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The Impact of Agile Methodology on the Success of Technology Projects

Case Study: IT Department at alfanar Company

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Introduction:

In today's thriving global technology scene, companies are continuously being put in a situation where they have to develop innovative, performant, and reliable IT solutions within short timeframes and with ever changing requirements. In reaction to these forces, Agile software development has become prevalent in the private and public sectors. Agile, the organisation behind Agile, published a manifesto and a bunch of principles in 2001, claiming to be built around flexibility, collaboration, and customer satisfaction. Agile has been a widely accepted project management framework across market segments for roughly the past 20 years, since it provides the means to enable successful project delivery.

Agile promotes short development cycles (sprints), ongoing customer participation, and ongoing improvement. These aspects make it particularly well-suited for projects with rapidly changing technical requirements. Instead of brute-force methods like the Waterfall, Agile shapes itself around change in the least-damaging way possible. And it is for this reason why the world's leading technology companies have rallied around it and why enterprises going through digital transformation around the world are choosing to embrace it.

In Saudi Arabia, the national Vision 2030 program placed significant value on digitization, automation, as well as good infrastructure. Everywhere in the Kingdom, businesses are expanding the ante in investment of their IT modernization process with a focus on greater internal efficiencies and enhanced customer experiences. One of the front runners in this is Riyadh's premium building and manufacturing company, alfanar operates in the electrical, construction, and digital sectors and has its IT division within its Support Services Division, supporting internal users in all units.

Due to the size and complexity of alfanar's IT projects, the organization sought a way to apply Agile in its organization to deliver projects more effectively. But although Agile methods have become widespread, we are still left with uncertainty about the degree to which they operate in practice to influence project success. Does Agile speed up delivery? Will Agile meet the

customer satisfaction in overall results? Are IT departments more adaptive when responding to change?

This proposal, seeks to examine these issues among a case study of the IT department of alfanar. The study, consider the project outcomes and interviewing the key Agile stakeholders who are involved in the Agile-managed projects, will contribute to the exploration of the Agile adoption-related real values and challenges in the Saudi Arabian technology environment

Problem Statement

In large companies I've seen tech project management struggle with scope creep (what am I supposed to deliver), lack of clarity of requirements (nobody can tell me what to do), poor communication (I wish people would tell me what's going on) and difficulty to adapt (if all requirements are set, the project is out of date). Agile methodology is claimed to help with some of these problems by using an incremental, people-oriented approach, but in practice, this can differ dramatically depending on the implementation.

In alfanar, for instance, a major industrial company in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the IT department covers a full spectrum of sophisticated internal systems used by and required in all of the business sectors, i.e., Manufacturing, Engineering, and corporate services. These systems are not only technology-laden, but often need to be updated to support the organization and regulatory influx.

While the department is working to implement Agile principles with methods such as Scrum and Kanban, there is little formal assessment as to whether these practices have yielded enhanced project results. For instance, did Agile methodologies reduce the number of project delays? Are stakeholders more satisfied with the outcomes? Is the team more reactive and sharp with Agile methodologies?

Also, given that alfanar functions in a mixed world that includes legacy systems (SAP, for example) along with truly digital solutions, it's not always easy to apply Agile. Obstacles to success can include organizational resistance to change, inadequate Agile training, or a disconnect between business goals and the repetition of Agile expansion.

Without an in-depth probe to determine the actual impact of Agile methodology on project success at alfanar, you may be missing key information that could leverage, optimize, and extend your organization's Agile initiatives. Thus, the examination of the performance of Agile in the IT department and whether it has fulfilled the sworn prospect for higher delivery speed, stakeholder satisfaction, and flexibility for the organization is dearly needed.

Importance of the Study

This study is so valuable because it can fill a noticeable gap in the context of Agile project management within the Saudi corporate sector. Even though Agile methodologies have been studied and used worldwide, most academic literature has been forged in Western, technology-driven contexts. Fixed research has explored the observed relationships between Agile and real-world success among industrial companies located in the Gulf region, and in particular organizations like alfanar that intersect manufacturing, construction, and IT.

Theoretical Importance:

The findings of this study add to the literature on whether Agile methodologies can be applied beyond software-focused organizations. This study takes one step further and explores how Agile approaches are enforced into practice in a diversified and mature enterprise setting, utilizing a focal unit of alfanar, the IT department, which caters to a diverse range of internal stakeholders with complex technological provisions. It will hopefully show what some of the promoted benefits of Agile (more agility, better product, happier customers, etc) look like in non-start-up / non-pure-play tech company settings. Also, this study merges Agile theory with the success measurement models of project management: the Iron Triangle (time, cost, and scope) and stakeholders' satisfaction. Thus, there is a chance of witnessing success in its entirety, from a technical and a human standpoint.

Practical Importance:

With technology unwinding at an exponential pace across the globe, organizations are under pressure to release innovative and reliable IT solutions, often within tight timeframes and changing provisions. Agile practices have been embraced as a tool to address these challenges by public and private sector organisations around the world. Initiated in 2001 by a group of software developers, the Agile Manifesto is a set of values designed to allow us to assemble better projects that are more elastic and more customer-

responsive. In the last couple of decades, Agile has attained noteworthy acceptance as a project management framework and has become the mainstay in all industries to assure the successful delivery of projects.

Agile focuses on short development cycles (sprints), constant customer engagement, and iterative refinements. It is well-suited to technology projects in which requirements can change quickly. Unlike rigid, linear methodologies like Waterfall, Agile can adjust a change quickly. This responsiveness has resulted in its use by conducting technology companies around the world and has become very popular among organisations looking to dive into the digital space.

In the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA), a national transformation program, Vision 2030, has driven a great deal of desire for digitization, automation, and smart infrastructure." This has led companies across the Kingdom to fast-track their IT modernization initiatives to enhance their operations and customer service. One example is the engineering and manufacturing enterprise, alfanar, based in Riyadh. alfanar works across electrical, construction, and digital sectors and has created an IT function within its Support Services Department to address the solution demands of all internal units.

Due to the size and complexity of the projects, fast started with the projects on the IT side, the company has adopted Agile to improve project delivery effectiveness. Nonetheless, despite the popularity of Agile methodologies, their overall impact on project success is not known. So, what can Agile really do to speed things up? Are the results better according to the stakeholders? Are IT folks more open to change?

This article attempts to address these questions based on the case of the alfanar IT department. Through evaluating the performance of the projects, and from the firsthand experiences that the stakeholders of Agile projects deliver, this investigation is expected to define the true benefits and challenges behind the implementation of Agile technique within the Saudi's industry of technology.

Objectives of the Study

The purpose of this research is to analyze the relationship between Agile methodology and project success within a real-world organizational setting—specifically, the IT department at alfanar Company. These purposes seek to break down the idea of “project success” into measurable dimensions such as timely delivery, customer satisfaction, adaptability, and team performance.

Primary Objective:

- To assess the overall influence of Agile methodology on the success of technology projects in the IT department of alfanar.

Secondary Objectives:

1. **To study the impact of Agile practices on project-delivery timelines.**

That also extends to understanding if an Agile framework, featuring iterations, sprint planning, and the daily stand-up, can reduce delay and enhance time to market for internal IT projects.

2. **To determine the impact of Agile on customer and stakeholders' satisfaction.**

If we focus on how stakeholder feedback is incorporated within Agile steps, we investigate whether projects will sufficiently satisfy end-user expectations.

3. **Analyze the level to which Agile is adaptable to change in the project scope and priorities.**

Agile is supposed to accommodate change, not repulse it. This goal measures how effectively project teams can turn on a dime in response to feedback or a new business requirement at alfanar.

4. **To determine if Agile practices contribute to improved internal team collaboration and morale.**

Agile frameworks emphasize people, communication, and teamwork. This objective will look at how these practices influence team dynamics and effectiveness.

5. **To provide practical recommendations for improving Agile implementation within the company.**

Beyond understanding current performance, the study aims to propose actionable strategies to optimize Agile practices for better alignment with organizational goals.

These objectives will serve as the foundation for the research questions and hypotheses, ensuring the study remains focused, relevant, and capable of producing practical insights for decision-makers in both alfanar and the broader Saudi business ecosystem.

Research Questions

The research questions serve as the backbone of this study, guiding the investigation toward measurable and meaningful insights about the use of Agile methodology in alfanar's IT department. These questions are designed to explore not only the technical outcomes of Agile adoption but also its human and organizational impact.

The primary research question is:

1. What is the impact of Agile methodology on the success of technology projects within alfanar's IT department?

This overarching question will be explored through several sub-questions that focus on different dimensions of project success:

2. How do Agile practices influence adherence to project delivery timelines?

Timely delivery is a key performance indicator in project management. This question seeks to understand whether the iterative nature of Agile (e.g., sprints, velocity tracking) helps teams complete projects faster or with fewer delays.

3. To what extent does Agile improve stakeholder and client satisfaction with project outcomes?

This question examines how regularly gathering feedback during the project lifecycle affects the final deliverables and the perception of value among business units served by the IT department.

4. How effectively does Agile enable teams to respond to changes in scope, requirements, or market conditions?

Change is often inevitable in long-term projects. This question evaluates whether Agile structures—such as product backlogs, sprint reviews, and retrospectives—facilitate flexible responses to evolving needs.

5. What is the effect of Agile practices on internal team dynamics, collaboration, and morale?

Agile emphasizes people over processes. This question explores how Agile ceremonies (e.g., daily stand-ups, sprint retrospectives) influence communication, transparency, and team motivation.

6. Are there organizational or cultural barriers that affect the successful implementation of Agile at alfanar?

Not all environments are equally suited for Agile. This question aims to uncover systemic challenges—such as departmental silos, resistance to change, or inadequate training—that may hinder Agile adoption or reduce its effectiveness.

Together, these questions will form the basis for the study's data collection and analysis plan, ensuring a well-rounded understanding of Agile's impact on technology projects in the alfanar context.

Hypotheses

To empirically investigate the impact of Agile methodology on the success of technology projects, this study formulates a set of hypotheses based on prior research, project management theory, and observations from alfanar's IT operations. These hypotheses are structured to test specific relationships between Agile practices and key performance indicators of project success.

Main Hypothesis (H1):

There is a statistically significant positive relationship between the implementation of Agile methodology and the overall success of technology projects in alfanar's IT department.

This main hypothesis is supported by the following sub-hypotheses:

H1.1 – Timely Delivery:

Projects managed using Agile practices are more likely to be completed within or closer to their planned timelines compared to non-Agile projects.

Rationale: Agile promotes incremental delivery, regular progress reviews, and quick adaptation to issues, which are expected to minimize delays.

H1.2 – Stakeholder Satisfaction:

Agile-managed projects result in higher stakeholder satisfaction due to iterative development and continuous feedback loops.

Rationale: Regular involvement of stakeholders in sprint planning, reviews, and demo sessions can ensure that deliverables align with expectations.

H1.3 – Responsiveness to Change:

Agile methodology enhances the project team's ability to respond effectively to changes in requirements or project scope.

Rationale: One of Agile's core values is "responding to change over following a plan." Agile tools such as backlogs and sprint cycles are designed for adaptability.

H1.4 – Team Collaboration and Morale:

Agile practices improve team collaboration, communication, and overall morale within the IT project teams.

Rationale: Daily stand-up meetings, retrospectives, and shared ownership of tasks promote transparency and engagement.

H1.5 – Organizational Readiness:

The effectiveness of Agile methodology is influenced by the organization's level of readiness, including training, cultural alignment, and management support.

Rationale: Even the best methodology can underperform if not supported by proper infrastructure, leadership, and change management strategies.

These hypotheses will be tested through data collected from alfanar's IT personnel using structured surveys. Quantitative analysis—using techniques such as correlation and regression—will be employed to validate or reject each hypothesis.

Literature Review

The Agile methodology has been the subject of extensive research over the past two decades, particularly in relation to its application in software development and technology-driven organizations. This literature review summarizes key studies that shed light on the effectiveness of Agile practices in improving project outcomes, with a particular focus on contexts relevant to the current study—namely, large organizations, IT departments, and the Middle East region.

1. Beck et al. (2001) – The Agile Manifesto

This foundational document outlined four core values and twelve principles that would form the basis of Agile practices worldwide. The authors emphasized individuals and interactions over processes and tools, and working software over comprehensive documentation. Although not a research paper, the Manifesto sparked a global movement that led to various Agile frameworks, including Scrum, Kanban, XP, and SAFe. It highlighted the importance of responsiveness and customer collaboration—factors that are central to this study's evaluation criteria.

2. Highsmith (2010) – Agile Project Management

Highsmith argued that Agile project management is particularly effective in environments characterized by uncertainty and rapid change. He proposed that Agile is not just a methodology but a mindset that allows organizations to innovate more effectively. His work contributed to defining metrics for success in Agile environments, such as delivery speed, team engagement, and customer satisfaction. These same metrics are used in the current study to assess Agile's effectiveness at alfanar.

3. VersionOne's State of Agile Report (2023)

An annual global survey of Agile practitioners, this report found that the top three benefits of Agile adoption are: faster time-to-market (71%), increased team productivity (63%), and improved business/IT alignment (58%). However, challenges persist, including inconsistent processes, lack of experience, and resistance to change. These findings mirror the mixed

adoption environment seen in organizations like alfanar, where Agile is present but not yet uniformly applied.

4. Alghamdi (2022) – Agile in Saudi Digital Transformation

In a rare region-specific study, Alghamdi investigated Agile practices within several Saudi government digital initiatives. His findings showed that Agile improved communication, stakeholder involvement, and adaptability to policy changes. However, he also found that cultural norms and hierarchical structures posed significant barriers to full Agile adoption. These insights are directly relevant to alfanar, where similar organizational dynamics exist.

5. Alshammari & Alshahrani (2021) – Agile Implementation in the GCC Private Sector

This study examined Agile adoption in several private companies in the Gulf region. It concluded that while awareness of Agile is growing, successful implementation requires not just process changes but shifts in leadership behavior and team structures. Many companies faced difficulties due to limited internal Agile expertise. These challenges will be explored in this study in the context of alfanar's IT department.

6. Serrador & Pinto (2015) – Does Agile Improve Project Success?

In a quantitative study covering 1,002 projects across various industries, Serrador and Pinto found a statistically significant correlation between Agile use and project success—particularly in terms of meeting customer expectations and handling changes. Their research supports the core hypothesis of this study that Agile contributes positively to stakeholder satisfaction.

Summary:

The reviewed literature presents a generally positive view of Agile's impact on project performance. However, success is heavily dependent on organizational context, maturity of Agile implementation, and cultural adaptability. While most research focuses on Western or purely technical environments, studies such as those by Alghamdi and Alshammari provide critical regional context that reinforces the relevance of this research on alfanar's IT department. The current study fills a gap by offering a focused case study from a large Saudi industrial company with a complex IT landscape.

Theoretical Framework

This study is grounded in several theoretical models that inform the understanding and assessment of Agile methodology and its relationship to project success. These frameworks provide a structured basis for evaluating how Agile principles translate into measurable performance outcomes within organizational settings—specifically within alfanar’s IT department.

1. The Agile Manifesto (2001)

At the heart of the theoretical foundation lies the Agile Manifesto, which introduced four key values:

1. Individuals and interactions over processes and tools.
2. Working software over comprehensive documentation.
3. Customer collaboration over contract negotiation.
4. Responding to change over following a plan.

These values are further supported by twelve guiding principles, including early and continuous delivery, sustainable pace, face-to-face communication, and regular reflection and adaptation. In the context of this study, these principles provide a lens through which the effectiveness of project delivery and stakeholder involvement at alfanar can be assessed.

2. Scrum Framework

Scrum is the most widely adopted Agile framework and is relevant to this research due to its structured yet flexible approach. It is based on time-boxed iterations (sprints), cross-functional teams, and roles such as the Product Owner, Scrum Master, and Development Team. Scrum also includes artifacts (e.g., product backlog, sprint backlog) and ceremonies (e.g., sprint planning, daily stand-ups, sprint reviews) that facilitate transparency and collaboration.

In alfanar, where multiple projects run simultaneously across different business functions, the Scrum framework helps examine how roles, iterations, and team dynamics influence project success.

3. Project Success Models – The Iron Triangle and Stakeholder Satisfaction

The traditional project success model—often referred to as the Iron Triangle—includes three dimensions: time, cost, and scope. A successful project is expected to deliver all three within the agreed parameters. However, modern interpretations of project success include additional dimensions such as stakeholder satisfaction, team morale, and long-term business value.

This research uses a hybrid model combining the Iron Triangle with stakeholder-centric metrics. Agile’s impact will be analyzed not only based on technical completion metrics but also through perceptions of satisfaction, responsiveness, and value generation.

4. Change Management Theory

Implementing Agile often requires cultural and structural changes within an organization. As such, this research incorporates concepts from change management theory—particularly Kotter’s 8-Step Process and Lewin’s Change Model—to understand how organizational readiness, leadership, and resistance to change may affect Agile success.

In alfanar, transitioning from traditional project management toward Agile often means rethinking hierarchy, empowering teams, and promoting continuous learning. The success of this transition depends as much on organizational behavior as on technical processes.

Conclusion:

By integrating Agile-specific theories with broader models of project success and change management, this framework allows for a holistic assessment of Agile’s effectiveness. It ensures that the study considers both process-driven and people-centered elements, which are essential in evaluating complex IT environments like alfanar’s.

Methodology

This study adopts a **quantitative descriptive-analytical approach**, designed to measure and evaluate the perceived impact of Agile methodology on project success within the IT department at alfanar. The methodology is guided by the need to obtain reliable, empirical data from professionals actively engaged in Agile practices, and to analyze this data statistically to derive insights and test hypotheses.

1. Research Design

The descriptive-analytical design was chosen for its ability to both describe the current state of Agile implementation and analyze its relationship with various success indicators. This approach is suitable for identifying patterns, testing hypotheses, and drawing conclusions about cause-and-effect relationships based on statistical evidence.

2. Population and Sampling

The target population includes **employees of the IT department at alfanar**, particularly those involved in project management, software development, systems analysis, testing, and business analysis. This includes roles such as project managers, scrum masters, developers, QA engineers, system analysts, and IT coordinators.

A **purposive sampling** technique will be used to select participants who have experience working on Agile-managed projects within the last 12 months. The expected sample size is **between 40–60 participants**, depending on availability and consent.

3. Data Collection Tool: Structured Questionnaire

The primary tool for data collection is a **structured questionnaire**, developed based on validated Agile and project management literature. The questionnaire is divided into four sections:

1. **Demographic Information:** Gender, age, job title, years of experience, exposure to Agile.
2. **Agile Implementation Scale:** Frequency of use of key Agile practices (e.g., daily standups, sprint reviews, backlog grooming).
3. **Project Success Indicators:** Perceptions of project delivery (on time, within budget, meeting scope), stakeholder satisfaction, team adaptability, and responsiveness to change.
4. **Organizational Environment:** Readiness for Agile adoption, training, leadership support, and resistance to change.

Each item will use a **5-point Likert scale**, ranging from “Strongly Disagree” to “Strongly Agree.”

4. Data Analysis Techniques

Data will be analyzed using **SPSS software**. The following statistical techniques will be applied:

- **Descriptive statistics** (mean, standard deviation) to summarize responses.
- **Correlation analysis** to determine relationships between Agile usage and success indicators.
- **Regression analysis** to test the impact of Agile on project outcomes while controlling for demographic variables.

Significance will be tested at the **$p < 0.05$ level**.

5. Ethical Considerations

All participants will be informed of the voluntary nature of their participation, and confidentiality will be maintained. No personal identifiers will be collected, and data will be stored securely. The research will comply with ethical guidelines approved by the university.

Scope, Limitations, and Tools of the Study

To ensure clarity, precision, and credibility of the research, this section outlines the **scope**, identifies **limitations**, and explains the **tools** used throughout the study.

1. Scope of the Study

This research focuses exclusively on the **IT department of alfanar**, a leading engineering and manufacturing company headquartered in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. The department serves various internal business units, including operations, engineering, finance, HR, and administration.

- **Geographical Scope:** Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.
- **Sectoral Scope:** Information Technology within a diversified industrial enterprise.
- **Methodological Scope:** Quantitative research using structured surveys.
- **Temporal Scope:** Agile-managed projects carried out between **2024–2025**.
- **Operational Focus:** Analysis of project delivery timelines, stakeholder satisfaction, responsiveness to change, and team collaboration—all under Agile methodology.

2. Limitations of the Study

While every effort has been made to ensure the rigor and relevance of this study, certain limitations must be acknowledged:

- **Organizational Focus:** The study is limited to a single company (alfanar), which may restrict generalizability of findings to other industries or countries.
- **Sample Size:** Although the sample is expected to include key stakeholders within the IT department, the relatively small size (40–60 participants) may impact statistical power.
- **Self-Reporting Bias:** Data collected via surveys is inherently subjective, and responses may be influenced by personal perception, memory, or social desirability.
- **Agile Maturity Variation:** Different teams or units within alfanar may be at varying stages of Agile maturity, which could affect consistency in responses.
- **Exclusion of Qualitative Insights:** While a quantitative approach provides breadth, it may miss in-depth perspectives that could have been obtained through interviews or focus groups.

Despite these limitations, the study is designed to provide **valid, focused, and actionable** insights that are highly relevant to alfanar and comparable organizations undergoing digital transformation.

3. Tools Used in the Study

The research relies on the following tools and resources:

- **Survey Questionnaire:** A bilingual (Arabic–English) questionnaire constructed using Google Forms or Microsoft Forms for accessibility and ease of distribution.
- **SPSS Software:** For advanced statistical analysis, including regression and correlation.

- **Microsoft Excel:** For initial data cleaning, visualization, and export of survey responses.
- **Academic Databases:** For literature review and referencing, including Google Scholar, JSTOR, and ScienceDirect.
- **Official alfanar Materials:** Internal documents and process charts (where permitted) will be used to contextualize findings.

These tools are selected to ensure reliability, simplicity, and compatibility with the digital work environment at alfanar.

Timeline

A well-structured timeline is essential for the successful execution of any research project. The following proposed schedule outlines the key phases of this study and the expected duration for each. The research is projected to be completed within **7 academic weeks**, beginning from the formal acceptance of the proposal.

Time Frame	Activity	Phase
Week 1	Finalize research title, scope, and objectives. Conduct literature review and define hypotheses. Prepare the draft proposal for academic approval.	Phase 1 – Preparation
Week 2	Develop the questionnaire (English & Arabic versions). Validate with supervisor and pilot on a small sample. Incorporate feedback.	Phase 2 – Instrument Design
Weeks 3 & 4	Distribute the questionnaire to selected IT staff in alfanar. Send follow-up reminders to ensure participation.	Phase 3 – Data Collection
Week 5	Clean data, organize it in Excel, and perform analysis using SPSS. Test hypotheses and identify trends.	Phase 4 – Data Analysis
Week 6	Interpret the findings, draft the “Results” and “Discussion” sections, and review with supervisor.	Phase 5 – Drafting Results
Week 7	Finalize all sections of the paper, format references, perform proofreading, and submit the full document.	Phase 6 – Final Submission

Contingency and Flexibility

An additional **buffer of 1 week** is considered in case of unforeseen delays such as low survey response rate or scheduling issues with reviewers.

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