



# Group-based Assessments – A Tool to Improve Job-readiness of Project Management Graduates

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# Why Is Project Management Important?

Tool for creating economic value, fostering competitive advantage and generating business benefits

PM methods and strategies reduced risks, cut costs and improved success rates

Alignment between PM and business strategy enhances the chances

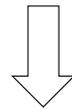
60% of senior executives said building a strong PM discipline is a top-three priority for their companies

80 % of global executives believed having PM helped them remain competitive during the recession

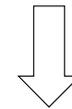
90% of global senior executives ranked PM methods as either critical or somewhat important to delivering successful projects

# Project Success

Perceived in different ways by all stakeholders



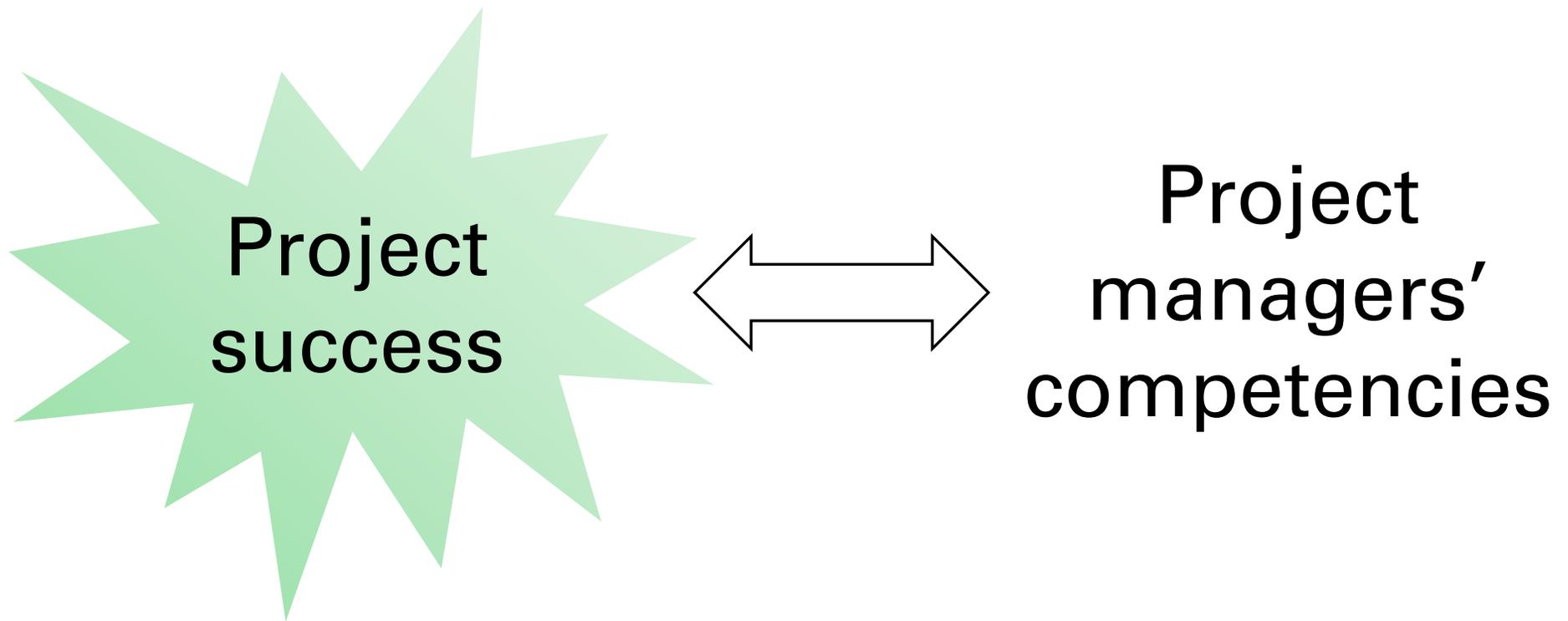
No conclusive evidence or common agreement



A lack of consensus regarding the criteria by which success is evaluated

650 project managers' opinions - achieving project success is undoubtedly more difficult and far more complex than simply meet the "iron triangle" criteria.

# Project Success and Project Managers' competencies



Magano et al. (2022)

# Definitions of Competencies

A bundle of skills and technologies that enables companies to provide benefits

Ability of an individual, a team, or a company to mobilize and combine resources to implement an activity in a situation

Three dimensions of competence: cognitive, functional, and social-knowledge

Two perspectives on competence: the theoretical and the operational

**Combination of knowledge, skill, and attitude (KSA)**

# Project Managers' Competencies

**Six dimensions:** industry-specific and generic skills, project management knowledge and expertise, (senior) managerial skills, (positive) personal traits, project management methodology experience, and professional qualifications and risk management

A mix of **contextual, technical and behavioural** competencies

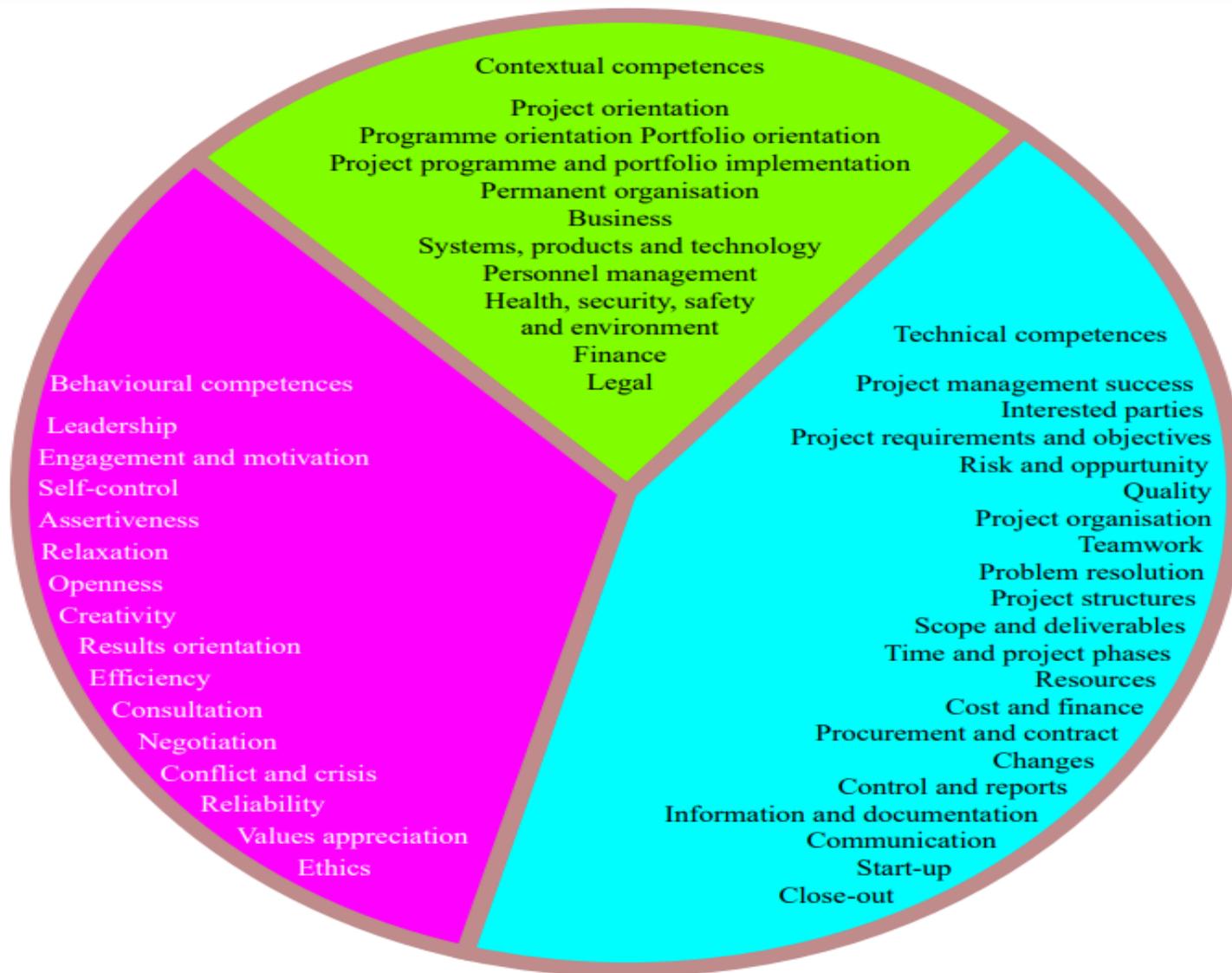
**Three main areas:** the context, the project management tools, and techniques and the human aspect

**58 project management competencies** divided into four clusters competencies: processes, personal, technical, and context and business

**81 competencies divided across 11 dimensions:** influencing, communication, emotional, contextual, management, cognitive skills, professionalism, knowledge and experience, project management knowledge, and personal skills and attributes

# Competencies Framework

- “Project Management Competency Development Framework” (Cartwright, 2008)
- “APM Competence Framework” (The Association for Project Management Competence Framework, 2015)



# Hard & Soft Skills

- Generally refer to processes, procedures, tools and techniques
- Hard skills are important for planning and control

- “Soft” skills refer to dealing with human issues, i.e. the “people” part of the project.
- Soft skills (dealing with people)
- Teamwork
- Cognitive skill
- Leadership and communication skills
- Motivation, delegation, ownership and sense of achievement;
- Responsibility, authority and delegation
- Trust in his team and delegate work

**Balance and optimize the use of these skills**

# Focus on Hard Skills



**Hard skills are not enough!**

Mere hard skills (discipline-specific and technically oriented)



Soft skills, which are interpersonally related

# Human Skills and PM

- Human skills of project managers have the greatest influence on PM practices and technical skills the least.
- Project leadership requires more than just technical competence.

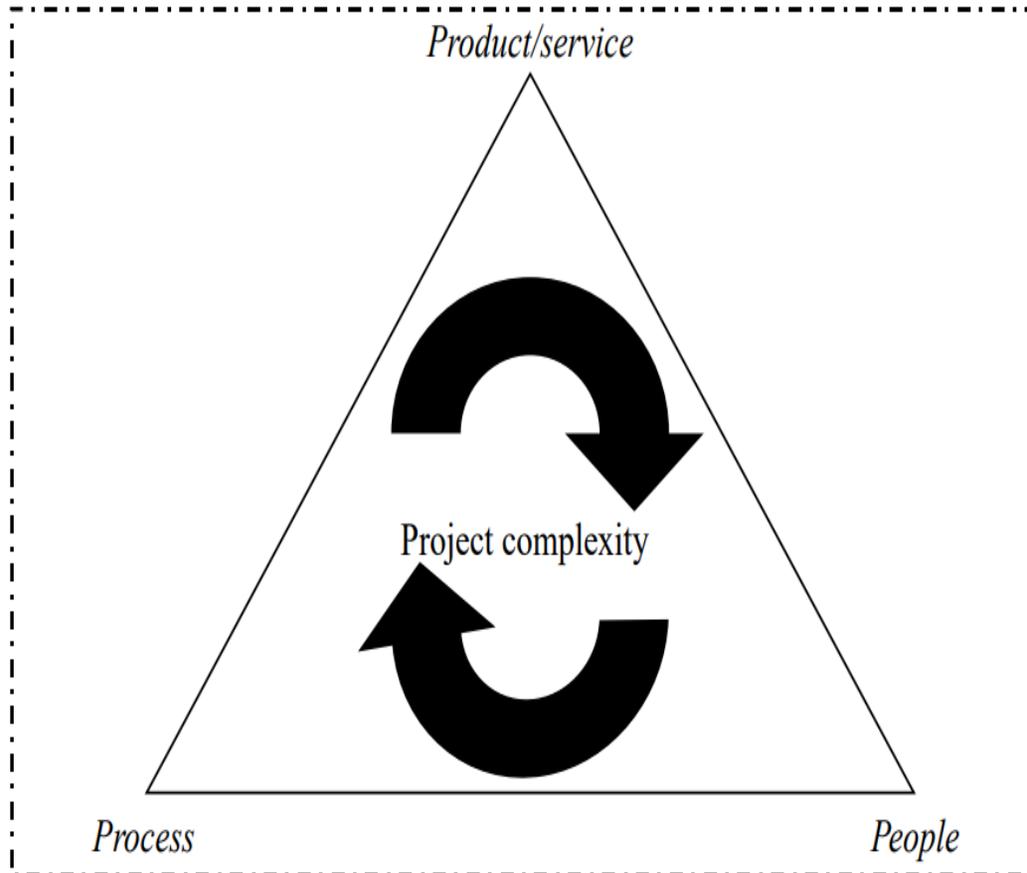
# Human skills and PM



90-95 % of performance issues annually related to soft skills



50% strategy and understanding of dynamic environment, 40% management and only 10% technical applications

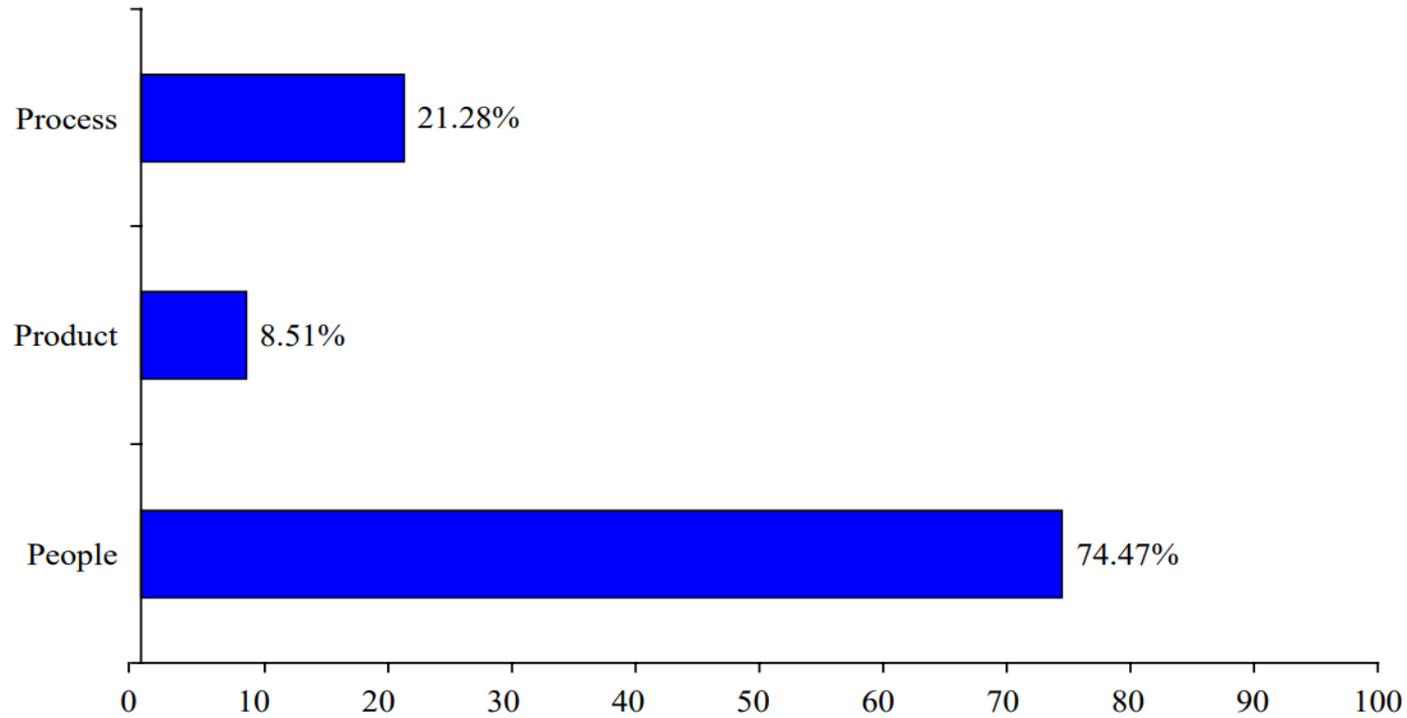


“a project which *involves a lot of people*”, “many *different people* with different skills”,

“*variety of people* in terms of skills and experience”, multidisciplinary, multi-national, multi-site and *a lot of stakeholders*, many functional cross-over, i.e. all related to dealing with *many people* with multidisciplinary background

The variety and number of teams, virtual teams and location of teams were the other terms used to define complex project, which again *imply people*.

# Project Complexity



# PM Graduates' Preparation

**GLOBAL  
CONCERN**

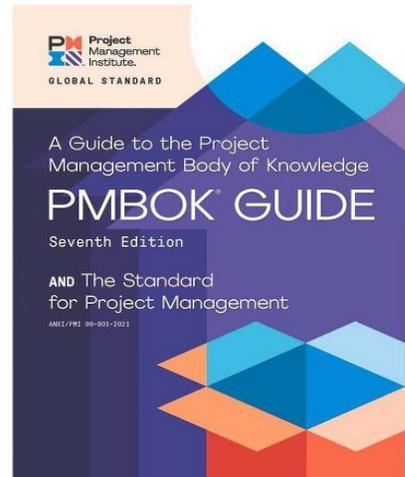
Field-specific knowledge  
and technical skills alone  
are not enough

Graduates need  
professional skills to deal  
with the stressful nature of  
the workplace environment

# PMI Talent Triangle



# University Education on PM



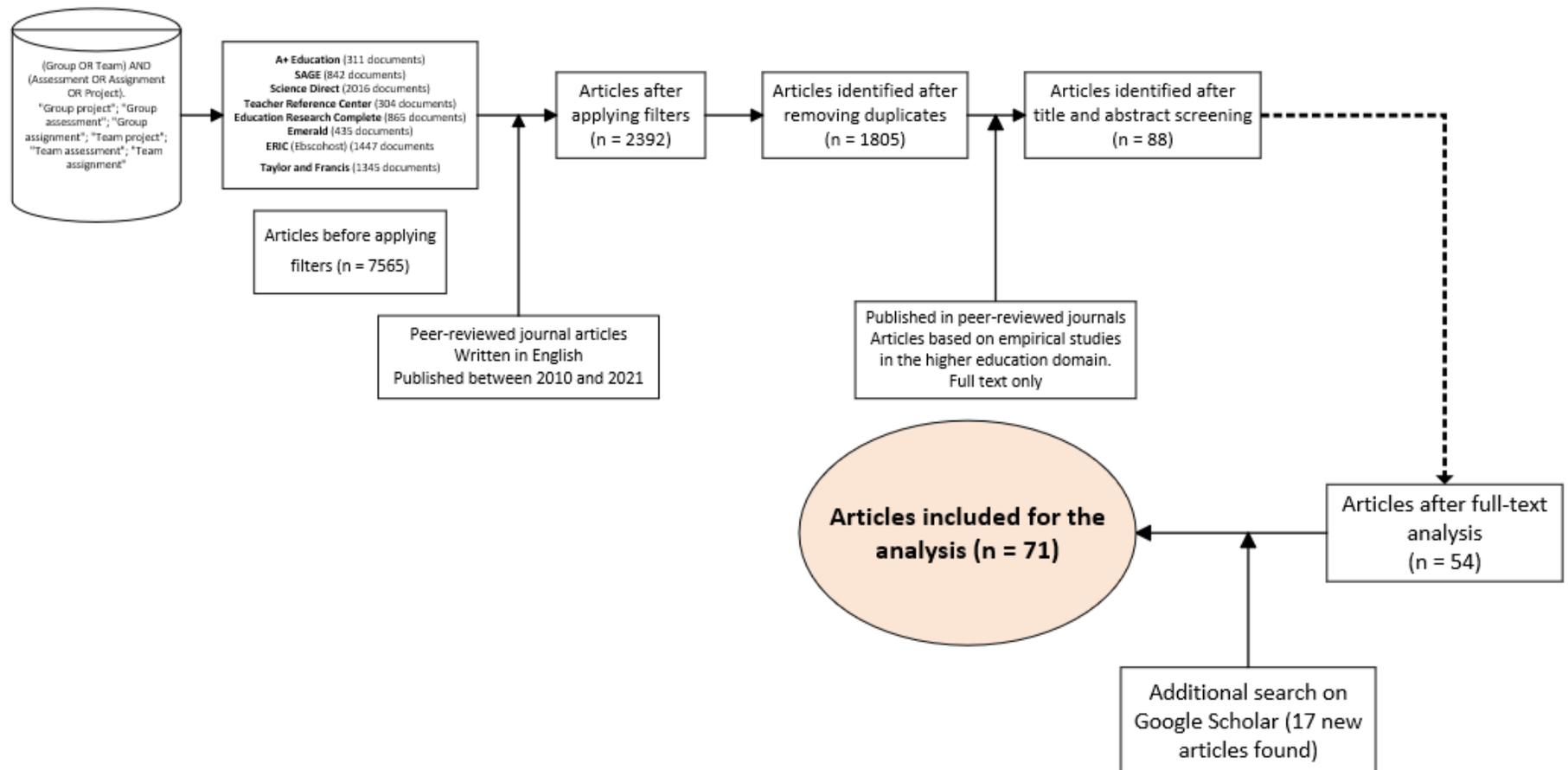
*“practitioner development has tended to exclude or marginalise knowledge, skills and behaviours that overlap or are considered as belonging to other areas of practice such as general management, human resource management and a range of other fields.”*  
(Crawford et al. (2006, p. 724).

**Technical skills**

# GROUP-BASED ASSESSMENTS



# Systematic Literature Review



# Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

<b>Inclusion Criteria</b>	<b>Exclusion Criteria</b>
Any scholarly article published in peer-reviewed journals	Conference proceedings, reports, book chapters, and dissertations were excluded.
Articles based on empirical studies	Any non-empirical studies, such as review papers, were excluded from this review.
Any study which is in the higher education domain	Studies related to primary school, secondary education, vocational education, training, and workplace sectors were excluded.
Full text only	In order to read and understand the full findings of the article.
In the year range (2010–2021)	The scoping review suggests that a considerable number of publications are available from the last decade.
Described in English	The authors' inability to interpret other languages.

# Theme 1: Self- and Peer Evaluations

- A useful method for addressing the problem of freeloading
- Individual contributions need to be reflected
- Fosters independent learning
- Assists academics in understanding the reasons for high variation

Formative and Summative Peer Assessments

Adjusting Peers' Marks

Anonymity and Confidentiality in Peer Evaluations

Qualitative and Quantitative Questions in Peer Evaluations

Training for Self- and Peer Evaluations

# Theme 2: Group Formation

Student-selected group formation

Structured teacher-selected group formation

Random teacher-selected group formation

# Theme 3: Group Size

Interpersonal transactions  
increases with number of  
students

Nature and size of the task

Little consensus on the number  
of members in a group

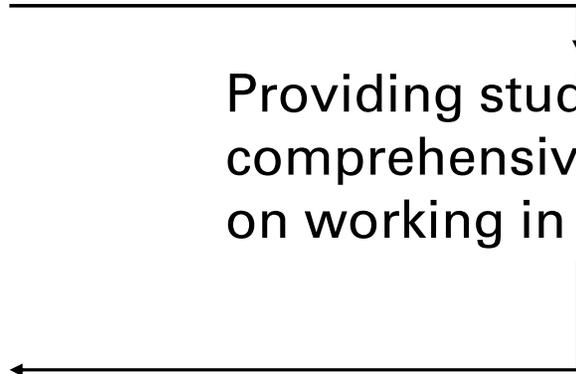
# Theme 4: Training for Working in Groups

Provided with little instruction on managing group dynamics

Providing students with comprehensive guidelines on working in a group

Debriefing students on their experiences

High-level communication topics and include one discourse-level topic



# Theme 5: Academics' Support and Guidance

- Engaging themselves in resolving group complexity, group conflict, discussing group skills development in students
- Allocating designated class time for group meetings
- Clarify assessment specifications and improve the quality of tasks

# Theme 6: Facilitation of Group Work by Technology

- To collaborate, communicate, facilitate group discussion, and share resources.
- Facilitate group discussion and share resources, including Wiki, discussion boards, Skype, FaceTime, Zoom, Google Docs, the GroupMe application, and social media platforms

# Summary

- Hard skills are not enough to bring project success.
- Universities need to ensure that PM graduates are well-prepared for the industry.
- Group-based assessments have the potential to develop the right skills if designed effectively.

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**Any questions?**

***Thank you for your attention***