

Chapter Two

Section One

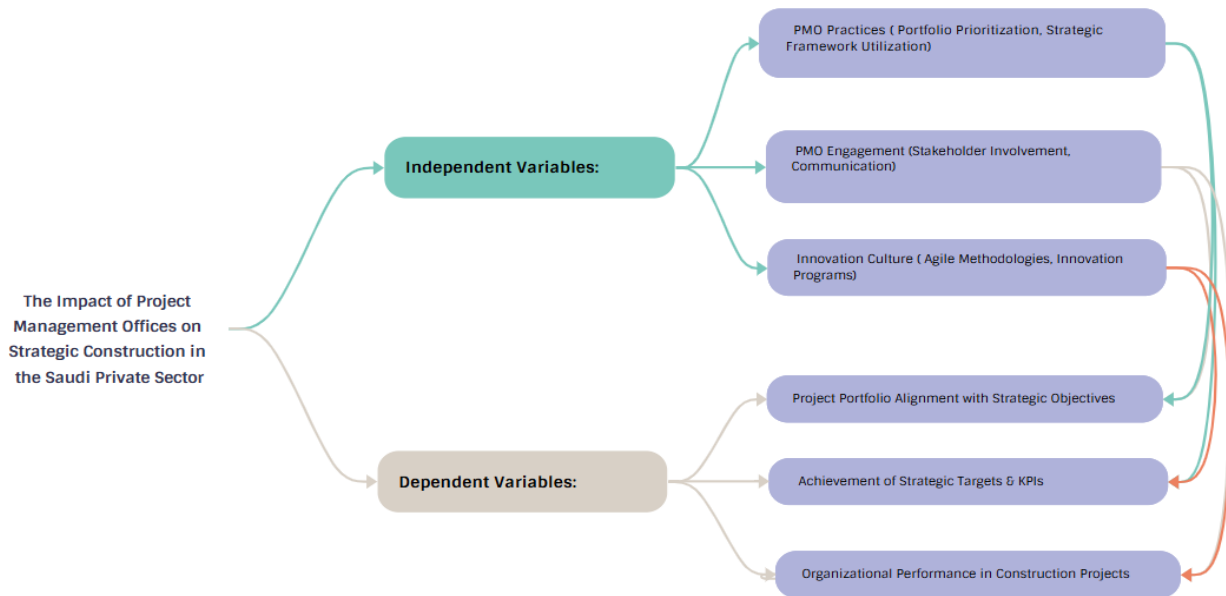
Study model

Independent Variables:

- PMO Practices (Portfolio Prioritization, Strategic Framework Utilization)
- PMO Engagement (Stakeholder Involvement, Communication)
- Innovation Culture (Agile Methodologies, Innovation Programs)

Dependent Variables:

- Project Portfolio Alignment with Strategic Objectives
- Achievement of Strategic Targets & KPIs
- Organizational Performance in Construction Projects



- PMO Practices **supports** Project Portfolio Alignment with Strategic Objectives and Achievement of Strategic Targets & KPIs.
- PMO Engagement **supports** Project Portfolio Alignment with Strategic Objectives and Organizational Performance in Construction Projects.
- Innovation Culture **supports** Achievement of Strategic Targets & KPIs and Organizational Performance in Construction Projects.

Theoretical Background of the Independent Variable — Project Management Office (PMO)

١. Concept of the PMO

A Project Management Office (PMO) is a centralized organizational unit that standardizes project-related governance processes and facilitates the sharing of resources, methodologies, tools, and techniques. The PMO plays a critical role in ensuring that projects and programs are aligned with organizational goals and strategies. Its functions may vary from providing support to managing portfolios, depending on the organizational structure and maturity.

According to the Project Management Institute (PMI), PMOs can be classified into three types:

- **Supportive PMO:** Provides consultative roles, templates, and guidance.
- **Controlling PMO:** Enforces compliance with governance frameworks.
- **Directive PMO:** Directly manages projects and programs.

٢. Importance of PMOs

The PMO is essential in ensuring project success, especially in complex or strategic initiatives. It provides a framework for consistency, accountability, and visibility. Key areas of importance include:

- Aligning projects and programs with organizational strategy.
- Enhancing governance and compliance.
- Increasing project success rates through standardization.
- Improving resource management and utilization.
- Enabling decision-making through data and reporting.

In the context of national transformation programs such as **Saudi Vision ٢٠٣٠**, PMOs are instrumental in driving reform projects, coordinating across sectors, and tracking the impact of strategic initiatives.

٣. Related Theories

Several theoretical frameworks support the understanding and function of PMOs:

- **Resource-Based View (RBV):** Positions PMOs as a strategic resource that enhances organizational capabilities.
- **Contingency Theory:** Suggests the design and role of PMOs should align with the specific context and complexity of the organization.
- **Institutional Theory:** Explains the institutional pressures that lead organizations to adopt PMOs as formal structures to ensure legitimacy.

- **Organizational Alignment Theory:** Highlights the importance of aligning organizational systems (including PMOs) with strategic goals to enhance performance.

٤. Determinants of PMO Effectiveness

The structure, authority, and success of a PMO depend on several determinants, including:

- **Organizational maturity and culture:** More mature organizations integrate PMOs into strategic processes.
- **Executive support:** Top management sponsorship is crucial for the PMO's influence.
- **Clarity of roles and responsibilities:** Ambiguity undermines PMO authority.
- **Integration with strategy:** PMOs aligned with the organization's strategic plan are more impactful.
- **Communication systems:** Effective communication enhances coordination and implementation.

٥. Dimensions of PMOs

PMOs function across multiple dimensions, including:

- **Strategic Alignment:** Ensuring projects support strategic goals.
- **Portfolio Management:** Prioritizing and selecting projects based on strategic value.
- **Governance and Oversight:** Establishing policies, controls, and reporting structures.
- **Knowledge Management:** Capturing and disseminating best practices and lessons learned.
- **Performance Monitoring:** Tracking KPIs and providing visibility into project outcomes.
- **Capacity Building:** Enhancing project management capabilities and standards.

٦. Challenges Facing PMOs

Despite their importance, PMOs often encounter significant challenges, such as:

- **Lack of top management support:** Without executive backing, PMOs may lack authority and influence.
- **Role ambiguity and resistance to change:** Misunderstanding of the PMO's purpose can lead to internal resistance.
- **Misalignment with strategic goals:** Failure to link projects with strategic direction diminishes the PMO's value.
- **Over-bureaucratization:** Excessive controls can hinder agility and innovation.
- **Inconsistent performance measurement:** Lack of clear KPIs makes it difficult to demonstrate value.

Section Two

Theoretical Background of the Dependent Variable — Strategic Plan Implementation

١. Concept of Strategic Plan Implementation

Strategic plan implementation refers to the process of turning formulated strategies into actionable initiatives, programs, and projects to achieve organizational goals. It involves translating vision and objectives into operational activities, allocating resources, and monitoring execution. While strategy formulation focuses on “what” the organization aims to achieve, implementation addresses “how” those aims will be accomplished.

Successful strategic implementation ensures the alignment of internal processes, structures, and people with long-term goals, transforming plans into measurable outcomes.

٢. Importance of Strategic Plan Implementation

Even the most well-formulated strategies fail without effective implementation. The importance of strategic plan implementation includes:

- Translating vision into measurable progress.
- Achieving competitive advantage through execution excellence.
- Ensuring accountability and alignment across departments.
- Supporting change management and organizational transformation.
- Enabling tracking of progress toward national or sectoral strategies (e.g., Saudi Vision ٢٠٣٠).

In the Saudi context, strategic implementation is a national priority due to the scale and complexity of transformation programs across both public and private sectors.

٣. Related Theories

Several theories explain the process and challenges of strategic implementation:

- **Strategy-as-Practice Theory:** Focuses on the actions and interactions of individuals involved in the strategy process, emphasizing that strategy is shaped by people, processes, and context.
- **Balanced Scorecard (BSC):** A performance management framework that translates strategy into objectives across financial, customer, internal process, and learning perspectives.
- **McKinsey ٧S Framework:** Argues that successful implementation requires alignment of structure, systems, style, staff, skills, strategy, and shared values.
- **Kotter’s ٨-Step Change Model:** Provides a structured approach to managing strategic change within organizations.

٤. Determinants of Strategic Plan Implementation

Key factors that influence successful implementation include:

- **Leadership and top management commitment.**
- **Organizational structure and clarity of roles.**
- **Resource availability and allocation.**
- **Employee engagement and accountability.**
- **Effective communication of goals and expectations.**
- **Monitoring systems and feedback loops.**

٥. Dimensions of Strategic Implementation

Strategic plan implementation typically involves multiple interrelated dimensions:

- **Goal translation and cascading.**
- **Operational planning and execution.**
- **Resource and budget allocation.**
- **Monitoring and evaluation mechanisms (KPIs, dashboards).**
- **Feedback, adaptation, and continuous improvement.**

٦. Challenges of Strategic Implementation

Despite its importance, organizations face numerous barriers to strategic execution:

- **Misalignment between strategy and operations.**
- **Lack of accountability or unclear responsibilities.**
- **Ineffective coordination across units.**
- **Resistance to change and cultural inertia.**
- **Insufficient resources or unrealistic plans.**
- **Poor monitoring and corrective action mechanisms.**

Section Three

Relationship Between PMO and Strategic Plan Implementation

١. Theoretical Relationship Between the Variables

The Project Management Office (PMO) acts as a strategic integrator, serving as the operational arm for implementing organizational strategy through structured project and portfolio management. Theoretically, PMOs contribute to strategy implementation by:

- **Bridging the gap between strategy and execution.**
- **Providing governance and oversight to ensure alignment.**
- **Coordinating resources, timelines, and deliverables.**
- **Enabling performance tracking and corrective action.**

According to Organizational Alignment Theory, strategic success requires vertical and horizontal integration of processes and structures. PMOs provide this integration by operationalizing strategic goals through standardized practices.

From a Resource-Based View (RBV), the PMO can be seen as a unique organizational capability that enhances implementation capacity through coordination, knowledge sharing, and performance monitoring.

٢. Previous Studies on PMO and Strategic Plan Implementation

Numerous studies have explored the PMO's impact on strategy execution:

- **Hobbs & Aubry (٢٠٠٨):** Identified the PMO as a central actor in project governance, influencing strategic alignment and implementation quality.
- **Aubry et al. (٢٠٠٧):** Emphasized the PMO's evolving role from tactical support to strategic influence.
- **PMI Pulse of the Profession (٢٠١٧):** Found that organizations with mature PMOs are significantly more likely to achieve strategic objectives.
- **PwC Middle East PMO Study (٢٠٢٢):** Revealed that only ٣٩% of regional PMOs effectively align with strategy, compared to ٩٤% globally, pointing to a maturity gap.
- **Philbin (٢٠١٦):** Demonstrated how PMOs in the UK public sector support strategic delivery through portfolio governance and structured processes.

These studies collectively affirm the enabling role of PMOs in executing strategic plans, though they also highlight contextual differences in effectiveness based on maturity, structure, and leadership support.

٣. Commentary on the Literature

The literature supports the PMO as a critical mechanism for bridging strategic intent with execution. However, significant gaps remain in understanding how PMOs function in the **Saudi private sector**, particularly under national transformation pressures. Much of the existing research focuses on public institutions or global corporate environments, limiting the contextual applicability.

There is also a lack of empirical studies measuring the **direct impact** of PMO maturity, structure, or functions on **strategic plan implementation outcomes** in localized settings. This gap justifies the need for this research, which aims to evaluate how PMOs in Saudi private organizations contribute to or hinder strategy realization under Vision ٢٠٣٠ reforms.

Literatures Review

Analytical Analysis of Previous Studies

This section critically examines the most relevant and recent studies on the relationship between **Project Management Offices (PMOs)** and **strategic plan implementation**, with a focus on identifying methodological approaches, key findings, contextual limitations, and relevance to the Saudi private sector. The analysis is grouped thematically to highlight comparative insights and gaps.

This chapter provides a comprehensive review of the relevant literature concerning the role, structure, and processes of the Project Management Office (PMO), with a particular focus on its strategic impact within organizations. It identifies key theoretical contributions, highlights gaps in the current body of knowledge, and positions this study within the context of Saudi Arabia's private sector. The chapter concludes by presenting the study problem, research questions, and recommended directions to address the identified research gaps.

EXPLORING THE PROJECT MANAGEMENT OFFICE (PMO) – ROLE, STRUCTURE AND PROCESSES (٢٠١٦). Philbin, S. P. (٢٠١٦)

This study is grounded in a comprehensive review of the relevant literature concerning the role, structure, and processes of the Project Management Office (PMO). One of the primary references is the work of Philbin (٢٠١٦), who provided an in-depth exploration of PMO functions within organizations. Philbin (٢٠١٦) emphasized that the PMO can assume multiple roles, ranging from providing consultative support to exercising direct control over project execution. The flexibility of the PMO structure allows it to align with the strategic needs of the organization effectively.

Philbin's study also categorized various PMO structures and highlighted the importance of designing a PMO that fits the organizational context and culture. Moreover, Philbin underscored the need for well-defined processes and procedures to ensure that the PMO contributes effectively to enhancing project performance. These insights formed the foundation for the current study's hypotheses, which focus on the relationship between PMO structure and its effectiveness in achieving strategic objectives.

In addition to Philbin's work, this study draws upon several other key contributions to the field. For example, Aubry et al. (٢٠٠٧) discussed the dynamic evolution of PMOs, suggesting that PMOs are not static entities but continuously adapt in response to organizational changes. Furthermore, Hobbs and Aubry (٢٠٠٨) provided significant evidence regarding the variations among different types of PMOs and their respective impacts on project success.

The selection of these specific studies was deliberate, as they offer theoretical models and empirical findings that directly support the objectives of this research. They collectively contribute to a solid theoretical framework that not only informs the study's hypotheses but also offers a validated perspective on the critical factors influencing PMO effectiveness.

The primary problem addressed in this paper is the lack of comprehensive frameworks and empirical studies that adequately describe the specification, functioning, and effectiveness of Project Management Offices (PMOs) in technology and engineering projects. Despite the increasing adoption of PMOs across various industries beyond IT, there remains a limited understanding of their roles, structures, processes, and impact on project success

١. PMO Roles and Structures

Philbin (٢٠١٦) provided a detailed exploration of PMO functions within organizations, emphasizing that PMOs can serve in diverse capacities, from offering consultative support to exercising direct control over project execution. This flexibility enables the PMO to align effectively with an organization's strategic needs. Philbin also categorized various PMO structures, stressing the importance of designing a PMO that fits the organizational context and culture.

٢. PMO Processes and Standardization

Philbin (٢٠١٦) underscored the significance of well-defined processes and procedures in ensuring that the PMO contributes to project performance and organizational success. A properly structured PMO, supported by clear processes, can facilitate project delivery, resource optimization, and strategic alignment.

٣. PMO Evolution and Adaptability

Aubry et al. (٢٠٠٧) argued that PMOs are not static entities but rather evolve dynamically in response to organizational changes. Their study emphasized that the PMO's adaptability is crucial to sustaining its relevance and effectiveness over time.

٤. PMO Types and Impact on Project Success

Hobbs and Aubry (٢٠٠٨) provided empirical evidence showing significant variations among PMO types (supportive, controlling, and directive) and their respective impacts on project success. Their research suggests that a tailored PMO structure can substantially influence project outcomes, especially when aligned with organizational strategy.

Research Questions

The study is guided by the following research questions:

١. What are the different roles of PMOs in organizing and managing technology and engineering projects?
٢. How do these roles vary across supportive, controlling, and directive PMO types?
٣. What are the essential structural components and processes required for an effective PMO?
٤. How can these components and processes be standardized while maintaining flexibility to adapt to project-specific requirements?
٥. What are the benefits of implementing PMOs in organizations managing technology and engineering projects?
٦. How do these benefits vary based on project complexity and organizational context?
٧. What challenges do organizations face when designing and implementing PMOs, particularly in engineering environments?
٨. How can these challenges be addressed to enhance PMO effectiveness in achieving project outcomes?
٩. How does the PMO contribute to strategic alignment and overall organizational performance in the technology and engineering sectors?

Key Observations

The review of prior studies reveals several critical gaps:

- Absence of **tailored PMO frameworks** that consider the specific needs, project complexities, and organizational structures within the Saudi private sector.
- Lack of **standardized communication strategies** to promote PMO integration and stakeholder engagement.
- Inadequate research on **standardized key performance indicators (KPIs)** that measure PMO contributions to strategic objectives, beyond operational success metrics.
- Limited studies addressing **cultural barriers** and organizational resistance that affect PMO implementation in the Saudi business environment.
- Minimal longitudinal research tracking PMO effectiveness over time, particularly in fast-evolving industries aligned with Saudi Vision ٢٠٣٠.

Aspect	Current Study (Saudi Private Sector)	Philbin (٢٠١٦)
Geographical Focus	Saudi Arabia, tied to Vision ٢٠٣٠	General, no specific country
Industry Focus	Private sector (multiple industries)	Tech & engineering sectors
Strategic Context	Strong national strategy link (Vision ٢٠٣٠)	Organizational strategy only
Key Problem	Misalignment of projects with national strategy; lack of innovation & KPIs	Undefined PMO roles & processes in tech projects
Cultural Considerations	Local cultural adaptation & leadership buy-in	Minimal cultural focus
Performance Measurement	Focus on clear KPIs linked to strategy	General process focus, limited KPI detail
Stakeholder Engagement	Emphasizes stakeholder involvement for alignment	Limited stakeholder detail
Practical Frameworks	Provides practical methods & models for Saudi context	Descriptive only, no applied frameworks

The Literature Gaps

Despite the increasing adoption of PMOs across various industries, there remains a lack of comprehensive frameworks and empirical studies that adequately describe the structure, functioning, and effectiveness of PMOs, particularly in technology and engineering projects within the Saudi private sector.

The reviewed literature emphasizes the importance of PMO flexibility, evolution, and alignment with organizational strategy. However, there is limited research that specifically addresses:

- How PMOs can be optimized for technology and engineering projects in the Saudi context.
- The unique challenges and cultural factors influencing PMO adoption and performance in Saudi private organizations.
- The strategic contributions of PMOs beyond operational efficiency, particularly in supporting national initiatives such as Saudi Vision ٢٠٣٠.

This study seeks to address these gaps by investigating the impact of PMOs on strategic plan execution in the Saudi private sector.

To advance the field and close these gaps, the following recommendations are proposed:

١. Develop Tailored PMO Frameworks

Organizations should establish PMO structures that are customized to their specific industries, project types, and strategic objectives. Standardization is important, but PMOs must also retain flexibility to adapt to unique project requirements, especially in agile environments.

٢. Implement Effective Communication Strategies

Clear and consistent communication about the PMO's purpose, processes, and strategic value is essential. Stakeholders must understand how the PMO contributes to project success and organizational growth to promote acceptance and collaboration.

٣. Focus on Saudi Private Sector Dynamics

More empirical studies are needed to explore PMO performance within the Saudi private sector, taking into account **local cultural factors, regulatory environments, and industry-specific practices**.

٤. Evaluate PMO's Role in Saudi Vision ٢٠٣٠

Future research should examine how PMOs can effectively support national transformation goals and contribute to strategic initiatives aligned with Saudi Vision ٢٠٣٠.

٥. Develop Sector-Specific PMO Models

Given the diversity of Saudi industries such as construction, healthcare, energy, finance, and IT, sector-specific PMO models should be developed to address industry-specific challenges and success factors.

٦. Conduct Longitudinal Studies

There is a need for long-term studies that assess PMO performance over multiple project cycles to better understand its sustained impact on strategic alignment and organizational performance.

٧. Enhance PMO Leadership and Competency Development

Further research should explore the leadership styles, skills, and competencies required for PMO managers to succeed in Saudi private organizations, supporting the development of targeted training programs.

٨. Support Digital Transformation and Agility

Research should focus on how PMOs can support digital transformation initiatives and adopt agile methodologies to increase responsiveness to dynamic market conditions.

٩. Develop Standardized KPIs to Measure Strategic Impact

Organizations need to establish **clear KPIs** that measure PMO contributions not only in terms of operational success but also in relation to strategic alignment and value creation.

١٠. Address Cultural Barriers

Further studies should investigate cultural and organizational resistance to PMO adoption and identify practical strategies to overcome these challenges, particularly within hierarchical and traditional business environments.

The contribution of project management offices (PMO) to the strategy implementation in Project-Based Businesses: systematic literature review and proposal of a mode (٢٠٢١) Brito, Medeiros Junior(٢٠٢١)

the literature on the role and impact of Project Management Offices (PMOs) in the implementation of strategic plans, with a particular focus on the Saudi private sector. The review covers key concepts such as PMO structures, the importance of standardization, stakeholder engagement, and the alignment of project goals with strategic objectives. It critically examines previous research, specifically the study titled "The Contribution of Project Management Offices (PMOs) to Strategy Implementation in Project-Based Businesses", and highlights the gaps this current research seeks to address. (Müller, ٢٠٠٩)

One of the persistent challenges identified in project management research is the **lack of standardization in project management concepts, structures, and approaches**, which can lead to inconsistencies in application and reduce the validity and generalizability of research findings. The study underscored that the absence of unified frameworks and consistent methodologies not only complicates the effective measurement and evaluation of PMO contributions but also undermines the development of robust theoretical foundations in the field.

The research aimed to bridge this gap by exploring the role of PMOs in facilitating strategy implementation within Project-Based Businesses (PBBs). The study proposed that PMOs can significantly contribute to aligning projects with organizational strategies, but only if their structures, processes, and performance metrics are clearly defined and standardized. Without such standardization, there is a risk of ambiguity in PMO functions, which may hinder their ability to deliver strategic value consistently across different industries and organizational contexts.

However, despite the study's valuable contributions, it appeared to overlook several critical areas, such as **the active engagement of stakeholders, the importance of cross-departmental communication, and the necessity of continuously aligning project goals with evolving strategic objectives**. These elements are essential to fully realizing the potential of PMOs as strategic partners within organizations. Additionally, the study did not sufficiently address the dynamic complexities present in various sectors, particularly in rapidly transforming economies such as Saudi Arabia's private sector.

Building on the identified gaps, the current research emphasizes that Engaging stakeholders in strategic planning, project selection, and performance evaluation processes enhances buy-in and supports seamless strategy execution. Furthermore, this study highlights the importance of sector-specific adaptations and cultural considerations, particularly within the unique regulatory and operational landscape of the Saudi private sector. This refined focus contributes to a more

comprehensive understanding of how PMOs can effectively support strategic planning and implementation in diverse and complex organizational settings.

Research Questions:

- What are the actions that PMOs can take to collaborate with strategy implementation in PBB?
- How can PMOs contribute to strategy implementation in PBB?

Key Observations

- **Theoretical Strength but Limited Practical Applicability:**
While the ٢٠٢١ study provided a valuable theoretical contribution to understanding PMO roles in strategy implementation, it lacked practical relevance for specific national contexts or industry sectors. Its generalized approach limits its applicability to region-specific challenges and organizational environments.
- **Absence of Stakeholder Collaboration:**
The study did not sufficiently address the critical role of stakeholder collaboration in PMO success. Stakeholder engagement is essential for ensuring that project selection, execution, and outcomes are closely aligned with the organization's strategic goals. This omission weakens the practical utility of the proposed model.
- **Neglect of Cultural and National Factors:**
The study failed to consider national, cultural, and organizational dynamics, which significantly influence PMO effectiveness. This gap is particularly relevant in countries like Saudi Arabia, where cultural norms, leadership styles, and regulatory frameworks are unique and demand context-specific PMO practices.
- **Current Research Contributions:**
The present study addresses these gaps by offering practical, actionable frameworks that are specifically tailored to the Saudi private sector. It emphasizes the importance of stakeholder engagement, structured communication, cultural sensitivity, and continuous strategic alignment. Moreover, the study directly supports Saudi Arabia's national transformation agenda, Saudi Vision ٢٠٣٠, by providing PMO strategies that are adaptable, sustainable, and aligned with the country's strategic priorities.

Aspect	Current Study (Saudi Private Sector)	٢٠٢١ Study (Project-Based Businesses)
Geographical Focus	Saudi Arabia	Global
Industry Focus	Multiple Sectors	Project-Based Businesses
Strategic Context	Saudi Vision ٢٠٣٠ Alignment	General Strategy Implementation
Key Problem	Lack of tailored PMO frameworks, limited stakeholder engagement, communication gaps	Lack of PMO standardization
Cultural Considerations	Focus on Saudi cultural and leadership dynamics	Not addressed
Performance Measurement	Emphasis on practical, standardized measurement systems	Underdeveloped performance framework
Stakeholder Engagement	Central recommendation	Largely missing
Practical Frameworks	Provides actionable, Saudi-specific solutions	Conceptual model, limited practical application

The Literature Gaps

- Drawing on the limitations identified in the study, several key recommendations are proposed to enhance the effectiveness of Project Management Offices (PMOs) in supporting strategic plan implementation, particularly within the Saudi private sector. The study proposed a generalized conceptual model.
- It lacked attention to stakeholder engagement, communication practices, and organizational alignment at deeper levels.
- It did not sufficiently address context-specific factors such as national culture, regulatory environment, or sectoral needs.
- Addressing the absence of Saudi-specific PMO frameworks that align with strategic goals and Saudi Vision ٢٠٣٠.
- Highlighting the importance of stakeholder collaboration, communication, and leadership development.
- Proposing standardized KPIs that measure not only project delivery metrics but also long-term strategic contributions.
- Emphasizing benchmarking international best practices while customizing solutions to fit local Saudi cultural and organizational structures.
- Advocating for longitudinal studies to assess the sustained impact of PMOs on strategic plan implementation.
- **PMO Stakeholder Engagement:**
PMOs should actively engage stakeholders in decision-making processes, project selection, planning, and performance evaluation. This systematic involvement ensures

that project objectives are aligned with strategic goals and fosters stakeholder commitment, which is essential for successful project outcomes.

- **Structured Communication Processes:**
There is a need to establish formal communication channels between PMOs, project teams, and executive leadership to ensure clear, timely, and effective information flow. Structured communication enhances coordination, supports faster decision-making, and improves the overall responsiveness of PMO activities.
- **Customized Yet Standardized PMO Frameworks:**
While standardization is critical to ensuring consistency and comparability, PMOs should retain the flexibility to tailor their frameworks to sector-specific needs and the unique cultural and regulatory environment of Saudi Arabia. Sectoral and cultural customization ensures that PMOs remain relevant and effective within the local context.
- **Robust Performance Measurement Systems:**
PMOs should implement formalized performance measurement systems that go beyond traditional project management indicators such as time, cost, and scope. These systems should include balanced Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) that capture both operational efficiency and long-term strategic contributions. The use of comprehensive tools like the Balanced Scorecard is recommended to provide a multi-dimensional view of PMO performance, aligning operational outcomes with strategic objectives.
- **Benchmarking and Best Practices:**
Saudi organizations should actively benchmark their PMO practices against international best practices to adopt proven frameworks and KPI systems. However, these global standards must be adapted to fit local organizational structures, leadership styles, and cultural norms to ensure successful integration and application.
- **Addressing Barriers to Performance Tracking:**
Effective PMO measurement requires addressing common challenges such as cultural resistance, resource shortages, and limited stakeholder participation. Overcoming these barriers is essential for establishing reliable, actionable, and transparent performance tracking mechanisms.
- **Continuous Strategic Alignment and Longitudinal Assessment:**
PMOs must regularly reassess their practices and project portfolios to ensure continuous alignment with Saudi Vision ٢٠٣٠ and the evolving needs of the Saudi private sector. Additionally, longitudinal studies should be conducted to evaluate the long-term impact of PMOs on strategic plan implementation and to support sustained improvements in PMO effectiveness.
- **Stakeholder Engagement:** Involve stakeholders in discussions about strategic priorities and ensure that project selection processes reflect these priorities.

Furthermore, The literature review highlights persistent gaps in PMO standardization, stakeholder engagement, communication practices, and the adaptation of PMO frameworks to local cultural and sector-specific requirements. Previous research, particularly the study on Project-Based Businesses, provided a solid conceptual foundation but lacked practical guidance and regional specificity.

This study aims to address these shortcomings by providing tailored, actionable solutions specifically designed for the Saudi private sector. It emphasizes the critical importance of

engaging stakeholders, establishing structured communication channels, developing flexible yet standardized PMO frameworks, and implementing robust performance measurement systems aligned with both operational metrics and strategic outcomes. The integration of international best practices with local customization is essential for enhancing PMO effectiveness in Saudi Arabia. (Müller, ٢٠٠٩)

By bridging these gaps, this study contributes to a deeper understanding of how PMOs can play a pivotal role in driving the successful implementation of strategic plans, particularly in the context of Saudi Vision ٢٠٣٠. The proposed recommendations offer a pathway for Saudi organizations to strengthen their PMO capabilities and achieve sustainable, strategic success.

To enhance their impact, PMOs should collaborate closely with stakeholders, align project goals with strategic objectives, and foster communication across departments.

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for measuring PMOs Services in selected Organisations in Botswana(٢٠٢٢) K. Ntshwene, J.K. Ssegawa , P.D. Rwelamila(٢٠٢٢)

The primary problem addressed in this research study is the lack of formal measurement systems and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) used by Project Management Offices (PMOs) to assess the effectiveness and efficiency of their services in various organizations in Botswana. This gap in measurement limits organizations' ability to evaluate the value contribution of PMOs towards successful project delivery, which is expected to be within the constraints of time, budget, and quality specifications.

PMOs are typically established to improve project governance, ensure alignment with strategic objectives, and enhance organizational project delivery capabilities. The literature consistently emphasizes that PMOs can bridge the gap between strategy formulation and execution by providing structure, standardization, and performance oversight.

Despite these advantages, there is no universal agreement on PMO structures, roles, or performance measurement systems. This variation raises concerns about the consistency and comparability of PMO contributions across different organizational settings. The need for well-defined Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to measure PMO effectiveness is frequently cited but often insufficiently addressed in existing research.

Research Questions:

- What are the current practices related to the measurement of PMO services in selected organizations in Botswana?
- How do these practices affect project delivery success?
- What specific KPIs are utilized by the identified PMOs to measure their effectiveness and efficiency?
- Are these KPIs aligned with the organizational goals and the expected outcomes of project management?
- What challenges do organizations face in establishing and implementing formal measurement regimes for their PMOs?

- How do these challenges affect the overall performance and credibility of PMOs?
- What are the common factors that led to the establishment of PMOs in the selected organizations?
- How do those factors correlate with the success or failure of project completions?
- How does the lack of KPIs in most organizations impact the perceived value of the PMOs?

The ٢٠٢١ study, The Contribution of Project Management Offices (PMOs) to Strategy Implementation in Project-Based Businesses, explored how PMOs support strategy implementation within project-based organizations. The study identified the lack of standardization in PMO concepts and methodologies as a major challenge, which can undermine both research validity and practical effectiveness.

While the study proposed a conceptual model to link PMOs to strategy execution, it did not provide practical frameworks tailored to specific industries, countries, or cultural settings. Additionally, it failed to address key elements such as:

- Active stakeholder engagement in PMO processes.
- The role of communication in ensuring project alignment.
- National and cultural influences on PMO design and success.

These gaps limit the applicability of the ٢٠٢١ study to regions like Saudi Arabia, where cultural, leadership, and regulatory factors significantly shape organizational practices.

PMOs in the Saudi Private Sector

Saudi Arabia's Vision ٢٠٣٠ emphasizes diversification, innovation, and improved organizational efficiency across the private sector. In this context, PMOs can serve as critical enablers of strategic plan implementation. However, Saudi organizations face challenges that require customized PMO frameworks, including:

- Cultural barriers related to hierarchy, decision-making, and resistance to change.
- Limited stakeholder involvement in project selection and KPI development.
- Inconsistent performance measurement practices that do not adequately capture strategic contributions.

The Saudi private sector needs PMO models that are both globally benchmarked and locally adapted to address these challenges effectively.

Performance Measurement and the Role of KPIs

Accurately measuring PMO performance is essential to demonstrating their value in strategic plan execution. KPIs provide a structured method to assess whether PMOs are contributing to both project success (time, cost, scope) and broader strategic objectives (alignment, value delivery).

Although the Botswana study (٢٠٢٢) focused on the lack of formal KPI measurement systems, its emphasis on developing clear, actionable performance indicators is highly relevant to the Saudi context. Saudi organizations can benefit from adopting performance measurement systems that:

- Integrate strategic KPIs aligned with Saudi Vision ٢٠٣٠.
- Combine operational metrics (cost, schedule, scope adherence) with strategic outcomes (business value, customer satisfaction, alignment with long-term goals).
- Address cultural and organizational barriers to effective KPI implementation.

By tailoring these measurement practices to Saudi-specific challenges, PMOs can provide clearer evidence of their strategic impact.

Key Observations

- The ٢٠٢١ study provided valuable theoretical contributions but lacked practical relevance to specific national or sectoral contexts.
- It did not address stakeholder engagement, which is essential for aligning projects with organizational strategies.
- It overlooked the influence of national culture, regulatory environments, and sector-specific needs on PMO effectiveness.
- It failed to propose standardized performance measurement systems adaptable to diverse organizational settings.

Aspect	Current Research: Saudi Private Sector	Botswana Study (٢٠٢٢)
Geographical Focus	Saudi Arabia	Botswana
Industry Focus	Saudi private sector with focus on Vision ٢٠٣٠ alignment	Selected organizations
Strategic Context	Both operational and strategic KPIs (alignment, value delivery, national objectives)	Primarily operational KPIs (time, cost, scope)
Key Problem	Central to PMO design and KPI customization	Not emphasized

Cultural Considerations	Strongly emphasized as essential for KPI development and project alignment	Limited discussion
Performance Measurement	Recommended as formalized, multi-level communication channels	Not detailed
Stakeholder Engagement	Includes sustained alignment with Saudi Vision ٢٠٣٠, long-term impact evaluation	Limited to operational outcomes
Practical Frameworks	Recommended with localization for Saudi cultural and sector-specific needs	Recommended international best practices

In contrast, the current study emphasizes practical solutions customized for Saudi Arabia's private sector and aligns with the national transformation agenda under Vision ٢٠٣٠.

The Literature Gaps

Building on the limitations of the ٢٠٢١ study and informed by best practices in performance measurement, the following recommendations are proposed to enhance PMO effectiveness within the Saudi private sector:

- Active Stakeholder Engagement

PMOs should systematically involve stakeholders in project selection, planning, KPI development, and performance evaluation. This collaboration will ensure that project priorities align with strategic objectives and will increase stakeholder commitment throughout the project lifecycle.

- Structured Communication Channels

Saudi organizations should establish formal communication frameworks that connect PMOs, project teams, and executive leadership. Improving information flow and coordination will help PMOs adapt quickly to shifting strategic priorities and project demands.

- Customized PMO Frameworks

While maintaining core elements of standardization, PMOs should retain the flexibility to tailor their processes to Saudi cultural, regulatory, and sector-specific requirements. This balance ensures both consistency and local relevance.

- Robust Performance Measurement Systems

Organizations should implement formal performance measurement systems that go beyond traditional project metrics. These systems should:

- Measure project delivery success (time, cost, scope).
- Assess strategic contributions, including alignment with Saudi Vision ٢٠٣٠, business value, and customer impact.
- Use tools like the Balanced Scorecard to evaluate performance across multiple dimensions.
- Benchmarking Best Practices

Saudi PMOs should benchmark their structures, KPIs, and operational practices against international standards. Global best practices can be adapted to suit local Saudi contexts, improving both performance and credibility.

- Continuous Strategic Alignment

PMOs must regularly reassess their goals, processes, and KPIs to ensure sustained alignment with evolving organizational strategies and national objectives under Vision ٢٠٣٠.

- Long-Term Impact Evaluation

Future studies should adopt longitudinal research methods to evaluate the long-term contributions of PMOs to strategic plan implementation. This approach will provide deeper insights into PMO maturity and sustained organizational impact.

Organizations should benchmark their PMO practices to identify best practices in performance measurement and KPI utilization. Implementing formal performance measurement systems with defined KPIs, using the balanced scorecard framework, and involving stakeholders can enhance performance monitoring. Addressing barriers like cultural resistance and resource limitations is also essential for effective measurement.

The impact of Project Management Offices on organizational performance(٢٠٢٣) Adele JAMALELDINE (٢٠٢٣)

The effectiveness of Project Management Offices (PMOs) in facilitating the implementation of strategies within Project-Based Businesses (PBB) is often unclear, leading to challenges in aligning project outcomes with strategic objectives

PMOs have long been recognized for their ability to enhance project delivery success by providing governance structures, standardized processes, and improved resource management. The ٢٠٢٣ study titled "**The Impact of Project Management Offices on Organizational Performance**" focused on how PMOs contribute to improving project efficiency, achieving delivery targets, and ensuring adherence to time, cost, and scope constraints. This study emphasized the operational benefits of PMOs, particularly in terms of process standardization, risk management, and performance tracking.

The ٢٠٢٣ study on the impact of Project Management Offices (PMOs) on organizational performance highlights the positive role PMOs play in enhancing efficiency, improving project success rates, and supporting strategic goals. However, the study lacks consideration of regional and cultural factors, particularly within the Saudi private sector, and does not differentiate the effects across specific industries or types of PMOs. Additionally, it focuses on short-term outcomes without exploring long-term impacts on organizational sustainability and strategic growth. Future research should address these gaps by examining PMOs within specific regional and industry contexts, conducting longitudinal studies, distinguishing between different PMO structures, and assessing the PMO's contribution to strategic alignment and organizational change, especially in environments undergoing digital transformation.

However, while the ٢٠٢٣ study provided valuable insights into the project-level contributions of PMOs, it did not sufficiently explore the broader strategic impact of PMOs on organizational goals. Additionally, it lacked consideration of cultural, sector-specific, and stakeholder engagement factors that can significantly influence PMO effectiveness, particularly in distinctive national contexts.

Research Questions:

- How do PMOs contribute to the alignment of project outcomes with organizational strategies in PBB?
- What specific roles do PMOs play in enhancing communication and collaboration among project teams and stakeholders?
- What are the key factors that influence the effectiveness of PMOs in strategy implementation within PBB?

Key Observations

- The ٢٠٢٣ study made a valuable contribution in terms of understanding how PMOs influence project-level performance but did not extend this analysis to strategic plan execution.
- The current study addresses these gaps by offering practical, actionable models specifically designed for the Saudi private sector.
- This research emphasizes stakeholder collaboration, communication structures, strategic alignment, and cultural sensitivity as critical enablers of PMO success.
- Limited Stakeholder Engagement: Both studies overlooked the active role stakeholders should play in project selection, performance measurement, and strategic alignment.
- Inadequate Cultural Consideration: National cultural dynamics, leadership styles, and organizational behaviors specific to countries like Saudi Arabia were not considered.
- Operational Focus: Prior research focused heavily on project efficiency (time, cost, scope) without adequately addressing strategic contributions or long-term impacts.
- Lack of Context-Specific Frameworks: There is an absence of PMO models tailored to the regulatory and cultural environment of the Saudi private sector.
- Absence of Longitudinal Studies: Previous studies did not explore the sustained impact of PMOs over time in driving strategic objectives.

To address the gaps identified in previous research, PMOs in the Saudi private sector should adopt tailored frameworks that:

- Align with the cultural values, leadership dynamics, and communication styles prevalent in Saudi organizations.
- Integrate international best practices while customizing them to the local regulatory and operational landscape.
- Engage stakeholders in decision-making processes to increase buy-in and ensure strategic alignment.

Aspect	Current Study: Saudi Strategic Plan Impact	٢٠٢٣ Study: Organizational Performance
Geographical Focus	PMO's role in strategic plan execution aligned with Saudi Vision ٢٠٣٠	PMO's effect on operational efficiency and organizational performance
Industry Focus	Operational KPIs + Strategic KPIs (alignment, value delivery, Vision ٢٠٣٠ contribution)	Project delivery success (time, cost, scope)
Strategic Context	Central to project selection, KPI development, and strategy alignment	Limited
Key Problem	Strong focus on Saudi culture, leadership style, and organizational behavior	Not addressed
Cultural Considerations	Core focus: aligning projects with strategic plans and national goals	Not a primary focus
Performance Measurement	Emphasizes formalized, multi-layered communication between PMOs, project teams, and executives	٢٠٢٣ Study: Organizational Performance
Stakeholder Engagement	Customized international best practices adapted for Saudi private sector needs	PMO's effect on operational efficiency and organizational performance
Practical Frameworks	Advocates for longitudinal evaluation of PMO contributions to strategy execution	Project delivery success (time, cost, scope)

This study missed the role-definition process and regularly reviewing and refining roles can help mitigate these issues. Without clear definitions, roles can become ambiguous, leading to confusion about who is responsible for what tasks. This can result in overlapping duties or gaps in accountability, potentially hindering project progress.

The Literature Gaps

Drawing on the limitations of prior studies, the following recommendations are proposed to enhance the role of PMOs in the Saudi private sector:

- **Active Stakeholder Engagement:** PMOs should involve stakeholders in project selection, planning, and KPI development to ensure alignment with strategic priorities and foster commitment.
- **Structured Communication Channels:** Establish formal communication processes that connect PMOs, project teams, and executive leadership, ensuring timely information sharing and effective decision-making.
- **Customized PMO Frameworks:** Develop PMO structures that are standardized at their core but adaptable to the specific needs of different sectors and Saudi organizational cultures.
- **Robust Performance Measurement Systems:** Implement KPIs that balance operational metrics (time, cost, scope) with strategic outcomes (value delivery, strategic alignment, Vision ٢٠٣٠ contributions).
- **Benchmarking International Best Practices:** Saudi organizations should adopt proven global PMO practices but modify them to fit the local regulatory and cultural context.
- **Continuous Strategic Alignment:** PMOs must regularly reassess their processes to remain aligned with evolving corporate strategies and national priorities.
- **Long-Term Impact Evaluation:** Future research should track PMO contributions over time to assess their sustained role in strategy execution and organizational transformation.
- Establish clear roles and responsibilities for PMOs to ensure alignment with strategic goals.
- Foster a culture of collaboration between PMOs and project teams to enhance communication and knowledge sharing.
- Invest in training and development for PMO staff to improve their strategic management skills and project oversight capabilities.
- The primary goal of this book is to provide practical guidance and best practices for setting up and operating successful PMOs. It aims to help organizations improve project performance, reduce costs, and achieve .

Comparative Overview of Key Studies

Study	Geographical Context	Key Focus	Findings	Limitations
Philbin (٢٠١٦)	UK Public Sector	PMO structure, governance, strategy	PMOs enhance strategy implementation through governance and support	Public sector focus
Brito, Medeiros Junior(٢٠٢١)	Global	Project-Based Businesses	General Strategy Implementation	Not addressed
K. Ntshwene, J.K. Ssegawa , P.D. Rwelamila(٢٠٢٢)	Botswana	Selected organizations	Recommended international best practices	Limited to operational outcomes
(٢٠٢٣) Adele JAMALELDINE (٢٠٢٣)	Not a primary focus	Project delivery success (time, cost, scope)	PMO's effect on operational efficiency and organizational performance	Not addressed

Hobbs & Aubry (٢٠٠٨)	Canada/Global	PMO typology and evolution	PMOs evolve from operational support to strategic functions over time	Lacks Middle East application
Aubry et al. (٢٠٠٧)	Global	PMO performance and strategy link	Strategic PMOs contribute to portfolio alignment	Focused on mature organizations
PMI Pulse of the Profession (٢٠١٧)	Global	PMO maturity and strategy delivery	Organizations with PMOs meet strategic goals ٣٨% more often	No sector-specific data
Alghamdi & Bach (٢٠٢١)	Saudi Arabia (Public Sector)	PMO performance and strategic alignment	Positive impact of PMO on national program execution	Public sector-oriented

Key Themes and Patterns Identified

١. PMO Maturity and Strategic Alignment

Most studies concur that the maturity level of a PMO strongly influences its ability to support strategy execution. Mature PMOs implement formal processes, governance mechanisms, and performance metrics that drive alignment between project activities and strategic objectives (PMI, ٢٠١٧; Hobbs & Aubry, ٢٠٠٨).

٢. Contextual Influence

Geographical and sector-specific contexts play a critical role. While global studies highlight the strategic value of PMOs, Middle Eastern and Saudi-specific research (e.g., PwC ٢٠٢٣, Alghamdi & Bach ٢٠٢١) shows a gap in PMO performance, with cultural and structural issues often undermining effectiveness.

٣. Sectoral Disparity

There is a clear disparity between findings in the public and private sectors. Public sector PMOs—especially in Vision ٢٠٣٠-related programs—are more structured due to top-down mandates. In contrast, the private sector lacks uniform standards or enforcement, leading to inconsistent PMO implementation and strategic contribution.

٤. Research Gaps

- Limited empirical studies focus specifically on the Saudi **private** sector PMOs.
- The dynamic relationship between PMO functions (e.g., governance, portfolio management) and strategy execution KPIs is not deeply explored.
- Cultural, organizational, and leadership barriers specific to the Saudi private sector are underrepresented.

٥. Relevance to Current Research

The reviewed literature affirms the theoretical relationship between PMOs and strategic plan implementation but highlights a substantial **empirical and contextual gap** in Saudi Arabia's **private sector**. While several studies demonstrate the potential of PMOs as strategic enablers, the regional data indicate that many organizations still treat PMOs as technical or reporting units rather than strategic drivers.

This study aims to bridge this gap by:

- Investigating the **actual impact** of PMOs on strategic plan implementation in Saudi private sector organizations.
- Exploring how **PMO dimensions (e.g., governance, alignment, performance tracking)** influence execution outcomes.
- Providing **recommendations tailored to the local organizational and cultural context** under the transformation mandate of Vision ٢٠٣٠.

٦. Conclusion of the Analysis

In summary, while the global body of literature supports the role of PMOs in strategic implementation, regional discrepancies and local implementation challenges demand a focused inquiry. There is a pressing need to assess how PMOs in the **Saudi private sector** can evolve from administrative units to strategic enablers. This study will contribute to addressing this gap through empirical evidence, contextual analysis, and practical recommendation

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