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# Leadership in a strategy implementation project office in South Africa


**Quincy Lepan**

**WITS Business School**


**Thesis presented in partial fulfilment for the degree of Master of Business Administration to the Faculty of Commerce, Law, and Management, University of the Witwatersrand**

**April 2021**

## DECLARATION

I Quincy Lepan declare that this research report entitled “Leadership in a strategy implementation project office in South Africa" is my unaided work. I have acknowledged, attributed, and referenced all ideas sourced elsewhere. I am hereby submitting it in partial fulfilment of the degree of Master of Business Administration requirements at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. I have not submitted this report before for any other degree or examination to any other institution.



Quincy Lepan

Signed at Johannesburg on 1st April 2021

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# ABSTRACT

The Project Management Office plays a critical role in organizations in South Africa. It needs to ensure it has articulated all projects that entail an organization. The current paper's essence is to examine Project Management Office leadership in South Africa with specific Project Management Office (PMO) and Project Management Office (PMO) leaders' success. It also attempts to understand the impact that Project Management Office (PMO) maturity has on the success of projects. Finally, it considers the measurements used in understanding the success of a project. It uses a qualitative design approach with 27 respondents, and the responses undergo thematic analysis to understand the implications of the current study. The paper shows a strong correlation between Project Management Office maturity in South Africa with effective leadership with strong technical skills and high emotional intelligence (emotional quotient EQ) and interpersonal relationship skills. It also indicates a need to improve communication skills and flexibility in project management which is majorly lacking in failed projects despite the improvement depicted over the years. The paper shows that the success of the Project Management Offices is down to the leadership of the PMO and leads to a resultant increase in maturity and project performance.



**Keywords:** PMO, project management, South Africa, Project Management Office, transformation, leadership, manager

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# LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

| | |
|---|---|
| PMO | Project Management Office |
| OPM | Organizational Project Management |
| P3O | Portfolio, Programme & Project Management |
| OPM3 | Organizational Project Management Model |

# 1 INTRODUCTION

This research evaluates Project Management Office Leaders' ability to develop Project Management Offices that deliver South Africa strategy. However, before getting to the research conceptualization, we briefly introduce the terms and concepts we have used to conceptualize this research in and broadly. In contrast, Chapter 2 has a more specific and detailed discussion on the research context. The research conceptualization section provides for the research problem statement and, consequently, the purpose of this research and the research questions. The paper gives the delimitations and assumptions of the research study. It also discusses the significance of the research study and provides a preface to the research report.

## 1.1 Context of and Background to the Study

In the fiercely challenging business world, organizations adopt different competitive strategies to achieve a competitive advantage in their business of choice (Johnson, 2016). Initiatives are generated that are implemented via projects to enable the realization of the business strategies. "A project is a temporary endeavour designed to produce a unique product, service, or result with a defined beginning and end (usually time-constrained, and often constrained by funding or staffing) undertaken to meet unique goals and objectives, typically to bring about beneficial change or added value" (Rose, 2013, pg3) . To deliver on projects effectively and efficiently that bring about strategy realization, one must utilize project management (Jugdev, 2005) "Project management is the application of knowledge, skills, tools, and techniques to meet project requirements. Project Management is accomplished through the appropriate application and integration of the project management processes identified for the project" (PMI, 2017, pg3).

Therefore, greater emphasis is placed on Project Management as a capability. The practices of this capability in an organization are known as organizational project management (OPM) and can be considered as a source of competitive advantage for the organization, the Project Management Offices that houses the capability and

continues to grow and develop these practices and must then be seen as a strategic enabling function, and the leader of this should be considered a key enabler. With this in mind, greater importance should then be given to find the right leader to act in this critical role, as they are responsible for setting up the Project Management Office - which includes defining its objective, implementing governance standards and procedures, developing templates, adopting a project management information system, and designing a learning and development program for project professionals to provide continuous development that supports them in their career path. These activities aim to improve organizational project management quality; quality or maturity is measured via a corporate project management maturity model (OPM3) (Silva, Tereso, Fernandes, & Pinto, 2014).

This research is focused on the effectiveness of Project Management Office leadership. The associated importance of selecting the right candidate to develop and grow Project Management Offices or revive failed Project Management Office's that will improve the organizational project management and, by default, improve the OPM3 has beneficial result in bringing about business value and strategy realization.

In a 2019 survey published by the Project Portfolio Office of Project Management Offices in South Africa, it was found that out of 161 organizations, 92% have a formal Project Management Office. Of these organisations 80% have a Project Management Office Leader, 46% of Project Management Offices are two years or less. Furthermore 42% of Project Management Offices have a documented catalogue of services, 50% of Project Management Offices have an established PM methodology, 82% of Project Management Office's do not track the value of the Project Management Office, 27% of Project Management Offices have not assessed their Project Management Office Maturity, and 45% of Project Management Offices are not trusted to deliver value by their business (Project Portfolio Office (PPO), 2019). Project Management Offices vary in size and function, as the organizations' needs primarily drive it. Still, organizations appreciate the importance of organizational project management and establishing a formal Project Management Office structure. However, few organizations feel that they derive the desired benefit or value of having a Project Management Office. As part of this research, it evaluated

the benefit of having a skilled Project Management Office leader at the helm and the associated benefits it brings with it.

## 1.2 Research Conceptualisation

### 1.2.1. The Research Problem Statement

Formal Project Management Offices exist in many large organizations in South Africa; they are accepted as a prerequisite to improve organizational project management maturity and expedite project delivery. Herein lies the problem, as there is no predefined structure for a PMO. The structure is driven by organizational need and the mandate given to its nominated leader.

Project Management Office leaders are critical to Project Management Offices' success. Therefore, selecting the correct qualified and highly skilled leader becomes doubly essential (Tibaingana, 2014). The problem arises when the people entrusted with recruitment have limited familiarity with project management as a capability or a corporate Project Management Office's needs (Kerzner, 2013). At this point, the fledgling Project Management Office is already hamstrung and further compounded when an ill-suited individual is tasked with taking the reins. Therefore, this study evaluated the maturity of the Project Management Office (PMO), how the maturity translates to better project delivery and success and how the leadership style of the leader influences maturity of PMO.

### 1.2.2 The Research Purpose Statement

The purpose of this research is to establish; what is required to elevate a Project Management Office to better maturity, whether the maturity of the Project Management Office is important in the success of projects and whether the leadership style of the PMO head is important in propelling the PMO to a better maturity. The belief is that even though anyone can assume the role of a leader and, further to that, a Project Management Office leader, not all appointments deliver the desired success (Tibaingana, 2014). The PMO plays an integral part in strategic execution (Aubry & Hobbs, 2011). Some PMO leaders find themselves in the position either through poor

recruitment or the “Peter Principle” where promotion was based on succeeding in previous roles and tenure to ensure excellence in the current status, resulting in undesirable consequences for the Project Management Office and, by default, the organization (Peter & Hull, 1969).

### 1.3 Research Questions

a. What is required to elevate a Project Management Office to a better maturity?

b. Establish whether the maturity of the Project Management Office is important in the success of projects.

c. Establish whether the leadership style of the PMO head is important in propelling the PMO to a better maturity.

### 1.4 Significance of the Study

Current research in organizational project management and Project Management Offices primarily focuses on the Organizational Project Management (OPM) capability and maturity. The lack of an in-depth understanding of the success criteria, maturity measurement is reasonably broad and open to various interpretations. This study adds relevant information to the industry by depicting a Project Management Office and Project Management Office leader’s success criteria in South Africa. It further illustrates the effect that a Project Management Office leader’s effectiveness in facilitating and enabling the successful transformation of a PMO has on improving its maturity. It portrays the factors to consider when measuring a Project Management Office’s maturity alongside critical success criteria for a project. Project Management Offices should gain valuable insights into the study’s information, and decision-makers should understand the relevance of such information when dealing with matters affecting project management capabilities.

## 1.5 Preface to the Research Report

The current report utilised surveys and limited interviews targeted at South African employees working for a financial services organization. The questionnaire was circulated amongst them to participate in the study. The study design is qualitative and deployed surveys to get information from the respondents.

To this end, the report has six chapters. Following this introductory chapter, Chapter 2 provides a literature review covering the problem, the past studies, the explanatory framework, and the conceptual framework. Chapter 3 discusses the research strategy, design, procedures, reliability, and validity measures and limitations. Chapter 4 and Chapter 5 present and discuss the findings, respectively, to interrogating our research questions, while Chapter 6 summarises and concludes the research.

# 2 LITERATURE REVIEW

## 2.1 Introduction

This section has three broad objectives: understanding the research problem, identifying the knowledge gap, and applying a framework for interpreting the research findings. Specifically, it provides the research problem and reviews the literature on studies that have attempted a similar study or research.

With this knowledge, we leveraged existing theories and frameworks on “leadership”, change management and PMO transformation and applied them to the Project Management discipline and Project Management Office context.

## 2.2 Research problem analysis

(Hines, Vince, 2021) surveyed 214 international organisations and established that, 82% have 1 PMO or more. In the “PMO Insights” report, Project Portfolio Office (PPO) found that out of the 161 South African organizations surveyed, 92% have a formal PMO (Project Portfolio Office (PPO), 2019). One can therefore see that the Project Management Office construct an accepted fact in most modern organizations. One must also understand that no two organizations are the same, and the same can be said for PMOs as a whole. (Aubry, Hobbs, Müller, & Blomquist, 2010) indicate that the topic around PMOs is represented by “diversity of opinion and confusion”. When faced with so much change (organizational – internal and external factors) and uncertainty around the PMO, it increases the difficulty level of the assignment and the need for strong leadership to transform the PMO.

Project Management Offices operating at higher Organizational Project Management Maturity levels tend to deliver more effectively on their critical strategic projects. Therefore, most PMOs aim to reach a higher level of organizational Project Management Maturity (Bredillet, Tywoniak, & Tootoonchy, 2018). Based on the P3O Framework, there are seven focus perspectives that drive organizational project

management maturity (OPM) including the organizational governance which focuses primarily on stakeholder management, roles and responsibilities, terms of reference and having clear governance structures for all projects.

The management control assesses the maturity of the project management processes and how well its adopted and entrenched in the organisation, the benefits management focuses on tracking and realisation of benefits along with who is responsible for it. The risk management looks over all risk related matters and understanding around how the risk management practices influences the planning by the project managers.

The stakeholder management, looks at process improvements, managing lessons learned and disseminating the good practices.

The finance management on the other hand oversees all the financial aspects of the projects to ensure that the organisation is receiving maximum returns on its project budget spend – is closely aligned with the risk management practices.

Lastly, the resource management, looks at how resources are deployed to projects and the differences between larger and smaller organisations and the different project teams.

It is, therefore, imperative for a PMO to reach a higher maturity level. Thus, there has to be a competent Project Management Office (PMO) leader at the helm (Karkukly, 2015). Therefore, the head of the PMO must understand the PMO role and Project Management's technical requirements, further augmented by an array of interpersonal and Leadership skills that will ensure the adoption of their methods by the impacted teams (Goleman, Boyatzis, & McKee, 2001).

### 2.3 Project Management Office (PMO)

A Project Management Office is defined as an administrative body or entity assigned various responsibilities related to the centralized and coordinated management of those projects under its domain. The Project Management Office's duties can range

from providing project management support functions to being responsible for the direct management of a project (PMI, 2017).

Project Management Offices' constant is that they vary significantly in structure and role depending on the organization (Hobbs & Aubry, 2007a). The researchers also found that in their initial "Descriptive Survey," there were varying views on the value of a Project Management Office, with entities seeing limited value, similar to findings by (Project Portfolio Office (PPO), 2019) and authors, consultants, and practitioners speaking highly of its proposed value (Hobbs & Aubry, 2007a).

In the PMO Insights report by Project Portfolio Office (PPO) (2019), it was found that 46% of respondents Project Management Offices were two years or less old. The statistic is even more telling that despite the progression of time, empirical research previously published by Hobbs and Aubry found that the average life expectancy of a Project Management Office was two years (Hobbs & Aubry, 2007a). One would then have to ask the question, which impacts Project Management Offices' longevity in organizations.

### 2.4 PMO Services and Functions

Looking at the functions, they are essentially the same and, over the years, have not dramatically changed, as reflected below.

Project Governance framework gives project stakeholders structure, processes, roles and responsibilities along with decision making models for managing projects. Project and Portfolio Management (PPM) is a formal approach that an organization can use to orchestrate, prioritize, and benefit from projects. This approach examines the risk-reward of each project, the available funds, the likelihood of a project's duration, and the expected outcomes. Resource management provides insights on which resources will be required for current and future projects, thus contributing to more dynamic planning and ensuring project goals are achieved. PM competency development and training focuses on developing the project management professionals that form part of the PMO teams and to help them improve and better understand some of the lesser utilised tools and techniques. Information Management tools and techniques are

inclusive of but not limited to the following PM information systems, lessons learned register and codifying of knowledge. Assurance and governance are part of the PMO's ambit to conduct audits and ensure compliance to the governance standards and frameworks ensuring improved project efficiency.

Not all Project Management Offices perform the same functions. The requirement is determined by the organizational environment within which the Project Management Office operates (Bredillet et al., 2018), the ability of the Project Management Office to adapt to its varying organizational structure differentiates the Project Management Office (Bredillet et al., 2018). This is seen as the reason for such short lifespans of Project Management Office offices. Therefore, it can be surmised that as a result of their inability to adapt to changes, they either fail or become surplus to requirements.

### 2.5 PMO Maturity

Maturity models hail from the Carnegie Mellon "Capability Maturity Model", just as it started, there are several different PMO and OPM maturity models. For this study, the OPM3 model by PMI (Bento, Gomes, & Romão, 2019) and the P3O model (Roden, 2008) by Axelos will be used as reference frameworks for purposes of evaluating the maturity of the PMO. One consistent theme from the various maturity models is the understanding that as the Project Management Office's maturity and capability improve, so will its contribution to the organization (PM Solutions, 2018) and its value realisation.




**Figure 1: Project Management Office Capability and Performance** **Source:(PM Solutions, 2018)**

## 2.6 Drivers for the transformation of Project Management Office's

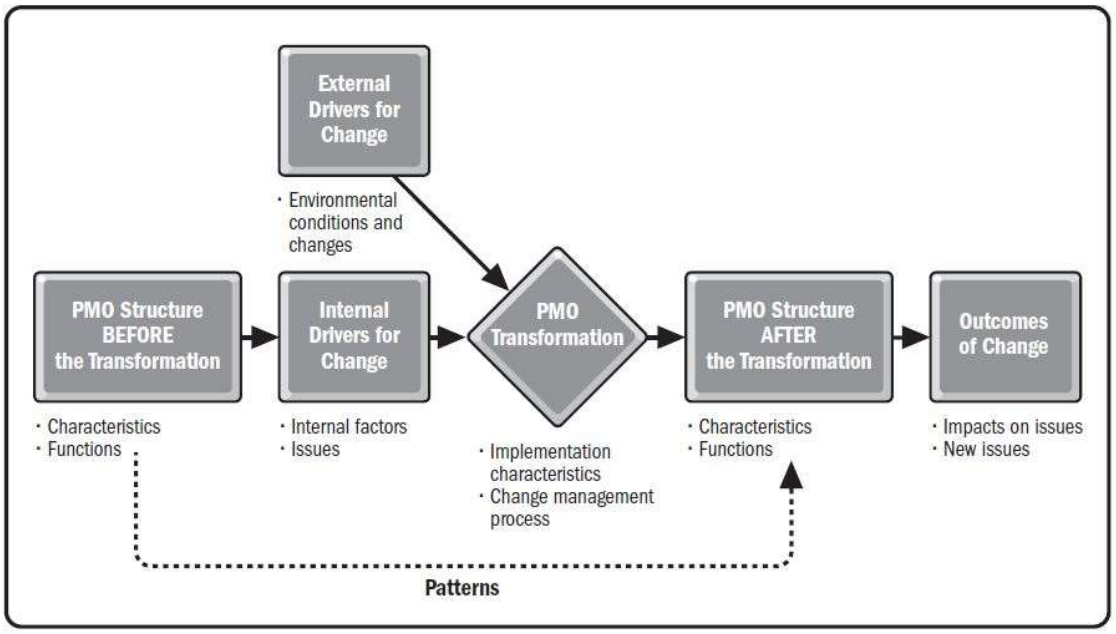



**Figure 2: PMO Transformation Framework**

Source: (Aubry et al., 2010)

### 2.6.1 Internal Drivers for Change

Project Management Office's failure is triggered by the collapse in many of its primary functions, signalling their spiral into obsolescence. Loss in the functions listed in Table 2: results in the organizational belief that Project Management Offices fail to provide value to the organizations they serve. Project Management Office does not adapt its processes but remains fixed in the original state when the unit was created (Light, 2018). Ultimately, they are allowed to continue running as "zombie PMO" (Light, 2018), where the organization continues to function despite the Project Management Office's failure to deliver on the value it desired.

The slow fall into obscurity is inevitably triggered by the failure of one or more projects. It is expected that the Project Management Office as the custodian of both oversight and governance, must apply reasonable assurance to ensure project success at all times. Good assurance and governance are one critical factor in successful project delivery (Musawir, Abd-Karim, & Mohd-Danuri, 2020). Projects are set up for failure at the outset, where the business case did not provide sufficient justification and benefits were not identified or made measurable and quantifiable (Einhorn, Marnewick, & Meredith, 2019). Project Management Offices are responsible for ensuring business and strategic alignment by validating that the correct input is provided for initiating projects.

The failure of projects can largely be ascribed to inadequate project management processes (Marnewick, Erasmus, & Joseph, 2017), which means that the project manager failed to fulfil his/her primary function and the Project Management Office offices who are responsible for supporting the efforts of the project manager must accept ultimate accountability. Should the organization believe that there is still value to be found in the PMO, these events would ultimately trigger a change for the PMO. "At a certain point, a decision is made by managers concerning a PMO transformation. It is understood that managers' actions may influence their internal organization and their external environment. After the decision has been implemented, a new PMO structure is in place." (Aubry et al., 2010, pg35).

### 2.6.2 External Drivers for Change

PMO's ultimately form part of the organizational structure. Forces in the external environment, such as the rise of new rivals or products, may prompt organizations to act, resulting in increased demand (Porter, 1989). Events such as the recent Covid-19 pandemic, forced several organizations to accelerate their digital transformation initiatives (Morgan, 2020).

The current organization and PMO may not have the required skill-set to bring about the change, or 53% of the respondents in "The State of Project Management 2021" (Hines, Vince, 2021) believed that more work would be organised around smaller teams. Therefore, being able to "see around corners" (McGrath, 2019, pg114) page number is an invaluable skill in leaders, to be able to anticipate the change and plan.

## 2.7 Leadership and transformation failures

The focus of Goleman et al. (2001) is on the emotional intelligence of leaders at the top of an organization and the impact it has as it flows through the organization and ultimately is reflected in the organization's bottom line performance. Emotional Intelligence requires leaders to know themselves and allow for introspection, and to seek feedback as a means for growing and developing. It encourages an intentional change process, applying the five stages of learning developed by Richard Boyatzis.

| # | Discovery | Description |
|---|---|---|
| 1. | The Ideal Self | Who do I want to be? |
| 2a. | The Real Self | Who am I? |
| 2b. | Strengths | Where my Ideal and Real self are similar |
| 2c. | Gaps | Where my ideal and Real self are different |
| 3. | Learning Agenda | Building on my Strengths while reducing my Gaps |
| 4a. | Experimentation | New Behaviour, thoughts, and feelings |
| 4b. | Practicing to Mastery | Creating and building new neural pathways |
| 5. | Resonant Relationships | Help to support and encourage each step in the process |

(Boyatzis, 2006)

In “Leadership that gets results,” (Goleman, 2000) asserts that irrespective of the individual, they are capable of learning the “six styles of leadership” it would, however, require a concerted effort from the individual. It would have to be a focused, intentional effort to bring about personal change.

(Kotter, 2006) postulates eight steps for leading change to thwart transformation failure. He argues that organisations should create a sense of urgency, build a guiding coalition, form a strategic vision and initiatives, enlist a volunteer army, enable action by removing barriers, generate short-term wins, sustain acceleration, and institute change (Kotter, 2006). Failure of the leader and his team in achieving any number of the eight steps will fail the change initiative. This is a reflection on the shortcomings of the “Leadership” and their inability to affect the desired change.

### 2.8 Research Knowledge Gap Analysis

Most research around organizational project management and Project Management Offices primarily focuses on the Organizational Project Management capability and maturity. It further delves into the reasons for projects or Project Management Office structure failures. They either deal mainly with project management and the legal grounds for failure. Very few have investigated the correlation between the Project Management Office Leader’s skill and ability to foster the Project Management capability and create a dynamic and robust Project Management Office that continues to grow and evolve as the organization it serves adapts to its market conditions. Our view is a wealth of content exists around project management; therefore, everyone believes that having been part of a Project or Project Management Office, they can “doing the job,” and here we find us the “accidental project manager,” as the last person standing becomes the Project Management Office Leader. The Project Management Office and the Project Management’s capability is doomed to mediocrity or eventual extinction. They never move past the basics of project management and leave with the large numbers of “accidental project managers” that join teams and organizations. It is therefore essential to have good knowledge capability development programs to support their career paths. Project Management Office leaders need to foster a learning culture. Significantly

few Project Management Office's and knowledgeable professionals have developed adequate knowledge in the field. They fail to develop the Project Management Office capability when they fail their tasks.

The Project Management Office Leader, who is ultimately responsible from a line management function, has to get involved in the detail to assist in rescuing projects in danger. It is believed that they have superior skills and abilities due to the nature of the role. Should this threat pass, very few post-mortems are performed, or lessons learned sessions facilitated to understand what went wrong and how to improve and ensure that no future repeats of this nature occur. Performing constant assurance on projects by both the PM and Project Management Office increases the project's probability of success. However, failure of this and improved lacklustre risk management practices makes project management a challenging task. Most South African organizations cater to staff by having goals set for employees' training and personal development. Very few Project Management Offices have a concerted development plan for the capability they oversee; for them, it is enough that staff complete certification exercises, which is considered adequate development.

A popular corporate tactic is to bulldoze through any opposition; for the sake of delivering a project, recognition is given to project sponsors and project managers for "delivering," but at what cost, if sound project management skills were employed, to begin with, there would be no need to resort to extremes. However, this is now compounded as the resultant recognition ensures that individuals such as these arise in the ranks, and they then employ this self-same "skill" to their role as managers. The lower the competence of the PM, the more likely a project is to fail. Therefore, the lower the Project Management Office leader's competence and lack of competency, the more likely the Project Management Office will fail.

### 2.8.1 Theory

Leadership theories

Trait theory

Early studies analysed leadership based on hereditary attributes (Bass, 1990) and compared traits of leaders with those of followers. Trait approach emphasizes

attributes of leaders such as personality, motives, values, and skills. By identifying specific traits or characteristics of leaders, one could distinguish a leader from a follower (Hughes, 2005).

Research concerning trait theory concentrated on the following factors: (a) physical factors such as age, height, weight, physique, health, and appearance; (b) ability factors such as fluency of speech, tone of voice, academic performance, intelligence, judgment and decision, insight, and initiative; and (c) personality features such as integrity, emotional control, self-confidence, and popularity (Bass, 1990a; Bryman,1986). According to this theory, an individual must possess these traits or characteristics in order to assume leadership. Seeking to ascertain if trait theory accurately predicted leadership potential, Mann (1959) had reviewed trait studies, and reported that the foundation of trait theory lacked validity. Traits reported as being crucial to effective leadership in one study were not validated in others. (Hughes, 2005, p 26).

Stogdill (1974) completed a second review of trait leadership research that included an additional 163 studies that were conducted from 1949 to 1970. This review identified factors associated with energy, age, status, mobility, education, and intelligence as being able to separate effective leaders from ineffective leaders. According to Stogdill (1974), improved measurement techniques and methodology lead to the identification of these traits. However, Stogdill (1974) surmised that trait theory research produced confusing results because a combination of traits proved effective in some groups of leaders, while they were ineffective in others. Therefore, Stogdill concluded that leadership requires more than just the study of people, but also the study of situations. (Hughes, 2005, p26). Many other researchers, also, have realized that there is no trait would guarantee leadership success; and the attributes are related to leadership behaviour and effectiveness. (Yukle, 2002)

Behavioural Theory

Failure of the trait theory led to further research that focused on behavioural styles of leadership. Behavioural theories emerged during World War II because trait research had failed to explain leader effectiveness (Bryman, 1986). Behavioural leadership proposed that behaviour of the leader impacted work and follower

effectiveness. This era of research focused on leadership behaviour as a mean of identifying the best way to lead.

Contingency Theory

With the modest success in identifying consistent relationships between patterns of leadership behaviour and group performance, the field of leadership was ready for a new paradigm (Chemers, 1997, p. 28). It became increasingly clear to those who were studying the leadership that the predicting of leadership success was more complex that isolating a few traits or preferable behaviours; this led to focus on situational influences. (Robbins, 1997). Contingency theories tried to predict which types of leadership style will be most effective in different types of situations (Holda, 1995). Contingency approaches hypothesize that there are not universally acceptable. styles of leadership. A leadership style may prove valid in one situation, yet ineffective in another. Therefore, discrete factors in the situation influence leadership. “Leadership must change with the situation – or the situation must change to accommodate the kind of leadership exercised” (Fair Holm, 1998, p.53, cited in Hughes, 2005). Many studies have attempted to isolate critical situational factors that affect leadership effectiveness including the degree of structure in the task being performed, the quality of leader-member relations, the leader’s position power, subordinates" role clarity, group norms, information availability, subordinate acceptance of leaders" decisions, and subordinate maturity (Howell et al., 1986, pp. 88-102).

Fiedler’s contingency model

The first comprehensive contingency model for leadership was developed by Fred Fielder, where he proposes that effective group performance depends on the proper match between the leader’s style of interacting with his/her subordinates and the degree to which the situation gives control and influence the leader (Robbins,1997, p.421). Fiedler developed a personality measure, the least preferred co-worker (LPC) scale, as a measure of leader personality. The measure is based upon a series of semantic differential ratings of a person with whom one has worked in the past and is completed by the leader not by the subordinate (Lawrence, 2000). The underlying premise is that a leader’s description of the person with whom he/she has worked experienced the greatest difficulty working is reflective of a basic leadership

style. Fiedler's second premise is that the leader's personality orientation or behavioural style influences group performance and varies according to "situation favourability". Robbins (1997) summarized these situations:

1. Leader-member relations: the degree of confidence, trust, and respect subordinates have in their leader.
2. Task structure: the degree to which the job assignments structured / unstructured); and
3. Position power: the degree of influence a leader has overpower variables such as hiring, firing, discipline, promotions, and salary increases.

Results from Fiedler's research indicated that task-oriented leaders are more effective in high-control and low-control situations, and that relationship-oriented leaders are more effective in moderate-control situations. Task-oriented leaders perform better in favourable situations "because everyone gets along, the task is clear, and the leader has power; all that is needed is for someone to take charge and provide direction" (Daft,1999, p. 96). Conditions unfavourable to the task-oriented leader require high levels of structure and task direction. The relationship-oriented leader performs better in favourable situations because human relations skills are. important in achieving high group performance in these situations.

Critical Analysis of Change Theories

According to Wischnevsky (2004), organizational leaders are more likely to act if they perceive a gap between the actual level of performance compared to an internal or external benchmark or if there are changes that require their action. Research has shown that certain circumstances tend to increase the likelihood that leaders will engage in major organizational change initiatives. These circumstances include top management changes, environmental shifts and a decline in performance. Visioning is one of the most important steps of a change process. A good vision helps people in the organization know where they are going. Many organizations have written visions that are published, distributed to employees and hung prominently on the walls. Having a published vision is not enough to direct people to a future state or assist them in getting there. The leaders have to communicate the vision to the people within the organization and they have to lead by example to make the vision real. When there is a difference in what leaders say and what leaders do, this leads to a loss of trust and faith among the leaders and their people. If the vision of a

company is to have the best workforce in the industry and the leaders disregard employee opinions, hire inappropriate candidates and spend little in the way of employee training and education, it sends a message that the vision is not really worth the paper on which it is written (Simonson, 2005).

The concept of changing processes to empower people in the organization to change. This step includes evaluating the current systems, processes and capabilities to facilitate change. Organizational learning and the ability of a company to create and exploit knowledge and information leads to successful organizational performance (Farrell, Flood,Curtain, Hannigan, Dawson and West 2005). According to Herrick (2005), leaders should be involved in stewardship. This involves the transformational process of involving others in solutions and actions. Leaders need to create a healthy work environment to provide the framework for a positive and professional practice environment. Most organizations have a model for improvement. One of the most common is the Shewhart (or Deming) Cycle, also known as the Plan-Do-Check/Study-Act Cycle (Deming, 1986).

Employees need to understand that every process can be improved and when leadership focuses on continuous improvement and reinforces the small successes, it encourages people to seek more opportunities for improvement (Pryor, White and Toombs, 1998). People respond differently to change. Some people find it exciting and enjoy change, while others vehemently resist it. Resistance is a normal reaction to change and should be expected. This is especially true during the development stages of groups undergoing change and working on improvement projects. Leaders need to understand this reaction and support the teams as they go through these phases of change. Transformational organizations recognize normal resistance and plan strategies to enable people to work through their resistance (Kohles, Baker and Donaho, 1995). he is planning should involve a vertical and horizontal microcosm of an organization. When a plan is viewed as everyone's plan, it can be embraced by everyone. It is empowering when people are involved in the planning and change management process (Collins, 2001). Successful organizations have to acquire, integrate, and use new knowledge to be successful. They have to be able to combine and exchange information in order to enhance their processes to guard against failure. Understanding where an organization is and where they should be is part of

this process. This has to be discussed, explored, and communicated (Farrell, Flood, MacCurtain, Hannigan, Dawson and West, 2005)

Successful implementation of change involves discipline. Collins (2001) in his book, Good to Great, indicates that the most successful organizations should have disciplined people, disciplined thought, and disciplined actions. People should be held accountable for their actions, and this cannot occur unless measurements are in place. Newcomb (2005) suggests that leaders have to be accountable to the organization for the results of their plans and the outcomes of the organization. Accountability requires a master plan which can be segmented into smaller projects, assigned to teams, and monitored by team leaders. This plan can be tracked with target dates for completion and evaluation (Newcomb,2005). Jick's (2003) and Mento's (2002) models include a step that addresses leadership behaviour and supporting strong leadership characteristics. Kotter (1996) and Shields (1999) focus more on the cultivation of the team members implementing the change. Transformational leadership has four dimensions: (1) charisma, (2) inspiration to gain support for their vision, (3) individual consideration and (4) intellectual stimulation. Although there has been research focusing on transformational change, there have been few studies that focus on the CEO's impact on the effective functioning of the top management team (Farrell, Flood, Curtain, et.al. 2005).

## 2.9 Framework for Interpreting Research Findings

The framework utilized to interpret the Project Management Offices' effectiveness is based on the P3O framework perspective and applying the maturity assessment levels across the different views. Organizational governance evaluates whether projects are a wise investment for the organization and whether they suit its course and strategy. Management control entails the strategic, tactical, and operational steps to assess and monitor each project and its progress. Benefits management helps examine whether the investments that have been made in projects have the desired results for the organization or if this is not the case. Risk management mainly focuses on whether specific threats or risks during the project can be managed and opportunities. Stakeholder management is an aspect of management that involves

a wide range of stakeholders and possible projects and keeps them updated on any changes. Finance management monitors the project's progress and mainly looks at the financial aspect and the returns on specific investments. Resource management focuses on developing talents within the own workforce and effectively using them to benefit the projects.

These P3O perspectives are measure against a five (5) level maturity scale, which is as follows:

**Level 1:** Awareness of the process. The manager needs to be aware of all project processes to ensure they can give recommendations toward process improvement.

**Level 2:** Repeatable process. Processes need to be repeatable, which implies that another Project Management Office performing the same task should arrive at similar results.

**Level 3:** Defined process. The Project Management Office should define processes to ensure they are the best fit for the firm's project and problem.

**Level 4:** Managed process. Project management is a critical aspect of the Project Management Office's role since it enables achieving expected milestones within a set time.

**Level 5:** Optimized process. Process optimization helps reduce waste within a project, which is a critical aspect of the entire project's organization. Resource allocation should match project milestones to achieve the expected results within a set time. (Roden, 2008)

> *"Leaders play a critical role during the organization's attempt to embrace change. It takes a leader to create positive change. Leadership is critical from the announcement of change through the implementing of the change. During the period in-between, the organization is the most unstable, often characterized by confusion, fear, loss of direction, reduced productivity, and lack of clarity about direction and expectations. It*

*can be a period of high emotion, with employees grieving for what is lost, and initially unable to look to the future."* (Kolzow, 2014, pg227)

According to Goleman, (2000), there are six (6) emotional leadership styles as shown below:

## The Six Leadership Styles (Goleman)

| | Commanding | Visionary | Affiliative | Democratic | Pacesetting | Coaching |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| The leader's modus operandi | Demands immediate compliance | Mobilizes people toward a vision | Creates harmony and builds emotional bonds | Forges consensus through participation | Sets high standards for performance | Develops people for the future |
| The style in a phrase | "Do what I tell you." | "Come with me." | "People come first." | "What do you think?" | "Do as I do, now" | "Try this." |
| Underlying emotional intelligence competencies | Drive to achieve, initiative, self-control | Self-confidence, empathy, change catalyst | Empathy, building relationships, communication | Collaboration, team leadership, communication | Conscientious-ness, drive to achieve, initiative | Developing others, empathy, self-awareness |
| When the style works best | In a crisis, to kick start a turnaround, or with problem employees | When changes require a new vision, or when a clear direction is needed | To heal rifts in a team or to motivate people during stressful circumstances | To build buy-in or consensus, or to get input from valuable employees | To get quick results form a highly motivated and competent team | To help an employee improve performance or develop long-term strengths |
| Overall impact on climate | Negative | Most strongly positive | Positive | Positive | Negative | Positive |

Goleman, Daniel, "Leadership that Gets Results" Harvard Business Review. March-April 2000 p. 82-83.

*Source: Goleman, (2000)*

As an effective leader, it is essential to employ a collection of these leadership styles as and when required. According to Goleman (2000), these can be learned and, once successfully deployed, can lead to outstanding performances.

Goleman et al. (2001) found that "emotional intelligence is the hidden driver for performance" in organizations. Therefore, to evaluate the leadership component, we will analyse the "Emotional Intelligence" and capabilities of the leaders in these roles and leveraging the Capabilities and corresponding traits championed by (Goleman 2000) in his work "Leadership that gets results. The table below is a depiction of skills a project manager needs to succeed.

| Self-Awareness (Head) | Self-Management (Head & Heart) | Social Awareness (Heart) | Social Skills (Hands) |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Emotional Self-Awareness** | Self-control | Empathy | Visionary Leadership |
| **Accurate Self-assessment** | Trustworthiness | Organizational Awareness | Influence |
| **Self-confidence** | Conscientiousness | Service Orientation | Communication |
| | Adaptability | | Change catalyst |
| | Achievement Orientation | | Conflict management |
| | Initiative | | Building Bonds |
| | | | Teamwork and collaboration |

**Table 1: Project Manager Skill Sets**

## 2.10 Conclusion

Project management leaders have to get results. These results are confirmed by delivering on projects and their objectives. Therefore, leaders unable to deliver on projects through their teams and the Project Management Office they oversee will not get results. Increased effectiveness in Leadership through improved emotional intelligence (EQ) and appropriate “leadership styles” will contribute toward improved outcomes. However, those results are dependent on the EQ of the leader and their

efficacy and the skill and understanding of the Project Management Office and project management skill sets' core functionality.

# 3 RESEARCH STRATEGY, DESIGN, PROCEDURE AND METHODS

## 3.1 Introduction

Three questions were posed that this research report intended to answer, that is:

1. Does the maturity of the PMO processes, governance frameworks and methodology determine the Organizational Project Management Maturity OPM3 level?
2. Does the maturity of the PMO/OPM3 influence the success of the projects in the PMO?
3. What Leadership styles succeed in the PMO context that ultimately determines the success of the PMO Leader?

The paper has reviewed literature and developed an interpretative and conceptual framework, guided by the techniques to provide a conclusion. This chapter identified and described the research approach, design, procedure, and methods employed to collect, process, and analyse empirical evidence. Broadly, it had three objectives: to identify and describe the research strategy, the research design, and the procedure and methods. The chapter described the reliability and validity measures that this research applied to make it credible and the technical and administrative limitations of the choices made.

## 3.2 Research Strategy

Research strategy or method is defined as “a particular way of studying something to discover new information about it or understand it better” (Cambridge 2020). Research started with one question and that was expanded. There are broadly three research strategies, qualitative, quantitative, and mixed. We applied a qualitative research approach (leveraging inductive and deductive analysis), utilizing structured

interviews and questionnaires to poll the participants. (Hobbs 2006) successfully used this as a research approach in his report on “The Reality on Project Management Offices,” it provided keen insights not just to the researcher but the various industry bodies such as Project Management Institute (PMI), and this research is referenced as a foundational point for research on Project Management Offices.

For this research, we utilized both inductive and deductive approaches. “Inductive analysis refers to approaches that primarily use detailed readings of raw data to derive concepts, themes, or a model through interpretations made from the raw data by an evaluator or researcher” (Thomas, 2006). “Deductive Analysis refers to data analyses that set out to test whether data are consistent with prior assumptions, theories, or hypotheses identified or constructed by an investigator” (Thomas, 2006). The interviews were transcribed and analysed to identify themes that arise. This process is commonly utilized in qualitative analysis and is known as “Thematic Analysis” (Sundler, Lindberg, Nilsson, & Palmér, 2019).

### 3.3 Research Design

Next to the topic selection and formulation of research questions, deciding on the research design is the next most essential decision. Research design focuses on how the researcher gathers the research data. A large amount of research is available on research design, none more influential than Bryman (2016), who provides five generic research designs: cross-sectional, longitudinal, case study, comparative, and experimental. Our preferred method of data collection used was “cross-sectional.” It focused on Project Management Offices and Project Management Office leaders’ current view at the specific point in time. Hobbs and Aubry (2007) followed a similar approach in “A multi-phase research program investigating Project Management Offices (PMOs),” where the first portion was to understand the current context of the Project Management Office landscape as very little was available on the subject.

## 3.4 Research Procedure and Methods

This section documented the actual procedure and the methods employed in this research to collect, collate, process, and analyse empirical evidence. Broadly, we detailed the data and information collection instruments, the target population and sampling of respondents, the ethical considerations during the research process, data and information collection process and storage, data and information processing and analysis, and the background description of the respondents who provided empirical evidence for this research study.

### 3.4.1 Research Data and Information Collection Instrument

Bryman (2016) defined the research data collection instrument as a valuable tool in collecting data. Notably, tools could range from an interview, questionnaire, or observation. The mechanism employed for obtaining data for this research was Microsoft teams interviews using predefined questionnaires. The Aubry and Hobbs (2011) and Hobbs (2006) frameworks proved helpful in eliciting responses imperative to the research in question. Bryman (2016) stated that the research instrument could have various structures depending on the research type and preferences. These structures included fully structured, semi-structured, and unstructured designs. The semi-structured format proved useful for this research as an interviewing methodology for expanding on the questions. The objective was to enrich the structured survey-based questionnaire. The researcher sourced original questions from the literature review and developed them during a pilot study conducted on five PMO professionals.

### 3.4.2 Sample and Sampling

#### 3.4.2.1 Research Target Population

A research target population is a collection or group of individuals or objects that the research will be focused upon or sourced from (Bryman, 2016). The selected target groups are project management professionals and leaders in the financial services field (Tarrant, 2016; Einhorn, Meredith, & Marnewick, 2020). The research focus was

on a sample of 27 professionals as the sample. It included individuals who made part of a Project Management Office or directly had a hand in creating a Project Management Office or have provided oversights in office matters.

### 3.4.3 Ethical considerations when collecting research data

The sole goal of data collection is to be responsible for the group under research. Notably, the researcher needs to protect all respondents, especially the information they share in the study (Denzin, 1989). With this responsibility in mind, it is essential to adhere to research ethics and closely follow the guidelines for the responsible conduct of research at a high ethical standard (McKellar & Toth, 2016). Fortunately, the current study lead has been actively involved in the project office and project management domains, and as such would like to contribute to its development and growth. The target population that formed part of this study was predominantly individuals that operate in the project management domain. In the project management community, there is a history of close collaboration. Informed consent was sought from the participating individuals before their participation and the publication of the research findings. All possible identifying information (if any) will be anonymized. All data will be encrypted and securely stored, with only the primary researcher having access to the information. The information gathered will be protected and securely stored. However, the report will be freely shared to contribute to the knowledge base of the community. The information will be gathered on a recognized surveying portal with user access controls to ensure information can only be accessed via signing into the portal. Information downloaded for processing will be encrypted, protected, and stored in a secure cloud storage portal.

### 3.4.4 Research data and Information Collection Process

Data and information abound; with the advent of the internet and the various social media forums, there is a world of data and information exposed. However, for research and critical studies, one needs to collect the correct or data appropriate for our purposes that align with the research method adopted. For this research, we have opted for a qualitative research method. There are four predominant modes:

ethnographic field observation, content analysis, interviewing, focus groups, and unobtrusive measures.

The researcher adopted the semi-structured interview model for this research, and respondents were interviewed via Microsoft teams with a selected group of Project Management Office leaders. Interviews are ideally suited to elicit the responses to build up the information required to generate the processing data. The participants all formed part of Project Management Office structures and report into such and based on this, uniquely qualified to provide their insights and observations.

### 3.4.5 Research Data and Information Processing and Analysis

#### 3.4.5.1 Research Data and Information Processing

Research data processing is converting verbal or written information into machine-readable data. However, Bourque, Clark, and Clark (1992) prefer a broader definition, which states that the onset of data processing is the collection of data before transforming it as deemed necessary.

Data coding is a process of transformation of an observation or data into evocative, unified groups. The data should be a systematic depiction of observed or recorded phenomena. Notably, the researcher should deploy various ideas intertwined with theories. Codes originate from an inductive emergence in the process, but the researcher could have defined them before the onset of the research.

#### 3.4.5.2 Research data and information analysis

The goal of research data analysis is to uncover emerging themes, patterns, concepts, insights, and understandings (Patton, 2014). There are more than several qualitative data analysis methods: narrative analysis, grounded theory, conversion analysis, and discourse analysis. One can choose one or a combination of these depending on the data set to complete the research. Data analysis plays a vital role in the study, as weak analysis results may result in unsatisfactory results and unusable findings (Anon 2018). The researcher used thematic analysis to identify,

analyse, organize, describe, and report themes (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Below is detailed the various phases of thematic analysis (Nowell, Norris, White, & Moules, 2017).

| **Establishing Trustworthiness During Each Phase of Thematic Analysis** | |
|---|---|
| **Phases of Thematic Analysis** | **Means of Establishing Trustworthiness** |
| | |
| Phase 1: Familiarizing oneself with the data | Prolong engagement with data |
| | Triangulate different data collection modes |
| | Document theoretical and reflective thoughts |
| | Document thoughts about potential codes/themes |
| | Store raw data in well-organized archives |
| | Keep records of all data field notes, transcripts, and reflexive journals. |
| | |
| Phase 2: Generating initial codes | Peer debriefing |
| | Researcher triangulation |
| | Reflective journaling |
| | Use of a coding framework |
| | Audit trail of code generation |
| | Documentation of all team meeting and peer debriefings |
| | |

| | |
|---|---|
| Phase 3: Searching for themes | Researcher triangulation |
| | Diagramming to make sense of theme connections |
| | Keep detailed notes about the development and hierarchies of concepts and themes. |
| | |
| Phase 4: Reviewing themes | Researcher triangulation |
| | Themes and subthemes vetted by team members |
| | Test for referential adequacy by returning to raw data |
| | |
| Phase 5: Defining and naming themes | Researcher triangulation |
| | Peer debriefing |
| | Team consensus on themes |
| | Documentation of team meetings regarding themes |
| | Documentation of theme naming |
| | |
| Phase 6: Producing the report | Member checking |
| | Peer debriefing |
| | Describing the process of coding and analysis insufficient details |
| | Thick descriptions of context |
| | Description of the audit trail |
| | Report on reasons for theoretical, methodological, and analytical choices throughout the entire study |

**Table 2: Establishing Trustworthiness during Each Phase of Thematic Analysis**

Source: (Nowell et al., 2017)

The researcher deployed narrative analysis as a tool for the depiction of themes. Notably, it involved analysing content from each of the respondents and reporting themes found in the data. It focused on user experiences and stories these individuals shared to assist in answering the research questions.

### 3.4.6 Description of the Research Respondents

At the point of reporting on the research, the researcher should describe vital data characteristics that entail participants. Notably, the objective is the authentication of these people as the rightful information sources. There is a need to report demographics like educational level, gender, age, and years working. It is also vital to give the number of people in the study, physical aspects of the study setting, organizational role, and critical respondent attributes. These aspects were relevant to the study to validate respondents participating in the current research.

There were 27 respondents in total, and the demographic and ratio of the participants were as below:

| Answer | % | Count |
|---|---|---|
| **Male** | 37.04% | 10 |
| **Female** | 62.96% | 17 |
| **Total** | 100% | 27 |

**Table 3: Survey participants gender distribution**

The table is significant since it shows the percentage of respondents and the possibility of bias in reporting. A 50-50 ratio of male to female participants is ideal, implying the current results is slightly more skewed toward female the female respondents as they make up a larger number of the sample population.

Interestingly the participants, were all older than 30 years of age, as evidenced in the table below:

| # | Answer | % | Count |
|---|---|---|---|
| **1** | 18-29 | 0.00% | 0 |
| **2** | 30-39 | 37.04% | 10 |
| **3** | 40-49 | 44.44% | 12 |
| **4** | 50 or older | 18.52% | 5 |
| | Total | 100% | 27 |

**Table 4: Survey participants age distribution**

Individuals above 30 years are highly likely to have worked in a number of different organizations and environments to gain adequate knowledge about the working context. This implies that the respondents are experienced.

The spread of the roles required to ensure that there was an adequate sampling of the representative population was fulfilled, as displayed below:

| Answer | % | Count |
|---|---|---|
| **Project Manager** | 25.93% | 7 |
| **Programme Manager** | 22.22% | 6 |
| **Project Management Office Head** | 25.93% | 7 |
| **Business Analyst** | 11.11% | 3 |
| **Other** | 14.81% | 4 |
| **Total** | 100% | 27 |

**Table 5: Survey participants' role designations.**

The sample population is spread across the various disciplines in the project and PMO teams, this ensures that the feedback is representative, and the results are representative of the diversity of their views.

The participants' tenure in their current PMOs provided a varied spread of experiences within the PMO structure.

| Answer | % | Count |
|---|---|---|
| **Less than 1 year** | 11.11% | 3 |
| **Between 1 to 3 years** | 37.04% | 10 |
| **Between 3 to 5 years** | 25.93% | 7 |
| **More than 6 years** | 22.22% | 6 |
| **Not part of PMO** | 3.70% | 1 |
| **Total** | 100% | 27 |

**Table 6: Average tenure of survey participants in their PMO.**

Most participants have worked at the organization for more than a year, but those working for three years or more represent 88 percent of the sample. Experience in the working environment is imperative when giving responses concerning the functional capacity of PMO leaders.

### 3.4.7 Research Strengthens: Reliability and Validity Measures Applied

Reliability is the degree of consistency in results, while validity is accuracy concerning concepts in research. Combined, reliability and validity speak to the rigor of the measurements applied (Cypress, 2017). The measurement can be reliable; however, the results may still not be valid, leading to false conclusions.

The data derived from the interview participants served as a control group to ensure the research's reliability. There were additional control questions included in the surveys to identify the outliers and possible exclusion data quickly.

Leininger (1985) details qualitative research's validity as "gaining knowledge" of the studied matter. There are four main validation methods for qualitative research strategies: credibility, dependability, transferability, and conformability. Credibility demonstrates the study object based on the research methods, and dependability can account for changes in the study design and context (Labaree, 2020). Credibility

and dependability were the basis to ensure the requisite rigor is applied and a high measure of conclusions' trustworthiness.

### 3.4.8 Research Weaknesses: Technical and Administrative Limitations

Due to the pandemic's current state, the interviews were remote, and the surveys were via Qualtrics. This limits your ability to establish rapport and the researcher's verbal cues. The Project Management Office construct had no proper formalized one-size-fits-all construct, and therefore the views and opinions of the audience would differ (Hobbs, 2006). Feedback on the survey was based on the participants' subjective opinions, the Project Management Office's maturity, and their understanding of the Project Management and Project Management Office capabilities. Therefore, the feedback provided influenced the research.

# 4 RESULTS

## 4.1 Introduction

The essence of this section is to provide results from the study. Many respondents were part of a formal PMO, their tenures ranging between 1 and 5 years. The methodologies used in the PMO's were Traditional waterfall, Kanban/Scrum, and Waterfall/Agile hybrid. The leadership model that the respondents said was most utilised in the PMO's was "Authoritative: Mobilises people toward a vision - has a mostly positive impact."

## 4.2 Presentation of the Data:

To enabled focused responses; the questions were grouped in logical themed groupings: allowing for responses focused on:

- The individual who focused on the demographic of the individual, their role, and their understanding of their role in the PMO context
- The PMO Focused on understanding the methodology, governance, and maturity of the PMO structures and
- The PMO Leadership Focused on understanding the leadership style, developmental approach, and tenure.

### 4.2.1 Research Question 1 (PMO)

*What is required to elevate a Project Management Office to a better maturity?*

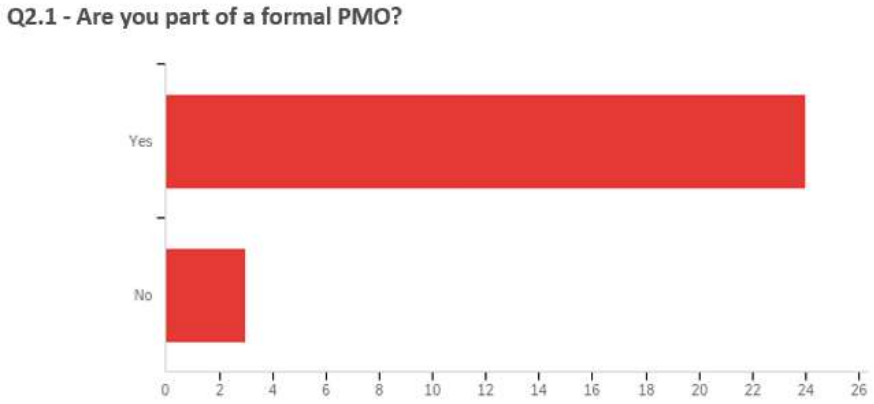



**Figure 3: Responses on Project Management Office (PMO) Membership.**

### Q2.2. What influences the maturity of the PMO Organizational Project Management Maturity (OPM)?

Not all organizations see the value of having a formalised PMO. In the current financial services organization being surveyed, one can see that it has been widely adopted and accepted.

### Q2.3. Which of the following methodologies are used in your PMO?

| Answer | % | Count |
|---|---|---|
| **Waterfall / PMBOK** | 7.41% | 2 |
| **Kanban/Scrum/Agile variant** | 25.93% | 7 |
| **Waterfall / Agile Hybrid** | 66.67% | 18 |
| **TOTAL** | 100% | 27 |

**Table 7: Responses on Project Management Office (PMO) methodology.**

The traditional waterfall methodology proposed by Royce in 1970 (Bassil, 2012) is still prevalent. The Agile and hybrid methodology adoption is increasing, as depicted in table 8, but for the most part, one can see that waterfall still features quite strongly.

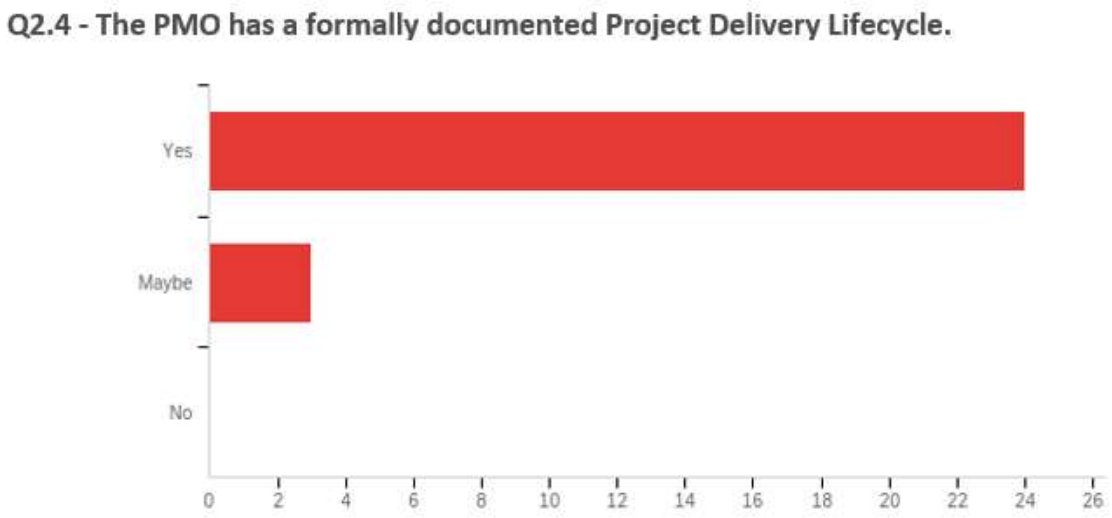



**Figure 4: Responses on Project Management Office (PMO) delivery lifecycle.**

A documented project delivery Lifecycle ensures that the full process is articulated from inception to close out and benefits realisation—most of the participants state that the PMO has documented the PDLC.

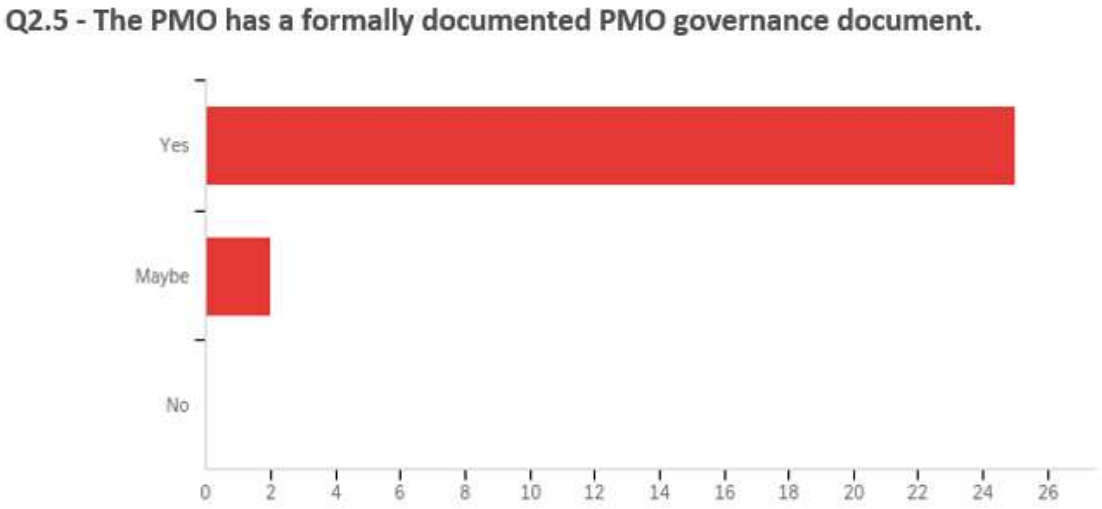



**Figure 5: Responses on Project Management Office (PMO) governance documentation.**

A documented governance process ensures that all aspects of the project governance requirements are clear and required project artifacts are known.

**Q2.6 - The PMO follows a structured gated process for project governance.**

| # | Answer | % | Count |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Yes | 74.07% | 20 |
| 2 | Maybe | 14.81% | 4 |
| 3 | No | 11.11% | 3 |
| | TOTAL | 100% | 27 |

**Table 8: Responses on Project Management Office (PMO) gated governance process.**

The gated process ensures that at every "check point" or handover point, there is a logical governance check to ensure that all requirements are met for the project to progress to the next step.

**Q2.7 - My understanding of the delivery lifecycle and PMO processes are clear.**

| # | Answer | % | Count |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Strongly Agree | 44.44% | 12 |
| 2 | Somewhat agree | 48.15% | 13 |
| 3 | Neither agree nor disagree | 3.70% | 1 |
| 4 | Somewhat disagree | 3.70% | 1 |
| 5 | Strongly disagree | 0.00% | 0 |
| | **TOTAL** | 100% | 27 |

**Table 9: Responses on understanding Project Management Office (PMO) processes.**

Across the surveyed organization, one can see that the respondents have indicated that they have a clear understanding of the PMO and project processes. This bodes well from an organizational perspective.

**Q2.8 - Are you familiar with PMO Maturity Assessments?**

| # | Answer | % | Count |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Yes | 59.26% | 16 |
| 2 | No | 40.74% | 11 |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | **TOTAL** | 100% | 27 |

**Table 10: Responses on understanding Project Management Office (PMO) maturity assessment.**

Understanding maturity assessments and the prevalence thereof and seeing how familiar the respondents are with these.

### Q2.9 - Where would you rate your PMO on the following maturity scale?

| # | Answer | % | Count |
|---|---|---|---|
| **1** | 1. PMO Processes are ad-hoc | 3.70% | 1 |
| **2** | 2. PMO Processes are somewhat repeatable | 18.52% | 5 |
| **3** | 3. PMO Processes are standardised and formalised | 51.85% | 14 |
| **4** | 4. PMO Processes are managed, and metrics are defined | 11.11% | 3 |
| **5** | 5. PMO Processes are second nature and constantly being refined and optimised | 14.81% | 4 |
| | **TOTAL** | 100% | 27 |

**Table 11: Respondents rating of Project Management Office (PMO) maturity.**

The quantification of a Project Management Office's maturity results from generating value for customers and the company as a whole. Maturity might be an evolution from a strategic approach or operational approach. However, it is imperative to deploy a careful analysis to pinpoint the entirety of the process. Companies need to ask themselves questions requiring operational Project Management Office necessity in maturity and strategic maturity PMO necessity. The real world should state that none of the organizations has achieved any of these metrics. A Project Management Office with a strategic mission can perform in a mature or immature way depending on several factors. The same applies to a company that is deploying an operational mission. Organizations can have strategic or tactical alongside operational objectives with low or high levels of maturity. A Project Management Office can have multiple approaches depending on the mission. It makes sense to analyse maturity if the focus is on each of the three methods being used. The conclusion is that there are three different levels of maturity that Project Management Offices could achieve. An operational viewpoint is that most South African

companies depict immaturity from a strategic and tactical perspective. The company is aligned with objectives and generates value that shareholders expect. The Project Management Office generates value via the functions provided to translate into services for various Clans. Its maturity is quantified as the sophistication of service provision. There are multiple ways to provide service, from the most trivial and straightforward that add zero value to the organization to complex and complicated methodologies that offer greater value and depict an increase in expected results. Each of the services that a Project Management Office provides in an organization can have four maturity levels. Most organizations in South Africa are at the operational status of maturity. They have not yet determined the best methodologies to correct mistakes made in the processes they undertake.

### 4.2.2 Research Question 2 (Individual)

*Establish whether the maturity of the Project Management Office is important in the success of projects.*

**Q1.3 - Please indicate your role designation:**

| Answer | % | Count |
|---|---|---|
| **Project Manager** | 25.93% | 7 |
| **Programme Manager** | 22.22% | 6 |
| **Project Management Office Head** | 25.93% | 7 |
| **Business Analyst** | 11.11% | 3 |
| **Other** | 14.81% | 4 |
| **TOTAL** | 100% | 27 |

**Table 12: Respondents Project Management Office (PMO) role designation.**

An individual's role in the organization is imperative since it underscores the context within which responses are provided. The respondents were evenly spread in the cohort, making the results pertinent and representative of the target population.

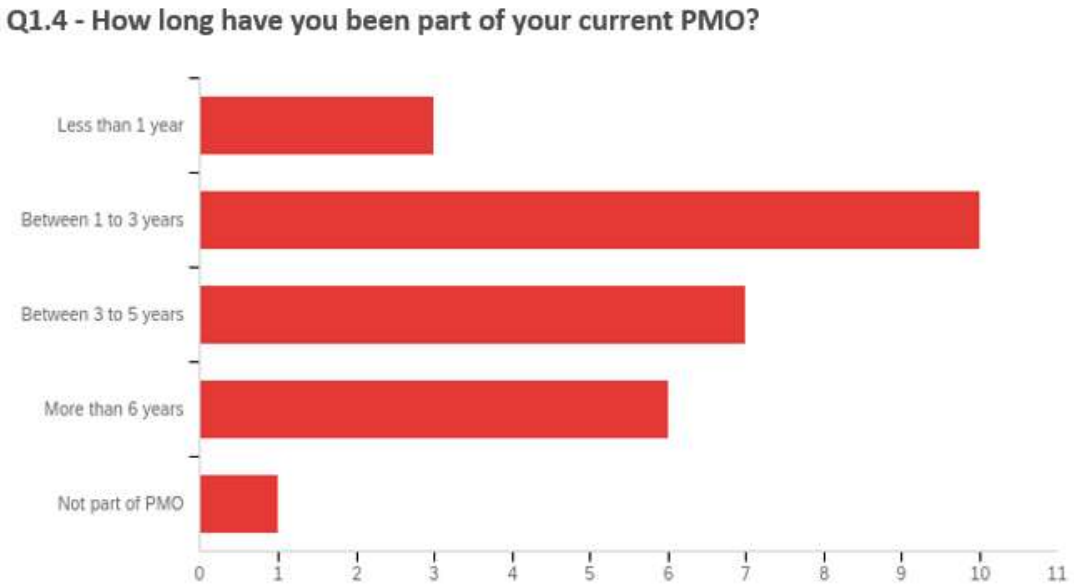



**Figure 6: Duration of respondent's tenure in the Project Management Office (PMO).**

The results in Figure 5 show that most employees have worked for one year or more. The sum of those who have worked for three or more years is the highest, implying statistically significant results.




**Figure 7: Project Management certification of respondents.**

The results in Figure 6 depicts the project management certifications attained by the participants within the target organizations. Surprisingly, there is a larger proportion of

respondents that have a Prince2 certification, considering that more South African organizations follow PMBOK (PMP) in South Africa.

**Q1.8 - In my current role, project objectives and outcomes are clearly defined.**

| # | Answer | % | Count |
|---|---|---|---|
| **1** | Strongly Agree | 18.52% | 5 |
| **2** | Somewhat agree | 55.56% | 15 |
| **3** | Neither agree nor disagree | 7.41% | 2 |
| **4** | Somewhat disagree | 18.52% | 5 |
| **5** | Strongly disagree | 0.00% | 0 |
| | **TOTAL** | 100% | 27 |

**Table 13: Respondents' understanding of Project objectives & outcomes.**

Table 14 shows that 20 respondents agree that they have a clearly defined role, objectives and the outcomes is clearly set and available at inception of the project. This is especially essential for clarity of purpose and understanding, leading to successful project delivery.

**Q1.9 - In my current role, I have managed to deliver projects - on budget, within the scope, and on time:**

| | Answer | % | Count |
|---|---|---|---|
| **1** | Always | 7.41% | 2 |
| **2** | Most of the time | 25.93% | 7 |
| **3** | About half the time | 29.63% | 8 |
| **4** | Sometimes | 29.63% | 8 |
| **5** | Never | 7.41% | 2 |
| | **TOTAL** | 100% | 27 |

**Table 14: Respondent's ability to deliver to Project success criteria.**

Table 15 shows that respondents cannot always deliver their projects on time, and the most significant responses are “about half the time” and “sometimes,” representing 16 out of 27 participants.

### 4.2.3 Research Question 3 (PMO Leadership)

*Establish whether the leadership style of the PMO head is important in propelling the PMO to a better maturity.*

**Q3.1 - How long has the PMO Head been leading the current PMO?**

| # | Answer | % | Count |
|---|---|---|---|
| **1** | Less than 1 year | 48.15% | 13 |
| **2** | Between 1 to 3 years | 44.44% | 12 |
| **3** | Between 3 to 5 years | 7.41% | 2 |
| **4** | More than 6 years | 0.00% | 0 |
| | **TOTAL** | 100% | 27 |

**Table 15: Respondent’s ability to deliver to Project success criteria.**

Most of the respondent’s state that the PMO head has been at the organization for under a year to more than three years. None has been at the helm of the PMO for over five years. Duration of tenure is an essential indicator of longevity in the role and often leading to greater PMO maturity.

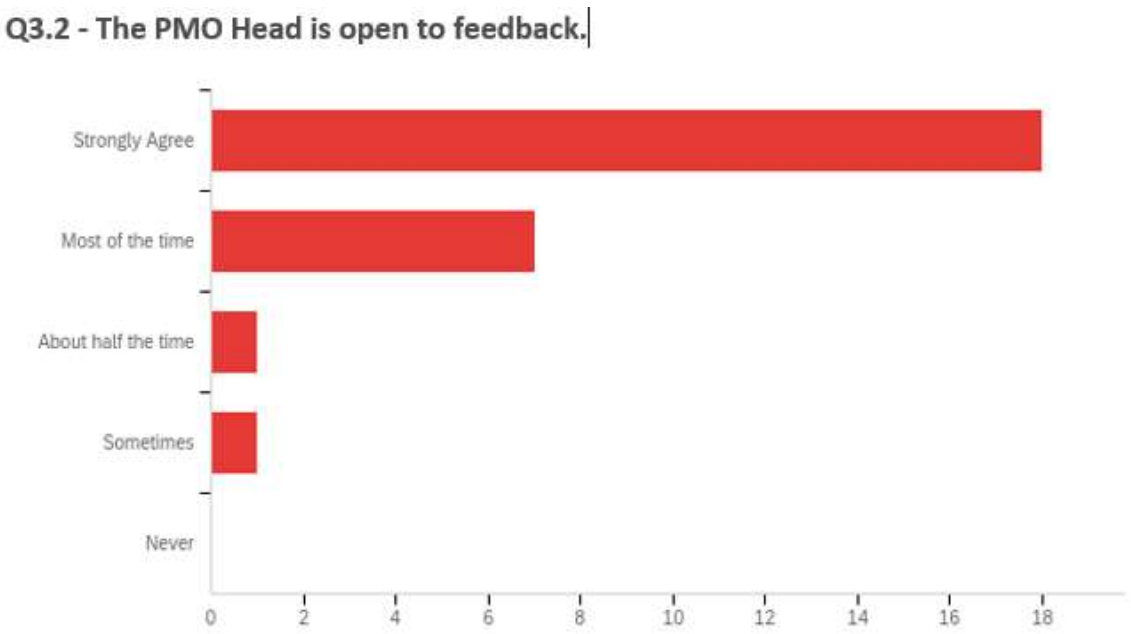



**Figure 8: Responses on Project Management Office (PMO) Head, openness to feedback.**

The PMO leader is open to feedback, and none of the respondents stated that the PMO head never accepted feedback from respondents. Leaders should be open to feedback that assist them in growing, it is encouraging from an organizational context to see that this is embraced by its leadership.

**Q3.3 - The PMO Head is accessible and supportive.**

| # | Answer | % | Count |
|---|---|---|---|
| **1** | Strongly Agree | 66.67% | 18 |
| **2** | Somewhat agree | 25.93% | 7 |
| **3** | Neither agree nor disagree | 3.70% | 1 |
| **4** | Somewhat disagree | 3.70% | 1 |
| **5** | Strongly disagree | 0.00% | 0 |
| | **TOTAL** | 100% | 27 |

**Table 16: Response on the accessibility of Project Management Office (PMO) Head.**

The PMO head is openly accessible and supportive, as depicted in Table 14.

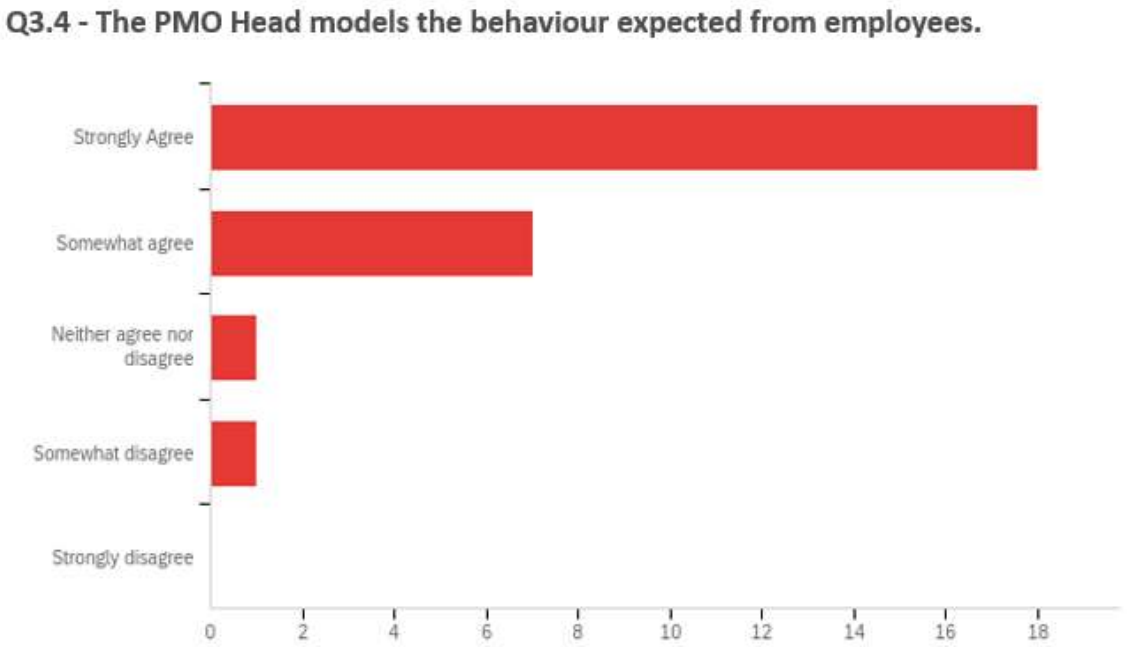



**Figure 9: Responses on Project Management Office (PMO) Head demonstrating exemplary behaviour.**

The PMO leader readily models their behaviour to reflect the behaviour expected from the organizations employees that it wants them to emulate. From a trust building perspective, it is essential that there is no dissonance between the expected behaviour and reality.

**Q3.5 - The PMO Head encourages employees to grow and develop their skills.**

| # | Answer | % | Count |
|---|---|---|---|
| **1** | Strongly Agree | 59.26% | 16 |
| **2** | Somewhat agree | 25.93% | 7 |
| **3** | Neither agree nor disagree | 11.11% | 3 |
| **4** | Somewhat disagree | 3.70% | 1 |
| **5** | Strongly disagree | 0.00% | 0 |
| | **TOTAL** | 100% | 27 |

**Table 17: Response on positive reinforcement from Project Management Office (PMO) Head**

The PMO head encourages workers to grow and develop their skills, as depicted in Table 18. This type of behaviour encourages a growth culture and employees thrive

more in environments such as these, leading to greater organizational and project success.

### Q3.6 - Employee's trust in the Leadership of the PMO Head.

| # | Answer | % | Count |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Strongly Agree | 48.15% | 13 |
| 2 | Somewhat agree | 37.04% | 10 |
| 3 | Neither agree nor disagree | 11.11% | 3 |
| 4 | Somewhat disagree | 3.70% | 1 |
| 5 | Strongly disagree | 0.00% | 0 |
| | **TOTAL** | 100% | 27 |

**Table 18: Response on employee trust in Project Management Office (PMO) Head.**

The PMO heads are trusted by their employees at the company, as depicted in Table 19. Organizations with higher trust relationships thrive as its employees are engaged and committed.

### Q3.7 - Select the appropriate leadership style of your PMO Head.

| # | Answer | % | Count |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Coercive: Demands immediate compliance - has a negative impact | 0.00% | 0 |
| 2 | Authoritative: Mobilises people toward a vision - has a mostly positive impact | 37.04% | 10 |
| 3 | Democratic: Forges consensus through participation - has a positive impact | 22.22% | 6 |
| 4 | Pacesetting: Sets high standards for performance - has a mostly positive impact | 18.52% | 5 |
| 5 | Coaching: Develops people for the future - has a positive impact | 22.22% | 6 |
| | **TOTAL** | 100% | 27 |

**Table 19: Response on Project Management Office (PMO) Head leadership style.**

The most prevalent leadership style is authoritative and has the most positive impact on the company, from respondents' perception depicted in Table 20. It is enlightening

and especially encouraging from an organizational impact to see that none of the respondents perceive any of their leaders to have adopted a “Coercive” leadership approach.

# 5 DISCUSSION

## 5.1 Introduction

The following section will provide a discussion of the results from the previous section. Notably, it will link the research results to the identified hypotheses in the study. The theories used in this section include management-as-planning (Johnston & Brennan, 1996), the scientific experimentation of model by (Shewhart & Deming, 1986), the language/action perspective (Winograd, 1986), and the community of practice theory (Aubry, Müller, & Glückler, 2011). The information is relevant since it underscores factors that influence PMO maturity, how the PMO/OPM3 influences the success of the projects in the PMO, and leadership styles that succeed in the PMO context determine the success of the PMO Leader.

## 5.2 Requirements to improve a Project Management Office to better maturity.

Aubry (2015) indicates that project management maturity can be utilized as a measurement for improving an organization's project management capability.

The P3O perspectives are measured against a five-level maturity scale (Roden, 2008), as follows:

**Level 1:** Awareness of the process. The manager needs to be aware of all project processes to ensure they can give recommendations toward process improvement.

**Level 2:** Repeatable process. Processes need to be repeatable, which implies that another Project Management Office performing the same task should arrive at similar results.

**Level 3:** Defined process. The Project Management Office should define processes to ensure they are the best fit for the firm's project and problem.

**Level 4:** Managed process. Project management is a critical aspect of the Project Management Office's role since it enables achieving expected milestones within a set time.

**Level 5:** Optimized process. Process optimization helps reduce waste within a project, which is a critical aspect of the entire project's organization. Resource allocation should match project milestones to achieve the expected results within a set time.

Each of the levels presented above corresponds to specific points that need to be completed and divided into various organization missions to represent maturity levels. The operational maturity level is the most reminiscent in South African Project Management Offices, and this will take a significant amount of time before it can change. For the organization that is the subject of our research, one can see the value of them having a unified way of working in that the respondents all replied favourably in their understanding and familiarity with the methodology, governance framework, and process, ensuring that there is uniformity in their processes and delivery approach. An effective PMO maturity should be at level 2 or higher, which aligns with the theory and from our findings, 96.3% of the respondents agree with this.

The conclusion can be drawn that the requirements for improving the maturity of a PMO, requires improving project governance, staff knowledge, formalised processes, and lifecycle. Our findings concur with the requirements from the theory which at level 1 requires there to be at a minimum a formal PMO in the organisation. The PMO must adopt a formalised methodology. These methodologies should be documented as part of the PMO formal process and included in the project delivery lifecycle and all accompanying governance guidelines to assist when assessing from a governance and assurance perspective. The processes should be clear and easily accessible to ensure that it is widely understood by all stakeholders and project participants.

| | |
|---|---|
| **Q2.1** | Are you part of a formal PMO? |
| **Q2.3** | Which of the following methodologies are used in your PMO - Selected Choice? |
| **Q2.4** | The PMO has a formally documented Project Delivery Lifecycle. |
| **Q2.5** | The PMO has a formally documented PMO governance document. |
| **Q2.6** | The PMO follows a structured gated process for project governance. |
| **Q2.7** | My understanding of the delivery lifecycle and PMO processes are clear. |
| **Q2.8** | Are you familiar with PMO Maturity Assessments? |

| Q2.9 | Where would you rate your PMO on the following maturity scale? |
|---|---|

This assertion is supported in the findings by (Bento et al., 2019), where they have found that “Some of the interviewees stated that the adoption of formalised organisational project management methodology brought improvements at the process level, which made it possible to define in a more appropriate way the scope, schedule, costs, and goals to perform improvements in the stakeholder’s communication.”

Project Management maturity and Project Management Office (PMO) structures are not generic. It is not always a one-size-fits-all model due to the diversity in PMO structures and make-ups. (Hobbs & Aubry, 2007b), goes further in stating the following: “No consensus exist as to the way PMOs are or should be structured nor as to the functions they should or do fill in organizations.”

### 5.3 Understanding the importance that increased maturity of the PMO and project management practices have on the success of projects.

While (Mullaly & Thomas, 2010) suggest that an increased maturity level will result in improved delivery. A successful Project Management Office should articulate guiding and advising employees, educating, recruiting, deploying members of the project management team, and setting standards and methods for project management—access in project management in two dimensions, including critical factors and measurement indices. Clear success factors increase the chances of obtaining the desired result of successfully delivering on the project and the measures in the project environment. Measurement indexes include criteria imperative in determining the success of a project. They are impacting concluding the success of a project and determining how it can be measured. A connection needs to be created between critical success factors and essential success criteria to improve its excellence. There is a need for care to differentiate between these success factors and criteria. Project management success is different from a project’s success because it implies assessing the overall project success. However, project management success is quantified by quality and cost alongside the time consumed in a project.

The project management team is tasked with guiding and advising employees and providing education for every project team. It is imperative to persuade team members to accept that managers in a specific position are the most effective and best practice to deal with complexities in the project. These are also the best individuals to recruit project team members and manage expectations from the consumer base. The Project Management Office should use available knowledge in the best way to manage projects and learn lessons from projects conducted in other companies. Most Project Management Offices in South Africa have been skipping this requirement by avoiding learning lessons from the environment in which they exist as a business entity. The knowledge should include research and development alongside engineering to improve services and products at the company.

A project's most helpful success criteria include the environmental impact, project objectives, product effectiveness, project efficiency, stakeholder satisfaction, project performance, scope, time, quality, and cost. Project environmental impact implies the effect that the project has had on the environment. Every project needs to positively affect the environment, given companies' need to reduce their carbon footprint. Most of these issues are usually in the project planning phase, which implies that any negative environmental impact is frowned upon since the Project Management Office has failed to achieve the objectives it set in the beginning (Monteiro, Santos, & Varajão, 2016). A positive environmental impact has a similar effect on sustainable economic development from the organization's perspective articulating a specific project.

Project objectives are critical success factors because they show that a company has settled a specific set of goals and achieved them. All companies need to be ready to ensure the Project Management Office understands particular objectives set out as customer requirements that can be completed within a specific timeframe. The objective is to ensure that the Project Management Office can follow through with all of these objectives and achieve them as expected.

Product effectiveness is imperative for value creation and giving the company a unique value proposition from the market's perspective. It is vital to create products

that customers want rather than those they think they need but become ineffective. There is also a need to understand consumer dynamism, especially during the current pandemic. There has been a significant shift in consumer preferences that organizations need to understand before engaging in specific projects. The Project Management Office should ensure that the product it has created for the consumer base fits into the consumer profile and becomes a valuable product that might receive wide adoption from the consumer base.

Project efficiency is typically quantified in consumer satisfaction. Customers have to be satisfied with every product they receive from the company, especially if it fits their profile. There should also be a direct link between the inputs and outputs in the project. The failure to meet the expected outcomes results in a lack of efficiency of a project. It depicts their Project Management Office as an entity in an organization that fails to perform its expected objectives.

Stakeholder satisfaction is a central aspect of project management, and the Project Management Office needs to realize that these individuals are the lifeblood of the entire company. The Project Management Office is a department in the organization. It needs to ensure all projects succeed to avoid instances where stakeholders withdraw from the project due to poor performance.

Project performance is an essential metric used in projects to understand how they have performed, especially when observing their money and output. There must be a clear link between input and profitability and a methodical paradigm shift in production if needed to guarantee project success.

The scope is a vital factor within a project because it shows the specific aspects of the project that need to be attained within a given time. It also shows the project's cost to provide the Project Management Office with a clear indication of project expectations. Employees should understand the project scope, which implies ensuring that they have a specific team role. These teams need to work as a single unit under the Project Management Office to attain project milestones and objectives.

Time is a vital aspect in project management, and different systems like Kanban and Agile have become helpful in managing time in the project. The Project Management Office should ensure that every employee completes the specific aspect within the allocated time. The entire office needs to work like a machine to attain project objectives and deliver the expected quality by the end of the Project Life Cycle.

Quality is a vital aspect in project management that the Project Management Office should learn because it influences future projects. It is critical to learn from past mistakes and make necessary changes that should impact the future. The objective is to ensure the project achieves initial goals and makes essential improvements from which it can learn later. Documenting project quality information is a critical aspect of the Project Management Office that should help knowledge dispensation to new employees joining a specific team.

Cost is a fundamental aspect of project management, and the Project Management Office should be ready to manage it. The department usually estimates the project cost required to meet shared objectives. There may be changes made when the project is ongoing that can be over budget or under budget, depending on requirements. Some projects may need to be shelved due to unknown circumstances such as a global pandemic or recession. However, the cost is fundamental because unwittingly increasing the project cost results in failure. The Project Management Office might scrutinize the lack of excellent metrics to make required measurements and remain within budget. The Project Management Office needs to ensure risk management success by reducing or decreasing the project's adverse risks to satisfy cost and time alongside the project objectives.

### 5.4 Determining the leadership style required to propel the PMO to better maturity.

Project Management Office leaders should have the expected level of flexibility related to the organization's demands and service stakeholders and team members' needs. This is missing in some PMOs and PMO leaders but is not limited to our target organization. The PMO head must have a high level of technical understanding to

maximize the latest project management software and methodologies. PMO leaders with limited interpersonal skills and technical knowledge often secure positions at the PMO offices' helm; this is brought about by the limited understanding of recruiters' role requirements. A specific team has not received a positive outcome from the internal audit team for the last three years from one of the PMO offices in the target organization. The lack of understanding of the role's complexity indicates that these findings were repeat findings. There was an inability to understand and address the required shortcomings – despite being highlighted through the audit process. "An effective project leadership always has the right competencies and skills for right jobs at the right time, which necessitates ample need for research on project leadership." (Ahmed, Mohamad, & Masood, 2013, pg1).

The respondents agreed that for any leader in a PMO role, should welcome feedback, be accessible and supportive of their teams. In ensuring that the leader is authentic and that there is no incongruence, the leader must model the type of behaviour that they expect from their employees and teams. Building trust to improve employee performance is an important consideration for PMO leaders. In growing and elevating the team and the individuals they have to adopt a growth mindset focused on developing skills. Above all else, the PMO leader should have the ability to be flexible in employing the leadership style appropriate to the situation.

| **Q3.1** | **How long has the PMO Head been leading the current PMO?** |
|---|---|
| **Q3.2** | The PMO Head is open to feedback. |
| **Q3.3** | The PMO Head is accessible and supportive. |
| **Q3.4** | The PMO Head models the behaviour expected from employees. |
| **Q3.5** | The PMO Head encourages employees to grow and develop their skills |
| **Q3.6** | Employees trust in the Leadership of the PMO Head. |
| **Q3.7** | Select the appropriate leadership style of your PMO Head |

These questions focus on the key characteristics for leaders to affect a level of intentional change.

- Taylor (2006) states that it has long been known that feedback plays a critical role in providing input that contributes to the individual's psychological well-being. Individuals need to be open to feedback. A large proportion of the

respondents agree that their PMO leadership is open to feedback in the responses.

- Ninety-three percent of the respondents agree that the PMO leadership is supportive and accessible, implying that they do not isolate themselves from the team members. This correlates directly with sponsorship, where lack thereof overwhelmingly leads to failure (Schmid, P. & Koch, A., 2004).

- In this instance, due to the PMO leaders' high involvement, it has an overall positive effect. In looking at the overall behaviour of PMO leaders, the respondents concur that the leadership team models the desired behaviour that they would like to see from their employees. This aligns closely with the principles espoused by (George, Sims, McLean, & Mayer, 2007) in discovering your authentic self, thus ensuring unity between the individual and their team members as they are always authentic.

- Developing individuals is an essential aspect of an organization with a growth mindset. (Gottfredson & Reina, 2020) assert that organizations must prioritize mindset development for organizations' efforts in the development of individuals and leaders. It is clear that the respondents perceive that the PMO leadership feel strongly about their development, which will contribute to greater loyalty to the organization, looking after the individuals' interests.

- The teams feel strongly in the trust aspect of their relationship with the PMO leadership team. In "The connection between employee trust and financial performance," Covey and Conant (2016) state that trust between employees and employer is not a "nice to have" but a "must have." trust is imperative for building elite performance.

- None of the respondents indicated that the PMO heads applied an overwhelmingly negative leadership style in assessing the leadership styles employed by the various PMO leaders. It may indicate many PMO heads with a relatively short tenure at the helm of their new teams – they largely employed an "Authoritative" approach. In the study by (Ahmed et al. 2013), it

is found that that the manager roles related to projects are evolving to leading and away from the older form of managing and directing.

| | Coercive | Authoritative | Affiliative | Democratic | Pacesetting | Coaching |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Flexibility | -.28 | .32 | .27 | .28 | -.07 | .17 |
| Responsibility | -.37 | .21 | .16 | .23 | .04 | .08 |
| Standards | .02 | .38 | .31 | .22 | -.27 | .39 |
| Rewards | -.18 | .54 | .48 | .42 | -.29 | .43 |
| Clarity | -.11 | .44 | .37 | .35 | -.28 | .38 |
| Commitment | -.13 | .35 | .34 | .26 | -.20 | .27 |
| **Overall impact on climate** | **-.26** | **.54** | **.46** | **.43** | **-.25** | **.42** |

**Figure 10: Leadership styles (Goleman, 2000)**

# 6 SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This section will provide the study summary, conclusions, limitations, and recommendations for future studies.

## 6.1 Summary

Project Management Office leaders are critical to Project Management Offices' success. Thus, selecting the correct leader who is qualified and highly skilled becomes doubly essential. A problem arises when the people entrusted with recruitment have limited familiarity with project management due to a corporate Project Management Office's needs. At this point, the fledgling Project Management Office is already hamstrung and further compounded when an ill-suited individual is tasked with taking the reins.

Data and information abound; with the advent of the internet and many social media forums, there is a world of data and information exposed. Contrarily, for research and critical studies, one needs to collect the correct or data appropriate for our purposes that align with the research method adopted. For this study, we have opted for a qualitative research method. Notably, there are four predominant modes: ethnographic field observation, content analysis, interviewing, focus groups, and unobtrusive measures. The researcher adopted the semi-structured interview model for this study, and respondents were interviewed via Microsoft teams with a selected group of Project Management Office leaders. Interviews are ideally suited to elicit the responses to build up the information required to generate the processing data. The respondents all formed part of Project Management Office structures and report into such and, based on this, also uniquely qualified to provide their insights and observations.

This paper utilized a qualitative research methodology to get responses from respondents. The objective was to ensure the individuals participating in this study

gave specific information about the Project Management Office and Project Management Office leader. The respondents were surveyed utilizing “Qualtrics.” The selected target groups are project management professionals and leaders in the financial services field. The research focus was on a sample of 27 professionals as the sample. It included individuals who made part of a Project Management Office or directly hand in creating a Project Management Office or have provided oversights in office matters in the past.

According to the results, the Project Management Office has four critical duties imperative in helping the company succeed. Notably, the office is expected to advise and guide each of the individuals in the organization. Another role is to assist in recruitment and deployment into the project team. Employees getting into the team have to be the best fit for the specific role they need to play. Finally, they should give particular standards and methods that concern project management that employees can follow to achieve project milestones. The Project Management Office that cycles through these vital objectives finds itself in an excellent position to deliver quality in every project and give the customer the required results. It should also measure flexibility to make changes required because workers typically leave an organization. Finding the exact person to follow a specific role might take a significant amount of time.

The maturity of a Project Management Office results from developing staff, improving project management processes and procedures, and delivering business benefits for stakeholders and the organization. It might be an evolution from an operational approach to a more strategic focus. Contrarily, it is imperative to deploy careful analysis to pinpoint the entirety of the process. Firms need to ask themselves questions that entail operational Project Management Office necessity in maturity and strategic Project Management Office necessity in maturity. A PMO with a strategic mission can perform in a mature or immature way depending on several factors. A similar case applies to a company that is deploying an operational mission. Organizations can have strategic or tactical alongside operational objectives with low or high levels of maturity. A PMO could have multiple approaches depending on the mission, and it makes sense to analyse maturity if the focus is on each of the three techniques being used. The conclusion is that there are three different levels of

maturity that Project Management Offices could achieve. A firm with an operational viewpoint is the case with most South African companies depicting immaturity from a strategic and tactical perspective. The firm is aligned with objectives and generates value that shareholders expect. The PMO creates value via the functions provided that it may translate into services for various clients. The maturity is quantified as the sophistication of the service proposition. There are many ways to assist, from the most trivial and straightforward, adding zero value to the organization, to complex and complicated methodologies that offer greater value and depict an increase in expected results. The services a PMO offers vary according to the organization's needs, the PMO mandate, and its overall maturity. Most PMO offices across South Africa are between levels 2 and 3 on the organizational project management maturity scale (Project Portfolio Office (PPO), 2019). Ultimately PMO offices, which have failed in determining the best methodologies to correct mistakes made in the processes they undertake, will continue to fail.

## 6.2 Conclusions

The fundamental questions of this research have been achieved through the use of respondents deploying a qualitative design. The first question was to understand the determination of the success of a Project Management Office. The research also took on understanding the success of a Project Management Office leader. It was then imperative to understand how a Project Management Office's maturity impacts its success in projects. It then became critical to understand factors considered when considering the maturity of a Project Management Office. The final question was to understand the success of the project. The researcher undertook a study in South Africa in a financial organization to get to the depth of the respondents' information. The usefulness of the qualitative design was to get in-depth information from each of the participants. It was then imperative to analyse the information using thematic analysis based on each individual's content in the study. The research has critical implications for the entire public and private sector in South Africa, considering it needs to ensure the Project Management Office's maturity. One of the fundamental problems identified was the lack of understanding of the implications of the Project Management Office to human resource management in the country—the only

noticeable correlation found in the study that is worthwhile concerned eight of the nine dependent variables. Human resources make a critical aspect of organizations in South Africa, but this has not yet been captured from the responses human resources makes a crucial aspect of organizations in South Africa, but this has not previously been captured from the study's responses. There was no monetary donation towards the study, which implies that it was performed of the researcher's own accord. The study's research questions were derived from the literature review, and additional questions came from the pilot study the researcher conducted.

### 6.3 Limitations

The coronavirus pandemic has made it increasingly hard to research with the respondents in a face-to-face context. It has implied that there is a need to conduct research using video tools like Microsoft teams. It limited the ability to establish rapport with each of the respondents, and the verbal cues from the researcher were increasingly hard to understand from the context of the audience. Another problem in the study was that it was imperative to formalize the Project Management Office construct, but this became an increasingly challenging task as the study proceeded. The implication was that opinions and views from the respondents could be different. The researcher depended on responses from participants, and this was subject to opinion. These individuals gave the information they thought was subjective to the circumstances they faced. It was also increasingly hard to deploy qualitative research on survey monkey or similar platforms because the platform's responses would have been reduced due to insufficient knowledge concerning its usefulness in research. Quantitative research methods would have been excellent for the study because they could have increased the number of responses that would have been imperative in quantifying the information from the study.

### 6.4 Recommendations

The recommendation to the South African financial services company's Project Management Offices is to ensure that they achieve a higher organizational project

management maturity by employing skilled project management leaders. The importance of proper recruitment cannot be overstated enough; the human resource department plays a critical role in supporting the organizational leadership to identify and secure the perfect role player to support and develop the Project Management Office and grow it into a strategy realization office. Future researchers should attempt to meet a far more comprehensive range of respondents to get varied results by building rapport with the audience. It is also imperative to use mixed methods to acquire quantitative and qualitative data. The methodology can provide a wealth of information concerning statistics about the Project Management Offices in South Africa alongside in-depth responses that could help organizations understand how to set up Project Management Offices for success. The objective is to increase Project Management Offices' success and help companies better serve their stakeholders and customers and improve project delivery compared to their competitors.

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# APPENDICES

# Appendix 1.1: Data collection instrument(s)

| | |
|---|---|
| Q1.1 | Gender |
| Q1.2 | Age |
| Q1.3 | Please indicate your role designation: - Selected Choice |
| Q1.4 | How long have you been part of your current PMO? |
| Q1.5 | What is your project management certification? |
| Q1.6 | In my current role, project objectives and outcomes are clearly defined. |
| Q1.7 | I have managed to deliver projects on budget, within scope, and on time in my current role. |

| | |
|---|---|
| Q2.1 | Are you part of a formal PMO? |
| Q2.3 | Which of the following methodologies are used in your PMO - Selected Choice? |
| Q2.4 | The PMO has a formally documented Project Delivery Lifecycle. |
| Q2.5 | The PMO has a formally documented PMO governance document. |
| Q2.6 | The PMO follows a structured gated process for project governance. |
| Q2.7 | My understanding of the delivery lifecycle and PMO processes are clear. |
| Q2.8 | Are you familiar with PMO Maturity Assessments? |
| Q2.9 | Where would you rate your PMO on the following maturity scale? |

| | |
|---|---|
| Q3.1 | How long has the PMO Head been leading the current PMO? |
| Q3.2 | The PMO Head is open to feedback. |
| Q3.3 | The PMO Head is accessible and supportive. |
| Q3.4 | The PMO Head models the behaviour expected from employees. |
| Q3.5 | The PMO Head encourages employees to grow and develop their skills |
| Q3.6 | Employees trust in the Leadership of the PMO Head. |
| Q3.7 | Select the appropriate leadership style of your PMO Head |

# Appendix 1.2: One-page bio of the researcher including the declaration of interest in the research and funders, if any

## About Quincy

Quincy is passionate about growing and developing successful disruptive organizations through deliberate strategy and culture change initiatives. Significantly contributes to strategy realization and business value creation by creating enabling environments that foster collaboration and espouses innovation.

He is a dedicated knowledge professional, eternal scholar, focusing on continuously improving his skills and developing new capabilities.

Quincy models his leadership style on ethical and transformational leadership values; he is always mindful of the importance of effective change management initiatives in the execution, implementation, and eventual adoption of successful strategies. He is experienced at leading and coordinating geographically dispersed virtual teams. Celebrates the diversity that individuals bring to the team and encourages innovation through experimentation. Fosters a growth culture based on collaboration and leveraging the individuals' strengths to expedite team growth to a high-performing team. He enjoys mentoring and developing fellow knowledge professionals through knowledge sharing and skills transfer aided by experiential learning.

## Career Summary

| Position | Organization | Period |
|---|---|---|
| Head of PMO | FNB Investment Pillar | May 2020 – Current |
| Head of PMO COE | WesBank | Mar 2019 – Apr 2020 |
| Enterprise Programme Manager | Dark Fibre Africa | Oct 2018 – Mar 2019 |
| Program Manager / Project Office Manager | First National Bank | Nov 2016 – Sept 2018 |
| Project Manager / Business Analyst Manager | First National Bank | Jul 2014 – Oct 2016 |
| Business Analyst | Contracted to Standard Bank by (DVT) | Sep 2013 – Jun 2014 |
| IT Business Analyst | PCS Group | Apr 2013 – Aug 2013 |
| Business Analyst | Alexander Forbes Financial Services | Jun 2000 – Feb 2013 |

## Education

| Qualification | Institution | Year |
|---|---|---|
| Master of Business Administration (MBA) Candidate | University of Witwatersrand | In Progress |
| (PMP)Project Management Professional | Project Management Institute | 2018 |
| Postgraduate Diploma in Business Administration (PDBA) | University of Witwatersrand | 2018 |
| (MAP) Management Advancement Program (NQF8) (Complete) * MAP Top Syndicate 2016 | University of Witwatersrand | 2016 |
| (DAD) Disciplined Agile Certified | Disciplined Agile Consortium | 2017 |
| Advanced Diploma in IT Project Management (NQF 7) | University of Johannesburg | 2015 |
| Grade 12/Matric | Hoërskool Florida (Secondary/High School) | 1994 |

# Appendix 1.3: Ethics documentation

Informed consent:

Dear Research Participant,
You are invited to complete a survey questionnaire that forms part of my formal qualification for Master of Business Administration at the University of the Witwatersrand.

The purpose of this research is an Evaluation of Project leadership in Project Management Offices in South Africa.
Leaderships play an essential role in the project environment and the Project Management Offices, especially in realizing strategic objectives.
The research is purely for academic purposes, and it will take the participant approximately not more than 10-15 minutes to complete the questionnaire. If you are willing and comfortable to participate and contribute, it will be appreciated if you could complete the questionnaire on the link below by no later than XX November 2020.

https://wits.eu.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/_____

Should you have any questions, the primary researcher, Mr. Quincy Lepan, can be contacted during office hours at 083 964 4357

email: mailatquincy@gmail.com

Rest assured that your responses will be kept strictly confidential and anonymous.

Thank you in anticipation for your participation.

Yours Sincerely
Quincy Lepan (Masters Student),
Wits Business School,
University of Witwatersrand

# Appendix 1.4: Dully filled in data collection instrument(s)



Data Collection Instrument.docx

UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND JOHANNESBURG

SCHOOL OF GRADUATE SCHOOL OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION ETHICS COMMITTEE
CONSTITUTED UNDER THE UNIVERSITY HUMAN RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE (NON-MEDICAL)

CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE PROTOCOL NUMBER: WBS/BA1619058/686

| | |
|---|---|
| PROJECT TITLE | Evaluation of Project leadership in project management offices in South Africa |
| INVESTIGATOR | Mr Quincy Lepan |
| SCHOOL/DEPARTMENT OF INVESTIGATOR | MBA (Research Article) |
| DATE CONSIDERED | 16 November 2020 |
| DECISION OF THE COMMITTEE | Approved unconditionally |
| RISK LEVEL | MINIMAL RISK |
| EXPIRY DATE | 30 JUNE 2021 |

ISSUE DATE OF CERTIFICATE 25 November 2020 CHAIRPERSON _____
(Dr MDJ Matshabaphala)

cc: Supervisor: Dr Munkuli

DECLARATION OF INVESTIGATOR

To be completed in duplicate and ONE COPY returned to the Chairperson of the School/Department ethics committee.

I fully understand the conditions under which I am are authorized to carry out the abovementioned research and I guarantee to ensure compliance with these conditions. Should any departure to be contemplated from the research procedure as approved I/we undertake to resubmit the protocol to the Committee.

Quincy Lepan
Signature

30 / 11 / 2020
Date




# SUPERVISOR ACQUIESCENCE FORM

## CERTIFICATE TO BE SIGNED BY SUPERVISORS OF HIGHER DEGREE CANDIDATES

Quincy Lepan (student's name) candidate for the MBA _____ (degree)

Has today submitted his/her thesis/dissertation/research report?

**a.** Has this thesis/dissertation/research report been submitted with the acquiescence of the supervisor?

**YES _____** **NO _____**

**b.** To the best of your knowledge, are you able to verify that the candidate has acknowledged wherever any information used in the thesis or dissertation or other work has been obtained by him/her while employed by or working under the aegis of any person or organization other than the University or its associated institutions?

**YES ____X____** **NO _____**

**c.** Did the candidate's research require ethical clearance?

**YES ____X____** **NO _____**

If YES, has ethical clearance been obtained?

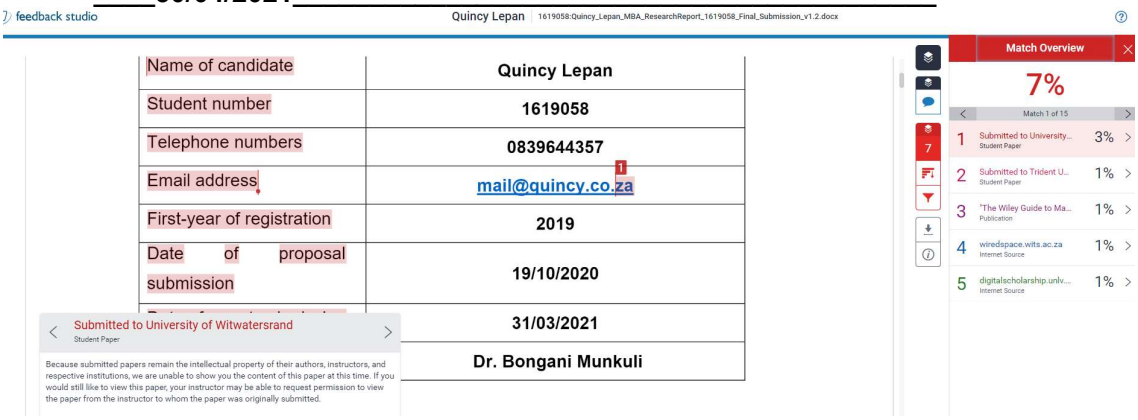
**YES ___X_____** **NO _____**

Ethical clearance number: _WBS/BA1619058/686

**Name of Supervisor: ___DR Bongani Munkuli_____**

**Signature:** _____

**Date:** ____30/04/2021_____




Dr Bongani Munkuli- 30/04/2021