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An Evaluation Analysis on Public-Private Partnership of Road Development by the State of Virginia

Cavine Chavi-Ann Phillips
Walden University

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Cavine Chavi-Ann Phillips

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Walden University
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Abstract

An Evaluation Analysis on Public-Private Partnership of Road Development by the State
of Virginia

by

Cavine Chavi-Ann Phillips

MPA, Florida Atlantic University, 2015

BA, Florida International University, 2011

Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Public Administration and Policy

Walden University

April 2021

Abstract

The unremitting nature of road infrastructural development and the strain of internal budgetary issues have pushed many governmental agencies to seek the non-traditional procurement methods of a public-private partnership to satisfy their ongoing needs. Researchers have examined many regions that have used this non-traditional procurement type of public-private partnership to meet their infrastructural needs while facing budgetary issues. I reviewed the state of Virginia's usage of this non-traditional procurement method as an alternative method to traditional procurement to foster their road infrastructural developmental needs. The state of Virginia has used Public-private partnerships to bridge the current gap of the state's lack of resources to sustain their infrastructural needs over a prolonged timeframe. This study addressed how the state of Virginia used factors of accountability, risk management, and policy to develop and foster public-private partnership projects for road development. These regions' public-private partnership policies were examined to explore the impact the policies may have on the growth of public-private partnerships in the area. As a result of the small sample size from the states of Virginia, the District of Columbia, and Maryland were incorporated into the sample size. The research concluded stakeholders employed factors of accountability, risk management, and policy in public-private partnership for road development to foster a strategic framework within their regions. The findings promote positive social change by being consistent in supporting that policy and organizational regulations often nurtures the other two factors of accountability and risk management.

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Dedication

I would like to dedicate this dissertation to my late maternal grandparents Emmanuel and Ivy Boreland, who were intricate in laying the foundation for me to be become a resilient individual; this is the most powerful tool they could equip me with for the doctoral journey. To my significant other, Riccardo White, whose unrelenting support throughout this process gave me the energy to continue and believe in me even when I did not believe in myself. To my mother, Genevieve Boreland, my cousin, Conroy Williams, and aunts, Marjorie Allen and Joan Morris, who were my cheering squad, and always providing support and comfort. To my mother-in-Law, Vinette Wilson, whose encouraging words always came at the right moment. To my beautiful daughter, Amia White, you were the anchor who forced me to finish this journey, and I hope one day you will use my perseverance as a tool to foster your future educational development.

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My mother, late maternal grandparents, and cousin are my foundation of strength and pride. Without them, I would never be able to strive for my ultimate dream of obtaining my doctoral degree. To my friend Jamel Marshall, who allowed himself to be my sounding board to ensure the information I have is in a digestible format. Words are never enough to express my depth of gratitude to you all. I would like to thank my significant other and daughter; without their understanding, support, encouragement, and love I would not have been able to reach this finish line and achieve my doctoral degree. Thank you, Lord, for equipping me with the right persons in my life to help me endure this journey.

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Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

Public-private partnerships are a social phenomenon that have gained notoriety over the last couple of decades within the public sector. Many governments have used these partnership types in the domestic and international arena for varying reasons, some of which include but are not limited to the timeliness of service, lack of financial resources, and readily available subject matter experts (SMEs) to provide quality control services and goods to the public on their behalf (Argaw et al., 2016). The public sector has viewed public-private partnerships as one of the most viable solutions to their inept budget over the years (Wegrzyn et al., 2019). Although this might be the case, many public entities are fearful of embarking on such journeys because of the high-risk factors that are often associated with these projects (Alonzi, 2017). With this apprehension in mind, public's entity's use of the nontraditional procurement method of public-private partnership to satisfy their needs have created a niche for these public entities to ensure they are satisfying their needs without compromising their inherent duties of caring for the general public.

Burke and Demirag (2017) explored Ireland's use of the strategic method of risk transfer to the stakeholders of the private entity in their use of a public-private partnership for road development. They highlighted that this method was significant in fostering the needs of the general public. Their discussion supported the notion that with careful planning, governmental entities can maximize the outputs as well as shift the weight of the risks and responsibilities they bear in these project types to meet their societal needs (Burke & Demirag, 2017).

The lack of a standardized definition of what constitutes a public-private partnership has placed a slight hurdle on how to evaluate these existing projects effectively. Thus, in this study, I used Alonzi's (2017) definition of a public-private partnership. A public-private partnership is a contractual agreement between a public and private entity that allows the private entity to provide goods and services on behalf of the public entity. The contractual agreement can also produce the development of public resources with the final aim of turning the commodity over to the public entity after a prescribed timeframe. Both parties determine the length of these contracts by examining factors of the contract such as the commodity, cost, delivery, and any other relevant socioeconomic factors pertinent to the development of the contract (Gan et al., 2018). Private companies always look for an equitable trade before entering into these types of agreement; however, what might be equitable in their assessment may become inequitable within the assessment of the public entity. The problem is that the state of Virginia does not have the finances to fund their road maintenance projects; as a result, I sought to evaluate how the state of Virginia has navigated this issue with their use of public-private partnerships to provide ongoing road infrastructural development.

Background

Public procurement has undergone many developments throughout the years. These developments have been used to grow and foster a more enhanced version of public procurement contracting through creative measures (Follak, 2015). Some of these creative measures include more outsourcing of public goods and services to meet the basic needs of citizens (Lu et al., 2013). There are many forms of outsourcing, some of

which include but are not limited to subcontracting, public-private partnerships (Argaw et al., 2016), and privatization. In this research, public-private partnership contracting were examined to develop a deeper understanding into some of the rationales that drive the conversation for these project types. Torvinen and Ulkuniemi (2016) analyzed the post value of using a public-private partnership project type to support the public's needs. The authors noted that the lack of adequate funding has been a contributing factor in the rise of public-private partnership in public procurement contracting (Torvinen & Ulkuniemi, 2016). The question remains, however, how these contract types been performing as opposed to traditional public procurement contracts. Georghiou et al. (2014) mentioned that the lack of a clear definition of public-private partnership has further hampered the establishment of a baseline to use in the comparative analysis between these contract types. The authors furthered their analysis by explaining that the lack of clear empirical data has slowed the discussion of using this creative means to meet other needs of the public procurement sector (Georghiou et al., 2014).

Baum (2018) provided a rationale to examine the motives behind the actions of some public procurement agencies who have used public-private partnership contracts to meet their needs. For example, he explored the use of these contract types in education. His discussion developed around students' successes, and he concluded that their results were not solely based on the notion that they were attending educational institutions that were operated within a public-private partnership venture (Baum, 2018). Baum maintained that the increase in resources that are made available to these students varies from those available in publicly ran schools. He found that the public-private partnership

venture schools were a result of the students' scholastic achievements, and in most cases, both types of educational type institutions had comparable performance results (Baum, 2018). This led to the final conclusion that the performance results were not the direct result of the public-private partnership ventures (Baum, 2018). Mann (2015) detailed why a deeper understanding of the risk factors associated with the outsourcing of public contracts is needed. Mann demonstrated that understanding the risks associated with public-private partnership projects force each stakeholder to incorporate risk mitigation in the creation of the project. Furthermore, Alonzi (2017) addressed the roles of shared risked factors associated with public-private partnerships. He noted that risk-sharing is not the most sought-after method of risk mitigation, but in most cases, it is one of the driving factors to push each party to ensure the success of the project (Alonzi, 2017). Other researchers to focus on the public-private partnership contract include Cantarero-Prieto et al. (2017), Gan et al. (2018), and Hodge and Greve (2017). They viewed the issue of risk mitigation as an essential component.

Problem Statement

Public-private partnerships influence the derivative of financial gain on the economic front (Ameyaw et al., 2015). The purchasing powers of the private sector shift drastically in their favor when the outcome of the projects met or even exceeded its intended project timelines as well as outcomes (Atmo & Duffield, 2014). Often, the public sector partner will incentivize specific projects' deliverables to generate a deeper investment in the project completion by the private entity (Baum, 2018). These incentives are used as economic generators to support reinvestment in the public entity's regional

economy (Atmo & Duffield, 2014). The budgetary constraints of public entities have pushed them to use nontraditional procurement tools to jumpstart their economy and implement creative measures (via contracting) to meet their residents' needs (Almarri & Boussabaine, 2017). The budgetary issues that have plagued these public agencies also pushed the talk of public-private partnership into the forefront as a viable solution to replace traditional procurement (Almarri & Boussabaine, 2017).

The use of public-private partnerships is a notable change in how the state of Virginia has continued to meet their residents' needs to ensure continuity of operation. In this study, I examined the problem of how the state of Virginia uses public-private partnerships to deal with their budgetary constraints for continued road infrastructural development.

Purpose of Study

The purpose of this study was to improve upon the understanding of public procurement officials and how they used public-private partnerships to effectively meet their growing infrastructural needs while increasing the private sector's interest in investing in more public-private collaborations. I examined the state of Virginia's embedded measures to keep their contractors and internal staff on task with issues such as accountability and risk mitigation throughout the contracting process. I discuss policy and regulations used by the state to protect their interests while engaging in the realm of public-private partnerships. The qualitative methodology was used to gather and analyze the information to further the understanding of the problem statement. The problem statement was addressed through interviews to develop an understanding of public-

private partnerships in public procurement, using the state of Virginia's infrastructural development initiatives as the focus.

Research Questions

Research Question (RQ)1: How did the state of Virginia use the factor of accountability to develop their current and past public-private partnerships?

RQ2: What, if any, risk mitigating factors were used within the creation of these projects?

RQ3: How have policy and regulations affected the growth of public-private the partnership in state of Virginia?

Theoretical Framework

In this study, I used a qualitative approach to dissect the problem. I employed interviews of procurement professionals in both the public and private sector who are currently in the middle of fully executed public-private partnership projects in conjunction with existing data to examine the performance values that were used in both current and past contracts.

I used the narrative policy framework (see Weibler & Sabatier, 2018) to support the constructivist viewpoint of grounded theory to help provide a more robust analysis of this topic (see Almarri & Boussabaine, 2017). In this study, I examined how the state of Virginia navigated their risk factors, performance values, and policy influences to foster their use of public-private partnerships to satisfy a public need. It was imperative to use this combination because human actions are the driving influence behind the policies being created to support these endeavors (Kirkpatrick & Stoutenborough, 2018). Within

the public procurement industry, ideas, policies, and regulations are all influenced by the actions of procurement officials (Uyarra et al., 2020). Moreover, I demonstrated how these policies have evolved and have influenced the growth of public-private partnership in the last decade within the state.

Nature of the Study

The qualitative method was the most appropriate for this study because it allowed me to examine the language and perceptions of public officials who have entered into these projects (see Rubin & Rubin, 2012). The public procurement industry is driven by rules, regulations, and laws that are used to implement and govern the actions of individuals within the industry (Tam, et al., 2018). These laws have helped to create the organizational structures that are partly responsible for the cultural mindset to facilitate the discussion of the policy initiatives behind public-private partnerships within public procurement. One of the significant benefits of the qualitative method of data analysis is using the grounded theory to dissect the patterns of humanist nature through the use of comparison to provide "both descriptions and explanations" (Wiesche et al., 2017, p. 687). These descriptions are then used by stakeholders to create the nexus of future projects through the contract vehicle of public-private partnership. Using this methodology, I was afforded the flexibility to limit the validities that posed a threat to the overall soundness of the research (see Rubin & Rubin, 2012).

The interviewees were 4 procurement executives from the public sector from whom I was able to gather the information needed for cross-analyzation. Due to the collaborative efforts occurring under a public-private partnership, it was essential to also

include 3 procurement executives from the private sector to capture both points of the spectrum. I also used a document review of policies and organizational regulations to understand the transition of the growth, if any, for public-private partnerships as administered by Virginia's Office of Public-Private Partnerships (VAP3). VAP3 is the agency that is tasked with overseeing the public-private partnerships projects throughout the state. This agency's authority derived from the public-private Transportation Act (PPTA) of 1995 and the Public-Private Education and Facilities Act of 2002 (Office of Public-Private Partnership, n.d.). The Office of Public-Private Partnership (n.d.) provided a range of guidelines set forth in the PPTA of 1995 and Public-Private Education and Facilities Act of 2002 with preexisting requirements before projects were allowed. According to the agency's information, the projects they have embarked upon have generated billions of dollars into the state's economy as well as improved traffic patterns throughout the state (Office of Public-Private Partnership, n.d.).

The cross-analyzation of the data between public and private sector participants opens the door for future project developments by understanding the pitfalls to avoid when embarking on such a contractual journey. In this study, I conducted interviews with stakeholders of public-private partnerships in Virginia, and prior to conducting those interviews, permission was sought and granted from Walden University's Institutional Review Board (IRB). No one from the protected population was interviewed. I used theming and cross-analyzation to identify themes in the information that was collected because it allowed for commonalities to be identified, categorized, and analyzed.

Definition of Terms

Public-private partnership: An agreement between a public and private entity where the private entity provides goods and services on behalf of the public sector entity and/or develops public resources with the final aim of transferring the commodity to the public entity at the end of the contract (Alzoni, 2017).

Stakeholders: A member or subgroup within the entity whose decision has a major impact in steering the overall goal of the agency (Burke & Demirag, 2017).

Sustainability in procurement: The process by which public and private entities generate a positive impact on socioeconomic factors while minimizing its potential output to the environment (Agarchand & Laishram, 2017).

Value for money: The infusion of acquiring the highest quality of service to meet the needs of the customer (Hu & Han, 2018).

Assumptions

I assumed that the 10 interviewees from both the public and private sector provided accurate information regarding their experiences and contributions to current and past public-private partnerships in the state of Virginia. I used open-ended questions tailored to extrapolate the interviewees' experiences in relation to the inception, growth, and development of these project types throughout the state of Virginia.

Scope and Delimitations

It is important for a researcher to avoid limitations and lack of validity because they pose serious threats to the soundness of the one's findings (Leung, 2015). I was able to avoid as well as reduce bias within the research by acknowledging innate biases and

implementing measures to avoid them. Ignoring biases can cripple the foundation of one's research development and usefulness of the research findings (Kjesrud, 2015). The unaddressed bias in one's research can shape the effectiveness of the research findings and compromise the integrity of the researcher (Shaw & Satalkar, 2018), which can affect how the scholarly world accepts the overall research.

I deemed it necessary to use the interview research design method to explore the research questions of how the state of Virginia used factors such as accountability and industry influences to develop their current and past public-private partnership projects. The use of this design method helped to explore the issue at hand to develop a deeper understanding of the research area. A research design is used by many researchers to examine a phenomenon as it pertains to their research questions to answer how organizations, groups, or persons fit into their overall thesis (Rubin & Rubin, 2012). It is important to note that a researcher may look at a one-time event, or they may examine something over a definitized timeframe (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). On the other hand, interviewing is a research design where a researcher seeks to have a personal conversation with a known expert or an affected member of society to gain insight on the interviewer's topic (Rubin & Rubin, 2012). These personal conversations can be structured as a formal interview, or they can be informally structured to gain the maximum amount of knowledge on the topic that is being researched.

Limitations

One of the limitations of this research is that I only explored public-private partnerships within a specific framework, and the conclusion should not be treated as the

only solution for road development needs. Virginia's needs may vary from other public entities, and as such, all other public entities should tailor their contracts to fit their needs. The use of public-private partnerships should be based on the public entity's needs and how their socioeconomic factors become the driving force behind the public entity's decision to embark on such a journey (Mota & Moreira, 2015). In this research, I focused solely on transportation projects, and these results may be used as a snapshot of how a public entity can use this out-of-the-box solution to meet their growing needs on a tight budget. The contextualized answers are bound to a particular subsection of the social problem because there are different avenues within this research methodology that the public service problem could have followed to bridge the gap in understanding within the phenomenon (see Ravitch & Carl, 2016). Many researchers may explore the same social problem and reach a different degree of conclusion because of the research methodology, conceptual framework, theories, and values that are used to dissect the problem (Trochim & Land, 1982). So often, researchers report different findings on the same or similar research topics, depending on the framework that was used to formulate the investigation of the problem.

The research questions, design, and methodology were created with alignment and consistency. These two aspects of the research dealt with ensuring the research had a logical flow so that anyone who desires to read the information can follow the contextual design on how I dissected the problem for analyzation and then tied it all together in its conclusion (see Susha et al., 2019). Alignment and consistency foster the development of transparency of one's research (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). When conducting research, it is

important for the researcher to be open and as transparent as possible with their research participants (Shenton, 2004). The ethical standard within research denotes few instances where deceptive/reduced transparency is acceptable as long as there is a provision for transparency at some point after the conclusion of the collection of data (Hébert et al., 2015). O'Sullivan et al. (2017) emphasized that researchers should ensure there is consistency, reliability, and validity within their research when examining any social problems. These systems help to reduce the externalities that a researcher can become predisposed to bias on their prior knowledge and experiences.

Significance of Study

This research helps fill a gap in understanding the problems that may plague the contracting methods of public-private partnerships in public procurement contracting and how the state of Virginia's agency navigated these problems. The project was unique in that I examined arguments in favor of public-private partnerships in public procurement (see Torvinen & Ulkunemi, 2016) and used these arguments to develop a deeper understanding on how they may be used to help foster a better atmosphere of public-private partnerships. One of the unique values of this research dealt with applying locality to determine how important this aspect is within the procurement cycle and how it was used to facilitate the development of project management to measure accountability in the development of these projects. The findings of this study provide private industry and government officials insight on how various elements of public procurement can aid their negotiation in the overall contract creation process of public-private projects.

Implications for Social Change

This study provides vital information that can and may be used by both public and private sector procurement professionals to devise public-private partnership projects in their environment. Federal and state governments, local municipalities, and their industry partners may use the information in this research to develop a more robust blueprint to ensure the continuity of services within their sector. Policymakers, key stakeholders, and various members of the wider public who hold an avid interest in the development of these partnerships could benefit from using this in-depth analysis on how these project types were compiled by the state of Virginia. Researching this topic may lead to many other public sector partners utilizing public-private partnerships to meet their growing needs while dealing with stringent budgetary restraints. Refined contracting practices, policies improvement, and emerging policies are some of the potential rewards that could be gained from the knowledge within this research.

Summary and Transition

In summary, the state of Virginia used public-private partnership project types to meet their road development needs. These projects have over the last decade or more generated millions of dollars in this commonwealth's economy while providing jobs to their citizens (Office of Public-Private Partnership, n.d.). Using this type of contract vehicle to meet their needs has created a gateway for other public entities to use in meeting their citizens' needs. A public-private partnership is not a venture that should be entered into lightly because of the rigid commitments that each public agency must adhere to during the lifecycle of the program (Cruz & Sarmiento, 2018; Jasiukevicius &

Vasiliauskaite, 2018; Turhani, 2013). In the next chapter, I examine past literature on public-private partnerships to further understand how the phenomenology applies to the present system in the state of Virginia. I first discuss the global perspective on public-private partnership, its emergence, and how it has gained traction in the public sector. I then examine the information as it pertains to the United States of America and how its bureaucratic system has slowly welcomed this movement to meet their growing needs.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Introduction

In the state of Virginia, public-private partnerships have been used for road infrastructural development to provide continued drivable road conditions to their residents and those who use this commodity. The growing need for road maintenance and their inability to provide these services through the use of traditional public resources has led to the growth of public-private partnerships to bridge the gap (Button, 2016). Within this state, one of the measures used to help in the facilitation of these projects is VAP3 (Office of Public-Private Partnership, n.d.) in handling the allotted span of the contract process. This agency has used VAP3 as an oversight body that understands, maintains, and facilitates the development of public-private partnerships (Office of Public-Private Partnership, n.d.). VAP3 serves as a body by the state to ensure the accuracy of project development, maintain public standards, and notify their public entities should there be a change to state policies on these matters (Office of Public-Private Partnership, n.d.). VAP3 staff are not only policy disseminators, they are also policy advisors because they provide advice on current public-private partnership policies that are working and those that are not working in favor of their institution from information gathered via ongoing projects. The VAP3 board is not a board that works only on independent projects for the state; they are there to provide permission and guidance to any public agencies throughout the Commonwealth of Virginia that asks for their assistance in using this contract method to procure goods and services. In Chapter 2, I examine the historical context of public-private partnerships, explore the issue of risk factors and how it is

handled by stakeholders, explain how grounded theory connects to public-private partnerships, and look at research strategies that were used in the development of this research. In this chapter, I examine past research on public-private partnerships to understand how it all translates to the present system in the state of Virginia. I first discuss various aspects of public-private partnerships, their emergence, and how they gained traction in the public sector. I then examine the information as it pertains to the United States of America and how its bureaucratic system has slowly welcomed this movement to meet their growing needs. Finally, I end the chapter by discussing how the state of Virginia has become a pioneer in establishing a blueprint on how to effectively leverage public-private partnerships to provide road infrastructural development to meet the public's needs.

Research Strategy

The research strategy I implemented used a combination of words, search engines, and methods to look into the issue of public-private partnerships and how they aligned with the state of Virginia's need to satisfy their public duties. Terms such as *public-private partnership, ppp, 3p, policy and ppp, grounded theory, narrative policy framework, narrative framework, United States of America and ppp, narrative framework and ppp, policy and grounded theory, ppp and USA, ppp and Virginia, ppp and stakeholders*, amongst other terms were used. These terms were used in the Thoreau search engine, which is supported by EBSCO discovery services. The use of the Thoreau search engine previewed a plethora of journals to provide search results to discover materials that provided further explanation on the social issue at hand.

Historical Context of Public-Private Partnership

The rise of public-private partnerships is a conceptual phenomenon that deals with providing a viable solution to the economic downturn for public entities over the years. The conceptual theory of a public-private partnership at times has been seen as an aggressive solution to many public entities' financial problems because of the issue of privatization of public resources that arises (Carpintero & Petersen, 2016). The rise of public-private partnerships in the United States of America can be traced back to the 1960s when the city of Boston used this medium to provide multiservices centers for their people (Dunning, 2018). According to Dunning (2018), "The federal government funded and regulated the activities of local nonprofits that deployed programming and resources to urban residents" (p. 803). As a result of this regulation, the public sector sought a different means to provide the same services without the added bureaucratic red tape. One could surmise that the regulation of these nonprofits agencies helped to foster the growth of public-private partnerships in the public sector's acquisition process. Dunning, (2018) introduced the conclusion that as a result of the activities of 1960s, in later years, the Clinton Administration was not able to successfully push the agenda of public-private partnerships at the federal level as a viable alternative solution to traditional procurement.

It is important to also highlight that one of the issues that the Clinton Administration faced was the complexity of federal regulations and the tractions that they had hoped would emerge from this effort did not come to fruition. Dunning (2018) mentioned that the Clinton Administration had hoped their use of public-private partnerships as a solution would demonstrate the added value that could be gained from

shifting the current public procurement methodology to foster a new era in the acquisition of goods and services.

Public-private partnerships may have been in existence before this era, but this point in time was when a national agenda was pushed through to creatively bridge the gap between the public's needs and their inability to satisfy these needs (Dunning, 2018). While the introduction to public-private partnerships can be traced back to the 1960s, the phenomenon did not gain widespread traction until the early 2000s because of the many risk factors as well as the public bureaucracy associated with these projects (Dunning, 2018).

Public bureaucracy within itself is a pandora's box of rules that must be adhered to before projects can be established. Willems and Van Dooren (2011) mentioned that the rise of this phenomenology could be associated with circumventing mandatory public accountability and appropriation laws. There must be meticulous documentation of public spending, and the need for strict documentation at times can be avoided with the use of public-private partnerships to sidestep the ebb and flow of the required documentation of public spending (Carpintero & Petersen, 2016). The important distinction to bring to light on this assessment deals with the notion that the shift to a public-private partnership does not eliminate the need for accountability of public spending but rather the strict rules that a public entity must adhere to are removed because the private body has more latitude on the administration of the public goods as denoted under the terms of the agreement (Shaoul et al., 2012; Stafford & Stapleton, 2017; Valverde & Moore, 2019). As a result of this, the actions of public-private partnerships create a subframe in traditional

procurement that is being heavily reviewed to ensure the outcomes are proper. Private entities who own and operate the public's commodity can do so for various reasons, some of which include their vast wealth, technical expertise, and/or the ability to quickly acquire a high level of expertise as well as their ability to move swiftly (Kuznetsov, 2017; Liu & Wilkinson, 2014).

The inability to adequately justify the transfer of public resources to a private entity for governance has been a stumbling block to the advancement of these projects. The resistance of adopting this movement can also be attributed to the democratic values that are enshrined within the Constitution of the United States of America. The people of this nation are bonded to the constitutional allotment of public governance and accountability. The fear of losing their stronghold on public goods and services has been another major hindrance to the upraise of a public-private partnership to satisfy the needs of this society (Dunning, 2018).

Government entities in appeasing the people have to ensure their transactional actions are all handled with care and foresight (Domingues & Zlatkovic, 2015). This action ultimately demonstrates to the people their government's dedication to meeting their needs. The restrictive nature of budgets, laws, rules, and ethical obligations have paved the pathway for these project types to catch some momentum in different pockets within the public sector (Geddes & Reeves, 2017). However, question remains as to how the public handles the divide between public obligation and public governance and accountability. Public entities have leveraged their expertise on the governmental operation to help facilitate this shift. Box (2007) supported this conclusion in mentioning

that public administrators have to be the agents of social change to rebalance the social equilibrium for all. Due to this pressing agenda, it is imperative for public administrator to dedicate their resources to the aid of prioritized agenda items without adding to the strain each entity might be undergoing.

Population growth has been another factor in the rise of these project types in the public sector. At times, public issues outgrow the public agency's ability to keep up with meeting their residents' needs, which has resulted in these agencies becoming more reliant on private sector investors and their resources to satisfy the public's need (Osei-Kyei & Chan, 2018). When the needs of residents within a specific location outgrow their government ability to provide adequate services, the public agency then turns to innovative measure to solve their issues. These innovative measures become the tools that are the saving grace for many local, state, and federal entities via public-private partnerships because the agencies in question are not able to provide these resources over a prolonged timeframe.

The continued growth of public-private partnerships has allowed key stakeholders of the public sector to establish parameters of operation for these foregoing projects. These parameters range from the type of partnerships that can be entered into to the conditions that must be present before the public entity can turn to these measures for a solution (Osei-Kyei & Chan, 2018). The temporary transfer of these responsibilities to the private sector then allows the public sector to focus on other critical needs, which calls for the rebalancing of social equity (Box, 2007). Public administrators should be vehicles of change because it is one of their primary roles as public servants (Box, 2017).

Providing for an economically strapped community has its consequences on the agency's which often time limits the agency's ability to generate civic engagement, that is essential to foster their economic stability (Kweun et al., 2018).

It is important to mention that while I solely focused on the public-private partnership in road development, this type of agreement has been featured in other aspects of the public sector. For example, Mann (2015) examined the impact of the public-private partnership in the healthcare industry. Mann explored how public entities can creatively meet their needs while still holding onto their innate power and authority. Retaining the inherent power and authority of its public institution is a key element that a public entity must ensure they are doing throughout the contract process. If public entities continuously relent their power and governance to a private entity, soon there will be no bargaining power to use as leverage over private contractors who are seeking to join partnerships with a public agency.

Innovation can be a direct result of a public-private partnership. The private sector's advanced labor force, technology, and project management methods can all cumulate into providing innovations that is not readily available to the public entity through their own workforce. The vast resources that are at the private sector disposal at times will take years for the public sector to obtain because of the lack of financial resources available to foster such innovation (Torvinen & Ulkuniemi, 2016). The issue with innovations in the public sector is that change moves at snails' speed. It is a slow churning wheel that must go through multiple cycles of bureaucratic red-tapes and political agendas that will ultimately delay the swift implementation solutions to ongoing

problems (Gawel, 2017). As a result, at the time of solution implementation the innovative measure might now become outdated and depending on the solution it might be obsolete.

The rise of public-private partnership in the public sector is considered another form of privatization. The control of a public commodity by a private entity has given the public great cause for concern that the private entity may create exclusivity regarding the usage of these commodity (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). To address this concern, the State of Virginia mandated that the production of the public goods should be made available to all their residents (Office of Public-Private Partnership, n.d.). This piece of legislation is a means by which the government created a safe environment in this new phase of privatization of public goods and services. Within the British government public-private partnerships were initially introduced under the umbrella of privatization (Solheim-Kile et al., 2019). This supposition was later shift into the realm of quasi-privatization, which was later categorized as a collaboration between the private and public sector to achieve a desired outcome (Solheim-Kile et al., 2019). The privatization of public commodities is a growing phenomenon and the increase in the public-private partnership projects has encouraged the scholarly discussion of do public-private partnerships fall within the realm of full or quasi privatization.

Privatization of public good is used as a means to increase a private entity's investment in the community. Often time's public entities will incentivize deals to push the private entity's continued participation in having more operational presence in the local region (Boyer & Scheller, 2018). Once these private entities begin setting roots the

local economy may become reliant on their continued operation (Munawarah et al., 2017). With this notion in mind, citizens increase their call for government accountability within this relentless pursuit of privatization through “ppp” (Vita, 2016) and demand the restricting of these procurement by pushing the boundaries of collaboration to foster the production of the public’s commodities without shifting the scales towards complete privatization of these commodities (Paschal, 2015).

Governments in developed and developing countries movement towards the use of public-private partnerships to satisfy their needs are similar in nature, they lack the financial resources to produce the commodity (Ose-Kyei & Chan, 2018). Underdeveloped countries use this non-traditional procurement method as a means to provide goods and services, as well as, a means to reduce the levels of poverty and unemployment within their borders (Chahar & Gangal, 2017). On the other hand, developed countries used public-private partnership to stimulate their local and global economy. Within the literature there is a lack of discussion on how developed worlds use these projects as an economic stimulus to their current bargaining power. Due to these countries statuses as ‘advanced counties’ the issue has been overlooked and attention is more centered around the substitution of public services rather than public-private partnership procurement being used to foster the bargaining power for the “*global elite*”. The advancement of a society can be attributed to multiple sources however, with the increase financial burdens shared by these advances’ societies, the need push forward without remaining stagnant is paramount to their continued growth (Caperchione et al., 2017). The conceptualization of privatizing public goods via public-private partnership

has widened the grey area of how governments will retain ownership and controlling interest in the operation and implementation of public goods. Infrastructural development is the forerunner for these project types and in such instances the public will question their respective government's ability to retain their sovereign power within the lifecycle of the contract.

One of the key components of public-private partnerships that is often overlooked is the need for corporative collaboration (Davis & Friske, 2013). Once projects are created and a legally binding agreement has been signed, all parties' needs to ensure they are adhering to the terms of the agreement to guarantee project deliverable as well as objectives are being met. The public entity cannot overstep its boundaries because this action may be perceived as a breach of contract and result in serious penalties which could offset the advancement the public entity is attempting to achieve via the agreement (Davis & Friske, 2013).

Virginia's Law on Public-Private Partnerships

Public-private partnerships are not entered into on a whim within the state of Virginia because all parties involved (public and private) will make every effort to understand the multi-dimensional blocks of issues that need to be addressed before they can approach a common ground of established parameters that will foster a successful contract completion (Torvinen & Ulkuniemi, 2016). In the contracting world, the word "*completion*" of a project does not necessarily mean the public entity is now in receipt of the commodity, it could also mean the commodity is at a stage where the public may utilize the services that were procured (Osei-Kyei & Chan, 2015). In such an instance the

model of “*Build-operate-manage*” may be the terms of the agreement. In understanding this non-traditional procurement measure, one must conclude there isn’t a “*one shoe fits all*” scenario that can be used by multiple entities to reach their overall goals (Ormsbee, 2017; Deaton & Aten, 2017). Public entities should rather use successful public-private partnership completion as a model to emulate for drafting their own goals to formulate different achievement and or similar outcomes (Almarri & Abuhijleh, 2017).

A trade-off within contracts to safeguard the achievement of organizational goals on a broader spectrum (Guevara, 2015) is not always necessary but can be most advantage for all. For example, the state of Virginia will not create policies that will be more beneficial to the private entities than themselves. They will design laws that will be more protective of their public funds, goods, services, as well as, personnel to preserve the best interest of the public. This action also seeks to provide reassurance to the general public that their administrators are not selling off their public resources for ill-gotten gains (Wang & Zhao, 2018). It cannot be stressed enough that public-private partnerships are used as a tool to boost and or jumpstart stagnant and failing economies (see Wang and Zhao, 2018). The authors also furthered the discussion of public-private partnership in analyzing the transfer of risk on infrastructural projects from the public agency to the private entity. The transference of risk is a strategy used by many public entities to safeguard themselves from adverse effects of being held most culpable for the failure of projects. The investment by the private entity in acquiring labor force to staff these projects is one of the gateways to building revenues for the federal, state, and or local entities (Schultz, 2018).

The Public-Private Transportation Act (PPTA) of 1995 was established by the commonwealth of Virginia to meet the needs of their state. According to §33.2-1801 “The general assembly finds that 1) there is a public need for timely development and/or operation of transportation facilities within the commonwealth, 2) such public need may not be wholly satisfied existing ways and 3) authorizing private entities to develop and/or operate one or more transportation facilities may result in the development of such facilities” (Virginia Law, n.d.). The general assembly sought to make a transition from traditional procurement to non-traditional procurement methods to meet their needs because they saw it fit to foster their self-preservation. This self-preservation action was also a self-serving agenda at the state level to generate regional jobs to tackle the issue of unemployment in their state. While accomplishing the goal reducing the state’s unemployment rate, one may surmise the increase in employment rate may have led to an increase in state revenue. The statute laid out specific terms and circumstances under which public-private partnership agreements can be entered. In striving for self-preservation and community survival the PPTA of 1995 also laid the foundation of acquiring federal, state, and local assistance.

According to §56-575.2 the Public-Private Education and Facilities Act (PPEA) of 2002 was designed similar in nature to the PPTA of 1995. The statute was developed to design “education facilities, technology infrastructure, and other public infrastructure and government facilities for the benefit of citizens of the Commonwealth” (Virginia Law, n.d.). At this point in its governance the state of Virginia determined it was best to also utilize the blueprints from PPTA of 1995 to continue to meet the needs of their state.

The PPEA of 2002 provided the private entities with almost absolute power to operate the public goods when they are the successful bidder. While this was the case, the law also provided protection to its citizens in dictating that the private entity must “keep the qualifying project open for use by the members of the public at all times, or as appropriate based upon the use of the facility” (Virginia Law, n.d.). The PPEA of 2002 demanded that competitive solicitation is used through the inception of these projects. The state wanted to protect its citizens and its interest, and in doing so mentioned that prior to embarking upon such endeavor’s permission must be sought by the public entity from the relevant authority to ensure the procurement is of sound vesting. These two public-private partnership laws work in conjunction with other public procurement laws of Virginia to continue facilitating the state’s socioeconomic growth. Using the model of public-private partnership public, entities are seeking an expeditious climb to socioeconomic stabilization because of the latitude given to the private entity under these laws (Schultz, 2018).

One cannot move forward without mentioning that the PPTA of 1995 and PPEA of 2002 works in conjunction with Virginias’ Public Procurement Act §2.2-4300. In the state of Virginia, the Virginia’s Procurement Act demanded that competition should be used as an engine to foster the acquisition of goods and services (Virginia Law, n.d.). The rationale for this stemmed from the notion that often times, competition will birth the best value and product for the best price. In procurement, not all solicitations will end in the public entity acquiring the commodity for the least amount of monies and or the best value, (Virginia Law, n.d.) as these two concepts are not mutually exclusive of each

other. On one hand, acquiring the commodity for the least amount of monies may entail the public entity accepting subpar commodity because the cost is the lowest (Rudzianskaite-Kvaraciejiene et al., 2015). While best value means that the public entity is not obligated to accept the lowest bid for the acquisition, the public entity is able to accept paying a higher price for the commodity because it will produce superior performance, production, and quality (Yang et al., 2016). Using the “best value” methodology the public agency will reduce if not eliminate the threat of inadequate services for their residents.

The state of Virginia used this type of procurement method to improve upon the road conditions of I495 to provide more lanes in an attempt to reduce the level of congestion that many commuters have faced on a daily basis (Office of Public-Private Partnerships, n.d.). This project was completed in 2012 and added an additional 3.5 billion dollars into the state’s economy (Office of Public-Private Partnerships, n.d.). The state has demonstrated via other public-private partnership projects how they have used this non-traditional procurement method as a double-edged sword to address multiple areas of deficiencies within their state’s economy. The state website did not address the number of jobs that was created as a result of the I495 public-private partnership project, but one can assume many jobs were created as a result of this project.

The use of interviews to obtain information within the research, provided me with the ability to cross-triangulate the information received from the stakeholders who have intimate knowledge of the processes that must be undertaken before any such project can materialize in the state of Virginia and the policies that are centerfold for a comparative

analysis. This way of fact finding provided me with the ability to adequately satisfy the parameters of dissecting the factors such as risk, accountability, and policies and how they were handled and/used throughout the initiating and implementing process of public-private partnership projects in the state.

Public-Private Partnerships and the Value for Money

When a public entity uses public-private partnerships as an economic boost for their economy one must consider the “value for money” criterion. The value for money criterion deals with the impact the influx of money has on creating stabilization of a region’s economy (Almarri & Boussabaine, 2017). Economic stabilization through public-private partnerships bring the implication that the “*value for money criterion*” heavily correlates with the stabilization of the region’s economy which helps to strengthen the dollar (Almarri & Boussabaine, 2017). The notion of value of money was seen as a recurring theme throughout many literatures with regards to public-private partnerships. On one hand, it is assumed the information listed is accurate and the region’s economy benefited greatly from the influx of ongoing projects. While on the other hand, the influx of too much funding can overflow the market thus having a negative impact rather than a positive one. Regardless, of the outcome, it is safe to conclude public-private partnerships have been a leading influence on the ‘value of one’s dollar’. This complex issue is then simplified on the notion that each region will ensure their transactions do not create undue burdens in the local and national economy.

In a perfect world, an increase in shared resources could be the thing of the future under the guise of public-private partnership. However, oversimplifying this matter might

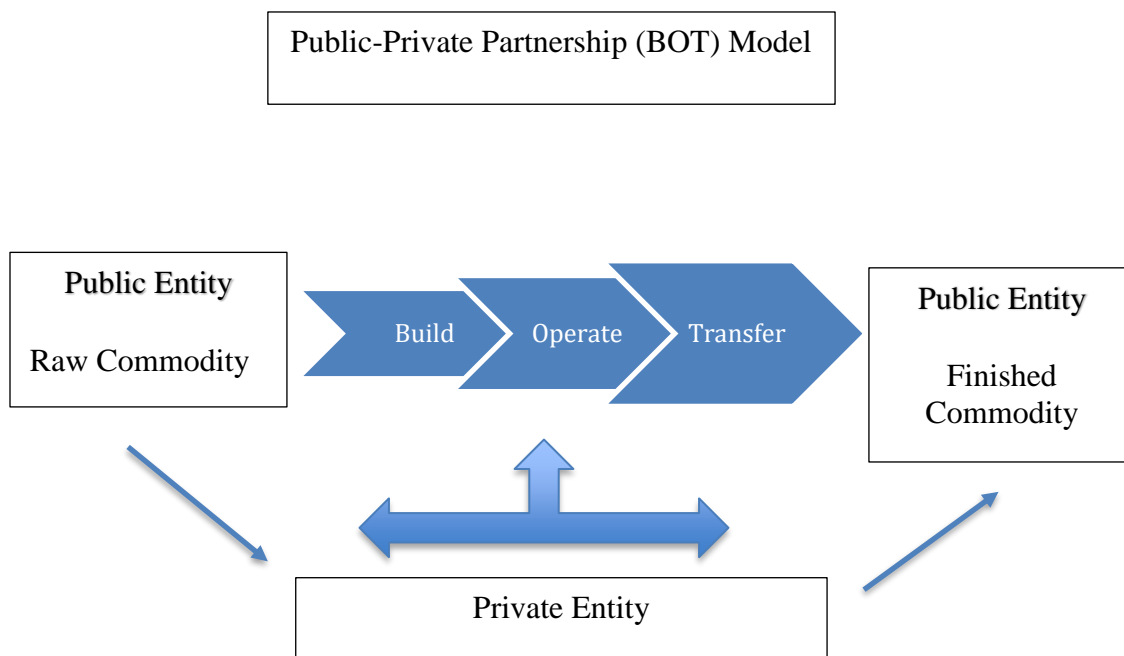
become traitorous in the overall mechanism of ironing out the details of sharing in the cost of these projects (Atmo et al., 2015) and bureaucratic red-tape could be the stumbling block that continuously impede the growth of public-private partnership across many governments in the United States of America. In order to foster this continued development, one must always consider the facts of performance, commodity, and financial status as a segue into the growth of public-private partnership in traditional procurement in the United States of America (Almarri & Boussabaine, 2017; Atmo et al., 2015; & Osei-Kyei & Chan, 2015). Another major issue to review for these project types goes to the notion of the skillset, level of expertise, and financial resources available to the private sector which can be used to meeting the public's needs (Kumaraswamy & Zhang, 2001; Chabar & Gangal, 2017).

Public-Private Partnership Types of Operation

There are many types of public-procurement projects. The specific model that will be used will depend on the multiple factors of the foregoing project. Some of the types of public-private partnership includes but isn't limited to Build-Operate-Transfer (BOT) (Tsukada, 2019), Build-Operate-Manage-Transfer (BOMT) Design-Build-Transfer (DBT) (Tsukada, 2019), Design-Build-operate-Transfer (DBOT) (Reynaers & Van Der Wal, 2018), Design-Build-Finance-Maintenance- Operate (DBFMO) (Reynaers & Van Der Wal, 2018) amongst others. Both the public and private entity may elect to utilize one or a portion of the any of these models in their contractual agreement. Table 1 provides a description and contract duration for BOMT, DBT, DBOT, DBFMO, while Figure 1 provides a graphic illustration of a BOT project cycle.

Table 1*Description of the Types of Public-Private Partnerships*

Types of public-private partnership	Description	Duration of contract	Types of commodity
Build, operate, manage, transfer	The private entity will turn the raw good into an operational product, they will then manage the operate and manage the day-to-day operation of the product, then at the end of the contract term, transfer the ownership back to the public entity.	These contracts are generally longer than most because will allow the private entity to recoup their investment and solidify their profits. Could be from 25-150 years or longer	All construction types
Design, build, transfer	The private entity is responsible for crafting the outline of how the raw commodity will be	These projects typically only last the duration of the time it will take the private entity to the raw commodity into an operational product. This could be 6 months to may years, it will greatly depend on the complexity of the build that is being undertaken. Could be 5 years to 100 years or more	buildings, road development,
Design, build, operate, transfer	All that is described under DOT with the additional services of operating the finished product before turning it over to the public entity.		Tolls road development, buildings, etc.
Design, build, finance, maintenance, operate	This is where the private entity will take on considerable risk to take on such a project. The private entity will be the sole person who is responsible for crafting a design, finance majority or if not the entirety of the project, they are responsible for the upkeep of the finished product and they are also in charge of the day-to-day operation.	These project types are always long-term project to ensure the private entity is able to recoup all their majority investment with added profits. Approximately 50 years of more on these project types	Buildings, toll roads, etc.

Figure 1*Design, Operate, and Transfer Model*

Each model is uniquely designed to facilitate meeting the public entity's need (Attarzadeha et al., 2017). Often, the public entity will not have the financial and labor resources to develop, as well as, operate the public goods and as such, they may request that a private entity design, build, and then transfer the final product to the public entity to manage (Tsukada, 2019). There are many variables that need to be considered before finalizing the transaction because the wrong model on a project can create minimal to severe damage that may or may not be repairable (Attarzadeha et al., 2017).

Enacting the improper model could be creating a plectra of risk factors that may or may not create a pandemonium of issues throughout the lifecycle of the project. No model is free from risks and slow rewards, and according to Attarzadeha, et al., (2017),

“PPP-BOT projects are characterized by high capital out-lays, long lead times and long operation periods, which make the forecast of cash flows more difficult and expose participants to high level of financial risk and uncertainty” (p. 680). The State of Indiana utilized the design-build-best value type of procurement to enter their road infrastructural developments (Indiana Department of Transportation, n.d.). The State utilized the means of public-private partnership to provide itself with a means of growing their economy by entering into a lease agreement under their Indiana Finance Authority (IFA) law to lease, operate, and maintain the Indiana Toll Road. The successful bidder for this project was the ITR Concession Co. (now owned by IFM Investors) and under the agreement the state of Indiana received \$3.8 billion from IFM Investors to obtain the rights to operate the approximately 157 miles of toll road for seventy-five (75) years (Indiana Department of Transportation, n.d.).

The Florida department of Transportation (FDOT) has also followed along the lines of using the model of public-private partnership as a means to provide road infrastructural development for residents of their state in facilitating several multi-million-dollar deals to improve upon the conditions of the current roads within the state. One such project saw the improvement of I-595 to widen the road and improve the interchanges from the Turnpike west to I-75/Sawgrass Expressway which cost an estimated \$1.3 billion (Florida Department of Transportation, n.d.). The First Coast Outer Beltway in Jacksonville, FL is another public-private partnership project used within the state (Florida Department of Transportation, n.d.).

The logistical operations of public-private partnership have manifested itself in many forms that ultimately result in the provision of services which Kumaraswamy and Zhang (2001) discussed can fall under the “Build-Operate-Transfer (BOT)” module of public-private partnership. A notable issue mentioned by Chabar and Gangal (2017) dealt with the different levels of bureaucracy each level of government must handle within their daily operations. The authors maintained these bureaucratic issues could be a deterrent to successful contract.

A partnership must have an equitable trade-off for private and public entities to commence such a deal. The heightened levels of risk factors associated with these projects have placed a damper on allowing it to continue with an accelerated growth (Ahmad et al., 2018). While this is the case, financially burdened cities and states started embracing these associated factors to eliminate their undue burdens of not being able to facilitate meeting their citizens growing needs (Gopalkrishna & Karnam, 2016). Two of the government’s intrinsic values deal with safeguarding and providing security to its citizens (Osei-Kyei & Chan, 2018; Panayides et al., 2015). To assist this action, they will need to ensure there are drivable road for their residents to commute to and from work, home, and school amongst other places, while also maintaining the ongoing flow of transactional traffic for commerce. Should their roads become undrivable in any capacity, then this will hurt their economy. A society thrives on their economic stability and growth which at times will rely heavily on their roads as a means to transport good and services throughout their state (Verweij, 2015). A cost of doing this business deals with

the respective states ensuring their road's wear and tear from the heavy commuters are repaired in a timely manner.

Another benefit of these partnership types is the unrelenting use of innovations for rapid development. Rapid development pushes for more agile services, and at times could be the start of one's downfall in the overall completion of the project (Vasytynska & Nemchenko, 2018). With this information, the question then created a paradigm shift into discussing how risk factors are mitigated in the conceptual process of the foregoing contract.

How Risk Factors Are Handled

Risks are always inherent factors of any project, and mitigation factors are needed to minimize these inherent risks. It is important to identify potential risks and implement measures to counteract these risk factors (Zheng et al., 2019). Traditional risk mitigations methods are utilized in the reduction of these project types, but they must be tailored to fit the unique nature of each project (Jasiukevicius & Vasiliauskaite, 2018). Rapid development brings with its inherent risks that are embedded within the lifecycle of the project (Kumaraswamy & Zhang, 2001; Suseno et al., 2015) and in BOT style public-private partnership risk mitigation had been used to enhance the vitality of these projects (Kumaraswamy & Zhang, 2001). Risks associated with these project types are often avoidance, shared, transfer, accepted, or a combination of any of these risk reduction methods (Li et al., 2018). Risk avoidance means the entity that is shouldering the majority of the burden will look for ways to remove the found risk from the project

lifecycle. Alternatively, shared risk means both entities shoulder the burden of the project's embedded risk (Lopes & Caetano, 2015).

Risk transfer means one entity shifts the inherent risk from their shoulder to the other and acceptance means that the other entity accepts the risk without attempting to implement a shared system (Burke & Demirag, 2016). It is important to note, the least popular option toward risk management is 'risk acceptance'. No entity, whether private or public, will accept the sole responsibility of project hiccups, and or failure because this action can become a detriment to their profits and company's stability (Reypens et al., 2016). In the overall project creation, the private sector counterpart majority of the times will seek to have a contract that allows for the shared risks associated with these projects, while the public sector counterpart will push to have the risks transferred to the private party (Schepper et al., 2015). In an impasse, the parties will find a resolution that is amicable to all parties. Risk identification is a crucial element of the overall management of the project and the various dimensions of risk management are all key components that must be handled to increase the project's chances of success (Zhang et al., 2019).

Stakeholders play a key role in the development of these projects and become the final authority on how risks are assessed and managed (Loosemore & Cheung, 2015). In traditional procurement, the public sector was overburdened with the risk factors of a project because of the financial investment they stand to lose in the event the project fails or deviates in its timeline and deliverables (Opara & Rouse, 2019). Through the vehicle of public-private partnership, public sector stakeholders can now tailor the risk assessment to effectively shift and or share these burdens (Burke & Demirag, 2017) with

their private sector counterpart. To ensure project deliverables are maintained, stakeholders tend to embed stiff penalties into project timelines. The tactical method stakeholder used in the advancement of health services in Pakistan demonstrated that stakeholders use of risk transfer and shared responsibilities is not unique to the constructions industry but is used across the board for all public-private partnership types (Khan & Puthussery, 2019). Within the public-private partnership world, the way risks are monitored is heavily dependent on the type of public-private partnership project that is being enacted by the actors of the public and private sectors.

Grounded Theory in Public-Private Partnerships

I embarked on a quest to analyze the implications of public-private partnerships and road development in the state of Virginia through the lens of grounded theory. Grounded theory looks at the patterns and behaviors of societal members while focusing on how these patterns and behaviors shapes the development of relationships (Shanahan et al., 2018). Within public procurement, individual perceptions set the tone for how policies are initiated and developed into bills which become laws. Often researchers will not use one dimension of a theory but will use various dimensions to analyze their problem (Davis & Friske, 2013). Grounded theory was chosen to dissect this social issue to understand how the actions of people influence the public entity of Virginia. Patton (2015) explained it best in stating that “grounded theory is observations and interviews out in the real world” (p. 18) and it is these experiences I sought to capture in the overarching analysis of this social issue.

I found it most convenient to use grounded theory because it will allow for the exploration of the multiple dimensions of public-private partnerships throughout the data gathering and analyzation phase of the research. This is possible because grounded theory is one such theory that is flexible in its application to the research questions that are being investigated (Trangkanont & Charoenngam, 2014). Trangkanont and Charoenngam further maintain that when grounded theory is used in the analyzation of public-private partnerships it allowed for “*theory-generating*” to emerge. These theories encouraged repetition to facilitate the development and understanding of the complexity of public-private partnerships to enable key stakeholders the ability to simplify the procurement process and use the method(s) most applicable to their needs.

One of the most important aspects of grounded theory I chose and why it was chosen goes to Baxter’s (2016) explanation that grounded theory is used “to generate, rather than verify, theory from data through the constant comparing of unfolding observations” (p. 573). The conclusion of Baxter is similar in conclusion with Trangkanont, and Charoenngam, and with this notion in mind one can then proceed with concluding it was the most appropriate theory to apply to the foregoing analyzation of public-private partnerships and how it is leveraged by the state of Virginia to meet their road infrastructural developments. I sought to maximize the information that was gathered to further the understanding of public-private partnerships and grounded theory in separating existing themes from emerging ones (Agarchand & Laishram, 2017). It is not guaranteed that new themes will emerge, however, the repetition of the analysis of the data, increases the possibility of this occurring and thus increases the understanding of

the methods that stakeholder can use to foster the sustainability of their upcoming projects.

Sustainability is another major theme within the realm of public-private partnerships. This is one of the issues that stakeholders sought to achieve whenever they utilize the non-traditional procurement method of public-private partnerships to meet their needs (Panda, 2015). The use of grounded theory will further the discussion on how stakeholders will be able to use the current factors of public-private partnerships such as accountability and policy to bolster their sustainability measures. In veering into this territory, the argument might then venture around the notion that grounded theory was used to analyze the governance of project development which is essential to the creation a viable sustainable plan that is typically embedded in these project cycles (Agarchand & Laishram, 2017). Grounded theory will allow for the processing of data in many stages and I will determine how much of the information will be repetitively analyzed for consistency in results to exhaust the results to ensure all areas were examined. Combining the narrative policy framework inquiry along with grounded theory will capture a more precise analogy of the current works of procurement officers in the public sector. This pairing will allow the interviewer to capture the stakeholders' to experiences and facilitate the flow of responses for recording and analyzation purposes.

Many scholars have utilized grounded theory in the analyzation and processing of their research. Smith et al. (2018) examined the various problems that can occur throughout four development stages of public-private partnerships in the Swish water and sewage sector as well as provide proposed solutions. The authors outlined the four stages

of public-private partnerships in their study as: initial feasibility, procurement, operating, and concluding. Each stage described by the authors is associated with a specific timeline of the inception to projects to the conclusion and or continuation of these projects. The authors used an existing case study of a “project that took place in a municipality in southern Sweden” (p. 109) to understand the fundamentals of various problems that arose within the contract cycle the Swedish government utilizing this form of non-traditional procurement process. The authors concluded the usage of public-private partnership projects in the Swish water system helped in fostering the reduction of issues through the usage of resource allocation, stakeholder’s management and the creation of identity. These problem reduction measures were instrumental in removing agency’s issues throughout the four stages of public-private partnership projects in the Swish water system.

The use of Public-private partnerships was used to examine the sustainable infrastructural development challenges in the procurement process in India. The authors Agarchand and Laishram (2017) explored the pitfalls of sustainability of public-private partnership in its procurement processes. The authors used grounded theory through a qualitative methodology to uncover the challenges that plague the sustainability of public-private partnerships in India. The authors concluded the lack of buy-in by stakeholders and participants during the various phases of these projects, the lack of proper accountability and risk assessments amongst other findings were key components that have hindered the effective nature of public-private partnerships in public procurement.

Panda (2015) explored collaborative governance and how it impacts value creation via the public-private partnership process. The author used grounded theory to look into this matter and found that many attributes were contributing factors that play an essential role in the overall governance process of public-private partnerships. The author ended with a multi-directional impact that is supported by both tangible and intangible factors that may or may not be avoided to foster a more collaborative effort in the final presentation of the outcome of the concluding public-private partnerships. Panda highlighted the baseline for successful public-private partnerships baselines is then diverted into issues such as ego, policies, power, and contract management amongst other issues. These factors are some of the driving forces on how public-private partnerships impact the value creation process.

Davis and Friske (2013) examined the role of how public-private partnership facilitate the cross-border logistics of U.S./Canadian border relations. The authors wanted to obtain a better understanding of how border relations foster the global supply chain management/relationships. The authors examined some unique challenges such as international relationships and how dual countries have allowed their intergovernmental issue to not impede the progress of public-private partnerships in the mechanism of global relations to foster a more collaborative effort in the global supply chain management arena. Within this arena, stakeholders from both the public and private sector has been enriched via shared standards to reduce bureaucratic red tapes and focus more on the strategic planning and operation methodologies of the cross-border relations in the global arena. The author's final conclusion maintained that management,

collaborative efforts, and shared standards are essentials to oiling the wheels of cross-border relations and public-private partnership relations.

Summary

I discussed various aspects of public-private partnership, its emergence, and how it gained traction in the public sector, the national movement of public-private partnership in United States of America and then in the State of Virginia. The state of Virginia utilized public-private partnership as a mean to subsidize their ability to provide infrastructural development and maintenance. This action also served in addressing multiple socioeconomic issues that the state has undergone such as unemployment and budgetary constraint to meet their needs. Although, the Commonwealth saw it fit to use alternative procurement methods, their interest and properties were safeguarded by current legislations. I also discovered that other states had join the movement and were using various models of public-private partnership projects to meet their road infrastructural needs. Chapter three (3) discussed the research methods that was used for data collection within the research. The next chapter also dictated how I selected the potential interviewees as well as how the invitation was communicated to the potential interviewees for final selection. The next chapter also provided the research questions that will be used to better understand the complexities public-private partnership in the State of Virginia.

Chapter 3: Research Method

Ground Theory and the Advancement of Public-Private Partnership

The purpose of this study was to improve the understanding of public procurement officials and how they may use a public-private partnership to effectively meet their growing infrastructural needs while increasing the private sector's interest in investing in more public-private collaborations. To achieve this goal, I discussed the issue through the lens of grounded theory. In its existence, a researcher can use either the postpositivist or constructivist views on grounded theory to examine their social problem. Grounded theory can be examined from the postpositivist paradigm as formulated by Strauss or the constructivist approach as formulated by Glaser (Howard-Payne, 2015). Each approach allows its user to dive into their specific societal problem based on its own intricacies without trying to force feed it into a specific monolog of research data and findings. Howard-Payne (2015) further discussed the pros and cons to each segment of grounded theory: on one hand Strauss allowed for the researcher to embed themselves within the research, while Glaser did not because of the undue influence a researcher may have on the overall outcome of the information that was examined.

Grounded theory coupled with the narrative policy framework was the best theoretical lens to analyze the social issue of public-private partnership in the state of Virginia. This pairing allowed me the capability to look at the nuisances of collaboration between the public and private sector. Shanahan et al. (2018) evaluated the use of narrative policy framework to examine facts, evidence, and data as a part of this policy framework. The authors demonstrated how the cumulative actions can help others create

links by removing the ominous nature from the equation (Shanahan et al., 2018). The epistemological nature of this research required that the methods, validity, and scope of the research separated the facts from fiction. I dove into the parameters of how public-private partnerships are created and administrated in the state of Virginia through the examination of the following three RQs:

RQ1: How did the state of Virginia use the factor of accountability to develop their current and past public-private partnerships?

RQ2: What, if any, risk mitigating factors were used within the creation of these projects?

RQ3: How have policy and regulations affected the growth of public-private partnership in the state of Virginia?

It was imperative to broaden the knowledge of the bargaining powers of public procurement officers in reducing the accusation of the public in the dereliction of their duties. The narrative policy framework is used to explain the multiple viewpoints of stakeholders and centralized them into a cohesive agenda to foster the conversation regarding direction of stakeholders' projects.

Encased in grounded theory framework, I used interview data collection methods to collect data for analyzation. To fully understand and provide deeper insight to the present and contribute further to the field of public-private partnership in public procurement, the past was examined to locate the existing model and then an extrapolation of various data points was conducted to fully understand the big picture. Looking at the evolution of policies in the region allowed me to collect information to

cross-triangulate the information collected in the interviews. A specific sampling pool is used as a predictor of the wider population's actions within this industry. I interviewed 10 key stakeholders who had direct knowledge of these project types in the state of Virginia. The stakeholders hailed from both the public and private sector because it is important to capture the viewpoints of both sides of the table to be able to adequately contribute to the current literature.

The Researcher's Role

I used the structured standardized interview model to discuss various questions that cumulated into broadening the understanding of the main issue, how the state of Virginia uses the model of public-private partnership to satisfy the public's needs. I understood the intimidation factors that could arise from the conducting a formal interview, and as a result, I implemented a heterogeneity of techniques to create a level of comfort and ease to open the door to a flow of information from these stakeholders. The mere notion of being interviewed inherently creates cases of uneasiness for the both the interviewer and the interviewees (Rubin & Rubin, 2012). The interviewer wants to ensure the interviewees are comfortable so that the extraction of raw data to cross analyze with other information is maximized (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). It is understood the interviewees want to ensure they are not divulging too many craft and trade secrets as well as not creating a negative impression of themselves and their organization (Rubin & Rubin, 2012). With these two opposing goals, the researcher is then tasked with eliminating and/or reducing these fears so that the participants of the interviews are at ease with the task of dispensing information to the interviewer (Ravitch & Carl, 2016; Rubin & Rubin,

2012). Ravitch and Carl (2016) discussed the imperativeness of an interviewer personifying the atmosphere of the interview to establish a warm and open environment during the interview process. The most important role the researcher can play in the overarching segment of data collection is ensuring they are selecting SMEs (O'Sullivan et al., 2017) to interview because it would prove fruitless to gather data from someone with limited knowledge of the topic in question.

To reduce the blunders of interview etiquette I needed to make ample preparations for the impartation of knowledge. Some of these preparations included but were not limited to the being adaptable, being informed, and being prepared (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). This allowed for the alignment and consistency of the research to be present from the inception to its conclusion. These issues of research alignment and consistency are needed for the transitional points of the research to be interconnected so that its global picture and transparency are at the forefront to the research development (O'Sullivan et al., 2017). O'Sullivan et al. (2017) supported the integration of research characteristics to facilitate the soundness of the research findings.

Methodology

A qualitative study approach was selected to conduct information gathering on the state of Virginia's nontraditional procurement method of using public-private partnerships to meet their growing needs. I deemed it most appropriate to use interviews to dive into the actions taken by the state to better understand why the state diverted to such a nontraditional procurement means and to understand how they fostered the growth while ensuring these commodities were still available to all their residents. The state of

Virginia has used public-private partnerships to foster the improvement as well as development of many road infrastructural development throughout the state. Due to the small sample pool, I also interviewed public-private partnership professionals from the state of Maryland and the District of Columbia.

Pathway of Participant Selection

I used nonprobability sampling to select the research participants who were invited for an interview. Nonprobability sampling is used when a researcher seeks to target a specific population and has determined that random sampling would not provide adequate information from the population (El-Masri, 2017). I deemed it most appropriate to target a specific group within the general population because of the nature of the research, the questions, and specificity. I needed well-qualified individuals to participate in the overall research. SMEs were able to provide me with in-depth information on the who, what, where, and why of public-private partnership projects in the state of Virginia, Maryland, and District of Columbia. If I had chosen the random sampling method, the possibility of drafting a non-SME on the issue of public-private partnership in the state of Virginia, Maryland, and District of Columbia would have greatly increased. When conducting research, it is essential to obtain quality information to analyze so that the researcher may obtain relevant information on the subject being explored.

A list of 20 names was compiled of individuals who had intimate knowledge of the happenings of public-private partnership projects in the state of Virginia. The list of names included 10 members from the public sector who worked for the state of Virginia's VAP3 and their regular public procurement officers. The other 10 participants

were selected from private companies that were the successful bidders of past and present public-private partnership projects. My aim was to solidify 10 participants for interview purposes, five from the public sector and five from the private sector. The research participants were contacted via email using language that was approved by Walden University's IRB that outlined the nature of the study, its objective, and the implications it may have for future public-private partnership projects. Due to low responses from the original list, several other public-private professionals were contacted via email that had participated in projects within the public-private partnership world within the state of Maryland and the District of Columbia in order to reach adequate sample size.

In conjunction with the interviews, I examined laws used in the intricacies of projects enacted in the state. This examination allowed me to see point-in-time analysis as the information stated by the interviewees and how this information was used throughout the projects. I randomly selected names from the state of Virginia's VAP3 website and other public websites that provided the list of information regarding key personnel on who held these public positions regarding these projects. I also used this website to obtain the procedure manual and other information on past and ongoing projects that have been formed under the umbrella of public-private partnerships. The website contained pertinent information on the public-private partnership efforts, its documentation, and comprehensive contract documents. One benefit of obtaining information from the website was that it allowed me to also obtain information on lessons learned from past projects that were published on the state's website. The lessons learned information was used in conjunction with the information obtained from the interviewees

to perform cross-mapping of information to determine the commonalities that may have occurred in the reflective stages after the contract had been awarded, was ongoing, and or was concluded. The reason for using the website to obtain these contracts stemmed from the notion that the state of Virginia and its respective public agencies host the most up-to-date and/or accurate contract documents. I was reliant on obtaining the most comprehensive information to provide an accurate analysis of the information of policies and regulations, accountability, and risk mitigating as it relates to these selected for data analysis.

Instrumentation

The primary mode of instrumentations that I used to collect data were interviews, notetaking, and tape-recordings through structured interviews with primary stakeholders who held valuable intel on the mechanism of public-private partnerships in the state of Virginia. Instrumentation created an accessibility to the collection of data so that researchers will be able perform fact-finding to be able to generate factual conclusions that will foster the betterment of society (De la Guardia & Garrigues, 2019). In preparation for the interviews, I utilized existing data to create and structure the questions that were used as the focal point to drive the conversation vehicle between the interviewer and interviewees. De La Guardia and Garrigues (2019) mentioned that a researcher does not need to have expensive equipment to conduct fact-gathering, rather they need to create innovative ways to ensure the tools being used to gather information are reliable. Once its reliability can be authenticated the rest of the research process can be supported.

Narrative research is a method used by many researchers to tailor the direction of their information gathering process. In doing so, one should be mindful they are not doing too much steering of the how the information is being spoken by the interviewees to the overarching theme of the research being conducted (Lessard et al., 2018). The interview questions will be developed from the historical knowledge on the various procurement laws in the state of Virginia its past, as well as, current contracts, and research articles. The questions will range from how the state tailored its need to meet the feasibilities of their foregoing contracts, to the factors that are essential to the decision-making processes these private entities undergo before embarking on vying for such a contract. The questions will be crafted and submitted to IRB for approval.

Issues of Trustworthiness

To eliminate the issue of partiality, I utilized a multiple point system of fact checking to ensure the information that was collected was not be misrepresented. One of such measure that was utilized was providing human review of the auto-transcription service that was used to transcribe the interviews to eliminate misrepresentation and or improperly transcribed information to ensure the interviewees information was accurately represented in the presentation of the converted information. Although the interviewee's identities remained unanimous, the information presented should still be accurate.

Trustworthiness is one of the key elements that must be present to support the validity and credibility of one's research (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). Without these elements, the findings of the research that was embarked upon could be considered flawed by members of the scholarly community. One of the rationales behind these elements deals

with the issue of younger scholars looking to existing research for guidance and accurate information to use as a baseline in their research (Ravitch & Carl, 2016).

Ethical Obligation of the Researcher

The participants of the research were invited to participate in an interview via an approved IRB letter (approval number 05-08-20-0741789) that was emailed to the selected individuals to partake in an interview for research purposes. I did not use any member of the protected group and as a result, no special permission was sought from IRB. I assigned unique identifier to each research participant and remove their identity so that the results will remain anonymous and cannot be identified within the findings. I took all necessary pre-cautions to ensure the information that was collected was stored in a manner as dictated by the IRB guidelines to ensure the information is being safely stored. The retrieved data was stored on my personal laptop that is password protected and I added an additional layer of protection by storing the data in a selected folder that are encrypted. The utilization of password and encrypted files increased the protection of the research data not being accessible to anyone other than myself.

Summary

Chapter 3 addressed the manner in which I analyzed the information that was gathered throughout the research. The research methodology and approach that was used to gather and analyze information. I sent out a plethora of invitation to individuals who are intimately linked to the public-private partnership projects in the state of Virginia, Maryland, and District of Columbia in hopes of solidifying 10 confirmed individuals who would assist with the information gathering of the researcher. Due to low response, only

7 persons were interviewed. The information that was gathered was then analyzed and discussed in Chapter four (4).

Chapter 4: Results

Purpose of Study

The intent of this study was to improve upon the understanding of public-private partnership professionals and how they have used public-private partnerships to effectively meet their growing infrastructural needs while increasing the private sector's interest in investing in more public-private collaborations in the state of Virginia. However, due to a low response rate, the study was expanded to the District of Columbia as well as state of Maryland. I examined the state of Virginia's embedded measures that kept their contracts on task with issues such as accountability and risk mitigation throughout the cradle to grave process. I discussed policy and regulations used by the state and private contractors to protect their interests while engaging in the realm of public-private partnerships. The focus of the problem statement was addressed through interviews to understand the use of public-private partnerships in public procurement in the state of Virginia's infrastructural development.

Preview of Chapter's Content

In this chapter, I analyze several factors that surround the implementation of public-private partnership development within the states of Virginia, Maryland, and the District of Columbia. I examine the effects of policy and how they translate to the public-private partnership projects for road development in the regions. Through the process of semistructured interviews, I obtained and analyzed information to answer the following research questions:

RQ1: How did the state of Virginia use the factor of accountability to develop their current and past public-private partnerships?

RQ2: What, if any, risk mitigating factors are used within the creation of these project?

RQ3: How have policy and regulations affected the growth of public-private partnership in the state of Virginia?

I asked eight questions, which are listed in Appendix A. I first began with establishing the interviewees' professional background, which led into their current knowledge of the procurement industry and how the public sector's use of public-private partnership provides public sector goods and services on their behalf. The next question addressed risk mitigation and how beneficial these risk mitigation factors are within the bounds of the contract. The final two questions focused on lessons learned and best advice these professionals could impart unto other public-private partnership professionals.

Settings

In this study, I focused and obtained public-private partnership professionals' experiences from both the private and public sector who have worked on public-private partnership projects within the states of Virginia, Maryland, and the District of Columbia. I excluded procurement professionals who had no previous experiences with these specific procurement transactions because the intent of the research was to examine the impact of policy via the lens of professionals who are tasked with adhering to these policies in the contract formulation process. The participants were in command of the

method as well as the duration of the interviews. I probed the experiences of these professionals to ensure the gap in the research was explored.

Data Collection

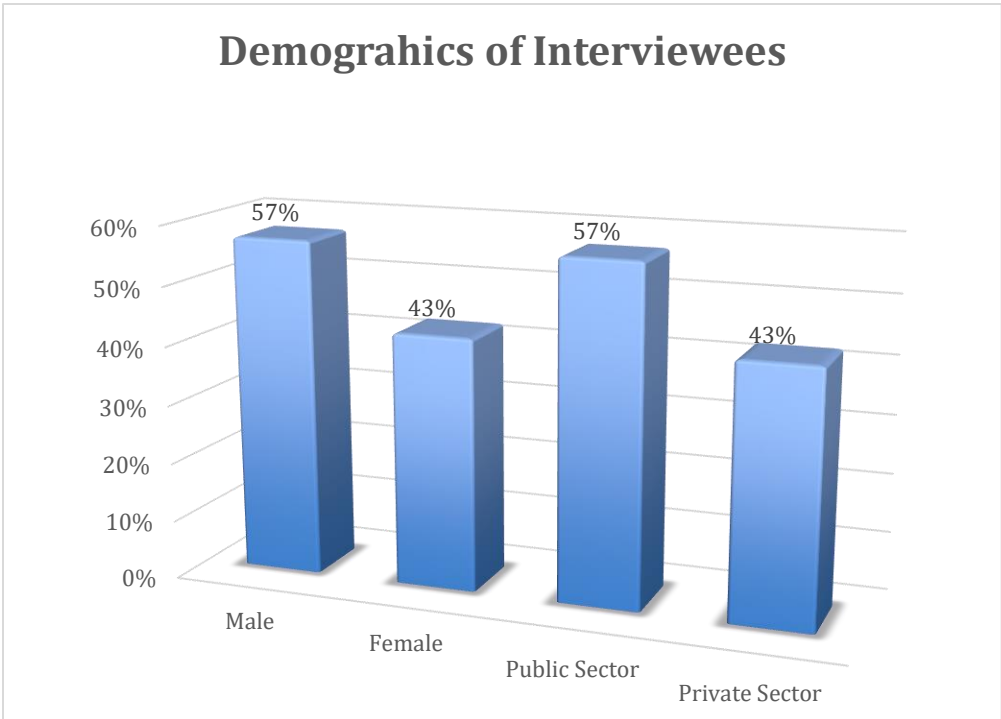
The Zoom conferencing platform and telephone were used to conduct the interviews. The interviews were used to collect the experiences of each research participants via a question-and-answer conversational exchange to obtain the information needed for analyzation. Using both of these data collection platforms allowed each research participant to articulate their experiences freely and in the comfort area of their own choosing. The interviews were conducted virtually. Seven participants were asked eight interview questions that were tailored to explore the gap in the research. The interviewees were given consent forms via email, and a second disclosure was provided to the interviewees at the beginning of each interview. The interviews were recorded via the Zoom platform and the phone call recorder. Each interviewee was provided with a disclosure informing them that the interviews would be recorded and that it would only be used for analyzation purposes.

Demographics of Interviewees

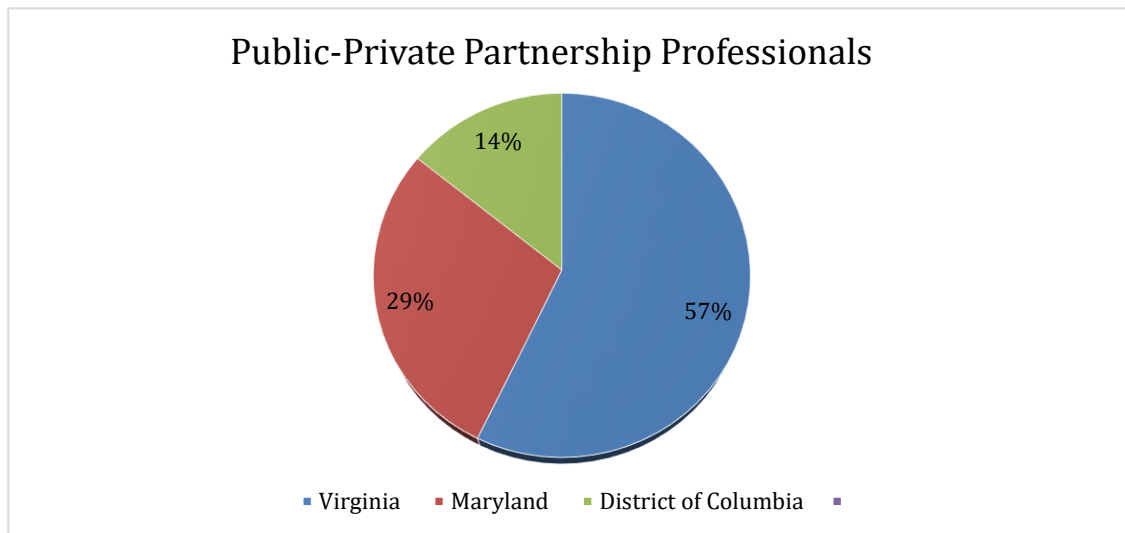
A total of 7 public-private partnership professionals were interviewed to acquire their knowledge on how policy, accountability measures, and risk management were considered for contract development. A total of 4 public and three private sector professionals were interviewed, and of this, 4 of the interviewees were males and 3 were females. Figure 2 illustrates this information.

Figure 2.

Demographics of Interviewees



Each participant was interviewed separately, and the interviews ranged between 30 minutes to 1 hour. I intended to focus only on the state of Virginia; however, due to low responses from prospective participants, the research pool was expanded to incorporate the state of Maryland and the District of Columbia to allow data saturation to be met. Data saturation is met when no new information is being collected during the interviews. Figure 3 depicts the responses on the number of professional by region.

Figure 3.*Public-Private Partnership Professionals Location*

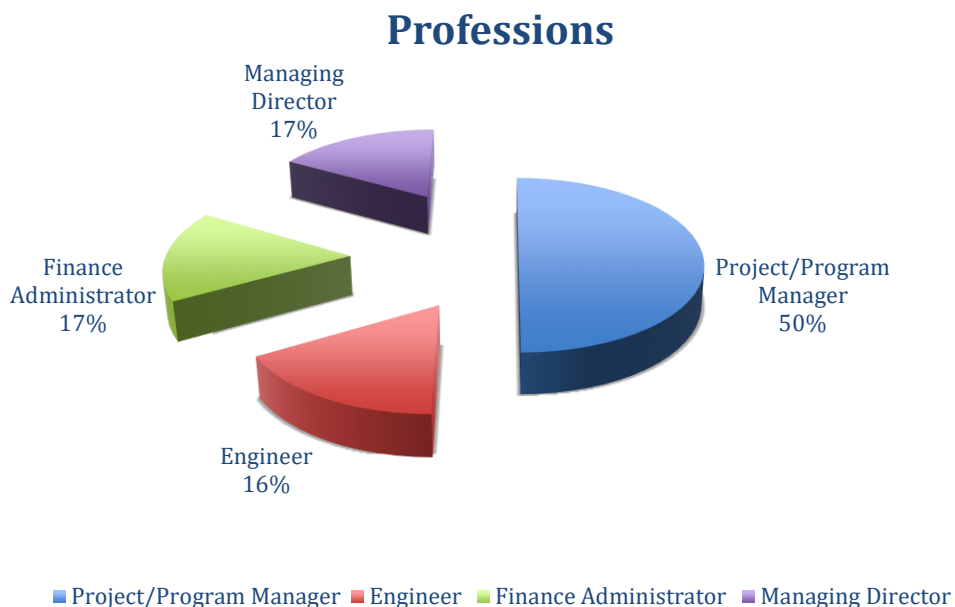
The responses provided by the seven research participants were transcribed, reviewed, and analyzed to extract codes and themes (as shown in Table 1). The codes and themes were used alongside the responders' answers to examine the three research questions as previously mentioned in this chapter.

Data Analysis

The purpose of this research was to understand the accountability, policy, and risk management measures within public-private partnerships for road development in the states of Virginia, Maryland, and the District of Columbia. The research consisted of seven public-private partnership professionals from both the private and public sector to understand how their experiences shaped the interaction and development of public-private partnership projects. These professionals' years of experiences ranged from 3

years to over 25+ years dealing with public-private partnership projects in formats such as project managers, finance officers, and directors amongst other career fields associated with contracting. The targeting of specific professionals allowed for the collection of information specific to the region.

The interviewees were asked to provide their current occupational title, years of experience, and how many of those years were in support of or handling of public-private partnership projects. Amongst the interviewees, their career service was mixed from engineers to finance officers to project managers to directors with 80 years of combined experience. Some professionals were in the early years of being a public-private partnership professional with 3 years of experience while others were categorized as senior subject matter experts with over 20 years as public-private partnership professionals. Figure 4 describes the professional occupations of the interviewees.

Figure 4.*Professional Occupation of Interviewees*

The consensus of the interviewees has been that public-private partnership projects have been an effective tool that has been used by the public sector to provide services to their citizens. Within the states of Virginia, Maryland, and the District of Columbia, this procurement tool is one that has been entered into with forethought and specificity to foster the probability of success. Stakeholders' decisions to enter into this project type have been guided by legislations, coupled with organizational internal policy and regulations. Regardless of the sector to which each interviewee belonged, they emphasized that there must be an equitable exchange for all the parties involved before these deals are pursued. The interviewees emphasized that there are many misperceptions that surround these types of projects, and, as a result, both the private and public sector

personnel have more to do in edifying the public on the benefits these project types bring to their region. One of the rationales for the public's lack of understanding is the public's low engagement in public hearings that are used by the stakeholders to inform the public of the projects at hand and to address their concerns.

Policy Impact in Public-Private Partnership Development

Public policy played a significant role in every facet of public-private partnership project for road development. Many states have policies in place that determine the type of projects that can be created and per the private sector interviewees, their respective organizations have regulation/policy that govern how they will approach these projects. It provides them with clear objectives that should be considered when embarking on such a journey and not only are there organizational regulations, but there are planning committees and internal mechanism that are triggered to help with hammering out how or if the public-private partnership projects are pursued. It is through strategic meetings that each organization, as well as, the public sector client fosters an open forum to discuss with each other the mechanism on project initiatives which then foster a more robust solicitation, proposal, and final agreement. The table below depicts five (5) of the most predominate overarching themes that were discovered in the coding and data analysis portion of the research. The interviewees focus was more centered on various topics throughout their interviewees as Table 2 denotes.

Table 2.*Main Themes From Interviewees*

	Financing	Decision making	Policy	Risk management	Collaboration
Source 1	X	X	X	X	
Source 2		X	X		X
Source 3	X	X	X	X	
Source 4	X	X	X	X	X
Source 5		X	X	X	X
Source 6	X	X	X		
Source 7	X	X	X	X	X

The public sector personnel discussed numerous public policies that have been enacted within the state of Virginia, Maryland, District of Columbia and how these policies set guidelines on the processes they should follow when they are embarking on these projects. Legislations such as *Public-Private Transportation Act of 1995* and the *Implementation Manual and Guidelines for the Public-Private transportation Act of 1995* in Virginia, *Public-Private Partnership Act of 2014* in the District of Columbia, and House Bill 560 in the state of Maryland created the backbone on which these regions have proceeded in the realm of public-private partnership projects. The public sector professionals wanted to emphasize that these policies have seen changes based on lessons

learned, change in economic development, amongst other factors. These policies not only create directive, but they also foster the creation of numerous committees that hold various role in the over cradle to grave process pf these project types. These committees are composed of key stakeholders who have decision making authority to provide feedback to the requesting agency. These processes are collaborative in nature and are held at various stage in this type of solicitation process.

The private sector is not immune from these policies. While the private sector does not have the strict bureaucratic red tapes to impede or slow the pace of their actions, they are aware and will always explore the state's legislative policy to determine the restrictions in place prior to making the determination to engage with the public client on forming a working relationship via these project collaborations. An interviewee mentioned that amid these procurement types, the misconception of the public is that the relationship shared on the public-private partnership project is only that of bidder and evaluators/client and supplier, but rather that is not always the case. There are many other roles private companies play in the public-private procurement solicitation process. Sometimes these private sector groups are contracted in the role of auditors, and researchers, amongst other fields of study to aid the respective agency's decision to either engage in or step away from the procurement pathway of public-private partnership. The third party's role is to be objective in evaluating the validity and viability of the prospective project submitted in the forms of reports and debriefing of relevant stakeholders. All these actions are in support of and are under the implicit or expressive authority of the *Public-Private Transportation Act of 1995* and *the Implementation*

Manual and Guidelines for the Public-Private transportation Act of 1995 for Virginia, *Public-Private Partnership Act of 2014* for District of Columbia and *House Bill 560* for the state of Maryland delegated down to committees, employees, and subcommittees as deemed necessary within these regions.

The driving policy for the public-Private partnership for road development in the state of Virginia is the *Public-Private Transportation Act of 1995* which can be found in § 33.2-1800- § 33.2-1824 (Virginia Law, n.d.). It supported the interviewees assessment of the key role policy places in the overall process of public-private partnership development in the state. One vital action of the law that needs to be illustrated is the creation of the *Transportation Public-Private partnership Steering Committee* under chapter 18 section § 33.2-1803.2 (Virginia Law, n.d.). The section describes the number of stakeholders and the office each member should occupy while providing the committee with broad, as well as, precise objectives that they need to ensure are in their evaluation of public-private partnership financing options. The statute dictates the following in § 33.2-1803.2:B (Virginia Law, n.d.):

B. Prior to the initiation of any procurement pursuant to § [33.2-1803](#) by the Department of Transportation, the Virginia Passenger Rail Authority, or the Department of Rail and Public Transportation, the Committee shall meet to review the public sector analysis and competition developed pursuant to § [33.2-1803.1:1](#) and concur that:

1. The assumptions regarding the project scope, benefits, and costs of the public sector option developed pursuant to § [33.2-1803.1:1](#) were fully and reasonably developed;
2. The assumed financing costs and valuation of both financial and construction risk mitigation included in the public sector option are financially sound and reflect the best interest of the public; and
3. The terms sheet developed for the proposed procurement contains all necessary elements. (Virginia Law, n.d.)

VAP3 also created and maintains a PPTA Implementation Manual and Guidelines last updated in November 2014. The Manual is a supporting mechanism to the PPTA of 1995. Per the State's agency website, this Manual is updated to be reflective of what is stated in the PPTA of 1995. A detail analysis of this manual I found various steps and procedures are laid out to public-private partnership professionals on the internal mechanism of the VAP3 office.

The State of Maryland implemented a similar law on 9 April 2013 via House Bill 560 (Maryland Transportation Authority, n.d.) which provided information to the public on the engagement rules for public-private partnership within the state. Per state law in Maryland, it was devised to create accountability measures through the creation different committees to seek additional information on foregoing projects and will provide approval and or denial on prospective public-private partnership projects. The legislation was also designed to stimulate the economy and increase competitive procurement awards for public-private partnerships developments in the state. The District of

Columbia pursuant to the increased interest in such procurement type, enacted their public-private partnership legislation named the *Public-Private Partnership Act of 2014* and follow up with their rule and guideline procedure regulations on 21 October 2016. The rule and guideline procedure manual serve as a supplement to their legislation which provides a high-level view on how their state agency can conduct these type of procurements.

All three territories have policies in place that facilitates this complex type of procurement to ensure the protection of both the public and private entities. The legislations in all three territories created offices, committees, and dictated primary, as well as, secondary objectives aim at boosting their infrastructure and economy. The legislations and internal procedural document demonstrated that the state of Virginia, Maryland, and District of Columbia do not enter into these agreements on whimsical notion of probabilities. The embarkation on a public-private partnership project is done via a thorough vetting process in each of these regions which enables the accountability of how, when, and where their agencies are able to enter into a public-private partnership deal.

Finance Method of Public-Private Partnership in Road Development in Virginia, Maryland, and the District of Columbia

Public-private partnership is not a new phenomenon that is used by the public sector for road developments, however, the blueprint of how the state of Virginia, Maryland, and District of Columbia utilizes this procurement tool for road development can be used by other regions to tailormade their own projects. The financing mechanism

for each project can create a unique structure that does not imposed too much of a financial burden on the state, its residents, and its private sector partners. The usage of availability payment for public-private partnership development have worked well for the state of Virginia. While other regions have adopted other payment structured in the enacting of their public-private partnership projects. Virginia, Maryland, and District of Columbia have developed a tried-and-true process with their concessionaires on the way in which they finance their public-private partnership projects, and it has allowed both the concessionaire and the state the access to maximum the return on investment to all the relevant stakeholders (state, concessionaire, residents). The numerous financing structures used have provided the regions with the ability to deliver multiple multi-billion dollars projects which has fostered the creation of numerous jobs to the support the local and national economy. One thing these professionals wanted to highlight is the fact that while the state of Virginia has not utilized other forms of payment mechanism other than availability payment, it does not mean that they are not a valid or effective form for contract financing model.

Risk Management in Public-Private Partnership Development

All the research participants were of the opinion that risk management is a key component of the procurement cycle of public-private partnerships. Some even mentioned risk management is one of the most essential proponents of the contract process and the stakeholders should undertake the examination for risk factors from the inception to completion of the project. The action will enable the successful reduction and or in some cases elimination of some risk factors that were foreseen. I discussed with

the participants the factor that if risk factors cannot be eliminated then the next step is doing adequate risk allocation to reduce its potential impact. The party with the most resources to deal with the risk should be the party that retain ownership of the risks because there are risks the government party is more equipped to handle and others the concessionaire has more resources to handle. When such action is taken, it reduces the overburden of a risk factor on one party which could ultimately make the deal less attractive to the potential concessionaire and in some extreme cases will force them to walk away from the deal.

Risk management is an evolving process. It deals with encasing the projects with financial accountability, proper management of personnel, specific, measurable achievable, relevant, and timebound (SMART) goals which will be the drivers for the overall project. Internal and external factors are paramount to the proper handling of risk aversions, risk acceptance, risk shared, and or risk transferred. Each aspect handles the issues differently and on any given project, more than one of those risk management types may be present to aid the continuation of the project. Combining multiple risk management methods on a single project includes, proper planning, foresight, and strategic mapping of how to herald in the options at the right interval and on the party most equipped with the resources to handle the issues.

Accountability and Collaborative Nature of Procurement Officials

It is important to mention the state of Virginia, Maryland, and District of Columbia embedded accountability measures throughout their procurement process. Accountability begins at the state level via legislators who are tasked with timely

modifying their respective public-private partnership laws to ensure relevant state employees can embark upon their duties relative to current events. The State's legislators went a step further to ensure they are steward of taxpayer's dollars and property by ensuring various committees are in place to facilitate and in some cases oversee the process of these procurement types from cradle to grave. These measures states in each regions law allows for structural accountability tree so that each player is acutely aware of their role and responsibilities and operate under such guidance.

As previously mentioned in this chapter these three regions use their current policies as a means to grow the level of accountability each party hold within the lifecycle of these projects. These measures explicitly and implicitly tell each party what they can and cannot or should and should not do via their legislations. These legislations are not one sided in nature because it dictates the bounds within which each sector (public or private) may collaborate on public-private partnership projects. In such instance's accountability is used to breed transparency and will give way to boost the collaborative nature of public-private partnership projects in any and all environments.

One of the reoccurring subtle themes of the interviewees is that public-private partnerships are extremely collaborative in nature. Once these projects are conceived, it becomes a beneficial venture because both the public client and the concessionaire are working tirelessly to enact an agreement. This beneficial agreement is vetted, re-done, and negotiated into a palatable solution which laid out how, when, where, and which interval the public client, will, may and should step into the production line to ensure the continuation of services. The finalized agreements are not free of public oversight, the

public clients are embedded within the process, however, their actions are not openly viewed as hands on however, they are taking stock on the progress of each project while ensuring deliverables are being met in a timely manner.

Summary

This chapter provided a summarization of the purpose of study, a depiction of the data collection method, the research questions, the demographics of the interviewees and result of the interviews. The results of the interview were analyzed and presented in a collective summary of the interviewees answers to the interview questions that provided me with the ability to answer each research question. I found that the state of Virginia, Maryland, and District of Columbia uses multiple pieces of legislations and agency regulation as guides to develop the way in which respective parties are held accountability in the development and performance of any public-private partnership project. The issue of risk management is heavily used to ensure the success of these projects. The risk factors can range from risk transfer, risk acceptance, to risk shared and the legislations have created a safe space for both the private and public sector to embark upon public-private partnership projects. In chapter 5, a full interpretation of the findings, conclusion, and recommendation for public-private partnership professionals is presented. The limitation of the study was also mentioned to help as a starting point for the future research.

Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations

Introduction

Public-private partnerships are a growing singularity that has been gaining notoriety over the last couple of decades within the public sector. Public-private partnerships projects are a nontraditional form of public procurement that is used to meet agencies, citizens, and economic needs. The use of this nontraditional procurement type is not void of accountability measures, risk management, and bureaucratic red tapes. These factors are associated with this contract type at different intervals within the inception, processing, and operation phase. The use of this procurement type has enabled financially strapped entities to provide infrastructural development on a continuous basis. The states of Virginia and Maryland as well as the District of Columbia have used public-private partnership projects at various stages to provide resources to their people. In this research, I explored the measures used by these regions that enabled accountability and reduced risk. I discovered that these measures are a derivative of the various state laws of these areas, and these state laws are periodically updated to remain relevant and substantive to the overall process of public-private partnership development.

The purpose of this study was to bring a deeper understanding of how procurement officials have used public-private partnership projects to effectively and efficiently meet their growing infrastructural needs. I examined how these three factors, accountability measures, risk management, and policies, were used to achieve the goal of fostering public-private partnership projects for infrastructural development. In this chapter, the findings of the research questions are summarized, recommendations for

future research are discussed, and synthesis of the information is presented to enhance the development in the field of public-private partnerships.

Interpretation of Findings

The research questions examined were created to gain a deeper understanding into the workings of public-private partnership development for road development. The relevant stakeholders from both the public and private sector provided in-depth information on how these regions achieved their desired outcomes when they embark upon this specific type of procurement. In this section, I discuss some of the themes as they relate to the three research questions:

RQ1: How did the state of Virginia use the factor of accountability to develop their current and past public-private partnerships?

RQ2: What, if any, risk mitigating factors are used within the creation of these projects?

RQ3: How have policy and regulations affected the growth of public-private partnership in the state of Virginia?

Through semistructured interviews, seven key stakeholders in both the public and private industry were interviewed to obtain their perspectives on the current operation of public-private partnership projects for road development. The interviews were transcribed using the Otter.ai software. This software is an auto computer-generated transcription service; hence, the need for quality control assessment was deemed necessary. Once quality assessment was conducted to ensure the accuracy of the transcribed audio, the transcript was uploaded into NVivo for Mac to conduct coding and themes for analysis.

In reference to RQ1, I concluded that there was high level of accountability that remained throughout each phase of these procurement types for both the private and public sector. Both the private and public sector professionals encased their actions with multiple measures to the foster growth as well as success of the project. Measures were explicitly as well as implicitly spelled out within laws and organizational regulations and were used as guidelines by the stakeholders in their overall decision-making process. The regions have demonstrated they have sustained a functional legal framework in the realm of public-private partnership to pioneer accountability for these projects.

RQ2 regarding risk management was another key component to fostering the success of these projects. The main takeaway for majority of the stakeholders was that the entity who is most equipped to handle specific risks factors should embrace it and not shy away taking on the responsibility. Risk management entails embedding factors to curtail its impact upon the projects. Some risk factors can be avoided, while others can only be minimized. In such instances, the relationship of risk management to decrease the various risk factors is structured in a manner that at some point may eliminate the variance of the risk in relation to the project. The structural integrity of the projects is determined by the terms and conditions as well as the project timeline on how stakeholders shelter, shift, or eliminate risk factors such as project overruns and change order, which may lead to a delay in completion time as well as an increase in the overall cost of the project. Within the public sector, it is important for the issuing agency to partner with an experience concessionaire to facilitate their projects. Using the wrong resources within a project can increase the risk factors and, if left uncorrected, could lead

to project failure. Risk management is an intricate section of public-private partnership projects and it is not to be overlooked because it is needed to facilitate a smooth project.

Regarding RQ3, laws, rules, and agency/organizational regulation are the baselines for when, where, and how a project was created. It is ominous in nature if these various laws are not taken in strides. The notion of catering to multiple moving parts simultaneously can become a daunting task. However, taking these various laws in sections allows the stakeholders ample time to satisfy the requirements under the law and ensures they are meeting their desired objectives. The laws and organizational regulations are an additional layer of risk management as well as protection for both the client and provider. It would be detrimental for either party to these agreements to concede to a binding agreement that would ignore these laws because it would be fiscally irresponsible of them. The notion of value for money is forethought of these ongoing projects; however, the finality of the project must be profitable to those involved.

The use of public-private partnerships for means other than road development has been done in these regions. The states of Virginia, Maryland, and the District of Columbia have all used this procurement type of public-private partnership for projects such as metro-rail development, erecting government buildings, and building schools amongst other types of projects. In all three regions, their current legislations are designed to give their personnel a degree of free reign that allows them to process their contract type for procurement. One of the benefits these regions have, especially the state of Virginia, is their long history of involvement in public-private partnerships, which have afforded them the capacity to create trends for others to embody along their journey

into the public-private partnership world. The longevity with this procurement type has allowed personnel the ability to use lessons learned to foster more robust projects. The public-private partnership professional can use lessons learned and remodel those lessons to bring into fruition the future projects in which they will be involved. The notion of risk transfer is one of the taboo areas of risk management that could become problematic in solidifying a mutual agreement between the public and private sector organizations. One of the main reasons for this is the trend that risk transfer is a predominant one-way model. It is the transfer from the public sector to the private sector counterpart. However, in discussions, some of the interviewees stated that they aimed to overcome this challenge within the negotiation phase to become more open to having the party best equipped to handle the risk embrace the risk. They also mentioned that there may be cases where the risk must be shared and, in such cases, it should be a welcome challenge because of the resources held by both parties to fully tackle the risk in question.

Grounded theory, as discussed in Chapter 2, is a theory that captures the impact of societal members' actions and how these actions directly foster outcome in multiple arenas (Shanahan et al., 2018). As a result, the steps taken by public-private partnership professionals have influenced the outcomes of projects through usage accountability, risk management, and policy. Baxter (2016) mentioned that grounded theory pushes for the unfolding of new theory through the use of observations. It was under this premise that I was able support the emergence of a new theory dealing with the collaborative efforts of the three performance factors explored in relation to the public-private partnership that had given rise to the collaboration theory of a public-private partnership. The theory deals

with the notion that the three factors discussed in detail throughout this dissertation, when effectively combined, increase the probability of success of these projects. The depth of collaboration that is needed in order to adjust to the nature of each project requires the stakeholder to tap into a reservoir of knowledge from internal and external personnel, which only support the criterion of the collaborative nature of public-private partnerships.

Limitations of The Study

As noted in previous chapters, I explored the impact of public-private partnership within a specific framework and as such it should not be treated as the only solution for road development. The utilization of this procurement model must be embarked upon with much foresight, planning, and strategic implementation. The findings are limited to those public-private partnership professionals who participated in this research and shared their experiences, lessons learned, and insight to the handling of their current and past projects. Due to this nature, current and future professionals should not generalize these findings to the entire school of public-private partnership projects, but they should rather use it as a blueprint to enhance their projects. These findings should be used as a tool rather than an absolute solution to foster the development of future public-private partnership projects.

My approach to data collection was impeded when there were not enough candidates responding to my request for interview within the intended population of public-private partnership professionals in the state of Virginia. Due to the insufficient number of responses, the research participant pool was expanded to include the state of

Maryland and District of Columbia. As a result, the findings should not be singularly applied to the state of Virginia.

Recommendation for Future Study

The financial impact of public-private partnership has been on a local and national level. The resources that must be included on these projects to foster its success is vast in nature. Due to these two factors, it is recommended that future study examine how these three factors “accountability, risk management, and policy” impacted current projects during the current coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. The COVID-19 pandemic created new rules that had to be implemented by various levels of government in an effort to combat the fatal diseases that claimed many lives. The complex nature of these project types can be explored to determine how risk factors that were already incorporated in the project helped to reduce project overruns and delay in schedule amongst other factors during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Implications of Social Change

This study provided information that both the public and private sector could utilize in public-private partnership project. Federal and state governments, local municipalities, and their industry partners may utilize the information in this research to develop a more robust blueprint to ensure the continuity of services with regards to the projects that they are embarking upon. The complexity of these projects may become overwhelming however, examining the functional framework of the state of Virginia, Maryland, and the District of Columbia will allow the examiner to determine the aspect of these regions’ model they would like to use when embarking on their own project(s).

Policymakers, key stakeholders, and various members of the wider public who hold an avid interest with the development of these partnerships could benefit from using this in-depth analysis on how these project types were compiled by the regions. Researching this topic may lead to many other public sector partners utilizing public-private partnerships to meet their growing needs while dealing with stringent budgetary restraints. Refined contracting practices, policies improvement, and emerging policies are some of the potential rewards that would be gained from the knowledge within this research.

Conclusion

Chapter 1 provided an introduction to the public-private partnership for road development within the state of Virginia and was discussed throughout this dissertation. Chapter 2 examined literature in relations to various models of public-private partnership for road development and identified a gap in studies that needed exploration. Chapter 3 outlined the approach to the study. It detailed that qualitative methodology that the research questions will be explored while looking at the state of Virginia's public-private partnership for road development. Chapter 4 summarized the findings that were explored via interviews and document reviews to verify laws that provided guidelines to public-private partnership professionals who are engaging in these type of projects. The analysis was expanded to nearby territories Maryland and District of Columbia to examine how they use this procurement type for road development and how accountability, risk management, and policies played a role in the overall process. Chapter 5 provided recommendations for future studies and implication for social change.

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Appendix: Interview Questions

Interview Questions for Virginia, Maryland, and District of Columbia Interviewees:

1. Please state your name, occupation/title, and years of experiences within the contracting field, and how many of those years have you been involved in public-private partnership project.
2. Please provide a brief introduction of your professional experience as a contracting officer/procurement executive?
3. With your knowledge of the procurement industry, what is your opinion on the public sector's use of public-private partnerships to provide public sector goods and services to the public on their behalf?
4. What are some of the benefit(s) that public-private partnership projects provide to the community that are not widely discussed in the procurement industry?
5. Regarding the creation of the public-private partnership project(s) you have worked on, how much did public policy, and or agency regulation(s) played a role in the length, terms and conditions and any other pertinent factors that were incorporated into the contract agreement? Please explain.
6. What if any, are some of the risk mitigating factors that were incorporated in the projects you have been included on that in your opinion were beneficial to the success of the project?
7. Thinking back on these projects, are there any critical risk mitigating factor(s) every procurement executive should consider including in the contract process of public-private partnership agreement?
8. Looking back, are there any lessons learned pertaining to your projects or other projects that you have been involved with that could be useful in aiding you with preparing for future public-private partnership projects?