The difference between Private sector and Public Sector Project Management:

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The main purpose of this article was to analyse the difference between Private sector and Public Sector in Project Management. To achieve this, certain objectives were set to prove (or disprove) the notion that there are indeed differences between the two sectors. In pursuit of this study, the article applied quantitative research method. Random sampling was used to extract one hundred target participants. A questionnaire designed in likert scale frame work was employed to generate the survey data. The research findings revealed that bureaucracy delays project completion, and decision-making process in the private sector is quick compared to decision making process in the public sector. The study recommends that both private and public, should make use of Research and Development information of different organizations or institutions to identify and establish issues which would positively influence and improve success of projects they implement. More so, benchmarking should be performed on the identified issues and a good framework for appraisal, monitoring, and evaluation of projects must be developed. Such framework could be used to trace the project during implementation and shows effect of project delays in financial terms.

Key words: Public, Private, Partnership and Project Management

1. Introduction

Project Management has become the contemporary way of executing small, medium and large business ventures globally (Erasmus, Pretorius and Pretorius, 2010). South Africa is no exception and both the public and private sectors have harnessed resources towards this approach. Based on a boom in South African infrastructure and the National Development Act (NDA) it has been evident that there has been massive growth of infrastructural projects in the country which are mostly sourced or initiated by the state (Terry, 2013). This has resulted in competition between the private and public sectors in securing and executing these projects. Post 2012, government started a national programme whereby the public sector initiates projects and private sector executes these projects (National Treasury, 2012). The state initiates a mega project, plans it, calculates the budget and sources a project specialist that will look after the project and ensure that it is executed, with the end result being that project sponsor gets the desired product (Taylor, 2013).
An example of infrastructural projects that were initiated include that were required for South Africa to successfully host the FIFA World cup in 2010, all of which were mega infrastructural projects (National Treasury, 2012). The sponsor, in this instance the state, wanted to ensure that prior to the World Cup the stadium projects, the Gautrain and two power stations (Kusile and Medupi Power Stations) were completed on time as well as being within budget and at the best quality possible (2010) and National Treasury, 2012). The World Cup was initiated and run by the state however financing was largely from tax payers and the private sector. Project execution i.e. infrastructure construction was mainly by the private sector Meredith et al, (2013). Experienced contractors from the private sector were appointed to execute the work within the stipulated time and cost frames (Vermeulen, Pretorius and Kruger, 2012).

In closing both the state and the private sector were involved in executing infrastructural projects associated with, but not only limited to the World Cup (Marnewick, Pretorius and Pretorius 2011).

2. Current Economic Climate in South Africa
South Africa has managed to keep its bright economic status due to prudent and monetary policies while most developing countries have staggered in fiscal crisis in the last decade of the new millennium. This was promoted by the government role in accelerating economic growth, infrastructure development, and increase in social services, which has led to massive reduction in poverty (Agumba, Pretorius and Haupt, 2013).

To achieve this, the government has invested R 642- billion to improve the infrastructure development and an amount of R827-billion is expected to be spent in the coming 3 years (Baldwin, 2013). This will improve exports markets and a total reduction of costs of doing business. The presidential infrastructure coordinating commission is responsible for executing (83 %) of government projects (Aladwani, 2002).

3. Research Objectives
The major core of this research is to prove (or disprove) the notion that there are indeed some significant gaps between the private and public sectors in Project Management. These are two different sectors that operate within the same sphere of work, but with different working conditions, ethics, principle and culture. The differences and/or similarities
between the private and public sectors were highlighted, compared and discussed.

4. Research methodology

The study employed a quantitative research approach in gathering the necessary data (Bakker & Demerouti 2014). The target population considered in this study comprised members of the Project Management Institute (PMI) organization and candidates. To allow for equal and unbiased chance for participation, random sampling was employed to extract one hundred (n=100) target participants. Data was collected by making use of a structured questionnaire designed in a likert scale format. The questionnaire was used mainly for collecting reliable primary data on the differences between project management in public and private sector.

5. Survey Results and Discussion

The article findings revealed that most respondents are project managers and are over the age of 30, majority of which are females who hold university degrees. The research findings also indicate that there is equal representation of respondents for both private and public sector.

Project completion within budget: The research findings as depicted in figure 1 below revealed that most of the projects are completed beyond the budgeted amount with the public sector recorded the highest percentage of 70% while private sector stood at 6%. The remaining 24% of the respondents were indifferent to neither public sector nor private sector do complete their projects within the allocated budget.

Frequency of project schedule modification: About the number of times project schedule modified, the results of the findings show that project schedule has been modified more times in the public sector than in the private sector. This implies that private sector in South Africa is more efficient than the public sector.

Bureaucracy and project execution: Further analysis revealed that bureaucracy has a significant impact on the implementation of the project. A great number of respondents from both sectors
indicate that most of the projects are delayed for two or three months due to bureaucracy and red tape.

Project decision making efficiency: In terms of decision making efficiency, the research results revealed that decision making process in the private sector is much more efficient compared to decision making process in the public sector. Figure 2 below confirms that 42 (84%) respondents out of sample of 50 agreed that decision making is quicker in the private sector while 8 (16%) respondents disagreed confirming that project decisions are executed much more efficiently in the public than the private sector.

Top level support in project management: Furthermore, the results also indicate that 87% of the respondents from both private and public sector were in support of the fact that top management support for projects is essential to ensure successful implementation of the project.

Politics and power management in project implementation: Further analysis also revealed that private sector recognized much more the importance of managing politics and power before implementation of project. Based on figure 3 below, 74% of the respondents from the private sector agreed while 26% disagreed. The public-sector results show that 70% disagreed while 30% agreed that politics and power should be managed before project implementation.

![Decision making efficiency](image)

![Politics and power management in project implementation](image)

Project risk monitoring and assessment: Success of project also depends on the assessment and monitoring of risk. The survey results indicated that most of the organizations in the private sector monitor...
risks on a continuous basis while project risks in public sector are not monitored on a regular basis.

6. Conclusion

This study explored factors positively influencing project implementation success. The accumulation of theoretical study and research evidenced that there exist factors which, when applied during implementation of project, would influence implementation of such a project in a positive way. It is important for organizations both in private and public sector to understand the immense contribution of identified factors to the success of the project.

It is clear from the survey results that all identified issues are very important for project success even though some factors deemed more crucial than others. There is a difference between private sector and public sector leaving the conclusion that private sector goes extra mile in ensuring that project implementation will succeed. In both sectors, it is crucial that those people charged with governance should focus much on creating conducive environment to successful implementation of projects.

7. Recommendations

Through this study, it is recommended that organizations in South Africa, both private and public, should make use of Research and Development information of different organizations or institutions to identify and establish issues which would positively influence and improve success of projects they implement.

The other important thing which ensures successful implementation of projects is to put more emphasis on monitoring and evaluation of projects. More so, benchmarking should be performed on the identified issues and a good framework for appraisal, monitoring, and evaluation of projects must be developed. Such framework could be used to trace the project during implementation and shows effect of project delays in financial terms.

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