

Foundations of Project Letdown and Neglect in Ghana

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Abstract

Many reasons have been cited for foundation of project letdown in Ghana and Ghanaian government projects in particular. These include socio-political, economic, technological, knowledge, macro- and micro-global, and project management education, among others. The next sub-section discusses this foundation in detail. Ghana's projects have suffered several setbacks such as total abandonment and delays in the past, mainly due to financial difficulties. Groundwater projects, which are the main source of water for rural dwellers, have witnessed delays mainly because of the difficulty in making monthly payments for completed work. Payment delays sometimes result in project abandonment in Ghana, and, in some extreme circumstances, contractors go bankrupt. In some circumstances, the project fails to commence after initial planning. For example, the quest by the Ghanaian government to build 30,000 houses for the security forces (police, military, and customs) to improve the security personnel's living conditions has proven that lack of finance can cause good intentions to come to no avail. The project was initiated and approved by parliament but failed to commence due to the government's inability to secure a loan from the South Korean STX Company. The government's letdown to secure the loan meant that the government had no choice but to abandon the project.

Keywords: Project Letdown and Neglect Project in Ghana

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The third part of the research is to find out from the general public, project management practitioners and contractors what they perceive as the effects of the Ghanaian government's project failure on the key stakeholders of such projects. However, in line with the aims and objectives of this study, effects are restricted to only the negative ones. Therefore, there is a need to review prior studies in this subject area. This will provide justification for the research findings and recommendations.

Many effects of project failure have been cited in management and project management literature; however, a review of the literature indicates that the effects are specific to specific projects and/or specific industries. For instance, research into causes and effects of project failure in Malaysian construction industry by Sambasivan and Soon (2007) identified six (6) main effects. These were: time overrun cost overrun, disputes, arbitration, litigation and total abandonment. The study, which used a questionnaire survey to collect data from clients, consultants and contractors, concluded that there is a direct correlation between causes of project failure and the effects of project failure. That is to say, the effects of the project failure could be traced to specific causes of the project failure.

2.0 PROJECT LETDOWN AND NEGLECT IN GHANA

2.1 Project Management Education in Ghana

Project management knowledge in Ghana is very low even among tertiary institutional lecturers (Moderator's Report, 2007). This can be attributed to the lack of project management as a discipline in the country's curriculum in educational institutions. Until 2006, Ghana had no single tertiary institution offering project management as a course of study. The maiden one started in the Ghana Institute of Public Administration (GIMPA), a private institution which introduced an undergraduate degree in Operations and Project Management. Concerns have been raised by the World Bank and academia in the country about this issue, and the Moderators' Reports in 2007 emphasised it.

A report by the World Bank in 2007 indicated that Ghana had performed poorly in programmes and projects because of a lack of professional managers (World Bank Report, 2007). Prior to this report, the same institution had reported that the Ghana National Insurance Scheme (NHIS) was suffering from administrative lapses because of lack of knowledge on the part of administrators (World Bank Press Release, 2007). Specifically, this press release, as cited by Damoah (2011), stated that Ghana's health

insurance system required skilled labour for the DMHISs and the providers to manage and administer the new health insurance system, yet there was insufficient administrative, managerial, and technical human capacity to handle the scheme. The implementation of the NHIS introduced extra administrative overheads to health facilities. When the NHIC introduced its ICT network platform and the providers start to develop their IT solutions, managers and administrators in the DMHISs and the providers needed technical know-how to handle this increasing pressure, but this knowledge, according to the World Bank, was not adequate in Ghana's healthcare sector.

2.2 Financial Difficulty and Project Management in Ghana

Ghana's projects have suffered several setbacks such as total abandonment and delays in the past, mainly due to financial difficulties. Groundwater projects, which are the main source of water for rural dwellers, have witnessed delays mainly because of the difficulty in making monthly payments for completed work (Frimpong et al., 2003). Payment delays sometimes result in project abandonment in Ghana, and, in some extreme circumstances, contractors go bankrupt (Adams, 2008). In some circumstances, the project fails to commence after initial planning (as Heeks, 2002, 2005, 2006 puts it). For example, the quest by the Ghanaian government to build 30,000 houses for the security forces (police, military, and customs) to improve the security personnel's living conditions has proven that lack of finance can cause good intentions to come to no avail. The project was initiated and approved by parliament but failed to commence due to the government's inability to secure a loan from the South Korean STX Company (Daily Guide, 2012; p.1). The government's setback to secure the loan meant that the government had no choice but to abandon the project.

2.3 Corruption and Project Management in Ghana

Corruption has bedevilled project management practices in Ghana and government projects in particular, and it has become part and parcel of officials undertaking projects in the country (see TI, 2008; Ghanaian Chronicle, 2012). However, this social vice has been defended and justified vehemently by some state officials. They cite among other reasons low salaries, the project not being their personal property, poverty, feeding a habit, gaining of societal status and sharing of the national 'cake'. Even though it is difficult to find a criminal code that defines corruption (Azeem, 2009), corrupt practices such as bribery of local or foreign government officials and private companies, facilitation of payments, fraud, embezzlement, theft, collusion, and rent-seeking exist in the country. A renowned Ghanaian political scientist, Gyimah-Boadi, posits that corruption is pervasive and has to do with motive and opportunity (Gyimah-Boadi, 2002). According to Gyimah-Boadi, the opportunity for corruption normally occurs when systems and institutions of accountability are weak – lack checks and balances – and when moral decency is very low among officials. This social phenomenon fosters an anti-democratic environment which creates uncertainty, unpredictability and declining moral values which disrespect constitutional institutions and authority (Gyimah-Boadi, 2002; Mensah et al., 2003).

A study conducted by Transparent International (TI) between 1999 and 2008 points out that Ghana is far behind in the fight against corruption (TI, 2008). The scores range from 10-0, with 10 being the countries with least corruption and 0 being the most corrupt; Ghana has always been in the lower brackets (3.3-3.9). In 2007, Ghana had a Corruption Performance Index (CPI) score of 3.7, thereby positioning the country 69th out of 180 of the world's countries that were studied (TI, 2008). According to the report, only countries with an index of 5 and above do not have a serious corruption problem. Consistent with the definition offered by the World Bank (World Bank, 2013), the definition of corruption in the study was an abuse of public office for private gain, and measured the degree to which corruption is perceived to exist among a country's public officials and politicians.

Transparency International's research findings indicate that the state of corruption in Ghana is serious. Nevertheless, this definition has been criticised for leaving the impression that it is only people who occupy public office who are capable of abusing their office or power (Tax Justice Network (TJN), 2008). TJN argues that the World Bank and TI description of corruption does not provide room for corrupt practices such as market rigging, insider trading, tax dodging, non-disclosure of conflicts of interest, and illicit party funding (Azeem, 2009). Even though the TI study's findings give a picture of the state of

corruption in the country, if TJN's criticism and definition is taken into consideration, the state of the phenomenon could even be worse.

Internal reports on corruption in the country show similar findings to that of the TI (2008) report. For example, a report in 2007 by the Public Accounts Committee on the Auditor-General's report in 2006 on Public Accounts submitted to Parliament and the follow-up public hearings states that there is a serious corruption problem among public officials. The same report shows a similar trend in the 2010/2011 report published in 2012 (Ghanaian Chronicle, 2012). The 2013 one is not different. A survey on corruption in Ghana conducted by the Ghana Integrity Initiative (GII) and Ghana Center for Democratic Development (CDD) also shows a similar problem.

These corrupt practices in Ghana affect project management and project performance. If this happens, cost escalation becomes inevitable. However, efforts have been made over the years to curb the phenomenon. The Ghanaian government has made significant attempts to curb corrupt practices in the country by enacting laws and setting up independent bodies and agencies to address the phenomenon (Amponsah, 2010). Notable among them are the Ghana Public Procurement Act, the Financial Administration Act and its Regulations, the Assets Declaration Act, the Whistleblower Act, the Anti-Money Laundering Act, the Public Officers Liability Act, the Serious Fraud Office (SFO) and the CHRAJ, Ghana Integrity Initiative (GII). Even though these efforts have helped to expose corruption (Short, 2010), recent reports (Meet the Press, 2009; Takyi-Boadu, 2011; Ghanaian Chronicle, 2012) indicate that the phenomenon still exists in the country and in government projects in particular.

2.4 Ethical Issues in Project Management Practices in Ghana

Closely related to corruption are ethical issues in the management of projects in Ghana. Public officials have indulged themselves in practices that raise ethical issues over the years in execution of government projects. Ethical issues in project management practices in Ghana are not perceived to be as serious as portrayed by Heidman et al. (2005). Notable among them in recent years is when the late President, Professor Evans Attah-Mills, on President's Question and Answer Time (Meet the Press) stated that it was normal for a Minister of State to travel for an official government assignment with his girlfriend and that "it is not the first time it has happened" (Meet the Press, 2009).

There have been instances where a state official chairs a government project, and becomes the sole supplier of materials for the project at a rate which is above the market rate for the same project (see Takyi-Boadu, 2011; Ghanaweb, 2011; Ghanaian Chronicle, 2012). Additionally, in some circumstances, government officials do not pay contractors on time, which leads contractors to go bankrupt, hence, causing their business to collapse (Adams, 2008).

2.5 Socio-cultural factors and Project Management in Ghana

Ghana is a country with a rich culture which is well respected by its citizens, especially with regard to its religious values. As indicated in chapter one, religious values are well adhered to by Ghanaians. Sometimes when projects do not go as expected, pastors and other religious leaders are called upon to pray for the project. Communication in Ghana is mostly indirect and people often resort to silence as a means of getting their points across. The use of proverbs, wise sayings, and analogies is the most common practice, and people considered to be wise are those who are often quiet and able to express themselves in these proverbs and adages. It can therefore be argued that these cultural traits and practices can influence project management and performance in the country. For instance, respect for elders as against good management practices hinders good project performance.

Even though reported cases of project letdown in Ghana are many, and a lot of reasons have been cited for such failure, a review of the literature shows that journal articles devoted to the subject matter are rare. For instance, the work of Ayee (2000) indicates that there had not been any empirical evidence to back up this claim for project letdown and, to the best of my knowledge, there has been only one journal article and one thesis since, and these are Frimpong et al. (2003) and Amponsah (2010) respectively. However, the former study is full of flaws and the latter is restricted to only three sectors of the economy – construction, banking and agriculture – and this call for further debate. The latter for instance, which investigates foundation of schedule delay and cost overrun of groundwater projects in Ghana, indicated that, between 1970 and 1999, 33 out of 47 projects were delayed whilst 38 overran, indicating a 75%

schedule and cost deviation with only 25% meeting the planned and budgeted cost. Further, the study pointed out that there are 26 reasons why projects fail. Out of these foundation, five (5) were seen by contractors, owners, and consultants (respondents) as the most important factors. These were: agents having difficulty in making the monthly payments, poor contractor management, material procurement, poor technical performances, and escalation of material prices.

Although this study gives a picture of the state of project letdown in the construction industry, the rigorousness of the study is questionable and, as such, it might not show the true scale of the situation. First and foremost, the choice of the sample and the method used in collecting the data is questionable. Using random sampling without picking a specific number such as the 3rd, 4th, 6th, 10th of the population brings the reliability of the study into question. Moreover, the study failed to indicate the number of respondents from both the public and private sectors the study set out to cover. Using random sampling, and without showing the number of representatives from each sector, implies that it is possible for the respondents to come from only one sector (private or public) and therefore the study can be seen as unrepresentative of both sectors. In addition, the study failed to indicate the level of experience of the respondents in dealing with groundwater construction and project management in general; therefore, the respondents' opinions cannot be relied upon. It is possible that all the respondents might be junior or newly recruited employees who might not have adequate experience to provide information that portrays the true picture of the subject matter being studied. Moreover, the research was conducted in the construction industry, which therefore makes it industry-specific and unable to reflect the other industries in the country.

Even though much has been researched about foundation of project failure, to date, project management literature can be divided into three groups. Group one takes a generic view of project letdown (Frimpong et al., 2003; Kaliba et al., 2009; Ahsan & Gunawan, 2010; Liu et al., 2011; Amid et al., 2012). The second group focuses on private sector projects (Mangione, 2003; Consoli, 2006; Mairea & Collettere, 2011). The last group focuses on government or public sector projects; however, this focuses exclusively on single case(s) projects (Kumar & Best, 2007; Maubeta et al., 2008; Fabian & Amir, 2011; Patanakul, 2014). This makes the research industry-specific by default and this therefore affects generalisability.

Moreover, different respondents have different perceptions about those projects that are of high importance and vice-versa (Kometa et al., 1994; Frimpong et al., 2003; Amponsah, 2010). Thus, different categories of study respondents differ in their perceptions of the factors that influence projectletdown(Frimpong, 2003; Sambasivan & Soon, 2007). This research bridges this gap by taking a holistic view of government or public sector project failure. Secondly, in relation to Ghana, this will provide empirical evidence to support reported claims of projectletdownin government projects. Thirdly, this study contributes to the academic field of projectletdownin Ghana specifically and in developing countries in general.

The studies also show that the foundation are not the same and that they have relative importance (Frimpong et al., 2003; Ngacho & Das, 2014). Thus, the various foundation of projectletdowndo not have the same influence in causing projects to fail. In other words, each cause has a different weight when it comes to its ability to influence (cause) project failure. In the case of Frimpong et al.'s (2003) research, out of the 26 reasons that were found to account for groundwater projects' failure, five (5) were seen by contractors, owners, and consultants (respondents) as the most important factors. They were: agents having difficulty in making the monthly payments, poor contractor management, material procurement, poor technical performances, and escalation of material prices. In the case of Ngacho and Das (2014), out of the six KPIs – time, cost, quality, safety, site disputes and environmental impact – time was the most influential (important), followed by cost, site disputes, environmental impact, quality performance and lastly safety. Therefore, the question to answer in this regard is: Which of these factors are more important in causing the Ghanaian government's project failure?

3.0 OTHER THEORIES CONSIDERED

3.1 Resource Dependency Theory

The first theory that was considered for this study is the Resource Dependency Theory (RDT). RDT, which was propounded by Pfeffer and Salackcik in 1978, holds the view that resources external to

organisations affect their behaviour, and as such the activities of an organisation are influenced by external environmental forces (Pfeffer & Salackcik, 1978). The fundamental assumptions underlying the RDT theory are that: organisations depend on resources and these resources come from sources external to the organisation (Hillman et al., 2009); these external environments consist of other organisations and therefore, the resources that an organisation needs are often in the hands of other organisations; organisations therefore depend on each other. As a result, those who possess resources have power; thus, the basis of power is resources. Therefore, power and resources are directly linked. These resources include: labour, capital, raw material, and others.

In project management, resources are very crucial for project implementation – as studies (Krigsman, 2006; Perkins, 2006; Teigland & Lindqvist, 2007; Sweis et al., 2008; Ruuska & Teigland, 2009) show that, without resources or enough of them, projects are bound to fail. This means that the project management's ability to procure the right resources is very crucial for the project's performance. In developing countries, reliance on external sources of resources (especially funding) for developmental projects is very high (see Fabian & Amir, 2011; World Bank, 2012; Ghana Budget, 2012, 2015), and as such the need for governments and government agencies and/or performing organisations to develop skills necessary to win support from external donors is very crucial for project management.

Ghana's government relies heavily on the external environment (international organisations and governments, donor agencies and NGOs) for resources for project implementation.

As stated in chapter one and in a previous section in this chapter, most developmental projects are funded by the International Monetary Fund (IMF), World Bank and other donor agencies. These external bodies control these projects directly or indirectly, depending on the agreement. They do this by setting up rules and regulations for the implementation of the project (see World Bank project life cycle for Ghana, 2012). Sometimes they set rigid conditionality that even affects the citizens of the country. Typical examples are the freezing of public sector employment by the IMF in Ghana in 2009 (GNA, 2009) and the on-going IMF bailout of Ghana (IMF, 2015). Further, in 2012, the UK Prime Minister, Mr David Cameron, issued a warning that if the Ghanaian government did not legalise gay/lesbian marriage, the UK would not give aid to the country again (GNA, 2012; Daily Guide, 2012; Ghanaweb, 2012). Many projects in Ghana have failed because donors or foreign partners have withdrawn their resources from them (Imani, 2010; Ghanaweb, 2012).

The literature indicates that Ghana's government projects depend greatly on external resources for their implementation. However, this study does not use this theory, because it only captures the resources part of this study and therefore it is not looking at the holistic view of the subject matter being investigated. Moreover, there are other components (such as stakeholders, and planning among others) of the research which are not captured. In addition, the research is more on the extent of project failure, causes of project failure and its subsequent effects on key stakeholders. Therefore, the research is more focused on stakeholders – the reasons (causes) for the failure of Ghanaian government projects are more related to the stakeholders.

3.2 Resource-Based View Theory

The next theory considered is Resource-Based View (RBV) Theory. RBV is closely related to RDT. RBV is a strategic management theory that is widely used by managers in project management (Almarrim & Gardiner, 2014). It argues that resources are rare; however, they are the main drivers of competitive advantage, especially in project management capabilities (Almarrim & Gardiner, 2014). RBV argues further that firms have a competitive advantage over other firms and this is dependent upon the resources that those firms have, which are rare, inimitable and non-sustainable, and as such ability to have these can influence a firm's competitive advantage (Wu, 2010; Killen et al., 2012; Almarrim & Gardiner, 2014; Ghapanchi et al., 2014). Thus, competitive advantage and firm performance are strongly influenced by the firm's resources: there is a strong link between resources and a firm's performance and competitive advantage (Ghapanchi et al., 2014). In other words, resources that are available to firms are scarce, especially a firm's resources in the form of capabilities, and as such the ability to have sustained resources and capabilities gives the firm a competitive advantage and good performance. In a nutshell, RBV holds the view that resources are inevitable if a firm wants to have a competitive advantage or good performance.

In project management, performing organisations develop certain capabilities (human resources) which are difficult to imitate and this is directly associated with performance; this gives them competitive advantage (Almarrim & Gardiner, 2014). These resources are both tangible and intangible (Killen et al., 2012; Almarrim & Gardiner, 2014).

This shows that project success is dependent largely on resources, which indicates that resources are valuable to firms (Hulland et al., 2007). However, this theory is not used in this study because, like the Resource Dependency Theory, it concentrates on resources and focuses slightly on the knowledge and/or skills of project management. Nevertheless, there are other components (such as stakeholders and planning among others) of the research which are not captured.

Moreover, the research is more on the causes of project failure and its subsequent effects on key stakeholders. Therefore, the research is more focused on stakeholders – the reasons (causes) for the failure of Ghanaian government projects are more related to the stakeholders.

3.3 Knowledge Management Theory

Knowledge Management Theory was also considered for this research; however, it was not sufficient to capture the necessary elements in the research. Like the RBV, organisational knowledge serves as a source of sustainable competitive advantage (Birasnav, 2013). In other words, knowledge is a prelude to competitive advantage. In essence, a firm's management of knowledge is directly related to its performance, and as such firms that are able to manage knowledge correctly have the capability to sustain competitive advantage (Birasnav, 2013). Due to the valuable nature of knowledge and the fact that it resides in the brains of human beings, Birasnav advocates that firms must "develop strategies to create organisational knowledge through leveraging employees' knowledge" (Birasnav, 2013, p.1). Thus, making conscious efforts to manage knowledge enhances a firm's ability to innovate and/or develop new products to survive in the turbulent competitive marketplace (Birasnav, 2013).

This knowledge can be classified into two parts – explicit and tacit knowledge (Parent et al., 2014). "Explicit knowledge is more easily articulated, written or codified, tacit knowledge is rather inarticulate, developed with experience, and deepened through problem solving activities" (Parent et al., 2014, p.2). On the other hand, tacit knowledge is understood as particularly valuable due to its nature and the degree to which it is complex, (non)codifiable, (non)teachable, system dependent, and results in observable products (Zander & Kogut, 1995). However, Parent et al. (2014) associate the application of the two types of knowledge with both information and knowledge.

3.4 Corporate Social Responsibility

Another theory that was considered is Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). Many definitions and meanings have been provided by different authors; however, the theme that runs through CSR is that organisations take responsibility for the impact that their activities have on their customers, employees, communities and the environment in which they operate (Russell, 2008). In other words, CSR has to do with the voluntary responsibility of an organisation towards its stakeholder(s). However, recent developments by pressure groups and/or governments over the world have made CSR go beyond the traditional understanding of the concept. Moreover, in practice, CSR means something different to corporate managers (Dahlsrud, 2008). A review of 37 definitions of CSR by Dahlsrud (2008), for instance, shows that there are five main dimensions to CSR: stakeholder, social, economic, voluntariness and environmental dimensions.

In project management and in the Ghanaian government's projects in particular, CSR can be approached from all three dimensions provided by Dahlsrud (2008). From the stakeholder perspective, Ghanaian government projects have a strong stakeholder base. In most cases, they are carried out because of foreign influence and donor or funding agencies. Typical examples have been provided in chapter one and previous sections of this chapter. Socially, it is the social responsibility of the Ghanaian government and performing organisations of Ghanaian government projects to provide help and support to local areas where projects are carried out. This provides the social well-being of citizens. Economically, it is the responsibility of the government to implement projects to improve the economic life of the citizens as well as the country as a whole. Voluntarily, it can be argued that the government is obliged by the constitution to implement projects; however, this can be viewed from two different perspectives: one, the

donor perspective – this is a situation where donors volunteer to fund projects to enhance the life of the Ghanaian populace; and two, the performing organisation perspective – a situation whereby organisations performing government projects voluntarily provide support to locals in the form of infrastructures, funding for schools, among other things.

The environmental dimension is very crucial in most Ghanaian government projects (see World Bank, 2013). Most projects carried out in developing countries have a very significant effects on locals (Campbell, 2012; Cash, 2012), and the case of Ghana is not different. Projects in Ghana often have environmental hazards and as such it has become very important for the government to ensure that projects, carried out by both public and private organisations, provide the necessary support to the immediate environment in which they operate (Amasa, 1975; Obiri et al., 2006).

However, this theory was not used because it does not capture all the themes in the study. For instance, it does not capture resources, communications, knowledge or skills, among others.

3.5 Square Root Framework

This study is supported by the Square Root Framework. In an attempt to define what should constitute project failure, Atkinson (1999) provides a framework called The Square Route Framework. According to the framework, project failure should go beyond the triangle stage. Atkinson (1999) contends that it is not sufficient to judge projects' performance at the 'iron triangle' phase. Like De Lone et al. (1992), Meyer (1994), and Toor and Ogunlana (2010), he posits that project success/failure should go beyond the time, cost, and requirement phase to include the post-delivery phase to look at the product phase. In view of this, Atkinson (1999) adds three more ways in which projects should be assessed. This framework uses the Information System (IS) as an example and argues that, apart from the 'iron triangle', project should be assessed on the Information System, benefits to organisations, and benefits to the stakeholder community. The square root framework further states that a successful IS project is one that IS has maintainability, reliability, validity, and quality usage.

The benefits to an organisation are provided by an IS system that improves efficiency and effectiveness, increases profitability, meets strategic goals, reduces waste, and organisational-learning. The benefits to the stakeholder community include: satisfied users, positive social and environmental impact, personal development, professional learning, contractors' profits, capital suppliers, content project team, and economic impact on the surrounding community. The diagram below throws more light on the framework.

Atkinson's (2019) Square Route Framework is comprehensive and all-encompassing; and therefore, the square root framework is adapted for this study. Thus, this study adapts the framework by replacing the IS and benefits to organisation with sector and national development respectively.

4.0 CRITIQUE/ RESEARCH GAP ANALYSIS

In other to arrive at our research gap, criticism was based on only literature works related to construction projects even though some few works had one or two factors that could be found in construction related projects. Omran, et al. (2012) did a study on evaluation of factors for success of construction projects in Wadi Alhaya, Libya using questionnaire survey to elicit information from 44 respondents. The findings from the study after using relative importance index revealed that ten (10) factors were critical to the realization of success of construction projects.

They include; contractor's experience, project manager's leadership skills, labour productivity, quality relationship between team members, shortage of materials etc. Yong and Mustaffa (2012) attempted to study the principal factors that are critical to the success of construction projects in Malaysia. Using a questionnaire as a means of data collection and mean score analysis, 15 key factors were identified as a means of delivering construction projects to fruition from a response of about 45 questionnaires.

The factors include; financial capability of the client, control of contractor's work, consultant's competence, consultant's ability to solve problems, etc. Saqib, et al (2008) in their study on assessment of factors critical for construction project's success in Pakistan, identified ten (10) factors as key to successful construction projects.

The study adopted a survey method using questionnaires, while criticality score and index were used to analyse the results. The findings from the study include; decision making effectiveness, project

manager's experience, contractor's cash flow, contractor's experience, and timely decision by client amongst others. Baccarini and Collins (2003) studied factors critical to the success of projects in Australia. The study adopted a survey method using questionnaire to elicit responses from one hundred and fifty (150) respondents. Descriptive statistics viz frequency distribution were used to analyze the data. The findings revealed that project's understanding, competent project team, communication, realistic schedule and cost estimates as well as adequate project control seems to be key drivers to successful projects. Ogwueleka, (2011) did a study on critical factors of success influencing project performance in Nigeria.

Five (5) factors were identified as key drivers. The study adopted the survey method where 188 questionnaires were distributed to the respondents in the four regions of Nigeria. Frequency, severity and importance index were used to analyze the results from the study. The findings revealed objective management, management of design, technical factors, top management's support and risk management as key drivers to success. Ejaz, et al.(2013) in their study on assessment of most critical success factors for mega construction projects in Pakistan, identified five (5) factors as key drivers for the success of construction projects. Survey method with the aid of questionnaires was used to elicit responses from professionals in the industry. Descriptive statistics viz, mean score ranks were used to analyze the results.

The findings from the study include; planning efforts and scheduling, adequate funding, ability of the project manager to decision, adequate planning and specification, timely decision making by client. Poon et al. (2001) did a study on the identification of success factors in the construction process using literature review in arriving at their findings. The findings from the study include; clearly defined project objectives, scope of the project, the project manager, project team, planning, control, appropriate size of work package, communication and information management, top management support as well as environmental health and safety.

A cursory look at some of the literature below would assist us in arriving at our research gap properly. In Poon et al (2001), their work seem to be too theoretical as literature review was solely used to arrive at their findings without any further empirical analysis to buttress their findings. This seems inadequate. Omran et al (2012) used a total of forty-four (44) respondents to arrive at their findings in Libya, this is also not adequate given the entire population of Libya.

Saqib et al (2008) in their work did not state the numbers of questionnaires used in eliciting responses from their respondents, this is unacceptable in a research work of that magnitude. In Ogwueleka, (2011), the study was carried out in Nigeria from the four (4) regions; viz south, east, north and west using questionnaires to elicit information from one hundred and eighty-eight (188). These also seem to be misleading given the population of Nigeria. Ejaz, et al. (2013) in their study also did not mention the number of questionnaires used, this also misleading and inadequate. In this study, the research was centered on construction projects within Imo, Abia and Rivers States of Nigeria. A total of two hundred and fifty-three (253) respondents with particular reference to the public sector were consulted for the study.

5.0 RESULT DISCUSSION

This section seeks to find out the extent of project failure in Ghanaian government projects using different project success/failure criteria: time, cost and deliverables; contribution to the sector in which the project is implemented; stakeholder satisfaction; and national development. Thus, the extent of project failure in Ghanaian government projects is found using an adapted square root framework proposed by Atkinson (1999). In relation to the above criteria, all respondents agreed that Ghanaian government projects fail; however, the extent of failure differs from criterion to criterion. Moreover, in the statistical analysis, the overall rankings, as shown in Table 11 in Chapter 5 showed that the worst criterion is meeting the set time, which is followed by cost, deliverables, stakeholder satisfaction, national development and sector contribution respectively. The next sub-section discusses in detail the extent of failure in these failure criteria.

1. Time

All the respondents were in agreement that Ghanaian government projects do not meet their projected timescales and that they have witnessed a lot of time overlap. Thus, rarely do Ghanaian government projects achieve their anticipated time duration. Some rated time duration failure at 90% whilst others rated it at 50%. This suggests that there is no consensus on the extent of failure in terms of not meeting the stipulated time duration. In the statistical analysis, time was ranked as the number one criterion in causes of Ghanaian government project failure. This finding is in agreement with earlier researchers such as Sambasivan and Soon (2007), Sweis et al. (2008), Kaliba et al. (2009), Ahsan and Gunawan (2010), Kaliba et al. (2009) and Liu et al. (2011), which have concluded that schedule deviation is common in project management in developing countries. However, these previous studies were conducted in specific industries and/or specific projects (cases), whilst this study looks at government projects in general.

2. Cost

In relation to cost, all respondents agreed that there is deviation in most government projects and the deviation is mostly cost escalation. As with time, most of the respondents were reluctant to rate cost in terms of percentage; however, they perceived that Ghanaian government projects hardly ever meet this success/failure criterion. Nonetheless, then it must be 'at only 35% failure'. If that's not what you mean, then 'Some respondents rated it at 35% failure. This was ranked number five, as shown in Table 11 – thus, it is the second worst performing criterion in Ghanaian government project failure.

This finding supports a prior study conducted by Cheng (2014) into construction projects, which asserted that cost overrun is a common problem in the industry. Further, Kaliba et al. (2009), Ahsan and Gunawan (2010), and Aziz (2013) have all found cost deviation in projects in developing countries. Similarly, Pinto (2014) has asserted that cost deviation in project management has become a norm in organisations. Based on these prior studies' findings, it can be said that this finding is not surprising. The difference between prior studies and this research is that they were conducted only in a specific industry whilst this study is looking at government projects in general, and therefore this finding can be applied to different industries within the government sector. Moreover, cost escalation can be viewed from a government perspective from the findings of this research. In other words, this research finding provides a unique dimension to the project management literature thus, from a government projects perspective.

3. Deliverables

It was found that some Ghanaian government projects do not meet deliverables or requirements. This problem was ranked fourth. The study revealed that shoddy work is often produced in some circumstances, especially in projects that are directly awarded by Ghanaian government officials. Thus, the quantity and quality of the deliverables are sometimes compromised due to corruption or failure to follow the right procedure. It was found that, due to lack of supervision by government consultants and regulatory bodies such as quality control officers, hence, contractors end up using the wrong products when carrying out projects. The study revealed that this is often found in the construction sector, where the performing organisations have to take samples of their materials for testing, but they often fail to do so. Further, the study found that consultants are unable to supervise and monitor project standardisation and this result in substandard work.

4. Stakeholder satisfaction

In relation to stakeholder satisfaction or benefits to the stakeholder, all respondents perceived that Ghanaian government projects partly meet stakeholders' satisfaction and partly do not; and this was ranked third by the questionnaire participants. The consensus was that some of the projects benefited the stakeholders whilst others did not. Further, the study revealed that the satisfaction level ranges from 30-70%. The interviewees cited implementing projects at the wrong places or where they are not needed. They further perceived that sometimes the deliverables are sub-standard, and therefore they are unable to be used and so people become dissatisfied with the products of such projects. In addition, lack of community involvement was cited as a factor, as a result of projects being 'dumped' on them; that is, there

is a lack of feasibility studies by political leaders or government officials, as analysed in the previous chapter.

This finding confirms Ahonen and Savolainen's (2010) study, which concluded that, in one project, some stakeholders might be satisfied whilst others might not – depending on who is measuring satisfaction and the criteria being used to measure the project's performance. Even though Ahonen and Savolainen's research studied ID projects, there is some degree of similarity with this study, as both are related to government projects; Ahonen and Savolainen (2010) concentrated on specific government projects whilst this study focuses on government projects in general. Further, both studies are in developing countries. Similarly, Lyytinen and Hirschheim (1988), Agarwal and Rathod (2006), Procaccino and Verner (2006), Ika (2009) and Carvalho (2014) have all concluded that different stakeholders might have different opinions on the success and/or failure of a project. Therefore, this finding is not surprising, as prior studies have proven that stakeholders often do not agree on their level of satisfaction.

5. National development

Most of the respondents did not talk much about this topic. This was because, once they had contributed to the discussion of the respective sectors, as discussed in sub-section 6.2.6; they had automatically contributed to national development. For example, some interviewees argued that, once the projects have been completed, then they have contributed to the development of the country. It was found that about 70% of Ghanaian government projects contribute to national development, leaving 30% as non-contributory – this is due to the irrelevance of such projects. Further, it was revealed that the reason for this irrelevance is directly linked to politics. As analysed in Chapter 5, most politicians make campaign promises and then they have to fulfil such promises, even if the projects to which they relate are not needed for national development.

6. Sector contribution

In terms of sector contribution, the response was relatively positive. This was ranked first by respondents. The respondents agreed that Ghanaian government projects often contribute to the sector in which they are implemented. It was found that this is the case because that is the main reason why they are implemented. The only negative issue was that, sometimes, the projects are not needed or they are not implemented where

5.0 CONCLUSION

The first objective of this research was to find out the extent of failure in Ghanaian government projects using different failure criteria. As a result, an adapted Square Root Framework proposed by (Atkinson, 1999) (time; cost; deliverables; contribution to sector where projects are implemented; contribution to national development; and stakeholders' satisfaction) was used to investigate this objective.

The findings showed that all the three categories of the study's participants (contractors, PMP and general public) agreed that Ghanaian government projects fail on all six criteria; however, the extent of failure differs from criterion to criterion. They agreed that the worst performing criterion is meeting the projected time, followed by cost, deliverables, stakeholders' satisfaction, contribution to national development and contribution to the sector where the project is implemented respectively.

This shows that the criteria in which Ghanaian government projects fail most are within the iron triangle (time, cost and deliverables) (Atkinson, 1999). This is followed by failures to provide the expected benefits of the project's product. Some of the findings are supported by the literature whilst others are not. For instance, prior literature supports the various failure criteria and the extent of failure within each criterion (KPMG, 2013), but has not empirically compared these failure criteria within a study.

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