While every role plays an important part in the creation of a project's final design the balance of responsibilities is more skewed towards some roles over others. Project managers hold more responsibility over a designer, while the designer does more of the work. Managers ensure the team is on task and working efficiently while most of the work is done by the people they manage. The responsibility of the workers falls on the manager. In this sense the project manager is steering a ship while the designers and other workers are making sure it stays afloat. Generally an overlap is formed as the project manager may and in my opinion should have a good understanding of each role they are managing so that the manager may assist or outright do a specific task if a designer is not present or otherwise needs assistance. In addition the project manager should ensure that the work done by their subordinates is to a specific quality before passing it along to the next stage, may it be a milestone, a QA session, or otherwise.

When it comes to roles playing a bigger part in project development I feel it depends on the project mainly, but generally speaking every role plays an important part that if not fulfilled causes overall disruption to the project. While the project manager is an important role - working as a team leader a well coordinated team that knows each other well may be able to progress just as much if not more than a team with a project manager, although I feel this is a rare case. Each designer plays an important role seeing as they do the work for the project, without them there would be no work done and thus no project. Quality is important to ensure a project is to the desired standard and without them it becomes the responsibility of the designers, eating development time and manpower. As for the lead designer in my experience this role has been synonymous with the project lead but ultimately can be seen as an inbetween for the designers and the project manager, i.e. having a lead programmer, lead artist, lead sound design, etc. In this respect they are the leaders of each subdivision on a team doing a similar role to the project manager but for a smaller group. I feel the lead role could be obscured by a good project manager if necessary.

As for which position I find most challenging I would say the project manager as they have to be prepared for almost every scenario, direct the team as necessary, provide feedback, ensure the schedule is met, and more. They hold a great amount of responsibility and require a greater amount of experience to be efficient and effective. In essence filling the role of the project manager I find it to be difficult as I am accustomed to the role lacking the key experiences to be a leader.

Some ways a project manager can play a role in QA is checking the contributions of each team member as they are made to ensure the baseline quality is met before QA goes and nitpicks it further than the project manager would. This creates a dual door setup where the project manager catches obvious issues while QA gets deep into the product to find issues that may not be as easily found or otherwise seen by the project manager or a consumer.