

Midocean University

Faculty of Management

Department/ Specialization



Project title

**The role of the Project Management Office (PMO) in
enhancing project success rates**

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1. Chapter 3: Research Methodology

1.1. Introduction

This chapter outlines the methodological framework utilized for the field study and to test the impact of project risk management strategies on the achievement of strategic organizational objectives.

1.2. Operational definitions for research variables

To transform abstract theoretical concepts into measurable empirical indicators, the research variables are operationally defined as follows:

The Independent Variable: PMO Core Functions and Roles

The PMO roles are operationally defined as the centralized, structural behaviors, standards, and oversight actions implemented by a Project Management Office to govern, support, and direct project execution. This construct is measured across four sub-dimensions using a 5-point Likert scale:

- **Project Governance and Standardization:** The frequency and capacity of the PMO to establish unified project management methodologies, templates, policies, and compliance metrics across the organization.
- **Performance Monitoring and Control:** The operational practices actively aimed at tracking project health, measuring KPIs, managing project interdependencies, and executing corrective actions to prevent project slippage.
- **Resource and Capacity Management:** The institutional capacity of the PMO to optimize, allocate, and balance human, financial, and technical capital across multiple projects to eliminate bottlenecks.
- **Knowledge Management and Capability Building:** The deliberate strategy of documenting historical project data, lessons learned, and providing ongoing training and mentorship to project managers to elevate organizational execution capacity.

The Dependent Variable: Project Success Rates

This variable is operationally defined as the comprehensive performance level an organization exhibits in executing individual projects effectively within established constraints. It is measured via the following project performance benchmarks:

- **Triple Constraint Compliance (Time, Cost, Scope):** The efficiency of projects in meeting their baseline schedules, staying within approved budgets, and delivering the full technical scope.

- **Quality and Stakeholder Satisfaction:** The degree to which completed projects meet specified corporate requirements and satisfy the expectations of clients, sponsors, and end-users.
- **Value and Benefit Realization:** The baseline success of the project in delivering the intended operational capabilities and business value promised in the original project charter.

1.3. Research design (research onion)

This study adopts the structural framework of Saunders' Research Onion to ensure methodological alignment from abstract philosophy down to operational tools:

- **Research Approach:** To effectively investigate the dynamic relationship between PMO functions and their impact on enhancing project success rates, this study adopts the descriptive analytical approach. This methodology is uniquely suited for the study's scope, as it extends beyond the mere surface-level documentation of PMO presence. It provides a comprehensive, systematic description of contemporary PMO responsibilities while simultaneously analyzing their underlying success mechanisms. By deploying this approach, the study can break down complex organizational variables, evaluate their current deployment, and critically analyze how proactive PMO oversight directly correlates with higher project completion rates.
- **Research Strategy:** A Survey Strategy is deployed. Data is collected through a standardized and structured questionnaire distributed to a targeted sample population, enabling quantitative generalizations.
- **Research Choice:** A Mono-method Quantitative design is chosen. The study focuses entirely on statistical data collected through the survey instrument to address the research questions.
- **Time Horizon:** A Cross-Sectional time horizon is applied. Data is collected from the study population at a single point in time (during the current year, 2026), representing a realistic snapshot of current project management practices.
- **Techniques and Procedures:** This layer involves distributing the questionnaire electronically and via fieldwork to relevant project professionals, followed by data coding, entry, and analysis using statistical software.

1.4. Research population & Sampling methods and technique

The target population comprises management professionals bridging project execution and organizational oversight within contemporary organizations operating in developing environments (specifically the Saudi-Arabia region). This includes: PMO Directors, Project Portfolio Managers, Project Managers, and Senior Project Coordinators.

1.5. Data collection method

Primary data collection is executed through a Structured Questionnaire, explicitly designed and peer-reviewed (validated by expert arbitrators) for this study. The questionnaire is divided into three primary sections:

- **Demographic Data:** Capturing respondent position, years of experience, organization size, PMO type (Supportive, Controlling, or Directive), and industry sector.
- **Independent Variable Core:** Items measuring the implementation maturity level of PMO governance, monitoring, resource optimization, and knowledge management functions.
- **Dependent Variable Core:** Items measuring the organization's success rates regarding project timelines, budgets, quality standards, and stakeholder satisfaction.

1.6. Types of data

To achieve a holistic empirical evaluation, two distinct types of data are gathered and modeled:

- **Primary Data:** Raw quantitative data collected directly for the first time from the target sample via the survey questionnaire to capture actual, current perceptions and practices regarding PMO roles and project success rates for the year 2026.
- **Secondary Data:** Documentary and foundational data extracted from academic literature, PMO maturity frameworks, project management body of knowledge (PMBOK), and corporate project evaluation reports. Secondary data is used to ground the research problem and construct its theoretical framework.
- **Sample Size:** The study aims to draw a representative sample ranging from 10 to 50 qualified respondents from the selected organizations to ensure the statistical capacity necessary for regression modeling.

1.7. Statistical analysis procedures

The collected quantitative data is processed, coded, and analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), applying the following statistical tools (Descriptive Statistics):

- Frequencies
- Percentages
- Arithmetic means

Standard deviations will be calculated to determine demographic profiles and answer Sub-questions 1 and 2 regarding the current maturity level of PMO operations and the baseline project success rates.

1.8. Conclusion

This chapter lays out a detailed methodological roadmap for evaluating the impact of the Project Management Office (PMO) on enhancing project success rates. The study employs a descriptive analytical approach, implemented through a single-method, cross-sectional quantitative survey design to collect data from regional project professionals during 2026. By translating key independent and dependent variables into measurable empirical indicators and integrating primary survey data with core academic literature, the framework ensures high reliability and structural consistency. Ultimately, detailed sampling techniques and data processing procedures using SPSS software provide a powerful empirical engine for analyzing field data, testing research hypotheses, and answering the study's central questions, which will be addressed in the subsequent analysis chapter.

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Appendix

Questionnaire:

The role of the Project Management Office (PMO) in enhancing project success rates

Part 1: To what extent does your organization utilize a dedicated Project Management Office (PMO)?

- ☐ Fully functional PMO.
- ☐ Partial/Departmental PMO.
- ☐ No formal PMO.
- ☐ Planning to implement one.

How effectively does your PMO align project goals with overall organizational strategy? (1 - Not at all, 10 - Extremely well)

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
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Which PMO functions have the greatest impact on your project success?

- ☐ Resource Management.
- ☐ Methodology Standardization.
- ☐ Risk Management.
- ☐ Budget Oversight.
- ☐ Project Reporting.
- ☐ Quality Assurance.

Does your PMO provide standardized templates and processes for project documentation?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

How much has the PMO improved the consistency of project delivery within your firm? (1 - No improvement, 10 - Significant improvement)

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
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What are the primary challenges your PMO faces in driving project success?

- Resistance to Change
- Lack of Executive Support
- Resource Constraints
- Poor Communication
- Inadequate Tools
- Bureaucratic Burden

How does your PMO handle project performance monitoring?

- Real-time Dashboards
- Weekly Progress Meetings.
- Monthly Audits.
- Ad-hoc reporting.
- None

How would you rate the impact of the PMO on mitigating project risks? (1 - Minimal impact, 10 - Very high impact)

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
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Does the PMO facilitate post-project reviews to document lessons learned?

- Yes
- No

In your experience, what is the single most important contribution a PMO can make to increase project success rates?
