Organizational collaboration, hybrid structure, governance and value creation

Evidence from Indian public-private partnerships

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Abstract

This study was conducted to understand the various causalities and consequences of the hybrid structure and governance under public private partnerships (PPPs). Narrations pertaining to the central question of the research were collected from senior officials from PPPs in India, including executives from public agencies and private agencies. The grounded theory approach was used to analyze the narrations. Classical content analysis, selective coding and axial coding methods were used for data analysis. Complementary assets and capabilities among organizations, and inability to carry out project as a stand alone organization were the major casualties of the PPP structure. There were two dimensions of governance complexity, i.e. (i) Uninterpretable rules, policies, systems, and (ii) unexpected actions/decisions in uncertainty, in the PPP structure. The causalities in the complexity of the governance of the hybrid PPP structure were (i) organizational attributes, (ii) stakeholders’ expectations, (iii) power of control, (iv) institutional logic, (v) strategic decision making, and (vi) contract management. The attributes to the complex PPP governance system were, trust, ego, interpretation of complex operational phenomenon, mechanism to address risks and uncertainty and Interdependencies and reciprocity.

Introduction

Organization studies have been occupying a significant position the management discipline. Analysis of organizations became imperative with the advent of organizational collaborations, especially with the hybrid organizational structures. Scholars of organization studies have been more inquisitive in the recent past to understand how these hybrid organizations have designed and managed. Mair et al. noticed organizational hybridization and their governance structure are determined by the institutional logics. Organizational heterogeneity, presuming differences and institutional logics2 has made the organizational collaboration more complex, creating a complex structure and management of the hybrid organizations. Institutional logic, categorization, network effects has been occupied a significant space in organizational literature, still there exist blind spots in developing new understandings3. More specifically the focus on isomorphism and semblances in organization studies2 has left a space of understanding growing complexities in organization theories. Meyer and Hollerer4 have shown their concerns that over focusing on the formal organizations may leave a space to understand the alternative mode of organizing institutions.

The inter-organizational environments of the multi-stake holder hybrid organizations are yet to attract attention
of organization scholars. However the stability mechanism in the hybrid structure and partnership arrangement in multi-partner based organizational design with heterogeneous organization forms has been considered to a vacant space to fill with contemporary theory formation and empirical verification. There were two interesting dimensions of hybrid firms in which studies have been conducted, i.e. (i) governance of hybrid organizations with respect to transaction cost and embeddedness, and (ii) design parameters for organizational alliance. But there is significant research gap in establishing the linkage between organizational complexity and value creation with respect to hybrid structure and governance.

Partnership theories have occupied an important place in the general management and economics literature. Organizational partnership, collaboration, alliance, etc. has been used interchangeably. One of the important factors of partnership in organizations was profit sharing. Profit making organizations desire for higher economics of scale and high resource utilization, but the interdependencies among organizations some time lead to conflicts. Sometimes organizational cultures and institutional distinctiveness also create hurdles in the partnership arrangements. Asthana et al. emphasized on trust which carries paramount importance in partnership arrangements.

The hybridization of public sector and private sector in delivering public services are increasing practiced. UNESCAP and FICCI defines public-Private Partnership (PPP) as an agreement or contract between government organizations (Public Parties) and private sector organizations (private Parties) for the provision of public services where the public party and a private party/parties share one or more responsibilities planning, execution, implementation and management control of a project (with their own experiences and strengths) in which the involved parties share resources, risks and responsibilities. The organization scholars have studied the PPP structure and governance from the project perspectives from two major dimensions i.e. (i) sectoral basis [for example water sector, sports tourism, transport system and infrastructure, Railways, Textile, health, education etc.], and (ii) objective basis [for example risk management, government obligations, collaborative mechanisms & organizational studies, corruption, security and law, social entrepreneurship, environment protection, infrastructure development, international policy and public policy networks]. However there is a significant research gap in understanding in-depth into the structure and governance of PPPs.
A partnership between public sector and non-profit organization aim to have a common goal of societal value creation and social capital formation. But the partnership arrangement gets into complex governance and structural design when the partners have two different orientation i.e. social orientations versus economic orientation. This article attempted to understand organizational collaboration, hybrid structure, governance and value creation with respect to Indian Public-Private-Partnership projects, especially by responding to the recent hue and cry on PPPs i.e. ‘what has gone wrong with PPPs in India’ in daily news magazines. This study followed the Classical Grounded Theory Approach. Following the approach of the theorists in the Grounded Theory, this study did not do a literature review (on PPPs) until data collection was finished. However, some literature on organizational collaboration were reviewed to gain an understanding on organizational collaboration, alliance, etc. The literature review was conducted later to analyze and compare the study results with previous studies. The manuscript has been divided into eight sections. The introduction section familiarizes the subject addressed in this study. The literature section makes a deep probing into the existing studies, especially on the structure and governance of hybrid organizations, to identify few research questions. The method section explains the sampling & data collection, and analytical procedure. The finding section identifies key findings, and develops a structural framework by linking various key variables. The discussion section discusses the study outcomes, and compares the outcomes with previous studies. The study results were consolidated in the conclusion section. The limitations of this study and the future research opportunities (especially the causality-outcome relationships) were discussed in the limitations and future research section. Finally, the contributions of this study to the practitioners and policy makers have been discussed in the practical implication section.

**Literature**

The significant causalities of coalitions, alliances and partnerships in organizations are symbiotic interdependencies, mutual reciprocity and complementary goals. Organizational partnerships were subjected to circumstances pertaining to the purposes of organizations, their relationships and the stage of partnership development. Hidden agendas, improper communications and lack of coordination led to failures in organizational alliances. Lavie et al. identified a typology of differences between alliance partners, i.e. (1) strategic differences and organizational differences, and (ii) cultural differences, and operational differences in routines. The dimensions of organizational differences in cultural space were management style and organizational responsiveness.

Substantial work on hybrid organizational arrangements with respect to strategic alliances was done by Borys and Jemison. They discussed hybrid organizations with respect to purpose, boundaries, value creation and stability. Hybrid organizations suffered from precision in the specification of boundaries and lack of cooperation from partner organizations. Hybrid organizations were not only be influenced by asset complementarities but also influenced by organizational levers like organizational structure and governance, human resource processes and the system of performance management.

The structure of Hybrid organizations contained different levels of interdependencies leading to specific organizational coordination mechanisms and it’s governance structure. This different level of interdependencies or mutual dependencies was associated with transaction cost among the collaborating organizations. Organizational structure of hybrid organizations was associated with the level of strategic complexities. The complexity in the integration of organizational partners was positively associated with the complexity in the governance structure of the hybrid organization. The governance mechanism was highly dependent upon the production cost and the transaction cost of the collaborating organization. There was a strong link between institutional logic and hybrid organizational forms.
collaborations had either complementary organizational logics or competing organizational logics (organizational logics was varied from commercial to social intention). The sustainable hybrids couple elements pulling from different logics. Organizations can be categorized in two groups with respect to their orientations i.e. (i) hybrid organizations and, (ii) Market organizations. Hybrid organizations were more about task organizations who were designed to perform specific tasks and being controlled for the quality and quantity of their products/services. Value creation in organizational partnerships and collaborations was related to the reciprocity and organizational philosophies. Value creation in hybrid forms was strongly influenced by the management and coordination mechanisms followed in the organization. Hybrid organizations experienced difficulties in value creation relative to the unitary organizations. In a recent study, Hockerts cited that the hybrid organizations identified hidden complementarities and made a unique combination of resources, which often generated an innovative cognitive framework which was previously being ignored by market incumbents. One of the significant issues in the hybrid organization was decision making and human resource management, especially with respect to strategic decision making and power sharing.

One of the interesting pieces of literature was contributed by where the researcher emphasized on the understanding of collaborative governance mechanism (for example institutional conditions, hold up issues and spillover issues) contextual to country specificity, economic systems, and social capital. The ability of the institutional adaptation was a major element of the success of collaborative governance. Trust, commitment and share understanding were noticed as success elements in PPP based governance.

A long list of studies on PPP identified in the body of literature (Table 1). PPP studies concentrated across various dimensions, for example, success factors, risks and uncertainty, transparency and accountability, value creation and PPP performance, contract management, governance.

Table 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Researchers</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Dimensions/Outcome</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Osei-Kyei and Chan</td>
<td>2015</td>
<td>The study focused on Critical Success Factors (CSFs) with respect to internal organizational elements (allocation and sharing of risk, and transparency in procurements) and external organizational elements (strong consortium of private organizations, political and public support).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chung and Hensher</td>
<td>2015</td>
<td>Risk associations with PPPs, especially with respect to personal traits, contextual and contractual factors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reynaers and Grimmelikhuijsen</td>
<td>2015</td>
<td>Input processes and output transparency in institutional, cognitive and strategic perspectives in the institutional environment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valero</td>
<td>2015</td>
<td>PPP outcomes subjected to opportunism behavior of public party in long term contractual agreement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Researchers</td>
<td>Year</td>
<td>Dimensions/Outcome</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>Greco</td>
<td>2015</td>
<td>Discussed on agency issues, incomplete contracts and imperfect bundling.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Babones and Gherman</td>
<td>2014</td>
<td>PPP implications in regional development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demirag and Khadaroo</td>
<td>2011</td>
<td>Studied the relationship between accountability and value for money and identified four types of accountability cultures, processes and mechanisms that influence value for money decision in PPPs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forrer et al.</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>Studied accountability in PPPs with respect to risk, costs and benefits, political and social impacts, expertise, collaboration, and performance measurement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Koppenjan and Enserink</td>
<td>2009</td>
<td>Sustainability factors in PPPs with respect to regulatory rent seeking, and integration of economic and sustainability regulation; sustainability contract designing; risk perceptions of private parties and political uncertainties.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wang</td>
<td>2009</td>
<td>Discussed the darker side of PPP, especially with respect to performance outcome and value for money.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ysa</td>
<td>2007</td>
<td>The study focused on partnership arrangement and governance i.e. hierarchical governance in symbolic partnerships, market rules in instrumental partnerships, network-based governance in organic partnerships.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hodge and Greve</td>
<td>2007</td>
<td>Performance outcome of private finance initiative based PPPs with respect to resource shifting from public to private and achievement of value for money. Also noticed high degree of complexity and governance in PPPs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chong et al.</td>
<td>2006</td>
<td>Performance of PPPs with respect to High transaction cost leads to inefficiency of PPPs leading to an increase in the pricing of products.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bloomfield</td>
<td>2006</td>
<td>Discussed on risks, resource constraints and transparency barriers in PPPs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trafford and Proctor</td>
<td>2006</td>
<td>The success factor in PPPs are good communication, openness, effective planning, ethos and direction.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Researchers</td>
<td>Year</td>
<td>Dimensions/Outcome</td>
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<tr>
<td>Adams et al.</td>
<td>2006</td>
<td>Risks in PPP associated with corruption, asset ownership uncertainty and regulatory changes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Awortwi</td>
<td>2004</td>
<td>PPPs follow principal-agent model and face the issues with contract management. Focused on contract management process and competition; efficiency, responsibilities and risks to private agents; good governance; and regulations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jamali</td>
<td>2004</td>
<td>Trust, openness and fairness are Critical Success Factors (CSFs) in PPPs which experience complexities with strategic and operational realities.</td>
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</table>

Past studies emphasized on good governance and governance strategy was critical in PPP success\textsuperscript{27,76}. Organizations in PPPs had complementary and supplementary capabilities\textsuperscript{77}, so the structure and governance in the PPPs adapted to complementary contribution of the stakeholder organizations\textsuperscript{78}. There were two important elements noticed in the PPP organizational structure i.e. (i) Trust\textsuperscript{79,80} and (ii) risk\textsuperscript{25,81}. Meidute and Paliulis\textsuperscript{82} observed dispute settlement methods and clarity in contract including undertakings and liability, evaluation of risks and payment mechanisms as success elements in PPPs. Grimsey and Lewis\textsuperscript{83} found various forms of risks those influence the project and private sector like financial risks, environmental risks, technical risks, operational risks, political risks etc. Another important aspect of PPP governance system was the balance between social orientation and economic orientation. Hauxman\textsuperscript{10} explained the resource dependency in partnership arrangement in the line of collaboration than competition under the synergy approach, but over emphasis of social orientation by public sector or over emphasizing on commercial orientation of private sector led to competition for goals which further created conflicting situations.

**Methods**

This study employed qualitative methods for data collection and data analysis. In the beginning the research problem was decided followed by framing open-ended research questions. Subsequently theoretical sampling and data collection has been made. The aim of this study was to generate theory from empirical data. For the same grounded theory was followed to build up and integrate set of ideas explains some behaviors\textsuperscript{43,44,84}. In the past, the grounded theory approach had been confirmed as a suitable qualitative method to conduct management research\textsuperscript{85}, and organization studies\textsuperscript{86,87}. Data coding, analysis and theory development was made following\textsuperscript{43,44,84,88,89}.

**Sample and Data Collection**

The goal of this exploratory study was to understand (i) what are the causalities and consequences of hybrid PPP organization, and (ii) what are factors associated with this hybrid structure and governance. To comprehend the same, the list of PPPs in India were identified from secondary sources, and ten PPPs were purposively
chosen subjected to (i) accessibility and reachability of the researcher, and (ii) subjected to time and resource limitations associated with this research. Then from the chosen PPPs, two to three senior members were randomly selected (both from public sector and private sectors from the steering committee and the PPP projects) for a personal discussion. Out of the ten PPPs (initially selected) senior executives of two PPPs were not willing to participate in the discussions. All together twenty-eight senior officials were finally approached for discussion but only seventeen officials including six officials from public sector and eleven officials from private sectors were finally agreed for the personal discussion. The purpose of this study was not to verify the research question objectively but to understand the multidimensional view pertaining to the structure, governance and value creation in PPP subjectively. This study broadly followed the narrative methods of data collection of Koerner. The motive behind gathering information in form of narrations is to cover social relationships, sequence of events and contextual signals. So the respondents were asked to narrate their experience and observation on the PPP from the initiation to operations to present situation [the respondents were asked to narrate their experience and observation pertaining to (i) how PPP hybrid organization was established and became operational, and (ii) what were the pros and cons with this hybrid structure and governance that the respondents have experienced with].

**Analytical procedure**

Data analysis was done following the approach of Stewart and Shamdasani, and constant comparison method in grounded theory and theoretical sampling model of Charmaz and Bitsch. The study used classical content analysis and keyword in context for contextualization for a thematic development. *First* an iterative process of reading, analyzing and rereading the text of all narrations was pursed followed by semantical content analysis (i.e. the frequency at which certain concepts, phrases, adverbs are mentioned, the frequency at which certain object is classified). Coding method was exercised to do the open coding [data analysis through line —by-line, sentence- by —sentence, paragraph- by —paragraph, document — by document analysis to generate conceptual and theoretical ideas] followed by selective coding, and axial coding (causal condition-central phenomenon-context-intervening condition-action/interaction-consequences]. The concepts, their properties and dimensions were identified. The constant comparison method was engaged following Bitsch i.e., the narrations were compared for similarities and differences to discover variations and patterns.

**Findings**

Private organizations were found different from public organizations with respect to their intents, interests, constraints, attributes and orientations. The major intent of public organizations was to accomplish social responsibilities while that of the private organizations were to achieve commercial or financial targets. Similarly the attributes of public organizations (power, standard rules and procedures) were found different from that of the private organizations (efficiency, improved MIS, quick decision making, matrix structure). The distinct intents, interests, constraints, attributes and orientations have given rise to the unique resources and capabilities to the public and private organizations [the assets and capability of organizations in the PPP were derived from the combinations and interactions among characteristics like organizational intent, interest, constraint, attribute and orientation]. The collaboration between public and private organizations helps them to achieve their interests and weaken the negative effects of the constraints (see Table 2).

**Table 2**

*Emergence: Complexity and Organization*
### Difference between public organizations and private organizations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristics</th>
<th>Public Organizations</th>
<th>Private Organizations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intent [what I want to achieve]</td>
<td>Social performance (get the work done)</td>
<td>Financial performance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest [what I normally do]</td>
<td>Bureaucratic commitment to government and politics</td>
<td>Competing among contractors for business and economics of scale</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constraints [difficulties for me]</td>
<td>Specific assets and capabilities</td>
<td>Dependents upon government for projects/business</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attributes [what I have]</td>
<td>Power, standard rules and procedures</td>
<td>Efficiency, improved MIS, quick decision making, matrix-structure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orientations [how do I behave]</td>
<td>Planning, Controlling, legal compliance</td>
<td>Action</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The organization and arrangement of the structure and governance of the hybrid PPP was the central phenomenon in this study. The dimensions, attributes and immediate outcomes of the structure and governance of the hybrid PPP were identified. The major causalities for the organization of the PPP hybrid were (i) incapability of production and provision of services as standalone organization, and (ii) possession of complementary assets and capabilities among organization. There were two major dimensions of complexity associated in the PPP hybrid structure i.e. (i) uninterpretable rules and policies of the PPP organizational contract and functional modalities, and (ii) unexpected actions/decisions in case of uncertain events.

The complex hybrid PPP structure and governance is attributed by five elements (i) trust, (ii) ego, (iii) interpretation of complex operational phenomenon, (iv) mechanism to address risks and uncertainty, and (v) interdependencies and reciprocity. Trust played an important role the organization of the governance structure. This study identified six types of trust in the PPPs i.e. (i) entry level trust, (ii) operational level trust, (iii) cognitive trust, (iv) affective trust, (v) organizational trust, (iv) interpersonal trust (Table 3). The operational level trust was higher than the entry level trust. The trust among the partners built up over time but was not significant since the trust was only cognitive in nature [i.e. organizations expected that their partners would behave in a certain way since they are governed by contract agreements]. From ex-ante to ex-post project situation the cognitive trust could not be converted to affective trust. Hence trust was limited to organizational trust [i.e. individual’s trust on their partner organizations] than interpersonal trust [individual’s trust on the employee/representatives of their partner organizations].

Table 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types of Trusts in PPPs</th>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Trusts</th>
<th>Definitions</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Trust Type</td>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entry Level Trust</td>
<td>The level of trust among partner organizations (i.e. among the workers of partner organizations) during initiation of the PPP (in the ex-ante project situation).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operational Level Trust</td>
<td>The level of trust among partner organizations (i.e. among the workers of partner organizations) when PPPs are in operational level (in the ex-post project situation).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cognitive Trust</td>
<td>Organizations expected that their partners would behave in a certain way [i.e. expectation of conformity].</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affective Trust</td>
<td>Trust among partner organizations governed by feeling and emotion by working together for a period of time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizational Trust</td>
<td>The level of trust that an individual has on his/her partner organizations [i.e. trust between individual and his/her partner organizations].</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interpersonal Trust</td>
<td>The level of trust that an individual has on the employees of his/her partner organizations [i.e. trust between two individuals from two different organizations].</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The second attribute of the PPP structure and governance was ego [of the representatives of the partnering organizations]. One type of the ego was position ego [ego of an individual because of an important position he/she occupies in their respective organizations or the PPP structure], and the other type of the ego was representation ego [ego of an individual because he represents an important organizations (representatives of each organizations believed that the role of their organization is very important as compared to other organizations in the PPP)].

The third attribute was ability of interpretation of complex operational phenomenon. When organizations got into partnerships, in the operational process they come across complex phenomenon which all partner organizations were unable to understand with same level. Inability in understanding created unrest among partner organizations. The fourth attribute was the absence of a mechanism to address risks and uncertainty. Partners in the PPP understand the risks and uncertainties in their own dimensions [for example public sector was concerned in the political angle while private sector was concerned in the commercial angle]. The fifth attribute was the degree of interdependencies and reciprocity among organizations. So every action an organization takes has got a twin impact i.e. an impact on it’s own organization, and an equal or different impact on the partner organization.

This high level of complexity with their attributions led to five types of outcomes i.e. (i) delay operations: the organizational operations are delayed; (ii) blame game: organizations (workers) tend to not to bear the responsibility and accountability of their mistakes, and often blame partner organizations; (iii) high fear factor: people in the PPP structure do have a high degree of fear with in them expecting anything can go wrong and there is a chance of mistake being committed by them as they do not able to interpret the rules/policies properly; (iv) lack of initiatives: no one want to take an initiative because as the initiator may be caught and punished if anything do not match with the policy framework which are difficult to interpret fully; and (v) rule bound:
organizations (people) become very much rule bound as deviations are questionable and punishable.

The organization of the structure and governance of the hybrid PPP was very much contextual and subjected to certain intervening conditions. There were six intervening conditions for the central phenomena described under this study. First, the organizational attributes of the partner organizations (system, structure, governance and policies of the partner organizations). Second, the expectations of the stakeholders of the partner organizations (the major stake holder of the public organization was the public, and the major stake holder of the private parties were the shareholders and other partnering private organizations in the consortium). Third, the power of control (public party had the higher power of control as per the PPP regulation). Fourth, the institutional logic (the institutional logic of public party was to provide public services whereas the institutional logic of private party was the commercials). Fifth, strategic decision making (how much is the role of private party and public party in the strategic decision making). Sixth, the contract management team (ability to manage contract and relationships). However this complex structure and governance of the hybrid PPP along with it’s intervening condition was contextual to (i) Indian PPP models, (ii) Indian political and legal environment, and Indian Business Environment (differences in the characteristics of public and private organizations: intents, interests, constraints, attributes and orientations).

The hybrid PPPs with their structure and governance had taken a set of actions/strategies which further ended up to a valuable consequence to all partners and stakeholders. Despite of differences, organizations still prefer to stay together in the partnership because of their latent intentions. Partnership malfunction is a cost for the private party; while partnership failure is a responsibility for public party [government is answerable to public for any deviation or failure of the hybridity]. This study noticed three possible reasons for success of the hybridity in PPP i.e. (i) stick to deliverables, (ii) compromise with organizational intents, and (iii) strengthening trust bond from entry level to operational level. Staying together definitely lead to value creation to all parties i.e. value creation to public party by fulfilling it’s responsibility in creating and establishing a service delivery system; value creation for private party by(i) achieving commercial benefits, and (ii) enhancing scale economics and specialization; and. value creation for public by availing public services.

Discussion

The hybrid organizations can be divided into four categories with respect to organizational partnerships i.e. private —private partnership, public-public partnership, public-social partnership, and public-private partnership. The organizational intents of all these organizational are different, for example the intent for public organizations and social organization are public service delivery, while the organizational intent of private organizations are commercials and profit structures. Hence the public —private partnerships are the most complex organizational structure and governance (as compared to other organizational partnerships) because of the contrasting and conflicting organizational intents.

There were two different types of causality analysis was done in this study. First, analysis on the causality of the hybrid structure, and second, analysis on the causality of the complexity of the hybrid structure. The causality of
hybrid PPP was assets/resources complementarities and interdependence i.e. inability as a standalone player to carry out certain tasks or achieve certain organizational goals [as seen in previous study, i.e., 94]. Harrison et al. 95 noticed potential of a greater value creating synergy which comes from alliances with resource complementarities.

The complexity of the hybrid structure was resulted from intervening conditions [organizational attributes, institutional logics, power roles, strategic decision making capabilities, and contract management (ability to manage contract and relationships) (see figure 1)]. An earlier study noticed existence of contract hazards and mutual interdependencies among partner organizations in the hybrid organizational structure and governance7. This study found similar attributes, and the PPP structure and governance was influenced by the intervening conditions. So a contract hazard in PPPs can be an outcome of the intervening conditions.

Complexity to the PPP hybrid was attributed by complex operational phenomenon, and risks and uncertainty (Follow Figure 1). Past studies emphasized on risk as a predictor of PPP success or failure72,64. Also previous studies have identified sharing of risk, and transparency in procurements as the critical success factors in PPPs59 where risk associations with PPPs were governed by contextual and contractual factors62. However, this study did not find risk as a factor of success or failure of PPP, but risk was found as an embedded element in PPP which resulted from the complex interaction between intervening conditions and PPP attributes. Earlier studies found ‘contractual agreement’ as a factor influencing the PPP governance74,68,72,73, but this study noticed contract management as an intervening condition to the complex PPP structure and governance.

Power of control was observed to be an intervening condition to organizational complexity in the structure in governance in the hybrid set up, and similar phenomenon was noticed by Bjerregaard and Jonasson 96 [they found power asymmetry as an intervening condition in the structure in governance in the hybrid organizations]. The governance structure gets more complex if the strategic complexity in integration of project partners is very complex50 but this study found that the governance structure becomes complex because of the degree of strategic decision making and the power of control rests in the organizations in the PPPs.

Institutional logics was found causing complexity in the governance of the PPP. The institutional intent of private sector was different from that of the public sector [even though the parties have joined hands because of their complementary assets and capabilities]. Private sectors had a different organizational attributes (system, structure, rules, styles and policies) as compared to that of the public sector in the context of Indian political, legal and business environment. The fusion of organizational attributes was difficult in the hybrid governance which has made the PPP structure and governance more complex. Under the Indian situation the public sector was able to exercise high degree of power of control and strategic decision making as compared to those of the private sector. But at the same time the contract management was being controlled by the private sector who practically implement the PPP project either by putting it’s resource or by pooling resources from others. Stakeholders’ expectations were also different from both the parties (public party and private party) in the PPP. All these factors have brought complexity in the governance of the hybrid PPP. Some of these findings corroborate with previous studies, for example, Lindqvist97 observed conflicting legislation and power relations influence the governance of PPPs; and Brinkerhoff34 found the diversity among the stakeholders in the PPP which accounted for the intensity of conflicts. Similarly Dormois et al. 98 emphasized on organizational logic and attributes as instruments to differentiate private sector from public sector and found path dependency as causality in the differential nature of public sector and private sector. In the presence of asymmetric information in the interdependence mode leads to conflicts in the partnership governance.

Previous studies explained that the public organization and private organization collaborate and cooperate through a contract based partnership mechanisms to achieve a common goal by sharing their resources and risks 99,100,101,102. Similarly Keene77 found organizations who have complementary and supplementary resources and capabilities with a common interest get into a PPP mode of partnership. However this study noticed that the
public organization and private organization collaborate through a partnership arrangement and share resources and capabilities to perform a common task but the ultimate goals of the partners were different even though task-based goals remains the same. So, this study claims that the PPP mode of partnership exist to attain meaningful goals than common goals.

The PPP success [value creation] was ensured by appropriate actions/strategies as shown in figure 1 [Stick to deliverables, compromise with organizational intents, strengthening trust bond from entry level to operational level]. The interpersonal trust is governed by cognitive and affective trusts which influences interpersonal cooperation in organizations. Chia-Hui noticed shared values and trust as major organizing principles of dynamic collaborative mechanisms in organizational partnerships, and Edelenbos commented trust is one of the critical factor in the sustainability of PPP. Jamali noticed that trust, openness and fairness are Critical Success Factors (CSFs) in PPPs which experience complexities with strategic and operational realities. Similarly, Tan and Lim explained trust in the line of openness, cooperation, commitment, inter-dependence, reliability and competence among members. Ansell and Gash argued that the trust and shared understanding were success elements in PPP governance. Trafford and Proctor identified good communication, openness, effective planning, ethos and direction as success factors in PPPs. This study also argue that trust is an important attribute but the study found trust exist in different forms, i.e., entry level trust, operational level trust, cognitive trust, affective trust organizational trust, interpersonal trust. But the successful element for PPP governance is to raise the operational level trust at a higher level as compared the entry level trust. However, the study did not find the contractual trust (trust of character like honesty, consistency and fairness), competency trust (organization’s ability to complete the task strictly adhering to the laid contractual conditionality), and communication trust (disclosing accurate information to partners) among PPP partners. The complex interaction between these two attributes i.e. trust and ego [higher ego, weak trust] led to weak communication among the partner organization. Studies on organizational alliances found that partners who acknowledge latent differences can overcome the negative consequences of the partnerships outcomes. Similar outcomes have been traced out in the PPPs i.e. when partners compromise with organizational intents they are like to derive value (by achieving their specific interests) out of the partnership arrangements.

Past academic studies have not much focused on the success strategies in organizational collaboration. Few studies emphasized on cooperation and coordination as key to partnership success. This study could not find any concrete strategy per se for inter-organizational collaborations in PPPs, but a possible set of actions (adhering to deliverables, compromising with organizational intents, and strengthening trust bond from entry level to operational level) were noticed for partnership success. Also it was seen that the set of actions to make the collaboration success was not a strategy but a fear factor of partnership failure. A partnership malfunction invites troubles for public sector in fulfilling government’s commitment to public and politics. At the same time any malfunctions has a financial implication to the private party.

Conclusion

This qualitative study was conducted employing grounded theory approach to probe deep into the structure and governance of PPPs in the context of Indian legal, political and business environment. The major causality of the PPP hybrid structure was the complementary and supplementary relationship among project partners, and the inability of any partner to do the task standalone. The major causality in the complexity of the governance of the hybrid PPP structure were (i) organizational attributes (policies, styles, systems, structures) of each partnering organizations, (ii) stakeholders’ expectations from each partnering organizations, (iii) power of control held with each partnering organization, (iv) organizational logic of each partnering organizations, (v) strategic decision making power held with each partnering organization, and (vi) the efficiency of contract management team. The complexity in the PPP governance had two different dimension i.e. one uninterpretable
rules, policies, systems, and two, unexpected actions/decisions in uncertainty. The major attributes to this governance system were trust, ego, interpretation of complex operational phenomenon, mechanism to address risks and uncertainty and Interdependencies and reciprocity. The complexity in the governance structure in the PPP leads to series of phenomenon like delay operations, blame games, high fear factors, lack of initiatives and highly rule bound behavior. To create value with complex governance structure, PPPs have taken a set of actions [stick to deliverables, compromise with organizational intents, and strengthening trust bond from entry level to operational level] to create value. Even though the major stakeholders in the PPP (public sector and private sector) have common interest but they have a different goals. For example, the goal of public sector was creation of service delivery systems for public while the goal of private sector was commercial benefits, achieving scale economics and specializations.

Limitations and Future Research

Even though this study was conducted following the theoretical framework of Koerner but still it suffered from lesser sample size. The conformity of the relationships [causal condition-central phenomenon-context-intervening condition-action/interaction-consequences] would have been higher had there been more number of samples. I request researcher to conduct similar studies in a higher sample size. This study identified the causality of PPP governance and the consequences of it along with intervening conditions (seemingly external variables) and attributes (seemingly internal variables). I invite researchers to verify quantitatively if these intervening conditions and attributes have any mediating and moderating impact in the relationship between causality and consequences in PPP governance and structure. The causality-consequence relationship in this study identifies a series of propositions [for example: sticking to deliverable leads to value creation, relationship between trust and delay in operations etc.] which can be tested specifically using qualitative methods and quantitative methods. Future researchers should study the relationship between immediate outcome (delay operations, blame games, high fear factors, lack of initiatives and highly rule bound behavior) and attributes (trust, ego, interpretation of complex operational phenomenon, mechanism to address risks and uncertainty and Interdependencies and reciprocity) in the PPP.

Practical Implications

Policy makers and PPP practitioners should use the causality-consequence framework to handle the complexity in the PPP governance. There were two types of factors which lead to the complexity in the PPP governance i.e. (i) factors difficult to control: organizational attributes, expectation of stakeholders, and institutional logic; and (ii) factors can be controlled: power of control, strategic decision making and contract management. Policy makers and practitioners should emphasize on the factors which can be controlled to address the complexity and bring simplicity in the governance. Contract hazards are important issues which need to be emphasized by Indian PPPs. Also the importance of contract management team needs to be recognized in the building of relationships and trusts among project parties. PPP practitioners should work on the strategies/set of actions which lead to value creation [stick to deliverables, compromise with organizational intents, and strengthening trust bond from entry level to operational level] through the PPP mode.

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