

Applied TQM in Public Sector Privatization and Strategic Partnerships in Abu Dhabi, UAE

Dr. Hamad Al Ameri

Business Solutions & Pathways to Success, Khalifa City-A, P.O.Box 965005
Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates

Dr. Bakhit Al Ameri

Support Services Director, Al Ain Municipality, Al Ain, Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates

Abstract

This paper investigated the extent to which applied TQM enhanced the readiness of the private and public sectors in engaging in strategic partnerships and their management capacity in sustaining such partnerships. The investigation was conducted in Abu Dhabi, UAE and carried out using the mixed method. Purposive sampling was used to ensure that only those involved or had knowledge of their organizations' partnership initiatives participates in the study. The research data was treated using both quantitative and qualitative tools. The findings revealed that applied TQM was perceived to have enhanced the readiness of the private and public sectors to engage in strategic partnerships and in sustaining their partnerships. The readiness of both sectors was positively correlated with their capacity to sustain their partnership through the use of applied TQM. On the basis of the findings, the researcher developed a framework that highlights the significance of applied TQM for potential and future strategic partnerships between the public and private sector.

Keywords: TQM, privatization, PPP, strategic partnership, readiness, sustainability

1. Introduction

The concept of this paper was informed by the confluence of two significant phenomena that had unfolded in the UAE in the past decades: the quality movement and economic diversification. These events will continue to shape the economic engines that will propel the country in its journey towards becoming a competitive knowledge economy as envisioned in UAE 2021. The increasing momentum of the quality movement in the UAE led this paper to focus on the application of total quality management (TQM) in the public and private sectors while the drive towards economic diversification situated this paper in the context of privatization, public-private partnerships, and other strategic partnerships between the government and the private sector. These are among the current diversification strategies of the government. In this paper, both the quality movement and economic diversification were seen from the frame of readiness and sustainability as an indicator of meaningful economic advance in relation to the strategic vision of the country in general, and Abu Dhabi, in particular.

1.1. Economic Diversification in the UAE

The foundation of the economic dynamics in the UAE is based on oil production and its vast oil resources. This is not endemic only to the UAE but a reality in the Gulf countries as well. Even before the global recession, the potential backlash of oil dependency had been deliberated in the literature (Karl, 1997; Richards & Waterbury, 2008; Beblawi, 1990) based on the argument that the Gulf state's practice of oil-dependent rentier system created a disparity between the actual factor of production and opportunity cost (Richards & Waterbury, 2008). Such can affect both political equilibrium and economic stability (Karl, 1997). In this regard, Richards and Waterbury (2008) wrote that rentierism can boomerang with tremendous repercussions in the wake of revenue decline or disappearance of oil rent. Accordingly, the UAE was singled out by (Davidson, 2008:151) as representing "the purest example of these rentier states."

The economy of the UAE is dependent on oil and gas and related hydrocarbon industry that are mainly produced and exported from Abu Dhabi. While Dubai also produces oil and gas, its production is not very substantial compared to Abu Dhabi. This makes Abu Dhabi the primary contributor to the federal government budget while at the same time catering to its own individual domestic needs and development projects as an entity (O'Sullivan, 2009). As a matter of its long strategic plan and economic sustainability, the UAE had adopted a policy that is shifting the focus away from its dependency on oil to one of a diversified economy. In effect, the different emirates as well as the federal governments had set goals that are finely tuned to the realization of the goals of economic diversification (Seznec, 2011). The pursuit of economic diversification and commitment to innovation had also shaped the UAE policy towards the fulfillment of the core values of domestic and international trade.

The diversification of the economy started in the mid-1990s when the leaders of the UAE envisioned an economy that would reduce its reliance on fossil fuels. This was when the UAE started to set the policy

frameworks that would encourage and boost trade, travel, tourism, real estate, construction, services, and related industries. These initiatives paid off as the UAE Annual Economic Report (2012) showed that in 2011 alone, the share of the non-oil sectors in gross domestic production (GDP) was 69.5 percent (AED 74.8 billion) of the total GDP of UAE. Service activities including wholesale, retail trade, repair services, real estate, transportation, storage, communication, financial enterprises, government services, and others composed about AED 440 billion of the total GDP according to the UAE Annual Economic Report, 2012 (Ministry of Economy, 2013). This stimulated the gradual movement of the country towards becoming a service- and knowledge-based economy.

1.2. Quality Initiatives

As a corollary, the leaders of the UAE saw the need for organizations to improve quality and customer service to become competitive. In effect, a number of strategic and far-reaching macro-level quality and excellence initiatives were launched for all sectors of the economy, namely the government departments and the public and private sectors. At this point in time, Dubai was the first mover and key driver of quality excellence in the UAE, and organizations started adopting best practices, international standards on quality, business excellence frameworks, and investing in people development.

Thawani (2014) charted the quality journey of the UAE starting with the institutionalization of the Dubai drive for quality and the Dubai Quality Award (DQA) in 1994 which was intended for private sector organizations to improve business standards and make these globally competitive. Accordingly, the DQA was initially based on the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award (MBNQA) but soon began to manifest closer alignment with the European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM) model. Another highlight of the Dubai drive for quality was the installation of the Dubai Quality Group (DQG) in 1994 which marked the beginning of the development and promotion of quality. The body was responsible for promoting ISO 9000; opening of the Masters of Quality Management programs in universities; establishing the Dubai Government Excellence Program (DGEP); adoption of ISO 14000 and OHSAS 18000; establishing the Dubai Human Development Award, Dubai Service Excellence Scheme (DSES) and Hamdan Bin Mohammed e-University (Thawani, 2014).

Abu Dhabi and the other emirates later followed and created their own programs improving efficiency, effectiveness, customer service, and overall competitiveness of industry and nation. For Abu Dhabi specifically, the Sheikh Khalifa Excellence Award (SKEA) and Abu Dhabi Award for Excellence in Government Performance were established. The SKEA was established in 2001 by the Abu Dhabi Chamber for private and public sector. SKEA uses a framework similar to EFQM. The Award for Excellence in Government Performance was established in 2008 for Abu Dhabi government entities/departments. (Thawani, 2014).

The ASQ (American Standard for Quality) noted that the quality journey of the UAE opened a number of opportunities for improvement in quality management such as creating a culture of sharing data/benchmarks; the use of advanced quality tool; measuring the impact and benefit of TQM on corporate performance; exploiting synergies in quality, risk, corporate social responsibility, and corporate governance; and quality in design (Thawani, 2014:5). It was in this regard that this paper looked into the application and significance of TQM.

1.3. Privatization and Strategic Partnerships

The other construct explored in this paper is that of strategic partnership as embodied in Abu Dhabi Vision 2030. Abu Dhabi vision 2030 is a long term strategic plan to transform the emirate of Abu Dhabi into a world class economy by diversifying into various sectors, integrating with the global economy, optimizing government resources and investing in social & physical infrastructure. Accordingly, the government of Abu Dhabi had identified nine areas defining the social, economic and political future of the emirate: large, empowered private sector, knowledge based economy, transparent and optimal regulatory environment, premium healthcare, education and infrastructure assets, optimization of resources, complete domestic and international security, continuation of strong and diverse international relations, maintenance of traditions, heritages and cultural assets and strong contribution to the federation of UAE (ADCED, 2008). Empowering the private sector included the provision regarding partnership with the government which ranged from large scale privatization and PPPs to smaller scale strategic partnerships.

It has to be noted that the UAE adopted privatization as an economic strategy at a much later time compared to countries in the MENA such as Morocco, Turkey, Egypt, Jordan, Tunisia, and Lebanon. Until 2005, it was observed that there was very little activity in the GCC notably for few transactions in Oman and Saudi Arabia but no privatization activities took place in the the rest of the region such as Kuwait, Bahrain, and the United Arab Emirates (OECD, 2005).

Later signs of privatization activity in the UAE were noted only after 2006 (Al-Asaad, et al., 2007). The literature is replete with documented privatization experiences in Europe, Asia, Latin America, Africa and the Middle East (Ahmad, 2011; Megginson, 2005; Megginson, 2010; Megginson and Netter; Nellis, 2012; Akoum, 2012) as well as post-privatization experiences in water and utilities (Gassner, Popov, & Pushak, 2008);

telecommunications (Li & Xu, 2004); infrastructure (Andres, et. al., 2008); banks (Megginson, 2005; Boubakri, et al., 2005); and electricity (Zhang, Parker, & Kirkpatrick, 2008). These experiences definitely provided significant lessons in privatization but Abu Dhabi 2030 opted for an eclectic stance in its outlook towards privatization to suit its model of economic development.

Privatization in the Abu Dhabi government public sector is currently focusing on providing additional affordable social services rather than products or manufacturing. Hence, the term privatization in this paper can either refer to privatization as the transfer of rights and functions over state owned enterprises from the public to the private or privatization as public-private partnerships as defined by Bond (2001). It was purported that once the UAE governmental privatization and sustainable development strategies for the future are proven successful, they can be adopted by the other Emirates later on.

Strategic alliances with foreign companies and governments will allow the expansion of the public sector services to develop the social welfare provisions. Some of the most important privatization partnerships the Abu Dhabi government is undertaking include business ventures into healthcare, education, utilities and alternative energies. The UAE government also believes that privatization can improve the country's chances of future sustainable development by allowing for leadership positions in alternative energy research sectors that will eventually replace oil as global power providers. Likewise, privatization will help the UAE Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) develop their job skills training and expertise to specialize in various services and production that will open up the economy for more capitalist ventures in the future. This will provide more jobs in the private sector for Emiratis who are mainly employed in the public sector due to their need for job skills and work experience (Al-Hashimi, 2005). In this regard, this paper did not strictly cover large scale privatization but also included public-private partnerships, and strategic partnerships connoted in Abu Dhabi 2030.

The economic priorities of Abu Dhabi Vision 2030 include achieving economic development and sharing of economic benefits every section of the society. In this regard, one of the four key priority agenda of Abu Dhabi Economic Vision 2030 is the optimisation of government operations. The policy agenda sets out guidelines for optimising the Government's own role in the future of the Emirate, by improving the efficiency and accountability of Government departments. The Government has already embarked on an extensive review of its processes and structures. Many services are being delivered electronically through e-Government initiatives, and departments are being streamlined and non-core services outsourced to the private sector. These initiatives will be continued and enhanced. At the same time, the Government continues to review and enhance the legislative framework and the law-making processes themselves to ensure maximum efficiency (ADCED 2008).

Based on the foregoing premises, this paper investigated the extent to which applied TQM enhanced the readiness of the private and public sectors in engaging in strategic partnerships and their management capacity in sustaining such partnerships. The findings of the investigation led to the development of a framework that underscores the significance of applied TQM in guiding potential and future privatization and strategic partnership initiatives.

2. Methodology

Based on the different ontological, epistemological, and methodological positions identified by Guba and Lincoln (1994), this paper anchored its methodology on positivism and constructivism. Positivism has its roots in the ontological principle and doctrine that truth and reality is free and independent of the viewer and observer (Aliyu, et al. 2014, p.81). The goal of positivism is to arrive at a universal unchanging truth that is always true so long as specified conditions hold. Positivism is the philosophical foundation of the scientific method, a method design to produce objective results by applying carefully selected tools in a controlled environment. Therefore, positivism is mainly related with scientific investigation where the units of analysis are numeric data (Easterby-Smith et al. 2006). This paper chose positivism on account of the fact that the investigation entailed numerical descriptions and statistical inferences.

Constructivism, on the other hand, is a philosophical position that intends to understand reality from the manner in which the world as experienced is constructed in the minds of human beings (Mertens, 2005). The focus of inquiry is the experiences of participants and their perceptions of the phenomenon investigated. Constructivism has a relativistic ontological stance hence it is not plausible to speak of a singular reality apprehended by human subjects. Rather, each individual creates his own meaning giving rise to the perception of multiple realities in the form of constructs in the minds of individuals. It aims to understand the world through meanings and understanding ascribed to the world by subjects who experience it. This paper chose constructivism because the study involved the analysis of narratives from the lived experiences of the participants on the phenomenon investigated.

Based on the philosophy adopted, this paper used the mixed method which combines the advantages of the quantitative and the qualitative methods. In comparison to quantitative and qualitative research, Creswell (2008) define mixed methods research as:

an approach to inquiry that combines or associates both qualitative and quantitative forms. It involves

philosophical assumptions, the use of qualitative and quantitative approaches, and the mixing of both approaches in a study. Thus, it is more than simply collecting and analysing both kinds of data; it also involves the use of both approaches in tandem so that the overall strength of a study is greater than either qualitative or quantitative research (Creswell, 2008, p.4).

Mixed methods research can be sequential, concurrent, and transformative (Creswell, 2008). Sequential mixed methods are procedures used to expand the results of one method by using another method. Concurrent mixed methods merge the data from two methods to come up with a more comprehensive analysis of the research problem. Transformative mixed methods uses a theoretical lens as an overarching perspective within a design that contains both quantitative and qualitative data. (Creswell, 2008, pp.14-15). Based on this differentiation, this paper used the sequential mixed method.

The companies or entities that participated in the investigation were chosen through purposive sampling. Due to time and space limitations, fifteen companies from the private sector and six public sector entities participated in the survey and interview. Data collection was done in two phases. The first was the survey which was done using a modified questionnaire adopted from Hensley and Dobie (2005). Before administering the questionnaire, the instrument was first pre-tested in various SMEs in Abu Dhabi. Reliability test using Pearson r yielded a value of 0.94 which indicated a high reliability. The final questionnaire was given to the heads of the private companies and the corresponding government entities which were retrieved after a given period. The second phase was the interview which took place some weeks after the survey depending on the availability of the participants. The interview session took place for an average time of forty five minutes. The interviews were conducted at a pre-arranged time and place convenient to the interviewees. These interviews provided greater opportunity for respondents to articulate their thoughts and feelings. However, the difficulty of scheduling the interviews during the free time of the managers was a major limitation in recruiting more participants during this phase of the study. The interviews were done in Arabic and English and the audio-taped interviews in Arabic were transcribed by an expert after which the Arabic text was translated into English.

The quantitative data was analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistical tools. The descriptive statistics used was the weighted mean and the inferential statistics used involved the t-test and Pearson Product Moment Coefficient of Correlation. For the qualitative portion of the investigation, thematic analysis and narrative analysis were used. Thematic analysis is a method of identifying themes that are evident in the data with minimal attempt at data description and interpretation (Boyatzis, 1998). It has been observed however, that there is no consensus among researchers about what it is and how it is done (Tuckett, 2005). The processes generally employed reading, coding, categorization, and connection. Reading established the relationship of parts to the whole after which an understanding of the parts is gained by understanding the whole. After reading, the text was coded by highlighting the key ideas. The coded responses were later arranged in systematic orders or categories and themes. Similar categories or themes are later organized in a manner that these convey similar or divergent meanings (Grbich, 2007). Narrative analysis, on the other hand, is the process of looking into the social construction of reality revealed in the text (Guba & Lincoln, 2004). To reflect this in the research findings, the text served as the narrative that provided an avenue for the views of the participants to be heard. In this paper, categories were either combined or linked when the meanings were similar..

3. Results and Discussion.

3.1. Readiness to engage in strategic partnerships

The participants from both the public ($M=3.87$) and private ($M=3.53$) sectors perceived that applied TQM was highly contributed in enhancing the readiness of their organizations to participate in strategic partnerships. Almost all of the indicators of applied TQM were rated to be highly contributory except for quality certification ($M=3.12$) and quality tools ($M=3.11$) which the private sector participants perceived uncertain in terms of its contribution.

The test for two independent samples showed $t=0.968$, $p=0.193$ $p > 0.05$, indicating that the observed numerical difference in the means of the respondents from the public and private sectors did not significantly differ. There was no significant difference in the perception of the respondents on the contribution of applied TQM in enhancing the readiness to participate in strategic partnerships. On the whole the findings indicate that regardless of sector, the respondents were unanimous in their perception that applied TQM highly contributed in enhancing the readiness of potential strategic partners in taking their initiative to the next level.

From the interviews, the participants from the services sector affirmed the effectiveness of applied TQM and quality assurance in ensuring their readiness to contribute to the government initiative of upgrading the quality of schools, hospitals, and the utilities system in providing world-class services to the communities of Abu Dhabi. Similarly, the participants from the manufacturing sector confirmed that applied TQM prepared their organizations for strategic partnership with the government by strengthening the general aspects of the management system and their functional areas of specializations. This made them more prepared and competitive in entering into partnerships with the government.

The participants from SMEs revealed that they focused on the business planning as this was a core requirement for partnership. Although there was a portion of the plan on management, it was much more on a general management aspect of business. Since they were all starting with business ideas at that time, they reasoned out that quality assurance were far from their concerns because their immediate need was for funding and other business support. For this reason, their response to questions on quality models, quality tools and quality practices in relation to enhancing their readiness appeared not to have resonated with the participants.

There appeared to be a convergence of views among participants from the government sectors on the significance of quality practices in preparing their entities to partner with the private sector. There was a consensus of views that quality practices ensured the integrity of their management systems which need to be strong as more partnerships are forged with the local private sector. They also mentioned that their organizations have adhered to global quality standards to keep up with the various developments in the field of their partners. More so, the performance of their organizations was monitored and that they needed to apply quality principles in order to be competitive. All of the participants from the government sector expressed that they kept up with the indicators set by government awarding bodies such as SKEA and the Abu Dhabi Excellence Awards for Government Services. On the whole, the participants from the government sector made it clear that applied TQM was not only necessary and essential in their performance but also a vital component in the selection of private partners and in sustaining their partnership with the private sector.

3.2. Sustainability of strategic partnerships

The participants from the public sector ($M=4.41$) generally perceived applied TQM to have very highly contributed in sustaining strategic partnerships compared to the respondents from the private sector ($M=3.53$) who perceived that applied TQM highly contributed in enhancing the sustainability of strategic partnerships.

The t-test for two independent samples showed $t=1.041$, $p=0.168$ $p > 0.05$, indicating that the observed numerical difference in the means of the respondents from the public and private sectors did not significantly differ. There was no significant difference in the perception of the respondents on the contribution of applied TQM in sustaining strategic partnerships. On the whole, the findings indicate that regardless of sector, the respondents were unanimous in their perception that applied TQM highly contributed in sustaining strategic partnerships.

From the testimonies of the participants, it was also evident that they used a menu of tools that were consistent with the nature of their businesses or services which also implied the application of principles and practices of TQM. Foremost among these principles was customer satisfaction, employee involvement, leadership, training of the personnel, and continuous improvement. For the smaller companies that did not focus on quality certifications prior to entering into partnerships with the government sector, they have caught up with the practice as this was not only a means by which they can continuously improve and enhance organizational health but was also a means of keeping up with the high standards set by their government partners.

On the whole, the general message that underpinned the testimonies of the participants from the private sector was that applied TQM was not only an essential requirement in preparing them for partnership with the government sector but was also a sustaining factor for their partnership. This generally supported the quantitative portion of this paper. Specifically, the aspects of applied TQM such as tools, quality assurance certifications, and TQM principles positively mediated the sustainability of the partnership.

3.3. Correlation of readiness and sustainability

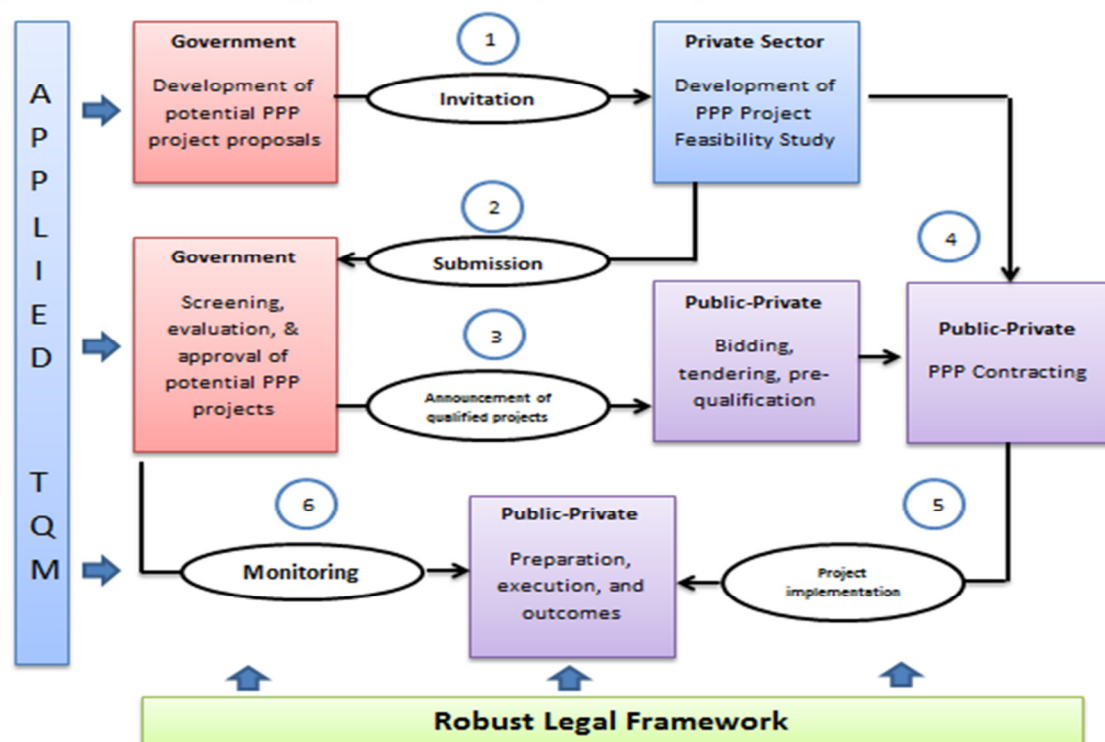
There was a moderate positive correlation, $R=0.6175$, of the readiness of the private sector with their capacity to manage the sustainability of strategic partnerships with the public sector. This means that an increase in private sector readiness brought about by applied TQM will correspondingly increase the sustainability of their partnership with the public sector. The R squared value of 0.3813 indicates that an increase in private sector readiness brought about by applied TQM would likely yield a 38 percent increase in the sustainability of their partnership with the public sector.

On the other hand, there was a moderate positive correlation, $R=0.5941$, of the readiness of the public sector with their capacity to manage the sustainability of strategic partnerships with the private sector. This means that an increase in public sector readiness brought about by applied TQM will correspondingly increase the sustainability of partnership with the private sector. The R squared value of 0.353 indicates that an increase in public sector readiness brought about by applied TQM would likely yield a 35 percent increase in the sustainability of their partnership with the private sector.

On the whole, applied TQM enhanced the over-all readiness of both the private and the public sectors in preparing for strategic partnership and the application of TQM invariably enhanced the sustainability of the partnership. Based on the quantitative and qualitative findings, readiness and sustainability as mediated by applied TQM were not sector specific which meant that both the private and public sectors similarly perceived the relevance of applied TQM in enhancing readiness and sustainability.

Based on the results of the investigation, this paper developed the framework shown in Figure 1 which highlights the potential significance of applied TQM in strategic partnerships of the government and the private sector. The framework hypothetically covers the significant touch points identified by the participants and identifies the key considerations for the application of TQM. Each of the touch points has its own detailed processes which were beyond the coverage of the investigation. Based on the framework, (1) the government agency develops project proposals for potential partnership with the private sector and calls for proposals by way of public invitation; (2) private sector companies with significant partnership ideas develop the corresponding project feasibility studies and submit these to the hosting government agency; (3) the proposals are thoroughly evaluated and screened using the appropriate criteria after which approved proposals are selected. This is followed by the announcement of the qualifying companies; (4) the bidding, tendering, and pre-qualification process follows which selects the best company for partnership. A contract between this company and the government is later entered into which becomes the foundation of the partnership; (5) the private company implements the project; and (6) the performance and outcomes are duly evaluated by the government partner. All of the processes are presumed to be within the ambit of a robust and enabling legal framework.

Figure 1. Framework for Applied TQM in Strategic Partnerships Between the Public and Private Sector



Within the processes described, there are certain key considerations where applied TQM can significantly contribute to.

- Quality certifications of the private sector companies can support their credibility in quality assurance and in providing service quality
- Balanced scorecard can be useful in planning for potential projects on the part of the government and in the preparation of feasibility studies on the part of the private sector
- Benchmarking is an essential consideration in ensuring that private companies bring in the global best practices in the industry
- Business process management helps ensure administrative efficiency on the part of the government and sustains making an organization's workflow more effective, more efficient and more capable of adapting to an ever-changing environment.
- Customer complaints management framework ensures that there is optimum customer services and stakeholder satisfaction based on project implementation and outcomes.
- Customer loyalty/satisfaction measurement ensures that the views of end-users are factored into the operation of the project
- Employee loyalty/engagement measurement ensures the commitment of employees to the project and high morale which that boost their performance
- Enterprise risk management this ensures that risk is properly managed in order to promote project

sustainability

- Kaizen is a philosophy of continuous improvement which should be embraced in the implementation of every project
- Lean Six Sigma ensures that variances are identified and minimized in order to control quality of products and services
- Performance management dashboard ensures easy access to information that are essential in determining performance levels, as well as in planning and decision-making.
- The application of quality principles would also significantly contribute to the sustainability of partnerships.
- Leadership commitment is a necessity in all of the aspects of partnership from beginning to end to ensure support and success of the projects.
- Communication is the binding element vital to the partnership. An integrated communication system using the state of the art IT technology ensures transparency, the smooth flow of information, information security, and access to vital information critical to planning and decision-making
- Quality planning should be the central consideration in planning project proposals, feasibility studies as well as in preparing operational plans for project execution.
- Customer satisfaction should be one of the central rationale for partnership of the government with the private sector.
- Continuous improvement is the key consideration for administrative efficiency, project sustainability, and organizational health of the projects
- Employee engagement and satisfaction should be a central consideration to boost employee performance that contributes to organizational efficiency and effectiveness.
- Quality culture defines the norms and way of life in the company that reflects embracing quality principles by all levels of the organization.
- Teamwork breaks down barriers in project planning and implementation that promoted optimum involvement, engagement, and commitment.
- Training promotes knowledge and technology transfer that contributes to the attainment of the goals of Emiratization and the development of local talents.
- Rewards and recognition promotes ownership and acknowledges best performance and practices which can significantly boost the morale of the workforce.

The results show that the effectiveness of applied TQM was discriminated on the basis of whether these were used to enhance readiness or to promote sustainability. The effectiveness of TQM principles and practices is hence dependent on its utility.

4. Conclusions and Recommendations

4.1. Conclusion

This paper concludes that applied TQM works and its influence in enhancing the readiness of the public and private sectors to enter into partnerships cannot be discounted. As a corollary, applied TQM is essential in promoting the sustainability of partnerships between the public and private sectors. By way of implication, the UAE government can attain greater sustainability through privatization and other strategic partnerships as part of its economic diversification strategy. The UAE government has recently affected by the global recession and financial crisis which compelled the leaders to develop new strategies for future sustainable development of the UAE economy. The government recognizes the unsustainable future of the oil sector that has brought the country so much wealth and is now turning to private sector involvement as a key to sustaining the non-oil industries for the future.

4.2. Recommendations

Based on the findings, this paper recommends the following:

1. There is a need for the enactment of a law that will shape the development of a robust legal framework governing privatization and other public-private partnership in Abu Dhabi.
2. A central committee for privatization needs to be established as part of the government structure in Abu Dhabi that will be responsible for setting the standards for privatization and other strategic partnerships.
3. A framework for privatization and other strategic partnerships needs to be developed that is backstopped by general guidelines, procedures, and requirements contained in a manual in order that potential investors can be properly informed.
4. The government needs to set-up a robust and integrated IT system needed to support privatization and other strategic partnerships.

5. This government needs to pursue collaboration of the strategic alliances formed between the universities, multinational corporations, the UAE Ministry of Education, and the UAE government for Emiratization to be successful in the long-term. The collaboration can help create a continuous global network of knowledge exchange and technology transfer.

6. The government needs to ensure that privatization and other strategic partnerships bring in change management strategies which will help streamline the workplace and upgrade productivity in all divisions of UAE government

7. There is a need to document best practices by establishing a global network of permanent archival data that can be used for accounting, filing, memos, feedback, employee records and as an online communications center for all employees. This will also promote the coordination of all departments to be linked through databases to upgrade overall communication and efficiency.

8. The paper also recommends that the proposed framework be tested empirically by other researchers in order to ascertain its validity.

On the whole, the Abu Dhabi government should continue implementing privatization and other strategic partnerships because it will allow for more competition and better service provision within the public sector for necessities like water, electricity, healthcare, banking, education and telecommunications. Some of the practical recommendations for privatization and sustainable development that the Abu Dhabi government can implement include:

1. Diversify the public sector by adding as many global partnerships as possible.
2. Reduce the overall financial burden on the government by expanding the capabilities of the public sector with global alliances.
3. Upgrade the political relationships between the western world and Arab world by establishing Abu Dhabi as a major business hub.
4. Develop a global reputation as an easy to do business location that will attract international investors, FDI and foreign partnerships to the public and private sectors.
5. Establish Abu Dhabi as a center for major innovation and new technologies research and development hub.
6. Continue to launch new sustainable development strategies and educational awareness programs throughout the UAE to upgrade the society's knowledge about sustainability
7. Integrate appropriate change management strategies into the government public sector during privatization development to increase adaptation to change for all employees.
8. Launch new talent management and continuous learning training programs to enforce Emiratization throughout the public and private sectors.
9. Integrate global corporate training programs with Abu Dhabi programs to ensure Emiratis are properly trained, qualified and skilled for privatization partnership business ventures to ensure future job security.
10. Focus on the development of leadership in the government manager role
11. Integrating government manager leadership into the innovation process
12. Recognizing the significance of privatization in government management
13. Coordinating privatization strategies to allow government managers to streamline overhead costs and upgrade the daily routine throughout the entire organization
14. Ensuring privatization implementation will upgrade the flow of information and communications throughout the value-added global privatization
15. Developing the organizational culture by improving the overall sharing of information and communication throughout the organization
16. Encouraging the generation of innovative new ideas by all employees through continuous learning programs to adapt to efficient methods and processes
17. Adoption of successful innovation methods from multinational corporations
18. Adopting new governmental regulations to adapt to global workplace environment
19. Upgrading government policies to include employee continuous learning and training programs

References

- ADCED. (2008). *Abu Dhabi Vision 2030*. Abu Dhabi: Abu Dhabi Council for Economic Development.
- Akoun, I.(2012). The political economy of SOE privatization and governance reform in the MENA. *ISRN economics*, 2012. p. 9.
- Al-Asaad, H., Al-Mohaisen, A., & Sud, S. (2007). GCC power grid:Transforming the GCC power sector into a major energy trading market. *Oil, Gas, and Energy Law*, www.ogel.org.
- Al Hashimi, A.(2005). Privatization in the UAE. *Khaleej Times*, September 7, 2005
- Aliyu, A., Bello, M., Kasim, R. & Martin, D.(2014). Positivist and non-positivist paradigm in social science research: Conflicting paradigms or perfect partners. *Journal of Management and Sustainability*, 4(3), p.51-

- 63.
- Andres, L., Foster, V., Guasch, J. & Haven, T.(2008). The impact of private sector participation in infrastructure. Washington D.C.: World Bank.
- Beblawi, H. (1990). *The rentier state in the Arab world* In Luciani, G.(ed), *The Arab State*. London: Routledge.
- Bond, P.(2001). Privatization, participation and protest in the restructuring of municipal services: Grounds for opposing World Bank promotion of public-private partnership. [Online] Available at: http://www.thewaterpage.com/ppp_debate1.htm
- Boubakri, N., J. Cosset, and Guedhami,O. (2005)..Liberalization, corporate governance and the performance of privatised firms in developing countries.*Journal of Corporate Finance*, 5(3)p. 1081-1110.
- Boyatzis RE (1998) Transforming Qualitative Information. Sage: Cleveland
- Cameron, R., & Sankaran, S. (2015). *Mixed methods research methods in project management in Parsian,b. & Smit,K. (eds) Methods, Designs and Practices for Research into Project Management*. Aldershot: Gower.
- Creswell, J.(2008). The selection of a research design. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.
- Davidson, C. (2008). *The United Arab Emirates: A study in survival*. Boulder CO: Lynne Rienner.
- Easterby-Smith, M., Thorpe, R. & Lowe, A.(2006). Management research: An introduction. Thousand Oaks: Sage.
- Economy, M. o. (2013). *UAE Annau economic report,2012*. Dubai: Ministry of Economy.
- Gassner, K., Popov, A. & Pushak, N. (2009). *Does private sector participation improve performance in electricity and water distribution?*, New York: TheWorld Bank.
- Government of Abu Dhabi. (2008). *Abu Dhabi Economic Vision 2030*. Abu Dhabi: Government of Abu Dhabi.
- Government of Dubai. (2006). *Dubai Strategic Plan 2015*. Dubai: Government of Dubai, UAE.
- Grbich, C., 2007. Qualitative data analysis: An introduction. UK: Sage.
- Guba, E. & Lincoln, Y. (1994). Competing paradigms in qualitative research. In Denzin,Y.;Lincoln,S. (eds) *Handbook of qualitative research*. Thousand Oaks: SAGE.
- Hensley, R.L. and Dobie, K. (2005), "Assessing readiness for six sigma in a service setting", *Managing Service Quality*, Vol. 15 No. 1, pp. 82-101.
- Karl, T. (1997). *the paradox of plenty:Oil booms and petro states*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Li, W. & Xu, L.,(2004). The impact of privatization and competition in the telecommunications sector around the world. *Journal of Law and Economics*, 30(3), pp. 395-430.
- Megginson , W. (2010). Privatization and Finance. *Annual Review of Financial economics Journal*, 2, 145-174
- Megginson, W. .(2005). *The Financial Economics of Privatization* (First edition). New York: Oxford University Press.
- Megginson, W. L., & Netter, J. M. (2001). From State to Market: A survey of Empirical Studies on Privatization. *Journal of Economic Literature*, 39, 321-389.
- Mertens, D.(2005). Research methods in education and psychology: Integrating diversity with quantitative and qualitative approaches. Thousand Oaks: SAGE.
- NBS. (2010). *Analytical report of economic and social dimensions in the United Arab Emirates*. Abu Dhabi: National Bureau of Statistics.
- Nellis, J.(2012). The international experience with privatization: Its rapid rise, partial fall, and uncertain future. *The School of Public Policy* , 5(3), pp. 1-29.
- Neumann, W. (2003). *Social research methods: Qualitative and quantitative approach*. Allyn and Bacon.
- OECD. (2005). *Ownership structures in MENA countries: listed companies, state-owned, family enterprises and some policy implications*. Retrieved from <http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/26/2/3540210.pdf>
- Omar, F. (1996). Privatization in the GCC countries: the need and the process. *Islamic Economic Studies*, 3(2).
- O'Sullivan, A. (2009). *Reading in the Gulf: Is it time to change*. Al Ain: HTC Ma'rifa.
- Richards, A., & Waterbury, J. (2008). *A political economy of the Middle East*. Boulder CO: Westview.
- Seznec, J. (2011). *The sovereign wealth funds of the Gulf. In The Political Economy of the Gulf, Working Group Summary Report*. Doha,Qatar: Center for International and Regional Studies, Georgetown University School of Foreign Service.
- Silva, D. (1994). *The political economy of windfalls: The Dutch Disease*. St. Louis, MO : Center in Political Economy, Washington University.
- Thawani, S. (2014). *20years of quality milestones mark the UAE's journey to excellence*. Dubai: ASQ MENA.
- Tuckett, A.(2005). Applying thematic analysis theory to practice: A researcher's experience. *Contemporary Nursing*, 4(1)pp. 75-87.
- Zhang, Y., Parker, D. & Kirkpatrick, C.(2008).Electricity sector reform in developing countries: an econometric assessment of the effects of privatization, competition, regulation. *Journal of Regulator Economics*, 33(2), pp. 159-178.