



Project Management Performance in Saudi Arabia:
An Exploratory Study into the Constructs
that Most Influence Project Success

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DEDICATED TO

My wife

Soha Alajam

And my lovely daughter & son

Joud & Hesham

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Candidate *Salem Shuaib*

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AMOS	Analysis of Moment Structures
ANOVA	Analysis of Variance
APM	Association for Project Management
ARAMCO	Saudi Arabian Oil Company
BPM	Building Project Management
CBA	Cost–Benefit Analysis
CDSI	Central Department of Statistics & Information – Saudi Arabia
CPM	Critical Path Method
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
CSF	Critical Success Factors
EFQM	European Foundation for Quality Management
EVM	Earned Value Management
ISO	International Organization for Standardization
IT	Information technology
JEC	Jazan Economic City
JIT	Just-In-Time
KAEC	King Abdullah Economic City
KEC	Knowledge Economic City
KPI	Key Performance Indicator
KSA	Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
MANOVA	Multivariate Analysis of Variance
MoP™	Management of Portfolios
MSP	Managing Successful Programs
NHMRC	National Health and Medical Research Council
PM	Project Management
PMI	Project Management Institute
PMPA	Project Management Performance Assessment
PMPAC	Project Management Performance Assessment Construction
PMPQ	Project Management Planning Quality
PRINCE2	Projects IN Controlled Environments, version 2
QM	Quality Management
QMS	Quality Management System
R&D	Research & Development
RADAR	Results, Approach, Deploy and Review
RBV	Resource-Based View
SAGIA	Saudi Arabian General Investment Authority
SCE	Saudi Council of Engineers
SEM	Structural Equation Modelling
SMEs	Small and Medium Enterprises
SPSS	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
TQM	Total Quality Management
UAE	United Arab Emirates
VRIN	Valuable, Rare, Inimitable, and Non-substitutable
WBS	Work Breakdown Structures

ABSTRACT

The research study reported in this thesis is focused on investigating the success of Project Management Performance (PMP) during the delivery of a project and the effect on success of project completion outcomes. The projects were completed in the public and private sectors in Saudi Arabia. By examining specific project implementation methods and processes, the research was used to address three specific questions:

- 1 *What is the role of project management implementation variables, such as leadership, lifecycle process, staff, partnerships and resources, policy and strategy, financial, change management and key performance indicators in the various projects within Saudi Arabia?*
- 2 *In particular, to what extent do project change management practices influence project management performance outcomes in Saudi Arabia?*
- 3 *And what are the challenges facing project management performance practices in Saudi Arabia?*

The literature review presents previous research encompassing project management performance, which shows the value of applying project management performance models to determine the effectiveness of specific variables that influence project outcomes that can lead to project success. The research reported here expands the previous research and similarly shows how certain project management attributes can both add value and increase the likelihood of project success. Furthermore, it expands the contextual model to include project change management, which enhances the relationships between the variables and increases the level of understanding about what change management within the project environment can bring to a project in terms of successfully translating plans into action and accomplishment. No previous research into the impact of project change management on project management variables during project development and implementation in Saudi Arabia was found during an extensive search of the literature. Including the management of change as a tool in project management thus provides a more holistic model than those currently available.

The research was conducted using a quantitative web-based survey, which targeted both public and private organisations in Saudi Arabia that have managed projects, and yielded 419 valid responses. These responses were further validated, analysed and tested within the proposed conceptual framework. The research included two phases of statistical analysis, descriptive and structural

equation modelling (SEM) was employed to prove the models validity. The results showed that *staffing, project change management and policy and strategy* in Saudi and international organisations were the most important aspects of *leadership*. There were divergent elements between Saudi and international organisations located in the KSA as to the employment of *financial management practices*, which in Saudi firms was a function of project change management, while in international organisations it was predominantly an aspect of policy and strategy.

Saudi and international organisations also diverged as to the emphasis each placed on project change management. For Saudi Arabian firms, *change management* was the second most critical aspect of both business and project strategy after leadership. Whereas, for international organisations with representatives in the KSA, *policy and strategy* was deemed the second most important attribute, reflecting the regional influence that looks to policy and strategy to market projects. This view extends the concept of the operational influence that *policy and strategy* has in projects. By establishing policies and strategies that embrace a clear culture of versatility, the ability to adapt to project change through increased project support can increase project success. By having strategies that include promoting project awareness, and a policy of open feedback, enables goal clarification and opportunities to refine processes, thus implement project change management.

This research contributes both theoretically and on a practical level. On a scholarly level, the research extends the development of knowledge regarding project management performance and specifically the use of the project management performance assessment model (PMPA). On a practical level, it acknowledges the value of staff, which affirms the regional need for skilled labour to achieve project goals. This finding strongly argues for more training and education programs in the region, since the persistent lack of the appropriate skill mix poses challenges and has serious implications for project managers.