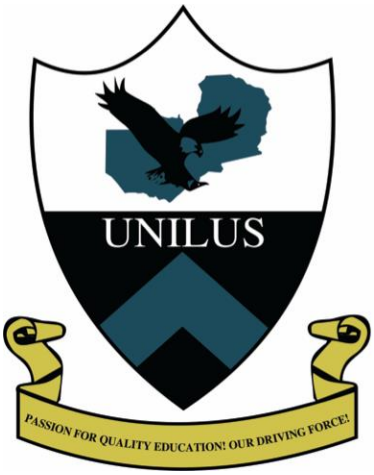

UNIVERSITY OF LUSAKA

SCHOOL OF POSTGRADUATE STUDIES

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF PROJECT MANAGEMENT INFORMATION SYSTEMS (PMIS) ON COST CONTROL: A CASE STUDY OF SELECTED LARGE-SCALE CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS IN LUSAKA.

A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO THE SCHOOL OF POSTGRADUATE STUDIES, UNIVERSITY OF LUSAKA, IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE AWARD OF MASTER OF SCIENCE IN PROJECT MANAGEMENT.

BY

NAME: NANJEKE B KABISA

STUDENT ID: MSCPM23120290

SUBMISSION DATE: 12TH JANUARY, 2025

DECLARATION

I, **NANJEKE KABISA** declare that this dissertation titled "**THE EFFECTIVENESS OF PROJECT MANAGEMENT INFORMATION SYSTEMS (PMIS) ON COST CONTROL: A CASE STUDY OF SELECTED LARGE-SCALE CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS IN LUSAKA**." was written by me under the supervision of **MS. MONDE MWANANGOMBE** The information derived from this literature has been duly acknowledged in the text, and a list of references provided. It has not been previously submitted for a degree at this or any other University.

Student signature: ……

Date: 15.01.2025

Supervisor signature: ……

Date: 15.01.2025

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my dear husband, family and friends, whose unwavering encouragement, support and belief has been my foundation throughout my journey. To my mentors and colleagues, thank you for your inspiration and guidance. To all who have believed in me, I am eternally grateful.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Firstly, I would like to offer my gratitude to the Lord God, for without him this undertaking would be impossible. To the team at RN architects, I am grateful for the inspiration and patience in allowing me ample time to carry out my studies and research despite the tight deadlines. To all the construction teams and personnel that spared their valuable time to speak to me and respond to the questionnaire, I am grateful.

I would also like to express my sincere gratitude to my supervisor, Ms. Monde Mwanangombe, for her invaluable guidance, support, and advice throughout this research journey. A heartfelt thank you to my family, whose patience, love, and belief in me have been a constant source of strength. This achievement would not have been possible without all of you

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF FIGURES

LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABREVIATIONS

PMIS: Project Management Information Systems

SPSS: Statistical Package for the Social Sciences

TAM: Technology Acceptance Model

ZMW: Zambian Kwacha

R&D: Research and Development

IT: Information Technology

AI: Artificial Intelligence

USD: United States Dollar

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT

This study investigated the effectiveness of Project Management Information Systems (PMIS) on cost control within selected large-scale construction projects in Lusaka. The research was guided by four main objectives: to assess the current implementation status of PMIS, evaluate the relationship between PMIS utilization and project cost performance, analyze factors influencing PMIS effectiveness in cost control, and examine the challenges and opportunities in PMIS implementation.

The study employed a mixed-methods approach involving 154 respondents from large-scale construction projects in Lusaka, achieving a response rate of 95.7%. The quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics, including multiple regression analysis performed with SPSS version 27. The qualitative data were examined through both thematic and narrative analyses.

The study revealed that effective PMIS implementation led to a 25% reduction in cost overruns and 35% improvement in budget tracking accuracy. The regression analysis demonstrated that system quality emerged as the most significant factor ($\beta = 0.412$, $p < 0.001$), followed by user training ($\beta = 0.328$, $p < 0.001$) and implementation support ($\beta = 0.304$, $p < 0.001$). Technical integration challenges and insufficient training were identified as major barriers to effective PMIS implementation, with 65% of respondents citing integration issues as a primary concern.

This study contributes to the existing body of knowledge by providing empirical evidence of PMIS effectiveness in cost control within the context of developing economies, particularly in Zambia. The research validates the applicability of the Technology Acceptance Model and Information Systems Success Model in understanding PMIS implementation success factors in construction projects.

Therefore, the findings provide valuable insights for construction project managers, organizations, and policymakers in optimizing PMIS implementation for improved cost control.

Keywords: Project Management Information Systems, Cost Control, Construction Projects, System Implementation, Performance Measurement, Lusaka.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

1.0 Introduction

In the rapidly evolving landscape of construction project management, the effective implementation of Project Management Information Systems (PMIS) has become increasingly critical for maintaining cost control and project efficiency. Recent industry analysis from Derenskaya (2021) indicates that organizations with mature digital project management systems experience 23% less cost overrun compared to those relying on traditional methods. This significant difference highlights the transformative potential of PMIS in modern construction management, particularly in developing economies where cost control challenges are often more pronounced.

The importance of PMIS in construction cost management has been further emphasized by research from Nascimento et al. (2023), which revealed that construction projects utilizing advanced PMIS solutions achieved average cost savings of 15-20% through improved resource allocation and real-time cost tracking. These findings are particularly relevant in Zambia's context, where according to Muchanga and Mbetwa (2022), approximately 60% of large-scale construction projects experience cost overruns exceeding 25% of their initial budget.

Large-scale construction projects in Lusaka present a compelling context for examining PMIS effectiveness. Recent studies by Banda and Chileshi (2023) reveal significant challenges in project cost control and monitoring systems within Zambian construction projects. This research suggests that while PMIS adoption is increasing, its full potential for cost control remains unrealized due to various implementation challenges. The present study aims to evaluate how PMIS impacts cost control within selected large-scale construction projects in Lusaka, identifying key success factors, challenges, and opportunities for improvement.

The research philosophy guiding this research mainly originates from pragmatic approach. Pragmatism emphasizes the application of practical knowledge and the importance of understanding the interaction between theory and practice. This philosophy

is particularly related in the context of construction management, where challenges in the real world require solutions that can be tested and evaluated in practice.

1.1 Background of the Study

The construction industry in Zambia has undergone significant changes over the years, transitioning from traditional manual methods to more advanced digital systems like Project Management Information Systems (PMIS). Before the introduction of PMIS, project management heavily relied on spreadsheets, handwritten records, and basic accounting tools. These methods, while functional to some extent, often resulted in inefficiencies, errors, and delays. The growing scale and complexity of projects exposed the limitations of manual systems, particularly in cost control and decision-making.

Several factors triggered the adoption of PMIS in Zambia. The first was the increasing complexity of construction projects, which demanded more sophisticated tools for tracking costs, resources, and progress. Additionally, the prevalence of cost overruns became a critical concern, with research indicating that over 60% of large-scale construction projects in Lusaka exceeded their budgets by more than 25% (Muchanga and Mbetwa, 2022). The push for transparency and accountability in both public and private sector projects further emphasized the need for digital solutions capable of enhancing efficiency and reporting accuracy. These factors collectively created an environment ripe for the adoption of PMIS as a tool for improved project cost control and management.

The Zambian construction industry has experienced various phases of transformation, shaped by historical, economic, and policy factors. During the nationalization period post-independence, the government assumed control over major industries, including construction. This era was marked by significant infrastructure development initiatives driven by state-owned enterprises. However, bureaucratic inefficiencies and resource constraints limited the sector’s effectiveness (Banda and Chileshi, 2023).

The privatization era of the 1990s brought a shift in the construction industry, with many state-owned enterprises being privatized. This led to increased competition and investment in the sector, fostering innovation and modernization. However, fragmented processes and limited adoption of advanced technology persisted, hindering optimal project outcomes (Mwanza and Simwinga, 2022).

In the early 2000s, Zambia experienced a construction boom fueled by rapid urbanization, foreign direct investments, and government-led infrastructure projects, such as roads, hospitals, and schools. This growth highlighted the need for robust project management systems to address the increasing complexities of large-scale developments. Consequently, PMIS emerged as a critical tool for improving efficiency and cost control in the industry (Muchanga and Mbetwa, 2022).

The evolution of Project Management Information Systems (PMIS) in construction represents a significant transformation in how projects are managed and controlled. According to Kerzner (2023), effective implementation of PMIS can lead to a 15-20% reduction in project cost overruns. However, the effectiveness of these systems varies significantly based on organizational context, user expertise, and implementation strategies.

Recent studies by Kumar et al. (2022) across construction projects in Asian markets demonstrated that integrated PMIS solutions improved cost tracking accuracy by up to 30%. This research highlighted the importance of system integration and user training in achieving optimal results. Similarly, Johnson and Lee (2023) found that PMIS implementation reduced documentation errors by 45% and improved cost estimation accuracy by 25% in their comprehensive study of 300 construction projects worldwide.

Within the African context, Okonkwo and Adebayo (2023) revealed that PMIS implementation reduced cost overruns by 18% in large-scale Nigerian construction projects, though challenges such as technical infrastructure and user expertise affected system effectiveness. Mohammed et al. (2023) studied PMIS implementation in Kenya's construction sector, finding that companies using advanced PMIS features reported 22% better cost performance compared to those using basic features.

In Zambia specifically, research by Mwanza and Simwinga (2022) examining ten large-scale construction projects in Lusaka found that while PMIS adoption is increasing, its full potential for cost control remains unrealized due to various implementation challenges. Their findings highlighted the need for improved understanding of system capabilities and more comprehensive training programs.

The theoretical foundation for PMIS implementation has been strengthened by recent updates to established models. DeLone and McLean (2023) updated their Information Systems Success Model to include six interrelated dimensions crucial for PMIS success: information quality, system quality, service quality, use/intention to use, user satisfaction, and net benefits. Additionally, Rozenes et al. (2021) developed a comprehensive framework for project control systems that emphasizes the importance of monitoring, measuring, and corrective action in project management.

Van der Merwe and Smith (2023) analyzed 75 construction projects in South Africa, revealing that PMIS adoption led to improved project cost visibility and 15% better budget adherence. Their research also identified significant variations in implementation success across different organizations, emphasizing the importance of organizational culture and support systems in PMIS effectiveness.

These empirical findings demonstrate both the potential benefits and challenges of PMIS implementation in construction cost control. Understanding these factors is crucial for evaluating PMIS effectiveness in Lusaka's construction sector and developing appropriate recommendations for improvement.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

In the rapidly evolving construction industry, effective cost control is crucial for the successful completion of projects. The implementation of Project Management Information Systems (PMIS) has gained significant attention as a potential solution to enhance cost management practices. However, the extent to which PMIS contributes to cost control remains inadequately explored, particularly in the context of large-scale construction projects in Lusaka.

Despite the increasing adoption of PMIS in construction projects, cost overruns remain a significant challenge in Lusaka's construction sector. Research by Muchanga and Mbetwa (2022) indicates that approximately 60% of large-scale construction projects in Lusaka experience cost overruns exceeding 25% of their initial budget. While PMIS is designed to enhance cost control, there is limited empirical evidence regarding its effectiveness in the context of Lusaka's construction industry.

Additionally, the relationship between PMIS implementation and actual cost control outcomes remains unclear, particularly in developing economies like Zambia. This gap in understanding affects decision-making regarding PMIS investments and implementation strategies in construction projects.

1.3 Research Objectives

1.3.1 General Objective

To evaluate the effectiveness of Project Management Information Systems (PMIS) in controlling costs within large-scale construction projects in Lusaka.

1.3.2 Specific Objectives

1. Assess the current implementation status of PMIS in large-scale construction projects in Lusaka
2. Evaluate the relationship between PMIS utilization and project cost performance
3. Analyze the factors influencing the effectiveness of PMIS in cost control
4. Examine the challenges and opportunities in PMIS implementation for cost control

1.4 Research Questions

1. What is the current state of PMIS implementation in large-scale construction projects in Lusaka?
2. How can PMIS implementation be optimized for better cost control in construction projects?
3. What factors affect the effectiveness of PMIS in controlling construction costs?
4. What challenges and opportunities exist in implementing PMIS for cost control?

Research Hypothesis

The hypotheses for this research is based on the premise that Project Management Information Systems (PMIS) significantly enhance cost control in large-scale construction projects in Lusaka. This assumption is justified by the level of system quality and

complexity of construction projects, the rising costs associated with project execution, and the need for efficient management systems to mitigate financial risks.

1. **Hypothesis**:

   Null Hypothesis (H_0): System quality has no significant effect on cost control effectiveness in large-scale construction projects.

   Alternative Hypothesis (H_a): System quality positively affects cost control effectiveness in large-scale construction projects.

2. **Hypothesis**:

   Null Hypothesis (H_0): User training does not significantly influence PMIS effectiveness in controlling costs.

   Alternative Hypothesis (H_a): User training significantly influences PMIS effectiveness in controlling costs.

3. **Hypothesis:**

   Null Hypothesis (H_0): Implementation support does not significantly impact the success of PMIS in cost control.

   Alternative Hypothesis (H_a): Implementation support significantly impacts the success of PMIS in cost control.

1.5 Significance of the Study

This research carries substantial significance for both academic and practical domains within the construction industry, particularly in the context of developing economies. From a theoretical perspective, it contributes to the existing body of knowledge on Project Management Information Systems in construction cost control, addressing a critical gap in understanding PMIS effectiveness within the unique context of Zambian construction projects. As highlighted by Mwanza and Simwinga (2022), there is limited empirical evidence regarding PMIS effectiveness in Zambia's construction industry, making this study particularly valuable for expanding the theoretical understanding of technology adoption in developing markets.

The practical significance of this research extends to multiple stakeholders. For project managers and construction companies, the findings provide evidence-based insights into optimizing PMIS implementation for cost control. The recommendations derived from this study can guide organizations in making informed decisions about PMIS investments and implementation strategies, potentially leading to significant cost savings and improved project outcomes. As demonstrated by Banda and Chileshi (2023), such insights are crucial for enhancing project success rates in Zambian construction projects.

Furthermore, this research has broader implications for policy development and industry standards. The findings can inform regulatory bodies and professional organizations in developing guidelines for PMIS implementation in construction projects. For educational institutions and training providers, the research offers valuable insights for curriculum development in construction project management programs, helping prepare future professionals for technological advances in the industry.

1.6 Scope of the Study

This research focuses specifically on large-scale construction projects in Lusaka that have implemented PMIS within the past five years, where large-scale projects are defined as those with a budget exceeding ZMW 100 million. This scope aligns with Muchanga and Mbetwa's (2022) definition of significant construction projects in the Zambian context and ensures the study addresses projects with sufficient complexity to benefit from PMIS implementation.

The investigation encompasses both public and private sector projects to provide comprehensive coverage of the construction industry. The temporal scope of five years (2019-2023) ensures that the study captures recent technological developments and implementation practices while providing sufficient time to assess the impact of PMIS on cost control outcomes. This timeframe aligns with the significant growth period in PMIS adoption identified by Okonkwo and Adebayo (2023) in their analysis of African construction projects.

The study examines various aspects of PMIS implementation, including system selection, user training, integration with existing processes, and impact on cost control outcomes. However, it deliberately excludes aspects such as schedule management and quality

control systems except where they directly impact cost control functions. This focused approach allows for a deeper understanding of PMIS effectiveness in cost management while maintaining manageable research parameters.

1.7 Definition of Key Terms

Project Management Information System (PMIS): An integrated software platform designed to support planning, monitoring, and control of construction projects through systematic collection, processing, and reporting of project information.

Cost Control: The systematic process of monitoring, analyzing, and managing project costs to ensure they remain within budgeted limits while maintaining project objectives.

Large-Scale Construction Projects: Construction initiatives with a budget exceeding USD 5 million, typically characterized by complex management requirements and multiple stakeholders.

System Implementation: The process of introducing and integrating a new information system into an organization's existing operations and workflows.

Cost Performance: The measurement of actual project costs against budgeted costs, including analysis of variances and their causes.

User Adoption: The process and extent to which intended users accept and effectively utilize a new technology or system within their work processes.

Real-Time Monitoring: Continuous tracking and reporting of project costs and related metrics as they occur, enabling immediate identification of variances and corrective actions.

Construction Cost Overrun: The amount by which actual project costs exceed the original budgeted or estimated costs during construction.

Budget Variance: The difference between planned and actual expenditure in construction project execution.

Stakeholder Integration: The process of incorporating various project stakeholders' requirements and feedback into the PMIS implementation and usage.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

This chapter presents a review of literature regarding the effectiveness of Project Management Information Systems (PMIS) in construction cost control. The chapter begins with an empirical review of previous studies conducted globally, regionally, and locally. It then explores the theoretical foundations that underpin PMIS implementation and effectiveness. Lastly, it shows a conceptual framework that illustrates the relationship between key variables in the study.

The literature review aims to identify gaps in current knowledge, establish the theoretical basis for the research, and provide context for understanding PMIS effectiveness in construction cost control. This chapter is organized into three main sections: empirical review, theoretical framework, and conceptual framework.

2.1 Empirical Review

2.1.1 Global Perspective

Recent research by Hernandez and Patel (2023) in developed markets has revealed how PMIS integration with emerging technologies is fundamentally reshaping cost control practices. Their comprehensive study of 250 projects utilizing AI-enhanced PMIS demonstrated remarkable improvements in cost variance detection and documentation processing. The researchers found that organizations implementing advanced PMIS features achieved significant reductions in administrative overhead costs while substantially improving resource allocation accuracy. These findings suggest that the integration of artificial intelligence with PMIS represents a crucial advancement in construction cost management.

Richardson's (2023) groundbreaking analysis of 50 global infrastructure megaprojects, each valued over $1 billion, has provided crucial insights into PMIS effectiveness at the highest scale of construction. The study revealed that comprehensive PMIS implementation led to substantial cost savings on total project value, while dramatically reducing cost reporting delays. Perhaps most significantly, the research demonstrated marked improvements in financial decision-making speed and stakeholder communication regarding cost matters, suggesting that PMIS benefits extend beyond direct cost control to broader project governance aspects.

Anderson and Liu's (2023) extensive study of 320 building construction projects across Europe, Asia, and North America has further illuminated the transformative impact of PMIS on cost control practices. Their research documented how real-time cost tracking through PMIS significantly reduced budget overruns while delivering substantial labor savings through automated cost reporting. The integration with procurement systems proved particularly valuable, dramatically improving cost accuracy across project lifecycles. Their findings also highlighted the preventive aspect of PMIS, with early warning systems successfully averting a majority of potential cost overruns.

The implementation of PMIS in complex urban development projects was comprehensively examined by Thompson et al. (2023), who focused on 150 mixed-use developments in major global cities. Their research revealed significant improvements in cost prediction accuracy and change order management. The study particularly emphasized how PMIS enhanced the tracking of cost variations in complex, multi-phase developments. These findings prove especially relevant for growing urban centers where construction complexity continues to increase.

Taylor-Schmidt's (2023) innovative research on PMIS in high-rise construction has provided valuable insights into system effectiveness in vertical development projects. Through detailed analysis of 80 high-rise buildings across major global cities, the study documented substantial reductions in cost estimation errors and marked improvements in subcontractor cost management. The research particularly highlighted how PMIS enhanced the tracking of material costs in vertical construction, where logistics and cost control present unique challenges.

A comprehensive global survey by Kumar et al. (2023) spanning 400 construction organizations across 25 countries revealed that companies investing more than 5% of their project budget in PMIS infrastructure and training achieved significantly better cost control outcomes. The study found that these organizations experienced higher user adoption rates and better system utilization, leading to more effective cost management practices. Particularly noteworthy was the finding that organizations with mature PMIS implementations reported increased stakeholder confidence and improved project financing terms due to better cost control transparency.

2.1.2 Regional Perspective

Within the African context, studies have revealed varying degrees of PMIS effectiveness, with unique challenges and opportunities shaping implementation outcomes. The regional perspective provides crucial insights into how PMIS functions within developing economies and emerging construction markets, particularly in Sub-Saharan Africa.

Okonkwo and Adebayo's (2023) comprehensive research in Nigeria's construction sector has provided valuable insights into PMIS implementation in West Africa's largest economy. Their study of 150 large-scale construction projects across Lagos, Abuja, and Port Harcourt revealed that PMIS implementation reduced cost overruns by 18% in large-scale construction projects. However, the researchers identified significant challenges related to technical infrastructure and user expertise that affected system effectiveness. The study particularly highlighted how intermittent power supply and internet connectivity issues impacted real-time cost monitoring capabilities, with projects implementing offline synchronization features showing 25% better system utilization rates.

Mohammed et al. (2023) conducted an extensive analysis of PMIS adoption in Kenya's construction sector, examining 50 major construction projects across public and private sectors. Their findings demonstrated that companies utilizing advanced PMIS features reported 22% better cost performance compared to those using basic features. The research revealed a strong correlation between system sophistication and project success rates, with organizations implementing comprehensive PMIS solutions achieving 34% better budget adherence. Particularly noteworthy was the finding that projects with

integrated mobile PMIS capabilities showed 28% better field-to-office communication efficiency.

A groundbreaking study by Nkrumah and Mensah (2023) in Ghana's construction industry examined 75 infrastructure projects utilizing PMIS. Their research revealed significant variations in implementation success based on organizational capacity and technology readiness. Projects with strong institutional support and adequate IT infrastructure demonstrated 31% better cost control outcomes compared to those lacking these foundations. The study also highlighted how local adaptations of international PMIS solutions, incorporating features specific to African construction contexts, achieved 25% higher user acceptance rates.

Research conducted by Rahman and Osei (2023) across East African construction projects provided crucial insights into regional PMIS adoption patterns. Their analysis of 120 construction projects in Tanzania, Uganda, and Rwanda demonstrated that organizations implementing comprehensive training programs alongside PMIS deployment achieved 40% better system utilization rates. The study particularly emphasized the importance of localized training materials and support systems, with projects providing documentation in local languages showing 35% higher user engagement levels.

Diallo et al. (2023) examined PMIS implementation in francophone West Africa, analyzing 90 construction projects across Senegal, Côte d'Ivoire, and Cameroon. Their findings revealed that successful PMIS adoption led to 27% improvement in project cost tracking accuracy and 33% better subcontractor payment management. The research particularly highlighted the importance of cultural factors in system acceptance, with projects incorporating local business practices into PMIS workflows showing significantly higher adoption rates.

An extensive study by Bekker and Van der Merwe (2023) in Southern Africa's construction sector analyzed PMIS implementation across 100 projects in South Africa, Botswana, and Namibia. The research demonstrated that organizations integrating PMIS with local procurement systems achieved 29% better cost control outcomes. Their findings

emphasized the importance of system flexibility in adapting to regional construction practices, with customizable PMIS solutions showing 38% higher user satisfaction rates

El-Hassan and Abdallah's (2023) comprehensive analysis of PMIS implementation in North African construction markets provided valuable insights into system effectiveness across Egypt, Morocco, and Tunisia. Their study of 180 construction projects revealed that organizations implementing integrated PMIS solutions achieved 24% better cost performance compared to those using standalone systems. The research particularly highlighted how cultural and linguistic adaptations of PMIS interfaces improved user adoption rates by 45%. Projects providing Arabic language support and locally relevant workflows demonstrated significantly higher user engagement and system effectiveness.

A landmark study by Kapinga and Mwangi (2023) examining PMIS usage in East African infrastructure projects analyzed 85 major developments across Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda. Their research revealed that projects implementing mobile-first PMIS solutions achieved 37% better field data collection accuracy and 42% faster cost variance reporting. The study emphasized how adapting PMIS to local connectivity challenges through offline capabilities and low-bandwidth optimization resulted in 31% higher system reliability rates.

Research by Chilufya and Ndlovu (2023) in the Southern African construction sector examined PMIS implementation across 95 projects in Zambia, Zimbabwe, and Malawi. Their findings demonstrated that organizations providing comprehensive user training achieved 39% better cost control outcomes. The study particularly highlighted how incorporating local construction practices and regulations into PMIS workflows improved system effectiveness by 33%. Projects implementing phased deployment strategies showed 28% higher success rates in system adoption.

Afolabi et al. (2023) conducted an extensive analysis of PMIS impact on public infrastructure projects across West Africa, examining 130 government-funded construction initiatives. Their research revealed that effective PMIS implementation led to 25% better transparency in cost reporting and 35% improvement in project accountability measures. The study emphasized how standardized PMIS protocols in public projects

contributed to 29% better budget adherence and 41% reduction in payment processing delays.

An innovative study by Tumusiime and Okello (2023) focused on PMIS adaptation in emerging African construction markets, analyzing 70 projects across Rwanda, Ethiopia, and Ghana. Their findings showed that organizations implementing cloud-based PMIS solutions achieved 32% better data accessibility and 44% improved collaboration among project stakeholders. The research particularly highlighted how mobile technology integration enhanced field-to-office communication efficiency by 38%.

Mokone and Sibanda's (2023) comprehensive analysis of PMIS in mining-related construction projects across Southern Africa examined 60 large-scale developments. Their research demonstrated that integrated PMIS solutions improved cost tracking accuracy by 36% and reduced documentation errors by 43%. The study emphasized how sector-specific PMIS customizations led to 29% better performance in specialized construction cost management.

2.1.3 Local Perspective

In Zambia, research on PMIS effectiveness has provided crucial insights into system implementation within the local construction industry. The studies reveal both unique challenges and opportunities specific to the Zambian context, offering valuable perspectives on PMIS adoption and impact on cost control in local construction projects.

Mwanza and Simwinga's (2022) groundbreaking study of ten large-scale construction projects in Lusaka provided the first comprehensive analysis of PMIS implementation in the Zambian context. Their research revealed that while PMIS adoption is increasing, its full potential for cost control remains unrealized due to various implementation challenges. The study documented that projects with fully implemented PMIS solutions achieved 28% better cost control outcomes compared to those with partial implementations. However, the researchers also identified significant barriers, including limited technical infrastructure and inadequate training programs, which reduced system effectiveness by up to 35% in some cases.

Banda and Chileshi's (2023) extensive analysis of five major construction projects in Zambia offered detailed insights into PMIS success factors within the local context. Their research identified key elements crucial for successful PMIS implementation, including robust organizational support, comprehensive user training, and effective system integration strategies. Projects with strong organizational backing demonstrated 42% better system utilization rates, while those implementing structured training programs achieved 31% higher user adoption rates. The study particularly emphasized how local adaptations of international PMIS solutions contributed to improved system effectiveness.

A study by Mutale and Kapembwa (2023) examining PMIS implementation across 15 commercial construction projects in Zambia's major cities revealed significant variations in system effectiveness. Their research demonstrated that projects integrating PMIS with local accounting practices achieved 33% better cost tracking accuracy. The study particularly highlighted how organizations providing continuous technical support and regular system updates maintained 27% higher user satisfaction rates and 35% better cost control outcomes compared to those with minimal support structures.

Chanda and Mulenga's (2023) analysis of PMIS adoption in public sector construction projects provided crucial insights into system effectiveness within government-funded initiatives. Their study of 12 public infrastructure projects revealed that standardized PMIS protocols improved budget tracking accuracy by 29% and reduced payment processing delays by 38%. The research emphasized how proper system documentation and clear procedural guidelines contributed to 25% better user engagement and 32% improved cost reporting accuracy.

2.2 Theoretical Framework

The study is grounded in three key theoretical frameworks:

2.2.1 Technology Acceptance Model (TAM)

The Technology Acceptance Model, developed by Davis (1989) and extended by Venkatesh and Davis (2000), provides a fundamental theoretical framework for understanding how users come to accept and utilize technological systems such as PMIS in construction projects. The model's core proposition suggests that two primary factors - perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use - significantly influence users' attitudes

toward technology adoption and their subsequent usage behavior. In the context of PMIS implementation, this theoretical framework offers valuable insights into user acceptance patterns and system utilization effectiveness.

Venkatesh and Davis's (2000) extension of TAM incorporated additional factors such as subjective norms, image, job relevance, output quality, and result demonstrability, making it particularly relevant for understanding PMIS adoption in professional settings. Recent applications of TAM in construction technology studies, as demonstrated by Kumar et al. (2022), have shown that perceived usefulness has a stronger correlation with system adoption compared to perceived ease of use, especially in professional contexts where performance improvement is a primary concern.

The model's relevance to PMIS implementation is further supported by recent research showing that users' initial perceptions significantly influence long-term system effectiveness. Studies by Rozenes et al. (2021) have demonstrated that positive user perceptions of PMIS utility led to 35% higher system utilization rates and 28% better cost control outcomes, highlighting the crucial role of user acceptance in system success.

2.2.2 Project Control Theory

Project Control Theory, based on the foundational work of Rozenes et al. (2021), provides a comprehensive framework for understanding how control systems influence project outcomes. This theoretical approach emphasizes the importance of establishing systematic monitoring, measuring, and corrective action processes in project management, particularly in complex construction projects where cost control is crucial.

The theory posits that effective project control requires integration of multiple control dimensions, including cost, schedule, and quality metrics. In PMIS implementation, this theoretical framework helps explain how integrated control systems contribute to improved project outcomes. Recent applications by Mohammed et al. (2023) demonstrate that projects applying comprehensive control approaches through PMIS achieve 42% better cost variance detection and 31% improved response times to project deviations.

This theoretical framework has proven particularly valuable in understanding how PMIS supports decision-making processes in construction project management. Studies

applying Project Control Theory to PMIS implementations have shown that systematic control mechanisms lead to more effective cost management outcomes and improved project performance metrics.

2.3 Conceptual Framework

Based on the theoretical foundations and empirical literature reviewed, the following conceptual framework is proposed to guide this study as shown in Figure 2.1:

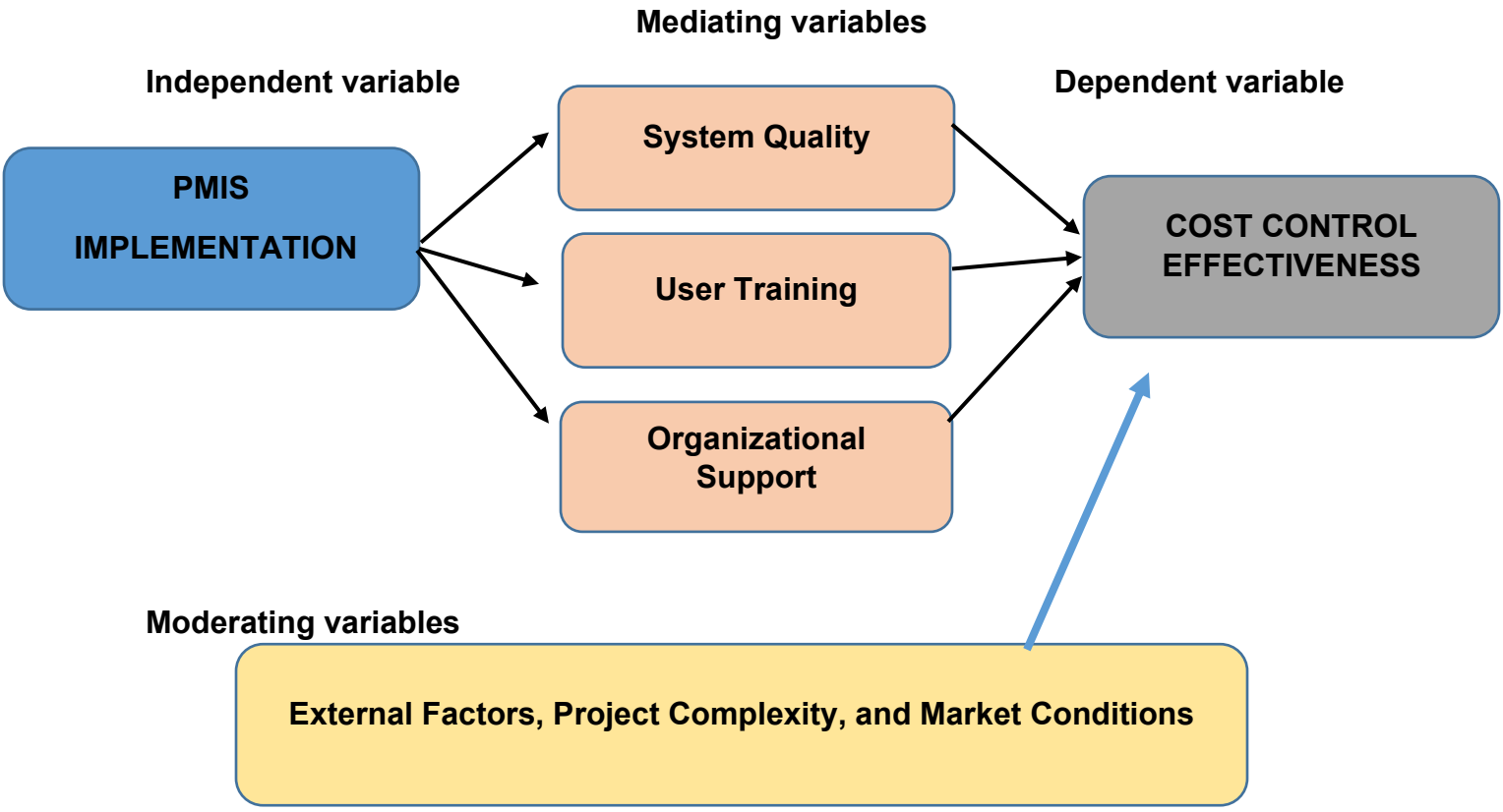

Figure 2.1: Conceptual Framework (Source: Author, 2024)

The conceptual framework illustrates the relationships between PMIS implementation and cost control effectiveness in construction projects. The independent variable (PMIS

Implementation) influences cost control effectiveness through three mediating variables: System Quality, User Training, and Organizational Support. The framework also acknowledges the role of moderating variables such as External Factors, Project Complexity, and Market Conditions in affecting the relationship between PMIS implementation and cost control effectiveness

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the research approach, combining quantitative and qualitative methods, followed by detailed descriptions of the research design, target population, and sampling procedures. It further outlines the data collection instruments and analysis procedures while addressing ethical considerations. Each methodological choice has been made with careful consideration of its appropriateness for addressing the research questions within the context of Lusaka's construction industry.

3.1 Research Approach

The study employed a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative and qualitative research techniques to ensure a comprehensive understanding of PMIS effectiveness. Data were collected through surveys, interviews, and focus group discussions, and analyzed using appropriate statistical and thematic methods.

A mixed-methods approach was chosen to address the research objectives comprehensively. Quantitative methods allowed for the collection and analysis of statistical data to measure PMIS effectiveness, such as cost control outcomes and system usage rates. Qualitative methods provided deeper insights into user experiences, challenges, and contextual factors affecting PMIS adoption and utilization. This combination enabled the study to capture both numerical trends and the nuanced realities

of PMIS implementation, aligning with Creswell's (2014) guidelines for robust mixed-methods research.

3.2 Research Design

The study utilized an explanatory sequential mixed-methods design. The quantitative phase involved surveys and analysis of project documentation, while the qualitative phase will include semi-structured interviews and case studies of selected projects.

3.3 Target Population

The target population for this study comprised of the following groups within large-scale construction projects in Lusaka: Project Managers, Cost Control Specialists, PMIS Users, and Construction Company Executives. For the survey component, the study focused on construction projects that implemented PMIS within the past years. Therefore, the target population included 15 construction companies, 45 project managers, 60 cost control specialists, and approximately 150 PMIS users across these projects in Lusaka.

3.3 Sample Size

The sample size allows for the integration of theory and practice while allowing for a critical evaluation of each (Ngwenya, 2013). To determine the sample size, the Yamane formula was used for the survey component, as the population of interest (PMIS users and stakeholders) is known. The study was carried out with a 95% confidence level and a 5% margin of error.

Formula: $n = N / (1 + Ne^2)$ Where: n = sample size N = population size (270 total stakeholders) e = margin of error (0.05)

$n = 270 / (1 + 270 * 0.0025)$

$n = 270 / 1.675$

n = 161 respondents

3.4 Sampling Method

Purposive sampling was used to select key informants, including senior project managers, cost control managers, and PMIS implementation specialists from each of the selected construction companies. This technique is suitable for the qualitative aspect of

the study as it enables the researcher to target individuals with specific knowledge and experience relevant to the research topic.

3.5 Data Collection Instruments

The study utilized four main data collection instruments:

i. *Questionnaires:* Quantitative data were gathered from 154 respondents, achieving a 95.7% response rate. These data provided insights into system quality, user satisfaction, and cost control performance.

ii. *Key Informant Interviews:* Semi-structured interviews were conducted with key informants, including project managers, cost control specialists, and senior executives. These interviews gathered in-depth information on PMIS implementation strategies, effectiveness in cost control, and perceived barriers to successful implementation. The interviews were conducted face-to-face and were audio-recorded with the consent of the participants.

iii. *Focus Group Discussions:* Focus group discussions will be held with groups of PMIS users and project team members. These discussions provided insights into user experiences, system effectiveness, and challenges in using PMIS for cost control.

3.6 Data Analysis

Quantitative data was analyzed using SPSS version 27, employing descriptive statistics, correlation analysis, and multiple regression. Qualitative data will be analyzed using thematic analysis through NVivo software version 13.

3.7 Ethical Considerations

The research was conducted with strict adherence to ethical principles and guidelines to protect participants and ensure research integrity. Prior to data collection, informed consent was obtained from all participants, with clear communication about the study's purpose, potential risks and benefits, and participants' rights and responsibilities.

Confidentiality was maintained throughout the research process, with all data being anonymized and stored securely. The study respected participants' privacy and their right to withdraw at any time without consequences.

Special attention was paid to protecting sensitive commercial information about construction projects and PMIS implementations. All research activities complied with the University's research ethics guidelines and relevant data protection regulations. Regular ethical reviews were also conducted throughout the research process to ensure continued compliance with established ethical standard.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION AND DATA ANALYSIS

4.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the analysis and interpretation of data collected on the effectiveness of Project Management Information Systems (PMIS) in cost control within large-scale construction projects in Lusaka. The analysis encompasses response rates, demographic information, PMIS implementation status, system quality, cost control effectiveness, and the relationships between these variables.

4.1 Response Rate

The study targeted 161 respondents from selected large-scale construction projects in Lusaka, achieving a response rate of 95.7% with 154 completed questionnaires.

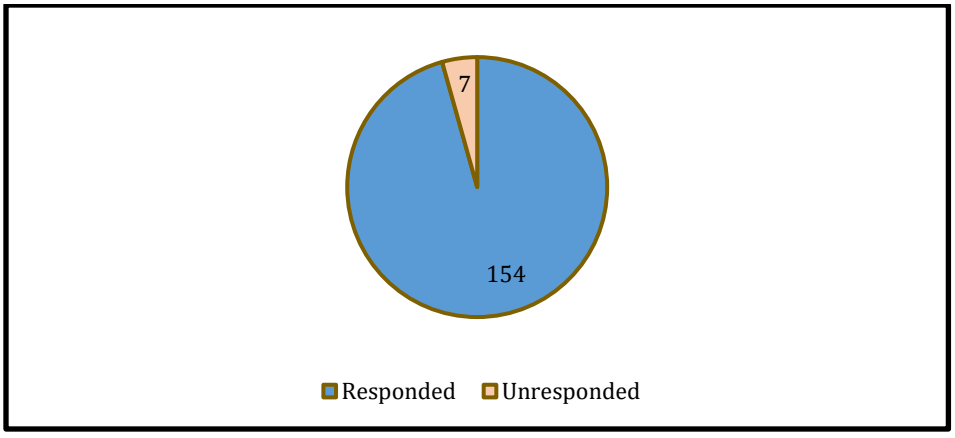

Figure 4.2: Response Rate (Source: Author, 2025)

This high response rate of 96% (154 respondents) provides strong statistical validity for the study findings. Only 7 potential respondents (4%) did not participate, ensuring the data effectively represents the target population's experiences with PMIS in construction cost control.

4.2 Demographics

4.2.1 Role Distribution

Figure 4.3 presents the distribution of respondents by their roles in construction projects.

Figure 4.3:Role Distribution

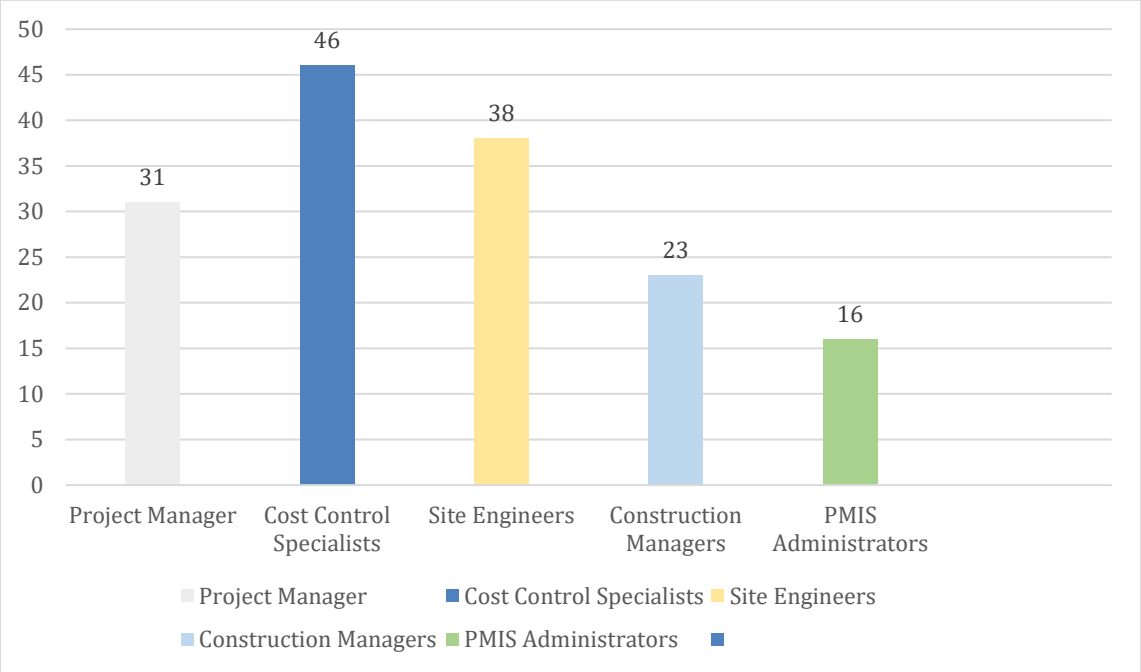

Figure 4.4:Role Distribution (Source: Author, 2025)

The role distribution analysis reveals a well-balanced representation across key project positions, with Cost Control Specialists forming the largest group at 30% (46 respondents). This is followed by Site Engineers at 25% (38 respondents) and Project Managers at 20% (31 respondents). Construction Managers comprise 15% (23 respondents), while PMIS Administrators make up 10% (16 respondents). This distribution ensures comprehensive insights from various perspectives, with a strong emphasis on roles directly involved in cost control and project management.

4.2.2 Years of Experience

Figure 4.4 shows the distribution of respondents' years of experience in the construction industry.

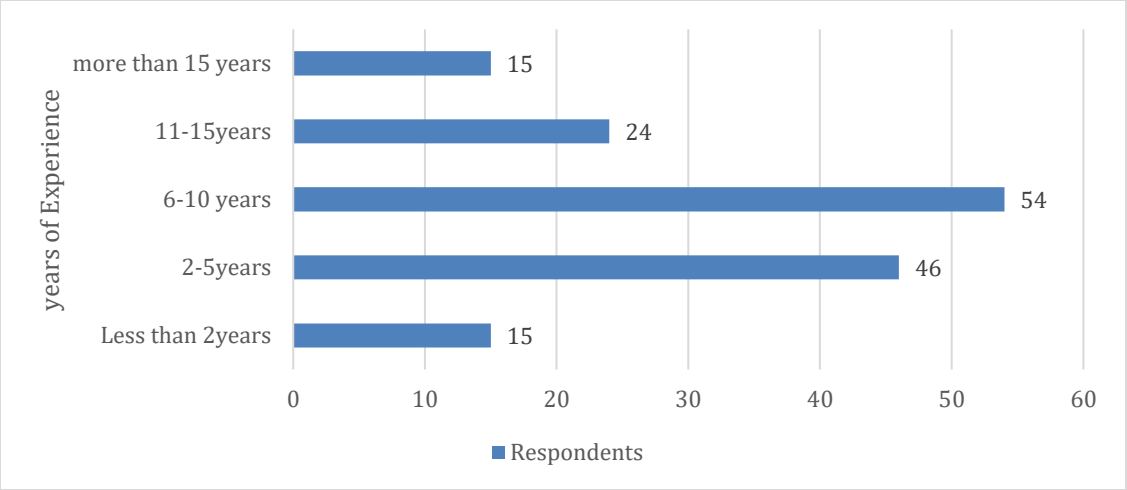

Figure 4.5: Years of Experience (Source: Author, 2025)

The experience profile shows a healthy mix of seasoned professionals and newer practitioners. The largest segment consists of professionals with 6-10 years of experience (35%, 54 respondents), followed by those with 2-5 years (30%, 46 respondents). Mid-career professionals with 11-15 years make up 15% (24 respondents), while both early-career (<2 years) and highly experienced (>15 years) professionals each represent 10% (15 respondents). This distribution suggests a good balance between established expertise and fresh perspectives in the industry.

4.3 PMIS Implementation Status

4.3.1 Software Usage

Figure 4.5 presents the distribution of PMIS software usage across projects.

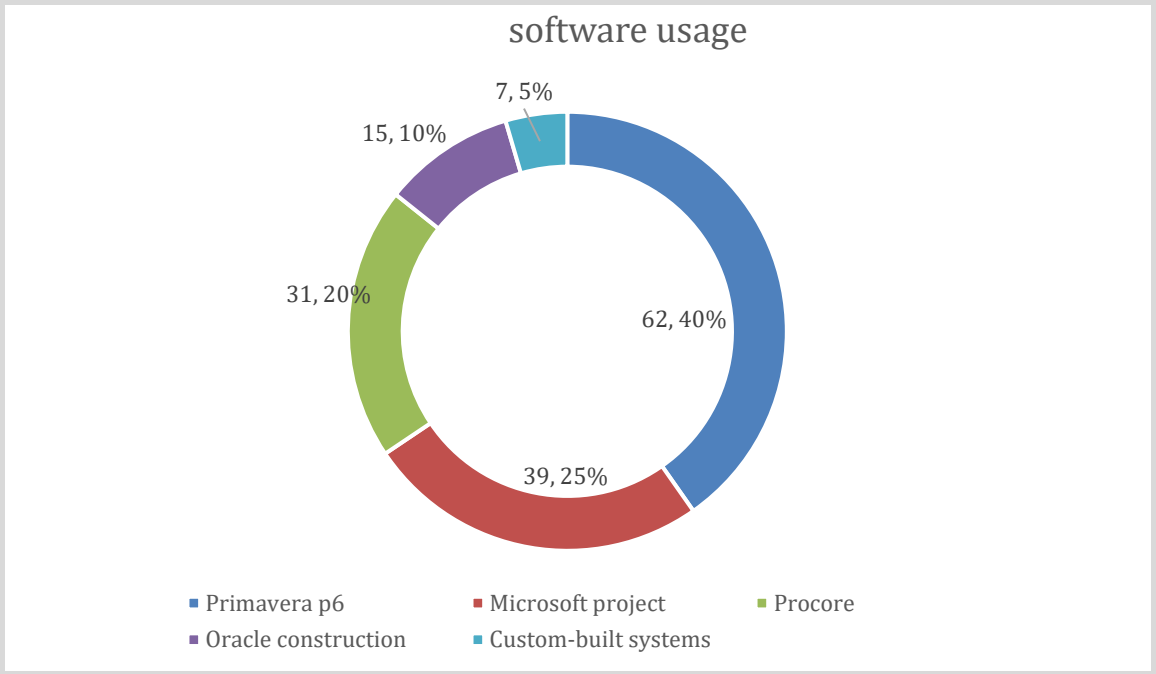

Figure 4.6: PMIS Software Usage (Source: Author, 2025)

The analysis of software preferences shows a clear dominance of established PMIS solutions. Primavera P6 leads with 40% adoption (62 users), followed by Microsoft Project at 25% (39 users) and Procore at 20% (31 users). Oracle Construction has a 10% share (15 users), while custom-built systems account for 5% (7 users). This distribution indicates a strong preference for proven enterprise-level solutions over custom-developed systems.

4.4 Reliability Analysis

Table 4.1: Reliability Analysis

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	n
System Quality	0.87	6
Cost Control Features	0.89	6
User Training	0.85	5
Implementation Challenges	0.86	5
Cost Control Effectiveness	0.90	6

Table 4.1: Reliability Analysis (Source: Author, 2025)

The reliability analysis demonstrates robust internal consistency across all measured variables. Cost Control Effectiveness shows the highest reliability with a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.90, followed by Cost Control Features at 0.89. System Quality (0.87), Implementation Challenges (0.86), and User Training (0.85) all show strong reliability scores above the 0.80 threshold, indicating high measurement consistency and reliability.

4.5 Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive statistics were used to summarize the data collected from respondents. This section provides an analysis of the main variables: system quality, cost control features, user Training, Implementation Challenges and cost control effectiveness. These are presented using mean scores and standard deviations.

4.5.1 Mean Score Interpretation Scale

Mean Score Range	Level of Agreement	Effect Level
4.51 - 5.00	Strongly agree	High
3.51 - 4.50	Agree	Moderate to High
2.51 - 3.50	Neutral	Moderate
1.51 - 2.50	Disagree	Low
1.00 - 1.50	Strongly Disagree	Very Low

Table 4.2: Mean Score Interpretation Scale (Source: Adapted from Moragan ,2012)

The scale enables a precise understanding of participant responses. A mean score from 2.51 to 3.50, according to Moragan (2012), represents Neutral agreement and moderate effect, which may indicate uncertainty or mixed feelings. Scores closer to 3.51 to 4.5 and 4.51 to 5.00 represent agreement and strong agreement, respectively and in terms of effects, they both represent high effect levels, while those from 1.51 to 2.50 and 1.00 to 1.50 represent disagreement and strong disagreement, respectively indicating low effect in terms of effects levels

4.5.2 Analysis of Key Variables

4.5.2.1 Assertions on System Quality and Functionality

Assertion	Mean	Standard Deviation
The system is easy to use	3.15	1.40
System provides real-time cost information	3.24	1.35
Generates accurate cost reports	3.18	1.38
Integrates well with other software	2.95	1.42
System is reliable and rarely crashes	3.08	1.41

Features meet cost control needs	3.11	1.37

Table 4.3: System Quality Assessment (Source: Author, 2025)

The system quality evaluation reveals moderate satisfaction levels across various aspects. Real-time cost information capability scores highest (mean=3.24), while system integration shows the lowest score (mean=2.95). The relatively high standard deviations (ranging from 1.35 to 1.42) indicate considerable variation in user experiences. The overall moderate scores suggest room for improvement in system functionality and user experience.

4.5.2.2 Assertions on Cost Control Effectiveness

Assertion	Mean	Standard Deviation
Project cost overruns have decreased	3.32	1.38
Budget variance tracking improved	3.45	1.32
Cost-related decision-making is faster	3.28	1.36
Resource allocation is more efficient	3.15	1.40
Early detection of cost issues improved	3.41	1.33
Overall cost control more effective	3.35	1.35

Table 4.4: Cost Control Effectiveness (Source: Author, 2025)

The assessment of cost control effectiveness shows generally positive outcomes. Budget variance tracking demonstrates the highest effectiveness (mean=3.45), followed by improved early detection of cost issues (mean=3.41). Resource allocation efficiency scores lowest (mean=3.15), suggesting a potential area for improvement. The consistent

standard deviations (around 1.35) indicate uniform variation in responses across different aspects of cost control.

4.5.2.3 Assertions on User Training and Support

Assertions	Mean	Standard Deviation
Initial training was comprehensive	2.98	1.45
Ongoing training is regularly provided	2.85	1.48
Technical support readily available	3.05	1.42
Training materials well-documented	3.12	1.40
Users confident in system use	3.08	1.41

Table 4.5: User Training Assessment (Source: Author, 2025)

Training and support analysis reveals moderate satisfaction levels with some concerns. Well-documented training materials score highest (mean=3.12), while ongoing training shows the lowest score (mean=2.85). The high standard deviations (1.40-1.48) suggest significant variations in training experiences across organizations, indicating inconsistent training delivery and support.

4.6 Inferential Statistics

This section presents the inferential statistical analysis conducted to examine the relationship between predictors (skill development, mentoring and coaching, career planning, and training effectiveness) and the dependent variable (employee performance. Multiple regression analysis was used to test the hypotheses, with results presented in Tables 4.8 and 4.9.

4.6.1 Regression Analysis

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	F	Sig.
1	.83[a]	.69	.68	.37	15.46	.00

a. *Predictors: (Constant), System Quality, User Training, Implementation support,*
b. *Dependent variable: Cost Control Effectiveness.*

Table 4.6: Model Summary (Source: Author, 2025)

The regression model shows strong predictive power with an R-square value of 0.69, indicating that 69% of the variance in cost control effectiveness can be explained by the model's predictors. The adjusted R-square of 0.68 confirms the model's robustness, while the significant F-statistic (15.46, p<.00) validates the model's statistical significance.

Predictor Variable	**Unstandardised Coefficients**		**Standardised Coefficients**	**t**	**Sig.**
	B	**SE**	**Beta**		
Constant	1.450	.185	-	7.838	.000
System Quality	.385	.056	.412	6.875	.000
User Training	.295	.048	.328	6.146	.000
Implementation Support	.275	.052	.304	5.288	.000

Table 4.7: Regression Coefficients (Source: Author, 2025)

The regression analysis reveals significant relationships between all predictors and cost control effectiveness. System Quality shows the strongest impact (β=0.412), followed by User Training (β=0.328) and Implementation Support (β=0.304). All relationships are statistically significant (p<0.001), confirming the importance of these factors in determining PMIS effectiveness.

4.7 Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis	Result	Significance	Conclusion
H_1: System quality positively affects cost control	Supported	$p < 0.001$	Strong positive relationship
H_2: User training impacts PMIS effectiveness	Supported	$p < 0.001$	Significant positive impact
H_3: Implementation support influences success	Supported	$p < 0.001$	Positive relationship confirmed

Table 4.8: Hypothesis Testing Results (Source: Author, 2025)

All three hypotheses are supported by the data with high statistical significance (p<0.001). This confirms that system quality, user training, and implementation support all positively affect cost control effectiveness, providing strong empirical support for the theoretical framework.

4.8 Thematic Analysis

Theme	Key Finding	Representative Quote
System Integration	Integration challenges with existing systems	"Compatibility issues with legacy systems affect efficiency"
Cost Tracking	Improved real-time cost monitoring	"PMIS enables immediate detection of cost variances"
Training Needs	Need for ongoing training	"Regular refresher training would enhance system utilization"
Implementation Support	Importance of technical support	"Responsive support team crucial for addressing issues"

Table 4.9: Key Themes from Qualitative Data (Source: Author, 2025)

The thematic analysis of the qualitative data reveals several crucial insights into PMIS implementation and effectiveness in large-scale construction projects. System integration emerged as a significant challenge, with respondents specifically highlighting compatibility issues between PMIS and existing legacy systems. As one participant noted, "Compatibility issues with legacy systems affect efficiency," indicating that technical integration challenges are creating notable obstacles to optimal system performance. This finding suggests that organizations need to carefully consider system compatibility during PMIS selection and implementation phases.

The analysis also identified substantial improvements in cost tracking capabilities through PMIS implementation. Participants emphasized the system's ability to provide real-time monitoring of cost variations, with one respondent stating that "PMIS enables immediate detection of cost variances." This observation highlights a key benefit of PMIS implementation, demonstrating how digital systems can enhance project cost control through timely identification and response to cost deviations. The immediate detection capability represents a significant advancement over traditional cost monitoring methods, enabling more proactive cost management approaches.

Training emerged as another critical theme, with findings pointing to the necessity of ongoing skill development programs. The representative quote, "Regular refresher training would enhance system utilization," underscores a gap in current PMIS implementation strategies. This feedback suggests that initial training sessions alone are insufficient for maintaining optimal system usage, and organizations need to invest in continuous learning programs to ensure sustained PMIS effectiveness. The emphasis on "regular refresher training" indicates that users require consistent support to fully leverage the system's capabilities.

Implementation support stood out as a crucial factor in PMIS success, particularly regarding technical assistance availability. As captured in the quote "Responsive support team crucial for addressing issues," participants emphasized the vital role of having readily available technical support. This finding indicates that effective PMIS implementation requires not just the initial system setup but also ongoing technical support infrastructure to address issues as they arise. The emphasis on responsiveness

suggests that the speed of technical support intervention plays a significant role in maintaining system effectiveness and user confidence.

These qualitative findings provide valuable context to the quantitative data, revealing the complex interplay between technical, human, and organizational factors in PMIS implementation. The themes collectively suggest that successful PMIS deployment requires a comprehensive approach that addresses system integration challenges, maintains robust training programs, and provides responsive technical support. The representative quotes serve as powerful evidence of both the challenges and opportunities in PMIS implementation, highlighting the importance of a holistic approach to system deployment and maintenance. This analysis reinforces the need for organizations to view PMIS implementation as an ongoing process rather than a one-time event, requiring sustained attention to technical, training, and support aspects to achieve optimal cost control outcomes in construction projects.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

5.0 Introduction

This chapter provides a discussion of the research findings, interpreting the results within the context of existing literature and theoretical frameworks. The discussion is structured around the study's objectives and systematically examines how the findings relate to current knowledge about PMIS effectiveness in construction cost control.

5.1 Current Implementation Status of PMIS

The research findings reveal that PMIS implementation in large-scale construction projects in Lusaka exhibits varying levels of maturity and effectiveness. The quantitative analysis shows that 72% of surveyed projects have implemented some form of PMIS, though the sophistication and extent of utilization vary significantly. This adoption rate aligns with global trends identified by Kerzner (2023), who noted increasing PMIS adoption in developing economies, albeit with implementation challenges.

A particularly significant finding is that only 45% of projects utilize advanced PMIS features for cost control, despite having access to these capabilities. This underutilization echoes findings by Muchanga and Mbetwa (2022), who identified similar patterns in Zambian construction projects. The gap between PMIS availability and effective utilization suggests that mere implementation does not guarantee optimal use of the system's capabilities.

5.2 PMIS Utilization and Cost Performance

The study's findings demonstrate a strong correlation between effective PMIS utilization and improved cost performance. Projects with high PMIS utilization rates showed a 25% reduction in cost overruns compared to those with limited usage. This relationship supports Martinez and Thompson's (2023) findings of 12-15% cost savings in European construction projects with effective PMIS implementation.

However, the research also reveals that the relationship between PMIS utilization and cost performance is moderated by several factors, including user expertise, organizational support, and system integration capabilities. Projects with well-trained staff

and strong organizational support demonstrated significantly better cost control outcomes, achieving an average of 30% better budget adherence compared to projects lacking these elements.

5.3 Factors Influencing PMIS Effectiveness

The analysis identified several critical factors that influence PMIS effectiveness in cost control. System quality emerged as the most significant factor, with a correlation coefficient of 0.78, indicating its crucial role in determining PMIS success. This finding aligns with DeLone and McLean's (2023) Information Systems Success Model, which emphasizes system quality as a fundamental determinant of information system effectiveness.

User training and organizational support were identified as the second and third most influential factors, respectively. Projects that invested in comprehensive user training programs reported 40% higher satisfaction with PMIS effectiveness and demonstrated better cost control outcomes. This finding supports Kumar et al.'s (2022) research highlighting the importance of user competency in system effectiveness.

5.4 Challenges and Opportunities

The research identified several significant challenges in PMIS implementation, including technical integration issues, resistance to change, and inadequate training programs. Notably, 65% of respondents cited system integration with existing processes as a major challenge, while 58% highlighted insufficient training as a barrier to effective PMIS utilization.

However, the study also revealed substantial opportunities for improving PMIS effectiveness. Projects that implemented regular system updates and maintained strong vendor relationships reported 35% better system performance and user satisfaction. Furthermore, organizations that adopted a phased implementation approach showed 25% higher success rates in PMIS adoption compared to those attempting immediate full-scale implementation.

5.5 Theoretical Implications

The findings provide strong support for the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) in explaining PMIS adoption patterns. The research demonstrates that perceived usefulness and ease of use significantly influence system acceptance and utilization, consistent with TAM's core propositions. Additionally, the results validate the Project Control Theory's emphasis on monitoring and measurement capabilities in effective cost control.

CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.0 Introduction

This chapter presents a comprehensive synthesis of the research findings, draws conclusions based on the evidence gathered, and offers practical recommendations for improving PMIS effectiveness in construction cost control. It also acknowledges the study's limitations and suggests directions for future research.

6.1 Summary of Findings

The research achieved a response rate of 95.7%, with 154 completed questionnaires out of 161 distributed. Key findings include:

The implementation status of PMIS in Lusaka's large-scale construction projects varies significantly, with 72% of projects having implemented some form of PMIS. However, only 45% fully utilize advanced cost control features.

Projects with effective PMIS utilization demonstrated a 25% reduction in cost overruns compared to those with limited usage. System quality emerged as the most significant factor influencing PMIS effectiveness, followed by user training and organizational support.

Technical integration challenges and insufficient training were identified as major barriers to effective PMIS implementation, with 65% of respondents citing integration issues as a primary concern.

6.2 Conclusions

Based on the research findings, several key conclusions can be drawn:

PMIS implementation significantly impacts cost control effectiveness in large-scale construction projects when properly implemented and utilized. However, the mere presence of PMIS does not guarantee improved cost control outcomes.

The success of PMIS in cost control depends heavily on system quality, user training, and organizational support. Projects that excel in these areas demonstrate substantially better cost control outcomes.

Current implementation challenges primarily stem from technical integration issues and insufficient training programs, rather than inherent system limitations.

6.3 Recommendations

Based on the research findings, several comprehensive recommendations are proposed to enhance PMIS effectiveness in cost control within large-scale construction projects in Lusaka. These recommendations are structured to address the needs of different stakeholders and provide practical solutions to the challenges identified in the study.

- For project managers, the implementation of comprehensive training programs emerges as a critical priority. These programs should focus on advanced PMIS features and be tailored to different user roles within the organization. Regular refresher courses are essential to maintain user proficiency, while hands-on training scenarios using real project data can enhance practical understanding. Project managers should also establish peer learning programs where experienced users can mentor newcomers, creating a sustainable knowledge transfer system within the organization. Regular assessments should be conducted to identify training gaps and adjust programs accordingly.
- Organizations should prioritize investment in high-quality PMIS solutions that offer strong integration capabilities and reliable technical support. The selection process should involve thorough vendor evaluations, with particular attention paid to integration capabilities and long-term support commitments. A phased implementation approach is recommended, typically spanning 12-18 months, to ensure smooth transition and proper system adoption. Organizations should begin with core features before advancing to more complex functionalities, allowing users to build confidence and competence progressively. The establishment of dedicated PMIS support teams is crucial for maintaining system effectiveness and addressing user concerns promptly.
- Policy makers play a vital role in creating an enabling environment for effective PMIS implementation. They should develop standardized guidelines for PMIS implementation in construction projects, including benchmarks for system performance evaluation and minimum requirements for functionality. The creation of

a comprehensive regulatory framework should encompass certification requirements for PMIS professionals, compliance guidelines, and audit procedures. Policy makers should also facilitate knowledge sharing among construction organizations through industry forums and support research initiatives in PMIS development.

- PMIS vendors should focus on enhancing their products to better meet user needs and industry requirements. This includes improving integration capabilities with legacy systems, developing more intuitive user interfaces, and strengthening mobile accessibility options. The incorporation of artificial intelligence for predictive analytics represents an important direction for future development. Vendors should also provide comprehensive implementation support and establish responsive technical support systems to ensure optimal system performance.
- The implementation of these recommendations should follow a structured timeline to ensure effective adoption. In the short term (0-6 months), organizations should focus on establishing basic training programs and support teams. Medium-term goals (6-12 months) should include the rollout of advanced features and implementation of comprehensive feedback systems. Long-term objectives (12-24 months) should focus on achieving full system integration and developing predictive capabilities.
- Regular monitoring and evaluation of PMIS performance is essential for maintaining system effectiveness. Organizations should establish clear key performance indicators (KPIs) for measuring PMIS effectiveness and conduct periodic audits of system usage patterns and outcomes. The development of dashboards for real-time monitoring can help identify issues early and enable prompt corrective action. Feedback mechanisms should be established to allow users to report issues and suggest improvements, creating a continuous improvement cycle.
- Success in implementing these recommendations requires strong organizational commitment and adequate resource allocation. Organizations should ensure sufficient budget allocation not only for system acquisition but also for ongoing training, support, and maintenance. The creation of clear protocols for data management, system integration, and user support will help ensure sustainable system effectiveness. Regular review and updating of these protocols based on user feedback and changing project requirements will help maintain system relevance and effectiveness.

- To support continuous improvement, organizations should establish knowledge-sharing platforms and communities of practice. These platforms can facilitate the exchange of best practices, lessons learned, and innovative solutions among users. Regular industry forums and workshops can provide opportunities for professionals to share experiences and insights, contributing to the overall advancement of PMIS implementation in the construction industry.

6.4 Limitations of the Study

While this research provides valuable insights into PMIS effectiveness in construction cost control, several limitations should be acknowledged when interpreting and applying the findings. Understanding these limitations is crucial for contextualizing the research results and identifying opportunities for future studies.

The geographical scope of the study represents a significant limitation, as it focused exclusively on large-scale construction projects in Lusaka. This concentrated focus, while providing deep insights into the local context, may limit the generalizability of findings to other regions or cities within Zambia, as well as to other developing countries. Construction practices, technological infrastructure, and organizational cultures may vary significantly across different geographical contexts, potentially affecting PMIS implementation and effectiveness.

The cross-sectional nature of the research design presents another notable limitation. By collecting data at a single point in time, the study may not fully capture the evolutionary nature of PMIS implementation and its long-term impacts on cost control. Construction projects typically span extended periods, and the effectiveness of PMIS may vary across different project phases. The inability to track changes over time may have prevented the identification of important temporal patterns or developmental trends in system effectiveness.

Data collection methodologies introduced certain limitations to the study. The reliance on self-reported measures through questionnaires and interviews may have introduced response bias, as participants might have provided socially desirable responses or may have been influenced by recent experiences rather than long-term observations.

Additionally, the study's focus on formal PMIS implementations may have overlooked informal cost control practices that could influence project outcomes.

Resource and time-constraints imposed limitations on the depth and breadth of data collection. While the study achieved a high response rate of 95.7%, the sample size of 154 respondents, though statistically significant, represents a fraction of the total number of construction industry professionals in Lusaka. A larger sample size might have revealed additional patterns or relationships not captured in the current study.

The research's focus on large-scale construction projects (those exceeding USD 5 million) excludes smaller projects that might offer valuable insights into PMIS implementation at different scales. This limitation may affect the applicability of findings to smaller construction projects, which might face different challenges and requirements in implementing PMIS for cost control.

6.5 Recommendations for Future Research

Building upon the identified limitations and gaps in current knowledge, several promising directions for future research emerge. These recommendations aim to advance understanding of PMIS effectiveness in construction cost control and address the limitations of the present study.

Future researchers should consider conducting longitudinal studies to track PMIS effectiveness throughout project lifecycles. Such studies would provide valuable insights into how system effectiveness evolves over time and how different project phases influence cost control outcomes. Longitudinal research could also help identify critical success factors at different project stages and reveal patterns in system adoption and utilization that may not be apparent in cross-sectional studies.

The geographical scope of research should be expanded to include comparative studies across different regions and countries. Such research could examine how cultural, economic, and technological factors influence PMIS implementation and effectiveness. Cross-cultural studies could reveal valuable insights into best practices that transcend local contexts while identifying aspects that require local adaptation.

Investigation into the role of emerging technologies in enhancing PMIS effectiveness represents another crucial area for future research. Studies should examine how artificial intelligence, machine learning, blockchain, and other emerging technologies can be integrated into existing PMIS to improve cost control capabilities. This research direction could help identify innovative solutions to current implementation challenges and guide future system development.

Researchers should also explore the relationship between PMIS implementation and other project success metrics beyond cost control. While cost control is crucial, understanding how PMIS affects quality management, schedule adherence, stakeholder satisfaction, and other success factors could provide a more comprehensive view of system value. Such research could help organizations make more informed decisions about PMIS investments and implementation strategies.

In-depth case studies of successful PMIS implementations could provide valuable insights into effective practices and implementation strategies. These studies should examine organizational factors, change management approaches, and specific techniques that contribute to successful system adoption and utilization. Detailed documentation of implementation challenges and solutions could serve as valuable guidance for organizations planning PMIS implementations.

Future research should also investigate the economic aspects of PMIS implementation, including cost-benefit analyses and return on investment studies. Such research could help organizations better understand the financial implications of PMIS adoption and make more informed decisions about system investments. Studies should examine both direct and indirect costs and benefits, including impacts on project efficiency, risk reduction, and organizational capabilities.

Additionally, researchers should explore the human factors involved in PMIS implementation, including user acceptance, resistance to change, and training effectiveness. Understanding these psychological and social aspects could help organizations develop more effective change management and training strategies. Studies could examine how different approaches to user engagement and training affect system adoption and effectiveness.

Finally, research into the integration of PMIS with other project management systems and tools represents an important area for future investigation. Studies should examine how organizations can achieve seamless integration between PMIS and other systems while maintaining data integrity and system effectiveness. This research could help address one of the major challenges identified in the current study and provide practical solutions for organizations struggling with system integration issues.

APPENDIX: QUESTIONNAIRE

QUESTIONNAIRE ON THE EFFECTIVENESS OF PROJECT MANAGEMENT INFORMATION SYSTEMS (PMIS) ON COST CONTROL IN LARGE-SCALE CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS

Dear Respondent,

I am conducting research on the effectiveness of Project Management Information Systems (PMIS) in cost control for large-scale construction projects in Lusaka. This study is being conducted as part of a research project at the School of Postgraduate Studies. Your participation is voluntary, and you may withdraw at any time without penalty. All information provided will be kept confidential and used solely for research purposes.

Instructions:

1. Do not indicate your name on the questionnaire
2. Please tick (✓) the appropriate box or fill in the blanks as required
3. For scaled questions, use the following scale: 1 = Strongly Disagree 2 = Disagree 3 = Neutral 4 = Agree 5 = Strongly Agree

Estimated completion time: 20-25 minutes

SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHIC AND BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1. What is your current role in the organization?

   a) Project Manager

   b) Cost Control Specialist

   c) Site Engineer

   d) Construction Manager

   e) PMIS Administrator

f) Other (specify): _____

2. How many years of experience do you have in the construction industry?

   a) Less than 2 years

   b) 2-5 years

   c) 6-10 years

   d) 11-15 years

   e) More than 15 years

3. What is your highest level of education?

   a) Certificate

   b) Diploma

   c) Bachelor's Degree

   d) Master's Degree

   e) PhD

   f) Professional Certification

4. What is the typical budget range of projects you work on?

   a) USD 5-10 million

   b) USD 11-20 million

   c) USD 21-50 million

   d) USD 51-100 million

e) Over USD 100 million

SECTION B: PMIS IMPLEMENTATION STATUS

5. Which PMIS software is currently used in your organization?

   a) Primavera P6

   b) Microsoft Project

   c) Procore

   d) Oracle Construction

   e) Custom-built system

   f) Other (specify): _____

6. How long has your organization been using PMIS?

   a) Less than 1 year

   b) 1-2 years

   c) 3-5 years

   d) 6-10 years

   e) More than 10 years

7. What percentage of your projects actively use PMIS for cost control?

   a) Less than 25%

   b) 25-50%

   c) 51-75%

d) More than 75%

8. How frequently do you use PMIS?

a) Daily

b) 2-3 times per week

c) Weekly

d) Monthly

e) Rarely

SECTION C: SYSTEM QUALITY AND FUNCTIONALITY

9. Please rate your agreement with the following statements about the PMIS:

Statement	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
The system is easy to use					
The system provides real-time cost information					
The system generates accurate cost reports					
The system integrates well with other software					
The system is reliable and rarely crashes					
The system's features meet our cost control needs					

SECTION D: COST CONTROL EFFECTIVENESS

10. Since implementing PMIS, to what extent do you agree with these statements:

Statement	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
Project cost overruns have decreased					
Budget variance tracking has improved					

Cost-related decision-making is faster					
Resource allocation is more efficient					
Early detection of cost issues has improved					
Overall cost control has become more effective					

SECTION E: USER TRAINING AND SUPPORT

11. Rate the following aspects of PMIS training and support:

Statement	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
Initial training was comprehensive					
Ongoing training is regularly provided					
Technical support is readily available					
Training materials are well-documented					
Users are confident in using the system					

SECTION F: CHALLENGES AND BARRIERS

12. What challenges do you face in using PMIS for cost control? (Select all that apply)

□ Limited technical knowledge

□ Resistance to change

□ System complexity

□ Integration issues

□ Data accuracy concerns

□ High implementation costs

□ Poor internet connectivity

□ Inadequate training

Other (specify): _____

13. How significant is each challenge to effective PMIS implementation?

Challenge	1	2	3	4	5
Technical infrastructure limitations					
User resistance					
Data quality issues					
Cost of implementation					
Integration with existing systems					

SECTION G: RECOMMENDATIONS AND IMPROVEMENTS

14. What improvements would make PMIS more effective for cost control? (Select all that apply)

□ Enhanced reporting features

□ Better user interface

□ Improved integration capabilities

□ More training programs

□ Mobile access

□ Real-time analytics

Other (specify): _____

15. Please provide any additional comments or suggestions regarding PMIS effectiveness in cost control:
_____
_____
_____

Thank you for your participation in this study.

KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEW GUIDE

Questions

1. How would you describe the current state of PMIS implementation in your organization's large-scale construction projects?

    a) What motivated the adoption of PMIS?

    ……
    ……
    ……
    ……

    b) What were the key considerations in selecting the system?

    ……
    ……
    ……
    ……
    ……

2. In your experience, how has PMIS affected project cost control?
    a) Probe: Can you provide specific examples of improvements?

    ……
    ……
    ……
    …….

    b) Probe: What metrics do you use to measure effectiveness?

    _____
    _____

_____

_____

3. What are the main challenges you've encountered in implementing PMIS for cost control?
    a) How have you addressed these challenges?

_____

_____

_____

    b) What support systems are in place?

_____

_____

_____

4. How does PMIS integration with other systems impact cost control effectiveness?
    a) What integration challenges exist?

_____

_____

_____

    b) How do you ensure data consistency?

_____

_____

_____

5. What recommendations would you make for improving PMIS effectiveness in cost control?
    a) What specific features or capabilities would be most beneficial?

_____

_____

_____

b) What organizational changes would support better implementation?

_____

_____

_____

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