

Participants' Power Asymmetry in Public Infrastructure Projects

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Abstract: In spite of all advances in procurement strategies, so far many infrastructures fail meet the terms of their promises. The problem believed to be rooted in project people and process emphasizing on process of decision-making, as well as people's power. A refined process of infrastructure projects is developed to support managers' decisions and assist structuring necessary resourcing (i.e. people, contractors, organisations) in order to end up with better outcome in term of measurable performance (time, cost, quality) as well as stakeholder satisfaction.

Aim

Reflecting on current unsatisfactory rates of success, a refined process is intended to better structure and plan infrastructure projects. Among success factors, decision making, governance and participants' power asymmetry have been identified to be prevailing. A new approach is envisaged to integrate the above success factors into a process for real project decisions.

Research Method

The grounded research method has been chosen as an appropriate conceptual starting point. In a case study approach, the current theories of decision, power and governance were cross-pollinated to emerge and polish the new theory that explains projects behaviour. The theory is then validated by constant comparative study of real project data. In this research, public private partnerships (PPP) were centre of focus due to their unique role of delivering infrastructure.

Expected Outcomes

The findings amplify the need for refined approval regime and governance to manage the participants' power imbalance. The effectiveness of project early decisions at inception, procurement and final investment moreover to team building and selection of private-party are identified as cornerstone of success. The influence of participants' power bases on the decisions is explored and a new theory is established in which empowerment, collaboration and rational decisions are endorsed.

Value

The applicability of research remains for project managers to adopt more effective processes in delivering public infrastructure, who set for better outcome in term of performance measures and stakeholder satisfaction.

