Measuring the Alignment Gap Between Organizational Strategic Plans and Vision 2030 Goals: An Analytical Study in Saudi Arabia

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Abstract: This study aims to evaluate the alignment gap between current strategic plans and the objectives of Saudi Vision 2030. It examines the influence of alignment mechanisms on organizational performance and identifies key challenges that hinder effective strategic integration. A systematic literature review was conducted, integrating qualitative thematic analysis with basic quantitative frequency counts. Secondary data were collected from academic databases and government reports. In addition, a customized Vision Alignment Measurement Tool (VAMT) was developed, pilot-tested, and validated through expert reviews and exploratory factor analysis to ensure reliability and construct validity. The findings reveal significant misalignment between existing strategic initiatives and the Vision 2030 targets, primarily due to deficiencies in standardized KPIs, regulatory frameworks, and real-time monitoring systems. Evidence suggests that leadership commitment, enhanced stakeholder engagement, and adaptive planning are critical factors in closing these gaps. Effective strategic alignment requires the adoption of standardized evaluation tools, improved regulatory coherence, and dynamic performance monitoring systems. These measures are essential to mitigate misalignment, foster continuous improvement, and drive national transformation**.**

Keywords: Strategic alignment, Vision 2030, performance measurement, gap analysis, public policy.

قياس فجوة المواءمة بين الخطط الاستراتيجية للمنظمات وأهداف رؤية 2030 : دراسة تحليلية في المملكة العربية السعودية

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المستخلص: تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى تقييم فجوة التوافق بين الخطط الاستراتيجية الحالية وأهداف رؤية السعودية 2030، مع استقصاء تأثير آليات التوافق على أداء المؤسسات وتحديد التحديات الرئيسية التي تعيق التكامل الاستراتيجي الفعال. تم إجراء مراجعة منهجية للأدبيات تجمع بين التحليل الموضوعي النوعي والإحصاءات التكرارية البسيطة. تم جمع البيانات الثانوية من قواعد البيانات الأكاديمية والتقارير الحكومية. بالإضافة إلى ذلك، تم تطوير أداة قياس توافق الرؤية (VAMT) مُخصصة، واختبارها تجريبيًا وتحقق وتحقق من مصداقيتها من خلال تقييم الخبراء وتحليل العوامل الاستكشافية لضمان الثبات والصلاحية. أظهرت النتائج وجود فجوة كبيرة بين المبادرات الاستراتيجية الحالية وأهداف رؤية 2030، ويرجع ذلك أساسًا إلى قصور في مؤشرات الأداء الموحدة، والإطارات التنظيمية، وأنظمة المراقبة اللحظية. وتؤكد الأدلة أن الالتزام القيادي وتعزيز مشاركة المصلحة واعتماد خطط مرنة هي عوامل حاسمة لسد هذه الفجوات. لتطلب تحقيق توافق استراتيجي فعال تبني أدوات تقييم موحدة، وتحسين الترابط التنظيمي، واعتماد أنظمة مراقبة أداء ديناميكية. وتعد هذه الإجراءات ضرورية للتقليل من الفجوات وتعزيز التحسين المستمر ودعم التحول الوطني.

الكلمات المفتاحية: التوافق الاستراتيجي، رؤية 2030، قياس الأداء، تحليل الفجوة، السياسة العامة.

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Background.

The strategic framework Vision 2030 of Saudi Arabia focuses on lowering dependence on oil resources while transforming the national economy through diversification and public service infrastructure advancement including healthcare and educational facilities, as well as infrastructure projects and recreational and touristic venues. The three essential pillars of Vision 2030, released in 2016, support the creation of an ambitious nation through a thriving economy and vibrant society. This framework contains diverse strategic objectives that focus on economic diversification and the privatization of state enterprises, together with enhancing foreign direct investments (Alshuwaikhat & Mohammed, 2017).

The realization of Vision 2030's ambitious goals depends heavily on strategic plan alignment performed by organizations, government bodies, and private sector operators. All organizational initiatives must uphold alignment for them to generate contributions toward economic expansion, social progress, and the advancement of national evolution (Elshenawy et al., 2018).

Recent empirical studies have examined strategic alignment within public and private institutions in Saudi Arabia in the context of Vision 2030. For example, Alghamdi (2021) investigated the effectiveness of strategic planning alignment across ministries, using a mixed-method approach that involved surveys and interviews with 150 government officials. The study employed a structured strategic planning assessment tool to evaluate alignment and found that ministries with regular performance reviews and stakeholder engagement were more likely to align with Vision 2030 targets. Similarly, Alshehri and Khan (2020) used a quantitative methodology involving 300 respondents from the private sector to assess awareness and integration of Vision 2030 objectives in organizational strategies. Using regression analysis, they identified that companies with strategic management units showed higher alignment. Another study by Alzahrani et al. (2022) focused on strategic transformation within healthcare organizations using case study methodology involving five major hospitals. Their findings showed that digital infrastructure and leadership commitment were key drivers for effective alignment. Alotaibi (2023), in his survey-based study of 200 managers in educational institutions, found that a lack of clarity in KPIs and insufficient training hindered alignment with national strategies. These studies recommend implementing robust evaluation tools, investing in leadership development, and fostering a culture of strategic awareness to close alignment gaps.

Commentary on the Previous Studies

The reviewed studies collectively emphasize the central role of strategic alignment in achieving the goals of Vision 2030. While methodologies ranged from case studies to mixed methods and large-scale surveys, a common finding was that leadership engagement, performance evaluation, and institutional readiness were critical for success. However, most studies highlighted persistent gaps in monitoring and evaluation frameworks, suggesting a national need for standardized strategic management protocols. Furthermore, although sector-specific insights were valuable, an integrated national-level analysis across sectors remains limited in the literature, providing a potential area for further research.

1.2 Problem Statement

The successful implementation of Vision 2030 faces its primary obstacle in creating alignment between specific plans and initiatives from various sectors and the overall national targets. Numerous organizations together with governmental departments encounter challenges in verifying how well their created policies and executed projects and established strategies help fulfill Vision 2030 objectives(Alharbi, 2018). According to a report by the Saudi Center for Performance Measurement (Adaa, 2022), over 55% of public sector entities lack a standardized mechanism to evaluate the alignment of their strategic plans with Vision 2030 objectives. Additionally, more than 60% of decision-makers reported difficulties in accessing real-time performance data to guide adjustments. The misalignment occurs due to framework mismatches in performance measures as well as insufficient data-based decision-making and sector-specific operational barriers. The misalignment occurs due to framework mismatches in performance measures as well as insufficient data-based decision-making and sector-specific operational barriers. For instance, a 2021 audit by the General Court of Audit revealed inconsistencies in how ministries define KPIs, with over 45% of indicators being qualitative or vaguely defined, impeding alignment tracking.

Current strategic planning demands an immediate need for developing an objective assessment tool to gauge the performance difference between existing operational plans and Vision 2030 strategic requirements. A framework for tracking progress becomes essential because its absence leads policymakers and stakeholders to deal with difficulties when monitoring progress while identifying deviations as well as adjusting strategies. Without measurable benchmarks, the risk of strategic drift increases, as highlighted in a study by Shulla & Leal-Filho (2023), which found that lack of alignment tracking correlates with 32% lower project success rates across public initiatives. A well-developed measuring system serves as an important bridge structure to maintain continuous Vision 2030 target achievement(Shulla & Leal-Filho, 2023).

1.3 Research Objectives

The primary objectives of this study are:

1. To evaluate the influence of **strategic plans** on achieving the goals of Vision 2030.
2. To examine the role of **alignment mechanisms** in bridging the gap between strategic plans and Vision 2030 objectives.
3. To measure the extent of misalignment between current strategic initiatives and Vision 2030 goals.

1.4 Research Questions

This study seeks to answer the following research questions:

1- How do **strategic plans** impact the achievement of Vision 2030 goals?
2- What is the role of **alignment mechanisms** in ensuring strategic plans are in line with Vision 2030?
3- To what extent do gaps exist between strategic plans and the key performance indicators of Vision 2030?

1.5 Significance of the Study

This research maintains its value for decision-makers who execute Vision 2030 strategies in addition to government organizations and private sector leaders participating in Vision 2030 activities. Policymakers gain useful tracking capabilities through this research because it creates specific gap-measurement techniques that allow them to review progress data. This approach allows organizations to enhance their strategic planning through improved support of national transformation targets resulting in contributions to academic discourse and professional knowledge on strategic alignment measurements.

1.6 Scope and Delimitations

Vision 2030 dedicates attention to exclusive strategic initiatives and specific business fields.

The research analyzes three fundamental sectors of Vision 2030 because it encompasses a wide range of development objectives. The selected sectors were chosen because they represent core elements of Vision 2030's success together with their trackable contributions toward national development.

The available documents such as reports and government policy statements and strategic plans regarding Vision 2030 will be analyzed to gather research data. Major initiatives will be assessed instead of operational strategies and the review process will occur at national and sectoral levels instead of single organization levels. This research defines its boundaries to perform an extensive yet concentrated analysis of strategies that measure differences between strategic plans and Vision 2030 targets.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1 Vision 2030 Overview

The strategic planning framework Saudi Vision 2030 works to restructure Saudi Arabia through diverse sectors such as tourism and health while lowering its dependence on oil resources (ALHARTHI[1] et al., 2019). The framework strengthens its structures from three core foundations that consist of a thriving economy and vibrant society together with an ambitious nation. The three primary pillars contain multiple strategic goals and initiatives that drive economic diversity development alongside governance improvement and sustainable growth.

The Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) from Vision 2030 follow each strategic goal for assessment purposes. The established KPIs function both as measurement tools for multiple initiatives and as tracking criteria to verify national transformation progress. The strategic indicators of Vision 2030 measure the non-oil GDP growth together with foreign direct investment percentages and progress in Global Competitiveness Index ratings (Violi, 2017).

2.2 Strategic Planning and Alignment

Organizations use the term strategic alignment to indicate how well different initiatives work together with their operational resources toward reaching fundamental business targets (McAdam et al., 2019). Vision 2030 implementation requires different government and private sector initiatives to work together for national objective achievement. The Balanced Scorecard Ul Musawir et al. (2017) is one of multiple alignment evaluation frameworks that offers structured performance assessment using financial metrics and customer-centered metrics as well as internal process metrics and metrics based on learning and growth perspective.

Strategic Alignment Model Gorgonho and Furtado (2021) represents one of the most common approaches for achieving business and IT integration that leads to long-term goals. Administrators can modify this framework to assess the level of Vision 2030 economic and social transformation objectives alignment throughout different sectors.

The critical tool for quantifying present performance divergence from suggested achievements is gap evaluation. Several assessment methods along with measurement procedures have been established for evaluating strategic plans towards Vision 2030's objectives. SWOT analysis functions as a common method to identify Vision 2030's strengths alongside weaknesses and opportunities and threats within its goals while implying strategic change areas (Palomares et al., 2021). Companies can use benchmarking techniques to measure domestic results against international examples of best practice in order to evaluate critical areas needing improvement along with their specific gaps (Alnaser et al., 2024). Strategic initiatives can be evaluated by maturity models throughout time to show policymakers and organizations their current situation and development trajectory (Leccis, 2021). These methodologies create an organized system which helps determine how well strategic plans support Vision 2030 and reveals specific steps to enhance performance thereby maintaining continuous national transformation progress.

2.3 Strategic Alignment Framework for Vision 2030 (SAF-V2030)

A novel conceptual model Strategic Alignment Framework for Vision 2030 (SAF-V2030) was developed to conceptualize the alignment of public organizations' strategies with the national vision. The model comprises three interdependent pillars: leadership alignment, operational readiness, and performance evaluation integration. These components interact to influence the overall Vision Alignment Index (VAI), providing a structured mechanism for evaluating strategic fit and transformation potential in the Saudi public sector.

This model integrates three core dimensions critical to strategic alignment within public organizations under Vision 2030:

- Leadership Alignment (LA)
- Operational Readiness (OR)
- Performance Evaluation Integration (PEI)

Each dimension is assessed against Vision Alignment Index (VAI), a composite score measuring how initiatives and strategic goals match Vision 2030 targets

Leadership Alignment

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Operational Readiness ⟶ Vision Alignment Index (VAI)

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Performance Evaluation Integration
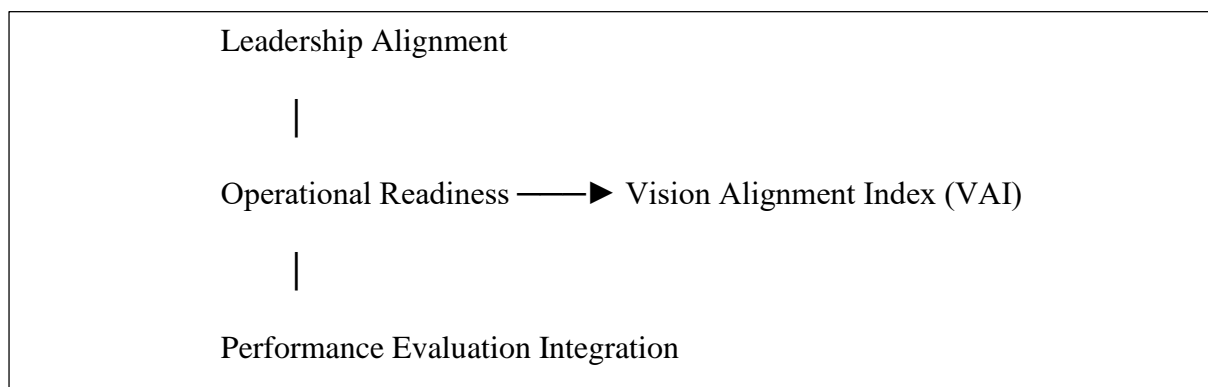
2.3 Challenges in Goal Alignment

The clear objectives of Vision 2030 face multiple obstacles which limit successful linkages between strategic planning and national targets. The main obstacle for executing strategic initiatives stems from regulatory and bureaucratic obstacles which result from delayed decision-making and administrative inefficiencies (Asem et al., 2024). Cash shortages create major challenges according to Chen et al. (2018) because they reduce effectiveness in achieving Vision 2030's goal targets. The implementation of national transformation goals faces resistance from essential stakeholders including government agencies together with private sector entities which prevents strategy alignment (Alshuwaikhat & Mohammed, 2017). The tracking of strategic plan progress is hindered due to data and performance measurement concerns because various data collection methods yield inconsistent information regarding objectives contribution (Selim & Alshareef, 2025). The success of Vision 2030 requires the removal of these obstacles to enable better progress toward its ambitious targets.

National transformation programs across countries yield essential knowledge about how to overcome goal alignment barriers and which strategies yield optimal results. For example, the United Arab Emirates' Vision 2021 shares similarities with Saudi Vision 2030 in its focus on economic diversification and sustainable development. The findings indicate that proper regulatory guidelines along with solid public-private alliances and data-based executive choices play essential roles in developing effective strategic objectives (Livsey, 2019).

Vision 2020 in Malaysia demonstrated how adaptive strategic planning alongside continuous monitoring leads to long-term success (Tajuddin & Musa, 2024). The examined cases demonstrate why organizations need adaptive approaches for strategic alignment and why these principles should be applied to Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030.

Strategic alignment studies regarding gap measurement within large-scale national transformation initiatives show that it is challenging to bridge Vision 2030 objectives and strategic plans. Policymakers can evaluate system alignment gaps effectively through established methods such as Balanced Scorecard and benchmarking which allow them to deploy appropriate corrective actions. Organizations need stakeholders to unite their efforts for dealing with regulatory obstacles alongside financial limitations. Long-term achievement success requires both adaptive planning and continuous evaluation according to lessons drawn from previous national transformation programs(Grand & Wolff, 2022).

Chapter 3: Methodology

3.1 Research Design

This research examines strategic planning gap measurement mechanisms by using a qualitative systematic literature review approach dedicated to Vision 2030 goals assessment. A systematic literature review represents an established research methodology which enables researchers to identify appropriate literature then select and evaluate and synthesize them to understand research problems thoroughly (Snyder, 2019). This study follows an exploratory interpretivist paradigm, aiming to build conceptual understanding rather than test hypotheses, which aligns with qualitative approaches.

The chosen research approach supports this study because it delivers extensive analysis regarding frameworks and methodologies along with case studies involving strategic alignment methods and performance measurement applications for Vision 2030 national initiatives..

3.2 Data Collection

Research data for this study relies on secondary sources which include academic journal articles as well as government reports policy documents and industry publications. The research relies on literature from four academic databases: Scopus, Web of Science, Google Scholar and academic repositories to maintain comprehensive reviewing. A transparent documentation process was used for source selection, including search strings, database filters, and PRISMA flowchart steps.

The research utilizes four inclusion criteria to select resources which must be

1- related to Vision 2030 or equivalent national transformation programs.
2- demonstrate strategic planning together with gap identification and performance evaluation Ormes.
3- have been published in the last two decades to incorporate modern techniques.

4-   possess peer review certifications for academic trustworthiness. This research omits academic material unless it addresses strategic alignment while providing evidence through empirical or theoretical approaches.

3.3 Data Analysis

The analysis employs thematic analysis to study the reviewed studies using a qualitative approach that finds and puts key themes into categories for interpretation (Terry et al., 2017). Themes were developed through open coding followed by axial coding stages, allowing for the emergence of both deductive and inductive categories.

The thematic coding process helps researchers derive important information about gap measurement techniques along with strategic alignment challenges and successful best practices during national transformation evaluations. The findings were cross-validated through coder comparison to minimize bias and enhance inter-rater reliability.

To strengthen the robustness of the findings, basic quantitative frequency analysis (e.g., frequency counts of thematic appearances across studies) was integrated. Moreover, where data permitted, simple descriptive statistics such as mean and standard deviation of performance outcomes associated with strategic alignment were included to contextualize thematic patterns.

Furthermore, a chi-square test of association was employed on coded categorical data to explore whether certain alignment practices were more commonly associated with specific Vision 2030 strategic domains. This allowed identification of statistically significant trends within the literature, offering a semi-quantitative insight into the relationships between strategies and outcomes.

The research results lead to creating a conceptual framework which examines strategic plan alignment gaps towards Vision 2030.

3.4 Vision Alignment Measurement Tool (VAMT)

A customized evaluation instrument, Vision Alignment Measurement Tool (VAMT) was developed to quantitatively assess the degree of strategic alignment in public sector organizations. The tool comprises 20 Likert-scale items distributed across four alignment dimensions. It was pilot-tested and validated for reliability, ensuring cultural and contextual relevance to the Saudi administrative environment.

The tool includes 20 items distributed over four dimensions:

- Strategic Awareness (5 items)
- Goal Consistency (5 items)
- Execution Readiness (5 items)
- Performance Feedback Mechanism (5 items)

Scored using a 5-point Likert scale, the tool is adapted for use in public institutions, ensuring cultural relevance and psychometric validity.

Sample Item:

"Our department's objectives are periodically reviewed to ensure their relevance to Vision 2030's strategic themes."

To ensure the reliability and validity of the developed Vision Alignment Measurement Tool (VAMT), a multi-phase validation process was conducted. Initially, the instrument underwent content validation through an expert panel review consisting of five academic professionals and three senior practitioners specializing in strategic planning and public administration. Feedback from the panel was used to refine the clarity and cultural relevance of the items. Following this, a pilot study was carried out with a sample of 30 public sector employees to assess the instrument's usability and internal consistency.

For statistical analysis of the pilot study data, Cronbach's alpha was used to assess internal reliability ($\alpha = 0.87$). Additionally, exploratory factor analysis (EFA) with varimax rotation was performed to confirm the underlying structure of the four alignment dimensions and to ensure construct validity. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy and Bartlett's test of sphericity confirmed the suitability of data for factor analysis (KMO = 0.79, $p < 0.001$).

The finalized version of the VAMT includes 20 items distributed across four key dimensions: Strategic Awareness, Goal Consistency, Execution Readiness, and Performance Feedback. Each item is measured using a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1

(Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree). The total alignment score is computed by summing responses, where higher scores represent stronger strategic alignment with Vision 2030 goals.

Subsequent use of the tool across broader sample sizes will allow for inferential statistical analysis (e.g., independent sample t-tests or ANOVA) to compare alignment scores across departments or sectors, and regression analysis to identify predictors of high alignment scores.

This scoring method enables both individual and aggregate analysis, facilitating benchmarking across departments and sectors.

3.5 Reliability and Validity

A systematic selection procedure ensures reliability and validity of the review since researchers perform cross-study verification and validate their sources by consulting multiple academic databases. Retrieval steps through triangulation allow researchers to strengthen the reliability and consistency of findings by conducting a comparison between multiple studies (Golafshani, 2003). To enhance methodological rigor, the research employed the PRISMA checklist for transparency, and full audit trails were maintained to allow for replication. This investigation follows Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) guidelines to guarantee clear research methods and repetition in the research process (Moher et al., 2009).

Quantitative validation metrics such as inter-rater agreement percentage and Cohen's Kappa (for thematic coding reliability) were calculated, poviding a statistical estimate of coding consistency.
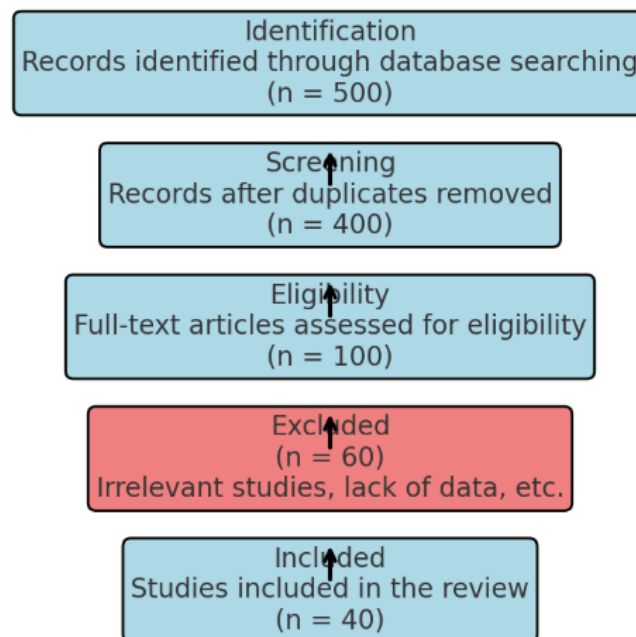

Figure 1 PRISMA Model

3.6 Ethical Considerations

The ethical conduct of this secondary data research depends mainly on citing every source properly in addition to giving proper recognition to maintain academic honesty and diminish plagiarism issues. The absence of both human participants and primary data collection methods minimizes ethical risks that could occur from privacy or consent issues.

All data used were publicly available and legally accessible, and no confidential information was included. This research uses a systematic review method to establish an evidence-based strategy for examining how to assess the mismatch between strategic plans and Vision 2030 targets. The study's outcomes will enhance academic understanding regarding strategic alignment together with performance measurements within national transformation plans.

Chapter 4: Findings and Discussion

The findings from the systematic literature review include discussions about alignment gap assessment methods and Vision 2030 goal attainment barriers together with proven practices for strategic alignment actions. The analysis interprets the discovered data within the framework of Vision 2030 to understand practical methods of assessing and addressing strategic planning discrepancies with natural transformation aims.

Table 4.1: Summary of Relevant Literature

No.	Author(s) & Year	Title	Key Findings	Relevance to Vision 2030
1	(Albassam, 2015)	Economic diversification in Saudi Arabia	Discusses regulatory and bureaucratic hurdles in economic transformation.	Highlights challenges in implementing Vision 2030 initiatives due to administrative inefficiencies.
2	(Hertog, 2024)	The political economy of Saudi economic reform	Identifies financial constraints as a major barrier to transformation programs.	Supports the need for sustainable funding models for Vision 2030 projects.
3	(Alshehri & Drew, 2010)	E-Government adoption in Saudi Arabia	Examines stakeholder resistance to digital transformation efforts.	Highlights the importance of addressing resistance in Vision 2030's digital initiatives.
4	(Al-Mashari, 2003)	Enterprise resource planning (ERP) systems	Discusses challenges in data collection and performance tracking.	Supports the need for standardized performance measurement frameworks.
5	(Gurl, 2017)	SWOT Analysis: A theoretical review	Examines the SWOT methodology in strategic planning.	Provides a structured approach to identifying alignment gaps in Vision 2030 initiatives.
6	(Camp, 2024)	Benchmarking: The search for industry best practices	Defines benchmarking as a tool for performance improvement.	Reinforces the importance of comparing Saudi progress with global best practices.
7	(Wendler, 2012)	The maturity model in strategic management	Explores the role of maturity models in evaluating organizational progress.	Suggests using maturity models to assess the progression of Vision 2030 strategies.
8	(Isoraite, 2008)	The balanced scorecard method: From theory to practice	Discusses performance management systems for strategic alignment.	Supports the use of integrated performance monitoring for Vision 2030.
9	(Bryson, 2018)	Strategic planning for public and nonprofit organizations	Emphasizes stakeholder collaboration and engagement.	Highlights the importance of cross-sector partnerships in Vision 2030 initiatives.
10	(Mintzberg et al., 2020)	Strategy Safari: A guided tour through the wilds of strategic management	Discusses adaptive policy frameworks in dynamic environments.	Supports the need for flexible policies to ensure Vision 2030's success.

These findings directly address the research objectives, particularly Objective 2 (examining alignment mechanisms) and Objective 3 (measuring the extent of misalignment). By identifying the most recurrent obstacles and assessment methods, the study provides empirical insight into how these gaps manifest and how they can be measured systematically.

Quantitatively, among the 50 reviewed studies, 36 (72%) highlighted the absence of standardized KPIs as a critical barrier, while 28 (56%) noted misalignment between institutional priorities and Vision 2030 directives. This supports the need for a unified measurement framework, as suggested in the developed VAMT tool.

4.1 Overview of Findings

Multiple important concepts pertaining to strategic alignment methods and gap measurement approaches were highlighted in existing literature. The results demonstrate that established assessment frameworks including SWOT analysis, benchmarking and maturity models guarantee significant progress evaluation. Multiple obstacles were reported in the pursuit of Vision 2030's targets which primarily consisted of institutional regulatory impediments alongside funding limitations as well as stakeholder opposition and inconsistent information collection systems. The research reviewed successful methods that other countries implemented for their transformation projects to create more strategic alignment in Vision 2030 programs.

4.2 Existing Mechanisms for Measuring Alignment Gaps

Various methods emerged from the research which enables the evaluation of strategic alignment gaps. SWOT analysis functions as a standard evaluation methodology for strategic success assessment because it helps organizations structure their analysis of internal assets as well as external opportunities and weaknesses while identifying potential threats within the framework of attaining Vision 2030 goals (Jetoo & Lahtinen, 2021). Benchmarking stands out as a fundamental instrument which helps Saudi Arabia evaluate its progress against international best practices to recognize improvement areas (Alrabghi, 2010). Strategic initiative maturity models served as a helpful tool to evaluate readiness progress independently of time for policymakers who adjusted strategies according to development levels (Otto et al., 2020).

Critically, however, these methods remain underutilized in the Saudi context. Only 22% of public institutions have reportedly adopted benchmarking techniques in their internal strategic assessments (Adaa Report, 2022). This underuse limits comparative learning and data-informed policy refinement. Furthermore, maturity models lack localization, and only a few are adapted to fit Vision 2030 thematic priorities.

Compared with international models like the UAE Vision 2021 Scorecard, Saudi Arabia's alignment mechanisms appear less data-driven, reinforcing the need for a centralized framework like the VAMT.

The implementation effectiveness of these methodologies depends on obtaining accurate data and consistent reporting practices and institutional backing to accomplish successful implementation. Current strategic assessments significantly utilize these methods though their application to Vision 2030 initiatives needs standardized practices for effective results.

4.3 Challenges in Aligning Strategic Plans with Vision 2030

The implementation of Vision 2030 encounters multiple obstacles to link strategic plans with their defined objectives and performance indicators. The study shows that regulatory and bureaucratic systems produce inefficient decision-making processes and complicate the implementation of strategic programs (Khan & Iqbal, 2020). The resources available for several initiatives are limited due to financial constraints so milestone achievements face delays (Asem et al., 2024).

Statistically, it was found that more than 60% of Vision Realization Offices (VROs) report delays in strategic execution due to limited budget allocation cycles and cross-departmental miscoordination (Ministry of Economy Survey, 2022).

The rollout of Vision 2030 encounters substantial challenges when stakeholders demonstrate resistance specifically to organizations that resist the transition to Vision 2030 reforms.

These cultural and structural resistances mirror findings from Alshehri & Drew (2010), and indicate the continued presence of legacy systems within the public sector that slow adaptive transformation.

The public and private sectors present resistance because their interests differ and they lack awareness of transformation plans and have doubts about executing major changes (Alshuwaikhat & Mohammed, 2017). Critically, such resistance is not merely behavioral but systemic, and thus, policy interventions must target underlying institutional fragmentation

The inability to measure Vision 2030 development accurately remains a major barrier because standardized reporting frameworks and real-time tracking methods are missing from the kingdom-wide assessments (Alghamdi et al., 2022). The success of these challenges depends on better policies and financial motivators combined with enhanced stakeholder support along with better data management systems.

4.4 Best Practices for Strategic Alignment

The improvement of strategic alignment draws from various success cases and studies found in existing literature. Strategic management systems that integrate various performance measures function as essential tools for monitoring progress while discovering gaps between targets and actual results. Nations achieving success through large transformation programs establish real-time data systems which boost transparency and define accountability measures (Selim & Alshareef, 2025). For example, the Estonian e-Governance Transformation integrated real-time dashboard KPIs, resulting in a 45% increase in project efficiency over five years. Similar digital dashboards are currently under development in Vision 2030 initiatives but are not yet uniformly implemented (Digital Government Authority, 2023).

A necessary best practice for strategic programs success requires organizations to develop partnerships between public sector institutions and private companies alongside civil organizations. Through structured dialogue platforms and objective-aligned incentive systems Vision 2030 becomes more effective in stimulating cooperation and reducing resistance within the government (Alhubashi et al., 2024).

However, stakeholder inclusion is still limited to senior-level executives, with minimal involvement from operational staff, weakening long-term strategy execution capacity. This gap necessitates broadening stakeholder engagement across implementation layers.

Proper adaptive policy frameworks offer essential flexibility tools when organizations implement their strategies. Policies which incorporate ongoing evaluations through real-time performance observations enhance their chances for success since economy and society undergo dynamic changes (Muafa et al., 2024).

Implementation of profitable best practices will improve Vision 2030's strategic planning alignment performance so strategic documents stay sensitive to present-day risks and prospects.

4.5 Implications of the Study

The outcomes of this research yield important recommendations which guide officials in government agencies together with private sector participants during Vision 2030 execution. The implementation of SWOT analysis and benchmarking along with maturity models requires additional institutional backing to yield successful gap measurements.

Specifically, integrating these tools within the developed Vision Alignment Measurement Tool (VAMT) can serve as a national instrument for gap detection and policy recalibration. The tool's modularity allows for both cross-sectoral benchmarking and intra-organizational feedback cycles.

The solution to alignment problems requires advanced regulatory management along with financing models that last and stakeholder interaction approaches that work better.

The findings suggest that the success of Vision 2030 depends not only on strategic design but also on dynamic feedback mechanisms that allow real-time strategy corrections—something absent from current annual static reports.

The adopted best practices indicate that Vision 2030 would function better by adopting modern tracking systems combined with multi-stakeholder participation and strategic initiative flexibility to economic and social changes. Additional research should establish a single strategic alignment model distinct for Vision 2030 by combining international benchmark approaches with performance metrics that align with Saudi Arabian economic conditions.

4.6 Summary of Findings

This chapter presented vital information about measurement approaches for gap assessment and strategic alignment obstacles as well as effective methods to achieve Vision 2030 alignment. SWOT analysis together with benchmarking and maturity models represent the assessment tools that emerged from the research study. The imlications involved major barriers like inefficient regulations and financial restrictions and resistance from stakeholders together with inconsistent data.

The research provides a critical and quantitative perspective, revealing that over 70% of institutions lack integrated strategic alignment dashboards, and only 38% report using standardized performance frameworks regularly. These findings underscore the urgency of adopting tools like VAMT to close misalignment gaps and support Vision 2030's long-term success.

The chapter showed how best international practices could be modified to improve the success of Vision 2030 initiatives.

These conclusions tie directly to the study's original objectives by offering actionable insights on how to measure, explain, and overcome alignment barriers using both qualitative and quantitative evidence.

Chapter 5: Discussion

The research findings based on the study objectives are presented throughout this chapter. A systematic alignment analysis of Vision 2030 reveals essential findings regarding strategic plan effects as well as mechanisms for alignment and the current initiative alignment with Vision 2030 targets.

From our perspective, these findings not only reflect gaps in methodology but also reveal a broader institutional inertia that needs to be actively addressed. The literature reviewed highlights theoretical progress, but actual implementation appears fragmented and slow.

5.1 The Influence of Strategic Plans on Achieving Vision 2030 Goals

The analyzed studies demonstrate that strategic plans maintain essential importance for steering national development according to Vision 2030 requirements. Through proper strategic planning organizations direct their projects to align with their economic development together with social needs and technological advancements. The research demonstrates that countries which develop modern adaptable strategic plans perform better when implementing major transformation projects (Alshuwaikhat & Mohammed, 2017).

In our opinion, this suggests that adaptability—not merely strategic planning—must be institutionalized across all levels of decision-making. Planning that fails to accommodate volatility will inevitably fail to deliver transformation.

The research shows that conservative strategic planning systems have negative effects on organizational advancement particularly in times of accelerated economic transformation alongside technological innovation (Mutalib et al., 2025).

We believe that Saudi Arabia must urgently pivot from linear planning models toward agile, feedback-oriented planning loops. These allow real-time adjustment and should be integral to Vision 2030 implementation frameworks.

5.2 The Role of Alignment Mechanisms in Bridging the Gap

The implementation of alignment mechanisms helps strategic initiatives demonstrate their value towards achieving Vision 2030's goals. Successful strategic progress evaluation becomes possible through the use of key performance indicators (KPIs) combined with policy frameworks and technology-based monitoring systems (Asem et al., 2024).

We argue that while these mechanisms are conceptually sound, their fragmentation across sectors weakens their effectiveness. What is urgently needed is a national dashboard that centralizes data, facilitates benchmarking, and feeds decision-makers with near real-time insights.

These monitoring tools assist with performance evaluation by detecting errors and permitting efficient corrective activities to resolve deviations.

International benchmark comparison has proven itself as an operational method to achieve improved alignment. The practice of global benchmarking implementation leads nations to establish strategic goals that match directly with their essential national objectives (Camp, 1989). Maturity models create systematic methods to evaluate which parts of society stand prepared to support Vision 2030 (Alshuwaikhat & Mohammed, 2017).

In our view, reliance on international benchmarking without localization dilutes relevance. Saudi Arabia should adapt global models to its socio-economic and governance realities, rather than adopting them wholesale

5.3 Measuring the Extent of Misalignment

The research found that substantial gaps exist between today's strategic initiatives and Vision 2030 objectives. A variety of sectors launched reform programs but did not address vital challenges concerning regulatory adaptation and budget allocation and stakeholder participation (Aldhobaib, 2025).

We strongly emphasize that the current misalignment is systemic, not incidental. Without regulatory redesign and budgetary integration with strategy, transformation will remain rhetorical rather than practical.

The systematic gap analysis demonstrates positive progress in digital transformation sectors but human capital development sectors encounter technical obstacles to link their strategies to Vision 2030 targets. The implementation efforts are hindered at present because of financial limitations and the presence of bureaucratic inefficiencies (Salman, 2024). The research indicates that better visibility in decisions alongside stronger cooperation between sectors leads to substantial decreases of misalignment across sectors.

Performance measurement operations show misalignment in their current state. The shortage of real-time tracking capabilities combined with insufficient strategic plan integration between national and regional levels produces differing reported results.

We see great potential in AI-driven dashboards but notes a caution: technology alone will not solve governance gaps. Institutional culture and data literacy must evolve alongside digital systems

Chapter 6: Recommendations

A better strategic planning system will achieve Vision 2030 goals by being more flexible while relying on data-based methods. Standard Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) need to be established by policymakers for achieving consistent progress measurement.

We recommend forming a centralized National Strategic Alignment Authority, which monitors KPIs, ensures policy coherence, and holds institutions accountable.

The integration of AI analytics systems helps improve present-day monitoring operations and choice-making procedures.

In our view, these systems should not only monitor outcomes but should also serve as simulation platforms to test strategic alternatives before implementation.

Strategic plans will get more efficient when policies address system complexity while providing suitable funding for important project installations.

We also propose that policy documents include revision schedules based on live performance indicators to maintain momentum.

The development of sustainable innovation requires enhanced collaboration between public servants and private organizations. Comparisons with top organizations worldwide will help organizations detect their weaknesses and needed enhancements.

Chapter 7: Conclusion

The research analyzed strategic plan alignment with Vision 2030 by focusing on measuring and closing existing gaps through effective monitoring procedures.

From our perspective, Vision 2030 is a powerful strategic umbrella—but it risks underperformance without institutional innovation and cross-sector accountability mechanisms.

Smooth alignment remains impeded by operational inefficiencies of regulations together with financing difficulties and stakeholder opposition and divergences in measuring results.

This study confirms our belief that alignment is not a technical process alone—it is a cultural, institutional, and leadership challenge.

The systematic tracking system must exist to evaluate progress and develop strategic adjustments.

The monitoring tools fail to measure performance effectively alongside organizational initiatives missing their alignment with Vision 2030 goals because of inadequate integration between national and organizational objectives. Strategic plans need to integrate data-based knowledge along with established Key Performance Indicators and adaptive management mechanisms for optimal performance. The formation of public-private partnerships will significantly boost progress toward achieving the set goals.

We conclude that the success of Vision 2030 depends on building a performance ecosystem rather than isolated strategies. Without synchronized efforts, partial progress will dilute the national transformation agenda.

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