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Identifying the competencies of middle managers leading successful strategy implementation

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**IDENTIFYING THE COMPETENCIES OF MIDDLE MANAGERS LEADING
SUCCESSFUL STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION**

MOMIN ZAFAR ABDULMAJID

SINGAPORE MANAGEMENT UNIVERSITY
2018

Identifying the Competencies of Middle Managers Leading Successful Strategy Implementation

by
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Submitted to Lee Kong Chian School of Business in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Business (General Management)

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2018

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ABSTRACT

Identifying the Competencies of Middle Managers Leading Successful Strategy

Implementation

Momin Zafar Abdulmajid

How does one successfully implement strategy? Persistent and alarmingly high failure rates of strategy implementation still prevail due to the myriad variables and complexities associated with execution, the brunt of which typically falls to middle management. Unfortunately, most organizations do not exercise sufficient rigor in the process and criteria to select the right middle managers for executing strategy, despite middle managers having a substantial impact on outcomes. Business leaders lack the necessary tools and frameworks for competency assessment to support their decision-making.

This research seeks to provide evidence that selection of the right middle managers is more likely to lead to successful strategy execution outcomes and identify the competencies of middle managers that are more likely to be effective in leading strategy implementation. The research would thereby help organizations improve their success rates in implementing strategy, while building upon previous research to deepen our understanding of the role and influence of middle managers implementing strategy. The dissertation examines the hypothesis that there are five competencies of middle managers that are more likely to lead to successful strategy implementation. These competencies synthesize the complex context of strategy implementation and relate to the abilities of middle managers in the areas of: 1)

strategic & systems thinking, 2) action orientation, 3) networking, 4) learning and adaptability, and 5) leading and developing subordinates.

The hypotheses were tested by gathering insights from multiple sources: extant research from prior strategy implementation and middle manager studies, primary interviews with C-level senior executives with diverse and rich relevant experiences, and a comprehensive survey of local and regional middle managers.

Our results suggest there is a correlation between key demographic variables and how these competencies are perceived by middle managers. Moreover, segmentation of our data provides additional insights to the results by identifying different profiles of middle managers in our sample population and illustrating how the varying personas may have contributed to the overall results. Our results suggest that the majority of middle managers may not be well-equipped for executing strategy, although they may have other qualifications, accomplishments, functional or technical abilities. Without knowing the required competencies, or those of the incumbent management pool, business leaders have a higher likelihood of ending up with mismatched middle managers for leading strategy execution. This study provides several pragmatic considerations for business leaders to mitigate the risk of misselection and improve the probability of achieving successful strategy execution outcomes.

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DEDICATION

Dedicated to my father.

His unwavering dedication to the pursuit of knowledge inspired my own.

He would also be proud.

Chapter 1. INTRODUCTION

“To think is easy. To act is hard. But the hardest thing in the world is to act in accordance with your thinking (Johann Goethe).”

If not implemented as intended, formulating a great strategy is inconsequential. Numerous studies have established that strategies tend to fail due to ineffective strategy implementation more often than due to inadequate strategy formulation (Webster, 1981; Alexander 1991; Kargar & Blumenthal, 1994). The success rate of strategy implementation is reported to be alarmingly low: about 70-90% of strategies never get fully implemented (Johnson, 2004; Raps, 2005), and on average, firms realize less than 63% of the financial performance their strategies promise (Mankins & Steele, 2005). A recent Economist Survey (EIU, 2017) reported 90% of executives taking the survey admit to failing to achieve their objectives in executing strategy and 53% believe that inadequate delivery capabilities put their organizations at a competitive disadvantage. Even ‘success’ in executing strategy is generally considered as the achievement of merely over half of the strategic objectives (Bridges Consultancy Survey, 2012). Interestingly from a research perspective, the topic of strategy implementation has received less attention than strategy formulation.

The research history of strategy implementation has been described as fragmented and eclectic (Noble, 1999a) and it is considered more of a craft than a science, in comparison with the process of strategy formulation. Nonetheless, enacting strategic change is probably the biggest constant organizations must grapple with to survive (Burke and Trahan, 2000). Both researchers and managers in industry have recognized the difficulty in achieving

successful strategy implementation outcomes, and that implementation is much harder than formulating strategy (Alexander, 1985; Wernham, 1985; Ansoff & McDonnell, 1990; 1989 Booz Allen & Hamilton survey cited by Zairi, 1995; McKinsey Transformation Survey, 2010).

Effective strategy implementation is challenging because numerous factors can potentially affect the process by which strategic plans are converted into pragmatic organizational actions. There are significant obstacles and barriers encountered during strategy implementation and bringing about strategic change requires the adaptation of new ideas and behaviors by the entire organization both at a macro-level and at a daily, operational level (Hrebiniak, 2006). It follows that successful change can only persist over the long-term only when individuals alter their on-the-job behaviors in appropriate ways, thereby enabling the organization to execute change (Jones et al., 2005).

Over the years, researchers and corporate practitioners have outlined several prescriptions for executing strategy more effectively. Treating execution as a discipline, and positioning it as a high-priority item for the firm's leaders, while making it a core part of a firm's culture is advocated by Charan and Bossidy (2002). Galbraith (1985) suggests that leveraging the various dimensions of organizational design should be a key consideration in successfully implementing strategy. For implementing strategy successfully, Galbraith highlights that designing and aligning the following organizational aspects is necessary: structure, various business systems and processes that enable the organization to function, rewards and incentive policies, people and talent development, leadership, and culture. Researchers have also studied the influential context within which the strategy is implemented such as the magnitude and speed of the strategic changes that are mandated (Hrebiniak, 2005), the firm's

performance and position at the time of implementation, and changes in the operating environment (Porter, 1998; Ansoff & Sullivan, 1993). Even though lots of research progress in the field of strategic management has been made on the topic of strategy implementation, the key challenge of how to ensure successful strategy implementation remains elusive for many organizations.

Significant research efforts have also focused on the executors of strategy. The overwhelming majority of this research has focused on top managers and middle managers. Several researchers have established that middle managers are key players in strategy implementation and they enable change at the frontlines (Floyd & Wooldridge, 1994, 1997; Katzenbach, 1996; O'Shannassy, 2003). Below the CEO and his direct reports, there are dozens and sometimes hundreds and thousands of middle managers leading strategy execution across business units, geographies, departments and teams. Ultimately it is these managers that lead the 'masses' of the employees towards making changes that enable the realization of its desired strategic state. How effectively these middle managers perform often decides the outcome of the various strategic initiatives being implemented (Huy, 2001; Balogun, 2003, 2008; Kanter, 2004; Alamsyah, 2011).

Unfortunately, both the research and practice have largely overlooked a key and fundamental aspect of middle managers: what characterizes those middle managers that are more likely to deliver successful outcomes and become effective change leaders? Research has mainly focused on examining whether middle managers are consequential in strategy implementation outcomes, the various roles they play, and the personal and organizational factors that influence their effectiveness. Hence, there is a gap in research in coherently

identifying the competencies of middle managers leading successful strategy implementation and understanding how these competencies are distinct from traditional middle managers. Given that middle managers are the ‘workhorses’ of strategy implementation, it is logical that one of the most important considerations to ensure successful implementation outcomes may be the identification and selection of the ‘right’ middle managers, as well as ensuring there is a critical mass of them available to lead strategy implementation.

Based on the author’s 25 years of management and strategy consulting experience, and supported from preliminary exploratory interviews with senior management, most middle managers involved in implementing strategy are chosen in a manner that is neither systematic nor linked to any competency framework to aid decision-making. The criteria for selection of middle managers is ad-hoc and based primarily on their hierarchical position within the organization, implying that the middle manager selection often gets cascaded downward in the hierarchy. Senior managers will pick their next in command, and if there are multiple options for the next in command, they will choose based on basic criteria such as availability, previous job performance, education and experience levels, top manager perceptions (e.g. popularity of middle manager) and personal relationships. Often, little thought and preparation goes into selecting and preparing these middle managers for the difficult and long task ahead, and yet, these managers have been chosen to play a critical role in executing strategy. There may be several reasons for this managerial oversight in carefully selecting the middle ranks for strategy implementation: top managers may often not be familiar with the talent base beyond their immediate reports; top managers may treat implementation as the key responsibility of their next in command and hence it gets delegated downwards; top managers may not have competency frameworks or guidelines for identifying and selecting

the ‘right’ middle managers. There may be an expectation that in the absence of a framework or guidance, past performance on a previous task may be seen as an appropriate predictor of future performance for this novel task. Alternatively, they may simply not acknowledge the critical role that middle managers play in the outcome of the strategy implementation.

This is a topic of enormous importance and where the proverbial ‘tire meets the road.’ However, there are some fundamental and practical key questions regarding middle managers that are sparsely covered or missing altogether in the literature.

- Given what we know from literature and practice about why strategy implementation fails or succeeds, what would be the desirable competencies of middle managers that are more likely to successfully implement strategy?
- What separates successful middle managers from those that typically stumble?
- Which competencies would be critical for these middle managers to possess?
Which competencies would simply be basic hygiene factors?
- Can a ‘target competency profile’ of middle managers be developed to guide top managers in ascertaining and securing execution managers, rather than letting organizational hierarchy or *laissez-faire* drive selection?

For business leaders, responsible for ensuring that their organizations can effectively implement strategy, these research questions are of significant pragmatic importance. The purpose of this research is to further contextualize this topic and execute an exploratory research inquiry that would lead to insights on the key questions posed above.

Chapter 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Definitions of ‘Strategy Implementation’ and ‘Competencies’

Literature is consistent in its labeling of the strategy implementation topic: management literature frequently uses ‘implementation,’ ‘execution,’ and ‘actualization of goals’ interchangeably (Sashittal & Wilemon, 1996). While there is no universally accepted definition of strategy implementation, Yang, Sun and Eppler (2008) classify three broad research conceptions on the term ‘strategy implementation’: 1) *process*, 2) *behavior* and 3) *hybrid* perspectives. A *process perspective* portrays strategy implementation as a process that turns plans into action and acknowledges that the process may be complex, iterative, lively and interactive. The *behavior perspective* portrays strategy implementation to be a series of hands-on and behavioral activities that result in decisions and actions and acknowledges the decisions to be managerial interventions that align organizational action with strategic intention (Floyd & Wooldridge, 1992a), even extending the decisions to include external constituencies (Varadarajan, 1999). The behavioral perspective of implementation calls for executive leadership and key managerial skills and believes that these behaviors and activities are what transform the strategic plans into concrete reality (Schaap, 2006). The *hybrid perspective* is a combination of process and behavior perspectives, and from the author’s own experience, is more representative of real life situations.

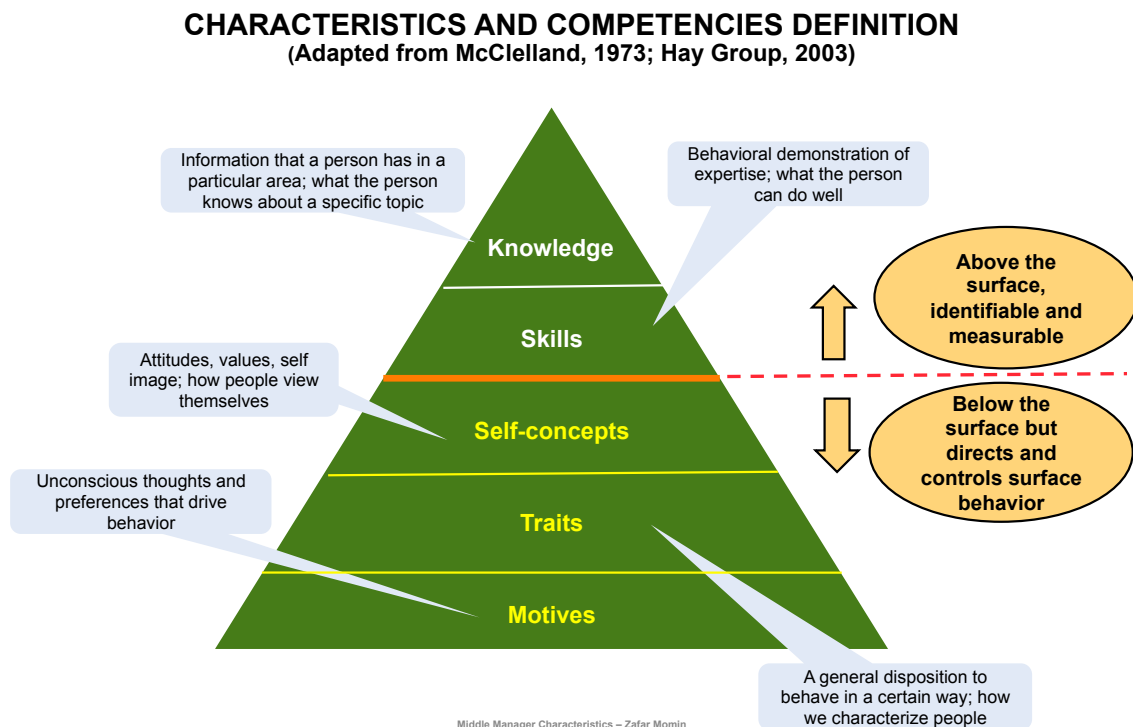
It is important to set the definition for ‘*competencies*’ for this research. While spoken English often interchangeably uses terms such as ‘characteristics’, ‘traits’, and

‘competencies’, the meanings of these terms can be quite different and confusing. A ‘characteristic’ refers to a distinguishing feature or quality of a person. Hay Group (2003) defines ‘traits’ as enduring characteristics of people, which often become ingrained. The definition of ‘competency’ is not clearly stated in literature and the meaning of the term ‘competency’ is still subject to debate (Schippmann et al., 2000). The Hay Group (2003), building on the work of foundational researchers in this field such as McClelland (1973), defines ‘competency’ as “the underlying characteristic of person which enables them to deliver superior performance in each role or situation.” The Hay Group proposes that the antecedents to ‘competency’ are analogous to an iceberg model where ‘skills’ and ‘knowledge’ that are measurable and identifiable form the tip on the surface. Skills are the things that people can do well, such as software programming, and knowledge is what a person knows about a specific topic, such as machine learning. There are underlying elements of the competencies below the surface such as ‘social role,’ ‘self-image,’ ‘traits’ and ‘motives.’ Social role is the image that people display in public and it reflects the values of the person, such as being a diligent worker or a leader. Self-image is the view people have of themselves and it reflects their identity, such as seeing oneself as an expert or team player. Traits are enduring characteristics of people and reflect the way in which we tend to describe people and by which we recognize them. Motives are unconscious thoughts and preferences, which drive behaviour (e.g. self-improvement).

For the purposes of this study, I have adopted the definition proposed by Bartram, Robertson, and Callinan (2002), which states that competencies are “sets of behaviours that are instrumental in the delivery of desired results or outcomes.” Competencies conceptualized in such a way are “something that people actually do and can be observed” (Campbell et al.,

1993) and in turn are influenced by some personal antecedents (Hay Group, 2003; Bartram, 2005). These definitions imply that some part of the competencies is experience, or job-related (e.g. knowledge and skills, which are affected by education and cognitive abilities), however others are personality- or individual-related (e.g. behaviours that underpin performance, which are personal characteristics) as shown in Figure 1 below.

Figure 1. Characteristics and competencies definition



Therefore, I use the terms ‘characteristics and competencies’ and ‘competencies’ interchangeably, both of which encompass what I am looking for to identify the distinguishing qualities of middle managers leading successful strategy implementation. In this study, competencies then are regarded as sets of knowledge, skills, traits, motives and attitudes that are required by middle managers for effective performance in a various strategy implementation settings.

2.2 Strategy Implementation Overview and Frameworks

In reviewing extant literature on this topic, research studies focus on either the importance of individual factors (e.g. quality of strategy formulation, structure, executors, employees, execution tactics, commitment, consensus, communications, etc.), or they focus on the holistic macro-level interrelation between various factors during strategy implementation. For example, an individual factor related to strategy like poor quality of strategy (Hrebiniak, 2006), or the kind of strategy developed (Alexander, 1985; Allio, 2005), or the way in which the strategy was formulated (Kim & Mauborgne, 1991, 1993; Singh, 1998) all have an impact on implementation.

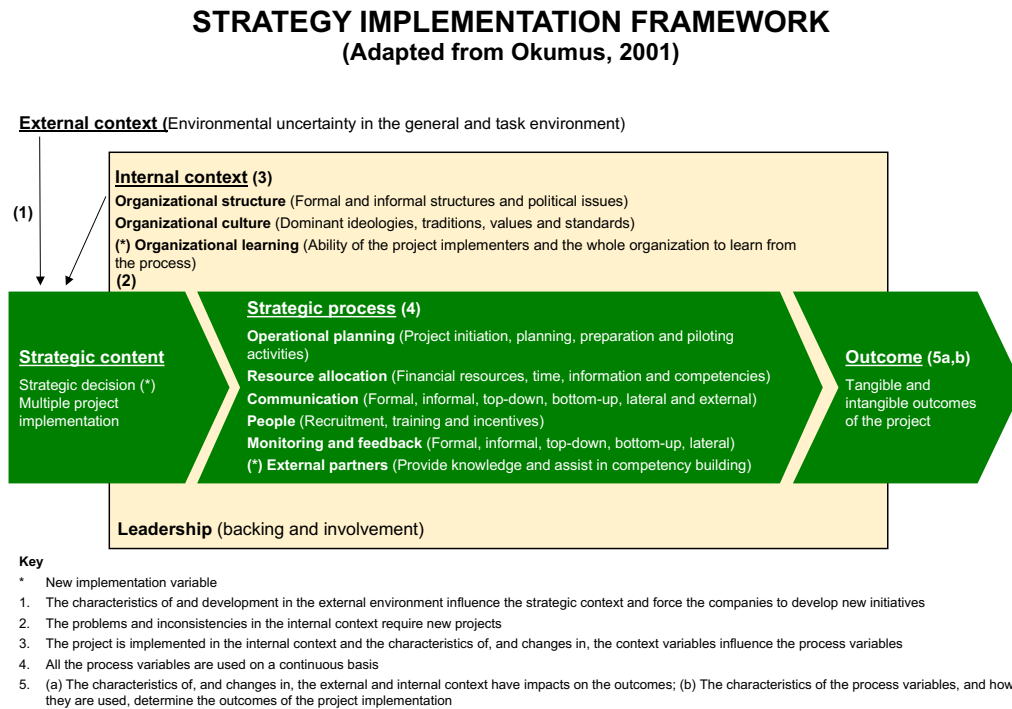
On the holistic front, the relationship between the strategy and its execution has been explained in a sequential model where firms decide to implement their strategy through a selection of organizational choices such as structure, systems, rewards, people and processes in order to support this strategy (Galbraith and Nathanson, 1978; Govindarajan, 1988; Gupta and Govindarajan, 1984). This research stream is most often referred to as ‘strategy implementation.’

Since Chandler (1962) hypothesized and substantiated his thesis that “structure follows strategy,” strategy implementation research has typically focused on the ‘hard’ dimensions of structure and systems (Olson, et al., 2005). However, with the expanded interest in resource-based theories of the firm (Barney, 1991), there has been a lot more research focused on the role of intangible factors such as skills, capabilities, leadership style, and culture in strategy implementation.

The research on strategy implementation from a holistic viewpoint has tried to either categorize various implementation factors into groups or relate them into an overall framework. Noble (1999a) reviews strategy implementation by grouping structural factors (structure and control mechanisms) and interpersonal process factors (consensus, behaviors, leadership, communication, execution style, interaction, etc.). Noble and Mokwa (1999) expanded upon Noble's work and added a third individual-level process grouping (cognition, organizational roles, commitment). Pettigrew (1985, 1992) grouped implementation variables into: strategic content, organizational context (structure, culture), environmental context (uncertainty in general and in task environment), implementation process (operational planning, resources, people, communications, control, monitoring, etc.) and strategic outcome.

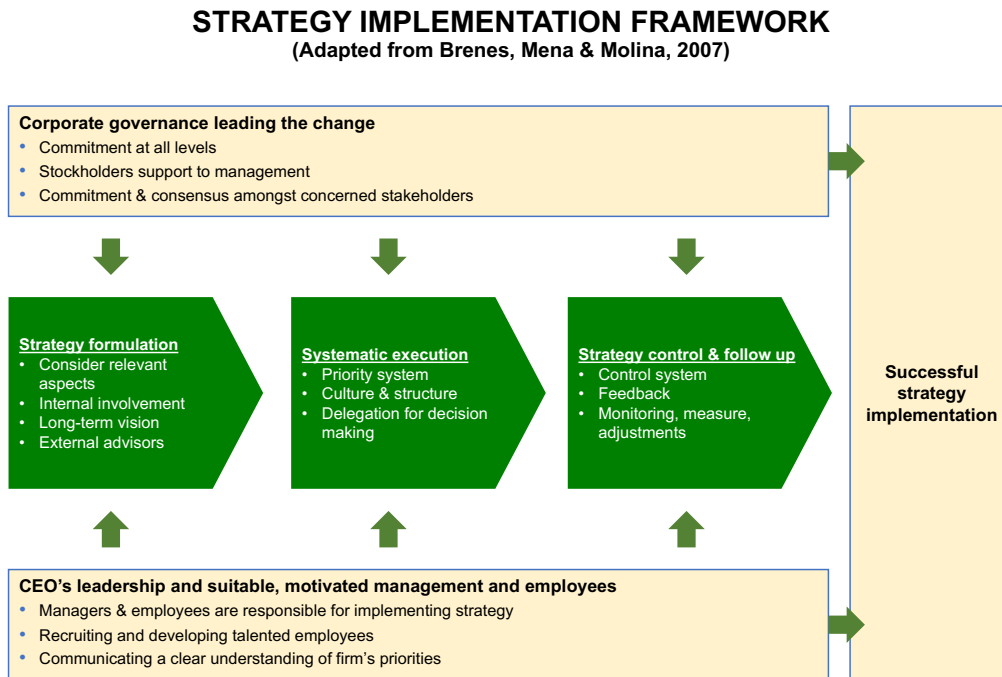
Various authors (Noble, 1999a; Higgins, 2005; Qi, 2005; Hrebiniak, 2005; Galbraith, 2007; Verweire, 2014) undertook research studies that refrained from clustering or categorizing implementation factors, rather compiling factors into frameworks. Okumus (2001), who added a few more variables like organizational learning, multiple project implementation and external partners, expanded this grouping to develop the framework shown below in Figure 2.

Figure 2. Strategy implementation framework (Okumus, 2001)



The frameworks were meant to systematically break down the implementation process into logical phases like pre-implementation, implementation planning, managing implementation, and maximizing cross-functional performance (Noble, 1999b) and link them to the roles of leadership, structure, communications, incentives, etc. in each stage. Brenes, Mena & Molina (2007), as illustrated below in Figure 3, mentioned that not only is a clear, consistent strategy, which is written down and well communicated an important factor, but the message has to be clear to what they term as the “internal partners’ degree of involvement.” It is their way of highlighting that a lot of different people exist in the organizations and it is important to involve these people in strategy formulation and execution.

Figure 3. Strategy implementation framework (Brenes et al., 2007)

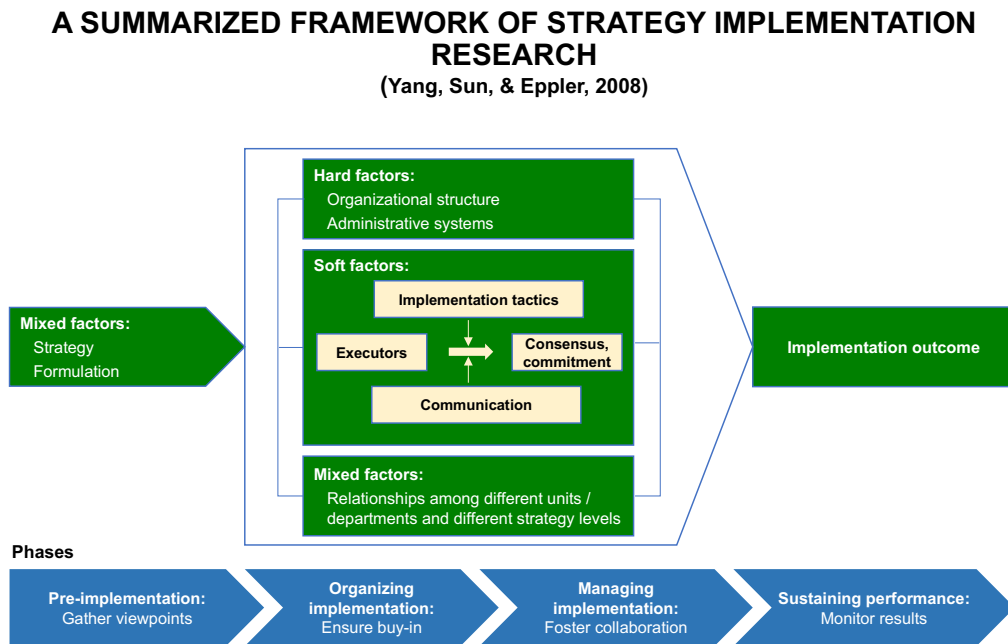


Middle Manager Characteristics – Zafar Momin

Higgins (2005) used the Waterman & Peters (1980) McKinsey 7-S framework (strategy, staff, style, systems, structure, skills, shared vision) and developed an 8-S framework by adding strategic performance and replacing skills with resources. Even though there appears to be a trend towards establishing more detailed frameworks and holistic model-based approaches for examining strategy implementation, Yang et al. (2008), in their review on the topic, believe that these efforts do not add a lot of value because they do not leverage prior empirical research and do not relate the variables being added the frameworks to each other in an informative manner. The authors suggest that future frameworks must make the research results meaningful for practitioners by “visualizing their findings in an intriguing and non-trivial manner.” They present their own summarized version of a framework in Figure 4 below. Their contribution is summary, but also the addition of the generic phases of

strategy implementation (Noble, 1999) and the key success factors of each step, as reported from prior studies.

Figure 4. Summary framework of strategy implementation research (Yang et al., 2008)



Middle Manager Characteristics – Zafar Momin

Wheelen and Hunger (2006) suggest that the most important activities involved in strategy implementation are: (1) involving people from all organizational levels in strategy implementation, i.e. allocating the responsibility for strategy execution; (2) developing programs, budgets and procedures; (3) organizing for strategy implementation; (4) staffing (matching the managers and employees with the strategy); and (5) leading by coaching people to use their abilities and skills most effectively and efficiently to achieve the organizational objectives.

At a high-level, it seems almost an impossible challenge to achieve coherence among the various implementation factors in a complex and dynamic environment. Yet, the literature suggests that the holistic orchestration and addressing of all the factors are what lead to a successful implementation. At a ground level, strategy implementation is the step-by-step, hands-on actions of myriad activities across the organization that requires large-scale employee participation, rigorous program management, and technology enablement (Smith & Kofron, 1996), and it also requires enactment of change at a people-level to align mindsets and convert plans into action (Porras & Robertson, 1992).

It is not fully surprising then that researchers, media surveys and consultants report high rates (anywhere from 50% to 90%) of failure in strategy implementation efforts (Kiechel, 1982, 1984; Gray, 1986; Nutt, 1999; Kaplan & Norton, 2001; Sirkin, Keenan, & Jackson, 2005; Higgs & Rowland, 2005). Candido & Santos (2013) studied the topic of implementation failure in fair detail and reported that based on their exhaustive analysis and estimations, the more likely failure rates are between broad ranges of 28-90%. The authors conclude that there has fragmentation and lack of consistent rigor in assessing the causes and extent of failure in implementation. For example, a particular initiative may have failed and not the entire implementation effort but reported or judged as a failure due to lack of clear and consistent definition of 'failure' or 'success.' The authors point out that another factor in assessing failure is the context of the study - such as organisational factors (firm size, sector, ownership, management style, etc.) and environmental variables (economic, cultural, social, etc.) - that might impact the degree of success or failure of a strategy. They recommend that this context needs should be clearly identified and discussed in future studies.

Nevertheless, with the complexity of strategy implementation and its numerous contextual factors and governing variables, implementation success remains elusive, and despite remarkable progress in the field of strategic management, high implementation failure rates persist. Even those that do succeed are deemed successful when management believes at least 50% of the strategic objectives are achieved (Bridges Consultancy Survey, 2012).

2.3 Barriers and Obstacles in Strategy Implementation

A key reason for execution failure is due to all the barriers and obstacles encountered during implementing strategy. Alexander (1991) identified a long list of obstacles encountered during implementation that can lead to failure: implementation taking longer than planned; unexpected major problems cropping up; activities ineffectively coordinated; conflicting priorities and crises distracting from implementation; employees having inadequate capabilities to do their jobs; lower-level employees with inadequate training; external environmental factors creating issues; middle and departmental managers with inadequate capabilities and direction; key implementation tasks and activities poorly defined, and the information systems insufficient for monitoring execution activities.

Giles (1991) mentioned that key obstacles stemmed from the poor effort put into the strategy formulation itself. He described strategy as often being a “mixture of budgets and management wish-lists” which was not executable and not ‘owned’ by executors as they were not involved in its formulation. Corboy & O’Corrbui (1999) term obstacles as ‘the seven deadly sins of strategy implementation’ and explain them to be: lack of understanding of how to implement strategy, stakeholders not fully appreciating the strategy, unclear individual

responsibilities in the change process, lack of anticipation, understanding and action upon encountered obstacles, and ignoring the requirements of day-to-day business imperatives. Lendel and Varmus (2011) also highlight the importance of defining strategic objectives and Allio (2005) mentioned that ideas, which cannot be efficiently transposed into concrete actions, are useless for the company. Grundy (2012) notes that managers have often problems associated with the lack of clarity about the strategy itself, as well as about the entire strategic management process.

Hrebiniak (2005) analyzed this angle of strategy implementation in fair detail, and documented several barriers that inhibit execution. He highlighted that management is typically better at ‘planning’ than ‘doing’ and consequently not very well trained or prepared to implement strategic initiatives. He also highlighted that another barrier to implementing strategy is that top management often see themselves as the architects of strategy and consider implementation to be a lower level task for the middle and frontline managers. Consequently, this leads to dysfunctional planning and execution and ultimately to failure.

Another challenge during implementation is the long time required for implementation during which many strategy assumptions can change and unexpected or uncontrolled events can impact the execution process. A related point is that often strategy formulation does not adequately anticipate implementation and this leads to ‘twists and turns’ during implementation that increase the level of challenges to be addressed. These obstacles require managers to not lose focus on the target objectives, but also to be open and adaptive and learn from the dynamic changes that occur over time. Another key point that Hrebiniak highlights

is that strategy implementation involves large scale of people across the organization, which requires an incredible level of communications of the strategy and implementation plan that are tailored to the various levels and understanding of the employees across the organization. Furthermore, and Dobni (2003) concurs, the rewards and incentives must address the basic question for employees' motivation: "what's in it for me?" Without addressing this issue, implementation efforts lose momentum and stall. Just hearing the pure rationale for strategic change is often not sufficiently motivating for employees to make changes in their roles, jobs and day-to-day efforts.

Based on surveys of hundreds of senior executives, Wharton-Gartner and Wharton Executive Education (Hrebiniak, 2005) reported a list of major obstacles to strategy implementation:

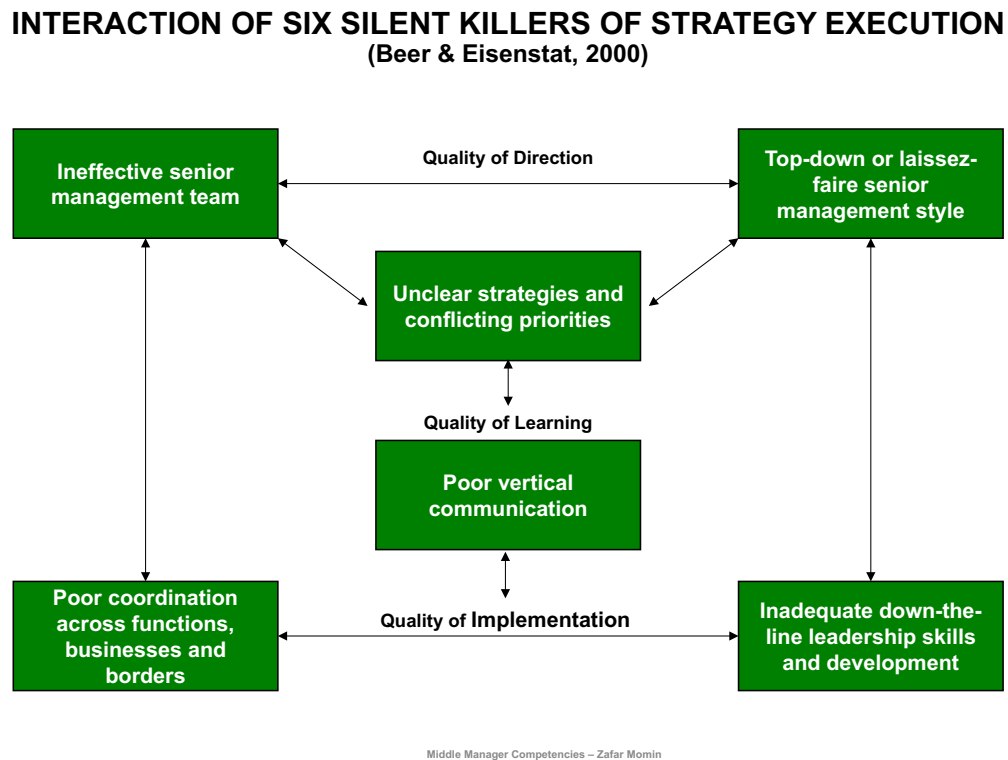
- Inability to manage change or overcome internal resistance to change
- Executing a strategy that conflicts with the existing power structure
- Inadequate information sharing amongst business units or departments
- Poor or vague strategy
- Inability to generate 'buy-in' or agreement on critical execution steps
- Lack of ownership of strategy or execution plans among key employees
- Unclear communications and responsibility/accountability for execution
- Lack of guidelines to guide implementation efforts
- Lack of understanding of role of organization design in execution
- Lack of incentives or inappropriate incentives to support execution objectives
- Lack of senior management support for implementation

- Insufficient financial resources to execute the strategy

The inability to manage change, which apparently includes culture change, was ranked number one in both surveys. Again, pointing to the difficulty in achieving change at the micro-level of frontline ranks. Hrebiniak pointed out that the surveys also revealed that some of the antecedents to the barriers were due to employees not understanding how their jobs contributed to important execution outcomes, inefficiency of the implementation process itself, and the slow pace of decision-making which slowed progress. Thus, managing the emotional balance and well-being of employees was highlighted an important role for the managers (Huy, 2001, 2002, 2011). These observations led credence to the significance and complex tasks that middle managers needed to perform to successfully implement strategy.

Beer and Eisenstat (2000) identified six main barriers (used interchangeably here with ‘obstacles’) to strategy implementation and termed them ‘silent killers’ of implementation as these barriers are also often unseen by management. These barriers hinder implementation due to ineffective top management and ‘command and control’ top management style which affect the quality of direction. Unclear or conflicting priorities and ineffective vertical communication raises a barrier to implementation and affects the quality of learning needed to execute effectively. Finally, inadequate competencies in the middle and lower levels of the organization, which is where implementation is happening, compounded by inadequate lateral coordination, hinders implementation by affecting the quality of the implementation itself. Beer and Eisenstat (2000) and Wessel (1993) claim that the interaction of such barriers, as shown in Figure 5 below, complicate matters further and make corrective actions very difficult.

Figure 5. Interaction of the six silent killers of strategy execution (Beer & Eisenstat, 2000)

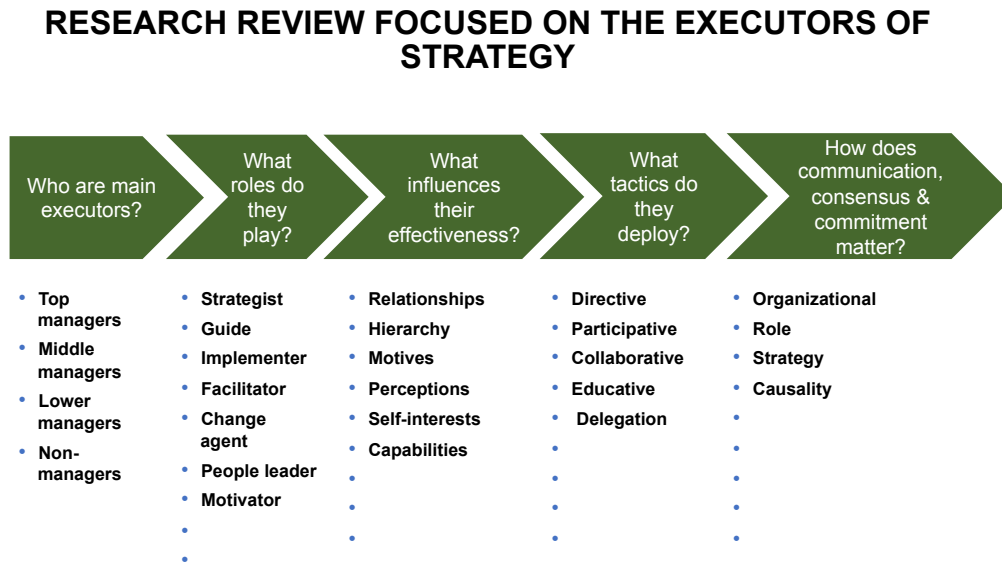


In summary of the barriers and obstacles, literature highlights that there are numerous and inter-related factors that impede strategy implementation. These factors stem from various aspects of the execution being undertaken: (i) the clarity and strength of the strategy itself and its articulation, interpretation and comprehension across the various ranks of the organization; (ii) people issues related to competencies and commitment needed across all levels (top to bottom) of the organization in order to execute the strategy; (iii) ‘hard’ organizational issues like structure, business processes, systems that require redesign to fit the strategy and (iv) tactical executional issues like implementation planning, resource allocation, project and people management, monitoring and control, cross-functional and external coordination, communications, etc. that are needed to adapt and make the strategy operational at a ground level with employees and external stakeholders.

2.4 The Influence of Executors in Strategy Implementation

Literature highlights that the effectiveness of strategy implementation is affected by the quality of the executors involved. By executors, literature refers to top management, middle management, lower management and non-management. Several research findings have documented the effect of the first line of senior leadership (i.e. top managers or C-suite executives) on strategy implementation (Hrebiniak & Snow, 1982; Hrebiniak, 2006; Schaap, 2006; Smith & Kofron, 1996). Schmidt and Bauer (2006) also include and study the role of the board in guiding implementation. By quality of executors, literature refers quite broadly to attributes like skills, attitudes, capabilities, experience, and other personal traits of the executors (Govindarajan, 1988; Peng & Littlejohn, 2001). We will examine the literature on executors of strategy through a structured approach shown in Figure 6 below.

Figure 6. Literature review: Focused approach for analyzing executors of strategy



Middle Manager Characteristics – Zafar Momin

2.4.1 Top management

Effective leadership is one of the most important factors to ensure any successful change implementation in an organization (McGuire et al., 2009). Leaders motivate their employees to achieve and exceed their performance levels by transforming the employees’ attitudes, beliefs, and values (Burns, 1978). They help communicate, lead, and guide the employees to embrace change. Top managers are expected to provide a facilitative environment (David, 1989) for successful strategy implementation that guides ownership of strategy, effective communication, allocation of resources and preparation of realistic implementation plans (Alexander, 1985; van Buul, 2010). Successful change leadership should be collaborative and empathetic whilst at the same time have a clear vision and the ability to make tough but fair decisions (Hayes, 2002).

For successful implementation of strategy, top managers play the role of strategist, analyst, guide, innovator, motivator, change driver, decision maker, risk manager, organizer and evaluator and these roles are driven by responsibility, loyalty, power, motivation, awareness, clarity, consistency and reliability (Yang et al., 2008; Sorooshian et al., 2010; Azhar, et al. 2014). Kouzes and Posner (1995) articulated five sets of behaviours: challenge the process, inspire a shared vision, enable others to act, model the way, and encourage the heart. A seemingly endless list of attributes that is required by successful change leaders has been prescribed by researchers, including Pagon et al. (2008) who have mentioned at least 25 different skill sets.

While several studies highlight the several important roles in the strategy execution process the top managers should play and various skills and behaviors they need to demonstrate, other researchers (Beer & Eisenstat, 2000; Hrebiniak, 2005) highlight that top managers may not see themselves as the lynchpins in implementation. Consequently, they often play a ‘figurehead’ or ‘distanced’ role and therefore research studies show somewhat mixed empirical evidence for their influence on the outcomes of strategy implementation. They suggest more research is needed to better understand the influence of top management in strategy implementation.

2.4.2 Lower and non-management

Unfortunately, there has been limited research on the impact of lower levels of management and non-management in strategy implementation. There is consistency in literature about the need for training to build up capabilities of employees (Alexander, 1985) and for the need for

persuasion and getting buy-in from lower levels. The lack of information sharing was also reported to be a key barrier (Hrebiniak, 2005; Noble 1999b) at lower levels for effective implementation. Without adequate direction, communication and leadership from their superiors (Rapert, Lynch & Suter, 1996), lower level employees will resist or derail changes they find unsuitable for themselves. The strategic decisions imposed on lower levels lead to employees feeling disgruntled and threatened (Nutt, 1987) and the leadership style and tactics employed middle managers has been cited to play a critical role in overcoming 'obstructionism' that is generally reported in most implementation efforts.

2.4.3 Middle management

2.4.3.1 Definition of middle managers

Middle managers in an organizational hierarchy are typically located below top management and above first-level line managers (Wooldridge, Schmid & Floyd, 2008). Kay (1993) identifies middle managers as those who supervise other managers, professional and technical people but are not general managers and do not have profit and loss responsibilities. Middle managers typically refer to the coordinators between daily activities and the strategic activities of the hierarchy of an organization (Floyd & Wooldridge, 1994). Floyd and Wooldridge identify middle managers as 'linking pins' between the top managers and bottom operational workers. Hamel and Breen (2007) consider middle managers to be people that "keep the wheels of the industry and commerce rolling. They do not make the big decisions but can help or harm their organization." Rensburg (2014) aptly describes middle managers as "managers who have managers reporting to them but also are required to report to managers at a more senior level."

2.4.3.2 Roles of middle managers in strategy implementation

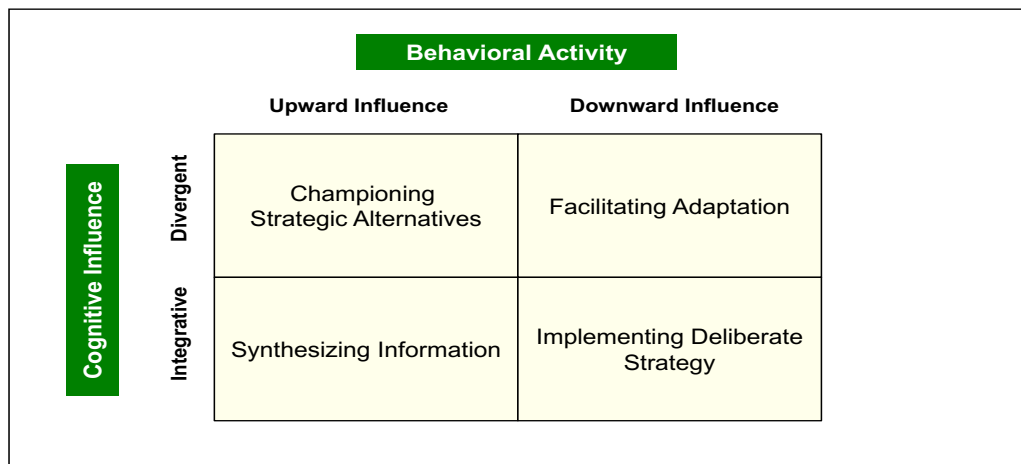
When it comes to middle management, there are various viewpoints regarding their roles in effective strategy implementation. The traditional view suggests that middle managers are primarily executors of a strategy that has been handed down to them from top management (Hrebiniak, 2005). In this view, middle managers are the ‘linking pins’ that connect strategic objectives with daily operations and manage the concerns of the employees involved in the implementation. Also in this view, Hrebiniak’s research shows that the major obstacles that middle managers face are more linked to executional issues such as employee resistance, vague strategy, unclear responsibilities, etc. Therefore, Hrebiniak concludes that developing a detailed, structured and logical model for strategy execution is critical for its success. In the traditional view of the middle manager role, strategy formulation and execution are distinct and sequenced activities.

Wooldridge & Floyd (1992, 1994, 1997, 2000), however, see middle managers as executors, but also believe that middle manager involvement is becoming significant in both the definition and the execution of strategy. Middle managers are deemed critical to championing alternatives, synthesizing data and information, facilitating adaptability, and executing deliberate strategy. Floyd and Wooldridge (1992) use a two-by-two matrix to define strategic roles for the middle manager that could be focused upward or downward in the organizational hierarchy or working integratively or divergently with the existing strategy. The authors suggest that middle managers coordinate strategy and action by mediating, negotiating and interpreting linkages between the strategic top management levels and operating levels. Their upward influence informs top management of the operating environment and revisions to the strategy that may be needed for strategic change.

Middle managers' downward influence ensures alignment and conformity to the intended strategic changes. Similarly, in an integrative or divergent influencing role, middle managers manage ideas that are coherent with the strategic direction and reconcile ideas and views that may be at odds with the intended direction. Thereby, Floyd & Wooldridge believe that middle managers participate broadly in the strategy implementation process and play a very crucial role in facilitating change that goes beyond carrying out mandates from the top management. Of course, the requirements for middle managers to be effective in this role are much more demanding and require multi-faceted characteristics and competencies to be successful. The authors summarized four key roles for middle managers (Figure 7 below).

Figure 7. Typology of middle manager roles in strategy

TYPOLOGY OF MIDDLE MANAGER ROLES IN STRATEGY
(Floyd & Wooldridge, 1992)



Middle Manager Competencies – Zafar Momin

Championing strategic alternatives means that middle managers would become ‘champions’ of corporate initiatives at an operating level and as advocates, would provide upward influence on top managers about strategic alternatives and persuade them based on their

intimate understanding of the implications at an operating level. In an *information-synthesizing* role, which may well be a precursor to the ‘championing’ role, middle managers evaluate and interpret information in a way that it affects top management perceptions about the strategy and give it more granularity from a grounds-up perspective which lays the groundwork for strategic changes.

In a downward influencing ‘*implementer of deliberate strategy*’ role, which is often considered the key traditional role for middle managers, there are managerial interventions from these middle managers that align strategic intent with organizational action. This role would be very tactical although stated as one of the strategic roles in the typology. In the role to *facilitate adaptability*, middle managers manage their local units or operations in way that enables sharing information freely, enables trials and experiments with new approaches, enables operations to adapt to changing conditions and to facilitate learning. In this role, middle managers act as facilitators of change and remove obstacles, reconcile contradictory objectives, ensure resources are available and empower and motivate resources to act upon initiatives. Their role in facilitating adaptability is quite different from implementing deliberate strategy and very important in enabling flexible organizational arrangements that make things happen despite hurdles. These activities are often being shielded from top management, as actions required for implementation are often not embedded in the deliberate strategy.

In a third view of the middle manager role, Balogun (2003, 2008) focuses on a strategy-as-practice viewpoint that examines how middle managers experience their role in making

strategic changes happen. Balogun defines middle manager roles within the nature of key activities like: 'coordination and management' that are traditional middle manager roles e.g. planning, budgeting, resourcing, oversight; 'sense making' which is the process people undertake when they try to understand what is going on by making sense of experiences or events and relate them to what it means for subordinates or peers. Balogun concludes that middle managers have a complex and diverse task list through a strategy-as-practice lens. Balogun and Hailey (2008) also conclude that the interpretive sense making role is less visible and not acknowledged for middle managers and this often leads to problems in strategy implementation. Middle managers, she highlights, feel overloaded, lonely and abandoned with a lack of bandwidth for critical tasks such as counseling, teambuilding and communications.

In taking this micro perspective, Balogun reiterates that middle managers perform coordination, management, and interpretation tasks in strategy implementation. Her findings build upon the relationship manager and networker roles that Floyd & Wooldridge and implementer roles that Hrebiniak had exemplified earlier. These roles may also have evolved as organizations have evolved (Galbraith, 2005) from traditional centralized, and hierarchical in nature to contemporary, decentralized with more lateral processes/mechanisms for coordination, and with more external networking.

Several research studies have been conducted to ascertain middle managers' view of their own role in strategy implementation. In a comprehensive study of 654 South African middle managers, and using Floyd and Wooldridge's (1992) typology, Rensburg et al. (2014) report

that middle managers overwhelmingly see their roles as that of traditional implementers of deliberate strategy and to some extent as facilitating adaptability and downward influencing and supporting roles. Ikävalko et al. (2001), in studying middle managers across a sample of European organizations, also concludes that the middle manager's main role is perceived to be the role of implementing deliberate strategy, while facilitating adaptability was ranked a second. Upward influences in both these studies are not deemed to be as relevant as the downward influences, which contradict earlier studies by several other researchers (Burgelman, 1983; Floyd & Wooldridge, 1992, 1994, 1996, 2000; Mantere & Vaara, 2008, Rouleau & Balogun, 2011).

Nevertheless, in all three views of the middle manager role, there is consistent theoretical and empirical evidence to conclude that middle managers are certainly important key actors in strategy implementation and those that affect its outcome (Floyd & Wooldridge, 1990, 1996, 2000; Burgelman, 1994; Thakur, 1998).

2.4.3.3 Factors influencing middle manager effectiveness

There are several views on which factors influence the effectiveness of middle management for driving successful outcomes. One view is that the relationship between top and middle managers moderates middle manager effectiveness in implementation roles. If middle managers do not get the direction and support from top managers, then they are less likely to support the strategy (Guth and MacMillan, 1986). Raes et al. (2011) studied the relationship interface between top managers and middle managers and concluded that this interface was central to understanding how top managers influence their organizations. Qi (2005) studied

the support levels from top managers of middle managers based on middle manager demographics such as age (younger better supported), gender (females better supported), experience (more experience less supported) and education (marginal relationship). While middle managers would expect more support and direction from the top, they also felt that they are in a better position to make decisions on implementation at a local level (Wooldridge & Floyd, 1990). These authors' findings suggest that the middle managers with positions that cut across boundaries would have greater strategic influence and upward influence amongst middle manager cohorts. They also suggested that managers that had good downward influence and maintained an overall balance of network centrality had a positive influence on organizational performance. Another factor for striking middle manager influence was their ability to mediate between internal and external environments.

Another viewpoint of middle manager influence was based on the match of the strategy with their leadership style, which considers middle manager personality as a primary consideration of implementation actions undertaken. A study by Gupta and Govindarajan (1984) highlighted that managers with sales and marketing experience were more likely to take risks and tolerate ambiguity better than other functional managers, thereby being more likely to succeed in 'growth and build' situations, rather than 'harvest' situation. Subsequently, Govindarajan (1989) investigated a more comprehensive list of personality variables like functional background, industry familiarity, problem-solving style, locus of control, etc., and tried to link them to the type of the strategy being pursued by the organization. For example, he finds that in case of a differentiation strategy pursued by an SBU, a greater R&D experience and greater internal locus of control on part of the middle manager contributed to a more effective implementation, but on the other hand, hampered it for a low-cost strategy

pursuit by an SBU. Waldersee & Sheather (1996) examined the causal role of the organizational context within which the strategy and managers' leadership style interact. This angle has not been studied in detail but at least in a lab setting they showed that managers could alter their behaviors to suit different strategy situations.

Guth and MacMillan (1986) reported that middle managers would be effective based on their perception of the organization's potential to deliver, and their own likelihood of success that could lead to their desired outcomes for themselves. So basically, if the managers did not think they would get what they sought in term of their own desired outcomes in the imminent implementation, they would likely inhibit the implementation process by passive (giving it low priority, creating delays, etc.) or interventional (subversive behaviors directed upwards, deliberate creation of barriers, sabotage, etc.) means. Heracleous (2000) concurred with the notion that the perceived ability and perceived consistency between personal goals and strategic change goals was the decisive 'soft' factor in middle manager influence in strategy implementation.

Kuyvenhoven and Buss (2011) derived several success factors for middle managers based on their analysis of literature and from their own consulting experiences under two main categories: A) *Relationship with top management*: recognition of strategic role of middle managers; clarification of expectations; need to support and legitimize sense-making process; clarity on priorities and avoiding conflicting signals, and B) *Skills needed*: strategy skills and need to understand specific directives and rationale behind strategic changes, as well as involvement and commitment to strategy; analytical skills and need to understand

organization and change context, ability to prioritize, ability to manage execution; team leadership skills; communication skills; boundary spanning skills and networking ability; self-awareness and need to understand biases, preferences, experience, and also to distinguish the needs of organization versus self.

While some of this responsibility to enable middle manager effectiveness clearly falls in top management's hands and is out of the middle managers' control, the ability to engage top managers through interaction and dialogue in order to clarify and gain a sense of direction is up to the middle managers' capabilities (Wooldridge & Floyd, 1990). The antecedents to these managerial skills enables middle managers to understand the strategy and its implications beyond the local sphere of operations, how the local unit's operations and the rest of the organization fits into the 'big picture' in the complexity of coordinated execution. Not possessing this capability also affects the middle manager's perceptions about the organization's potential to deliver the outcomes (Guth and MacMillan, 1986). Another factor that is highlighted related to the 'agency problem' and middle manager's potential lack of commitment (Guth and MacMillan, 1986; Heracleous, 2000). However, this is more dependent on the middle managers selected to lead implementation. If the middle managers selected to lead implementation do not have goal congruence between their personal and strategic goals, then naturally there would be a mismatch of direction and motivation. Finally, to be effective in strategy implementation, a long 'laundry list' of tactical executional competencies (Govindarajan, 1989; Kuyvenhoven and Buss, 2011) has been highlighted. As Ikävalko (2001) and other researchers have pointed out, there is a need for further research in better understanding what are the key competencies of middle managers that are needed, especially in different roles they assume during strategy implementation.

2.5 Tactics Deployed by Executors in Strategy Implementation

Nutt (1986) reported, based on 91 case studies, that managers deployed four key tactics for implementing strategy in various frequencies of usage: *intervention* (20%), *participation* (17%), *persuasion* (42%) and *edict* (23%). Nutt reported that these tactics described over 90% of tactics used by executors. Intervention, which refers to adjustments made during implementation by creating new norms or practices, had the best results. Participation, which consists of articulating strategic objectives and nominating task forces and formal groups to develop corresponding implementation options, and persuasion which is basically convincing people of the course of action, were the next most effective for results. Edict, which basically leverages power and issues directives and excludes participation, had the least effective results. Subsequently in 1989, Nutt developed a contingency framework that uses situational constraints like managers' autonomy and need for consultation to identify conditions under which the different tactics were more likely to be effective.

Lehner (2004), based on work done by Bourgeois and Brodwin (1984), suggested five key implementation tactics: command, change/politics, culture, collaboration and crecive/market. In the *command* model, top managers craft the strategy, present it to other managers and expect them to implement it. This model splits the 'thinkers' from the 'doers.' In the *change* model, top managers make decisions on the organizational dimensions like structure, people, systems, etc. that needed for implementing the strategy that they have developed. The *collaborative* model involves other managers in the strategy formulation and strategic decision-making and top managers seek to get diverse inputs into the strategy process. In the *cultural* model, top managers involve lower levels of the organization and try to get their commitment to the strategic goals. They get lower levels to participate in

designing the work processes that would be consistent with the strategy. In the *crescive* model, the top managers broadly define the vision and purpose and let the strategy emerge from the bottom of the organization. They seek to encourage innovation and select projects that emerge bottom-to-top that are consistent with the top management direction.

The *command* and *change* tactics are both top-down and involve top management embarking on either a 'tell/sell' or organizational design to facilitate the implementation process. Both *collaboration* and *crescive* tactics utilize participation significantly and include subordinate levels into the execution process. Salih and Doll (2013) mention that participation has a positive impact on strategy implementation.

The tactic of trying to implement strategy by using corporate *culture* remains the domain of transformational leadership (Bass, 1985).

In conclusion, regardless of the tactics employed from a middle manager perspective, the ability to convince, motivate and mobilize the lower ranks is very important for middle managers. More importantly, the ability to dynamically improvise and enable action as implementation proceeds, while being able to muster 360-degree organizational support is perhaps what distinguishes those middle managers that lead successful outcomes.

2.6 The Role of Communication, Consensus and Commitment in Strategy Implementation

Alexander (1985) reported that in his studies, communications figured more often than any other single factor in promoting successful implementation. Organizations that have open

and supportive communications between management and employees tend to outperform those with limited communications (Rapert, Velliquite and Garretson, 2002). Organizational communication plays a key role in knowledge dissemination, organizing processes, providing context, learning and training during the implementation process (Peng & Littlejohn, 2001).

On the other hand, communication barriers may exist due to structure, leadership style, culture and other organizational factors and these will impede implementation efforts (Heide, Gronhaug & Johanssen, 2002). Schaap (2006), Galbraith (1985, 2007) and others have pointed out the importance of having frequent and multi-level communications across the organization during the strategy implementation process to build consensus, mitigate rumors, foster shared attitudes and values, and enroll people in the process of organizational change.

If the various layers of the organization are not aware of the same information or the information gets modified and filtered through different levels, an inconsistent level of consensus may result. Floyd and Wooldridge (1992) label the gulf between strategies conceived by top management and their awareness at lower levels as an ‘implementation gap.’ They argue that consensus could vary from strong to weak levels depending on the understanding and commitment to the strategy. Rapert, Lynch and Suter (1996) believe while strategic consensus reflects the buy-in to that fact that the strategy is the appropriate one to pursue, strategic commitment is the depth of the willingness to put efforts and resources in making the strategy happen.

Shared understanding of the middle and operating layers of the organization with the top management's strategic goals is of critical importance to the effective implementation of strategy (Rapert, Velliquette & Garretson, 2002). Shared understanding without commitment may result in sub-optimal performance (Wooldridge & Floyd, 1989). If middle and lower layers are permitted to be involved with the detailed implementation planning, their commitment will likely increase.

Noble & Mokwa (1999) break it down further and propose three dimensions of commitment: organizational, strategy and role commitment. Organizational commitment is the level to which the manager works towards organization-related goals and values. Strategy commitment is defined as the level to which a manager supports the goals and objectives of the strategy. Role commitment is the level to which the manager is determined to do his best in his/her own responsibilities, regardless of whether of how he/she feels about the strategy. The authors showed that role and strategy commitment would influence the manager's performance on the implementation; however, organizational commitment did not have a strong influence. Their results highlight the complexity of the commitment construct and that commitment to an organization alone does not explain this factor completely.

Clearly from a middle manager characteristics and competencies perspective, literature has several implications that can be gleaned from this section. Firstly, communication is a key factor in any strategy implementation and the need for middle managers need to have strong communications capability for the various reasons mentioned in literature is firmly grounded. Secondly, without a proper understanding of the strategy and developing a consensus position

with it, there will be inconsistencies in the behavior of middle managers in terms of buy-in, initiating the appropriate actions and developing a commitment for converting the strategy into action. Thirdly, having commitment, whether it is to the strategy, the positional role, and/or to the organization is necessary for the middle managers to be able to do their jobs in implementation. Therefore, all three factors seem important in terms of required conditions and hygiene factors needed for middle managers to be able to perform effectively during strategy implementation.

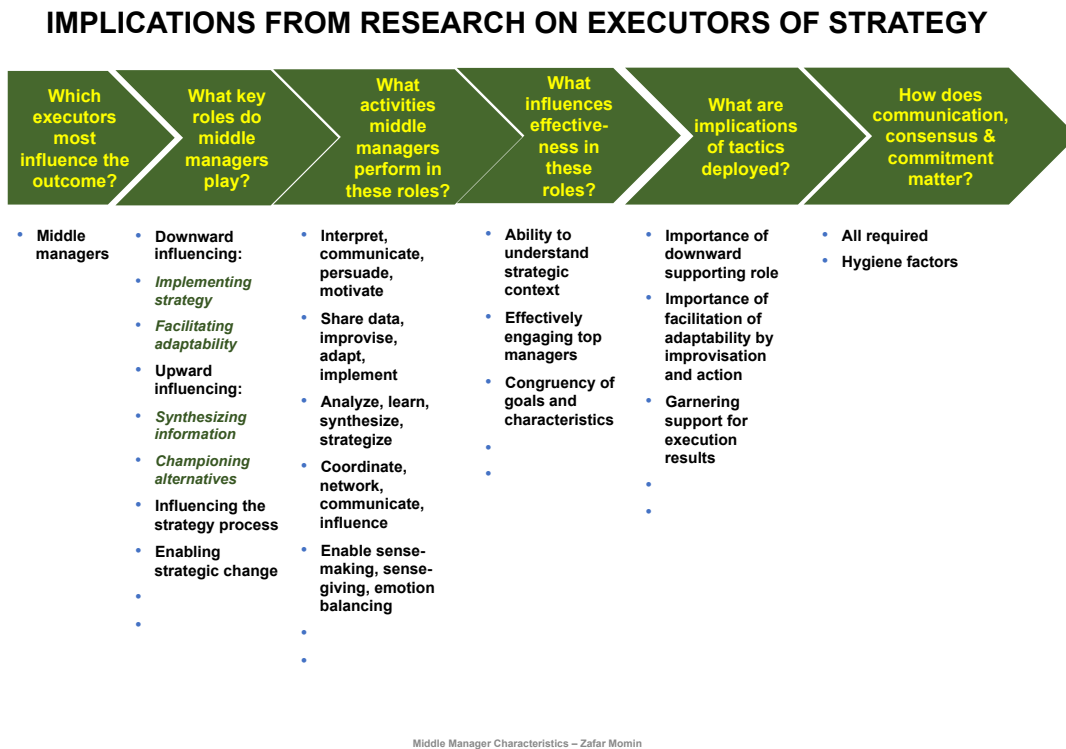
Chapter 3. RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND HYPOTHESIS SETTING

3.1 The Gap In Strategy Implementation Literature

Implementing strategy successfully remains a major challenge for leaders of organizations and the failure rates of such endeavours remains high. While there has been a trend towards developing more comprehensive frameworks and models with the continuous addition of new variables, many frameworks are difficult to test empirically and are typically inadequate to model the complexity of various real world practice situations. Practitioners may still require substantial guidance to make sound pragmatic decisions during strategy implementation. Research studies have also focused largely on middle managers and their various roles in strategy implementation. Literature has consistently affirmed the importance of middle managers' influence on the positive or negative outcome of strategy implementation, and the various roles that middle managers play and the moderating influences on their effectiveness during strategy implementation has also been well reported. Middle managers play a vital role in linking strategic intentions with organizational actions and their tacit knowledge of the frontline operations, customers and employees makes them the key managerial pool during strategy execution. Even though fragmented and eclectic, the considerable prior research on middle managers has several implications that have been derived from the literature review and are summarized in Figure 8 below.

The logical basis of my research is that if middle managers are indeed very important strategic actors and 'workhorses' of strategy implementation, then it should be critical to

Figure 8. Implications: Focused approach for analyzing executors of strategy



identify and select those middle managers that would be the most likely to lead successful implementation. For example, in an organization of 10,000 employees, there are typically 10-50 top managers and around 1,500 middle managers who oversee roughly 8,500 employees. For entrusting the arduous task of strategy implementation, selecting the middle managers with the ‘right’ competencies, from amongst many, becomes a key decision point for the pathway of eventual outcomes of the implementation effort. Unfortunately, practitioner experience and literature reveal little guidance for making such key decisions. Literature discusses roles that middle managers play but assumes middle managers would indiscriminately have what it takes to succeed based on assessment of demographic and other hygiene factors, such as experience, age, education, and track record, amongst others. This lapse in organizations to properly identify and secure a critical mass of the right middle managers may be a key reason for the high failure rates of strategy implementation.

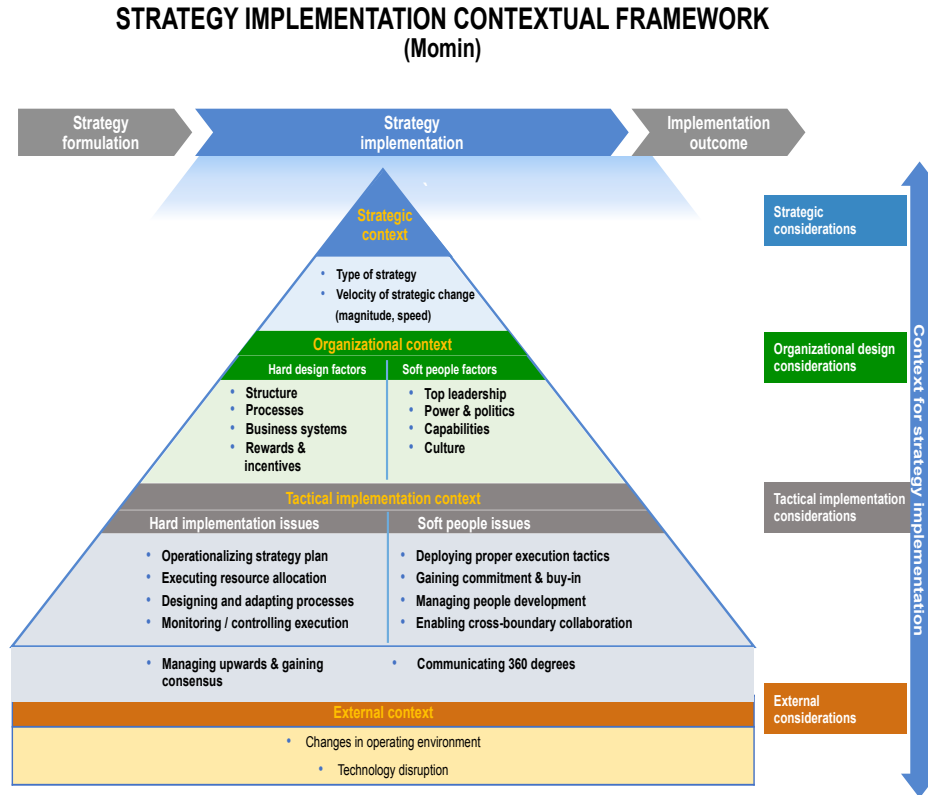
Literature has not focused on identifying the key competencies needed for middle managers leading successful implementation in their various roles. This is a key gap in the strategy implementation literature.

3.2 Framing the Contextual Basis for Strategy Implementation

In order to hypothesize what are the ‘right’ competencies for middle managers to possess, we synthesize various learnings from literature on: barriers and obstacles, middle manager roles, factors moderating their effectiveness, tactics deployed, and the roles of communication, consensus and commitment. In addition, we examine the complexities of the contextual aspect of strategy implementation that middle managers need to address in their various roles. Based on the extant literature in strategy implementation and the author’s own extensive experience in strategy consulting and corporate management, the contextual aspect of strategy implementation is presented in a summarized framework developed by the author and illustrated below in Figure 9.

While middle managers may focus primarily on the tactical implementation context, they would require the abilities to effectively deal with all the other contextual issues highlighted in the framework below. Formulating potential constructs of competencies required for middle managers leading successful strategy execution would also need to consider the broader contextual framework and issues highlighted therein.

Figure 9. Strategy implementation contextual framework



Middle Manager Characteristics – Zafar Momin

To a large extent, the *strategic context* during strategy implementation depends on the strategy itself. The strategy may be well thought-out and well-articulated, or it could be vague (Hrebiniak, 2005). From a middle manager’s perspective, gaining an understanding of the strategy at an organizationally broad but operationally detailed level is very important if he or she is to be able to interpret, communicate, sell and action the strategy. Also, the type of strategy being implemented would hold context for middle managers. Whether it has transformational elements across the organization (e.g. digital transformation), or is more functionally focused (e.g. lean manufacturing, sales growth), will also affect what is required of middle managers. The magnitude and speed of execution will drive the type of strategic

changes required: whether the changes are evolutionary (e.g. gradually improving employee productivity) on one extreme or revolutionary (e.g. trebling sales within 3 years) on the other. Depending on the velocity (size and speed) of strategic change required, the middle manager role and competencies required would vary greatly.

The *organizational context* during strategy implementation is related to the design of the key organizational dimensions needed to fit the strategy. The organizational design architects are typically the top managers and would involve others in the organization depending on their various styles (Bourgeois and Brodwin, 1984; Lehner, 2004). The middle manager role and competencies needed would depend on whether they would play key roles in influencing the design of the overall structure, key business processes and systems and planning of the overall execution.

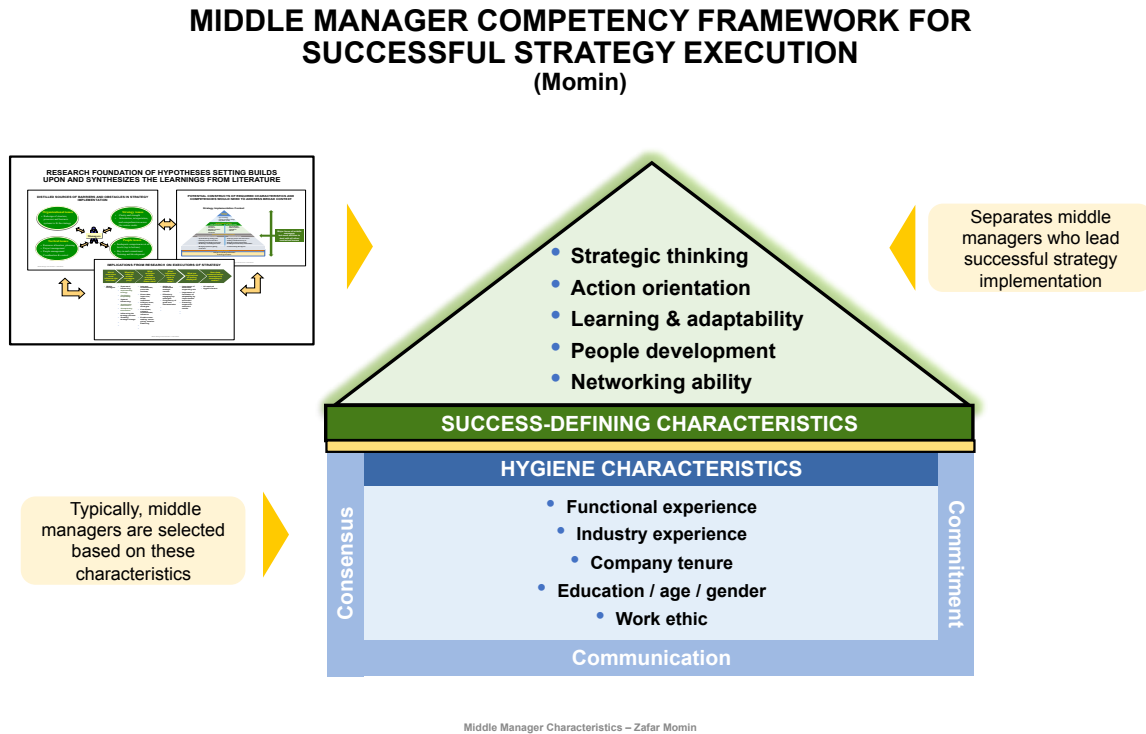
The *tactical implementation context* is where most of the middle manager focus is centered. Middle managers have substantive roles as implementers due to their operational knowledge and experience and ‘on-the-ground’ credibility with employees, more so than top managers. The tactical context is very much linked to the roles described by Floyd & Wooldridge, 1992: ‘implementer of strategy, ‘synthesizer of information,’ ‘facilitator of adaptability,’ and ‘upward influencer.’ In the very critical role of ‘facilitator of adaptability,’ the middle manager also facilitates information sharing and knowledge integration across teams and organizational boundaries (Constanzo & Tzoumpa, 2008). The tactical context on the soft aspect of execution is also linked to the importance of managing people development and people emotions (Huy, 2001; Chia & Holt, 2006) in a ‘downward influencing and supporting’ role. The tactical context also highlights the importance of developing and calibrating communications both vertically and horizontally.

The *external context* is relevant for any strategy implementation effort. Over the long period strategy typically takes to be executed, many changes occur in the strategy assumptions due to continual changes in the environment or technological changes that suddenly emerge. Effective middle managers have to be able to cope with and learn from such dynamic changes and adapt their strategy implementation playbook so that progress continues and execution does not get stalled.

3.3 Generation of Research Hypotheses

Within this broad and complicated context of strategy implementation, there are likely to be constructs of competencies that would distinguish effective middle managers that are more likely to be successful from others that would be more likely to fail. These competencies would enable middle managers to effectively deal with the multi-level contextual requirements, as well as the ambiguities and dynamics that are encountered during strategy implementation. Such distinguishing competencies would go beyond the threshold of hygiene requirements for middle managers. This competency perspective focuses on middle managers themselves and on how they execute strategy from a strategy-as-perspective viewpoint (Jarzrabkowski, Balogun, Seidl, 2007). Our research foundation infers a competency framework for middle managers that would distinguish between hygiene competencies that are often used for selection, and success-oriented, distinctive competencies that would separate those middle managers more likely to lead successful strategy execution. This proposed competency framework is presented in the Figure 10 below.

Figure 10. Proposed middle manager competency framework



3.3.1 Strategic and systems thinking

The strategic context of implementation implies that middle managers that are likely to be successful to understand and even influence the strategy and strategic changes, both at a macro firm level and micro local unit level. They must possess characteristics that enable them step back from their daily activities and view what is happening beyond their world through broader perspective. They require conceptual skills that enable them to make sense of the strategic direction and connect various initiatives and patterns into a ‘systems’ view. Discerning the ‘big picture’ allows effective middle managers not only to think strategically, but also conceptualize how a strategy would translate into actionable activities (Currie and Proctor, 2005). Effective middle managers are therefore able to link their local unit’s role in

the strategy implementation to the rest of the organization and pursue or adapt the appropriate initiatives.

This competency would also be critical to possess under other contexts such as the organizational context where middle managers need to influence broader organizational dimensions of structure, decision-making processes and business systems. With systems and strategic thinking, middle managers can better predict ramifications of decisions, spot ‘before’ and ‘after’ discrepancies in what is expected from a plan, and are able to reconcile and process disparate information and local incentives (key performance indicators) through application of conceptual frameworks or mental models. The ability to understand the intra firm workings of the organization helps them to be able to see how potential locally rational behaviours may undermine the system-wide success.

In a tactical context, middle managers require such thinking to be able to simplify and articulate corporate or business unit strategy in terms that subordinates can understand and identify with. They would have better credibility with employees if they exhibit confidence in understanding the ‘big picture’ rather than simply repeating the messages of senior managers. In the tactical context, they also can bridge cross-boundary and external collaborations that would be needed as they would be able to visualize, comprehend and communicate the knowledge requirements effectively. As part of ongoing tactical implementation, middle managers can exert more upward influence and work with top managers more effectively and credibly, as well as laterally, if they possess such characteristics. Finally, strategic and systems thinking would also be an important trait for middle managers who have to deal with contextual changes in the external environment. Such characteristics allow these managers to quickly conceptualize changes in the

environment and foresee implications for the future, thereby adapting and course-correcting to keep the implementation on course. Hence, I propose the following hypothesis:

H1: Middle managers with 'strategic and systems thinking' are more likely to successfully lead strategy implementation

3.3.2 Action orientation

The tactical, and to some extent, the organizational contexts require middle managers to be the implementers of strategy and be agents of change. Often, many middle managers are stuck in a routine of work life and over the years of experience become accustomed to operating within a comfort zone. Strategy implementation inevitably implies change and more often than not, middle managers would exhibit inertia to change because it implies getting out of the comfort zone. In this context, effective managers need to have the ability to get things moving quickly and steer activities of their unit towards achievement of results sought by the mandated strategic changes. To deal with the typical obstacles encountered during execution, middle managers need to have the ability to quickly execute their tactical functions like coordination, prioritization, resource allocation, planning and launching project management, setting up a monitoring mechanisms and ensuring ownership of key initiatives. High performing middle managers may need to cut through the bureaucracy and standard operating procedures and make different or novel decisions as needed.

Middle managers that are action-oriented, exhibit discomfort with the status-quo and show willingness to take risks to achieve results. Such middle managers are more likely to be effective in leading strategy implementation. Without possessing this fundamental

competency for one of the key middle managers roles, successful implementation will be elusive. Therefore, I propose a second hypothesis:

H2: Middle managers with an 'action orientation' are more likely to successfully lead strategy implementation

3.3.3 Networking ability

While systems thinking and action orientation may equip managers with some of the key characteristics for being effective in grasping the 'big picture' and enabling action, there remains a dire need to navigate across organizational boundaries in collaborative ways to facilitate execution. This need to create networks and partnerships, both internally and externally, often runs into barriers due to 'frictions' and 'turf issues' on the boundaries. These barriers often impede implementation. There is also the need to navigate vertically through the ranks in 'upward influencing' roles for collaborating, conflict resolution and facilitation of adaptability.

Therefore, a key competency of middle managers that are more likely to be successful in the implementation is the ability to network across organizational boundaries. Possessing this characteristic enables middle managers to leverage relationships for the implementation cause and the ability to network smoothly can build confidence for execution initiatives across levels and departments. Networking is critical not only in the tactical context for facilitating execution, but also in the organizational context for being able to participate with various ranks across the entire organization to shape and influence structural decisions beyond the middle manager's local unit. Of course, this competency requires middle

managers to broadly participate in formal and informal networks, while cultivating their own networks. Leading organizations recognize the importance of this networking ability and sometimes create rotational programs for their high potential management to cultivate such networks. With networking traits, middle managers can influence support for execution from behind the scenes, while gaining a better understanding of the issues and decision points via use of informal channels of communications from their networks. Therefore, I propose my third hypothesis:

H3: Middle managers with a greater 'networking ability' are more likely to successfully lead strategy implementation

3.3.4 Ability to learn and adapt

With so many variables and 'twists and turns' that are typical of strategy implementation, the only certainty in strategy implementation is that things will not go as planned. These variations often arise from a myriad of internal and external factors that are out of the middle managers' control. Another typical aspect of strategy implementation is the inflow of new knowledge, new ideas and new skills that changes in strategic direction bring with them. A key characteristic for effective middle managers in such situations is being able to continually learn and adapt. Being open minded in terms of learning new things and new skills and being able to adapt to changes that come along is imperative in strategic change situations. Openness has long been identified as an underlying trait of flexibility and contrasted with intolerance, rigidity, dogmatism, and premature closure (McCartt and Rohrbaugh, 1995). Such 'open' persons are creative and curious, and willing to take risk which is natural when change happens. On the other hand, those who are not open are conventional and are likely to be more risk averse. Possessing characteristics of learning and adaptability draws such

middle managers towards continuous learning and such managers constantly seeking new developmental opportunities in their careers.

It is possible that some change programs fail simply because traditional hierarchical organizations tend to attract, promote and self-select more risk-averse employees given that these organizations have rigid pyramidal structures with linear reporting lines and naturally filter out those who are more comfortable with change, risk taking and learning.

When changes are unexpected, as is often the case in the external or tactical contexts, resilience is a key sub-aspect of this construct. Although one could treat it as a separate construct, open mindedness to changes and resilience from unexpected outcomes could be considered as part of a single construct of competencies. Resilience in terms of positive response to failure or unexpected outcomes and the ability to learn from it and move ahead. Traditional middle managers who expect to be more in control of routine work processes and outcomes face difficulties adapting with such situations and experience significant stress and anxiety. In such flexible ‘switch-hitter’ roles, middle managers face conflicting roles as: teachers of others and students of new knowledge and skills; assertive to get things done and deference as a learner; and a planner as a manager and scrambler when things don’t work. These situations are typical in strategy execution and managing them effectively requires competencies to deal with them effectively. Therefore, I propose my fourth hypothesis:

H4: Middle managers with a greater ability to ‘learn and adapt’ are more likely to successfully lead strategy implementation

3.3.5 Ability to lead and develop people

A very important role of middle managers, mainly in the tactical implementation context, is managing and developing people. Ultimately, middle managers execute change at the front lines and customer interfaces through employees. Employees have to be convinced about the strategic changes, brought on board, supported through the emotional roller-coaster of accepting change motivated, prepared to perform in their role in executing change, and monitored and evaluated for continuous development. To provide subordinates with professional and emotional support is also very important (Huy, 2001, 2002). Without emotional support, morale gets deflated and employees prevent execution from moving forward due to their own anxiety. Effective middle managers can address the emotional well-being of their employees and help them cope with the work changes needed with their knowledge and improvisation. In addition to providing motivation for enacting change and dealing with emotional balancing, middle managers also develop their employees by open and receptive communications, managing their performance and mentoring. By ensuring their subordinates are not only convinced about the need for change, but also adequately trained and prepared for their roles in enacting change, middle managers enable their potential success. Thereby avoiding the typical obstacles of lack of buy-in and inadequate skills of employees that are needed to perform their execution tasks.

Effective middle managers are viewed as ‘role models’ when they are not only competent as managers, but also exhibit personal values such as integrity and fairness, respect for the individual and professionalism in their conduct. When employees trust their managers to allocate them fairly to tasks, prepare them for success and not set them up for failure, motivate and support them, rewards them fairly and help develop them along the journey, they are more likely to change and do their part. It is well established, that this – getting

people to change - is perhaps one of the most difficult tasks in any change program.

Therefore, I propose my fifth hypothesis:

H5: Middle managers with a greater ability to 'lead and develop people' are more likely to successfully lead strategy implementation

In sum, there are five competencies proposed in this research (see Figure 11 below), which could guide recruitment of middle managers leading successful strategy execution. Applying these competency guidelines could enable matching middle managers with the right abilities with the required competencies and thereby enhance the value and contribution of middle managers. Conversely, the absence of these competencies in the execution team could potentially result in dysfunctional responses from middle managers when they encounter the typical barriers, obstacles and challenges of strategy implementation.

Figure 11. Hypothesis: Constructs of middle manager competencies

HYPOTHESIS: CONSTRUCTS OF COMPETENCIES OF MIDDLE MANAGERS LEADING SUCCESSFUL STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION				
H1: Strategic & systems thinking	H2: Action orientation	H3: Networking ability	H4: Ability to learn and adapt	H5: Ability to lead & develop people
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to make sense of strategy at macro level and micro level • Conceptual ability in visualizing how to convert strategy into action • Ability to link local unit's role to the rest of the organization in the "big picture" of strategy implementation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to get things moving with a results oriented mindset • Willingness to challenge the status quo and make tough decisions • Ability to take risks in execution and work with whatever available resources and time given 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to span organizational boundaries - vertically and horizontally • Ability to leverage internal and external relationships for implementation cause • Ability to build confidence across levels / boundaries 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Having open mindedness in learning and acquiring new knowledge / skills • Having resilience and adaptability in dealing with unexpected factors and outcomes • Treating failure as a learning opportunity and not being risk-averse 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to effectively manage the well-being and development of subordinates • Having personal values of integrity and fairness as a 'role model' and credibility to convince people • Earning the respect and trust of subordinates by being investing in motivating and supporting them

Each of the proposed competencies may play a bigger or smaller role in addressing the various contextual issues encountered in strategy implementation. As Figure 12 conceptually illustrates, the tactical context of execution will require most of the competencies identified.

Figure 12. Competencies mapped to strategy implementation context

MIDDLE MANAGER COMPETENCIES MAPPED TO STRATEGY EXECUTION CONTEXT

Context Characteristics	Strategic context	Organizational design context	Tactical execution context	External environment
Strategic & Systems Thinking	●	◐	◑	◐
Action Orientation	◑	◐	●	◐
Networking	◑	◐	◑	◐
Learning and Adapting	◐	◐	●	◐
Leading and Developing People	○	◐	●	○

Source: Ratings are based on literature review and author's experience

High relevance	●
Low relevance	○

Middle Manager Competencies – Zafar Momin

However, effective middle managers will require several competencies to deal with other execution aspects related to strategy, organizational design and externalities. Strategic thinking, action orientation and ability to learn and adapt may figure prominently across several contexts in strategy execution, whereas leading and developing people may be a ‘downward supporting’ aspect of the competencies. Altogether, middle managers with these abilities should be well equipped to successfully lead the difficult journey of strategy implementation. Often, it is likely managers selected for strategy execution roles possess a partial set of competencies that severely impedes their effectiveness in such roles.

3.4 Distinction Between Middle Manager and Top Manager Competencies

It is important to note that the focus of this study is on middle managers, however, there may be key competencies for top managers that could have similar sounding constructs. Such competencies would have different sub-constructs, performance standards and implications for top and middle managers. It is unlikely that management hierarchy within a company would have completely different competencies for different levels of management. More likely, there will be some similar competencies with varying requirements in a continuum across the levels. In addition, there will be some competencies that would be specific to certain levels and not others. For example, in strategy consulting, many competencies are identical from the junior-most Analyst to senior-most Partner level, but the requirements for each competency at each level varies along a continuum. For example, competency related to analytical thinking, problem solving, communications, and teamwork may be common across all levels, but with varying degrees of achievement. However, competency related to commercial skills and intellectual capital development is only relevant to senior levels like Principal and Partner.

The role of top management as executors of strategy has been discussed earlier in the literature review section. How top managers influence strategy execution often depends on how they or the board view their roles. On one hand, top managers may provide a facilitative environment (David, 1989) for successful strategy implementation that guides ownership of strategy, effective communication, allocation of resources and preparation of realistic implementation plans (Alexander, 1985; van Buul, 2010). On the other hand, top managers may not see themselves as key participants in implementation (Beer & Eisenstat, 2000;

Hrebiniak, 2005) and consequently, they may play an inspirational but distant ‘figurehead’ role.

To illustrate this distinction in competencies between hierarchical levels, Tables A-E demonstrate how middle manager competencies identified in this study would be different for top managers. In these tables, the competencies and sub-constructs are those used in our research survey. The tables clearly reinforce that the identified competencies of middle managers may superficially sound like those applied to top managers, but they are in fact quite distinctive from competency requirements of top managers within the strategy implementation context.

Tables A-E: Distinction between middle manager and top manager competencies

Table A: Strategic & Systems Thinking

Middle Managers	Top Managers
Understand the company's strategic direction	Understands the strategic and competitive position of the company and industry
Conceptualize and visualize how to convert the strategy into action at local unit level	Considers the bigger picture to set priorities and forward direction
Interpret what the company's strategy means at a local unit level	Breaks down complex issues and recognizes important issues for prioritization
Link the role of the local unit with the rest of the organization	Evaluates and mitigates risks for company in implementing strategy
Identify new and relevant information to top managers to support their strategic decision-making	Engages key stakeholders and senior colleagues in ensuring strategic direction and implementation plans

Table B: Action Orientation

Middle Managers	Top Managers
Gets things moving quickly	Set the execution agenda and push for achievement
Works with a results-oriented mindset	Encourages and motivates organization to deliver results and assesses performance against goals
Makes tough decisions to get around obstacles	Creates culture in which tough decisions can be taken at lower levels
Challenges the status quo for improving effectiveness	Sets standards of excellence and performance
Takes implementation risks to enact action at local unit	Takes prudent risks for achieving organizational goals
Works with whatever resources are available	Defines priorities and manages resource allocation

Table C: Networking Ability

Middle Managers	Top Managers
Effectively works across organizational boundaries (e.g. departments, functions, business units)	Encourages and actively promotes cross-boundary activities in the organization
Effectively works with the company hierarchy (e.g. top managers, divisional presidents, etc.)	Develops rapport by actively listening, questioning, showing sensitivity to contextual differences, and soliciting contributions
Effectively works with external parties (e.g. suppliers, outsourcing partners, strategic partners)	Develops strong external networks and alliances to gain intelligence and support for implementation
Gathers support for implementing strategy at local unit	Uses networks to gain support for achievement of organizational goals

Table D: Learning and Adaptability

Middle Managers	Top Managers
Is open-minded to learn new knowledge and skills	Is intellectually agile in responding to changes and new ideas
Improvises and adapts existing practices at local unit, as needed	Understands and promotes the culture of continuous improvement and change
Recovers quickly (and shows resilience) in the face of unexpected outcomes	Acts decisively and confidently where outcomes cannot be predicted
Treats failure as a learning opportunity	Promotes values of accepting and learning from failure
Develop viable contingency plans	Comprehensively manages corporate risk and develops contingency plans
Tolerate ambiguity and uncertainty	Addresses situations with ambiguity and uncertainty with openness and rationality

Table E: Leading & Developing Subordinates

Middle Managers	Top Managers
Earns the respect and trust of subordinates as a "role model"	Inspires and motivates staff at all levels of the organization
Manages development of subordinates throughout the process of executing strategy	Selects and builds an effective team of managers for execution
Supports the emotional balance and well-being of subordinates throughout the process of executing strategy	Makes time to meet with staff at all levels from time to time and address personnel issues
Credibly convinces subordinates of required strategic changes at local unit	Effectively advocates and communicates organization's strategy and the need for change

3.5 Significance of this Research

From a *research perspective*, this study builds on a stream of studies that relate to the role and influence of middle managers in strategy implementation. Findings from this research would provide several insights on the middle managers themselves - in terms of the competencies required to successfully lead strategy implementation. This has been an area that literature has not focused upon previously and therefore the findings from this study would be additive and enhance our understanding of the middle manager role and influence in strategy execution.

This study would also validate the difference between distinguishing competencies and hygiene competencies. This is also of significance as prior research has not distinguished competencies in their studies and it is an important factor to consider in conducting empirical research. Thus, this study has implications for the middle management perspective and the various ways in which researchers conceptualize this important organizational group.

Furthermore, insights from senior-level practitioners on how they go about selecting middle managers for strategy implementation will also be very valuable in enhancing the perspectives of researchers studying middle managers. Previous research studies do not explore how the middle managers are recruited and the reasons why they were entrusted with the implementation roles. It may also encourage further studies to investigate why there is a lapse in this aspect in organizations embarking on implementing strategy.

This study will also contribute to the broader strategy implementation literature by providing insights and further validations from senior- and middle-level practitioners on their

encounters with successes and failures in executing strategy and the underlying contributing factors. These insights could potentially provide further validation or alternative viewpoints on the various contributing factors and frameworks that have been developed to analyze and improve the outcomes for strategy implementation.

From a *practitioner perspective*, knowledge gleaned from this study could offer several opportunities for organizations to leverage in executing strategy more successfully. For organizations, the findings from this study could help in developing a characteristics and competencies profile that can guide top managers in the selection of those middle managers that would be more likely to successfully lead strategy implementation. Recruiting and staffing the ‘right’ middle managers for various roles in strategy implementation could potentially increase the likelihood of successful outcomes. For top managers employing participative or collaborative models in formulating strategy, the findings of this study could also provide guidance on selection of the middle managers that could provide effective participation and contribution. In the absence of existing frameworks and guidelines to aid the selection of middle managers, such a ‘target profile’ can serve as a platform for selection, training, development and performance related policies related to middle managers. This platform can be very valuable to organizations and top managers in raising the likelihood of executing more successful strategy projects in the future.

The findings of this study could also provide evidence if variations exist in how middle managers view the required competencies depending on the size of the company, type of company (e.g. local, regional, multinational), or the industry they work in. The study would also lend insights on variations in competencies and their relative importance based on the middle managers’ own level of education (e.g. diploma, degree, post-graduate), level of

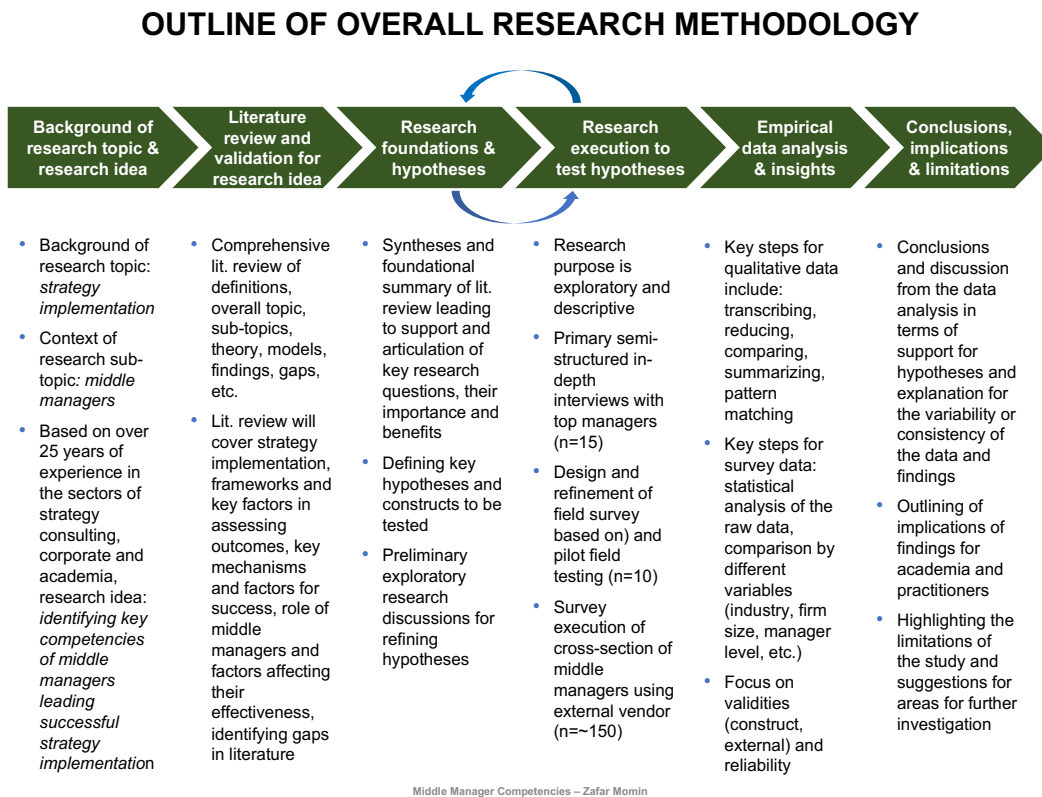
seniority, working experience and nationality. The variations and their implications would provide deeper levels of understanding the competency framework under different circumstances. This study could also provide valuable insights about middle manager segments and profiles that exist in organizations and how the competencies needed for strategy execution are aligned with the profiles. Finally, the comparisons of the viewpoints on key middle manager characteristics between senior management and middle management could also provide additional insights on the potential 'gap of understanding' between the different levels that has been reported in literature.

Chapter 4. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

4.1 Outline of Research

This purpose of this research study is to identify and test the key competencies of middle managers leading successful strategy implementation. The overall research methodology I used to conduct this research from concept to validation is outlined in Figure 13 below.

Figure 13. Research methodology outline



As a *background* to this topic, I have been interested in this area for the past 25 years of working with companies in either a strategic advisory role as a management consultant or a senior management role. With first-hand experience of numerous client engagements across

the world, I observed that strategy implementation was often hindered by middle managers that struggled to do their job for a variety of reasons. I wondered if the right middle managers had been entrusted for the execution task and about their selection process that seemed to lack any structure and rigor. A few exploratory discussions with previous clients cemented the research idea to further investigate the topic of key competencies of middle managers leading strategy execution and what distinguishes those that succeed from those that fail.

4.2 Detailed Research Steps

I then conducted a *literature review* focusing broadly on strategy implementation and exploring research on the overall topic, including studies on key strategic and organizational factors and variables, holistic frameworks, barriers and obstacles, execution tactics and leadership, which all play a part in impacting implementation outcomes. Although I looked at research findings pertaining to all executors of strategy, I focused primarily on research related to middle managers to understand middle managers' roles, activities, impact, effectiveness, tactics and other factors that influence their performance in strategy execution. This extensive review provided me with insights regarding what key aspects of the complexities that influence strategy implementation, as well as what was required of middle managers in their various roles. These insights helped me build the foundations for my research idea, as well as confirm that gaps exist in the current management literature.

The next step was *hypotheses development* which required analysis, synthesis and deduction based on the review of literature, while building upon the research ideas and questions. Through building a summarized framework for the various contexts of strategy implementation and examining the requirements for middle manager competencies needed, I could strengthen and frame the preliminary research idea into key constructs of competencies as my hypotheses. I refined the hypotheses by building upon the learning from literature by synthesizing the implications of what literature has documented on middle managers, as well as factoring in barriers and obstacles encountered during execution and the competencies needed to address them. A research plan was developed and approved by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) prior to execution (see Appendix 1).

For the *research execution*, an interview guide (Appendix 2) was developed to guide primary in-depth, face-to-face interviews with 15 top managers (C-level). All the interviews lasted 45-90 minutes and were recorded and contents subsequently transcribed. A written consent for the interviews was obtained prior starting the interviews. The purpose of these interviews was to get their perspectives on: their strategy implementation experiences and outcomes, the roles of middle managers, the process of selection of middle managers, which characteristics distinguished middle managers that were successful and any other factors they felt were relevant and worth noting. This information was gathered to understand whether the problem was indeed prevalent and acknowledged, and if our proposed model and hypotheses were relevant and comprehensive. Securing a top management perspective helped confirm some of the research foundational logic, as well as provide valuable data points to better refine the hypothesis.

To provide a direct understanding of middle manager attitudes on competencies and factors that enable successful strategy implementation, a questionnaire was designed to test the hypothesis and gain additional insights into the middle manager competencies topic. The target was middle managers that have participated in strategy implementation projects in their careers, preferably as managers themselves. A well-reputed global research vendor (www.researchnow.com) was selected to conduct an online survey. The sample (n=105) was randomly drawn from the vendor's large database of relevant participant pool of middle managers in Singapore. An additional sample (n=47) was drawn from the author's wide-ranging personal contacts to provide a total sample population (n=152) of middle managers. The overall response rate for the survey was 35% after controlling for quality of the non-admissible responses. These middle managers were carefully screened to avoid those that had less than 2 years of work experience, or did not possess at least a Diploma in terms of educational qualifications, or came from industries (e.g. F&B, Retail) that would not lend themselves to the type of the middle managers being targeted for this study. Informant screening was executed by terminating the survey for participants that selected any of the options that would screen them out (e.g. First level supervisor, 0-2 years of experience, etc.).

The survey was designed to test the competency constructs developed in our hypothesis, as well as, to gather additional data on hygiene factors and moderating influences on middle manager effectiveness to rigorously test the proposed competency framework. The survey captured key demographic data that would enable analysis based on variables such as work experience, seniority, strategy implementation experience, size and type of company, educational level and nationality. The MS-Word text version of the administered survey is included in Appendix 3.

The survey questions sought informants' inputs on the sub-dimensions or sub-constructs of the hypothesized middle manager competencies. For example, for each of the five competency constructs, there were 5-7 sub-constructs, which described and conceptualized the competency for the participant. The participants did not see the actual competency name (e.g. action orientation), instead they were presented questions that would measure the sub-constructs of the competency, which they were able to relate to. Respondents were asked to score sub-constructs for each competency with the overarching statement: "*Middle managers are more likely to be successful in leading strategy implementation if they have the abilities listed below.*" Participants' inputs were captured using a Likert 7-point attitudinal scale. An additional response of 'Don't Know' was included in all the questions to ensure that the neutral answer on the Likert scale was not used if the participant did not know how to respond to the questions.

The order of the sub-constructs was automatically randomized for each respondent during the online survey for greater accuracy and robustness of results. Again, this increased accuracy and robustness of potential responses. There were also questions intentionally included in some of the competency constructs which did not exactly relate to that construct as hypothesized to ensure that such questions would be scored differently by the respondents, hence raising the confidence in the overall responses. To gauge the relevant importance of hygiene factors (e.g. education level, experience, etc.) survey respondents were asked: "*How important are the factors below for middle managers who are more likely to lead successful strategy execution?*" To understand factors moderating outcomes and effectiveness of middle managers during strategy execution (e.g. having a robust selection process, ensuring 'right' managers are selected, agency issues, rewards and incentives, etc.), survey respondents were

asked to rate a 7-point Likert scale to the statement: “*Strategy implementation is more likely to be successful if the following situation exists.*”

The survey was iterated and refined a few times before the vendor coded it for pilot testing. Initially, a pilot sample with ~10 respondents was soft-launched to test survey readability, completion time and construct validity. As an example, refinements led to a more detailed option list for demographic data (e.g. company size, job titles, nationality). Other examples of refinement were re-casting the sub-constructs into more coherent and simpler statements (e.g. splitting ‘building good internal and external networks’ into two separate statements, i.e., one question on internal networks and a second on external networks). After refinement, the survey was launched and participants were provided the opportunity to give their consent via the online consent form before proceeding with the survey.

Chapter 5. RESEARCH RESULTS – CORE FINDINGS

5.1 Summary of Core Findings

The results of the primary interviews and survey results strongly support our research foundational logic and our hypothesis. The core findings from 15 C-level executives and 152 middle managers indicate that selecting the right middle managers is vital to ensuring successful strategy execution outcomes. The results show that the success rate of outcomes is typically around 25%. The findings from interviews also indicate that most organizations lack appropriate competency tools for assessment and typically do not deploy much rigor in the process of selecting middle managers. Furthermore, there is strong evidence from the survey results that oft-used selection criteria such as paper credentials (e.g. experience, education) are less important factors for ensuring successful outcomes, while communication, commitment and consensus are relatively more important (Alexander, 1985; Peng & Littlejohn, 2001; Guth and MacMillan, 1986; Wooldridge & Floyd, 1989; Rapert, Lynch and Suter, 1996).

Moreover, the interview and survey results strongly support the five identified competencies of middle managers leading successful strategy implementation. The data also lend support for middle manager roles identified in literature as implementers and adaptive facilitators of strategy (e.g. Floyd & Wooldridge, 1992; Balogun, 2003; Rouleau, 2005), rather than upward influencing strategic roles (Floyd & Wooldridge, 1992; Mantere, 2005) and downward supporting people therapist roles (Huy, 2001). The supporting evidence and details of these core findings are presented and discussed in the next few sections.

5.2 Results Analysis: Primary Interviews

5.2.1 General findings

The purpose of conducting C-level primary interviews was for strengthening the foundational logic of the research hypothesis related to strategy execution: types of outcomes and contributing factors; roles of top managers; the middle manager selection process; relevance of middle managers and their desired competencies for effectiveness. Another key purpose was to gain direct feedback on the hypothesis to further refine the competency constructs. To this end, we solicited interviews with C-level executives who had led strategy execution projects across a range of industries and geographies for their valuable inputs. The transcribed notes that were generated from the interview recordings are presented in Appendix 4. Figure 14 shows that the interviewees' experiences were from working with global, regional and local operations of large companies. This variety of industries and geographies helped provide broad and rich perspectives, while avoiding concentration bias.

On average, the informants indicated that strategy development typically took ~6 months and execution lasted from 6 months to multiple years. Their experiences in strategy execution were across various projects: post-merger integration, new product launches, distribution channel management, business portfolio expansion, digital transformation, order-to-delivery management, sales and profitability growth or turnarounds, and greenfield investments.

Figure 14. Primary interviews: List of industries represented

IN-DEPTH, PRIMARY INTERVIEWS WERE CONDUCTED WITH FIFTEEN C-LEVEL EXECUTIVES FROM VARIOUS SECTORS

Interview #	Type of Industry	Geographic Focus of Strategy Implementation Projects
1.	Automotive	Global (North America, Europe)
2.	Information Technology , Computers	Global (USA)
3.	Private Equity	Local (Indonesia)
4.	Financial Services	Local (Indonesia)
5.	Consumer Products	Local (Thailand)
6.	Media & Digital Communications	Local (Singapore)
7.	Human Capital Solutions	Local (Singapore)
8.	Banking and Insurance	Local (Singapore)
9.	Professional Services	Local (Singapore)
10.	Industrials	Regional (Asia Pacific), Local (China)
11.	Oil & Gas, Chemicals	Regional (Asia Pacific), Local (Malaysia)
12.	Food Ingredients	Regional (Asia Pacific)
13.	Industrials	Regional (Asia Pacific)
14.	Life Sciences	Regional (Asia Pacific)
15.	Global Risk Solutions	Regional (Asia Pacific)

In terms of strategy execution outcomes, most informants (75%) reported very limited to no successful outcomes, which is consistent with literature. The minority that reported successful outcomes attributed it to having the right people tasked with execution that were also aligned to the objectives and top management, working in an environment that allowed them to succeed, including ample support from the top (e.g. consistency, commitment, budgets). Another reason cited for successful outcomes was desperation from facing ‘do or die’ situations. These few examples of positive outcomes highlight unique situations where the key success factors apparently existed, or there was no other choice but to succeed. Many informants reported several reasons that contributed to failed outcomes. Their reasons were generally consistent with previous literature and are listed below:

- Not having the right people
- Resistance to change
- Lack of trust
- Culture mismatch
- Lack of buy-in of stakeholders
- Lack of commitment to strategy
- Lack of operational flexibility to adapt to change
- Frequent changes in management
- Organization size too big
- Lack of leadership skills
- Bad strategy
- Poor execution skills
- Lack of organization maturity
- Limited understanding of objectives
- Interference in execution
- Lack of safe environment to nurture talent
- Inadequate rewards and incentives
- Lack of technological support (e.g. CRM system)
- Existing power structure undermining execution
- Lack of participation in execution at all levels

5.2.2 Support for key assumptions

In terms of the importance of middle managers in strategy execution, the majority (90%) of informants believed that middle managers were critical and had a significant impact on the outcomes. Consistent with previous research, they reported that the critical role for middle managers was in tactical execution for the most part, but some also mentioned that it was in

supporting the strategy development process. This sentiment was well summarized by a regional head of a multinational firm: *“Definitely, they get most things done and know the operations better than anyone (else),”* and a global industrial company veteran: *“To develop strategy you need inputs of middle managers, but more important on implementation side is their buy-in.”* A senior management board member from the regional oil and gas sector pointed out that middle managers can influence outcomes in both directions: *“I think it’s very easy to agree to something, but when you still feel that it is not right and do nothing, passive resistance can become a big factor.”* Many of the interviewees lamented about being able to tap the adequate quality of the middle management talent pool, as one Indonesian country head pointed out: *“We have strong plans to tackle our strategy in the future but the biggest gaps come in terms of quality of people especially the middle management.”*

Many interviewees reflected on the role of top managers that support or impede strategy execution. The importance of fostering an environment that is conducive for effective strategy implementation was considered as a key responsibility for top managers (David, 1989). One senior management board member pointed out: *“Clarity of objectives and a sense of trust between middle and top management is quite essential.... Some employees may ask a classic question, ‘what’s in it for me’... You have to be very clear – is it less work, more money, or what?”* Another ex-CEO admitted that one could not blame middle managers for failures as, often, it was the top managers who could be the problem and he gave an example: *“We are good at starting strategies but not good at tracking them...More often than not, I think I have seen failures because we tend to abandon and move on to something else.”* A top executive from the global leader in information technology and computing highlighted that they had missed some of the biggest growth opportunities during the last decade,

primarily due to lapses in its top management: *“Our company did not have the right culture to nurture the talent required to build new strategic businesses...the decision about how to get the right managers to lead these businesses was flawed ...the person at the top typically would appoint someone they already knew from their past network.”* Consistent with previous research findings, the strategy execution impact of top management was reported as mixed.

When asked about the selection processes for middle managers, many of the interviewees were caught a bit off guard and had to think hard about their experiences. Almost 90% reported that they did not have any process and the selection was based on ad hoc middle manager selection criteria consisting of some part of the following:

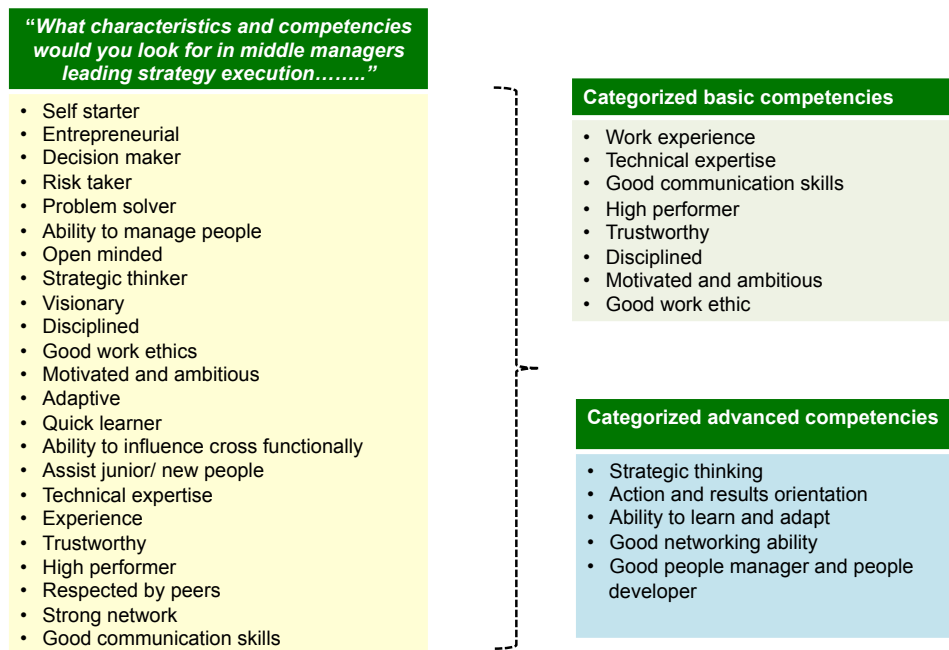
- Hierarchy
- Availability
- Past performance
- Comfort level and trust of top managers
- Paper credentials
- Technical skills
- Simply delegated downward

Given that most interviewees reported a lack of rigor in their process for selecting middle managers, they are asked about what they would look for if they had to do it all over again. The output of this discussion is summarized in Figure 15 below. As the figure illustrates, the long list of competencies from the interviews can be categorized into ‘basic’ or hygiene and ‘advanced’ or distinguishing competencies, which are completely aligned with the hypothesis

and competency framework presented in Figure 10 in the hypotheses generation chapter. This strengthened and confirmed the premise of many of our hypotheses.

Figure 15. Primary interviews: Desired list of middle manager competencies

COMPILATION OF COMPETENCIES FOR MIDDLE MANAGERS FROM PRIMARY INTERVIEWS



Middle Manager Characteristics – Zafar Momin

When asked for feedback on the five constructs of middle manager competencies (Figure 11) at the end of the interview, the interviewees unanimously reacted with endorsements and positive comments of the constructs: *“Your list is very good and looks like an ideal manager list.”* While all interviewees reinforced our hypothesis, and added that it was a comprehensive list of competencies for strategy execution considerations, many of them highlighted that it may be difficult to find middle managers with all the right competencies. However, interviewees suggested that if one could not find middle managers with all the identified competencies, one could still ensure that the execution team possessed them by

complementing one other. This coherent view about complementarity of skills came through from interviewees from very diverse backgrounds: *“In terms of all the 5 identified competencies, a good team needs piece of each of these drivers;”* *“Not everyone will have all skills, so you level them up by pooling a team where people can complement each other;”* *“I think in an ideal situation, you would want the implementation team to have a spread of each capability...”*

Each of individual sub-constructs and competencies were reviewed and discussed by many of the interviewees, providing further inputs for reinforcement and refinement. For example, in the action orientation competency: the attributes of being a self-starter and highly motivated manager were considered linked to the ability to ‘get things moving quickly’ and work with a ‘results oriented mind set;’ similarly, decision making abilities were also considered linked to ‘making tough decisions.’ Some of the interviewees highlighted that for their individual situations, some of these competencies may be more important than others. The regional head of an industrial field services company highlighted the need for strategic thinking by saying *“I believe if you can speak the language of CEO and translate it to the language of workers, that’s probably a key competency of the middle managers.”* Another regional head of a food ingredients company reflected on the execution of a global strategy project to create more customer value from their products: *“Yes, learning and adapting is a key skill set for middle managers and without an open mind and listening to customers, how can they even create customer value?”* The country head of a private equity firm who was in the process of merging dozens of hospitals into a single entity for an imminent IPO presented his own situation: *“Since I am neck deep in the current strategy execution project..., I would say action orientation, ability to learn and adapt, and breaking through walls is very important*

for me now...” A senior executive from one of the biggest global automotive companies pointed out: *“In a large organization, your networking ability impacts your ability to get action.”* In a contrasted view, a senior executive from the financial services industry insightfully pointed out: *“In banking, the various departments and business lines operate typically as silos. One would think networking should happen and be important to better align on the same customers, but it doesn’t.”* He further added: *“Compliance regulations and legacy systems in banking and insurance limit the ability of our middle managers to improvise and adapt and their action orientation typically boils down to doing what they are asked to do.... also, they would not challenge the status quo.”* Collectively, these insights suggest that in selecting middle managers for strategy execution, the relative importance of some competencies could be contextual to factors such as: company size, industry type, nature of the project, available talent pool and local culture.

Regarding the importance of hygiene factors, the interview results consistently highlighted that good communications skills are necessary. The interviewees also indicated that commitment was quite important for accomplishing results. There were mixed responses on whether there needs to be middle manager consensus with the strategy, although that would be the desired option. Some interviewees admitted that basic hygiene factors are often still used for the selection of middle managers. As one executive put it: *“We usually have criteria but in my observation, we tend to stick very tightly to paper credentials (qualification, experience) in a more traditional way.”*

Overall, the findings from the primary interviews led to strengthening of the research foundational logic and helped in reinforcing and refining the competency constructs. The results also confirmed the need for a guiding competency framework, which could have been a useful tool, for interviewees, if they had it earlier in their careers, rather than leaving middle manager selection to ad hoc factors or serendipity.

5.3 Results Analysis: Survey Results (Baseline)

5.3.1 Respondent demographics (total sample)

The data from the survey was analyzed using an analysis software tool called ‘Q’ developed by Qresearch (www.qresearchsoftware.com) and it is especially effective for analysis of market research data. It has comprehensive statistical analysis capabilities, similar to SPSS, but also powerful in terms of ease of usage and visualization.

The demographics of the sample are first discussed here to provide an overview of the overall sample. Additionally, key demographic variables are highlighted to build the foundation for the explanation of results later in this section. A majority (71%) of the sample population had 10+ years of work experience and 61% of the middle managers had been involved in over 4 strategy implementation projects in their careers. Only 26% reported successful execution outcomes, while most others encountered mixed outcomes with somewhat success or failure. The sample represented a balanced mix of participants across 7-8 key industries and across local, regional and global type of companies. The sample also represented middle managers whose positions were evenly split above or below a base ‘Manager’ level role. The

respondents were roughly 70/30 in terms of having a Singapore nationality or not. In terms of educational qualifications, 45% of the sample had earned a post-graduate degree versus 41% degree holders and 15% diploma holders. These demographics are in Figure 16 below.

Figure 16: Respondent Demographics (Baseline)

Figure 16A

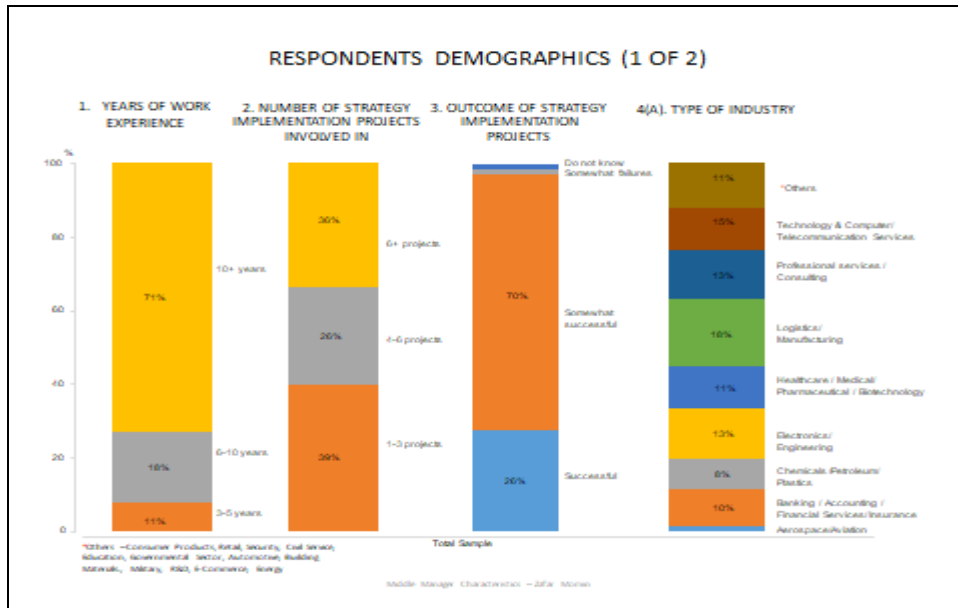
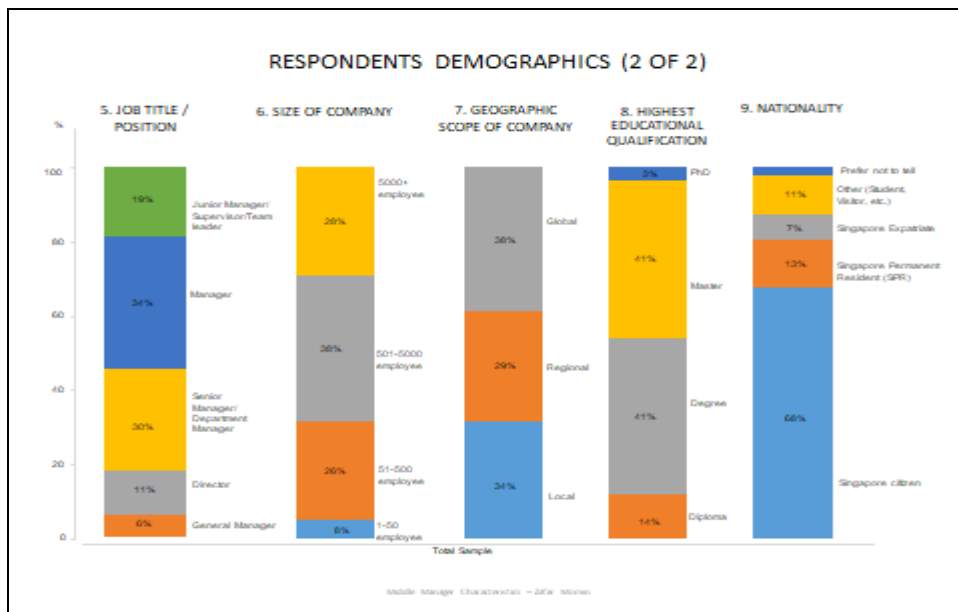


Figure 16B



From the cross tabulations in Table 1, respondents with bachelor degrees and diplomas were more concentrated amongst Singaporeans, compared to foreign respondents that had higher degrees. Table 2 indicates that local companies had over 70% of managers with degrees and diplomas, compared to regional and global companies that had ~50% of graduate degree holders, with global companies having an even higher proportion of managers with graduate degrees. This makes sense as larger global companies are more likely to need and hire applicants with graduate degrees than local companies. The proportion of graduate degree holders was more pronounced when comparing size of companies (Table 3) and those with 5000+ employees had 75/25 ratio of graduate versus non-graduate degrees. Also in the total sample, the overwhelming majority of the graduate degree holders that worked for large and global companies were specialized in business (e.g. MBA), whereas graduate degree holders for local and smaller sized companies typically held graduate degrees in technical fields.

As Table 6 indicates, near 80% of respondents working for companies less than 5000 employees would be with local or regional companies. Conversely, a significant portion (46%) working for companies with greater than 5000 employees would be with large global firms, and the rest (54%) for global firms with less than 5000 employees. As Tables 7-8 illustrate, Singaporeans comprised the majority (86%) in local firms, whereas 60% of non-Singaporeans worked for large (5000+) and 40% for global companies.

For the remaining variables (e.g. strategy execution experience, industry type and job titles), the distribution of the total population amongst the options provided for each variable is almost even. For example, as Figure 16A shows, for strategy execution experience, respondents that had experience in more than 6 projects, or 4-6 projects, or 1-3 projects were distributed as 36%, 26% and 39% of the population respectively. More detailed

demographics and cross-tabulations are in Appendix 5. However, the variables discussed above (education, company size, nationality) will be used to test for differences in population responses to provide further insights on the survey results.

Tables 1-8: Baseline Analysis Crosstabs

Table 1 – Crosstab between Education Qualification and Nationality

Highest Education Qualification	Nationality				
	SG Citizen	SG PR	Expats	Other (Student, Visitor etc.)	Prefer not to tell
Diploma	19%	5%	10%	0%	0%
	20	1	1	0	0
Degree	49%	37%	0%	19%	33%
	51	7	0	3	1
Master	30%	47%	80%	81%	67%
	31	9	8	13	2
PhD	2%	11%	10%	0%	0%
	2	2	1	0	0

Table 2 – Crosstab between Education Qualification and Geographic Scope of Company

Highest Education Qualification	Geographic Scope of Company		
	Local Co.	Regional Co.	Global Co.
Diploma	24%	7%	12%
	12	3	7
Degree	49%	41%	33%
	25	18	19
Master	24%	48%	53%
	12	21	30
PhD	4%	5%	2%
	2	2	1

Table 3 – Crosstab between Education Qualification and Size of Company

Highest Education Qualification	Size of Company			
	1-50 empl.	51-500 empl.	501-5000 empl.	5000+ empl.
Diploma	25%	21%	14%	7%
	3	8	8	3
Degree	67%	44%	50%	19%
	8	17	29	8
Master	8%	28%	34%	72%
	1	11	20	31
PhD	0%	8%	2%	2%
	0	3	1	1

Table 4– Crosstab between Education Qualification and Years of Work Experience

Highest Education Qualification	Years of Work Experience		
	3-5 years	6-10 years	10+ years
Diploma	6%	14%	16%
	1	4	17
Degree	44%	39%	41%
	7	11	44
Master	50%	43%	40%
	8	12	43
PhD	0%	4%	4%
	0	1	4

Table 5 – Crosstab between Size of Company and Job Title

Size of Company	Job Title				
	General Manager	Director	Senior Manager/ Department Manager	Manager	Junior Manager/ Supervisor/Team leader
1-50 empl.	0%	0%	9%	8%	14%
	0	0	4	4	4
51-500 empl.	56%	12%	27%	25%	24%
	5	2	12	13	7
501-5000 empl.	22%	47%	42%	42%	24%
	2	8	19	22	7
5000+ empl.	22%	41%	22%	25%	38%
	2	7	10	13	11

Table 6 – Crosstab between Size of Company and Geographic Scope of Company

Size of Company	Geographic Scope of Company		
	Local Co.	Regional Co.	Global Co.
1-50 empl.	14%	9%	2%
	7	4	1
51-500 empl.	39%	32%	9%
	20	14	5
501-5000 empl.	31%	39%	44%
	16	17	25
5000+ empl.	16%	20%	46%
	8	9	26

Table 7 – Crosstab between Nationality and Geographic Scope of Company

Nationality	Geographic Scope of Company		
	Local Co.	Regional Co.	Global Co.
SG Citizen	86%	59%	60%
	44	26	34
SG PR	10%	16%	12%
	5	7	7
Expats	0%	9%	11%
	0	4	6
Other (Student, Foreigner etc.)	4%	11%	16%
	2	5	9
Prefer not to tell	0%	5%	2%
	0	2	1

Table 8 – Crosstab between Nationality and Size of Company

Nationality	Size of Company			
	1-50 empl.	51-500 empl.	501-5000 empl.	5000+ empl.
SG	58%	79%	84%	40%
	7	31	49	17
SG PR	33%	10%	7%	16%
	4	4	4	7
Expats	0%	5%	2%	16%
	0	2	1	7
Other (Student, Foreigners, etc.)	8%	5%	5%	23%
	1	2	3	10
Prefer not to tell	0%	0%	2%	5%
	0	0	1	2

5.3.2 Findings and discussion (baseline)

The results of the survey strongly support our hypothesis for competencies of middle managers that are more likely to lead successful strategy implementation. For each of the sub-constructs within the five competencies constructs, the survey results indicate around 90% agreement (strongly agree, agree and somewhat agree) in terms of frequency distribution of responses across the 7-point Likert scale. Respondents also provided their rankings of the top-3 sub-constructs associated with each competency. These rankings provide valuable insights on what the respondents associated as important sub-constructs, as well as, highlighting those they felt were relatively less important. These baseline results are discussed below (and illustrated in Figures 17.1-17.7). Please note that in the figures below the statement descriptions of the sub-constructs are abbreviated for better readability. The full set of detailed baseline rankings are presented in Appendix 5.

Action orientation

Overall (see Figure 17.1), respondents endorsed the sub-constructs of middle manager ability to go from ‘plan to action’ with very high levels of agreement. The top-3 sub-constructs were abilities to: ‘work with a results-oriented mind-set,’ ‘work with whatever resources are available,’ and ‘to analyze all options’ before proceeding with execution. Abilities for ‘taking risks in implementation’ and ‘challenging the status quo’ were ranked the lowest.

These results are not surprising as the total sample had a higher proportion of middle managers that had worked for more than 10 years for local and regional companies, and typically held bachelor degrees or diplomas. In this context, it makes sense that they are more likely to rate much higher the sub-constructs associated with getting the job done with

‘results orientation’ and with ‘whatever resources are available,’ while ‘analyzing all the options’ carefully before jumping into execution. On the other hand, and for similar reasons, ‘challenging status quo’ and ‘taking risks’ would be deemed of relatively lower importance. We may observe some variations of these rankings when we segment the overall population sample later in the analysis and discussion of findings.

Strategic and systems thinking

This competency relates to the middle manager ability to comprehend strategy from the perspective of strategy execution. The results indicate that the highest ranked sub-constructs reflect alignment with middle manager roles of ‘executing deliberate strategy,’ ‘facilitating adaptability’ and ‘synthesizing divergent information’ (Floyd & Wooldridge, 1992). They are also aligned with the strategy-as-practice perspective of interpreting and making sense of the strategy and conceptualizing its action (Balogun, 2003, 2008).

Figure 17: Baseline Analysis (Total Sample Responses)

Figure 17.1 Baseline – Action orientation

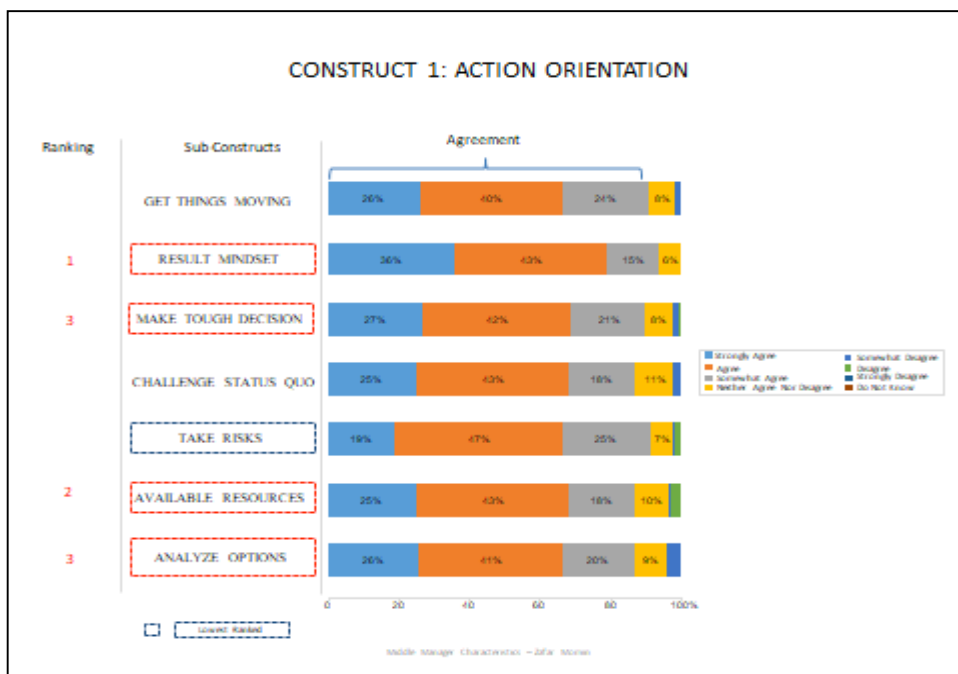
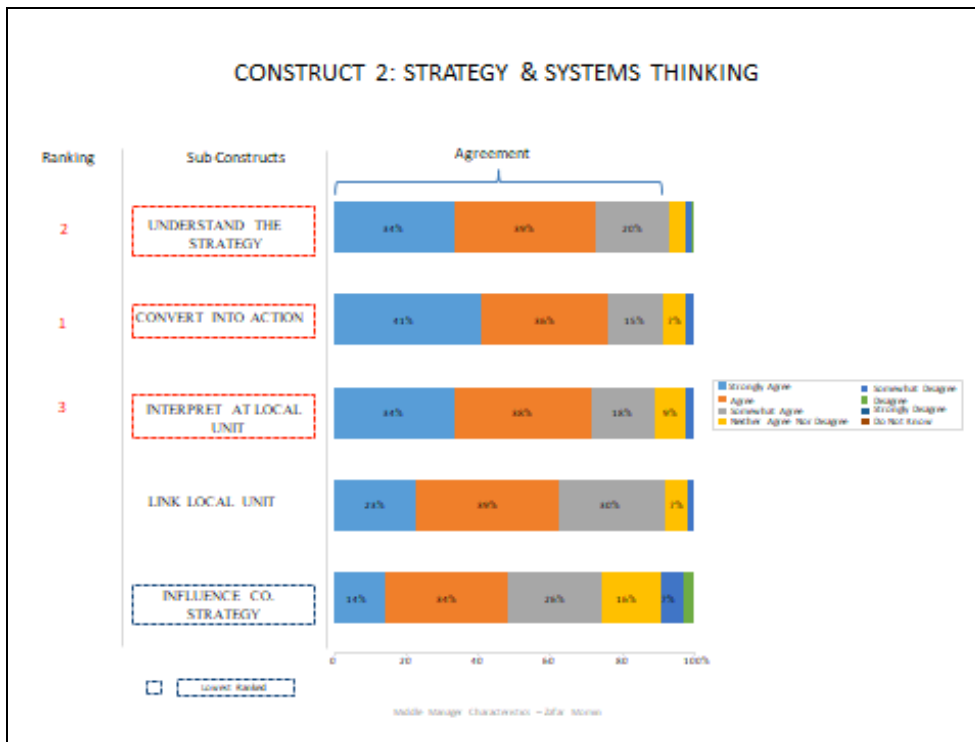


Figure 17.2 Baseline – Strategic & systems thinking



Overall (see Figure 17.2), respondents endorsed the sub-constructs of middle manager ability to ‘conceptualize converting strategy into action,’ ‘understand the overall strategy of the company’ and ‘interpret what it meant for the local unit’ with strong levels of agreement. The ability to ‘influence the overall company strategy’ was ranked the lowest. The latter is not surprising as this sub-construct was inserted into the survey as an intentional outlier (‘zinger’) to test if the respondents scored and ranked it differently from the other sub-constructs. The survey results confirmed this and hence this sub-construct was scored very differently from the rest and lowest rated. ‘Linking the local unit to the rest of the organization’ was ranked slightly below the top-3 and this may be understandable in the overall sample response where over 50% of the respondents’ companies were small- and mid-size companies and linking their local unit to the organization may have been considered relatively less important.

Networking ability

The results indicate that middle managers consider building internal networks and relationships and gathering support for the local unit as most important for strategy execution. Figure 17.3 shows that the top-3 sub-constructs were associated with middle manager ability to: ‘work across organizational boundaries’ and ‘build good network of internal relationships.’ Tied for third place were ‘to gather support for the local unit’ and ‘to work with the hierarchy.’ These views on networking ability are consistent with the strategy-as-practice micro perspective viewpoints from previous research conducted. (Balogun, 2003; Balogun & Hailey, 2008).

The abilities to ‘build a good external network’ and ‘good relationships outside the organization’ were ranked lowest. Even though external alliance networks and networked

Figure 17.3 Baseline – Networking ability

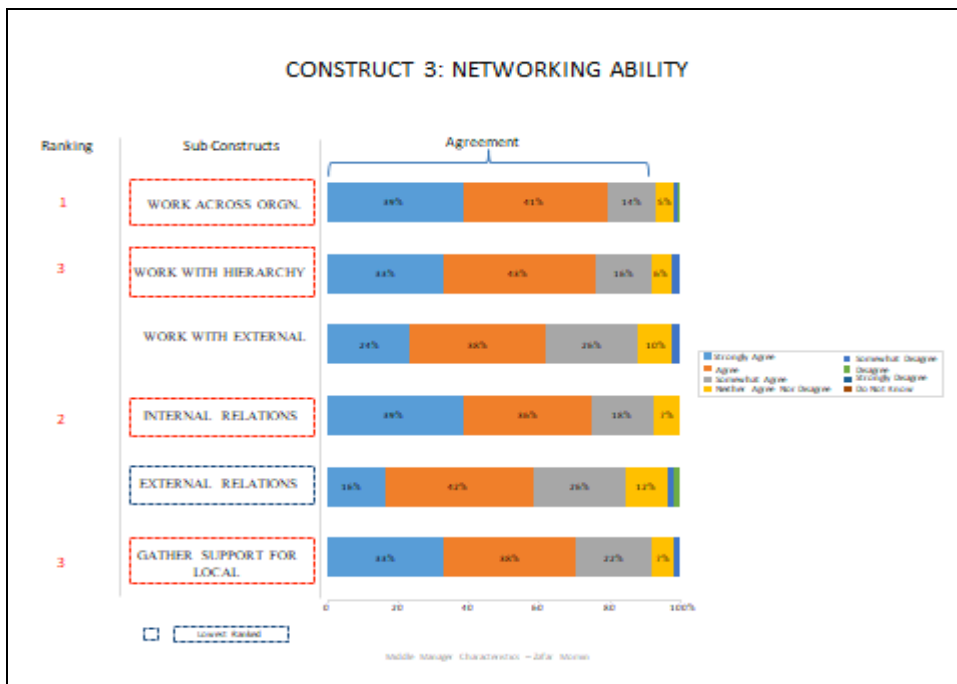
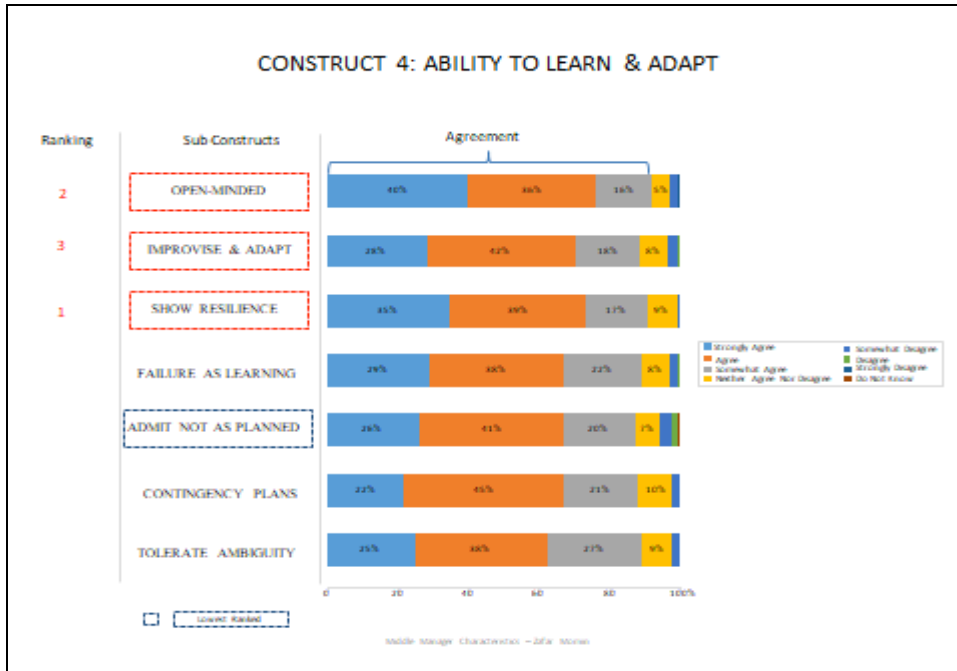


Figure 17.4 Baseline – Ability to learn and adapt



organizations have become more commonplace and important, perhaps these middle managers, with over 70% having over 10 years of experience, may still not regard external networks as important as internal ones. Also, most respondents did not work with professional services companies where this phenomenon may be more prominent. Alternatively, since many of the respondents worked for large global and regional companies, they may view themselves of greater relevance to external vendors and partners than the other way, hence rating external networks lower than internal networks.

Ability to learn and adapt

The sub-constructs that were highly ranked reflect higher importance for competency associations with middle manager roles of ‘executing deliberate strategy’ and ‘facilitating adaptability’ (Floyd & Wooldridge, 1992; Ikävalko et al., 2001). Figure 17.4 shows that the top-3 sub-constructs associated with learning and adaptability were ‘being resilient,’ ‘being

open minded’ and ‘improvising and adapting practices at a local unit level.’ These results, indicate a tactical execution theme and make sense, given that the total sample has a sizeable portion of respondents holding undergraduate degrees/diplomas and working with mostly small to medium, local and regional companies. These middle managers would be more focused on abilities associated with getting the job done efficiently.

The ability to ‘admit when something did not go as planned’ was ranked the lowest. This is not surprising as this sub-construct was not associated with the learning and adaptability construct and inserted into the survey as an intentional outlier to test if the respondents actually scored and ranked it differently from the other sub-constructs. From the perspective of a middle manager focused on execution, recovering quickly from unexpected outcomes and being open-minded to learning new things and adapting existing practices would be of far greater importance than admittance of unexpected consequences, as that is more of a personal preference and less linked to the execution. The survey results confirmed this and hence this sub-construct was scored very differently and lowest rated. The sub-constructs of ‘developing contingency plans’ and ‘treating failure as a learning opportunity’ were ranked between the top-3 and the bottom.

Ability to develop people

The results confirm that respondents clearly view the development of subordinates as an important competency for middle managers in leading successful strategy implementation. Succeeding would obviously be difficult without the support, commitment and capabilities of their subordinates. Overall (see Figure 17.5), respondents overwhelmingly endorsed the sub-constructs of middle manager ability to ‘support and develop subordinates during strategy execution’ with very high levels of agreement. The top-3 sub-constructs were associated

with middle managers' ability to: 'earn the trust and respect of subordinates,' 'be credible in convincing them of required changes,' and 'to manage their development' (Huy, 2001; Chia & Holt, 2006) . The top two sub-constructs were ranked closely and the third was clearly behind the top two. The ability to 'show fairness in assignments' was in-between the top and the bottom rankings. The ability to 'support emotional balance' was ranked the lowest. This emotional balancing aspect (Huy, 2002) was not considered a priority by middle managers in this study.

Figure 17.5 Baseline – Ability to lead and develop people

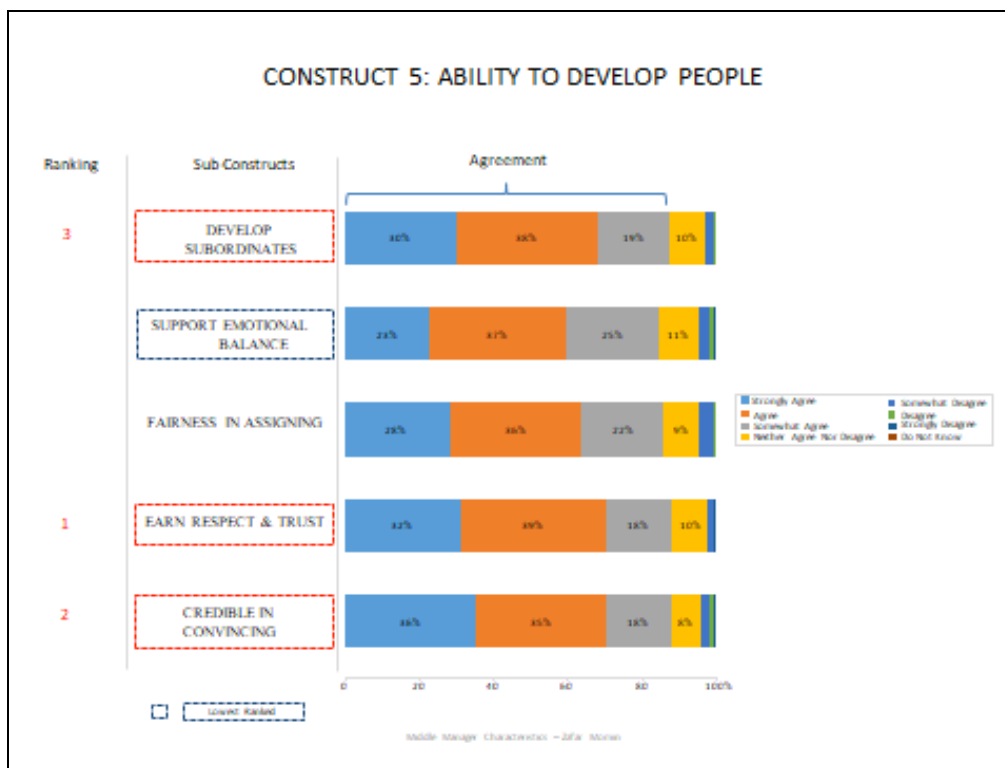


Figure 17.6 Baseline – Hygiene factors

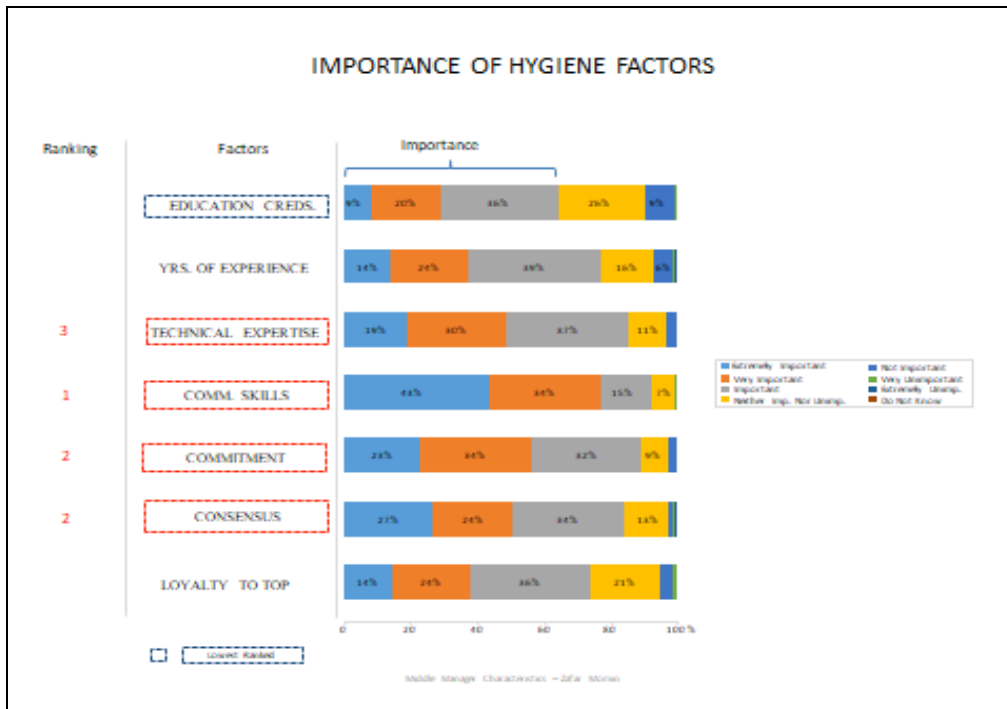
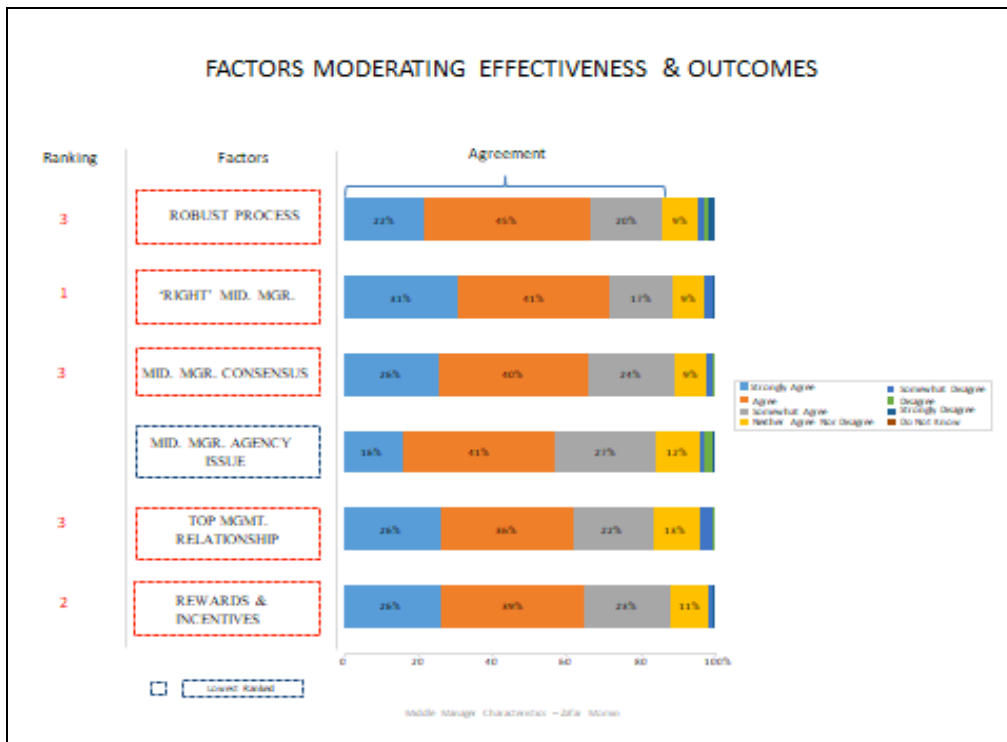


Figure 17.7 Baseline – Moderating factors



Hygiene factors

These results support our earlier intuition (see earlier Fig 10 for proposed competency framework) from prior research and personal experience, and manager responses in the interview phase, that communication skills (Alexander, 1985; Peng & Littlejohn, 2001), commitment (Guth and MacMillan, 1986) and consensus (Wooldridge & Floyd, 1989; Rapert, Lynch and Suter, 1996) are important hygiene competencies for middle managers leading strategy execution. Overall (see Figure 17.6), respondents overwhelmingly endorsed ‘good communications skills’ as the most important hygiene factor, followed by ‘commitment to the company’ and ‘consensus with the strategy’ – both in second place. Having ‘relevant technical expertise’ was the third most important factor. Having ‘relevant educational credentials’ and showing ‘loyalty to the top management’ both ranked at the bottom in reported importance. Having ‘relevant years of work experience’ was also not considered very important. None of the hygiene factors, except communication skills, indicated the strong consistency of (extremely important and important) responses that we observed in earlier results for the sub-constructs of the competencies.

The results confirm that middle managers do not consider typical ‘CV creds (e.g. education, experience)’ as important factors for success. Instead, they confirm that it is very important that the middle managers executing strategy have good communications skills, and to a lesser degree, are committed to the company and agree with the strategy. From these results, one could also surmise that communication may be more than a hygiene factor and perhaps a required competency for leading successful outcomes.

Moderating factors

Amongst various factors that could affect successful outcomes of strategy implementation, the results indicate ‘selection of the *right* middle managers’ as the most important factor. This was consistent with views derived from previous research and the primary interviews, which suggest that middle managers have a significant impact on the outcome of strategy execution (Floyd & Wooldridge, 1992, 1994, 1997, 2000). Figure 17.7 shows that respondents strongly endorsed all of the moderating factors presented to them that could influence middle manager effectiveness and successful strategy execution outcomes. The top factor was followed by ‘being awarded appropriate rewards and incentives for their performance,’ which we know from literature is a key moderating factor that addresses a key middle manager issue of ‘what’s in it for me?’ and one of the key dimensions of organizational design for strategy implementation (Galbraith, 1985).

Three factors that were closely tied for third place were: ‘having a robust selection process;’ ‘consensus with strategy’ (Wooldridge & Floyd, 1989; Rapert, Lynch and Suter, 1996); and ‘positive relationships with top management’ (Guth and MacMillan, 1986). The middle manager agency issue (Heracleous, 2000) of ‘strategy being personally beneficial’ was ranked lowest. This may be a research artefact as respondents may possibly not be comfortable to admitting that it could be a factor in their effectiveness.

Chapter 6. RESEARCH RESULTS – ADDITIONAL INSIGHTS

6.1 Results Analysis: Middle Manager Segmentation

6.1.1 Overview

While the baseline results of the online survey supported the importance of the proposed constructs to middle managers' effectiveness, further analysis was required to 1) gain insights on segments of middle managers that contributed to overall results, and 2) address an important concern raised by senior executives during primary interviews. Some interviewees expressed concern that the five competencies could be found within individual managers. If such a middle manager does not exist, then some interviewees suggested that strategy implementing teams – rather than the middle managers selected to execute strategy – may be formed to account for the five complementary competencies. To test whether these competencies could all be found within an individual middle manager and to identify key segments in the research sample, the online survey data was used to perform a segmentation study. To perform segmentation: (a) the number of variables (sub-constructs tested in each survey question) was reduced via factor analysis to understand the core factors underlying the responses; (b) a cluster analysis was conducted to understand the 'homogenous groups' of middle managers that arise from our survey data and the behavior of these differentiated middle manager personas and profiles.

6.1.2 Factor analysis

By conducting a factor analysis of 30 variables (sub-constructs) tested in the online survey, it became clear there were strong correlations between certain variables, enabling us to form

‘higher-level variables’ that capture participants’ responses across questions. For an understanding of these variables, and which ‘question groups’ were most correlated, please refer to Figure 18 below.

Figure 18. Mapping the factors to the competencies

Competencies	Leadership	Interpersonal skills	Ability to act	Disruptiveness
Action Orientation	○	○	◐	◐
Strategic Thinking	●	○	○	○
Networking Ability	◐	◐	○	○
Learning and Adaptability	◐	◐	○	○
People Development	◐	◐	○	○

The above figure highlights that there is a strong correlation between the majority of the variables tested under four of the five competencies, which can all be grouped under leadership skills. Also, underlying the tested variables is a correlation between interpersonal skills (i.e. those pertaining to dealing with emotion well-being and fair treatment of assignments for subordinates, liaising with external parties, etc.). The factor analysis also revealed that while the majority of the variables tested under the competency of ‘action orientation’ held a strong correlation except for the ability to challenge the status quo (to be disruptive), which stood alone as its own factor.

The *Leadership* factor encompasses a staggering 17 of the 30 tested variables, all of which relate to a set of skills that enable an individual to lead: understanding and translating strategy, navigating organizational hierarchy effectively, nimble adaptation to new situations

and knowledge, as well as being responsible for the development of subordinates. The *Interpersonal* factor relates to interactions with colleagues as well as external parties, and the ability to influence others. A number of these characteristics, while ‘outliers’ in the survey overall, can be key in specific functions in the firm, for example sales or marketing where these soft skills could be important to the job function itself and in implementing strategy. *Ability to Act* is very similar to ‘Action Orientation’ competency – it encompasses action and results focus and the related skills that enable a middle manager to self-start and proactively initiate action within the team. However, one key skill is separated from this competency, which is the ability to challenge the status quo: this characteristic stands alone as middle managers with a *disruptive* mindset could certainly have a different impact on implementation outcomes than those that are unwilling to question how things are done and do what is needful without ‘rocking the boat.’

It is important to note that *factors* do not correspond to any particular individuals and the analysis is meant to identify higher-level variables that explain participants’ responses and create more comprehensive variables that can be used for further analysis. Given that the *Leadership* factor is heavily weighted on four of the five competencies, there is an opportunity to look beyond that factor to other underlying factors that motivate responses.

6.1.2.1 Methodology

Stata/IC 14.0 (www.stata.com) was the software used to conduct this analysis. A data set consisting of variables 1-30 for 151 respondents was used for this analysis. One respondent’s response was removed from the total sample of 152 respondents because he or she was a

severe outlier that distorted the analysis. A pre-factor test was run on the data to determine whether the data is appropriate for factor analysis. The output of the test confirmed that the data set was appropriate. For further information on the pre-testing, see Appendix 11. Given that the data has been determined to be appropriate for factor analysis, a chart of ‘Eigenvalues’ were also generated by the software, which measure the variance in all the variables that is accounted for by a factor. If a factor has a low Eigenvalue, then it is contributing little to the explanation of variance in the variables and may be ignored. Our data indicated that there are three factors with Eigenvalues >1 and one factor that is very close to 1 that has been included to account for more of the variance in the data. Four factors accounting for ~65% of the total variance were selected, and Figure 19 shows which variables are highly correlated with each factor. The underlying factors with the labeling described earlier in this section are also shown below in Figure 19.

6.1.3 Cluster analysis

A cluster analysis was performed on the factors, resulting in four distinct personas or profiles of middle managers that were then validated through cross-tabulation with questions pertaining to hygiene factors and additional moderating factors that could affect outcomes and middle managers’ effectiveness. The four personas behaved as expected in further analysis via cross-tabulation (shown in Appendix 11) and therefore the description of the four segments and understanding of them is believed to be rational. For example, the cross-tabulations of the personas against hygiene factors (e.g. how would this persona value educational credentials and technical experience versus the others) and moderating factors (e.g. how would this persona value top management relationship versus the others) help reinforce the understanding of the segments and ensure it is rational. The four middle





manager segments have been summarized in Figure 19 below and are further elaborated upon in the following list (please note: a ‘1’ in the row is to denote the variables that the trait was most closely linked to). Following this, the traits were rolled into a composite cluster and a simple name was used to refer to the prototype manager in each of the resulting clusters.

Figure 19. Mapping the factors to the response variables

Testing	Code	Meaning	Factors			
			Leadership	Interpersonal	Action	Disruptive
			1	2	3	4
plan to action	V1	get things moving quickly			1	
	V2	work with a results-oriented mindset			1	
	V3	make tough decisions			1	
	V4	challenge the status quo				1
	V5	take risks in implementation			1	
	V6	work with whatever resources are available			1	
	V7	comprehensively analyze all options before proceeding with execution			1	
understand the overall strategy	V8	understand the company's strategic direction	1			
	V9	conceptualize and visualize how to convert the strategy into action	1			
	V10	interpret what the company's strategy means at a local unit level	1			
	V11	link the role of the local unit with the rest of the organization	1			
	V12	influence the company's overall strategy		1		
network effectively across organizational boundaries	V13	work across organizational boundaries (e.g. departments, functions, business units)	1			
	V14	work with the company hierarchy (e.g. top managers, divisional presidents, etc.)	1			
	V15	work with external parties (e.g. suppliers, outsourcing partners, strategic partners)		1		
	V16	build a network of good relationships inside the organization	1			
	V17	build a network of good relationships outside the organization		1		
	V18	gather support for implementing strategy at local unit	1			
learn and adapt	V19	open-minded to learn new knowledge and skills	1			
	V20	improvise and adapt existing practices at local unit, where needed	1			
	V21	recover quickly (or show resilience) in the face of unexpected outcomes	1			
	V22	treat failure as a learning opportunity	1			
	V23	admit when something did not go as planned	1			
	V24	develop viable contingency plans		1		
	V25	tolerate ambiguity and uncertainty	1			
develop and support subordinates	V26	manage the development of subordinates through the process of executing strategy	1			
	V27	support the emotional balance and well-being of subordinates through strrt execution		1		
	V28	show fairness in assigning jobs and responsibilities during strategy execution		1		
	V29	earn the respect and trust of subordinates as a 'role model'	1			
	V30	credible in convincing subordinates of the required strategic changes	1			

Figure 20. Cluster analysis: Identified segments

FOUR IDENTIFIED SEGMENTS OF MIDDLE MANAGERS (MM) Profile Description

			
Technical MM	Career MM	Ideal MM	Incentive-driven MM
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relies on technical credentials and years of experience to ascend hierarchy • Believes technical expertise implies his expert input is necessary for strategy • Performance linked to being consulted, incentives, and benefits received from strategy implementation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong managerial experience and performance • Relevant CV and education credentials • Career built in mid-size (<5000) regional firms • Aversion to 'rocking the boat' • Agnostic to organizational dynamics or strategic direction – will still implement regardless 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Holds relevant credentials but does not believe ability is derived from CV • Prefers to gain deeper understanding of strategy, willing to question strategic direction • Results oriented and good team leader, but less emphasis on interpersonal skills • Company agnostic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong emphasis on interpersonal skills, communication, and capable of influencing individuals within and outside of company • Strong preference for incentives and perks to 'reward' performance – sales mentality • Free radical behaviour – able to operate well alone, not lead teams

Middle Manager Competencies – Zafar Momin

1. *The Technical Middle Manager* does not value interpersonal skills or the ability to analyze all options and make decisions (ability to act), and is indifferent to leadership skills and a disruptive mindset. From this we can hypothesize that this type of middle managers may not need to make use of these skill sets and are instead valued for other reasons, such as for their technical expertise, in implementation. This was validated by cross-tabulating the segments against respondents' attitudes toward technical expertise: of the 81 respondents falling in this segment, a staggering 93% indicated they at least 'somewhat agree' that technical expertise is important. In comparison, other segments only had 70% - 83% of respondents indicate some level of agreement that technical expertise is important. In addition, 78% of this segment indicated at least 'somewhat agree' that relevant education credentials are important,

compared to less than 50% in each of the three other segments. Given the importance they (Technical managers) place on education credentials and technical expertise, this type of middle manager also believes they should be involved in shaping the company's strategy. About 93% of them at least 'somewhat agree' this should be the case, compared to other types that had 50%-65% levels of agreements on the same point. Compared to other groups, technical managers also believe effectiveness would be highly moderated if the strategy was personally beneficial, or if appropriate incentives were awarded.

2. *The Career Middle Manager* values leadership skills as well as interpersonal skills but holds a strong aversion to challenging the status quo. There is a clear nuance of geographic scope related to the career middle manager: this segment had the highest representation (82%) in regional and global companies. These managers also have a lower incidence of academic certifications. They are not likely diploma or doctorate degree holders, compared to other segments. As a result, it is expected that the managers in this segment overall provide a 'safe pair of hands' and while effective and competent, often prefer to implement deliberate strategy 'as is,' rather than opting to challenge senior management and 'rock the boat.'
3. *The Ideal Middle Manager* holds most of the hypothesized key competencies for effective strategy implementer middle managers. They value leadership skills, action orientation, as well as a disruptive mindset – and while indifferent to interpersonal skills, do not demonstrate an aversion to this factor like the *Technical Middle Manager* does. The fact that this middle manager type appeared in the cluster analysis addresses the issue raised by senior executives in the primary interviews

about the existence of such managers, and confirms that all five competencies of effective strategy implementer middle managers can be found in individuals. This segment accounted for 30 of the 152 respondents to the online survey. In addition, this segment is well represented in small- to mid-size, and local companies (90% work in companies with fewer than 5000 employees; over 50% work in companies with local scope, substantially more than other segments). These managers were from different industries, but two-thirds represented only a few industries such as: technology, telecommunications, manufacturing, logistics, electronics and engineering. From a nationality demographic, all managers, except one, in our sample were Singaporeans. From an education standpoint, these managers held various qualifications including postgraduate degrees but none had an MBA.

4. *Incentive-driven Middle Managers* value interpersonal skills and challenging the status quo but are averse to leadership skills and are indifferent to action orientation. This segment apparently, has little interest in leadership or action, moreover, respondents saw performance incentives very favorably, and in fact, are second only to *Technical Middle Managers* when it comes to agreeing that consensus with top management and personally benefitting from the strategy is important. This segment could point to a more specific function in the organization – for example, Sales – that relies upon performance incentives and may not ‘fit’ the competencies the same way (for example, third party networks could be more highly valued for Sales than traditional leadership characteristics). Like the *Technical Middle Managers*, this segment also places relatively higher importance on communications skills and believes that positive relationships with top managers affect outcomes. *Career and Ideal Middle Managers* also think these factors are important, but not to the same

degree. Please refer to Figures 21-22 below for an overview of each segment and its corresponding value on factors, and relation to competencies.

Figure 21. Mapping the clusters to the factors

Factors	Technical MM	Career MM	Ideal MM	Incentive-driven MM
Leadership	○	●	●	●
Interpersonal	●	●	○	●
Ability to Act	●	○	●	○
Disruptiveness	○	●	●	●






 = Negative extreme factor score
  = Positive extreme factor score
  = ± non-extreme factor score

Figure 22. Mapping the clusters to the competencies

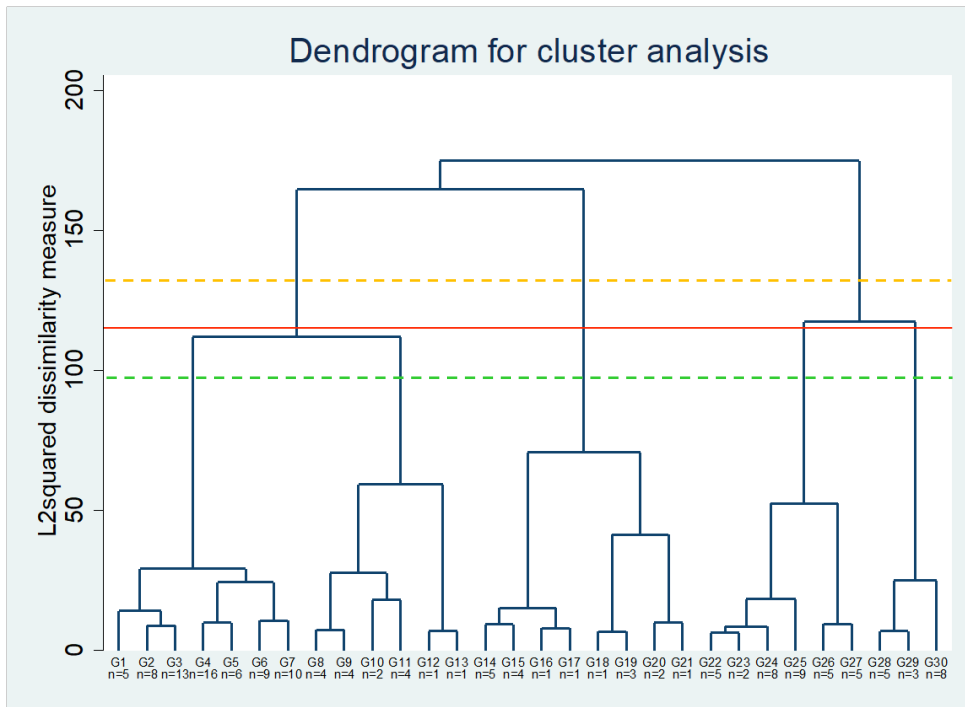
Competencies	Technical MM	Career MM	Ideal MM	Incentive-driven MM
Action Orientation	◐	◐	●	◐
Strategic Thinking	◐	◐	●	○
Networking Ability	○	◐	◐	◐
Learning and Adaptability	◐	●	●	◐
People Development	◐	●	◐	◐

 = Strong in this competency
  = Weak in this competency

6.1.3.1 Methodology

Taking the reduced set of variables derived from the factor analysis, a cluster diagnostic could be performed. By plotting ‘groups’ that behaved similarly via a dendrogram, it is possible to discern specific clusters of individuals that are homogenous within the group but different to other clusters. Clusters can be counted by taking a ‘horizontal cross section’ of the dendrogram anywhere on the vertical axis and selecting a number of clusters that allows for a parsimonious explanation of the data. In Figure 23 below, the dendrogram shows three viable cluster-defining points, at three clusters (orange dotted line), four clusters (solid red line) and five clusters (green dotted line).

Figure 23. Dendrogram for factor analysis



It was determined that three clusters may be too few due to a histogram of the cluster factor score density illustrating a divergent view being obscured within one or more clusters. Note that ‘hierarchical distances’ are used to select the number of clusters and ‘k-means’ method is

used to form the clusters. Highlighted in the red ellipses in the diagnostic (Figure 24A) below, it's clear to see Cluster 3 may contain heterogeneous attitudes when it should be homogenous.

Figure 24A. Cluster histogram diagnostic (3 clusters)

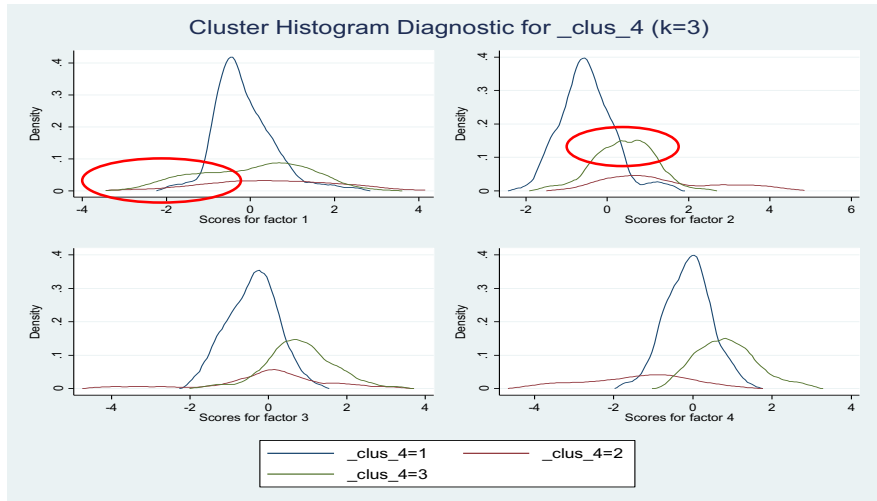
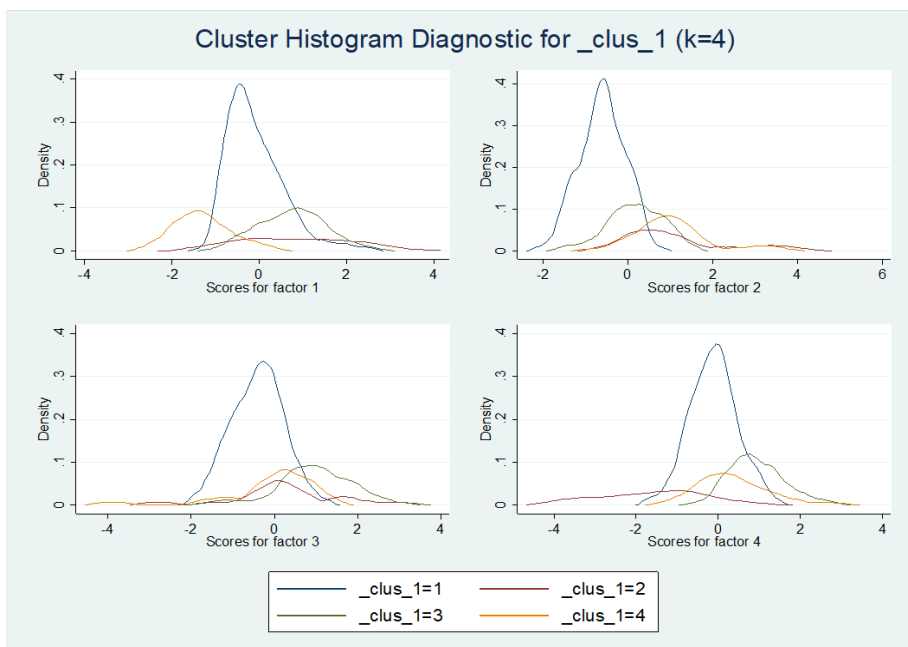


Figure 24B. Cluster histogram diagnostic (4 clusters)



On the other hand, five clusters were revealed to be too many because further analysis with five clusters had reduced statistical significance in post-cluster analysis via cross tabulation. This is because too few respondents were grouped in each cluster. Therefore, four clusters were determined to be ideal for the analysis. Figure 24B shows the improvement in the histogram diagnostic by choosing four clusters.

After running a cluster analysis with four clusters, the factor scores for each cluster were analyzed to determine which scores were considered ‘exceedingly’ positive or negative (± 0.35). In Figure 25 below, green-highlighted factor scores are extremely negative, and yellow-highlighted scores are extremely positive. The output has divided our sample (n=151) into four clusters. Based on an analysis of which factors held or not held by each cluster, the segments were named and further tested to ensure each segment behaved in line with its name.

Figure 25. Factor loading by cluster

_clus_1	N
1	81
2	17
3	30
4	23

Summary statistics: mean
by categories of: _clus_1

	_clus_1	Leader~p	Interp~l	Action	Disrup~e
Technical MM	1	-.0849109	-.5994493	-.4052519	-.1147683
Career MM	2	.8372464	1.122075	.2687063	-1.590467
Ideal MM	3	.754973	.1830046	.9751998	.9369678
Incentive driven MM	4	-1.304548	1.043043	-.0434172	.3576142

6.1.4 Discussion of segmentation results

The overall baseline results provided strong support of our hypothesis regarding competencies of middle managers leading successful strategy implementation. The results also highlighted the strength of association of the sub-constructs with each competency, as well as the relative importance of the hygiene and effectiveness moderating factors. The segmentation of our data provides additional insights to the baseline results by identifying different profiles of middle managers in our sample population and illustrates how the varying personas may have contributed to the overall results.

Our analysis highlights profiles of middle managers – *Career MM* and *Ideal MM* - that would be indicative of highly capable, results-oriented managers with multi-faceted abilities. Such middle managers are more likely to deliver successful outcomes while implementing strategy. They represented ~30% of our overall sample, which is reassuring for the practitioner. The fact that 20% of our sample was comprised of managers that were close to the *Ideal MM* profile confirmed that such managers may indeed exist. It also reinforced the idea from interviews with senior executives about potentially building complementarity in execution teams, if any required abilities were missing in individuals. *Ideal MMs* may not be perfect in every aspect (e.g. interpersonal), but they possess most of the competencies required. Such managers may have likely worked their way up the corporate ladder and been exposed to hands-on, rich and diverse experiences and responsibilities in their careers.

Career MMs may be good overall managers in a routine job function and considered a ‘safe pair of hands.’ However, they are not results-oriented and may struggle in a implementing strategy, unless complementary action-oriented and disruptive abilities exist in their teams.

70% of our sample population was comprised of *Technical MM and Incentive-driven MM* profiles of middle managers. As mentioned earlier, *Technical MMs* are possibly recruited for their functional or technical expertise and *Incentive-driven MMs* are more likely in market-facing roles (e.g. Sales). Both these segments may be competent in performing their functional roles but lack the competencies required for strategy execution. The data in the sample would suggest that the majority of middle managers do comprise such segments and only partially possess some of the required competencies for successful strategy execution. They are likely recruited by organizations for specific functional or technical capabilities. These segments do not value many of the leadership and action orientation attributes and are less likely to successfully implement strategy.

As we have established earlier through primary interviews, most organizations exercise limited rigor in the process of selecting middle managers for strategy implementation roles and lack guidelines for competency assessments. Therefore, ad hoc selection factors and probability would imply most middle managers would be selected from the *Technical MM and Incentive-driven MM* segments. Logically, these practices would significantly reduce the likelihood of successful outcomes right from the beginning of strategy implementation.

6.2 Results analysis: Impact of Independent Variables (MANOVA)

It is important to note that not all analyses that were performed have been discussed here. Some of the variable analyses showed little statistically significant difference between the samples. For example, analyzing populations based on the years of working experience (above and below 10 years), and noting that over 70% had more than 10 years of experience,

did not provide any difference in responses and rankings. Similarly, analysis of samples based on the number of strategy execution projects they had worked on also did not provide any significant differences. Even the variable of job titles only demonstrated a significant difference in population responses when comparing the junior managers versus the rest, and not when comparing other combinations of job titles. Many of the results of these analyses are presented in Appendix 10 for documentation and completeness purposes. But, these variables were not featured in our initial hypotheses and thus not included and reported in the main analysis.

6.2.1 Summary: Impact of independent variables

6.2.1.1 Overview of variable analysis

Analysis of the independent variables illustrates how sub-populations of the total sample may congruently or divergently view each of the sub-constructs, providing valuable insights into their sub-population profiles. In order to analyze the results and test for differences in the sample populations, one-way multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) tests were applied. *P values* less than or equal to 0.05 were considered to be statistically significant for assessing differences between sample populations and were computed by using MANOVA computations within Q. All the results, rankings and MANOVA tables for independent variable analyses are in Appendices 6-9.

6.2.1.2 Summarized findings

Our findings show statistically significant differences when the variables tested were graduate business degree or nationality. These significant differences stem from underlying

profiles of middle managers in these samples: in terms of their educational background, company work environment and national cultural aspects. When the analysis was performed using variables such as company size and job titles, the results exhibited relatively fewer statistically significant differences. There are several demographic factors that concurrently affect the collective view of a sample and the influence of those factors can be gauged through examining the cross-tabulations between the key factors. The results for the analysis using various variables and cross-tabulations are summarized in more legible versions with additional details for each variable analysis in Appendices 6-9.

As Figure 26 below summarizes, the top-3 sub-constructs for each competency in green colour, with closely associated sub-constructs depicted in a lighter green colour. The yellow-coloured sub-constructs signify weaker associations and the pink-coloured ones signify the lowest ranked within each competency. The orange-coloured cells and red-coloured numbers signify statistically significant differences in responses and rankings respectively. It should be noted that these differences are between sub-populations (e.g. MBA and non-MBA) of each variable and not across variables.

Next, we summarize each variable briefly before concluding the findings from the results of the variable analysis at the end of this section.

Figure 26: Results analysis: Summary of impact of variables

Competency Constructs/Factors	Sub-constructs/ Factors	Baseline (total sample)	Education		Size of Company		Nationality		Job Title	
			MBA	Non-MBA	Large Co.	Small Co.	SG citizen	Non-SG	Senior	Junior
Action Orientation	Results mindset	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	1
	Work with avail resources	2	1	1	2	3	1	1	2	2
	Make tough decisions	3	2	2	2	2	3	1	3	3
	Analyze all options	3	3	3	3	3	1	1	1	1
	Get things moving	3	3	3	3	3	2	3	3	3
	Challenge status quo	3	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
	Take execution risks	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L
Strategic & Systems Thinking	Convert into action	1	1	1	1	2	2	1	1	1
	Understand the strategy	2	2	2	2	1	1	2	2	2
	Interpret at local unit level	3	2	2	3	3	3	3	3	2
	Link local unit	3	3	3	3	3	1	1	1	1
	Influence company strategy	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L
Networking Ability	Work across boundaries	1	1	1	2	1	1	2	1	1
	Build internal relations	2	3	2	3	2	2	3	3	2
	Work with hierarchy	3	1	3	1	2	3	1	3	3
	Gather support for local	3	2	3	1	3	1	1	3	3
	Work with external	3	2	3	1	3	1	1	3	3
	Build external relations	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L
Ability to Learn & Adapt	Show resilience	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
	Being open minded	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
	Improvise and adapt	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
	Tolerate ambiguity	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	L
	Failure as learning	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	L
	Contingency plans	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	L
	Admit not as planned	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L
Ability to Lead & Develop People	Earn respect and trust	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	2	1
	Credible in convincing	2	3	1	1	2	1	2	3	4
	Develop subordinates	3	2	3	3	3	3	3	3	2
	Fairness in assignments	3	1	1	2	L	L	L	L	L
	Support emotional balance	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L
Importance of Hygiene Factors	Communication	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
	Commitment	2	3	3	3	2	3	2	3	2
	Consensus	2	2	2	2	3	2	3	2	3
	Technical expertise	3	2	2	3	3	1	1	1	1
	Loyalty to top	3	3	3	L	L	L	L	L	L
	Years of work exper	3	3	3	L	L	L	L	L	L
Factors Moderating Effectiveness & Outcomes	Selecting right mid mgrs	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
	Reward and incentives	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	3
	Mid mgr consensus	3	3	L	3	3	3	3	3	3
	Top mgmt relationship	3	3	3	L	3	3	3	3	3
	Robust selection process	3	3	3	L	3	2	L	L	2
	Mid mgr agency issue	L	L	2	L	3	L	L	3	L

Note: When a score appears more than once, means it is tied. When a score of 3 is missing, it was relatively, much lower than 2.

- Top- 3 sub-constructs/ factors (1,2,3)
- Strong association with competency
- Weaker association with competency
- Lowest ranked (L= Lowest Ranked)
- Noted differences in sample
- Statistically significant difference in ranking (p<=0.05)
- Statistically significant difference in responses p<<0.05

Middle Manager Characteristics – Zafar Momin

The analysis using the graduate business degree (MBA) variable provided insights about how MBA respondents were different from middle managers that did not have an MBA. Our analysis reveals that in relative terms, MBAs do not value getting into the tactical execution details by ‘getting things moving,’ ‘improvising and adapting practices,’ ‘working with available resources,’ ‘making tough decisions’ and ‘showing fairness in assignments.’ However, they place more importance in ‘challenging the status quo,’ ‘working with the

hierarchy,’ ‘interpreting the strategy’ and ‘tolerating ambiguity.’ Some of these differences can be attributed to the nature of the working environment between the samples: MBAs in this sample typically work for global, larger companies with more international scope, compared to non-MBAs that typically work for smaller local or regional companies where tactical execution may be far more relevant. The differences can also be somewhat explained by stereotypical MBA profile: by virtue of their self-selection for a global MBA degree, one expects MBAs to be more ambitious, more interested in strategy and analysis, and less interested in tactical execution, unlike their counterparts who likely started at lower positions and worked their way up the ranks.

The analysis using the company size variable provided insights about how respondents of large companies (with >5000 employees) were different from those that worked with relatively smaller ones (with <5000 employees). The key impact observed was: in working for a large company, ‘gathering support for local unit’ is far more important from a middle manager competency viewpoint, compared to smaller companies where middle managers are more focused on tactical execution of deliberate strategy and are also less likely to ‘tolerate ambiguity’ but more likely to make ‘tough decisions’ and ‘work with the hierarchy’ to get the job done. Large companies may have more complex operations manned by an international workforce and supported with a global infrastructure for resources and support, whereas smaller companies are often characterized by limited resources and require a more self-reliant, local and technically qualified workforce.

The analysis employing the nationality variable provided insights about how middle managers that were Singapore citizens were different from the rest of the sample that were non-Singapore-citizens. Our analysis revealed that Singaporeans were far more focused on

execution and more likely to ‘work with available resources,’ ‘improvise and adapt,’ ‘make tough decisions’ and ‘work with the hierarchy’ to get the job done, compared to non-Singaporeans. Non-Singaporeans were more likely to ‘analyze all options,’ ‘challenge the status quo’ and ‘tolerate ambiguity,’ compared to Singaporeans. The non-Singaporean managers also felt their consensus was more important, and that it would highly moderate their effectiveness. Some of these differences can be explained through the associated demographics: Singaporeans typically worked with local and regional companies and fewer held graduate degrees, whereas the non-Singaporean respondents worked for larger regional and global companies and more held graduate degrees. The non-Singaporean managers were relatively less focused on action and valued attributes that matched their educational profile and work environment.

The analysis using the job title variable provided insights about respondents that were junior managers were different from those that were at or above the ‘Manager’ level. Managers with Junior Manager titles in the sample were a mix of very experienced, technical managers, as well as relatively newer managers. Therefore, many of their responses were different and inconsistent with the rest of the management pool. Junior managers were ‘results minded’ like the senior managers, but less likely to ‘work with available resources,’ ‘improvise and adapt’ and ‘work with hierarchy.’ Moreover, they believed they need to ‘challenge the status quo,’ ‘treat failure as learning’ and be ‘supported for their emotional well-being’ by their supervisors. Interestingly ‘credibly convincing subordinates’ was one of their lowest ranked priorities, indicating that they did not have responsibilities for subordinates, or lacked managerial level strategy execution experience. The latter is an interesting finding as it could imply a sudden intergenerational shift to management, rather than a developmental journey.

6.2.1.3 Conclusions of variable analysis

In conclusion, the findings from the variable analysis illustrate that middle manager views on competencies are correlated with key demographic variables such as education, company size and nationality. Each variable provides insight to the variation in responses due to the peculiarity of the variable. For example, as we observed, managers from large companies may place a higher importance on gathering support for the local unit. The findings also corroborate and reinforce the findings from the segmentation analysis. For example, the findings from the MBA versus non-MBA analysis make more sense when one considers that most of the MBAs in our sample were either *Technical* or *Incentive-driven* middle managers. Similarly, the large company size findings make more sense when one considers that over 80% of the middle managers that worked for large companies (>5000 employees) in our sample were either *Technical* or *Incentive-driven* middle managers, whereas 85% of the *Career* and *Ideal* middle managers worked for relatively smaller companies (<5000 employees). When reviewing the nationality variable, it was evident that nearly 100% of the *Ideal* and 67% of the *Career* middle managers were Singaporeans, whereas 72% of *Technical* but only 32% of the *Incentive-driven* managers were Singaporean.

While the insight provided by each of the demographic variables is interesting, it is not as powerful as grouping some of the variables together into management personas. The cluster analysis provides a more powerful way to group the traits of typical middle managers and assess the incumbent talent pool of middle managers, as well as, determine the ‘right’ manager profile for the required context of strategy execution (e.g. type of strategy, type of organization, culture, etc.).

6.2.2 Example Results Analysis: Impact of graduate business degree (MBA)

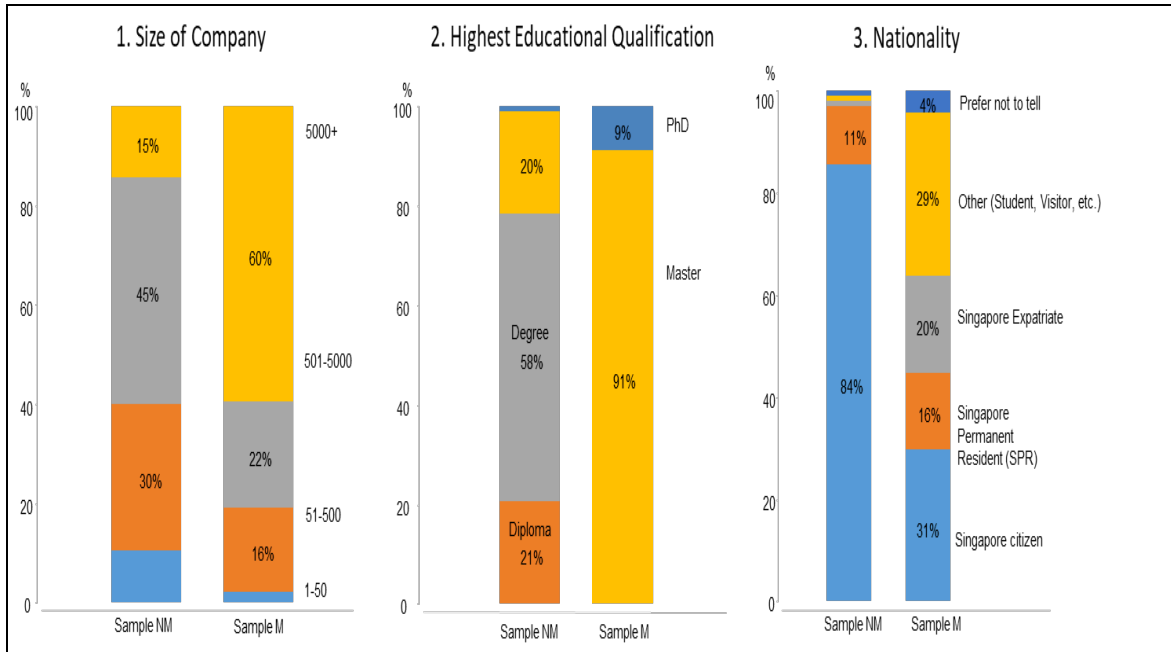
The results of the MBA variable are presented here to illustrate the results and analysis methodology for at least one of the independent variables. A similar description of the results, related figures and cross-tabulations of all other variables are in Appendices 7-9.

6.2.2.1 Respondent demographics (MBA versus non-MBA)

From the total sample size of 152 respondents, there were 45 respondents with a graduate business degree (termed Sample M in this analysis). Some (~9%) of these may have also had a PhD in addition to the MBA and these may be PhD holders who pursue a part-time MBA while working. Segmenting this sample from the 107 non-MBA respondents (termed Sample NM) provided differences in mainly 3 key areas shown in figure 27 below. The rest of the demographics were not significantly different and are documented in Appendix 6.

From Tables 9-11, one can observe that 85% of the non-MBA respondents worked for small and mid-size companies that had less than 5000 employees, whereas 60% of the MBA respondents worked for big companies with greater than 5000 employees. Size of company

Figure 27: Respondent Demographics: Impact of Graduate Business Degree (MBA)



Tables 9 – 11: Crosstabs for Analysis: Impact of Graduate Business Degree (MBA)

Table 9 – Crosstab between Education Qualification and Size of Company

Size of Company	Highest Education Qualification	
	Non Business Degree (Non MBA)	Degree in Business (MBA)
1-50 empl.	10%	2%
	11	1
51-500 empl.	30%	16%
	32	7
501-5000 empl.	45%	22%
	48	10
5000+ empl.	15%	60%
	16	27

Table 10 – Crosstab between Education Qualification and Nationality

Nationality	Highest Education Qualification	
	Non Business Degree (Non MBA)	Degree in Business (MBA)
SG Citizen	84%	31%
	90	14
SG PR	11%	16%
	12	7
Expats	1%	20%
	1	9
Other (Student, Foreigner, etc.)	3%	29%
	3	13
Prefer not to tell	1%	4%
	1	2

Table 11 – Crosstab between Education Qualification and Geographic Scope of Company

Geographic Scope of Company	Highest Education Qualification	
	Non Business Degree (Non MBA)	Degree in Business (MBA)
Local	42%	13%
	45	6
Regional	26%	36%
	28	16
Global	32%	51%
	34	23

is also correlated with MBAs in middle manager roles., a larger portion (51%) of MBA respondents were employed by global companies and very few (13%) by local companies. This was in contrast to non-MBA respondents where 42% worked for local companies and 32% for global companies. 79% of non-MBA respondents primarily held bachelor degrees and diplomas, while the rest had technical masters degrees. The third key difference was in terms of nationalities: 84% of the non-MBA sample were Singapore citizens, whereas only 31% of the MBA sample held Singapore citizenship. Therefore, results for the graduate business degree variable may also expect influences due to the respondent dimensions of nationality and company size and type.

6.2.2.2 Findings and discussion (MBA versus non-MBA)

In order to analyze the results and test for differences in the sample populations, one-way multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) tests was applied. The independent predictor variables were set as Samples M and NM and the dependent outcome variables were the numerical responses to the survey questions. As before, for the baseline statistical analysis, the *p value*, adjusted for false discovery rate corrections for multiple comparisons, is less than or equal to 0.05. *P values* less than or equal to 0.05 were considered to be statistically significant for assessing differences between sample populations and were computed by

using MANOVA computations within Q. All the results, rankings and MANOVA tables for this MBA variable analysis are in Appendix 6.

Action orientation

As in the baseline results, both samples M and NM were overall aligned in terms of agreement with this construct. The key differences between the two samples was in the ‘work with results oriented mind-set ($p=0.003$)’ and ‘challenge the status quo ($p=0.01$)’ sub-constructs (Figures 28A, 28B1). The MBA holders view these two sub-constructs as much more significant, compared to non-MBA respondents. The non-MBAs were less likely to challenge the status quo as they were also weighted by the contextual nationality (Singapore) and company size (relatively smaller) factors. While the reason for this was not tested, future research might ask if MBA-educated respondents could have greater international exposure through their affiliation with bigger companies and global education, and may be comfortable in ‘challenging the status quo’ due to their higher education and possible greater tolerance in the environments in which they work.

Another observable difference in rankings is in ‘working with available resources’ and ‘making tough decisions.’ For these, the non-MBA sample ranked them in the top-3, along with ‘results mind-set,’ whereas the MBAs did not consider these amongst their top-3 choices, and furthermore, scored these relatively low. Such differences suggest a relatively lower focus of MBAs on tactical aspects of implementation of strategy, and a higher focus on dealing with ambiguity, doing more strategic analysis, working with hierarchy and challenging norms. managers. MBAs did not consider the intentional outlier to ‘influence the overall company strategy’ as significant, although both samples did rank the outlier as lowest.

Figure 28: Analysis: Impact of Graduate Business Degree (MBA)

Figure 28A1

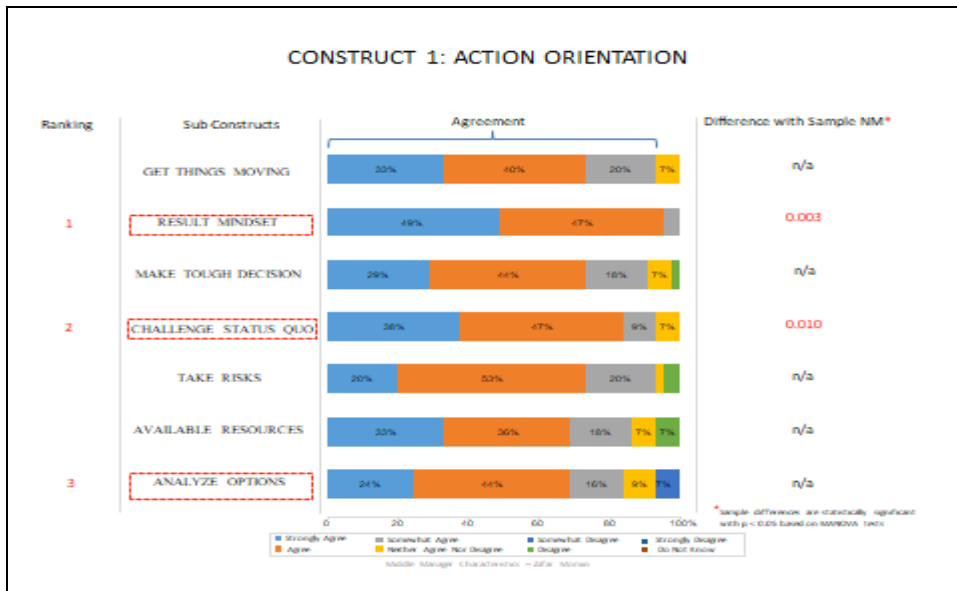
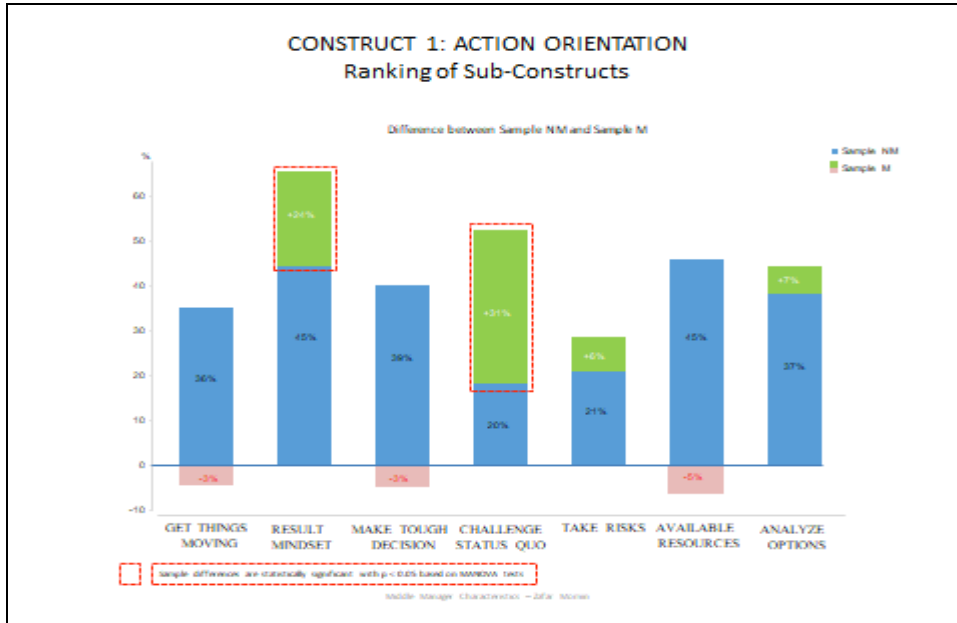


Figure 28B1



Strategic and systems thinking

There were statistically significant differences across all sub-constructs for this competency.

Figures 28A2 and 28B2 illustrate these differences in the responses and in the rankings. The

MBA holders are aligned but more contrasted in their views of the importance of ‘conceptualizing strategy into action,’ ‘understanding the strategy,’ and ‘interpreting it at a local level.’ They also rank ‘linking the local unit’ higher because they typically work for larger companies where such strategic thinking may be more required of middle managers.

Networking ability

There were statistically significant differences between the two samples across all the sub-constructs for this competency, except for those related to ‘building external networks’ and ‘building external relationships’ where both samples were statistically similar. Figures 28A3 and 28B3 illustrate these differences in the responses and in the rankings. The key difference is that MBAs see ‘networking across the boundaries’ and with the ‘company’s hierarchy’ as most relevant and ‘gathering support for the local unit’ and ‘building internal relationships’ second and third respectively. In contrast, the non-MBA sample, consistent with their results orientation on getting the done job executed, view ‘networking across organizational boundaries’ and ‘building relationships internally’ as most important, followed by ‘networking with hierarchy’ and ‘gathering support for local unit’ as joint third choices.

Again, one could surmise that MBAs relatively better recognize the importance of ‘working with hierarchy’ and ‘gathering support’ as more important for strategy execution, compared to non-MBAs who consider building lateral networks and relationships to be relatively more important. Both samples, especially MBAs, de-prioritize external networks and relationships well below the importance of building internal ones.

Figure 28A2

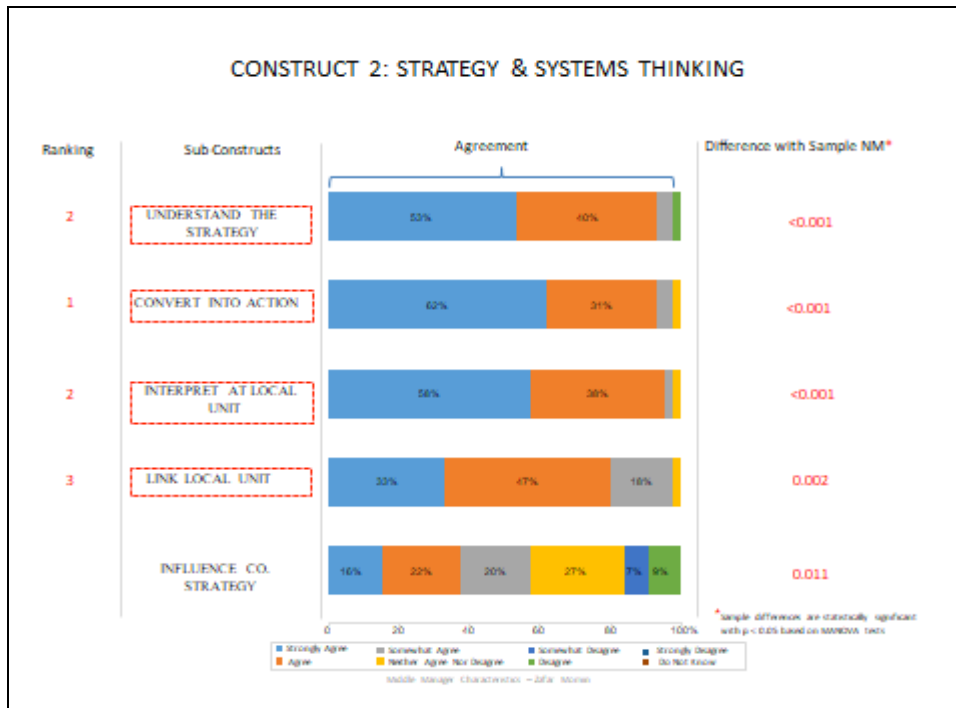


Figure 28B2

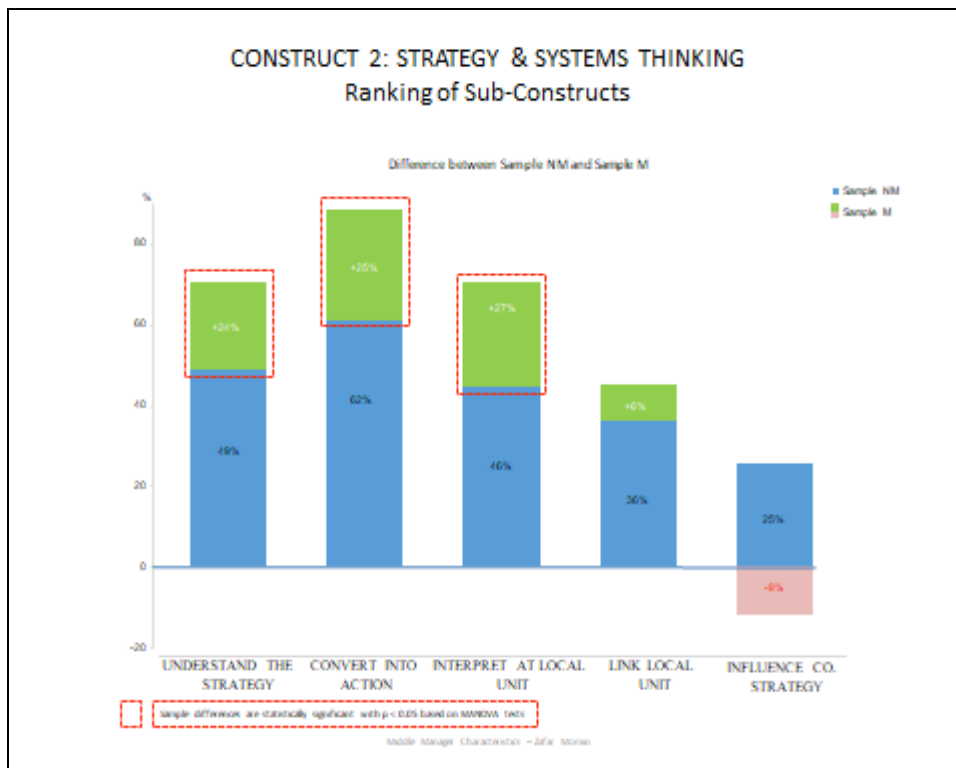


Figure 28A3

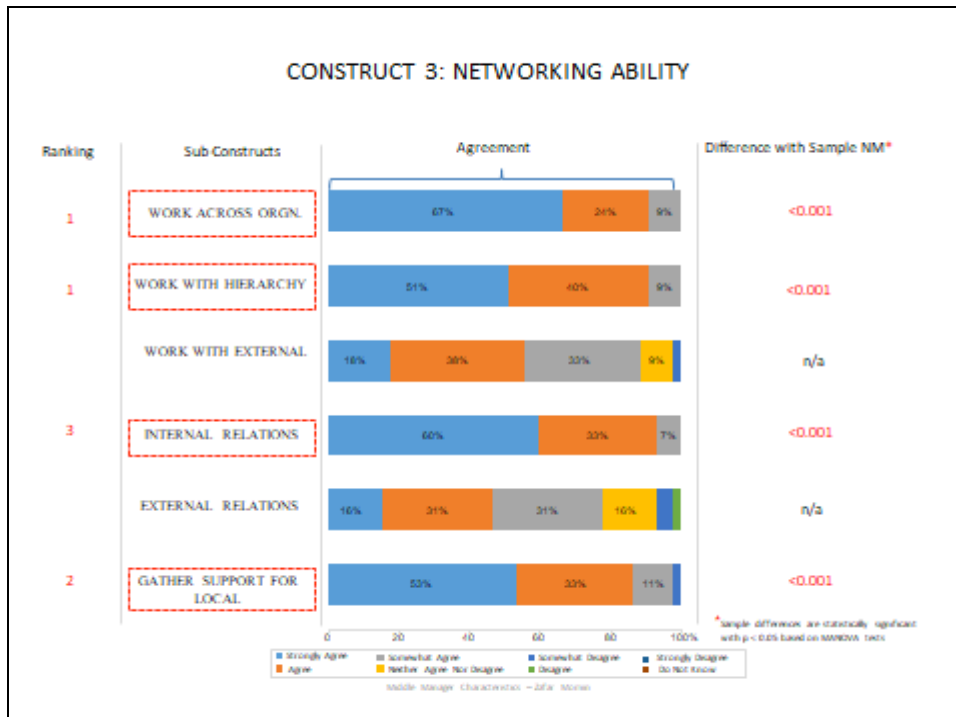
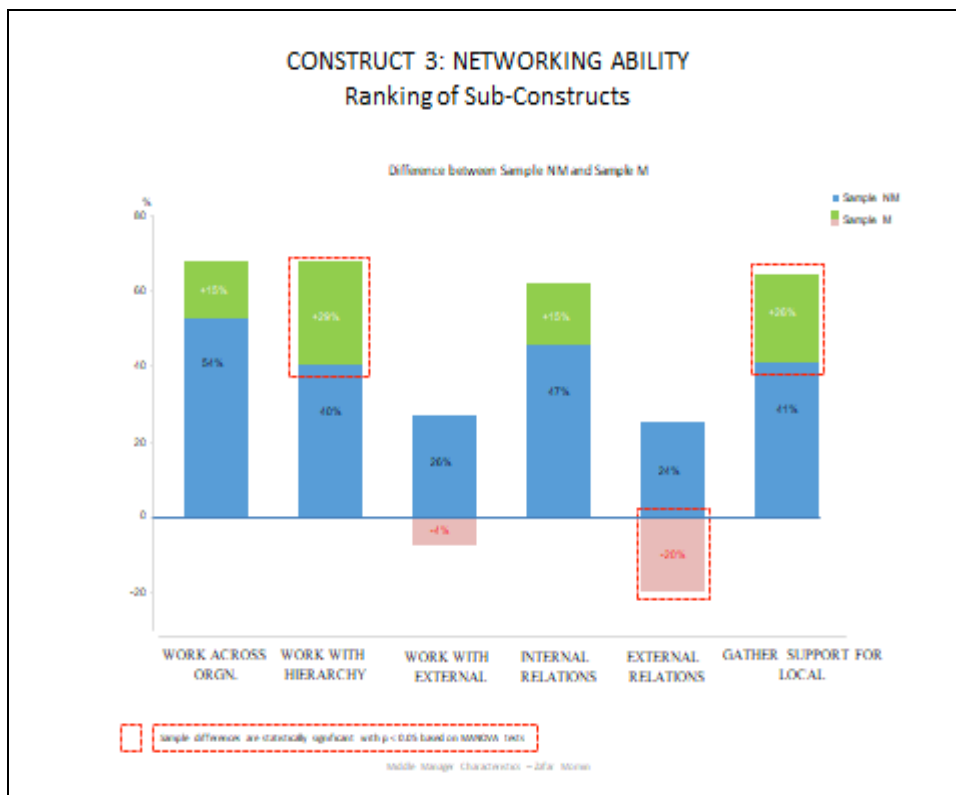


Figure 28B3



Ability to learn and adapt

There were statistically significant differences between the two samples across all the sub-constructs for this competency, except for those related to ‘adapting existing practices’ and ‘developing contingency plans’ (see Figures 28A4 and 28B4). The key difference is that MBAs see ‘tolerating ambiguity and uncertainty’ as far more relevant versus non-MBAs. Both samples are fully aligned on the ability to ‘show resilience’ in the face of unexpected outcomes as their top choices. It is understandable that MBAs may recognize tolerance of ambiguity as an important sub-construct due to their business education and working environment in larger international environments. Also, from a cultural angle, ambiguity may not be as acceptable in the non-MBA sample and hence ranked lower.

Ability to develop people

Most of the sub-constructs for this competency were aligned, except for those related to ‘managing the development of subordinates’ and ‘being role models for subordinates’ (see Figures 28A5 and 28B5). The key difference is that MBAs are stronger in their responses of their top-3 sub-constructs: ‘being role models for subordinates;’ ‘managing the development of subordinates;’ and being ‘credible in convincing them.’ The non-MBAs had less decisive differences in their responses to these sub-constructs and viewed ‘showing fairness in assignments’ as relatively more relevant third choice compared to the MBAs. ‘Supporting the emotional well-being and balance of subordinates’ was relatively ranked lower by both

Figure 28A4

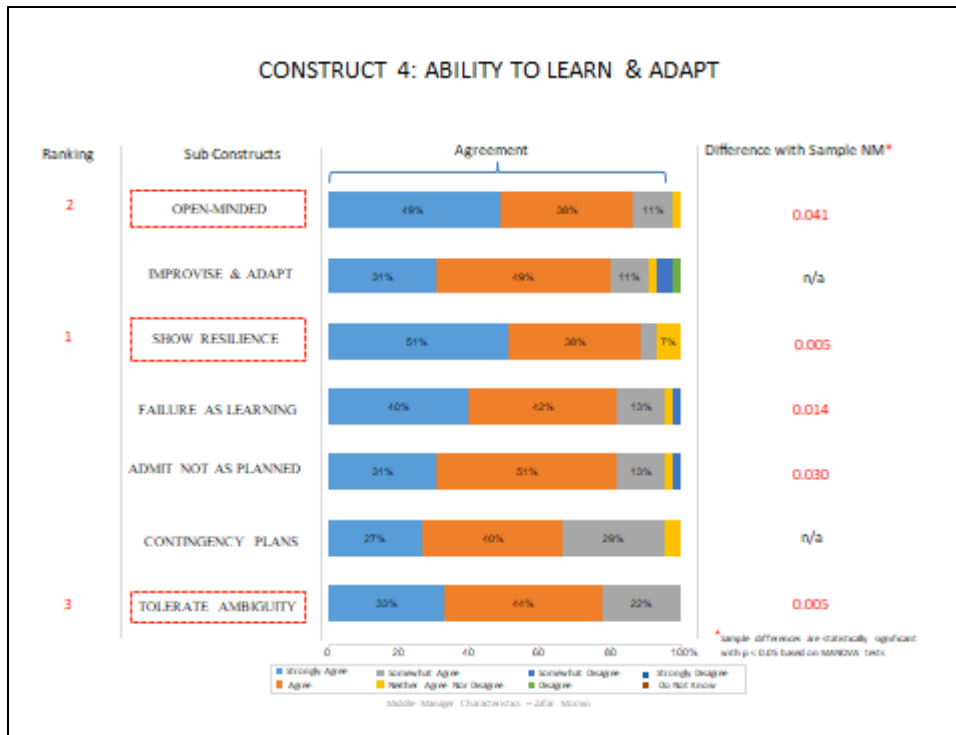


Figure 28B4

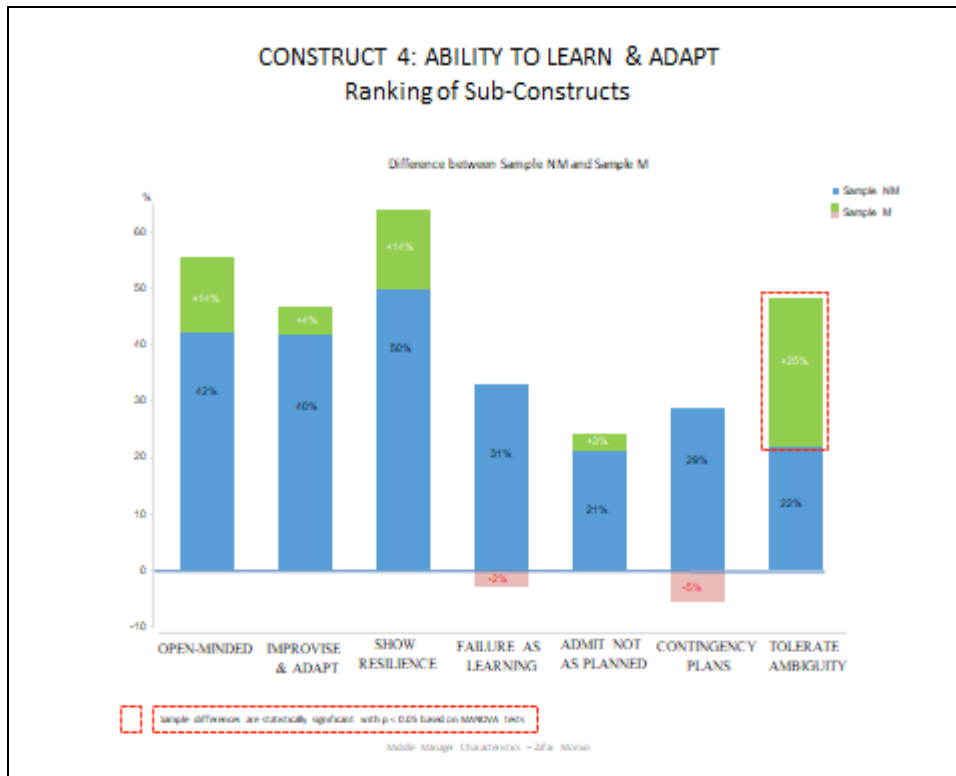


Figure 28A5

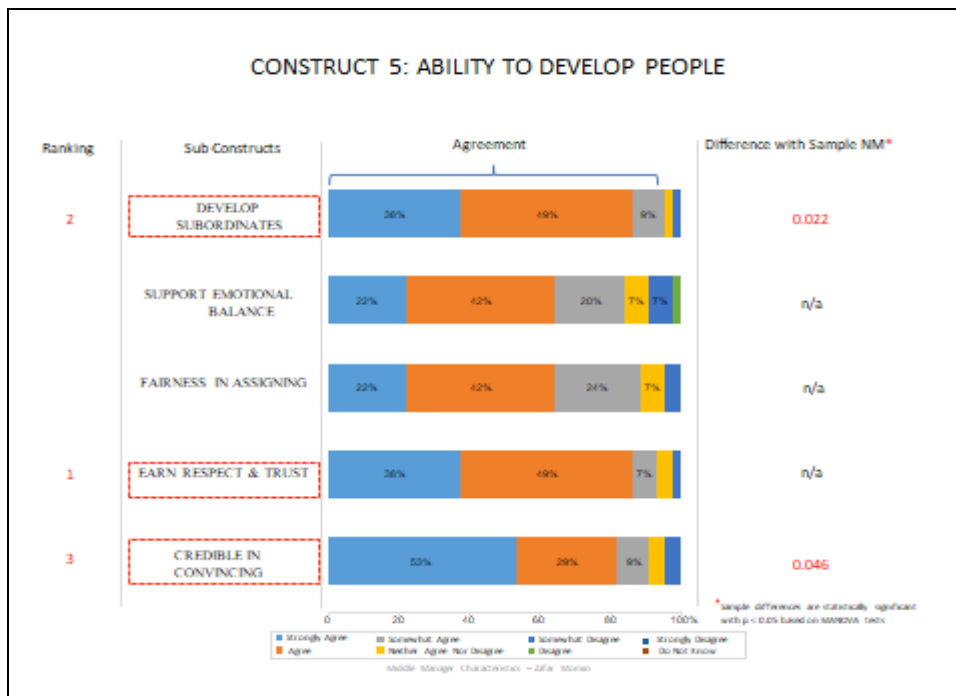


Figure 28B5



samples indicating that the being a role model and being invested in developing subordinates to ensure their success during change, and being able to convince them of imminent changes due to strategy were the priorities in terms of people development.

Hygiene factors

The MBA sample rated ‘communication skills’ significantly higher than any other sub-construct. The key take-away from the analysis on hygiene factors is that communication, consensus and commitment factors are important for both samples and MBAs rate all other factors lower than non-MBAs; however, non-MBAs also consider technical expertise as relatively an important hygiene factor. These results are illustrated in Figures 28A6-28B6

Figure 28A6

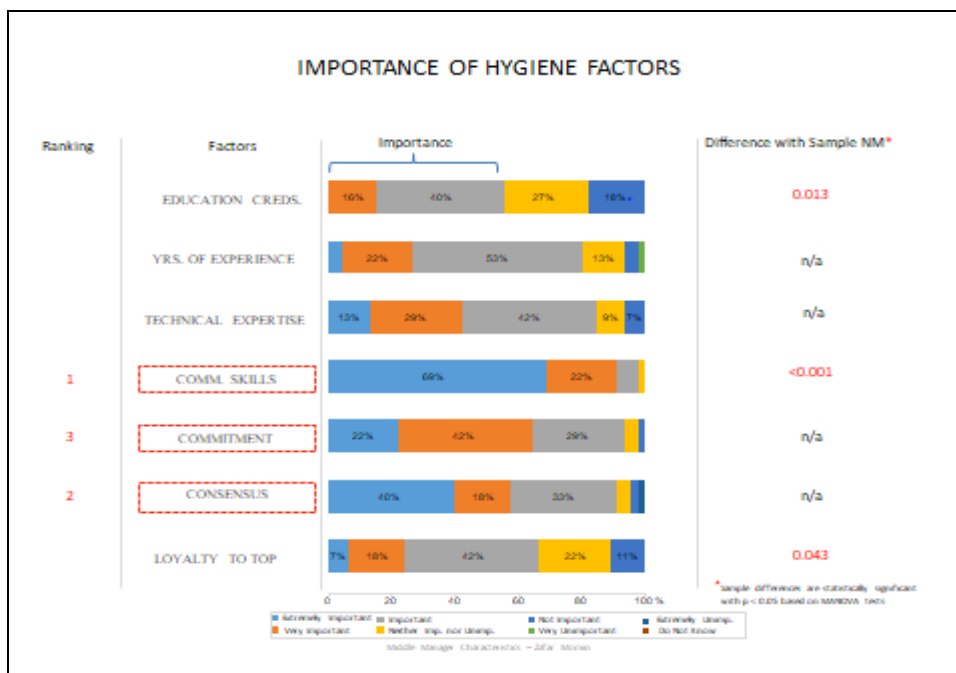


Figure 28B6

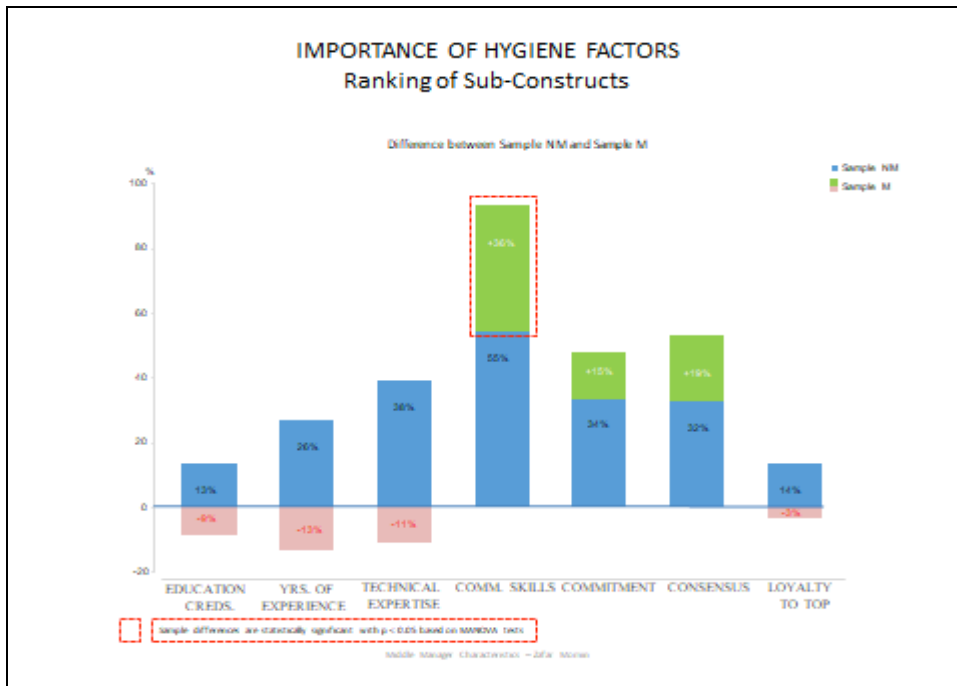


Figure 28A7

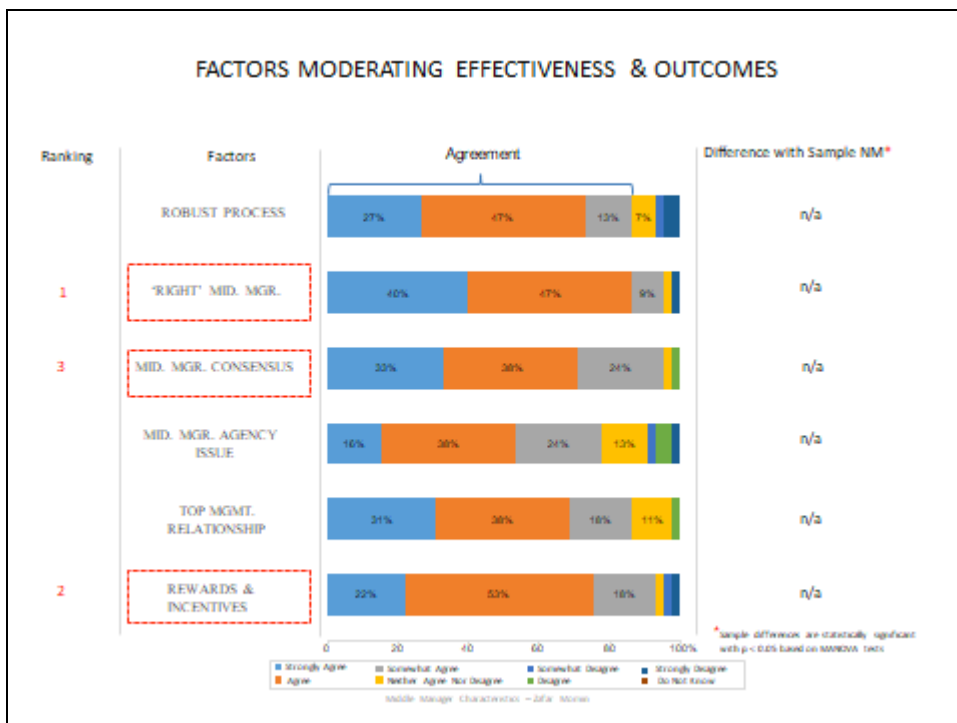
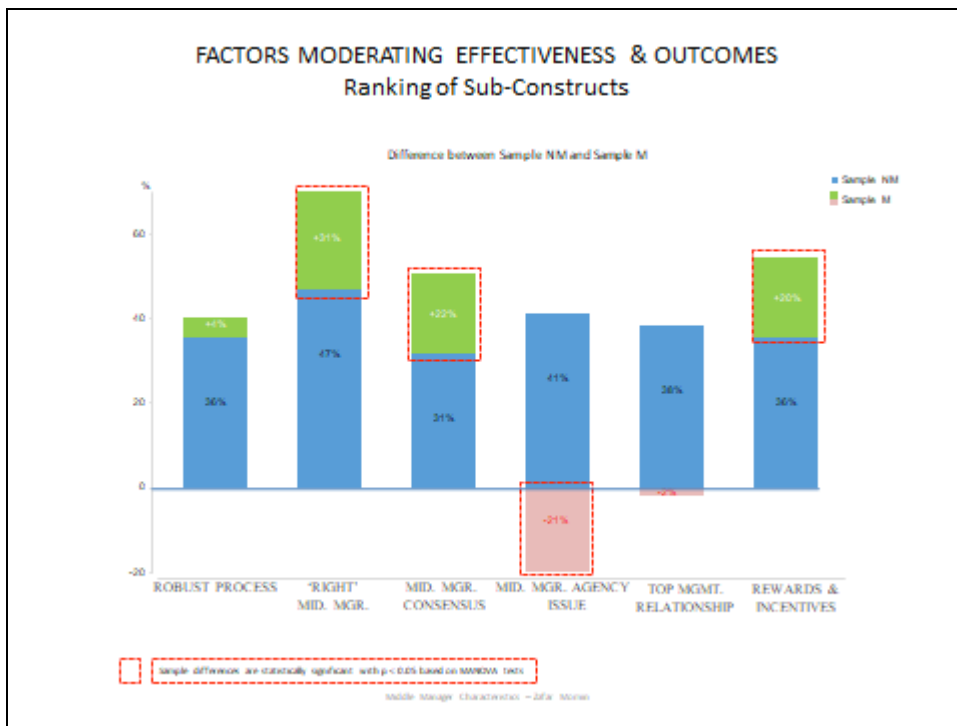


Figure 28B7



Moderating factors

There are no statistical differences in the responses to the factors affecting manager effectiveness and execution outcomes (see Figure 28A7). However, the rankings of the two samples were statistically quite significant, as shown in figure 28B7. Both samples were completely aligned on the importance of ‘selecting the right middle managers’ as the most important factor affecting executing outcomes, but MBAs rated it significantly higher. MBAs considered ‘middle manager consensus with the strategy’ and ‘rewards and incentives’ to be the next in importance, while rating the ‘agency issue of middle managers’ as very low. On the other hand, non-MBAs considered ‘middle manager agency issues’ and ‘positive relationships with top managers’ of second and third importance, respectively.

Non-MBAs may be more candid with their view on agency issues that they have observed in their working environment and one that is consistent with literature (e.g. Heracleous, 2000), while MBAs may want to believe that agency issues should not affect middle manager effectiveness. MBAs also rated rewards and incentives more highly, which is again consistent with literature (e.g. Galbraith, 1985). In contrast, non-MBAs did not rate rewards and incentives as important and may believe from their working environment (relatively smaller local and regional companies) and educational background (non-business), that they cannot influence rewards and incentives anyway. Both samples were aligned on the importance of 'having a robust middle manager selection process' and rated this in between their top and bottom choices.

Again, the MBA variable analysis was presented here as an example of the analysis to assess the impact of independent demographic variables. Similar descriptions of the analyses for the independent variables such as company size, nationality and job titles are presented in Appendices 7-9.

Chapter 7. LIMITATIONS, FUTURE RESEARCH AND CONCLUSION

7.1 Limitations of this Study

This study has several limitations, as can be expected with any research effort of this type. The primary focus of this study was middle managers and this study took diligent steps to ensure that the key subject of study in this research were indeed middle managers. However, by definition, middle management is a broad pool and one limitation of this study is that it does not sufficiently go beyond the broad middle manager definition to analyze further differences. Although this study segmented some of the middle manager responses based on reported titles or positions, it cannot be considered sufficiently detailed or robust to provide additional insights on the various layers of middle managers with different bands of job specifications.

The primary geographical focus of this study was Singapore and the majority of the respondent pool was from Singapore. This raises another limitation of this study in terms of generalization of results. Although this study did have a fair number of respondents that were non-Singaporeans or Singapore-based, it cannot be considered sufficiently broad from a geographical perspective. We do provide initial evidence that there may be differences between Singaporeans and non, but we do not have any data to compare individual country of origin, or specific geographies or groups of countries. Thus, it is impossible to develop a comprehensive or predictive theory about country of origin and their suitability for middle management roles. There are significant differences in economic development amongst the

countries, as well as significant cultural differences, and such differences could potentially alter the responses and relative rankings of the sub-constructs on the identified competencies.

A third limitation of this study stems from the fact that the study does not examine the type of role and projects that the respondent middle managers are undertaking. While this study does gather and segment respondents based on their experience in strategy implementation, it cannot directly link their responses to the projects and roles that they play in strategy execution. The roles played by middle managers are deduced from their responses. Adding this additional dimension of role and projects could raise the complexity of the survey and potentially detract from the main purpose of this study, however, it is still one of the limitations of this study.

A fourth limitation of this study is that it is unable to draw differences in population samples based on the industries that respondents work in. While this study had a balanced sample across several industries to not bias the study towards any single industry, with significantly larger sample sizes, one could better understand individual industry effects.

A fifth limitation of the study is that it identifies the five key competencies of middle managers that lead successful strategy execution, however, it does not try to account for every other competency that could be relevant. Though, the initial literature search and the interviews with CEOs and Managing Directors was an attempt to provide as comprehensive model for testing as possible. There may other competencies (e.g. analytical skills or ability to negotiate) that be closely related to these five or mutually exclusive, but this does study

focuses on the ones it believes as the most relevant competencies that provide a higher probability of successful outcomes. This study also does not address the question of whether having one competency could lead to being competent in the other. For example, it does not address the issue of whether better strategic and systems thinking ability leads to being better able to learn and adapt. For the manager looking to develop competencies in their organization it might be useful to know which are essential building blocks.

7.2 Future Research

This study, within its scope of research parameters, identifies five middle manager competencies that could raise the likelihood of successful strategy outcomes. This research builds upon previous studies and enhances our understanding of middle manager selection, roles and competencies. It also provides clear evidence of the contextual basis of the relative importance and relevance of these competencies. Further research along this line of research could provide further pragmatic guidelines for practitioners, while broadening our understanding of the middle manager pool in strategy execution.

As pointed out earlier, there are several limitations within the current scope of this study and further research can aim to address these limitations. For one, further studies focused on analyzing the layers of the middle management in further detail may provide valuable insights on the continuum of competency requirements within the middle manager pool. Furthermore, future research could also focus on the expanding our understanding of the competency requirements by conducting studies that analyze and link the roles and execution projects more tightly with the competencies. Another vector for further analysis is expanding

the geographic scope to further analyze the nationality-based dimension. It would be very useful to practitioners and academics to further assess the competency requirements and potentially their evolution from nation of origin, cultural, economic development and the level of international exposure.

Additional avenues for future research could include deeper dives into industry related effects. For example, trying to better understand the differences in middle manager competency requirements for strategy execution in industries that are more regulated versus others, or industries that have a higher rate of change (e.g. technology) versus others, or industries that are more capital intensive versus others. A related approach to this would be to more specifically examine global multinationals in these industries versus national or regional champions. For example, in the oil and gas sector, a BP versus a Petronas. Another avenue is to further investigate broadening of the five identified competencies. This could further validate the five competencies, while adding or modifying existing constructs. This could refine our understanding of middle manager competencies. This study is a necessary and useful step in the journey to provide such insights.

This study has highlighted the lack of appropriate process and rigor in the process of selecting middle managers for strategy execution. Future research could focus on understanding the underlying reasons for the this lapse in practice and seek to remedy it. Further investigation in this critical area could provide very interesting organizational insights and help develop pragmatic solutions to ensure more successful outcomes.

Finally, one could conduct further research using the competency constructs in this study and investigate the developments of potential testing methodologies to ascertain and gauge the competency as a toolkit that would be useful to organizations to apply. For decades, the strategy consulting industry has been using ‘case interviews’ with potential well-screened applicants from the top business schools to test their aptitude to succeed in consulting. This method has helped consulting companies to selectively identify applicants with the required competencies (e.g. analytical, problem-solving, working under pressure, etc.). Similarly, further research could determine the multi-faceted testing tools needed to screen and select middle manager candidates with the key competencies identified in this study.

7.3 Conclusion

This research focused on the role skills, competencies and execution abilities of middle managers because they are most influential in the successful outcome of strategy implementation, which remains a major challenge for many organizations. Core research findings highlight that many organizations lack due process and rigor and in selecting middle managers as executors of strategy and identify five key competencies of middle managers that are more likely to lead successful strategy implementation. In addition, this study provides valuable insights about middle manager profiles that exist in organizations. By segmenting middle managers based on respondent data, the study illustrates how middle manager competencies are aligned with segment personas and key demographic variables. These findings underscore that business leaders and top managers are more likely to end up with mismatched middle managers that lack the required abilities to successfully execute strategy if they do not know the competencies needed to implement strategy successfully, or

the competencies that exist in their management pool, thereby setting a course for failure from the start.

To raise the probability of achieving successful strategy execution outcomes, this study provides several practical implications for top managers.

- An organizational priority should be to develop and institutionalize robust processes for the selection of middle managers for strategy execution. The competency constructs identified in this research provide a platform to effectively conduct assessments in the selection of the right middle managers.
- Since strategic changes are inevitable and constantly occurring, it would be prudent to urgently and proactively secure a critical mass of middle managers more likely to successfully implement strategy.
- Also, it would be prudent to invest in building future executional bench-strength in the middle manager pool. Top managers could strive to create opportunities for middle managers to build competencies in action orientation, networking and people development. They could also provide training and coaching to develop abilities of middle managers in strategic thinking and learning and adaptability.
- Organizational leaders should be wary of selecting middle managers that appear to have the right credentials but may lack the competencies needed for successful strategy execution. Based on the findings of this research, such managers may have

strong credentials and speak the jargon, but lack the fundamental competencies needed to successfully implement strategy.

- Top managers should learn to better value the many intangible contributions that solid and promising middle managers (e.g. *Ideal MMs*) make to the organization. Such managers may be contributing in ways that are either not visible or visibly ‘rock the boat.’ Such managers consider executing well a higher priority than remaining on the radar of top managers. By understanding the competencies needed for successful execution, top managers may be able to better recognize, value and reward this important segment of middle managers.

This study also provides several avenues for future researchers to continue building upon our understanding of middle managers as strategy implementers. From a strategy-as-practice micro perspective, future studies can further enhance our understanding of the competency requirements for middle managers. This can be accomplished by focusing on the nuances of various middle manager layers to determine their correlation with identified competencies. Also, by capturing and broadly categorizing the types of strategy execution projects undertaken by middle managers, future studies can examine the potential variation in required middle manager competencies. Additional avenues for future research could be expanding the scope of the study to assess the impact of strategically categorized industries, or a broader set of geographies in various stages of economic development. Future research studies could also follow a macro perspective and examine practice deficiencies and potential solutions in the organizational resource selection and resource allocation processes linked to strategy execution.

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Appendix 1: IRB approval form



5 Jan 2018

Zafar Momin Lee Kong Chian School of Business

Dear Zafar (Principal Investigator) and Prof Philip Charles Zerrillo (Supervisor)

CATEGORY 1: EXEMPT FROM FURTHER IRB REVIEWtitle of Research: **Identifying the Quintessential Characteristics of Middle Managers Needed to Lead Successful Strategy Implementation**SMU-IRB Exemption Number: **IRB-17-184-E001(118)**

Thank you for your IRB application for the above research study, which we received on 18 Dec2017.

I am pleased to inform you that, based on the description of the research in your IRB application, the IRB has determined that your research is categorized as "Category 1: Exempt from Further IRB Review" and therefore does not require further IRB review or approval.

Please however note the following:

- 1 You and your research team remain responsible for conducting the research in full compliance with ethical, regulatory and legal standards for treatment of human participants as set out in the SMU-IRB policies, Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI), the SMU IRB Handbook, the Singapore Personal Data Protection Act, and any other applicable regulations. If the Principal Investigator is an SMU student, the Supervisor is responsible for ensuring that the research study is conducted in compliance with the above.
- 2 The comments in the attached IRB application and supporting materials (e.g., informed consent form, survey materials) reflect the advice that SMU IRB has provided to help ensure that your research is conducted in compliance with such ethical standards and regulations. Therefore, we strongly recommend that you implement the comments provided by the SMU-IRB prior to collecting data.
- 3 Please refer to Annex A, which presents a self-check-list of key elements of human participant protections that would typically be relevant for research categorized as Category 1: Exempt from Further IRB Review. We strongly recommend that you ensure your research confirms with all of these elements.
- 4 Please refer to Annex B to understand the criteria for Exemption and a list of the types of factors that would potentially cause a re-categorization requiring IRB approval.
- 5 If you plan to modify your research protocol in any substantive way, you must consult the SMU-IRB to determine if the research can continue to be considered as "Category 1: Exempt from Further IRB Review." To do so, submit an SMU-IRB Protocol Modification Request Form (see SMU-IRB website), together with a copy of the originally-submitted IRB application (with any modifications in tracked changes) to the SMU- IRB for review prior to implementing the modified protocol. Please see the IRB Intranet for a description of how to differentiate minor from substantive modifications.
- 6 If any adverse events or unanticipated problems involving human participants occur during the course of the research project, you must submit an SMU-IRB Unanticipated Problem Reporting Form (see SMU- IRB website) to the SMU-IRB within 24 hours of your awareness of the event.
- 7 Please use the above SMU-IRB exemption number in all your correspondence with the IRB on this research.

If at any point you have a question about the categorization of this research study, ethical or regulatory requirements relevant to the study, whether modifications to your study might require re-categorization, or any other matter, please do not hesitate to contact the IRB Secretariat at irb@smu.edu.sg or telephone +65 6828- 1925. You are also welcome to contact me directly.

Yours Sincerely,

Forrest Zhang (Chair Institutional Review Board)

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Forrest Zhang".

Appendix 2: Interview guide

Interview Guide - Semi-Structured Questionnaire

1. Can you briefly describe what sort of strategy implementation projects you have experienced during your career and what was your role in them? Please do comment on the context, magnitude, size of strategic change and how long it took to implement?
2. Did you consider these strategy projects to be successful implemented? How would you define “successful” or “effective” implementation?
3. I realize that there may be many variables and factors involved in the implementation process, but in your opinion, what were the main factors leading to the success (or failure) of the strategy implementation?
4. From these experiences, do you believe that having the “right” middle managers in leadership roles can positively influence the outcomes of the implementation? Who would be the “right” managers in your opinion?
5. What sort of professional and personal characteristics would distinguish the “right” managers from others? Can you please look at these characteristics described on the next page and comment on them? How would you rank them?
6. How did you (or your team) go about selecting the leaders and middle managers that would lead the various strategy implementation initiatives across the organization? More specifically, was there a criteria, or set of characteristics, or particular demographics that you looked for in making the selection, or was it mostly governed by hierarchy of the organization, or something else?
7. Do you believe there were sufficient guidelines, tools, expertise and prior education and training that helped you through the various stages, tasks and challenges of strategy implementation? More specifically on selection and recruitment of leaders and middle managers?
8. Are there any other points you would like to raise regarding your experiences?

Appendix 3: Survey questionnaire

SMU-IRB: Participant Information Sheet and Informed Consent Form (Online)

Title of Research Study:

Identifying the Competencies of Middle Managers Leading Successful Strategy Implementation

Principal Investigator, Title, and Affiliation: Zafar Momin, SMU PhD Candidate, Lee Kong Chian School of Business

Purpose of Research Study:

This study aims to understand competencies of middle managers that are more likely to deliver successful strategy implementation outcomes.

Study Procedures and Duration:

Participation involves an online survey, which is expected to take about around 15-20 minutes to complete. Participation in this study is entirely voluntary. You can withdraw from the study, or choose not to answer any specific questions, without penalty.

Benefits of Study:

The study is expected to contribute towards our understanding of how to positively influence strategy implementation. Specifically, what would help organizations in their selection and development of middle managers for the difficult task of successfully implementing strategy.

Possible Risks of Study:

There are no anticipated risks in this study beyond what one would typically experience in everyday life.

Confidentiality and Privacy of Research Data :

This study is entirely anonymous. Only the Principal Investigator and his/her co-investigators will have access to the raw data. Anonymized data from this study may be shared with qualified researchers or research institutions, where deemed appropriate, consistent with academic association, journal, or university policies. Any reports from this study will be done at the aggregate level, and/or with individual and company information anonymized or disguised, so that it would not be possible to identify participants or their companies.

Contact Details:

For questions/ clarifications on this study, please contact the Principal Investigator, Zafar Momin, at email address zamomin.2012@phdgm.smu.edu.sg and/or office/mobile number: +65 9818-2440. Alternatively, you can contact his supervisor, Dr Philip Zerrillo, at email address pzerrillo@smu.edu.sg and/or office number: +65-6828-0260.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding your rights as a participant in this research study and wish to contact someone unaffiliated with the research team, please contact the SMU Institutional Review Board Secretariat at irb@smu.edu.sg or + 65 68281925. When contacting SMU IRB, please provide the title of the Research Study and the name of the Principal Investigator, or quote the IRB approval number IRB-17-184-E001-M1 (218).

Participants' declaration:

I understand that participation is voluntary. Refusal to participate will involve no penalty.

I declare that I am at least 18 years of age.

I have read and fully understand the contents of this form, and hereby give consent to the Singapore Management University research team and its affiliates to collect and/or use my data for the purpose (s) described in this form.

By clicking, "I Agree" button, I consent to participate in this study and agree to all of the above.

If you do not wish to participate in the survey, you may close the browser now to exit.

1. I agree
2. I disagree [TERMINATE]

PARTICIPANT DATA

PN: DO NOT SHOW TITLE ABOVE IN THE SURVEY

ASK ALL/SC

Q1. My years of working experience

1. 0-2 [TERMINATE]
2. 3-5
3. 6-10
4. 10+

ASK ALL/SC

Q2. Number of strategy implementation projects I have been involved in during my career

1. 0 [TERMINATE]
2. 1-3
3. 4-6
4. 6+

ASK ALL/SC

Q3. From my experiences in strategy implementation, the outcomes of these efforts were typically

1. Somewhat successful
2. Successful
3. Somewhat failures
4. Failures
5. Do not know

ASK ALL/SC

Q4. Type of industry I work in

1. Aerospace/Aviation
2. Banking / Accounting / Financial Services/Insurance
3. Chemicals /Petroleum/ Plastics
4. Electronics/Engineering
5. Healthcare / Medical/ Pharmaceutical / Bio-technology
6. Logistics/ Manufacturing
7. Professional services / Consulting

1. Technology & Computer/ Telecommunications Services
2. Food & Beverages/ Restaurants [TERMINATE]
3. Others: Please specify

ASK ALL/SC

Q5. My job title is closest to one of these options

1. Owner/CEO/Partner/President [TERMINATE]
2. General Manager
3. Director
4. Senior Manager/Department Manager
5. Manager
6. Junior Manager/Supervisor/Team leader
7. First- level Supervisor [TERMINATE]
8. Executive/Senior Executive [TERMINATE]

ASK ALL/SC

Q7. My company's geographic scope of operations is

1. Local
2. Regional
3. Global

ASK ALL/SC

Q6. Approximate size of company I work in. Please specify this as the number of employees globally.

- ~~1~~ 1-50
2. 51-500 employees
- ~~3~~ 501-5000
4. 5000+

ASK ALL/SC

Q8. My highest education qualification

1. Secondary education or below [TERMINATE]
2. Diploma
3. Degree
4. Master
5. PhD

ASK ALL/SC

Q9. Nationality

1. Singapore citizen
2. Singapore Permanent Resident (SPR)
3. Singapore Expatriate
4. Other (Student, Visitor, etc.)
5. Prefer not to tell

PN: SHOW BELOW IN ONE SCREEN; ENABLE RESPONDENT TO CLICK "CONTINUE" AFTER 20 SEC
PN: KEEP THE "CONTINUE" BUTTON HIDDEN AT FIRST, SHOW IT AFTER 20 SECS

Thank you for taking this survey. We appreciate your time and effort.

This survey is a part of a study to understand how to better leverage middle management talent to implement strategy. In particular, we are researching competencies that support successful strategy implementation.

In total, completing this survey should take about 15-20 minutes. As mentioned earlier, your responses will be confidential and not linked with any specific individuals or companies.

SOME BASIC DEFINITIONS THAT WOULD BE HELPFUL WHILE TAKING THE SURVEY:

Strategy:

For our purposes, you can think of strategy as the decisions that your company makes about its future direction. For example, which products to create, or which markets to enter, or which companies to acquire, etc. A strategy could also imply transforming the company to become something different. For example, becoming more international, or more customer-centric, or more nimble and fast, or more digital, or more tech savvy, etc.

Strategy implementation (or strategy execution):

You can think of this as the process of putting the strategy into action, or translating the strategy into results. This is obviously a complex undertaking that involves many people across all parts of the company and takes a long time to accomplish. Implementing strategy typically requires making changes to the way things work.

Middle managers:

You can think of middle managers to be within management ranks that are higher than a first-level supervisor, and lower than two levels below the CEO (meaning below the CEO's direct reports). For our purposes, "CEO" could mean the top person in your organization (like Country Head, Regional Head, Divisional Head, etc.)

Local unit:

You can think about the middle manager's area of responsibility as the "local unit." It could be a group or a team within a department or function, or could be the department or function itself. It could also be a small business unit within the company.

Subordinates:

Employees who work for and report to the middle managers

PN: ASK ALL/SC PER ROW/RANDOMIZATION R1-R7

Part 1A: These set of questions ask about the middle manager's ability to go from plan to action

Please complete the questions below by indicating the degree to which you agree or disagree with each of the following statements.

	"Middle managers are more likely to be successful in leading strategy execution if they have the abilities listed below"	Strongly Agree	Agree	Somewh at Agree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Somewh at Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Do Not Know
1	Ability to get things moving quickly								
2	Ability to work with a results-oriented mindset								
3	Ability to make tough decisions								
4	Ability to challenge the status quo								
5	Ability to take risks in implementation								
6	Ability to work with whatever resources are available								
7	Ability to comprehensively analyze all options before proceeding with execution								

PN:

1. **ASK IF 4 OR MORE ATTRIBUTES SELECTED "STRONGLY AGREE/AGREE"; SHOW THE SAME ORDER AS PART 1A RANDOMIZE ORDER; MANDATORY TO SELECT 3 ANSWERS**
2. **AUTOCODE IF 3 ATTRIBUTES SELECTED "STRONGLY AGREE/AGREE";**
3. **SKIP THIS QUESTION WHEN ONLY 1 OR 2 ATTRIBUTES SELECTED "" STRONGLY AGREE/AGREE"**
4. **MASK THE ATTRIBUTES FROM PART 1A**

Part 1B:

From the following abilities that you "strongly agree" or "agree" with, please select the **three most important ones**.

1	Ability to get things moving quickly
2	Ability to work with a results-oriented mindset
3	Ability to make tough decisions
4	Ability to challenge the status quo
5	Ability to take risks in implementation
6	Ability to work with whatever resources are available
7	Ability to comprehensively analyze all options before proceeding with execution

Part 2A: These set of questions ask about the middle manager's abilities to understand the overall strategy of the company and what it means for the local unit

Please complete the questions below by indicating the degree to which you agree or disagree with each of the following statements.

	"Middle managers are more likely to be successful in leading strategy execution if they have the abilities listed below"	Strongly Agree	Agree	Somewh at Agree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Somewh at Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Do Not Know
1	Ability to understand the company's strategic direction								
2	Ability to conceptualize and visualize how to convert the strategy into action								
3	Ability to interpret what the company's strategy means at a local unit level								
4	Ability to link the role of the local unit with the rest of the organization								
5	Ability to influence the company's overall strategy								

PN: ASK ALL/SC PER ROW/RANDOMIZATION R1-R6

Part 3A: These set of questions ask about the middle manager's ability to network effectively across organizational boundaries

Please complete the questions below by indicating the degree to which you agree or disagree with each of the following statements.

	"Middle managers are more likely to be successful in leading strategy execution if they have the abilities listed below"	Strongly Agree	Agree	Somewh at Agree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Somewh at Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Do Not Know
1	Ability to effectively work across organizational boundaries (e.g. departments, functions, business units)								
2	Ability to effectively work with the company hierarchy (e.g. top managers, divisional presidents, etc.)								
3	Ability to effectively work with external parties (e.g. suppliers, outsourcing partners, strategic partners)								
4	Ability to build a network of good relationships inside the organization								
5	Ability to build a network of good relationships outside the organization								
6	Ability to gather support for implementing strategy at local unit								

PN: ASK ALL/SC PER ROW/RANDOMIZATION R1-R7

Part 4A: These set of questions ask about the middle manager's abilities to learn and adapt

Please complete the questions below by indicating the degree to which you agree or disagree with each of the following statements.

	"Middle managers are more likely to be successful in leading strategy execution if they have the abilities listed below"	Strongly Agree	Agree	Somewh at Agree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Somewh at Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Do Not Know
1	Ability to be open-minded to learn new knowledge and skills								
2	Ability to improvise and adapt existing practices at local unit, where needed								
3	Ability to recover quickly (or show resilience) in the face of unexpected outcomes								
4	Ability to treat failure as a learning opportunity								
5	Ability to admit when something did not go as planned								
6	Ability to develop viable contingency plans								
7	Ability to tolerate ambiguity and uncertainty								

PN: ASK ALL/SC PER ROW/RANDOMIZATION R1-R5

Part 5A: These set of questions ask about the middle manager's abilities to support and develop subordinates during strategy execution

Please complete the questions below by indicating the degree to which you agree or disagree with each of the following statements.

	"Middle managers are more likely to be successful in leading strategy execution if they have the abilities listed below"	Strongly Agree	Agree	Somewh at Agree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Somewh at Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Do Not Know
1	Ability to manage the development of subordinates through the process of executing strategy								
2	Ability to support the emotional balance and well-being of subordinates through the process of executing strategy								
3	Ability to show fairness in assigning jobs and responsibilities during strategy execution								
4	Ability to earn the respect and trust of subordinates as a "role model"								
5	Ability to be credible in convincing subordinates of the required strategic changes								

PN: ASK ALL/SC PER ROW/RANDOMIZATION R1-R7

Part 6A: These set of questions ask about some additional middle manager characteristics and competencies

Please complete the questions below by indicating the degree to which you think that it is important or unimportant with each of the following statements.

	"How important are the factors below for middle managers who are more likely to be successful in strategy execution?"	Extremely Important	Very Important	Important	Neither Important Nor Unimportant	Not Important	Very Unimportant	Extremely Unimportant	Do Not Know
1	Relevant education credentials								
2	Relevant years of experience								
3	Relevant technical expertise needed								
4	Good communications skills								
5	Strong commitment to the company								
6	Consensus with the strategy being implemented								
7	Loyalty to the top leadership								

Part 7A: These set of questions ask about other factors that may affect the effectiveness of middle managers in strategy implementation

Please complete the questions below by indicating the degree to which you agree or disagree with each of the following statements.

	<i>"The strategy implementation is more likely to be successful if the following situation exists"</i>	Strongly Agree	Agree	Somewh at Agree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Somewh at Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Do Not Know
1	Top management has a robust process for selecting middle managers to lead strategy implementation								
2	Local unit middle managers that are selected to lead strategy implementation have the "right" abilities								
3	Local unit middle managers agree with the strategy being implemented								
4	Local unit middle managers believe that the strategy being implemented is personally beneficial for them								
5	Local unit middle managers have positive relationships with top management								
6	Middle managers are awarded the appropriate rewards and incentives in line with their performance	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■

Appendix 4: Transcribed interview notes

Transcribed Interviews (C-Level Executives)

Vehicle Co. - Automotive

1. Can you briefly describe what sort of strategy implementation projects you have experienced during your career and what was your role in them? Please do comment on the context, magnitude, size of strategic change and how long it took to implement?

*I have been involved in different strategy implementation projects during my career. There are definitely projects that stick out in terms of intensity. Basically, two big ones that I was involved in when I was at Vehicle Co. - **one was in Vehicle Co. North America for Order To Delivery ('OTD')** and the other one was in **Vehicle Co. Europe for Project Oly**, it was a big strategic project to get Vehicle Co. Europe back to profitability (which never really happened). The OTD was basically reshaping the customer facing sales organization all the way back to the procurement organization into one chain.*

*These were large scale projects and I played a small part in them. Since the projects were huge, they had significant consultants, groups, **6-10 teams** within the overall project which were responsible for individual things.*

Like in Project Oly in Europe, there was a finance team, sales team etc. Each one was charged with a set of objectives ideally at a top strategic level.

*With OTD, it was on a geographical functional level. There was one OTD team each for North America, Europe, Asia, and Latin America. This was also a global project. The objective was slightly different depending on the nature of the work but to get things going (since it was a big organization) - **from concept selling and getting approvals from strategy board required 6-8 months and then the project ran for several years** since it was large scale project with complex changes in different parts of the organization, functions, systems (significant amount of IT system), and organizational structure.*

In terms of organizational structure, we created a head of OTD and at one point I was the head of North America of OTD. But at the same time, under me, theoretically, there were head of outbound logistic and inbound logistics. Theoretically, it was a reporting relationship but practically it was more of a conflictive role and more of negotiation/discussion rather than direct and act role which slowed down things.

2. Did you consider these strategy projects to be successfully implemented? How would you define “successful” or “effective” implementation?

*I would say **neither of the projects was truly successful**. One of them (the OTD) was in a sense more successful.*

In this, I did manage to restructure the organization into something more responsive. Though it didn't come anywhere near to achieving the goal (we can talk about that later), but it did set up the organization in a way it is now (15 years later) which is much more intense, focused on profitability rather than market share.

Just to illustrate, one of the big things of the original project failure was that we compressed the order to delivery, but when pushed into shelf, sales cycle slowed down and there was a huge push back in the inventory.

3. I realize that there may be many variables and factors involved in the implementation process, but in your opinion, what were the main factors leading to the success (or failure) of the strategy implementation?

*In terms of the factors that negatively impacted the strategy implementation, I think in both the cases, **the organization was so large; there were a lot of embedded cost structures**.*

*So for instance when we say we want to create delivery organization that cuts across manufacturing, procurement and logistics, the sales people said they might give up some power, but nobody ever gave up, so we still have marketing division with significant power and people might leapfrog you and go to CEO and complain about things. **So there was a power structure**. In a sense it was creating a new organization where we still had to run the existing business and **we could not overnight change the entire structure**.*

*In the other example of Europe, it was not very strong and it was very clear that we wanted to make the organization more profitable, it was not just about changing the organization structure but more about how we do our business better. **It was the same people who were responsible but it was just that they had more interactions**.*

4. **From these experiences, do you believe that having the “right” middle managers in leadership roles can positively influence the outcomes of the implementation? Who would be the “right” managers in your opinion?**

The middle managers do play a significant role. At the top level, the strategic eight pointers were very high level. But it had to be converted into actionable strategies. So for instance if a scheduling guy works with my Director, he has to understand how we schedule, how the order has to be delivered in certain number of days. So there needs to be commitment.

In most cases, people saw reasonable value in the objectives. But in Vehicle Co., there is always tremendous skepticism because they have been through many changes as every time a new CEO comes in, there are new strategic plans.

There was a lot of discussion about what is the right thing to do. To give an example, we sequence the cars based on paint to coat. So we developed a sequence in North America and we went to Europe (again the same OTD organization) and told them that it works very well, you may want to implement. However, they did not adhere to it and the Germans developed an advanced order sequence. Had it been in the smaller organization, there would be no duplication. This kind of slowed down things.

5. **What sort of professional and personal characteristics would distinguish the “right” managers from others? Can you please look at these characteristics described on the next page and comment on them? How would you rank them?**

*In hindsight, you look for good people. Given the large size of Vehicle Co., in hindsight I would have looked for **people who have a bigger network**. So you might have had people who are doing a good job but their ability to sell it, their ability to work in a broader organization may be just missing. Just like I gave you the example on sequencing, they could not sell it to Germans because they did not have the relationship and it was a brand new thing. In another instance, if you were trying to sell it to CLT division, they may question it considering it doesn't impact their sale but just reduced your order time. But had it come from someone they trusted and had credibility, it would have been lot easier.*

Also, since our strategy was radical in terms of target, comprehension was not a problem. If I would have told that we are going to do block chain, 90% would have said that we have read about it but we don't know what it is. But here everyone was clear what lead time, inventory etc. are, but the targets were too radical. So everyone understood strategic objective and its rationale. But the question was if we want to get there, what is the best way we do it?

Further, learning from failure and adaptability is important. But you may face some problem mainly in large organization. For instance, if everyone was communicated that the inventory were to be reduced by 40%, but now you find that it makes sense to reduce it to 20%, so you have to sell this thing to a broad spectrum of people who have a 40% number stuck in their head and who might come back to you saying that are you changing it to 20% because you are slacking in your target. So effectively change in midstream is difficult in a large organization especially if you are saying that it was one of our main objectives.

Action orientation is important and is a tough one. In a large organization, your networking ability impacts your ability to get action. There is a lot of inertia and reluctance and unwillingness to take risk (i.e. whether I will be left holding the ball).

System and strategic thinking are important but it also depends on the position and role of the middle manager. If the person is in an operational role, it's about buy-in and then becoming action oriented. You require strategic thinkers. Ability to make sense of the strategy and ability to visualize and convert strategy into action is one which I have concern about. The middle management of the organization I was working with were very resilient People development is also very important. More than people development, I think it's about how do I keep my people happy. While there may be some level of anxiety but how do I not let it get out of control and keep the job satisfactory is important.

In addition to this, in a lot of this strategy implementation projects, you are taking people out of the silos to broad organization. So it is important to have that skill to be able to work out of comfort zone. While you have technical skills and structural breaks, but now you are required to coordinate everything. It's a combination of the two i.e. system thinking and learning ability. For instance, in order to build confidence across levels and boundaries, we

created 'Creativity Teams'. We took people from procurement, supply chain, finance etc. and put them together to ensure they have a support network.

6. How did you (or your team) go about selecting the leaders and middle managers that would lead the various strategy implementation initiatives across the organization?

Honestly, my North American OTD team had 200 people and it was a totally newly created organization.

When you pull the people, there are whole different lot of things. One is that you get some people from within organization since you cannot hire 200 people. So may be 10% people would come from consulting but the remaining 90% will come from within the organization. So for that 90%, we reach out within the organization.

*One extreme could be that the organization may have **a person who is talented, has a good track record and can demonstrate that he can grow in a new role.** The other extreme could be that the organization has **a terrible person who has to be driven out.** So can this person be moved out this way? Overall, there is not much leeway. **Further, it also depends on availability.** So may be 6-7 persons out of this 200 people went on international assignments and we did not have anything lined up for them. So they were absorbed. **So we didn't really have a blind sheet, internet start-up type of capability.***

*But we would tell what kind of technical skills we were looking for. For instance, if we went to R&D team and said we wanted this skillset, they gave us 4-5 people. **And to a large extent it also depends on the individual because in some cases it was given as a choice and not mandated.** In general, it was a mix bag of 200 people. So, if I had to see it from hiring perspective, may be of those 200 people, I would have hired at least 2/3 of them.*

7. Are there any other points you would like to raise regarding your experiences?

Strategy implementation is a whole different world in smaller organization. *Smaller organization like start-ups have the luxury of picking people based on people skills and their ability to change. In a larger organization if you were doing delivery audit based on lead time reduction and you have a website designer, you would never put him to that job because he doesn't fit into that job characteristic. But a start-up may give a chance to that person.*

In smaller organizations, you can have people quickly on board and if everybody is there with you, you can quickly pull in. It's a less of challenge in terms of strategic implementation. Realistically, most of the times we are not asking people to do anything out of their comfort zone.

Big Co. – Information Technology

1. **Can you briefly describe what sort of strategy implementation projects you have experienced during your career and what was your role in them? Please do comment on the context, magnitude, size of strategic change and how long it took to implement?**

*I was in Big Co. Corporate Strategy basically looking at entire portfolio of Big Co.'s business in 3 buckets: **H1 are regular businesses that are already growing and have reached a maturity level**, so the amount of investment that is required is not much; **H2 are more growth businesses that are already established and proven but have tremendous opportunity to grow**; **H3 are more emerging businesses**, the model has not been fleshed out but the progress is significant. So, I was in the strategy team that was focusing on H3 businesses for Big Co. We have a portfolio of **15-20 new business opportunities**. We call them NewOps. The Senior Vice President was driving these NewOps. There were 20 of them and at that time it covered life science, pervasive computing, mobile computing, autonomous computing, and artificial intelligence.*

Since it was very difficult to predict which one of these businesses will take off, the idea was to make small bets in different business opportunities and have a milestone based process to measure how these businesses were progressing. There were many uncertainties' like market risk, technology risk etc. We also had a process of actually killing projects. So, from 20, we only had 3 or 4 that survived which became very large and were migrated from H3 to H2.

For instance, life science business got merged into healthcare business of Big Co. and not only pharmaceutical or biotech companies but also regional healthcare businesses that Big Co. is already serving became growth point for healthcare business.

Pervasive computing business – Big Co. decided not to get into device and basically lost out. It was a bad decision. Also, they didn't enter mobile business because it was a strategic blunder. Then the autonomous computing was way before its time because the technology was not there for AI and machine learning.

So of the 20 projects, 4-5 went into much later stages of which only 1 one made it and is now a part of H2. So I was part of the team that was looking at processes and measures to track H3 investments of Big Co.

2. Did you consider these strategy projects to be successfully implemented? I realize that there may be many variables and factors involved in the implementation process, but in your opinion, what were the main factors leading to the success (or failure) of the strategy implementation?

Big Co. did not have the right culture to nurture the talent and leadership required to build these businesses.

*One of the things we tried to do was to give greater autonomy to General Managers of these businesses but even with that, **the corporation was measuring with the wrong metrics**. When you invest in a start-up, one does not have much expectation of revenue, so when the business case was brought forward to hire management for nurturing these businesses, the yardstick/measurement processes got into the way. So we tried to redefine the metrics and educate the 'powers to be' to look at the businesses in slightly different context and I think we tried to get learning's from PG Co. (they had done some work in this area) and many other companies had done similar work where they had big businesses but were to invest in small risky ventures. So we developed a process, but the **biggest inhibitor was the internal mind-set of the people running the company and their unwillingness to change**.*

*They were **unable to trust people brought from outside** (they did bring people from outside to run businesses) and did not give them enough leeway. So things got throttled and stifled and lot of opportunities went by the side. There was even a project on social computing (before social network) but they could not figure out how to make money from it, so they killed it. This was kind of premature which has now become the biggest opportunity.*

The yardstick used for measuring business potential was traditional yardstick and you could not use traditional yardsticks for such businesses. We even had a team that studies VC's and tried to bring their learning's and figure out how they operate. But it is very hard to convert a corporate manager to VC mind-set as VC mind-set is very different. The VC mind-set is basically his money and his skin in game. Corporate guy is career executive and his skin is never in the game.

Let's say you decide to invest in X, you need to create a strategy, business model, organization culture for it. We actually had one week workshop at top B-School to understand how to build all this. Once this exercise was over, then we actually had to get a

leader to run this plan. The decision to how to get the leader was flawed as the person at the top would appoint someone they already knew from past network. So now this person may not be an entrepreneur. He may be a Big Co. employee who might be good at job but does not have entrepreneurial mind-set. And then he hires his other people.

So although they have everything in theory, but when they implement it, only 1 out of 20 things succeed. It was not that market opportunity was not there, but they didn't have the autonomy.

- 3. What sort of professional and personal characteristics would distinguish the “right” managers from others? Can you please look at these characteristics described on the next page and comment on them? How would you rank them?**

*H1 guys are traditional career managers. They are **people who understand operations and naturally drive operational excellence.** They are more visionaries and less politically shrewd. They are **more direct and can take risk.** They don't mind upsetting people and breaking the glass which can actually upset the corporate guys.*

In a company like Big Co., the guys who run Big Co. are traditional corporate managers who are not like VC's. So the guys who break the glass will always have conflict with founders/who run business. So in end, they would not put glass breakers but the guys who are similar to them.

*In terms of the five characteristics, my point is that these things are all there you need for H3 business. So when you get a person, you go by traditional yardsticks and this is where there is a mismatch is strategy formulation and implementation. In my experience, Big Co. has all this information and teams of people (at least 50 and some top consultants) who have perfected these things. **But when they picked up guys for pervasive computing, the decision was driven by trust than by these characteristics.** Even the picking of the current CEO is like that. In fact, you don't want people with a mind-set that they have to have people to do what they are told. In fact they have to have people who have mind-set of how am I going to make these 10 people who process the loan (in context of a banking example which was discussed during the interview) understand why they need to do it.*

- 4. How did you (or your team) go about selecting the leaders and middle managers that would lead the various strategy implementation initiatives across the organization?**

*I think they had a good idea in terms of the competencies which are needed in theory. They had a lot of people and consultants to tell them what are the skillset needed for H1, 2, 3 business. So they knew what they needed for H3 businesses **but they injected personal biases which made the process sub-optimal.** Though it was a committee driven decision but it was committee for H1 making decision for H3. Similar to the example of the guy who ran the pervasive computing business though he was not a risk taker. The only reason he was appointed was that the people above him had a comfort feeling that he would report back, he would do a good job and their investment will be well protected.*

So just like when you go and buy the property, you want to hire a person to manage the property. So you will hire a person whom you can trust and not a random guy. If your vision for the property is to build a mall, the trusted guy may not be able to execute the vision because he is biased in a certain way (due to lack of ability etc.).

They want people with trust as they are putting in tremendous amount of capital at risk while they are making these big decisions. The most important thing in implementing strategy is appointing the right leader.

5. Are there any other points you would like to raise regarding your experiences?

No, this is it. From my perspective, one might have all the metrics and theoretical understanding but you may not internalize it due to inherent bias, or the objectivity that may be needed for pure transformational efforts.

Fund Co. – Private Equity

1. **Can you briefly describe what sort of strategy implementation projects you have experienced during your career and what was your role in them? Please do comment on the context, magnitude, size of strategic change and how long it took to implement?**

*The most relevant one probably at the moment would be our (Fund Co.) recent investment in a hospital group locally. One of the things we are trying to implement is an expansion strategy (we call it a **2020 strategy**).*

*At the moment we have **10 hospitals** and we want to grow it to **40 hospitals by 2020**. Last year this company brought a few investors including us and the company has plans to go public this year. It was supposed to put together a growth plan and strategy leading up to 2020 efforts.*

With this comes a lot of big and small goals and all are supposed to be consistent with each other. Bigger goals are like growing up to x number of beds by x years, be in x number of cities, have x number of centres of excellence etc. Along with this, you also need to implement IT strategy, operations strategy etc. Given this is a hospital company and owners are primarily medical professionals, what they do best is take care of the hospital. They are naturally inclined towards ensuring that quality of medical care is top notch given that all founders are ex-practicing doctors. They are therefore inclined to ensure QC is quite strong. However, other things like systems, processes, book keeping, accounting, legal, HR etc. can get neglected. So considering they are going to go for IPO, a lot of things have to be shaped. We are very much eyeball deep in getting the back of house stuff in our 2020 strategy.

*We have strong plans to tackle our strategy in future but the biggest gaps comes in terms of quality of people specially the middle management. I think a common problem faced by companies in Asia is a dearth in quality of middle management. There is also **an issue of culture of the organization which is quite old school** – they don't fire people, people tend to stay 20-30 years, become very comfortable and complacent. As a result, when a big strategy comes up, they just don't want to keep up as they are very used to the work they did in past. If you try to whip them, they refuse to move. I have done everything from cajoling and screaming but nothing works. Even if you dangle a carrot for them, it may also not work because of the culture. There is no punitive action for what you do which becomes a big*

issue. I would therefore identify these two gaps as the biggest one with respect to what I am doing at the moment.

2. Did you consider these strategy projects to be successfully implemented?

Some strategy implementation projects have worked while others have not.

3. I realize that there may be many variables and factors involved in the implementation process, but in your opinion, what were the main factors leading to the success (or failure) of the strategy implementation?

*One thing that is important is **buy-in from all the stakeholders**. So we had buy-in from top but not from other guys. At one point we were managing 100 million dollar and a headcount of 120 people. A similar PE Fund in Indonesia brought a company and was also managing 500 million dollar and a headcount of 30 people. This was one of the root causes of the problem we were facing with our budget as our overhead was over the roof and we could not match with the fee to cover the overhead. So the partnership got together and worked out things. The entire strategy was led by the CEO who wanted a collection of best talent that we could find in Indonesia regardless of the cost. He was striving for this. We wanted a bigger fund but the number of people was to be directly proportional to that. **So the head of the fund basically went his own way and forced it upon rest to just follow him. While we were all partners and had our own votes, but there was no buy-in.** So we were not able to balance our budget as the buy-in was not sincere despite all of us signing to it. **I think verbally and on the surface, there was congruence in terms of goals but when pushed onto shelf, many people strayed from it.***

***I think commitment to the main strategy is important.** Since we had drawn the roadmap for strategy, it involved a lot of nasty paths. But we had to take the people through it. So while everyone understood it, but at certain point where it became difficult, people bailed out and reverted to more comfortable way of doing things which was status quo in their mind. Since all partners did not have same no. of share, the people who were not committed to the efforts had some of the highest no. of votes. So they were able to usurp the whole strategy. Then we were faced with a situation where rest of the organization was going in one way and someone would try to hijack or divert the direction of the company.*

*So for a good strategy to work, you have to be **true to yourself, realistic about what you can do and what you can't, it should be actionable, and you should know your strengths. A lot of strategies fail because they are too idealistic.** The more people you involve in strategy process and the more inputs you get and incorporate, the more sense of ownership and commitment will be there from people.*

*So in an ideal world, everyone from top to bottom has a say in the strategy. I remember a quote, **'Make sure you get right people on bus and it will determine where the bus goes'**. Something like this could work in organization where you have amazing people from top to bottom, where everyone is committed, smart and cares. Everyone would want to participate and have their voices heard. **So in a place like the hospital group, you want them to tell you what are the problems with your strategy but if you let them determine the strategy, we wouldn't get anywhere. But still the participative way of doing things has to be considered.***

- 4. From these experiences, do you believe that having the “right” middle managers in leadership roles can positively influence the outcomes of the implementation? Who would be the “right” managers in your opinion?**

Middle managers are super important for strategy to work. I think willingness to work, average degree of smartness, and discipline is required. Also, good work ethics are important as people take it for granted. So in our case, the customer facing side of strategy (i.e. doctors) is going well but it's the back of house part of the strategy (professionals like accountants, HR, technicians) where we are facing problems.

*I think people understand the big picture (grand 2020 strategy), however how it connects to what they are doing today and the sense of urgency is not something they are able to absorb. For instance, we break our work into milestone. The first immediate milestone is the completion of 2017 audit. So what does that mean for individual people? So the shareholders register has to be maintained and completed correctly. Doing detective work for last 30 years to ensure that things provided to investors are correct includes a lot of efforts on behalf of the management as they are the key personnel for data. **They know this but because of lack of culture, commitment, bad work ethics, and the urgency is not there and they leave for home at 4'o clock. There is no comprehension of deadlines as there is no punitive action.***

Whenever I have tried to elevate the problem to a founder who is director level in the company, I think there was not much of commitment to get things done. They understand the urgency but they don't want to walk boat too much. We (the investors) who are newer to the organization are not interested in rocking the boat too much because we don't have much attachment to the people. And in some cases, it works effectively this way because we are actually the bad guys.

- 5. What sort of professional and personal characteristics would distinguish the “right” managers from others? Can you please look at these characteristics described on the next page and comment on them? How would you rank them?**

*Since I am neck deep in the current strategy project and considering my challenges, I would say **action orientation, ability to learn and adapt, and breaking through walls** are very important. If a guy can learn and adapt but is not able to bridge across department, he will know where the problem is and would eventually seek help. He might not have the skill set but he would know from where he can get that. **In our situation, system thinking and networking can be supplemented by us. But if I had the luxury to choose the managers, I will pick all the 5 skills.***

- 6. Are there any other points you would like to raise regarding your experiences?**

I feel that a lot of CEOs jobs should be about communicating to people below whether it is evangelizing your message, direction, strategy, big goals or communicating the objectives. It is basically about understanding what makes each person tick and having compassion can make a big difference. People can act differently to different stimuli.

Global Spirits Co. – Consumer Products

1. **Can you briefly describe what sort of strategy implementation projects you have experienced during your career and what was your role in them? Please do comment on the context, magnitude, size of strategic change and how long it took to implement?**

*I have handled many strategy implementation projects like **branding, launching new products, and driving the distribution channels**. Every project was integrated together. All these strategies were targeted towards growing the business.*

Branding is basically growing the business in longer run. New product launch is both short term and long term. However, when you launch the product, you need a channel to seep and grow your product. So everything is connected.

2. **Did you consider these strategy projects to be successfully implemented? How would you define “successful” or “effective” implementation?**

The projects have been a mix of success and failure as there are many brands within the company. So some brands were successful and some were not that successful.

*One of the factors contributing towards the success of the brand is a good strategy. But good strategy is only a part of the formula. **So you may have a good strategy, but you will need excellent execution.***

*Most of the MNC's have a good strategy but fail in execution. **Many of the local companies are very good at execution as compared to MNCs as they don't know the local context.** They are only successful if they have the right local talent. They are good at strategy formulation because they learn from other markets and know that this is the right strategy. But to be successful in local market, you need to modify your strategy and the only local people with good talent can do this.*

We had both local people, regional and global people for our strategies. But most of the brands are successful based on the local talent. If you follow everything globally without local influence, then you would definitely fail. Though our brands are global, but who builds the brand globally? It is the company that builds the brand and not the brand that builds the company. When I joined an established brand, it was a failure despite being a big brand

globally – it is because of the people. **So it is the people in a company who build the business and people who build the business are your customers.**

When I talk about local people, it includes all levels. The top people (executive level) will draft the strategy. If the top people are the right people, you will have a good strategy. But the good strategy can't be successful if the lower and middle people cannot execute it.

I think strategies are both sequential and interactive. *If we have a top down approach, it will only give you the direction. So what we do is that we have regional or global direction but the person who really drafts the technical part is actually interactive. A lot of strategies sound good and are fancy but cannot be executed. I will give you an example of my company; GoodVodka has a global direction for the launch of a mixer drink. The problem is that selling vodka is already a challenge and now you are forcing people to drink a mixer of vodka. First of all, people may not drink vodka and now you are trying to sell a mixer drink. So there are 2 different variables. It's similar to forcing people in Thailand who eat rice to now have spaghetti. This is not possible. This is an example of where strategy would not fit into local context. So it is important that global level needs to listen as you do not know the local market in and out.*

- 3. From these experiences, do you believe that having the “right” middle managers in leadership roles can positively influence the outcomes of the implementation? Who would be the “right” managers in your opinion?**

*You have to look at the strengths of the person. If the person is a builder, you send him to build a market. If the person is a connector, he can run a business that is already established but cannot build a business. However, if you send builder, once he builds a business there will be no more challenge for him. So a builder is a person who is **entrepreneurial, decision maker, risk taker, problem solver and has to manage people.***

- 4. What sort of professional and personal characteristics would distinguish the “right” managers from others? Can you please look at these characteristics described on the next page and comment on them? How would you rank them?**

*If you are going to a new market, you have to **quickly learn and adapt**. You need to be very **open minded to new things and culture**. But your past success cannot guarantee future success.*

***You have to have strategic thinking if you are going to new market**. You need to know what is attributable to success. You need to visualise what you need to do to be successful in next 5 years. Without this, you cannot work on it. **If you have the ability to visualize, you can draft your strategies**. The clearer you visualise, the clearer are your plans. **So strategic thinking is forward looking**. Execution is a tactical part whereas strategy is directional (what you want to achieve). Tactical in the sense you need to know what resources you need, what to do, whom to approach. **Strategic thinking for me is primarily victory assurance**. **Individuals also need to demonstrate initiative and we need to motivate them**.*

***Networking is primarily the charming part (discussed later)**. In the future, it is not about company to company, but it is about who has a better network. Without network, you will be the one against hundred companies and you cannot fight the network. So networking is very critical. **People development is the area where most companies fail**. I do a lot of consulting for this part. Lot of small and medium companies grow by way of profits and cash flows but their people are never the core. **So once they grow to a certain level, there is a big gap because without people capability you cannot grow further**.*

When I interview my team, I have my senior managers (a team of 4 persons) and in beginning I get involved with them to tell them that this is what I want and this is what I am looking for. After interviewing 20-30 people, they will filter out 4-5 people based on the criteria (discussed later) and then I interview these 4-5 people personally. If I let my people hire, I also ask them to fire themselves. So I think the very first step is selecting the right persons, it is complex but it's is most critical step. For instance, the whole year we couldn't find the right person and the President kept chasing me that why don't you have anybody till now. I simply told him that if I don't get the right one, I will rather wait.

- 5. How did you (or your team) go about selecting the leaders and middle managers that would lead the various strategy implementation initiatives across the organization? More specifically, was there a criteria, or set of characteristics, or particular**

demographics that you looked for in making the selection, or was it mostly governed by hierarchy of the organization, or something else?

*This is a tough question because this involves HR. In our company, the top management, HR, line managers are all involved in the process of selection. **I think while they have a process but it depends on the each person's capabilities.** The formal HR criteria may lead to picking up of the wrong person. So, you may want to interview people. **And in interviews, it is not about the process but the intellect of the people who are interviewing.** When you interview, you need to enlist certain criteria – what if the person is not telling the truth. So you need to focus on work, experience, contribution. **If you select the right person, you have the right team and you have execution.***

*In any organization, few people link the company together – it can be from top management or middle management. **In any company it is these people who drive the whole organization and execution. You have to find these people and keep them dearly as without these people company cannot drive. Nobody knows who these right people are; it is based on your instinct and gut feeling. That is why I say judgement of the person who interviews is important.** If the person who is interviewing has experience, you can find the right people. Like for my team, I interview everyone. First quality I look for is **charm**, as our work deals with people. From a customer standpoint, without charm you are a deadwood as no one would want to talk to you. For the word charm, I took a few years to figure out that this guy is dry and this guy has a good personality. So you need to have unique personality – **more interactive, sincerity, and communication skills.** Second one is **tough link** because my work hours start from 2 in afternoon till 2 in morning. In all interviews, my last part is 'Can I ask you a personal question - What is your lifestyle'? This is to assess if this person fits or not in the role. If he goes home at 5'o clock, he is not fit. So you have to be job fit for the role. Certain functions are task oriented, some are people oriented but my team is people oriented and that is why I have to look for charm and job fit. But if you find people in banking of digital industry, you have to be task oriented.*

Advert Co. – Media & Digital Communications

1. **Can you briefly describe what sort of strategy implementation projects you have experienced during your career and what was your role in them? Please do comment on the context, magnitude, size of strategic change and how long it took to implement?**

I will talk about 2 projects. One, when I was running an advertising agency, we executed a project from 2008-2012. It was a part of our core global initiative to pivot our business to digital media. Singapore being fairly an important hub for the company in Asia Pacific region, it was an important lever in this pivoting model which the company wanted to achieve. We succeeded in this project better than we anticipated. In 2012, we were the best office in the world which is some validation that what we did was not just successful from internal point of view but it made a material difference to the organization.

For the second one, in my current company (Advert Co.), we are taking a step forward towards making our company 100% digital by 2020. One of the key pillars for achieving it is if our data strategy allows us to realize this. So I am in charge of this enabling pillar. This is slightly different from the first one in the sense that there I was an overall in-charge whereas here I am in-charge of one of the pillar to help the company become 100% digital. So it is work in progress for now and this organization is much larger with a lot more stakeholders who are responsible for individual pieces of business. So dynamics of making this happen is quite different.

2. **I realize that there may be many variables and factors involved in the implementation process, but in your opinion, what were the main factors leading to the success (or failure) of the strategy implementation?**

The reason why we succeeded in the first project was that Singapore office was not in a good shape. They were not keeping up to building a momentum to capitalize on future trend. In the year I took over, the fissures came up and whole thing almost collapsed. The business was in such a bad shape, it almost worked as an advantage where anything we suggested would be accepted with fewer pushbacks.

While the global people set the strategy, they didn't really give us too many approaches to achieve that. Given our large scale of the organization (70-80 offices globally), Singapore

was important from Asia Pacific perspective but not that big from global perspective. So they didn't really go down to chart a course on how we could achieve what we wanted.

*The one area where they were **open was to allow us to invest** a bit but not too much. That was one advantage we got but since we were already doing badly, we were to come up with sound reasoning as to why the investment we suggested would help. They did give us some guidelines on kind of margins we were required to make, what type of business areas we could look at, what type of global best practices are in place, where market succeeded or certain type of business/ sectors that could work. So in short we were to orchestrate it. They told us these are the few resources and we had to find a way to pull it all together. We had to do all things locally – how to introduce cost, find right people, operate local business etc.*

So while some stakeholders were quite open to change, some guys at the top level who were managing global P&L needed a lot of validation that our plan will work. They would come very hard on us saying a 'No'. In hindsight, they were looking at how confident we were with our plan, how much we were staking our success in our suggestion. So in the hindsight, I thought, you asked us to do it and now why are you resisting it. We faced resistance downwards as well, I had to make huge change in team, letting go off underperformers and bringing in new people and retaining a few who were prepared to change or pickup skills or were already doing right things but needed direction.

I think finance and commercial side of business was quite critical and were not efficient. We have a very cash flow business, where you get advertising dollars and pay commissions. How efficient you manage the cash flow determined how profitable we were. We spent a lot of time on cleaning it up.

*I guess getting a good finance team which is **trust worthy and good at what they do is very important**. I picked up the new team based on the criteria that you need to **be expert in field, extremely self-motivated and driven, should complement me (not like me as there is no point of having another me too, if I am good at what I do then I need someone who is good at other things), similar values (like being resilient in face of difficulty), agility of working longer hours for first few years), people who could take on overall plan and then execute it (within corporate boundaries) and deliver it in way they want (I wouldn't chart out the overall journey)**. I included them in budget setting, we were more transparent in financial and cost goals (this was not done before) and encouraged ownership. Also, the buy-in part of the project was settled in hiring stage. While people saw that 60-70% of staff left, only 30-40% was retained (so it was a hard decision to let go off people).*

Also, I was reporting to Asia Pacific CEO who was based in Sydney and there was regional management team which used to sit in different parts of Asia. That was the team I had to take on board. I had lesser issues at Asia Pacific level. This project did not have much of global impact; it only had P&L influence. We were given business targets, we had to consider certain businesses (since we were part of global business) and decide if they were profitable or not.

***The fact that we were working hand tight helped to an extent as there was less interference.** However, interference started when we showed signs of turn around. That was the time when they wanted to partake that turn around and start shaping it in a way that it would contribute globally.*

*We also started contributing disproportionately high to global revenue. We became 4th largest contributor in Asia – China, Australia, India and then Singapore. Then Singapore overtook India as we won lot of regional businesses. At that time, there was some pressure on us to conform to standardize ways of working. **I had more issues working with them as I had template of how things could work differently as compared to old ways of doing things which was not effective.** Though I have left the company, but they still use that template.*

- 3. From these experiences, do you believe that having the “right” middle managers in leadership roles can positively influence the outcomes of the implementation? Who would be the “right” managers in your opinion?**

*If I look at the team I picked up, firstly they all had **high level of motivation, and everyone wanted to achieve something, wanted to grow and was quite ambitious.** Ironically, such people are very difficult to work with senior guys because they could potentially displace them.*

***One of my hiring philosophy was can this guy one day take my job. If yes, they were on board.** If I cannot stay ahead of them, it means I am not relevant anymore. So I decided based on what they had done so far in their career, did they **do things outside the standard** to achieve something, were they **creative / adaptive, looked for alternative solution** to problems which is not standard in the industry we work in, **can work long and hard** (what would you do if a project came on a holiday), and finished something assigned to them within a span of time.*

*In context of a larger organization, one should have the **ability to influence a larger set of cross functional people**. **What you have done in earlier part of your career, how much you got your hands dirty** will get you a lot of appreciation of the work that entails on the ground to make a strategic piece happen. You also **develop technical expertise** in areas which coupled with your experience helps to **assist the junior/ new people**. There will always be bottlenecks and unknown situations in a job. These people who have encountered such situations are the ones who can manage it and will not run away.*

*From my current organization perspective, I would again consider similar qualities for middle managers like **being ambitious, driven, high sense of responsibility (have not taken short cuts)**.*

*Increasingly, it's difficult to find such sort of people. Working too hard is almost seen as negative. People who sit late to finish things are usually looked down upon. But you have a responsibility towards a job that is paying you money. We are in an industry where things are changing fast and there is something new to learn. But how do you learn if you are not prepared to spend extra time or are not passionate about it. Do you learn something new by taking a course? So while you have your regular projects going and when you learn new thing and you enjoy doing that, then you may spend half Saturday or extra 2 hours at work. **So people who do this periodically, tend to become one who excel in their job and you can trust them with more responsibility as they may come with something innovative that could shape our business.***

- 4. What sort of professional and personal characteristics would distinguish the “right” managers from others? Can you please look at these characteristics described on the next page and comment on them? How would you rank them?**

*Systematic thinking is needed to harness people from the ground into a more coherent piece which works well for filling up critical part of the endeavour. So someone from my team was supposed to orchestrate this. A middle manager is the one that interfaces with people at top and the layers who are actually providing fresh ideas. They also provide feedback on what is working and what is not. If you are just ‘yes mam’, then problem starts festering in the organization. It happened in my organization, where system didn't work and everybody pretended it was working. And then the top guy who believed everything was working fine was fired because it was part of his budget (3 million dollar). This happened because **he***

didn't consider the upward feedback. Also, if the middle layer is not appointed correctly, then again you will have this problem.

*In terms of being action oriented, there are multiple reasons people don't take action – they are **not well versed, are risk averse or are simply lazy.** Also, you tend to pick up the slack of **someone else.** So there would be some people who are very action oriented and would do things more than they were asked to. The other aspect could be that you have someone who would let it go down first and then later you come up with 'I don't care if company's goals are delayed for 6 months'. Also, if someone who is a weak link, it is important that others can pick up his slack and fix the problem and ease him out at some other point.*

*Also, as part of my current project, networking with right people is very important. One of the parts of networking is **connecting with people outside the company** (that helped with my previous project as my middle guys were very good with both internal and external parties – publishers, clients, tech facilitators).*

Learn and adapt – I already mentioned being open minded, being resilient, and treating failures as an opportunity to learn are important. But this is a part where culture also comes into play. People sometimes are just risk averse or usually fearful of failure. So as a leader you have to get people to open up and not to fear you. However, lack of fear should not translate to lack of respect.

*Also, leaders are supposed to create a culture and environment which is a very critical component. However, one of the less appreciated aspect of the people I had in my previous jobs, was that they **galvanized their teams and kept them motivated through highs and lows.** It created a minor problem, that we had mini cultures within each team. I liked the idea that they were competing with each other but at some point, if this was not managed well than this could become a deterrent. **So, while I had to manage a handful of middle guys, they had to manage a whole set of teams.***

While people do understand our vision (very high level), but we do not have a very well-articulated strategy to get there. Some teams may understand the business better as senior team member may be able to articulate.

*However, a constant dialogue, feedback and cascading is important to identify if things are working or not, what should be done and what shouldn't, or if there is a need to improve something. **Learning also has to happen as much as from inside as from outside.** This is an ideal practice and happens only in 20% of the organization. This happens in phases- it may be working well at one point and may just collapse next time.*

- 5. How did you (or your team) go about selecting the leaders and middle managers that would lead the various strategy implementation initiatives across the organization? More specifically, was there a criterion, or set of characteristics, or particular demographics that you looked for in making the selection, or was it mostly governed by hierarchy of the organization, or something else?**

I believe that they did have a process. The challenging part for them was that people they wanted were not people with whom they had worked in past because generally it would need skills from different organization. So they hired people who looked good on paper, based on where they have worked and jobs mentioned on their resume.

The problem happened when they interviewed them. They could not understand further what was in their resume. So people who were good at language but had not done the rigorous part of the work, were more likely to be hired rather than not.

In a core job in advertising, we know who is good or bad. Now we need less of those people as we need more of data, digital, and technology side. This is where we now have issues.

The other approach which is becoming a mainstream approach is to acquire companies. So I might acquire a company and I get those people to hire on my behalf or populate that group and spread them out to other part of the group. So, I think we do not have a good way of selecting people in our industry

Global Executive Recruitment Co. – Human Capital Solutions

- 1. Can you briefly describe what sort of strategy implementation projects you have experienced during your career and what was your role in them? Please do comment on the context, magnitude, size of strategic change and how long it took to implement?**

We help top clients with their strategy execution projects.

- 2. I realize that there may be many variables and factors involved in the implementation process, but in your opinion, what were the main factors leading to the success (or failure) of the strategy implementation?**

Mostly CEO and his/her team is our main focus. We help facilitate discussions on what it will take to be successful in implementing strategy.

- 3. What sort of professional and personal characteristics would distinguish the “right” managers from others? Can you please look at these characteristics described on the next page and comment on them? How would you rank them?**

We have a tool that we have developed over many years of research and testing. This tool helps test for competencies that may be needed for leaders to do what they need to do. It tests things like collaboration, problem-solving, etc. We give this extensive testing to the leadership team to help the CEO figure out which senior leaders he should select.

- 4. Are there any other points you would like to raise regarding your experiences?**

I think middle managers are neglected in the larger scheme of things. We pitch to CEOs and HR Directors as they are our paymasters. Also, we are not always sure how things evolve as part of our involvement, “positively” we would like to believe but don't know.

Systems Co. – Industrials

1. **Can you briefly describe what sort of strategy implementation projects you have experienced during your career and what was your role in them? Please do comment on the context, magnitude, size of strategic change and how long it took to implement?**

As a consultant, I have supported clients in implementing ideas that they have developed or have in mind which is one aspect of it. When I was working at Consult Co., I had a number of projects where I had to implement them across Asia Pacific and specifically when I was in China, I was driving a lot of the implementation. Typically, projects spread from 6 months to 2 years.

2. **Did you consider these strategy projects to be successfully implemented? How would you define “successful” or “effective” implementation?**

I have seen both sides of it. I have experience where we were able to successfully implement strategy projects and others where I did not see very good results.

3. **I realize that there may be many variables and factors involved in the implementation process, but in your opinion, what were the main factors leading to the success (or failure) of the strategy implementation?**

*The factors in terms of failure would be **commitment from the organization and the commitment from senior level and middle managers**. Since the efforts were being driven from top-down, so there was not much commitment from the team below and there was not sufficient buy-in. I have seen cases where the strategy is developed by external parties and there is inherent tendency to be against it even if it was the right thing to do.*

*Another aspect would be **capabilities of people to be able to change** what they are doing. I think both technical and managerial skills of people were lacking. Change is difficult and people are not ready to change what they are doing even if this could benefit them and the organization.*

*In terms of success, one of the factors was **creating a safe environment**. I can share my experience from China where I was driving the team, so supporting them and giving those capabilities/ competences required to be more effective in the new changed environment was one of the factors. Supporting them in terms of training and coaching was important. In some cases, the repercussions of failure were quite interesting – if you allow them to fail, they see that something needs to be changed and then they become more committed to change process.*

*The people who are enrolled in implementation are without a doubt a key factor to successful implementation. From hierarchal level, these people may not ensure success of implementation. All you want from them is to not create any barriers in success. But to accelerate the base of success, it will be a combination of the middle managers who have the previous criteria we have talked about and **people who are genuinely open to more change**. In my case, in one situation, I had to replace of one the Senior Manager as he was not ready for change and it was clear that from where we wanted to get, he may become a hindrance.*

*There is also a **cultural aspect** to it, depending on where you are. For instance, when I was in China, it was a very important part because people would listen to their bosses but may not respect him. So it is important that bosses are committed to it and they show the change (lead by example) so that subordinates can actually support their initiatives. If you want a successful change, you need people to be personally convinced. If they are just doing because their boss wants, you don't get full attention and change may not be sustainable.*

4. From these experiences, do you believe that having the “right” middle managers in leadership roles can positively influence the outcomes of the implementation? Who would be the “right” managers in your opinion?

*If I had to put down the characteristics, one would be **self-motivated** individuals, individuals who would be **high performing** in their task because it is an indication of competency and commitment in what they are doing, people who have **respect of their peers** which is important because I ended up once incorrectly choosing someone who fulfilled the first 2 criteria but didn't meet the third and had to work laterally in the organisation. It became tough for him to gain support of his peers. Last factor would be **cross functional coverage** as in some cases some teams may be heavily influenced and that would require more support on your side.*

5. **What sort of professional and personal characteristics would distinguish the “right” managers from others? Can you please look at these characteristics described on the next page and comment on them? How would you rank them?**

*I think in an ideal situation, you would want **the implementation team to have a spread of each capability**. It's very hard to find an individual that will have these entire skills (close to impossible); but these are definitely factors which a team should have. From an individual perspective, there might be a dominant skill one might have, but they would have couple of more supporting characteristics.*

From personal experience, I have realized that in this fast changing world, I would rather chose employees who are new to the company or have better experience in other companies because they have seen different way of doing things as compared to someone who has been in company for last 20 years. On the flip side, these people may have influence and power as they have been there for a long time. I would not really press on educational level because then you would go to traditional hierarchy system.

*But out of all factors you have enlisted, if I had to choose one, it would be **learning and adaptability**, because one obvious aspect of strategy implementation is that you can never cancel it. Having people who are able to adapt along the way, come out with new insights of how things can be done better, I think these are going to be most critical factors. Studies show that resilience is a characteristic of successful people. While you can provide support to people for all the stated skills, but aligning people will be more challenging and depends on individual behaviour. Having individualised coaching could touch on different factors, but ultimately it drives to the ability to be flexible. Lot of times its about what you want to achieve, how you want to achieve and supporting you through process knowing that path is going to be rocky.*

6. **How did you (or your team) go about selecting the leaders and middle managers that would lead the various strategy implementation initiatives across the organization? More specifically, was there a criteria, or set of characteristics, or particular demographics that you looked for in making the selection, or was it mostly governed by hierarchy of the organization, or something else?**

*There was one aspect where it was based on **hierarchy** and that had to be done as these people could become barriers to implementation. The other aspect was the **influence** in the company. People who had an inherent influence and respect from rest of the colleagues were used to accelerate the process. This was done to reduce the barriers otherwise these would have been restrictions to their team to do anything to implement the strategy.*

*If we had to pick people from top or middle level personnel, we would additionally consider the **potential, performance and competency** of the individual. However, for those who did not have the capabilities, we provided them relevant coaching or any other support that they may require.*

*Typically, **people are selected on basis of who is available**. Usually good ones are busy with other projects and if it is a good employee, departmental managers would not want to lose them. In my experience, very few companies think deeply about how to select people. People think that the challenge is in the formulation of strategy and implementation part of it is easy. I think many individuals in their corporate life will go through a few major implementations and hence you do not get opportunities to learn from mistakes. In many corporations, the senior management's assumption is that implementation will cascade down the organization and they start thinking about the next change they have to bring. From an employee standpoint, they presume it as flavour of the month and they would want to resist it sufficiently until new things come up.*

To develop strategy you need inputs of middle managers, but more important on implementation side is their buy-in. Buy-in can come from by making them understand what is this, how it impacts them and the organization, acknowledge the fact that it would be difficult for them to change (individually and for their colleagues) and providing support required to make the transition smooth.

Board Co. – Oil & Gas, Chemicals

- 1. Did you consider these strategy projects to be successfully implemented? How would you define “successful” or “effective” implementation?**

Most of the strategy projects failed. I am going through two strategy projects now, one is looking like it is doing well and the other is in too early stage. These projects are primarily for national companies.

- 2. I realize that there may be many variables and factors involved in the implementation process, but in your opinion, what were the main factors leading to the success (or failure) of the strategy implementation?**

*The main factor contributing to the failure was that there was **disagreement at the top level** on several aspects of strategy and how it should be implemented. I think it's very easy to agree to something but when you still feel that it is not right and do nothing, passive resistance can become a big factor.*

*Other thing is that **organization needs to be fairly mature** to realize that you need strategy implementation because there are certain things which are wrong that need to be changed. However, if the amount of change becomes too much to take, then resistance develops since people are very comfortable with what they did in past and now you require them to change. So **senior management's commitment** is a factor as to why strategy implementation does not work.*

In some of the projects I was involved in (just overseeing), what I saw very clearly was that the commitment from the Chief Executive is paramount. His knowledge of the issues and understanding of the capability and competence of people is very important. This could go down to his direct reports and people below him as this company (I am currently working with) practices succession planning. So a CEO has to know his direct reports and people below him that will replace him at one point. So if you have got a very strong commitment to succession planning, you will find that people will recognize the talent at below level. Most companies in Malaysia do not do this very well, but this company on whose Board I am sitting now, does this very well. Not only this company, but across all the companies within

the Group. They know who the people are, the strategic issues and business and hence they know how to shape things.

*The other thing I am clear is that you need to have the same person around for **at least 3 quarters** when a strategy is implemented. Also, a **CEO needs to be person respected in the organization**. When the CEO doesn't get involved in the process and one sets up a PMO office with someone heading the PMO, it could be disastrous unless you have a person who has all the qualities I told you. So even if CEO delegates the responsibility to PMO, he cannot totally relinquish his role, his involvement is required in some way or he needs to find someone who can replace him.*

- 3. From these experiences, do you believe that having the “right” middle managers in leadership roles can positively influence the outcomes of the implementation? Who would be the “right” managers in your opinion?**

*There were a few middle managers who played role in strategy implementation but they did not have the numbers to actually makeup an influencing force. There were individuals who did well but it did not stop the whole project. Usually, a few people did a few aspects of the projects. One way was that a person who was supposed to run the project, if he passively resisted it, then some people would do a few aspects. The other way is that of they find it very difficult to do, they would come back saying that actually we were wrong at first place and shouldn't have done it. **So clarity of the objective and a sense of trust between middle and top management are quite essential.***

In the end it has to benefit the middle management as well. The top management usually doesn't do a great job to identify such points for middle management which is very important. So employees ask a classic question, 'what is in it for me'? Because we never asked these questions as we worked like dogs, but now employees ask this question. You have to be very clear – is it less work, more money?

*Emotional well-being of employees needs to be handled when there is a change. **So it is essential to choose the right person to communicate.** Most people only explain what is in it for the company but you need to take into account the individual as well.*

4. **What sort of professional and personal characteristics would distinguish the “right” managers from others? Can you please look at these characteristics described on the next page and comment on them? How would you rank them?**

Micro level in terms of systematic thinking is more important than macro level.

Ability to visualize strategy into action is important as these are the people who know their business and own it. So mostly, one possesses this skill.

Action orientation is also important because you cannot have a person who expects someone else to do the tasks.

But not everyone will have all skills. So you level them up by pooling a team where people can complement each other. This is how Board of Directors works as all Directors don't have all skills. I think these skills should already be in the company files based on which the company should do an assessment. For instance, we tend to rate people for this.

5. **How did you (or your team) go about selecting the leaders and middle managers that would lead the various strategy implementation initiatives across the organization? More specifically, was there a criterion, or set of characteristics, or demographics that you looked for in making the selection, or was it mostly governed by hierarchy of the organization, or something else?**

I think everybody at Board level understands that there is a process which the management has to go through and we leave it to the CEO to decide. However, independent directors make them clear that just setting up PMO office and getting some guy to run it is not the right way to do it but you need to make sure that you get the right people.

Other part of strategy implementation is that you have to get people out of their current jobs and you must have an idea of how much time a person spends on it so that no one gets overwhelmed.

*I think in normal organization, they would want a person who can get the job done well. **This is where I differ; I think head of strategic development has got to be the CEO and to decide who he can delegate and how it has to be done.***

I don't think you can find any one person who knows everything a company does and if you did and if he is in middle or top management, he may not be the right guy because he has

*been there for years. He may play the role of a consultant on side if you want all the information. However, the guy who has to run it has to be **energetic, someone who can really talk to people at various levels (from board to all the way down), has some idea of how the company functions, knows what people are supposed to do, has be respected and who realizes what his role is going to be** – that is the kind of person I would like. And then he has to look for similar people like him at various levels in organization.*

*Also, another important trait is the **flexibility and ability to adapt**. When you get someone very focused and passionate, it is sometimes difficult to steer such a person to another course. I am assuming the CEO will have this ability. So a CEO needs to ensure that you get the right person to do this work.*

Food Co. – Food Ingredients

1. **Can you briefly describe what sort of strategy implementation projects you have experienced during your career and what was your role in them? Please do comment on the context, magnitude, size of strategic change and how long it took to implement?**

*I have lots of experience in this as a middle manager at one time and in the last decade as a senior leader. Some of the projects we have executed are **sales strategy** to increase sales and grow key account management which means changing the account strategy, metrics, territories, distributor management, etc. Quite a lot of things come under this.*

*Another one is **increasing customer value** which relates to becoming more than a chemicals supplier, rather finding ways to increase the value to the customer in the products he makes, but also related to anything else that might create value like supply chain. **This is a global project and multiple years in the making.***

*I have also been involved **in setting up new plants and new facilities as part of the strategy for growth.** We have also experienced major strategy implementation issues when we expanded the global product portfolio to add a new product platform.*

2. **Did you consider these strategy projects to be successful implemented? How would you define “successful” or “effective” implementation?**

*That is a good question. **We are good at starting strategies but not good at tracking them.** Sometimes we do it in annual reviews but I have implemented in Asia market and we are tracking for at least twice a year on how we are doing.*

For example for sales strategy, we want to track sales growth and then determine if it is successful even though it may not achieve our targets. Usually we do not achieve our targets. In customer value, it is harder to determine if it is successful or not and we are still trying to figure it out.

3. I realize that there may be many variables and factors involved in the implementation process, but in your opinion, what were the main factors leading to the success (or failure) of the strategy implementation?

More often than not, I think I have seen failures because we tend to abandon and move on to something else.

*Changes in management and CEOs lead to changes in direction and old strategies get abandoned. Another reason is that in a global company, the changes are difficult to implement due to **different priorities and lots of resistance** from country management to execute new things. The few successes I remember are from PG Co. days because they were very detailed and good at managing implementation and communicating very well to all employees.*

4. From these experiences, do you believe that having the “right” middle managers in leadership roles can positively influence the outcomes of the implementation? Who would be the “right” managers in your opinion?

Definitely, they get most of the things done and know the operations better than anyone.

5. What sort of professional and personal characteristics would distinguish the “right” managers from others? Can you please look at these characteristics described on the next page and comment on them? How would you rank them?

*These managers should have **good communications skills** that are definitely needed to talk up and down the line; they should also be able to work with people from different parts of the organization and different countries, so sort of **cultural skills** as well. Of course, **technical ability and experience** would be necessary.*

Your list is very good and looks like an ideal manager list. I think for example, many of our middle managers do not understand the strategy behind customer value creation and just don't “get it” so I think you are right about that.

Also, ability to action and take risks is very important. I have already mentioned networking.

Yes, learning and adapting is a key skill set for middle managers and without an open mind and listening to customers, how can they even create customer value?

People development is a necessary skill to get to management, right? Of course, people need to follow these managers to implement things.

- 6. How did you (or your team) go about selecting the leaders and middle managers that would lead the various strategy implementation initiatives across the organization? More specifically, was there a criterion, or set of characteristics, or particular demographics that you looked for in making the selection, or was it mostly governed by hierarchy of the organization, or something else?**

*On selection, we **did not really have a process.***

We talked amongst senior team and then informed senior managers or sales directors and then let them pick. Sometimes, we would have some discussion on it as to who to pick but it was left to them.

*They picked based on **technical skills** needed, **capacity available** of the manager, **past performance** etc. No real process for selection, now that I think about it. One of the big problems is that these people still have their normal job to do and targets to deliver, so who can do additional tasks is important.*

Power Co. – Global Risk Solutions

1. Can you briefly describe what sort of strategy implementation projects you have experienced during your career and what was your role in them? Please do comment on the context, magnitude, size of strategic change and how long it took to implement?

I am going to describe the most recent one because it is on top of my mind. There is another one as well but I will talk about this one only.

*The company I worked for was purchased by a holding company which is owned by a Private Equity Company. They purchased several different companies and strung them together under a beast called **Integral Co.** Under this beast, my company (**Power Co. - founded in 1978**) has the strongest name and biggest brand. **The idea was to use that brand name and put it across bunch of different service products and increase the value of the products because of the power of the brand name which is a standard move.***

*One of the things Power Co. was creating was **reputational due diligence products** – this was kind of investigation that we did alongside commercial, financial, legal due diligence in any type of transaction.*

*Earlier, it was the only shop in town but the industry grew quickly because of the service delivery heads and soon a ton of boutiques and competing companies came. One of these companies was called **Risk Co.** (most generic sign one could imagine) but it was a mid-sized budget company with operations based out of Washington DC area. It was managed by former air force people and was run in a very military style – regimented top down with commoditized products. **It was basically a due diligence sweat shop where people were just cranking it out.***

*So Integral Co. brought that company first and then quickly snapped up Power Co. So both companies were doing reputational due diligence, one was doing in an **inexpensive way (Risk Co.)** and the other was doing **high end version (Power Co.)**.*

*Power Co. was doing tons of other things – different types of investigations but due diligence was the bread and butter that made for almost **40% of the work**. So both the companies had the same brand management, sometimes an overlapping client list, and similar product*

outcomes **but were very differently priced**. Typically someone who wouldn't understand work methodology would consider them same.

The lower cost product (of Risk Co.) was like a check box compliance run by military people and appraised on basis like work criminal list, media reports. Power Co. investigated independently as it considered that there may be negative ideas about a particular issue in media but it would not consider it as these articles can be prepared. Further, there could be generalist view which may be mistaken. **Also, what would typically cost USD 25-40k in premium version; the same product would be sold for USD 2-3k in discounted version.**

So eventually, what they wanted to do was to combine the two teams, put them together and create a spectrum of services. Up until this point it seemed to be a simple process but the large accounts of both sides were threatened by the business. The company (Risk Co.) that defined itself as a boutique company, an insurgent against industry standard had to now come back to client as saying that they were Power Co. While it was good for Risk Co., but it was bad for Power Co. as they did not change the pricing. So we had cheap version of Power Co. which kind of diluted the brand.

2. Did you consider these strategy projects to be successfully implemented? How would you define “successful” or “effective” implementation?

*It is still work in progress but **I think our strategy is succeeding a little bit** as there are people in the company like myself who are sort of defying the hierarchy and sorting out things independently. I am trying to find independent apolitical ways to get the teams work together. I am doing this as I am recently gilded partner and I am trying to solve difficult problems. While I am doing it in my neck of the woods, but the strategy has not worked in North America.*

3. I realize that there may be many variables and factors involved in the implementation process, but in your opinion, what were the main factors leading to the success (or failure) of the strategy implementation?

The price was the biggest problem of the strategy. So we had two diverging pictures- an insurgent (Risk Co.) saying we will give you what you need, whereas Power Co. would say we are real investigation company.

The strategy was to create a unit within the company (Power Co.) i.e. that insurgent company (Risk Co.) with the larger due diligence unit which they called 'Transaction Intelligence Compliance'.

While it all made sense on paper but problem was that there was a cluster of managers based in Washington DC and they are very insulate. Risk Co. is not a global company and is very US focused. They basically sell reports saying 'Foreign company replacements are scary, they are risky for corporate'. And then you have a mature global company (Power Co.) with so many partners, saying (for instance) actually I am in Sao Paulo and it is not that crazy. So Power Co.'s view was not a North American view. Actually, the culture didn't quite fit.

The other problem was that they connected sales element of team (so we had weekly KPI calls where we talk about different clients so that each originator could be aware of the clients we are speaking to avoid stepping on each other's feet). There is a CRM system but at that time there was no real CRM system that went across both the companies. It was all done manually by calls that dealt with different regions which were horribly run. It used to be 90 minutes calls with busy partners all around the world where people would read from excel sheets. So it became meaningless after second call. They never resolved anything because three people are going to talk to client but they never really had a chance to interact before that. Also, it became political immediately because none of the partners would compromise. So it slowly started falling apart.

*Also, Power Co. has people based all over place with language skills and local knowledge. Risk Co. is basically US focused. Though it hired people who had studied in US and have been to Egypt for 2 weeks (for instance) and are now Middle East expert but still have a very North American attitude. So we had tried to integrate the teams by creating Project management software that went across the world. Risk Co. had a better project management software system so we started trying to insert these skills set. **There was more cross staffing. However, none of this worked.***

*Also, I was trying to push it through as I knew the benefits to KPIs. The problem was that we were reliant on North America to try to do things right the first time. So the integration was going to fall into lead of the North America team. Risk Co. and the North American headquarters were to create the system and then we were to follow. **The problem was that people were mostly lose in North America and Risk Co. did all work on basis of database in***

public domain whereas Power Co. did it traditional way –conduct human intelligence call, locate people and try to talk to them (in US you can get huge amount of data from database as it is more reliable whereas in Indonesia nothing from public domain is reliable and you have to use old age techniques). As a result, cheaper product was more compelling in North America, and the old school did not want to give up.

Also, as a part of the team that was tasked with Asia, the problem was that they considered strategy implementation as very easy – just add some people to cross team database, plug them into project, and go to clients together.

4. From these experiences, do you believe that having the “right” middle managers in leadership roles can positively influence the outcomes of the implementation? Who would be the “right” managers in your opinion?

*I think if I would have picked up the right people, it would be more **junior people**, people **who are hungry** and concerned about what’s in it for them, people **outside of headquarters** (from a less strategic part of company), and **self-serving**.*

*They would fall in **BD spectrum**, **client facing side people** who can handle difficult interpersonal situations, who **can connect** and who **have credibility**, who are not considered a threat by senior people and who can listen to them and some established people with experience.*

5. What sort of professional and personal characteristics would distinguish the “right” managers from others? Can you please look at these characteristics described on the next page and comment on them? How would you rank them?

*If I was elevated to the position of CEO and I had to pick up a team, **I think I will need very strong system people**. People who can naturally create order in an environment and processes in the office at various levels. They tend to be **not very people’s people**, have some credibility, some **political way** to bless what they are doing. Also, some **independent people** are also required who are not exposed to politics.*

In terms of all the 5 skills, a good team needs piece of each of these drivers. A good team needs people who can kick the door up, a system guy who can actually see how zipper fits in

together, networking guy to ensure that people get support, and people who can learn to adapt (though it is difficult). Additionally, the guy must be a **diplomat, can spin things and can do damage control**. If you have a lot of political opponent who will pin point at things, you will need a guy who has got a butt. Also, **ability to sell is very important**.

6. How did you (or your team) go about selecting the leaders and middle managers that would lead the various strategy implementation initiatives across the organization?

They did have an integration team. They chose people from both sides. They appointed several North Americans in the team. They also chose an overall leader who was a guy based in the headquarters for a long time and his primary source of work was due diligence product. They considered him to be most suitable due to experience. He was coming from Power Co. and was leading it.

The head of the Risk Co. was an ex-army guy and purely operations guy and these two were to lead a team in North America. Then there was a bunch of mid-level people below them. There were couple of other advisors which included the head of Power Co. of North America and Global CEO of Power Co. But the guy who had overall authority was the Power Co.'s New York' guy in headquarters who was doing due diligence work.

I think it was mistake as they did not think through. They just wanted someone to appeal to everyone and it was kind of based on hierarchy (organizational chart).

*Also, they had a very small pool to choose from. So they decided to select a top guy from here and there and combined them to work it out. **So it was more so based on hierarchy.** If you look at genesis of the company as it is now, I don't think they ever planned to have these two companies under same holding company. They got a good deal for Power Co. and took it and then they didn't know what to do. Then they decided to stick it together which was not part of original strategy. It was like an afterthought. The holding company had retained a guy who headed Power Co. and then they stick him on top of the whole holding company. So they never planned to have two companies together and they never wanted to shut down the companies. The guy who had made the decision had left and the company was left headless. And now we were left with a board comprised of PE guys with no real direction.*

Insure Co. – Banking and Insurance

1. Can you briefly describe what sort of strategy implementation projects you have experienced during your career and what was your role in them? Please do comment on the context, magnitude, size of strategic change and how long it took to implement?

*I have been involved mainly in financial services industry where I have worked for past 30-40 years mainly with banks and insurance companies. So I have handled strategy implementation projects of **market entry into different countries like China and Thailand**. I have also been involved in a project involving **rebuilding of our Indonesian operations**.*

*On the banking side, I have been involved **in implementation of a new business model for a particular business of the bank**. The bank wanted to target at small SME's and nobody was playing in this market. This project took us **a full year to implement** the model as it involved defining the value that we wanted created for the customer, building processes and systems. **The conceptualization of the strategy took us 3-4 months**. The approval was easy as the management was quite clear about what they wanted. We studied what other banks were doing and then we build our model about how we should do it. The management was quite clear that the opportunity was there and they understood that the existing model could not be applied to smaller SME's. So they realized that something was supposed to be different.*

2. Did you consider these strategy projects to be successfully implemented? How would you define “successful” or “effective” implementation?

By and large, most of them were successful. There were one or two projects which were not successful. I would even consider them as total flop.

The bank project was successful to an extent. It was successful for 2-3 years and after that new management came and decided to shift the strategy which caused the whole thing to derail. We literally changed the way we looked at small SME's – from way of giving loans, credit scoring and it was a major challenge at that time as the credit controller did not understand this in Singapore. Eventually we engaged a company to build a credit scoring (just like credit card) which became very successful as it helped us approve loan in 2 days instead of 2 weeks.

Also, we realized that small SME's had cash but didn't know how to deal with it and we engaged into cash management. This is why we were able to grow business very quickly. But after 2-3 years, when new management came in at EVP level (with his team), they decided that we need to go back to traditional relationship model despite of new model working well. This is when the strategy was switched and we didn't see it last for 1-1.5 years. As a result the business model failed and then they switched back again to the new model but by that time new banks came in and we lost the first mover advantage.

- 3. I realize that there may be many variables and factors involved in the implementation process, but in your opinion, what were the main factors leading to the success (or failure) of the strategy implementation?**

*One of the factors contributing to failure was **misalignment of the vision between middle and senior management**. Communication was one of the factors that affected it. Also, people had their own idea of how work had to be done which caused a lot of problem.*

*In those cases where I have seen success, the factors were totally opposite. **The communication and vision was quite clear.** The projects were very tightly managed.*

- 4. From these experiences, do you believe that having the “right” middle managers in leadership roles can positively influence the outcomes of the implementation? Who would be the “right” managers in your opinion?**

*I will give you the example of the Indonesia project. This project started after the financial crisis and Indonesia as a country was totally bankrupt. The operation in Indonesia was losing money. Our regional CEO told the country manager – ‘don’t call us until we call you, just don’t do anything’. In one of the management meeting, I raised the issue and told them that we need to start supporting Indonesia as I had seen that the country was kind of coming out of doldrums. The first time I was shot down as we were focusing on Korea, Thailand etc. But then again when I raised this issue that I see stronger signs and we must enter Indonesia now, the management told me why you don’t go ahead. Initially I was there for 3 months but ended up being there for 3 years. We realized that existing model we had there was not working. We were doing B2B business and margins were very thin. We decided to sell the entire portfolio and then we rebuild the entire business. We decided to partner with banks and Telco’s to do business. We had to let go off a lot of managers because they were quite traditional, had a fixed mind-set about how certain things should be done. Then we started recruiting young people and some of them came without knowledge of industry. These people didn’t come with any baggage of how things were to be done and from there we got it running and build a successful business. **The middle managers we brought in didn’t have a fixed mind-set and the vision of the top management was completely aligned.** This also became one of the success factors.*

It was the same thing when the bank bought me to build the SME model. So for this project, they were interviewing all bankers and every banker told them that they should have a relationship management model handling group of SME's. But they were not convinced of this model. This is when they brought me in, I told them that they need to rely on bank existing channels and get a few hunters. This turned out to be cost efficient model which worked.

In some companies, middle managers have a pretty big say while in some companies I have worked in, it would be less. For instance, in one of the companies I know of, when it comes to strategy implementation, middle managers are empowered to run it and that is how the company did well.

*Also, due to compliance issues, middle managers tend to go by book. But a lot of times, **in banks, if anything has to be changed it has to go through a committee. And after a while, middle managers tend to give up and stop bothering.** For examples, in one of the banks, to do anything in Asia, first you have to go through Asia committee and then go through Australia committee considering Australia committee would not know much about the products and business in Asia. So you are kind of putting them in a situation where they are signing on something they don't know much about. They tend to take the safest route then by not signing it. **So we tend to see middle managers as executors than influencers in such situation. Middle managers in banking industry don't have much authority to do things.***

- 5. What sort of professional and personal characteristics would distinguish the “right” managers from others? Can you please look at these characteristics described on the next page and comment on them? How would you rank them?**

Understanding the vision and then being able to manage it in the project is an important skill. A lot of middle managers lack in project management and strategy execution. It is important to break the project into smaller parts to be able to manage it.

I think all these skills are equally important.

The ability to think strategically both at micro and macro level and to be able to link it within the organization is very critical. Lot of times organizations struggle with it. So in terms of the projects I discussed, the ones which were unsuccessful were primarily because of this. While we were working in Indonesia, managers didn't think of themselves but how we could help each other which lead to success.

Financial services industry suffers from action orientation because of regulations and compliance. They are not used to moving very fast. Lot of time is that they are inward looking.

Networking ability is important for every industry but financial services industry struggles with it. Banks tend to miss on opportunities because they don't leverage network optimally as they operate in silos (corporate and consumer bankers don't interact with one another).

In my industry, the key asset is people. However, most companies are weak here as they give the technical training skills but they don't help them in overall development and see a bigger picture. They are just training executors and unfortunately that becomes the mind-set which is hindering a lot of financial institution from innovation. If you want to disrupt, there will be some lack of harmony. So in banks and insurance companies, people don't challenge status quo.

I think it is very important for top management to communicate the key of the strategy and rally the troupe below. They should also empower the middle managers to execute it. They should be allowed to make mistakes but should also learn from mistakes. Middle managers

are the ones who get things done and do have a strong influence in strategy implementation.

6. How did you (or your team) go about selecting the leaders and middle managers that would lead the various strategy implementation initiatives across the organization?

*So for SME project, they were looking for people who could look at the business totally differently apart from the banking industry experience. But then they realized that bankers came with a very fixed mind-set and then they looked at finance people and found they too had a very fixed mind-set. Then when I met the deputy CEO, I got to know that they were about to recruit someone from a medical devices company but at the last minute they pulled back. The guy was good as he understood about sale but not about risk. So they wanted someone who was balanced yet could think differently and doesn't come with a fixed mind-set. Then when they came to me, I rejected the offer as I told them I don't have the relevant experience. **But after a couple of months, they pushed me to have a chat with the CEO who told me that while I don't have the necessary experience, but my knowledge from other industry is what they could apply (insurance to banking) to their new business model.***

*If I had to select middle managers, I believe knowledge is something that can be gained but attitude is difficult to be changed. **So I would prefer to pick people who have the right attitude and can pick up things easily. I prefer people with business mind-set over technical skills.** I did the same in Indonesia and the business went very well. We recruited a business oriented actuary back in Indonesia and he did very well.*

I would say that there were processes and certain criteria in place while selecting people. Typically when we interview, business manager are usually involved and we also bring in people from other regions as part of the recruitment. We look for education, skills, and

*attitude (can do attitude, open mind-set etc.). A lot of this assessment is based on judgment and how do they respond. Sometimes we get it right and sometimes we do not. **Banks usually have criteria but in my observation banks tend to stick very tightly to paper (qualification, experience) and a more traditional way.***

Field Co. – Industrial Field Services

- 1. Can you briefly describe what sort of strategy implementation projects you have experienced during your career and what was your role in them? Please do comment on the context, magnitude, size of strategic change and how long it took to implement?**

Strategy can mean many things. In my head, I consider strategy to be a plan or an action to overcome something that is not working or to launch something new – what should we do, how should we do to get the desired results? E.g. How do we get Field Co. to next level, away from old technologies that didn't work as the future is digital.

I will discuss the ones which didn't work or were not communicated well at some level or didn't elaborate on 'how do we get there'.

- 2. Did you consider these strategy projects to be successfully implemented? How would you define “successful” or “effective” implementation?**

Hope is the worst strategy I have ever seen. In many projects I saw there was a vision but it was left to others to get it done without a clear map.

The ones which were successful had a clear map or if it wasn't there then CEO was willing to take ownership and agreed that there is a lot we do not know. For instance, if you are the CEO who has the idea of where we have to go and I am between you and the 3000 people who are supposed to get it done. If you just communicate 'go get it done', it will never work.

If you need more investment, you tell me what I need to give you to make you more successful. If I have to hire 200 people from a competitor, I will go and make sure that you have resources rather than telling you to make this work on your own. So when you hold people's hand and tell them to get it done, it can work. The ones that don't work are when someone doesn't communicate vision clearly and does not take ownership of lack of communication.

So in our case in Stage 1, our group company ('Group Co.') acquired Target Co. All the people of Target Co. were assimilated in Group Co. In stage 2, field people of the Group Co., were then assimilated into Field Co. The Target Co. and Group Co. transaction was managed well. We brought Target Co. for people and technology. Our CEO at Field Co. emphasized during the integration that we are not going to under-fund and under-staff unlike our Group Co. and we became a huge success. Our company has evolved over a period of 5 years. In year 1, we were 550 and grew to 800. In year 2, we grew to 1200 and year 3 we were up to 1500 and last year we took another 1400. So it was multi-year execution. So when you are doing acquisition and integration type of projects, you get different cultures. It is important to identify what is acceptable behaviour for all.

Our Group Co.'s digital strategy is working but quite slowly as compared to what the investors would expect. However, it is not optimally working in identifying how it will save customers time. The good part is that our company has all the data. But we have difficulty in executing things at right speed.

- 3. From these experiences, do you believe that having the “right” middle managers in leadership roles can positively influence the outcomes of the implementation? Who would be the “right” managers in your opinion?**

In my company, I would also consider myself as a middle manager. One level down in our organization is primarily the execution guys. I believe if you can speak the language of CEO and translate it to the language of workers, that's probably the key competency of the middle managers.

- 4. What sort of professional and personal characteristics would distinguish the “right” managers from others?**

I think qualities like integrity, believe in what you are saying, credibility, communication, openness and being candid are very important to be a competent middle manager.

All characteristics you mentioned are important. It is important to identify if the company does not allow the individual to challenge status quo and exercise flexibility. If I look at my success at this company in terms of culture, I have never been afraid to get fired. So this becomes very important. It is critical to get things moving with a result oriented mind-set.

- 5. How did you (or your team) go about selecting the leaders and middle managers that would lead the various strategy implementation initiatives across the organization?**

In our case, we inherited the people and we got to choose who will do which job. We majorly made good decisions except couple of them were bad ones. We ceremoniously walked off people from job sites including people who didn't follow the company policy willfully. This is how we kind of set up the culture of the company.

APPENDIX 5: Baseline Results - Rankings

Total Sample (n=152)

Figure 1

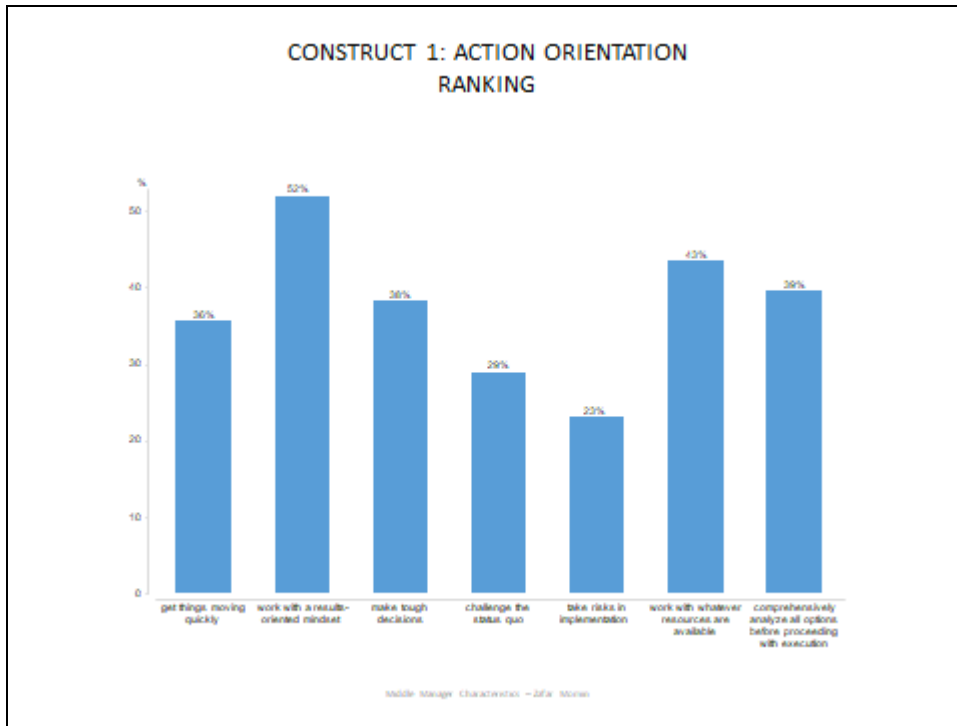


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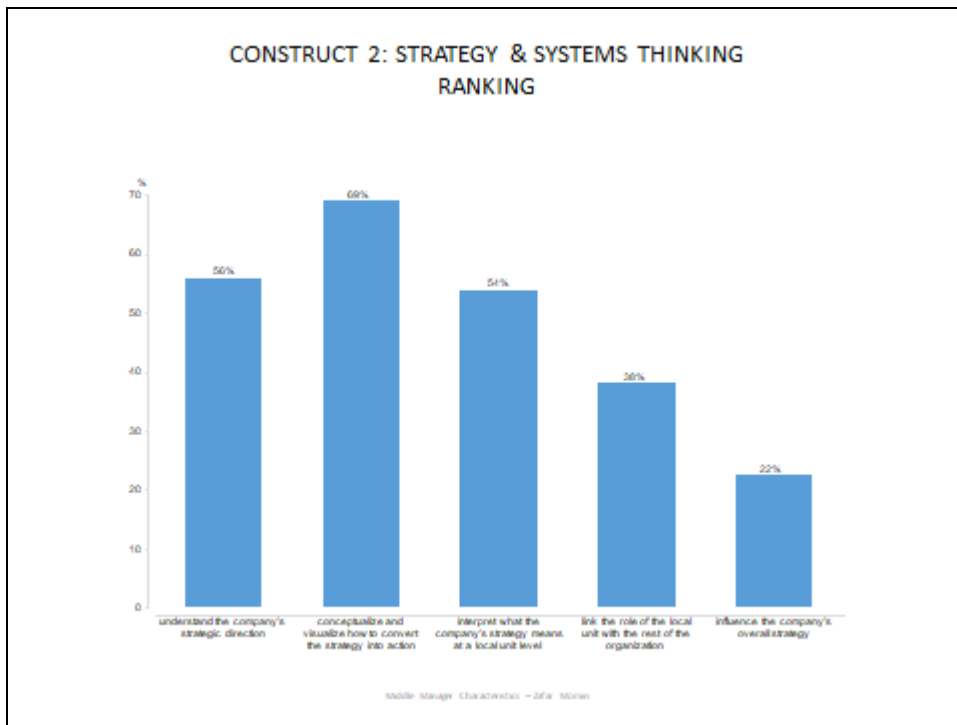


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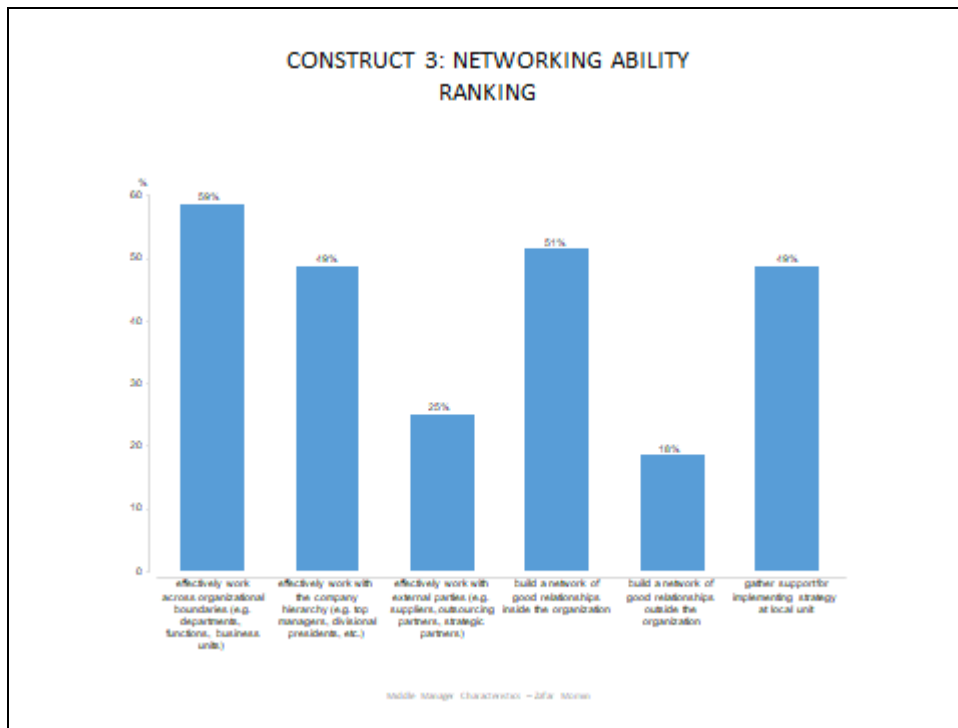


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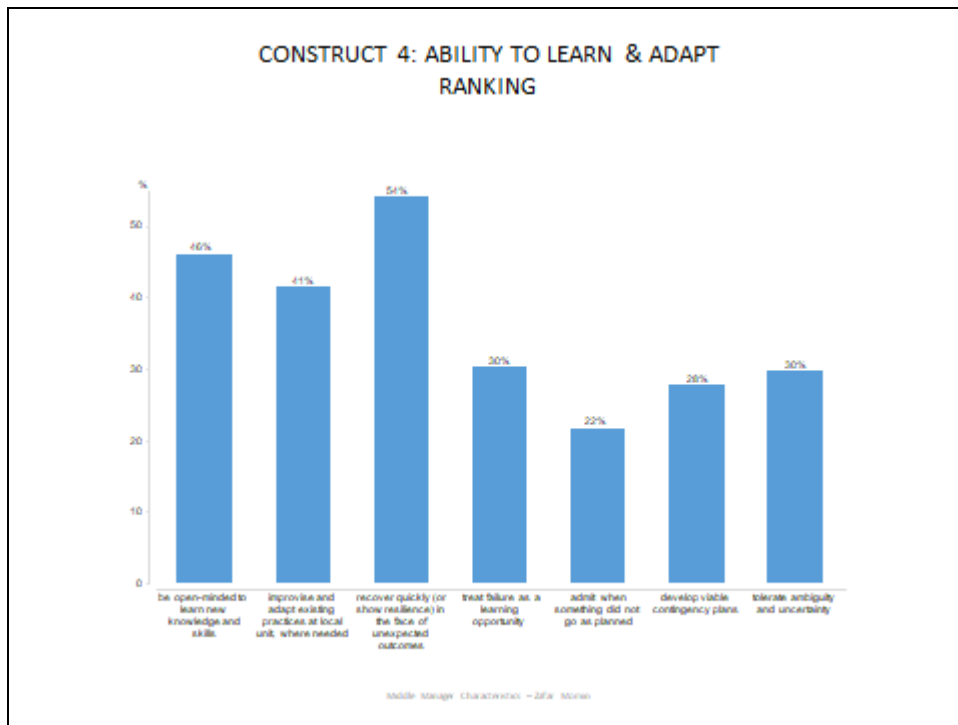


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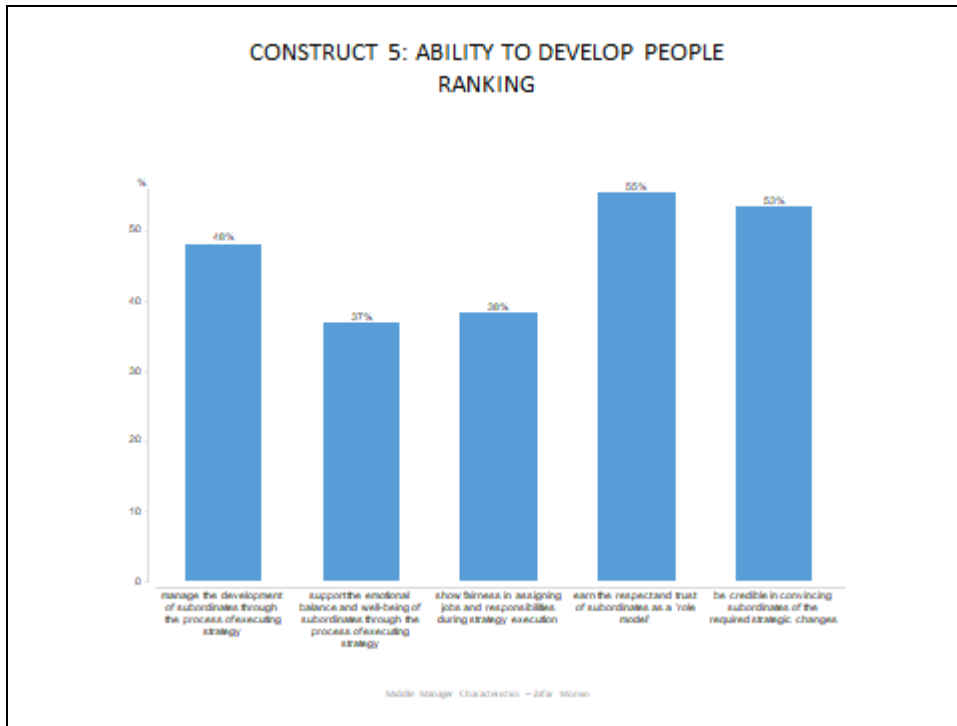


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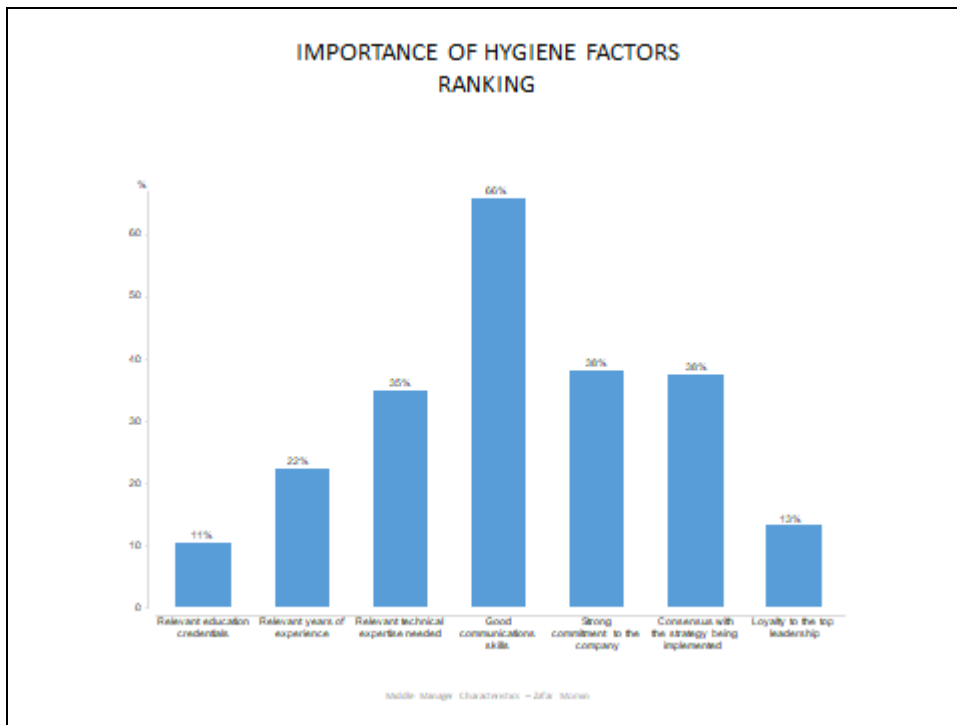
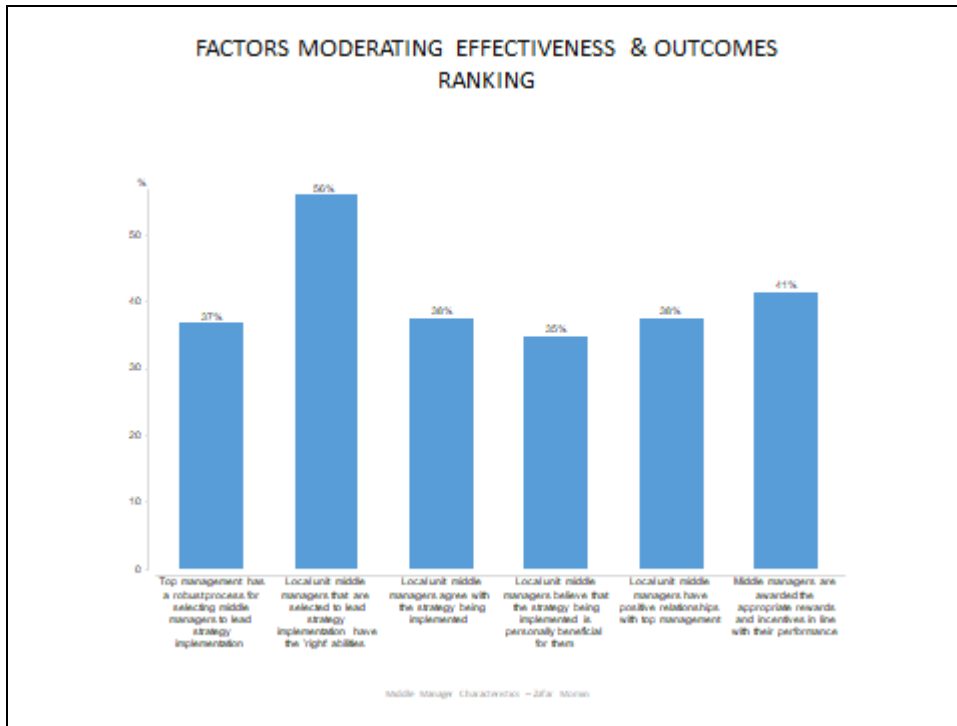


Figure 7



APPENDIX 6: Impact of Graduate Business Degree (MBA)

Analysis (Demographics, Response, Ranking, MANOVA Test Result)

Sample NM (n=107) – Non-MBA respondents

Sample M (n=45) – MBA respondents*

* Although respondents only provided highest educational qualification in their responses, we know as a fact that the sample accessed from the author's own contact list all had MBA degrees. Moreover, the non-MBA graduate degree holders' responses were tested and found to be not different from bachelor and diploma holders, indicating they were more likely to be technical graduate degree holders.

Figure 1-10: Respondent Demographics

Figure 1

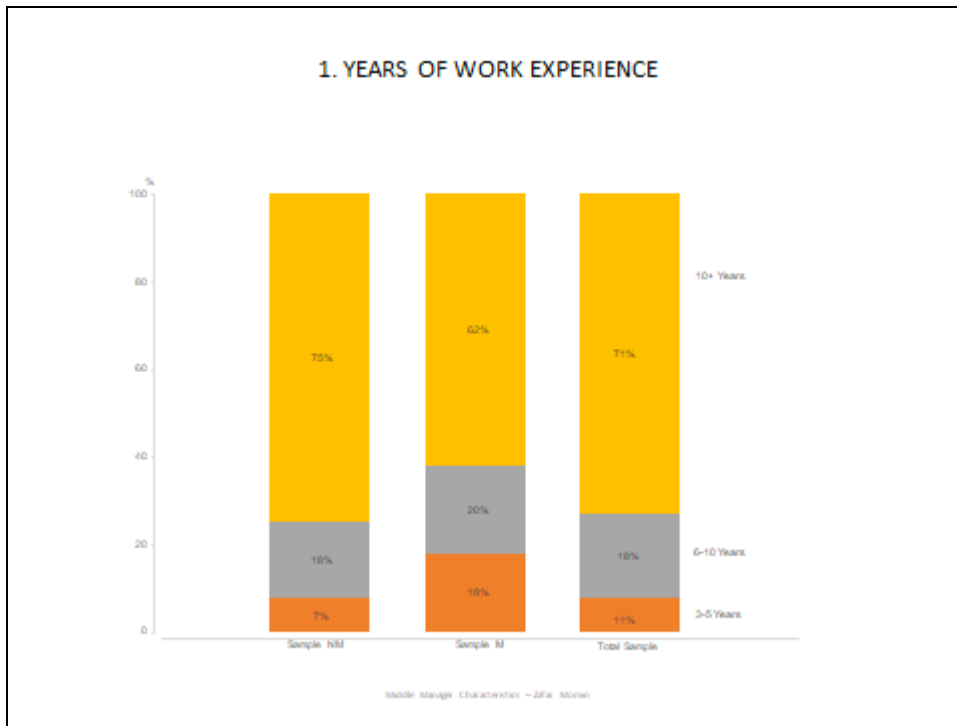


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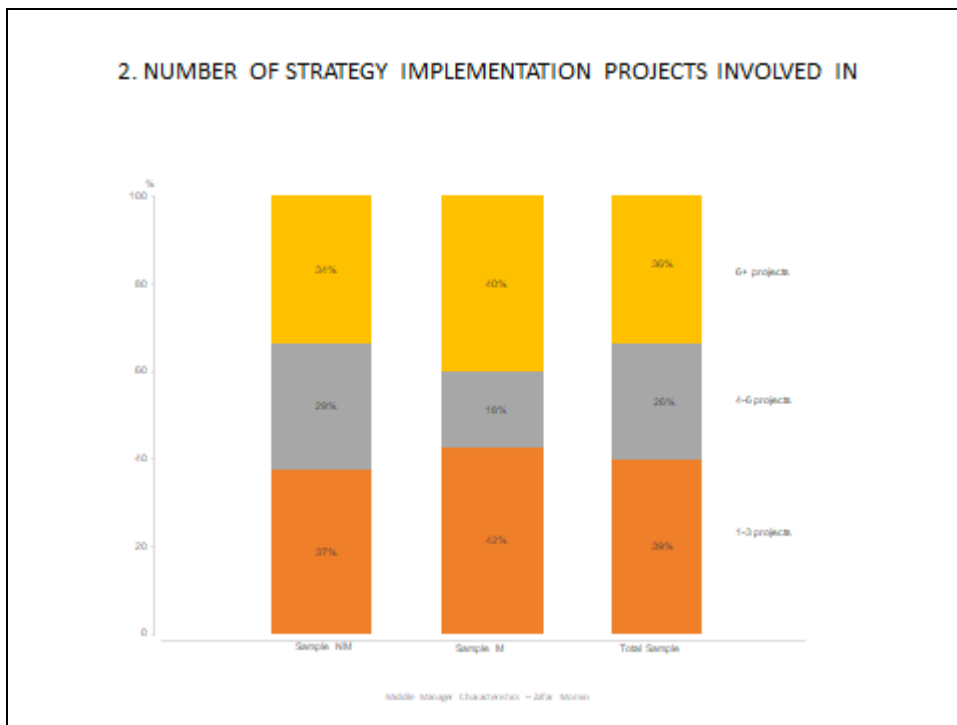


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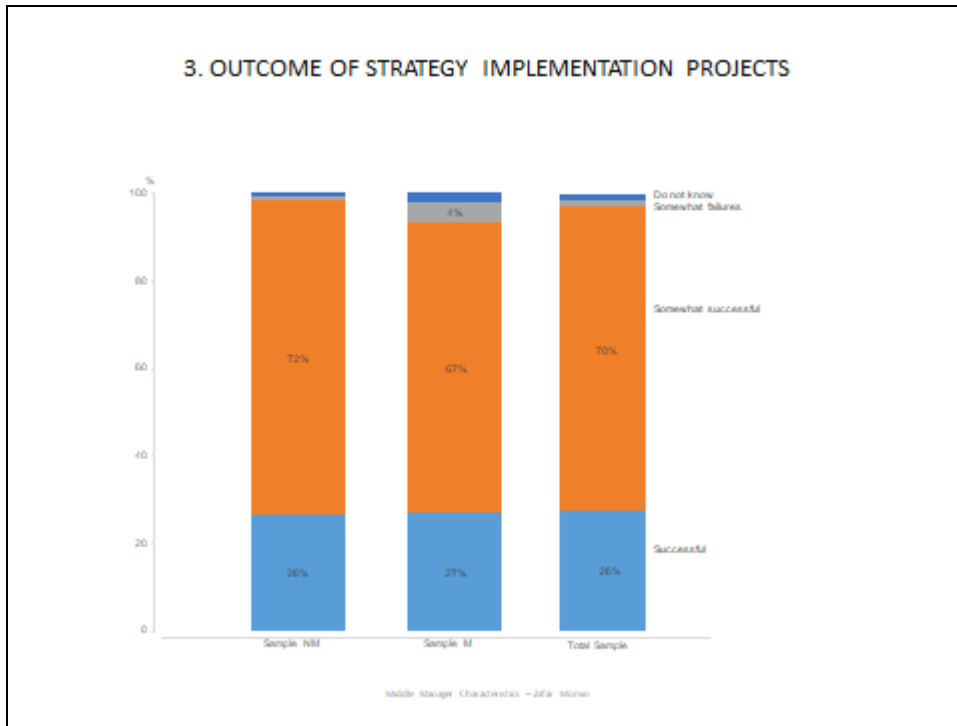


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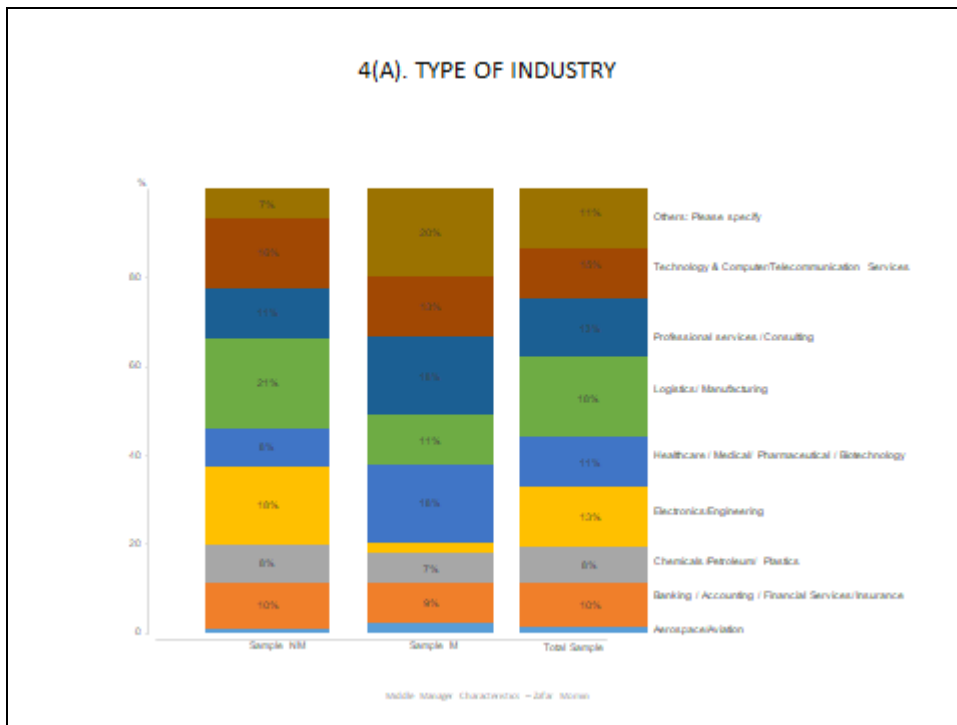


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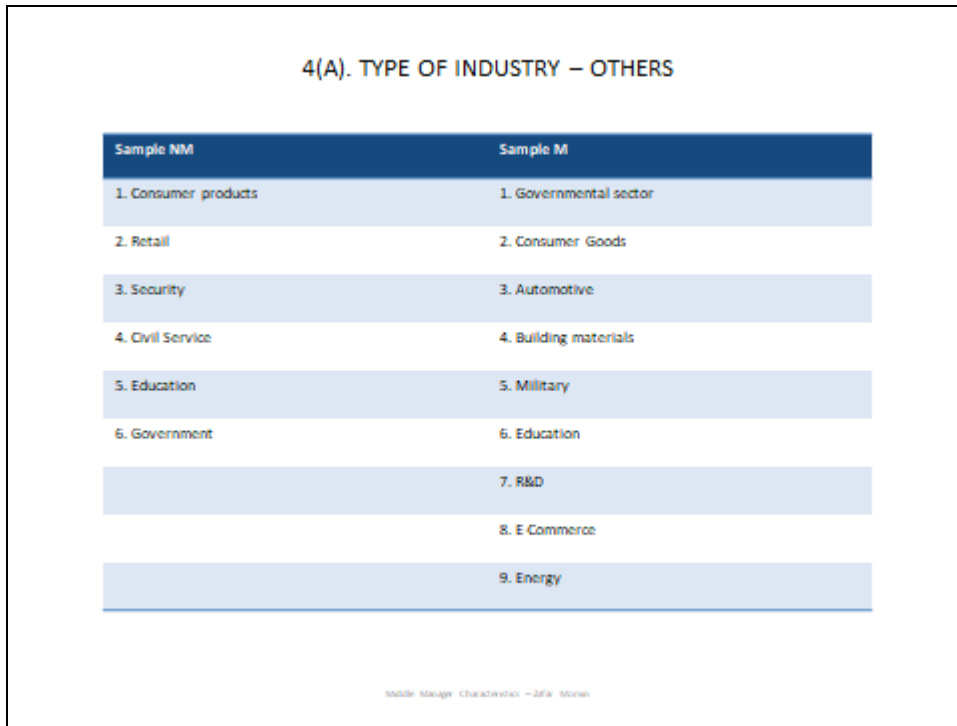


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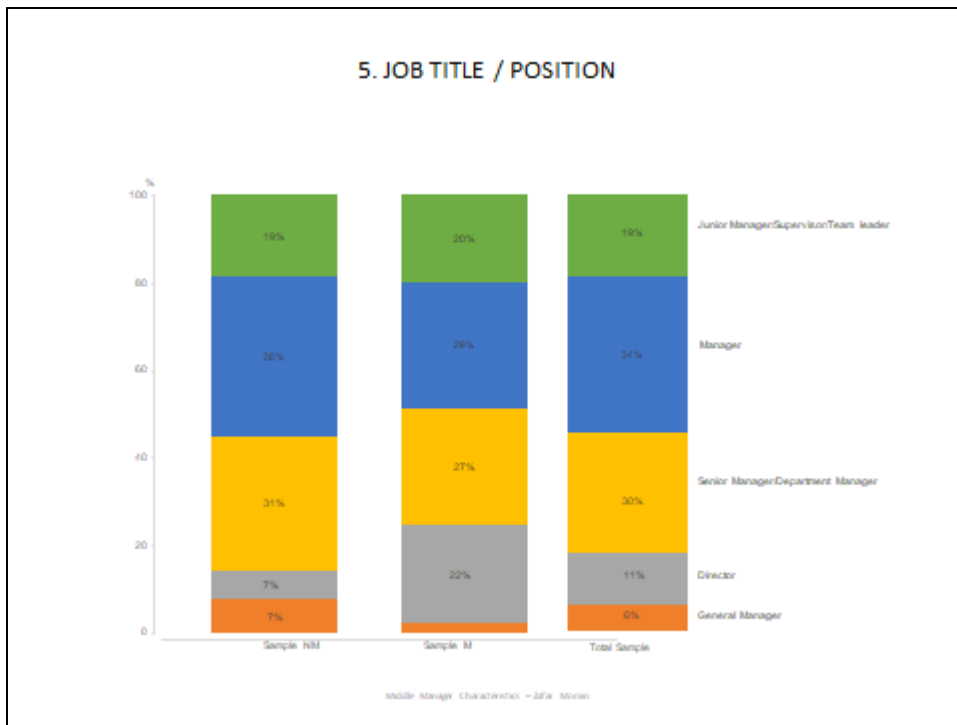


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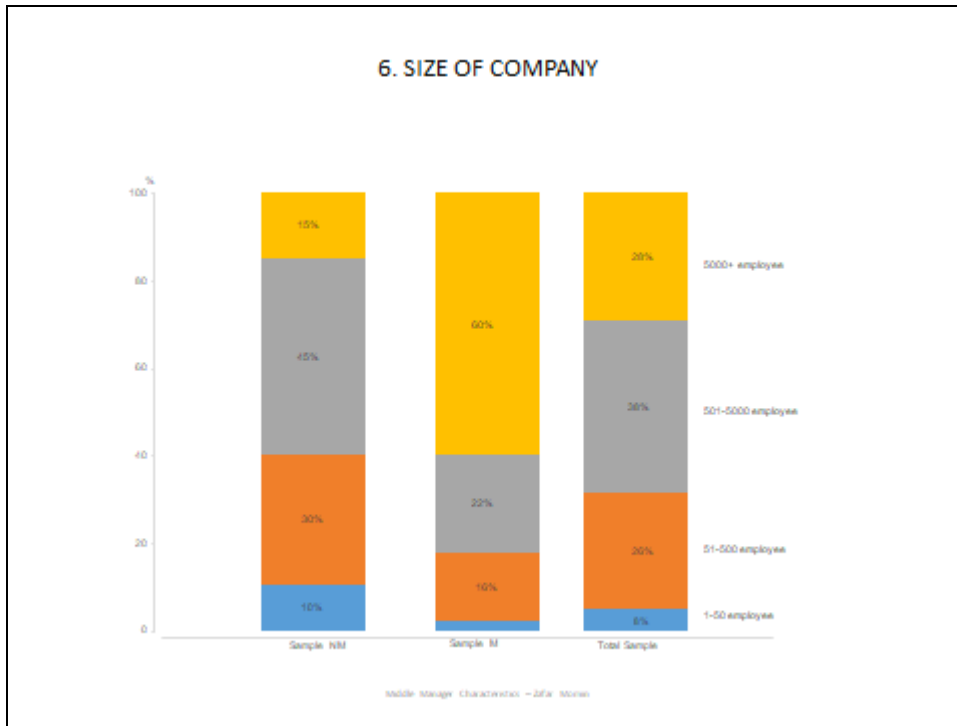


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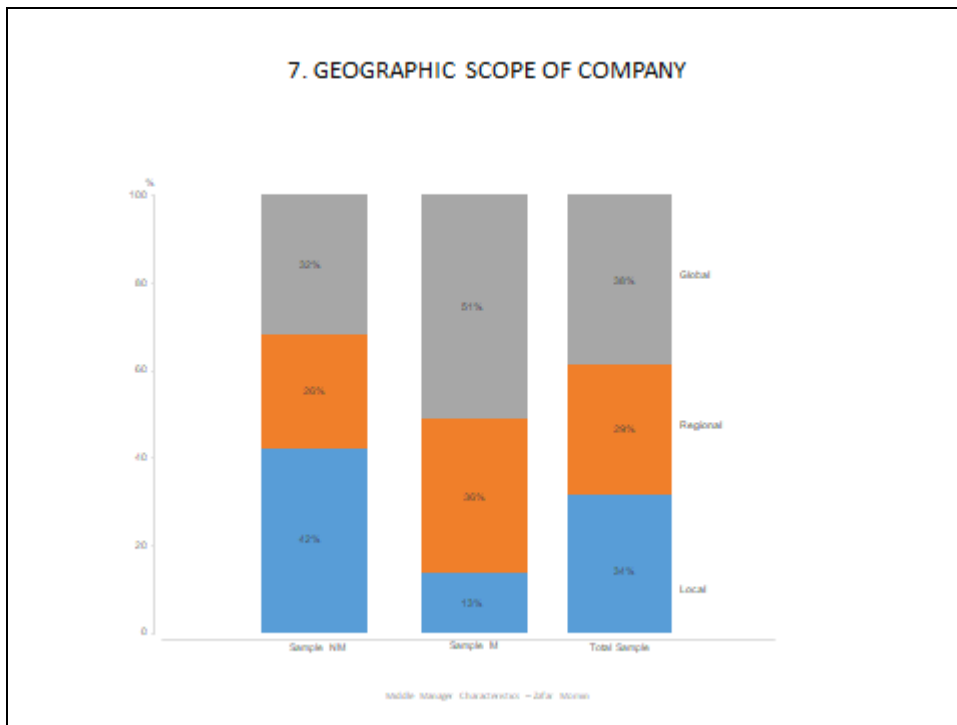


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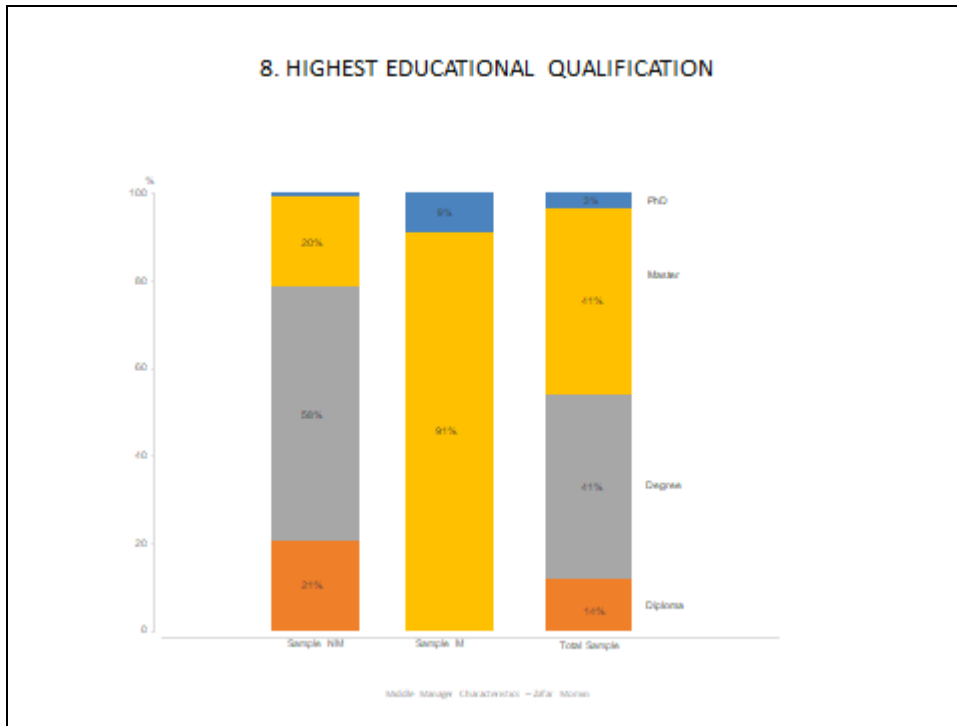


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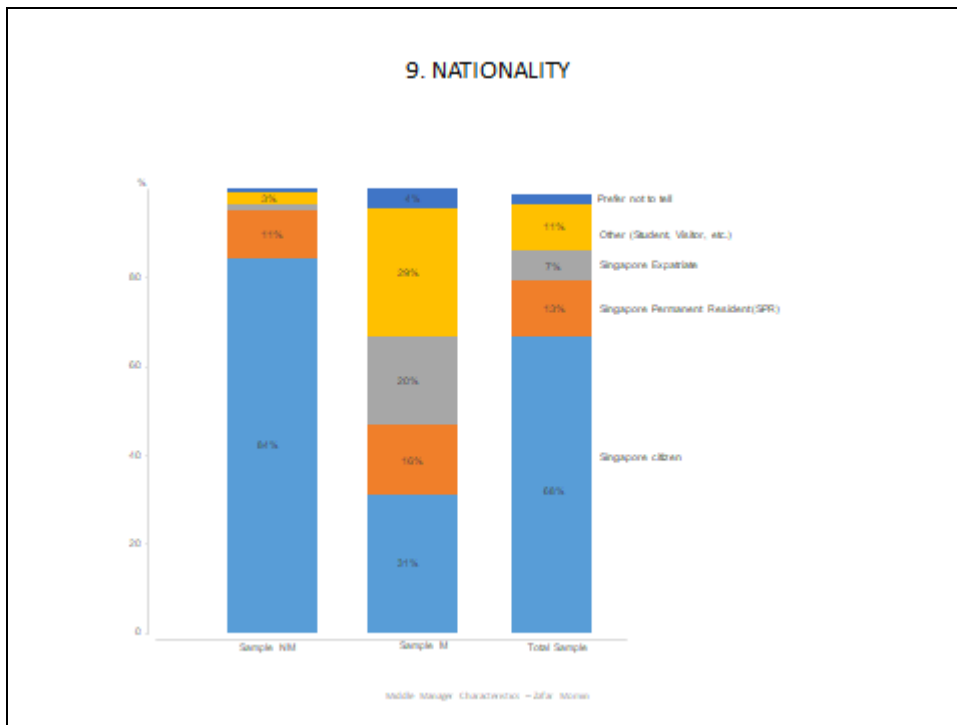


Figure 11-17: Sample NM Responses

Figure 11

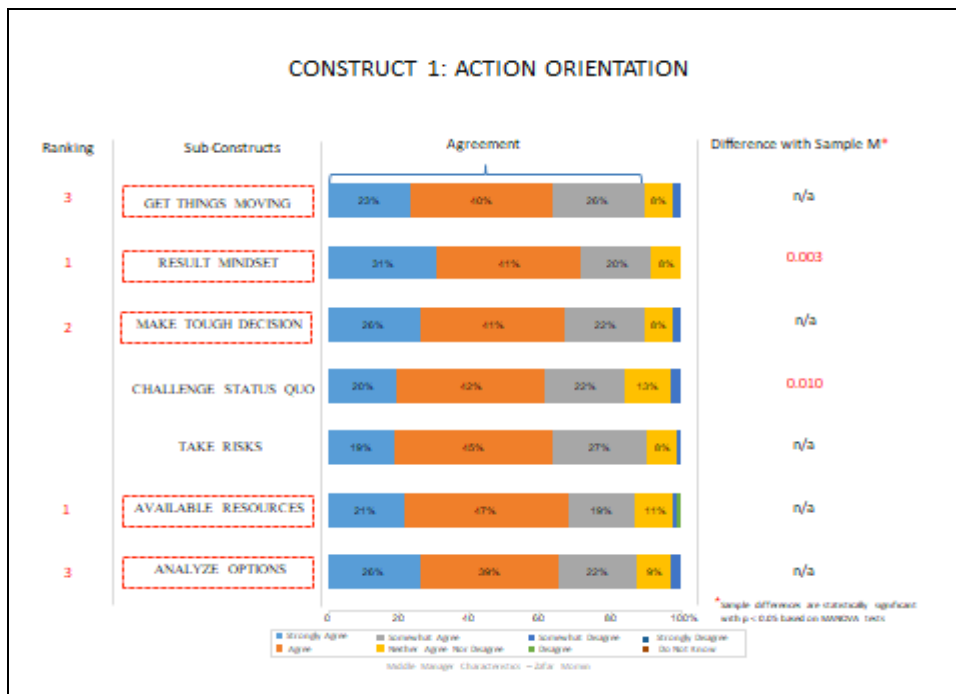


Figure 12

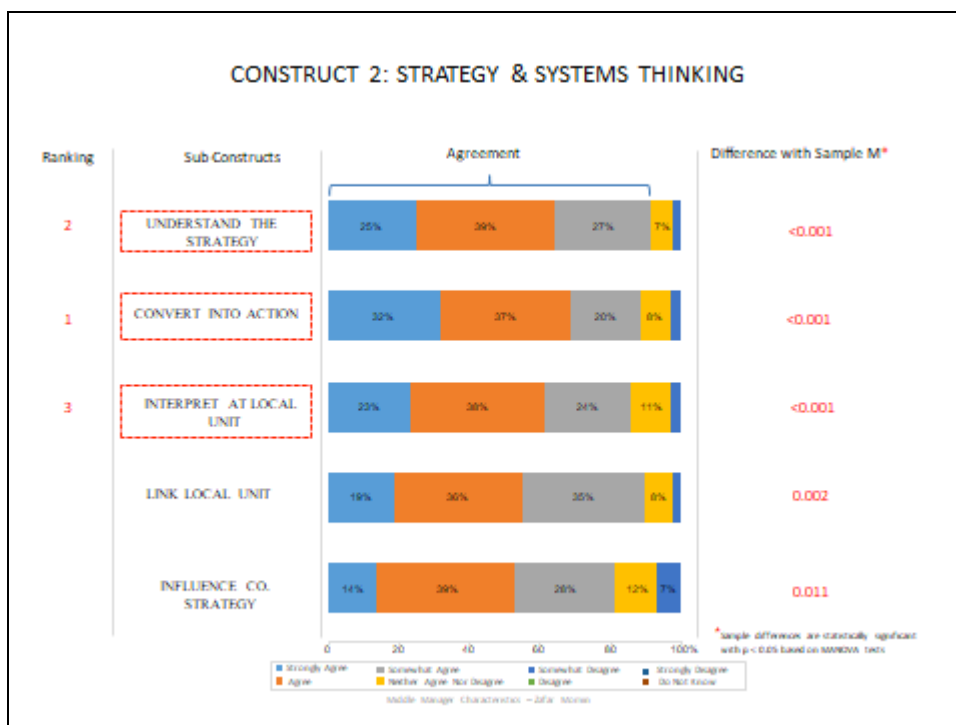


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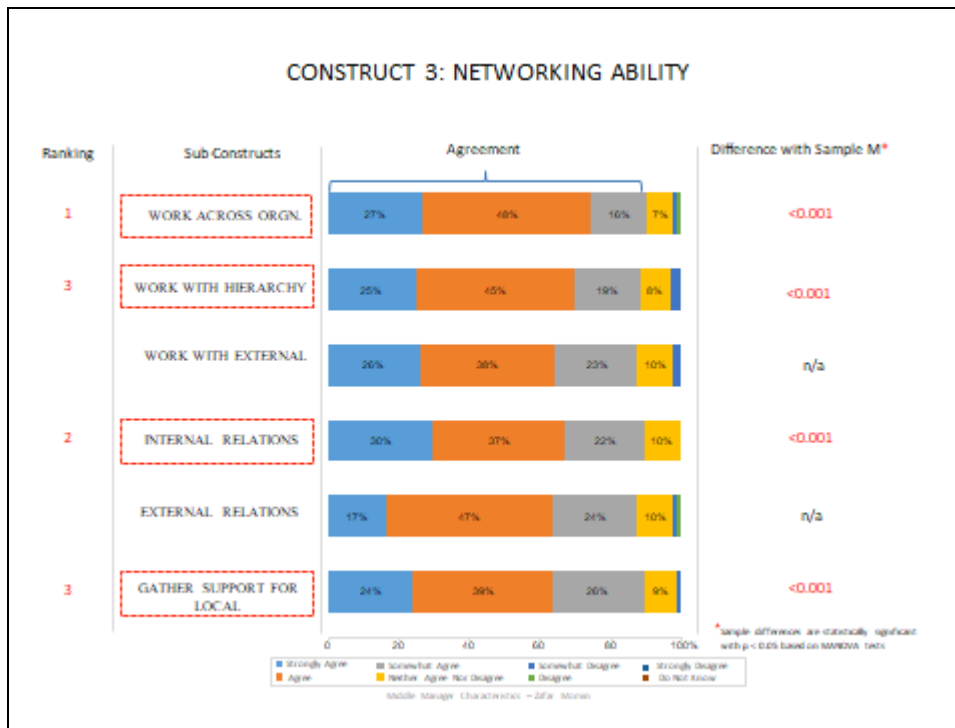


Figure 14

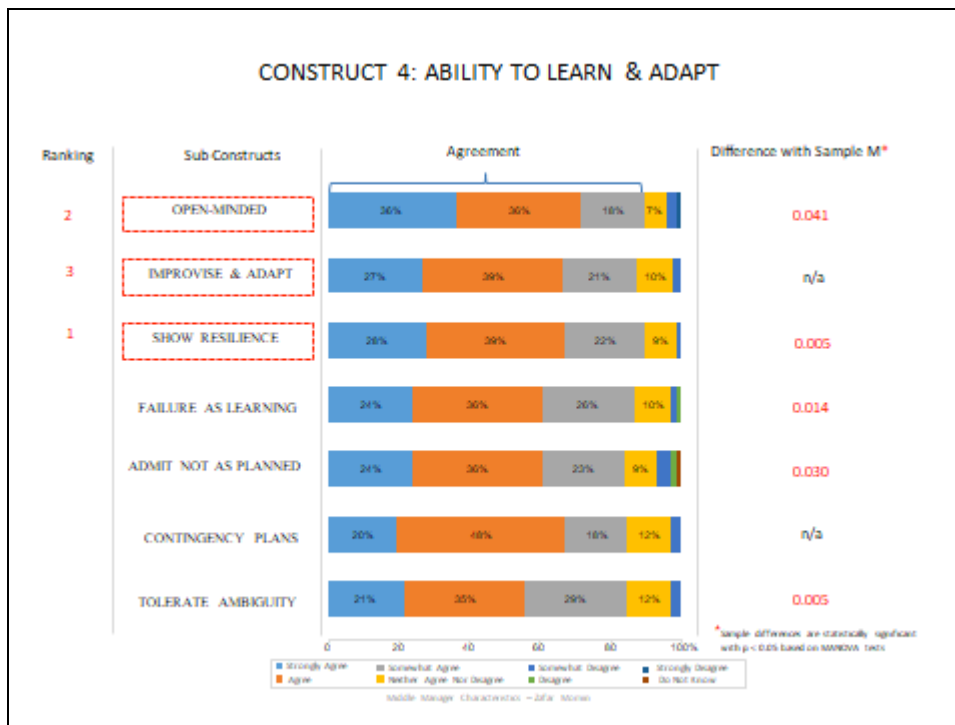


Figure 15

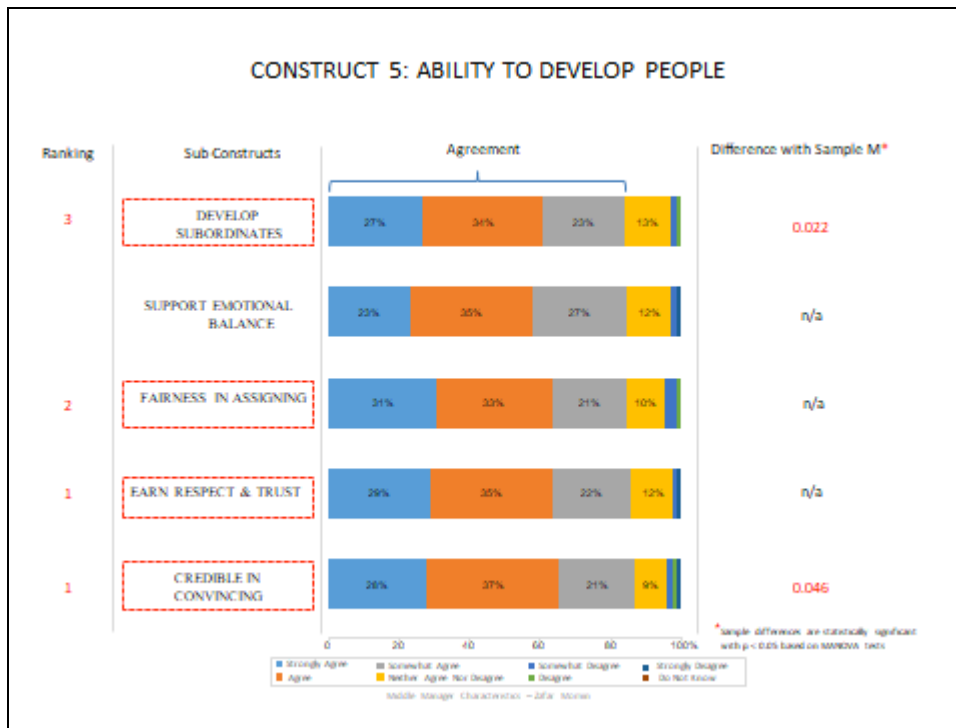


Figure 16

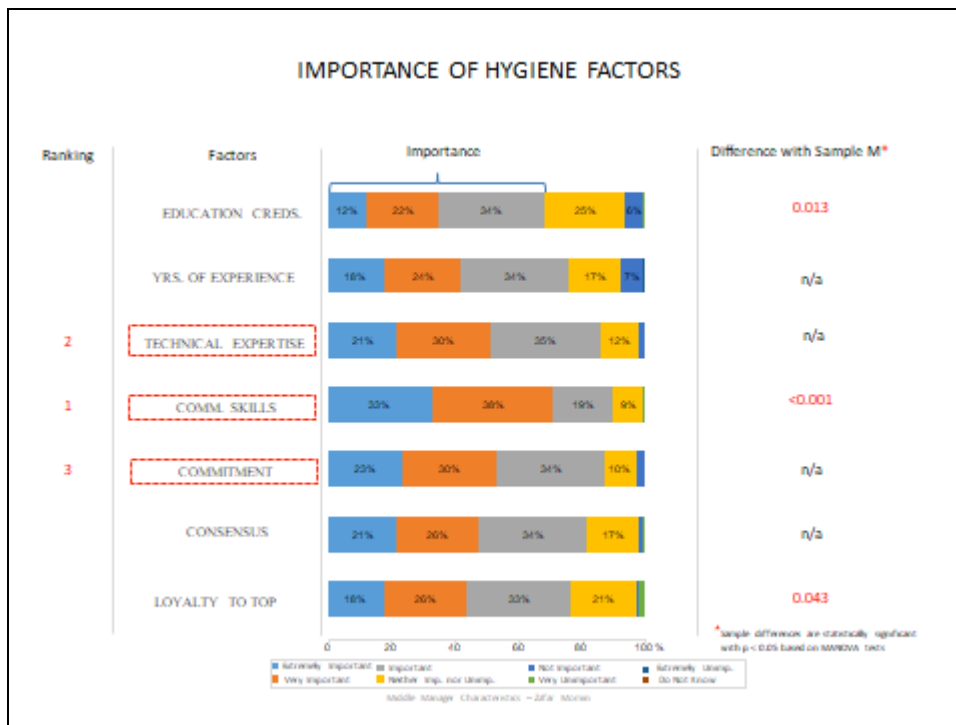


Figure 17

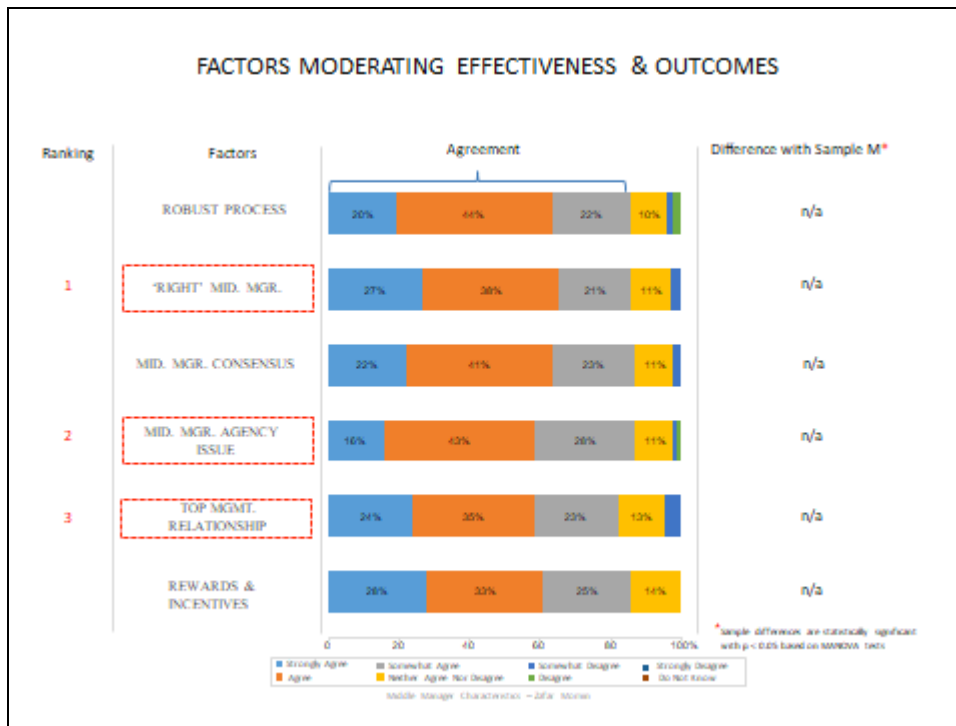


Figure 18- 24: Sample NM Rankings

Figure 18

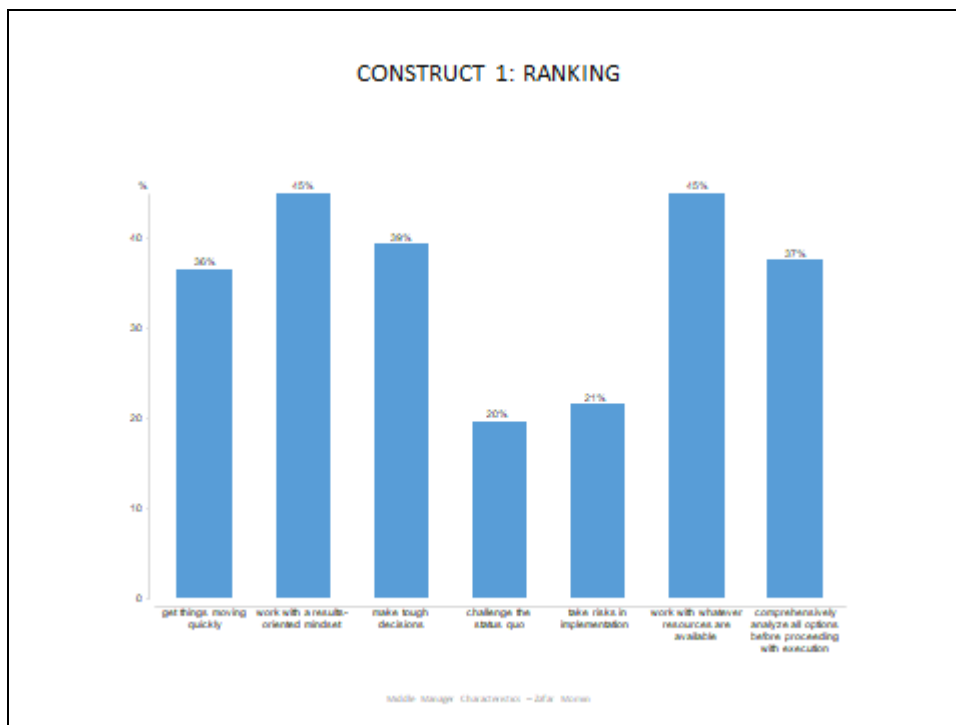


Figure 19

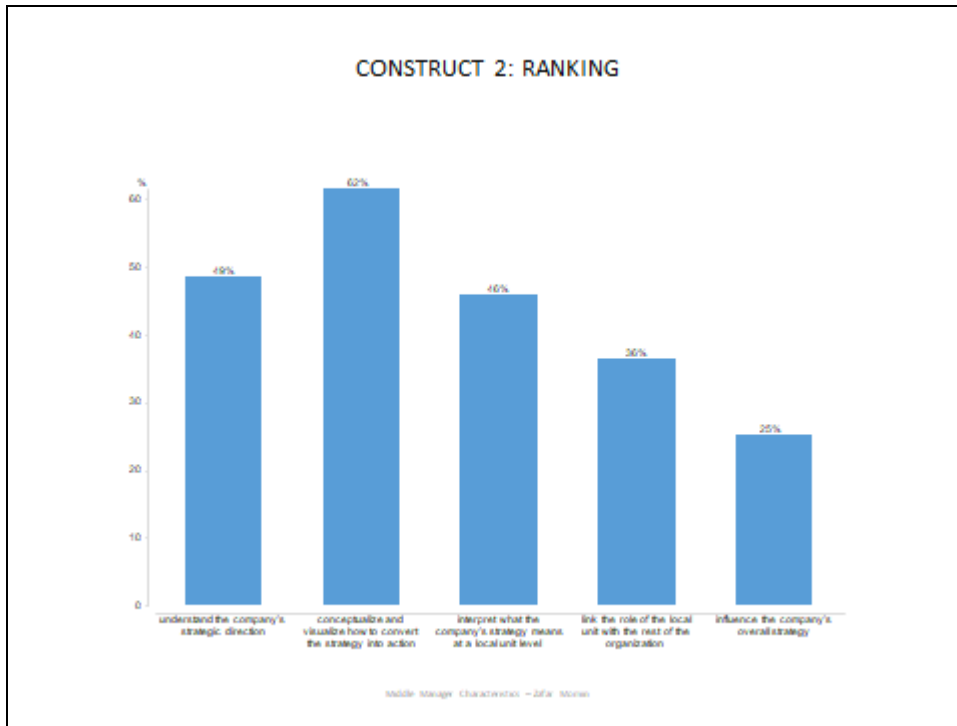


Figure 20

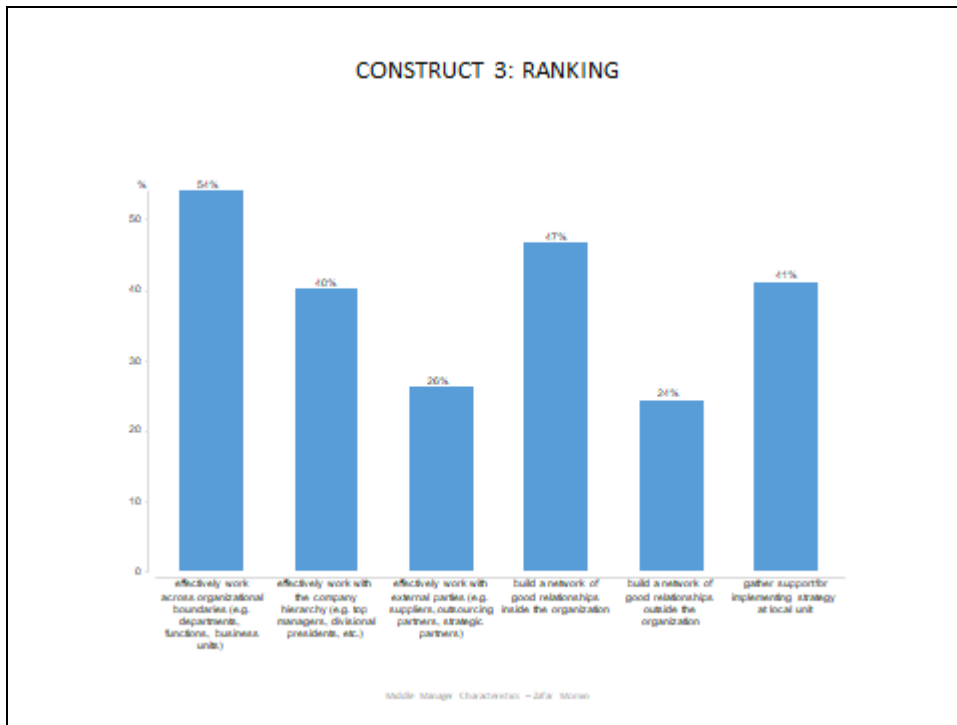


Figure 21

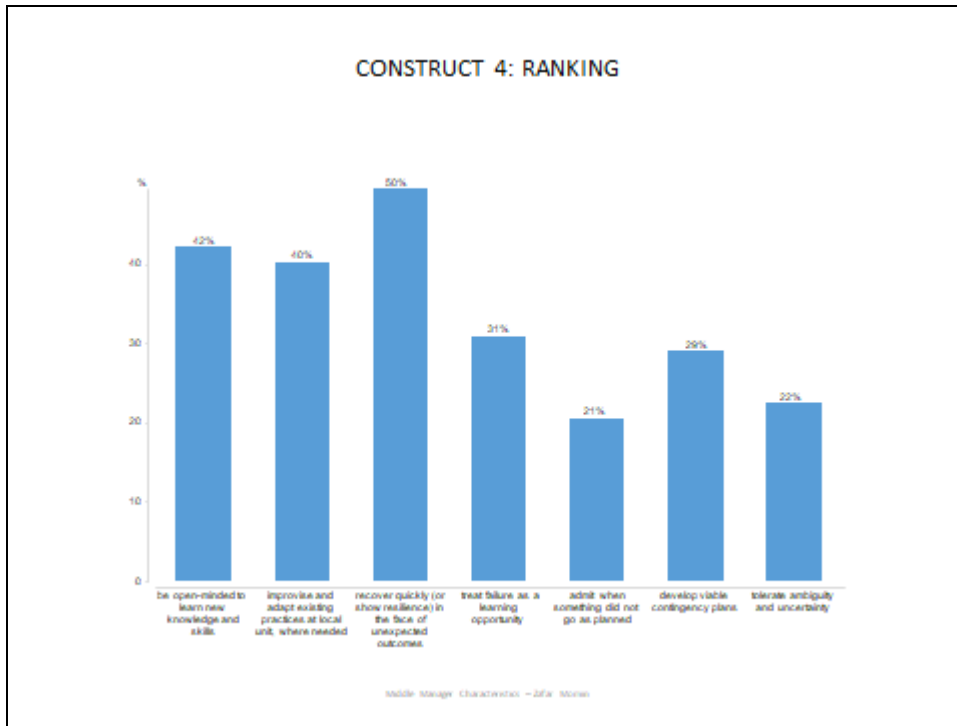


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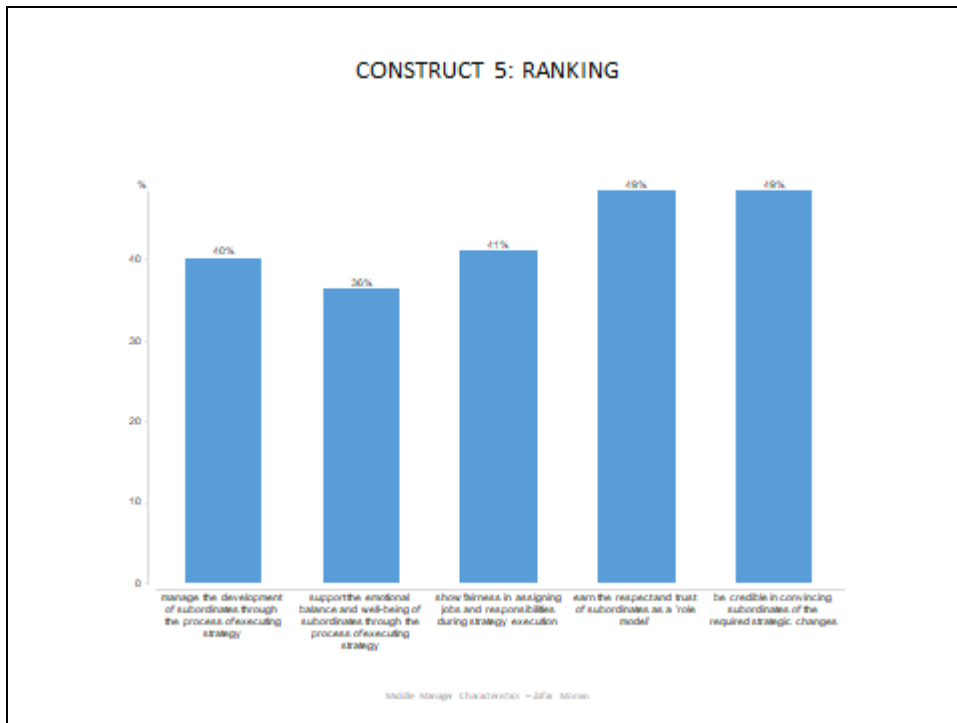


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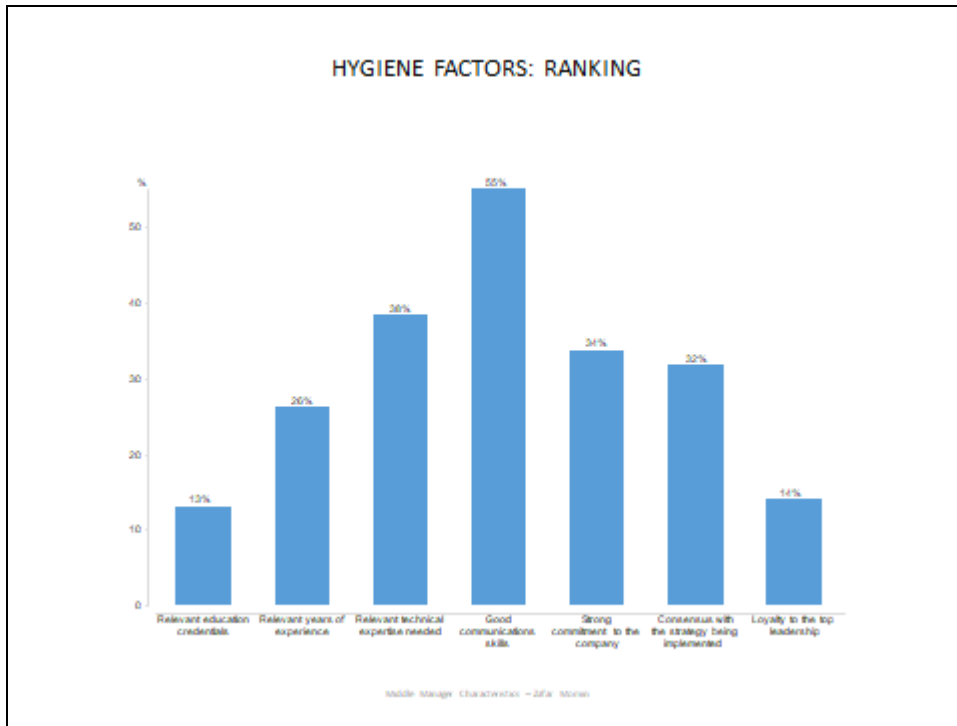


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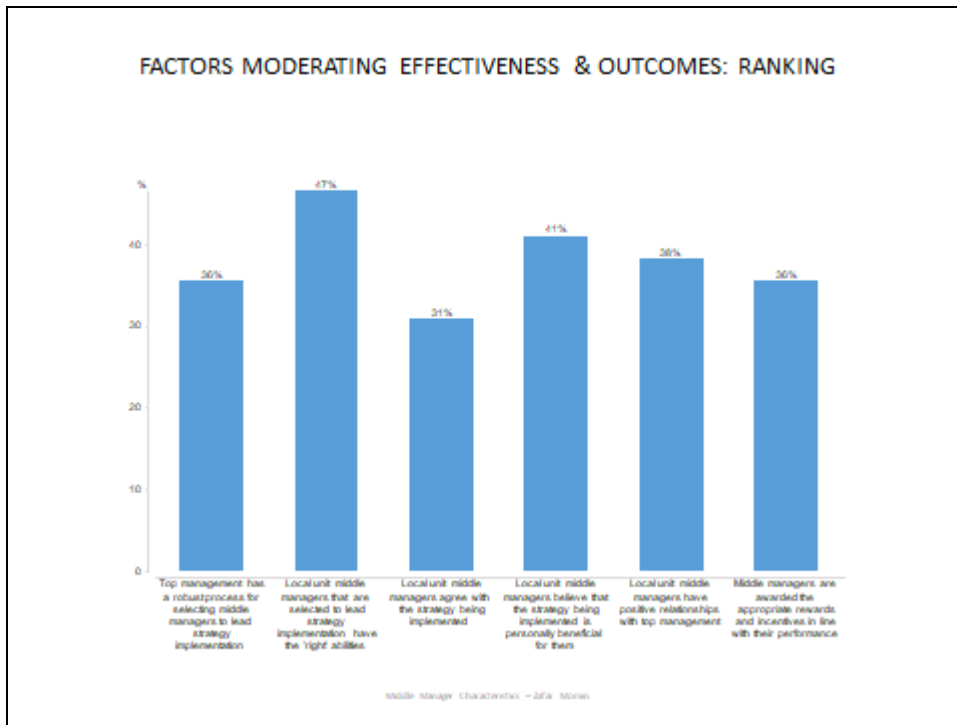


Figure 25-31: Sample M Rankings

Figure 25

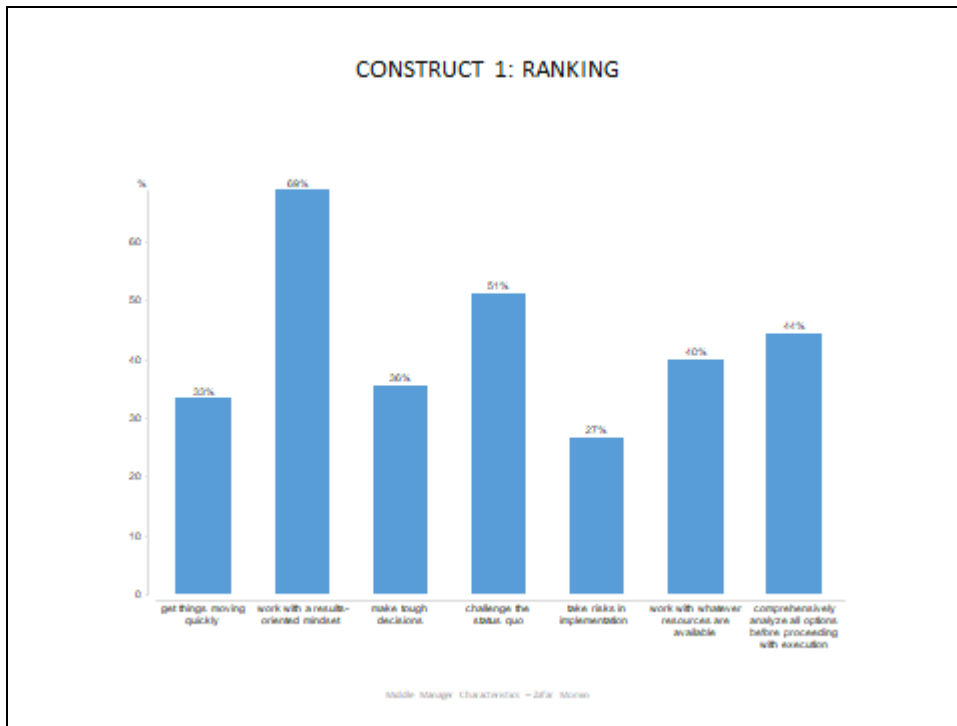


Figure 26

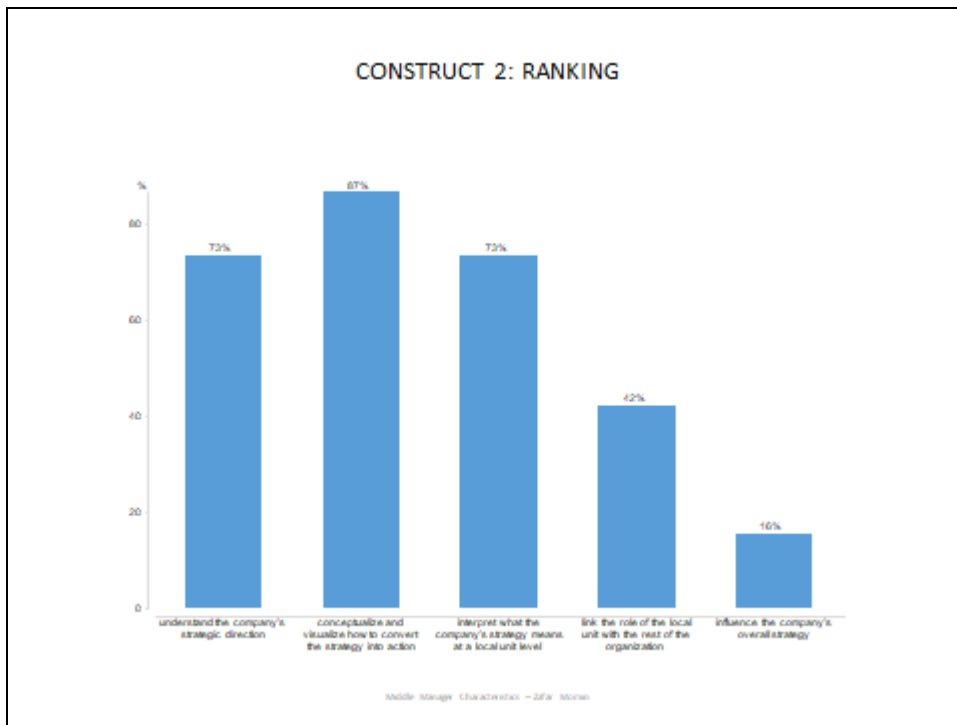


Figure 27

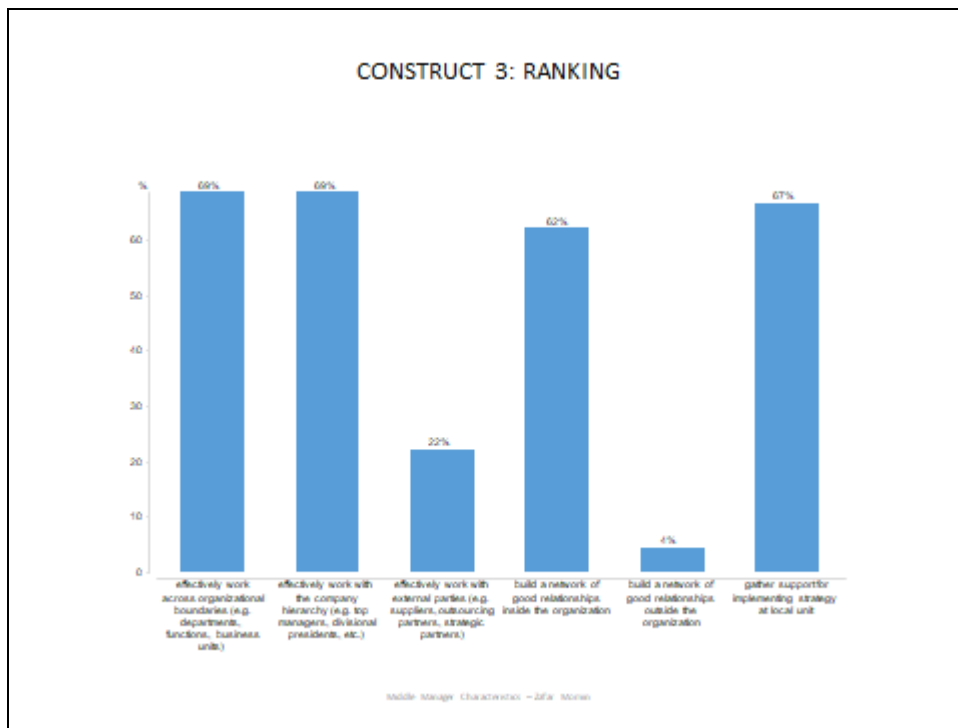


Figure 28

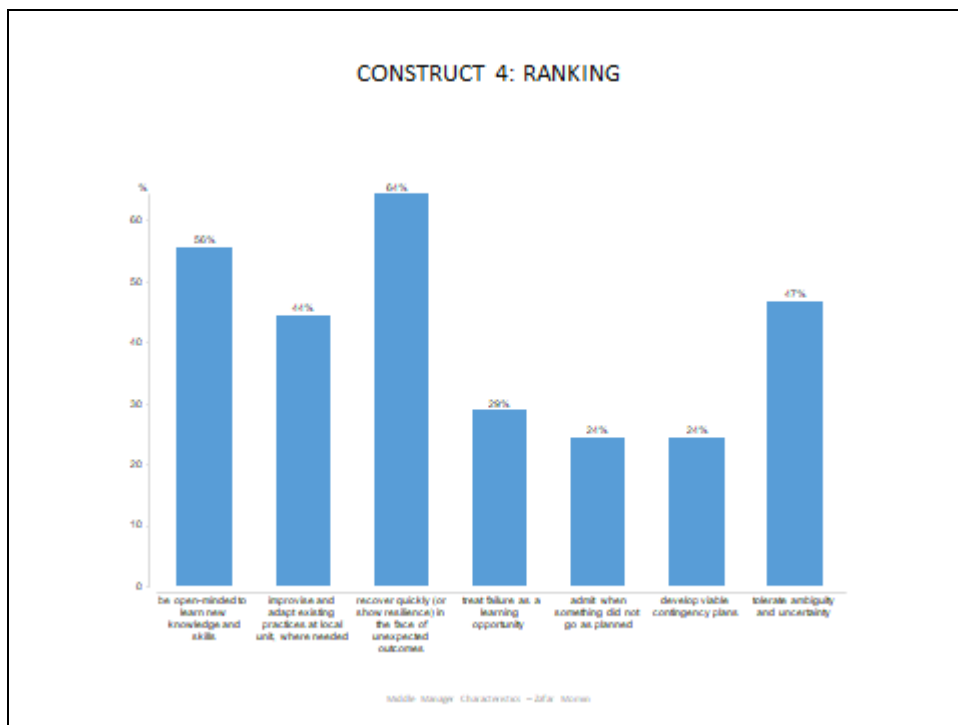


Figure 29

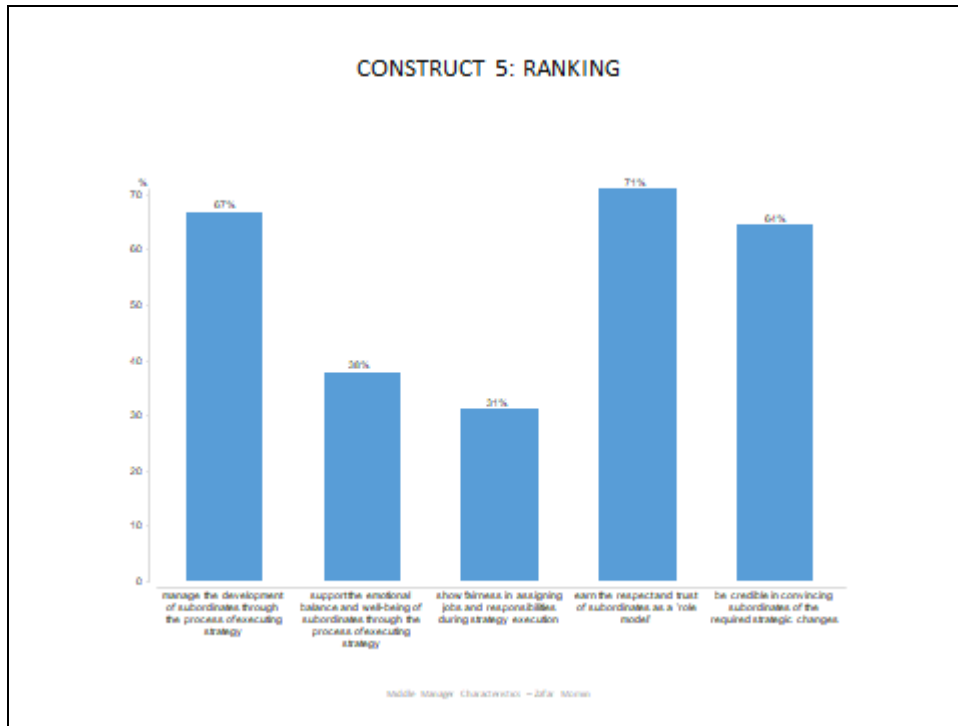


Figure 30

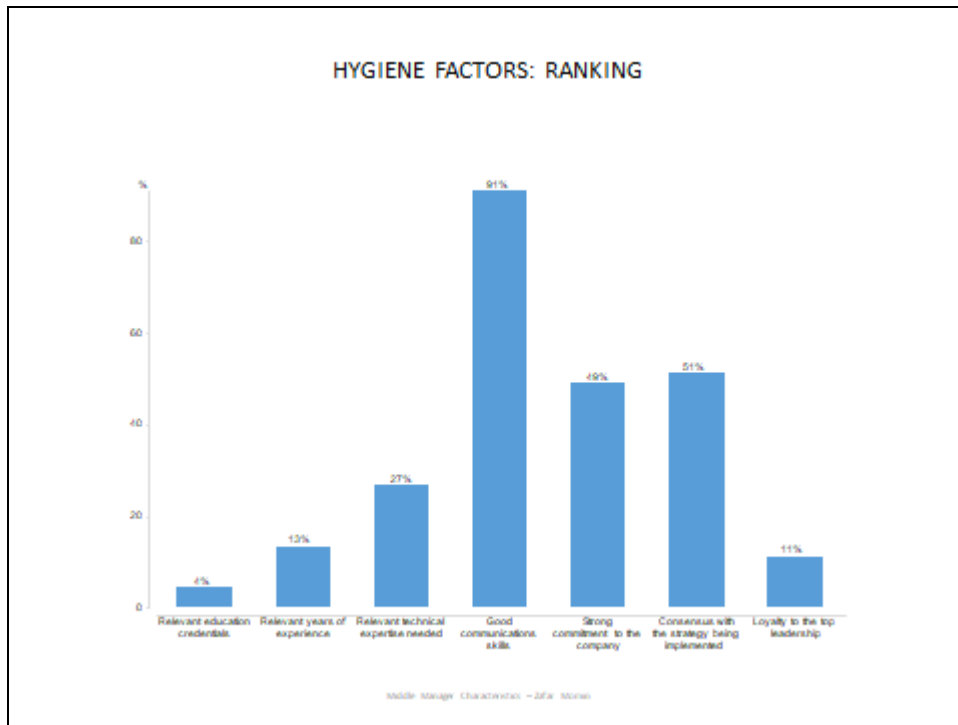


Figure 31

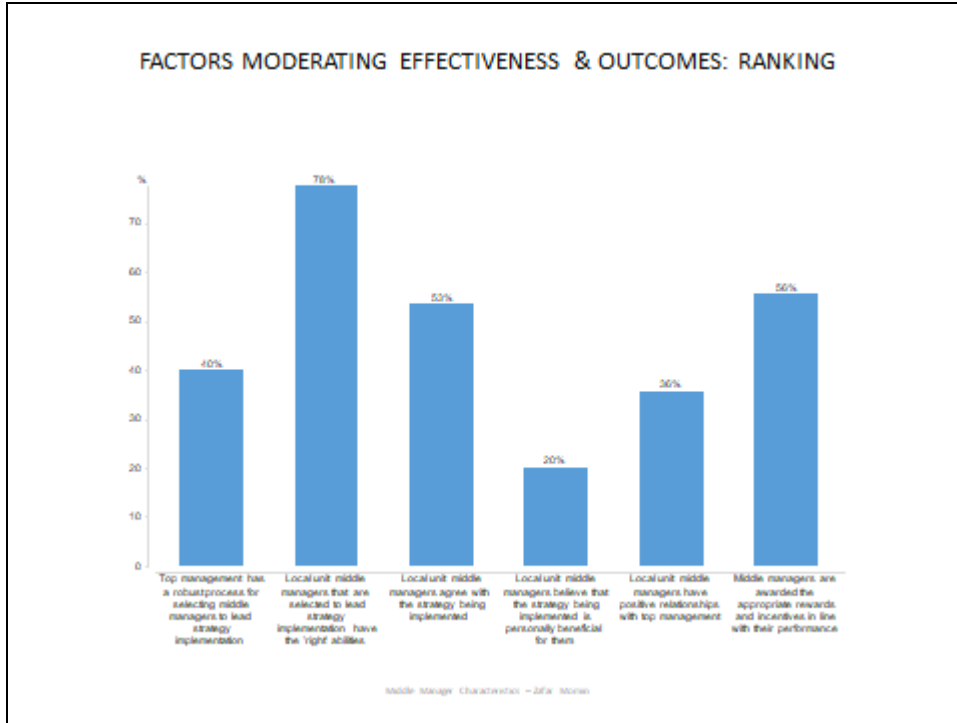


Figure 32-45: MANOVA Test Results

Figure 32 – Construct 1 Response

Significant - Smallest p-value (after applying False Discovery Rate correction): 0.003

	Non Business Degree (Non MBA) n: 107	Degree in Business (MBA) n: 45	R-Squared	p
get things moving	2.25	2.00	0.01	.484
work with a results-oriented mindset	2.06	1.56	0.07	.003
make tough decisions	2.19	2.11	0.00	1.000
challenge the status quo	2.37	1.84	0.06	.010
take risks in implementation	2.28	2.22	0.00	1.000
work with whatever resources are available	2.26	2.24	0.00	1.000
comprehensively analyze all options before proceeding with execution	2.23	2.29	0.00	1.000

n = 152 cases used in estimation; null hypotheses: two-sided; multiple comparisons correction: False Discovery Rate correction applied simultaneously to the entire table

Figure 33 – Construct 1 Ranking

Significant - Smallest p-value (after applying False Discovery Rate correction): 0.0002

	Non Business Degree (Non MBA) n: 107	Degree in Business (MBA) n: 45	R-Squared	p
get things moving quickly	0.36	0.33	0.00	1.000
work with a results-oriented mindset	0.45	0.69	0.05	.023
make tough decisions	0.39	0.36	0.00	1.000
challenge the status quo	0.20	0.51	0.10	<.001
take risks in implementation	0.21	0.27	0.00	1.000
work with whatever resources are available	0.45	0.40	0.00	1.000
comprehensively analyze all options before proceeding with execution	0.37	0.44	0.00	1.000

n = 152 cases used in estimation; null hypotheses: two-sided; multiple comparisons correction: False Discovery Rate correction applied simultaneously to the entire table

Figure 34 – Construct 2 Response

Significant - Smallest p-value (after applying False Discovery Rate correction): 0.000002

	Non Business Degree (Non MBA) n: 107	Degree in Business (MBA) n: 45	R-Squared	p
understand the company's strategic direction	2.21	1.60	0.08	< .001
conceptualize and visualize how to convert the strategy into action	2.13	1.47	0.09	< .001
interpret what the company's strategy means at a local unit level	2.32	1.49	0.14	< .001
link the role of the local unit with the rest of the organization	2.38	1.89	0.06	.002
influence the company's overall strategy	2.58	3.13	0.04	.011

n = 152 cases used in estimation; null hypotheses: two-sided; multiple comparisons correction: False Discovery Rate correction applied simultaneously to the entire table

Figure 35 – Construct 2 Ranking

Significant - Smallest p-value (after applying False Discovery Rate correction): 0.003

	Non Business Degree (Non MBA) n: 107	Degree in Business (MBA) n: 45	R-Squared	p
understand the company's strategic direction	0.49	0.73	0.05	.008
conceptualize and visualize how to convert the strategy into action	0.62	0.87	0.06	.004
interpret what the company's strategy means at a local unit level	0.46	0.73	0.06	.003
link the role of the local unit with the rest of the organization	0.36	0.42	0.00	.845
influence the company's overall strategy	0.25	0.16	0.01	.323

n = 152 cases used in estimation; null hypotheses: two-sided; multiple comparisons correction: False Discovery Rate correction applied simultaneously to the entire table

Figure 36 – Construct 3 Response

Significant - Smallest p-value (after applying False Discovery Rate correction): 0.0001

	Non Business Degree (Non MBA) n: 107	Degree in Business (MBA) n: 45	R-Squared	p
effectively work across organizational boundaries (e.g. departments, functions, business units)	2.10	1.42	0.11	< .001
effectively work with the company hierarchy (e.g. top managers, divisional presidents, etc.)	2.19	1.58	0.09	< .001
effectively work with external parties (e.g. suppliers, outsourcing partners, strategic partners)	2.23	2.40	0.01	.526
build a network of good relationships inside the organization	2.13	1.47	0.11	< .001
build a network of good relationships outside the organization	2.35	2.69	0.02	.097
gather support for implementing strategy at local unit	2.23	1.64	0.08	< .001

n = 152 cases used in estimation; null hypotheses: two-sided; multiple comparisons correction: False Discovery Rate correction applied simultaneously to the entire table

Figure 37 – Construct 3 Ranking

Significant - Smallest p-value (after applying False Discovery Rate correction): 0.002

	Non Business Degree (Non MBA) n: 107	Degree in Business (MBA) n: 45	R-Squared	p
effectively work across organizational boundaries (e.g. departments, functions, business units)	0.54	0.69	0.02	.189
effectively work with the company hierarchy (e.g. top managers, divisional presidents, etc.)	0.40	0.69	0.07	.002
effectively work with external parties (e.g. suppliers, outsourcing partners, strategic partners)	0.26	0.22	0.00	1.000
build a network of good relationships inside the organization	0.47	0.62	0.02	.164
build a network of good relationships outside the organization	0.24	0.04	0.05	.007
gather support for implementing strategy at local unit	0.41	0.67	0.05	.008

n = 152 cases used in estimation; null hypotheses: two-sided; multiple comparisons correction: False Discovery Rate correction applied simultaneously to the entire table

Figure 38 – Construct 4 Response

Significant - Smallest p-value (after applying False Discovery Rate correction): 0.005

	Non Business Degree (Non MBA) n: 107	Degree in Business (MBA) n: 45	R-Squared	p
be open-minded to learn new knowledge and skills	2.07	1.67	0.03	.041
improvise and adapt existing practices at local unit, where needed	2.21	2.07	0.00	.642
recover quickly (or show resilience) in the face of unexpected outcomes	2.16	1.67	0.05	.005
treat failure as a learning opportunity	2.32	1.84	0.04	.014
admit when something did not go as planned	2.42	1.93	0.03	.030
develop viable contingency plans	2.31	2.11	0.01	.356
tolerate ambiguity and uncertainty	2.40	1.89	0.06	.005

n = 152 cases used in estimation; null hypotheses: two-sided; multiple comparisons correction: False Discovery Rate correction applied simultaneously to the entire table

Figure 39 – Construct 4 Ranking

Significant - Smallest p-value (after applying False Discovery Rate correction): 0.02

	Non Business Degree (Non MBA) n: 107	Degree in Business (MBA) n: 45	R-Squared	p
be open-minded to learn new knowledge and skills	0.42	0.56	0.02	.904
improvise and adapt existing practices at local unit, where needed	0.40	0.44	0.00	1.000
recover quickly (or show resilience) in the face of unexpected outcomes	0.50	0.64	0.02	.654
treat failure as a learning opportunity	0.31	0.29	0.00	1.000
admit when something did not go as planned	0.21	0.24	0.00	1.000
develop viable contingency plans	0.29	0.24	0.00	1.000
tolerate ambiguity and uncertainty	0.22	0.47	0.06	.018

n = 152 cases used in estimation; null hypotheses: two-sided; multiple comparisons correction: False Discovery Rate correction applied simultaneously to the entire table

Figure 40 – Construct 5 Response

Significant - Smallest p-value (after applying False Discovery Rate correction): 0.02

	Non Business Degree (Non MBA) n: 107	Degree in Business (MBA) n: 45	R-Squared	p
manage the development of subordinates through the process of executing strategy	2.32	1.82	0.04	.022
support the emotional balance and well-being of subordinates through the process of executing strategy	2.38	2.40	0.00	1.000
show fairness in assigning jobs and responsibilities during strategy execution	2.26	2.29	0.00	1.000
earn the respect and trust of subordinates as a 'role model'	2.25	1.84	0.03	.082
be credible in convincing subordinates of the required strategic changes	2.26	1.78	0.04	.046

n = 152 cases used in estimation; null hypotheses: two-sided; multiple comparisons correction: False Discovery Rate correction applied simultaneously to the entire table

Figure 41– Construct 5 Ranking

Significant - Smallest p-value (after applying False Discovery Rate correction): 0.01

	Non Business Degree (Non MBA) n: 107	Degree in Business (MBA) n: 45	R-Squared	p
manage the development of subordinates through the process of executing strategy	0.40	0.67	0.06	.007
support the emotional balance and well-being of subordinates through the process of executing strategy	0.36	0.38	0.00	1.000
show fairness in assigning jobs and responsibilities during strategy execution	0.41	0.31	0.01	.622
earn the respect and trust of subordinates as a 'role model'	0.49	0.71	0.04	.027
be credible in convincing subordinates of the required strategic changes	0.49	0.64	0.02	.187

n = 152 cases used in estimation; null hypotheses: two-sided; multiple comparisons correction: False Discovery Rate correction applied simultaneously to the entire table

Figure 42 – Importance of Hygiene Factors Response

Significant - Smallest p-value (after applying False Discovery Rate correction): 0.0003

	Non Business Degree (Non MBA) n: 107	Degree in Business (MBA) n: 45	R-Squared	p
Relevant education credentials	2.93	3.47	0.05	.013
Relevant years of experience	2.74	2.98	0.01	.565
Relevant technical expertise needed	2.43	2.67	0.01	.458
Good communications skills	2.08	1.42	0.09	< .001
Strong commitment to the company	2.39	2.22	0.01	.804
Consensus with the strategy being implemented	2.52	2.20	0.02	.273
Loyalty to the top leadership	2.66	3.13	0.04	.043

n = 152 cases used in estimation; null hypotheses: two-sided; multiple comparisons correction: False Discovery Rate correction applied simultaneously to the entire table

Figure 43 –Importance of Hygiene Factors Ranking

Significant - Smallest p-value (after applying False Discovery Rate correction): 0.0001

	Non Business Degree (Non MBA) n: 107	Degree in Business (MBA) n: 45	R-Squared	p
Relevant education credentials	0.13	0.04	0.02	.802
Relevant years of experience	0.26	0.13	0.02	.588
Relevant technical expertise needed	0.38	0.27	0.01	1.000
Good communications skills	0.55	0.91	0.12	< .001
Strong commitment to the company	0.34	0.49	0.02	.548
Consensus with the strategy being implemented	0.32	0.51	0.03	.172
Loyalty to the top leadership	0.14	0.11	0.00	1.000

n = 152 cases used in estimation; null hypotheses: two-sided; multiple comparisons correction: False Discovery Rate correction applied simultaneously to the entire table

Figure 44 – Factors Moderating Effectiveness and Outcomes Response

Not significant - Smallest p-value (after applying False Discovery Rate correction): 0.44

	Non Business Degree (Non MBA) n: 107	Degree in Business (MBA) n: 45	R-Squared	p
Top management has a robust process for selecting middle managers to lead strategy implementation	2.36	2.29	0.00	1.000
Local unit middle managers that are selected to lead strategy implementation have the 'right' abilities	2.24	1.84	0.03	.439
Local unit middle managers agree with the strategy being implemented	2.29	2.04	0.01	1.000
Local unit middle managers believe that the strategy being implemented is personally beneficial for them	2.41	2.71	0.01	1.000
Local unit middle managers have positive relationships with top management	2.39	2.18	0.01	1.000
Middle managers are awarded the appropriate rewards and incentives in line with their performance	2.25	2.18	0.00	1.000

n = 152 cases used in estimation; null hypotheses: two-sided; multiple comparisons correction: False Discovery Rate correction applied simultaneously to the entire table

Figure 45 – Factors Moderating Effectiveness and Outcomes Ranking

Significant - Smallest p-value (after applying False Discovery Rate correction): 0.001

	Non Business Degree (Non MBA) n: 107	Degree in Business (MBA) n: 45	R-Squared	p
Top management has a robust process for selecting middle managers to lead strategy implementation	0.36	0.40	0.00	.905
Local unit middle managers that are selected to lead strategy implementation have the 'right' abilities	0.47	0.78	0.08	< .001
Local unit middle managers agree with the strategy being implemented	0.31	0.53	0.04	.013
Local unit middle managers believe that the strategy being implemented is personally beneficial for them	0.41	0.20	0.04	.019
Local unit middle managers have positive relationships with top management	0.38	0.36	0.00	1.000
Middle managers are awarded the appropriate rewards and incentives in line with their performance	0.36	0.56	0.03	.033

n = 152 cases used in estimation; null hypotheses: two-sided; multiple comparisons correction: False Discovery Rate correction applied simultaneously to the entire table

APPENDIX 7: Impact of Company Size

Analysis (Demographics, Response, Ranking, MANOVA Test Result)

Sample S (n=109) – Respondent company size \leq 5000 employee

Sample L (n=43) – Respondent company size $>$ 5000 employee

In Appendix:

Figure 21a: Results analysis: Company Size – Respondent Demographics

Figure 21: Figures 21A1-A7, 21B1-B7: Company Size – Responses and Rankings

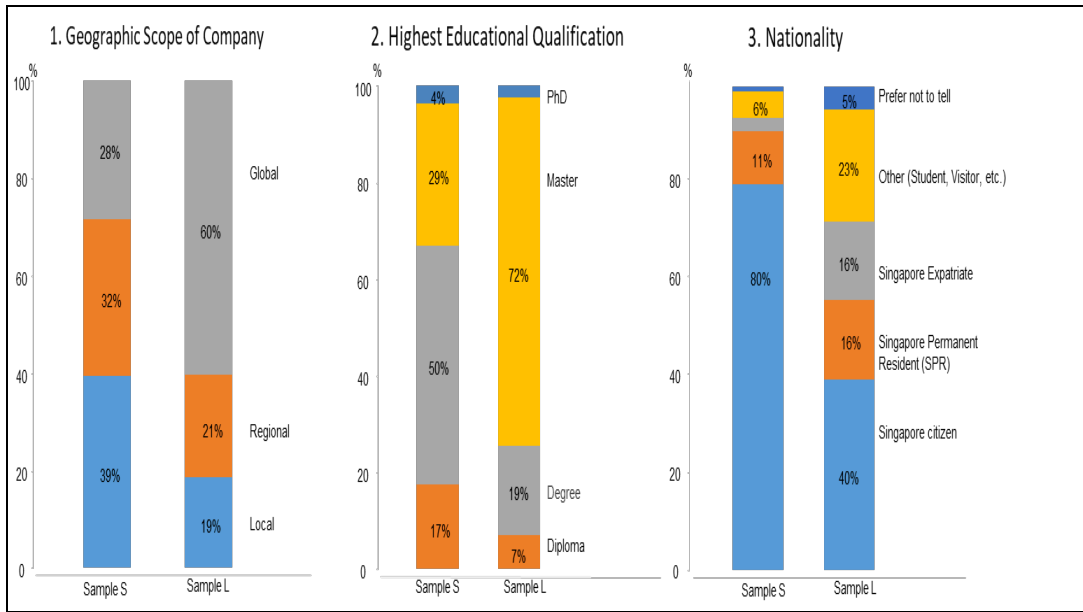
6.3 Results analysis: Impact of company size

6.3.1 Respondent demographics (company size > versus <=5000 employees)

From the total sample size of 152 respondents, there were 43 respondents that worked for companies with great than 5000 employees (termed Sample L in this analysis). The remaining sample consisted of 109 respondents that worked for companies less than or equal to 5000 employees (termed Sample S), out of which they were roughly evenly split between companies that were between 501-5000 employees and below 500 employees. Segmenting the total sample along this company size variable provided demographic differences in mainly 3 key areas shown in Figure 20 below. The rest of the demographics were not significantly different.

From Figure 20 and Tables 12-14, one can observe that 60% of the sample L ('large company) respondents worked for global companies, whereas ~40% of the sample S ('small company') respondents worked for local companies and ~30% for regional companies and less than 30% worked for global companies. Over 70% of sample L held graduate degrees, whereas 67% of sample S held bachelor degree and diploma qualifications. The third key difference was in terms of nationalities: around 80% of the sample S were Singapore citizens, whereas only 40% of sample L held Singapore citizenship. Therefore, the small and large company size based segmentation also partially bifurcates respondents on dimensions of company type, educational qualifications and nationality.

Figure 20: Respondent Demographics for Analysis: Impact of Company Size



6.3.2 Findings and discussion (company size > versus <=5000 employees)

As earlier, we analyze the results and test for differences in the sample populations using one-way multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) tests. The independent predictor variables were set as Samples L and S and the dependent outcome variables were the numerical responses to the survey questions.

Table 12 – 14: Crosstabs Analysis: Impact of Company Size

Table 12 – Crosstab between Size of Company and Highest Education Qualification

Highest Education Qualification	Size of Company	
	<=5000 empl.	>5000 empl.
Diploma	17%	7%
	19	3
Degree	50%	19%
	54	8
Master	29%	72%
	32	31
PhD	4%	2%
	4	1

Table 13 – Crosstab between Size of Company and Geographic Scope of Company

Geographic Scope of Company	Size of Company	
	<=5000 empl.	>5000 empl.
Local	39%	19%
	43	8
Regional	32%	21%
	35	9
Global	28%	60%
	31	26

Table 14 – Crosstab between Size of Company and Nationality

Nationality	Size of Company	
	<=5000 empl.	>5000 empl.
SG Citizen	80%	40%
	87	17
SG PR	11%	16%
	12	7
Expats	3%	16%
	3	7
Other (Student, Foreigner, etc.)	6%	23%
	6	10
Prefer not to tell	1%	5%
	1	2

Action orientation

The key significant difference between the two samples was in the ‘get things moving quickly ($p=0.034$)’ and ‘work with results oriented mindset ($p=0.022$)’ sub-constructs. Figures 21A1 and 21B1 illustrate these differences. Compared to sample S, sample L views these two sub-constructs as much more significant with much stronger levels of agreement. There are no statistically significant differences in the rankings for this competency as shown Figure B1. While both samples agree with their top choice of ‘results mind-set,’ sample L views ‘working with available resources’ as a second choice, whereas sample S considers this their third choice, along with ‘analyze all options.’ Sample S views ‘making tough decisions’ as their second choice, which is ranked much lower by sample L. Middle managers working for larger and global companies view ‘getting things moving quickly’ with a ‘results orientation’ and working with ‘whatever resources are available’ as the key aspects of this construct. For larger companies with global footprints and often under matrix organizational structures, perhaps the key performance dimensions include generating results quickly without negotiating too often for resources.

For relatively smaller companies with more local and regional footprints, and without lots of global resources and support, key performance dimensions for middle managers may include generating results (not necessarily as quickly) by making tough decisions by analyzing the execution options and working with available resources provided by the company. The working environments of company size are more likely drivers of the differences observed on ‘getting things moving.’ In the impact of business graduate degree, we also observed differences in ‘challenging status quo’ in addition to similar higher levels of agreement on the ‘results orientation’ that could be linked to both education and company size/type needs.

Figure 21: Analysis: Impact of Company Size

Figure 21A1

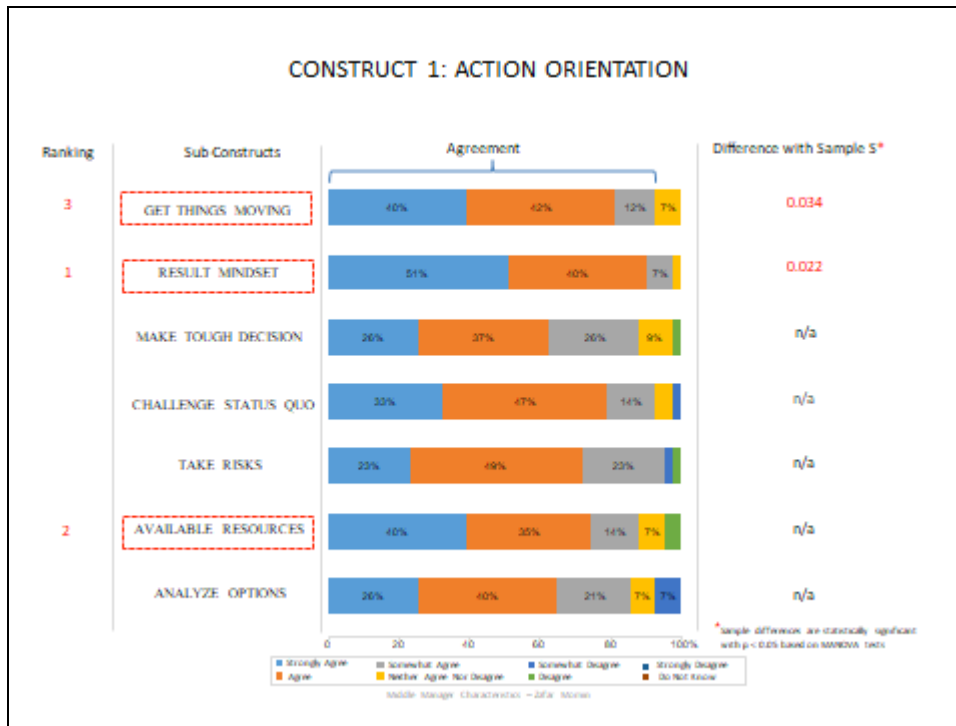
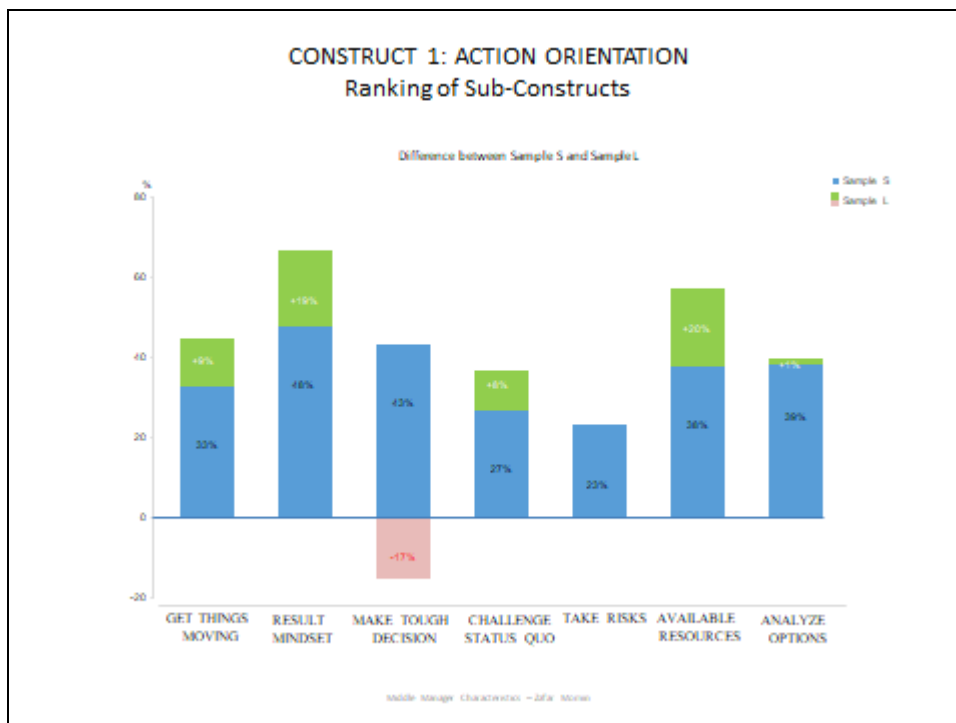


Figure 21B1



Strategic and systems thinking

There were statistically significant differences between the two samples across all the sub-constructs for this competency. Figures 21A2 and 21B2 illustrate these differences in the responses and in the rankings. Both samples have the same top-3 choices, however, sample L respondents are a lot more contrasted in their strong agreements with the importance of ‘conceptualizing strategy into action,’ ‘understanding the strategy,’ and ‘interpreting it at a local level.’ They also rank ‘linking the local unit’ higher because they typically work for global and larger companies where this aspect is viewed as relatively more important in strategic thinking abilities required by middle managers. Compared to sample S respondents, they did not consider the deliberate outlier to ‘influence the overall company strategy’ as important, although both samples did rank it the lowest. In comparison to the education (MBA) analysis, sample L appeared similar in terms of responses from sample M (MBA) for this construct, which is not surprising as over 70% of sample L had graduate degrees. However, the ranking differences with non-MBA respondents were quite different compared to differences between samples L and S where only ‘conceptualizing strategy into action’ was clearly the major ranking differentiator for company size: large company respondents rank it significantly higher as a required middle manager ability in terms of strategic thinking, probably as a function of the relative complexity of the business operations of a larger company.

Networking ability

There were no statistically significant differences between the two samples across all the sub-constructs for this competency. Figures 21A3 and 21B3 illustrate these differences in the responses and in the rankings. The relative ranking among the two samples shows subtle

differences with the most significant difference: sample L views ‘gathering support for the local unit’ as their top choice. Given the environment that sample L operates within, this prioritization is not surprising as garnering support for the local unit within the large and global context may be one of the important aspects of networking for middle managers under those conditions, and in contrast to those working with smaller local and regional companies. Sample S views ‘gathering support’ as a distant third choice whereas ‘networking across the boundaries,’ ‘working with the company hierarchy’ and ‘building internal relationships’ are most relevant to them. Both samples prioritize external networks and relationships well below internal ones.

Ability to learn and adapt

There were statistically significant differences between the two samples across all the sub-constructs for this competency, except for those related to ‘being open minded’ and ‘adapting existing practices.’ In the other sub-constructs, there were relatively more neutral responses and disagreements in sample S compared to sample L. Figures 21A4 and 21B4 illustrate these differences in the responses and in the rankings. The key differences are in sub-constructs related to ‘treating failure as a learning opportunity,’ ‘admitting when something goes wrong,’ ‘developing contingency plans,’ and ‘tolerating ambiguity and uncertainty.’ There is also a difference in ‘showing resilience’ although both samples ranked this as their top choice. There were no statistically significant differences between the sample rankings. Sample L ranks ‘tolerating ambiguity’ amongst their top-3 choices, whereas it is amongst the lowest rank for smaller companies. It is understandable that large global companies may recognize tolerance of ambiguity as an important sub-construct due to their business education and more complex working environment. Also, within smaller local and regional

companies, it is possible that things like failure, ambiguity and admittance of things not going according to plan may be less acceptable and hence ranked lower.

Ability to develop people

None of responses and rankings for the sub-constructs for this competency was statistically significant between the two sample populations. For both samples, the top-3 choices were those related to ‘earning trust and respect of subordinates,’ ‘being credible in convincing them,’ and ‘managing the development of subordinates.’ The only other notable point is that ‘showing fairness in assignments’ appeared to be relatively of some importance to sample S respondents. ‘Supporting the emotional well-being and balance of subordinates’ was relatively ranked lower by both samples. Regardless of company size, respondents indicated that the being a role model and being invested in developing subordinates to ensure their success during change, and being able to convince them of imminent changes due to strategy were the priorities in terms of people development ability.

Figure 21A2

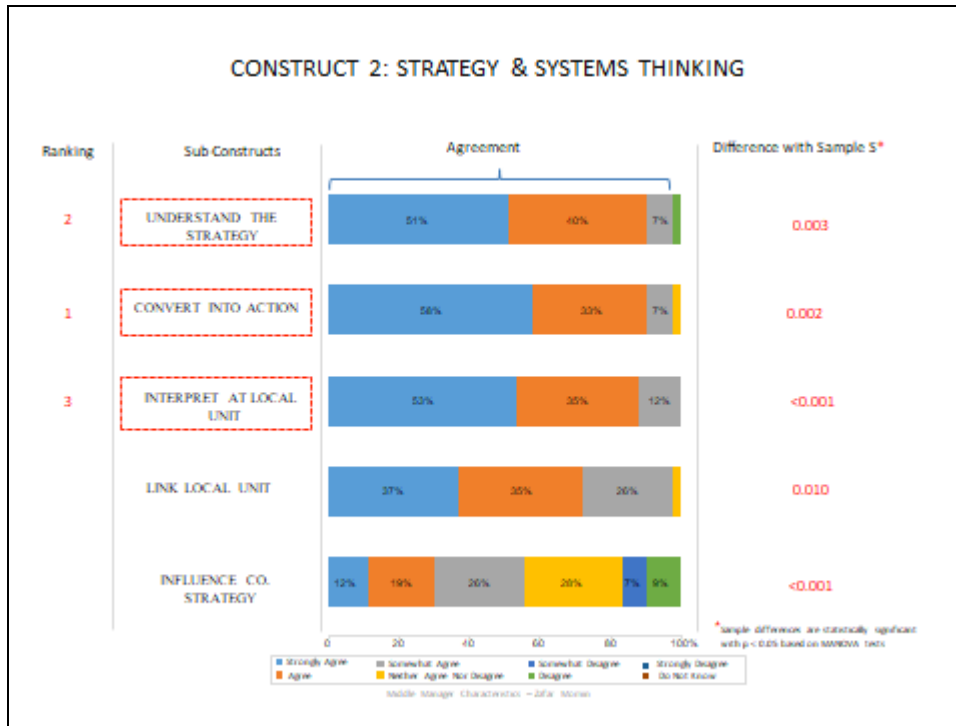


Figure 21B2

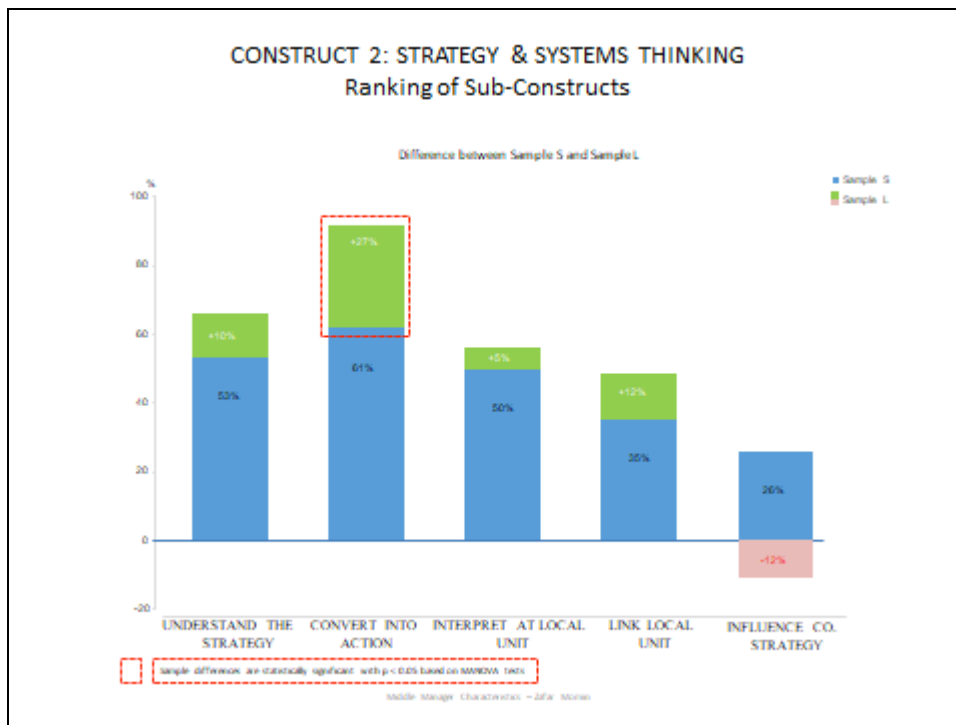


Figure 21A3

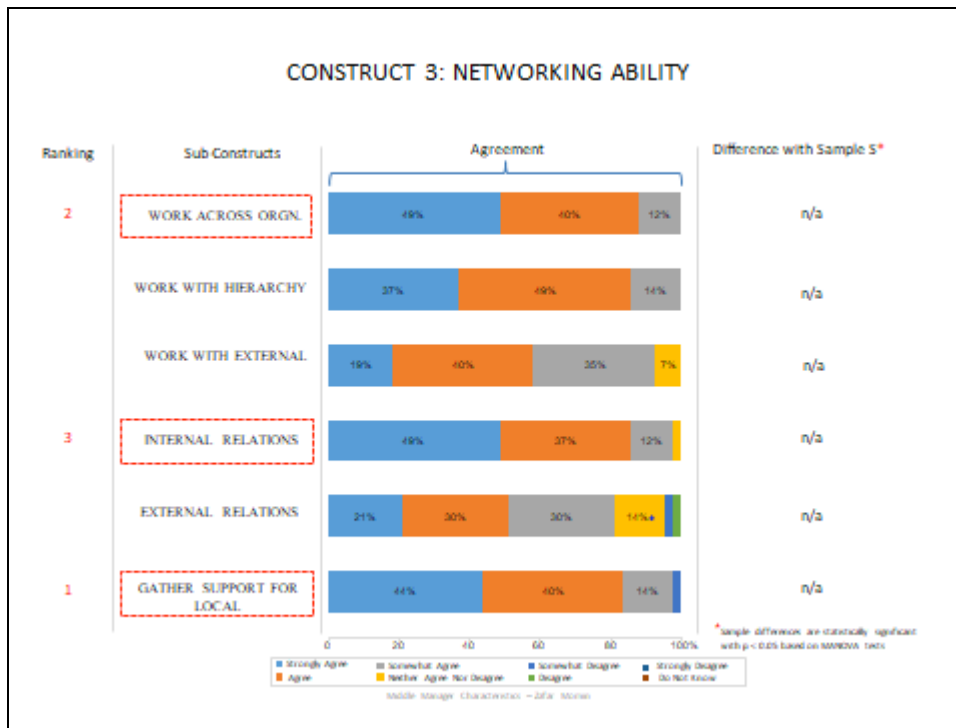


Figure 21B3

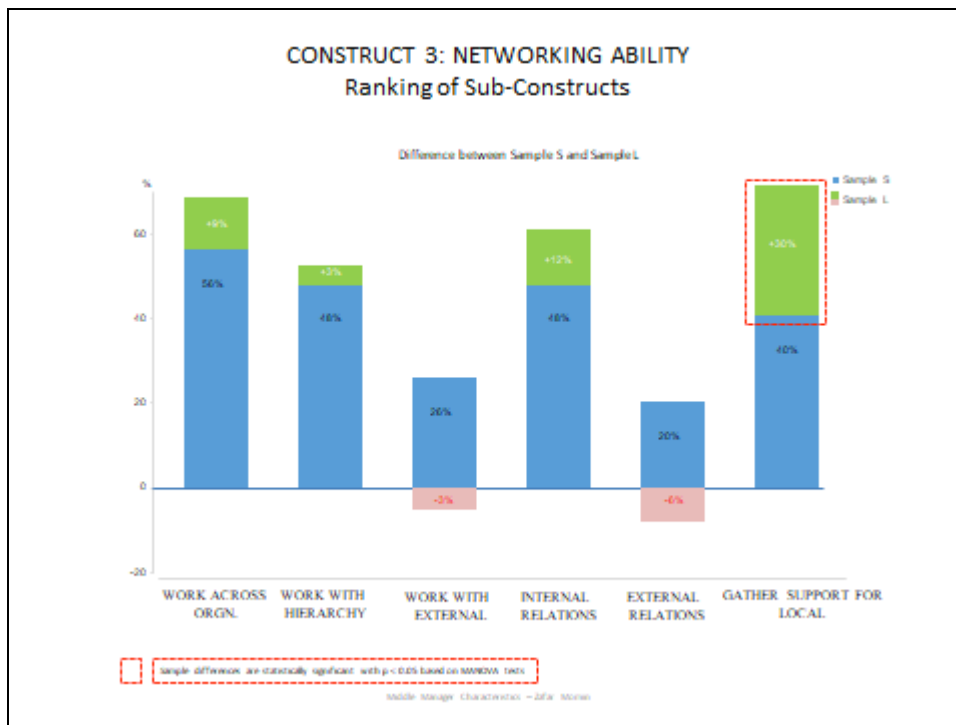


Figure 21A4

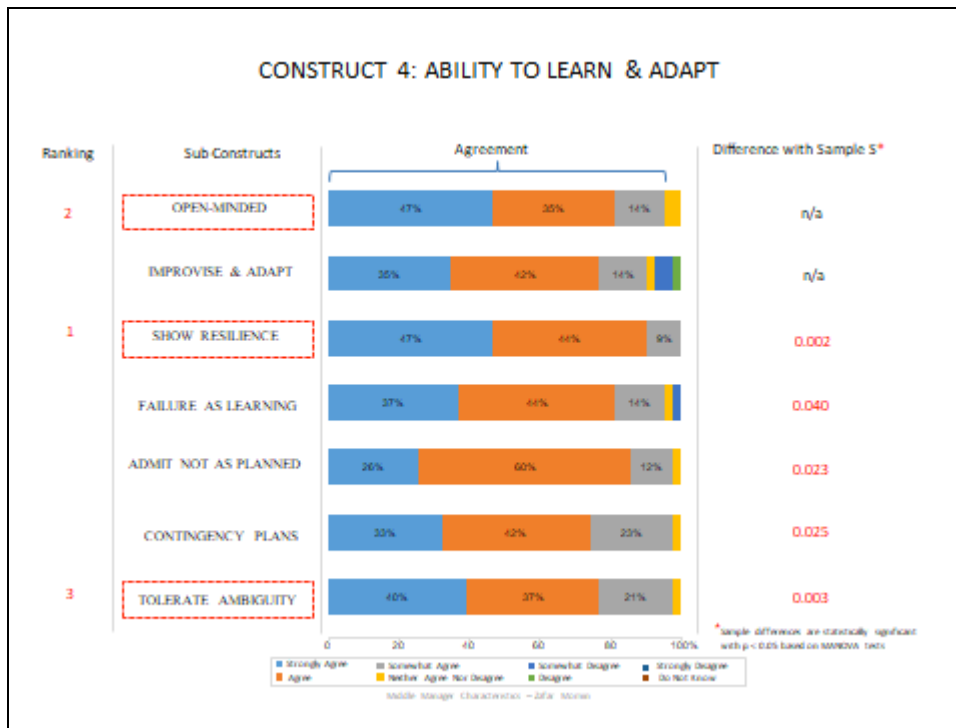
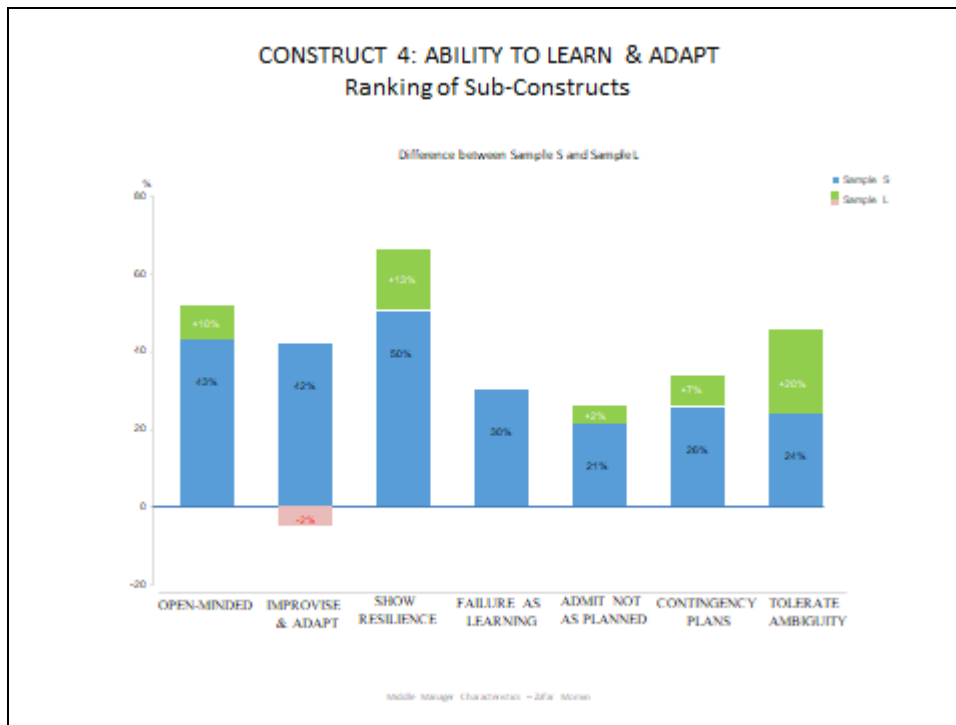


Figure 21B4



Hygiene factors

None of the responses and rankings for the sub-constructs for this competency was statistically significant between the two sample populations. For both samples, the top-3 choices for hygiene factors were ‘communications,’ ‘consensus,’ and ‘commitment.’ Sample L respondents also included ‘relevant technical expertise’ as an additional important sub-construct in their rankings. We do not include the figures for these results here as they are not significantly different, but they are included with all other results in the Appendix 7. Regardless of company size, the main hygiene factors are consistent and the need for technical expertise may be slightly more relevant for complexity associated with large global companies. Comparing with the previous analysis on the education (MBA) variable, there were statistically significant differences between some of the sample responses and rankings for the hygiene factors, although the top-3 choices were the same as this construct.

Moderating factors

None of responses and rankings for the sub-constructs for this competency was statistically significant between the two sample populations. Both samples were completely aligned on the importance of ‘selecting the right middle managers’ as the most important factor affecting executing outcomes and ‘appropriate rewards and incentives’ as the key factor moderating effectiveness of middle managers. Both samples ranked ‘middle manager agency issues’ of least importance.

Impact of Company Size - Additional supporting demographics and figures

Figure 1-10: Respondent Demographics

Figure 1

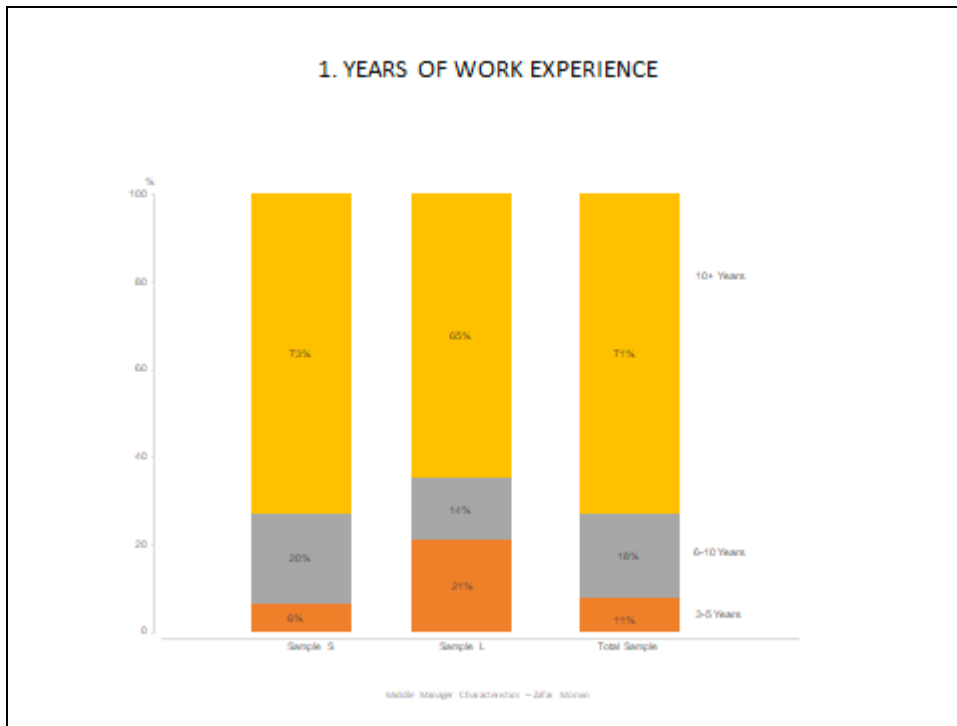


Figure 2

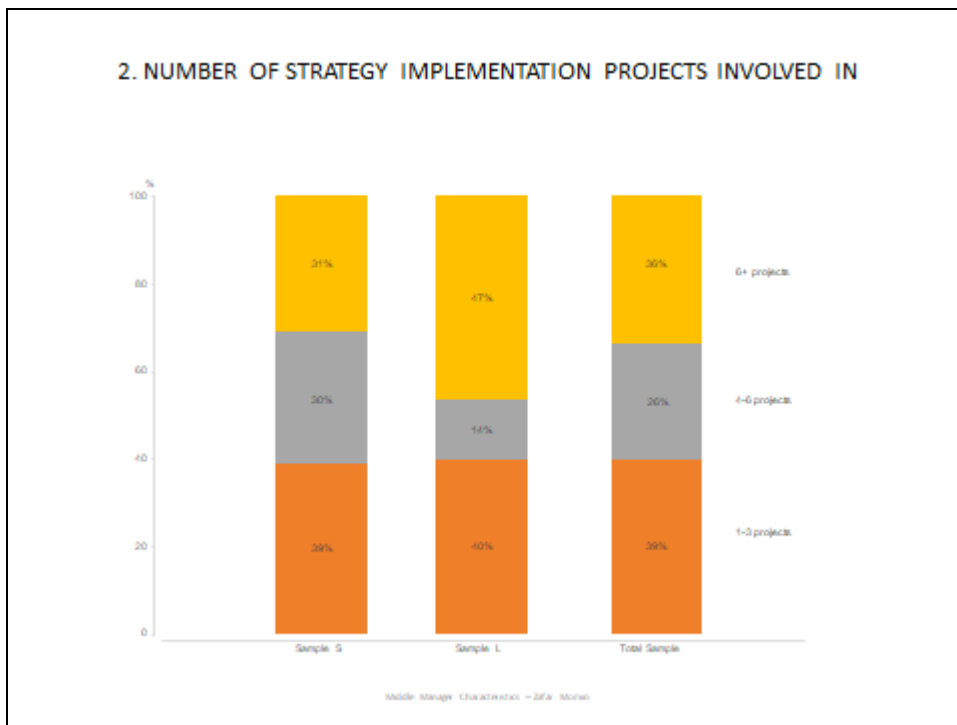


Figure 3

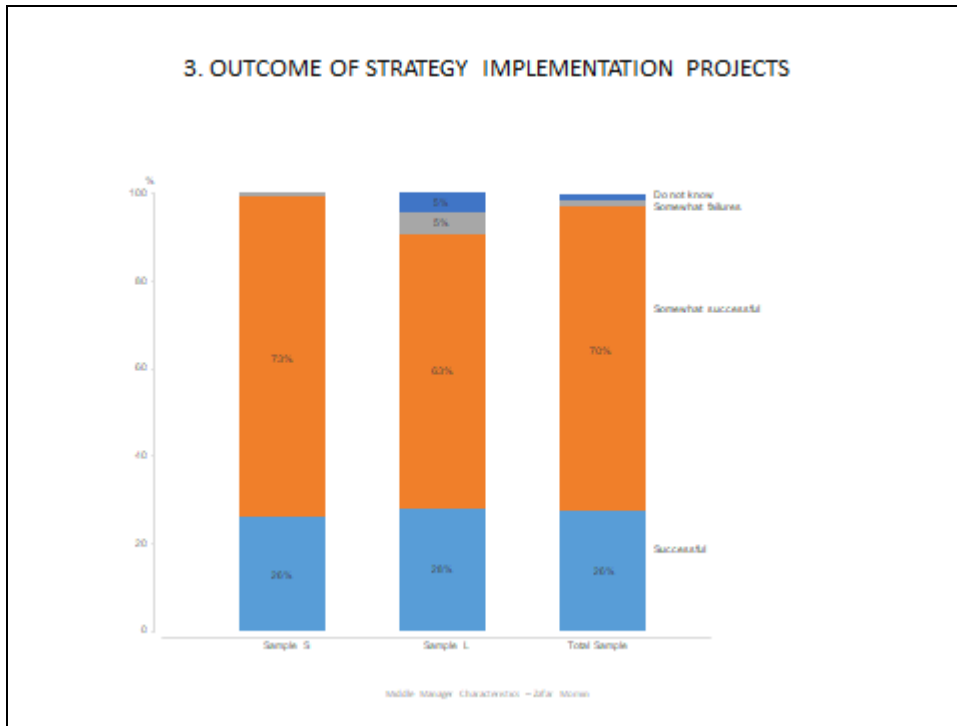


Figure 4

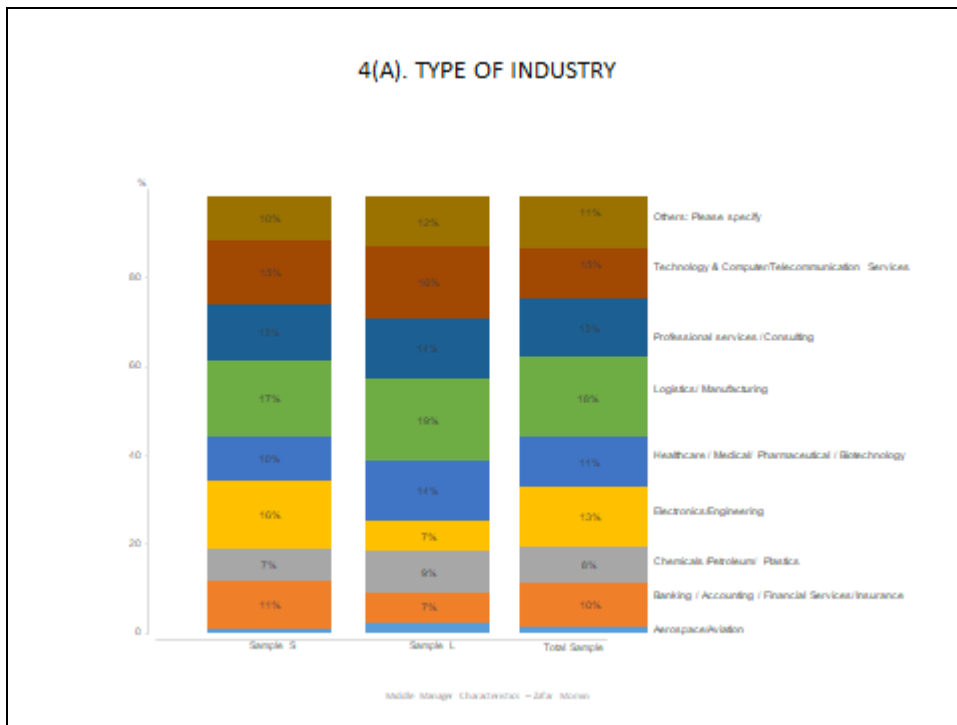


Figure 5

4(A). TYPE OF INDUSTRY – OTHERS

Sample S	Sample L
1. Consumer products	1. Consumer Goods
2. Retail	2. Automotive
3. Security	3. Building Materials
4. Governmental Sector	4. Military
5. Education	5. Education
6. Civil Service	
7. R&D	
8. E Commerce	
9. Energy	

Middle Stage Characteristics – 201x Survey

Figure 6

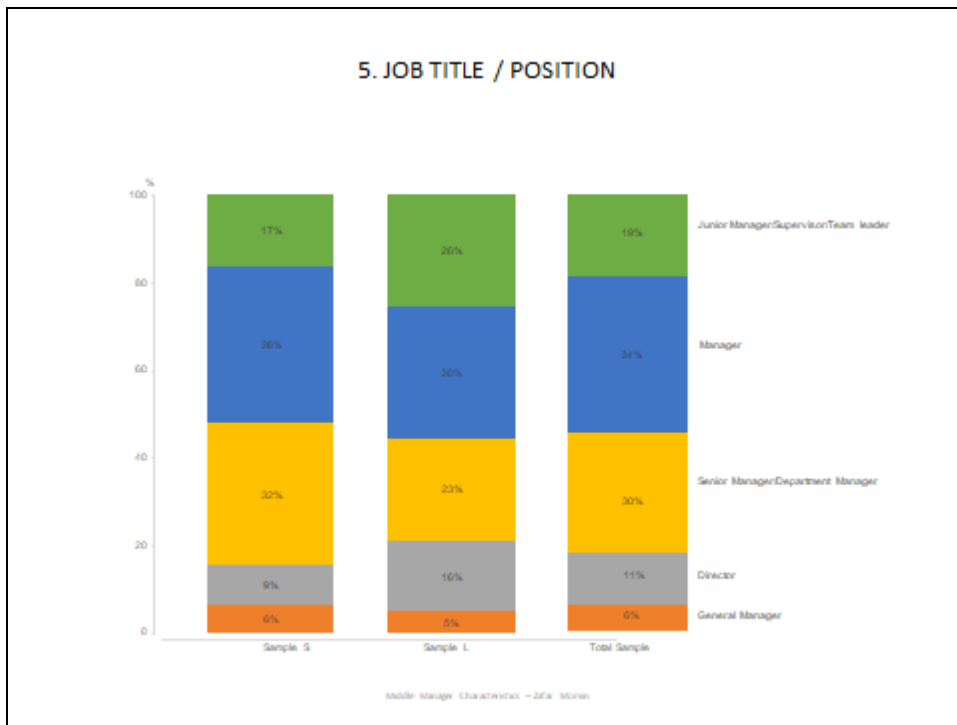


Figure 7

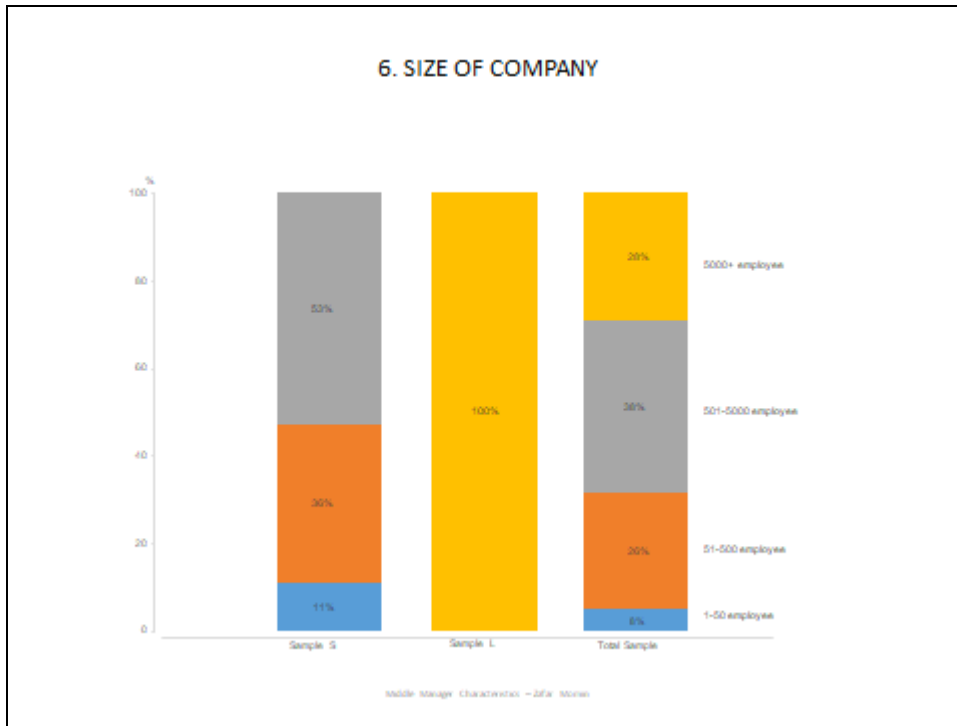


Figure 8

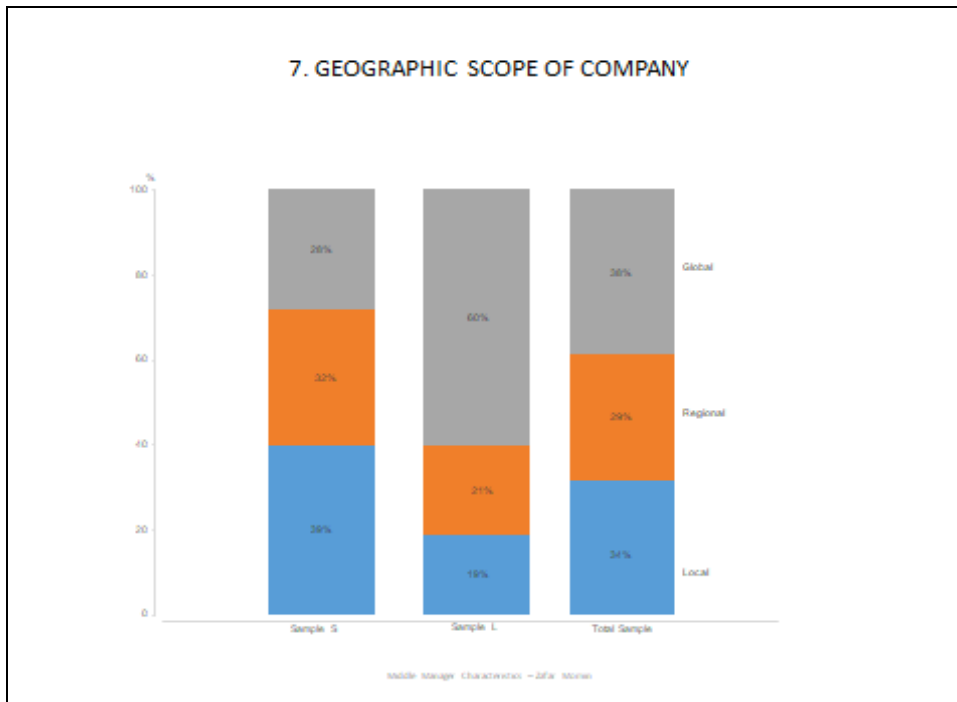


Figure 9

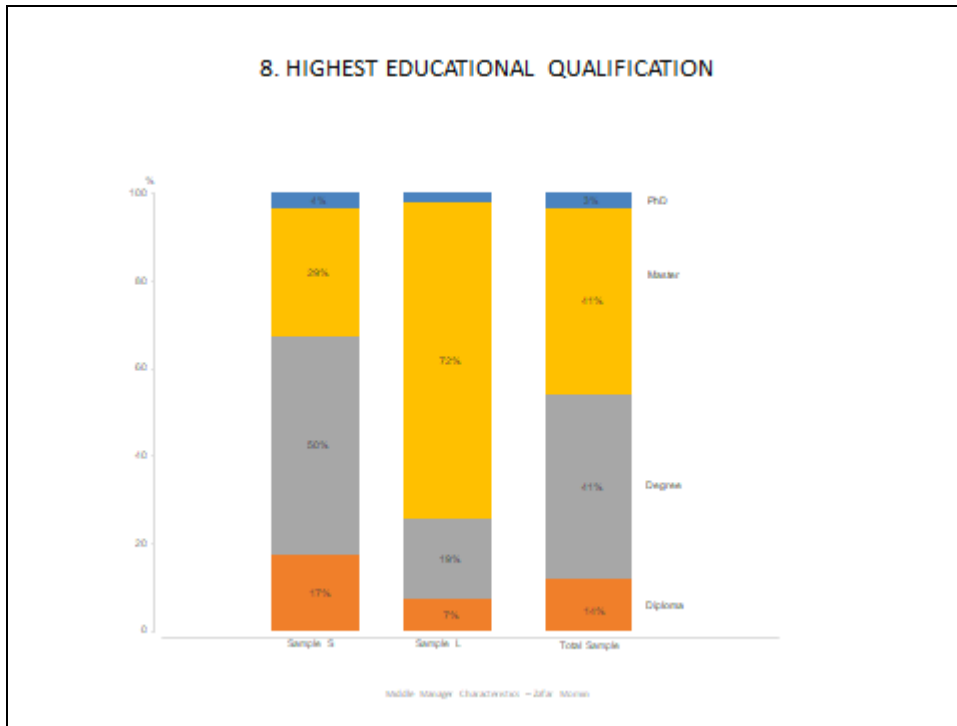


Figure 10

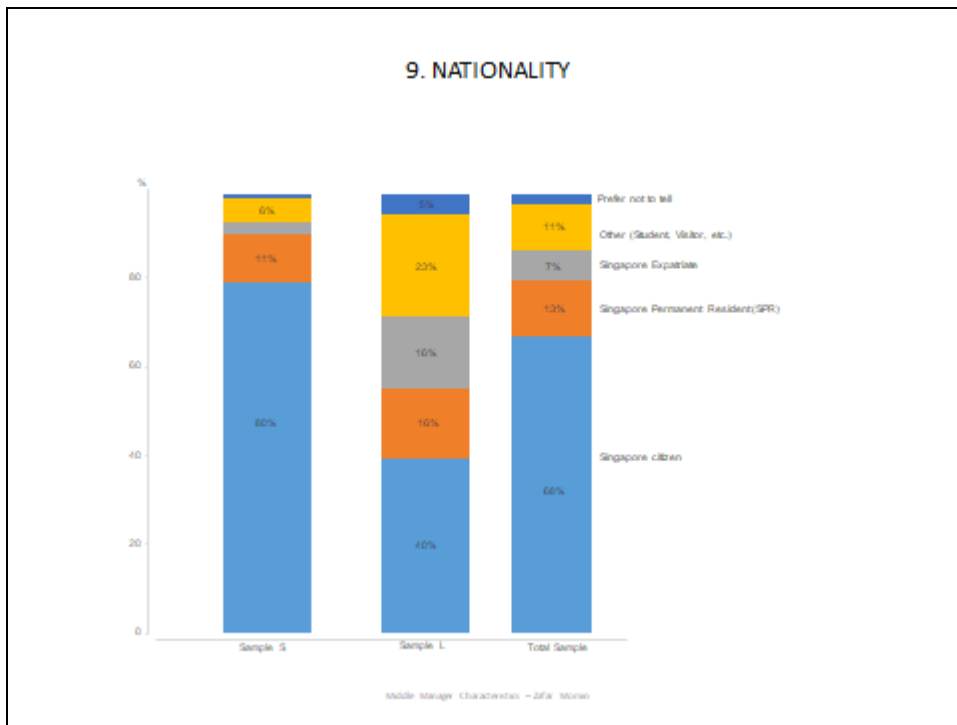


Figure 11-17: Sample S Responses

Figure 11

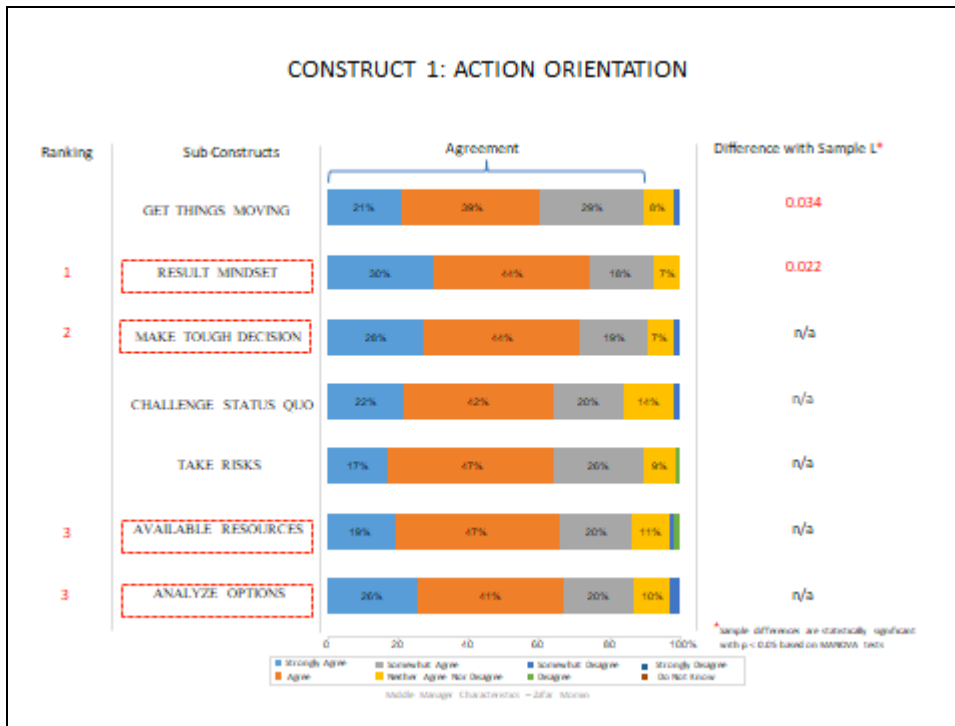


Figure 12

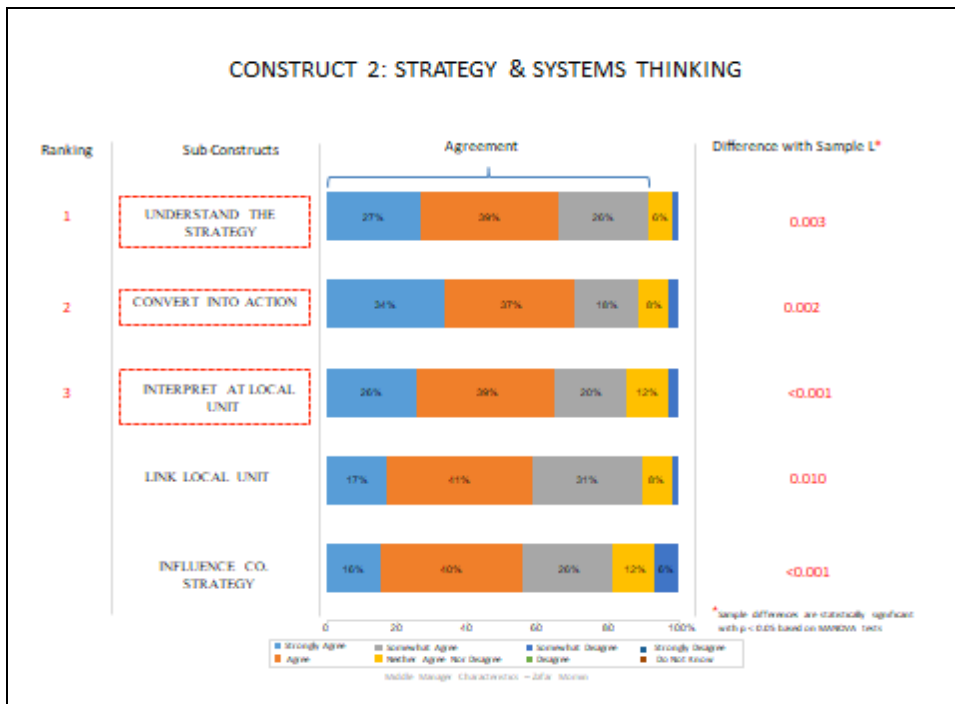


Figure 13

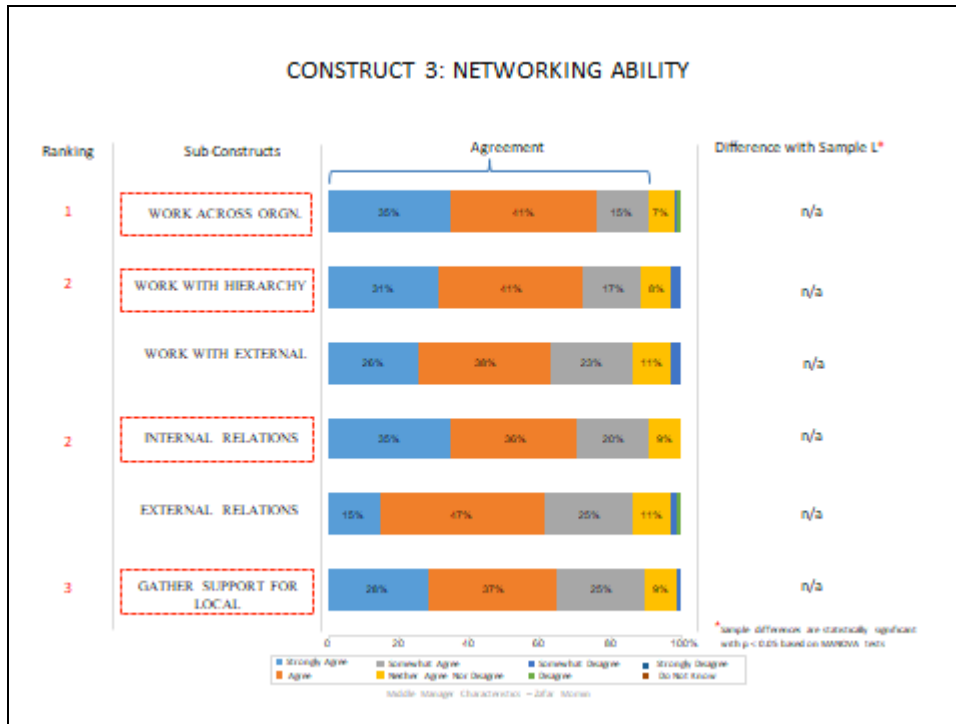


Figure 14

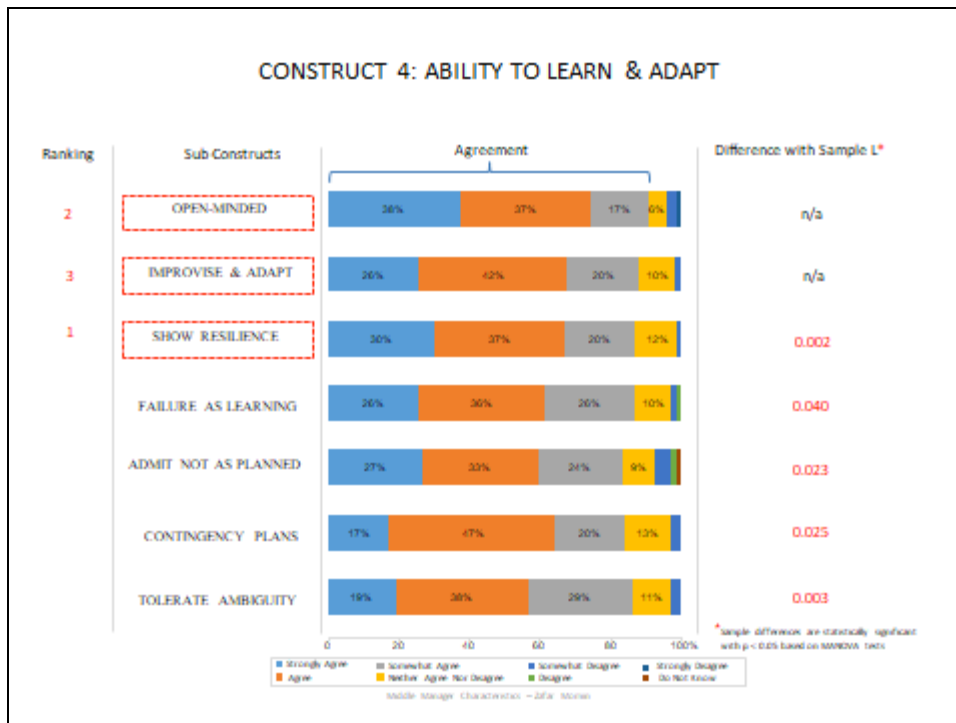


Figure 15

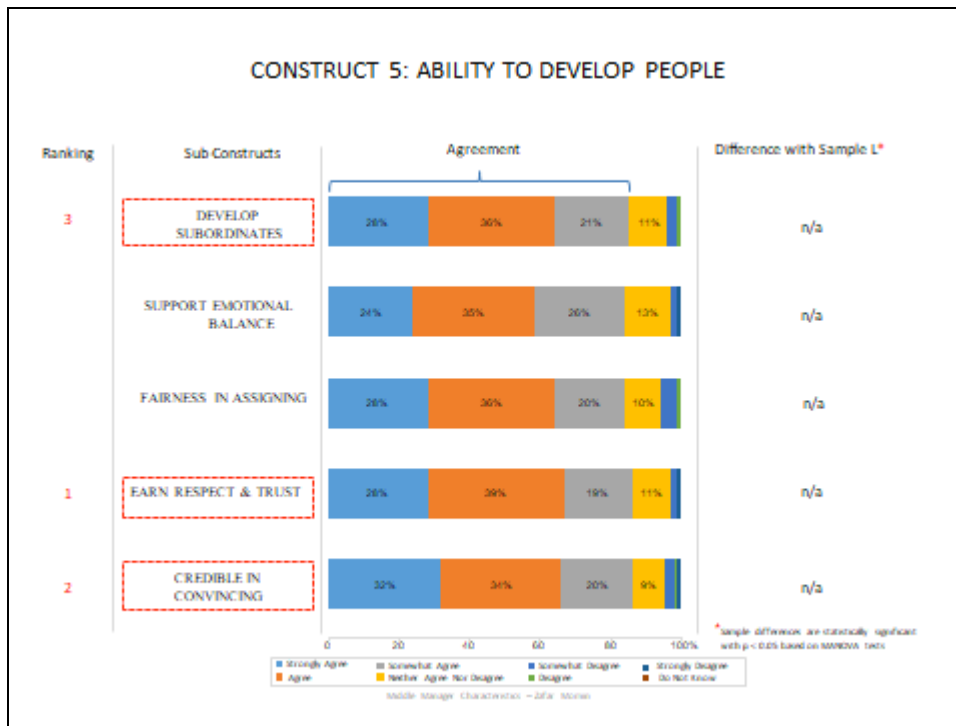


Figure 16

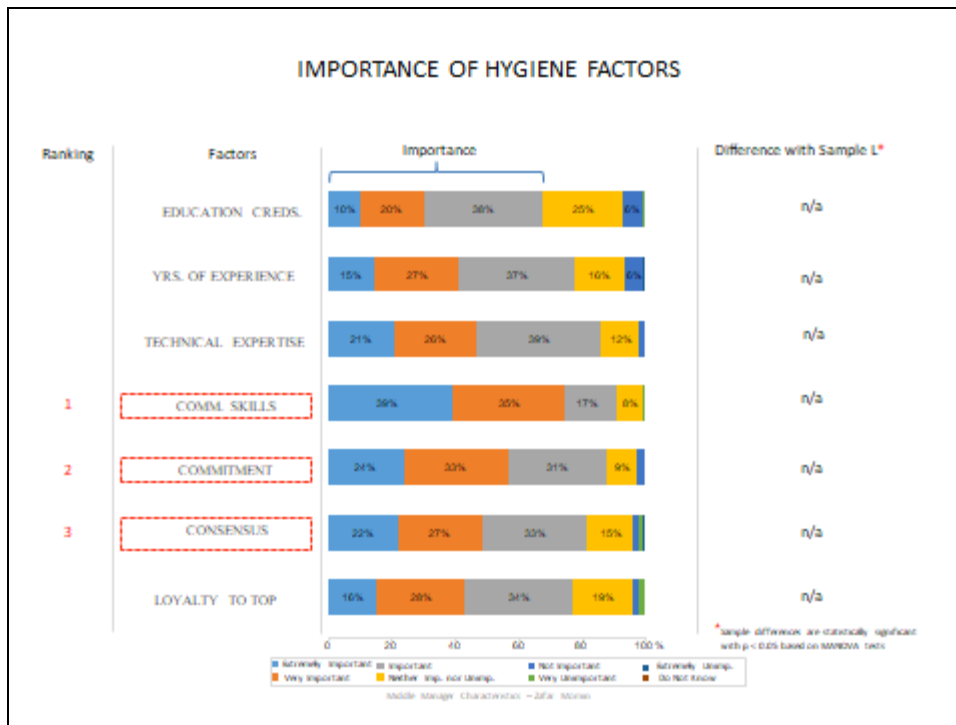


Figure 17

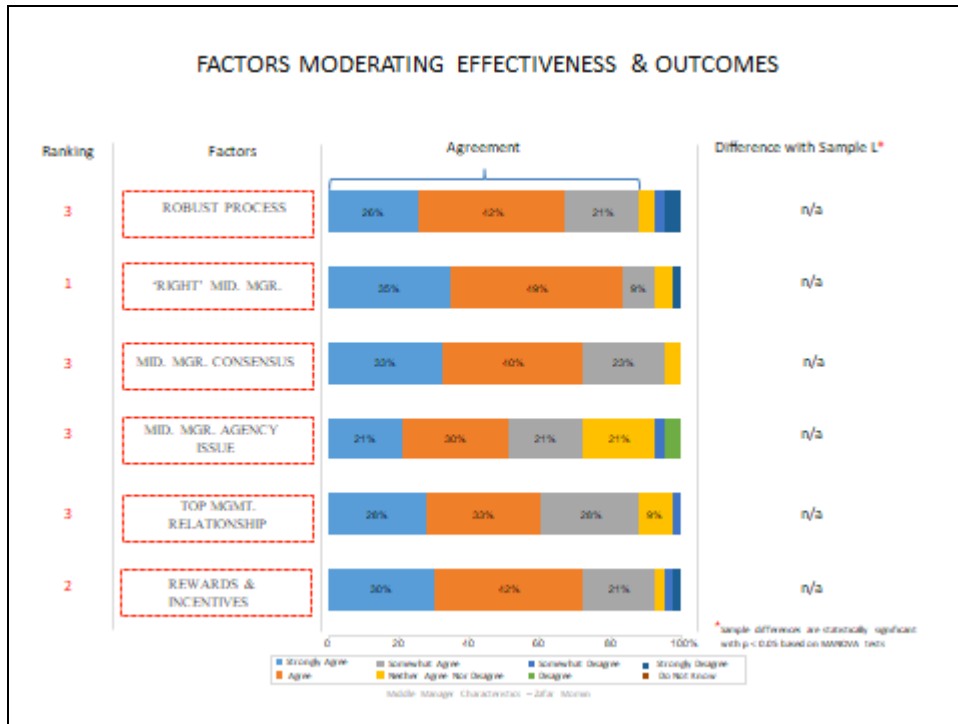


Figure 18-24: Sample S Ranking

Figure 18

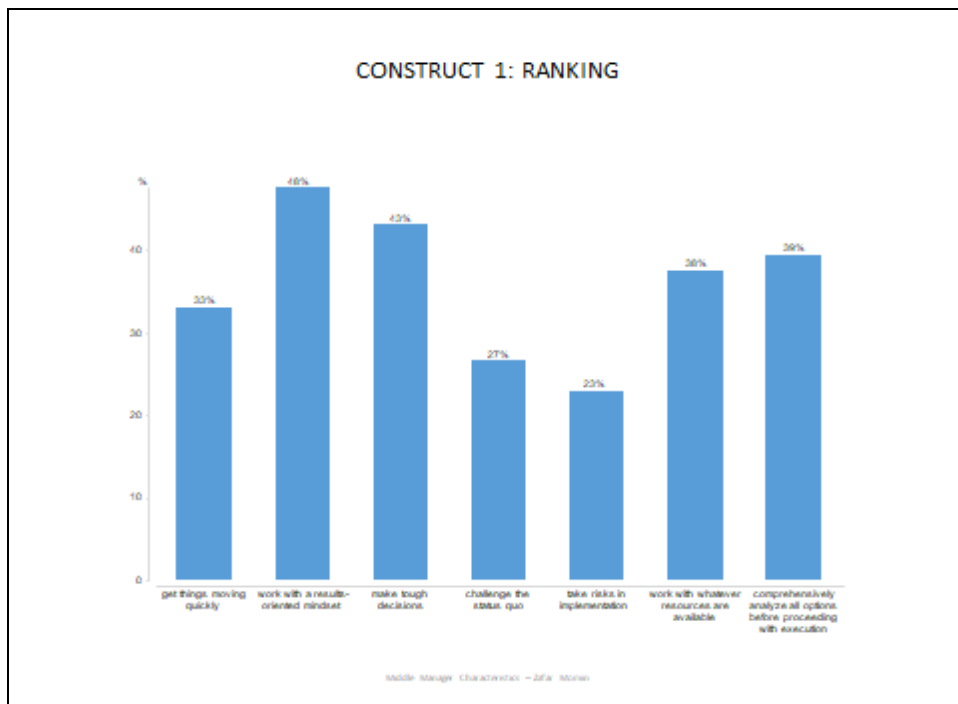


Figure 19



Figure 20

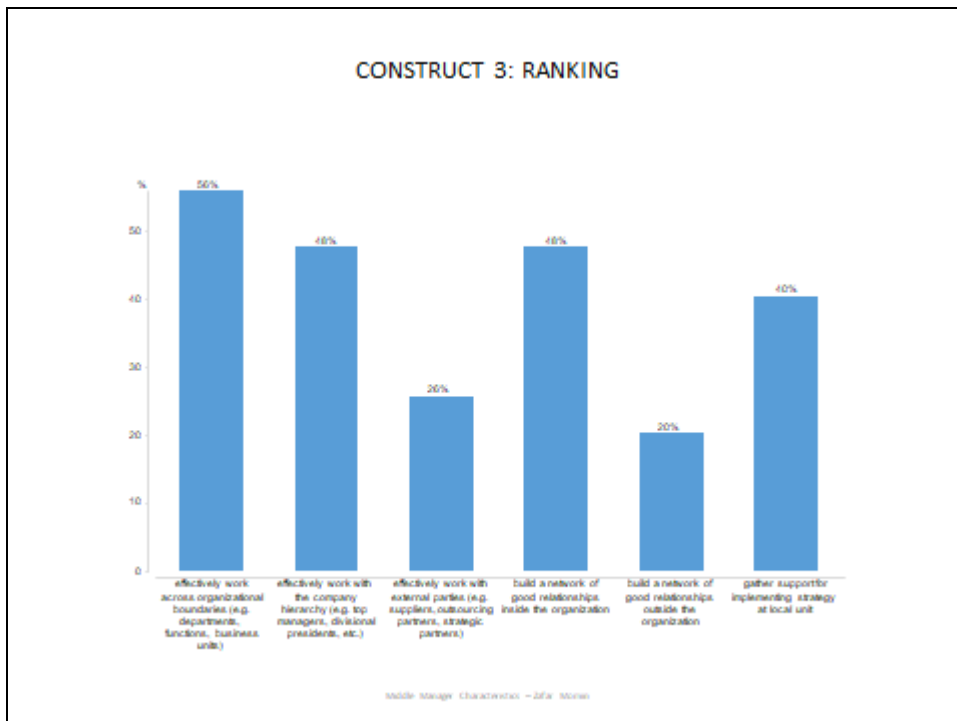


Figure 21

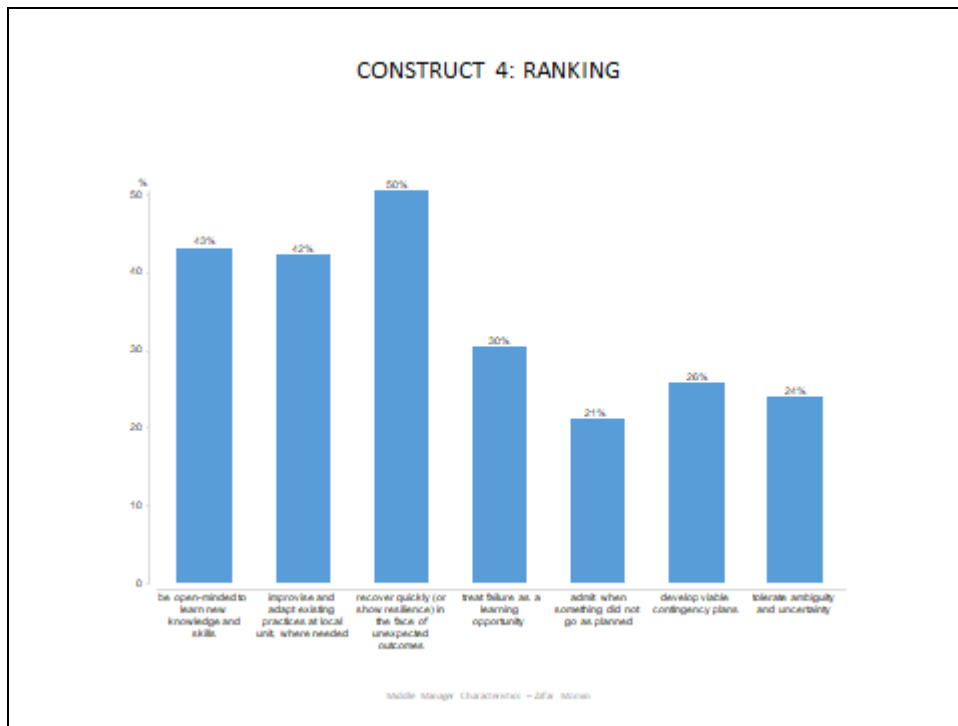


Figure 22

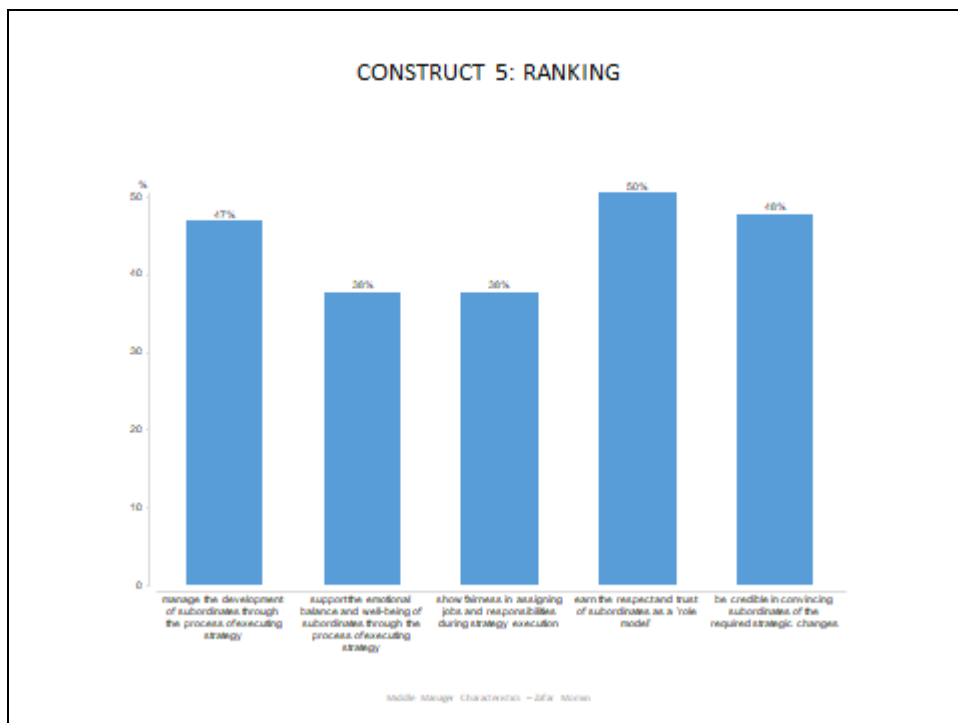


Figure 23

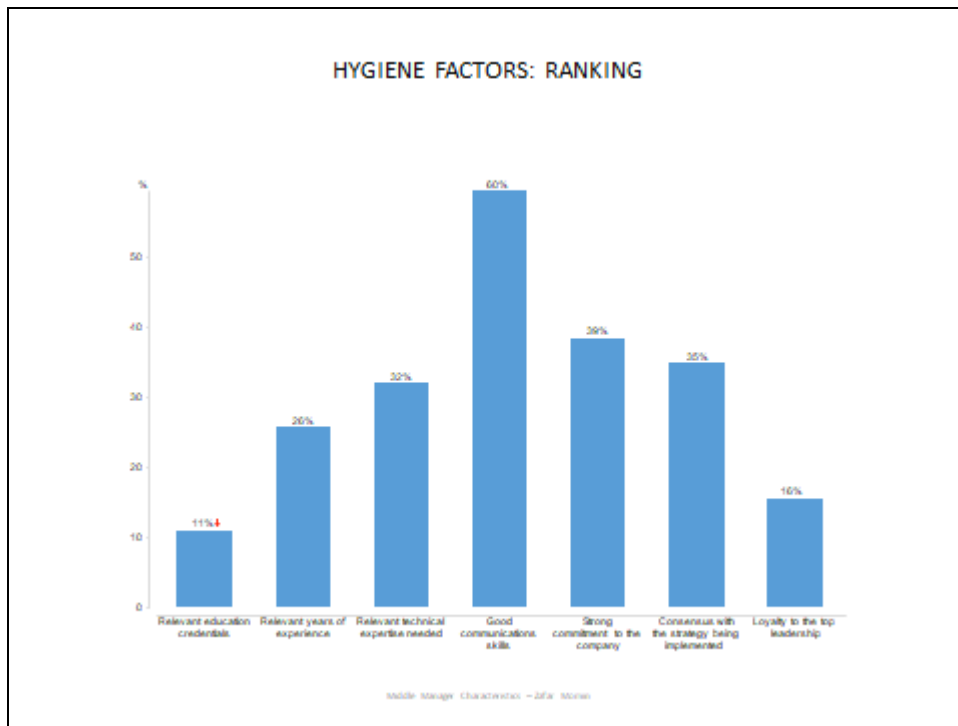


Figure 24

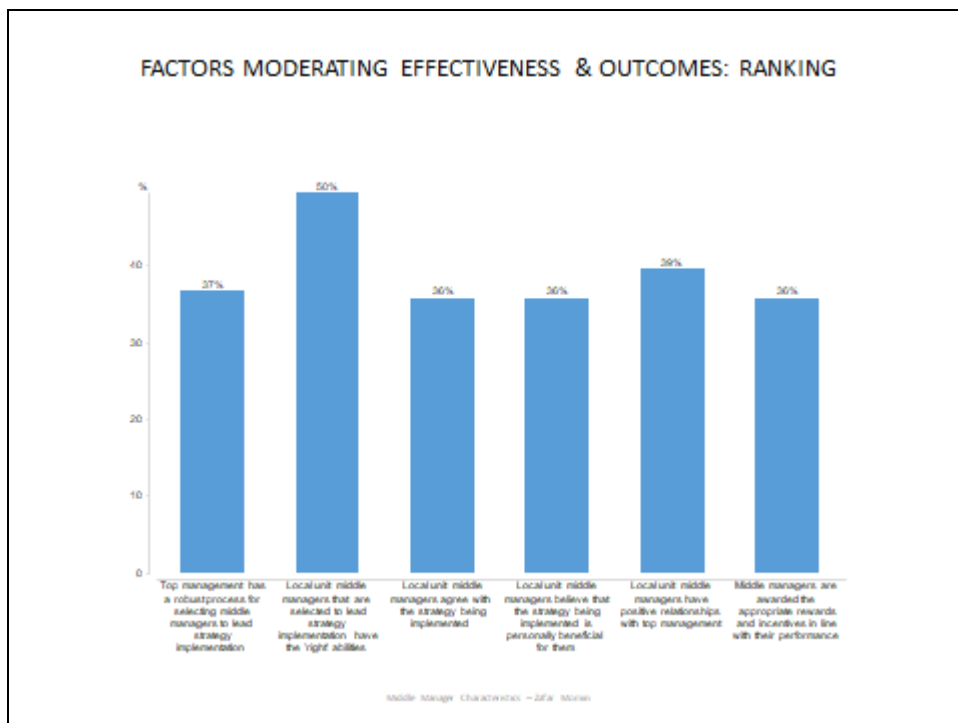


Figure 25-31: Sample L Ranking

Figure 25

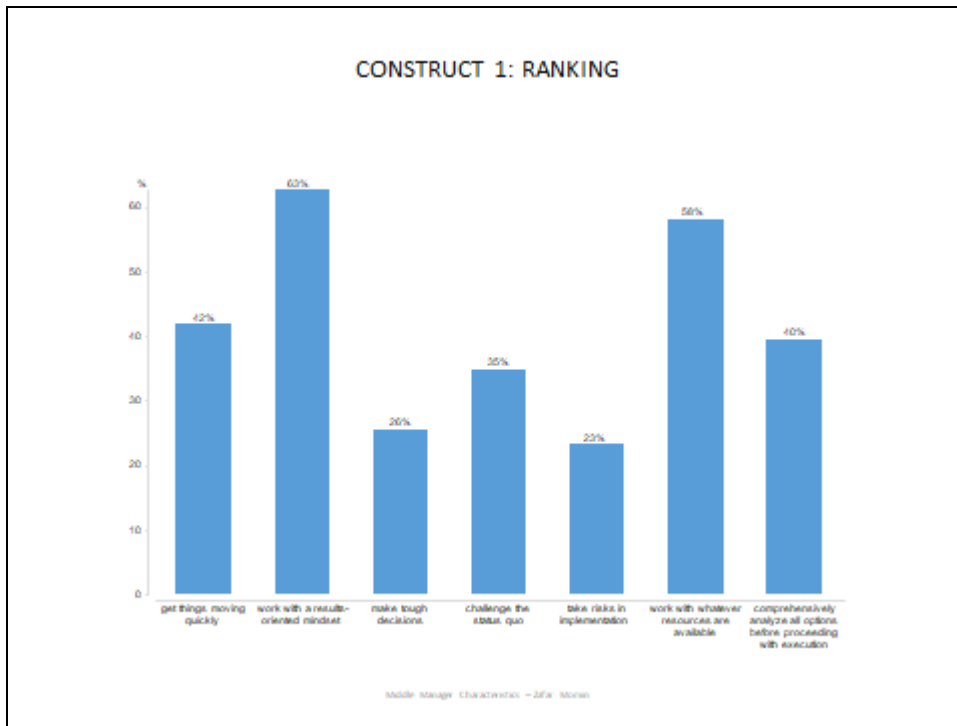


Figure 26

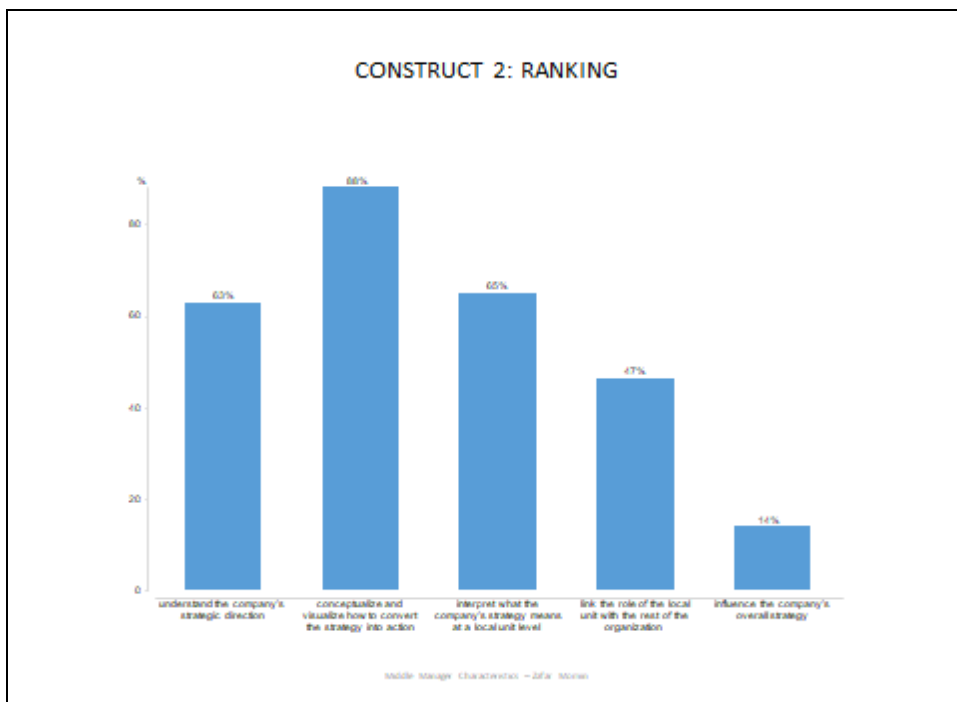


Figure 27

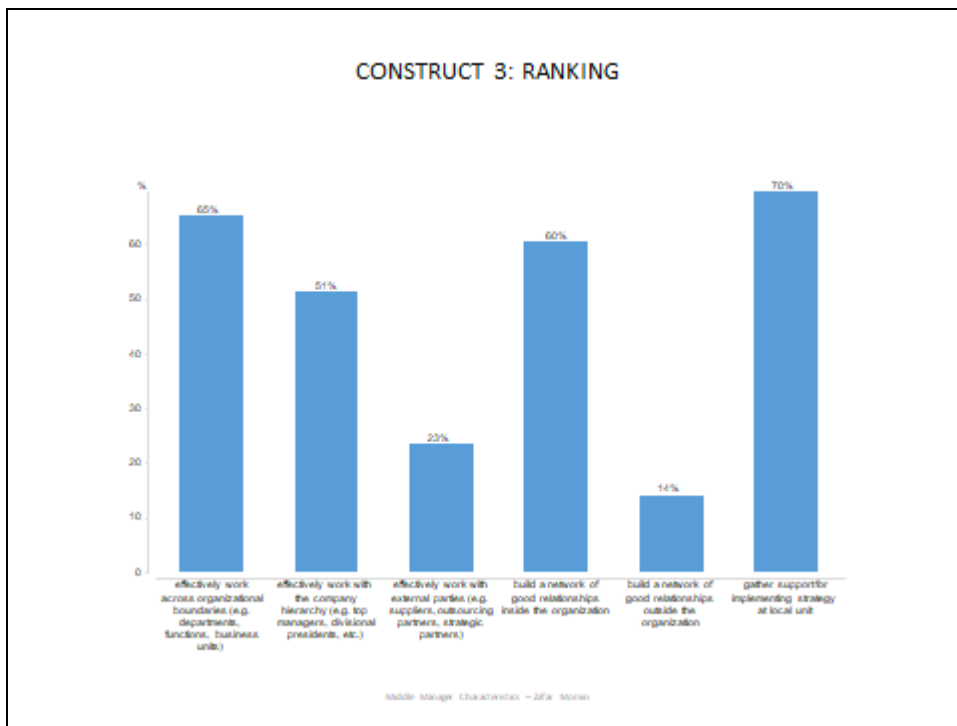


Figure 28

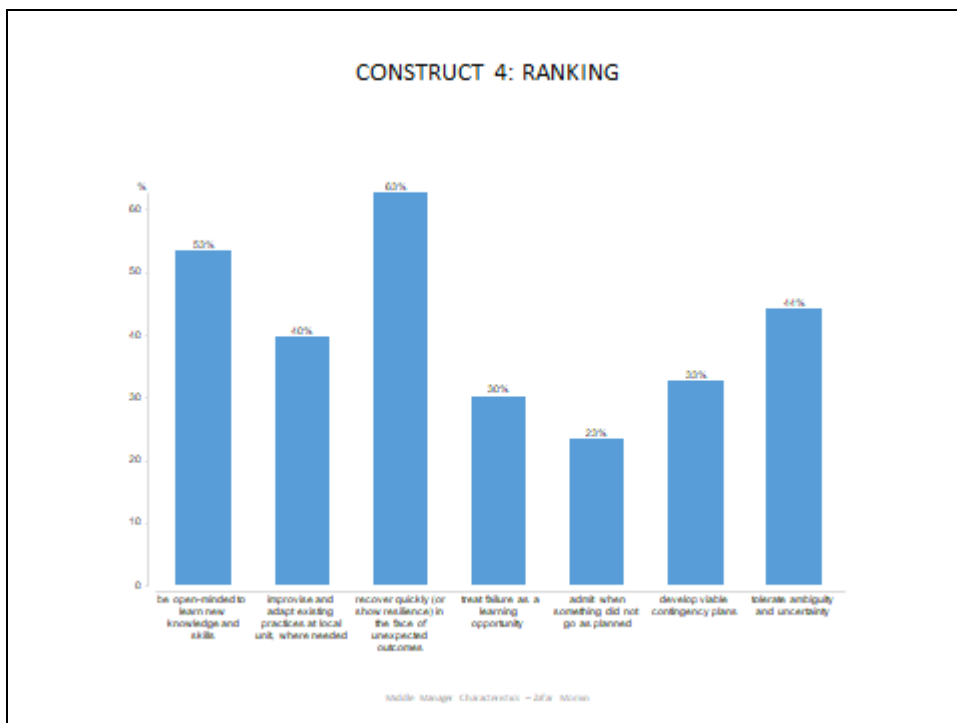


Figure 29

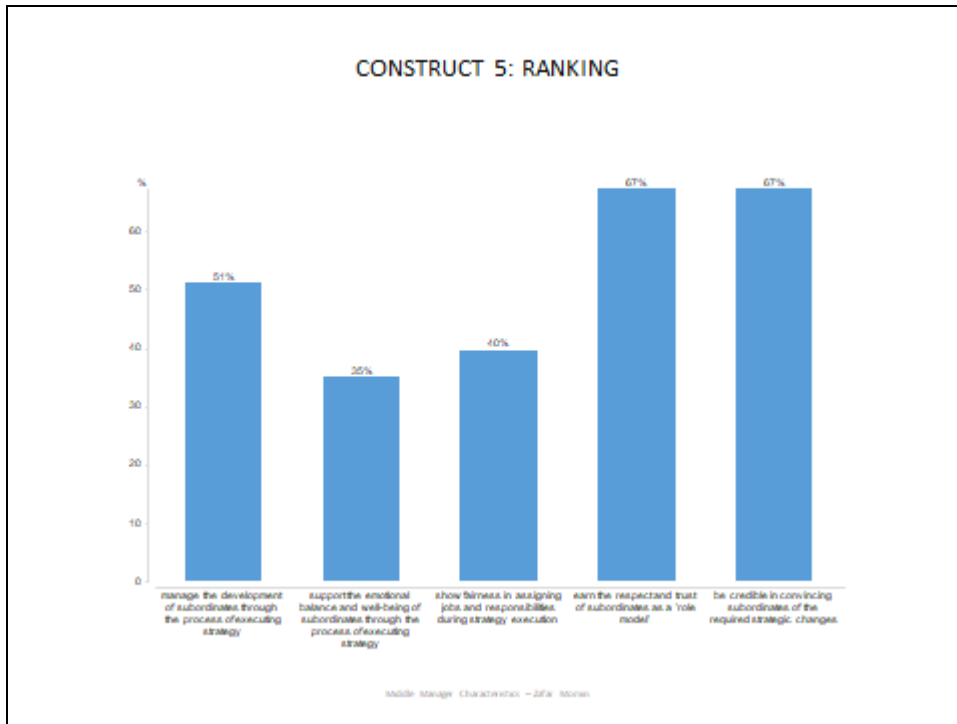


Figure 30

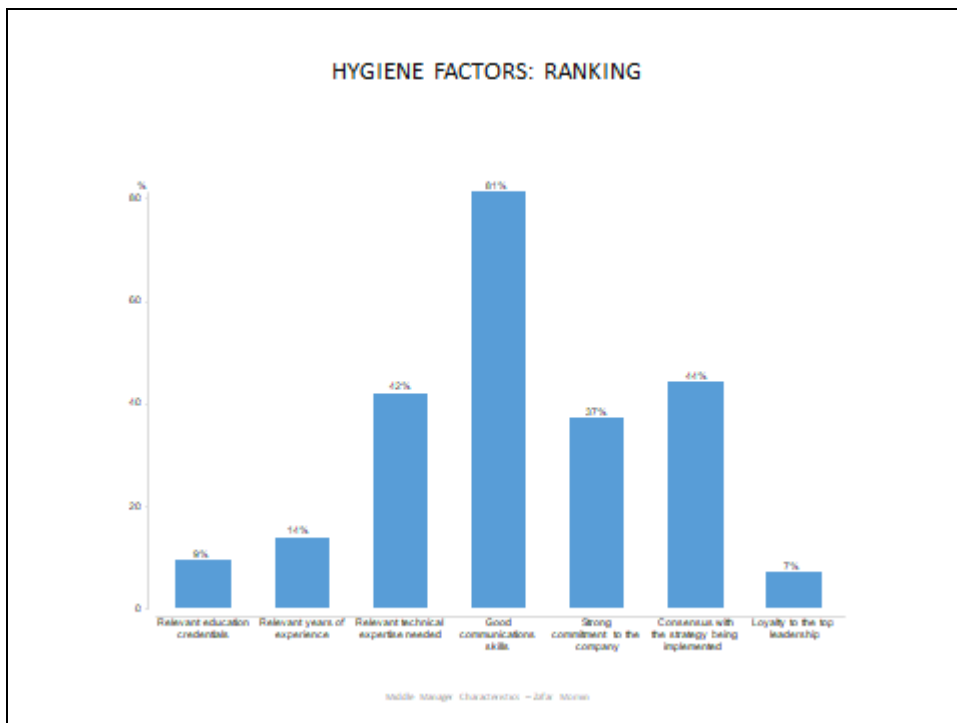


Figure 31

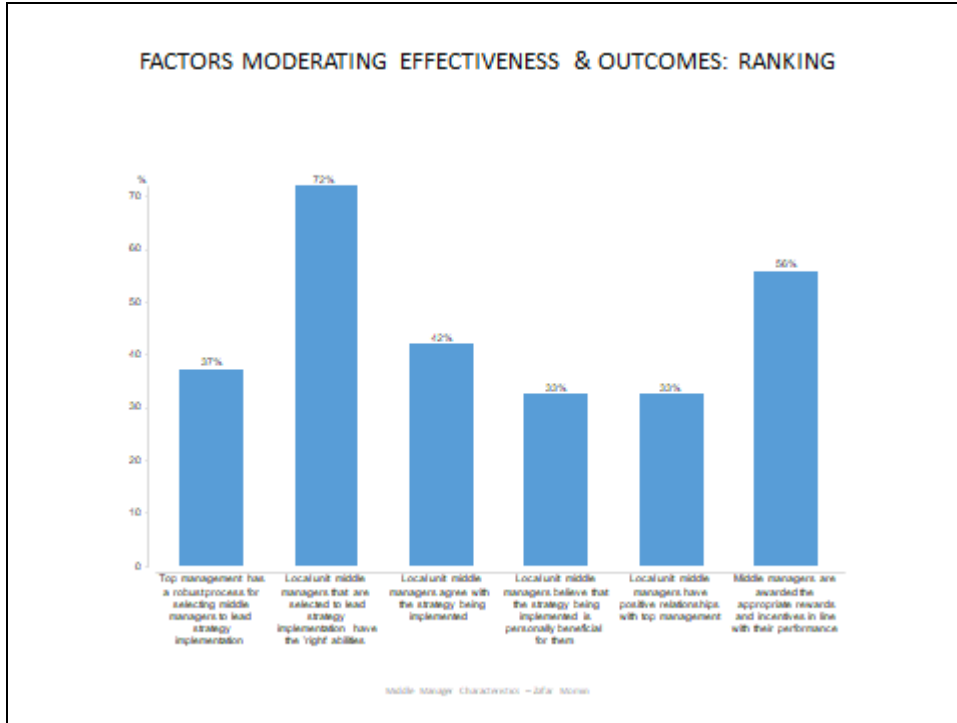


Figure 32-45: MANOVA Test Results

Figure 32 – Construct 1 Response

Significant - Smallest p-value (after applying False Discovery Rate correction): 0.02

	<=5000 n: 109	>5000 n: 43	R-Squared	p
get things moving	2.30	1.86	0.04	.034
work with a results-oriented mindset	2.03	1.60	0.05	.022
make tough decisions	2.12	2.28	0.01	1.000
challenge the status quo	2.31	1.98	0.02	.227
take risks in implementation	2.30	2.16	0.00	1.000
work with whatever resources are available	2.33	2.07	0.01	.689
comprehensively analyze all options before proceeding with execution	2.23	2.30	0.00	1.000

n = 152 cases used in estimation; null hypotheses: two-sided; multiple comparisons correction: False Discovery Rate correction applied simultaneously to the entire table

Figure 33 – Construct 1 Ranking

Not significant - Smallest p-value (after applying False Discovery Rate correction): 0.30

	<=5000 n: 109	>5000 n: 43	R-Squared	p
get things moving quickly	0.33	0.42	0.01	1.000
work with a results-oriented mindset	0.48	0.63	0.02	1.000
make tough decisions	0.43	0.26	0.03	.635
challenge the status quo	0.27	0.35	0.01	1.000
take risks in implementation	0.23	0.23	0.00	1.000
work with whatever resources are available	0.38	0.58	0.03	.300
comprehensively analyze all options before proceeding with execution	0.39	0.40	0.00	1.000

n = 152 cases used in estimation; null hypotheses: two-sided; multiple comparisons correction: False Discovery Rate correction applied simultaneously to the entire table

Figure 34 – Construct 2 Response

Significant - Smallest p-value (after applying False Discovery Rate correction): 0.0001

	<=5000 n: 109	>5000 n: 43	R-Squared	p
understand the company's strategic direction	2.17	1.65	0.06	.003
conceptualize and visualize how to convert the strategy into action	2.09	1.53	0.06	.002
interpret what the company's strategy means at a local unit level	2.27	1.58	0.09	< .001
link the role of the local unit with the rest of the organization	2.36	1.93	0.04	.010
influence the company's overall strategy	2.53	3.28	0.07	< .001

n = 152 cases used in estimation; null hypotheses: two-sided; multiple comparisons correction: False Discovery Rate correction applied simultaneously to the entire table

Figure 35 – Construct 2 Ranking

Significant - Smallest p-value (after applying False Discovery Rate correction): 0.01

	<=5000 n: 109	>5000 n: 43	R-Squared	p
understand the company's strategic direction	0.53	0.63	0.01	1.000
conceptualize and visualize how to convert the strategy into action	0.61	0.88	0.07	.006
interpret what the company's strategy means at a local unit level	0.50	0.65	0.02	.419
link the role of the local unit with the rest of the organization	0.35	0.47	0.01	.927
influence the company's overall strategy	0.26	0.14	0.02	.597

n = 152 cases used in estimation; null hypotheses: two-sided; multiple comparisons correction: False Discovery Rate correction applied simultaneously to the entire table

Figure 36 – Construct 3 Response

Not significant - Smallest p-value (after applying False Discovery Rate correction): 0.22

	<=5000 n: 109	>5000 n: 43	R-Squared	p
effectively work across organizational boundaries (e.g. departments, functions, business units)	2.01	1.63	0.03	.299
effectively work with the company hierarchy (e.g. top managers, divisional presidents, etc.)	2.10	1.77	0.03	.619
effectively work with external parties (e.g. suppliers, outsourcing partners, strategic partners)	2.28	2.30	0.00	1.000
build a network of good relationships inside the organization	2.04	1.67	0.03	.351
build a network of good relationships outside the organization	2.41	2.53	0.00	1.000
gather support for implementing strategy at local unit	2.17	1.77	0.04	.224

n = 152 cases used in estimation; null hypotheses: two-sided; multiple comparisons correction: False Discovery Rate correction applied simultaneously to the entire table

Figure 37 – Construct 3 Ranking

Significant - Smallest p-value (after applying False Discovery Rate correction): 0.01

	<=5000 n: 109	>5000 n: 43	R-Squared	p
effectively work across organizational boundaries (e.g. departments, functions, business units)	0.56	0.65	0.01	1.000
effectively work with the company hierarchy (e.g. top managers, divisional presidents, etc.)	0.48	0.51	0.00	1.000
effectively work with external parties (e.g. suppliers, outsourcing partners, strategic partners)	0.26	0.23	0.00	1.000
build a network of good relationships inside the organization	0.48	0.60	0.01	.950
build a network of good relationships outside the organization	0.20	0.14	0.01	1.000
gather support for implementing strategy at local unit	0.40	0.70	0.07	.006

n = 152 cases used in estimation; null hypotheses: two-sided; multiple comparisons correction: False Discovery Rate correction applied simultaneously to the entire table

Figure 38 – Construct 4 Response

Significant - Smallest p-value (after applying False Discovery Rate correction): 0.002

	<=5000 n: 109	>5000 n: 43	R-Squared	p
be open-minded to learn new knowledge and skills	2.03	1.77	0.01	.242
improvise and adapt existing practices at local unit, where needed	2.20	2.07	0.00	.682
recover quickly (or show resilience) in the face of unexpected outcomes	2.17	1.63	0.06	.002
treat failure as a learning opportunity	2.29	1.88	0.03	.040
admit when something did not go as planned	2.42	1.91	0.04	.023
develop viable contingency plans	2.37	1.95	0.04	.025
tolerate ambiguity and uncertainty	2.40	1.86	0.06	.003

n = 152 cases used in estimation; null hypotheses: two-sided; multiple comparisons correction: False Discovery Rate correction applied simultaneously to the entire table

Figure 39 – Construct 4 Ranking

Not significant - Smallest p-value (after applying False Discovery Rate correction): 0.18

	<=5000 n: 109	>5000 n: 43	R-Squared	p
be open-minded to learn new knowledge and skills	0.43	0.53	0.01	1.000
improvise and adapt existing practices at local unit, where needed	0.42	0.40	0.00	1.000
recover quickly (or show resilience) in the face of unexpected outcomes	0.50	0.63	0.01	1.000
treat failure as a learning opportunity	0.30	0.30	0.00	1.000
admit when something did not go as planned	0.21	0.23	0.00	1.000
develop viable contingency plans	0.26	0.33	0.00	1.000
tolerate ambiguity and uncertainty	0.24	0.44	0.04	.185

n = 152 cases used in estimation; null hypotheses: two-sided; multiple comparisons correction: False Discovery Rate correction applied simultaneously to the entire table

Figure 40 – Construct 5 Response

Not significant - Smallest p-value (after applying False Discovery Rate correction): 0.61

	<=5000 n: 109	>5000 n: 43	R-Squared	p
manage the development of subordinates through the process of executing strategy	2.27	1.93	0.02	.819
support the emotional balance and well-being of subordinates through the process of executing strategy	2.38	2.42	0.00	1.000
show fairness in assigning jobs and responsibilities during strategy execution	2.29	2.21	0.00	1.000
earn the respect and trust of subordinates as a 'role model'	2.23	1.88	0.02	.748
be credible in convincing subordinates of the required strategic changes	2.23	1.84	0.02	.607

n = 152 cases used in estimation; null hypotheses: two-sided; multiple comparisons correction: False Discovery Rate correction applied simultaneously to the entire table

Figure 41 – Construct 5 Ranking

Not significant - Smallest p-value (after applying False Discovery Rate correction): 0.28

	<=5000 n: 109	>5000 n: 43	R-Squared	p
manage the development of subordinates through the process of executing strategy	0.47	0.51	0.00	1.000
support the emotional balance and well-being of subordinates through the process of executing strategy	0.38	0.35	0.00	1.000
show fairness in assigning jobs and responsibilities during strategy execution	0.38	0.40	0.00	1.000
earn the respect and trust of subordinates as a 'role model'	0.50	0.67	0.02	.585
be credible in convincing subordinates of the required strategic changes	0.48	0.67	0.03	.281

n = 152 cases used in estimation; null hypotheses: two-sided; multiple comparisons correction: False Discovery Rate correction applied simultaneously to the entire table

Figure 42 – Importance of Hygiene Factors Response

Not significant - Smallest p-value (after applying False Discovery Rate correction): 0.76

	<=5000 n: 109	>5000 n: 43	R-Squared	p
Relevant education credentials	3.00	3.30	0.02	1.000
Relevant years of experience	2.74	2.98	0.01	1.000
Relevant technical expertise needed	2.48	2.56	0.00	1.000
Good communications skills	1.97	1.67	0.02	1.000
Strong commitment to the company	2.34	2.35	0.00	1.000
Consensus with the strategy being implemented	2.54	2.14	0.02	.758
Loyalty to the top leadership	2.70	3.07	0.02	.931

n = 152 cases used in estimation; null hypotheses: two-sided; multiple comparisons correction: False Discovery Rate correction applied simultaneously to the entire table

Figure 43 –Importance of Hygiene Factors Ranking

Not significant - Smallest p-value (after applying False Discovery Rate correction): 0.15

	<=5000 n: 109	>5000 n: 43	R-Squared	p
Relevant education credentials	0.11	0.09	0.00	1.000
Relevant years of experience	0.26	0.14	0.02	1.000
Relevant technical expertise needed	0.32	0.42	0.01	1.000
Good communications skills	0.60	0.81	0.04	.149
Strong commitment to the company	0.39	0.37	0.00	1.000
Consensus with the strategy being implemented	0.35	0.44	0.01	1.000
Loyalty to the top leadership	0.16	0.07	0.01	1.000

n = 152 cases used in estimation; null hypotheses: two-sided; multiple comparisons correction: False Discovery Rate correction applied simultaneously to the entire table

Figure 44 – Factors Moderating Effectiveness and Outcomes Response

Not significant - Smallest p-value (after applying False Discovery Rate correction): 1.00

	<=5000 n: 109	>5000 n: 43	R-Squared	p
Top management has a robust process for selecting middle managers to lead strategy implementation	2.34	2.35	0.00	1.000
Local unit middle managers that are selected to lead strategy implementation have the 'right' abilities	2.19	1.95	0.01	1.000
Local unit middle managers agree with the strategy being implemented	2.30	2.00	0.02	1.000
Local unit middle managers believe that the strategy being implemented is personally beneficial for them	2.43	2.67	0.01	1.000
Local unit middle managers have positive relationships with top management	2.36	2.26	0.00	1.000
Middle managers are awarded the appropriate rewards and incentives in line with their performance	2.27	2.14	0.00	1.000

n = 152 cases used in estimation; null hypotheses: two-sided; multiple comparisons correction: False Discovery Rate correction applied simultaneously to the entire table

Figure 45 – Factors Moderating Effectiveness and Outcomes Ranking

Not significant - Smallest p-value (after applying False Discovery Rate correction): 0.14

	<=5000 n: 109	>5000 n: 43	R-Squared	p
Top management has a robust process for selecting middle managers to lead strategy implementation	0.37	0.37	0.00	1.000
Local unit middle managers that are selected to lead strategy implementation have the 'right' abilities	0.50	0.72	0.04	.138
Local unit middle managers agree with the strategy being implemented	0.36	0.42	0.00	1.000
Local unit middle managers believe that the strategy being implemented is personally beneficial for them	0.36	0.33	0.00	1.000
Local unit middle managers have positive relationships with top management	0.39	0.33	0.00	1.000
Middle managers are awarded the appropriate rewards and incentives in line with their performance	0.36	0.56	0.03	.287

n = 152 cases used in estimation; null hypotheses: two-sided; multiple comparisons correction: False Discovery Rate correction applied simultaneously to the entire table

APPENDIX 8: Impact of Nationality

Analysis (Demographics, Response, Ranking, MANOVA Test Result)

Sample C (n=104) – Respondents are SG Citizens

Sample NC (n=48) – Respondents are Non-SG Citizens (PR, Expats etc.)

In Appendix:

Figure 22: Results analysis: Nationality – Respondent Demographics

Figure 23: Figures 23A1-A7, 23B1-B7: Nationality – Responses and Rankings

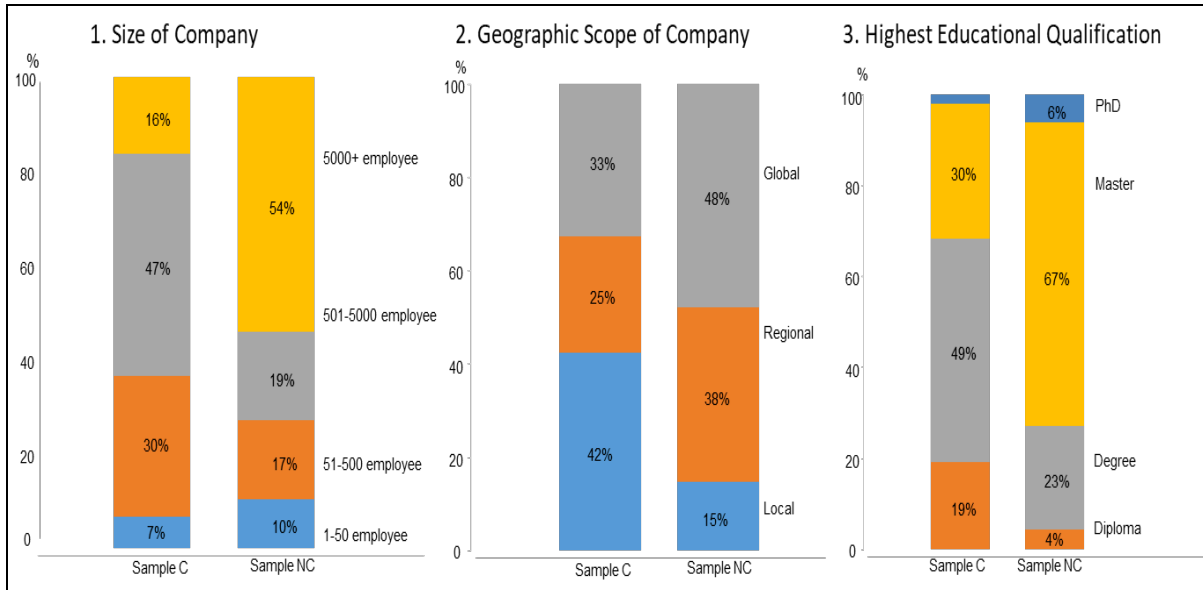
6.4 Results analysis: Impact of nationality

6.4.1 Respondent demographics (Singapore citizens versus non-Singapore citizens)

From the total sample size of 152 respondents, there were 104 respondents that were Singaporean citizens (termed Sample C in this analysis). The remaining sample consisted of 48 respondents that were non-citizens (termed Sample NC) and belonged to various nationalities. Segmenting the total sample along this nationality variable provided demographic differences in mainly 3-4 key areas, as shown in Figure 22 below.

From Figure 22 and Tables 15-17, one observes that Sample C was characterized by: 77% had over 10 years of experience; 84% worked for companies with less than 5000 employees; 42% worked for local companies and 32% with regional companies; 70% had Bachelor's degree or diploma. Sample NC was characterized by: 58% had over 10 years of experience; 54% worked for companies with more than 5000 employees; 48% worked for global companies and 38% with regional companies; 73% had a Master's degree or higher. In addition, Sample C did have fewer managers with junior titles and fewer managers from industries such as financial services, professional services and healthcare.

Figure 22: Respondent Demographics for Analysis: Impact of Nationality (Singapore citizen)



Tables 15 –17: Crosstabs Analysis: Impact of Nationality

Table 15 – Crosstab between Nationality and Size of Company

Size of Company	Nationality	
	SG Citizen	Non -SG Citizen (PR, Expats etc.)
1-50 empl.	7%	10%
	7	5
51-500 empl.	30%	17%
	31	8
501-5000 empl.	47%	19%
	49	9
5000+ empl.	16%	54%
	17	26

Table 16 – Crosstab between Nationality and Geographic Scope of Company

Geographic Scope of Company	Nationality	
	SG Citizen	Non -SG Citizen (PR, Expats etc.)
Local	42%	15%
	44	7
Regional	25%	38%
	26	18
Global	33%	48%
	34	23

Table 17 – Crosstab between Nationality and Highest Education Qualification

Highest Education Qualification	Nationality	
	SG Citizen	Non -SG Citizen (PR, Expats etc.)
Diploma	19%	4%
	20	2
Degree	49%	23%
	51	11
Master	30%	67%
	31	32
PhD	2%	6%
	2	3

6.4.2 Findings and discussion (Singapore citizens versus non-Singapore citizens)

As earlier, we analyze the results and test for differences in the sample populations using one-way multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) tests. The independent predictor variables were set as Samples C and NC and the dependent outcome variables were the numerical responses to the survey questions.

Action orientation

The only significant difference between the two samples in responses and rankings was the ‘results-oriented mind-set ($p=0.021$).’ Figures 23A1 and 23B1 illustrate these differences. Sample C views ‘working with available resources’ and ‘results-oriented mind-set’ are their top 2 choices, followed by ‘making tough decisions’ and ‘analyze all options.’ Sample NC included ‘analyze all options’ as a second choice followed by ‘challenging status quo’ and ‘getting things moving quickly.’ Middle managers from Sample NC working for larger and global companies view results orientation and getting things moving quickly as the key aspects of this construct, however, perhaps their higher education levels may also cause them to also rate higher ‘challenging the status quo’ and ‘analyzing all options.’

Strategic and systems thinking

There were statistically significant differences between the two samples across most of the sub-constructs for this competency. Figures 23A2 and 23B2 illustrate these differences in the responses and in the rankings. Both samples have the same top-3 choices, however, sample NC respondents are a lot more contrasted in their strong agreements with the importance of ‘conceptualizing strategy into action,’ ‘understanding the strategy,’ and ‘interpreting it at a local level.’ They also rank ‘linking the local unit’ higher because they typically work for global and larger companies where this aspect is viewed as relatively more important in strategic thinking abilities required by middle managers. Compared to C respondents, they did not consider the intentional outlier to ‘influence the overall company strategy’ as important, although both samples did rank it the lowest. In terms of rankings as well, there were statistically significant differences across all answers except ‘linking the local unit.’ In sum, in this competency the Singaporeans and non-citizens are generally aligned, however, Sample NC responses are much more pronounced in their views.

Networking ability

There were no statistically significant differences between the two samples for this competency, except for the sub-construct 'build good internal relationships.' Figures 23A3 and 23B3 illustrate these differences in the responses and in the rankings. The relative ranking among the two samples shows subtle differences with the most significant difference: sample NC views 'gathering support for the local unit' as their top choice. Given the environment that sample NC operates within, this prioritization is not surprising as garnering support for the local unit within the large and global context may be one of the important aspects of networking for middle managers under those conditions, and in contrast to those working with smaller local and regional companies. Sample C views 'gathering support' as a distant fourth choice whereas 'working across boundaries,' 'working with the company hierarchy' and 'building internal relationships' are most relevant to them. Both samples prioritize external networks and relationships well below internal ones.

Figure 23: Analysis: Impact of Nationality

Figure 23A1

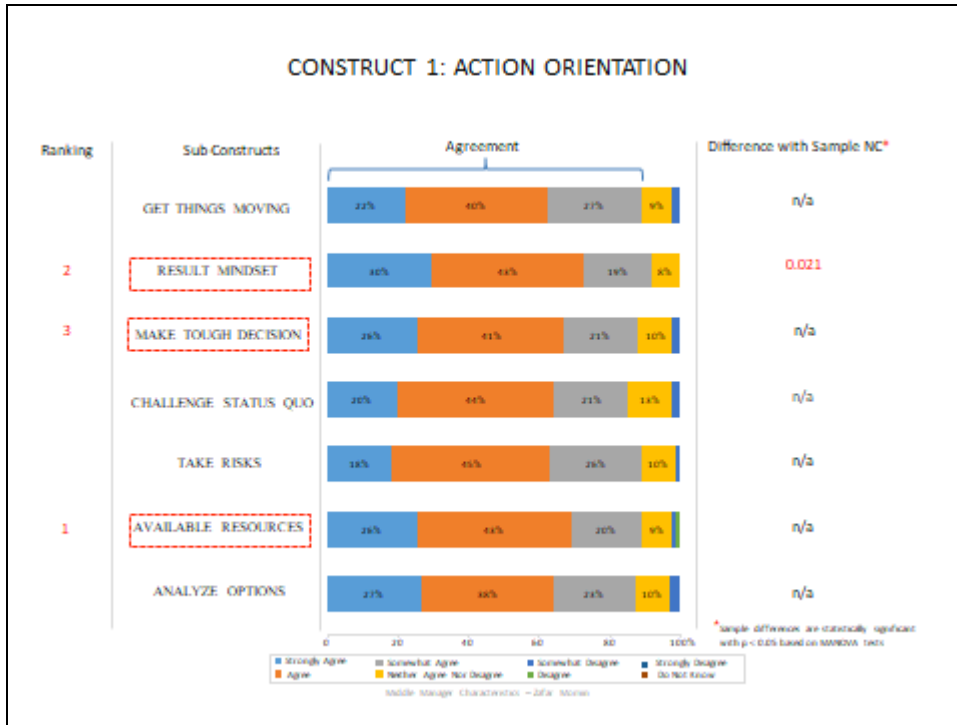


Figure 23B1

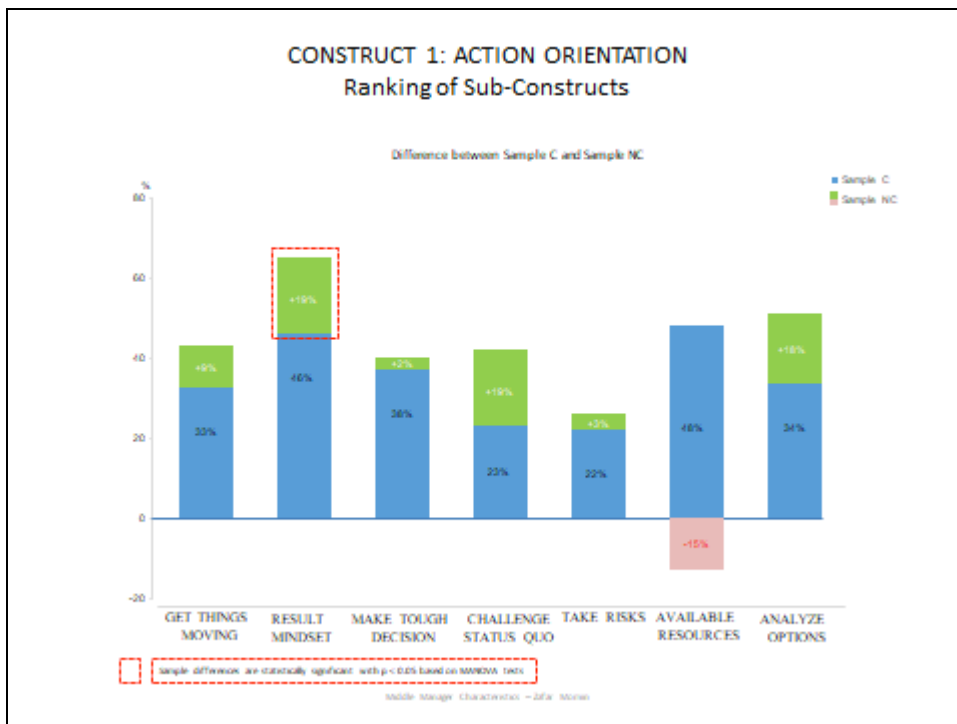


Figure 23A2

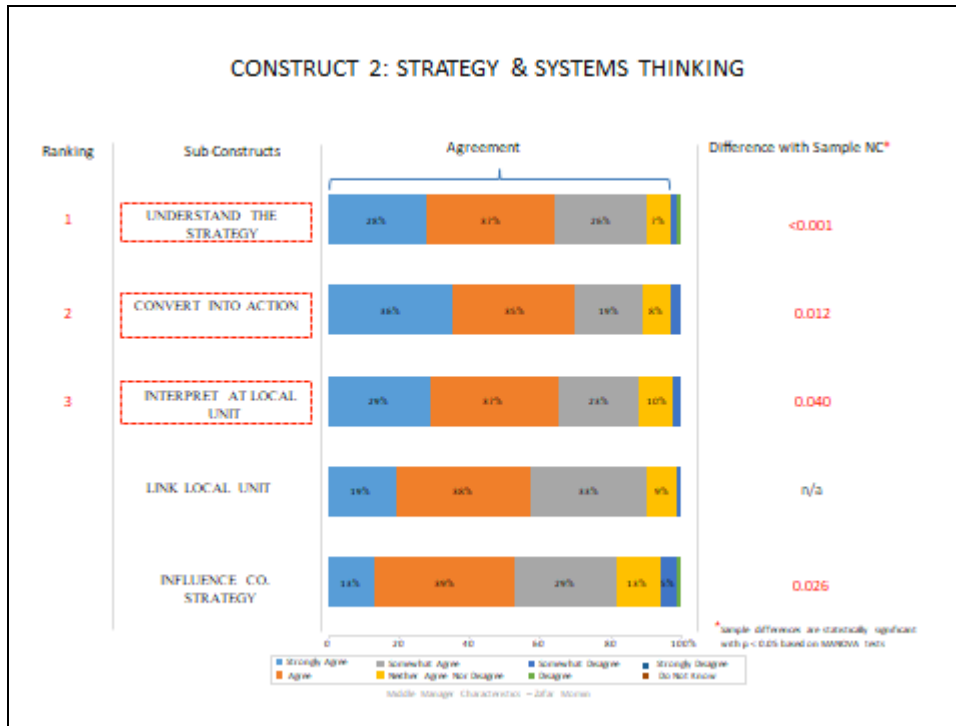
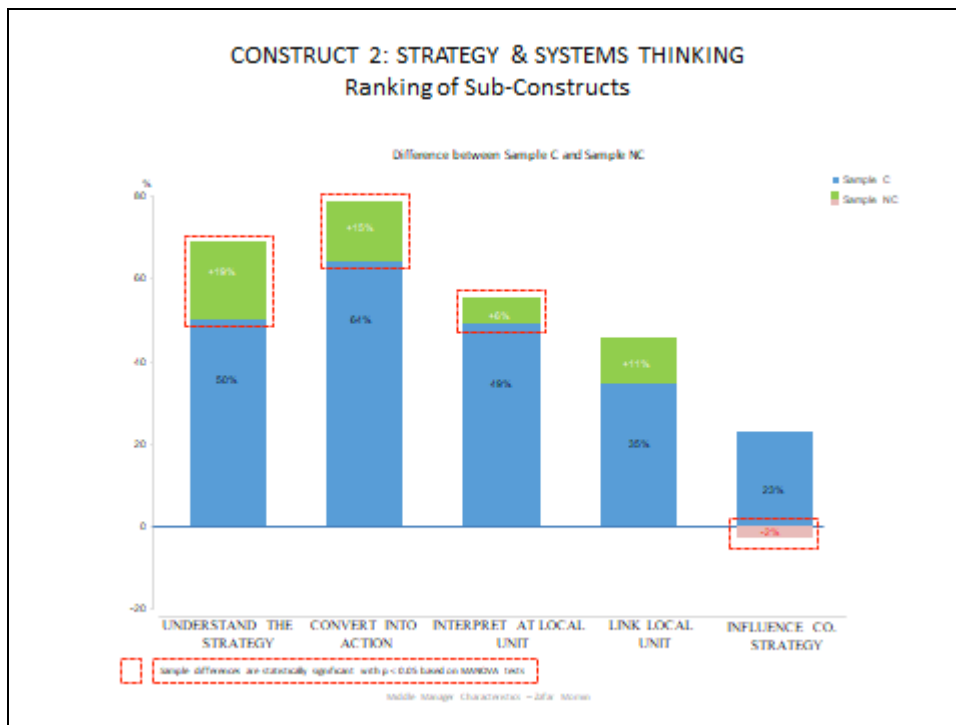


Figure 23B2



Ability to learn and adapt

There were statistically significant differences between the two samples across just a few sub-constructs for this competency: ‘showing resilience ($p=0.046$)’ and ‘tolerating ambiguity and uncertainty ($p=0.016$).’ In terms of rankings, ‘showing resilience’ was top choice for both samples and ‘being open minded’ was the second choice. Sample NC ranks ‘tolerating ambiguity’ as their third choice, whereas Sample C respondents chose ‘improvise and adapt existing practices,’ which was a fourth choice for Sample NC. The ratings ‘being open minded,’ ‘improvise and adapt’ and ‘resilience’ were all statistically significant and shown in figure 23B4. It is understandable that large global companies may recognize tolerance of ambiguity as an important sub-construct due to their business education and more complex working environment. Also, within smaller local and regional companies, things like failure, ambiguity and admittance of things not going as planned may be less acceptable and hence ranked lower.

Ability to develop people

Two of the sub-constructs for this competency were statistically significant between the two sample populations: ‘managing the development of subordinates ($p=0.012$)’ and ‘earning trust and respect of subordinates ($p=0.032$).’ For both samples, the top-3 choices were those related to ‘earning trust and respect of subordinates,’ ‘being credible in convincing them,’ and ‘managing the development of subordinates.’ The relative rankings are significantly different as well for the top-3 choices and these are shown in Figure 23B5. The only other notable point is that ‘showing fairness in assignments’ and ‘supporting the emotional well-being and balance of subordinates’ was relatively ranked lower by both samples. Regardless

of nationality, respondents indicated that the being a role model and being invested in developing subordinates to ensure their success during change, and being able to convince them of imminent changes due to strategy were the priorities in terms of people development ability.

Hygiene factors

None of responses for the sub-constructs for this competency was statistically significant between the two sample populations. However, the rankings for the top choices were statistically different as shown in Figure 23B6. For both samples, the top-3 choices for hygiene factors were ‘communications,’ ‘consensus,’ and ‘commitment.’ Regardless of nationality, the main hygiene factors are consistent and the need for technical expertise may be slightly more relevant in the NC sample for complexity associated with large global companies.

Figure 23A3

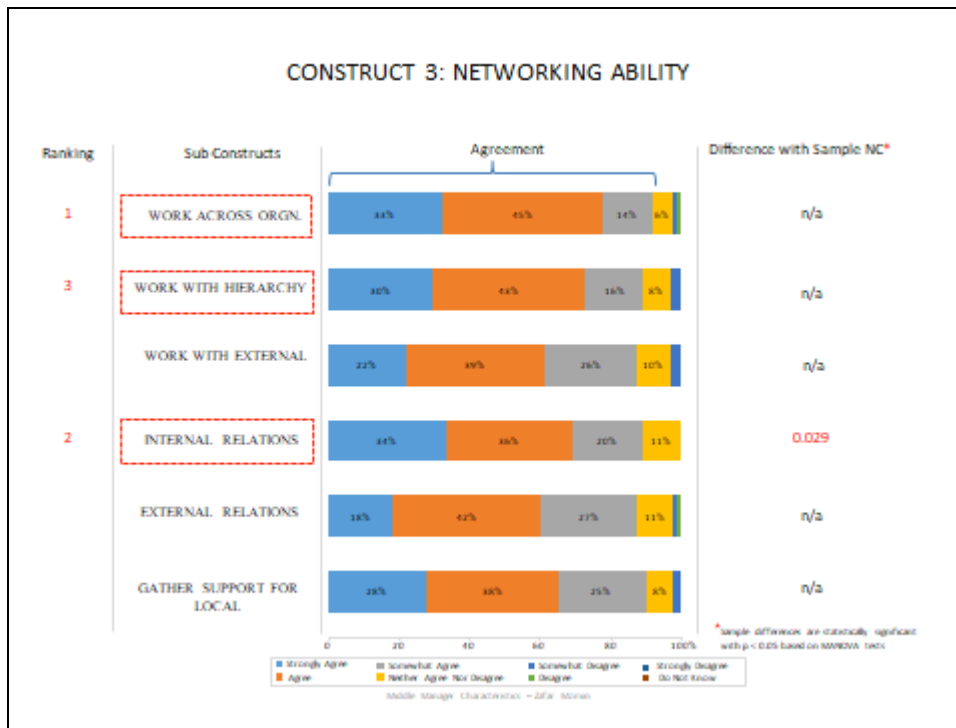


Figure 23B3

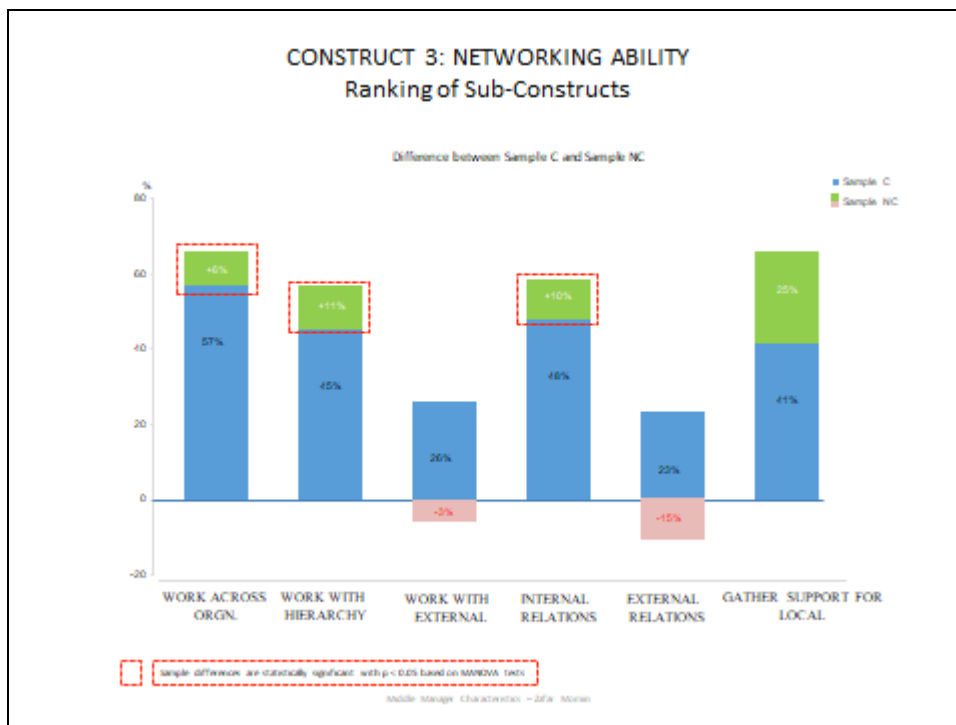


Figure 23B4

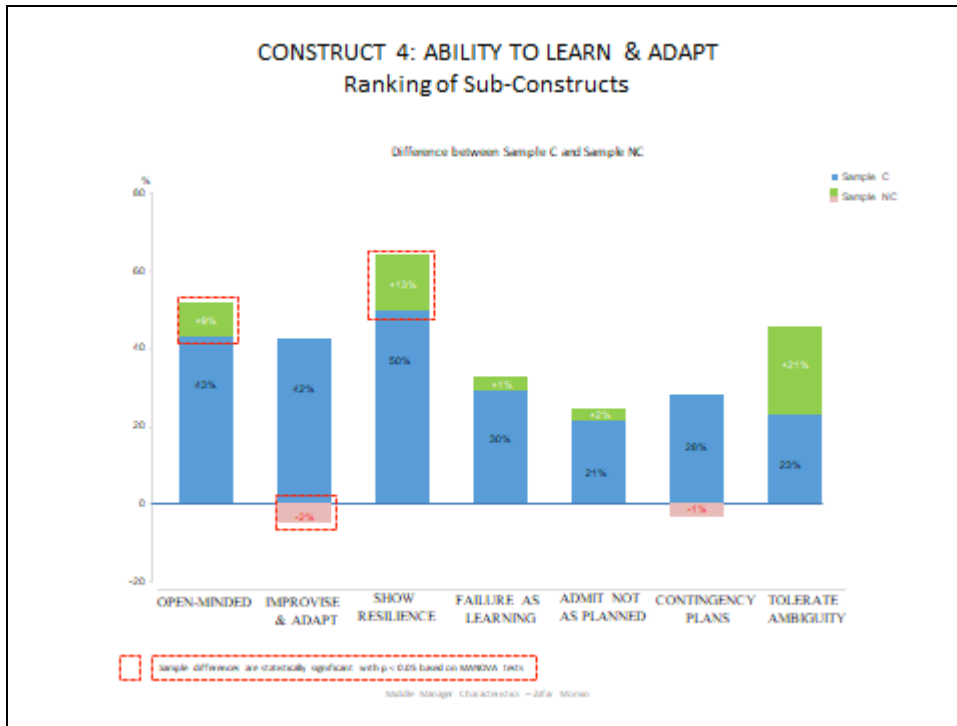


Figure 23B5



Moderating factors

None of responses for the sub-constructs for this competency was statistically significant between the two sample populations. However, rankings were statistically significant for their top choices (see Figure 23B7). Both samples were aligned on the importance of ‘selecting the right middle managers’ as the most important factor affecting executing outcomes and ‘appropriate rewards and incentives’ as the key factor moderating effectiveness of middle managers. Singaporean middle managers viewed ‘positive relationships with top managers’ as an important aspect for moderating their effectiveness (Guth and MacMillan, 1986). Both samples ranked ‘middle manager agency issues’ of least importance.

Figure 23B6

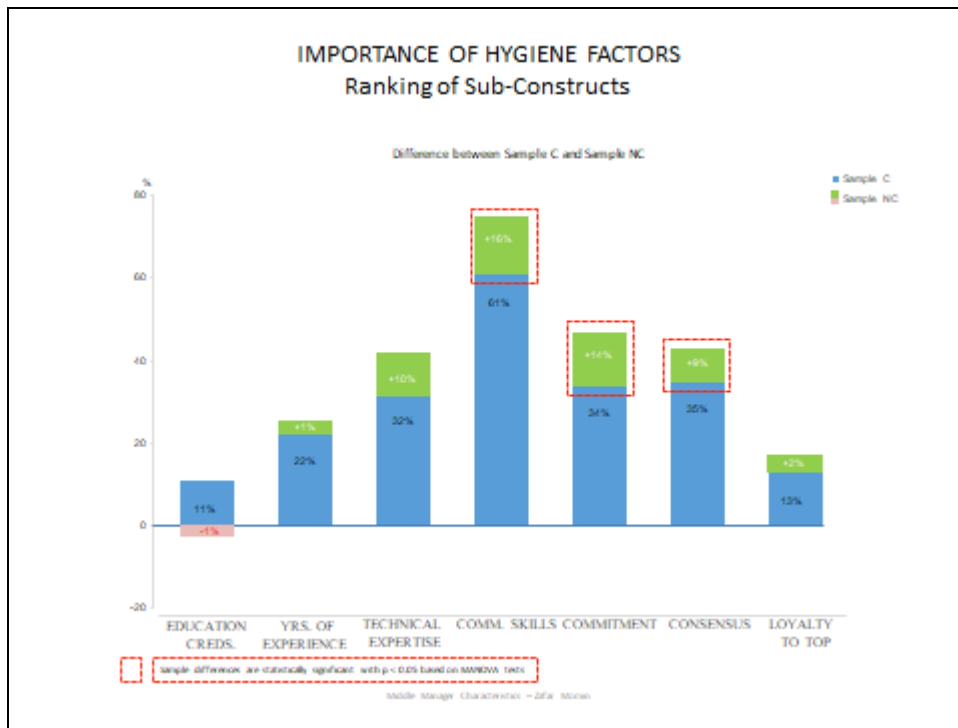
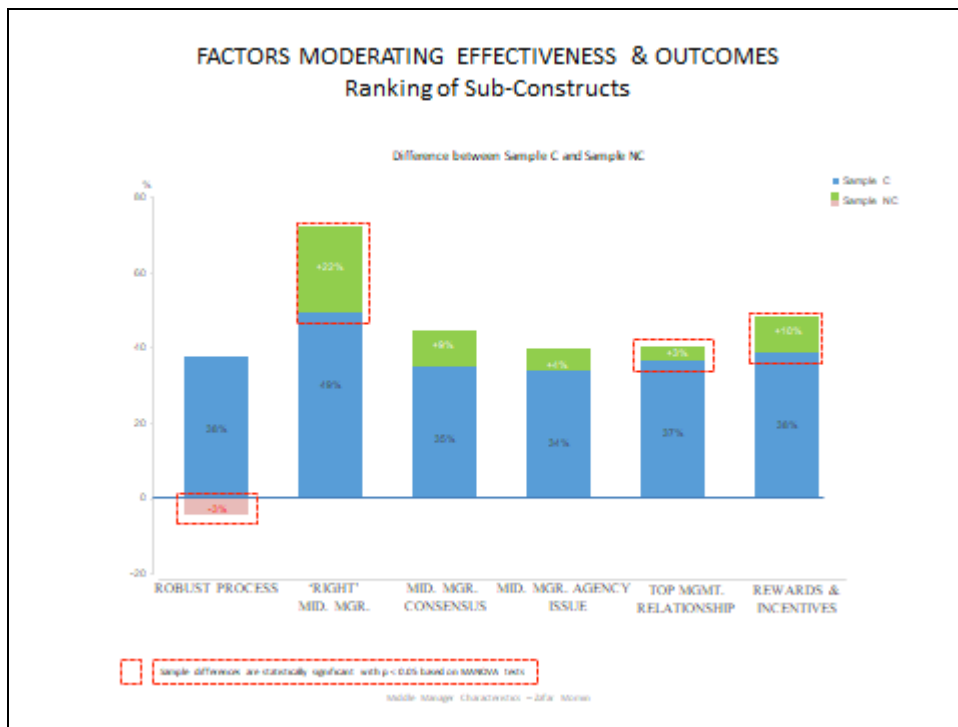


Figure 23B7



Impact of Nationality - Additional supporting demographics and figures

Figure 1-10: Respondent Demographics

Figure 1

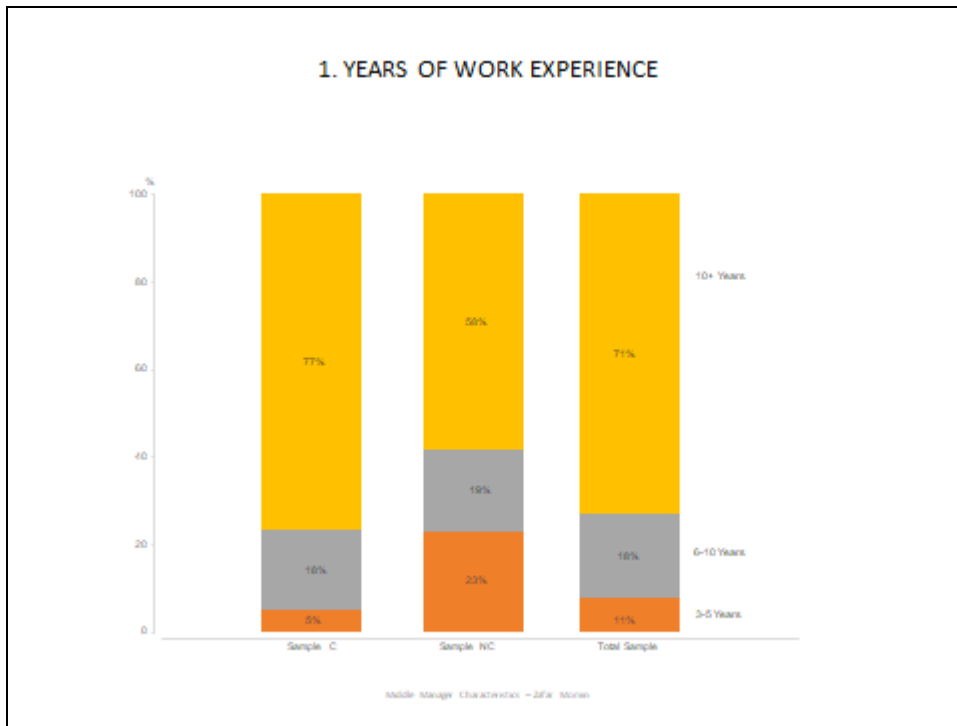


Figure 2

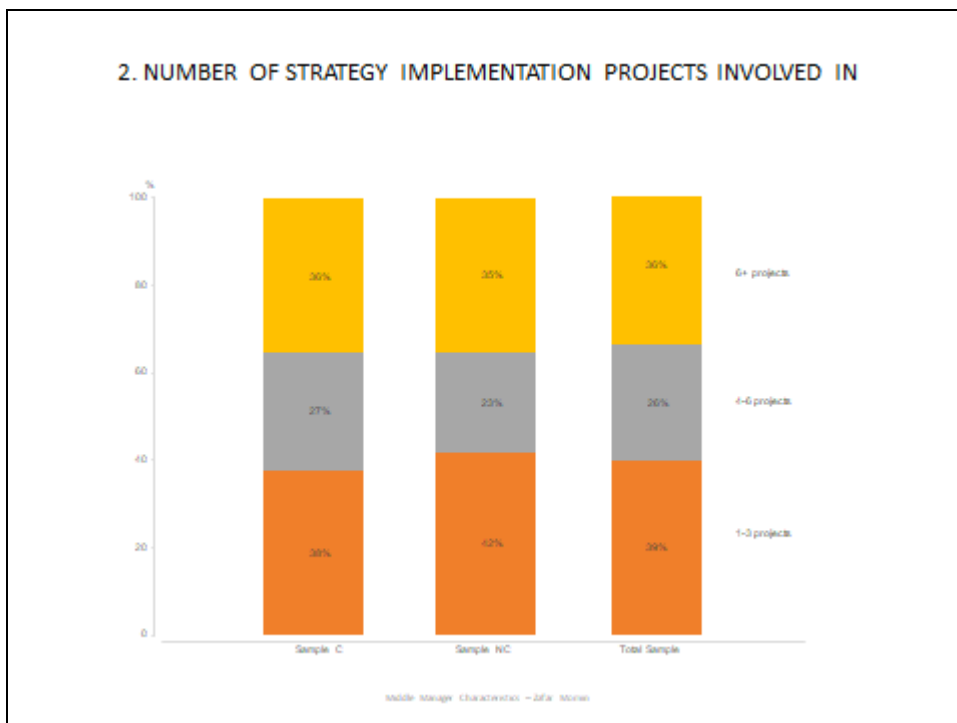


Figure 3

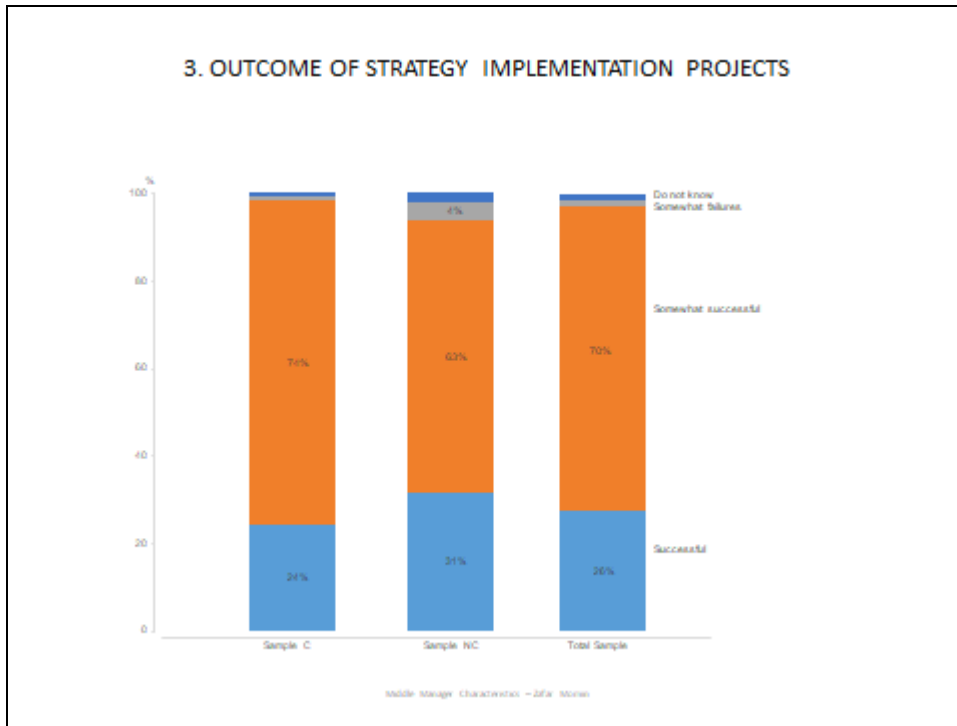


Figure 4

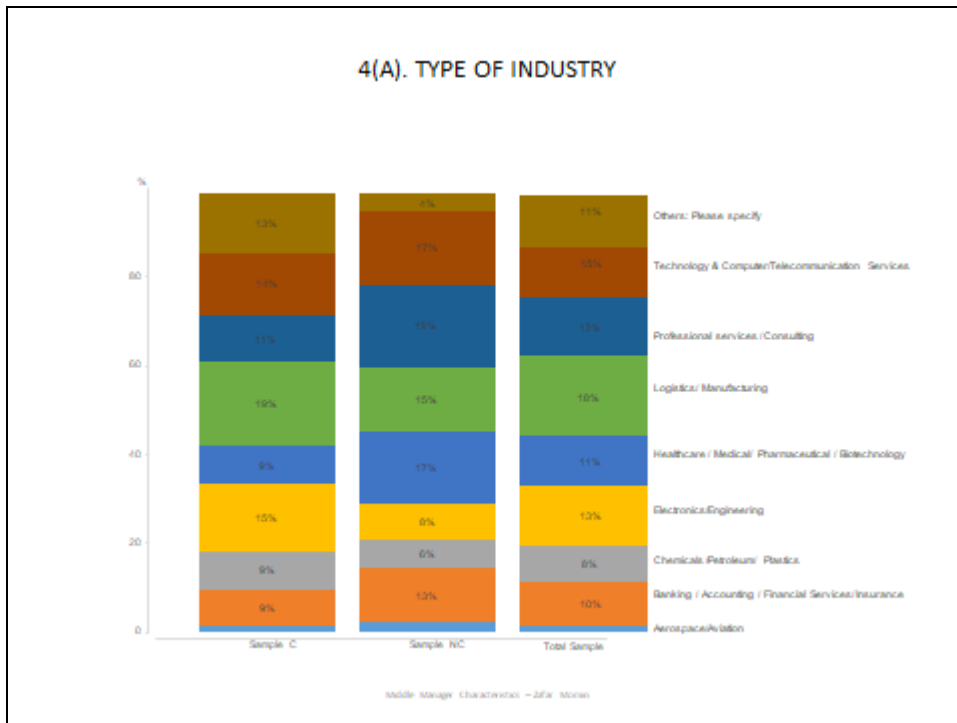


Figure 5

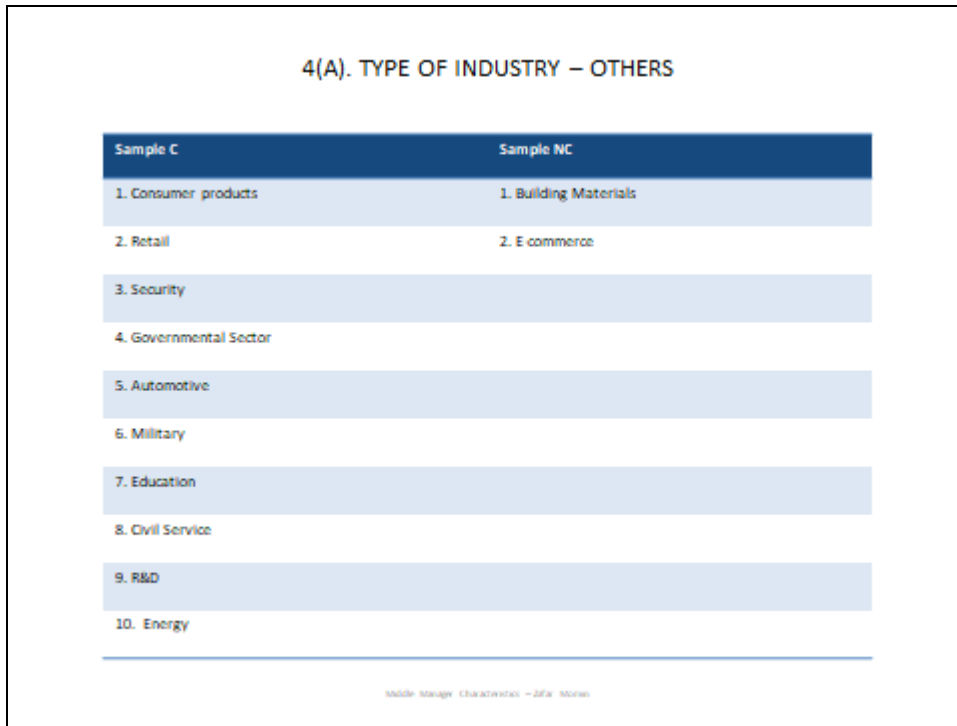


Figure 6



Figure 7

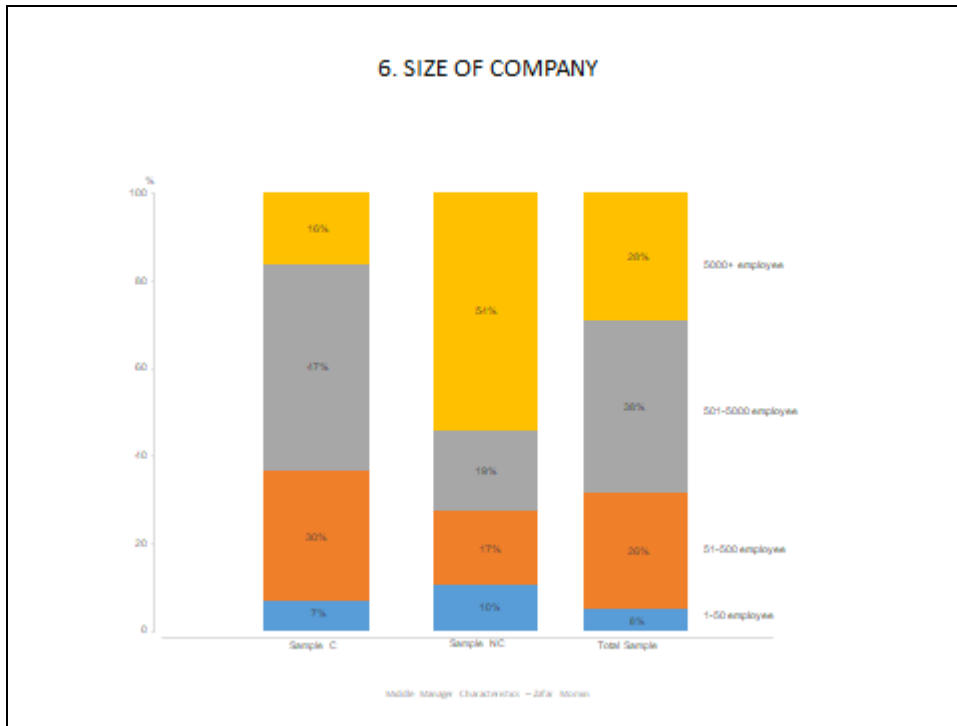


Figure 8

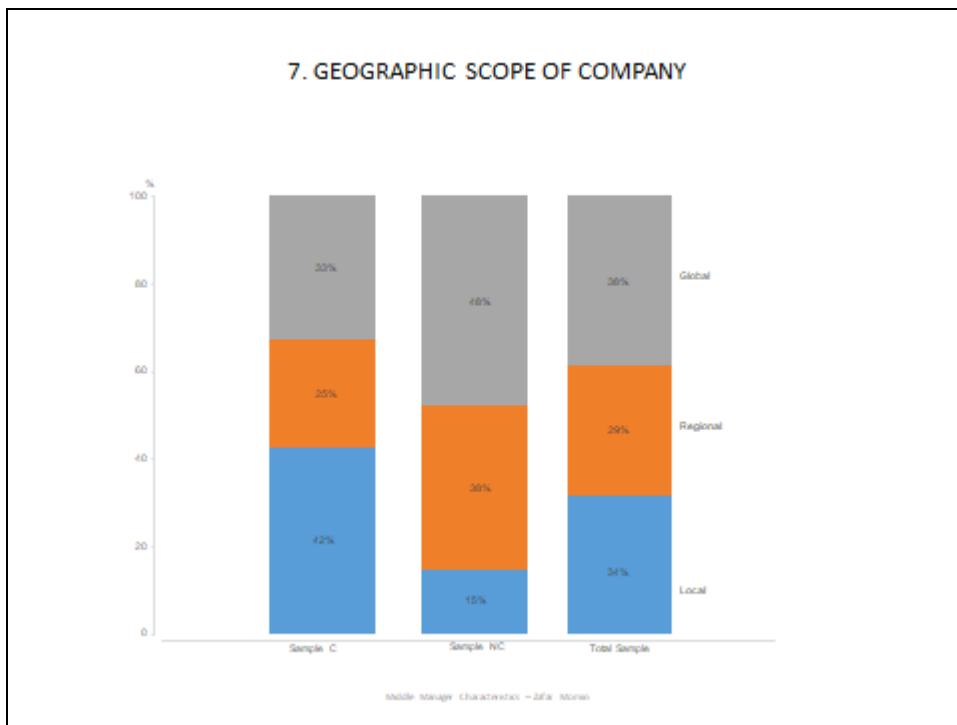


Figure 9

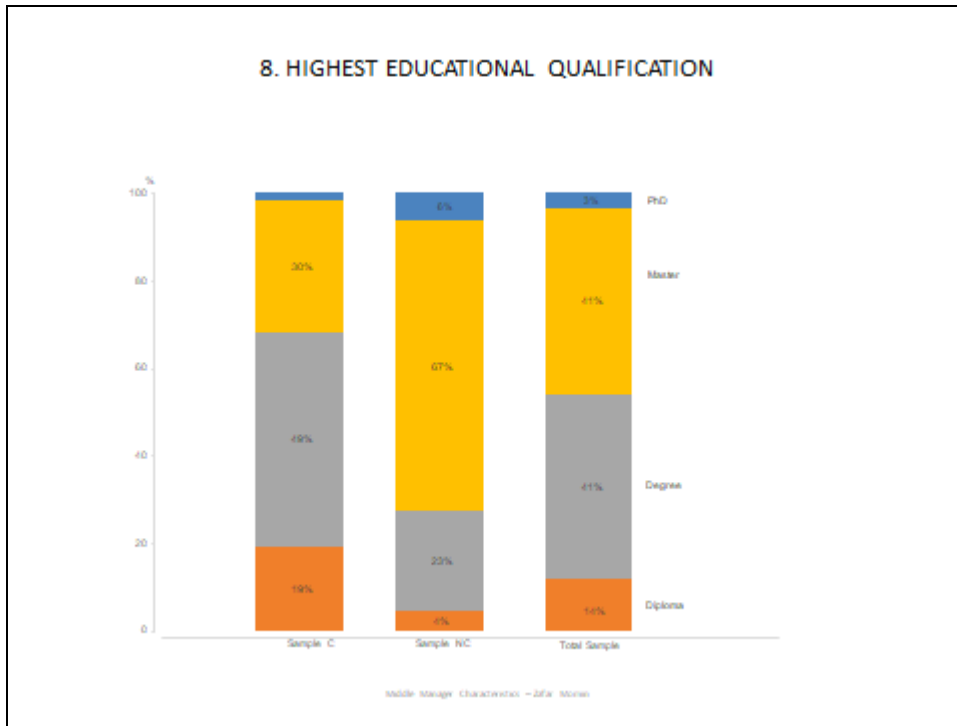


Figure 10

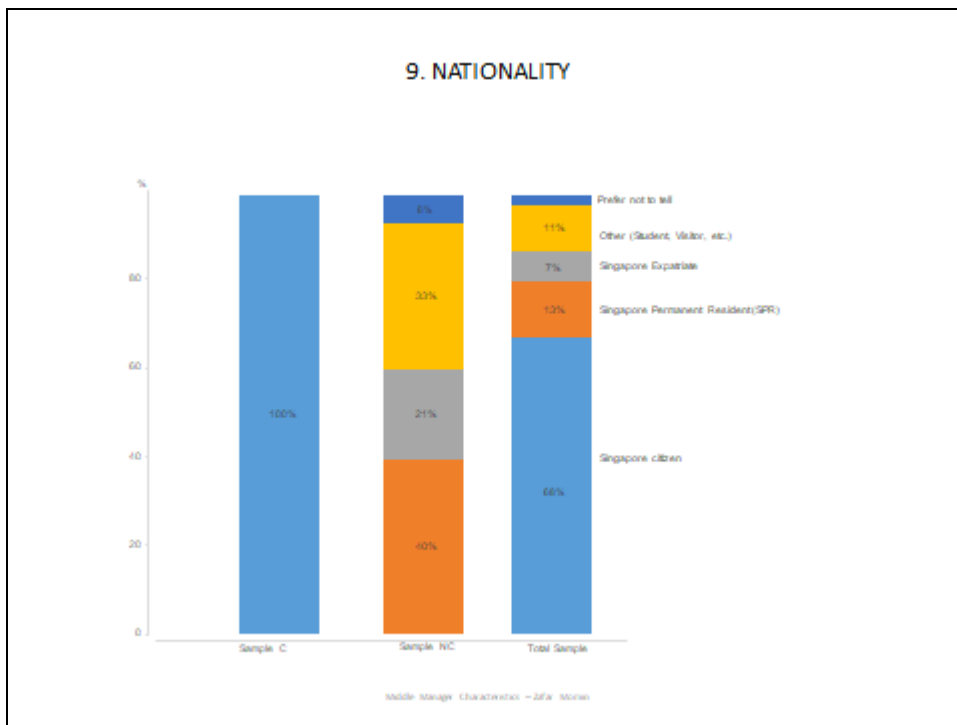


Figure 11-17: Sample NC Responses

Figure 11

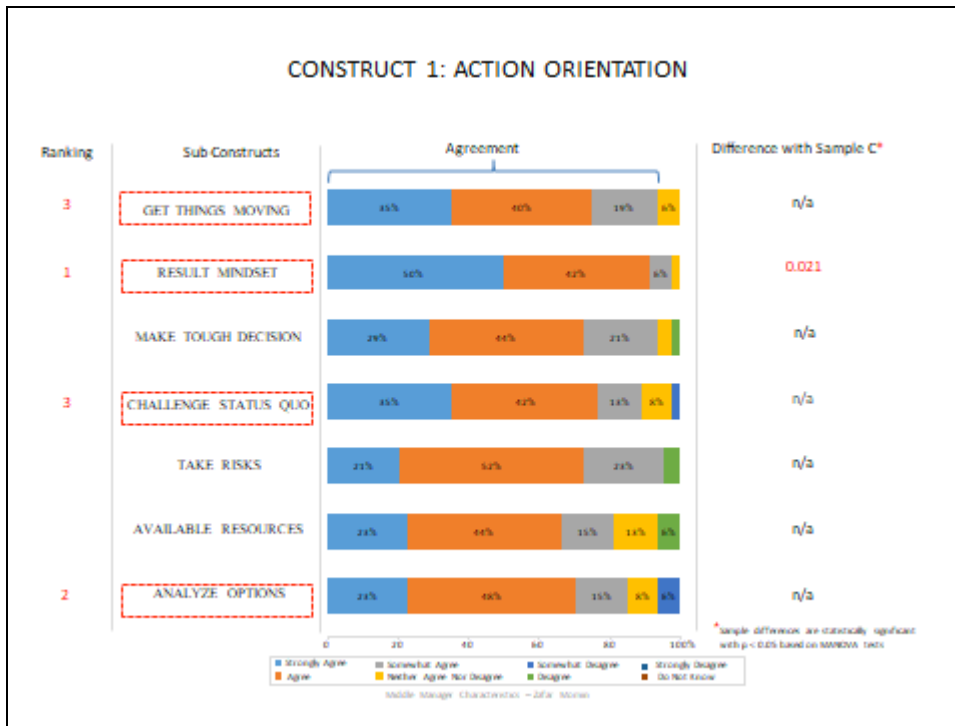


Figure 12

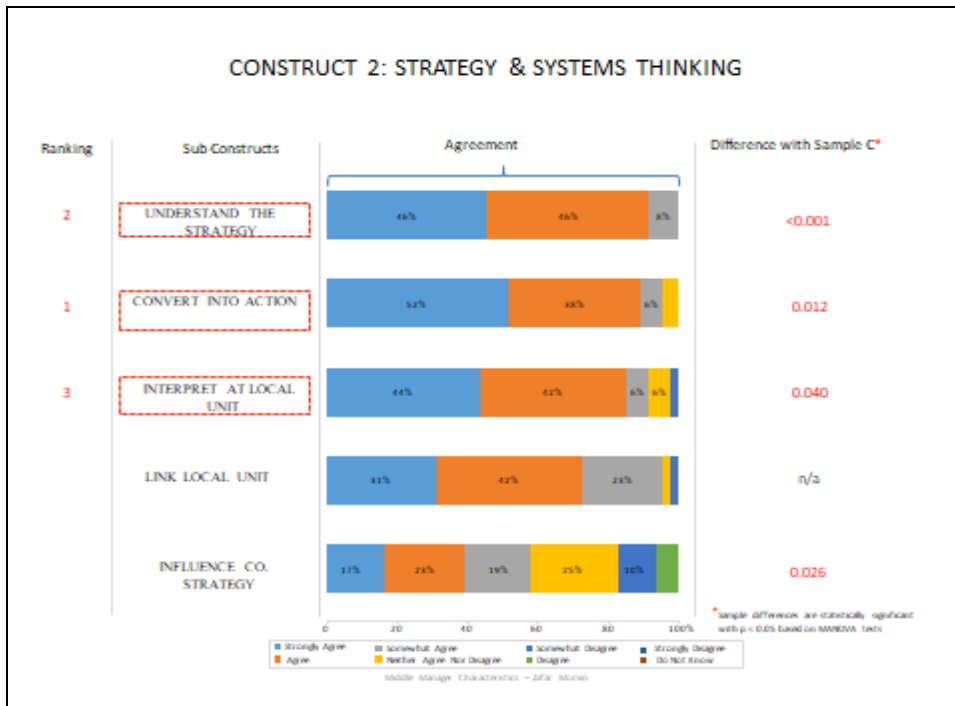


Figure 13

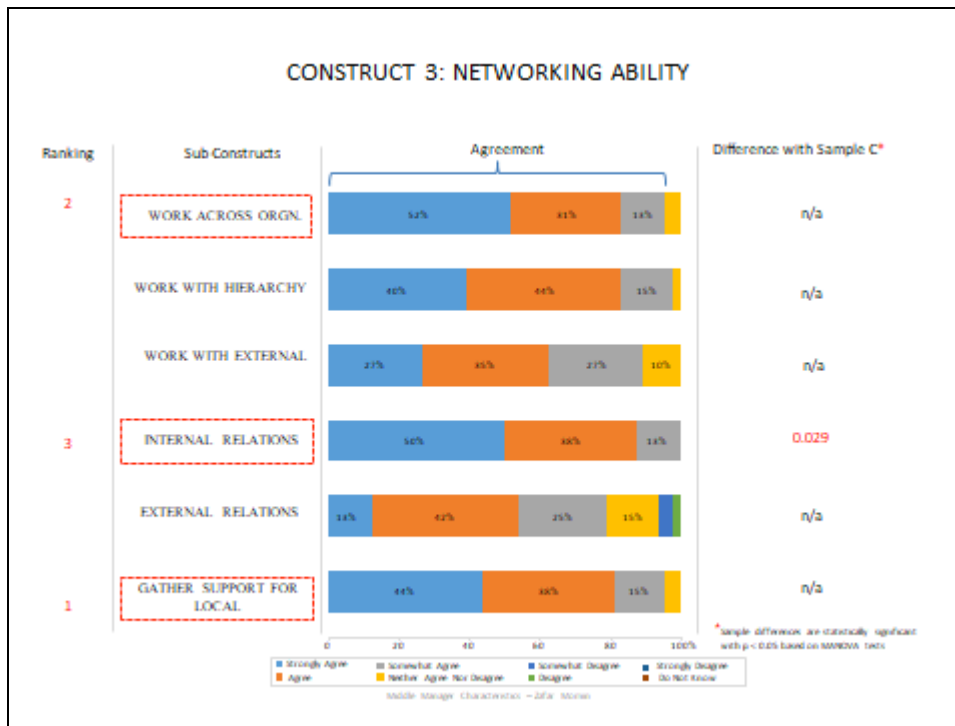


Figure 14

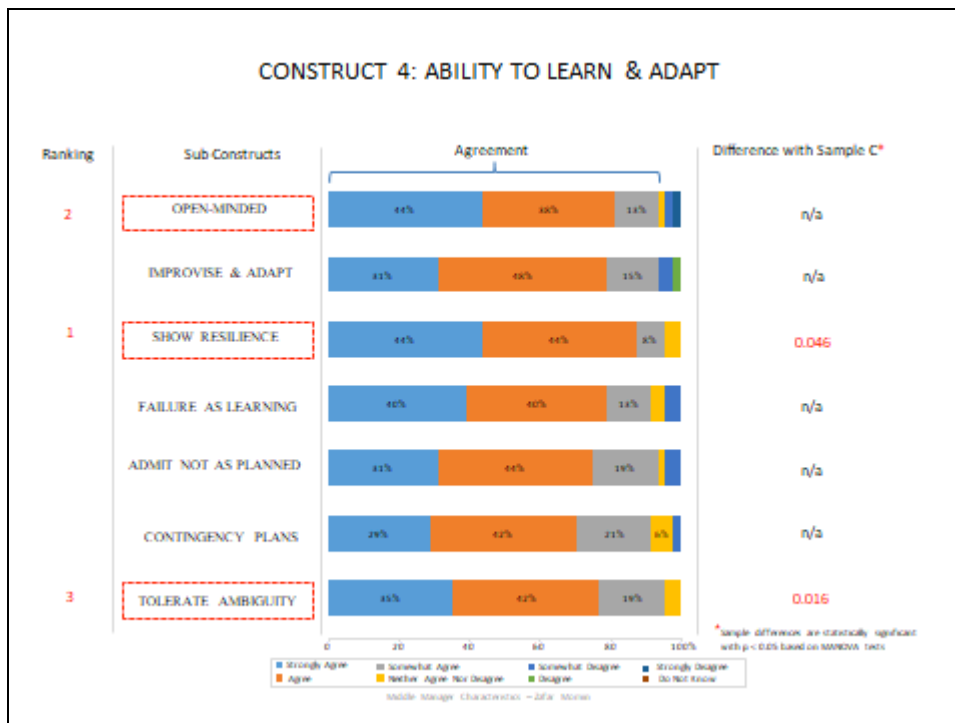


Figure 15

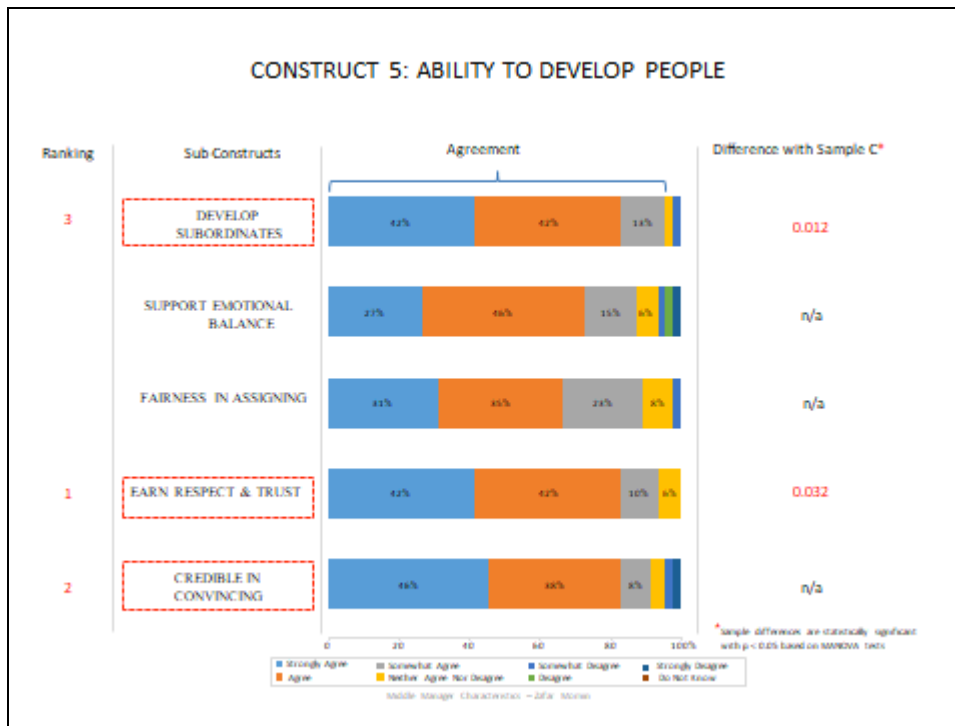


Figure 16

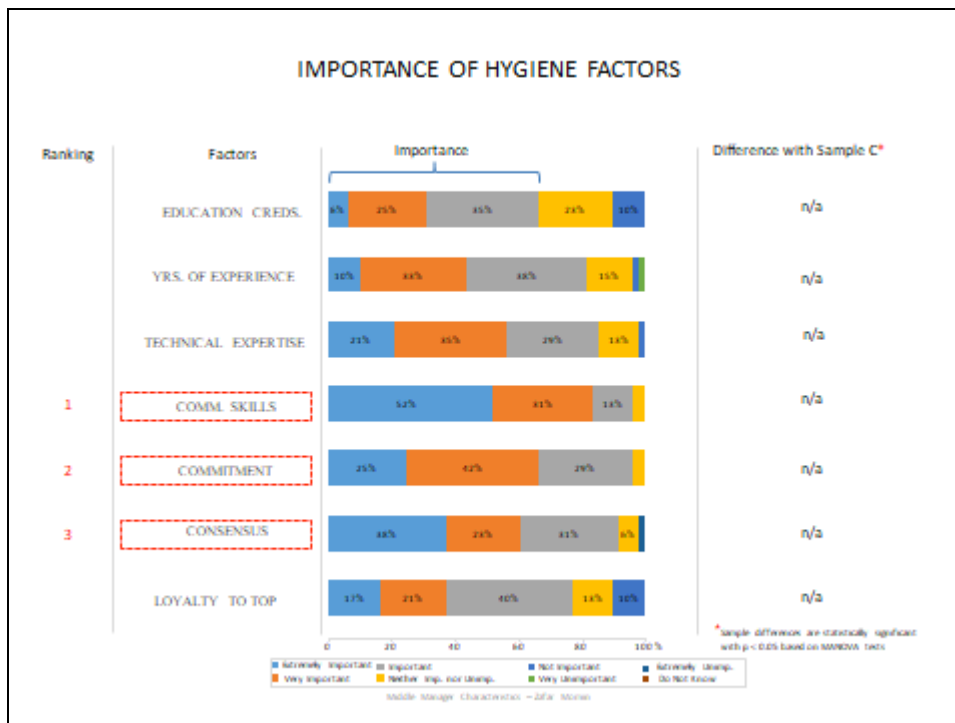


Figure 17

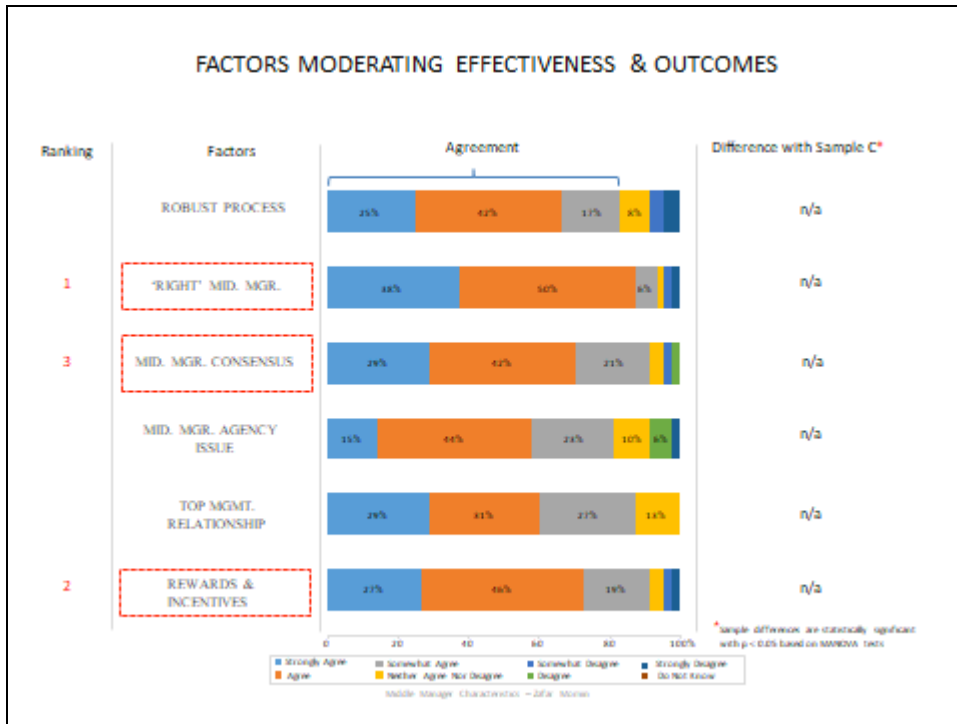


Figure 18-24: Sample NC Rankings

Figure 18

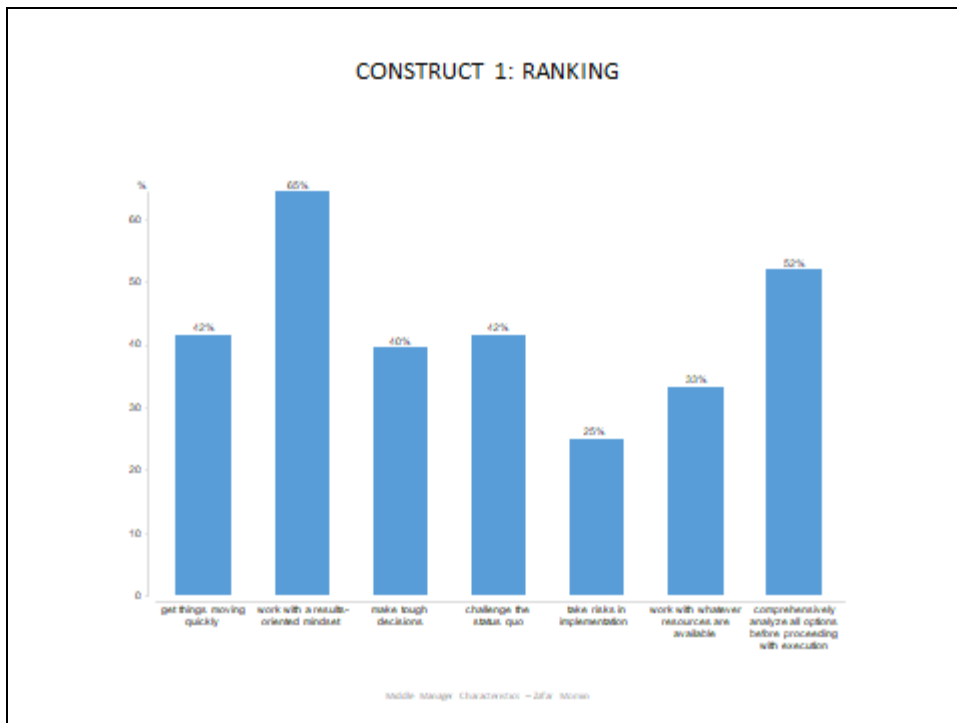


Figure 19

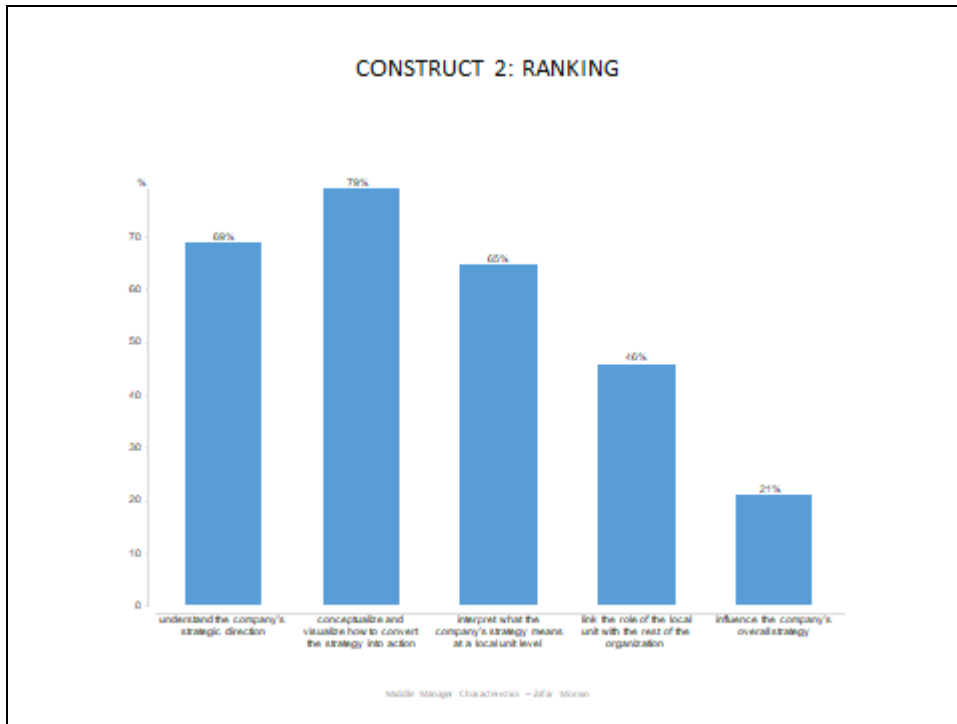


Figure 20

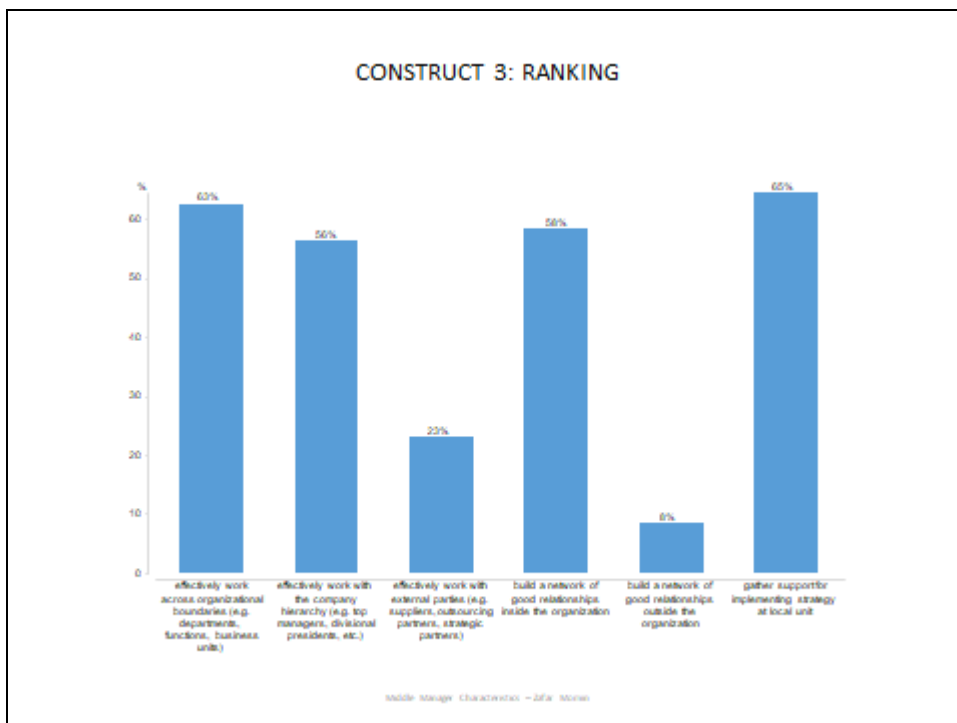


Figure 21

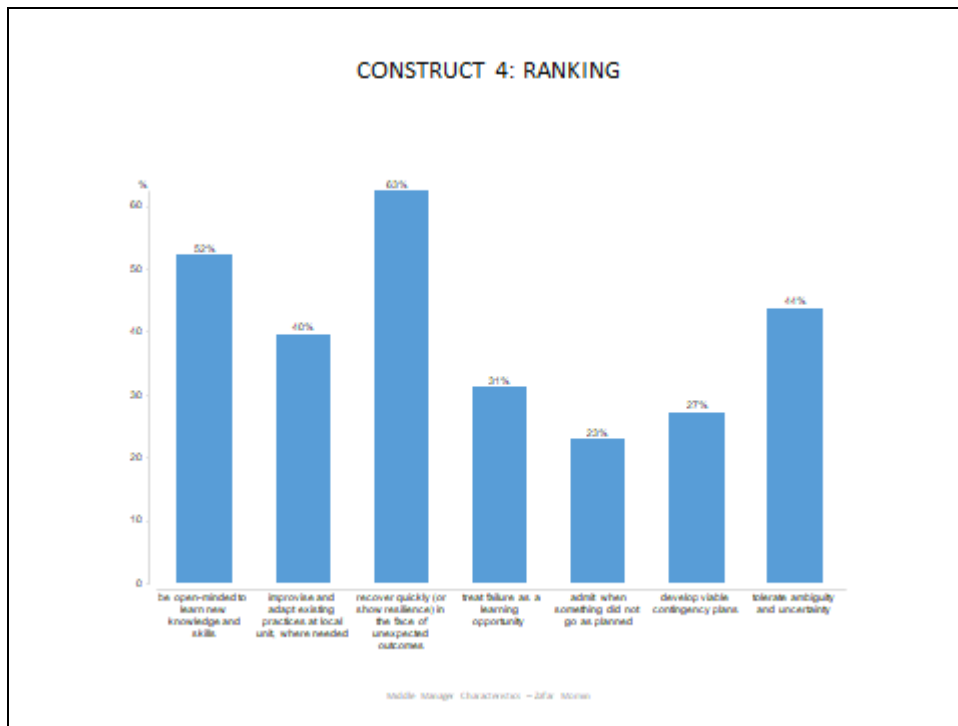


Figure 22

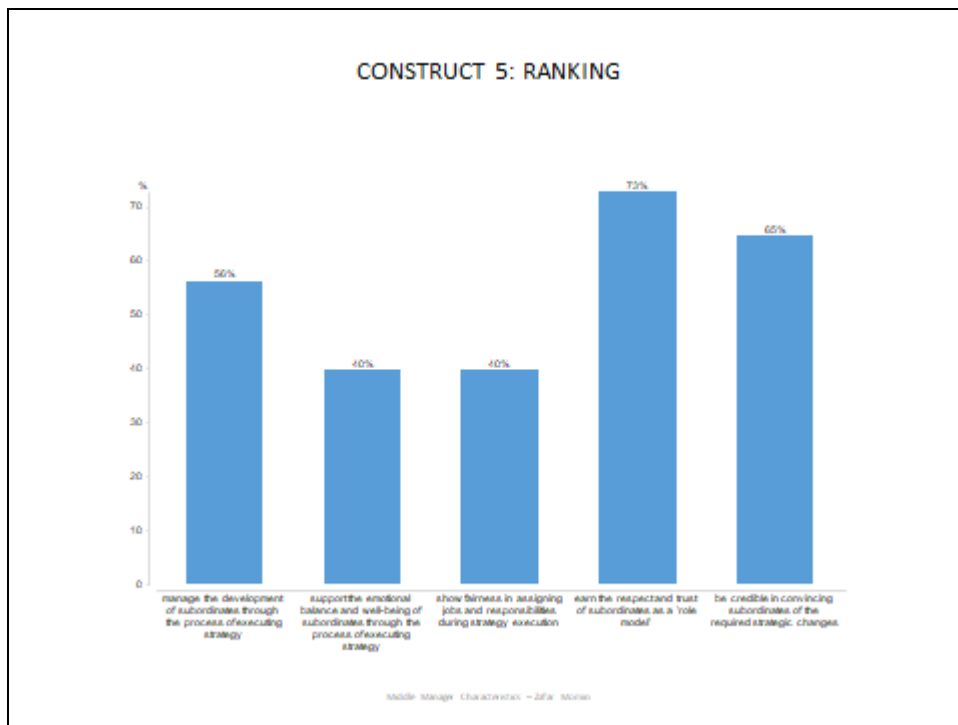


Figure 23

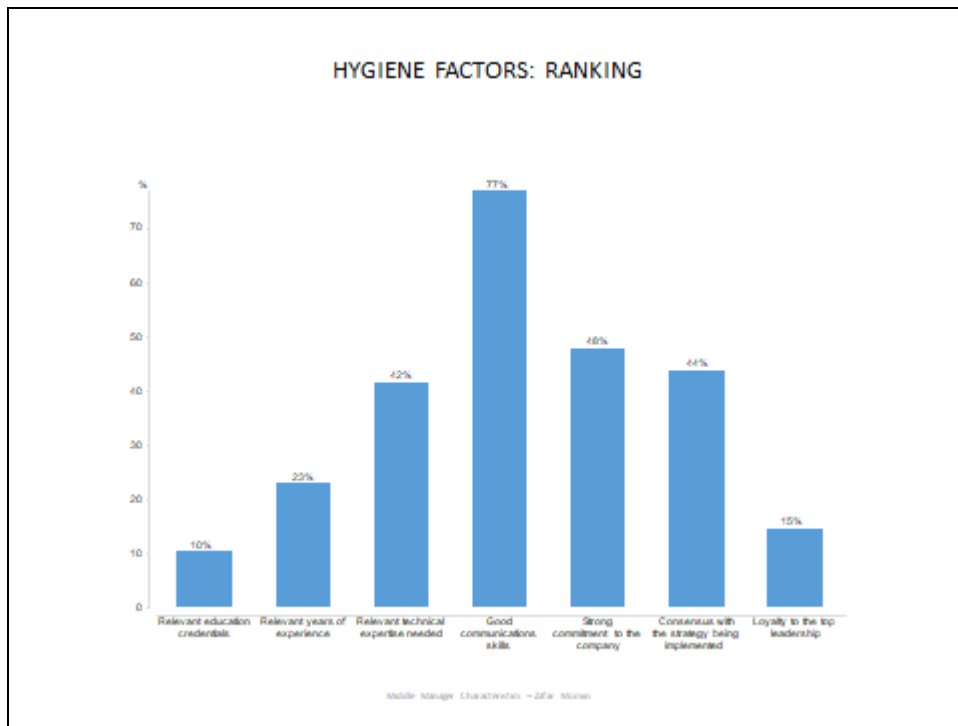


Figure 24

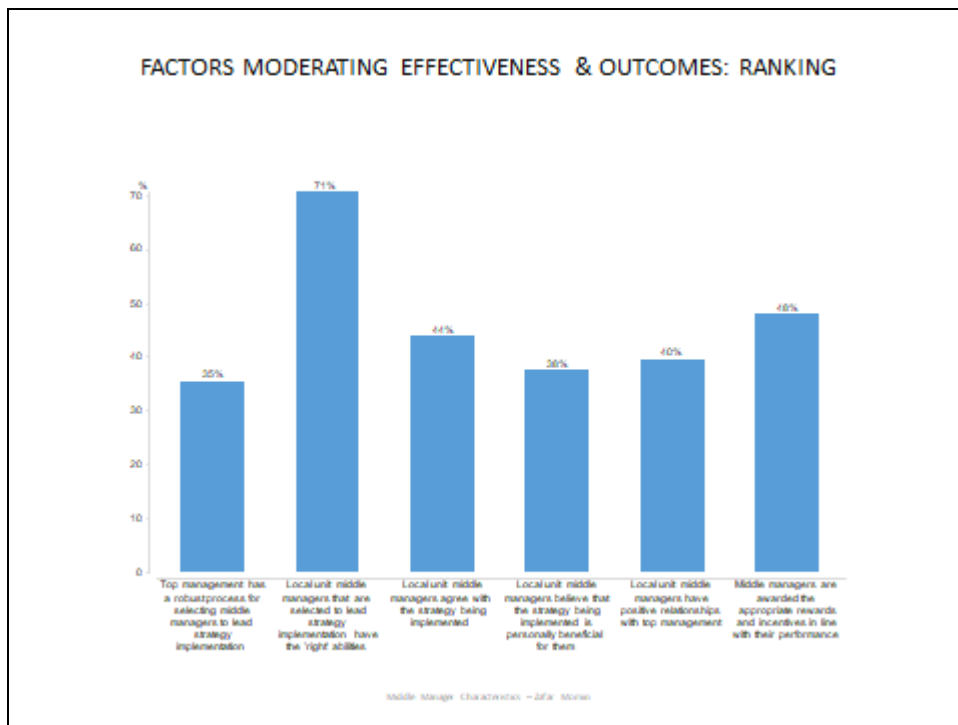


Figure 25-31: Sample C Rankings

Figure 25

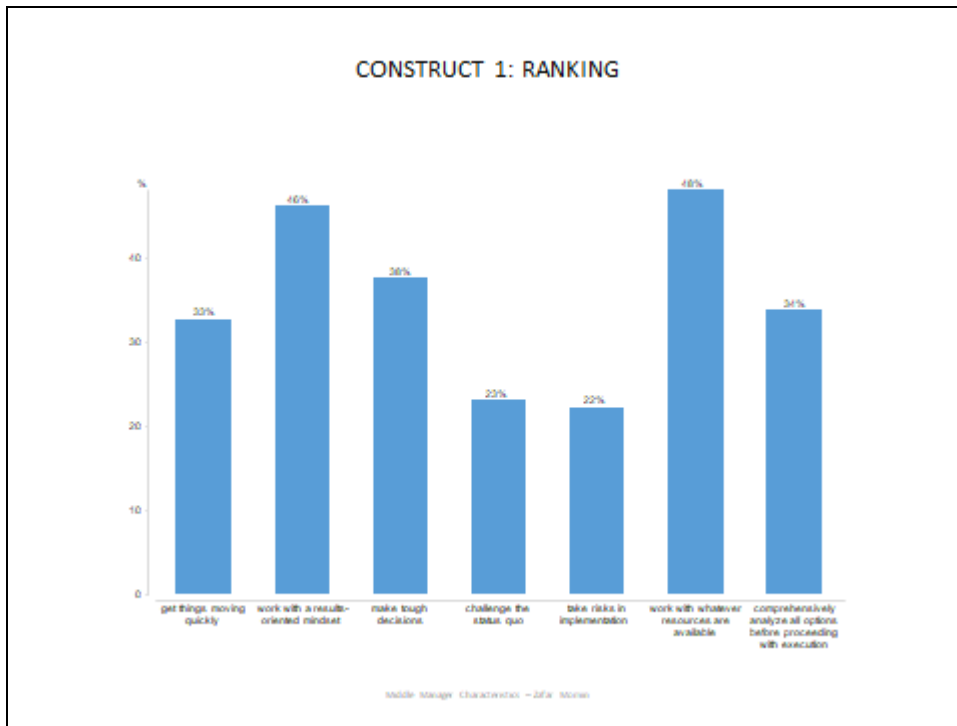


Figure 26

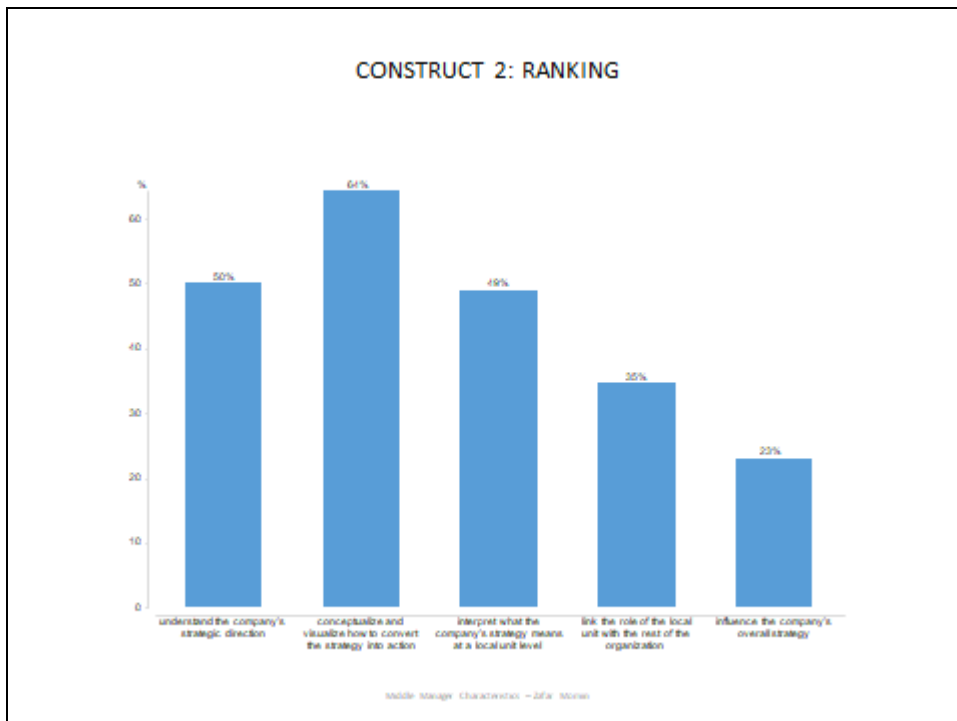


Figure 27

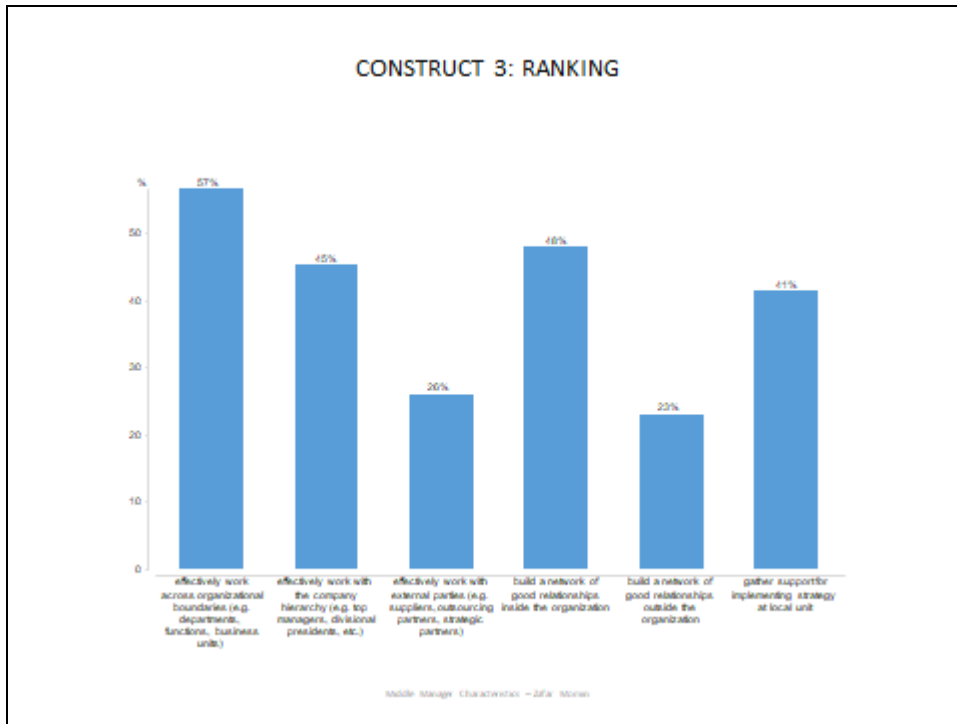


Figure 28

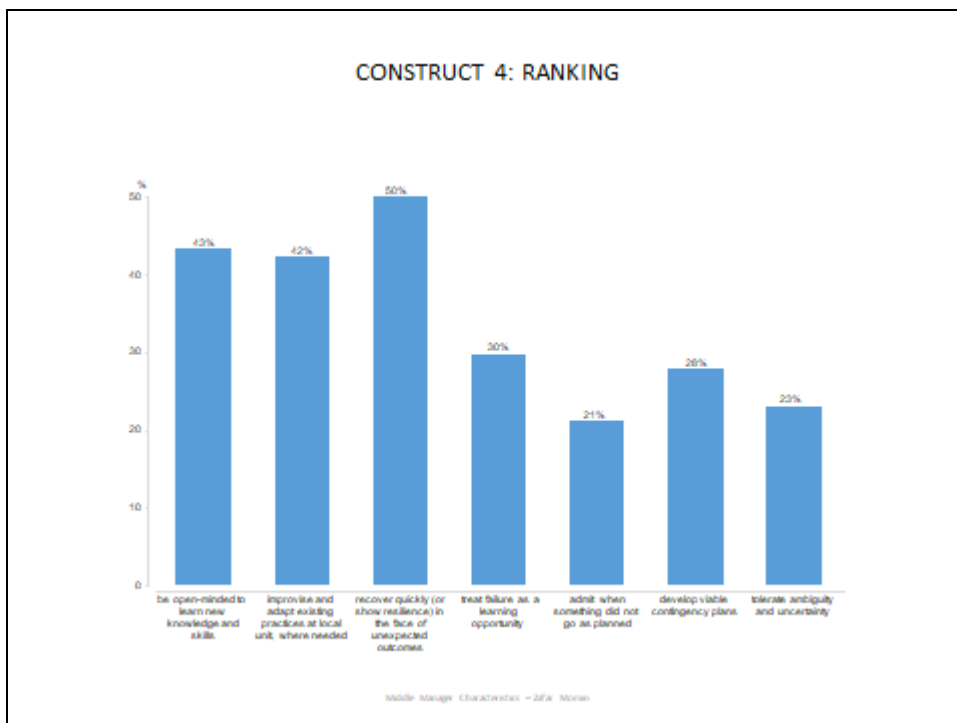


Figure 29

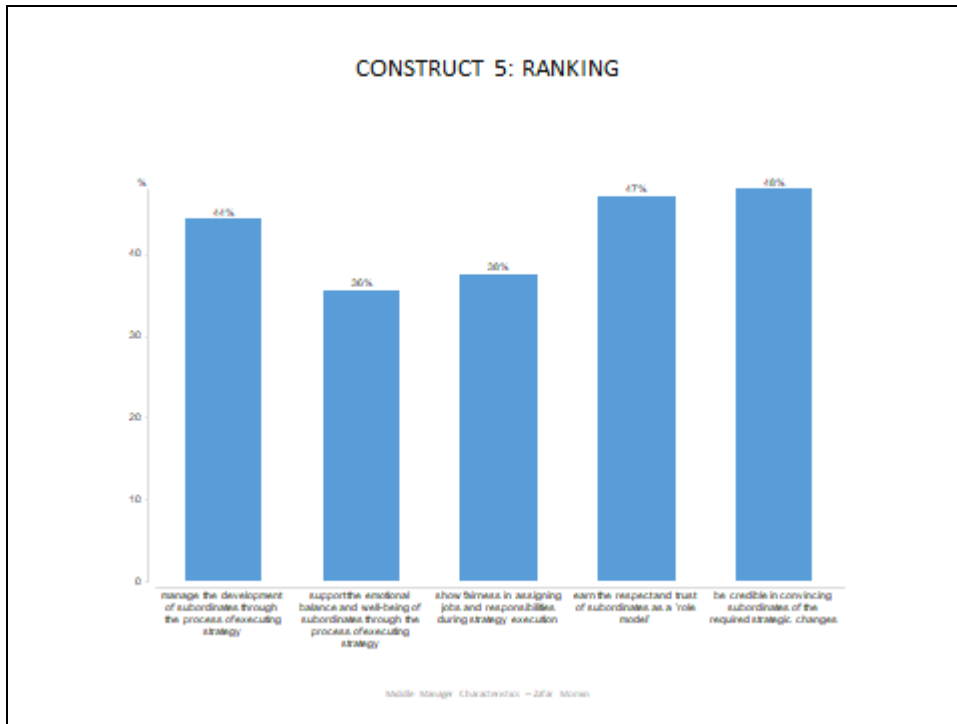


Figure 30

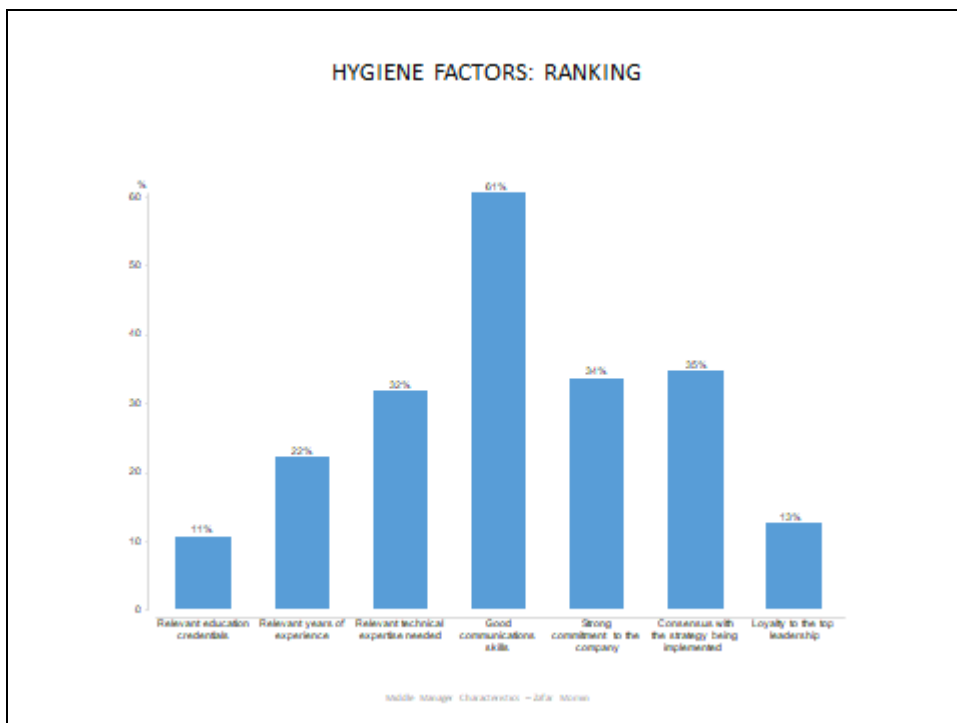


Figure 31

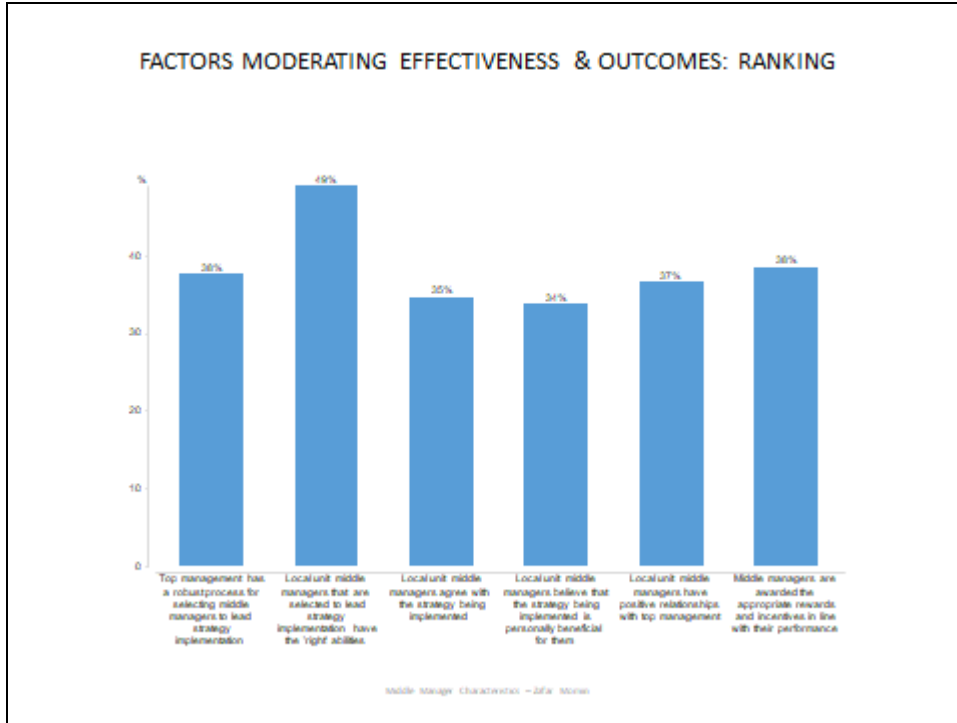


Figure 32-45: MANOVA Test Results

Figure 32 – Construct 1 Response

Significant - Smallest p-value (after applying False Discovery Rate correction): 0.02

	SG Citizen n: 104	PR+ Expats n: 48	R-Squared	p
get things moving	2.28	1.96	0.02	.382
work with a results-oriented mindset	2.05	1.60	0.06	.021
make tough decisions	2.20	2.08	0.00	1.000
challenge the status quo	2.32	2.00	0.02	.500
take risks in implementation	2.30	2.19	0.00	1.000
work with whatever resources are available	2.18	2.42	0.01	1.000
comprehensively analyze all options before proceeding with execution	2.24	2.27	0.00	1.000

n = 152 cases used in estimation; null hypotheses: two-sided; multiple comparisons correction: False Discovery Rate correction applied simultaneously to the entire table

Figure 33 – Construct 1 Ranking

Not significant - Smallest p-value (after applying False Discovery Rate correction): 0.26

	SG Citizen n: 104	PR+ Expats n: 48	R-Squared	p
get things moving quickly	0.33	0.42	0.01	1.000
work with a results-oriented mindset	0.46	0.65	0.03	.485
make tough decisions	0.38	0.40	0.00	1.000
challenge the status quo	0.23	0.42	0.04	.262
take risks in implementation	0.22	0.25	0.00	1.000
work with whatever resources are available	0.48	0.33	0.02	1.000
comprehensively analyze all options before proceeding with execution	0.34	0.52	0.03	.431

n = 152 cases used in estimation; null hypotheses: two-sided; multiple comparisons correction: False Discovery Rate correction applied simultaneously to the entire table

Figure 34 – Construct 2 Response

Significant - Smallest p-value (after applying False Discovery Rate correction): 0.001

	SG Citizen n: 104	PR+ Expats n: 48	R-Squared	p
understand the company's strategic direction	2.21	1.62	0.08	< .001
conceptualize and visualize how to convert the strategy into action	2.08	1.62	0.04	.012
interpret what the company's strategy means at a local unit level	2.19	1.81	0.03	.040
link the role of the local unit with the rest of the organization	2.34	2.02	0.03	.063
influence the company's overall strategy	2.59	3.08	0.04	.026

n = 152 cases used in estimation; null hypotheses: two-sided; multiple comparisons correction: False Discovery Rate correction applied simultaneously to the entire table

Figure 35 – Construct 2 Ranking

Not significant - Smallest p-value (after applying False Discovery Rate correction): 0.31

	SG Citizen n: 104	PR+ Expats n: 48	R-Squared	p
understand the company's strategic direction	0.50	0.69	0.03	.305
conceptualize and visualize how to convert the strategy into action	0.64	0.79	0.02	.683
interpret what the company's strategy means at a local unit level	0.49	0.65	0.02	.748
link the role of the local unit with the rest of the organization	0.35	0.46	0.01	1.000
influence the company's overall strategy	0.23	0.21	0.00	1.000

n = 152 cases used in estimation; null hypotheses: two-sided; multiple comparisons correction: False Discovery Rate correction applied simultaneously to the entire table

Figure 36 – Construct 3 Response

Significant - Smallest p-value (after applying False Discovery Rate correction): 0.03

	SG Citizen n: 104	PR+ Expats n: 48	R-Squared	p
effectively work across organizational boundaries (e.g. departments, functions, business units)	2.00	1.69	0.02	.351
effectively work with the company hierarchy (e.g. top managers, divisional presidents, etc.)	2.11	1.79	0.02	.351
effectively work with external parties (e.g. suppliers, outsourcing partners, strategic partners)	2.32	2.21	0.00	1.000
build a network of good relationships inside the organization	2.08	1.62	0.05	.029
build a network of good relationships outside the organization	2.37	2.62	0.01	.936
gather support for implementing strategy at local unit	2.18	1.79	0.04	.118

n = 152 cases used in estimation; null hypotheses: two-sided; multiple comparisons correction: False Discovery Rate correction applied simultaneously to the entire table

Figure 37 – Construct 3 Ranking

Significant - Smallest p-value (after applying False Discovery Rate correction): 0.04

	SG Citizen n: 104	PR+ Expats n: 48	R-Squared	p
effectively work across organizational boundaries (e.g. departments, functions, business units)	0.57	0.62	0.00	1.000
effectively work with the company hierarchy (e.g. top managers, divisional presidents, etc.)	0.45	0.56	0.01	1.000
effectively work with external parties (e.g. suppliers, outsourcing partners, strategic partners)	0.26	0.23	0.00	1.000
build a network of good relationships inside the organization	0.48	0.58	0.01	1.000
build a network of good relationships outside the organization	0.23	0.08	0.03	.176
gather support for implementing strategy at local unit	0.41	0.65	0.05	.045

n = 152 cases used in estimation; null hypotheses: two-sided; multiple comparisons correction: False Discovery Rate correction applied simultaneously to the entire table

Figure 38 – Construct 4 Response

Significant - Smallest p-value (after applying False Discovery Rate correction): 0.02

	SG Citizen n: 104	PR+ Expats n: 48	R-Squared	p
be open-minded to learn new knowledge and skills	1.98	1.90	0.00	1.000
improvise and adapt existing practices at local unit, where needed	2.22	2.04	0.01	1.000
recover quickly (or show resilience) in the face of unexpected outcomes	2.14	1.73	0.04	.046
treat failure as a learning opportunity	2.29	1.94	0.02	.187
admit when something did not go as planned	2.38	2.04	0.02	.353
develop viable contingency plans	2.32	2.10	0.01	.734
tolerate ambiguity and uncertainty	2.40	1.92	0.05	.016

n = 152 cases used in estimation; null hypotheses: two-sided; multiple comparisons correction: False Discovery Rate correction applied simultaneously to the entire table

Figure 39 – Construct 4 Ranking

Not significant - Smallest p-value (after applying False Discovery Rate correction): 1.00

	SG Citizen n: 104	PR+ Expats n: 48	R-Squared	p
be open-minded to learn new knowledge and skills	0.43	0.52	0.01	1.000
improvise and adapt existing practices at local unit, where needed	0.42	0.40	0.00	1.000
recover quickly (or show resilience) in the face of unexpected outcomes	0.50	0.63	0.01	1.000
treat failure as a learning opportunity	0.30	0.31	0.00	1.000
admit when something did not go as planned	0.21	0.23	0.00	1.000
develop viable contingency plans	0.28	0.27	0.00	1.000

n = 152 cases used in estimation; null hypotheses: two-sided; multiple comparisons correction: False Discovery Rate correction applied simultaneously to the entire table

Figure 40 – Construct 5 Response

Significant - Smallest p-value (after applying False Discovery Rate correction): 0.01

	SG Citizen n: 104	PR+ Expats n: 48	R- Squared	p
manage the development of subordinates through the process of executing strategy	2.34	1.81	0.05	.012
support the emotional balance and well-being of subordinates through the process of executing strategy	2.45	2.25	0.01	.791
show fairness in assigning jobs and responsibilities during strategy execution	2.33	2.15	0.01	.898
earn the respect and trust of subordinates as a 'role model'	2.28	1.81	0.04	.032
be credible in convincing subordinates of the required strategic changes	2.23	1.87	0.02	.198

n = 152 cases used in estimation; null hypotheses: two-sided; multiple comparisons correction: False Discovery Rate correction applied simultaneously to the entire table

Figure 41 – Construct 5 Ranking

Significant - Smallest p-value (after applying False Discovery Rate correction): 0.01

	SG Citizen n: 104	PR+ Expats n: 48	R- Squared	p
manage the development of subordinates through the process of executing strategy	0.44	0.56	0.01	.851
support the emotional balance and well-being of subordinates through the process of executing strategy	0.36	0.40	0.00	1.000
show fairness in assigning jobs and responsibilities during strategy execution	0.38	0.40	0.00	1.000
earn the respect and trust of subordinates as a 'role model'	0.47	0.73	0.06	.014
be credible in convincing subordinates of the required strategic changes	0.48	0.65	0.02	.293

n = 152 cases used in estimation; null hypotheses: two-sided; multiple comparisons correction: False Discovery Rate correction applied simultaneously to the entire table

Figure 42 – Importance of Hygiene Factors Response

Not significant - Smallest p-value (after applying False Discovery Rate correction): 0.83

	SG Citizen n: 104	PR+ Expats n: 48	R-Squared	p
Relevant education credentials	3.10	3.06	0.00	1.000
Relevant years of experience	2.86	2.71	0.00	1.000
Relevant technical expertise needed	2.55	2.40	0.00	1.000
Good communications skills	1.98	1.69	0.02	1.000
Strong commitment to the company	2.44	2.12	0.02	1.000
Consensus with the strategy being implemented	2.55	2.17	0.02	.830
Loyalty to the top leadership	2.81	2.79	0.00	1.000

n = 152 cases used in estimation; null hypotheses: two-sided; multiple comparisons correction: False Discovery Rate correction applied simultaneously to the entire table

Figure 43–Importance of Hygiene Factors Ranking

Not significant - Smallest p-value (after applying False Discovery Rate correction): 0.65

	SG Citizen n: 104	PR+ Expats n: 48	R-Squared	p
Relevant education credentials	0.11	0.10	0.00	1.000
Relevant years of experience	0.22	0.23	0.00	1.000
Relevant technical expertise needed	0.32	0.42	0.01	1.000
Good communications skills	0.61	0.77	0.03	.651
Strong commitment to the company	0.34	0.48	0.02	1.000
Consensus with the strategy being implemented	0.35	0.44	0.01	1.000
Loyalty to the top leadership	0.12	0.15	0.00	1.000

n = 152 cases used in estimation; null hypotheses: two-sided; multiple comparisons correction: False Discovery Rate correction applied simultaneously to the entire table

Figure 44 – Factors Moderating Effectiveness and Outcomes Response

Not significant - Smallest p-value (after applying False Discovery Rate correction): 0.89

	SG Citizen n: 104	PR+ Expats n: 48	R-Squared	p
Top management has a robust process for selecting middle managers to lead strategy implementation	2.31	2.42	0.00	1.000
Local unit middle managers that are selected to lead strategy implementation have the 'right' abilities	2.23	1.90	0.02	.890
Local unit middle managers agree with the strategy being implemented	2.25	2.15	0.00	1.000
Local unit middle managers believe that the strategy being implemented is personally beneficial for them	2.43	2.65	0.01	1.000
Local unit middle managers have positive relationships with top management	2.38	2.23	0.00	1.000
Middle managers are awarded the appropriate rewards and incentives in line with their performance	2.26	2.17	0.00	1.000

n = 152 cases used in estimation; null hypotheses: two-sided; multiple comparisons correction: False Discovery Rate correction applied simultaneously to the entire table

Figure 45 – Factors Moderating Effectiveness and Outcomes Ranking

Not significant - Smallest p-value (after applying False Discovery Rate correction): 0.14

	SG Citizen n: 104	PR+ Expats n: 48	R-Squared	p
Top management has a robust process for selecting middle managers to lead strategy implementation	0.38	0.35	0.00	1.000
Local unit middle managers that are selected to lead strategy implementation have the 'right' abilities	0.49	0.71	0.04	.140
Local unit middle managers agree with the strategy being implemented	0.35	0.44	0.01	1.000
Local unit middle managers believe that the strategy being implemented is personally beneficial for them	0.34	0.37	0.00	1.000
Local unit middle managers have positive relationships with top management	0.37	0.40	0.00	1.000
Middle managers are awarded the appropriate rewards and incentives in line with their performance	0.38	0.48	0.01	1.000

n = 152 cases used in estimation; null hypotheses: two-sided; multiple comparisons correction: False Discovery Rate correction applied simultaneously to the entire table

APPENDIX 9: Impact of Job Title/Position (Senior/ Junior)

Analysis (Demographics, Response, Ranking, MANOVA Test Result)

Sample NJ (n=123) – Respondents are Managers and above

Sample J (n=29) – Respondents are Junior Managers

In Appendix:

Figure 24: Results analysis: Job Titles – Respondent Demographics

Figure 25: Figures 25A1-A7, 25B1-B7: Job Titles – Responses and Rankings

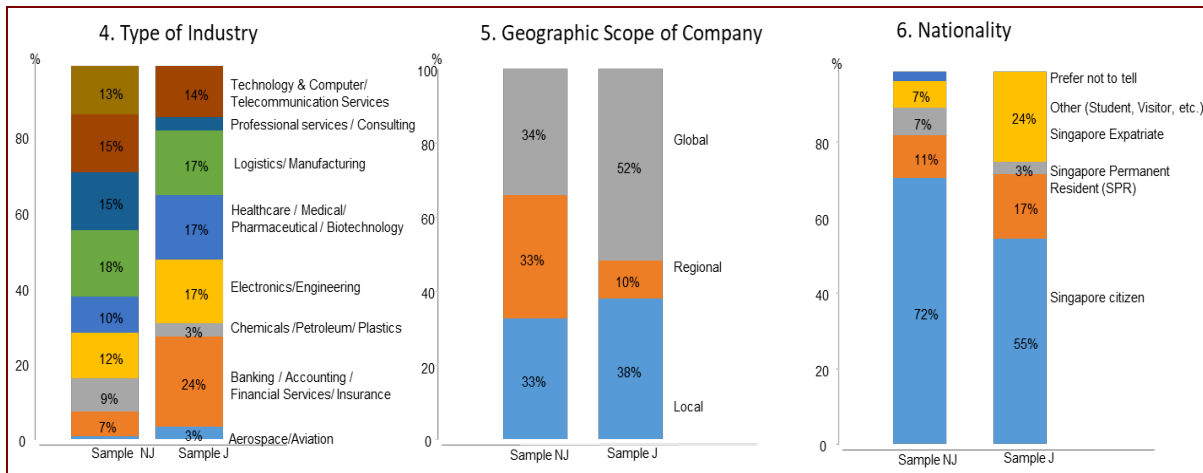
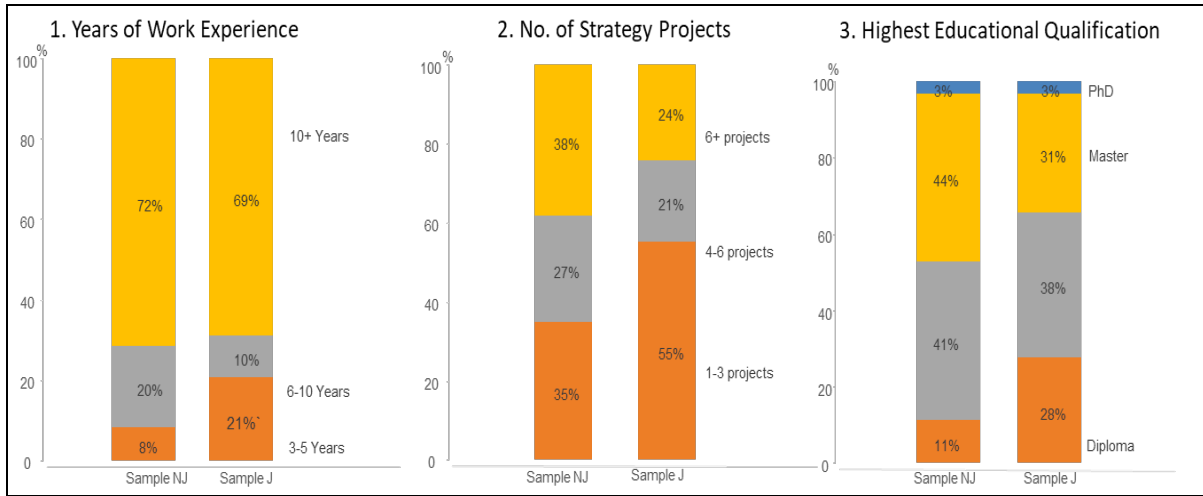
6.5 Results analysis: Impact of job title or position

6.6.1 Respondent demographics (senior managers versus junior managers)

From the total sample size of 152 respondents, there were 29 respondents that were middle managers that were relatively junior in terms of titles. This sample, termed Sample J in this analysis, had respondents with job titles like Supervisor, Junior Manager or Team Leader, all of which had to be above first-level supervisory positions, otherwise their survey was terminated. The remaining sample consisted of 123 respondents that were middle managers with titles of Manager or above (e.g. Senior Manager, General Manager, etc.), but below the top-level management team, and these were termed Sample NJ ('non-junior'). The purpose of this analysis was to examine the differences in views between the middle managers with relatively junior and senior titles or positions. Segmenting the total sample along this job title variable provided demographic differences in mainly 6 key areas shown in Figure 24 below.

Please refer to Figure 24 and Tables 18-20 below for the discussion on key differences in respondent demographics. Although the differences in years of work experience is mainly between those with less than 10 years of experience, both samples had a majority (~70%) of managers with over 10 years of experience. Therefore, Sample J titles did not necessarily imply significantly less work experience, rather their position in the company hierarchy. Similarly, in terms of strategy execution experience, Sample J indicated relatively less experience in executing greater than 3 projects (45% versus 65% in the senior sample).

Figure 24: Respondent Demographics for Analysis: Impact of Job Title/Position (Senior/Junior)



Tables 18 –20: Crosstabs Analysis: Impact of Job Title/Position (Senior/Junior)

Table 18 – Crosstab between Job Title and # Strategy Implementation Projects

No. of Strategy Implementation projects	Job Title	
	Manager and above	Junior Manager
1-3 projects	35%	55%
	43	16
4-6 projects	27%	21%
	33	6
6+ projects	38%	24%
	47	7

Table 19 – Crosstab between Job Title and Highest Education Qualification

Highest Education Qualification	Job Title	
	Manager and above	Junior Manager
Diploma	11%	28%
	14	8
Degree	41%	38%
	51	11
Master	44%	31%
	54	9
PhD	3%	3%
	4	1

Table 20 – Crosstab between Job Title and Geographic Scope of Company

Geographic Scope of Company	Job Title	
	Manager and above	Junior Manager
Local	33%	38%
	40	11
Regional	33%	10%
	41	3
Global	34%	52%
	42	15

Sample J demographics also differed with generally higher levels of bachelor degrees and diplomas and fewer graduate degree holders, compared to Sample NJ. In terms of geographic scope of companies, Sample J respondents worked for mostly either local or global companies and very few for regional companies, compared to a more even distribution observed in Sample NJ. In terms of nationality, Sample J had 55% Singaporeans compared to 72% in Sample NJ. There were also differences in the type of industry between the samples, with Sample J having a relatively higher proportion from Financial Services and Healthcare and much lower from Professional Services/Consulting.

6.6.2 Findings and discussion (senior managers versus junior managers)

As earlier, we analyze the results and test for differences in the sample populations using one-way multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) tests. The independent predictor variables were set as Samples J and NJ and the dependent outcome variables were the numerical responses to the survey questions.

Action orientation

Sample J indicated relatively lower levels of agreement and also had a lot more neutral and disagreement scores for some of the sub-constructs. Both samples ranked ‘work with results oriented mind-set ($p=0.014$)’ as their top choice and ‘working with available resources ($p=0.001$)’ was clearly a second choice for Sample NJ which surprisingly was not rated very highly for Sample J. ‘Challenge the status quo’ was a second choice for sample J, with no statistical significance between the two sample responses for this and the sub-construct for ‘taking implementation risks,’ which was extremely lower ranked by the junior titles sample. Figures 25A1 and 25B1 illustrate these differences and one can observe significant differences in responses to most of the questions in this construct. Sample J consists of managers that are still lower in the company hierarchy, despite a fair number of working experience, and they view ‘making tough decisions ($p=0.004$)’ and ‘getting things moving quickly ($p=0.002$)’ as their third choices. The most significant rankings difference between the samples is ‘working with available resources’ and the sample with more seniority clearly view this as a priority. ‘Analyzing all options ($p=0.01$)’ was in between the top and bottom choices with much higher scores from the NJ sample.

Strategic and systems thinking

Sample NJ showed higher levels of agreement and the overall rankings were similar. The only statistically significant difference between the two samples was for the lowest ranked intentional outlier sub-construct ‘influencing overall strategy’. Figures 25A2 and 25B2 illustrate these differences in the responses and in the rankings. Regardless of titles, the managers seemed generally aligned on this construct.

Networking ability

There were statistically significant differences between the two samples across all the sub-constructs for this competency, except ‘working across boundaries’ which was top ranked for both samples. Figures 25A3 and 25B3 illustrate these differences in the responses and in the rankings. The relative ranking among the two samples are somewhat similar with one significant difference: sample NJ views ‘working with company hierarchy’ as quite important and their second choice, whereas sample J views the hierarchy relationship as second lowest on their list. This ‘working with hierarchy’ aspect and ‘gathering support for local unit’ were the two significant differences in rankings between the two samples. Given that sample J has remained lower in the company hierarchy, despite significant years of experience and educational qualifications, they may not feel very comfortable with working top managers and therefore rank this aspect lower. Since about 40% of Sample J works for local companies, they may also relatively view the ‘support for local unit’ a bit less seriously than big regional or global companies. Both samples prioritize external networks and relationships below internal ones.

Figure 25: Analysis: Impact of Job Title/Position (Senior/Junior)

Figure 25A1

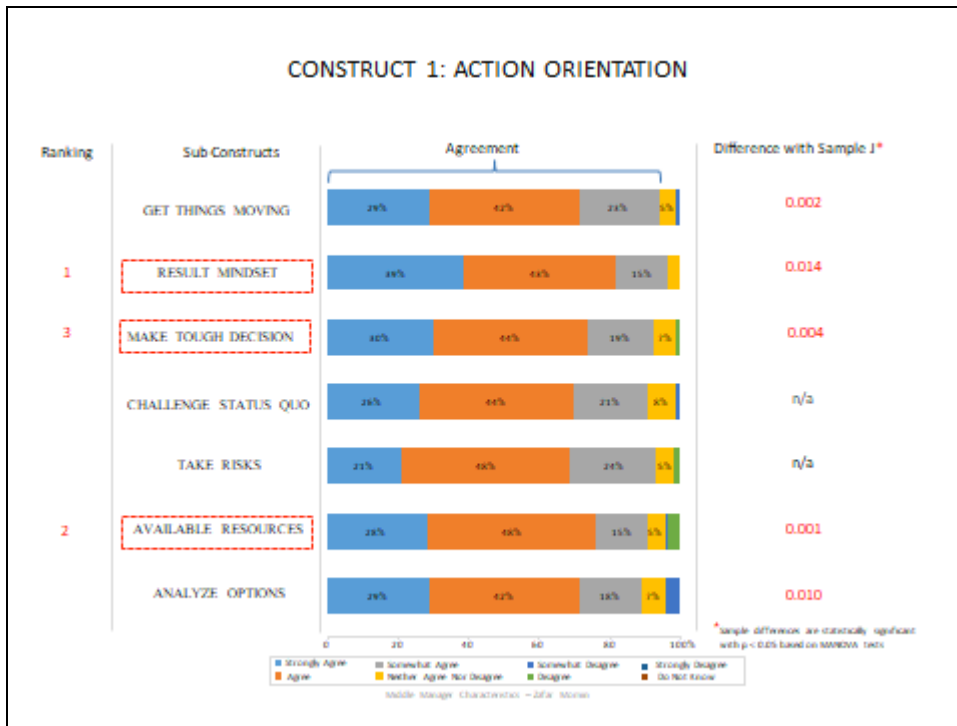


Figure 25B1

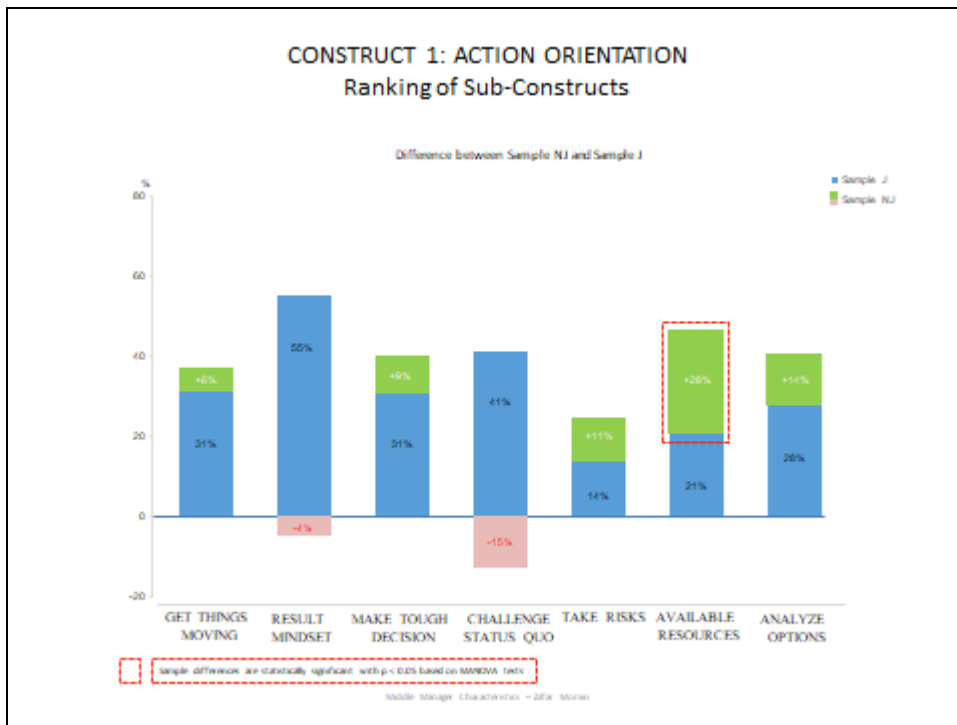


Figure 25A2

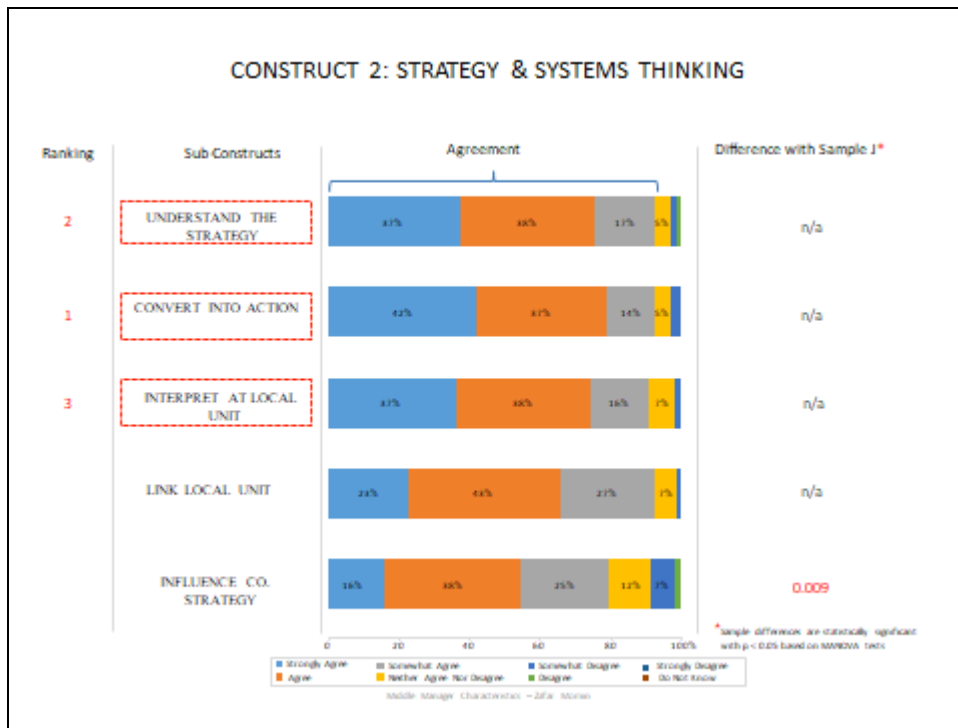
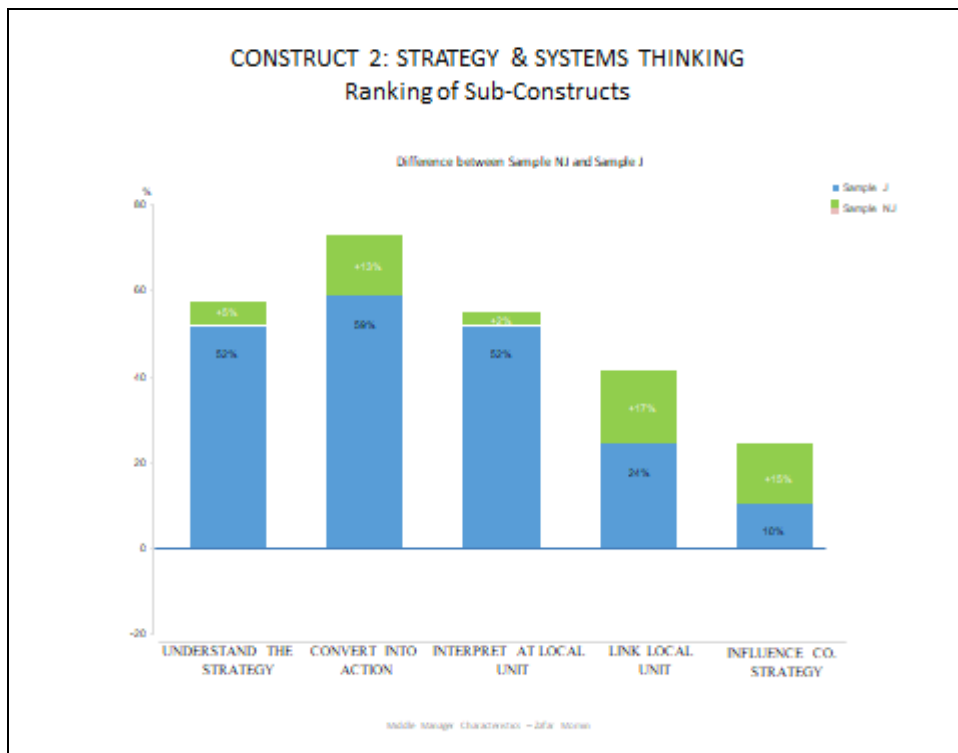


Figure 25B2



Ability to learn and adapt

There were relatively more neutral responses and disagreements in sample J compared to sample NJ. Also, there were statistically significant differences between the two samples across most of the sub-constructs for this competency, except for those related to ‘showing resilience’ and ‘treating failure as a learning opportunity.’ The latter is ranked almost the same as ‘being open minded’ by Sample J. Figures 25A4 and 25B4 illustrate these differences in the responses and in the rankings.

Figure 25A4

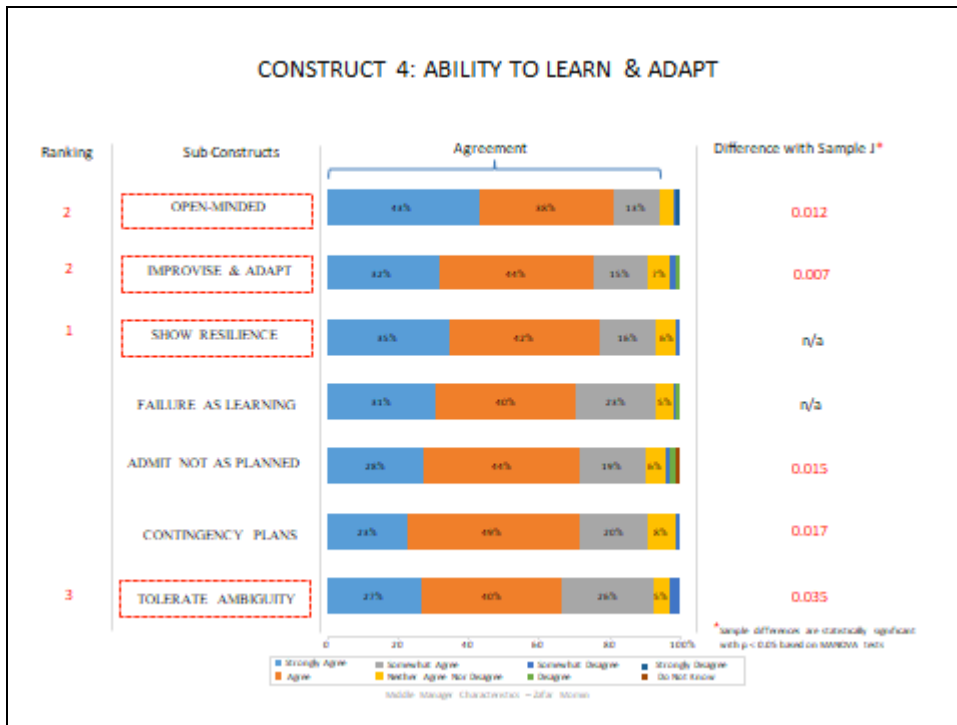
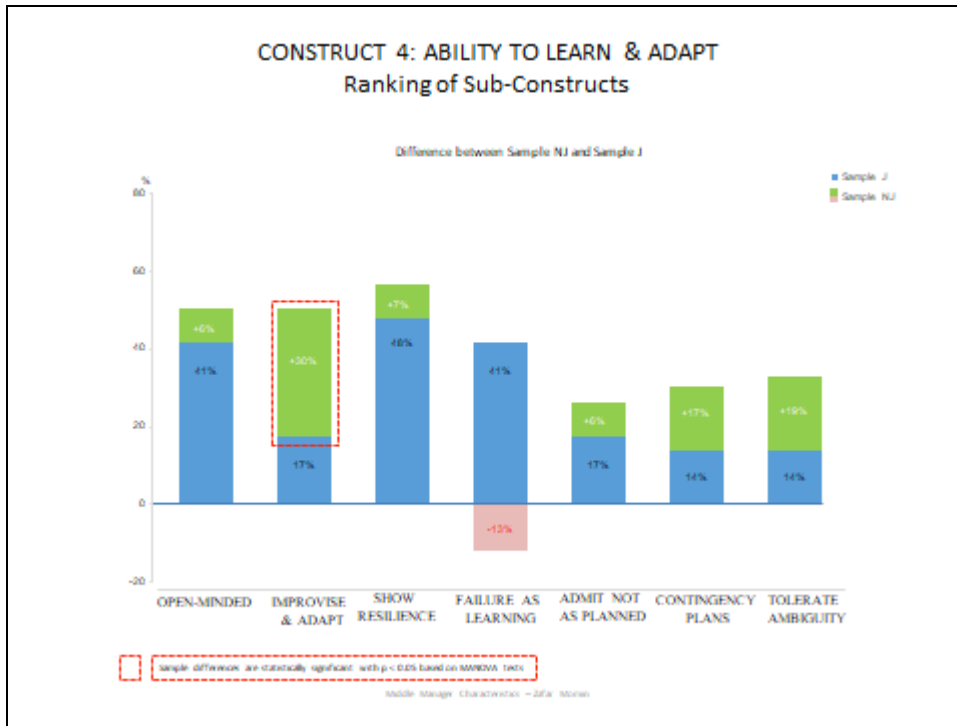


Figure 25B4



Sample J ranked ‘tolerating ambiguity’ and ‘developing contingency plans’ as their lowest choices and ‘improvising and adapting existing practices’ barely above the lowest. The lack of importance to adaptation was the most significant difference between the samples. It is surprising that middle managers with a key role in adapting strategy for execution at a local level would not view that as important. It is possible that Sample J includes a set of Technical MMs that may not have a strong ability to act in strategy execution situations. Therefore, perhaps they may not see some obvious roles such as ‘adapt and improvise,’ ‘work with hierarchy’ and ‘gather support for local unit’ as relatively important as the senior manager pool in Sample NJ.

Ability to develop people

None of responses and rankings for the sub-constructs for this competency was statistically significant between the two sample populations, except for ‘being credible in convincing subordinates ($p=.027$)’ which was also the top choice for Sample NJ. For both samples, the top-3 choices included to ‘earning trust and respect of subordinates’ and ‘managing the development of subordinates.’ However, again surprisingly, Sample J did not view ‘being credible in convincing subordinates’ was worthy of being in the top-3 and ranked it the lowest. Instead, they picked ‘managing the emotional well-being’ as their third choice.

Hygiene factors

None of responses and rankings for the sub-constructs for this competency was statistically significant between the two sample populations. For both samples, the top-3 choices for hygiene factors were ‘communications,’ ‘consensus,’ and ‘commitment.’ Sample NJ respondents included ‘relevant technical expertise’ as a fourth sub-construct in their rankings.

Moderating factors

None of responses and rankings for the sub-constructs for this competency was statistically significant between the two sample populations. Both samples chose ‘selecting the right middle managers’ as the most important factor affecting executing outcomes and ‘appropriate rewards and incentives’ as a key factor moderating effectiveness of middle managers. Sample J views ‘top management has a robust process’ as the second most important factor. Sample NJ views ‘consensus with strategy’ and ‘middle manager agency issue’ both as the joint third-most important factors moderating effectiveness.

Impact of Job titles - Additional supporting demographics and figures

Figure 1-10: Respondent Demographics

Figure 1

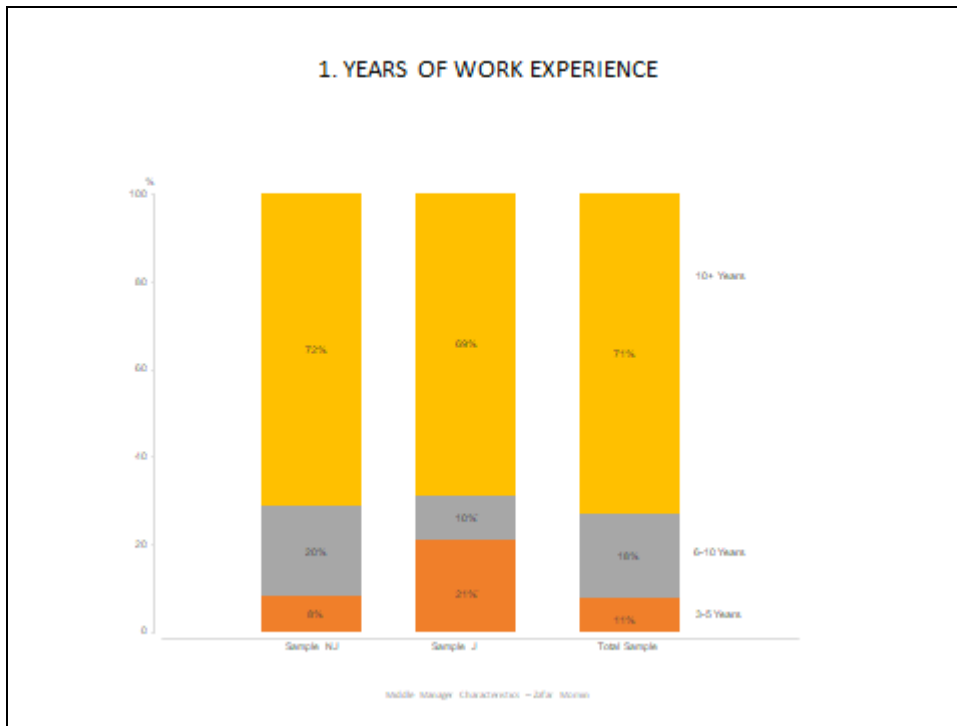


Figure 2

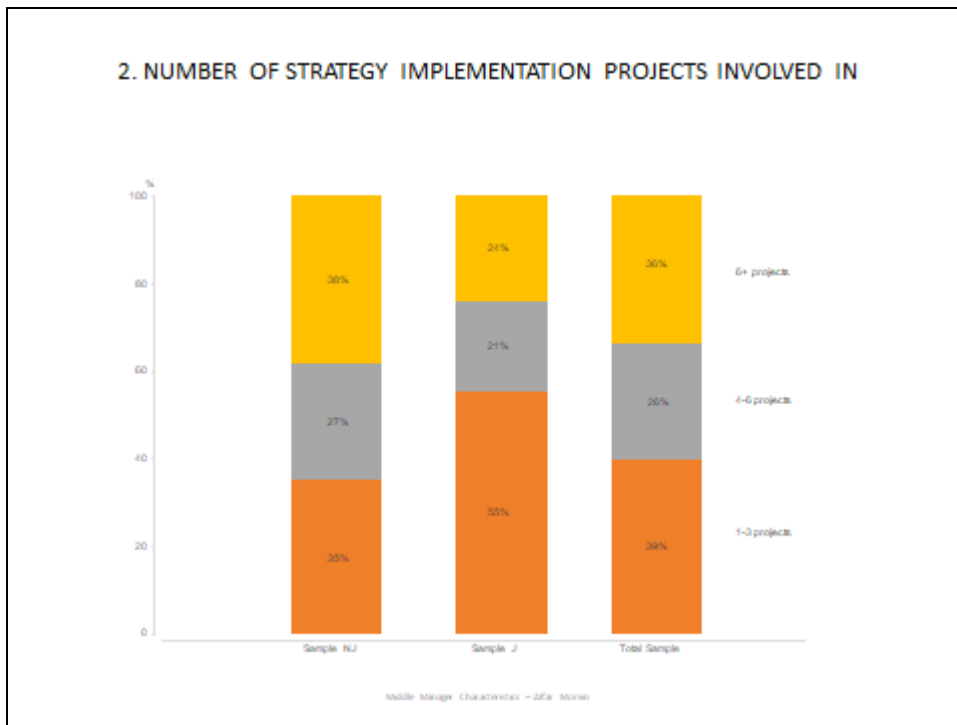


Figure 3

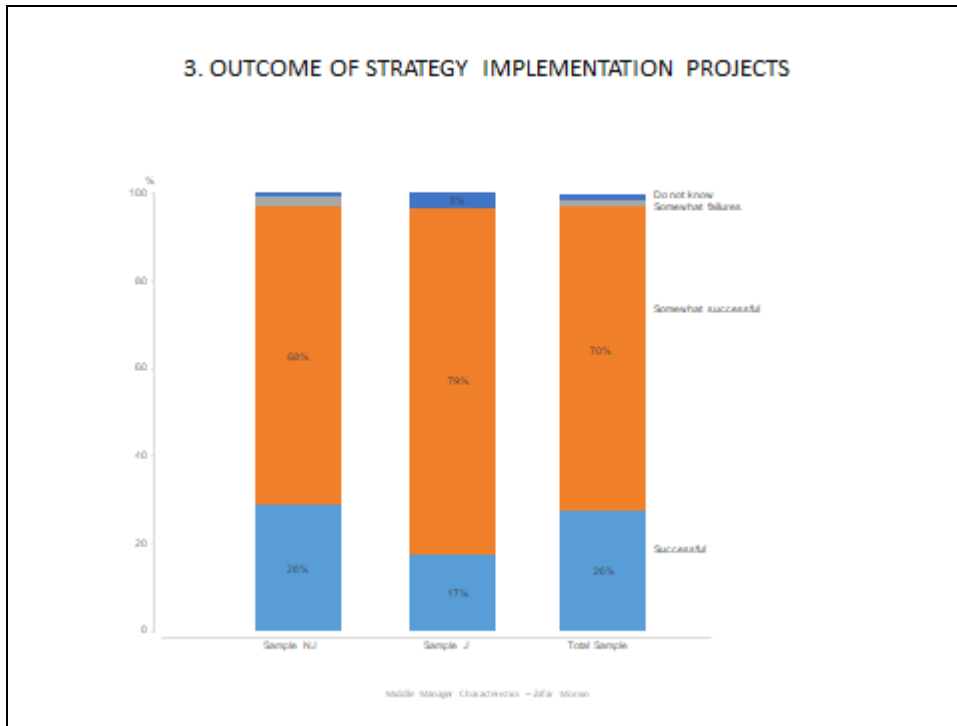


Figure 4

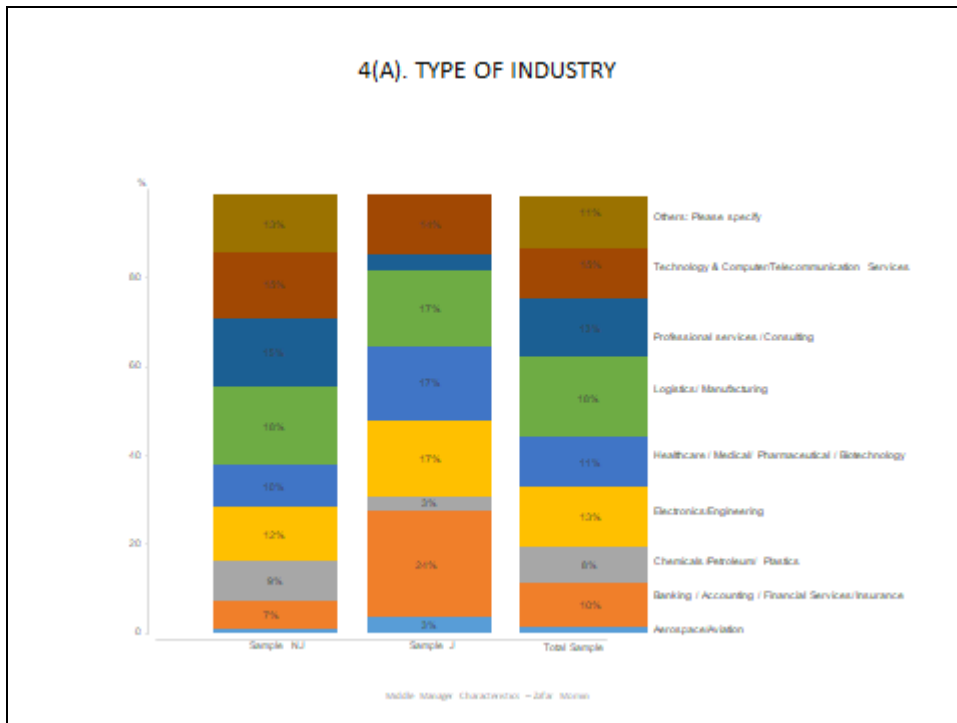


Figure 5

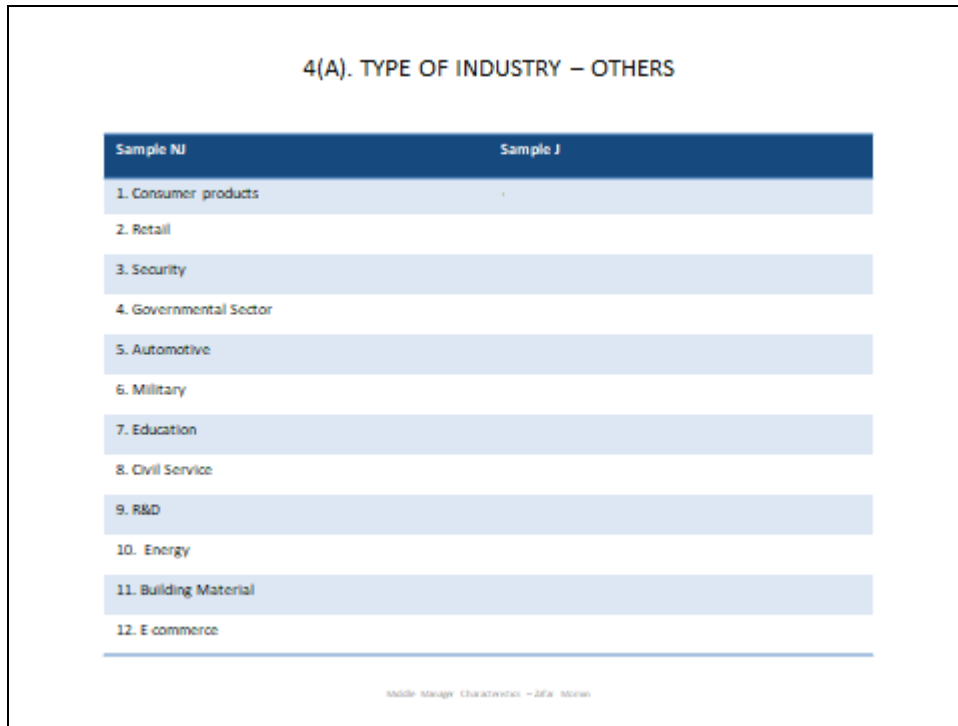


Figure 6

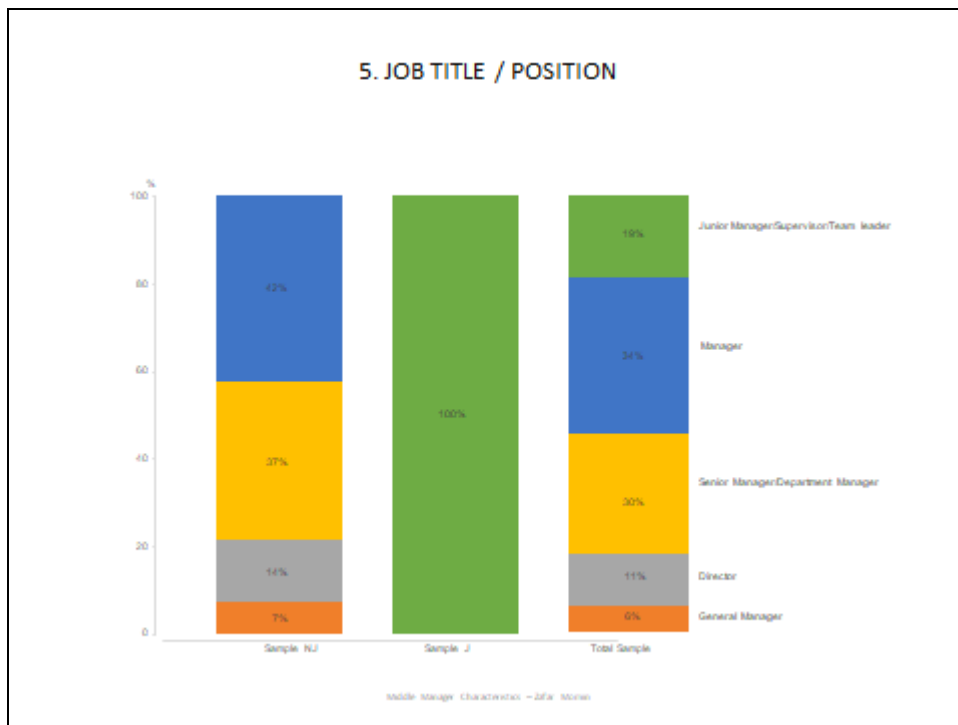


Figure 7

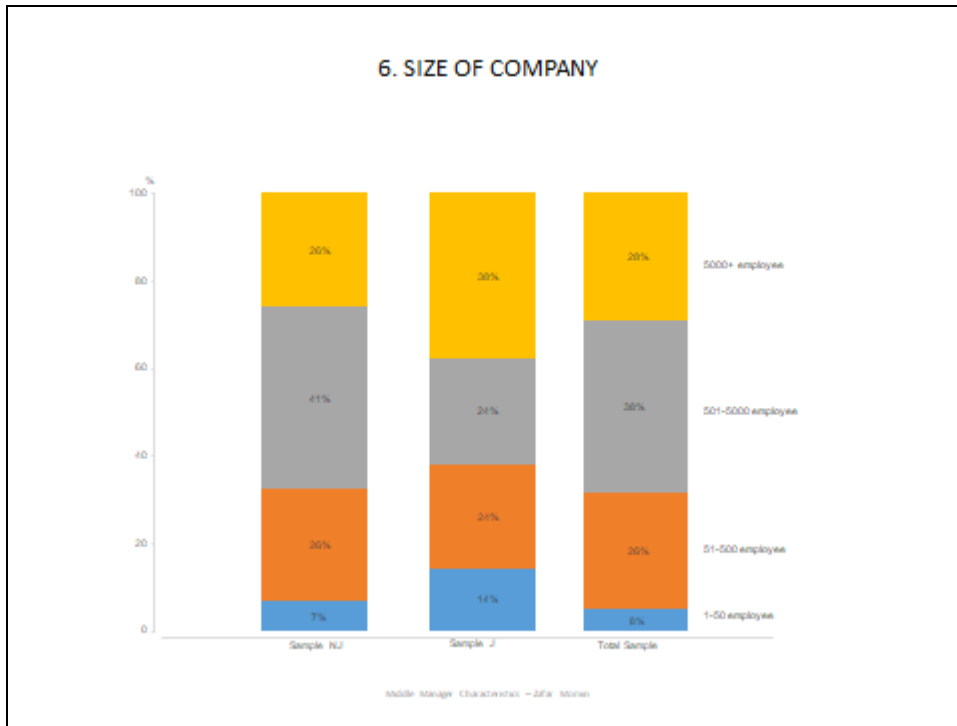


Figure 8

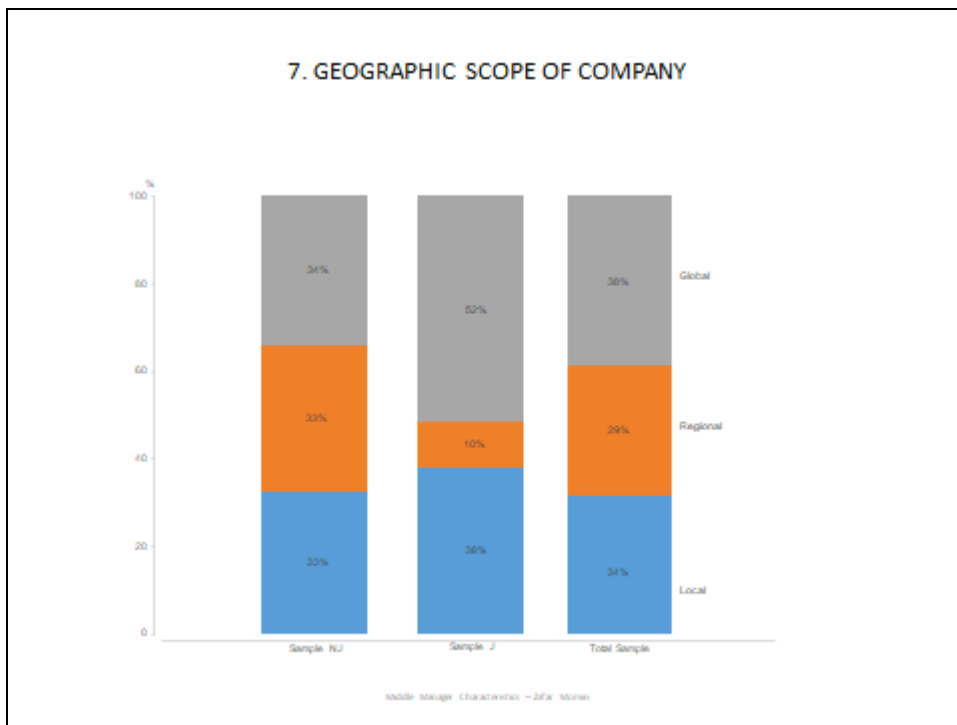


Figure 9



Figure 10

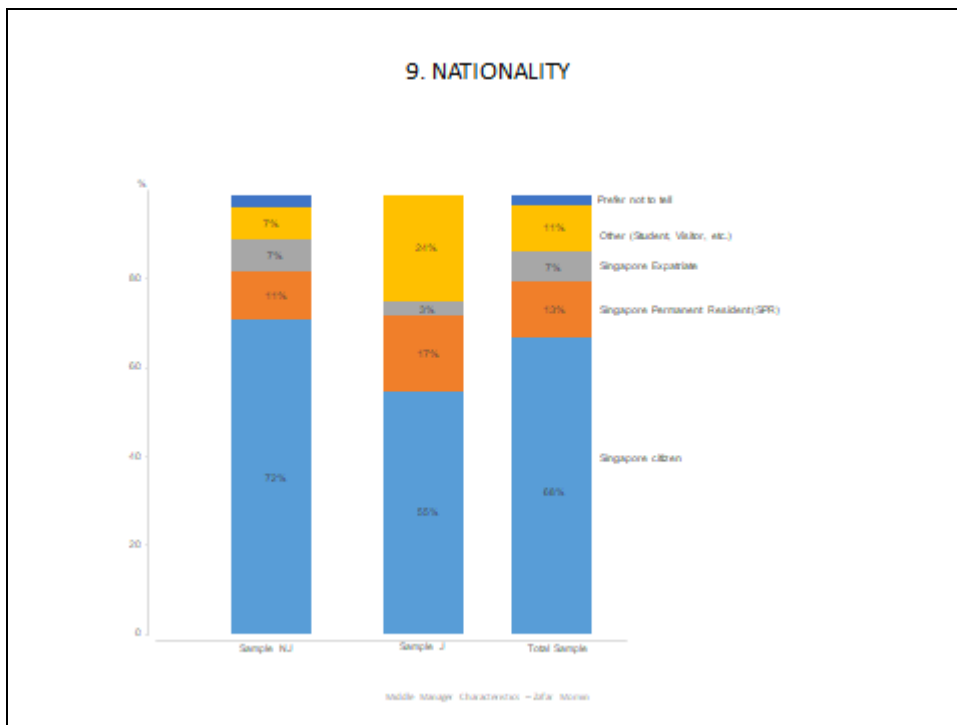


Figure 11-17: Sample J Responses

Figure 11

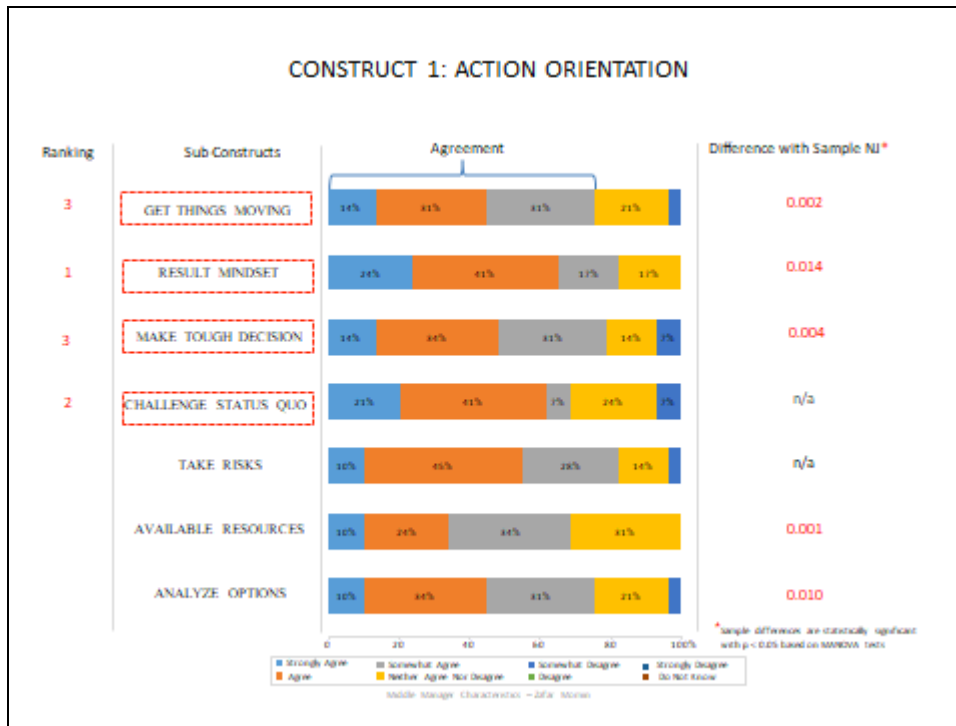


Figure 12

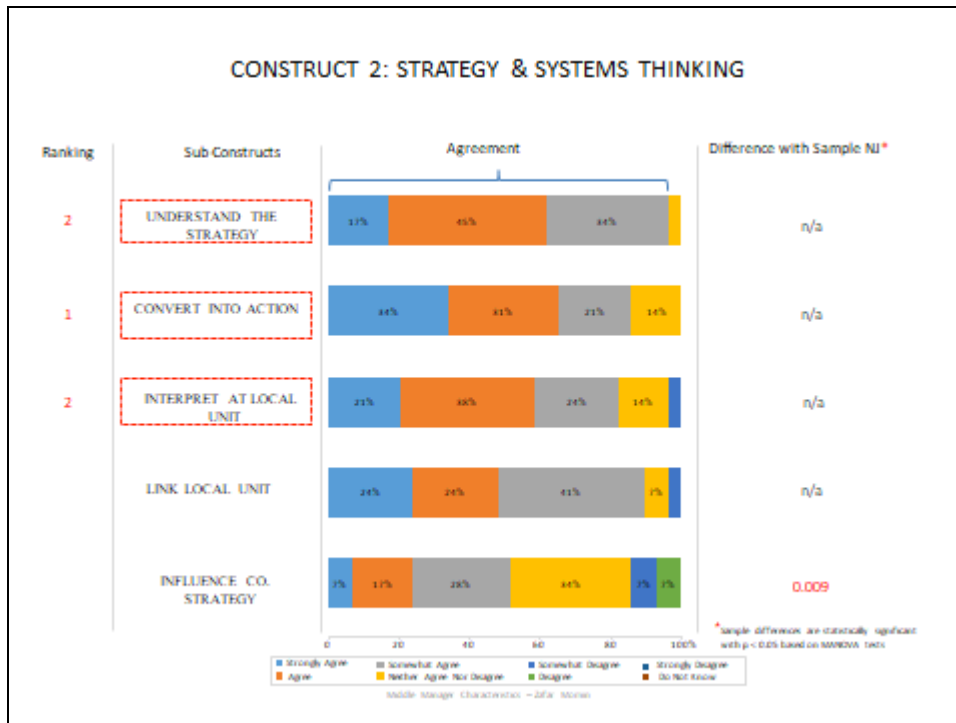


Figure 13

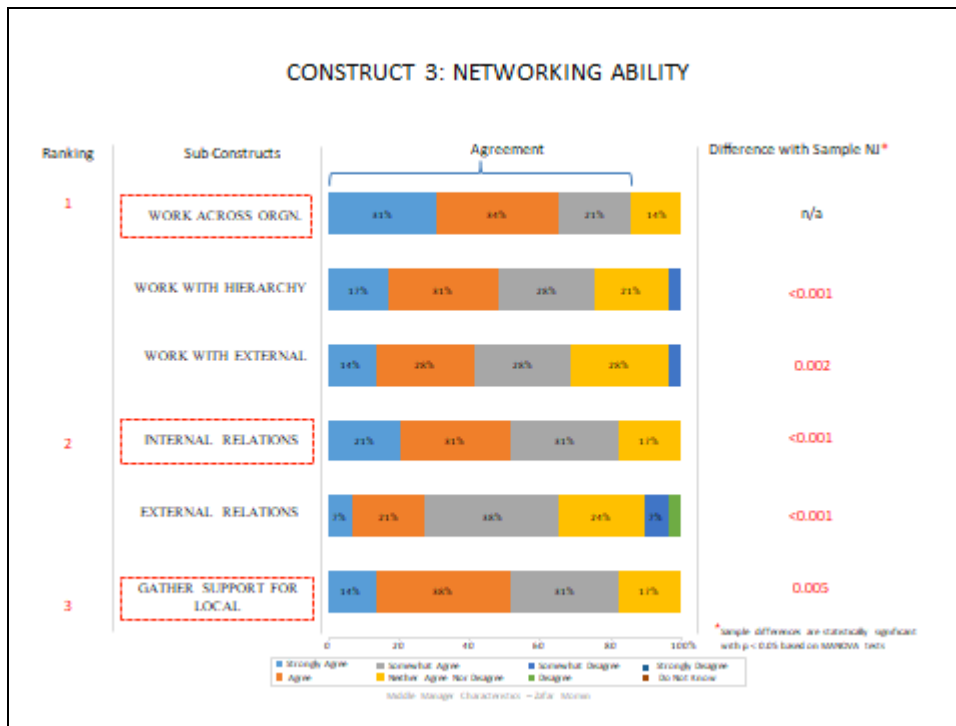


Figure 14

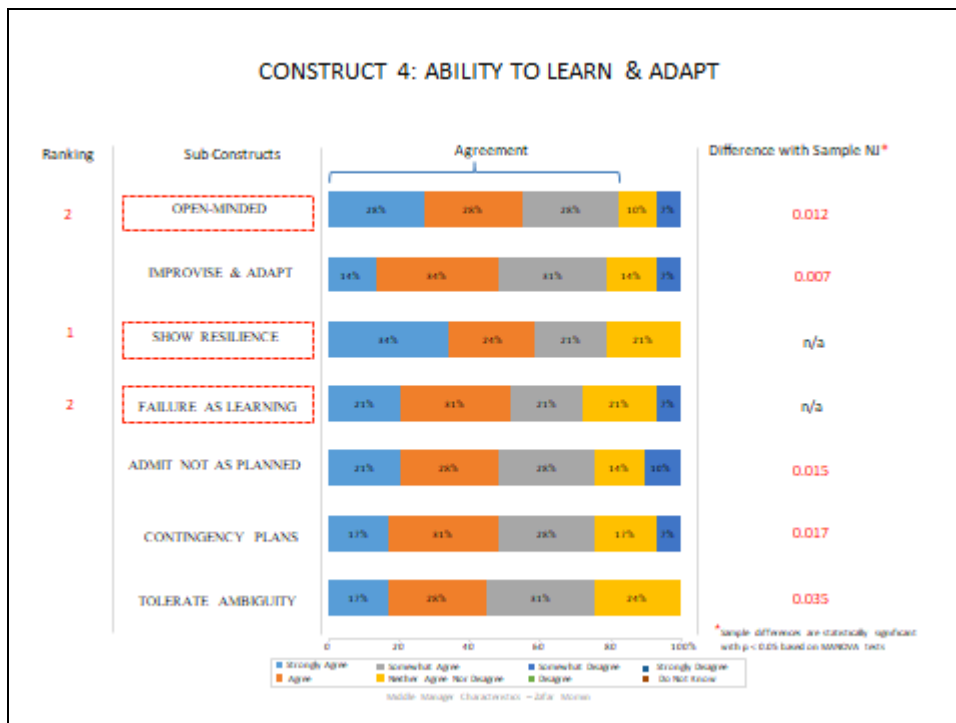


Figure 15

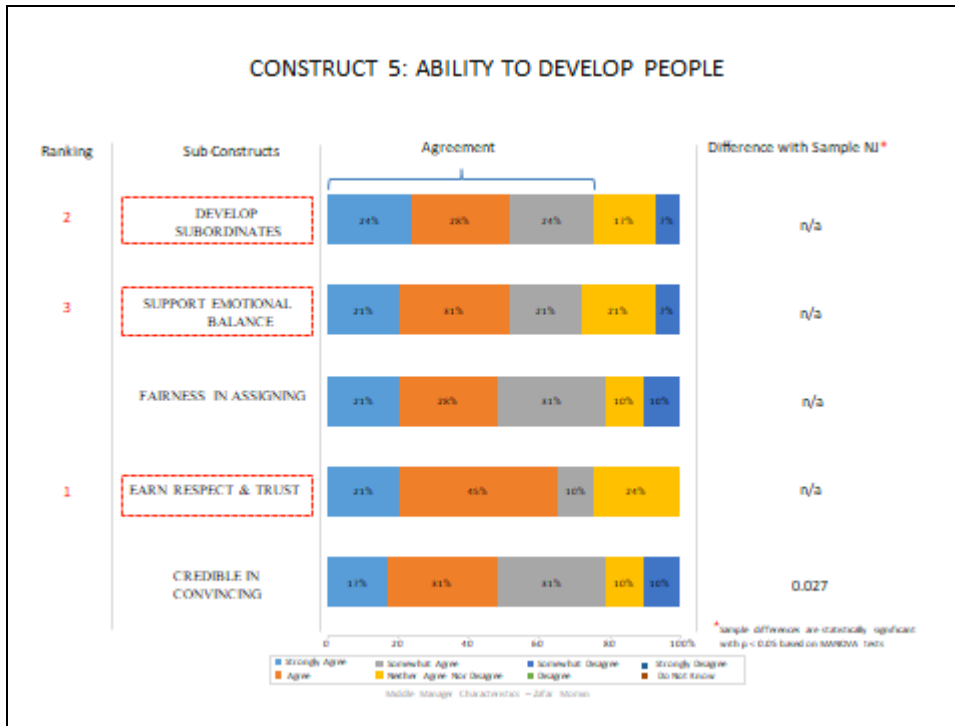


Figure 16

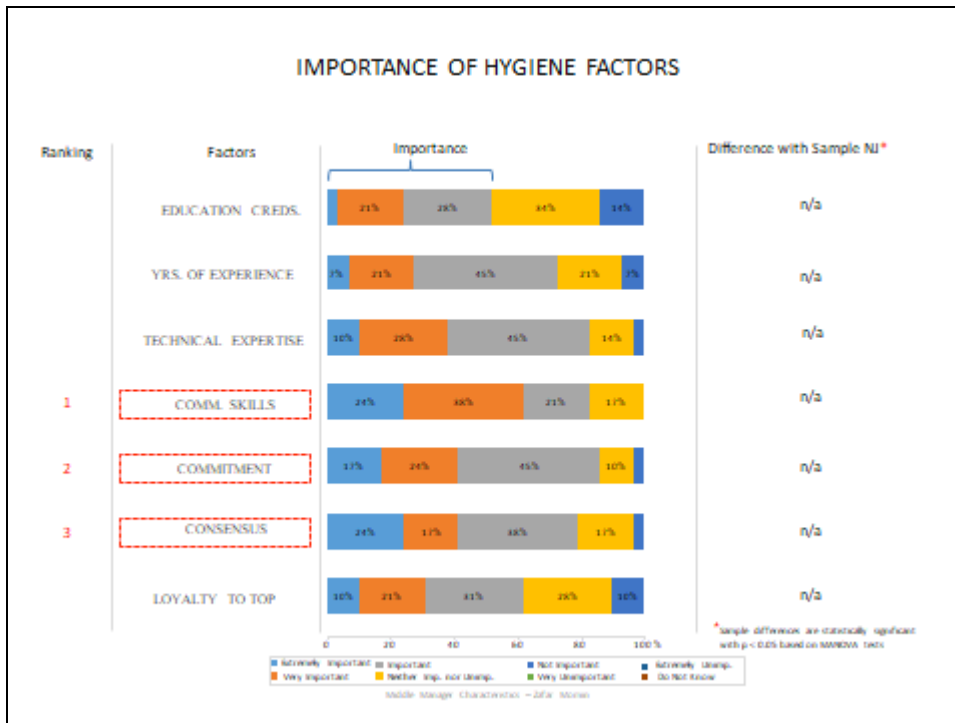


Figure 17

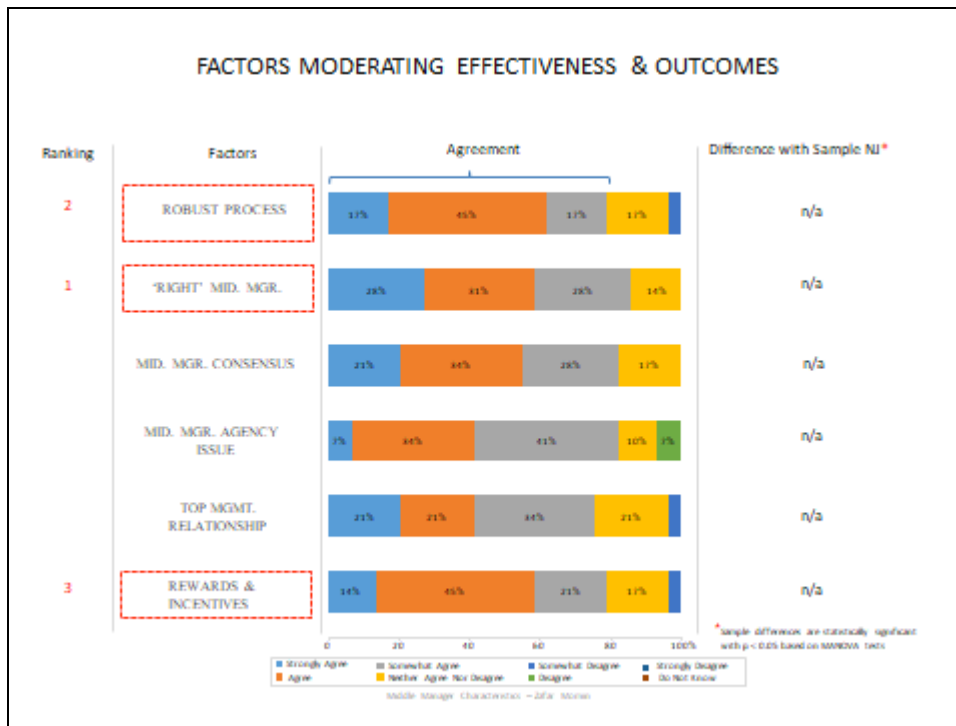


Figure 18-24: Sample J Ranking

Figure 18

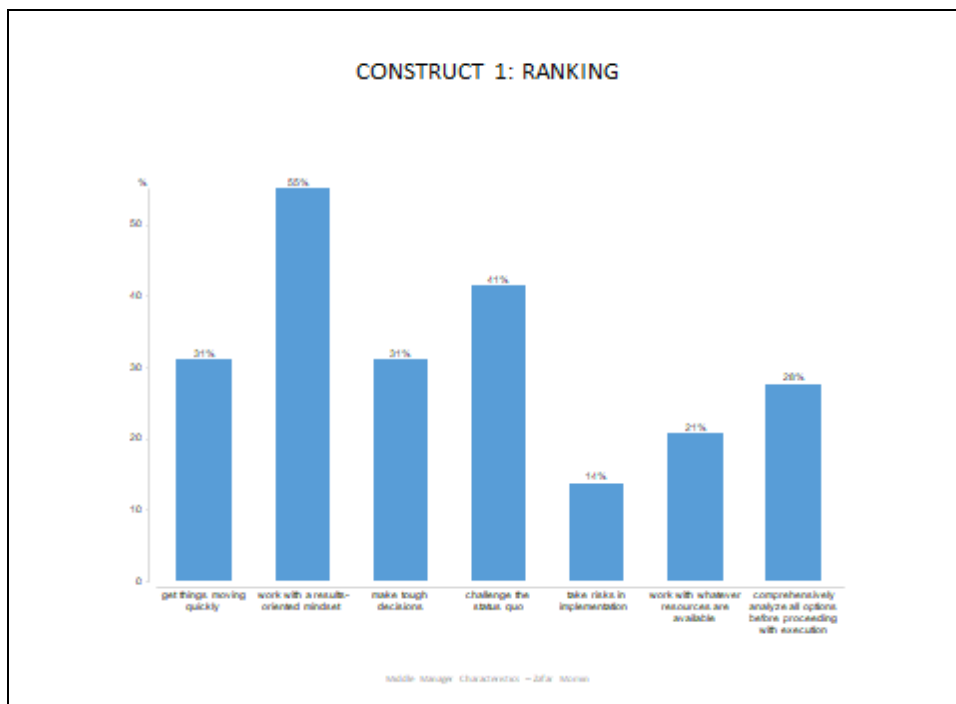


Figure 19

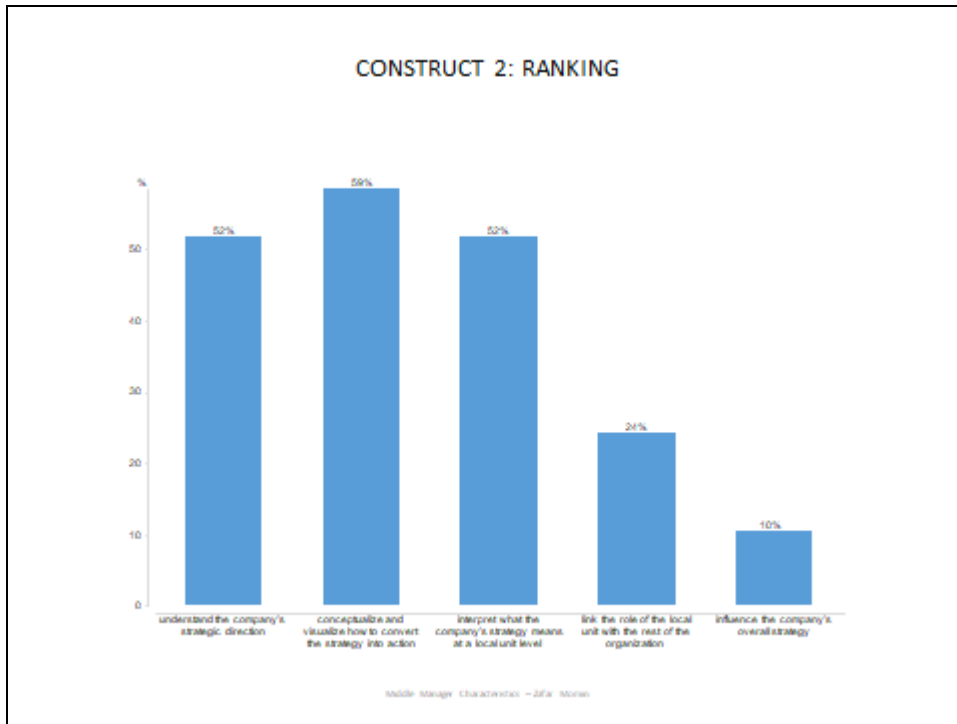


Figure 20

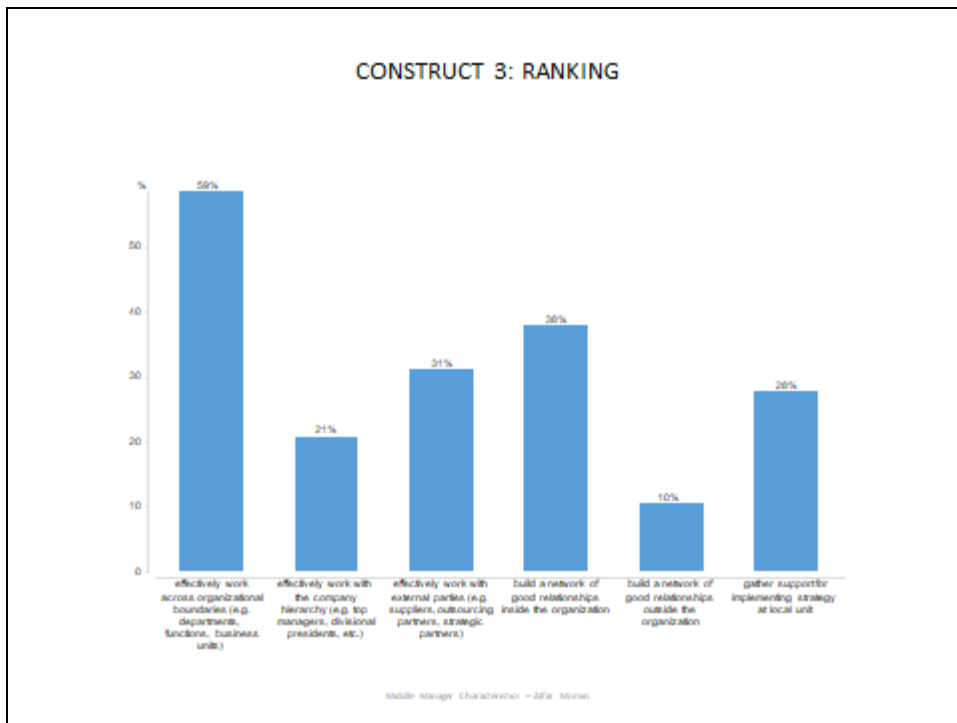


Figure 21

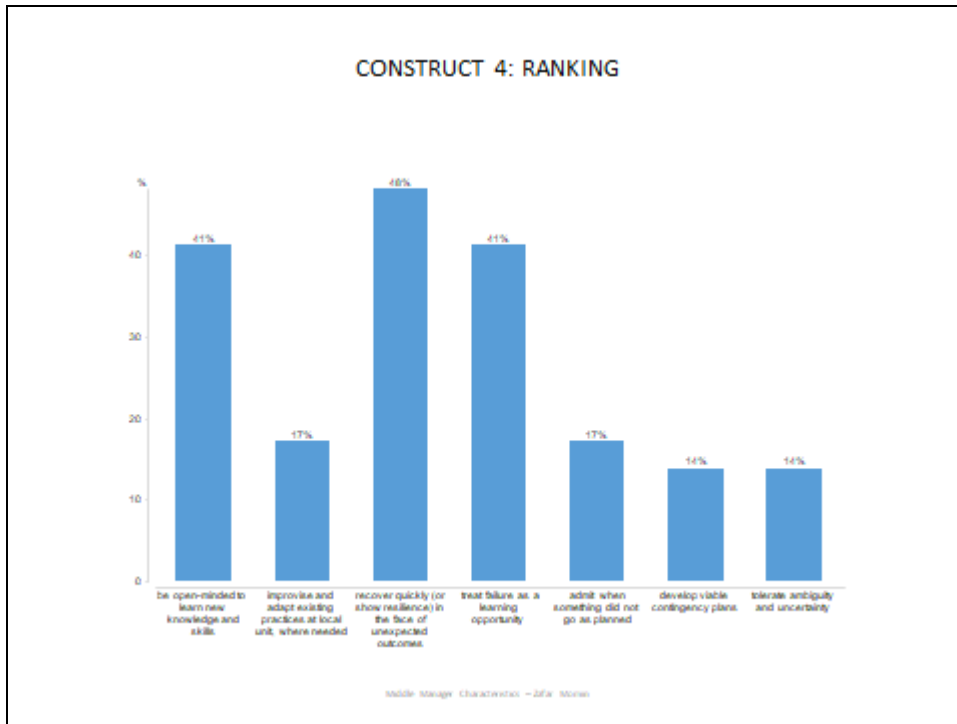


Figure 22

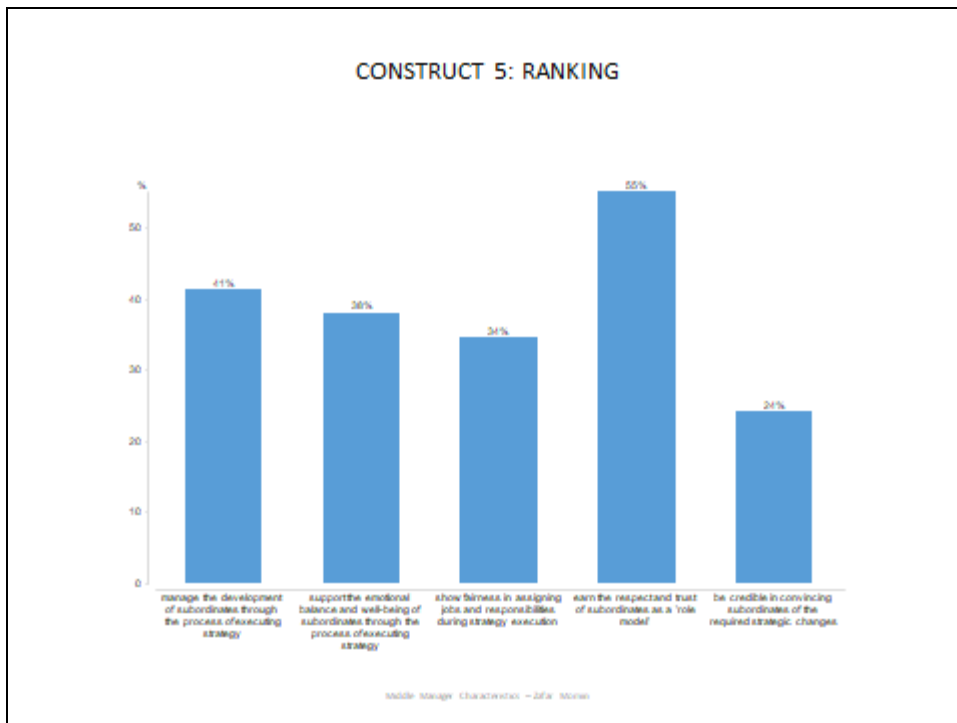


Figure 23

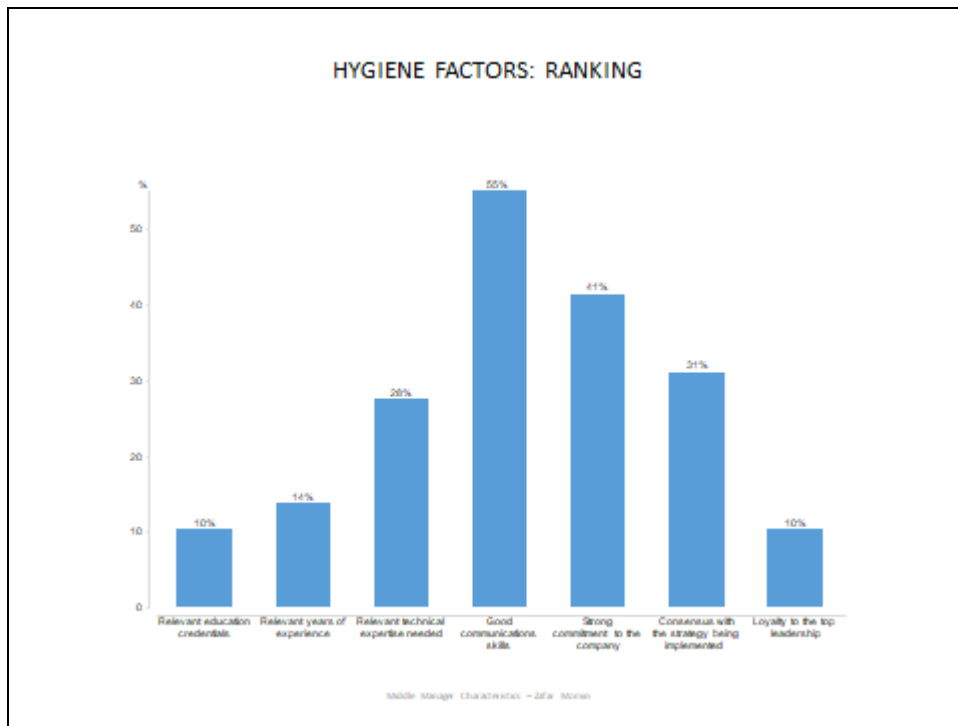


Figure 24

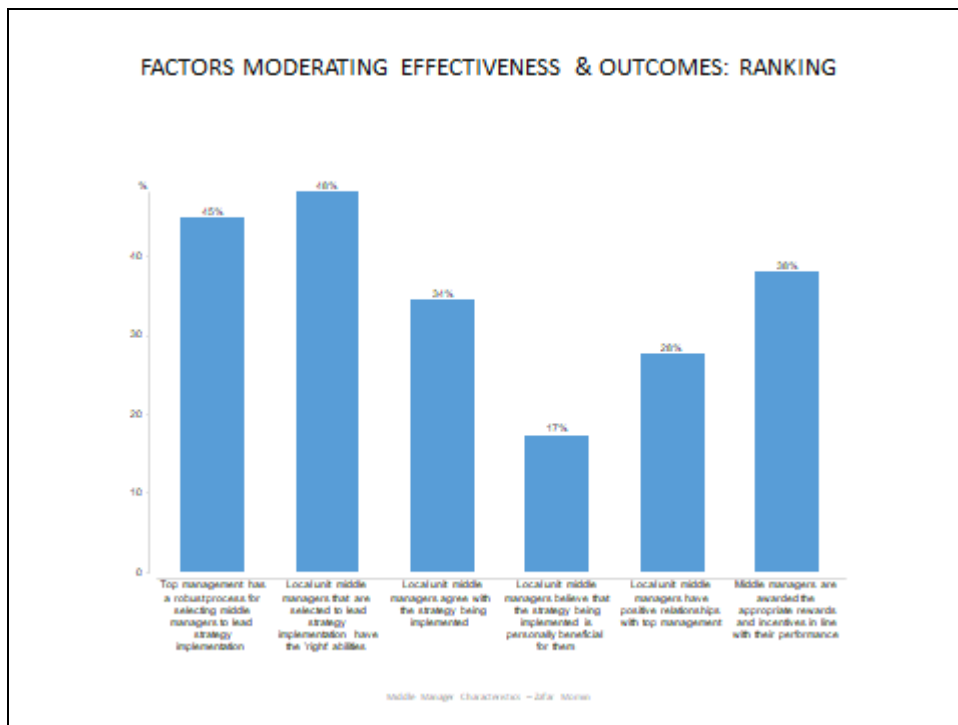


Figure 25-31: Sample NJ Ranking

Figure 25

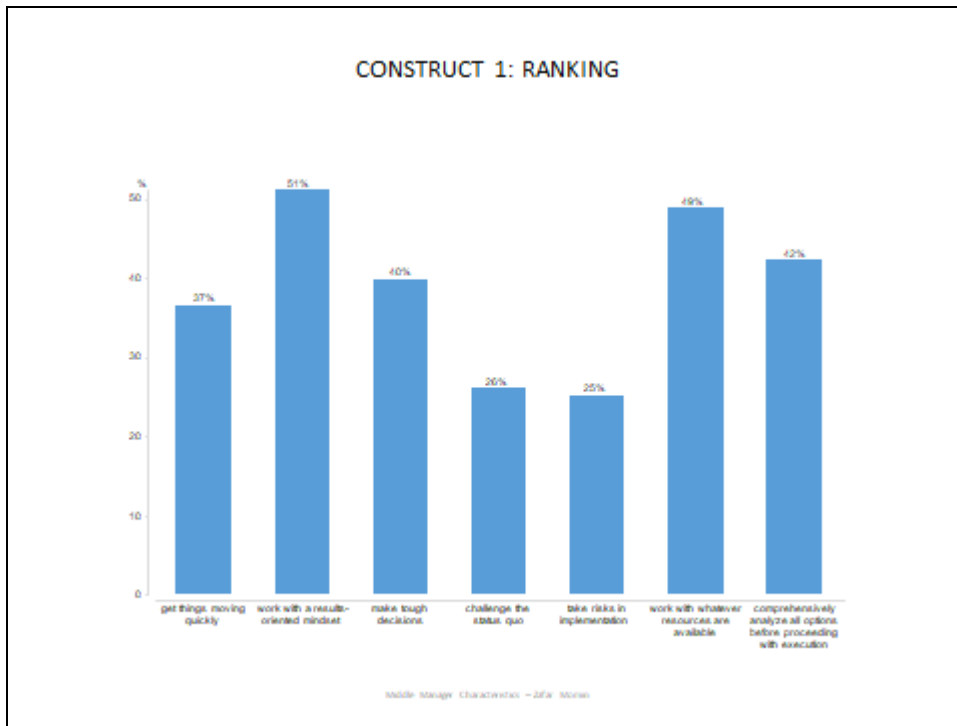


Figure 26

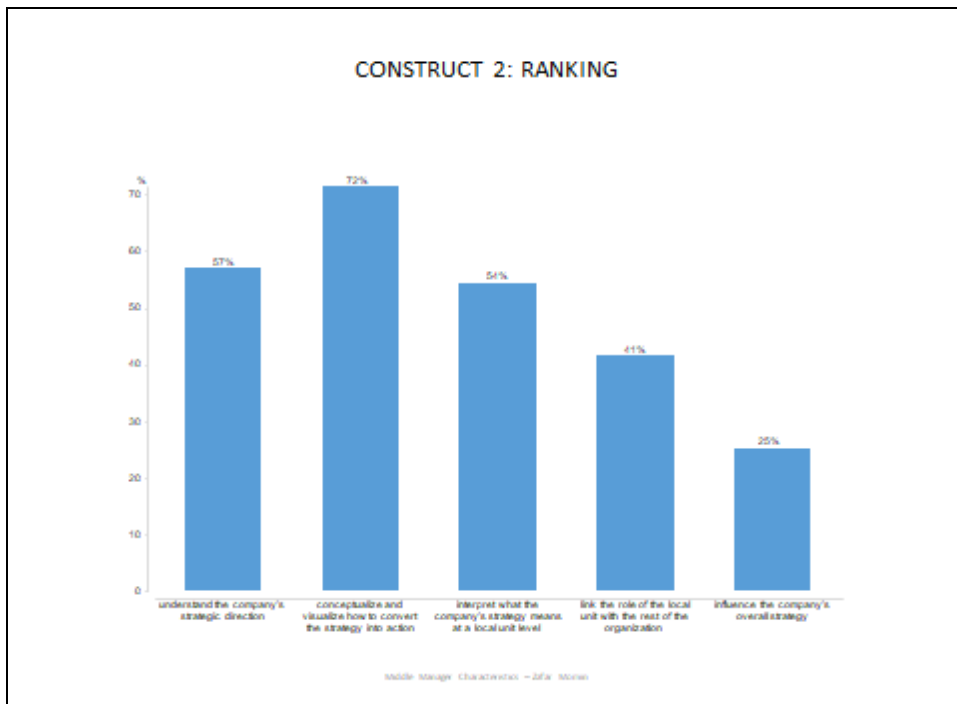


Figure 27

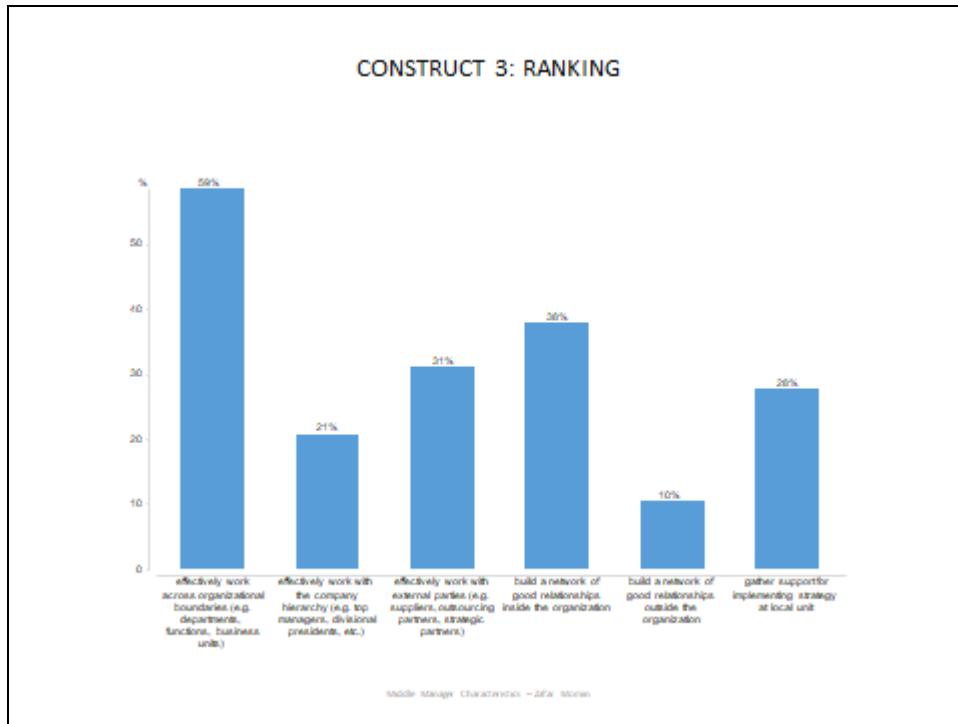


Figure 28

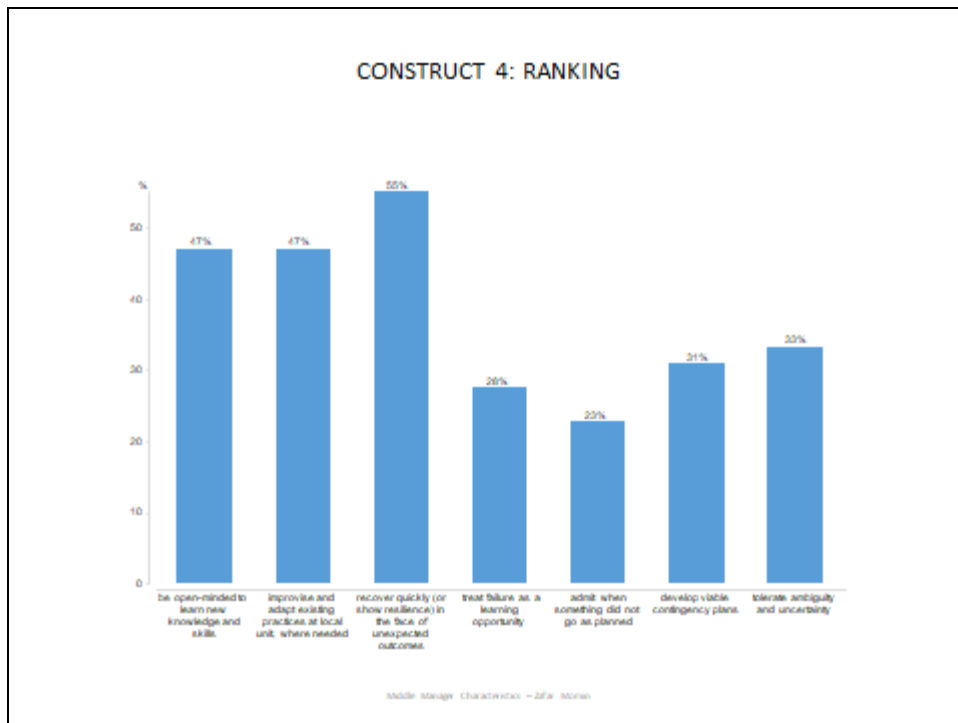


Figure 29



Figure 30

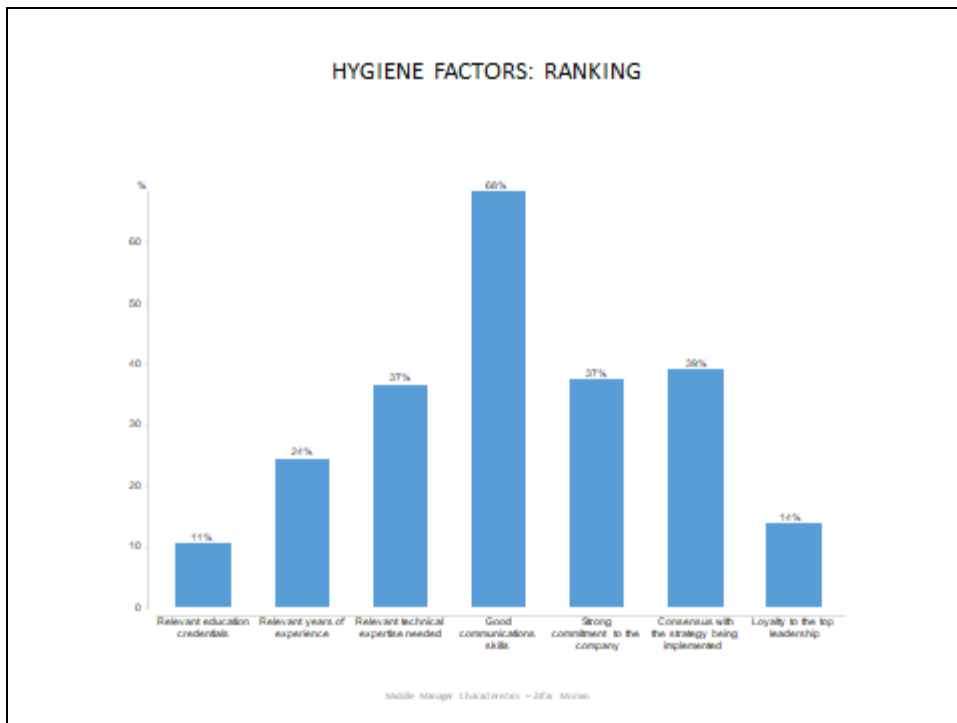


Figure 31

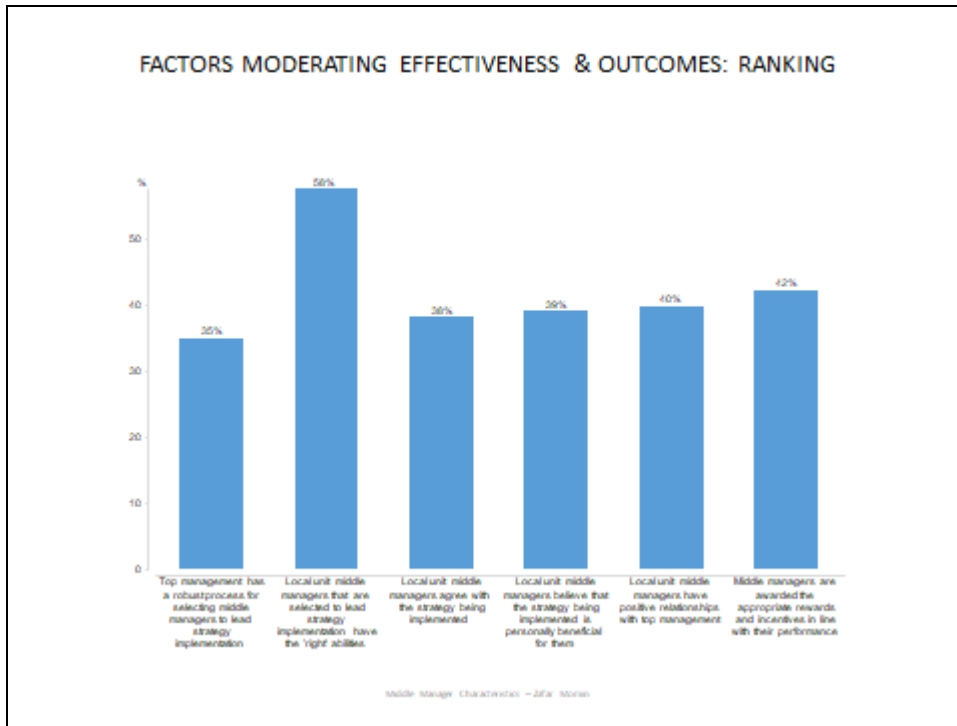


Figure 32-45: MANOVA Test Results

Figure 32 – Construct 1 Response

Significant - Smallest p-value (after applying False Discovery Rate correction): 0.001

	Manager and Above n: 123	Junior Manager n: 29	R-Squared	p
get things moving	2.06	2.69	0.07	.002
work with a results-oriented mindset	1.82	2.28	0.04	.014
make tough decisions	2.05	2.66	0.06	.004
challenge the status quo	2.14	2.55	0.03	.066
take risks in implementation	2.20	2.55	0.02	.098
work with whatever resources are available	2.11	2.86	0.07	.001
comprehensively analyze all options before proceeding with execution	2.14	2.72	0.05	.010

n = 152 cases used in estimation; null hypotheses: two-sided; multiple comparisons correction: False Discovery Rate correction applied simultaneously to the entire table

Figure 33 – Construct 1 Ranking

Significant - Smallest p-value (after applying False Discovery Rate correction): 0.04

	Manager and Above n: 123	Junior Manager n: 29	R-Squared	p
get things moving quickly	0.37	0.31	0.00	1.000
work with a results-oriented mindset	0.51	0.55	0.00	1.000
make tough decisions	0.40	0.31	0.01	1.000
challenge the status quo	0.26	0.41	0.02	.715
take risks in implementation	0.25	0.14	0.01	1.000
work with whatever resources are available	0.49	0.21	0.05	.041
comprehensively analyze all options before proceeding with execution	0.42	0.28	0.01	1.000

n = 152 cases used in estimation; null hypotheses: two-sided; multiple comparisons correction: False Discovery Rate correction applied simultaneously to the entire table

Figure 34 – Construct 2 Response

Significant - Smallest p-value (after applying False Discovery Rate correction): 0.01

	Manager and Above n: 123	Junior Manager n: 29	R-Squared	p
understand the company's strategic direction	1.98	2.24	0.01	.941
conceptualize and visualize how to convert the strategy into action	1.89	2.14	0.01	1.000
interpret what the company's strategy means at a local unit level	1.99	2.41	0.03	.220
link the role of the local unit with the rest of the organization	2.20	2.41	0.01	1.000
influence the company's overall strategy	2.59	3.38	0.06	.009

n = 152 cases used in estimation; null hypotheses: two-sided; multiple comparisons correction: False Discovery Rate correction applied simultaneously to the entire table

Figure 35 – Construct 2 Ranking

Not significant - Smallest p-value (after applying False Discovery Rate correction): 0.85

	Manager and Above n: 123	Junior Manager n: 29	R-Squared	p
understand the company's strategic direction	0.57	0.52	0.00	1.000
conceptualize and visualize how to convert the strategy into action	0.72	0.59	0.01	1.000
interpret what the company's strategy means at a local unit level	0.54	0.52	0.00	1.000
link the role of the local unit with the rest of the organization	0.41	0.24	0.02	.851
influence the company's overall strategy	0.25	0.10	0.02	.852

n = 152 cases used in estimation; null hypotheses: two-sided; multiple comparisons correction: False Discovery Rate correction applied simultaneously to the entire table

Figure 36 – Construct 3 Response

Significant - Smallest p-value (after applying False Discovery Rate correction): 0.0001

	Manager and Above n: 123	Junior Manager n: 29	R-Squared	p
effectively work across organizational boundaries (e.g. departments, functions, business units)	1.84	2.17	0.02	.104
effectively work with the company hierarchy (e.g. top managers, divisional presidents, etc.)	1.86	2.62	0.10	<.001
effectively work with external parties (e.g. suppliers, outsourcing partners, strategic partners)	2.16	2.79	0.06	.002
build a network of good relationships inside the organization	1.81	2.45	0.07	<.001
build a network of good relationships outside the organization	2.28	3.14	0.10	<.001
gather support for implementing strategy at local unit	1.95	2.52	0.05	.005

n = 152 cases used in estimation; null hypotheses: two-sided; multiple comparisons correction: False Discovery Rate correction applied simultaneously to the entire table

Figure 37 – Construct 3 Ranking

Significant - Smallest p-value (after applying False Discovery Rate correction): 0.002

	Manager and Above n: 123	Junior Manager n: 29	R-Squared	p
effectively work across organizational boundaries (e.g. departments, functions, business units)	0.59	0.59	0.00	1.000
effectively work with the company hierarchy (e.g. top managers, divisional presidents, etc.)	0.55	0.21	0.07	.002
effectively work with external parties (e.g. suppliers, outsourcing partners, strategic partners)	0.24	0.31	0.00	1.000
build a network of good relationships inside the organization	0.54	0.38	0.02	.331
build a network of good relationships outside the organization	0.20	0.10	0.01	.645
gather support for implementing strategy at local unit	0.54	0.28	0.04	.034

n = 152 cases used in estimation; null hypotheses: two-sided; multiple comparisons correction: False Discovery Rate correction applied simultaneously to the entire table

Figure 38 – Construct 4 Response

Significant - Smallest p-value (after applying False Discovery Rate correction): 0.01

	Manager and Above n: 123	Junior Manager n: 29	R-Squared	p
be open-minded to learn new knowledge and skills	1.85	2.41	0.04	.012
improvise and adapt existing practices at local unit, where needed	2.05	2.66	0.05	.007
recover quickly (or show resilience) in the face of unexpected outcomes	1.95	2.28	0.02	.144
admit when something did not go as planned	2.19	2.66	0.02	.081
treat failure as a learning opportunity	2.07	2.62	0.04	.015
develop viable contingency plans	2.15	2.66	0.04	.017
tolerate ambiguity and uncertainty	2.16	2.62	0.03	.035

n = 152 cases used in estimation; null hypotheses: two-sided; multiple comparisons correction: False Discovery Rate correction applied simultaneously to the entire table

Figure 39 – Construct 4 Ranking

Significant - Smallest p-value (after applying False Discovery Rate correction): 0.02

	Manager and Above n: 123	Junior Manager n: 29	R-Squared	p
be open-minded to learn new knowledge and skills	0.47	0.41	0.00	1.000
improvise and adapt existing practices at local unit, where needed	0.47	0.17	0.06	.022
recover quickly (or show resilience) in the face of unexpected outcomes	0.55	0.48	0.00	1.000
treat failure as a learning opportunity	0.28	0.41	0.01	1.000
admit when something did not go as planned	0.23	0.17	0.00	1.000
develop viable contingency plans	0.31	0.14	0.02	.452
tolerate ambiguity and uncertainty	0.33	0.14	0.03	.268

n = 152 cases used in estimation; null hypotheses: two-sided; multiple comparisons correction: False Discovery Rate correction applied simultaneously to the entire table

Figure 40 – Construct 5 Response

Significant - Smallest p-value (after applying False Discovery Rate correction): 0.03

	Manager and Above n: 123	Junior Manager n: 29	R-Squared	p
manage the development of subordinates through the process of executing strategy	2.08	2.55	0.03	.165
support the emotional balance and well-being of subordinates through the process of executing strategy	2.33	2.62	0.01	1.000
show fairness in assigning jobs and responsibilities during strategy execution	2.19	2.62	0.02	.311
earn the respect and trust of subordinates as a 'role model'	2.07	2.38	0.01	.848
be credible in convincing subordinates of the required strategic changes	1.99	2.66	0.05	.027

n = 152 cases used in estimation; null hypotheses: two-sided; multiple comparisons correction: False Discovery Rate correction applied simultaneously to the entire table

Figure 41 – Construct 5 Ranking

Significant - Smallest p-value (after applying False Discovery Rate correction): 0.002

	Manager and Above n: 123	Junior Manager n: 29	R-Squared	p
manage the development of subordinates through the process of executing strategy	0.50	0.41	0.00	1.000
support the emotional balance and well-being of subordinates through the process of executing strategy	0.37	0.38	0.00	1.000
show fairness in assigning jobs and responsibilities during strategy execution	0.39	0.34	0.00	1.000
earn the respect and trust of subordinates as a 'role model'	0.55	0.55	0.00	1.000
be credible in convincing subordinates of the required strategic changes	0.60	0.24	0.08	.002

n = 152 cases used in estimation; null hypotheses: two-sided; multiple comparisons correction: False Discovery Rate correction applied simultaneously to the entire table

Figure 42 – Importance of Hygiene Factors Response

Not significant - Smallest p-value (after applying False Discovery Rate correction): 0.14

	Manager and Above n: 123	Junior Manager n: 29	R-Squared	p
Relevant education credentials	3.02	3.34	0.01	1.000
Relevant years of experience	2.76	3.00	0.01	1.000
Relevant technical expertise needed	2.45	2.72	0.01	1.000
Good communications skills	1.79	2.31	0.04	.140
Strong commitment to the company	2.28	2.59	0.01	1.000
Consensus with the strategy being implemented	2.39	2.59	0.00	1.000
Loyalty to the top leadership	2.74	3.07	0.01	1.000

n = 152 cases used in estimation; null hypotheses: two-sided; multiple comparisons correction: False Discovery Rate correction applied simultaneously to the entire table

Figure 43 – Importance of Hygiene Factors Ranking

Not significant - Smallest p-value (after applying False Discovery Rate correction): 1.00

	Manager and Above n: 123	Junior Manager n: 29	R-Squared	p
Relevant education credentials	0.11	0.10	0.00	1.000
Relevant years of experience	0.24	0.14	0.01	1.000
Relevant technical expertise needed	0.37	0.28	0.01	1.000
Good communications skills	0.68	0.55	0.01	1.000
Strong commitment to the company	0.37	0.41	0.00	1.000
Consensus with the strategy being implemented	0.39	0.31	0.00	1.000
Loyalty to the top leadership	0.14	0.10	0.00	1.000

n = 152 cases used in estimation; null hypotheses: two-sided; multiple comparisons correction: False Discovery Rate correction applied simultaneously to the entire table

Figure 44 – Factors Moderating Effectiveness and Outcomes Response

Not significant - Smallest p-value (after applying False Discovery Rate correction): 0.96

	Manager and Above n: 123	Junior Manager n: 29	R-Squared	p
Top management has a robust process for selecting middle managers to lead strategy implementation	2.32	2.45	0.00	1.000
Local unit middle managers that are selected to lead strategy implementation have the 'right' abilities	2.09	2.28	0.00	1.000
Local unit middle managers agree with the strategy being implemented	2.17	2.41	0.01	1.000
Local unit middle managers believe that the strategy being implemented is personally beneficial for them	2.42	2.83	0.02	.965
Local unit middle managers have positive relationships with top management	2.25	2.66	0.02	1.000
Middle managers are awarded the appropriate rewards and incentives in line with their performance	2.16	2.52	0.02	1.000

n = 152 cases used in estimation; null hypotheses: two-sided; multiple comparisons correction: False Discovery Rate correction applied simultaneously to the entire table

Figure 45 – Factors Moderating Effectiveness and Outcomes Ranking

Not significant - Smallest p-value (after applying False Discovery Rate correction): 0.32

	Manager and Above n: 123	Junior Manager n: 29	R-Squared	p
Top management has a robust process for selecting middle managers to lead strategy implementation	0.35	0.45	0.01	1.000
Local unit middle managers that are selected to lead strategy implementation have the 'right' abilities	0.58	0.48	0.01	1.000
Local unit middle managers agree with the strategy being implemented	0.38	0.34	0.00	1.000
Local unit middle managers believe that the strategy being implemented is personally beneficial for them	0.39	0.17	0.03	.322
Local unit middle managers have positive relationships with top management	0.40	0.28	0.01	1.000
Middle managers are awarded the appropriate rewards and incentives in line with their performance	0.42	0.38	0.00	1.000

n = 152 cases used in estimation; null hypotheses: two-sided; multiple comparisons correction: False Discovery Rate correction applied simultaneously to the entire table

APPENDIX 10A: Impact of Years of Work Experience

Analysis (MANOVA Test Result)

Years of Work Experience ≤ 10 years (n =44)

Years of Work Experience > 10 years (n=108)

- Analysis showed no statistical significance and results are simply documented here for completeness

Figure 1 – Construct 1 Response

	Less than 10 years n: 44	More than 10 years n: 108	R-Squared	p
get things moving quickly	2.23	2.16	0.00	1.000
work with a results-oriented mindset	1.77	1.96	0.01	1.000
make tough decisions	2.07	2.20	0.00	1.000
challenge the status quo	2.02	2.30	0.02	1.000
take risks in implementation	2.05	2.35	0.02	1.000
work with whatever resources are available	2.27	2.25	0.00	1.000
comprehensively analyze all options before proceeding with execution	2.14	2.30	0.00	1.000

n = 152 cases used in estimation; null hypotheses: two-sided; multiple comparisons correction: False Discovery Rate correction applied simultaneously to the entire table

Figure 2 – Construct 1 Ranking

Not significant - Smallest p-value (after applying False Discovery Rate correction): 0.54

	Less than 10 years n: 44	More than 10 years n: 108	R-Squared	p
get things moving quickly	0.25	0.40	0.02	1.000
work with a results-oriented mindset	0.50	0.53	0.00	1.000
make tough decisions	0.41	0.37	0.00	1.000
challenge the status quo	0.39	0.25	0.02	1.000
take risks in implementation	0.34	0.19	0.03	.544
work with whatever resources are available	0.39	0.45	0.00	1.000
comprehensively analyze all options before proceeding with execution	0.45	0.37	0.01	1.000

n = 152 cases used in estimation; null hypotheses: two-sided; multiple comparisons correction: False Discovery Rate correction applied simultaneously to the entire table

Figure 3 – Construct 2 Response

Not significant - Smallest p-value (after applying False Discovery Rate correction): 0.32

	Less than 10 years n: 44	More than 10 years n: 108	R-Squared	p
understand the company's strategic direction	1.98	2.05	0.00	1.000
conceptualize and visualize how to convert the strategy into action	1.89	1.95	0.00	1.000
interpret what the company's strategy means at a local unit level	1.80	2.19	0.03	.317
link the role of the local unit with the rest of the organization	2.16	2.27	0.00	1.000
influence the company's overall strategy	2.84	2.70	0.00	1.000

n = 152 cases used in estimation; null hypotheses: two-sided; multiple comparisons correction: False Discovery Rate correction applied simultaneously to the entire table

Figure 4 – Construct 2 Ranking

Not significant - Smallest p-value (after applying False Discovery Rate correction): 0.25

	Less than 10 years n: 44	More than 10 years n: 108	R-Squared	p
understand the company's strategic direction	0.57	0.56	0.00	1.000
conceptualize and visualize how to convert the strategy into action	0.66	0.70	0.00	1.000
interpret what the company's strategy means at a local unit level	0.68	0.48	0.03	.246
link the role of the local unit with the rest of the organization	0.39	0.38	0.00	1.000
influence the company's overall strategy	0.27	0.20	0.01	1.000

n = 152 cases used in estimation; null hypotheses: two-sided; multiple comparisons correction: False Discovery Rate correction applied simultaneously to the entire table

Figure 5 – Construct 3 Response

Not significant - Smallest p-value (after applying False Discovery Rate correction): 0.53

	Less than 10 years n: 44	More than 10 years n: 108	R-Squared	p
effectively work across organizational boundaries (e.g. departments, functions, business units)	1.66	2.00	0.03	.526
effectively work with the company hierarchy (e.g. top managers, divisional presidents, etc.)	1.91	2.05	0.00	1.000
effectively work with external parties (e.g. suppliers, outsourcing partners, strategic partners)	2.30	2.28	0.00	1.000
build a network of good relationships inside the organization	1.89	1.95	0.00	1.000
build a network of good relationships outside the organization	2.34	2.49	0.00	1.000
gather support for implementing strategy at local unit	1.93	2.11	0.01	1.000

n = 152 cases used in estimation; null hypotheses: two-sided; multiple comparisons correction: False Discovery Rate correction applied simultaneously to the entire table

Figure 6 – Construct 3 Ranking

Not significant - Smallest p-value (after applying False Discovery Rate correction): 0.63

	Less than 10 years n: 44	More than 10 years n: 108	R-Squared	p
effectively work across organizational boundaries (e.g. departments, functions, business units)	0.61	0.57	0.00	1.000
effectively work with the company hierarchy (e.g. top managers, divisional presidents, etc.)	0.45	0.50	0.00	1.000
effectively work with external parties (e.g. suppliers, outsourcing partners, strategic partners)	0.27	0.24	0.00	1.000
build a network of good relationships inside the organization	0.64	0.46	0.02	.635
build a network of good relationships outside the organization	0.16	0.19	0.00	1.000
gather support for implementing strategy at local unit	0.45	0.50	0.00	1.000

n = 152 cases used in estimation; null hypotheses: two-sided; multiple comparisons correction: False Discovery Rate correction applied simultaneously to the entire table

Figure 7 – Construct 4 Response

Significant - Smallest p-value (after applying False Discovery Rate correction): 0.04

	Less than 10 years n: 44	More than 10 years n: 108	R-Squared	p
be open-minded to learn new knowledge and skills	1.89	1.98	0.00	1.000
improvise and adapt existing practices at local unit, where needed	2.00	2.23	0.01	1.000
recover quickly (or show resilience) in the face of unexpected outcomes	1.82	2.09	0.02	.779
treat failure as a learning opportunity	1.82	2.32	0.05	.044
admit when something did not go as planned	2.20	2.31	0.00	1.000
develop viable contingency plans	2.14	2.30	0.01	1.000
tolerate ambiguity and uncertainty	2.16	2.29	0.00	1.000

n = 152 cases used in estimation; null hypotheses: two-sided; multiple comparisons correction: False Discovery Rate correction applied simultaneously to the entire table

Figure 8 – Construct 4 Ranking

Not significant - Smallest p-value (after applying False Discovery Rate correction): 1.00

	Less than 10 years n: 44	More than 10 years n: 108	R-Squared	p
be open-minded to learn new knowledge and skills	0.43	0.47	0.00	1.000
improvise and adapt existing practices at local unit, where needed	0.41	0.42	0.00	1.000
recover quickly (or show resilience) in the face of unexpected outcomes	0.61	0.51	0.01	1.000
treat failure as a learning opportunity	0.39	0.27	0.01	1.000
admit when something did not go as planned	0.27	0.19	0.01	1.000
develop viable contingency plans	0.30	0.27	0.00	1.000
tolerate ambiguity and uncertainty	0.25	0.31	0.00	1.000

n = 152 cases used in estimation; null hypotheses: two-sided; multiple comparisons correction: False Discovery Rate correction applied simultaneously to the entire table

Figure 9 – Construct 5 Response

Not significant - Smallest p-value (after applying False Discovery Rate correction): 0.28

	Less than 10 years n: 44	More than 10 years n: 108	R-Squared	p
manage the development of subordinates through the process of executing strategy	1.93	2.27	0.02	.790
support the emotional balance and well-being of subordinates through the process of executing strategy	2.07	2.52	0.03	.282
show fairness in assigning jobs and responsibilities during strategy execution	2.18	2.31	0.00	1.000
earn the respect and trust of subordinates as a 'role model'	2.07	2.16	0.00	1.000
be credible in convincing subordinates of the required strategic changes	1.82	2.24	0.03	.416

n = 152 cases used in estimation; null hypotheses: two-sided; multiple comparisons correction: False Discovery Rate correction applied simultaneously to the entire table

Figure 10– Construct 5 Ranking

Not significant - Smallest p-value (after applying False Discovery Rate correction): 0.79

	Less than 10 years n: 44	More than 10 years n: 108	R-Squared	p
manage the development of subordinates through the process of executing strategy	0.55	0.45	0.01	1.000
support the emotional balance and well-being of subordinates through the process of executing strategy	0.41	0.35	0.00	1.000
show fairness in assigning jobs and responsibilities during strategy execution	0.27	0.43	0.02	.788
earn the respect and trust of subordinates as a 'role model'	0.57	0.55	0.00	1.000
be credible in convincing subordinates of the required strategic changes	0.64	0.49	0.02	1.000

n = 152 cases used in estimation; null hypotheses: two-sided; multiple comparisons correction: False Discovery Rate correction applied simultaneously to the entire table

Figure 11 – Importance of Hygiene Factors Response

Not significant - Smallest p-value (after applying False Discovery Rate correction): 1.00

	Less than 10 years n: 44	More than 10 years n: 108	R-Squared	p
Relevant education credentials	2.91	3.16	0.01	1.000
Relevant years of experience	2.70	2.85	0.00	1.000
Relevant technical expertise needed	2.45	2.52	0.00	1.000
Good communications skills	1.91	1.88	0.00	1.000
Strong commitment to the company	2.20	2.40	0.01	1.000
Consensus with the strategy being implemented	2.43	2.43	0.00	1.000
Loyalty to the top leadership	2.80	2.81	0.00	1.000

n = 152 cases used in estimation; null hypotheses: two-sided; multiple comparisons correction: False Discovery Rate correction applied simultaneously to the entire table

Figure 12 –Importance of Hygiene Factors Ranking

Not significant - Smallest p-value (after applying False Discovery Rate correction): 1.00

	Less than 10 years n: 44	More than 10 years n: 108	R-Squared	p
Relevant education credentials	0.16	0.08	0.01	1.000
Relevant years of experience	0.23	0.22	0.00	1.000
Relevant technical expertise needed	0.32	0.36	0.00	1.000
Good communications skills	0.59	0.69	0.01	1.000
Strong commitment to the company	0.39	0.38	0.00	1.000
Consensus with the strategy being implemented	0.41	0.36	0.00	1.000
Loyalty to the top leadership	0.16	0.12	0.00	1.000

n = 152 cases used in estimation; null hypotheses: two-sided; multiple comparisons correction: False Discovery Rate correction applied simultaneously to the entire table

Figure 13 – Factors Moderating Effectiveness and Outcomes Response

Not significant - Smallest p-value (after applying False Discovery Rate correction): 1.00

	Less than 10 years n: 44	More than 10 years n: 108	R-Squared	p
Top management has a robust process for selecting middle managers to lead strategy implementation	2.30	2.36	0.00	1.000
Local unit middle managers that are selected to lead strategy implementation have the 'right' abilities	2.14	2.12	0.00	1.000
Local unit middle managers agree with the strategy being implemented	2.30	2.19	0.00	1.000
Local unit middle managers believe that the strategy being implemented is personally beneficial for them	2.50	2.50	0.00	1.000
Local unit middle managers have positive relationships with top management	2.18	2.39	0.01	1.000
Middle managers are awarded the appropriate rewards and incentives in line with their performance	2.20	2.24	0.00	1.000

n = 152 cases used in estimation; null hypotheses: two-sided; multiple comparisons correction: False Discovery Rate correction applied simultaneously to the entire table

Figure 14 – Factors Moderating Effectiveness and Outcomes Ranking

Not significant - Smallest p-value (after applying False Discovery Rate correction): 1.00

	Less than 10 years n: 44	More than 10 years n: 108	R-Squared	p
Top management has a robust process for selecting middle managers to lead strategy implementation	0.39	0.36	0.00	1.000
Local unit middle managers that are selected to lead strategy implementation have the 'right' abilities	0.55	0.56	0.00	1.000
Local unit middle managers agree with the strategy being implemented	0.34	0.39	0.00	1.000
Local unit middle managers believe that the strategy being implemented is personally beneficial for them	0.39	0.33	0.00	1.000
Local unit middle managers have positive relationships with top management	0.45	0.34	0.01	1.000
Middle managers are awarded the appropriate rewards and incentives in line with their performance	0.41	0.42	0.00	1.000

n = 152 cases used in estimation; null hypotheses: two-sided; multiple comparisons correction: False Discovery Rate correction applied simultaneously to the entire table

APPENDIX 10B: Impact of Job Title/ Position

Analysis (MANOVA Test Results)

Director, Senior Manager, General Manager (n =71)

Manager, Junior Manager (n=81)

- Analysis showed no statistical significance and results are simply documented here for completeness

Figure 1 – Construct 1 Response

Not significant - Smallest p-value (after applying False Discovery Rate correction): 0.26

	Director & Senior Manager n: 71	Manager & Junior Manager n: 81	R-Squared	p
get things moving quickly	2.03	2.31	0.02	.997
work with a results-oriented mindset	1.73	2.06	0.04	.260
make tough decisions	2.13	2.20	0.00	1.000
challenge the status quo	2.07	2.35	0.02	1.000
take risks in implementation	2.24	2.28	0.00	1.000
work with whatever resources are available	2.13	2.37	0.01	1.000
comprehensively analyze all options before proceeding with execution	2.18	2.31	0.00	1.000

n = 152 cases used in estimation; null hypotheses: two-sided; multiple comparisons correction: False Discovery Rate correction applied simultaneously to the entire table

Figure 2 – Construct 1 Ranking

Not significant - Smallest p-value (after applying False Discovery Rate correction): 1.00

	Director & Senior Manager n: 71	Manager & Junior Manager n: 81	R-Squared	p
get things moving quickly	0.37	0.35	0.00	1.000
work with a results-oriented mindset	0.52	0.52	0.00	1.000
make tough decisions	0.41	0.36	0.00	1.000
challenge the status quo	0.30	0.28	0.00	1.000
take risks in implementation	0.23	0.23	0.00	1.000
work with whatever resources are available	0.49	0.38	0.01	1.000
comprehensively analyze all options before proceeding with execution	0.39	0.40	0.00	1.000

n = 152 cases used in estimation; null hypotheses: two-sided; multiple comparisons correction: False Discovery Rate correction applied simultaneously to the entire table

Figure 3 – Construct 2 Response

Not significant - Smallest p-value (after applying False Discovery Rate correction): 1.00

	Director & Senior Manager n: 71	Manager & Junior Manager n: 81	R-Squared	p
understand the company's strategic direction	2.00	2.05	0.00	1.000
conceptualize and visualize how to convert the strategy into action	1.92	1.95	0.00	1.000
interpret what the company's strategy means at a local unit level	2.00	2.14	0.00	1.000
link the role of the local unit with the rest of the organization	2.25	2.22	0.00	1.000
influence the company's overall strategy	2.65	2.83	0.01	1.000

n = 152 cases used in estimation; null hypotheses: two-sided; multiple comparisons correction: False Discovery Rate correction applied simultaneously to the entire table

Figure 4 – Construct 2 Ranking

Not significant - Smallest p-value (after applying False Discovery Rate correction): 1.00

	Director & Senior Manager n: 71	Manager & Junior Manager n: 81	R-Squared	p
understand the company's strategic direction	0.59	0.53	0.00	1.000
conceptualize and visualize how to convert the strategy into action	0.72	0.67	0.00	1.000
interpret what the company's strategy means at a local unit level	0.51	0.57	0.00	1.000
link the role of the local unit with the rest of the organization	0.41	0.36	0.00	1.000
influence the company's overall strategy	0.25	0.20	0.00	1.000

n = 152 cases used in estimation; null hypotheses: two-sided; multiple comparisons correction: False Discovery Rate correction applied simultaneously to the entire table

Figure 5 – Construct 3 Response

Not significant - Smallest p-value (after applying False Discovery Rate correction): 0.55

	Director & Senior Manager n: 71	Manager & Junior Manager n: 81	R-Squared	p
effectively work across organizational boundaries (e.g. departments, functions, business units)	1.87	1.93	0.00	1.000
effectively work with the company hierarchy (e.g. top managers, divisional presidents, etc.)	1.89	2.11	0.01	1.000
effectively work with external parties (e.g. suppliers, outsourcing partners, strategic partners)	2.21	2.35	0.00	1.000
build a network of good relationships inside the organization	1.77	2.07	0.03	.555
build a network of good relationships outside the organization	2.38	2.51	0.00	1.000
gather support for implementing strategy at local unit	2.03	2.09	0.00	1.000

n = 152 cases used in estimation; null hypotheses: two-sided; multiple comparisons correction: False Discovery Rate correction applied simultaneously to the entire table

Figure 6 – Construct 3 Ranking

Not significant - Smallest p-value (after applying False Discovery Rate correction): 0.94

	Director & Senior Manager n: 71	Manager & Junior Manager n: 81	R-Squared	p
effectively work across organizational boundaries (e.g. departments, functions, business units)	0.65	0.53	0.01	1.000
effectively work with the company hierarchy (e.g. top managers, divisional presidents, etc.)	0.56	0.42	0.02	.937
effectively work with external parties (e.g. suppliers, outsourcing partners, strategic partners)	0.21	0.28	0.01	1.000
build a network of good relationships inside the organization	0.58	0.46	0.01	1.000
build a network of good relationships outside the organization	0.14	0.22	0.01	1.000
gather support for implementing strategy at local unit	0.54	0.44	0.01	1.000

n = 152 cases used in estimation; null hypotheses: two-sided; multiple comparisons correction: False Discovery Rate correction applied simultaneously to the entire table

Figure 7 – Construct 4 Response

Not significant - Smallest p-value (after applying False Discovery Rate correction): 1.00

	Director & Senior Manager n: 71	Manager & Junior Manager n: 81	R-Squared	p
be open-minded to learn new knowledge and skills	1.93	1.98	0.00	1.000
improvise and adapt existing practices at local unit, where needed	2.08	2.23	0.01	1.000
recover quickly (or show resilience) in the face of unexpected outcomes	2.04	1.99	0.00	1.000
treat failure as a learning opportunity	2.15	2.20	0.00	1.000
admit when something did not go as planned	2.25	2.30	0.00	1.000
develop viable contingency plans	2.21	2.28	0.00	1.000
tolerate ambiguity and uncertainty	2.21	2.28	0.00	1.000

n = 152 cases used in estimation; null hypotheses: two-sided; multiple comparisons correction: False Discovery Rate correction applied simultaneously to the entire table

Figure 8 – Construct 4 Ranking

Not significant - Smallest p-value (after applying False Discovery Rate correction): 1.00

	Director & Senior Manager n: 71	Manager & Junior Manager n: 81	R-Squared	p
be open-minded to learn new knowledge and skills	0.54	0.40	0.02	1.000
improvise and adapt existing practices at local unit, where needed	0.45	0.38	0.00	1.000
recover quickly (or show resilience) in the face of unexpected outcomes	0.54	0.54	0.00	1.000
treat failure as a learning opportunity	0.27	0.33	0.01	1.000
admit when something did not go as planned	0.21	0.22	0.00	1.000
develop viable contingency plans	0.24	0.31	0.01	1.000
tolerate ambiguity and uncertainty	0.35	0.25	0.01	1.000

n = 152 cases used in estimation; null hypotheses: two-sided; multiple comparisons correction: False Discovery Rate correction applied simultaneously to the entire table

Figure 9 – Construct 5 Response

Not significant - Smallest p-value (after applying False Discovery Rate correction): 1.00

	Director & Senior Manager n: 71	Manager & Junior Manager n: 81	R-Squared	p
manage the development of subordinates through the process of executing strategy	2.15	2.19	0.00	1.000
support the emotional balance and well-being of subordinates through the process of executing strategy	2.45	2.33	0.00	1.000
show fairness in assigning jobs and responsibilities during strategy execution	2.23	2.31	0.00	1.000
earn the respect and trust of subordinates as a 'role model'	2.11	2.15	0.00	1.000
be credible in convincing subordinates of the required strategic changes	2.06	2.17	0.00	1.000

n = 152 cases used in estimation; null hypotheses: two-sided; multiple comparisons correction: False Discovery Rate correction applied simultaneously to the entire table

Figure 10 – Construct 5 Ranking

Not significant - Smallest p-value (after applying False Discovery Rate correction): 0.45

	Director & Senior Manager n: 71	Manager & Junior Manager n: 81	R-Squared	p
manage the development of subordinates through the process of executing strategy	0.49	0.47	0.00	1.000
support the emotional balance and well-being of subordinates through the process of executing strategy	0.34	0.40	0.00	1.000
show fairness in assigning jobs and responsibilities during strategy execution	0.42	0.35	0.01	1.000
earn the respect and trust of subordinates as a 'role model'	0.56	0.54	0.00	1.000
be credible in convincing subordinates of the required strategic changes	0.62	0.46	0.03	.449

n = 152 cases used in estimation; null hypotheses: two-sided; multiple comparisons correction: False Discovery Rate correction applied simultaneously to the entire table

Figure 11 – Importance of Hygiene Factors Response

Not significant - Smallest p-value (after applying False Discovery Rate correction): 1.00

	Director & Senior Manager n: 71	Manager & Junior Manager n: 81	R-Squared	p
Relevant education credentials	3.04	3.12	0.00	1.000
Relevant years of experience	2.89	2.74	0.00	1.000
Relevant technical expertise needed	2.49	2.51	0.00	1.000
Good communications skills	1.79	1.98	0.01	1.000
Strong commitment to the company	2.31	2.37	0.00	1.000
Consensus with the strategy being implemented	2.42	2.43	0.00	1.000
Loyalty to the top leadership	2.85	2.77	0.00	1.000

n = 152 cases used in estimation; null hypotheses: two-sided; multiple comparisons correction: False Discovery Rate correction applied simultaneously to the entire table

Figure 12 –Importance of Hygiene Factors Ranking

Not significant - Smallest p-value (after applying False Discovery Rate correction): 1.00

	Director & Senior Manager n: 71	Manager & Junior Manager n: 81	R-Squared	p
Relevant education credentials	0.10	0.11	0.00	1.000
Relevant years of experience	0.27	0.19	0.01	1.000
Relevant technical expertise needed	0.34	0.36	0.00	1.000
Good communications skills	0.69	0.63	0.00	1.000
Strong commitment to the company	0.38	0.38	0.00	1.000
Consensus with the strategy being implemented	0.41	0.35	0.00	1.000
Loyalty to the top leadership	0.10	0.16	0.01	1.000

n = 152 cases used in estimation; null hypotheses: two-sided; multiple comparisons correction: False Discovery Rate correction applied simultaneously to the entire table

Figure 13 – Factors Moderating Effectiveness and Outcomes Response

Not significant - Smallest p-value (after applying False Discovery Rate correction): 0.42

	Director & Senior Manager n: 71	Manager & Junior Manager n: 81	R- Squared	p
Top management has a robust process for selecting middle managers to lead strategy implementation	2.35	2.33	0.00	1.000
Local unit middle managers that are selected to lead strategy implementation have the 'right' abilities	2.13	2.12	0.00	1.000
Local unit middle managers agree with the strategy being implemented	2.17	2.26	0.00	1.000
Local unit middle managers believe that the strategy being implemented is personally beneficial for them	2.30	2.68	0.03	.422
Local unit middle managers have positive relationships with top management	2.34	2.32	0.00	1.000
Middle managers are awarded the appropriate rewards and incentives in line with their performance	2.18	2.27	0.00	1.000

n = 152 cases used in estimation; null hypotheses: two-sided; multiple comparisons correction: False Discovery Rate correction applied simultaneously to the entire table

Figure 14 – Factors Moderating Effectiveness and Outcomes Ranking

Significant - Smallest p-value (after applying False Discovery Rate correction): 0.002

	Director & Senior Manager n: 71	Manager & Junior Manager n: 81	R- Squared	p
Top management has a robust process for selecting middle managers to lead strategy implementation	0.35	0.38	0.00	1.000
Local unit middle managers that are selected to lead strategy implementation have the 'right' abilities	0.59	0.53	0.00	1.000
Local unit middle managers agree with the strategy being implemented	0.35	0.40	0.00	1.000
Local unit middle managers believe that the strategy being implemented is personally beneficial for them	0.49	0.22	0.08	.002
Local unit middle managers have positive relationships with top management	0.34	0.41	0.01	1.000
Middle managers are awarded the appropriate rewards and incentives in line with their performance	0.41	0.42	0.00	1.000

n = 152 cases used in estimation; null hypotheses: two-sided; multiple comparisons correction: False Discovery Rate correction applied simultaneously to the entire table

APPENDIX 10C

Summary of analysis of independent variables

Competency Constructs/Factors	Sub-constructs/ Factors	Baseline (total sample)	Education		Size of Company		Nationality		Job Title	
			MBA	Non-MBA	Large Co.	Small Co.	SG citizen	Non-SG	Senior	Junior
Action Orientation	Results mindset	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	1
	Work with avail resources	2		1	2	3	1		2	
	Make tough decisions	3		2		2	3		3	3
	Analyze all options	3	3	3		3		2		
	Get things moving			3	3			3		3
	Challenge status quo			2	3			1	3	
	Take execution risks	L	L		L	L	L	L	L	L
Strategic & Systems Thinking	Convert into action	1	1	1	2	2	1	1	1	1
	Understand the strategy	2	2	2	1	1	2	2	2	2
	Interpret at local unit level	3	2	3	3	3	3	3	3	2
	Link local unit		3	3						
	Influence company strategy	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L
Networking Ability	Work across boundaries	1	1	1	2	1	1	2	1	1
	Build internal relations	2	3	2	3	2	2	3	3	2
	Work with hierarchy	3	1	3		2	3		2	
	Gather support for local	3	2	3	1	3		1	3	3
	Work with external									
	Build external relations	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L
Ability to Learn & Adapt	Show resilience	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
	Being open minded	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
	Improvise and adapt	3		3		3	3		2	
	Tolerate ambiguity		3		3			3	3	L
	Failure as learning									2
	Contingency plans		L							L
	Admit not as planned	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L
Ability to Lead & Develop People	Earn respect and trust	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	2	1
	Credible in convincing	2	3	1	1	2	1	2	1	1
	Develop subordinates	3	2	3	3	3	3	3	3	2
	Fairness in assignments		L	2	2	L		L		
	Support emotional balance	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	3
Importance of Hygiene Factors	Communication	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
	Commitment	2	3	3	3	2	3	2	3	2
	Consensus	2	2		2	3	2	3	2	3
	Technical expertise	3		2	3					
	Loyalty to top				L					L
	Years of work exper									
	Education creds	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	
Factors Moderating Effectiveness & Outcomes	Selecting right mid mgrs	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
	Reward and incentives	2	2		2	2	2	2	2	3
	Mid mgr consensus	3	3	L	3	3		3		
	Top mgmt relationship	3		3	L	3	3		3	
	Robust selection process	3				3	2	L	L	2
	Mid mgr agency issue	L	L	2	L	3	L		3	L

Note: When a score appears more than once, means it is tied. When a score of 3 is missing, it was relatively, much lower than 2.

	Top- 3 sub-constructs/ factors (1,2,3)
	Strong association with competency
	Weaker association with competency
	Lowest ranked (L= Lowest Ranked)
	Noted differences in sample
	Statistically significant difference in ranking (p<0.05)
	Statistically significant difference in responses p<0.05)

Middle Manager Characteristics – Zafar Momin

APPENDIX 11: Factor & Cluster Analysis

Pre Factor Analysis output

Eigenvalues output

Dendrograms

Cluster analysis outputs

Cross-tabulations

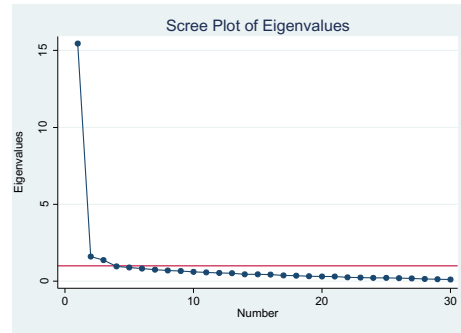
PRE FACTOR TESTING FOR FACTOR ANALYSIS

Bartlett test of sphericity
 Chi-square = 3326.329
 Degrees of Freedom = 435
 p-value = 0.000
 H0: Correlation Matrix = Identity Matrix
 (i.e., variables are not correlated with one another)
 Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy
 KMO = 0.941
 (obs=151)

The p-value is 0 and KMO measure > 0.6 so we know that a factor analysis is appropriate for this data set.

The Eigenvalue table and Scree Plot show there are 3-4 factors that underlie the 30 tested variables in the survey. We will use 4 factors in order to account for more variance in the data. 4 factors accounts for ~65% of variance in our data.

Eigenvalue #	Eigenvalue	Prop. of Var.	Cum. Prop. of Var.
1	15.45078	0.5150	0.5150
2	1.60515	0.0535	0.5685
3	1.37058	0.0457	0.6142
4	0.96030	0.0320	0.6462
5	0.88236	0.0294	0.6756
6	0.80879	0.0270	0.7026
7	0.73915	0.0246	0.7272
8	0.69414	0.0231	0.7504
9	0.65351	0.0218	0.7722
10	0.60652	0.0202	0.7924
11	0.56297	0.0188	0.8111
12	0.52380	0.0175	0.8286
13	0.51302	0.0171	0.8457
14	0.45195	0.0151	0.8608
15	0.43514	0.0145	0.8753
16	0.41822	0.0139	0.8892
17	0.37598	0.0125	0.9017
18	0.34560	0.0115	0.9133
19	0.32666	0.0109	0.9242
20	0.30577	0.0102	0.9343
21	0.30064	0.0100	0.9444
22	0.25577	0.0085	0.9529
23	0.23369	0.0078	0.9607
24	0.22140	0.0074	0.9681
25	0.21514	0.0072	0.9752
26	0.20242	0.0067	0.9820
27	0.17412	0.0058	0.9878
28	0.13600	0.0045	0.9923
29	0.11718	0.0039	0.9962
30	0.11324	0.0038	1.0000



Eigen values measure the variance in all the variables that is accounted for by that factor. If a factor has a low Eigen value, then it is contributing little to the explanation of variance in the variables and may be ignored. >1 significant

FACTOR ANALYSIS OUTPUT

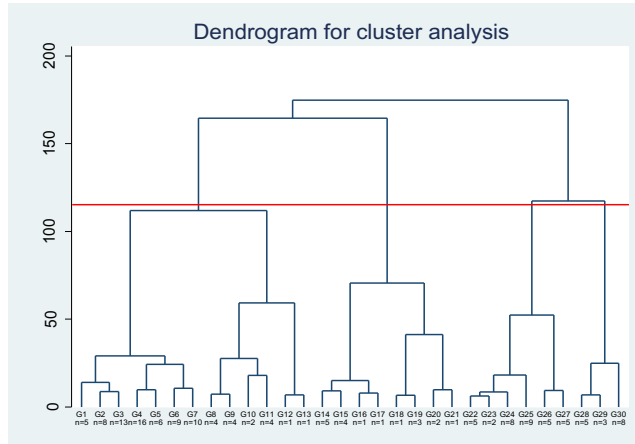
Variable	Factor1	Factor2	Factor3	Factor4
V16	0.7227	0.1435	0.3701	0.1717
V9	0.7126	0.1214	0.3642	0.2123
V13	0.7113	0.2773	0.3677	0.0319
V21	0.6888	0.1863	0.3817	0.0104
V18	0.6799	0.1930	0.3958	-0.0840
V29	0.6767	0.2706	0.2485	0.0999
V23	0.6604	0.3934	0.1413	0.1924
V14	0.6577	0.2781	0.3337	0.1672
V8	0.6504	0.2270	0.0942	0.3086
V11	0.6502	0.2724	0.1679	0.2991
V19	0.6386	0.4918	0.0744	0.2040
V30	0.6358	0.4740	0.2587	-0.1791
V25	0.6156	0.1943	0.1242	0.3382
V10	0.5927	0.1237	0.2558	0.3477
V22	0.5874	0.3994	0.3760	-0.0403
V20	0.5659	0.4391	0.2557	0.0337
V26	0.5488	0.4805	0.2143	0.0762
V17	0.1940	0.7767	0.2452	0.1602
V15	0.2863	0.7214	0.1867	0.2534
V12	0.0799	0.6691	0.2198	-0.0427
V28	0.4888	0.6324	0.1476	0.1771
V27	0.4502	0.6315	0.1132	0.0422
V24	0.4630	0.4976	0.4067	0.1328
V5	0.2443	0.1886	0.7471	0.1295
V6	0.2687	0.3520	0.6392	-0.2300
V3	0.2932	0.2091	0.6332	0.1994
V1	0.3888	0.2380	0.6181	0.2315
V7	0.1066	0.4947	0.5762	0.2809
V2	0.4255	0.0747	0.5669	0.4039
V4	0.3536	0.2392	0.3545	0.6620

Factors that do not explain even as much variance in the data as an 'average' variable are generally omitted from further consideration. Such factors will have Eigenvalues < 1

Factor definitions

Testing	Code	Meaning	Factors			
			Leadership	Interpersonal	Action	Disruptive
			1	2	3	4
plan to action	V1	get things moving quickly			1	
	V2	work with a results-oriented mindset			1	
	V3	make tough decisions			1	
	V4	challenge the status quo				1
	V5	take risks in implementation			1	
	V6	work with whatever resources are available			1	
	V7	comprehensively analyze all options before proceeding with execution			1	
understand the overall strategy	V8	understand the company's strategic direction	1			
	V9	conceptualize and visualize how to convert the strategy into action	1			
	V10	interpret what the company's strategy means at a local unit level	1			
	V11	link the role of the local unit with the rest of the organization	1			
	V12	influence the company's overall strategy		1		
network effectively across organizational boundaries	V13	work across organizational boundaries (e.g. departments, functions, business units)	1			
	V14	work with the company hierarchy (e.g. top managers, divisional presidents, etc.)	1			
	V15	work with external parties (e.g. suppliers, outsourcing partners, strategic partners)		1		
	V16	build a network of good relationships inside the organization	1			
	V17	build a network of good relationships outside the organization		1		
	V18	gather support for implementing strategy at local unit	1			
learn and adapt	V19	open-minded to learn new knowledge and skills	1			
	V20	improvise and adapt existing practices at local unit, where needed	1			
	V21	recover quickly (or show resilience) in the face of unexpected outcomes	1			
	V22	treat failure as a learning opportunity	1			
	V23	admit when something did not go as planned	1			
	V24	develop viable contingency plans		1		
	V25	tolerate ambiguity and uncertainty	1			
develop and support subordinates	V26	manage the development of subordinates through the process of executing strategy	1			
	V27	support the emotional balance and well-being of subordinates through str execution		1		
	V28	show fairness in assigning jobs and responsibilities during strategy execution		1		
	V29	earn the respect and trust of subordinates as a 'role model'	1			
	V30	credible in convincing subordinates of the required strategic changes	1			
hygiene factors	V31	education credentials				
	V32	relevant years of experience				
	V33	technical expertise needed				
	V34	Good communications skills				
	V35	Strong commitment to the company				
	V36	Consensus with the strategy being implemented				
	V37	loyalty to the top leadership				
Effectiveness levers	V38	Top mgmt has a robust process for selecting middle managers to lead implementation				
	V39	Local unit middle managers selected to lead str imp have the 'right' abilities				
	V40	Local unit middle managers agree with the strategy being implemented				
	V41	Local unit middle managers believe str being implemented is beneficial to them				
	V42	Local unit middle managers have positive relationships with top management				
	V43	Middle managers are awarded in line with their performance				

DENDROGRAM FOR DETERMINING NUMBER OF CLUSTERS



After analysing results for both 4 and 5 clusters, we determined that 4 clusters make the most sense based on the output. In addition, breaking out a fifth cluster also reduced the statistical significance of our findings in cross tabulating clusters against other variables.

Gi= low level groupings based on clustering
 Height of dendrogram indicates higher level of difference between groups of clusters
 Judgement to determine optimal number of clusters to be used

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OUTPUT OF CLUSTER ANALYSIS AGAINST FACTORS

_clus_1	N
1	81
2	17
3	30
4	23

The total number of respondents included in the cluster analysis is 151. One respondent was removed as he/she was an outlier that consistently formed a cluster of n=1.

Summary statistics: mean
 by categories of: _clus_1

_clus_1	Leader~p	Interp~l	Action	Disrup~e
Technical MM	-.0849109	-.5994493	-.4052519	-.1147683
Career MM	.8372464	1.122075	.2687063	-1.590467
Ideal MM	.754973	-.1830046	-.9751998	.9369678
Perks driven MM	-1.304548	1.043043	-.0434172	.3576142

An analysis of which factors load highly or poorly for each cluster informs the attitudes and aspects of each cluster that are homogenous within the cluster but are differentiated from the other clusters. Clusters are then labelled accordingly.

A factor score equal to or exceeding ± 0.35 is considered extreme. High factor scores are highlighted in yellow, and low factor scores have been highlighted in green.

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Cluster crosstab – Company size

firmsize	_clus_1				Total	
	Technical MM	Career MM	Ideal MM	Perks-driven MM		
< 50	1	6	1	4	12	
51-500	2	23	6	2	39	
501-5000	3	33	6	4	58	
>5000	4	19	4	16	42	
Total		81	17	30	23	151

Pearson chi2(9) = 27.3636 Pr = 0.001

Middle Manager Characteristics – Zafar Momin

Cluster crosstab – Geographical scope of Ops

scopeops	_clus_1				Total	
	Technical MM	Career MM	Ideal MM	Perks-driven MM		
Local	1	27	3	17	4	51
Regional	2	29	7	3	4	43
Global	3	25	7	10	15	57
Total		81	17	30	23	151

Pearson chi2(6) = 20.6970 Pr = 0.002

Middle Manager Characteristics – Zafar Momin

Cluster crosstab – Education level

eduqual	_clus_1				Total	
	Technical MM	Career MM	Ideal M	Perks-driven MM		
Diploma	2	16	1	5	0	22
Degree	3	36	8	16	2	62
Master	4	26	9	9	19	62
PhD	5	3	0	0	2	5
Total		81	17	30	23	151

Pearson chi2(9) = 29.0636 Pr = 0.001

Middle Manager Characteristics – Zafar Momin

Cluster crosstab – Industry type

Industry		_clus_1				Total
		Technical MM	Career MM	Ideal MM	Perks-driven MM	
Aerospace	1	0	0	1	1	2
Banking	2	10	2	2	1	15
Chemicals	3	5	1	3	3	12
Electronics	4	6	4	9	1	20
Healthcare/Ph	5	8	2	1	6	17
Logistic/Mnfg	6	15	4	5	2	26
Prof Services	7	14	4	2	4	20
Technology	8	13	3	6	1	23
Others	10	10	1	1	4	16
Total		81	17	30	23	151

Pearson chi2(24) = 35.5800 Pr = 0.060

Middle Manager Characteristics – Zafar Momin

Cluster crosstab - Nationality

nationality		_clus_1				Total
		Technical MM	Career MM	Ideal MM	Perks-driven MM	
SG	1	58	10	29	7	104
PR	2	13	3	0	3	19
Expat	3	3	2	0	5	10
Foreign	4	7	0	1	7	15
No tell	5	0	2	0	1	3
Total		81	17	30	23	151

Pearson chi2(12) = 49.0816 Pr = 0.000

Middle Manager Characteristics – Zafar Momin

Cluster crosstab – MBA grads

mbasample		_clus_1				Total
		Technical M	Career MM	Ideal MM	Perks-driven MM	
Non-MBA	0	61	11	30	3	105
MBA	1	20	6	0	20	46
Total		81	17	30	23	151

Pearson chi2(3) = 49.2557 Pr = 0.000

Middle Manager Characteristics – Zafar Momin

Hygiene factors – education creds vs clusters (which cluster thought educ creds were important)

. tabulate hf_educred _clus_1 , chi2

v31		_clus_1				Total
		Technical MM	Career MM	Ideal MM	Perks-driven MM	
Strongly A	1	11	0	2	0	13
Agree	2	23	2	2	3	30
Somewhat A	3	29	7	12	6	54
No A or DA	4	14	4	11	10	39
Somewhat D	5	3	4	3	4	14
Disagree	6	1	0	0	0	1
Total		81	17	30	23	151

Pearson chi2(15) = 28.9048 Pr = 0.017

Hygiene factors – experience vs clusters (which cluster thought yrs. of exp. were important)

. tabulate hf_yrsexp _clus_1 , chi2

v32		_clus_1				Total
		Technical MM	Career MM	Ideal MM	Perks-driven MM	
Strongly A	1	18	1	1	0	20
Agree	2	22	5	3	6	36
Somewhat A	3	28	3	18	11	60
No A or DA	4	10	4	6	4	24
Somewhat D	5	2	4	2	1	9
Disagree	6	0	0	0	0	1
Strongly D	7	1	0	0	0	1
Total		81	17	30	23	151

Pearson chi2(18) = 38.6930 Pr = 0.003

Hygiene factors – tech expertise vs clusters (which cluster thought tech expertise was important)

. tabulate hf_techexp _clus_1 , chi2

v33		_clus_1				Total
		Technical MM	Career MM	Ideal MM	Perks-driven MM	
Strongly A	1	25	3	0	1	29
Agree	2	25	5	8	6	44
Somewhat A	3	25	6	13	12	56
No A or DA	4	5	2	8	2	17
Somewhat D	5	1	1	1	2	5
Total		81	17	30	23	151

Pearson chi2(12) = 28.7004 Pr = 0.004

Hygiene factors – Communication vs clusters (which cluster thought communication was important)

```
. tabulate hf_communication _clus_1 , chi2
```

V34		_clus_1				Total
		Technical MM	Career MM	Ideal MM	Perks-driven MM	
Strongly A	1	43	2	1	19	65
Agree	2	29	8	11	3	51
Somewhat A	3	9	4	10	0	23
No A or DA	4	0	2	8	1	11
Disagree	6	0	1	0	0	1
Total		81	17	30	23	151

Pearson chi2(12) = 70.7257 Pr = 0.000

Effectiveness factors – selection vs clusters (which cluster thought mngt should have process for MM selection)

```
. tabulate ef_selection _clus_1 , chi2
```

V38		_clus_1				Total
		Technical MM	Career MM	Ideal MM	Perks-driven MM	
Strongly A	1	21	1	0	11	33
Agree	2	44	7	10	7	68
Somewhat A	3	12	6	10	2	30
No A or DA	4	2	2	8	2	14
Somewhat D	5	1	1	1	0	3
Disagree	6	1	0	1	0	2
Strongly D	7	0	0	0	1	1
Total		81	17	30	23	151

Pearson chi2(18) = 50.3520 Pr = 0.000

Effectiveness factors – MM right abilities (which cluster thought the “right” MM affected outcomes positively)

```
. tabulate ef_rightabilities _clus_1 , chi2
```

V39		_clus_1				Total
		Technical MM	Career MM	Ideal MM	Perks-driven MM	
Strongly A	1	36	0	0	11	47
Agree	2	39	9	6	8	62
Somewhat A	3	3	6	14	3	26
No A or DA	4	2	1	9	1	13
Somewhat D	5	1	1	1	0	3
Total		81	17	30	23	151

Pearson chi2(12) = 75.8866 Pr = 0.000

Effectiveness factors – beneficial to self vs clusters
(which cluster thought agency issue moderates effectiveness)

. tabulate ef_beneficialstrt _clus_1 , chi2

V41		_clus_1				Total
		Technical MM	Career MM	Ideal MM	Perks-driven MM	
Strongly A	1	18	1	0	5	24
Agree	2	42	5	11	5	63
Somewhat A	3	15	8	12	6	41
No A or DA	4	5	3	6	3	17
Somewhat D	5	0	0	1	1	2
Disagree	6	1	0	0	2	3
Strongly D	7	0	0	0	1	1
Total		81	17	30	23	151

Pearson chi2(18) = 40.2263 Pr = 0.002

Effectiveness factors – relationship with top management vs clusters
(which cluster thought positive top mngt relations affect outcomes)

. tabulate ef_buddywtopmngmt _clus_1 , chi2

V42		_clus_1				Total
		Technical MM	Career MM	Ideal MM	Perks-driven MM	
Strongly A	1	28	0	2	10	40
Agree	2	39	4	5	6	54
Somewhat A	3	8	7	13	5	33
No A or DA	4	5	4	7	2	18
Somewhat D	5	0	2	3	0	5
Disagree	6	1	0	0	0	1
Total		81	17	30	23	151

Pearson chi2(15) = 55.5320 Pr = 0.000

Effectiveness factors – performance incentive vs clusters
(which cluster thought incentives were important for effectiveness)

. tabulate ef_incentive _clus_1 , chi2

V43		_clus_1				Total
		Technical MM	Career MM	Ideal MM	Perks-driven MM	
Strongly A	1	30	2	1	7	40
Agree	2	37	5	8	9	59
Somewhat A	3	12	6	11	6	35
No A or DA	4	2	4	10	0	16
Somewhat D	5	0	0	0	1	1
Total		81	17	30	23	151

Pearson chi2(12) = 49.8251 Pr = 0.000

Cluster crosstab – years of work experience (not significant)

. tabulate yearsexp _clus_1, chi2

yearsexp	_clus_1				Total
	1	2	3	4	
2	7	2	2	5	16
3	17	3	5	3	28
4	57	12	23	15	107
Total	81	17	30	23	151

Pearson chi2(6) = 4.3957 Pr = 0.623

Cluster crosstab – job titles (not significant)

. tabulate jobtitle _clus_1, chi2

jobtitle	_clus_1				Total
	1	2	3	4	
2	7	0	1	1	9
3	7	3	2	5	17
4	24	6	6	8	44
5	33	3	12	4	52
6	10	5	9	5	29
Total	81	17	30	23	151

Pearson chi2(12) = 17.0322 Pr = 0.148

Cluster crosstab – strat proj outcomes (not significant)

```
. tabulate impoutcome _clus_1, chi2
```

impoutcome	_clus_1				Total
	1	2	3	4	
1	28	1	4	7	40
2	51	16	25	14	106
3	1	0	1	1	3
5	1	0	0	1	2
Total	81	17	30	23	151

Pearson chi2(9) = 13.5304 Pr = 0.140

Cluster crosstab – # strat exec projects (not significant)

```
. tabulate noproj _clus_1, chi2
```

noproj	_clus_1				Total
	1	2	3	4	
2	29	6	14	10	59
3	23	2	9	4	38
4	29	9	7	9	54
Total	81	17	30	23	151

Pearson chi2(6) = 5.9925 Pr = 0.424