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استكشاف كيفية مساهمة استراتيجيات العلاقات العامة في اهداف ومبادرات رؤية 2030

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**Topic - Exploring How Public Relations Strategies Are
Contributing to The Goals and Initiatives of Vision 2030**

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Abstract

The objective of this investigation was to evaluate the public relations campaign's effectiveness in promoting Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030. Eight selected articles applied thematic analysis to reveal how PR campaigns influenced international perception, improved domestic awareness, defined best practices, and spearheaded the diversification of the economy. The recommendations stressed that social media and cultural diplomacy need to alter the world, education, and strategies to have the nation on their side. PR strategies of other national transformations indicated that there is a need to have integrated PR activities. Moreover, PR strategies supported the sustainable performance systems and smart city in reference to the objectives of economic diversification. Therefore, the study concluded that Vision 2030 PR operations are complex, it underlines the need for PR practitioners to engage in clear and ethical communication.

Table of Contents

Acknowledgement	3
Abstract	4
Chapter 1: Introduction	8
1.1 Background	8
1.2 Problem Statement	9
1.3 Aim and Objectives	10
1.4 Research Question	11
1.5 Rationale	11
Chapter 2: Literature Review.....	12
2.1 The Role of Public Relations in National Economic Transformations	12
2.2 Vision 2030 and its Communication Challenges	13
2.3 Public Relations Strategies and International Perception	14
2.4 Public Relations and Economic Development.....	14
2.5 Challenges and Opportunities in Implementing PR Strategies for Vision 2030	15
2.6 Literature Gap	16
2.7 Theoretical Framework.....	17
2.7.1 Excellence Theory of Public Relations	17
Chapter 3: Methodology.....	19
3.1 Research Philosophy	19

3.2 Research Approach19

3.3 Research Design20

3.4 Research Strategy20

3.5 Search Terms20

3.6 Initial Screening21

3.7 Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria21

3.8 Quality Assessment22

3.9 Data Extraction.....23

3.10 Data Analysis24

3.11 Time Horizon.....24

3.12 Ethical Consideration25

Chapter 4: Results26

4.1 Data Extraction Table26

4.2 Thematic Analysis28

4.2.1 Role of PR Campaigns in Shaping International Perceptions.....28

Theme 2: Domestic PR Strategies and Public Awareness29

Theme 3: Contribution of PR Strategies to Economic Diversification31

Chapter 5: Discussion35

Chapter 6: Conclusion and Recommendations38

6.1 Recommendations39

6.2 Limitations of The Study	41
References	42

Chapter 1: Introduction

Public relations are expected to contribute to the objectives and programs of Vision 2030, the development plan of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to diversify away from oil and gas (Nurunnabi et al., 2020). These strategies include a set of communication control strategies aimed at changing the perception of the public, involving counterparts from other countries in cooperation, and spreading the achievements of the nation (Asem et al., 2024). For example, issue management campaigns have been crucial in helping PR in the promotion of Saudi Arabia's image in the global market, appeal to investors, and tourist attraction (Moshashai et al., 2020). The Saudi Ministry of Investment (2022) has pointed out that based on the current estimate, the FDI inflows increased by 20% in 2021 and one of the causes of this was effective public relation. Moreover, the use of public relations in the promotion of cultural and entertainment events has boosted the domestic tourism by 35% in 2021 during the Saudi Seasons' campaign (Saudi Commission for Tourism and National Heritage, 2022). Since information management and stakeholders' engagement are core components of PR, these strategies are crucial in supporting the goals and objectives stated in Vision 2030. The purpose of this study is to evaluate the level of public relations' contribution to Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030 by measuring its impact on global perception, domestic support, and diversification.

1.1 Background

Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030 was launched in 2016 by Mohammed bin Salman Al Saud, the Crown Prince and the country's Deputy Prime Minister. It is the long-term development plan of the kingdom focused on non-oil economic development (Asem et al., 2024). Economically, Saudi Arabia has depended significantly on the receipts from oil sales, which has been a major issue because of the volatility of the international oil market (García-Sánchez et al., 2024). The need for

economic diversification was gradually felt in periods of low oil prices, indicating an oil-based economy's vulnerability (Brahimi et al., 2024). Knowing this, the Saudi government initiated the process of change that was intended to alter the nature of the country's economy by adopting Vision 2030.

Furthermore, the framework of Vision 2030 focuses on several key areas: diversification of the economy through the development of sources of income other than oil and encouraging growth of society and the economy. It also contains activities to improve sectors like tourism, arts, health, and information technology (Saudi Vision 2030, 2016). To accomplish these objectives, which seem to be lofty, the function of public relations (PR) has stood out as being more important. PR has been applied to change Saudi Arabia's image in the external world and finance different social and economic changes the kingdom has been implementing (Brahimi et al., 2024). For instance, the PR has been significantly active in marketing the Kingdom by majoring in culture and history. Thus, the "Saudi Seasons" is a series of cultural and entertainment events, which is a vivid example of how PR activities create a premise for further tourist attraction (Saudi Commission for Tourism and National Heritage, 2022). Besides, the PR strategies have been applicable in marketing the Kingdom for FDI by publicising reforms in the Kingdom's economic structure and policies (Nurunnabi et al., 2020). According to Saudi Ministry of Investment (2022), these efforts have contributed to improving the FDI which affirms that PR is instrumental in realising the objectives under Vision 2030.

1.2 Problem Statement

In the case of Vision 2030, PR strategies are mainly used to describe the operation's perception and success. Sfakianakis (2024) further elaborated on the role of PR in the international marketing of Saudi Arabia's cultural and economic initiatives. He also emphasised that Global PR

has contributed to the improvement of investors' confidence in Saudi Arabia and the modification of perceptions. Similarly, Samargandi et al., 2024) suggested that PR helps in enhancing the domestic awareness and support for the Vision 2030 reforms in the areas of tourism and entertainment where PR has also enhanced the participation rates among the public.

However, one main issue with PR strategies in the country is the capacity to guarantee that these strategies are always effective in altering the perception of the general public on Vision 2030 goals. People may need help comprehending Vision 2030 objectives, which limits their accomplishment. Some PR tactics have been successful, but there is no evaluation of how they are affecting Vision 2030. It is crucial to comprehend the effects and efficiency of PR strategies to keep engaging, supporting, and participating local and global stakeholders in Saudi Arabia's change process.

1.3 Aim and Objectives

Aim

This study aims to assess the role of public relations in promoting Vision 2030's objectives and programs in Saudi Arabia, especially in terms of international image, domestic opinion, and economic diversification.

Objectives

- To analyse the role of PR campaigns in shaping international perceptions of Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030 initiatives.
- To assess the level of public awareness and understanding of Vision 2030 within Saudi Arabia and to evaluate how domestic PR strategies are fostering support and buy-in for the program's goals

- To identify best practices in PR for national transformation programs, drawing on the case study of Vision 2030 and comparing it with successful PR strategies employed in other countries
- To assess the contribution of PR strategies to economic diversification under Vision 2030

1.4 Research Question

How do public relations strategies influence international perceptions, domestic support, and economic diversification in the context of Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030?

1.5 Rationale

The justification for this study is founded on the necessity to evaluate the efficiency of PR strategies in promoting Vision 2030, Saudi Arabia's framework for economic transformation and development. Vision 2030 is to change the Kingdom's economy by diversifying it and improving the lives of citizens (Saudi Vision 2030, 2016). PR strategies are crucial in determining these programs' reception at home and abroad, thus ensuring their success. Salman (2024) has identified that PR campaigns have played a major role in enhancing the perception and investment attraction of Saudi Arabia globally. Likewise, the USC Center on Public Diplomacy (2023) noted that PR enhances the Tanzanian people's understanding and support for the Vision 2030 reforms. However, there is always a gap between defined plans and public perception, which may hinder Vision 2030. Measuring PR strategies' effectiveness is important for maintaining stakeholders' interests. Therefore, this study aims to systematically evaluate the impact of PR on Vision 2030's objectives to identify areas for improvement in PR practice and improve the outcomes of subsequent campaigns.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1 The Role of Public Relations in National Economic Transformations

Public relations (PR) are an essential factor in the processes of national economic transformations because they influence the perception of the population and investors. Ruiz-Mallén & Heras (2020) stressed the role of PR in enhancing Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030 that effective and coordinated PR campaigns have enhanced the image of Saudi Arabia in the international market and attracted foreign investments. Sfakianakis (2024) observed that PR campaigns have been instrumental in the process of transforming Saudi Arabia from the outside world's perspective into one that is progressive and open for business with a view of foreign direct investment and tourism. Flynn & Aldamer (2024) highlighted that PR methods have improved domestic understanding and endorsement of Vision 2030 Tourism and Entertainment Reforms. These PR campaigns have received massive public engagement and, therefore, the achievement of strategic communication to national economic goals.

Rendtorff (2019) identified that despite the PR efforts, there are many barriers that one has to face while changing negative perceptions and scepticism, especially in the Western media. Moreover, PR campaigns are usually opposed due to prejudice and political climate, and the credibility of the promoted initiatives is questioned. This view depicts the challenges and barriers encountered in applying PR to address national economic transformation objectives. Overall, it can be argued that, on balance, PR strategies have effectively promoted the goals of Vision 2030 by attracting more investment and public attention. However, they face substantial difficulties in changing people's well-established perceptions. The mixed outcomes suggest that a more complex approach to the use of PR as a tool for creating national economic change is needed while, on the one hand, promoting positive attitudes and, on the other, combating prejudice and mistrust.

2.2 Vision 2030 and its Communication Challenges

Vision 2030 is not exempt from communication challenges, even though it is among the most strategic PR visions with big goals for the future. Pineda-Escobar (2019) reported that one of the major challenges is the gap between the grand intentions and the global audience's awareness of these transformations. Despite the Vision 2030 projects' goals of changing the Saudi economy into a diverse and developed one, the international community remains sceptical based on previous prejudices and conflicts. This perception gap always threatens to compromise the impact of PR's meant to promote Vision 2030 as a viable and promising development blueprint. In support of this argument, Paletta & Bonoli (2019) stated that there is worth to the PR approach in some spheres, for instance, in attracting FDI and tourism. At the same time, he also mentions that such efforts are often met with a certain degree of scepticism due to the negative attitudes and mistrust towards the information provided by the Saudi authorities. The research shows that to overcome these issues, one needs more than just strong PR campaigns and timely and clear communication must be established to gain the audience's confidence gradually.

On the other hand, a study conducted by Flynn and Aldamer (2024) stated that using PR has improved the appreciation of Vision 2030 at the domestic and international levels. Flynn and Aldamer (2024) also observed that projects such as the Saudi Seasons and the NEOM project have attracted the attention of various groups of people and presented Saudi Arabia's reforms and progressive policies. This view thus supports the likelihood of PR strategies to disseminate the goals of Vision 2030 despite the existing barriers. Although, Vision 2030 has improved public relations but still has significant communication gaps. The diverse outcomes of the analysed experiments emphasise the need for global message scepticism and a more nuanced communication strategy.

2.3 Public Relations Strategies and International Perception

Public relations management is critical to influencing a country's perceptions, especially when undertaking a development agenda, as seen in the KSA's Vision 2030 case. A study by Ainurrofiq & Khasanah (2024), PR measurement firm AMEC, revealed that public relations activities carried out by PR departments and agencies have a positive relationship with the amount of FDI attracted by developing countries. It implies that PR strategies that depict Saudi Arabia's attempts at diversification of its economy and social reforms as positive can draw international investment that Vision 2030 needs (Moshashai et al., 2020). However, not all PR campaigns are equally successful. Audiences are getting smarter, so they can no longer be easily convinced by the propaganda-like information disseminated by governments, according to a study by Khoirunnisa & Nurhaliza (2024). Heibach (2024) also investigated the public's reaction to the public relations campaigns of several developing countries and found that individuals are capable of independently seeking substantiation of a country's progress beyond the polished PR messaging. It also emphasises that PR strategies built on actual changes and openness are more believable to the audiences. Therefore, PR could indeed be relied on to influence international perception, however, the impact depends on whether the perception is real or staged. Like most PR strategies, Vision 2030's PR will require improvements to be communicated alongside the message to gain the international community's confidence.

2.4 Public Relations and Economic Development

PR approaches can be a major tool in promoting economic development, especially for projects such as Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030. According to Odhiambo (2024), the level of FDI increases in countries with good reputations regarding transparency and governance. Strategic PR campaigns can enhance this positive reputation through the right message that communicates a

nation's reform agenda to make the country a favourable destination for business. For instance, PR focusing on Vision 2030's spending on infrastructure and development of education can assure foreign investors of the long-term prospects of the country's economy.

Nonetheless, the efficiency of PR in promoting economic development can be rather low. A study by Krzymowski (2020) also proved that unethical public relations are detrimental to a nation, which may lead to a loss of investment. It shows that PR strategies should always harmonise with fundamental economic reforms. When the message disseminated through publicity does not correspond with the realities on the ground, it leads to a credibility gap with potential investors, thus hampering economic development (Moshashai et al., 2020). Therefore, PR provides useful instruments for the growth of economic activities. However, it is critical to be trustworthy in the context of the disclosed information and its correlation with the actions. To get the attention of foreign investors, Vision 2030's PR will also have to demonstrate real progress, aside from rhetoric, to achieve the country's economic diversification goals.

2.5 Challenges and Opportunities in Implementing PR Strategies for Vision 2030

Challenges and opportunities of PR in managing change for a transformative plan such as Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030 plan. There is also a risk of managing the expectations of different stakeholders in the organisation. Almakaty's (2024) analysis of the effective communication approaches for multi-faceted efforts identified audience categorisation as a crucial aspect of the process. PR strategy in Vision 2030 should consider international investors, the domestic population, and their concerns and dreams. However, this segmentation offers a great opportunity for targeted communication. A study by Heibach (2024) indicated that when a campaign is framed to appeal to the target group's values and concerns, it will likely receive support. Thus, while

appealing to domestic priorities, for instance, by focusing on job creation measures or better education in Tanzania, PR strategies can foster the population's support for Vision 2030's reforms.

Some obstacles relate to the reversal of existing perceptions about Saudi Arabia. Research by Singh and Alhabbas (2024) revealed that the international public negatively perceives the nation. PR strategies will, therefore, challenge these perceptions positively by presenting the existing social changes and development. Overall, PR for Vision 2030 needs to be done strategically, particularly given the complexity of society and the prevailing perceptions. By balancing the audiences and providing the appropriate communication tactics, PR can transform the threats into opportunities, gaining domestic support and global investment for Vision 2030's achievement.

2.6 Literature Gap

This study has established several gaps in the literature on PR strategies for Vision 2030 that should be addressed. While prior works have explored the use of PR in influencing international audiences and supporting national projects, there is a gap in research investigating how PR strategies contribute to improving domestic audiences' understanding and approval of Vision 2030. Moreover, the literature lacks an integrated view of PR and how each element such as social media or cultural diplomacy contributes to diversification and social change. There are also significantly fewer comparative analyses of the PR practices of Saudi Arabia compared to those of other countries that are also going through similar processes of nation-building. This absence of comparative analysis hampers the identification of the benchmark and the possibility of adapting the successful practices from other countries. Moreover, PR is a constantly evolving field, and the expansion of technologies in the modern world makes it important to research to ensure that conclusions can be applied. Filling these gaps can provide broader information on how

to enhance PR to better contribute to the goals of Vision 2030, which, in turn, can increase the level of support for change among foreign and domestic audiences.

2.7 Theoretical Framework

2.7.1 Excellence Theory of Public Relations

The theoretical framework of this study is the Excellence Theory of Public Relations, which James E. Grunig established in the middle of the 1980s with Todd Hunt. As the Excellence Theory suggests, organisations achieve the desired performance in a two-way symmetrical communication system that involves sharing information from both the side of the organisation and the side of the public. Unlike the one-way, the organisation is only an information disseminator or even a provider of messages to the audiences with no feedback.

The Excellence Theory is useful for this analysis of Vision 2030 since the theory postulates that discussion with other domestic and foreign communities regarding Saudi Arabia's changes is imperative. Therefore, to attain Vision 2030, Saudi Arabia must declare its goals and accomplishments and listen to what other people think about the country (Asem et al., 2024). This ties in with Grunig's assertion that the best way to practice public relations is to establish and maintain two-way symmetrical relationships with the target public, which can help improve their trust and support for the initiatives.

Nevertheless, it has some drawbacks. One major area for improvement is that it presumes that all the stakeholders are ready to partake in two-way communication, which might not be the case. For example, prejudice or rivalry in international relations can impede free communication and discussion, and some of the critical or cautious attitudes towards Saudi Arabia's PR activities (García-Sánchez et al., 2024). Also, the theory fails to incorporate elements of power that can

distort communication, for instance, when a media message is influenced by political forces outside the theory. However, the limitations do not reduce the usefulness of the Excellence Theory in analysing and enhancing PR strategies connected with Vision 2030 (Kumi et al., 2020). Hence, it becomes incumbent upon the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to ensure that it uses two-way symmetrical communication to improve the PR campaigns, to ensure that people understand change that is happening in the kingdom as well as to address dynamics of the global image.

Chapter 3: Methodology

3.1 Research Philosophy

This research has used a specific research philosophy and this is the Interpretivist research philosophy. Saunders et al. (2019) established that Interpretivism is a philosophical belief system whereby one acknowledges that social phenomena possess inherent meaning as viewed from the researcher's subject. This approach is appropriate for the study because it reveals how and why the determinative public relations strategies influence the perception of Vision 2030 among the stakeholders. Thus, the decision to select an interpretive approach is justified as this approach allows for the provision of detailed information on the questions of communication and perception that is crucial for the assessment of PR strategies in the socio-political environment.

3.2 Research Approach

The category of research applied in this study is inductive. Saunders et al. (2019) have stated that inductive research, being a type of research, entails data collection and theory development as the end product of data analysis. This approach is chosen because it enables the researcher to find out new trends and patterns concerning the communication strategies as influence that can shape people's perception of the Vision 2030 Convention but not covered by the current theories or frameworks. Therefore, while applying the inductive approach, there were many descriptions and qualitative data that enabled the development of new theoretical frameworks or models on PR strategies and their efficacy in the socio-political environment of Saudi Arabia.

3.3 Research Design

The kind of research design chosen for this study is secondary qualitative research design. Secondary qualitative research is a research method of arriving at new conclusions from the gathered qualitative data in documents, interviews, and reports (Saunders et al., 2019). This approach is chosen because the study gathered unstructured information on public relations and Vision 2030 methods. It provides more comprehensive data as compared to the situation where data is gathered from the start. The implication of secondary qualitative research means that the study discovered other complicated features within the data, and thereby help to understand how PR strategies influence perception and support for Vision 2030 programs.

3.4 Research Strategy

The research strategy used in this study entails the collection of secondary data. This process involves observing for documents that have previous qualitative information in the form of journals, government publications, newspapers, and interviews. Thus, by employing these abundant data sources, the study's aims are to offer generalised conclusions about how PR has impacted the perception of Vision 2030. The secondary data analysis approach is easy to use and time-saving. It allows the researcher to scan a large amount of information that will help identify trends, patterns, and possibly gaps in the existing literature on PR and Vision 2030's goals.

3.5 Search Terms

To gather comprehensive insights for the study, the following search terms were utilised: such as "Vision 2030 Saudi Arabia public relations strategies," "impact of PR on Vision 2030 goals," "Saudi Arabia economic diversification PR campaigns," "international perception of

Vision 2030,” “public relations effectiveness in Saudi reforms,” “challenges in PR for Vision 2030,” “Saudi tourism and PR campaigns,” “cultural diplomacy and Vision

3.6 Initial Screening

In the context of the preliminary filtering of sources, the study aimed to include only those sources that describe the function of public relations for achieving the objectives set in Vision 2030. It entails reviewing research papers, government documents, and media reports within the last five years. The screening parameters are the linkage with Vision 2030, identification of PR strategies and strategies to envisage the impact of Vision 2030, evidence on the efficacy of these strategies and comparative and SMA perception. In assessing the sources' relevance, the sources' credibility, and the depth with which they shed light on the effects of the PR on the implementation of Vision 2030 and the corresponding challenges. This way, the most relevant and the best quality data are brought into focus for the study.

3.7 Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

Criteria	Inclusion	Exclusion
Publication Date	Published within the last five years	Published more than five years ago
Relevance to Vision 2030	Directly addresses Vision 2030 goals and PR strategies	Does not mention Vision 2030 or PR strategies
Type of Source	Academic articles, government reports, media analyses	Opinion pieces, blogs, non-peer-reviewed sources

Evidence of PR Impact	Provides empirical evidence on PR effectiveness	Lacks empirical evidence or data
Geographic Focus	Focuses on Saudi Arabia and Vision 2030	Focuses on other countries or unrelated initiatives
Language	Published in English	Published in languages other than English
Credibility	Peer-reviewed journals, official reports, reputable sources	Non-credible sources, unknown authors, or non-reputable publishers

3.8 Quality Assessment

Data screening is a critical process that evaluates the quality of selected articles up to this stage. While some articles were deleted during the first screening, others were rejected because they lacked quality and had insufficient material about soft skills in project management. The quality evaluation method's quality assessment criteria used the CASP Checklist. This instrument comes in two forms that are qualitative and a quantitative type of research. However, the current research used both types of articles in secondary data, both CASP versions were used to assess these articles. This tool has a checklist that assesses the research technique to ensure that the core aspects of the research work have been harmonised, and this includes sampling, method of data collection, design of approach and data analysis (Alhubashi et al., 2024). In addition, the quality evaluation method was important to check the reporting of the results in this study, thus enhancing the researcher's report to the reader. It guaranteed that the research procedures were well recorded and met the required standards. Additionally, it confirms the reliability of the results and enables

thorough evaluation. The methodical approach facilitated a thorough assessment while bolstering evidence-based methodologies. Furthermore, CASP techniques have also facilitated the identification of the limits of each research, which were not explicitly indicated in the material. As a result of this evaluation, several more items were omitted due to their low quality. The following depicts the articles searched for in an online database and then rejected at each level of data filtering, extraction, and quality evaluation. There were a total of 8 finalised articles.

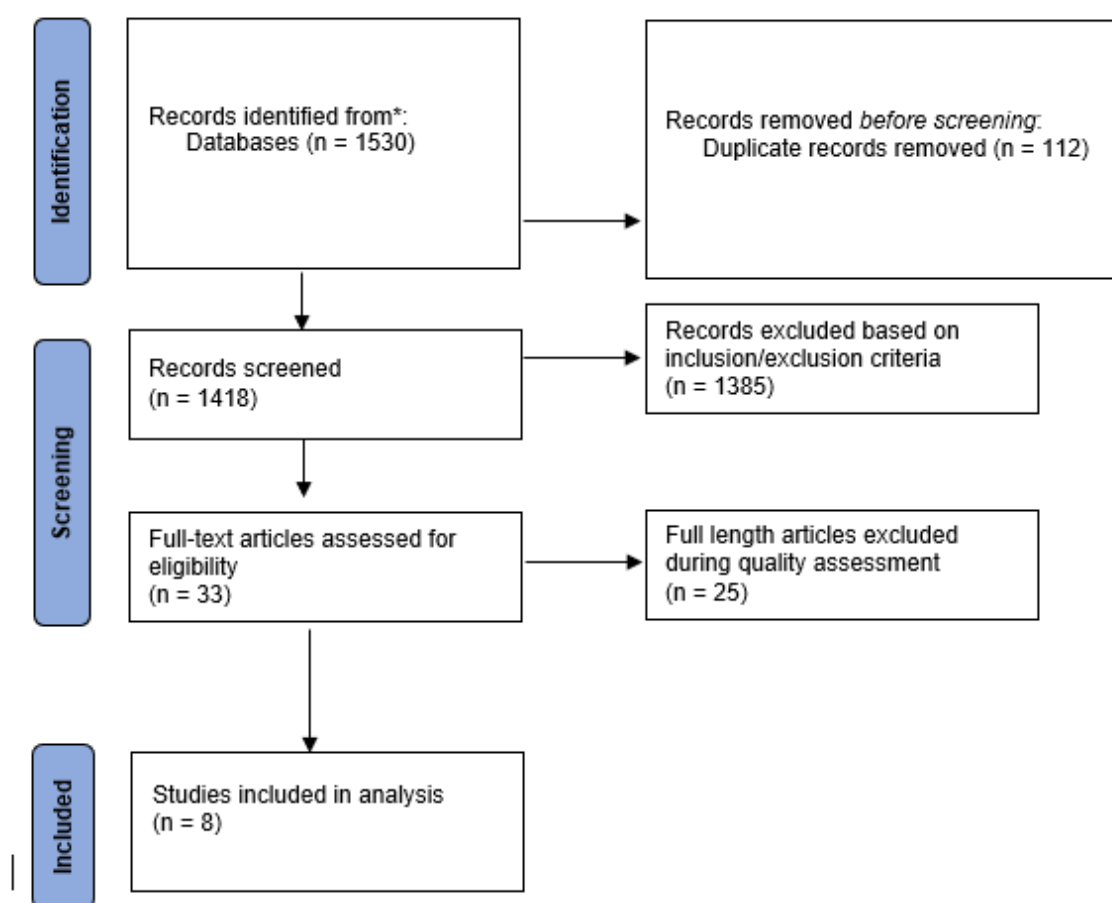


Figure 1: PRISMA Flow Chart of Data Collection and Screening

3.9 Data Extraction

In this step, information from the chosen sources undergoes a collection and sorting process. It includes searches for the main themes, trends, and research findings regarding PR

application and its effectiveness in Vision 2030. Every source is carefully analysed to retrieve data on the impact of PR campaigns, the perception locally and internationally, and the issues encountered. Data is sorted according to the objectives of a given research to have a harmonious flow. The analysed data is then integrated into a coherent concept regarding the role of PR strategies in the context of Vision 2030 objectives, which serves as the basis for the conclusion.

3.10 Data Analysis

The selected method of data analysis for this research is thematic analysis. The thematic analysis is a technique of comprehending, interpreting, and reporting patterns (themes) in the gathered data (Braun & Clarke 2006). It is a popular qualitative analytical technique because it offers flexibility and a relatively detailed and complex data picture. This approach is chosen as it provides a way of analysing the qualitative data that is systematically collected from secondary sources so that common themes related to the effectiveness of the public relations strategies in realising Vision 2030's objectives are determined. Thematic analysis is useful in classifying data and interpreting it in a manner that presents key issues and trends pertinent to the study's goals.

3.11 Time Horizon

The time frame for this study is from January 2024 to August 2024, which enabled the researcher to cover all aspects of the year in the analysis of the effects of PR on Vision 2030. It is a time that enables the collection of data and information from different PR campaigns and programs executed over the year. It also made it possible to observe these strategies' short- and medium-term effects, which are reflected in public opinion, domestic support, and diversification. By adopting this time horizon, the present study aims to offer an explanatory rather than forecasting account of the dynamics of PR's functioning regarding the difficult tasks set by Vision 2030.

3.12 Ethical Consideration

The research in this study relied on secondary data instead of primary data, hence avoiding entailing the process of seeking consent from the participants. However, only the papers which are included in the second round of the process were reused, and the authors who developed potential conflicts of interest were excluded. The data acquired was likely to be original and valid, with quality standing marked and dependability supported by evidence. Analysing the chosen research, the authors were given the necessary credits.

Chapter 4: Results

4.1 Data Extraction Table

Sr.	Authors and Year of Publication	Aim	Method	Sample	Findings
1	Alghamdi et al., 2022	Develop a framework for sustainable performance systems and KPIs	Semi-structured interviews and focus groups	Senior managers and staff in SACM's academic department and external experts	Identified 12 CSFs and 30 KPIs crucial for daily activities, enhancing the sustainable performance of SACM.
2	Alsaaidi, 2020	Analyse Saudi Arabia's national branding strategy using Twitter	Qualitative content analysis	Tweets from @saudivision2030 Twitter handle	Twitter effectively enhances Saudi Arabia's brand image, promoting socio-political and economic progress.
3	Mohiuddin et al., 2023	Investigate higher education development	Expert interviews and surveys	Participants from the top ten Saudi universities	Prioritised new curriculum, industry-based outcomes, skilled

		in Saudi Arabia under Vision 2030			graduates, faculty development, and research collaborations.
4	Alamoudi, Abidoeye, & Lam, 2023	Develop a framework for citizen participation in smart, sustainable cities (SSC)	Delphi method	Decision makers in urban planning	Proposed a framework with SMM, CPL, and CPR as key components, facilitating SSC outcomes in line with Vision 2030.
5	Alshawan, 2023	Explore OD practices in Saudi Arabia during Vision 2030 and COVID-19	Qualitative interviews	11 organisation development experts	Highlighted facilitating and hindering factors for OD practices, with recommendations for improving organisational change management.

4.2 Thematic Analysis

4.2.1 Role of PR Campaigns in Shaping International Perceptions

The theme connected with the evaluation of PR campaigns and their relevance to the discussion of Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030 is the notion of the campaign's impact on the general population. This theme covers numerous activities and communication channels to manage the international perception of Saudi Arabia's change-making efforts. As for the characteristics, this theme involves the promotion of the Kingdom through social media, cultural diplomacy, and global engagement efforts. These codes relate to other major themes, including "social media impact", "nation branding", "culture and events", and "diplomatic approaches".

4.2.1.1 Impact of Social Media on Nation Branding

This sub-theme examines how Saudi Arabia has used social media, specifically Twitter, to build an improved global image. Alsaaidi (2020) noted that @saudivision2030 is one of the main handles for advocating for Vision 2030's socio-political and economic prosperity. Therefore, the research showed that Saudi Arabia is seen as a progressive country on Twitter because it uses the right hashtags and the appropriate messages. Due to modern social media, mainly Twitter, since it instantly offers the opportunity to communicate with the targeted masses, primary media has several advantages over traditional forms of media.

4.2.1.2 Cultural Diplomacy and Global Engagement

This sub-theme deals with the analysis of cultural processes and diplomatic initiatives that make possible a new image of Saudi Arabia in the international system. Alsaaidi (2020) and Alghamdi et al. (2022) pointed out cultural diplomacy for Vision 2030. Alsaaidi also explains on the manner in which Saudi Arabia's cultural events are marketed to reveal the cultural and technological development of the country. Alghamdi et al. (2022) explained that such actions are

in line with the global plan to enhance sustainable performance systems and indicators to produce the developed image of the country.

Analysis of Findings

The examination of these findings indicated that there are some similarities and differences in the notions introduced by the authors. In this regard, Alsaaidi (2020) and Alghamdi et al. (2022) are in unison to expound on the fact that cultural diplomacy and social media play a crucial role in influencing the world's perceptions. They also established that such tools are important in developing a good image and ensuring the international community is aligned with Vision 2030. However, its target areas become distinct at this stage. Alsaaidi (2020) mainly concentrates on the direct outcomes of social media, especially Twitter, in nation branding. The emphasis is made on the essence of the dissemination of information and on the scale of social media in forming perceptions globally. On the other hand, Alghamdi et al. (2022) expand the scope of the discussion and include cultural events and sustainable performance frameworks into the story of international perception. It is claimed that cultural diplomacy and performance measures are two elements that should be used to create and sustain a liberal image.

Theme 2: Domestic PR Strategies and Public Awareness

The theme of Domestic PR Strategies and Public Awareness is concerned with how PR in Saudi Arabia seeks to generate citizens' awareness and support for Vision 2030. This theme focuses on the need to employ proper communication, education, and participation in creating a conducive domestic environment to ensure the achievement of the significant reforms in Vision 2030. Some of the parameters of this theme are education and cultural programs and their applicability in communication as the method of obtaining general public support. Predecessor codes that fall

under this theme are “public outreach”, “educational programmes and activities”, “communication tactics”, and “joint programmes and projects”.

4.2.2.1 Engagement through Cultural and Educational Initiatives

This sub-theme evaluates the extent to which domestic PR approaches in the education sector, like curriculum changes and partnerships, have contributed to the achievement of Vision 2030. In the study by Mohiuddin et al. (2023), the authors highlight the measures introduced into the higher education system to promote projects that will help bring the system into correspondence with Vision 2030. Such measures entail the process of curriculum relevant to current trends in the job market, faculty development, and international linkages. Such initiatives not only enhance the quality of education but also sensitise the public by availing practical display of progress to Vision 2030.

4.2.2.2 Communication and Collaborative Engagement

This sub-theme focuses on the communication and collective involvement in raising awareness and sponsorship of Vision 2030 objectives in KSA. Alshawan (2023) and Mohiuddin et al. (2023) stress the value of communication processes and partnerships in enhancing domestic relations. Thus, Alshawan (2023) stresses the significance of the principles of OD, strategic management, and leadership in translating the goals of Vision 2030. As Mohiuddin et al. (2023) rightly pointed out, stakeholders' collaboration also supports the Vision 2030 education sector, which can involve business entities and other schools.

Analysis of Findings

The difference in these findings entails comparing and contrasting the views of the authors of the two articles. In their studies, Mohiuddin et al. (2023) and Alshawan (2023) concur that

communication and engagement approaches are vital in engaging the public to support Vision 2030. They note that these issues require increased attention, effective communication, and teamwork development to raise citizens' awareness and achieve Vision 2030 objectives. Nevertheless, the two types of companies differ in the areas of concern. Most of the literature review by Mohiuddin et al. (2023) focuses on the educational sector, outlining that curriculum development, faculty training, and industry partnerships are critical in engaging the public and ensuring that education outcomes align with Vision 2030 goals. In contrast, Alshawan (2023) mainly discusses general OD practices and their attention to strategic management, leadership, and communication for change and public support. Therefore, by identifying the role of domestic PR strategies in raising public awareness of Vision 2030, the two studies provide different angles of analysis depending on the nature of the research undertaken. Mohiuddin et al. (2023) give a comprehensive view of the education sector, while Alshawan (2023) gives a view of the general topic of organisational development and strategic communication. Altogether, these viewpoints present the complex nature of domestic PR approaches regarding promoting Vision 2030.

Theme 3: Contribution of PR Strategies to Economic Diversification

The Contribution of PR Strategies to Economic Diversification theme relates to the impact of PR initiatives in driving Saudi Arabia's diversification agenda, which is in line with Vision 2030, away from reliance on oil. This theme consists of numerous communication activities to promote sustainable development and the achievements and key indicators introduced by smart, sustainable cities.

4.2.3.1 Sustainable Performance and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

This sub-theme explores the place of PR strategies in economic diversification and the forces that play out in the firm's performance, which entails success factors and KPI. In their study,

Alghamdi et al. (2022) said that PR strategies are important in building long-term PSO performance theories. Their study states that the SACM in Australia uses PR to share information about the key success factors and KPIs well because they refer to the daily work and organisational goals. This alignment is required for the firm's sustainable performance and Vision 2030, particularly for the goals of diversification of the economy.

4.2.3.2 Smart Sustainable Cities and Economic Growth

This sub-theme analyses PR's role in enhancing the idea of smart, sustainable cities and the effects on the kingdom's economic development-kingdom's economic development of Vision 2030. Alamoudi, Abidoye, and Lam (2023) have presented the concept of PR and the contribution of PR in engaging citizens in the creation of SSC. Some opine that the appropriate PR techniques can be important in managing the stakeholders and the public in urban planning and sustainability. Such initiatives are required to realise the smart city objectives enumerated under Vision 2030, which supports the expansion and development of the economy.

Analysis of Findings

The comparison of these findings shows that the authors' perceptions are partially congruent and partially divergent. Alghamdi et al. (2022) and Alamoudi, Abidoye, and Lam (2023) concur that PR strategies are crucial in enhancing sustainable performance and economic growth. They stress that strategic communication and engagement are essential for ensuring the organisation's goals align with Vision 2030. Nevertheless, they differ in the spheres of concern. Alghamdi et al. (2022) mainly focus on internal organisational factors, and they explain how PR assist in establishing and disseminating the performance indicators that foster sustainable performance in public sector organisations, including the SACM. Their concern is more on the meso-level impacts of PR on the organisation's efficiency and goals.

On the other hand, Alamoudi, Abidoye, and Lam (2023) focus on the macro level of PR and its contribution to the development of the urban area and smart sustainable city, which is more related to the citizens and stakeholders. They argue that such attempts are useful to the process of diversifying the economy in general and Vision 2030, the Kenyan development plan to create innovative cities in particular. In general, both researches stress the importance of PR strategies for economic diversification. Still, the outcomes of the studies could be more similar because of the differences in the range of the researches. Altogether, these two viewpoints offer a holistic analysis of the impact of PR strategies on the economic diversification efforts of Vision 2030.

Theme 4: PR Strategies in Enhancing Sector-Specific Goals of Vision 2030

This theme focuses on PR's role in achieving Vision 2030 objectives in health, learning institutions, and sustainable development. It emphasises PR activities' sectoral consequences and contribution to the change process.

4.2.4.1 PR in Healthcare and Education Reforms

Rahman & Qattan (2021) underlined how PR can help Saudi Arabia's healthcare sector reanimate under the framework of Vision 2030. They underline that SC enables healthcare reform and synchronises national systems with SDGs. Mitchell and Alfuraih (2018) examine the PR strategies used in educational reforms, thus emphasising the aspects of promoting modernised curricula and better learning outcomes to attract public support. Di Nauta et al. (2020) describe some of the effects of sustainability principles on university strategic management, including how PR conveys universities' adherence to sustainable development goals, improving their image.

Analysis of Findings

These studies observed that PR is critical in advocating for sectorial reforms consistent with Vision 2030. They stress the importance of communication and the proper approach to the public as key factors for mobilisation in healthcare, education, and environmental sustainability.

Chapter 5: Discussion

This research assesses the PR strategies supporting Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030 objectives. Therefore, eight articles were selected for review, and the articles underwent thematic analysis to establish the themes and sub-themes that would be important to the set research objectives. These themes were centered on the role of PR in the management of a country's image internationally, rallying support locally, setting standards and contributing to the diversification of the economy.

The first research aim is to understand the part played by PR campaigns in influencing the global perception on the Saudi Arabia Vision 2030 projects. The study highlighted two main sub-themes: the degree and kind of impact of social media on nation branding and cultural diplomacy. In the study conducted by Alsaaidi (2020) it was established that Twitter played a crucial role in enhancing the image of Saudi Arabia in the global society through socio-political and economic liberalisation. This is in concordance with the Excellence Theory of Public Relations that deals with the two-way symmetrical model of PR for the purpose of gaining understanding from both ends. Thus, the PR activities of Saudi Arabia in social media directly engage the targeted global community to positively regard the Vision 2030 projects. Similarly, according to the findings of Alghamdi et al. (2022), cultural diplomacy shows Saudi Arabia's cultural and technological advancements, which contributes to the improvement of global perceptions.

The second objective was to establish the level of public awareness and understanding of Vision 2030 in Saudi Arabia and how PR activities at the national level support the program's goals. The research studies of Mohiuddin et al. (2023) and Alshawan (2023) discussed in this paper demonstrate how education reforms and group learning can support this aim. In their study, Mohiuddin et al. (2023) stressed the relevance of syllabi enhancement and corporate partnership for enhancing the relevance of Vision 2030 goals within education outputs, which would help

garner people's support and knowledge. Alshawan (2023) stressed that the domestic environment is most important and has to be supported through strategic communication and leadership. These findings are consistent with the Excellence Theory, which supports increasing the PR function's authority and incorporating it into strategic management to improve organisational performance and public relations.

The third objective is to develop recommendations for this study on best practices in PR for national transformation programs. The study used the case of Vision 2030 and benchmarked against successful PR strategies for other countries. Rahman and Qattan (2021) and Mitchell and Alfuraih (2018) explained that PR strategies can facilitate reforms within specified sectors such as healthcare and education. Rahman and Qattan (2021) argued that an effective communication strategy is crucial for managing healthcare reforms and their orientation towards achieving global sustainable development goals. Similarly, Mitchell and Alfuraih (2018) supported the idea of PR in supporting educational reforms and the economic development agenda. Implementing these best practices proves that the PR strategy is the key to overall national transformation goals, especially if encouraged by the principles of the Excellence Theory that endorses ethical and transparent communication.

The fourth objective was to determine the extent to which PR strategies have supported the diversification of the economy for Vision 2030. Thus, promoting sustainable performance systems and smart, sustainable cities were recognised as two major subthemes. Alghamdi et al. (2022) highlighted how PR strategies assist in identifying the most important success factors and performance measurement benchmarks for public sector organisations regarding Vision 2030's economic diversification objectives. Consequently, Alamoudi, Abidoye, and Lam (2023) emphasised that PR ensures the citizens' involvement in creating smart, sustainable cities that are

important for economic development and transformation. Such research demonstrates the complex nature of PR's contribution to economic diversification through the processes of sustainable development and stakeholder management for innovative urban development projects.

Overall, it is clear that the PR strategies have greatly helped enhance the Vision of 2030, according to the study. PR initiatives and activities are vital in implementing Vision 2030 since they are mandated to influence the perception of other nations, mobilise local support, and showcase the best practices for achieving the vision. The Excellence Theory of Public Relations conceptual foundation is the most useful for analysing the efficacy of these kinds of strategies, as it stresses the ethical and transparent two-way symmetrical communication to accomplish organisational and national goals.

Chapter 6: Conclusion and Recommendations

The study demonstrates that PR strategies are instrumental in promoting the objectives of Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030. This study, therefore, employs a thematic analysis of eight leading articles to establish how PR has influenced the international perception of Nigeria, created domestic awareness, identified other nations' success stories for emulation in the transformation process, and contributed to economic diversification. The results show that the PR campaigns significantly influence the international community's perceptions of Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030. Most of the KSA's image-building has been done through social media, especially Twitter, to post positive developments in the Kingdom, both in the social-political and economic realms. These efforts are supported by cultural diplomacy that promotes Saudi Arabian culture and the country's advancement to create a positive image. It aligns with the Excellence Theory of Public Relations, which postulates that public relations should engage in two-way symmetrical communication to foster understanding between the organisation and its stakeholders.

At the national level, PR strategies have been useful in creating awareness and thus garnering support for Vision 2030. Education changes implemented and embraced include the modernisation of curriculum and industry partnerships, which have been central to realising the vision and outcomes of education. Practical communication and leadership have even improved the feedback and support of the public in these strategies. Therefore, these findings underscore the necessity of the strategic positioning of PR and the strengthening of PR functions within organisations to improve communication with the public and the effectiveness of organisations.

The research also highlighted key recommendations and practices of public relations for national transformation programs by analysing Vision 2030's strategies and the strategies used in other countries. Communication and engagement with stakeholders are especially important for

effecting sectorial changes, as in the case of the health and education sectors. They show that a systematic and institutionalised PR approach is critical to achieving national transformation agendas. In addition, the study shows how PR strategies support economic diversification under the Vision 2030 policy. Public relations are useful in enhancing sustainable performance systems and creating smart, sustainable cities. This paper examines how PR strategies' critical success factors and key performance indicators (KPIs) connect Vision 2030's economic diversification goals with organisational objectives. The overall process of diversification of urban economies is consistent in developing and implementing new strategies and involving stakeholders in creating imaginative urban development projects.

Therefore, using the evidence provided in this dissertation, PR strategies are critical in achieving Vision 2030. They are crucial in influencing international opinion, improving home front support, getting acquainted with better practices, and diversifying the economy. The framework offered by the Excellence Theory of Public Relations helps explain the indicated strategies' success. Therefore, if PR activities are based on ethical, transparent, and two-way symmetrical communication, PR can contribute to Saudi Arabia's vision for a diversified, sustainable future. Therefore, the present study emphasises the imperative of continuous and comprehensive PR processes in the face of challenging global and domestic perceptions to successfully implement Vision 2030's transformative objectives.

6.1 Recommendations

In light of the research findings of this dissertation, the following recommendations are recommended to improve the PR strategies to support Vision 2030 goals:

Enhance Two-Way Communication Channels: To increase stakeholders' participation and confidence in the government, the flow of information between the government and the stakeholders must be improved. It entails the deliberate process of soliciting the opinions of the public and other audiences in the global community via social media, forums, or polls. Responding to these people's questions and addressing their issues is crucial since using a more engaging communication style can improve relations.

Invest in Continuous PR Training and Development: Learning activities should be organised more often to update and improve PR professionals. It requires information technology skills, diplomacy and manners, and handling conflict and crises. Therefore, PR professionals will be able to understand global PR trends and develop more effective and innovative approaches.

Expand Cultural Diplomacy Efforts: The practice of cultural diplomacy should be intensified to create more cultural interchangeability, cultural display, and cultural events between nations. The measures may help present the country's cultural and historical overview and recent successes, which will improve attitudes overseas. Other benefits of the Kingdom include collaborations with other international cultural institutions that can further strengthen the presence of the Kingdom's culture across the globe.

Develop Comprehensive Metrics for PR Impact: It is necessary to develop holistic measures for assessing PR strategies for Vision 2030 goals. It entails developing standards, often referred to as key performance indicators (KPIs), that encompass the public's perception and engagement levels, among other things, concerning communication campaigns. PR strategies are periodically evaluated and changed to reflect Vision 2030's goals.

If Saudi Arabia follows all these recommendations, it can improve its PR strategies to advance Vision 2030 at home and abroad.

6.2 Limitations of The Study

The study's limitations are as follows: Initially, the use of secondary qualitative data restricts the possibility of obtaining primary information and can be significantly influenced by the sources. Secondly, the study does not cover all of the important aspects and trends associated with PR strategies and Vision 2030 due to the limited number of articles reviewed, which is eight. Thirdly, the analysis method is mainly based on published academic and professional papers, which may exclude ideas and findings from unpublished reports and local PR activities. Finally, some of the presented results may become obsolete due to the constant development of PR activities and Vision 2030 measures. Longitudinal research and primary data collection should be used in future studies to fill these gaps and enhance understanding.

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