurtosis tests. Lastly, the data validity is tested by using Kaiser-Meyer Olkin test and Barlett's test.

Findings and Discussion

Demographic Profiles

The respondents were asked to reveal certain demographic information including gender, ethnicity, age, academic qualification, type of qualification, job position, department, grade, and working experience. Table 3 provides the summary of the demographic information.

Table 3: Respondents' demographic information

Demographic Profiles		Frequency (N=194)	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	79	40.7
	Female	115	59.3
Ethnicity	Malay	176	90.7
	India	11	5.7
	Chinese	7	3.6
Age	20 – 30 years	24	12.4
	31 – 40 years	64	33.0
	41 – 50 years	74	38.1
	51 years and above	32	16.5
Academic Qualifications	Degree	100	51.5
	Master	90	46.4
	PhD	4	2.1
Types of Qualifications	Accounting	98	50.5
	Non Accounting	96	49.5
Job Position	Supporting Staff	7	3.6
	Management and Professional	176	90.7
	Top Management	11	5.7
Department	Accounting	45	23.2
	Administrative	78	40.2
	Audit	10	5.2
	Finance	46	23.7
	Others	15	7.7
Grade	41	101	52.1
	44	21	10.8
	48	70	36.1
	52	2	1.0
Working Experience in the Current Organization (no. of years)	Less than 1 year	11	5.7
	1 – 3 years	10	5.2
	4 – 5 years	23	11.9
	5 years and above	150	77.3

It was found that 59.3% of the respondents are female. As much as 38% of the respondents are in the 41-50 years old age group followed by 33% in the 31-40 years old age group. Most of the respondents are Malays comprising of 90.7%. All the respondents had a minimum qualification of a bachelor degree.

The job positions of 90.7% of the respondents are management and professionals. 40% of the respondents are in the administrative job scheme and 23.7% are in financial services, with only 5.2% in accounting job scheme. The remaining 7.7% are from various other departments such as being officers in the tax, legal, health, education, information & technology, and procurement departments. 52.1% of the respondents are from Grade 41, with 36.1% in Grade 48, and 10.8% in Grade 44. Those with more than 5 years working the present organization stood at 77% and 12% had 4 to 5 years working in the present organization.

Factor Analysis

Factor analysis is used to ensure the variables consistency and to determine the integrity. In this study, the factor loading of all the variables are higher than 0.6 with exceptions on items 13, 18, and I12 as observed in Table 4. Thus, after removing these variables, the factor loading values ranged from 0.65 (I4) to 0.86 (I9). It shows that 10 out 13 variables are usable in measuring integrity of the Malaysian public sector.

Descriptive Analysis

Service Scheme wise Evaluation

Based on all the groups of service schemes, the average highest result for all the integrity factors measures at 4.3, which includes practices by the group on administration, audit and finance scheme, and the mean lowest score measures at 4.0, which includes practices by the group on accounting scheme (Table 4).

Table 4: Integrity factors based on the service schemes

Service Schemes	I1	I2	I3	I4	I5	I6	I7	I8	I9	I10	I11	I12	I13	All Average
Accounting	4.3	4.0	4.2	4.1	4.3	4.0	3.8	4.0	3.8	3.9	3.8	4.0	3.8	4.0
Administration	4.7	4.0	4.3	4.4	4.7	4.3	4.3	4.0	4.4	4.0	4.1	4.4	4.0	4.3
Audit	4.2	4.5	4.5	4.4	4.6	4.3	4.1	4.2	4.0	4.2	4.3	4.2	4.1	4.3
Finance	4.6	4.1	4.3	4.3	4.7	4.4	4.3	4.2	4.4	4.0	4.0	4.2	4.1	4.3
Others	4.5	4.1	4.1	4.1	4.3	4.3	3.8	4.3	4.1	4.1	4.1	3.9	4.0	4.1
All Average	4.5	4.1	4.3	4.3	4.5	4.3	4.1	4.1	4.2	4.0	4.0	4.2	4.0	4.2
Factor Loading	0.73	0.69	0.32*	0.65	0.72	0.77	0.71	0.21*	0.86	0.72	0.69	0.53*	0.80	

* The factor loadings of the parameters less than 0.6 are considered as not suitable to measure integrity for Malaysian public sector

The group on accounting service scheme scored a total average of 4.0, while its highest score measured at 4.3 for I5. Moreover, the score for factors I7, I9, I10, I11, and I13 are lower compared to the average integrity scores of the group. The group on administrative scheme's average total score measured at 4.3 while the highest score measured at 4.7 for the I1 and I5 factors, while the lowest score measured at 4.0 for I2, I8, I10, and I13 factors. In addition, the score for I11 is lower than the overall average integrity scores of the group. The group on audit scheme's average total score measured at 4.3 while the highest score measured at 4.6 for the I5 factor, and the lowest score measured at 4.0 for the I9 factor. Moreover, scores for the factors I1, I7, I8, I10, I12, and I13 are lower compared to the average integrity scores of the group. The group on finance scheme's average total score measured at 4.3 while the highest score measured at 4.7 for the I5 factor, and the lowest score measured at 4.0 for I10 and I11 factors. Additionally, the scores for I2, I8, I12, and I13 are lower compared to the overall average integrity scores of the group.

Factor wise Evaluation

The study attempted measure the integrity practice in the public sector using 13 variables. Based on the respondents, a total average of 92.6% agreed that they practice the integrity factors and 1.9% claimed that they do not practice them as observed in Table 5. Based on all

the factors of integrity, the highest mean score is at 4.5 for factors (I1) and (I5), and the lowest mean score is at 4.0 for factors (I10), (I11), and (I13) as observed in Table 4.

Table 5: Frequency scores of factors of integrity

Scores	I1	I2	I3	I4	I5	I6	I7	I8	I9	I10	I11	I12	I13	All Average
1	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	0	4	0	0	0	0	0.6
2	4	4	0	0	0	5	6	1	4	4	2	6	4	3.1
3	2	2	7	10	11	8	9	54	3	6	6	12	8	10.6
4	74	163	124	124	67	112	117	70	120	170	171	114	168	122.6
5	114	25	63	60	116	69	58	69	63	14	15	62	14	57.1
Disagree (1-2)	4	4	0	0	0	5	10	1	8	4	2	6	4	3.7
Agree (4-5)	188	188	187	184	183	181	175	139	183	184	186	176	182	179.7
Disagree% (1-2)	2.1	2.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	2.6	5.2	0.5	4.1	2.1	1.0	3.1	2.1	1.9
Agree% (4-5)	96.9	96.9	96.4	94.8	94.3	93.3	90.2	71.6	94.3	94.8	95.9	90.7	93.8	92.6
Minimum	2	2	3	3	3	2	1	2	1	2	2	2	2	2
Maximum	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
Std. Dev.	0.6	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.6	0.7	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.4	0.4	0.7	0.4	0.4

Based on the factors on practicing integrity in the public sector, 96.6% of the respondents claimed that *their department frequently benchmarked its integrity and ethics* (I1) as observed in Table 5. The employees using the scheme on administration scheme regarded it the most and the employees using the scheme on audit perceived it to be the least as observed in Table 4. Based on the rest of the service schemes, the employees in the schemes on accounting regarded it to be lower than average. 96.9% of the participants regarded *managing integrity an essential leadership competency* (I2) as observed in Table 5, while the employees using the scheme on audit perceived it as the most and those in the accounting and administration scheme perceived it to be the least as observed in Table 4.

94.8% of the participants agreed to have *concrete guidance for integrity and how to address them* (I4) as observed in Table 5. The employees using the scheme on audit and administrative schemes possess it the most while the employees using the scheme on accounting possess it the least as observed in Table 4. 94.3% of the participants agreed that *they can easily identify the integrity and ethical leader among the top managers* (I5) as observed in Table 5. The employees using the scheme on administration and finance possess it the most while the employees using the scheme on accounting scheme possess it the least as observed in Table 4.

93.3% of the participants agreed that *they have policies and guidelines for disciplinary action and rewards on its integrity and ethics regarded as the best practice* (I6) as observed in Table 5. The employees using the scheme on finance possess it the most while the employees using the scheme on accounting possess it the least as observed in Table 4. 90.2% of the participants agreed that *they publish annual reports about integrity and ethics* (I7) as observed in Table 5. The employees using the scheme on finance and administrative practice it the most while the employees using the scheme on accounting practice it the least as observed in Table 4.

Only 94.3% of the participants agreed that *they formally evaluate ethical training for effectiveness and constantly update and improve* (I9) as observed in Table 5. The employees using the scheme on administration and finance practice it the most while the employees using the scheme on accounting practice it the least as observed in Table 4. 94.8% of the

participants agreed that they *promote transparency in connection with all activities* (I10) and 95.9% of the participants agreed that *the supervisors and managers receive integrity and ethics training on how to recognize and prevent retaliation* (I11) as observed in Table 5. In both instances, the participants in the audit scheme practice it the most while those in the accounting scheme practice it the least as observed in Table 4. Finally, 93.8% of the participants agreed that they *promote integrity conduct as part of their activities* (I13) as observed in Table 5. The participants in the finance and audit schemes practice it the most while those in the accounting scheme practice it the least as observed in Table 4.

Diagnostic Tests

Skewness and Kurtosis tests were used to carry out the normality testing. Skewness can be defined as something that is out of the line depending on the extension of the curve if it curves out to the right or left. When the curve extends more to the right, this is known as positively skewed and when it extends more to the left, this is known as negatively skewed (Wuensch, 2014). On the other hand, Kurtosis measures how flat the symmetric distribution is at the top. The rule that is observed for both the skewness and kurtosis to be considered normally distributed is for the values to be from -2 to +2. When the skewness and kurtosis values are in this range, the data distribution is considered normal. Nevertheless, in this study the skewness value is 03.006 while the value of the kurtosis is 13.54, which indicates being outside of the range of normality which means that the data is not normally distributed. However, Field (2013) suggests that the data can be considered normal if they exceed thirty and here the sample size of the study is 194.

Table 6: Reliability testing for factors of integrity

Cronbach's Alpha	0.89
Eigenvalue	7.78
Eigen % variance	77.81
% of variance	77.81
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy	0.751
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity Approx. Chi-Square	2360.35
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity Sig.	0.00000

The Cronbach's alpha value on integrity as observed in Table 6 is 0.89, which means that the reliability of the items in the questionnaire is excellent (George & Mallery, 2016). The test's eigenvalues indicate that the factors utilized for integrity is able to explain 77.7% of the variance. The Kaiser-Meyer Olkin test shows a greater value than 0.6, at 0.75. The Barlett's Test Sphericity Approx. Chi-Square determines the value's significance (Chi-Square = 2360, $p < 0.0000001$). Thus, the sample is adequate for utilization in the factor analysis for measuring the integrity.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Malaysia has a vision of reaching a developed nation status by the 2020, however, many steps must be undertaken to improve the integrity level of the public service sector. This study attempted to measure the level of the present integrity practices in the Malaysian public sector by evaluating the effects of thirteen factors.

A total of 92.6% respondents claimed that in general they practice the mentioned factors of integrity, however, the priority of these factors are different among the service

schemes. In general, the integrity practices in the group with the administration, audit, and finance schemes are better compared to the accounting group. This might be the reason for the presence of several areas of weaknesses, corruption, and weak controls of asset management that were reported in the recent official report by the Auditor General.

The government continuously initiates programmes that aim to promote and motivate the practices of integrity in all the departments in the public sector in order for them to be more transparent in carrying out their duties. However, it has not given the expected impact as reported in the 2014 Corruption Perception Index (CPI) by Transparency International, in which Malaysia only improved by three ranks from 53 to 50 among 175 countries; this shows that the measures and efforts undertaken for fighting graft are still insufficient (Zainal, 2014). This demonstrates that although the government has taken the right steps to improve the public's perception, there are still many more steps that must be undertaken to increase the confidence of the public towards the integrity of the public sector. The Prime Minister of Malaysia Mohd Najib also added that a strong commitment is required in the area of integrity practices to provide Malaysia with a bright future (Today Online, 2016).

It is insufficient to just change the structures of bureaucracy to improve this situation. The whole public sector must be transformed to create an efficient and reliable sector to ensure adequate integrity and an effective evaluation system. Improvements in the integrity practices would be able to assist in the achievement of the intentions of the stakeholders and to make sure there is accountability in the public sector. It is also recommended that each department and ministry produces or reports their activities of integrity and ethics and ensure that they organized to create a culture of good governance in the various departments in the public sector. The report should be made available to the public to create awareness and to educate them on the important steps that have been undertaken to reduce employee misconduct in the government.

This study's findings would be able to assist the various departments and agencies in the government to improve their level of integrity according to the related service schemes. In addition, the factors of integrity measures and approaches utilized in this study would be able to assist the government in creating techniques for measurements of accountability in the public sector. Nevertheless, this study also faced several limitations that could be addressed in future researches. In this study, only 6 ministries were taken into consideration even though there are 24 ministries in Malaysia while the survey only included heads of departments. The levels of integrity practices could be different in the other ministries and among other government officers that could be addressed in future researches.

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