Project Portfolio Management Governance Processes: An insider view on factors leading to disintegration [1]

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Abstract

While there are numerous procedures in place for conducting and governing projects, there still is a lack of direction for controlling the entire collection of projects as a whole. Firms frequently appear incapable of correctly selecting and prioritizing the appropriate set of projects, as well as managing these projects consistently in order to achieve organization-wide goals. Thus, a frequent stumbling block for leaders managing portfolios (collection of projects, programs and operations) is a continual rate of failure. Existing literature does not claim to offer definitive answers to this question. Thus, this research study was undertaken to investigate the factors leading to disintegration of Project Portfolio Management (hereafter PPM) governance processes by interviewing top PPM leaders from around the world. The data was collected using interview method. The results revealed that the lack of PPM knowledge, formal training and lack of communication are among the major reasons of governance processes' disintegration.

Keywords: Project Portfolio Management (PPM), Disintegration of PPM, Governance Process, Failure of PPM.

1.0 Introduction

Portfolio management, as defined by Project Management Institute, is 'the central management of multiple portfolios which allows executive management to achieve organizational objectives through efficient decision making on portfolios, projects, programs and operations.'

While there are several rules outlining how to execute projects, there is still a lack of direction regarding how to govern the entire set of projects as a whole (Cooke-Davies, 2002). Firms frequently appear incapable of selecting and prioritizing the most appropriate set of projects (Gray&Larson, 2005), as well as managing these projects consistently in order to achieve organization-wide goals. Thus, a frequent stumbling block for leaders managing portfolios and projects is a continual

[1] How to cite this paper: Nagawade, M., Pani, P., Gallant, M. (2022). Project Portfolio Management Governance Processes: An insider view on factors leading to disintegration; *PM World Journal*, Vol. XI, Issue X, October.

rate of failure. The existing literature does not claim to offer definitive answers to this question (Stratton, 2011).

Decisions and information accuracy are critical components of project portfolio management. As a result, the role of appropriate decisions made by governing authorities at each level becomes critical to the portfolio's performance. Throughout the project's lifecycle, from inception to completion, governing committee investment decisions would encompass risks, issues, revisions, best practices and actions taken. Very few studies are being conducted to determine the factors that contribute to the disintegration of Project Portfolio Governance Management Processes over the course of the portfolio's lifecycle.

2.0 Review of Literature

2.1 Background and Definition of Project, Program and Portfolio Management

Markowitz authored article on portfolio management in the 1950s, which was recognized with the 1990 Nobel Prize in Economics (Stratton,2011). Researchers and scholars continue to progress the discipline of PPM, with numerous articles and books published on the subject.

Markowitz's work focused on the financial portfolio, that was primarily composed of bonds and stocks. However, it was not until 1952 that Markowitz (1952) published one of the earliest papers on portfolio selection in the field of finance. It also focused on the concept of implementing techniques similar to the investment optimization techniques. These techniques proved to be effective in the field of finance in project portfolios (Petrinska-Labudovikj, 2014). Two complementary, but distinct, forces influenced the evolution of the PPM concept. The first was the requirement for rational investment decisions that result in benefits for the organization, and the second was the requirement for resource allocation that ensures those benefits are realized effectively and efficiently (Lenos, 1996); (Young & Conboy, 2013).

According to the sixth edition of the PMI Project Management Body of Knowledge guide, a project is referred as temporary endeavor with a clearly defined beginning and ending date as well as a clearly delineated compass and resources. A project is unique, but it does have set of procedures which are designed to accomplish a unique goal. All of these require specialized execution to make sure that delivery timeframes, budget allocations, and requirements for learning and integration are met. As a result, project management is concerned with the application of knowledge, capability, procedures, and other paraphernalia to facilitate the completion of prescribed projects (Cooper, Edgett & Kleinschemidt, 1997). This is quite an old definition but is still applicable in today's scenario.

Programs are defined as "a collection of similar projects organized logically for the purpose of obtaining benefits and control that are not available when managing them individually (Dawidson, 2006)". As a result, program management is defined as the application of knowledge, skills, and philosophy to a program in order to fulfill its objectives and gain control and profit that would not be possible if program mechanisms were managed independently of one another (PMI, 2015).

An important prong, in the context of project management is referred to as the Portfolio or Project Portfolio – "to accomplish strategic objectives, a portfolio is a collection of programs projects, sub-portfolios and operations that are managed collectively. It is possible for portfolio components to be independent of one another or to share common aims in all cases. The portfolio's components are quantifiable, which enables them to be ranked, quantified, and prioritized" (PMI,2013). A portfolio may consist of a collection of existing and proposed portfolio elements, among many other things, with the objective of achieving one or more organizational objectives. An organization may have multiple portfolios, each of which is focused on a distinct set of organizational strategy and objectives. When an organization's portfolio does not coincide with its overall strategy, it is the organization's primary responsibility to investigate why the assignment was conducted in the first place. In this case, the portfolio should reflect the organization's intent, channel, and evolution (Dawidson, 2006).

PPM is then defined as the collaborative association of one or more portfolios with the purpose of achieving organizational goals and strategies (Enoch & Labuschagne, 2010). When it comes to portfolio management, it consists of a collection of standardized organizational processes that an organization uses to appraise, select, and organize its limited resources in order to best achieve the organization's mission, vision, and values. PPM is tasked with the responsibility of generating crucial data that can be used to aid or modify investment and organizational strategies (PMI, 2013).

PPM enables the governing structure to make decisions that will guide or persuade the portfolio group as they work to accomplish specific goals. Portfolio management is therefore responsible for striking a balance between competing needs for projects and programs while allocating capital in accordance with organizational priority areas and capabilities (Levine, 2006).

Program and project management should be aligned with the organization's overall strategic objectives. On the other hand, the portfolio, program, and project management contributions to achieving strategic objectives vary significantly (Richardson & Jackson, 2018). Portfolio management enables organizations to achieve their goals more effectively by selecting the appropriate programs or projects and allocating resources to the most critical tasks first. Program management contributes to its projects and program elements by managing their inter - dependencies and optimizing the benefits derived. Project management is the process of creating and implementing plans for achieving specific capacity goals that are motivated by the objectives of a program or project portfolio (Fabozzi& Drake, 2011).

2.2 PPM Disintegration- Factors and Causes

For numerous projects, long-term initiatives fall short of their promises and produce disappointing results upon completion. Several of these businesses are notoriously known for exceeding budgets, timelines, or both. Consider London's 2012 Olympics Project, whose spending plan of more than £9 billion more than quadruples the estimated price and whose contingency reserve of approximately £3 billion was almost entirely earmarked for specific jobs as early as the first quarter of 2010, more than 2 years before the deadline (APM, 2013). This case is connected to governance failure, as the primary reason for the project's failure was cost overruns. Several studies have discovered that there are two main causes of governance failure in portfolio management: cost and time overruns (Martinsuo, 2013). Both of these events occurred in this case, and thus this case study is critical for comprehending the causes of disintegration. This case is consistent with Mitnick's (1973) assertions from decades ago. According to Mitnick (1973), while not all undertakings are as high profile, many do go overspending or fail in the same way. Frequently, project managers earn a bad reputation for failing to deliver on time or within budget. Technology is one of the areas with the worst track record, with failures accounting for more than half of all projects attempted. As a consequence, organizations commit significant resources to projects but are unable to consistently deliver on time or, more importantly, quantify the value they receive from their investment. Many business owners do not even record the amount of revenue generated by a completed project.

Publicly available statistical data on project failures vary significantly in their rough estimates and lack proprietary information from private firms, rendering them unreliable as a guide. Nonetheless, each new project is launched with zeal and no expectation of failure, but regularly without the benefit of lessons learned from previous endeavors that could result in growth this time. Even on small, simple and direct projects, several areas can cause complications that ultimately result in failure. When any level of complexity is added to the numerous possible causes of failure, problems escalate quickly into disasters. The following are some of the most frequently cited causes of project failure as per Dago (2018):

- The project's scope was not specified clearly
- Risk management is insufficient
- Failure to recognize critical assumptions
- Inexperienced and untrained project managers
- No methodology or procedures are used
- At all levels, communication is inefficient
- The project's and/or the company's key personnel are leaving
- Ineffective expectation management
- Ineffective leadership
- Insufficient documentation
- Failure to maintain an accurate record of requirements
- Failure to keep track of progress
- The project blueprints are devoid of context
- Inaccurate time and effort estimates
- Global projects must contend with cultural differences

Large, well-structured corporations have a clear process for defining their corporate strategy and then trying to break it down into manageable components for business units, operations, and so forth. These businesses have established a procedure for strategic planning (Biesenthal & Wilden, 2014). This is commonly not the case in smaller companies, where this procedure is frequently disorganized, if not nonexistent. In such cases, the company's strategic orientation is more of a "feeling" that pervades the organization, occasionally expressed in conventions, occasionally mentioned in brochures, and occasionally discussed during staff coffee breaks. In this scenario, most projects and employees are managed on a frequent planning basis, with mid-managers taking decisions on the basis of two approaches: proceed doing what has been completed in the preceding 6-to-12 months, and begin gathering from top managers the corporate strategy and practical application.

Such project portfolios are commonly plagued by an intersecting characteristics syndrome as well. As per Goldratt's "Theory of Constraints," in this type of atmosphere, most initiatives are early, most strategy objectives are overlooked or not designed at all, and assets are overbooked and multi-utilized (Goldratt,1984).Because these portfolios are a compilation of various strategies (announced, secret, unbelievable, deduced) from numerous "business as usual" years, the link between the true corporate strategy position and what happens in their firm may be quite tenuous.

2.3 Case studies on PPM governance disintegration

Some classic case studies of Project Portfolio Governance Management disintegration are discussed below. The purpose of discussing these case histories is to better discover the fundamental reasons that influence disintegration. These case studies have served as a guide for many portfolio managers in recognizing how governance failure occurs.

The Airbus A380

In 2004, Airbus began assembling different components for what they hoped would be the world's largest passenger airliner. Pieces were shipped from Toulouse to the Hamburg assembly site. As the pieces were placed close together, it became clear that they'd never fit (Reed, 2019).
It was later discovered that the designers working on the plane's parts had used various CAD programs, resulting in disparities in the specifications. Project Manager emphasizes the importance of having everyone on the same platform, even when working across time zones and boundaries. This should begin with identifying the systems and processes that will be used (Dörfler & Baumann, 2014). The actual cause of this failure was a lack of coordination in the core committee, which led to miscommunication and, as a result, massive failure.

The Challenger Space Shuttle

The most heinous mistakes are those that result in death. On January 28, 1986, the Challenger Space Shuttle crashed after only 76 seconds of flight. It was later revealed that the disaster occurred as a result of a faulty seal under one of the solid rocket boosters, which was exacerbated by the winter conditions (Hall, 2003). Specialists had warned that the meteorological conditions would make the takeoff more dangerous, so fault was also a variable.
Human error can have a large or minor impact on a project, but the Project Manager's responsibility is to put processes in place to reduce the risk of human error trying to derail a project. Many scholars have debated the role of human emotions and mistakes in portfolio governance management success and failure.

Berlin Brandenburg Airport

The Germans hoped that the new airport would help Berlin establish itself as a global commercial hub. The airport's construction began in 2006, after 15 years of planning (Garaldi & Stingl,2012). The actual launch date was in 2011, but it was missed. It was then scheduled to debut on October 31, 2020, right in the middle of the global COVID-19 pandemic.

However, it must be mentioned that the global recession of 2007 did not help. However, in order to handle efficient projects, it is essential to understand external factors and ensure that they do not sidetrack a project. This project failure can be linked to the fact that it is always essential to make sure the project runs in accordance with the prepared Gantt Chart, which is an important way to avoid project delays (Kazemi, Andersen & Klakegg 2015).

The Garden Bridge

Boris Johnson, the Mayor of London at the time, dubbed the Garden Bridge a "disastrous vanity project." Despite the fact that it was never built, the construction budget totaled £53 million (BBC, 2019). According to research, the bridge has been overoptimistic in terms of both the amount of money that must be raised and the overall cost (BBC, 2019). Despite the fact that survey processes on the riverbed already had begun, this led to a shortage that could never be replenished. Overestimation and over-optimism towards projects have also been criticized previously by a few researchers, based purely on the fact that these two have become a major reason why so many portfolio managers are unable to understand why the project failed (Beringer, Jonas & Gemünden, 2012). Ambition is a powerful motivator, but it should be grounded in reality, particularly when relying on financing to get things started. In retrospect, it would have been advisable to first determine if the project was feasible before spending £161,000 on a website.

2.4 Summary of factors causing governance disintegration – Based on case evidence

The aforementioned examination of several case studies assisted in the conclusion that there are a variety of factors that contribute to governance failure, which eventually leads to portfolio failure. Inadequate planning, lack of upfront due diligence in prediction, lack of proper Project Management governance controls and balance of power are the most common causes of project failure. Other contributing factors include perfectionism, focal disparity, underestimation of sophistication, improper planning, lack of due diligence in prediction and absence of suitable Project Management checks and balances. In addition to this, failures to test and keep regular insight into the design, underestimating complexity, and problems in requirements management are some of the other reasons why these initiatives have been unsuccessful.

Because of their ambition, people are prone to making rash decisions, and the urge to create anything that hasn't been done before might lead them to rush into undertakings. Real-world initiatives rarely go exactly as planned – this is a sad truth of project portfolio's life. Failures do happen, but they can also have beneficial consequences. They are a fantastic source of useful knowledge and lessons that will assist you in achieving success in the future. Every project failure brings with it at minimum one practical lesson that may be applied to future projects to help project managers enhance project management understanding and skills. As a result, the overall take away from the analyses is that project failure is primarily caused by insufficient interest, poor communication, a lack of openness, and scope creep among other factors. All these reasons for failure can be controlled via governance framework and processes

Lack of interest - warning indications include stakeholders failing to show up for meetings or provide input, as well as tasks not being performed on schedule. It is the project manager's responsibility to keep track of all tasks and to guarantee that it is reported to governance body during toll gate review meetings. If you suspect that stakeholders' enthusiasm in the project is waning, schedule a meeting to remind them of the importance of the initiative.

Poor Communication - Due to poor communication, it's easier for members of project team to become 'lost' and out of the loop when it comes to the progress of the project, decision making, and reviews. Project managers should develop a communication strategy and automate as much of the process as they possibly can. Keeping everyone working on project up to date on a continuous basis is made possible using this method.

Lack of transparency- the more a company tries to conceal an issue or problem, the less transparency business has and the more serious the problem becomes. Issues do emerge, and the best course of action is to recognize them as soon as possible, alert the governance body immediately, including partners and clients, and work together with them to mitigate the risk.

Scope creep- should be avoided at all costs; hence, the project should not be started until all parties are on same page and the governance body has given a formal sign-off. Always make certain that everyone has a copy of the project's scope to work from.

Large-scale initiatives are failing at an astonishing speed. These endeavours, regardless of whether massive technology deployments, post-merger integrations, or significant growth strategies, necessitate months or years of effort. Nonetheless, as study after study has shown, they frequently yield disappointing results some estimates, more than 50 % of the time (Cooper, Edgett &

Kleinschemidt, 2001). And the cost they pay isn't just monetary. Employees who worked hard to complete their fraction of the assignment are disheartened as a consequence of these failures.

The problem is that the typical management style directs project teams' attention away from the end result and towards generating suggestions, technological advances, and incomplete solutions. Of course, the intention is to piece these all together in a design that will accomplish the end goal, but if a task includes many people who are working over a long period of time, managers planning it find it difficult to forecast all of the tasks and work flows that will be required. It is practically unavoidable that some details will be overlooked unless the final product is fully realized, as in massively complicated engineering tasks such as producing an airplane. Even if all of the necessary projects are planned, they may be challenging, if not unthinkable, to meld together once completed (Too & Weaver, 2014).

For more than a dozen years, experts and practitioners have recognised that carrying out the appropriate development initiatives and projects is critical to achieving an organization's overall strategic objectives (Cooper, Edgett & Kleinschemidt, 2001). PPM may be a great choice because it offers a set of tools, methods, and processes to aid in the centralization of portfolio management, which includes the identification, prioritisation, strategic planning, and regulate projects, programmes, and other related works to achieve corporate objectives (Project Management Institute, 2006).

Overruns in project costs are a critical result of the disintegration of project portfolio governance. Predictions will be inaccurate if appropriate governance skills are not used, and activities will cost more than expected. Aside from these commonly used cost-cutting metrics, project managers could save money by hiring less pricey resources and minimize waste or superfluous tasks. These are some of the things that an eligible project manager must do to stay on budget to provide as much money as possible.

However, there is frequently a lack of adequate cost planning in portfolio, which is due to the incompetence of the portfolio manager. As a result, the project's cost exceeds the spending plan, and the organization must live with the consequences. When such a situation arises in a portfolio, businesses are regularly forced to spend money in order to sustain. They risk losing both their business and their reputation. The portfolio manager is responsible for developing a realistic schedule and verifying the figures to ensure accuracy. When bad governance is in place, timetables become unrealistic.

2.4 Research Gap and Question

To make appropriate decisions for portfolios governance committees need to understand the current available frameworks and gaps in the implementation of portfolio governance management processes. This research focused on factors that cause disintegration of PPM governance processes for a renowned global framework. The biggest benefit of this research is that it revealed the factors that cause disintegration of governance management processes, how that may lead to poor decisions and eventually have short term impact on the organization. Based on the literature review, it is clear that the earlier studies have focused on how projects fail, the reasons behind failure of projects and what project managers can do to deal with project failure. However, the number of studies that specifically focused on the factors that cause disintegration of Portfolio governance management processes that too for complex global projects is nearly negligible. Along with that, there are no studies that interviewed global PPM leaders who govern portfolios with annual revenue of more than $1M USD and to learn their perception about PPM disintegration. Thus, the major research question that has been addressed is:
What are the factors that cause disintegration of Project Portfolio Governance Management Processes during the portfolio lifecycle?

3.0 Research Approach

In case of present research study, we have employed qualitative approach. This denotes that, based on the nature of the variables and objectives the authors used qualitative information to take the research further. The qualitative information is available from primary sources in which we used interviews to collect the data from global PPM leaders.

3.1 Research Design

This research is qualitative in nature; hence the research design of the present study is exploratory research design. Exploratory study tries to accurately and methodically characterize a population, situation or event in order to make conclusions about it. It can provide answers to what, where, when and how inquiries. Research problem that has not been thoroughly investigated before are investigated through the use of exploratory research as a method of investigation. The nature of exploratory research is frequently qualitative in character. Exploratory research is frequently employed when a new subject is being investigated or when data collection procedure is proving difficult for a variety of reasons. It is possible to conduct this form of research when we have a common idea or a specific subject that we wish to investigate, however there is no prior knowledge or framework with which to conduct the investigation.

Exploratory research can employ a wide range of research methodology to study one or more variables, depending on the research question. In contrast to experimental research, in observational case the researcher does not manipulate or change any of the variables; instead, she or he simply observes and analyzes them. This is the primary reason why the researcher has used exploratory research design in case of present research study as it made it easier for the researcher to explore PPM governance across its lifecycle.

3.2 Data Collection

The data for this research study was gathered from both primary and secondary sources.
The study's participants are divided into two groups: (1) Top Management Executives that act as Portfolio Governance body and (2) PPM Managers. A qualitative interview questionnaire was designed that comprised of 45 open ended as well as closed ended questions. A consent form was emailed to the potential respondents, later all the interviews were conducted face-to-face, and video recorded as well.

3.3 Sample Profile

The study is concerned with existing governance frameworks and processes available to help make crucial decisions about the portfolio across its lifecycle. Based on that, the respondents selected were as follows:

- Portfolio Practitioners who have managed at least two portfolios and they were included in the decision-making process, governance activities or were responsible to execute the portfolio end-to-end.
- Senior Management Executives and Global Leaders like Vice Presidents, Directors and CEOs who were governing multi-million-dollar projects were interviewed
- Only those respondents who have worked in the capacity of a manager or higher for at least 15 years in their overall career
- Practitioners can be from any industry type across the globe

- Practitioners were a mix of trained/certified from reputed institutes for courses like PMI - PfMP® (Project Management Institute – Portfolio Management Professional) and Alexos - MoP (Axelos – Management of Portfolios), as well as non-trained / non-certified practitioners. This helped in understanding views of both categories of practitioners (trained/certified as well as non-certified)

3.4 Primary Data

Data was gathered through interviews administered to the practitioners who were managing or were a significant part of at least two portfolios as Governance body and were included in the decision-making process, governance activities or were responsible to execute the portfolio end-to-end. It also included managerial cadre that has worked in the capacity of a Project Manager, Program Manager or Portfolio Manager for at least 15 years in their overall career. Respondents were a mix of PPM trained/certified as well as non-trained/non-certified practitioners.

The interview technique of data collection involved the presentation of oral verbal information and the response in the form of an oral verbal response to those stimuli. Using this method, we followed a strict procedure and conducted personal interviews in order to obtain responses to a predetermined set of questions.

The reason behind using face-to-face interviews with all respondents was the opportunity for human interaction. This strategy was specifically chosen to allow the researcher to connect on a personal basis with the top-level executives during the research process. The semi-structured interview method was chosen as the best option. For this, formal list of objectives were required to direct the interview. Based on the research questions like, factors influencing PPM lifecycle, PPM governance, governance failure and its short-term impact on the organization were included in the interview questionnaire. There were a total 13 respondents for the interviews all of which held senior level leadership positions in their organizations that include - CEO, Directors, VPs, Senior Portfolio Managers and PMO. The researcher asked a total of 45 questions that were based on action to improve portfolio governance processes, reasons and impact of portfolio governance process failure, impact of the revenue size of the portfolio, monitoring changes by governance body and frameworks that are used currently for governance decisions.

Table 1: Demographic Information of Respondents; Source: Self

#	Location of respondent	Role of respondent	Industry/domain of respondent	At least 15 years of overall work experience?	Minimum 5 years of managerial experience of handing at least two Portfolios?	Part of a governance committee that provides decisions?	During the career span, part of team that acted up on decisions provided by governance body?	Studied or been certified for any Portfolio Governance Management models/frameworks?	Can respondent name any global standards for portfolio/governance management provided by some of the reputed institutes?
Respondent 1	Italy, Europe	Head of Portfolio Management and PMO	Highly reputed Industrial Minerals Co. in Italy	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	PMI - PfMP®	ISO21504, IPMA, Axelos - MoP, AIPM and IPMA-ICB
Respondent 2	Mumbai, India	CEO	Legal Process Outsourcing	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No study or certification	Not aware of any
Respondent 3	Toronto, Canada	Head of Portfolio	World's leading E commerce	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	PMI - PfMP®	Axelos- MoP
Respondent 4	Bangalore, India	Portfolio Manager	Non-IT Consulting	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No study or certification	Not aware of any
Respondent 5	Dallas, Texas	Assistant Director	IT Consulting	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No study or certification	PMI-PfMP®
Respondent 6	Bangalore, India	Portfolio Manager	Tax Consulting	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No study or certification	PMI-PfMP®
Respondent 7	Kochi, Kerala	Manager - PMO	Tax Consulting	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No study or certification	PMI-PfMP®
Respondent 8	Chennai, Tamil Nadu	IT Portfolio Manager	Leading Bank	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No study or certification	Not aware of any
Respondent 9	Kolkata, India	IT Portfolio Manager	Telecom / Mobile	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	PMI - PfMP®	ISO21504, Axelos - MoP, AIPM and IPMA-ICB
Respondent 10	London, UK	Head of PMO	Tax Consulting	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No study or certification	Not aware of any
Respondent 11	Delhi, India	Global Director of Risk	IT	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No study or certification	Not aware of any

		and Complia nce							
Respon dent 12	Toronto , Canada	PMO Manager	Legal Process Outsourcin g	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No study or certification	Axelos - P3O
Respon dent 13	Mumba i, India	Director of Service Delivery	Legal Process Outsourcin g	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No study or certification	Not aware of any

4.0 Results and Discussion

For the analyses of interview responses, we used thematic analysis. Thematic analysis, which is a research technique, can be used to explore and analyze data. Thematic investigation analysis is a type of qualitative research in which the researcher conducts theme-based research for the topics under consideration (ALQubaisi, 2018). We generated various themes based on the codes that were interpreted in the preceding section.

The interview questionnaire was divided into three sections.

In the first section of the interview questionnaire, there were six qualifying questions with Yes/No answers: at least 15 years of overall work experience, at least 5 years of managerial experience where the respondent has been an integral part of at least two Portfolios, has been a part of a governance body that made decisions, has been a part of team that acted on decisions provided to them by governance body and if the respondent was trained or certified for portfolio management.

We asked personal opinions in the second part of the interview questionnaire (open ended questions). The questions concerned thoughts on studying governance frameworks/processes and the ability to effectively manage portfolios. Was portfolio management governance knowledge useful at both the personal and organisational levels and ease of remembering the governance processes that have been learned and implementing them for portfolios.

We concentrated specifically on the reasons why portfolio governance processes fail or disintegrate in day-to-day execution. In addition, the top three short-term consequences of portfolio governance failure were investigated. Finally, the top three actions that a company can take to improve their portfolio governance management processes were investigated. These three interview questions were the most important because they were directly related to research questions.

We asked questions about the portfolio governance process in the fourth section of the interview questionnaire. The investigation was related to their awareness of the escalation process, risk tolerance thresholds, regular toll-gate reviews scheduled for the governance body to review component progress, a PMO dedicated to supporting portfolio governance activities such as reporting, dashboard, analysis, and a focus on Governance Management to deal with internal or external environmental factors (political, economic, sociological, technological, and legal).

4.1 Themes identified from interviews

Following is the detailed description of the themes identified:

PPM Tools and Techniques

The analysis further revealed that, there are regular gate reviews, focus on a dashboard for governance meetings, focus on reviewing budget versus actual spend, focus on governance body reviewing the risks as all the respondents said yes to all these questions. Most of the respondents also said that PMO is dedicated to support portfolio governance activities and there is focus on Governance Management. The researcher also asked about the focus on acceptance of right amount of risk, use tools and techniques while prioritizing components and use any of the available other generic PPM tools and techniques and it was identified that most of the respondents said yes to all these.

Project Termination and Decision Making

A question was also about the termination of components and whether the governance body is indecisive about terminations - four respondents said no and nine respondents said yes to this and cited real examples to support their answers. It was clearly established from the interview response that failure of governance will lead to failure of the overall portfolio. It was further identified that the majority of the respondents agree that decisions made by governance body are correct. The importance of governance frameworks is also highlighted as it was reported from the response that the professionals who have studied governance frameworks/processes are able to manage portfolios effectively.

PPM Certification

It was further identified that PPM governance management certification helps in getting Personal and Professional Benefits. When it comes to the implementation of the governance processes in day-to-day work life, it was identified that there was 70 % implementation of learning by Practitioners who were certified several years ago. However, portfolio practitioners who had recently completed their certification stated that due to fresh knowledge they implemented 100% learning. However, it is important to note that all the respondents reported that PPM frameworks need to be tailored to suit their organizational needs.

Portfolio Governance and Implementation

There was another major concern that has been resolved using interview responses and that was related to how uncertified Portfolio Managers runs governance and it was identified that they run it through past experience, help from team members and awareness (online self-learning) of governance frameworks. It was also identified that the alignment of portfolio, program and projects with organization's vision/mission and goals is done by senior management, but it was also reported that sometimes there is no clarity. Documentation of organizational strategy is very important; 8 respondents reported that this step was judiciously completed, while 4 said that their organization does not document it. It was further established that the portfolio governance management framework/processes predominantly being followed across organizations is PMI - PfMP®.

Portfolio Strategy and Components

To the question of whether portfolio management governance processes are a sub-set of the larger organizational/corporate governance processes as all the 13 respondents agree to this. Additionally, the governance body for portfolio is formed by CEO, Sponsor, Clients, Senior Management and Leaders from various departments. The results further suggested that there is proper training and information given to governance body so that they are clear about their role and responsibilities. The portfolio components selection is done by governance body in collaboration with Portfolio Manager, tools and techniques are used for selection. Respondents also suggested that collaboration between Clients, Senior leaders, Governance Body and Sponsors take the duty of authorization of portfolio components. At the same time the termination process is also initiated by the same group. However, nine respondents further suggested that a major difficulty in termination is human emotions.

Change, Allocation Discretion and Communication

As the researcher progressed with the interview, more strategic and intense questions were put forward. Communication plays a vital role and therefore the researcher also asked about the communication of decisions taken by governance body and it was reported that four respondents said that there was no proper communication about decisions taken. Six respondents states that they fail to see commitment from governance body. Furthermore, gate reviews play an instrumental role and it was suggested by the respondents that gate reviews are really useful. Allocation and re-allocation of resources is done by governance body, senior leaders and PMO. Eight respondents stated that the governance body needs to improve discretion and communication around bad news like termination of projects. As per the response from the interview, the sensitivity on discretion is something to worry about. It was further identified that change control board, monitors the change. The respondents also reported that the size of the portfolio doesn't matter when it comes to the governance processes.

The most important responses were related to reasons for portfolio governance failure, short term impact due to the failure of portfolio governance and actions that an organization can take to improve their portfolio governance management processes. It was identified that the reasons for portfolio governance processes to fail are - subjectivity in decisions provided by governance body, power struggle within governance body, fear of failure due to past letdown, poor communication, lack of senior management commitment and poor organizational culture. It was further identified that the short-term impact due to failure of portfolio governance are gossip in the team, demotivated employees, strategy failure, cost and time overruns, client will lose trust in organization, misaligned resources and revenue loss. As per the response from the interviewers the actions that an organization can take to improve their portfolio governance management processes are senior leaders should frequently review all portfolio management processes and speak with Portfolio Managers, Senior Leaders should establish a good governance culture in the organization, implementation of agile methodology for strategic changes, focus on improving communication and organization must invest in portfolio management trainings.

To summarize the outcome of the interviews for the theme of governance processes - there is awareness of the escalation process and risk tolerance thresholds amongst respondents, which brings transparency, reduces risks and rules out the possibility of unilateral decisions. There are regular gate reviews, which aid in regular progress checks which is a critical governance process. The emphasis is on a dashboard for governance meetings, which provides tangible metrics and executives can make well informed decisions. A PMO is dedicated to supporting portfolio governance activities, which makes the processes consistent and timely. The emphasis on Governance Management and on reviewing budget versus actual spend is a positive step towards ensuring the success of the governance process. An important finding about the governance process is that the size of the portfolio has no bearing on the governance processes running smoothly or breaking down. Professionals who have studied governance frameworks/processes are able to manage portfolios effectively, and senior leaders should review all portfolio management processes on a regular basis and consult with Portfolio Managers for improvement. It is also necessary for the organization's senior leaders to establish a good governance culture and invest time/energy in building that culture.

Another major theme identified by us was portfolio governance and its implementation. It was discovered that even uncertified PMs manage portfolio governance using prior experience and the assistance of team members. Senior management is critical in aligning the portfolio with the organizational strategy. The findings also indicate that proper documentation of organizational strategy, portfolio strategy, portfolio charter, and portfolio roadmap is carried out. Furthermore, portfolio management governance processes are a subset of broader organizational/corporate governance processes.

5.0 Discussion and Conclusion

The findings confirm that a lack of governance processes will inevitably result in the failure of the portfolio as a whole. This is in line with the findings from literature in which it was asserted that if the governance process is inefficient then there are high chances that the project might fail (ALQubaisi, 2018). The significance of governance frameworks/processes is underscored by the fact that professionals who studied governance frameworks/processes are capable of managing portfolios effectively. This implies that a lack of awareness about governance framework plays a role in the breakdown of PPM. Certification in PPM governance knowledge enables to gain professional and personal benefits relates to the finding from earlier study that asserted that certifications in PPM are necessary not only to gain knowledge but also to manage portfolios effectively (Confido, Wibisono &Sunitiyoso , 2018). Respondents indicated that renowned portfolio governance frameworks provided by global institutions that train/certify for Portfolio Management are also required to be customized, based on specific needs of their organizations.

Another significant worry was addressed through interview replies, and it was determined that uncertified PMs manage portfolio governance through past experience, assistance from team members, and self-researched knowledge of governance frameworks. While it was confirmed that senior management is responsible for aligning portfolio, program, and project objectives with the organization's vision/mission and goals, it was also observed that there is occasionally a lack of clarity. This finding coincides with the finding from literature in which the researcher asserted that it is the responsibility of senior managers to ensure that the portfolio aligns with the organizational objectives and goals (Dawidson, 2006).

As agreed upon by all respondents, portfolio management governance processes are a subset of larger institutional governance processes. The portfolio's governance body is comprised of the CEO, Sponsor, Clients, Senior Management, and department heads. Additionally, the results indicated that sufficient governance training and information are being provided to the governance body members which plays a positive role in PPM. This finding contrasts with the finding from literature in which it was identified that training is indeed not an important part of PPM and without training it is possible for a PPM to take crucial decisions (Derakhshan, 2019)

The most significant replies were the reasons for failure of portfolio governance processes, its short-term consequences on the organization, and the activities an organization should initiate to strengthen its portfolio governance management processes. Portfolio governance systems fail for a variety of reasons, including subjectivity in decision-making by the governing body, power struggles within the governance body, fear of failure as a result of previous disappointment, inadequate communication, senior management commitment, and organizational culture. It is already established in our literature review section that the most frequent causes of project failure include inadequate planning, a lack of prior due diligence in forecasting, an absence of appropriate Project Management controls, and a lack of a proper balance of powers are all contributing factors. These initiatives have failed for a variety of reasons, including failures to test and maintain regular insights into the structure, underestimating the complexity of the problem, and troubles with requirements management, to name a few. Most of these factors are directly related to the lack of certification in PPM. For example, poor planning, a failure of due diligence in prediction, and the absence of appropriate Project Management checks and balances happen when a manager is not certified or has not obtained proper training in managing PPM (Elbok &Berrado, 2017)

Additionally, it was determined from the interviews that the short-term consequences of portfolio governance failure include team gossip, organizational strategy failure, cost and time overruns, customer's loss of trust in the organization, mismatched resources, and revenue loss. When grapevine or gossiping starts in an organization then productivity decreases and in many cases the conflict situation arises, this has been the major reason why many projects in the past have failed (Gupta & Sharma, 2016). Along with that, organizational strategy failure denotes that strategy of an organization fails if the portfolio governance fails. In many cases, organizations are not able to keep a track on time and cost of the projects and due to that the budget exceeds and the projects is also not being completed on time (Hyvari, 2016).

According to the interviewers' responses, the actions that an organization can take to improve its portfolio governance management processes are; senior leaders should regularly evaluate all portfolio management processes and communicate with Portfolio Managers; senior leaders should establish a strong governance culture within the organization; agile methodology should be used for strategic changes; a focus should be placed on improving top-down communication; and the organization should invest in portfolio management trainings. These solutions will help in dealing with the problems that have been noted earlier like; inadequate planning, lack of upfront due diligence in prediction, lack of proper Project Management controls and balance of powers are the most common causes of project failure.

Due to the time and resource constraint, the present research only involved 13 interviewees. Therefore, the future researcher has a scope to take into consideration more respondents. Along with that the future researcher must also explore the significance of certification in small and large projects by comparing and contrasting them so that specific findings can be obtained regarding utility of PPM certification and training.

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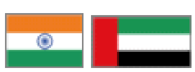

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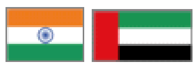

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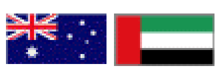

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