

# An Exploratory Study on the Influencers of the Perceived Relevance of CIO's Activities

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## ABSTRACT

Over the past decades several studies aimed to rank the importance of CIO's activities. One aspect that stands out in these studies is the difficulty in finding two studies that agree on the relative importance of CIO's activities. On the one hand, this can be explained by the CIO role evolution. On the other hand, there may be certain variables that influence the perception of the importance of CIO's activities. This paper presents the results of an exploratory study developed to identify the current CIO's main activities and to verify whether CIO's demographics and CIO's business context influence the perception of the importance of those activities. The results show that managing projects, interacting with top management teams, optimizing business processes and making strategic decisions are main CIO's activities; and the importance recognized to these activities is influenced by characteristics such as the CIO's age or the hierarchical structure of the organization.

## KEYWORDS

Activities, Chief Information Officer, CIO, Influencers, Perceptions, Large Companies, Ranking

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Information Technology (IT) has come to assume many different roles in organizations since it began to be commercially available in the mid-twentieth century. Initially, its use was restricted practically to the operational level. But over time, with the development of new features and capabilities, companies found applications at various managerial levels and, currently, information technologies are embedded in Information Systems (IS) and in virtually all organizational activities (Trigo et al., 2011; Varajão, 2005).

The volume and variety of information available to organizations from both external and internal sources is growing rapidly, being IT/IS fundamental for its effective management and protection as a key corporate asset (Williams et al., 2014). The Information Systems Function (ISF), as main responsible for IT/IS adoption and management, must ensure that organizations are adequately supported by IT. In this context, the Chief Information Officer (CIO) plays a central role as Head of the ISF, taking responsibility for the planning, organization, direction and control of the processes that are required to ensure the existence of an Information System (IS) that suits the organization's informational needs (Varajão et al., 2012b). In fulfilling his role, the CIO needs to perform a rich and diversified set of activities. For several years, studies (Carvalho et al., 2009; Larson & Adams,