Andile Gqaji (South Africa), Cecile Proches (South Africa), Paul Green (South Africa)

Perceived impact of public sector leadership on road infrastructure service delivery

Abstract

It is well documented that road infrastructure is an important catalyst of the South African economy because of the interchange of people, goods and services which are dependent upon transport. The purpose of this study was to investigate the perceived impact of public sector leadership on road infrastructure service delivery. A qualitative methodology approach was employed using a purposive sampling technique. Twenty, in-depth, face-to-face interviews were conducted with respondents from both the public and private sectors. Data were analyzed using thematic analysis and the findings of this research indicate that public sector leadership is ineffective in driving road infrastructure development. The results also suggest that the lack of accountability and corruption hinders the delivery of infrastructure.

Introduction

South Africa has witnessed a tremendous increase in the number of protests whereby some have become extremely violent. Largely, these protests are a result of dissatisfaction due to poor service delivery. Moshikaro & Pencelliah (2016) agree that the continued escalations of public protests in South Africa are due to poor delivery of service at the sphere of local government. Whilst the government is cognisant and attempting to address dissatisfaction, the trajectory of agitation among citizens due to poor delivery of service is on the incline. Enshrined in the constitution is the provision of quality service to all South Africans by all levels of government.

The social wellbeing and fiscal state of any country is extensively influenced by the transportation of services, goods and people. National Minister, Martins (2013) in his address of the Department's Budget Vote to the National Assembly on 28 May 2013, alluded to road infrastructure as a catalyst in bringing disconnected communities closer to economic opportunities. He further stated that it is the Department of Transport's duty to make transport the heartbeat of the economy. However, in a study conducted by Naidoo (2011) the absence of accountability mechanisms and a total lack of transparency and leadership have not only led to the frustration of those tasked with the planning, design and delivery of infrastructure, but have also led to violent service delivery protests throughout South Africa. It is against this background that this article aims to identify the perceived impact of public sector leadership on road infrastructure delivery.

1. Problem statement

South Africa is one of the most rapidly developing countries compared to other African nations, but is facing severe service delivery challenges (Pityana, 2016; Bizana, et al., 2015; Adinboade et al., 2014). Contemporary literature claims that South Africa is not a unique country, as many other developing countries around the world are also facing problems of inefficient public service delivery. Service delivery has been inconsistent with the general public's preferences and considered ineffectivein these countries.

Chikulo (2013) advocates that local governance in South Africa has made significant in-roads in terms of delivery of basic services, particularly to the previously disadvantaged groups in society. However, Govender and Mostert (2011) argue that service delivery challenges faced by government have drawn attention to the public sector (government), which is the driver of development in South Africa, and have created a perception from the voluntary organizations that there is a characteristic of ineffective leadership, which has supposedly resulted in technical incompetency and corruption in the public sector.

This has hindered or delayed the rate of road infrastructure development in South Africa. Pillay (2008) argued that the expectations of the general public from public sector servants are quite high, but the experience has often been negative, i.e., service delivery to improve quality of life does not exist.

The service delivery protests that have recently taken place, with some turning violent including damage to property, even though circumstantial, could have been prompted by the lack of road infrastructure delivery. The former president of South Africa, Thabo Mbeki (2005) indicated that poor service delivery could in the long run negatively affect the stability in South Africa. Pillay (2008) further suggested that it is imperative to

improve the general public's perception of public sector servants through efficiencies and improved service delivery that stems from effective leadership. This further supports the need to investigate the impact of public sector leadership on road infrastructure service delivery.

Research question: What are the perceptions of how public sector leadership impacts road service delivery?

2. Literature review

Leadership is one of the most important factors affecting organizational performance (Green, 2016). Leaders institute a direction by developing a vision for the future. They then align the followers through communicating this vision and encouraging them to deal with any hindrances (Nwokeiwu, 2009). In today's ever-changing world, leaders are needed to challenge the status quo, to create visions for the future, and to encourage organizational members to want to achieve the vision or the goals of the organization.

2.1. Leadership within the public sector. Leadership is about "making it happen". Effective leaders are required by every organization, however, they are very hard to find. Many people see the importance of leadership as self-evident no matter what the setting. In organizations, effective leadership should theoretically provide higher quality and more efficient services and goods. It should provide cohesiveness, individual development, and higher levels of contentment amongst subordinates, as well as direction and vision, the creation of a conducive environment, building an enabling environment for creativity and innovation, and being a resource for invigorating the organizational culture (Van Wart, 2003). Leadership has been intricate in all eras and hence it has been transforming, however, it may seem that leaders today face additional challenges. However, there is little consensus on what the key challenges facing today's organizational leaders really are (Birchfield and Story, 2004).

It is generally acknowledged that leadership is an essential element of constructive social transformation in any public sector. It can also be clear that communities cannot carry on expanding and be successful without it, and no organization can succeed where it is not available (Herbst and Conradie, 2011). This, today, has allowed the general public to view and hold public sector leadership accountable – through the internet, the media and public awareness. Even though there are too many challenges, the public displays less tolerance for leader's mistakes and structural problems (Yankelovich, as cited in Van Wart, 2003).

Leaders, irrespective where and who they lead, are expected to 'get things done' to sustain good systems, and to provide training and resources for production to sustain effectiveness and efficiency through different types of controls. They are further required to make sure that technical problems are correctly handled and to coordinate functional operations (Van Wart, 2003). For service delivery, ineffective and inefficient leadership has been acknowledged by different authors as one of the main flaws (Herbst and Conradie, 2011). Another element is that leaders do not do the work. Van Wart mentioned that they depend on the subordinates to actually do the work. Accordingly, subordinates' training, maturation, motivation and continued development and overall contentment are essential for organizational and production effectiveness.

Leaders, whether in the public or private sector, are typically required to do and be all of these things: perform, develop subordinates, align their organizations and foster a common goal. Yet most leaders are required to make intricate choices about what to focus on and what they should glean from the act of leadership (Van Wart, 2003). This is rather difficult in South African politics where there has been frequent Minister reshuffling (Pityana, 2016), e.g., when a Minister focuses on something and is ready to implement, he or she is moved to another department and another Minister takes over and focuses on something else.

In recent times, it has turned out that the point of view of leadership has transformed and keeps on transforming, and that leadership with the required competence to build relationships, to co-operate in partnerships and to guide transformation efficiently is imperative for long-term efficiency of public sector organizations. Martin (as cited in Herbst and Conradie, 2011) agreed that imperative skills for leadership growth in the future will fall in the grouping of relationships and collaborations. Herbst and Conradie further added that the process of being a better leader is mainly premised on self-determination and personal revolution. Van Wart (2003) suggested that leaders must have a basic technical knowledge of the organization, often more for credibility than the executive function itself – formal training can help here. Leadership is a different profession altogether from doing line work. Training in this instance can greatly facilitate the learning process, particularly for those who have just taken up leadership roles.

Herbst and Conradie (2011) argue that there is no or little consideration being paid to the development of those individual characteristics that are also

significant for leadership: honesty, self-comprehending, personal skills and self-awareness.

Singh (2008) claimed that currently, the development schedule of service delivery comprises of obtaining and endorsing higher levels of economic growth, reducing and addressing poverty and underdevelopment, and building and sustaining organizational capacity. In simple terms, the public sector must encourage and achieve a high value of life, living and livelihood for all in South Africa. In essence, accountable, effective, economical and efficient service delivery is a constitutional directive and it is the responsibility of the public sector leadership to ensure that it exists. Where there is effective leadership, organizational performance improves.

When it comes to service delivery, everyone understands the significance of effective leadership, which is when people take part in an election for our political leaders. People realise that it matters who is in office, so they involve themselves in elections, i.e. to select the best candidate. Government must focus on effective leadership, transparency, accountability, openness and responsiveness (Holtzhausen and Naidoo, 2011). This will ensure that those who do not perform are removed from public sector. Holtzhausen and Naidoo added that in order to promote effective delivery of services, the role and capacity of an effective leader ought to be rooted in their ability to develop, attract and retain competent employees. However, the researcher argued that due to political interference, some competent people do not want to work in the public sector, which poses a challenge for attracting competent people.

3. Research methodology

The study adopted a qualitative approach in order to ascertain the perception on public sector leadership. Purposive sampling was employed. In-depth, semi-structured interviews were used to collect data. Ethical approval was obtained and twenty face-to-face interviews were conducted. See Table 1 below indicating position, organization and years of experience in the industry.

Table 1. Details of interviewees

Reference	Position	Voluntary organization	Experience in the industry (years)
R1	Functional Head of Roads and Highway	SARF	>10
R2	Regional Head Designate	SARF	>10
R3	Head of Geometric Design Team	SARF	>10
R4	Section Manager	SARF	>10
R5	Technical Director	SAICE	>10
R6	Project Manager	SAICE	>10
R7	Division Manager	SAICE	>10
R8	Regional Manager	SARF	>10
R9	Section Manager	SARF	5-10
R10	Executive Director	SAICE	>10
R11	Manager	SAICE	>10
R12	Manager	SAICE	>10
R13	Manager	SAICE	>10
R14	Senior Manager	SAICE	>10
R15	Deputy Head	SARF	>10
R16	Director Advisory Group	SAICE	>10
R17	Principal Transport Sector	SAICE	>10
R18	Transport Specialist	SARF	5-10
R19	Manager	SAICE	>10
R20	Principal	SAICE	>10

The sample was chosen by concentrating on the voluntary organizations in South Africa, as they render a consulting and an advisory role to the government for the delivery of road infrastructure. The South African Institution of Civil Engineering (SAICE) and the South African Road Federation (SARF) were represented by personnel that practice civil engineering in both the private and public sector which ensured that both views were captured.

All participants were interviewed at their offices and the duration of each interview session lasted approximately 40 minutes. Interviews were conducted between 24 April 2013 and 28 April 2013. Questions were phrased in a manner that brought forth answers from the interviewees in their own words that aimed at what they perceived as key aspects linked to the impact of public sector leadership.

The questionnaire comprized of 10 questions and twenty participants were interviewed. With the approval of the respondents a tape recorder was used. Some of the participants had practised in both the public and private sector and as a consequence provided a rich perspective. Data was analyzed using thematic analysis whereby the data were coded using a wide range of categories that identified and described themes from the perspectives of the participants.

4. Results

Research question: *What are the perceptions of how public sector leadership impacts road service delivery?*

4.1. Lack of technical competency/expertise. The way to maximise results as a leader is to have high expectations for both relationships and results (as

cited in Nwokeiwu, 2009). Technical competency is one of the attributes cited by respondents to be lacking in the public sector. It can be stated categorically that if people are not competent in their jobs they cannot deliver on any of the organizational objectives. This will certainly hinder the delivery of infrastructure, amongst other things, in the public sector. As compared to the public sector, the interviewees cited that the private sector has an edge in terms of competency in that they attract more qualified people.

A Roads Division Manager who spoke from personal experience had to move from the public sector to the private sector for his own competency development, and concurred that:

...the leadership that was in place did not ensure that I was properly trained to be part of the team and to grow and be competent to deliver services. I was not empowered. I had to go to the private sector to get proper training [7].

However, one of the respondents claimed that the:

...private sector can afford to attract more qualified and competent people because it can pay high salaries. Public sector is limited to threshold in terms of position. Again, the type of person you can get may not be the best because the public sector is limited to what it can afford [8].

Van Veelen (2013) elaborated that in the past, government departments were led by public servants, who through their expertise in management of infrastructure had acquired the wisdom to plan in advance and make decisions. However, in recent times government departments have been led by people who do not have the necessary technical background and knowledge that is required. Public servants who had the expertise and wisdom to plan road infrastructure have now been replaced by people who do not have the knowledge to make long term decisions.

A participant suggested that:

...because if you do not have leadership that do not have the capabilities to lead and do not have the technical expertise to be able to lead, you cannot have service delivery. However, the leader does not have to have all the competencies, but there must be sufficient technical competency within the organization [16].

There was a general feeling amongst respondents that not all government departments that are mandated with road infrastructure delivery lack technical competency. One interviewee cited that:

...there are public sector organizations that are strong in technical competency and that do things a

lot better, SANRAL is one of them. This organization was recently congratulated by the Minister of Finance on its budget spending and service delivery, which shows competency [16].

A Project Manager in the public sector appeared to talk from experience when he cited that:

... due to lack of leadership people got frustrated, qualified people quit and there was no time for skills transfer and mentoring and that has left the municipality with a skills shortage, and they could not replace those qualified people who left. The leadership was frustrating by not acknowledging competency, ability and qualifications [6].

A Divisional Manager expressed that the deployment of technically unqualified and inexperienced municipal managers is to blame for the lack of the required skills in the public sector and must be prevented as it is a sign of ineffective leadership. He added that:

...before, a municipal manager was a highly technical person. But now the decisions that are taken at local municipal level are more political rather than technical [7].

Wenzel (2007) concurred with the Divisional Manager's view that the deployment of unqualified people in the public sector hinders the delivery of infrastructure. Pillay (2008), however, argued with Wenzel's view that it is fundamental for government to promote transformation as a result of apartheid, nonetheless, it is a very serious concern that the majority of public sector servants are very inexperienced.

4.2. Lack of vision and prioritisation of road projects. Respondents cited that public sector leadership lacks vision and prioritization of roads projects. Projects that have been prioritised were to ensure popularity and obtain votes. Road infrastructure is being rolled out in areas that do not necessarily need it, to find out that there are other areas that need it more. It was further claimed that public sector leadership has different priorities when it comes to roads. There must be a balance of vision; one of the respondents mentioned that political leadership in the public sector is compromised by a limited vision, i.e., there is a lack of seeing the bigger picture.

One respondent cited that:

There is an outward looking rather than inward focus which impacts on delivery. This is based on politicians' vision of obtaining votes instead of visioning the needed infrastructure [6].

It was cited by the respondents that public sector leadership, whether strong or weak, will have a

direct impact on road infrastructure delivery. Participants agreed that effective leadership can create the right momentum to ensure that the necessary funding and strategic direction are given or dedicated to the road infrastructure sector. Conversely, if this sector does not have effective leadership then it is likely that budgets will be reduced and consequently, infrastructure delivery will reduce.

A participant added that:

Due to apartheid, finances are diverted from roads to other needy areas. Also due to lack of strong leadership finances are diverted to other areas. Sometimes... diverted to not so needy areas [19].

A Senior Manager in the public sector who deals with Council as their leadership exhibited a lot of emotional frustration and cited that:

...in the public sector we have too many managers and too few leaders. But because of lack of leadership, there is lack of faith in subordinates for every project, instead of allowing subordinates to carry out the project. Instead of empowering the subordinates the Council would rather empower external people, leaving internal people with skills shortage. This creates low staff morale and self-esteem. Effective leadership will ensure such things do not happen [14].

The Senior Manager's opinions corresponded with the views of Sharma and Bajpai (2010), who claimed that in many organizations there are normally managers instead of leaders. Birchfield and Story (2004) added that consequently many organizations are over-managed and under-led. Mukoma (2003) agreed with Kotter (as cited in Naidoo, 2005) that many management experts believe the manager's leadership style is primarily influenced by his attitudes towards his subordinates. When the subordinates are effectively led and empowered they appreciate the trust exhibited by their leader, and respond with superior performance which is associated with motivated subordinates.

4.3. Lack of accountability. Respondents stated that a lack of accountability in the public sector is the reason for the lack or slow pace of delivery of infrastructure. The private sector is driven by accountability to shareholders and by profits, whereas in the public sector there is no urgency and no accountability. Naidoo (2005), however, claimed that the Path-Goal Theory found that is the responsibility of leadership to assist subordinates in accomplishing their goals which are compatible with the objectives of the organization. A respondent argued that leadership drives accountability. Jones (as cited in Ndlovu, 2009), however, argued that it does not help to keep raising

the issue of lack of accountability in the public sector without understanding the underlying challenges faced by the public sector employees. In some cases, if not most, public sector organizations attempt to administer large volumes of transactions through outdated technologies or procedures without business intelligence capabilities. The issue of lack of accountability in the public sector should not be misunderstood; it is attributable to capacity, regulations, structure, procedures or infrastructure.

The public sector is said to be relaxed where people work with no objectives or goals. One of the respondents stressed that there is no focus or pressure for delivery; there is no drive in the public sector and people seem to work with no objectives or sense of urgency. Nwokeiwu (2009) explained that success is both about relationships and results effective leaders know where they are headed and are able to influence others to follow. However, in the study that was undertaken at the University of Michigan, it was found that effectiveness of leaders was determined by productivity of subordinates (Naidoo, 2005). Therefore, the productivity of subordinates is dependent on how they are led and the efficiency of leaders.

One of the respondents stated that:

When it comes to accountability, leaders must be held accountable for delivering on what their targets are [9].

Baldwin (2010) suggested that if the public sector is to deliver a service effectively and efficiently, change has to occur in the upper echelons and leadership must be held accountable for their outcomes, but not only at the leadership level but at all levels of the organization.

In essence, accountable, effective, economical and efficient service delivery is a constitutional directive and it is the responsibility of the public sector leadership to ensure that it exists.

4.4. Political interference. Political interference was cited as a major issue in the public sector. A Director categorically stated that public sector leadership must ensure that people are appointed based on their expertise, not on political association, as if there is a change in politics and those people are removed that will affect infrastructure implementation, there must also be no cadre deployment.

A respondent argued that:

Largely, in the private sector people are employed for their technical and management capabilities. In the public sector, a large percentage of leadership is employed based on their political association, not necessarily based on their leadership skills and

technical traits. Public sector leadership is more politically motivated than it should be. [16]

Public sector leadership should not be politically driven but should be purely based on needs and demands (e.g. in rural areas, particularly in KZN, where school children, due to a lack of pedestrian infrastructure, swim across a crocodile infested river to get to school) and delivering services to the public. This is consistent with Mukoma's (2003) view, who claimed that most of the decisions in the public sector are more influenced by what is happening in politics rather than by logical and rational thinking.

4.5. Corruption. Corruption was cited as one of the hindrances of infrastructure delivery. A Division Manager said that instead of funds being spent on infrastructure, they are spent on fruitless expenditure. Herbst and Conradie (2011) advocated that public sector leaders must conduct themselves with honesty and self-awareness.

Fenaroff suggested that in improving the public sector image, it is important to eliminate elements of corruption which unfortunately are widespread in the public sector (as cited in Ndlovu, 2009). Lungu and Esau (as cited in Ndlovu, 2009) claimed that sound public sector ethics are crucial. Accordingly, there is a need to evaluate the public sector's ethics regime. Unethical behavior by leaders makes it difficult to enhance an effective public service due to free flow of information, trust, being impaired by it. Ethical leadership displays a certain level of integrity that is important for stimulating a sense of the leader's trustworthiness, which is fundamental for subordinates to acknowledge the vision of the leader (Ndlovu, 2009).

One participant explained that:

It is cited in the National Treasury Regulation and the Public Finance Management Act (PFMA) that a lowest tender should get the contract, but in some department one of the highest tenderers get the contract and no one will explain or clarify how the adjudication was conducted [17].

Another participant added that:

Fraud and corruption is rife in the public sector. Tender processes are being flawed and flouted. Due to lack of transparency, service providers are not advised of why they did not win a tender and learn later that a tender was awarded to a friend [10].

Another respondent highlighted that corruption is linked back to lack of accountability in the public sector.

Frazer-Moleketi (2007) explained that corruption is present in all small and big countries, poor or rich,

however, developing countries are the ones on which its effects are most destructive. The poor are disproportionately hurt by corruption as it redirects funds planned for development, in that way undermining a government's capability to provide basic services, including providing road infrastructure, feeding inequality and injustice, and discouraging foreign aid and investment. This is evident in South Africa where the inequality gap between the rich and the poor is still wide.

4.6. Lack of funding. A Technical Director argued that what inhibits road infrastructure delivery is the lack of funding. One of the key issues is that public sector leadership does not understand the implications of funding on road infrastructure delivery. Ndlovu (2009) cited that service delivery unfortunately requires vast financial resources. Any leader, good or bad, cannot deliver on any mandate without all the necessary resources.

Another respondent stressed that:

Funds to build roads are too limited, in particular at the local level. The funds allocated for roads are spent on other priorities due to political leadership [7].

It was explained that:

There is a lack of funding when it comes to road infrastructure. There is a huge amount of money required to build and maintain infrastructure. The legacy of apartheid is also to blame for the lack of infrastructure. One can look at the lack of delivery in rural communities where infrastructure is mainly required. We are facing a backlog of so much infrastructure delivery that needs to be implemented to restore evenness in terms of economies of scale [10].

One of the respondents agreed that lack of funding prevents roads from being built, however, he had a different view and put things into another perspective when he cited that nowadays government is trying to alleviate poverty and, hence, the funds are diverted to the so-called needy. Funds these days are spent where they are desperately needed, which is not necessarily on road infrastructure.

4.7. Lack of project management skills. Respondents observed that within some government departments there are unqualified people in senior positions who do not know what decisions to make. Public sector leaders must instil problem solving skills (intellectual stimulation) in their subordinates, which entails stimulating and transforming subordinates' awareness of seeing problems as challenges and their aptitude to resolve those challenges (Nwokeiwu, 2009). Furthermore, these people in senior positions would rather not make a decision than make a wrong decision, which

ultimately stalls the implementation of infrastructure and they know that they will not be fired. Pillay (2003) pointed out that effective leadership is concerned with the implementation of the decisions that will assist in facilitating the activities of an organization towards achieving its objectives.

One of the respondents stressed that:

...where there is low morale, people are not motivated enough to do the jobs they are employed for. It all comes down from the top to the people on the ground. Because of lack of effective leadership in the public sector to motivate staff to see the broader picture of delivering infrastructure and if there is no vision, people lose morale. Unmotivated staff cannot work hard enough to deliver infrastructure [6].

Respondents also cited poor communication as a result of lack of leadership. A study cited in Baldwin's (2010) research revealed that low levels of subordinate commitment were related to poor communication from leadership. Leaders, therefore, are required to be effective in their communication style so that they can communicate effectively with subordinates. Ineffective communication by leaders to subordinates leads to frustration and makes service providers annoyed because people are not communicating effectively and wasting time. The only good thing an effective leader can do is to enforce good and timeous planning, organizing, leading and controlling well ahead of time, ensuring the plans for implementation are communicated effectively.

It was stated that...

... public sector leadership should not necessarily have to have strong technical skills, however, they must have strong people's skills, communication is vital, the ability to pull people together to try to achieve the same goals. People skills will help deal with politicians who apply pressure from time to time....it also requires integrity to eliminate corruption. [17].

Discussion

The findings of the research revealed that participants viewed public sector leadership in a bad light when it comes to infrastructure delivery. The results revealed that all the challenges that come with ineffective leadership impeded road development and that effective leadership was totally lacking. The study also found that respondents, as civil engineers, were frustrated that the lack of effective leadership not only adversely impacted on the economy of the country and the quality of human life, but it also adversely affected their profession, because it cannot survive without

the government's roads contracts as their major client.

The findings of this research further indicated that respondents perceived that many critical positions in the public sector were made through nepotism, cadre deployment, etc., but positions should be made on technical merits. In that way leaders will receive the best technical advice required to make sound decisions. Burke and Collins (as cited in Naidoo, 2011) concurred that transformational leaders stress team development and improved subordinate working relationships to guarantee positive working relationship to contribute to the overall achievement of subordinates and the organizational performance.

The majority of respondents blamed the slow pace, or worse, lack of infrastructure, on the public sector leadership. This is because better organizational performance is linked to effective leadership (Smith et al., as cited in Sharma and Bajpai, 2010). When the new government took power in 1994, it promised to improve service delivery in order to redress social imbalances created by apartheid. It was vital to take note that there were great hopes that the post-apartheid South African government would bring essential services to many South Africans who were in the past barred or afforded unsatisfactory services.

As a result, the new democratic government dedicated itself to enhancing the quality of basic services, accountability of public servants, efficiency and services of all recipients (Ile, 2010). Effective leadership is considered to be critical for the rapid improvement and the redress of service delivery imbalances and inequalities. Holtzhausen and Naidoo (2011), however, claimed that effective leadership alone will not end service delivery challenges, but service delivery cannot be significantly enhanced without effective leadership.

Luyt (as cited in Holtzhausen and Naidoo, 2011) highlighted that a major hindrance to service delivery, particularly at local government level, is ineffective leadership, which comprises not only corruption but also poor performance on the part of those tasked with service delivery and government officials in the management of public resources, as well as a total lack of political will to take action against those who are underperforming. Mubangizi and Gray (2010) explained that government has the most important function to play against the background of severe service delivery backlogs that continue to mask the vast steps it has taken in the past couple of years. They further added that the White Paper on Transforming Public Service Delivery was developed to transform the manner South Africa delivered its services, however, how

efficient has it been? It can be stated categorically that effective leadership plays a key role in any organization. Sharma and Bajpai (2010) added that effective leadership not only impacts subordinates' (in both public and private sector) job satisfaction, but also their productivity and organizational commitment. It is evident as suggested by the findings and the literature that effective leadership not only enhances job satisfaction, but also increases productivity, organizational performance and the climate of the organization. This is valid for both the public and private sector organizations.

Limitations

This study only explored the perceptions of the voluntary organizations on the impact of public sector leadership on road infrastructure delivery. A quantitative study could be conducted with more participants from voluntary organizations, and the public sector can also be included to determine their perspective. Further studies can also explore the role of partnerships between the public sector and voluntary organizations to improve road infrastructure delivery.

Conclusion

The study adopted a qualitative approach and collected data from 20 participants. The qualitative research technique was chosen because it provided a rich explanation and recognised different role players' perspectives to the phenomena. In this study, the qualitative technique was used on the basis that the research question was exploratory as it sought to investigate the perception of how public sector leadership impacts road service delivery. The results highlight seven significant themes impacting public sector leadership which influences infrastructure service delivery. The results as corroborated by previous studies also revealed that the lack of transformational and transactional leadership in the public sector had an impact on subordinates' (those at implementation level) morale and performance.

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