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Faculty of Social Sciences

Department of Decision Analytics and Risks

School of Business – Project Management

An Investigation into the Integration of Sustainability in Project Management for Non-Profit Organisations in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

By

Mohammed Hussain Alharithi

Thesis for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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Abstract

The integration of sustainability (environment–social–economic) into project management has been explored through various approaches in the literature review , including the use of measurements of sustainability, integration within project management knowledge areas, proposed changes to core principles and practical of sustainability in the current and future for project management, with identified as the most effective approach for providing comprehensive in the organisations. That is lead to make balance between the human needs without make any risk for future generations of human.

Many researchers clarify how sustainability has been integrated into project management especially in environmental sustainability among cross countries. For example, they focused in constructs . In contrast, only a few studies offer comprehensive research on SPM and there is limited knowledge regarding social sustainability and economic sustainability. In the society field, there is a lack of knowledge regarding SPM in NPOs, as determined.

The main aim of this research is to explore to what extent sustainability is integrated into project management in the NPOs of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA). To meet the main aim of this study, the following research objectives are set: (i) to assess the level of understanding of SPM among employees; (ii) to explore the current role of project management in integrating sustainability; (iii) to evaluate the current state of SPM practices; and (iv) to develop a strategic, SPM conceptual framework for embedding sustainability into project management processes.

The mixed methods approach was adopted for the study. The first phase, descriptive analysis, was carried out by surveying 204 staff working in the project management field in NPOs of Saudi Arabia. The collected data were then analysed to explain the level of knowledge among staff in NPOs around SPM and the implementations in the current state of project management. The second phase, the semi-structured interview, explored the issue in depth with project managers or those who are responsible for project management (34 interviewees) in the NPOs of Saudi Arabia. The mixed methods enabled the researcher to interpret the motivations underlying SPM in NPOs; to assess how the current project management process can be improved; and identify the obstacles to incorporating sustainability into project management and how these can be addressed. In this sense, the biggest issue that NPOs faced was that, in 2017, the Saudi Government removed the centralisation of NPOs so that they could rely solely on themselves without assistance.

In order to integrate sustainability into project management (SPM) in non-profit organisations (NPOs), this study makes several theoretical and practical contributions (12 contributions from P197 to P208) to academics, policies, and practice. Additionally, the final conceptual framework will serve as a guide for decision makers in Saudi Arabia's NPOs. Therefore, this research concludes that the lack of knowledge and implementation in terms of SPM (environmental sustainability–social sustainability–economic sustainability), and the limited related policy, can inhibit the implementation of SPM in NPOs in Saudi Arabia.

Keywords:

Sustain*, Project management, Non-profit Organisations, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

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Research Thesis: Declaration of Authorship

Print name: Mohammed Alharithi

Title of thesis: An Investigation into the Integration of Sustainability in Project Management for Non-Profit Organisations in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

I declare that this thesis and the work presented in it are my own and has been generated by me as the result of my own original research.

I confirm that:

1. This work was done wholly or mainly while in candidature for a research degree at this University;
2. Where any part of this thesis has previously been submitted for a degree or any other qualification at this University or any other institution, this has been clearly stated;
3. Where I have consulted the published work of others, this is always clearly attributed;
4. Where I have quoted from the work of others, the source is always given. With the exception of such quotations, this thesis is entirely my own work;
5. I have acknowledged all main sources of help;
6. Where the thesis is based on work done by myself jointly with others, I have made clear exactly what was done by others and what I have contributed myself;
7. None of this work has been published before submission:

Signature: Date:

Acknowledgments

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

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Chapter 1: Introduction

This chapter presents the background of sustainability project management (SPM) in Non-Profit Organisations (NPOs) to provide an overview of the broader context of this research study. It focuses on SPM in NPOs worldwide, and explains the overarching research motivation and significance. This is followed by an outline of the main research aim and specific research objectives. A short summary of the research methodology is also presented. At the end of this chapter, the thesis structure is highlighted with a brief description of each chapter.

1.1 Introduction and Background

Project management has become increasingly globalised, and contributes significantly to the growth of countries in which it is implemented by organisations (Aarseth *et al.*, 2017). Integrating sustainability into project management is one of the most significant challenges facing organisations around the world. Many businesses are integrating the principles and practices of sustainability into their core business operations (Silvius and Schipper, 2014). Sustainable development, which is one key element of sustainability, represents one of the major challenges that has assumed significance in various contexts. The pressure on organisations to incorporate sustainability principles and practices into their policies and activities is gradually increasing (Labuschagne *et al.*, 2005). Furthermore, governments in many countries have become more aware of their responsibility to implement sustainability. This is in part due to the United Nations 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Yanarella and Bartilow (2000) argue that empirical studies have demonstrated that national governments require companies to execute projects such that they are developing strategies,

action plans, and key performance indicators (KPIs) that contribute to the broader sustainable development agenda.

In a wider context, sustainability is becoming an increasing concern in most universal aspects of life. While more than 100 definitions for sustainability have been presented, which indicates the multifaceted nature of this concept, most scholars involved in this domain broadly agree that sustainability highlights the need to simultaneously balance environmental, social, and economic goals (Aarseth *et al.*, 2017). The most commonly adopted definition of sustainable development is that which has been taken from the Bruntland Commission Report (1987). Sustainable development is defined as the ability to meet our own needs without prejudicing the ability of future generations to meet their own needs (Bruntland, 1987). Project management plays a key role in the realisation of sustainable business operations and the concept of sustainability in particular has recently been linked to the project management process (Silvius and Schipper, 2014).

The growing number of publications on the integration of sustainability into project management indicates that the topic is gaining momentum both in industry and academia. Clarke and Clegg (2000) (p. 46) stated that, “Sustainability is becoming a key business imperative, as the eternal search for domination over nature is replaced by the challenge of achieving environmental balance”. As far as the definitions of projects and project management are concerned in the context of sustainability, they have been propounded based on differing perspectives and contexts. Wysocki (2011) defines ‘project’ as the collection of different activities or practices which are interrelated, complicated to some extent, and aim at the accomplishment of some combined project goals and objectives which are controlled by the available organisational resources and timeframe. Projects have also been defined as a systematic array of the different activities which are designed and performed in such a manner that the project objectives are accomplished within estimated resources and time (Ahuja *et al.*, 1994). Furthermore, project management can be defined as the collection of tools and techniques which revolves around management of organisational

assets as well as achievement of organisational goals and objectives (Jugdev and Muller, 2005). Kerzner (2011) stated that project management is the application of knowledge, skills, tools and techniques in a project to achieve the desired project outcomes. These skills and aspects of knowledge facilitate the project managers in accomplishing the project goals whilst making sure that projects are sustainable, as they can have a significant impact upon society.

Based on a structured review of 164 references including books, articles, papers, and book chapters, Silviu and Schipper (2014) identified several impact areas that provide leverage points for the consideration of sustainability in project management. These are: recognition of project context, identification of stakeholders, project specifications/requirements/deliverable/quality criteria, business case/costs/benefits, dimensions of project success, selection and organisation of project team, project sequencing and schedule, materials used and procurement, risk identification and management, stakeholder involvement, project communication, project reporting, project handover, and organisational learning. The Bruntland Commission Report for a sustainable future played a vital role in changing sustainability from a term primarily used in relation to ecology and green issues to one incorporating economic, social, and environmental aspects (World Commission On Environment And Development, 1987). The multi-dimensional approach has been central in the United Nations' work on sustainability and sustainable development through the Earth Summit in Rio and the Rio +20 conference (World Commission On Environment And Development, 1987). Thereafter, the term 'sustainability' has been used in varying contexts in different research studies (Singh *et al.*, 2012). Some previous research studies conceptualise and associate the term sustainability with the triple bottom line approach – people, planet and profit (Kleindorfer *et al.*, 2005)– whereby sustainability is about the balance or harmony between economic, social, and environmental sustainability.

Sustainability can also be defined as the process that helps in the creation and development of a vision which focuses on the practical use of the natural resources to ensure that there is a high degree of integrity in the maintenance of the natural resources and

ecosystem (Gladwin *et al.*, 1995). In practice, integration of sustainability at an operational level has become crucial because traditional project management approaches have placed little or no emphasis on the issue of sustainability (Labuschagne *et al.*, 2005). It has been argued that the integration of sustainability in project management brings many benefits to the organisation in the form of minimising financial risk, improving corporate image, and helping the firm to attain a sustainable competitive advantage in the marketplace (Schieg, 2009). Considering these outcomes of sustainability in project management, business organisations have been considering sustainable project management as a means to achieve the United Nations (UN) Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Furthermore, Silviu and Brink (2014) have argued that a project's sustainability is often the first thing to consider when it runs out of resources, particularly its budget. There have been several efforts to promote and support a sustainable project management approach. To this end, new approaches have sought to integrate sustainability into project management principles and activities, as outlined in Figure 1.1.

Sustainable Development	Project Management
Long-term + short-term oriented	Short-term oriented
In the interest of this generation and future generations	In the interest of Sponsor/Stakeholders
Life cycle oriented	Deliverable/result oriented
People, Planet, Profit	Scope, Time, Budget
Increasing complexity	Reduced complexity

Figure 1.1: Sustainable project management differs from the current approach

(Source: Silviu and Brink, 2014)

According to the literature review (Silvius and Brink, 2014), sustainable project management (SPM) has five main aspects (which are discussed in Section 2.4); these are (1) using a checklist of sustainable action suggestions; (2) utilisation of sustainability indicators or key performance indicators (KPIs) for a project; (3) learning from other previous projects about the better way to integrate sustainability into project management; (4) a proposal for modifying the core principles of project management; and (5) use of sustainability management processes.

1.5.1 Non-government organisations (NGOs) and non-profit organisations (NPOs):

According to Vakil (199a), there are different perspectives among non-government organisations (NGOs) and non-profit organisations (NPOs). **First**, on segments of human; NGOs can assist any type of human whether civil society in different level, and support any in human rights-related issues at local, national, or international levels. However, NPOs mainly focus on the local society level. **Second**, there are differences between their main activities. NGOs can work on multiple activities at multiple levels, such as providing expertise to support international and local institutions. However, NPOs tend to focus on the main activities for which they had already determined the target group to assist; mainly the community level. **Third**, regarding the profit when it provides different benefits to community . NGOs could gain profit, but NPOs never gain profit. In spite of the fact that the terms seem to be different, they share a number of characteristics in common. With regard to 'mission', for example, all terms indicate that the mission is to support society in a variety of ways.

In Saudi Arabia, institutions are divided into three sectors: public sector (government), private sector (companies), and non-profit organisations sector(charity). Others—for example, NGOs—are not involved because the Saudi government did not allow them to deal with international charities or NGOs according to the King Khaled Foundation (2018; 2021).

1.5.2 Non-profit organisations (NPOs)

It is important to remember that “A non-profit organisation (NPO) is one that is formed to provide services and goods for its clientele, with profit being a minor objective. Its primary mission is one of providing services, usually for charitable, religious, educational, scientific, literary, humanitarian, or other non-business purposes” (Ohayv, 1990, p. 3). Also, managing projects in NPOs can be challenging, and there have been calls for further investigation when it comes to the integration of sustainability in the project management of NPOs. NPOs can be defined as professionally staffed organisations which make an effective contribution towards the development of society and minimise the suffering of humankind through their social development projects. NPOs significantly differ from business organisations in terms of their goals and aims (King Khalid Foundation, 2021). They operate by funding projects, capacity building, and providing services for the betterment and welfare of individuals in a society (Streeten, 1997; Baccaro, 2001). NPOs are a key part of the Saudi Arabian economy, particularly as it relates to the Kingdom’s Vision 2030. The Saudi Vision 2030 is a plan to reduce Saudi Arabia's dependence on oil, diversify its economy, and develop public service sectors such as health, education, infrastructure, recreation, and tourism. Taher and Hajjar (2014) state that the Saudi Arabian government is showing concern for managing sustainability challenges because, currently, Saudi Arabia is known for its rich oil deposits and requires energy efficiency and sustainable development. Ghaddar (2021) and Khan (2022) argued that Saudi Arabia entered into an agreement with Acwa Power to establish alternative power in many cities of Saudi that paves the way for reducing the traditional power. Alternative power can achieve sustainability project management (SPM) which is one facet of the Saudi Vision 2030. NPOs represent a large sector in Saudi Arabia, and have significant social, environmental, and economic impact due to their business activities. The NPO organisations contributes significantly to overall economic development, enhances well-being and quality of life, lowers the unemployment rate, and participates in the economy through partnership arrangements with private sector organisations (Anheier, 2014). These

factors indicate the necessity of NPOs implementing sustainability in project management at the national level.

1.5.3 Non-profit sector in Saudi Arabia

Saudi Arabia is the largest country in the Arabian Peninsula, comprising 80% of its total land mass, as shown in Figure 1.2 (below). The population of the country is 32 million according to the 2017 census, and 70% of them are under the age of 30 (Vietor and Sheldahl-Thomason, 2018). There is only one religion practiced in Saudi Arabia, which is Islam. This is due to the fact that the birthplace of Islam is in the Arabian Peninsula and most of the people are religious in this country (Al-Ahwal *et al.*, 2016). Saudi people are highly influenced by Islamic values and morals as well as Arab traditions in their behaviour and daily practices (Bjerke and Al-Meer, 1993).



Figure 1.2: Saudi Arabia administrative map

(source: <https://www.cia.gov>)

Islam has many values and social skills based on the text of the Qur'an and sayings of the prophet Mohammad (peace be upon Him) which Kabasakal and Bodur (2002) referred to as prophetic guidance. However, it should be recognised that not all aspects of an Islamic nation necessarily reflect all Islamic principles (Albassam and Ntim, 2017). Islamic practice is described by Vietor and Sheldahl-Thomason (2018) using the five well-known obligations, which are:

1. Reciting that there is no God but God and Muhammad is the Messenger of God (Shahada – the testification).
2. Praying five times a day (Salat).
3. Giving 2.5% of one's total net worth to the poor (Zakat).
4. Fasting during the month of Ramadan in the lunar calendar (Sawm).
5. Taking a pilgrimage to Mecca during one's lifetime (Hajj).

Poverty is present in any country, whether Islamic or not, but the difference in Islamic countries is the emphasis on those who have enough money to donate to poor people to alleviate poverty in the community. Verses from the Quran encourage Muslims to assist the poor by donating:

“(الذين ينفقون أموالهم بالليل والنهار سرّاً وعلانيةً فلهم أجرهم عند ربهم ولا خوف عليهم ولا هم يحزنون) .”

[الآيت 2: 274]

Those who (in charity) spend of their goods by night and by day, in secret and in public, have their reward with their Lord: on them shall be no fear, nor shall they grieve.

[274 Al-Baqarah].

Donations in the Islamic faith are of different kinds. Zakat is the practice whereby a Muslim has to pay 2.5% yearly from his or her wealth. Second, any Muslim can pay any amount at any time, and, in return, hope to gain the reward from God for doing so.

Within this context, Saudi Arabia is attempting to switch from an oil-dependent economy to other sustainable and innovative resources. Saudi Arabia in 2017 was one of the top 10 countries that controlled world energy supplies, as well as being among the G20 members (US News, 2018). In terms of alternative power, the Saudi Government made an agreement with the United States of America (US) in 2022 whereby it transitioned from conventional power to alternative power, due to climate change. Thus, in the future, NPOs will need to replace the conventional power infrastructure, and seek maintenance support from the government or other sectors to solve related problems (Khalil, 2022). Because the fixed cost of their alternative power production is zero, NPOs can sell the extra power (solar power) to the government, thereby increasing benefits and reducing costs as per the Saudi Vision 2030.

In such ways, the government is trying to engage and stimulate the non-profit sector in this facet of the economy. Furthermore, the affairs of NPOs in Saudi Arabia are regulated by the Ministry of Labour and Social Development MLSD (2017). The Ministry categorises NPOs into five types: 1) charities (1336 organisations); 2) civil society organisations (342 organisations); 3) cooperative societies (253 organisations); 4) social development committees (536 organisations); and 5) Quran memorisation societies (564 organisations) (King Khalid Foundation, 2021). Moreover, the government differentiates between charities and foundations according to government regulations MLSD (2017) based on the following:

- Private foundations can be founded by individuals or by groups of any number, whereas charities must be established only by groups of at least 20 volunteers.
- Foundations cannot receive government funding and should generally support projects which are operated by charities.

Nonetheless, the two have to comply with common rules, according to regulations that correspond to the 'features' noted by Salamon *et al.* (2000); these rules include:

- Neither aims to make a profit.
- Both of them have to obtain from permission from the MLSD if they want to be

involved in profit-making transactions.

- They may only work in Saudi Arabia.

The non-profit sector is established as the third sector in the global economy after the profit and government sectors. NPOs can make a profit, but they cannot distribute the profit among owners. The report of the King Khaled Foundation (2021) also states that private funding exceeds eight billion Saudi Arabian Riyals (SAR) per year, while public donations exceed two billion SAR. The costs for NPOs are 7.5 billion SAR. The sector with the highest cost is social services, while the lowest cost is for environmental services. NPOs can be established by any Saudi individual if they meet the stipulated conditions (King Khalid Foundation, 2021). The average donation from individuals per year is about 2,128 SAR = 481.64 GB (1 SAR= 0.19 approximately GBP). In terms of their domains of work, NPOs' activities are categorised into 10 groups, based on volume: these are culture and entertainment (2.69%), education and research (1.55%), health (5.45%), social services (37.06%), environment (0.98%), development and housing (18.36%), advocacy (1.76%), philanthropic intermediaries and volunteer promotion (6.37%), da'wah (i.e. religious propagation), guidance and religious education (22.84%), and professional and scientific associations and unions (2.95%) (King Khalid Foundation, 2021), as shown in Figure 1.3.

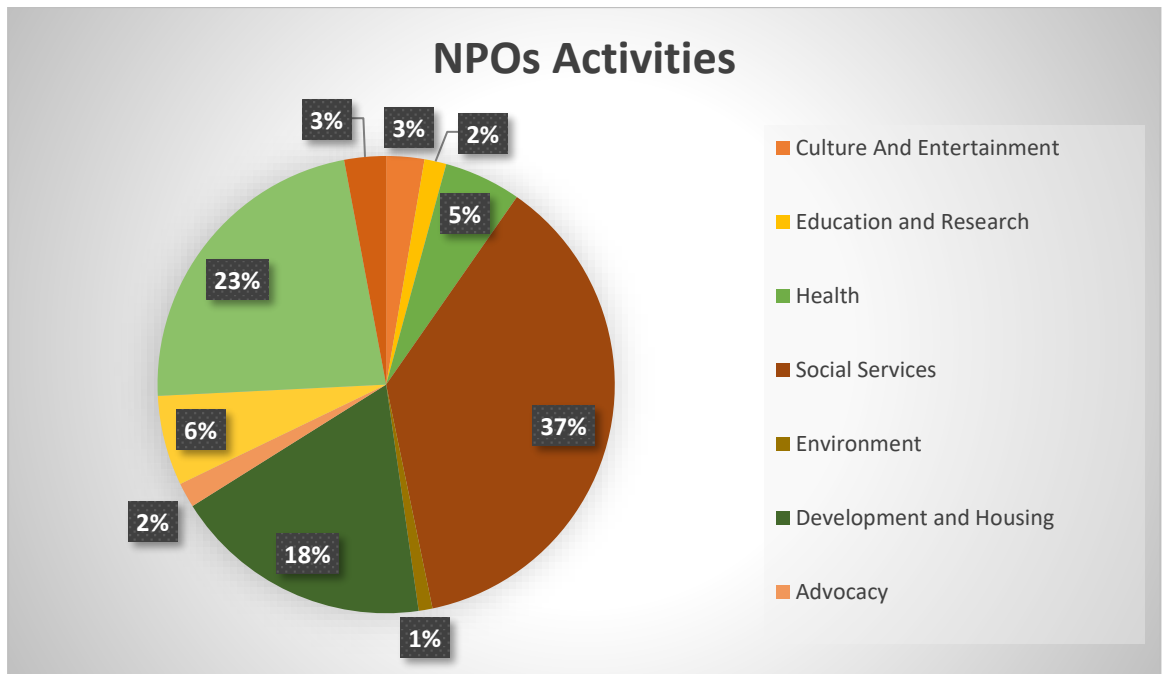


Figure 1.3: Saudi NPO indicators
(Source: King Khalid Foundation, 2021)

1.2 Research Motivation and Problem Statement

In the past, the NPO sector in Saudi Arabia received significant financial support from the government to enable them to play a vital and active role in providing services to Saudi Arabian society. This societal service is necessary, not only for humanitarian reasons, but also for religious affairs. However, in the current period of time, the government has reduced the financial funding that goes to NPOs and encouraged them to apply effective governance standards, facilitate staff to receive high-quality training and development, and promote a culture of volunteering and full-time careers in this sector (First Voluntary National Review *Towards Saudi Arabia's Sustainable Tomorrow*, 2018; King Khalid, 2018) Therefore, employing SPM practices will facilitate these recommendations of the government. NPOs have become active in policy making and the promotion of civil actions, in addition to other important functions that may create a positive impact in society (Casey, 2016). However,

influenced by the current competitive and complex external business environment, NPOs are becoming concerned about their organisational sustainability (Claeyé and Jackson, 2012). According to Matic and Al-Faisal (2012), the NPO sector is an important sector in the Saudi Arabian economy that has its own methods for securing the funding it requires to operate.

As Vision 2030 approaches, there has been a proliferation in the number of NPOs established in Saudi Arabia. This has seen a growth rate of 166% for NPOs, whereby the number of NPOs in 2021 was 6,902, compared with 2,598 NPOs in 2018 according to the King Khalid Foundation (2018, 2021). Also, the number of volunteers in the NPOs of Saudi Arabia increased to 2.8 million individuals, representing a 26% increase. The average number of hours worked by volunteers in NPOs was six hours per week, with the number of workers in the NPO sector standing at 72,151. Of this total figure, 78% were citizens (56,316), and 60% were male (43,896). The average working hours were 38 hours per week (full time) and 21 hours per week (part time). NPOs in Saudi Arabia spent more than five billion SAR in annual wages for staff, and the monthly average salary was 5,796 SAR. The highest average salary was in social services (6,524 SAR), and the lowest was in the environment (4,302 SAR) (King Khalid Foundation, 2021). These organisations contribute around 0.13% of the Kingdom's Gross Domestic Product (GDP), which is less than the global average of 6% (King Khalid Foundation, 2021). As part of the country's ambitious Vision 2030, Saudi Arabia plans to raise the NPO sector's contribution to GDP from less than 1% currently to 5% in 2030 (Balkhi, 2017; King Khalid Foundation, 2018; Wag Spa, 2022).

Saudi Arabian NPOs have not received much attention in the academic literature, particularly when it comes to the investigation of SPM. Hence, there is a clear need for this research in order to investigate these issues further and develop a framework that could prove useful in integrating sustainability into project management in the NPO sector in Saudi Arabia. This need provides the motivation for the formulation of the research problem in the following section.

This research focuses on the integration of sustainable development in the implementation of project management of Saudi Arabian NPOs. The main aim is to improve the state of sustainable development of the country and regions where NPOs operate. This is directly in line with the Saudi Arabian 'Vision 2030' where sustainability is at the heart of country's development in all business sectors. Both sustainability and project management in the context of NPOs are examined in this research study as an integrated agenda and this research explores gaps in the substantive and procedural aspects of NPOs. The motivation of this study has three perspectives—academic, practical, and policy. There is a gap in the existing academic literature on the integration of sustainability or sustainable development into project management process of NPOs, including the context of Saudi Arabian NPOs. The current state of sustainable project management in NPOs in Saudi Arabia, drivers/motivations, and barriers to implementation have not been investigated by researchers in the past. Therefore, this suggests a gap in the knowledge which offers academic motivation to carry out this research and informs the main aim and specific objectives of the study. Practically, managers in Saudi Arabian NPOs need to understand the concept of SPM and its role within NPOs. A framework approach needs to be developed to embed sustainability into the project management processes of NPOs and other organisations. From a policy perspective, evidence-based policy design and implementation is needed in Saudi Arabia so that NPOs are integrating sustainable development in their project operations. Policy recommendations are required to address the challenges being faced at national and NPO-sector levels, and this research is an empirical attempt to do so. In this regard, SPM has not been well investigated in NPOs in general, and in Saudi Arabia's case, it is a relatively nascent topic; to the extent that no single comprehensive study has been conducted yet. This gap is clear in the prevailing body of literature, as discussed in Chapter 2. Therefore, the current research aims to address this gap by investigating to what extent sustainability has been integrated into the project management processes in NPOs in Saudi Arabia from a managerial perspective, and how it can be further improved. This study focuses

on developing a strategic model or framework that will address the integration of the three pillars of sustainability (environmental, economic, and social) into project management for NPOs in Saudi Arabia's context.

1.3 Research Aim and Objectives

The main aim of the research is to explore to what extent sustainability is integrated into the project management practices of NPOs in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and, thereafter, to develop a framework that can be adopted by NPOs to achieve the integration of sustainability into project management. In order to meet the main aim of this research, the following specific research sub-objectives are suggested:

- To investigate the level of understanding of the concept of sustainability among employees of NPOs in Saudi Arabia who are involved in the project management process.
- To explore the current role of project management in integrating sustainability in Saudi Arabian NPOs' development projects.
- To evaluate the current state of SPM practices of Saudi Arabian NPOs.
- To develop a strategic, sustainable project management conceptual framework for embedding sustainability into project management processes.
- In order to achieve these objectives, a qualitative descriptive method is employed to collect data from a large sample of staff who work in project management in Saudi Arabian NPOs. In-depth interviews are carried out with staff who work as project managers in Saudi Arabian NPOs.

1.4 Research Questions

According to the objectives set for this research, four research questions have been formulated:

- What is the level of understanding of the concept of ‘sustainability’ among the project management employees of NPOs in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia?
- How does the project management process play a role in integrating the principles of sustainability in Saudi Arabian NPOs?
- What is the current state and practice of SPM in Saudi Arabian NPOs?
- How can a strategic SPM model be developed for embedding sustainability into project management processes?

1.5 Summary of Research Methodology

This research has used a mixed method approach, i.e. an integration of qualitative and quantitative research methods for data collection purposes. This research explores, in depth, the integration of sustainability into project management during a period when the Saudi Arabian government significantly reduced support, including financial support, from 100% to 27%. In fact, with the change with regard to centralisation from dependent to independent (as mentioned in the King Khaled Report (2018)) one of the targets of Vision 2030 is to increase the proportion of NPOs from less than 1% to over 5%. Quantitative data were collected using a questionnaire survey which was conducted online through Microsoft Forms. Project, programme, and portfolio managers of NPOs in Saudi Arabia were invited to complete this online questionnaire. Qualitative data were gathered using semi-structured interviews in selected NPOs in Saudi Arabia to gain in-depth insights into the current status of SPM, its drivers, and barriers to implementation. Project management practitioners in NPOs were the targeted interviewees. Furthermore, some of the key questionnaire

respondents were chosen for these interviews. Quantitative data were analysed using Microsoft Forms and Excel spreadsheets, and qualitative data were analysed using manual.

1.6 Significance of the Research

This research has significant value from academic, practice, and policy perspectives. For example, it is hoped that the findings of this research study will help NPOs in Saudi Arabia to understand the status of SPM in NPOs which are implementing a range of social development projects in the country. The study also fills the identified gap in the literature, and it is hoped that this will be of academic benefit to general discourse in this area. The development of an innovative and evidence-based strategic SPM framework can help in embedding sustainability into project management processes. The framework is comprehensive for an integrated approach, and is designed not only for NPOs in Saudi Arabia, but across the world as well, in terms of potentially being applied by other organisations aiming to achieve sustainability in their project delivery. The study will also help NPOs to identify the drivers which might persuade project managers to opt for SPM. More importantly, the research findings highlight some significant barriers facing the integration of sustainability in project management practices, and helps NPOs to overcome these barriers by adopting effective sustainability and project management strategies. The developed framework will be crucial for applying SPM in NPOs in Saudi Arabia and will help them to achieve their broader sustainability agendas including economic, social, and environmental areas. The implementation and integration of the principles of sustainable development in the projects of NPOs will result in important benefits such as cost savings, effective management process, minimal environmental impact, and social benefits. The study findings will be of great interest to NPO sector policymakers and government departments which supervise the sector.

1.7 Structure of the Thesis

The remainder of this thesis is structured as follows, and shown in Figure 1.4:

Chapter 2 presents a critical review of the existing literature around the topic of SPM in organisations in general, and NPOs in particular, to explore the previous research around this topic, and identify gaps in the relevant theories. This, in turn, informs the research question for this study. The major drivers of and barriers to the implementation of SPM are studied.

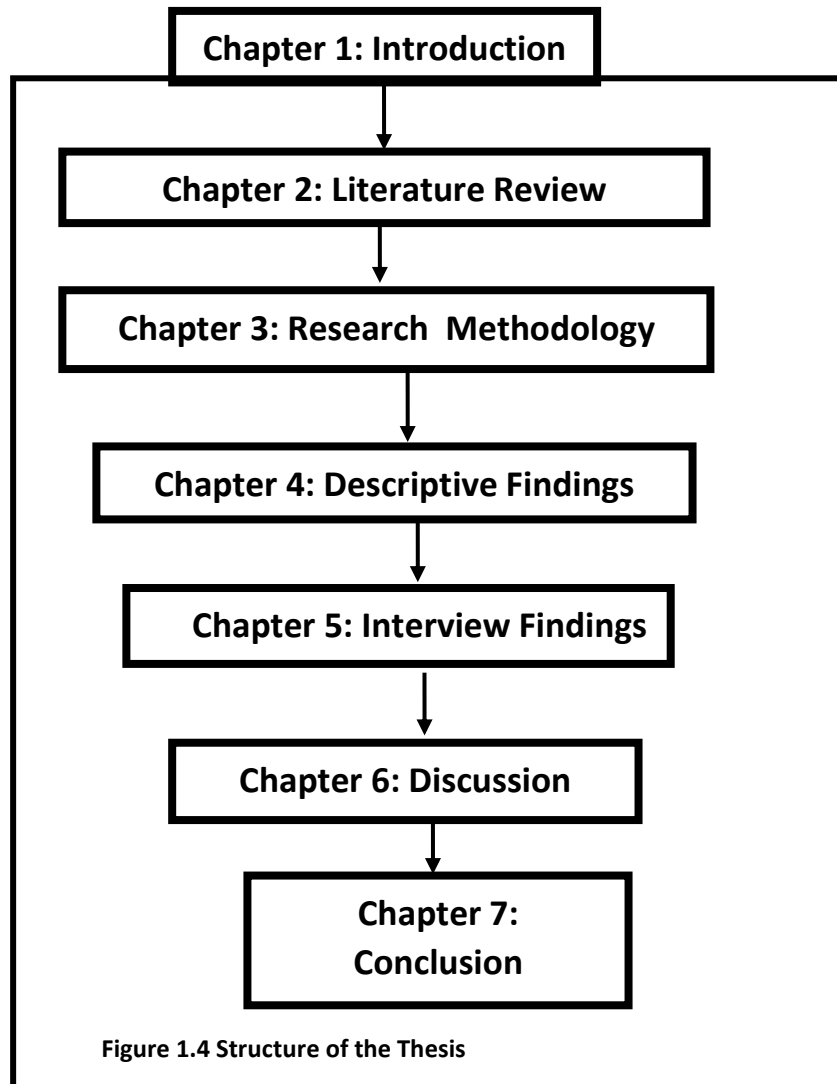
Chapter 3 discusses and justifies the chosen research approach and methodology used to meet the aims and objectives. In this regard, research approach, types of research methods, research philosophy, population and sample size, along with research ethical considerations are discussed.

Chapter 4 presents the data analysis of the quantitative data to produce research findings in line with the specific research questions.

Chapter 5 presents the data analysis of the qualitative data to produce research findings in line with the specific research questions.

Chapter 6 discusses the main findings arising from both the quantitative and qualitative data analyses. The findings are discussed broadly, and interpretations are offered. The research findings are situated in the context of existing literature to compare and contrast them.

Chapter 7 concludes the current research study based on results of the quantitative and qualitative data analyses. This chapter also presents the research study limitations and implications. Furthermore, some recommendations are made for NPOs in Saudi Arabia on how sustainability can be integrated into their project management practices, whilst clearly identifying the contribution to knowledge.



Chapter 2: Literature Review and Theoretical Background

Increased focus on sustainable business operations in an organisational context has changed the viewpoint of researchers and practitioners towards project management (Chawla *et al.*, 2018). In this chapter, academic literature on Sustainable Project Management (SPM) in organisations is critically reviewed. A methodological study of the literature review is carried out to evaluate and discuss previous studies in line with the current research. The rationale for conducting this review is to map out the extant literature available in this domain, and to define the gap that will guide the investigation for this study. The literature review is systematic in nature, and explains some of the various dimensions of SPM in previous research studies. Due to the specialised focus of this domain, the number of relevant articles collected that are linked to SPM are limited in number. Part of this review initially focuses on the broad study and delineation of sustainability to identify the main theme(s) in this area. In the discussion and conclusion sections that follow, key issues and research gaps are discussed, and a broad summary of the pertinent issues identified in the review is provided.

2.1 Literature Review—Methodology

In order to examine the previous studies related to the research topic of SPM, a content-based methodology is used based on a systematic review methodology. As stated by Seuring and Gold (2012), this technique is a useful tool for examining previous studies in an organised way. The content study is a flexible way of reporting data which can be used in a methodological systematic literature review (SLR). This type of review of previous studies relies on a context-based analysis which is an organised method of examination. The content study is based on four phases: collection of data, analysis description, selecting category and

reporting of data. Moreover, the SLR depends on the implementation and justification of “pre-specified eligibility criteria” when identifying, criticising and synthesising the literature, which minimises the probability of sample selection bias (Higgins and Green, 2011, p. 3). Hence, the SLR technique can ensure a critical, subjective, and scientific means of conducting reviews (Cook, 1997).

Collecting articles from academic research using the SLR method can reduce researcher bias. Through focusing on sustainable project management (SPM), a preliminary search strategy can be employed which involves entering several search strings into the four primary databases used in this study (i.e. Scopus, Web of Science, Business Scours Premier, and Emerald Insight), which focus on academic journals recommended by Southampton University. The search strings used in this study were: ("sustainability" OR "sustainable") AND ("project management"), Sus ("sustainability" OR "sustainable") + NPOs ("Non Profit Organisations" OR "non-profit Organisation" OR "Charity Organisation"). Once the search for appropriate articles was completed, inclusion and exclusion criteria were applied.

This research focuses on academic journals that were published in the English language. The abstracts of the retrieved articles were read to ensure that they focused on SPM, using the Mendeley program. Articles were shortlisted after the identification of citations via the databases, as shown in Table 2.1. The quality of the articles was evaluated according to the 2021 ABS journal ranking system, which provides a complete list of business and management academic articles. Furthermore, because SPM is a relatively new topic, the search for articles focused on the last 14 years (i.e. articles published between 2009 and 2022), as highlighted in Figure 2.1. This was updated during the time extension of the current research. Articles that were duplicated from different search engines were excluded. Also, where articles were obtained that were missing the full text, Google Scholar was used to search for the full text with the aid of the article’s title. Table 2.1 illustrates the keywords and inclusion and exclusion criteria used in the current search.

Next, the research examined all peer-reviewed journals listed in the quality rankings guide of the UK Association of Business Schools (ABS). It is important to note that some other international journal quality guides do not provide the same level of coverage and transparency as the ABS guide. For instance, the other journal rankings such as The Financial Times (FT) and The University of Texas at Dallas (UTD) is not existence any indications of the transparent how to add journals in the FT or UTD (Adler and Harzing, 2009). Therefore, rather than relying solely on classifications, the focus is on what is 'good'. This research adopts all ABS publications in order to avoid confusion regarding what constitutes 'good' literature and to increase the objectivity of the quality assessment of the current literature. On the other hand, in the Saudi Digital Library, this topic remains unknown at the moment, but it may prove useful to NPOs in the future Saudi Digital Library (2023).

Table 2.1: Inclusion and exclusion criteria used in the literature review

Keywords	Inclusion Criteria	Exclusion Criteria
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> "Sustainability*" AND "project management" AND "project" OR "sustainable project management" 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Focused on sustainability in project management Published in ABS ranking journals English Language Journal articles only Between 2009- 2022 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not focused on SPM Published in other journals not on ABS Years - before 2009
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> "Sustainability*" AND "non-profit Organisation*" OR "Charity* Organisations" 		

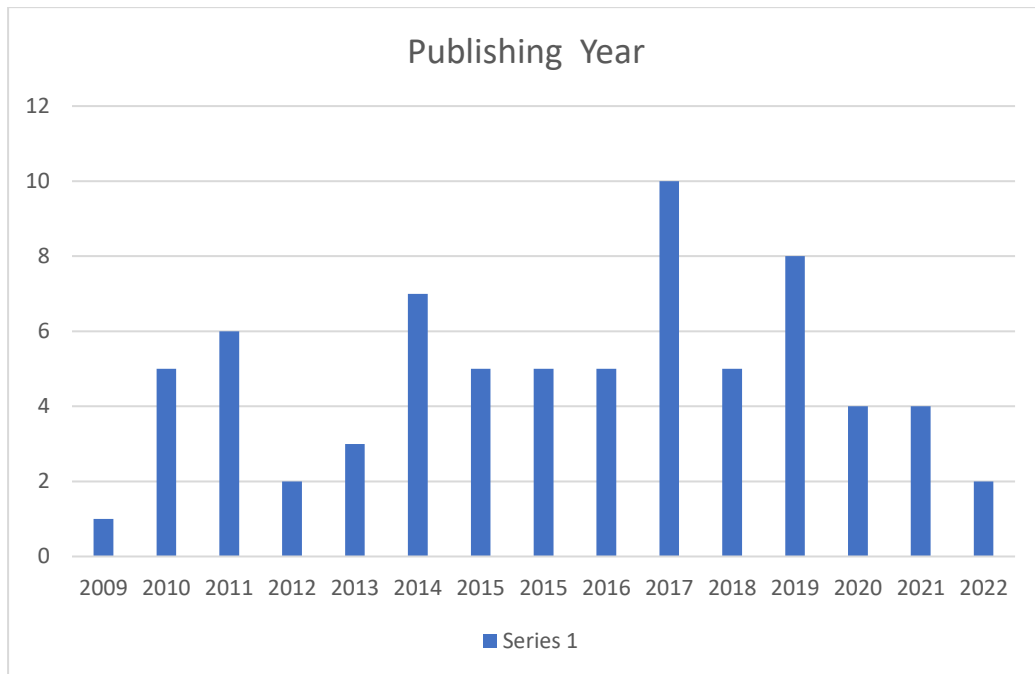


Figure 2.1: Number of papers published from 2009 to 2022

A total of 62 papers on SPM were identified, which indicates a dearth of research on this topic, due to its relative nascence (Khalifeh, Farrell and Al-Edenat, 2019). The 71 journal articles are listed in the ABS list, and are published in the English language, as shown in Table 2.2. Using "Sustainable" OR "Sustainability" and "project management" as research parameters, 882 papers were identified, similarly based on the terms "Sustainable" OR "Sustainability" and "non-profit", which indicates that there is significant research in this field. Based on the number of articles found in other broader areas and the subsequent articles identified for this research, it can be seen that publications in this domain are scant. Figure 2.2 shows the SLR process and the articles that were found.

Table 2.2: Number of Articles per Search

Title of Search Keywords	No. of items
Sustainability + Project management	814
Sus + NPOs	68
Total (Sus + Pm + NPOs)	882
Filter	71

Academic Research

Numbers

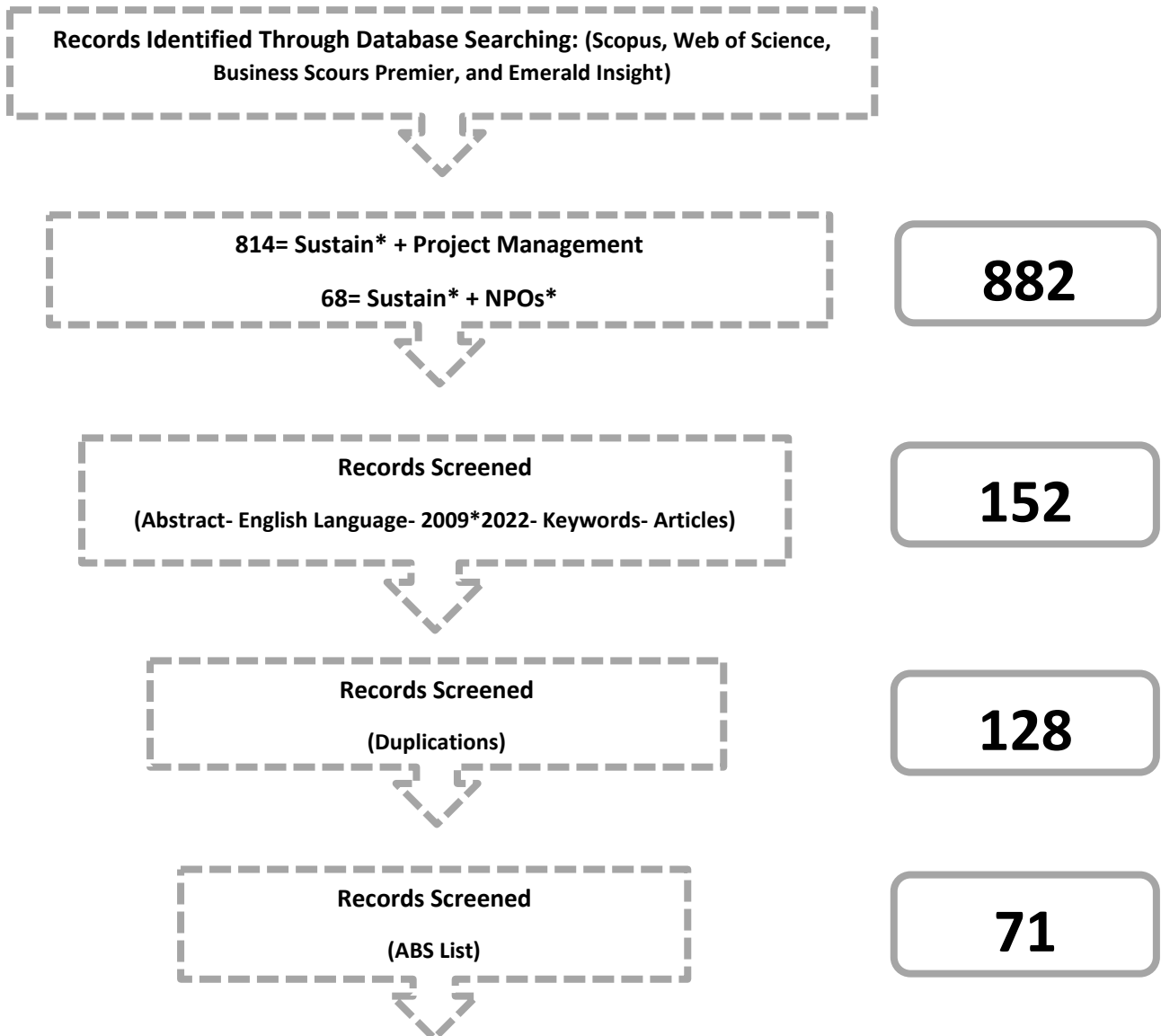


Figure 2.2: Application of methodology for the Systematic Literature Review

2.5.1 Descriptive analysis of literature review results

Figure 2.3 suggests that nearly one-third of journal publications were published in the *Journal of Cleaner Production*. The rest came from the *International Journal of Project Management*, the *Project Management Journal*, and others.

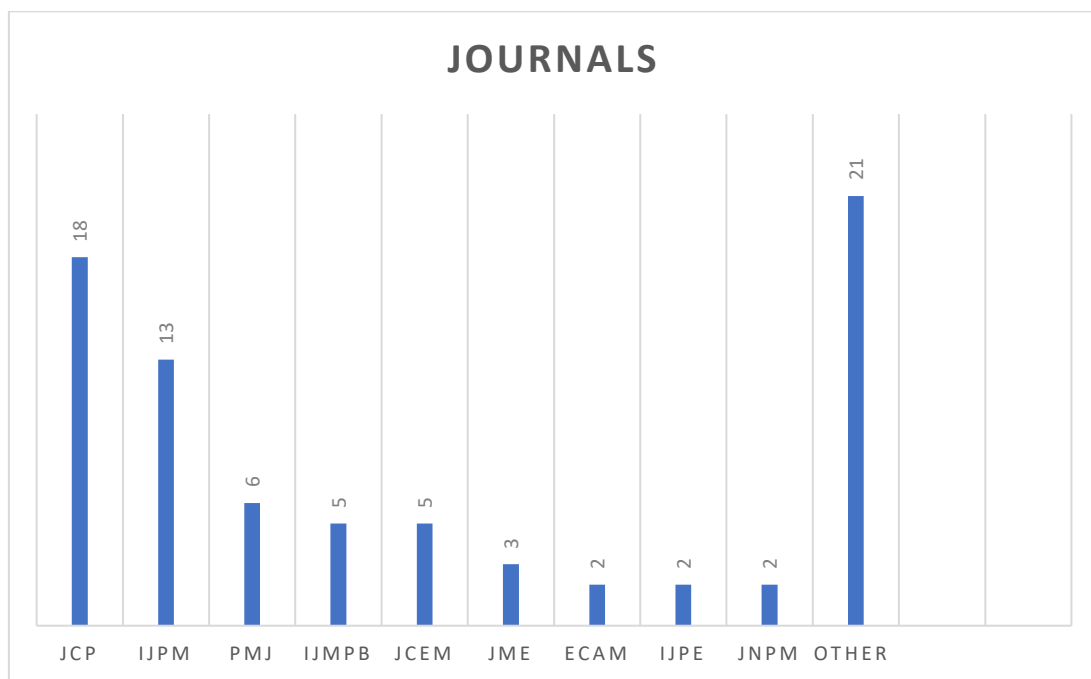


Figure 2.3: Publications from 2009–2022

Therefore, research on SPM is steadily growing in terms of research publications in various journals globally. This increase is clear from the literature analysis of journals listed in ABS. As the affiliations of the authors relate to different research fields and disciplines, it can be deduced that the topic is cross-disciplinary in nature. Furthermore, it can be inferred that, whenever a research area is rapidly developing over a short time period, there may be some initial confusion regarding the concepts of definition, disciplinary boundaries, or analytical units while a coherent conceptualisation is being established. In Table 2.3, the number of publications and their abbreviations are presented.

Table 2.3: Number of Publications per Journal

Journal Name	Abbreviation	No. of papers
Journal of Cleaner Production	JCP	18
International Journal of Project Management	IJPM	13
Project Management Journal	PMJ	6
International Journal of Managing Projects in Business	IJMPB	5
Journal of Construction Engineering and Management	JCEM	5
Journal of Management in Engineering	JME	3
Engineering, Construction and Architectural Management	ECAM	2
International Journal of Production Economics	IJPE	2
Others (published once)		21

Furthermore, Table 2.4 lists the main authors who have been researching SPM, according to the number of articles they published from 2009 to 2022.

The following sections report the findings of the content analysis. After applying inclusion and exclusion criteria, 71 articles were obtained. The NVivo 12 (free license software program from Southampton University) program was then used to organise the themes of the current research. The themes are organised into two groups: the first group of articles focuses on sustainability (environmental, social, and economic). The second group includes articles focusing on project management (critical success factors, decision making, top management, stakeholders' engagement, and project life cycle). Due to a lack of research in SPM, multiple articles were reviewed and used within a number of individual themes. These

themes are discussed in detail in the following sections. Additionally, each theme from 17 themes was constructed based on the three references as a minimum requirement to include SPM.

Table 2.4: Top Authors (two or more published)

Number of Articles Published	Authors
7	Silvius, Gilbert
5	Carvalho, Marly M.
3	Martens, Mauro Luiz
2	David Riley(2011); Korkmaz, Sinem (2011); Swarup, Lipika(2011); Martina Huemann (2013); Ron Schipper (2014)

Furthermore, the literature review revealed that most of the studies were carried out in developed countries, with limited research from developing countries. This could be due to the level of support and funding afforded to researchers in the former category to investigate and develop new methods that boost sustainability. In contrast, developing countries could be said to be lagging behind in terms of achieving targets for goals on world sustainability due to a scarcity of resources being devoted to this area. Table 2.5 below provides a summary of articles published on SPM in both developed and developing countries.

Table 2.5: Published Research According to Country

Developed Countries	
USA	Swarup, Korkmaz and Riley (2011); Russell-Smith and Lepech (2015); Martens and Carvalho (2016b); Yazici (2020)

England	Wang, Wei and Sun (2014); Thomson and El-Haram (2019)
Netherlands	Lenferink, Tillema and Arts (2013); Gilbert Silvius <i>et al.</i> (2017)
Singapore	Hwang and Ng (2013); Hwang <i>et al.</i> (2017)
Norwegian	Aarseth <i>et al.</i> (2017)
Canada	Herazo, Lizarralde and Paquin (2012)
Finland	Kivilä, Martinsuo and Vuorinen (2017)
Developing Countries	
China	Shen, Wu and Zhang (2011); Zhang <i>et al.</i> (2014); Yuan (2017)
Iran	Heravi, Fathi and Faeghi (2015); Rostami <i>et al.</i> (2015); Bahadorestani, Naderpajouh and Sadiq (2020); Fathalizadeh <i>et al.</i> (2021)
Brazil	Martens and Carvalho (2016b, 2017); Carvalho and Rabechini (2017)
South Africa	Pade-Khene, Mallinson and Sewry (2011)
Pakistan	Maqbool and Sudong (2018)
Saudi Arabia	Al-Saleh and Taleb (2010)

Figure 4.2 was constructed based on the articles retrieved from the SLR. Based on the above data, it can be noted that the majority of the academic research was conducted using a single methodology; 58% was based on a quantitative methodology and 25% was based on qualitative research methods. Furthermore, the data highlight that the mixed methods approach is less popular in academic research, evidenced by the fact that only 17% was conducted using this method. Even though the mixed methods approach has many advantages over the single method, researchers still tend to use the latter. Some of the studies identified in the literature have shown that employing the single method may result in a contradiction in the findings when the same study is repeated using a different methodology (e.g., using quantitative and then later using qualitative). This confirms the importance of using mixed methods, which is employed in this research. Further details are outlined regarding the mixed methods approach which are presented in Section 2.4.

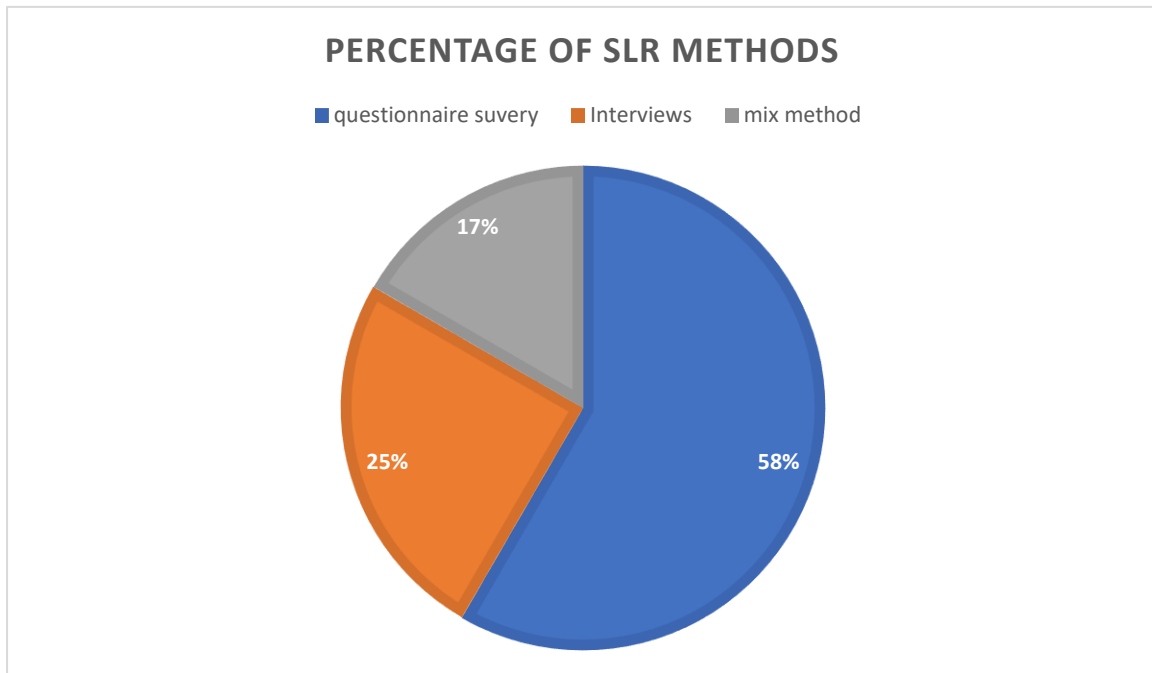


Figure 2.4: Percentage split of SLR methods

2.2 Sustainability

Sustainability is a broad concept that aims to describe a process leading to final goals. Sustainability helps in achieving long-term growth for organisations including environmental, social, and economic aspects Ding (2008). The sustainable environment can involve the use of various strategies and technologies for contributing towards the efficient use of natural resources (energy, materials, and water) such as reuse and recycling, whereas economic sustainability can include financial management (which contributes to increasing profit) and social sustainability (which explores the link between individuals and society).

Sustainability in the last 14 years has shown an increase in momentum in the area of project management research. Traditional views of project management have been challenged and, through this discourse, it has been argued that sustainable development should be better embedded into project management. Therefore, a better understanding of

the interface between project management and sustainable development is required (Cerne and Jansson, 2019). Sustainability is gaining more momentum as a concept in both the academic and industrial worlds. In this regard, Whiteman *et al.* (2013) stated that, in organisations, sustainability is considered as an alternative approach used by the management team to deal with certain economic, social, and environmental issues. The authors observed that sustainability comprises certain aims, and is a composite of interdependencies among different groups in society. In the field of general management, sustainability is an approach used for managing and dealing with social, environmental, and economic issues (Sabini *et al.*, 2019). The definition of SPM is discussed in detail in the following sub-sections, followed by the three main themes of sustainability (environmental, social, and economic).

2.5.2 Definition of Sustainable Project Management (SPM)

Before discussing or defining SPM, one needs to understand the broader concept of sustainability itself as SPM stems from it. Baba *et al.* (2021) argued that the definition from 293 publications of sustainability has various meanings based on disparate approaches used in project management. These include the meaning of sustainability as a constraint or a restriction, sustainability as an instrumental value or a tool to enhance project management, and sustainability as an intrinsic value and an actual target to begin the feasibility business for sustainability. Furthermore, Zuofa and Ochieng (2016) asserted that there are various definitions of sustainability which emerged during construction projects in Nigeria, with limited consensus on the core concept from its theoretical and practical perspectives. Many authors and researchers have differed in their definitions of sustainability providing a number of meanings linked to or underpinned by the contextual basis. For instance, Marcelino-Sádaba *et al.* (2015), Silvius (2017), Chofreh *et al.* (2019), Sabini *et al.* (2019) and Baba *et al.* (2021) stated that sustainability in general management refers to various approaches that

management may adopt to deal with social, economic, and environmental concerns when undertaking a project. Economic sustainability is significant for the success of projects. Economists generally define the concept of 'sustainable development' based on the well-known definition of the Bruntland Commission Report in 1987 which states that "Sustainable development means the ability to meet our own needs without prejudicing the ability of future generations to meet their own needs" (Bruntland, 1987). Nevertheless, sustainability is a function of a variety of (often contrasting) strategic objectives, as well as a network of complex interdependencies between multiple actors operating at various levels of society.

Sabini et al. (2019) argued that previous research indicates that sustainable project management is cross-disciplinary in nature, as the authors are affiliated with different research fields. The concept of SPM, disciplinary boundaries, and analytical units has been rapidly developed over a very short period of time; thus, it can be inferred that a lack of clarity is to be expected while a struggle to achieve some form of consensus continues. Based on the discussion above and the range of definitions for sustainability being offered in the literature, this research concludes that its actual meaning can be described as flexible and is therefore largely determined by the research being conducted and the researcher's own individual goals.

Similarly, as highlighted by Silvius and Schipper (2014), this research has also found that there are different concepts involved in SPM. Definitions of SPM are presented in Table 2.6. Al-Saleh and Taleb (2010) stated that there is no consensus on the definition of sustainability, and that it varies according to the context. For example, in the construction context, the three pillars of sustainability are defined below in the context of project management.

1. Environmental sustainability: Reducing environmental impacts and pollution through a rational use of natural resources and effective waste/resource management.
2. Social sustainability: Enhancing quality of life and social prosperity

while responding to the needs of communities and society (including those of end users, customers/clients and other project stakeholders).

3. Economic sustainability: Enhancing projects' profitability through the efficient use and management of resources.

Table 2.6: Definitions of Sustainable Project Management

Author/s	Definition
Deland (2009) (Source: adopted from Silvius and Schipper, 2014, p.71)	"Sustainable Project Management is minimising the resources you and your team use to work a project from project initiation through close."
Ning <i>et al.</i> (2009) (Source: adopted from Silvius and Schipper, 2014, p.71)	"Sustainable Project Management aims to apply the principle of meeting the needs of the day without compromising the benefits of future generations, to the construction industry by providing ways of buildings that use less virgin material and less energy, cause less pollution and less waste but still provide the benefits that construction projects have brought us throughout history."
Silvius <i>et al.</i> (2009) (Source: adopted from Silvius and Schipper, 2014, p.71)	"Sustainable Project Management is the management of project organised change in policies, assets or organisations, with consideration of the economic, social and environmental impact of the project, its result and its effect, for now and future generations."
Tam (2010) (Source: adopted from Silvius and Schipper, 2014, p.71)	"Sustainable Project Management is the promoting of positive and minimising of negative sustainability impacts (economic, environmental and social) within the process by which projects are defined, planned, monitored, controlled and delivered such that the agreed benefits are realised and contributing to a sustainable society."
Silvius <i>et al.</i> (2012)	"Sustainability in projects and project management is the development, delivery and management of project-organised change in policies,

(Source: adopted from Silvius and Schipper, 2014, p.71)	processes, resources, assets or organisations, with consideration of the six principles of sustainability, in the project, its result and its effect. These six principles are: (1) balancing or harmonising social, environmental and economic interests; (2) both short-term and long-term orientation; (3) both local and global orientation; (4) values and ethics; (5) transparency and accountability; and (6) consuming income, not capital."
(Banihashemi <i>et al.</i> 2017, p. 1105).	"Sustainable project management refers to the comprehensive and harmonised integration of social, economic and environmental principles (Triple Bottom Line of sustainability) into effective project delivery."

Tam (2010) cited by (Source: adopted from Silvius and Schipper, 2014, p.71) follows his definition with APM Body of Knowledge's Project Management definition. He also includes two factors on SPM: a) "enhance the positive impact and minimize the negative impact on the triple bottom line of sustainability" and b) "the outcome of the project can indicate a sustainable society. He broadens the significant impact on project management".

Hence, from the SLR, the best definition for explaining sustainable project management (SPM) in Non-Profit Organisations (NPOs) is that provided by Tam (2010). It explains the concept clearly and identifies the elements that can achieve the goals of SPM in NPOs. Also, it can be used to explore the different perspectives among project managers in NPOs of Saudi Arabia based on their experiences, majors (i.e. qualifications) and skills, as well as the level of impact on the implementation of NPOs based on their knowledge of SPM. None of the other definitions assists the social sector, specifically NPOs, because those definitions are focused on other sectors, such as environmental sustainability.

2.5.3 Environmental sustainability

Environmental sustainability is one of the three pillars of sustainability and aims to reduce the impact on the environment and pollution through many effective approaches, such as rational use of natural resources and effective waste management. Environmental sustainability includes four sub-themes; these are natural resources, carbon emission reduction, energy consumption, and water consumption. These sub-themes are extensively discussed in the papers that have been reviewed.

2.5.3.1 Rational use of natural resources in the environmental sustainability context

Rational use of natural resources depends on the efficiency of the materials. It can assist in reducing emissions in establishing a green project and can also have a positive impact on current traditional project management practices. Robichaud and Anantatmula (2011) stated that 'Green' building construction can bring about environmental benefits by using resources efficiently, which results in a positive impact on the consumption of natural resources, waste production, the generation of pollution, productivity, and general health of the populace. Additionally, the authors provided specific recommendations for modifying conventional building practices to achieve cost-effective, sustainable construction. The unique characteristics of green and sustainable projects require adjustments to conventional project management practices that minimise potential risks and improve the chances of delivering projects within budget. Moreover, Aksorn and Charoenngam (2015) and Martens and Carvalho (2017) studied project managers who integrate sustainability into project management. The authors observed that those project managers aimed to reduce natural resources by determining eco-efficiency and emerging negative environmental impacts. These indicators must overlap in the project life cycle from beginning to end. Another

example of reducing natural resources is offered by Green Business Parks (GBPs) to reduce waste and pollution. Possible methods include reusing materials instead of discarding them as waste and enacting any relevant treatment process (Stewart, 2007; Hwang *et al.*, 2017).

Finally, green project management practices can add significant value to sustainable construction projects while implementing projects within cost constraints. Furthermore, Zhang *et al.* (2014) and Carvalho and Rabechini (2017) contended that technological improvements are influential in SPM for a number of reasons, such as increasing eco-efficiency and green procurement and partnership (GPP), design for environment (DfE), and environmental technologies (ET) for green projects which lead to an effective use of natural resources. Besides this, Stanitsas *et al.* (2021) examined the quality benchmarks that can assist projects in sustainability value with regard to the ecosystem, such as energy efficiency, fitting renewable energy resources, sustainable use of natural resources, climate change adaptation, and disaster risk management.

2.5.3.2 Carbon emission reduction to achieve environmental sustainability

Carbon pollution is one of the most problematic issues responsible for damaging the environment and has a significant detrimental impact on climate change. Carbon emission reductions are achieved by implementing green projects. Bakhoun and Brown (2012) stated that global warming is defined as an increase in the average temperature of the Earth and that carbon dioxide (CO²) is a key concern in climate change. In their study, they mentioned that the basis of the extraction and transportation of raw materials and their manufacture into the final product causes CO² emissions which contribute to global warming. Carbon emissions from industry and construction projects cause significant damage to the environment. Also, Heravi *et al.* (2015) stated that fossil fuels contribute to climate change and increase CO². However, in the case of NPOs, this topic has not been considered. Furthermore, NPOs are not sufficiently aware of their role in reducing carbon emissions to achieve goals linked to SPM. According to Heravi *et al.* (2015), the following is an indicator of

environmental sustainability trends toward sustainability indicators for industrial buildings devoted to petrochemical projects: *Non-renewable (fossil fuels) energy indicates that CO² emission increases, contributing to global warming.* In addition, Kiani Mavi and Standing (2018) stated that China is responsible for the highest percentage of worldwide greenhouse gas emissions. If the new buildings sector in China transferred to using solar power, by the middle of 2030, the CO² would decrease by more than 20%. In the following section, energy consumption and switching to renewable energy alternatives are discussed in the context of environmental sustainability.

2.5.3.3 Energy consumption in the environmental sustainability context

Energy consumption is a key consideration in every project across all business sectors. Energy is consumed at all stages of a project's life span. For example, in the construction industry, energy is consumed starting from the extraction of materials to be used from the natural environment, processing, transportation to the building site, and during the construction phase itself. The consumed energy is expressed by the embodied energy that can be divided into three groups: 1) *initial* embodied energy in buildings which represents the non-renewable energy consumed in raw materials acquisition, processing, manufacturing, and transportation to site, 2) *induced* embodied energy which represents the non-renewable energy consumed at the construction stage of projects; and 3) *recurring* embodied energy in buildings which is the non-renewable energy consumed to maintain, repair, restore, refurbish, or replace materials during the life of the building (Bakhoun and Brown, 2012). Based on the issues raised and discussed above on energy consumption, it can be deduced that energy represents an essential element in many business sectors. Notwithstanding this truism, the NPO sector still lacks a sufficient volume of credible research in this topic. In the next theme, water consumption (the fourth sustainable environmental project management sub-theme) is discussed.

Martens and Carvalho (2017) argued that, based on the developed system of environmental law, all project managers should be aware of eco-efficiency while using water and energy in project management practices. Hwang *et al.* (2017) justified that the USA, European countries and China still do not place emphasis on measuring energy savings and pollution reductions that expolre the hard to see the positive environmental impact.

2.5.3.4 Water consumption and management in the environmental sustainability context

Water management signifies a very important element in SPM, as it plays a vital role in all projects all the time. There are many challenges, such as population growth, agriculture development, industry and urbanisation, and drought, with regard to achieving sustainability in the case of water consumption, both at present and in the future. With regards to projects and production sectors, researchers often discuss the water crisis in Australia. This is because the water crisis there is a serious issue and appears to threaten most of the production sectors, including construction (Kiani Mavi and Standing, 2018). In this regard, there are many sustainability challenges, which require transformational responses (PMSEIC, 2010 cited in Kiani Mavi and Standing, 2018). Three reasons that may cause a water crisis are: 1) rapid population growth; 2) development of different parts of agriculture, industry, and urbanisation; and 3) worldwide occurrence of drought.

On the other hand, it should be mentioned that a significant portion of wastewater is not treated appropriately. Untreated wastewater has various detrimental impacts on health, the environment, and the economy, such as the increased burden of disease due to a reduction in drinking water quality, increased greenhouse gas emissions, reduced industrial productivity, and increased cost of water treatment (WWAP, 2017 cited in Kiani Mavi and Standing, 2018). In addition, water pollution resulting from neglect towards the necessary conditions in infrastructure has forced the Chinese government to adopt new laws to protect water from pollution, such as an initiative passed in 2003, under the name of the Law of the People's Republic of China on Environmental Impact Assessment (Shen *et al.*, 2011).

Therefore, previous research studies have aimed to address the issue of water consumption and its management to mitigate water crises. This has received significant attention in the production and construction and building sectors where water usage appears to be relatively high.

Water management is one of the key issues when it comes to sustainability in projects and organisations, whether they are product- or service-based organisations. Research has mainly focused on the construction sector, while it seems that the rest of the industrial sectors have been largely ignored. None of the above studies selected for this review focused on environmental issues such as water management, energy consumption, and carbon reduction in SPM for the case of NPOs. This indicates a clear gap in this area of research as it relates to NPOs.

2.5.4 Social sustainability

Social sustainability is an important aspect for NPOs as they seek to improve employee skills through training and education, communication with the community, and health and safety of society more widely (Tam, 2010). This theme is explored below in terms of the challenges associated with employees, training and education deployment, community, and health and safety to achieve SPM.

2.5.4.1 The Employees' Role in achieving Social Sustainability

Employees can play a key role in developing their organisations when they are trained with the appropriate skills and work as a team. Zuofa and Ochieng (2016) discussed the intangible benefits that include appreciation from regulatory authorities, job satisfaction among employees, and improved relations with the stakeholders to achieve sustainability. Furthermore, the main challenge facing the integration of sustainability in construction projects is the skill level of employees. Hwang and Ng (2013) elaborated on this issue by discussing the challenges linked to labourers, which includes the critical challenge of workers'

resistance against change in the traditional project goals. For example, if the employees do not have sufficient skills or if they are not aware of the right procedure to implement the tasks, it can have a detrimental impact on the success of a project. The essential areas of workers' knowledge were identified as *time* management, *cost* management, *human resource* management, and *communication* management. Additionally, the most essential skills needed to mitigate these issues were teamwork, analytical, problem-solving, delegation, and decision-making skills. Furthermore, Martens and Carvalho (2017) stated that the one factor that can impact a project manager's perspective in SPM is the rules among internal and external stakeholders who have limited knowledge between them. Thus, all stakeholders have to clarify policy by using human rights between the duties and tasks and other conditions which can work clearly, particularly with external stakeholders (supply chain). Employees are key stakeholders for any organisation, whether it be a profit or non-profit entity. Employees are important in achieving the required goals and aims of any project. Organisations can depend on them to achieve sustainability in their projects. This particular area has remained, hitherto, under-researched as it relates to NPOs and, therefore, merits further investigation. In the following section, the importance of education and training for employees is discussed in detail.

2.5.4.2 Training and education to improve employees' skills

Training and education can help a workforce to gain new skills so as to increase the quality of their work. The main factor that contributes to the sustainability of society in project management, training and education is the consideration that training and education are important to implementing sustainability in project management, which can alleviate the challenges and crises. Training and education are necessary for the development and continuity of the project. Banihashemi *et al.* (2017) investigated knowledge management through innovative ideas and evaluated their potential applicability and functionality against cost and long-term performance. Their findings indicate the crucial role of knowledge and

sharing of knowledge among team members to achieve sustainability. The ultimate goal is that training of employees has to be improved. It is clear that alternatives for sustainability practices in project management take a long time to introduce, from stakeholders and clients to the highly experienced workforce on different projects of construction. Furthermore, staff should be encouraged to be innovative through training and implementation of new ideas related to sustainability and they should be sufficiently flexible to accept any changes or updates linked to SPM as is practical. Moreover, according to Hashim, Chao and Wang (2022), education and project manager's age can impact on project performance but the experience did not show any significant impact.

Robichaud and Anantatmula (2011) focused on a green project in the construction industry, which was aimed at providing communication and ongoing training for the reduction of costs. Continuous training and communication are necessary to build the project phases and to assure the achievement of green project goals in a cost-effective manner. Hwang and Ng (2013) aimed to identify the greatest challenges which face project managers in implementing sustainability in green projects, such as the demands for knowledge and behaviours to respond to challenges.

Alternative ways to attend training can also take place in the workplace, such as online training, to assist many workforces to improve their knowledge. Furthermore, in the Saudi context, staff should improve their behaviour and skills by attending (free) online training courses provided by the Saudi Government in different qualifications (Zaidh, 2021). Overall, from the above studies, regarding green projects and integrated innovation in sustainable projects, it is understood that training employees can have a positive impact on the outcome of any project.

2.5.4.3 Communication with the Community in the Social Sustainability Context

One of the main factors that contributes to sustainability in society for project management is the community: society is a fundamental pillar, such that its members' opinions and advice are taken into account to make the project sustainable; this serves the organisation as well as the community, particularly the beneficiaries of NPOs. Pade-Khene *et al.* (2011) have identified critical success factors (CSFs) and their necessary practice in developing countries in terms of information and communication technology (ICT) projects. The CSFs indicated the effectiveness of implementing the ICT projects in rural areas – which depended on consumer – in relation to cultural, social, economic, and political influences. The team on the project had to work with rural citizens to become responsive to all relevant factors (Pade-Khene *et al.*, 2011).

Gilbert Silvius *et al.* (2017) used interviews to assess the communities served by the projects, following from the fact that the management of stakeholders is always required. Their results showed that serving the community is the sole reason for carrying out a project, and, if there is a lack of stakeholder involvement or collaboration, projects can potentially go in the wrong direction. The authors concluded that sustainability is about accountability and transparency, and it also represents the perspectives of stakeholders. Furthermore, it was ranked in the top 10 statements in perspective (for more details refer to Silvius *et al.*, 2017). The result of the project is usually for the group of individuals who are directly participating in the project (Silvius *et al.*, 2017). Moreover, Baba *et al.* (2021) stated that, while overlapping with SPM in extractive industries, community engagement has to comply with four conditions: a) the perspective that local needs are a central consideration; b) value creation with a horizon beyond the project; c) value creation aimed at fostering local capabilities; and d) a focus on ensuring the independence of local communities. In this way, it will be more attuned to a new standard of sharing in the community by extractive industries. The latter study investigated the community in a sustainability context, and showed the importance of

having good, clear communication between the community and business sectors. In the following section, health and safety is explained within the SPM context.

2.5.4.4 Health and safety issues in social sustainability

Health and safety is a key aspect in the implementation of social sustainability for individuals. Heravi *et al.* (2015) noted that there are some overlaps among sustainability indicators in environmental, social, and economic contexts. For example, Shen *et al.* (2011) investigated health and safety issues in the dimensions of environment and some issues of safety in the social context. They found that public safety is the most important indicator in the construction industry in China, and that most casualties in construction stem from poor safety management.

Bakhoun and Brown (2012) also reported on human health and safety in their work. They pointed out that there is a significant effect on human beings involved in projects due to materials released by soil, water and air. These materials have a dangerous effect on human health in many ways, which runs contrary to any organisation's social responsibility. Safety is associated with the well-being of labourers and indoor security (i.e. their safety at their place of work). The measurement of safety is possible through accident rates (Bakhoun and Brown, 2012). Therefore, in all business sectors, the above studies are relevant with regard to the importance of health and safety in the workplace to achieve social sustainability.

2.5.5 Economic Sustainability

Economic sustainability is the third dimension of SPM. In this section, economic sustainability is categorised into three sub-themes: cost management, cost and schedule performance, and financial performance.

2.5.5.1 *The role of effective cost management in economic sustainability*

Cost management is a significant issue in terms of success in projects and achieving economic sustainability. According to Akbari *et al.* (2018), factors such as time, cost and quality management are key success factors for projects, along with leadership and efforts to preserve the environment. Other success criteria include project quality and its completion within time-set constraints and budget, employers' satisfaction, minimal environmental degradation, and overall health and safety measures.

Furthermore, Sánchez (2015) stated that the shareholders are the main source of finance. The shareholders are mainly concerned about increases in costs of operations and declines in sales. The organisation makes efforts to reduce the cost by reducing energy consumption, water consumption, and other environmentally negative aspects. Hwang *et al.* (2017) stated that project objectives such as project cost, time and quality are highly influenced by client-related barriers. They perceive three significant barriers related to the client: 1) perceived higher initial capital costs; 2) uncertain trade-offs between environmental financial benefits; and 3) lack of potential clients' awareness and demand. These were all found to have the same ranking on cost, quality, and time of project. Clients are regarded as the key decision makers of a project as they provide essential support in the form of vital resources for the project and, thus, largely influence the project development. Thus, client-related barriers prove to be decisive ones for achieving project objectives. However, NPOs have still not been investigated in this area of research. Significantly, an NPO's position is different in terms of supporting society by product or service, but they must have the vision to reduce fixed or variable costs of the organisation.

2.5.5.2 *Cost and schedule performance in economic sustainability*

Time and cost management for projects, and stakeholder and human resource management for green or sustainable projects, are the most essential areas that merit focus. Swarup *et al.* (2011) stated that cost and schedule performance are key metrics for projects,

and that there is always a comparison of *actual* versus *targeted* cost and schedule figures. Moreover, the key skills required to cope with a project include analytical, decision-making, and problem-solving skills. Hwang and Ng (2013) stated that green construction projects require knowledge of cost management, as costs are significant for equipment, new systems, and technologies employed for green construction. Various research studies have shown that green projects pose certain critical challenges for project managers. One of them is that the pre-construction process of green projects requires longer time periods. Therefore, cost and schedule performance can make the project manager aware of challenges and how to prepare for them before starting the project.

2.5.5.3 Financial performance in economic sustainability

In terms of SPM, financial performance represents the other end of the spectrum, with cost management focusing on costs and the former focusing on output typically measured by results. This is normally completed within the overall plan which is set up by the board at the outset. In execution of the projects, the deliberation of sustainability directs managers to increase economic performance (Martens and Carvalho, 2017; Yuan, 2017; Sabini, Muzio and Alderman, 2019; Stanitsas *et al.* 2021). According to Sabini, Muzio and Alderman (2019), the financial performance will improve after integrating sustainability into project management; this is a great justification to convince the other project managers to apply sustainability in their project management. Also, Stanitsas *et al.* (2021) clarified that the benefits of using the economic sustainability side that involves technical factors, engineering measures, and feasibility study in SPM as it relates to the construction industry is that it can increase productivity within a particular timeframe. Also, Martens and Carvalho (2017) demonstrated that the highest percentage of ethical work involves cost, financial, and economic performance variables. These variables can affect the project manager's perspective in SPM determined partnership among public and private sectors partnership (PPP).

In addition, in recent years, the indicators of economic performance related to projects that involve the period of payback have been increasingly emphasised. Moreover, in alignment with the perspective of the stakeholders from government agencies and shareholders, the economic performance of the project is a basic incentive for the shareholders to work mutually on a single project: "If a project is of satisfactory environmental and social impact, but cannot produce the economic benefits expected, we will definitely not be interested in it" (Yuan, 2017, p. 126).

Yuan (2017) explored the significance of criteria of financial performance when assessing the sustainability of railway projects. It is recommended that government agencies that tend to begin the establishment of railway projects should take steps to circulate

increased equilibrium between the three dimensions of the sustainability including economic sustainability.

On the other hand, Stanitsas *et al.* (2021) stated that SPM in construction projects can be applied economically to increase productivity in a particular period by focusing on key economic factors embedded in financial and economic performance, economic and political stability, cost management plans, and resource planning. Furthermore, Wang *et al.* (2014) clarified that paying more attention to quality control during applied sustainability into project building will decrease maintenance charges and life cycle replacement costs. This improves the economic performance of the project for better long-term results.

2.3 Project Management

The first part of the SLR explored the concept of sustainability in the context of project management. Sustainability is addressed from the perspective of its three pillars – social, environmental and economic. Project management is the application of knowledge, skills, tools, and techniques to project activities to meet project requirements (PMI, 2000). In this section, the themes of project management which include critical success factors (CSFs), decision making, top management, stakeholders' engagement, and project life cycle are discussed.

2.3.1 Critical Success Factors supporting SPM

Critical Success Factors (CSFs) are used to enhance the success of projects in the context of SPM. Martens and Carvalho (2016a), Banihashemi *et al.* (2017), and Kiani Mavi and Standing (2018) argued that project managers frequently raise the issue of measuring and managing success, and the factors affecting performance. In their study aimed at identifying the CSFs of project management, Kiani Mavi and Standing (2018) categorised them into five groups: (1) project; (2) project management; (3) organisation (4) external environment; and

(5) sustainability. They identify the cause and effect criteria of CSFs and also identify their credence. They use the fuzzy decision making and evaluation laboratory (fuzzy DEMATEL) method to demonstrate that the organisation, external environment, and sustainability are categorised as ‘cause’ criteria, while project and project management are ‘effects’. The findings of their work show that the greatest weighting or importance is given to top management. Also, they found that project managers can significantly improve project success by focusing on the most important CSFs rather than paying attention to all of them equally.

Although it is widely agreed that the determination of CSFs and their impacts on project results is important, incorporating sustainability into project management may support project success (Khalifeh, Farrell and Al-Edenat, 2019). Based on the empirical study of Khalifeh *et al.* (2019), the relationship between project management sustainability (PSM) and project success that involved importance, type of impact, and level of impact was positive, with different levels and types of industries, respondents, and project success models, or the goals of countries that conducted a feasibility study. Many studies have been conducted to identify the key variables for sustainability of project management and to ascertain the impact of these variables on the success of the project (Martens and Carvalho, 2016a). Akbari, Khanzadi and Gholamian (2018) argued that sustainable success for large-scale construction projects depends on the project team’s management ability and their problem-solving skills. Some of the other factors are communication, co-operation, and project leadership on the time limit, which play major roles in the successful implementation of sustainable projects.

Other examples that relate to alternative power are highlighted in a study by Maqbool and Sudong (2018). It investigated the five critical success factors (CSFs) (communication factors, team factors, technical factors, organisational factors, and environmental factors) affecting renewable energy projects in Pakistan. Through their study, the authors collected CSFs from 41 significant renewable energy projects, then further reduced this to five CSFs. Ultimately, environment factors are shown to affect positivity in projects’ levels of success.

Therefore, from the above studies, it is clear that CSFs play a vital role in enhancing the success of SPM. The next section explores how the decision-making process impacts the implementation of SPM.

2.3.2 Decision-making process

Decision making emerged as a key theme in SPM as part of the review of the literature. In general, it has been argued that sustainability needs to be integrated into the decision-making process involved in project management. Silvius *et al.* (2017) examined the significance of sustainability elements in the decision-making process of project managers. In comparison to time, cost and quality criteria, sustainability principles are under-represented in the study. However, using Q-methodology, the study also shows four distinct perspectives (people and quality, people and risk, time and cost, and quality) when considering the principle of sustainability. Marcelino-Sádaba *et al.* (2015) stated that projects have a crucial role in helping to understand sustainability in the corporation decision-making process and in broader society. There is huge focus on SPM in the construction sector. For example, Bakhoun and Brown (2012) stated that most sectors in the construction business, particularly relating to environmental problems, adapt sustainable development as a principle in their decision-making processes.

Yuan (2017) posited that, to achieve sustainability, understanding the complexity of the projects' infrastructure is extremely important as it is associated with difficulties in decision making and project success. Furthermore, Hwang *et al.* (2017) argued that there are significant barriers in the decision-making process in SPM. Clients are the usual providers of the necessary resources for project delivery. Therefore, client-related barriers are considered the decisive ones that need to be overcome to achieve the project objectives. Moreover, the decision-making process is a crucial element in the SPM which can affect the delivery of goals in any project.

2.3.3 Senior management's role

A senior manager's role is key in the success of a project in any sector. Top managers who possess effective leadership competence can potentially make significant contributions towards achieving project goals. The relationship between the senior managers' leadership and infrastructure sustainability (IS) is one of the most important project success criteria (Meng *et al.*, 2015). Kiani Mavi and Standing (2018) found that senior management and sponsor support are the most important factors in project management in construction. Top management includes two sub-themes: leadership and project managers. These are discussed in the following sub-sections.

6.4.3.1 Leadership competence

Leadership competence is becoming increasingly important in projects from a strategic perspective and is viewed as a key factor in construction project management. It allows for improving project managers' knowledge and competencies, all of which are essential skills for achieving project targets (Banihashemi *et al.*, 2017). Leadership means strategic senior management involvement in delivering projects, such as the project director. Leadership competence considers leadership or senior managers and explores their roles in the implementation of sustainability in project management. Al-Saleh and Taleb (2010) investigated value management in the Gulf countries. In their study, they interviewed 17 experienced leaders from different sectors. The results revealed that leaders are still not aware of the impact of sustainability issues in the Gulf region.

Meng *et al.* (2015) investigated the relationship between top managers' leadership and infrastructure sustainability. The aim of their research was to explore the relationships between the leadership competencies of top managers who have Intellectual Competence (IQ), Managerial Competence (MQ), and Emotional and Social Competence (EQ). The study also sought to explore the relationship between Infrastructure Sustainability (IS) and

leadership competence. The major findings were that the leadership competence of senior managers with MQ is the main determinant, followed by IQ, which directly drives the life cycle of the project infrastructure which, in turn, helps accomplish IS. Their research has helped in the selection criteria for top managers for an infrastructure project to be used for urbanisation of China. Therefore, leadership or a high standard of management is essential in SPM. The next section discusses the project manager sub-theme.

6.4.3.2 Project manager's role

A project manager is involved in delivering the project objectives through his/her operational role to support an organisation's strategic objectives. The key responsibilities of a project manager are planning, executing, and closing projects. A project manager has a leadership role for SPM (Silvius and Schipper, 2014; as cited by Eid, 2009). Yazici (2020) argued that integration of sustainability practices into project management can potentially assist project managers to achieve success in projects. Banihashemi *et al.* (2017) stated that project managers' knowledge, skills and competencies are important for achieving project objectives. The most important CSFs for implementing the principles of sustainability in project management are the tenure of project managers and their experience and competencies.

Moreover, other factors can also influence a project manager's performance in the workplace. For example, Martens and Carvalho (2017) identified a number of key factors that can affect work ethics from a project manager's perspective, such as cost and financial and economic performance due to public and private partnerships. Hence, all stakeholders must share ethical issues with them. In addition, project management tools can increase the performance sustainable of the project manager in order to benefit the international development project (Samara *et al.*, 2022). In another example, Silvius and de Graaf (2019) explored factors influencing the project manager's intention to address sustainability with the project board. Their findings show that four factors can affect the project manager's intention to address sustainability with the project board: moral compass and personal ability, potential

benefit, potential risk, and organisational fit. Silvius and Schipper (2020) also studied the factors that stimulate project managers to address the sustainability issues in a project. In accordance with the factors provided by the Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPA), the authors of this particular study used Q-methodology to investigate different subjective patterns that encourage project managers' experience. Their findings showed that three factors can encourage the behaviour of SPM: "pragmatic", "intrinsically motivated" and "task driven". All three factors can stimulate project managers' skills, which contributes to the successful implementation of SPM.

2.3.4 Stakeholder engagement

In SPM, stakeholders are considered and respected since proactive stakeholder engagement is one of its key principles. Identifying problems and developing solutions, collaborating to implement those solutions, and monitoring and evaluating project results are all necessary elements for stakeholder engagement (Silvius and , 2014). Stakeholder issues are treated casually in project management and its standards, while incorporating stakeholder management into the context of sustainability would require a paradigm shift in the underpinning values of stakeholders (Eskerod and Huemann, 2013). These values themselves are quite divergent, and depend to a large extent on whose views are being represented. This is highlighted by the study of Yuan (2017), who presented the belief of stakeholders to achieve sustainability in an infrastructure project (i.e. railway project). His results showed that there was a significant difference in views among stakeholder groups (government agencies, environmental protection organisations, internal project stakeholders, and the general public) about their perceptions of railway project sustainability, and that conflicts appear when stakeholders have differing perceptions. The main differences among these groups are based on economic and environmental criteria. The government agencies tend to focus on economic performance as this may engage other shareholders in the project and lead to an income. The government interface also represents the main

challenge to the local economy in the long run. Internal project stakeholders look toward economic measurements. However, environmental protection organisations the implementation of railway projects in environmental benchmarks. On the other hand, the general public believes that the social aspects are essential. Yuan's (2017) results show that there was a significant divergence in views among stakeholder groups, and conflicts appear when stakeholders have differing perceptions.

When stakeholders communicate well with each other and fulfil their commitments, they can deliver the agreed project plan effectively. Swarup *et al.* (2011) conducted a study in which they focused on the mounting complexity of sustainable, high-performance buildings. Their research used metrics that showed the level to which attributes influence the delivery of projects and relationships which include the commitment of the owner, integration of the team, and contractual relationships that affect the sustainability of the project goals. Their findings show that there is a strong owner commitment toward sustainability. Likewise, there is the early involvement of the constructor in the integration of the delivery process and the early inclusion of the green strategies. In this sense, crucial factors in the delivery process can have an effect on the project outcomes and sustainable goals. Hence, it can be inferred that the owner's actions play a key role in the success of project management. Therefore, in the above studies, it can be inferred that stakeholder engagement is important in the delivery process and can have a significant effect on project outcomes and achieving sustainable goals.

2.3.5 Project life cycle

A project's life cycle refers to the sequence of the phases that it goes through, starting from the project initiation to its closure. It is argued that the principles of sustainability need to be integrated into the life cycle of a project to achieve the goal of SPM. Sabini *et al.* (2019) stated that one method for structuring SPM involves considering each phase of the project (initiation, planning, execution, and closure) individually and the life cycle as a whole.

However, in the process of implementing sustainability, SPM can encounter complexities, particularly when dealing with stakeholders and their engagement in the life cycle of the project.

Another example can be seen in economic issues through the study of Robichaud and Anantatmula (2011) which considered maintaining a sustainable building project while focusing on cost constraints. The authors observed the transfer of a project of traditional buildings to green buildings by adding sustainability perspectives. In this case, they highlighted the fact that decision makers can add some experts (architects, builders, and engineers) from the feasibility and programming stage, as well as editing certain tools to make the building sustainable. To organise these steps, a feasibility plan is initially implemented, followed by a subsequent plan to better understand what the owner wants and how to achieve it. Following this, an expert team monitors the process of this project and then evaluates the project to determine whether it matches the plan.

However, the question arises as to how one should best integrate sustainability into the whole life cycle of projects. None of the studies reviewed has offered an insight into how to effectively integrate sustainability into the project management life cycle from a holistic perspective, taking into account the environmental, social, and economic pillars of sustainability. Therefore, a need exists to explore the optimisation of sustainability issues in the management of projects (Chawla *et al.* 2018). In order to structure this narrative of the life cycle, one approach would be to consider each of the project phases (i.e. initiation, planning, execution and closure) individually and as a whole, as well as stakeholder management. Moreover, the research does not consider pre-existing social sustainability studies, which have rarely been examined.

2.4 Discussion

The systematic literature review has identified SPM as the main theme based on several methods (Seuring and Gold, 2012) derived from the ABS journal articles. The literature review revealed a lack of research in SPM that has been published in academic journals; more specifically, in the ABS list of academic journals.

Many authors have focused on environmental sustainability due to its increasing importance in reducing costs and tackling climate change issues in response to the emerging policy context. One of the industries that existing research has investigated in terms of environmental sustainability is construction, with a focus on environmentally friendly buildings (Robichaud and Anantatmula, 2011; Bakhoun and Brown, 2012) including industrial buildings (Heravi *et al.*, 2015; Stanitsas *et al.*, 2021). However, in summary, these studies have only focused on green project management in construction, but the long-term effects and other challenges that may arise in the future have not been investigated. Efforts in how to address changes and scale-up sustainability have been limited to business sectors. It appears that most of the studies have focused on the construction industry, while a negligible number of other studies have investigated environmental sustainability in other sectors in a wider context (for example, Robichaud and Anantatmula, 2011; Hwang and Ng, 2013; Zhang *et al.*, 2014; Rostami *et al.*, 2015; Zuofa and Ochieng, 2016; Kiani Mavi and Standing, 2018; Goel *et al.*, 2020).

The literature review reveals that the studies that investigated environmental sustainability have attempted to include economic sustainability within the same topic; these include, but are not restricted to, Swarup, Korkmaz and Riley (2011), Hwang and Ng (2013), Rostami *et al.* (2015), Hwang *et al.* (2017), Yuan (2017), and Akbari, Khanzadi and Gholamian (2018). However, economic sustainability is an important topic within the three pillars of sustainability, and it needs to be investigated comprehensively in terms of cost management, cost and schedule performance, and financial performance in both profit and non-profit sector

organisations. Economic sustainability could help to drive environmental and social sustainability.

Most of the articles reviewed have involved limited investigations into social sustainability when they conducted their research on environmental sustainability, and their focus was exclusively on the environment. Social sustainability is an important element in achieving sustainability in an integrated way in many projects from the perspective of community in terms of employees, training and education, community, and health and safety. None of the past studies has (predominantly) covered social sustainability in NPOs in both developed and developing countries.

Previous studies have investigated the integration of sustainability in project management, but most have investigated the core project management area from organisational and project perspectives. In this sense, the studies have tended to focus on project management in terms of the critical success factors (CSFs), decision making, top management, stakeholders' engagement, and project life cycle. However, how sustainability is mainstreamed into these core project management processes and elements is yet to be uncovered, indicating one of the gaps in the literature.

Based on the critical literature review presented in this chapter, a conceptual framework is developed around the themes, as shown in Figure 2.5. This figure shows that the three dimensions of sustainability can be integrated into project management. Finally, the figure shows that CSFs can help to enhance the integration process holistically and make the SPM more efficient. CSFs are key for the successful integration of sustainability into project management in the whole life cycle of the project, including leadership, stakeholder management, and decision making. The project manager and their team, as well as senior project leadership, can act as agents (i.e. conduits) for transformative change where the three pillars of sustainability (environmental, social, and economic) are integrated into each phase of project management to ensure SPM from a holistic perspective within NPOs. This is shown in the conceptual framework figure below, highlighting the link between different themes and

sub-themes. This framework was used to underpin the empirical research in relation to the themes of the current research.

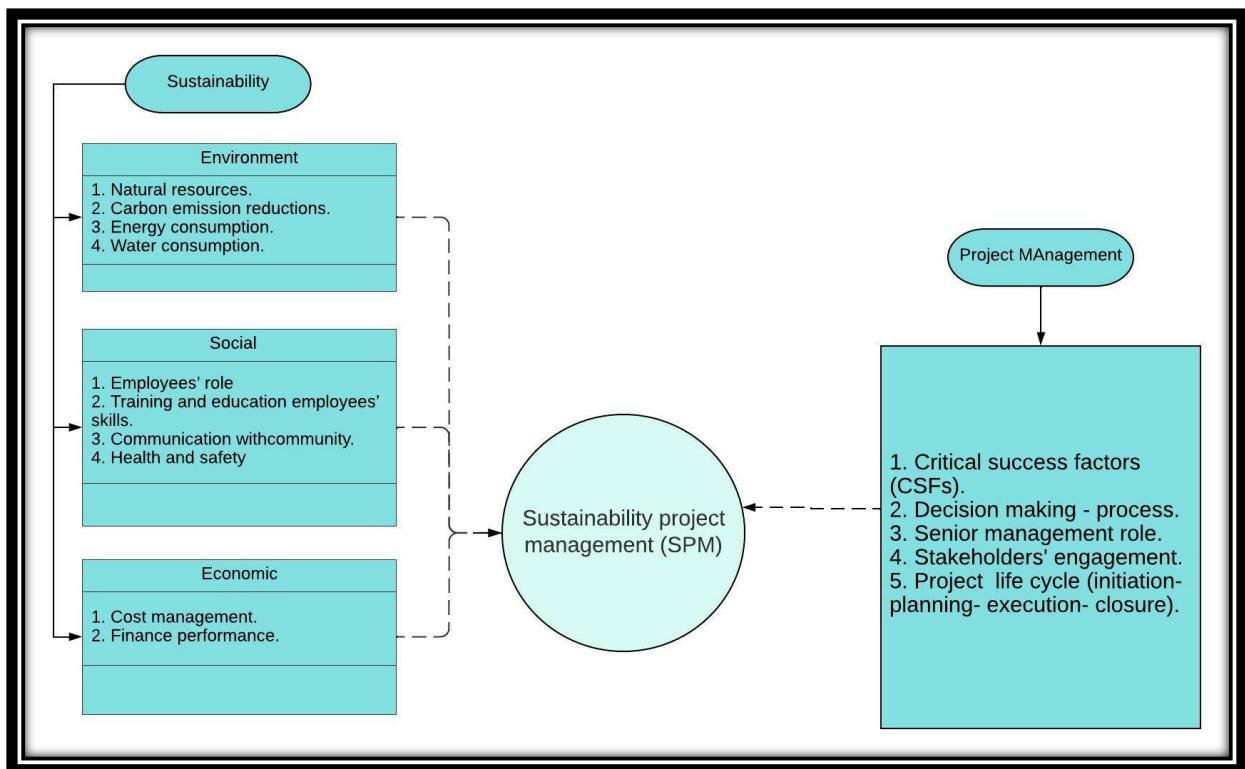


Figure 2.5: Conceptual framework proposed in this research

2.5 Conclusion

From the discussion above, it can be surmised that a clear gap exists in the literature review in terms of sustainability in project management, particularly in economic and social sustainability as it relates to for-profit organisations. However, in the case of NPOs, there has been a lack of research into the three pillars of sustainability in both developed and developing countries. In the current study, the focus is on NPOs in developing countries; specifically, Saudi Arabia. The research concentrates on sustainability in project management for NPOs in Saudi Arabia. SPM in Saudi NPOs is receiving more attention due to the country's Muslim culture, as the religion can drive social responsibility, which is at the heart of the work done by NPOs. Most of the previous studies reviewed have adopted a single method approach, which has some inherent drawbacks. However, in the present study, a mixed methods approach is adopted to achieve its aims and objectives. Further detail in this regard is provided in Chapter 3.

Chapter 3: Research Methodology

3.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the overall research methodology used in this research study to explore the extent to which sustainability is integrated into project management practices of non-profit organisations (NPOs) in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The research methodology designed for this study is guided by the research questions and objectives. All the research approaches and methods are first discussed and then justified in relation to this particular research. As described by Mayer (2015), research is conducted within a particular context for which a research philosophy must be formulated, a research strategy must be developed, and a data collection instrument must be created to meet the objectives of the research. Research methodology is defined as the way in which research is conducted and which methodologies, approaches, strategies, designs, and types should be used. Any research project must go through this pivotal phase, which is the most critical. Research methodology helps in the successful accomplishment of the study. Figure 3.1 shows the overall research philosophy and methodology adopted in this study, which is proposed by Saunders *et al.* (2009).

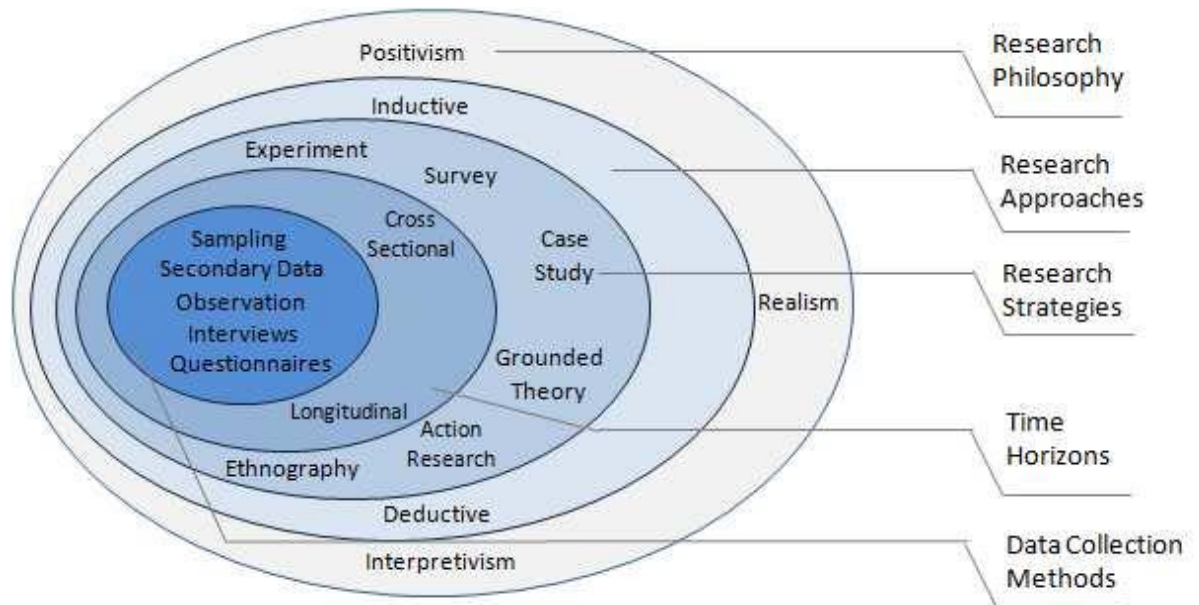


Figure 3.1: Research onion framework (Source: Saunders et al., 2009)

3.2 Research Philosophy

A research philosophy is considered to be a belief with regards to the ways in which data about any phenomenon are gathered, investigated, assessed, and utilised (Saunders *et al.*, 2009). Methodological choices in social and management research are influenced primarily by the ontology and epistemology of the research. Ontology, epistemology, and axiology are three ways of viewing an underpinning research philosophy. These philosophical assumptions are key component of any piece of research (Al-Saadi, 2014). Moreover, axiology is about the role of values and ethics within the research process. These three research philosophies are discussed in more detail in the following sub-sections.

3.5.1 Ontology

Ontology relates to the nature of reality and how a researcher perceives the world around him/her. Furthermore, ontology also is related to the question of whether observations are external to a person or belong to the individual's consciousness. Ontology

attempts to find an answer to 'what is'; more specifically, the question of being and knowing which is associated with ontology (Easterby-Smith *et al.*, 2012). In the case of the business and management field, the objects could include organisations, management, individuals' working lives, and the events and artefacts of the organisations. Ontology may decide how the world of business and management is viewed and may affect our selection of the research topic. The ontology philosophy was employed and used to formulate the research to investigate SPM in NPOs in Saudi Arabia. The research explored the nature of the reality of SPM practices, drivers, and barriers to change from the perspective of managers working in the delivery of project management within NPOs.

3.5.2 Epistemology

A primary focus of epistemology is the identification of the elements of knowledge (Saunders *et al.*, 2009) as well as discovering what 'knowing means' (Crotty, 1998). This philosophy is increasingly used in business and management research studies. In other words, epistemology is the assumptions that are made about knowledge, what is considered acceptable valid and legitimate knowledge, and how the knowledge is transferred to others (Burrell and Morgan, 1979). Furthermore, business and management includes various types of knowledge, which could all be considered valid and legitimate. This could be numerical, textual, and visual data, and ranges from facts to interpretations, which include narratives, stories, and even fictional accounts (Saunders *et al.*, 2015). Saunders *et al.* (2015) argued that our own epistemological assumptions will govern what is considered to be legitimate and valid in our research. Therefore, epistemology was adopted to evaluate the findings and results of the research of SPM in NPOs in Saudi Arabia in terms of the validity and legitimacy. Epistemology helped understand the SPM phenomenon in the context of Saudi Arabian NPOS and develop a theory of knowledge.

3.5.3 Axiology

Axiology explains the vital role of values and ethics within the research process, and it is about how the researcher manages his/her own values and those of the participants who takes part in the research (Saunders *et al.*, 2015). The research choice of a philosophy and the selection of data collection techniques reflect the researcher's values. Saunders *et al.* (2015) provided an example of collecting data through interviews and showed that the researcher who adopts this approach places emphasis on the value of interaction with respondents rather than collecting their opinions using an anonymous questionnaire. In this study, the mixed methods was used to gather the data as it combines the values of the quantitative and qualitative methods. Furthermore, the ethics of the research process for both the researcher and the participants for the interview and questionnaire methods which are used to gather the required data for this study are preserved.

3.5.4 Research paradigm

The term 'paradigm' is increasingly used for referring to the philosophical assumptions or to the set of beliefs guiding the actions and defining the worldview of the researcher (Lincoln *et al.*, 2011). Hence, it combines various philosophies that include positivism, interpretivism, realism, and pragmatism. Based on Kumar (2019), positivism is regarded as a scientific research philosophy, while interpretivism is considered an anti-positivist research stance. This research philosophy is regarded as a philosophical stance which reflects upon 'genuine' knowledge, and it is derived only through a natural phenomenon's experiences along with its relations and properties (Saunders *et al.*, 2009). The main aim of this research philosophy is to formulate universal laws and abstracts on the social universe's dynamics. Interpretivism (interpretivist) incorporates researchers in terms of interpreting the study's element; therefore, human interest is integrated by interpretivism into a study (Lodico *et al.*, 2010). The reliance of the realism research philosophy is on the notion of reality's

independence from the mind of a human being. In addition, this philosophical stance is dependent upon a scientific approach's assumption of knowledge's development. To put it differently, it can be contended that the world is portrayed by direct realism via human sense (Neuman, 2003).

Furthermore, there is another research paradigm called 'pragmatism', which is considered by various researchers to be the most common philosophical justification (Saunders *et al.*, 2009). Pragmatism aims to support the mixed methods research. Generally, pragmatism is viewed as the philosophical partner for the mixed methods research approach. It provides a set of assumptions about knowledge and enquiry underpinning the mixed methods research approach (Denscombe, 2008). It also distinguishes the approach from purely quantitative approach that is based on a philosophy of (post) positivism and a purely qualitative approach that is based on a philosophy of interpretivism or constructivism (Onwuegbuzie *et al.*, 2009). It is imperative to decide on the research philosophy in an effective and efficient manner to in order to conduct a study with full efficacy. Survey strategy and interviews in conjunction with multi-strategy research support an integration of both positivism and interpretivism philosophical stance (i.e. a combination of quantitative/qualitative and positivism/interpretivism).

This research is concerned with studying the social world of NPOs in Saudi Arabia whilst investigating their sustainable project management practices. Therefore, this study uses a combination of **positivism and interpretivism philosophy** (i.e. pragmatism philosophy) based on the nature of the main aim and objectives of the research. The study gathers quantitative facts through a survey and qualitative and non-numerical information through theoretical in-depth insights (Saunders *et al.*, 2009; Denscombe, 2010). This philosophical view of using positivist and interpretivist paradigms allows the researcher to adopt pragmatism. Pragmatism includes everyday meaning as being practical, paying attention to the context in which a researcher finds himself/herself in, and not being put down by ideology (James, 2012). In this study, the benefit of pragmatism is that it attempts to create space for

the exploration of how individual experience, knowing, and acting are formed with the help of social interaction (Kelly and Cordeiro, 2020). Therefore, pragmatism can be a relevant and useful paradigm to investigate the organisational processes of NPOs to support the integration of sustainability into their sustainable project management practices.

3.3 Research Approach

There are two main types of research approach used in social and management research. These are known as inductive and deductive approaches. The inductive research aims at developing a theory while the deductive approach aims at testing an existing theory or model (Saunders *et al.*, 2009). The inductive approach is also known as inductive reasoning since it begins with the theories and observations. Potential theory or theoretical insights are produced as a result of the data collection in research. Resemblances, patterns, and regularities (premises) experiences are observed for reaching conclusions, as these generate theories. It is worth emphasising that the inductive research approach does not imply theories while formulating hypotheses, research objectives, and questions (Goddard and Melville, 2004). The main aim of this approach is to produce meanings from the collected dataset for identifying relationships and patterns in terms of building up a theory or theoretical insights. Moreover, the researcher is not prevented by the inductive approach from utilising any existing theory to formulate the research questions which need exploration (Neuman, 2003).

The deductive research approach deals with the development of a hypothesis or hypotheses to be tested, based upon existing theories. A research strategy is designed in this philosophical theory in order to test a proposed hypothesis. According to Goddard and Melville (2004), the deductive approach to research means drawing on reasoning from the particular context to the general context. Hypothesis or hypotheses can be used as a means to explain the deductive approach, which might be derived from the theory's proposition. In other words, the deductive approach is concerned with deducting conclusions from premises or propositions. Deduction begins with an expected pattern which is tested against

observations through empirical evidence whereas induction begins with observations and seeks to find a pattern within them (Saunders *et al.*, 2009).

Researchers are now being challenged by the impasse of mixing different research approaches as it concerns theory testing or building within the context of a particular research study. This has led to the inherent polarisation of researchers along deductive and inductive lines as well as a combination of both research approaches known as the abductive approach (Awuzie and McDermott, 2017). Dubois and Gadde (2002) argued that the abductive research approach can enable the researcher's back and forth engagement between theory and data to new theory development or modification of an existing theory. Systematic combining advocates non-linear and non-positivistic research (Dubois and Gadde, 2014).

In this research, a combination of both approaches—inductive and deductive (abductive)—is used because the theory based a conceptual or a theoretical framework is developed and tested in Saudi Arabian NPOs' context, and theoretical insights are produced as a result of data analysis. Therefore, this study uses both deductive and inductive (abductive) approach for the application of a conceptual framework in the Saudi Arabian NPO sector and to develop new theory based on the modelling of sustainable project management as a result of data analysis.

The abductive approach has an advantage of systematically combining with the dual impact of inductive and deductive approaches (Kennedy and Thornburg, 2018). The SLR informed the development of a theoretical or conceptual framework to be applied in the empirical research to investigate sustainable project management in NPOs in Saudi Arabia from a holistic perspective (social, environmental, and economic sustainability). The framework combines two main themes of the research: *project management* and *sustainability*. Data collection instruments were designed based on this framework. The data were then collected to produce theoretical insights as a result of the analysis (inductive). At the same time, the framework or the model was applied in this research which is more of a

deductive approach. Thus, this research adopts a combination of both approaches and they complement each other.

3.4 Research Strategy

The purpose of this study is to investigate SPM in non-profit organisations in Saudi Arabia as part of a new topic. In exploratory research, various questions are posed in relation to a particular phenomenon as well as what is happening at the present time. When knowledge on a topic is lacking, this type of research is particularly helpful (Gray, 2004). Both inductive (theory development) and deductive research approaches (theory testing or hypothesis formulation) employ different research strategies. Saunders *et al.* (2009) recommended that these strategies are not mutually exclusive. Moon (2017) emphasised that determining what methodology to use in a study is the most important part of a research strategy. A specific use of the best strategy described in the above section is to apply the abductive approach. An effective research strategy is determined by the research questions (Robson, 2011). There are several types of design strategies in the literature, including fixed, flexible, and multi-strategy approaches. In an empirical study, Robson (2011) suggested that the research design is specified before the main stage of data collection. The quantitative research strategy uses numbers to collect data—for example, surveys and experiments. In spite of this, the research design may develop during the process of data collection if it is flexible. This strategy is classified as a qualitative strategy since the data used are not numerical. For instance, the research methods include case studies, ethnographic studies, grounded theory, and action research. There is a third multi-strategy research design, which offers a combination of both flexible and fixed design in a single research study (Robson, 2011). The multi-strategy supports mixed methods, aims to evaluate a topic, and compares alternative perspectives on a phenomenon such as sustainable project management. In addition, it has the ability to combine elements of other research strategies (Denscombe, 2010).

This research adopted the multi-strategy research design where a combination of two strategies is used. A survey strategy and interviews were chosen as the most suitable for this study in the NPOs sector in Saudi Arabia. In addition, this is consistent with the research goals and questions based on interviews and validated by a survey strategy (Saunders *et al.*, 2009, Denscombe, 2010). There are also other research strategies such as action research, grounded theory, and ethnography which are considered to be more appropriate for a large sample size of data with time available which is used for the generalisation of research findings and also needs huge information resources. Due to the impact of COVID-19 at the time of the research, these strategies were not suitable and, instead, a quantitative survey strategy was employed. Saunders *et al.* (2009) support this approach and argued that research strategy should be based on the research questions, the existing academic knowledge, the resources available, and the philosophical assumptions applied to the research. According to Saunders *et al.* (2009), survey research strategies are the most commonly used. The strategy includes noting the responses of the allotted individual samples to the statements in the questionnaire in order to compile information. In this strategy, the focus is vital to the evolution of the questionnaire with numerical rating scales such as the five-point Likert scale (1- Strongly Agree/ 2- Agree/ 3- Neither Agree nor Disagree/ 4- Disagree/ 5- Strongly Disagree) and multiple-choice questions. It is even considered as the most rigorous approach to the research as it gives a range of options to research participants to choose from based on their own context whilst offering flexibility. Following Robson (2011), this study is based on the concept of scientifically proven strategies, which includes the explanation of representative samples, survey methods, and higher quality measurements.

3.5 Research Methods

A primary dataset and a secondary dataset are the two main types of data (Collis and Hussey, 2003). The term 'primary data' refers to direct evidence of a particular event or topic. This is obtained by a person who is directly involved in the research. An interview, an observation, and a questionnaire are used to collect primary data. In this section, the three main research methods—quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods—are discussed in detail.

3.5.1 Quantitative method

The methodology of quantitative research involves the process of designing the study in advance of the data collection process (Robson, 2002). Questionnaires can be gathering data from different places to gain determined information (Denscombe, 2010). As a useful tool, it can help collect extensive datasets from a large sample size at a reasonable cost to the researcher (Saunders *et al.*, 2009). Furthermore, Alshehri (2012) explained that a quantitative approach is useful for determining the causal relationship between two or more variables. Denscombe (2014) noted that quantitative data collection has several advantages. Such advantages include scientific more reliable data, and data analysis that is not dependent on the research values of the investigator. Furthermore, the statistical tests of significance, the interpretation of quantitative results, and the researchers' confidence in their findings are higher when they rely on quantitative methods in comparison to qualitative methods (Denscombe, 2014). In contrast, quantitative approaches have the disadvantages of not adequately explaining how and why observed factors occur, and why they behave in a particular way. Additionally, standardising data and coding can actually undermine a very valuable resource due to the fact that it does not take into account values, roles, traditions, and norms, which are critical for contextualising social phenomena that are difficult to quantify. A questionnaire survey is used to collect quantitative data in this study. The survey strategy allows for the effective determination of the research and the ability of the

researcher to achieve results which are relevant and can be implemented. A survey was conducted in the NPOs sector of Saudi Arabia. This was an online survey with the help of an online tool, Microsoft Form, and gathered data from a large sample consisting of staff involved in project management in NPOs.

3.5.1.1 Quantitative data collection

The questionnaire surveys enable the researcher to gather the required data in the most efficient manner. In this study, data are quantitative and numerical to investigate the current state of sustainable project management in Saudi Arabian NPOs and their drivers and barriers to change. The personnel of the project management working in the NPOs in Saudi Arabia were targeted in order to collect the data. Also, the participants involved in the questionnaire were directors of the projects, project administrators, and project managers. The main motivation to use the online survey is that it is cost-effective, saves time, and offers breadth in the study. As far as the questionnaire design is concerned, it was designed on the basis of the five-point Likert scale (1- Strongly Agree/ 2- Agree/ 3- Neither Agree nor Disagree/ 4- Disagree/ 5- Strongly Disagree.) and multiple-choice questions underpinned by the literature review (theoretical/conceptual framework). A conceptual framework or theoretical model was developed based on a comprehensive and systematic literature review. It has key themes related to sustainable project management and guided the design of the empirical research study.

Programme and portfolio managers of Saudi Arabian NPOs were invited to complete the online questionnaire in order to collect the required data for the research. The questionnaire consisted of three main sections. In the first section, the questions cover to what extent the participant understands the sustainability concepts among the workers of NPOs in Saudi Arabia. The second section focuses on the project management and the sustainability integration in the practices of project management; i.e. the current state of sustainable project management in NPOs. Finally, the third section aims to explore the drivers

and barriers/challenges for the integration of sustainability in project management practices of NPOs. Survey questions were designed based on sustainability project management themes which can answer the research questions and fulfill the research objectives. The survey's weblink was sent electronically to around 300 participants and 204 responses were received. The survey is provided in the Appendix 1.

3.5.2 Qualitative method

By investigating social actors' experiences, circumstances, perspectives, and historical events, qualitative research methods provide an in-depth understanding of the social world (Ritchie and Lewis, 2003). The most popular and effective method in qualitative field research is interviewing (Scott and Garner, 2013). According to Kvale (1996), interviews should not take the form of a question-and-answer format, where the interviewer asks the questions and the interviewee responds; rather, it should be referred to as "InterViews" (capital I and capital V). An interview should, therefore, take the form of a conversation between the interviewer and the interviewee, not a question-answer format, because the data are generated from the dialogue rather than from the answers to the questions (Kvale, 1996; Block, 2000; Foley and Valenzuela, 2005; Kvale and Brinkmann, 2009). The semi-structured interviews used in this study were used to collect data because open-ended questions give interviewees the opportunity to express their ideas. An interview is a research technique used to gather data by exploring individuals' or groups' experiences as well as their perceptions, as defined by Scott and Garner (2013). Creswell and Clark (2011) further mentioned that qualitative data can provide a deeper understanding of a particular issue. In qualitative research, three types of interviews may be used to gather primary data. These are structured, semi-structured, and unstructured interviews.

A structured interview is also called a research-administered survey and standardised interview. A semi-structured interview is a meeting in which a formal list of questions is not strictly followed by the interviewer. In this type, open-ended questions are asked by

researchers, which allows for a detailed discussion with an interviewee instead of straightforward questions and formatted answers (Saunders *et al.*, 2009). Most of the open-ended interviews are held at locations and times preferred by the interviewees (Campion, 1997). An unstructured interview is also known as a non-directive interview and, in this type of interview, there are no prearranged questions. They are totally opposite to the structured interview, which offers standardised questions (Sanbonmatsu *et al.*, 1998).

According to Verma (2019), semi-structured interviews have become one of the most important tools and techniques in qualitative research. Researchers use structured interview questions to conduct this type of research method but the questions open lead to in-depth qualitative data based on the interviewees' opinions from their experiences and knowledge. Researchers are able to adjust questions based on the data and the information required during semi-structured interviews. Furthermore, qualitative research typically involves a relatively small sample size, which allows researchers to collect detailed, contextually rich information in depth. The qualitative approach focuses on the perceptions and reflections of what is known as a socially constructed reality.

Denscombe (2014) discusses the advantages of qualitative methods and asserts that the collected data are grounded, rich and detailed, and tolerance of contradictions and ambiguity.

3.5.2.1 Qualitative data collection

For qualitative data collection, the interviewees are selected conveniently (convenience sampling) from a large quantitative sample who have already completed the survey (Sanbonmatsu *et al.*, 1998). In this study, qualitative data were gathered with the help of semi-structured interviews in selected NPOs in Saudi Arabia to gain in-depth insights into the current status of SPM, and its drivers and barriers for implementation. This type of interview can help gain appropriate insights into the research objectives and it is also a flexible approach where new thoughts can be discussed during the interview. Project management

practitioners in NPOs were the potential interviewees and some other key questionnaire respondents were also chosen for the interviews. The interview questions were designed based on the themes that were discussed in the literature review and carefully worded to achieve the aim of the study and fulfill the research objectives. The interview questions are divided into three parts: 1. The three first questions are around the concept of SPM (cover understanding of SPM). 2. The next six questions investigate the role and the current SPM (what type of sustainability and why? What about others? Discussion about types of PM themes and why? 3. The last set of questions is about the drivers and barriers in SPM in NPOs in Saudi Arabia. The qualitative data were obtained from 34 interviewees who are project managers or top management in NPOs in Saudi Arabia. The interview protocol is included in Appendix 1.

3.5.2.2 Grounded theory

Grounded theory is an established methodology used in various cross-disciplinary research studies. Both qualitative and quantitative data collection methods can be used in grounded theory. Grounded theory aims to set out the discovery or construction of a theory from data which are systematically gathered and analysed using the comparative analysis. Overall, grounded theory is a flexible methodological approach, but it is complex in its nature (Chun Tie *et al.*, 2019). A version of grounded theory first emerged in 1967, and its development took place following that. A number of key aspects of grounded theory are set out in Glaser and Strauss' (1967) discussion. There was a significant difference in their approaches to data analysis and beliefs between them. Table 3.1 summarises Cooney's (2010) key differences between these two schools of thought about grounded theory. Several reasons have led to the choice of the Glaserian school for the present research: (i) this school of thought is closely associated with the original ground theory that caused a major revolution; (ii) it begins with general open-mindedness so as to avoid the bias caused by prior

assumptions in research; (iii) it emphasises the importance of research sensitivity to the development of theories; (iv) it fits the research design that is grounded in constructivism, which emphasises the importance of social processes in the development of theories; and (v) it involves a more flexible coding process that facilitates the natural and gradual emergence of findings during the process of theoretical sampling. As a final note, the aim of this research is to develop a conceptual theory rather than a description, and this will prove to be very relevant when discovering the extent to which sustainability is incorporated into project management practices among non-profit organisations in Saudi Arabia.

Table 3.1: Comparing the Two Schools of Grounded Theory

(Source: Cooney, 2009)

Comparison	Glaser	Strauss
Beginning	Open mind	General idea
Questions	Neutral questions	Structured question
Theory	Grounded in data	Interpreted by an observer
Social process	Should be identified	Need not be identified
Sensitivity	Comes from immersion	Comes from methods

Coding	More flexible	Restricted
Outcome	Conceptual theory	Conceptual description

This research uses grounded theory as an appropriate methodological approach to develop and address the research questions related to sustainable project management in Saudi Arabian non-profit organisations (NPOs). Using a grounded theory approach to code the qualitative interview data, this research reveals how NPOs in Saudi Arabia effectively integrate sustainability into the project management process in a holistic way (environmental, social, and economic sustainability). Grounded theory can potentially help to interpret the sustainable project management processes that take place in the NPOs including their current state, drivers, and barriers to change. In this research, there are various advantages of using grounded theory. According to Guest *et al.* (2011), for smaller datasets, the grounded theory provides a comprehensive analysis of data, aids in interpreting data, and can be used to examine topics other than individual experiences. Therefore, it can offer in-depth insights into sustainable project management practices in NPOs in line with the aim and objectives of the research.

The significance of this finding lies in the fact that Grounded Theorists are also looking for a new methodology that combines the theory-building ability of Grounded Theorists with Big Data approaches (Walsh *et al.*, 2015). Easterby-Smith *et al.* (2012) concluded that grounded theory has a greater degree of flexibility than other theories. Therefore, when implementing grounded theory, it is important to take into account 'accepting changes' as well as having a clear position on the issue of determinism (Corbin and Strauss, 1990). Researchers collect two types of data, each collected using a different method (Easterby-Smith *et al.*, 2012). First, a qualitative data source includes interviews, observation, and diary

keeping. It can be used when a higher level of quality is more important than a higher level of frequency. Second, quantitative data, on the other hand, are characterised by frequency rather than quality. Surveys and questionnaires are used to collect data.

The nature of the research on sustainable project management in NPOs calls for adopting a qualitative approach to collect data, particularly through the use of qualitative methods that are popular including 'in-depth interviews' (Seidman, 2013). It is necessary to conduct interviews to gain a deeper understanding of the social environment, motivation, and creativity as they establish connections between them (Amabile, 1997). The collection of data can be achieved through a variety of approaches, each of which has its own particular uniqueness (Guest, MacQueen and Namey, 2011). As a result, the methodology of the research is more reliable and consistent. In order to develop a grounded theory study, it is necessary to develop "some general, open-ended questions" (Charmaz, 2014, p. 65). Although the study used mixed methods data collection tools, the grounded theory approach was adopted in the qualitative element of the study using interviews.

3.5.3 Interviews for developing a theory

The interviewing technique relates to the research choice of using the grounded theory method. This supports the qualitative research approach in a study. A person's substantial experience with the research topic is explored through a gently guided, one-sided interview. Charmaz (2014, p. 56) defined intensive interviews as "a gently guided, one-sided conversation". Several advantages of this technique can be summarised as follows:

1. Allows for open discussion of ideas and issues during instruction.
2. Ensures that these ideas and issues can be followed up immediately.
3. Interview outcomes resulting from the co-construction of the interview conversation by interviewers and participants.

Observation and focus groups are other qualitative techniques (Easterby-Smith *et al.*, 2012). Semi-structured interviews were used to gather qualitative data in this research which

were then analysed using ground theory technique to generate findings in line with the research objectives. Interviews predominantly help investigate the level of understanding of the concept of ‘sustainability’ among the employees of NPOs involved in project management in Saudi Arabia, examine the role of project management in integrating sustainability in Saudi Arabian NPOs development projects, and analyse the current state of sustainability in the project management practices. The analysis was performed using the themes and sub-themes related to both sustainability and project management aspects of the study.

3.5.4 Inductive data-gathering process

Because grounded theory approach relies on data, rich interviews were conducted with managers in Saudi Arabian NPOs to investigate sustainable project management practices in their organisations and the data were then triangulated by online survey questions and secondary data to ensure the reliability of the research (trustworthiness). Integration of these different qualitative and quantitative sources helps to answer the aim and objectives. Therefore, in this research, the process of data collection is conducted through four main phases (see Figure 3.2). Each phase has its own aspects and rationale, as described in the following sections.

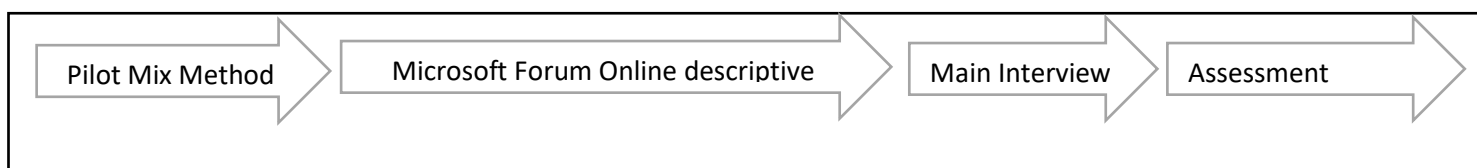


Figure 3.2: The phases of data gathering

During the initial stages of the research, the pilot mixed methods approach was introduced. A pre-interview and a pre-descriptive questionnaire were conducted online to establish networking with participants and get them involved with the research project. The Microsoft Forum Online descriptive was conducted to expand the breadth of sources from

the majority of participants and show the background of SPM. The total number of the interviewees who responded to the online descriptive was 204. Furthermore, interviews were carried out to provide more in-depth knowledge about SPM among the top management of NPOs and other bodies responsible for the project management in NPOs organisation. The total number of the interviews was 34. More details about the selected interview type (semi-structured interviews) are presented in the research methodology chapter.

3.5.5 Interviewing process

During this study, semi-structured interviews were conducted with employees of Saudi Arabian NPOs involved in project management in order to determine their level of understanding of sustainability and to analyse the current state of sustainability in the project management practices of NPOs and the role of project management in integrating sustainability into NPO development projects. A series of 10 steps was followed in order to generate the main data source for this study. Overall, 34 interviews were conducted with managers (at all levels of hierarchy) of non-profit organisations in Saudi Arabia who were responsible in/for the management of projects. These interviews were conducted from May to November 2020. Since the COVID-19 had been ongoing for more than three months, the data were extended by more than three months due to a lockdown imposed by the Saudi Government.

In accordance with Southampton University's ethical forms, all interviewees indicated their approval before answering any questions. In addition, the stock of knowledge was applied to an issue-based approach (Sackmann, 1991). In order to study how sustainability can be integrated into project management, sustainability was chosen as the topic. There was enough time for deep exploration during the 40-minute interviews conducted in Arabic, the interviewees' main language. It was necessary to conduct this thorough investigation since it is difficult to observe values directly without making inferences regarding them by interviewing key members of an organisation (Schein, 1984).

As part of the interview process:

- 1- All interviews were recorded as audio files.
- 2- These audio files were carefully transcribed into text documents by a third party.
- 3- As part of the support manual, the documents were coded.
- 4- As a final step, the findings were refined and confirmed by the participants during interview discussions.

Standard techniques of grounded theory, including the coding of data and the development of categories, were used. The data were coded using the three stages identified by Strauss and Corbin (1990). In open coding, the transcribed interviews were analysed line by line for a simple extraction of what the interviewee is saying and, in some cases, implying or not saying.

Table 3.2 List of Interviewees' Information

Type of NPOs	Job Title	Experiences	Code
1. Social Development Committee	Director of Project Management	9 Years	A1
2. Social Development Committee	Supervisor Manager	12 Years	B6
3. Social Development Committee	Project Manager	11 Years	B7
4. Social Development Committee	Project Manager	6 Years	A10
5. Charity Organisation	General Director of Project Management	18 Years	A9
6. Quran Organisation	Project Manager	12 Years	B5
7. The Cooperative Office For invitation & Guidance	Senior Manager	8 Years	B11
8. Charity Organisation	Project Manager	9 Years	A19

9. Charity Organisation	Project Manager	21 Years	A12
10. Charity Organisation	Supervisor Manager	4 Years	A13
11. Charity Organisation	Project Manager	4 Years	B8
12. Disabled Association	Director of Project Management	14 Years	A22
13. Abdulrahman Alrajhi Foundation	Director of Project management	17 Years	A4
14. Charity Committee for Orphans' Care	Project Manager	24 Years	B1
15. Alhosene Foundation	Project Manager		B2
16. Alanood Foundation	Project Manager	23 Years	A18
17. Charity Organisation	Project Manager	6 Years	B9
18. Alsobee Foundation	Director of Project Management	14 Years	B4
19. Charity Organisation	Project Manager	11 Years	A23
20. Alrajhi Foundation	Director of Project Management	16 Years	A8
21. Norah Almlahee Foundation	Director of Project Management	12 Years	B3
22. Waqf Charity	Project Manager	8 Years	A5
23. Charity Organisation	Project Manager	4 Years	A14
24. Environment charity Organisation	Project Manager	36 years	A2
25. Youth Leadership Building and Development Association	Project Manager	18 Years	A21
26. Alrajhi Foundation	Director of Project Management	13 Years	A17
27. Unity Alrajhi Foundation	Director of Project Management	21 Years	A6

28. Alrajhi Foundation	Director of Project Management	12 Years	A20
29. Charity Organisation	Director of Project Management	18 Years	A7
30. Alanood Foundation	Director of Project Management	4 Years	B10
31. Alhosene Foundation	Director of Project Management	12 Years	A11
32. Aloradee Foundation	Project Manager	5 Years	A16
33. Charity Organisation	Project Manager	4 Years	A15
34. Alesa Foundation	Director of Project Management	13 Years	A3

3.5.5.1 Theoretical framework

In order to analyse the data, there are several stages to consider: The first stage is analysing the descriptive online using Microsoft Forms online and Excel Sheet in a descriptive manner, showing that the results are based on answers from the descriptive participants. During this stage, the number of participants was 209; after participants answered, the result was 192 participants. Moreover, each descriptive form had 64 questions. Thus, the total number of answers from 192 participants is 12,228. The primary reason for using an online descriptive is that it is cost-effective, saves time, and provides a broad scope for the study, as it indicates the level of knowledge and application in current project management in Saudi NPOs.

The second stage is followed based on interview codes from data collected about SPM in Saudi NPOs. As part of the study, the coding was conducted over the course of four months (see Appendix 2) using a manual procedure. Following thematic analysis, the themes can be seen as patterns in the data, as participants discussed ideas in a largely consistent but

sometimes varying manner. Patterns emerged as a result of these ideas, which were categorised and eventually became themes. Some ideas were not consistently repeated. For example, a participant may have mentioned an idea only once, but he or she emphasised it strongly enough that the researcher could interpret it as an important theme. In Appendix 2, the coding for this project has been summarised. Each chart features codes, sub-codes, categories, and themes. This model provides codes that can guide NPOs in Saudi Arabia to begin with sustainability dimensions in environmental sustainability and indicate how NPOs can follow natural resources to use alternative sources of energy and reduce waste by using the technology available (online accounts or emails) rather than hard copies. In social sustainability, it helps to understand what internal and external stakeholders need and how to provide it at zero or minimal cost. As for economic sustainability, the strategy and process can benefit NPOs in Saudi Arabia without drawbacks—i.e. increasing income and saving costs. Moreover, leadership can control and organise sustainability steps. Leadership is followed by the sustainability project life cycle, which can organise the process of SPM from beginning to end. It can also clarify responsibility among stakeholders and measure the SPM in NPOs to examine whether the applied strategy is in keeping with the plan or if any future amendments are needed, and how to deal with them. The coding scheme for data analysis is shown in Table 3.3 below.

Table 3.3 The Coding Scheme for Data Analysis

Knowledge			
	Environmental sustainability	Social sustainability	Economic sustainability
Concept SPM	Project managers had a lack of knowledge due to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Following the Saudi Government until 2017 (funded 100%). 2. Their background in the Social Sector. 	Project managers believed that the second level after understanding economic sustainability is social sustainability, which could improve knowledge and skills in NPOs.	Due to NPOs being made dependent, project managers interpreted SPM as a means of growing and expanding their income.
Applying SPM			

Project Life cycle	Since project managers do not have the knowledge to apply environmental sustainability approaches (alternative power–waste management–recycling water) to their project management, they will be unable to reduce the use of natural resources in their projects.	In NPOs, project managers are the primary point of contact for implementing social sustainability, and organising and arranging duties and tasks between external and internal stakeholders in stages.	After a reduction in funding from the Saudi Government, project managers' only choice is economic sustainability determine is expand the income management in order to keep the NPOs working and reduce the fixed, variable, and future costs of their projects.
Leadership	Leadership is essential to integrating SPM in NPOs, both theoretically (strategies–visions–alternative plans) and practically (to complete their duties and tasks/improve their skills/interface obstacles/prepare themselves for future challenges).		

3.5.6 Secondary data sources

Secondary data are a powerful tool to provide context to the study and are considered as an efficient way of bringing together a large dataset particularly where access to the field might be difficult (Smith and Smith Jr, 2008). Secondary data are the work written by another author (or data collected) and help in carrying out more research while offering a wider perspective (Denscombe, 2010). In other words, someone else other than researcher collects these data; however, the researcher uses them for his/her own research objectives. Researcher is incorporated by the analysis of secondary data by utilising the information, which is gathered by someone else for her or his purposes (Young and Ryu, 2000). In addition, it plays an important role in making the collection of primary data more specific with the help of secondary data. The secondary data help the researcher to highlight deficiencies and gaps, along with additional information which needs to be collected. The secondary data aim to improve the problem's understanding.

Both secondary and primary sources of data collection were used in this research. Primary data were collected with the help of questionnaires and semi-structured interviews with managers in Saudi Arabian NPOs. The secondary data for the research study were

gathered from Saudi Arabian NPOs' strategies and other documents such as project management plans and policies. NPOs websites were also used to gather useful information and secondary data in line with the research aim and objectives. Secondary data were obtained from the resources shown in Table 3.4 to complement and support the primary data. In this study, primary data may address the gaps in the secondary data, and vice versa. The use of secondary data is useful as Johnston (2017) stated that technological advances have led to huge numbers of datasets that have been already collected, compiled, and archived. These secondary data are now easily accessible for researchers and are flexible. As a result, using existing secondary data has become prevalent.

Table 3.4 Secondary Data Sources

NPOs	Sources
1. General Authority for Awqaf	https://www.awqaf.gov.sa/Ge
2. King Khaled Foundation	Report - https://www.kkf.org.sa/
3. Alsobee Organisation Charity	https://asf.org.sa/ar/
4. Suliman Bin Abdulaziz Al Rajhi Foundation	https://www.rf.org.sa/ar
5. Social Development Committee Alswaedee District	https://csds.org.sa/news/stratplan/
6. Social Development Committee Alroabee District	https://www.csd.org.sa/
7. Charity Organisations King Fahd District	https://albr.org/
8. Prince Alanood Foundation	http://alanood.org.sa/Ar/Pages/home.aspx
9. Sustainable Development Report	https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/20230SDGs_English_Report972018_FINAL.pdf

10.	Reuters News	https://www.reuters.com/article/saudi-solarpower-int-idUSKBN2BV2AV
11.	Solarabic News	https://www.reuters.com/article/saudi-solarpower-int-idUSKBN2BV2AV
12.	N Business News	https://www.thenationalnews.com/business/energy/2022/03/08/saudi-arabia-signs-power-purchase-agreements-for-solar-projects-worth-665m/
13.	Saudi Press Agency	https://www.spa.gov.sa/ar

3.5.7 Qualitative and descriptive analyses

A mixed method is the combination of both quantitative and qualitative methods. In literature, there have been many definitions for mixed methods; however, there is still no agreement on the name and the definition of the mixed methods. Tashakkori and Teddlie (2010) stated that the mixed methods is still developing and more research is needed, which means that it is important to keep the discussion open regarding the definition of mixed method research. Even though there is a definitive definition of the mixed method, there are two main trends to define it. The first trend describes the mixed method as a process of collecting and analysing the data using both qualitative and quantitative approaches (e.g., Greene *et al.*, 1989; Creswell *et al.*, 2003; Onwuegbuzi and Teddlie, 2003). The second trend defines the mixed methods as a complete integration between qualitative and quantitative data through the whole research process, (Rocco *et al.*, 2003). Shelton *et al.* (2018) stated that when a mixed methods approach is used to conduct the research, the research is based on the use of both qualitative and quantitative methods. Quantitative methods use numerical evaluation and are completely based on the principles of numerical interpretation. In contrast, the qualitative approach is devoid of numerical interpretations and data are obtained by interviewing individuals (Flick, 2018). According to Shorten and Smith (2017), mixed methods refers to the process by which researchers collect and analyse both quantitative and

qualitative data within the same study in order to maximise the benefit. In addition, Maxcy (2003) suggested there are several advantages of the mixed methods research which are stated below:

- 1- When a research problem is studied through mixed methods research, a more comprehensive evidence can be reached.
- 2- Mixed methods research can provide an answer to the questions that cannot be answered by qualitative or quantitative research alone.
- 3- Mixed methods encourage researchers to collaborate with quantitative and qualitative researchers and create relationships between them.
- 4- Mixed methods research encourages the researchers to make use of multiple worldviews or paradigms.
- 5- Mixed methods research is a practical approach as it allows the researcher to be free to use all possible methods to study a research problem.

Due to these above stated advantages and the requirements for the study, this research study adopted a mixed methods approach—i.e. a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods. There are existing mature constructs on SPM that this study can adopt and apply in the Saudi context. In addition, there are limited studies on NPOs' SPM in Saudi, so the qualitative method can provide in-depth and rich insights. The approach is useful because the focus of the research is to develop a deeper understanding of the SPM process in Saudi Arabian's NPOs. Both quantitative and qualitative data can address different aspects of the same research.

3.5.8 Time horizons

In the research onion framework proposed by Saunders et al. (2009), 'time horizon' defines the time frame for the research study. The time horizon can be cross-sectional or longitudinal in nature. Cross sectional study is a relatively short-term research which involves

data collection at a specific point of time. Longitudinal study involves the collection of data repeatedly over a longer period of time, which may allow comparison of data (Saunders *et al.*, 2009). This research exploring SPM practices in Saudi Arabian NPOs is cross-sectional. This is because it starts and aims to end within a particular time frame. The data collection was only conducted once to meet the aim and objectives of the research. Cross-sectional study is most appropriate to explore the current state, drivers, and barriers to the integration of sustainability in project management practices of NPOs. It can be conducted relatively faster and is considered inexpensive. Empirical data were gathered in a cross-sectional questionnaire descriptive and interviews with the managers in NPOs in Saudi Arabia to assess the extent of sustainability integration into project management processes.

In this section, the two types of data collection (quantitative and qualitative), which are used in this research, are fully explained.

3.6 Research Population and Sampling

The research population was the Saudi Arabian NPOs sector and snowball sampling techniques was used in this study. Staff who were involved in projects and project management process in NPOs in Saudi were the potential research participants in this study for both methods. The sampling method is categorised into two main types; one is known as *probability sampling* which includes random and convenience sampling and the other type is the *non-probability sampling* technique. The snowball sampling technique was used to get a maximum response rate in the questionnaire descriptive. Initially, the questionnaire was sent to a targeted audience in NPOs and then snowball effect was achieved. On the other hand, in the context of the qualitative research design, the purposive sampling was used to engage with the audience. The sample size for the qualitative research is 34 of those managers (both senior and middle managers) who are involved in the different projects in NPOs of Saudi Arabia. The initial estimated sample size of the quantitative questionnaire study was around 300 participants; however, effective efforts were made to obtain the maximum response rate that will help support the validity and reliability, and achieve the research objectives.

As far as the research process is concerned, the researcher contacted the main NPOs that work in Saudi Arabia via phone call and emails to seek permission to conduct the study. Recently, the COVID-19 pandemic posed a significant challenge to the researcher in collecting data. Therefore, the research used the online technology to conduct the interviews and descriptives. This situation led to a delay in arranging interviews with the participants. Arabic language is the formal and national language in Saudi Arabia; therefore, translation of the questions is offered in both online questionnaire descriptive and interview. Both the questionnaire and the interview questions are included in Appendix 1.

Furthermore, a pilot study was conducted in order to achieve the following main goals: (i) to identify to what extent the quantitative scales are applicable and transferable in the Saudi Arabia context; (ii) to examine cooperation and response rate; (iii) to test the quality of the information in both quantitative and interviews; and (iv) to collect more information that may help to adjust the scales to suit the research needs and requirements. Therefore, the pilot study was sent to three doctors who are working in at the University of Prince Abdulrhman Bin Abdul Aziz, the University of Albaha, and the University of Jeddah to complete the study and to send their feedback as well to revise and fine-tune the translation from English to Arabic. They sent their invaluable feedback, and the adjustments were made accordingly. Their comments and the approval to conduct the pilot study are provided in Appendix 1.

3.7 Data Analysis Tools

The data analysis is the most critical part of any research study and it has to focus on the research questions and objectives. The research objectives shape the data analysis process. The overall outcome of the study is based on how the data are gathered, determined, evaluated, and presented. Additionally, it is important to justify the chosen research strategy while demonstrating the data analysis in order to achieve the research goal and objectives (Amankwah *et al.*, 2019). Excel and Microsoft Teams Software, which is an integrated

statistical software package, were used to analyse the quantitative data statistically. Based on correlations between key variables and regression analyses, descriptive statistics were produced. The NVivo (version 12) software package was not used for qualitative data analysis as the interviews were not analysed other English language such as Arabic Language. In this case the analysis was carried out manually.

As a qualitative method, thematic analysis using Microsoft Teams Software package is extremely useful for supporting quantitative results (Leininger, 1992; Thorne, 2000; King, 2004; Braun and Clarke, 2006; Nowell, Norris, White and Moules, 2017). Thematic analysis is used by other qualitative methods, as discussed by Boyatzis (1998), Holloway and Todres (2003), and Ryan and Bernard (2003). Other qualitative methods employ thematic analysis as well; however, it may be viewed as a flexible framework that can be used to analyse data regardless of the wide-ranging research worldviews applied (Braun and Clarke, 2006). The purpose of thematic analysis is to establish themes that explain a particular phenomenon by coding the data with detailed deep interpretations to make meaning from the data collected. Identifying patterns or following thematic coding can lead to that process, and the type of analysis selected can lead to that result: grounded theory, interpretive phenomenological analysis, or template analysis. There is no need to apply these three theories, but they could support the use of multiple analyses in one existing type. The themes and sub-themes are in line with the SPM conceptual framework which was developed based on the aims and objectives of SPM. However, new themes may inductively emerge as a result of the data analysis and the framework was modified accordingly. Secondary data were also analysed in this research using the NVivo qualitative analysis tool when there was a lack of information from both quantitative and qualitative methods. The mixed methods approach combines quantitative and qualitative data to complement the disadvantages and limitations of both types of research method. To summarise the meaning of a written piece, a label of a few words was created using manually method. It was necessary to create categories from a large

number of codes. Using the description of the codes, the research was conducted based on a range of questions, from identity to investment, to self-assessment to desire.

3.8 Quality Criteria—Validity, Reliability and Generalisability

The criteria of validity, reliability, and generalisability are applied to assess the quality of both quantitative and qualitative research. The quality criteria need to be monitored in a viable and an effective manner. Validity refers to the fact that the data collection tool must measure what it was actually intended to (Gray, 2004). Validity is mainly concerned with whether the findings of the research are truly about what they seem to be about (Saunders *et al.*, 2009). Denscombe (2010) stated that validity shows that the data and the research methods adopted are correct and the data provide true insights into the phenomenon (SPM in this case) (Denscombe, 2010).

In this research, data collection methods were selected according to the specific objectives where both breadth and depth were required to explore to what extent the sustainability has been integrated into the project management processes of Saudi Arabian NPOs.

Reliability means that if another researcher adopts a similar research procedure to that followed by the first researcher, the later researcher should be able to reach similar research findings and conclusions (Yin, 2009). Therefore, utmost care was taken while designing the data collection instruments and also in the data analysis to ensure that there would be no bias involved and that the findings offer a true picture of the state of SPM in the Saudi Arabian NPO sector. To address this concern, the researcher ensured that only reliable and authentic sources were used to gather the evidence—whether literature or secondary data sources. The interviews were recorded so that transcripts were produced for effective qualitative analysis. Generalisation deals with the issue of understanding whether the findings are generalisable to the audience beyond the immediate research context—i.e. NPOs involved in the research sample (Yin, 2009). A large number of questionnaire descriptive

responses and in-depth interviews provide an opportunity to employ a mixed methods approach (triangulation), which can help in the generalisation of the research findings (Gibson, 2017). Overall, a mixed methods research approach helps in making research more valid, reliable, and generalisable, thus ensuring the research quality.

3.9 Ethical Considerations in the Research

Research studies involving human beings are sensitive in terms of the ethical aspects and norms (Sales and Folkman, 2000). This research complied with all the ethical considerations arising. Denscombe (2010) stated that researchers are expected to conduct research in an ethical manner. In this research, major ethical issues are informed consent, confidentiality, data protection, data security, and participant anonymity. Appropriate strategies were adopted to address the ethical concerns so that there is no physical, psychological, or reputational harm for individuals and organisations involved in the study. Official ethical approval (reference number: 60657) was gained from the University of Southampton via the University's Ethics and Research Governance Online (ERGO) system. The University of Southampton is committed to carry out research activities within a comprehensive ethical framework by following its Ethics Policy. Therefore, all the research staff need to engage with ethical research by following its ethical guidance (University of Southampton, 2020). The data collection process commenced in Saudi Arabia with the help of an online questionnaire descriptive and interviews once ethical approval was granted. A Participant Information Sheet (PIS) and an Informed Consent Form were prepared for all the participants taking part in the study so that they understood the details of the research including its main aim and specific objectives. If the participants agreed to participate in the research, the consent form was signed by both the participants and the researcher.

In this study, all the data are highly confidential and were protected at a fully secured location with the help of a password. The data were saved in a personal laptop with a secure password and on the University's online shared drive where only the researcher and the

supervisors had access to the data. In addition, examiners could request access to the data if needed. It was ensured that the data were fully secured, and they were analysed anonymously. This approach meant that no individual could identify any of the participants and their respective NPOs. The findings of the research are presented in an anonymous way in any of the research-based output such as the PhD thesis and research articles. The data are destroyed after the completion of the research and production of the thesis/research articles will be continued in an anonymous way. If there is a need to mention any of the participants or NPOs, consent will be sought. Pseudonyms are used where required in the data analysis process and subsequent thesis writing.

3.10 Summary

This chapter has discussed and justified the overall research approach and methodology in line with the research aims, objectives, and research questions. From a philosophical perspective, the study took the pragmatism stance, and the abductive research approach was used to generate insights into the topic of sustainable project management in NPOs. This research employed mixed methods based on the research questions in order to answer the aim and objectives. The research questions are stated in Table 3.5 below.

Table 3.5 RQs Data Method

Research Questions	Justifications	Instruments 1	Instruments 2	Data Analysis
What is the level of understanding of the concept of 'sustainability' among the project management employees of NPOs in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia?	The level of knowledge among staff in project management of NPOs in Saudi Arabia.	Online descriptive analysis with	Semi-structured interviews with project managers in NPOs. The	1- Descriptive analysis by Microsoft forms and Excel spreadsheet.

<p>How does the project management process play a role in integrating the principles of sustainability in the Saudi Arabian NPOs?</p>	<p>With Vision 2030 in Saudi Arabi, if the renew policy in Saudi Arabia can assist SPM in NPOs or not.</p>	<p>anyone working in project management.</p>	<p>answers from interviewees are from their experiences, majors, or other specific training in project management.</p>	<p>2- The interview's answers done manually.</p>
<p>What is the current state and practice of sustainable project management in Saudi Arabian NPOs?</p>	<p>The positive or negative variables while some NPOs have implemented or will implement SPM in their project management.</p>			
<p>How can a strategic sustainable project management model be developed for embedding sustainability into project management processes?</p>	<p>The unique plan can be useful for NPOs in Saudi Arabia.</p>			

The research followed a mixed method approach which followed the collection of both quantitative and qualitative data. Quantitative data were collected through an online questionnaire descriptive and qualitative data were gathered with the help of interviews in Saudi Arabian NPOs. The study attempted to meet the research objectives from the perspective of managers involved in the project management process of NPOs. Both quantitative and qualitative data analysis helped generate research findings which are valid, reliable, and generalisable. Finally, ethical consideration of the collected data is clearly explained in accordance with the University of Southampton's ethical guidance policies. Prior ethical approval was gained before the data collection process started. Figure 3.3 summarises the overall research approach and methodology used in this research.

Research Philosophy	Research Approach	Research Strategy	Time Horizon	Research Methods
<ul style="list-style-type: none">•Pragmatism	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•Abductive	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•Survey•Semi-structured interview	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•Cross-sectional	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•Mixed methods•Questionnaire•Semi-structured interviews•Secondary data

Figure 3.3.: Research methodology used in the research

Chapter 4: Descriptive Data Analysis and Findings

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the quantitative data analysis from the study. In order to achieve the four objectives of the current research, the collected data are analysed according to the three main themes. In the first section, an overview of the collected data is presented, including the demographic details of the research participants. In the second section, the data regarding the level of understanding on the concept of sustainable project management (SPM) by the participants are analysed. The third section focuses on the analysis of the integration of sustainability in the project management process. The fourth section explores the drivers for and barriers/challenges to the integration of sustainability in the project management practices of NPOs in Saudi Arabia. Finally, the last section, which is a brief summary of the findings from this chapter, is presented to draw conclusions.

4.2 Data Collection Overview

A total of 192 questionnaire respondents participated in the current study, who were used for the analysis to produce findings. These participants have had experiences in project management and have different positions in non-profit organisations (NPOs) in Saudi Arabia. The data were collected in Saudi Arabia from 8 August 2020 to 9 November 2020. Microsoft Form was used to design the descriptive and collect the required data, which was subsequently exported onto an Excel spreadsheet for further quantitative analysis. The total number of descriptive questions totaled 64, and the total answers were 12,228 answers which were constructed according to the objectives of this study. The specific research objectives were: 1) to investigate the level of understanding of the concept of sustainability among

employees of NPOs in Saudi Arabia involved in project management; 2) to explore the role of project management in integrating sustainability in Saudi Arabian NPOs' development projects; 3) to analyse the current state of sustainability in the project management practices of Saudi Arabian NPOs; and 4) to explore the drivers and barriers in integration of sustainability in project management practices. In the questionnaire, there were two types of questions: a Likert Scale (1- Strongly Agree/ 2- Agree/ 3- Neither Agree nor Disagree/ 4- Disagree/ 5- Strongly Disagree) and multiple choice questions. Additionally, the data regarding the work position of the participants and their level of education, as well as their work experience, are presented in the following sub-sections based on the data collected from NPOs in Saudi Arabia.

Additional questions were included, which relate to how to identify the stages of implementing sustainability in project management in NPOs. Thirty five (35) of the participants selected that they had no plan for adoption, either now or in the future, while 54 chose 'Will adopt in the future', 37 selected 'Recent and ongoing implementation', and 72 selected that their NPO 'Made significant progress in the implementation', whilst the remaining six selected the option of 'Other'. Hence, this demonstrates some preliminary insights into SPM in Saudi Arabian NPOs.

4.3 Work Position of the Participants

The questionnaire investigated the work position or job role of the research participants in order to understand their perspectives regarding SPM. Figure 4.1 below shows the number of participants according to their work positions or job roles. It can be seen that there are 47 in project management, whilst project managers account for 82 out of a total of 192 respondents. The remainder, 75, are employees who work in the field of project management.

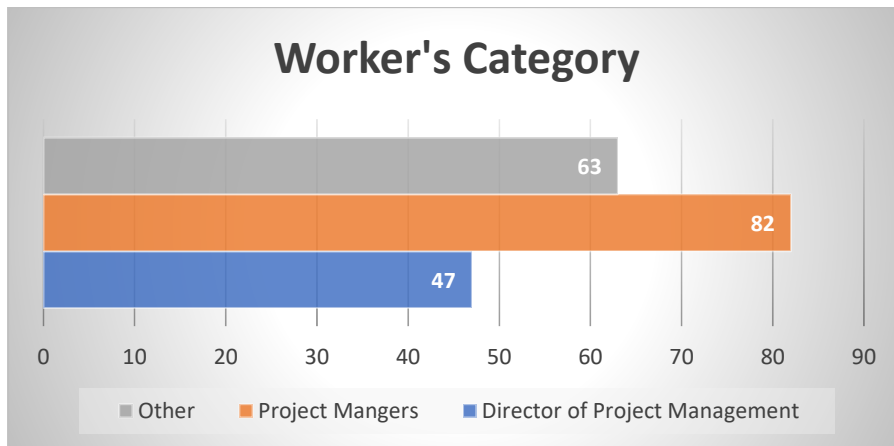


Figure 4.1: Work Position of the Participants

4.4 Participants' Level of Education and Experience

The participants had different levels of education, and the majority of them (110) held a Bachelor's degree. The rest of the participants included 39 who had obtained a Master's degree; and 21 holding a PhD. However, only 13 participants had received a Higher Diploma, whereas 21 of them did not answer this question and kept their level of education hidden. This could be because they might not have been comfortable about disclosing their education. These results are presented in percentages in Figure 4.2 below. Furthermore, Table 4.1 shows the participants' work experience in NPOs. Of these, 52 participants held less than 20 years of experience, whereas 50 of them had more than 21 years of work experience. Overall, this highlights the decent education levels of the respondents, which might have enabled them to provide better insights into SMP within their organisations. Furthermore, the majority of the staff majors are graduates or undergraduates in social science or Islamic religion or law, while a few have business majors based on the descriptive data.

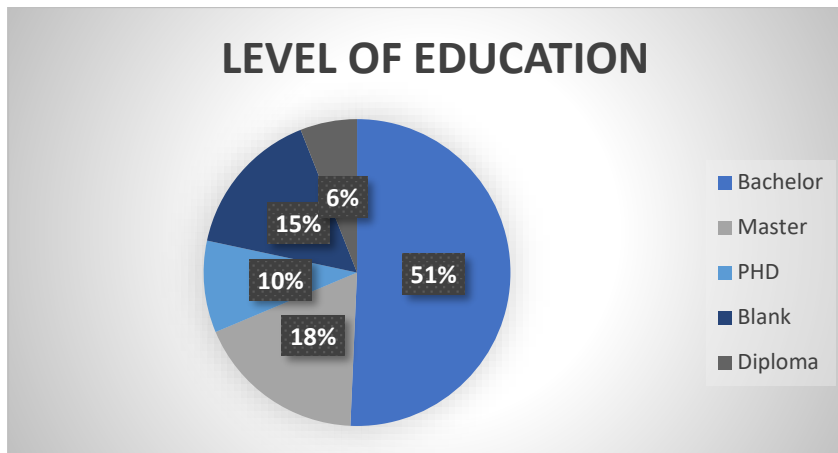


Figure 4.2: Participants' levels of education

Table 4.1: Work Experience of the Respondents

Experience of Staff	1–5 Years	6–10 Years	11–15 Years	16–20 Years	21 Years and above
	34	71	27	26	50

4.5 Types of NPOs

The data collected regarding the interest of the majority of participants focus on social issues in the element or area of sustainability. The data show that more than half (56%) of the questionnaire participants answered social sustainability. Only 6% selected economic sustainability, while 32% of the participants thought that the NPOs should focus on all the three elements of sustainability. This would be to ensure a holistic approach to sustainability in NPOs. Surprisingly, 3% of the participants selected environmental sustainability as the sole

focus in their NPOs, as shown in Figure 4.3. Therefore, from this result, it is determined that the majority of NPOs in Saudi Arabia appear to focus on social sustainability, in comparison to the other elements of sustainability.

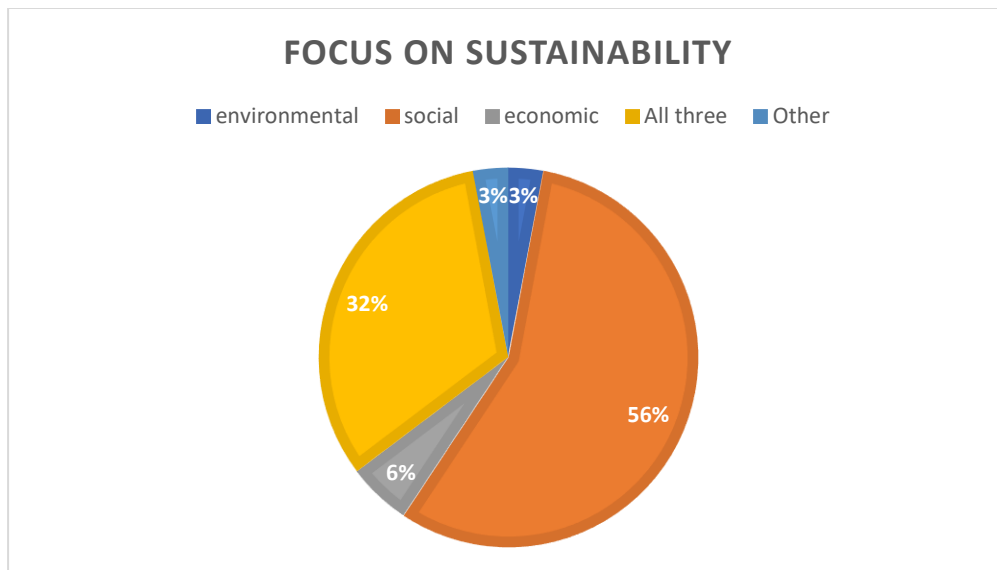


Figure 4.3: Focus on sustainability

Furthermore, there are various types of NPOs in Saudi Arabia. The collected data show that 139 of the participants answered that they work for charities and five work for foundations (see Table 4.2). However, 48 participants did not answer this question, as they might have thought that this was private information and would have preferred not to disclose it. As far as the nature of projects of these NPOs is concerned, charities are helping to address poverty, reduce unemployment through coaching and training, teach the Quran, care for children and orphans, and communicate with the society to understand their needs so that appropriate projects can be delivered. Foundations support the charity organisations by providing funds for the delivery of projects and they are mainly developed by corporate business organisations. Furthermore, social development committees are initiated by local communities to explore what the community needs are and how to deploy resources and engage the government to bring change in the community.

Table 4.2: Differences between the Types and Interests of NPOs

NPOs	Foundations	Charities	Empty
	5	139	48
		Charitable Society= 61	
		Charity association for memorising the holy Quran= 16	
		Orphans Care Charity= 18	
		Social Development Committee= 44	

4.6 The Concept of SPM

This section beginning from Question 7 explores the level of understanding regarding the concept of sustainability among participants who had different positions and levels of authority in NPOs in Saudi Arabia. The questionnaire results showed that 79.4% of participants were aware of the concept of sustainability, while 75.5% were aware of the risks associated with sustainability in project management. Furthermore, the results show that 67.2% of participants were aware of the opportunities associated with applying sustainability in project management. In addition, 80% of the participants believed that project management has a role in delivering sustainability, and 66% thought that there is commitment in their NPOs to integrate sustainability in project management. Regarding the community question ‘Does your NPO have a publicly available sustainability strategy?’ 55% answered that the society knows about sustainability strategies (see Figure 4.4).

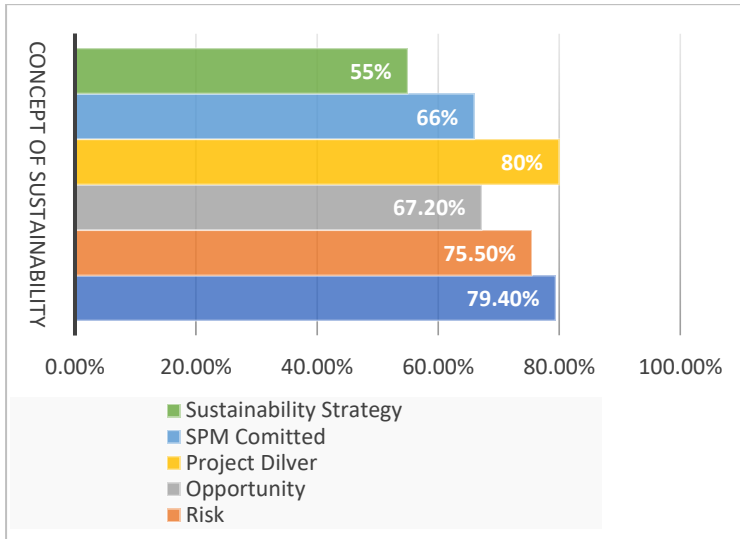


Figure 4.4: Concept of SPM

In the question relating to the type of policy that the NPOs implement, 142 of the participants answered that sustainability is the most common policy that has been implemented in their NPOs. Also, other multiple choice questions regarding the policy in NPOs were constructed in the questionnaire descriptive. A total of 46 participants selected the environmental policy, while the waste management policy was selected by 21 participants, and the travel and transport policy was chosen by 14 participants from Saudi Arabian NPOs. Water management, sustainable procurement, and biodiversity policies were selected by 27, 24, and 16 participants, respectively. Additionally, 23 participants selected the 'none' option, whereas 15 participants selected the 'other' option.

The SPM is addressed as a concept and the significance of learning about it by the staff is acknowledged. The next questions explore how workers integrate SPM in NPOs in Saudi Arabia. Question 8 in Microsoft Form discusses which pillar of sustainability is most important for NPO staff, and the responses were as follows: 3% for environmental, 56% for social, 5% for economy, and 33% for all pillars. The last 3% chose 'other' pillars as their option.

Question 9 was “Do you think project management has a role in delivering sustainability?” The staff responses were as follows: 80% chose ‘Yes’, 5% chose ‘No’, 11% selected ‘To some extent’, 1% selected ‘Not sure’, and 3% chose ‘Other’.

Question 10 focused on whether “There is commitment to integrate sustainability in project management in my NPO.” Responses were: 66% chose ‘Yes’, 12% chose ‘No’, 14% selected ‘To some extent’, 5% selected ‘Not sure’, and 3% chose ‘Other’.

Question 11 asked: “Does your NPO have a publicly available sustainability strategy?.” Answers varied between 55% chose ‘Yes’, 26% selected ‘Under Development’, 10% chose ‘No’, 6% selected ‘Do Not Know’, and 6% chose ‘Other’.

Question 12: “Which of the following policies does your NPO have?” (Please tick all that apply). Responses were: 20% selected environmental sustainability, 57% sustainability policy, 19% chose waste management policy, 7% chose travel and transport policy, 12% selected water management policy, 12% selected sustainable procurement policy, 5% chose biodiversity policy, 11% selected None, and, finally, 6% chose ‘Other’.

Furthermore, for Question 13 investigating the level of knowledge that the participants had of implementing sustainability in project management, Likert Scale questions were used. The collected data demonstrate that 40.7% of the participants strongly agreed, 45.1% of them agreed, 10.8% neither agreed or disagreed, 2.9% disagreed, and finally 0.5% strongly disagreed that their NPOs strategy involved sustainability. Furthermore, 37.7% of the responses strongly agreed and 38.7% of them agreed, while 15.7% neither agreed nor disagreed, with 7.4% disagreeing, and 0.5% strongly disagreeing that leadership or senior management must include the sustainability agenda in NPOs. Moreover, 42.6% of the participants strongly agreed, 36.8 % of them agreed, 14.2% neither agreed or disagreed, 5.9% disagreed, and 0.5% strongly disagreed that sustainability was a key business and decision-making factor in NPOs.

In case of applying sustainability in project management, which can provide finance and managerial resources, the results show that 33.8 % of the responses strongly agreed,

40.7% of them agreed, 17.2% neither agreed nor disagreed, 7.4% disagreed, and 1% strongly disagreed with that statement. Regarding the implementation of sustainability in project management, 32.8% of the responses strongly agreed, 33.8% of them agreed, 19.1% neither agreed or disagreed, 12.7%, disagreed, and 1.5% strongly disagreed that the implementation of the sustainability strategy in project management is active. What is more, 24% strongly agreed, 23% agreed, 30.4% neither agreed nor disagreed, 16.7% disagreed, and 5.9% strongly disagreed that NPOs know the measurement of their carbon footprint in NPOs. Separately, 36.3% strongly agreed, 36.3% agreed, 17.2% neither agreed nor disagreed, 8.8% disagreed, and 1.5% strongly disagreed that NPOs have measurements on the impact of project on society. All the aforementioned results are shown in Table 4.3 below.

Table 4.3: Outcomes of Sustainable Project Management

Points	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree or Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1. Applying Sustainability into project management	40.7%	45.1%	10.8%	2.9%	0.5%
2. Sustainability agenda in NPOs that are adopted by leadership	37.7%	38.7%	15.7%	7.4%	.5%
3. Sustainability as a key business and decision-making process in NPOs	42.6%	36.8%	14.2%	5.9%	.5%
4. If sustainability is applied into project management, it will secure	33.8%	40.7%	17.2%	7.4%	1%

finance resources and managerial resources					
5. Implementing a sustainability strategy effectively impacts current project management	32.5%	33.8%	19.1%	12.7%	1.5%
6. Measurements of carbon footprints by NPOS	24%	23%	30.4%	16.7%	5.9%
7. NPOs measure the effects of the outcomes of the projects on society	36.3%	36.3%	17.2%	8.8%	1.5%

From the above results in Table 4.3, it is clear that there is a high percentage of the participants who had some knowledge about the concept of sustainability. Moreover, many participants had already applied sustainability into the project management process, which was based on questions 7.2 and 7.3; they believe that the outcomes of integrating SPM can have a positive impact on NPOs, albeit with some inherent risks.

In contrast, Question 14 focused on the theme of responsibility: “Who has the operational responsibility for integrating sustainability in project management of your NPO?” The majority of responses (out of 192) chose chief executive officer (CEO) as the responsible party.

Additionally, Question 15 asked, “In which of the following areas does your NPO ensure strategies are developed for sustainability of projects?” Many respondents chose the social sector.

In the end, the Saudi Government’s decision to suspend the centralisation and support of many NPOs allowed for space for improvement such as SPM. This allowed the

NPOs to depend on themselves without any overlap with other sectors. Thus, NPOs in Saudi Arabia deal with SPM as one of the potential opportunities to complete their strategy.

The next set of the descriptive questions regarded how to implement sustainability strategies in the current project management in NPOs in Saudi Arabia. This set of questions was designed to investigate two objectives from the current research: (i) exploring the role of project management when integrating sustainability in Saudi Arabian NPOs' development projects and (ii) analysing the current state of sustainability in the project management practices of Saudi Arabian NPOs. These investigations included the three elements or pillars of sustainability to achieve a holistic approach, such as the environmental, social, and economic elements.

4.6.1 Environmental sustainability

This finding (Question 16) explores the implementation of environmental sustainability in Saudi Arabian NPOs. Based on the collected data, the importance of the theme of environmental sustainability is discussed according to the participants' responses in terms of their key area of focus. The results show that procurement, supply chain, and water were the most common and important ones, as 55.4% of the participants answered 'Yes'. This may show that NPOs appear to focus on these two elements of environmental sustainability when it comes to their operations. With regards to the other themes, such as energy consumption, travel and transportation, waste and recycling, biodiversity, and carbon emission, the percentages of the participants who answered 'yes' were 49%, 33.8%, 32.4%, 25.5%, and 23.5%, respectively (see Figure 4.5).

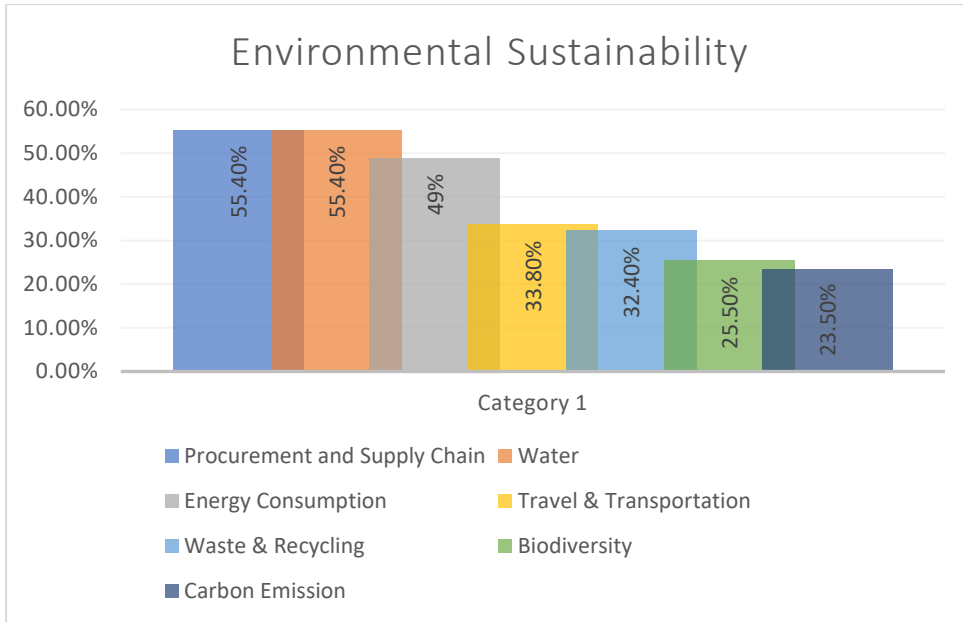


Figure 4.5: Who used sustainable environment in the current project management

From the above results in Figure 4.5, environmental sustainability still has not been implemented effectively in the current project management practices in Saudi Arabian NPOs. The highest percentage of the participants that were aware of environmental sustainability was 55.4%. Consequently, NPO participants in Saudi Arabia do not fully realise the benefits of environmental sustainability following the government’s suspension of funding. In fact the Saudi Government entered an agreement in 2022 whereby it transferred classic power due to climate change (Khalil, 2022). This made NPOs interface to sort out the variables, future challenges, and fixed costs such as energy consumption and supply chains. Hence, the previous results from the descriptive data were investigated in depth in the interview analysis to explain why the employees were not aware of environmental sustainability.

4.6.2 Social sustainability

The finding (Question 17) of social sustainability explores the implementation of social sustainability in Saudi Arabian NPOs. The collected data in this theme are shown in Figure 4.6; it can be seen that the most important sub-theme is community engagement, where 82.8% of the participants answered 'Yes' to community engagement when it comes to the implementation of sustainable project management in their respective NPOs. Furthermore, for the other sub-themes of social sustainability, such as employee engagement, health and safety, training and education, quality of life, and relationships with suppliers, the percentage of participants who answer 'Yes' on whether these areas of social sustainability are integrated into project management are 80.9%, 80.4%, 78.4% 76.5%, and 63.7%, respectively. As a result, this suggests that Saudi Arabian NPOs have focused more, relatively speaking, on social sustainability than on environmental sustainability when it comes to the delivery of their social development projects. NPOs have strategies to implement all these aspects of social sustainability. This could be due to the nature of these organisations and how they operate with a purpose.

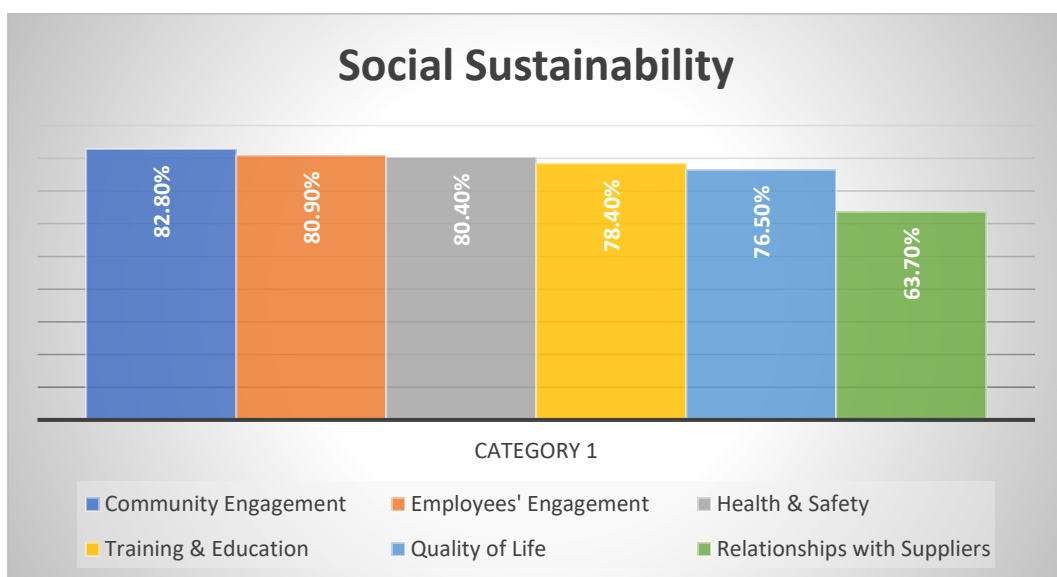


Figure 4.6: Who used sustainable social in the current project management

In conclusion, the above results show that the participants are aware of the importance of integrating social sustainability by developing communication with internal and external stakeholders to organise the priority based on their needs. This would lead to the main target of any NPOs to help society. Because their majors concentrate on Social Sciences and work in this area, the participants have experiences that allow them to deal with social rather than environmental or economic sustainability.

4.6.3 Economic sustainability

The finding (Question 18) of economic sustainability explores the implementation of economic sustainability in Saudi Arabian NPOs. The results show that the importance of economic sustainability is similar to social sustainability for NPOs in Saudi Arabia. The most important theme of the economic sustainability according to the participants' responses is cost management, as 82.9% of the participants answered 'Yes', whereas the less important theme is profitability with 55.4% of the participants answering 'Yes'. The percentage of the participants who answered 'Yes' for the other themes, such as finance and economic performance, is 77.9%, and for the income generation theme, it is 63.2% (see Figure 4.7).

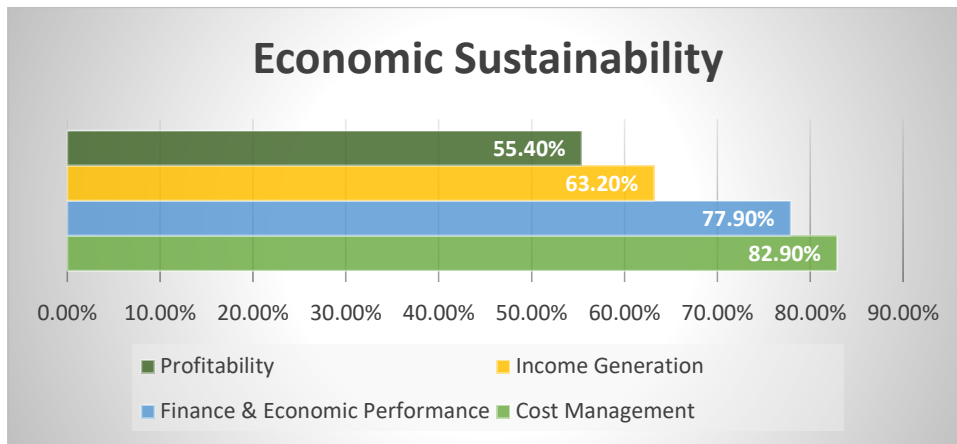


Figure 4.7: Economic sustainability in the current project management

Based on the answers to the question of economic sustainability, the principles of economic sustainability have been implemented in the project management process after a financial block from the Saudi Government. NPOs seek to generate income and discover the diversity fund to aid them to complete their projects. For instance, the participants realised that sustainable finance offered benefits to help save costs and increase income for NPOs during the life cycle of the project. In the interview analysis, cost savings and financial resources are further explored.

Although Question 19 – “There is an integration of sustainability in the project management processes of NPO”—was a holistic question, of the responses, 58% chose ‘Yes’, 12% chose ‘No’, 22% selected ‘To some extent’, 5% selected ‘Not sure’, and 6% chose ‘Other’.

4.6.4 Project life cycle

The project life cycle (Questions 20–23) is broken down into four key phases: initiation, planning, execution, and closure. In the descriptive questions, the four phases of the project life cycle (initiation, planning, execution, and closure) were investigated. Moreover, for each phase, there were specific questions that were constructed to meet the

required aim of the investigation. In the first phase, which is the *project manager influences the initial stage of the project*, providing an holistic view and long-term orientation of sustainability, 59.3% of the participants strongly agreed, 31.4% agreed, 7.4% neither agreed nor disagreed, 2% disagreed, and 0% strongly disagreed regarding the project manager's influence on the initial stage of the project providing a holistic view and long-term orientation of sustainability. Regarding the second question, which was based on "There is emphasis on sustainability in the project design stage", 42.2% of the responses strongly agreed, 36.3% agreed, 15.2% neither agreed nor disagreed, 5.4% disagreed, and 1% strongly disagreed. This shows an emphasis on sustainability in the project design stage in Saudi Arabian NPOs. For the third question, 46.1% of the answers strongly agreed, 28.9% agreed, 15.2% neither agreed nor disagreed, 8.8% disagreed, and 1% strongly disagreed that the NPOs should set Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to measure the sustainability performance for the projects holistically.

In the second phase in project management, which is the *planning* phase, 47.5% of the participants strongly agreed, 29.9% agreed, 14.7% neither agreed nor disagreed, 6.9% disagreed, and 1% strongly disagreed that NPOs should engage with the local community and society in project planning for project deliverables. In the second question, 34.8% of the responses strongly agreed, 32.8% agreed, 19.6% neither agreed nor disagreed, 11.3% disagreed, and 1.5% strongly disagreed that NPOs should design better procurement routes in projects and consider the environmental dimensions in order to ensure their project management practices are environmentally friendly.

The third phase was *execution*, which was based on whether NPOs should consider sustainable indicators in the execution of phases of the projects. In this phase, 35.8% of the responses strongly agreed, 34.8% of them agreed, 19.6% neither agreed nor disagreed, 7.8% disagreed, and 2% strongly disagreed that sustainable capabilities are able to change the impact of dynamic variables. These could be, for instance, technological advancements and people perceptions, which generated the following findings: 36.8% of the participants

strongly agreeing, 34.3% agreeing, 20.6% neither agreeing nor disagreeing, 3.9% disagreeing, and 4.4% strongly disagreeing. In the third question from this phase's investigations, 42.6% of the participants strongly agreed, 32.4% agreed, 12.3% neither agreed nor disagreed, 9.8% disagreed, and 2.9% strongly disagreed that sustainability practices in project management should be monitored regularly.

In the fourth phase, which is the *closure*, 28.9% of the responses strongly agreed, 31.9% agreed, 24.5% neither agreed nor disagreed, 9.8% disagreed, and 4.9% strongly disagreed to introduce a process based on project management principles and to manage the project closure. The second question in the fourth phase investigation demonstrated that 29.4% of the participants strongly agreed, 37.7% agreed, 22.5% neither agreed nor disagreed, 8.8% disagreed, and 1.5% strongly disagreed that NPOs should consider sustainable indicators for the decommissioning phase of the project. In the last question, there were 31.9% of the participants who strongly agreed, 31.9% who agreed, 21.6% who neither agreed nor disagreed, 13.2% who disagreed, and 1.5% who strongly disagreed that the status of project sustainability should be shared with the external and internal stakeholders of NPOs. All the above stated results are presented in Table 4.4 below.

Table 4.4: Summary on the Project Life Cycle of Sustainable Project Management

Stages	Indicators	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree or Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Initiation	Project manager influences the initial stage of the project, providing a holistic view and long-term orientation of sustainability.	59.3 %	31.4%	7.4%	2%	0%
	There is emphasis on sustainability in the project design stage.	42.2%	36.3%	15.2%	5.4%	1%

	The NPO has set KPIs to measure the sustainability performance of its projects in a holistic way.	46.1%	28.9%	15.2	8.8%	1%
Planning	NPO engages local community and society to plan the project and its deliverables.	47.5%	29.9%	14.7%	6.9%	1%
	NPO designs better procurement routes in projects to consider the environmental dimension.	34.8%	32.8%	19.6%	11.3%	1.5%
Execution	NPOs should consider sustainable indicators for the execution of phases of the projects.	5.8%	4.8%	6%	7.8%	2%
	Sustainable capabilities can change due to the impact of dynamic variables: technological advancement and people perceptions.	36.8%	34.3%	20.6%	3.9%	4.4%
	Sustainability practices in project management are regularly monitored.	42.6%	32.4%	12.3%	9.8%	2.9%
Closure	Introduction of a process based on PM principles to manage the project's closure.	28.9%	31.9%	24.5%	9.8%	4.9%
	NPO considers sustainable indicators for the	29.4%,	37.7%	22.5%	8.8%	1.5%

	decommissioning phase of the project.					
	Status of project sustainability is shared with external and internal stakeholders of NPO.	31.9%	31.9%	21.6%	13.2%	1.5%

4.7 Drivers and Barriers to SPM in NPOs in Saudi Arabia

In this section, the drivers and barriers (Question 24) to the implementation of sustainability into project management were investigated from NPO managers' perspectives, which aimed to achieve the fourth objective of the current research (to explore the drivers and barriers in integration of sustainability in project management practices; i.e. sustainable project management). The questions that had been designed to investigate this theme were multiple choices with each driver and barrier ranging from 1–5: 1 meaning not important and 5 meaning very important. The aim was for the respondents to report the drivers and barriers based on their own NPO contexts in Saudi Arabia. Answers of the research participants who selected 5 and 4 are presented in percentages in Table 4.5 and Table 4.6. It can be seen from Table 4.6 that the most important drivers of SPM, based on the participants' answers organised from the highest to the lowest were: 1) long-term project success—62.2%; 2) healthier and comfortable environment for people—61.6%; 3) enhanced reputation—60.6%; 4) cost savings—58.6%; and 5) doing the right thing—58.1%. On the other side, the top barriers to SPM based on the participants' answer organised from the highest to the lowest were: 1) lack of funding and resources—41.4%; 2) priority to triple bottom line (time, cost, quality)—38.4%; 3) lack of leadership—33.3%; and 4) and 5) lack of time and lack of policies had the same percentage—30.8% (see Table 4.6).

The drivers and barriers are associated with the implementation of sustainable project management in NPOs in Saudi Arabia. Drivers are the key factors which can help encourage

NPOs to integrate sustainability into their project management processes and the barriers are the major challenges which NPOs might face during this journey which need addressing through appropriate interventions by the project team.

Table 4.5: Drivers of Sustainable Project Management

Drivers:	5	4	3	2	1
Climate change	26.3%	10.1%	21.2%	16.7%	25.8%
Doing the right thing	58.1%	18.2%	12.1%	7.6%	4%
Motivation of the individual project manager	34.4%	25.8%	15.7%	11.1%	13.1%
Comply with policies and regulations	56.5%	16.2%	13.1%	8.6%	5.6%
Stakeholders' pressure	22.2%	21.2%	19.2%	16.2%	21.2%
Internal policies	41.9%	22.2%	18.2%	10.6%	7.1%
Increase in project quality	56.1%	16.2%	15.7%	9.1%	3%
Cost savings	58.6%	11.6%	12.1%	11.6%	6.1%
Long-term project success	62.6%	12.1%	8.6%	7.6%	9.1%
Enhanced reputation	60.6%	15.2%	10.6%	6.6%	7.1%
Healthier and more comfortable environment for people	61.6%	11.6%	21.1%	8.6%	6.1%
Responding to criticism in the media	28.8%	17.7%	26.8%	16.2%	10.6%

Table 4.6: Barriers to Sustainable Project Management

Barriers:	5	4	3	2	1
Lack of knowledge and understanding	29.8%	21.7%	18.7%	16.7%	13.1%
Lack of funding and resources	41.4%	23.7%	17.7%	10.1%	7.1%
Low return on investments	23.7%	26.8%	23.7%	16.2%	9.6%
Lack of time	30.8%	16.2%	22.2%	16.7%	14.1%
Lack of leadership	33.3%	16.2%	22.7%	12.6%	15.2%
Stakeholder engagement	25.8%	16.7%	25.8%	21.7%	10.1%
Lack of policies	30.8%	21.2%	18.7%	19.7%	9.6%
Priority to core business	27.3%	20.7%	21.7%	18.7%	11.6%
Priority to triple bottom line (time, cost, quality)	38.4%	13.6%	15.2%	14.6%	18.2%
Lack of technological infrastructure	23.7%	17.7%	25.3%	17.2%	16.2%

Finally, the last question 26 aimed to “Identify the stages of sustainability implementation in project management of your NPO”. In total, 17% selected ‘No plan for adoption now and in future’, 26% chose ‘Will adopt in the future’, 19% chose ‘Recent and ongoing implementation’, 64% selected ‘Made significant progress in implementation’, and only 3% chose ‘Other’.

4.8 Summary

In this chapter, data analysis and the quantitative questionnaire results of implementing sustainability into project management were presented. The first part (Questions 7 and 8) explained the concept of SPM, where the results showed that many participants were aware of the concept of SPM and knew about its benefits. Furthermore, the participants stated that sustainability was a key business activity in NPOs in Saudi Arabia.

Hence, opportunities arose for NPOs to effectively embed the concept of sustainability in their organisations to realise their full potential. This signalled the new vision of the Saudi Government to have independent management in NPOs and to identify the advantages in light of their plans and strategies.

The second part consisted of Questions 9–15 and explored how the workers implemented SPM in NPOs in Saudi Arabia. This helped to transfer the process in NPOs from depending on the Saudi Government to independence by applying sustainability in the strategy. This, in turn, could positively impact the top management or the decision makers in NPOs to integrated sustainability as a comprehensive element in NPOs. Thus, sustainability signalled the overlap as a whole process from the beginning to the end in NPOs.

The third part consisted of Questions 16–23 that investigated the development of sustainability strategy based on environmental, social, and economic sustainability in NPOs. As far as environmental sustainability was concerned, there was a lack of knowledge among employees in NPOs, where the highest percentage was only 55.4% of the participants who were aware of the procurement and supply chain, while water and the other themes had a much lower percentage. Still, environmental sustainability was not able to make good use of the existing opportunities such as the weather that was usually sunny in Saudi Arabia, which meant it could be a good source for using solar power. Other missed chances were lack of knowledge and implementation.

In terms of social sustainability, NPOs developed sustainable strategies, where 82.8% of the participants were aware of community engagement. Still, it was a struggle to apply environmental sustainability and economic sustainability. Hence, staff could take care of social sustainability based on their interests, where NPOs focused on the social sector to make sustainability improve their work. In addition, the staff's specialisation or expertise in the Social Sciences allowed them to cope with this failure based on their background. Finally, in terms of the implementation of economic sustainability into project management, the results

showed that the NPOs adopted economic sustainability, where 82.9% of the participants focused on cost management.

In economic sustainability, they started to generate income after suspending financial support for NPOs in Saudi Arabia and the efforts to save the types of cost to survive the NPOs. On the other hand, the project management life cycle had several questions which showed that the workers sought to organise the SPM in NPOs starting from the initial stage, planning, execution, and finally closure. That facilitated the achievement of SPM targets with accuracy and clarity in NPOs in Saudi Arabia.

Additionally, in the fourth part (Questions 24 and 25), the drivers and the barriers to integrating sustainability in project management in NPOs were explored. For instance, the motivations led to the 'long-term project success' driver, where 62.6% of the participants selected the driver. This showed that NPOs now have had the approval to depend on themselves without requesting support from the Saudi Government as they did in the past. Therefore, decision makers in NPOs can create plans that can assist society for a long time. However, the most influential barrier that faced the SPM was the lack of funding and resources, where 41.4% of the participants selected this barrier. In addition, the NPOs had concerns about the types of cost which they could not afford or would help them complete the whole processing. To resolve this issue, NPOs had to reduce the cost (e.g., fixed, variables, and future cost), increase income to cover cost issues, and improve work in NPOs. The last part (Question 26) focused on the implementation of SPM in NPOs in terms of "Identify[ing] the stage of sustainability implementation in project management of your NPO". The highest percentages of the participants answered, 'Made significant progress in implementation', which meant NPOs' staff were aware of the benefits of applying SPM in NPOs. These findings are further investigated through the qualitative study in the next chapter.

Chapter 5: Interview Data Analysis and Findings

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the analysis of the qualitative data which were gathered with the help of interviews with managers working in project management in Saudi Arabian NPOs. The interviews aim to answer the research aim and specific objectives as well as build on the quantitative findings of the descriptive analysis. Interviews were designed based on the aim and objectives of the research, and the outcome of the descriptive suggested key areas/themes to be explored in depth within the project management of NPOs in Saudi Arabia. For example, limited focus on environmental sustainability was found in project management practices of NPOs even though it is a key strategic priority of Saudi Vision 2030. Therefore, this in-depth investigation with similar various other areas around SPM is timely. The descriptive offers a wider perspective of SPM in NPOs whereas interviews gave in-depth insights. As far as the structure of this chapter is concerned, the first theme addresses the understanding of the concept of sustainability among managers in NPOs to gauge their knowledge and in-house capacity. Then the drivers and barriers to sustainable project management are explored. The extent to which sustainability is embedded into project management is also investigated in NPOs from a holistic perspective (environmental, social, and economic) with a key focus on the implementation of project management themes in Figure 2.5 in Chapter 2.

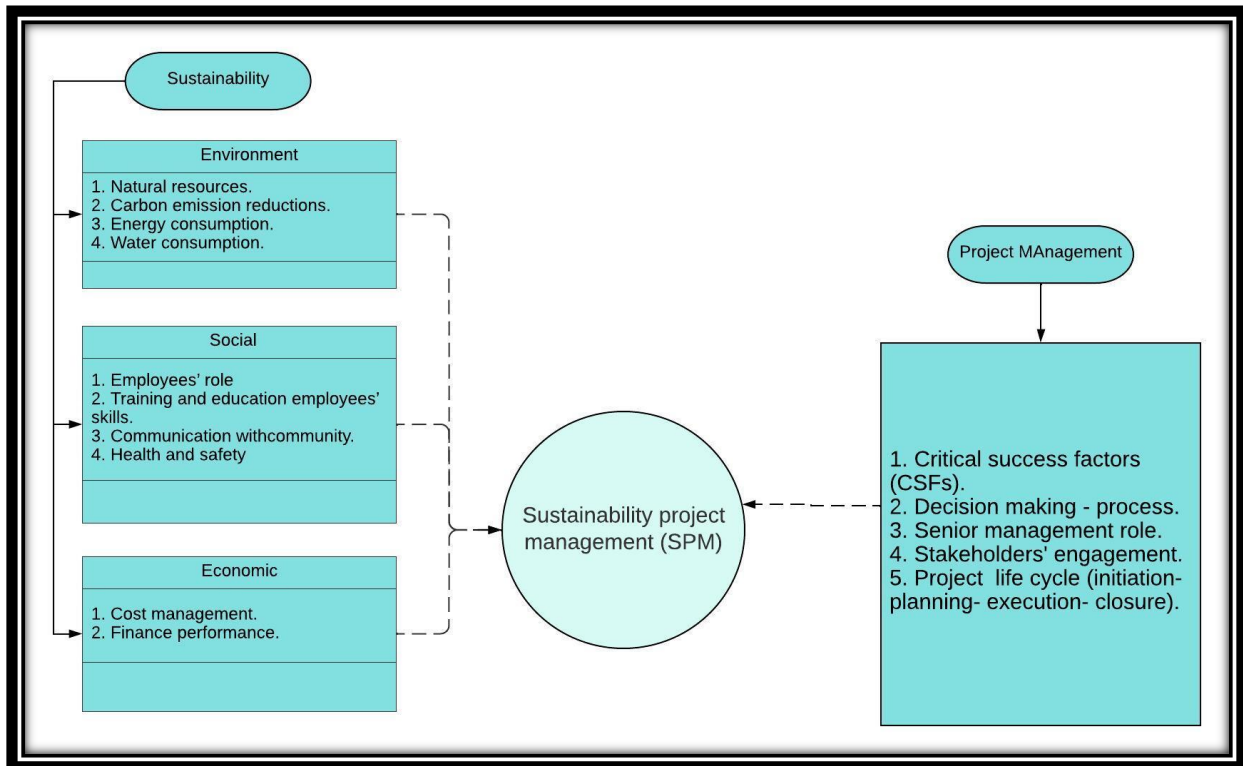


Figure 2.5: Conceptual framework proposed in this research

5.2 Understanding the Concept of Sustainability

This section investigates the extent to which the interviewees understand the concept of sustainability and their knowledge on how to apply it in SPM in NPOs. In order to investigate this aspect, the first four questions in the current study were constructed as follows: 1) 'Are you familiar with the concept of "sustainability" and "sustainable project management"?'; 2) 'How do you define sustainability?'; 3) 'What does sustainability mean to you in the context of an NPO?'; and 4) 'Which of the three pillars of sustainability (or all three) addresses the non-profit? And how?'

These questions aimed to clarify whether the concept of sustainability is generally known to employees or not. Based on the interviewees' answers, they were divided into three groups. The first group included the interviewees who had a good understanding of sustainability

(15%); the second group (75%) included the interviewees who had a limited understanding of sustainability; and the last group comprised the interviewees who were unaware of the concept of sustainability (10%). In the case of the first group, participants understood SPM in its three dimensions of economy, society and the environment; while five interviewees had good knowledge of SPM. Interviewee B3 provided the answer that

“sustainability is divided into three elements; the first element is social sustainability and the goal is to prepare long-term programmes that serve the community in all age groups. In order to cover the costs of these programmes, we rely on economic sustainability, which is to reduce costs and to discover investment strategies.”

Moreover, he mentioned that the technology service is able to reduce the cost of projects. In the case of environmental sustainability, he had limited knowledge and merely provided an example, as they used LED lights to save some energy. Meanwhile, another interviewee (A7) explained that social sustainability is the key point among sustainability pillars, as he mentioned that

“sustainability in general has two forms; it is the sustainability of the organisation, and it means its internal operations or the sustainability of services or the charitable mission of the organisation. As for the sustainability of projects, it means providing services and programmes to the community of all age groups. This indicates the provision of financial sources of government or private investment and support in order to contribute to achieve goals and serve the community.”

In addition, interviewee A11 answered that

“sustainability in our organisation actually has three main pillars, which are: the sustainability of the operations in the project; the sustainability of the services provided by this project; and the sustainability of giving and the impact after the project; these are the three concepts in our understanding of the concept of sustainability. The project is originally based on the public interest, the social benefit, so the sustainability of this benefit is the basis for everything.”

Based on the opinion of the above interviewees, it can be determined that sustainability is divided into three dimensions and it was mentioned that the most important one is social sustainability, followed by economic sustainability and, finally, environmental sustainability. All the dimensions together form sustainability in project management. Comparatively, in the second group, where the interviewees had limited knowledge of the concept of SPM, 22 interviewees believed that sustainability related to only economic sustainability. Therefore, in their answers, they focused only on economic sustainability. Specifically, interviewee B6 explained,

"Concept SPM is the way to providing the financial resources that are necessary for the continuity of the organisation. Obtaining financial resources varies from the previously unlimited governments support, and now the support is possible in a small percentage. Donations and philanthropists have made up small proportions with the Corona virus pandemic. Therefore, the successful components of SPM are investments. So, to cut down the budget for the salaries of employees, we hire volunteers. We also have investments in cooperation with the municipality to win commercial contracts."

Separately, interviewee A5 stated that,

"in NPOs, SPM mean the same as an individual part of the community you should care about; in NPOs, we face a great financial challenge, because we do not have sustainability in finance. With the Corona virus pandemic the situation has become very worrying for the implementation of our development programmes, and they have even stopped, because we do not have stable financial resources."

Also, another interviewee (B5) said that,

"this charitable association relies on the donations of benefactors, as well as on support from the government, and the association believes that there must be sustainability and there should be stable sources."

Overall, according to the participants in this group, sustainability relates to economic sustainability, particularly investment or stable income. If there is a fixed income, the NPOs are able to work steadily and continuously. Apart from that, they are not so aware in regard to the other dimensions of sustainability or to assume that other sustainability dimensions are heavily dependent upon economic sustainability. Therefore, the success of the NPOs is to provide priority for economic sustainability.

A few participants have a clear lack of knowledge of the concept of SPM and they do not apply it in their projects. Interviewee A15 added that,

"frankly, we do not know about the sustainability in general; our concept is how projects could be sustainable. For example, whenever there are enough donations, whether we support the community. Otherwise, we stop, we find programmes, and then we look for donations or support from donors to support this project."

Additionally, interviewee B8 said,

"for associations to achieve sustainability is how to become independent, as it relies on itself and manages its business to achieve its goals. Concerning the implementation of some projects, they are still in the process of preparation and study, and there is no specific project yet".

Hence, according to the participant's opinion, sustainability is still not clear, but they think that some projects may be sustainable. Moreover, they do not know the importance of sustainability when it is implemented in project management.

From the above discussion, it can be deduced that most project managers have a narrow understanding of the concept of sustainability in general, indicating limited capacity and how to apply it in their work. Also, a few of them fail to understand the meaning of sustainability and are not aware of the positive impact of its inclusion. The majority of the interviewees have a limited understanding, except in regard to financial sustainability, where they have certain strategies and plans in this field compared to other areas of sustainability – namely, society and the environment. The reason that the Saudi Government blocked the funding, many NPOs in Saudi Arabia explore any way to survive their origination upon on

economic sustainability. Thus, they thought sustainability mean economic sustainability if they have a stable funding the NPOs will complete.

Furthermore, some interviewees explained some sub-themes in the dimensions of SPM. In economic sustainability, they mentioned different sub-themes: investment management, finance management, and cost management whilst in relation to social sustainability, the following were stated: community, training, social responsibility, and religion motivation. Finally, environment sustainable initiatives were shown to include solar power, and reduce energy power.

5.3 Drivers or Motivations for SPM

The drivers or motivations for SPM were different among interviewees. In this section, the opinions of participants are categorised based on their answers to integrated sustainable into their project management what is the impact. They were asked the question: "In your opinion, what are the motivations for the sustainability of project management in NPOs? Is it a religious motive? Do you think that society is in dire need; for example, for sustainable projects?" In particular, the government in Saudi Arabia supports SPM in NPOs based on the 2030 vision, as interviewee A10 stated:

"NPOs have realised, after cutting of the direct support from the government, that they must be self-reliant in financial resources, and a unit of Vision 2030 is sustainability in all projects, whatever they are."

In addition, in his explanation of the government's tendency to expand services to all segments of society, interviewee A7 noted that

"NPOs lack expansion in services; for example, targeting only vulnerable groups, such as the poor, widows and orphans, but what about programmes that serve other segments of society, such as serving businessmen and women? The state obligated the ministry to establish supervisory bodies and centres to expand services and products for different segments of society."

In addition, other interviewees split the motivations into four parts, as interviewee A18 mentioned that

"there are several motives, meaning the first motive is the professional motive; we have duties that see professionalism. As practitioners in non-profit organisations, we must take into account the requirements of society; such as Al-Anoud NPO, which was established to serve the community, especially the poor and needy. The second motive commitment to Civil Legislation, on the importance of our homeland, the preservation and development of our land. Third, we also have a goal motive, that sustainable development is also about achieving balance, achieving justice, achieving community justice, social justice."

Moreover, another interviewee, A6, mentioned that

"one of the most important motives is the clarity of vision and plans, which facilitates the implementation process and the result is the success of the project. For example, the funders are Abdul Latif Jameel, Al-Rajhi, and King Faisal NPOs, who would help to establish a project. Nevertheless, it is not yet known if they will support this project on a yearly basis."

Based on the aforementioned opinions from the interviewees, it is necessary for the government and society to have NPOs programmes that overlap with SPM, as the NPO must rely on as itself expands its services for different parts of the community that lead to achieving balance among society, justice, community justice, social justice, balance in the use of resources, concern for future generations, knowledge awareness, and the benefits that we will recoup from the third-sector NPOs. With regard to society, it still needs the continuity and growth of charities that provide services and products to members of society.

5.4 Barriers to SPM

There are various barriers or obstacles that contribute to the failure of achieving sustainability or that impede access to sustainability of projects in project management as planned in advance. In this section, the perspectives of the participants regarding the

challenges they face in the implementation of SPM are presented and discussed. The interviewees were asked the question: 'What are the obstacles that prevent the sustainability of project management in your opinion?'. Subsequently, the majority believed that one of the main obstacles that SPM faces is the lack of financial resources. For example, interviewee B10 noted that

"the financial obstacle is the main one we face in supporting our projects and programmes, as you know with the Corona crisis. As for the employees' salaries, the majority are volunteers, but they serve us for a temporary period and we cannot commit them to a specific time, so if there are no financial incentives or appointment of employees with salaries and support for them, NPOs will struggle to ensure the steady continuation of the projects."

Another example came from interviewee B7, who said that

"one of the obstacles to the achievement of SPM is the lack of income from donors and benefactors. Thus, in our current projects, we have focused on investments in order to contribute to the diversification of sources of income. The other obstacle is the delay in making a decision. With the Corona pandemic, there has been a complete closure of the state, so the senior administration cannot take the necessary decisions, so there is a delay in the implementation and delivery of the project."

Furthermore, A23 pointed out that

"one of the main obstacles in SPM we faced was the financial source. With Corona, the financial support decreased significantly, so we were unable to continue the project; as also, some of our simple investments stopped with the pandemic (real estate investment), so we could not cover the costs of our sustainable programmes and we could not cover the interests of society."

Hence, based on their answers regarding economic sustainability, the lack of financial resources is the main obstacle that NPOs faced during the COVID-19 crisis.

Other interviewees thought that, even though NPOs have a source of income, without the knowledge of sustainability and how to implement it into project managements, NPOs

are still struggling to apply SPM. For example, interviewee A3 explained the most prominent obstacles:

"The obstacles to integrating the sustainability in projects are several. The first obstacle is the belief, and sometimes there is a lack of belief to integrate sustainability into the project managements. I imagine that it means not a lack of knowledge, as much as it is a lack of belief. For example, directors' boards of NPOs did not believe in overlapping sustainability into their project managements; it is not one of the purposes of the projects. The second obstacle is the employees in NPOs, as they may not have the ability or efficiency to implement financial sustainability in projects. The third obstacle is the lack of sufficient culture in society to achieve SPM; society still needs more learning. If the community did not accept SPM in the future we would struggle to cover their needs. The fourth obstacle is the lack of options available in SPM".

A few participants have different views regarding barriers, such as governments rules or levels of human efficiency. For instance, interviewee A12 explained that

"the regulations and systems to achieve SPM in our NPO have become better than before, but they are still limited editing from Saudi Government. Hence, We are still committed to follow the ministry's decisions, meaning that they do not give us all the powers."

Also, another example came from interviewee A8, who said that

"attracting human competency is an obsession and a great danger if an NPO is not interested in this aspect, because there will be financial and administrative waste, so human competency is important in any department to raise the quality of the project and the outputs to achieve the success of the SPM."

Interviewee A14 added that

"the obstacles may be the lack of competencies and appropriate advisors who are able to make and take the appropriate decision, as well as the obstacles that may be the lack of empowerment of some NPOs from some government agencies. Another obstacle may be that there are some initiatives

that require a high budget, perhaps that many donors may not agree to implement or even support these initiatives, for not developing an economic feasibility study.”

In conclusion, the obstacles vary from one NPO to another. The majority believe that the lack of knowledge and source of income, along with the COVID-19 pandemic, has led to the suspension of funding and donation and is a main reason for not completing the SPM in the NPOs. Others consider different barriers responsible for the disruption of the NPOs such as the government systems for NPOs, lack of human competencies, and delays in making necessary decisions.

5.5 Sustainability Themes

In terms of sustainability in project management in NPOs, the answers from many interviewees were based on their experience or knowledge in the triple bottom line—namely, environmental sustainability, social sustainability, and economic sustainability. In comparison, other participants lacked knowledge in some themes, such as environmental sustainability and, thus, many interviewees had no idea about this theme, as is presented in the next section.

5.5.1 Environmental sustainability

In reality, NPO managers are not aware of environmental sustainability or how to influence society as a whole on this matter. The role of NPOs in implementing sustainability also remains unclear. For example, Saudi Arabia is a rich region when it comes to renewable energy such as solar energy. Therefore, it is a good opportunity to use renewable energy in Saudi Arabia. However, unfortunately, they are still unaware of the importance and benefits of environmental sustainability. In this section, two sub-themes are discussed, as only a few participants were evidently aware of environmental sustainability (i.e. solar energy), and the potential to reduce the use of energy consumption, and waste management.

5.5.1.1 Solar energy in NPOs

Only a few from 34 interviewees were aware of the benefits of solar energy, although they did not implement it in their projects, whilst others had no idea about solar energy. One of the interviewees, who was a project manager, recently understood the importance of solar energy and stated that he would try to apply it in his future projects. For example, interviewee B5 stated that

"the importance of solar energy is still new to us, but we are in the process of establishing this project in our future projects."

However, most of the interviewees do not know anything about solar energy, as, when they were asked about environmental sustainability and were given the example of renewable energy, their responses were not clear; one answered, *"we are aware of this kind of energy"*.

According to the interviewees' statements, there is a lack of knowledge and implementation regarding solar energy among them. Some of them were aware of solar power but did not apply it in their projects because it was relatively new. In relation to the history of NPOs as a dependency on the Saudi Government, energy bills and other bills were free. Hence, solar power was new for them. Besides, many interviewees were worried about the next stage after applying solar power, particularly the cost of maintenance and whether it matched classic power or was more expensive. Other concerns included the Saudi market and what types of solar power to choose that best suited each NPO. Others tried to incorporate solar energy into current and future projects while many of them are still unaware of it.

5.5.1.2 Reducing energy consumption

A few of the from 34 interviewees rationalised energy consumption in order to reduce the cost of using energy in their NPOs. However, most of them did not know the importance of reducing energy consumption. For instance, interviewee B3 explained the implementation to reduce energy consumption

"in the field of quality and institutional excellence; We took into account a number of environmental considerations, which people usually do not take into account, such as rational consumption of electricity."

Furthermore, interviewee A8 interpreted the transfer from using classic power to LED power as follows:

"Sustainability is still not clear to us, but in terms of savings, we have converted ordinary lighting to LED, so that it contributes to reducing the cost of lighting."

Overall, many of the participants were aware of reducing the usage of the energy, and had plans to gain stable incomes, although they did not have specific plans for saving energy and reducing costs.

5.5.1.3 Waste management

Some of the 34 interviewees explained some of the ideas that contribute to the reduction of the use of natural resources, which results in reducing waste. Waste is an important area to address while delivering projects as it can result in carbon emissions. Interviewee A2 explained:

"Of course, four projects have been implemented accordingly, and now the Ministry of the Environment and the Ministry of Islamic Affairs have signed an agreement to benefit from ablution water in all mosques throughout the Kingdom; God willing, the association will have a role to play due to its previous experiences, and it will be one of the auxiliary resources, such as these projects."

On the other hand, another example can explain how to reduce the use of papers interviewee B3 explained that

"we take into account a number of environmental considerations, which, for example, other charities usually do not take into account; I mean, for example, the issue of waste paper...right now we focus on online rather than paper."

Therefore, based on the participants' thoughts, that are a limit number of interviewees to reduce the waste management because the majority of participants do not have the experience or knowledge to deal with waste management. Thus, waste has a negative impact on the environment in the long run so it is better to recycle and benefit from it, as well as to reduce the traditional use and move to more modern technical use to ease and avoid the waste of resources. In the next section, the second type of SPM, which is social sustainability, is explored.

5.6 Social Sustainability

The second important aspect, according to the participants, is social sustainability. Specifically, after addressing the diversity of sources and covering costs through economic sustainability, the programmes and projects that serve the community are the most important, because the purpose of non-profit organisations is to provide goods and services to the community. These interviewees were split based on their answers to three sub-themes, which are community, social responsibility, and religion motivation.

5.6.1 Community needs

NPOs have to know the community needs for goods and services and how to address them, either through training or as a mediator between the community, the government and the beneficiaries. The transformation is based on those in need in the community from depending on the NPOs to the reliance on themselves to secure a reliable income. In this regard, NPOs can investigate the service or products required from society. Sometimes, the desires of a community were different between contrasting places based upon the societies' needs, although the outcomes assist the societies to move from dependent to independent.

For instance, interviewee A22 mentioned that a society wants a place for disabled individuals to learn in order for them to acquire the right job:

"The sustainability of the society means knowing what the society needs and providing it in the most appropriate way. For example, people with disability usually face difficulties in finding a job, so we formed partnerships with some companies to help them in this matter through education and training and, after completion, they are employed by the company."

Another example can be seen from interviewee B8, who explained another idea to depend on themselves, which is to assist individuals in society to cook from their houses and to sell in the public areas by supporting NPOs without any fees. B8 stated that

"one of the projects that served the community is to change the poor families to become productive families. The idea was, families cook certain foods and we provide them with places to sell their products without fees, so they receive the profit and we act as an official legal cover for them. This project has been going on for five years since its inception."

Furthermore, another interviewee A8 said that the cooperation between the private sector and NPOs can provide facilities to society as well as to other NPOs to save on the extra cost of donations from transportation and storage of the productions. Specifically, it was noted that

"what is related to programmes and projects that serve the community: we have a unique idea that serves the community. For instance, in the past, the NPO provided limited productions and the person came to receive it from the NPO; however, in cooperation with the markets, they were given vouchers instead. Thus, it saved the costs of shipping and storages. Also, this provided more options than before to provide the needs of the poor with better services".

Consequently, based on the participants' views, the NPOs are founded on the bases of tackling poverty and helping those that are in need through facilitating difficulties and providing them with required education and training. Furthermore, NPOs act as a mediator

between the community and the government, as well as in the private sector based on social innovations.

5.6.2 Training and education

Training employees aims to improve their efficacy in NPOs by expanding their knowledge regarding SPM, which can be integrated into project management. Training also helps to understand the impacts when sustainability overlaps with project management. In particular, interviewee A23 commented on SPM and how it can benefit him as an employee, as it is possible to *depend* on himself:

"...because I work in a small organisation [and I am] directly responsible for all the projects. It was agreed to add sustainability in the projects. So, I tried to take some training remote courses in the field of sustainability to learn about sustainability and how it could develop income as well as reduce expenses...there are other benefits or examples such as the transfer from the system of working hours to the completion of tasks only."

Also, interviewee B6 commented on the suffering in some NPOs after the government funding cuts, and how to support them based on his NPO experts in SPM:

"We found out that some organisations were still negatively affected, especially after full government support was stopped in 2017. So, we decided to work in partnership with some associations to educate and develop them in the field of sustainability and change the idea from dependence on the government to self-income."

Based on the interviewees' answers, training is able to increase the quality of the NPOs' work due to the improved processes in NPOs when implementing sustainability into project management which is a new policy that will advance realistic results. It will also provide NPOs with the opportunity to survive the organisational structure of NPOs.

5.6.3 Passion and Need

A few of the participants thought that one of the reasons to establish a charity is due to the community requiring a specific service, such as a centre that provides free health care for those suffering from a specific disease (e.g., cancer). Interviewee B1 explained the justifications of passion and need, as he said that

"in another motive, which is passion, I know a number of people who left very prestigious high positions in state jobs and moved to the non-profit sector as they love charity work, and have a strong desire for it. For example, those who set up a charity to support autistic people; a colleague of mine is a doctor who established an autism centre...he has an autistic son. Hence, a certain need or a particular problem needs to establish NPOs."

Another example can be seen from interviewee A8, who commented on society's needs, saying,

"we discovered that the beneficiaries needed a house, so we created the first NPO upon government approval. Then we recruited employees who were expert in this field. Finally, we acted as a mediator between NPO and funding bodies, donations, and facilities from the government to complete this project by sustainable means".

As interviewee A1 added,

"in our strategy, the first step focused on society's needs. After that, we established a feasibility study because the NPO was created to assist the community. In the next step, we integrated sustainability in these projects to provide benefit to society as much as possible. Hence, the SPM lifetime started from 10 or 15 years".

However, some non-profit organisations exaggerate the needs of the community either due to the lack of a clear plan or ignorance of the needs of the community. In particular, interviewee A7 stated:

"One of the crises that the organisations face [namely] not taking into account the needs of the targeted group. For example, in the orphan's project, the need might be only to pay the bills. So,

why does the NPOs lose millions in investments, given that the service is simple and not worth all this trouble?''.

Based on the above discussion, the desire and need of the service is for individuals to become motivated to apply integrated sustainability into project management. Due to this desire, a person will take full responsibility and work very hard to overcome all difficulties, as well as to focus on the need(s) that contributes to the facilitation of the service as one of the reasons for the establishment of the NPOs, which is to cover the needs of the community. They can offer waivers, for example, to work as volunteers or at lower wages because of interests in performing this work. In the next section, the third type of SPM, which is economic sustainability, is explored.

5.7 Economic Sustainability

Economic sustainability is worrying for the NPO sector, as these NPOs have suffered from reduced government support in recent years from 100% to no higher than 27% (King Khalid, 2018); this also became worse during the COVID-19 pandemic. Thus, NPOs are looking for sustainable alternatives in terms of investing, as well as searching for ideas and solutions for salaries, fixed costs, and other future or added costs. Hence, the participants' responses focused on several important aspects of achieving SPM in regard to NPOs, which are investment management, financial performance, and volunteers.

5.7.1 Income management

One of the main pillars in achieving project sustainability is investment management, which is conducted to generate income. Investment management contributes to the provision of financial resources to NPOs, which allows them to support all other projects. Furthermore, it makes NPOs advance in their growth and the development of the projects in all phases. Therefore, many participants particularly mentioned that investment management plays the main role in achieving sustainability and how it is able to be

implemented in many different ways. However, NPOs' project managers still have limits in investment management because most of them focus on the real estate sector. For example, interviewee A9 answered the alternative implementation plan while the government reduced its funding support from 100%-27% maximum support for projects' NPOs by stating that

"with the Vision of the New Kingdom 2030, government support has been reduced from 100% to a maximum of 27%. The government requested the NPOs to rely on themselves and search for a source of income. Hence, we focused on the feasibility study for more than one project, and we find that we received limited support from the government and some support from funders and donations. We transferred part of the donations and requested support from funders to support our real estate project to generate investments that cover the costs of the organisation and the needs of the beneficiaries. This residential investment now boosts the income of the association from 100,000 to 150,000 Saudi Riyals annually" (1 pound = 5 Riyal).

Another interviewee (A4) mentioned that social investment can provide benefits rather than focus on profit, as they noted that

"one of the most important elements that contribute to financial sustainability is social investment is to solve social problems or fill social needs or deal with social needs commercially and as an investment. Our goal is to invest first and then solve the social problems. We usually invest by solving social issues."

Also, he mentioned in a commentary on the investment that

"there must be an intermediary or an investment office for the association to know what the investment opportunities are and how they are investing in the right way. This is because most workers do not know how to read financial statements, funding sources, or anything else, and the reason is that their specialisations are not in economics, and they also do not have any knowledge about trading and investment".

In addition, interviewee A5 explained that, while the NPOs do not have investment management or investment offices to show them an amazing investment project, the whole project could stop, as

"we relied on investments as a source of fixed income, although unfortunately we only have real estate investments that were affected by the Coronavirus pandemic and some investment in buildings stopped during the pandemic which affected our programmes in the association by having to suspend them."

Meanwhile, commenting on the direct support from the government, interviewee B8 explained one of the methods that the government uses to directly support NPOs:

"One example about how the government can provide facilities to NPOs is through municipality. It provides us with properties without financial interest or rent so that the income goes back to the organisation."

Therefore, based on their answers, these participants were aware of the importance of investments as a fixed income for the NPO, although their experiences and strategies were not the same; for example, some of them focused on a specific aspect in the investment sector and achieved a good source of income. However, project managers in NPOs still have limits in investment management. Most of them focus on the real estate field. Other interviewees recommended an investment office to take over the responsibility of the investments of the associations. Overall, to sum up, it is evident that all the interviewees agreed on the importance of investment management, although with different levels of capabilities.

5.7.2 Financial performance

One of the obstacles that NPOs face relates to financial performance, as NPOs need to address financial crises, such as salaries and fixed expenses, as well as variables and/or added costs due to new projects or unexpected future costs. Some interviewees thought that the advantage of SPM was to cover the running costs (whether fixed or variable). For example,

interviewee A8 explained a worrying point, which is to transfer the highest salary to the individual who is deemed to be the expert in a specific field in other firms:

"The sustainability is a new thought for our sector and to our leaders. In our NPO, we have many engineers who received high salaries, which is unusual in NPOs. Therefore, to overcome this high cost, we entered a partnership with private companies to sponsor some of our projects and pay the engineers and managers."

Another example is interviewee A6, who clarified that NPOs support any project that is able to cover the cost and increase funding. Indeed, interviewee A6 stated:

"Al Rajhi Foundation supports sustainable projects that generate profits and cover all costs in the long term. For example, surely in community schools, some schools received books from a curricula institution and a publishing house. They studied the idea from the bottom up and said that Muslim children abroad are in need of Islamic studies that suit them. They said that we establish an organisation that prints books and distributes them for a small fee. We supported the origination temporarily for six years and became independent after that. In addition, we stated the need to estimate their cost. As a result, many overseas schools support them right now."

In addition, interviewee A1 interpreted the solution to reduce the salary employees from full time to part time, by stating that

"one of the outcomes of financial sustainability is cost reduction. For example, we relied on part-time employees; and any spending needs approval from the higher management."

Therefore, these participants believed that it is an advantage when integrating sustainability in planning to reduce the costs and to be financially independent, as this may block them from completing the project. For example, this relates to searching for sponsors that can cover the employees' salaries, hiring part-time employees or volunteers, etc.

5.7.3. Volunteering

One of the advantages that contributed to the achievement of sustainability in project management is volunteering, whether on a permanent basis with NPOs or on a temporary basis. This benefits the charity by reducing costs, such as wages, as well as contributing to the provision and efficiency of manpower. In return, the volunteers obtain a reward and forgiveness from God according to Muslims' beliefs. For instance, interviewee A14 said that without volunteers, NPOs will struggle to provide service and productions for society:

"Volunteers contribute mainly to the continuity of the organisation; without them, we cannot complete the project, because they are key element to success, not much work can be done without them".

Even though interviewee A2 interpreted the law for volunteers and the privileges when they work for free in NPOs:

"The new system clarified to the volunteers their rights and duties, as well as the privileges they obtain when they apply for a job. For example, many volunteers carry out some charitable work for free, especially as the new recruitment system gives priority to some people with voluntary work. This will also enhance their CV. In the past, it was unfortunately unclear; volunteering was only religious matter".

Based on their opinions, volunteering contributes greatly to achieving sustainability, due to the common issue in charities, which relates to managing costs.

Overall, volunteers can effectively encourage NPOs to complete the all-project management as a product or service to the community. Also, the new indirect support from the Saudi Government can encourage anyone to work for free in NPOs. In return, the Saudi Government can provide them with some credit points to give them priority in the work or other services.

5.8 Project Management Themes

The majority of participants can identify the types of project management themes, which include decision making, responsibility to apply SPM, impact leadership, stakeholders' engagement, SPM life cycle, motivations to apply SPM, obstacles to apply SPM, critical success factors, and risk management. Other types include support from suggestions from interviews that can help the NPOs sustainably survive throughout the whole project management process. Many interviewees were able to talk in-depth about these points, while others had different views and refrained from clarifying their opinions; nevertheless, some participants had limited knowledge in the field. Subsequently, in the next section, a central sub-theme related to the participants—decision making—is presented.

5.8.1 Decision making

Decision making is one of the key aspects for integrating sustainability into project management. Regardless of whether leadership or stakeholders are aware of the importance of sustainability or not, without a decision based on applying sustainability, it cannot be applied in project management. Accordingly, the interviewees were asked the following question: "Is sustainability integrated into strategic and operational decision making during project management? If not, then why?" According to their answers, it is evident that there are many managers who believe that sustainability must be integrated with project management and should be included in decision-making processes within an NPO. Specifically, interviewee A16 clarified that decision making is taken with the utmost care during the planning phase and creates the future vision in the implementation of the project, as it was noted that

"sustainability is integrated with decision making, meaning that no decision is taken unless we are sure that we are able to cover the financial needs of the project or the decision that will be taken."

In addition, according to interviewee B10, taking a clear and firm decision contributes to the stability of an NPO. No matter how much the levels of care from managers change in the NPOs, they will uphold the decisions which had been taken previously. In this regard, interviewee B10 said:

"The decisions that serve the organisation and society are taken so that the plan and vision are clear to the organisation, whether the human care stay in or leave the organisation, but the organisation's policy is made every four years, so it is more important that SPM decisions are taken in the right manner."

Furthermore, interviewee A10 explained that, due to the importance of the decision-making process, they formed a dedicated committee to investigate the needs of the NPOs and to take the necessary decisions so that there would be no obstacles that could potentially delay decision making. Thus, projects are affected in terms of the quality and time specified for project delivery. Interviewee A10 noted that

"we have decisions issued by the Board of Directors, but finally we formed an Executive Committee so that we reduce the Board of Directors to attend meetings, and so that we do not take up their time. We have the Executive Committee, which implements programmes and takes small decisions. This team was responsible for the outcome after making decisions."

Meanwhile, interviewee A19 explained the benefits of taking decisions from different categories of stakeholders for the decision to suit the beneficiaries, as well as the decision makers, in order for them not to face problems in the future with stakeholders. He pointed out

"...because we are dealing with stakeholders, meaning that we are in a state of decision making and strategic making, while making the decision, whether strategic or operational, it must be in his opinion with regard to sustainability, and the involvement of those with our staff (by this I mean in this organisation); whether beneficiaries, donors or employees in this aspect is important, so that the decision is a sustainable strategic decision, and not based on reactions."

From the previous results, it is clear that integrating sustainability into the decision-making process will contribute to moving the wheel of development forward, regardless of

whether the interest is in the financial aspect or the human aspect, or even in the strategies and regulations related to the development of NPOs. However, there are a limited number of participants who are aware of overlapping SPM with any decision-making process, although they do not implement it in their plans. Moreover, some other interviewees are still unaware of the impact of SPM on decision making. For example, interviewee A21 explained that sustainable decision making is not in every project, as some projects are temporary or emergency projects, so they are unable to make a long-term sustainable decision. Interviewee A21 said that

"... sometimes we are preoccupied with other priorities. Also, sometimes we have cash in our account and so the topic is not present with us, nor at times when we have to stay away from financial resources to think about this topic. We made sure that we leave our file with a strategy that we have in the plan (the NPO plan) on the subject of financial resources, regardless of our financial situation."

In addition, another example can be seen from interviewee A3, who mentioned that the power of leadership appears in the prioritisation of the sustainable decision-making process and the lifetime of the project. Interviewee A3 stated that

"one of the important things is the integration of sustainability into strategic decision making, but this depends on the lifetime of the project as well as on our priorities. It is possible that the project may be eligible for the integration of sustainability, but we have not decided to integrate it based on our views towards this project."

Therefore, decision making is the initial stage to allow NPOs to overlap sustainability in the current project management. Thus, after approval from the top management, NPOs can change all strategies, policies, and project management with the SPM.

5.8.2 Responsibility to implement SPM

The remit of those responsible for the implementation of sustainability in project management is considered an important sub-theme. After the decision is made, the implementation must be as described in the decision, as the practical side contrasts from the theoretical side. The result is a person or group of people who takes the responsibility for implementing the sustainability in project management as planned in advance. Accordingly, the participants were asked the following question: "Who is responsible for implementing sustainability in your NPO project management?" Based on their answers, they are divided into several categories.

The first category is based on people who are responsible for applying SPM, and they are the director's board of management. Interviewee B2 discussed that the responsibility of any SPM is the top management or the director of the board of management, and is not the projected manager or the executive manager in some other NPOs. Interviewee B2 pointed out:

"From my point of view, the project manager is not responsible for the tasks of managing the project. Rather, he is only required to implement the project as explained previously. The main responsible parties are the members of the board of directors or the general manager who draw up the project plan, integrate sustainability into it, and appoint a project manager to implement this task".

Separately, another interviewee, B6, explained that the responsibility for applying SPM depends on the administrative hierarchy of the NPOs. Interviewee B6 said:

"Responsibility for SPM is always hierarchical, starting with the first decision maker, and subsequently in descending order. I see that today the maturity of the general assembly and the boards of directors, down to the managing director, to the CEO, to the department concerned with this, is the responsibility, meaning it is more and greater at the top of the pyramid."

In addition, other participants support the last argument. For instance, B4 added:

"I see it as the director project manager, responsible for planning the vision, sometimes it can be an individual or it can be a team, because they are the ones who are sitting and working on the

idea, and they are mostly the ones who understand the dimensions of the project, understand its secrets, how to build its sustainability."

The second category focuses on the fact that the individual who should hold the responsibility for implementing the sustainability in project management is the executive manager or the direct manager of the project. A17 explained that the executive manager holds the responsibility as he can implement it according to the plan. A17 commented that

"the executive manager of the entity is the one who holds the responsibility for SPM. The senior management team has to set the general framework, facilitate procedures, give support through them, and agree on general frameworks. Mostly it serves a specific project, that is, it lays down a number of plans. As for who is responsible, it is the executive manager who makes the plans, i.e. according to the data available to him".

Another example can be taken from a group of the interviewees, who said that the responsibility depends on the level of management authority from top management down to the employees who are directly involved in the project. A12 mentioned that

"the responsibilities are distributed according to the tasks, meaning in the decision itself, whether it is at the level of the decision maker or the decision implementer."

In addition, A21 explained that the responsibility and tasks of the central administration means that the responsibility is not on the shoulders of a specific person or entity, as he mentioned that

"the responsible [individual] depends on the type of project and the task is not limited to a specific entity such as the executive or senior management. The resulting negligence or defect shall be a mistake by the supervising authority, but if there is a problem beyond its control, it is necessary to verify who is responsible for it. It is not a specific administration or person".

Therefore, based on their opinions, there are differences in the participants' perceptions as to who has responsibility. Some claim that the senior management is the body who established plans and strategies and appointed employees and managers, so they take responsibility for everything. Others have different thoughts, as they see the responsibility according to the authority and the type of project.

5.8.3 Impact of leadership

Leadership is the main form of support and encouragement in the integration of SPM, and is the link between employees and an NPO's plans and future visions. It also works to unify the efforts of employees towards achieving SPM and controlling work problems, as well as drawing up the necessary plans to solve them. Moreover, it develops, trains, nurtures, and motivates individuals to apply the integration of sustainability into project management. Many participants described the advantages and benefits of leadership with different views; they were asked: "How would you comment on leadership in integrating sustainability project management?" In response, interviewee A9 clarified that leadership greatly affects the integration of sustainability into the management of current and future projects.

"As for management, I am telling you it is a very effective element; because he directed himself as the leader and his interests and conviction in SPM, a conviction of this idea conveys it to the board of directors, then the board of directors is convinced by the general assembly."

Also, another supporting example came from interviewee B3, as he said that

"the leader is considered the mainstay in integrating sustainability in project management as a NPO. The leader helps to integrate sustainability into the NPO's strategy, alongside vision. They can also motivate, develop and train employees and those related to the organisation by recognising the importance of sustainability and how it is integrated into projects in general. Besides, the leader can intervene in all delicate and general tasks and turn them into sustainability according to previously defined plans and strategies."

Another interviewee A19, on the contrary, referred to the negative effects that occur in the event that the leaders are not convinced of SPM, and the outputs that will be issued by the executive management. A19 pointed out that

"there must be a commitment from the leadership and the boards of directors, with regard to the sustainability report. I believe that they have a key role in this area, if there is no belief in the senior management and boards of directors regarding the sustainability system in the organisation, it certainly will not be of interest from the executive management, the issue becomes random, and the

institution will not be able to achieve tangible results and impact, I mean. It will not be able to achieve a social return for this aspect."

Similarly, another point was stated by interviewee A6, who focused on behavioural differences and tasks between a project manager and a project leader. Specifically, interviewee A6 added that

"leadership is an important key to integrating sustainability into project management because a topic like sustainability is new. Thus, the role of the leader is to identify sustainability, how it is integrated, and what the final outcome is when integration is done. Since it is a new topic, the leader follows up and discusses the appropriate ways to integrate sustainability and solve problems that he may face in the future. Moreover, the difference between the leader and the manager is that the manager carries out the tasks as they are and the leader creates new ideas that contribute to the improvement and development of the organisation in new ways, such as implementing the integration of sustainability in project management in non-profit organisation."

Based on the aforementioned participants' opinions, the leadership directly affects both the internal and external levels of the NPOs, which are included in the plan and the future vision, and anything else that affects NPOs. This is because they are the mainstay for planning and in the implementation of the integration of sustainability into project management. Also, they could enhance NPOs from top to lower management and integrate sustainability into project management to improve current or future projects' management.

5.8.4 Stakeholders' engagement

In this section, the participants were divided into two groups: The first group supported the participation of stakeholders with a justification for their support; the second group rejected the concept of stakeholder's engagement and also presented different opinions. They were asked the following question: "Who are the stakeholders? Are all stakeholders involved in the integration or in the integration of project management sustainability?" Subsequently, the first group (23 from 34 interviewees) agreed that all stakeholders should participate with different points of view. For example, some participants

pointed out that one of the benefits of participation, especially the participation of an individual with competence and experience, as well as the participation of the community to know the needs of the community, is to save effort and time, as well as provide financial resources and achieve targets easily. For example, B9 noted that

"we take into account the opinions of all stakeholders, because they give advice that NPOs did not pay attention to, and thus facilitate the important ideas that lead us to success of sustainability in the project management."

Giving another example, A11 explained that

"all stakeholders are involved, because the project will eventually be available to serve them. For example, we have a representative from the Ministry of Social Development, as well as a representative from the community and an executive team to take over the task of the SPM. All of them participate in the planning and implementation of the project, and are involved in the decision-making and implementation responsibilities."

Further, another interviewee, A22, explained about the outcome when engaging the stakeholders in the organisation. Indeed, they described

"the principle to involve all stakeholders due to their diversity of experiences and interests towards the project. For example, when we discuss sustainable project management, especially before the implementation phase, we take opinions and ideas or even previous experiences, what did they say and what are the obstacles they encountered, and the result contributes to improving and developing the implementation of SPM."

Hence, based on their opinions, the participants agreed on the importance of the participation of stakeholders, as they are the first beneficiaries of the services provided by NPOs. Therefore, they select what is the most important for them, what their needs are, and how the NPOs meet their needs for products and services.

The second group (9 from 34 interviewees) rejected the participation of stakeholders, as it is rather limited to members of the board of directors or the participation of specific departments, such as the executive management or funders only. For example, B7 discussed

that there are more important priorities than the participation of stakeholders, which may conflict with the plans and objectives of the NPOs. B7 commented that

"the participation of stakeholders is not absolute in a way, but is considered according to the specialisation, in addition to the fact that the final decision is in the hands of the members of the board of directors; this is our policy. We do not accept any of our stakeholders to share our plans and goals that we are working to achieve SPM."

In addition, another example came from interviewee A13, who pointed out that,
in reality, the board of directors and the executive team meet to take decisions related to the NPO without any type of stakeholders. The real situation in the field is that the donor institutions do not present a proposal, but rather provide conditions for the grant. Thus, in order to get the grant, you must settle these conditions, so if you settle them, you will not get the grant in the first step."

Another interviewee (A5) explained that the engagement of the stakeholders depends on the type of stakeholders, as some of them are able to engage. Specifically, interviewee A5 said that

"an explanation of some of the stakeholders is taken into consideration as the beneficiaries, so they participate with us in any decision making about SPM. As for others, for example, donors or volunteers, this may be taken as advice and may be accepted or rejected. So the beneficiary is the only person who participates from the stakeholder group."

Another example of the limit of sharing with stakeholders was noted by interviewee A21, who said that

"it depends on the specialisation and the majority of stakeholders are volunteers, so they only have a small influence in the organisation. Therefore, it is necessary to summon only those with specialisation and experience to involve them, but others are not necessary, and it will not benefit the NPO or organisation in anything, as the regular programmes are well-known and do not require any additional effort."

Based on the above opinions, the majority agree that NPOs can improve their process and policy depending on all stakeholders if they assist the NPOs due to their experiences,

education, and understanding that the NPOs in terms of priorities are based on internal and external stakeholders and the role of stakeholders to grow NPOs.

5.8.5 SPM life cycle

The project life cycle is an important element in the case that sustainability is integrated into project management, as sustainability is integrated harmoniously from the stage of planning to implementation. The project life cycle consists of four stages: planning, initiation and implementation, monitoring and control, and finally closing. During this stage, the interviewees' thoughts were split into two groups: the first group believed that all steps of a project life cycle should be implemented when it overlaps with SPM; the second group of the interviewees thought of only using limited stages of a project life cycle. They were asked the question: "The project life cycle depends on four stages: planning, starting and implementing, then monitoring and controlling, then closing. In your opinion, is sustainability integrated in all or some of the project life cycles, and if so why?"

The first group believed in applying SPM in all project life cycle stages. For example, interviewee A16 pointed out that

"the project life cycle is an important element from planning to closing. This is because we established sustainable projects, including plans, goals, and others, and then applied them on the ground. For example, we supported an NPO in a hospital by covering the salaries of employees. We searched for commercial companies that provide certain services to the hospital free of charge. Therefore, we established the idea of sustainability in the hospital with the support and search for commercial companies to support the programme."

Another example of adding new phases in the project life cycle was stated by interviewee B2, who noted that

"the issue of initiation is the construction of the project document, and it is a reflection; that is, if we wrote it in the document and planned, we will find it in the follow-up and in the implementation and in closing. It is a reflection, not something original, but rather a reflection of the plan, if we put it

in the planning and did not put it in the document, we cannot oblige the executor or the one who follows up and controls, or the one who closes such a case."

In addition, interviewee B4 explained that all stages are important, starting with planning. Nevertheless, he added that planning is the most important element in order to facilitate integration into the next phases and life cycle of the project. Interviewee B4 added that

"planning is the most important stage, because if SPM is integrated from the beginning, it will be easier in the following stages, from initiation, implementation, follow-up, monitoring, and then closing. If it has not been prepared, sometimes SPM needs its own input, and this input comes from the beginning of the project, from the time of thinking about it and planning, so that we can see the result."

Consequently, based on the thoughts of the participants, it is obvious that the participants agreed on using the entire project life cycle stages, and some even added some new stages to facilitate the implementation of sustainability in project management.

However, the second group thought about implementing only some phases of the project life cycle, not all. For instance, interviewee B3 remarked that

"the culture of the NPO focuses on two aspects, namely planning and implementation, in order for them to obtain financial support from the benefactors, so there is a weakness in the quality of the SPM, and there is a lack of standards that measure the project's tool. Monitoring is weak; it depends on the efficiency of a manager if he or she can see the project through to the end."

Furthermore, interviewee A12 said that

"my point of view is indeed that SPM must go through all stages from the beginning to the closure; there is no project, meaning now, and the reason is that the issue is foreign to us and we are still in the process of preparing for it."

Based on the opinions of the second group, there is a lack of knowledge and clarity in the integration of sustainability into the entire life cycle of the project, and the other believes that some stages of a project should meet certain conditions.

To sum up, many interviewees stated that the stages of the project life cycle were important and even used in their NPOs. Besides, from the outset, SPM had to integrate the following elements: plan, approval from decision makers, and the best way to act, tools, workers to apply sustainability into project management as agreed and, finally, the need to compare whether the outcome was like the plan or whether adjustments were required, and the best approach to work with with these adjustments.

5.8.6 Critical success factors

Participants' views regarding critical success factors are various and based on the interests and requirements of their NPOs. They were asked: "What are the critical success factors in management, the sustainability of project management?" –Some participants believed that leadership is the main factor in the success of the project. Correspondingly, interviewee A9 noted that

"I focus greatly on leadership, whether it is executive leadership or top management. Leadership is the basis for the development of a NPO, and without that, if the leaders are not in agreement to integrate sustainability into project management, they will not it is being worked on."

Meanwhile, interviewee A15 explained:

"Critical success factors in the sustainability of project management are leadership decision making—direct manager or directly responsible for the project—stakeholders. However, more important than these in my opinion is management, which is important in the reform of the project, especially as senior management gives support for the project."

Interviewee A19 also said that

"I think one of the challenges is not to the commitment of the boards of directors or the executive management to SPM. Also another impact is the aspect of financial resources. The last impact is setting goals in the wrong way; for example, they might create some projects to support society; however, the community is not interested in such projects or does not need them."

The participants acknowledged the previously mentioned critical success factors, which are leadership, decision making, and direct responsibility for the project and

stakeholders, but that leadership is the first major success factor. Other interviewees added that there are other critical success factors, such as the realistic need of the community. For example, interviewee A20 remarked that

"the critical success factors in integrating the sustainability of project management are leadership, decision making, direct responsibility for the project, and stakeholders. Provided that they stem from a realistic need."

Accordingly, interviewee A11 mentioned:

"I say project management, frankly, is a major factor in success, meaning that our project management adopted the scientific methodologies of management, and this was the biggest factor in the success of sustainability and projects, in addition to the owners, adoption, adoption of our leadership, they adopted this topic, supportively very strong, one of the governing factors is empowering and qualifying the team, meaning our team must go through stages of rehabilitation and development annually, so it does not stop at one point. Every year it is required to go to the best point; these are things that really help in the success and sustainability of project management."

To sum up, the interviewees asserted that there are decisive success factors that contribute to the sustainability of project management. These elements differ from one participant to another. For example, there is a group that believes that leadership is the basis while, comparatively, due to leadership through fieldwork, one can find opportunities such as SPM to motivate senior management to integrate and contribute to training the workforce to master integration and how to deal with it. Therefore, the main driver and developer in the organisation is leadership. Others believe that a clear vision together with other factors all contribute to the integration of sustainability in project management.

5.8.7 Risk management

Risk management is a very important element in providing appropriate alternatives in the event of a problem that hinders the implementation of SPM in NPOs, although there were many different answers provided by the participants. In the following examples, some of their ideas and plans for NPOs are reviewed. Many of the participants were not ready to manage risks and crises, but with the length of the COVID-19 pandemic, they searched for the best ways to reduce the crisis of stopping work by using technology, particularly distance learning. For instance, interviewee B6 stated:

"I imagine that the Corona pandemic brought many disadvantages such as we could not work. Hence, there must be alternative plans to complete our SPM in our organisation. One of the alternative plans is the transfer of education from face-to-face to online courses. For instance, in the past we spent a lot on course costs; we spent tens or even hundreds of thousands of Riyals on them. [1 pound = 5 Riyals.]. However, through the use of technology, with the example of Zoom, we spent a minimal amount to deliver these courses."

Another example is given by interviewee B5, who added that

"most of the projects and programmes stopped, knowing that we tried to transfer the lessons and courses online, but we could not, and the reason was first due to a weakness in the network, and also the beneficiaries of the organisation are not good at dealing with technology."

Based on these answers, technology can be noted as very important in saving costs, as well the finish the whole service needs the community in order to address the current issues that stem from COVID-19.

After the COVID-19 pandemic, many SPMs looked for alternatives in the event of a lockdown. This made them focus on modifying work and tasks from the workplace to working remotely, as many organisations did. This meant it was good to meet at any time and in different places, thanks to remote work plans.

This chapter has described the data analysis and the qualitative semi-structured interview results of implementing sustainability into project management. The first part discussed how knowledge among project managers in NPOs was limited, such that they

thought of SPM as economic sustainability. A few of the interviewees appeared to understand it as economic sustainability, by mentioning social and environmental sustainability. Hence, a limited number of project managers understand SPM comprehensively.

The second part covered practical application of SPM in NPOs. The implementation of SPM is divided into two sections: sustainability and project management. For sustainability, several project managers were working with different types of SPM (environmental sustainability–social sustainability–economic sustainability), based on their knowledge, experiences, majors, and the nature of their work.

A primary element of sustainability is *environmental sustainability*, but many interviewees were lacking in application of environment sustainability in NPOs, whether by solar power, reducing the energy consumption, or waste management. However, some of the participants did understand the benefits of the implementation of environmental sustainability, and then applied it in their current project management. Other interviewees knew about the benefits of implementing environmental sustainability, but they worried about the future with regard to applying project management from a maintenance perspective.

Regarding *social sustainability*, the interviewees had success in implementing social sustainability in NPOs through dealing with internal and external stakeholders, and improving the delivery of their needs based on their experiences in serving society and their majors in the social sector (Islamic religion). Also, if they still needed to improve efficiency, the project managers could assist the internal and external stakeholders with training and education.

The final element of sustainability is *economic sustainability* which, in turn, is based on income management and financial management. Regarding income management, many interviewees applied limits to investment, such as believing that real estate is the only option to increase funding. Regarding financial management, interviewees were dealing with fixed and variables costs by searching for alternative ideas to aid them to survive as NPOs, such as volunteers, transferring work from full time to part time, and finding funders to cover salaries.

At the same time, project managers are dealing with current and future project management, and all dimensions of sustainability need to improve from any type of project management. Project management involves decision making, responsibility, leadership, risk management, stakeholder engagement, SPM life cycles, and CSFs. For many interviewees, the first step to implement sustainability into project management is decision making, which allows the project managers to improve strategies and policies in NPOs. Regarding responsibility, SPM, interviewees distributed it into two groups. Some of them believed that the responsibility to implement SPM in NPOs lies with the senior manager. However, other participants thought that the responsibility depends on the authority and the type of project.

The majority of participants believed that leadership can impact NPOs by integrating sustainability into project management, and that leadership can encourage the top and lower management to also implement sustainability into project management. Furthermore, interviewees agreed that stakeholders' engagement can improve the policy and tasks in NPOs, based upon on the stakeholders' education and experiences. In addition, leadership was the main success factor to implement SPM in NPOs. The leadership can contribute to integrated sustainability in their current project management, and leadership can handle it by using opportunities, overcoming obstacles, and dealing with future plans or processing.

Regarding the SPM life cycle, the majority of participants applied SPM in the four stages of the project life cycle: planning, initiation and implementation, monitoring and control, and finally closing. Regarding risk management, because of the COVID-19 crisis, few interviewees planned under the term 'alternative plan' or 'emergency plan', but with the pandemic, some organisations handled it, using working online from home, meeting online, and flexible working.

Finally, motivation can encourage project managers to implement SPM in NPOs, helping to keep the programmes of NPOs stable. Involving SPM can link between the community and government and, hence, it can lead to a balance among society. However,

the biggest challenges to applying SPM in NPOs are lack of knowledge, source of income, and Saudi policy (restrictions to investment or delays in obtaining approval from the government).

Chapter 6: Discussion of Findings

6.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the key research findings from the data analysis (questionnaire and interviews) and situates it in the existing body of literature. The data analysis and findings follow a mixed method approach (quantitative and qualitative analysis) to examine the relationship between sustainability and project management themes in the context of SPM in NPOs. It also discusses the current state of knowledge and understanding of sustainability and SPM, as well as drivers for and barriers to the effective implementation of SPM. Before proceeding with the discussion of thematic research findings in this chapter, it is helpful to present the research questions of the thesis, which are stated below:

1. What is the level of understanding of the concept of ‘sustainability’ among the project management employees of NPOs in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia?
2. How does the project management process play a role in integrating the principles of sustainability in Saudi Arabian NPOs?
3. What is the current state and practice of sustainable project management (SPM) in Saudi Arabian NPOs?
4. How can a strategic sustainable project management model be developed for embedding sustainability into project management processes?

Accordingly, this chapter aims to address the above research questions. The discussion first examines the concept of SPM. It also analyses sustainability themes such as environmental sustainability (reduction in natural resources), social sustainability (stakeholders), and economic sustainability (income and cost management). Finally, project management themes (leadership, decision making, SPM life cycle), and key drivers and

barriers linked to SPM are discussed to provide deeper insights into the central argument of the study. Furthermore, the elements of SPM and how to implement it by providing links among them are demonstrated in a visual form at the end of this chapter.

6.2 The Role of SPM in NPOs in Saudi Arabia

The findings discussed in this section aim to answer the research question: **How does the project management process play a role in integrating the principles of sustainability in Saudi Arabian NPOs?**

Overall, NPOs have a responsibility to implement sustainability in their business management operations, particularly project management processes. This is because sustainability has been gaining increasing attention in both academia and organisational practice. According to the policy of SPM in Saudi Arabia, the role of NPOs in terms of sustainability in project management is still unknown. According to the King Khalid Foundation (2018), there is a lack of government policy which can support the integration of sustainability in project management in NPOs. The report concluded that there is a weakness in the empowerment of NPOs when it comes to SPM. One of the main issues is the restrictive legislation for the NPOs sector, along with a significant lack of detailed and factual information regarding NPOs.

In the descriptive findings, most of the questionnaire participants from different NPOs in Saudi Arabia had different perceptions of the level of implementation of SPM. However, in the qualitative interview findings, most of the project managers mentioned working following certain criteria and guidelines to serve their NPOs. The non-profit sector has recently changed with regards to how NPOs are being operated and managed. In the past, the Saudi Government used to support NPOs in all aspects of their operations, such as funding, strategy, and operations. This shows that NPOs have now become more independent as organisations. However, with regard to investment management, NPOs still need to seek permission from the government. NPOs now source their own income, and all these changes have an impact

on how NPOs perceive sustainability in terms of actual implementation. NPOs operate under various pressures and have competing demands, and this can weaken their ability to apply SPM.

At present, there is no robust policy to implement SPM in NPOs, although previous studies show that Saudi Arabia has been working on its Vision 2030 that stipulates goals and plans to achieve SPM. Saudi Vision 2030 is an ambitious strategic blueprint which mentions NPOs, which must increase in number in Saudi Arabia from less than 1% to 5% by 2030 (Balkhi, 2017; King Khalid Foundation, 2018; Wag Spa, 2022). This indicates the scale of the impact that NPOs can have in terms of sustainability from a holistic perspective. As per Vision 2030, NPOs must be involved in the delivery of SPM, as required by the government, whereby sustainability is at the forefront of the organisational agenda (First Voluntary National Review Towards Saudi Arabia's Sustainable Tomorrow, 2018). Therefore, this research can help to enhance the role of SPM in NPOs before 2030. Finally, as policy regarding SPM in NPOs in Saudi Arabia is currently unclear, this research can help the government in terms of improving the NPOs' efficiency as it relates to SPM as, to the best of the author's knowledge, this is the first study conducted in the context of Saudi Arabia that can provide guidelines for the policymakers in the Saudi Government to establish the SPM in NPOs with their conditions based on Vision 2030. These are some points already summarised in practical constructions. This highlights the current absence of a strong policy driver both at national and sector levels to drive change in the non-profit sector of Saudi Arabia.

6.3 Awareness of SPM in NPOs

The findings discussed here aim to answer the research question: **What is the level of understanding of the concept of ‘sustainability’ among project management employees of NPOs in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia?**

Based on the data analysis and systematic literature review, it was noted that the level of understanding regarding the concept of SPM varied significantly. Having a clear understanding of the concept of sustainability among project management employees of NPOs is critical for its effective implementation. In the descriptive, various questions focused on how comprehensive the concept was from the perspective of project management employees in NPOs in Saudi Arabia. According to the descriptive analysis, the majority of NPO staff and project managers are familiar with the concept of sustainability in the context of project management. They also implement sustainability into project management to some extent; however, it is clear that this concept is not sufficiently mature and, therefore, needs further development. Of staff in the descriptive (192 answered the descriptive), the majority of the participants were aware of the concept, and they were also aware that integrating sustainability into project management can be utilised to use potential opportunities and address potential risks. In addition, they believe that the integration of sustainability into project management was a key activity and required an aspect of strategic decision making in NPOs. Also, the participants believed that SPM could help them with regard to economic sustainability which is beneficial for NPOs in the long term.

However, the interview findings also suggested that many interviewees in NPOs had a limited/narrow understanding of sustainability, and tended just to focus on the economic sustainability aspect rather than its holistic interpretation. There was a popular notion that the concept of SPM could be viewed as a means to allow NPOs to be stable with regard to covering costs and increasing income. Another key issue is unstable levels of donation from funders. However, some sources of funds can provide regular or fixed income. Nevertheless,

when asked about environmental sustainability, many interviewees did not appear to be aware of it. Sustainability from a holistic perspective can assist NPOs in achieving the triple bottom line, focusing on environmental, economic, and social sustainability.

Concerning social sustainability, most of the project managers in NPOs became aware of social sustainability after they had applied economic sustainability in their NPO's workplace. One of the interviewees highlighted the direct relationship between providing financial resources and increasing income as services and programmes for the community (i.e. other than poor people who need free services), which included sustainability in all community projects. This research is in line with the main objective of NPOs, which is to offer long-term benefits to society, or so-called 'sustainability of society'. The research has shown that project managers from NPOs understand the importance of social sustainability, as it is core to their strategic agenda.

A considerable amount of literature has been published on the concept of SPM as evidenced by the SLR. Various studies have concurred that the SPM concept can deal with different approaches of management with regards to different areas, such as environmental sustainability, social sustainability, and economic sustainability (Silvius and Schipper, 2014; Marcelino-Sádaba, González-Jaen and Pérez-Ezcurdia, 2015; Silvius, 2017; Chofreh *et al.*, 2019; Sabini, Muzio and Alderman, 2019). Furthermore Baba *et al.* (2021) explored the concept that the definition of sustainability has various meanings with regards to different approaches to project management. These include sustainability as a *constraint*, whereby sustainability is viewed as a restriction; sustainability as *instrumental value*, whereby sustainability is seen as a tool that is able to enhance project management; and sustainability as *intrinsic value*, whereby sustainability is explained as a target with regard to business feasibility. Therefore, this research concludes that the meaning of sustainability is flexible, and is to be determined by a researcher's perceptions when considering a particular context such as NPOs in Saudi Arabia.

The current literature has ostensibly focused on environmental sustainability, rather than on economic and social sustainability. Moreover, the constraints on the SPM concept are likely to have an impact upon the implementation of project management. Correspondingly, there are various similarities between the studies of Al-Saleh and Taleb (2010), Zuofa and Ochieng (2016) and Aarseth *et al.* (2017) with regards to the integration process of the sustainability concept into project management, specifically in construction projects. For example, in the Gulf Countries in particular, the understanding of SPM among value managers in the construction industry is still low in relation to sustainability, which results in a lack of its application in project management (Al-Saleh and Taleb, 2010). This finding in the extant literature correlates with what this research study has found; that there is a lack of knowledge and understanding among NPO managers, which can subsequently have an adverse impact upon the implementation of SPM.

SPM needs to be present in all stages of the whole project life cycle, from beginning to end. Zuofa and Ochieng (2016) and Aarseth *et al.* (2017) agree that the SPM concept must overlap with strategies within construction projects that lead to an increase in awareness of SPM among employees, which will raise the demand for SPM in construction practice. However, the research does not take into account pre-existing social sustainability studies, which have rarely been examined. According to Silviu and Schipper (2014), it is important to compare the definitions of SPM which are prevalent in the field of environmental sustainability with those which are prevalent in the field of economic sustainability. However, in terms of focus on social sustainability, the emphasis is still limited. In the context of NPOs, the organisations examined have a certain focus on social sustainability which exists to a greater extent than is shown in the literature. In the literature, NPOs are more likely to place a greater emphasis on social sustainability than other organisations. In this sense, the concept of SPM still lacks knowledge in NPOs across countries and, in particular, in Saudi Arabian NPOs.

There are various reasons that may explain the limited knowledge and understanding of the concept of SPM in Saudi NPOs. *First*, the decision of the Saudi Government to cease funding support in 2017 meant that top management of NPOs sought to reduce costs and increase incomes. In Saudi Arabia, financial government support was reduced from 100% to a maximum of 27% (King Khalid Foundation, 2018). The government asked for NPOs to become more self-sufficient and search for other sources of income, which may explain the rationale for their increasing focus on social sustainability (social responsibility) from individuals and firms. *Second*, the NPO participants' work aimed to assist the community based upon on their academic background and specialised discipline. As the descriptive found, the majority of the participants varied between Islamic Studies, Law, and other social majors in terms of their academic knowledge. Subsequently, the majority of participants chose to apply economic sustainability in their project management processes, whether they had a background in investment/finance or another type of management.

In summary, this section has attempted to answer the question as to whether the concept of SPM can be understood as a holistic concept (environmental–social–economic) based on how the triple bottom line can be applied in project management.

6.4 Implementation of Sustainability in NPOs

This section discusses the key findings around the implementation of sustainability into current project management practices in NPOs, and attempts to answer the question: **What is the current state and practice of sustainable project management in Saudi Arabian NPOs?**

2.3.1 Environmental sustainability

Environmental sustainability is a key pillar of significant importance when it comes to the effective implementation of sustainability. Overall, the NPOs in Saudi Arabia still lack knowledge and skills, as well as implementation of environmental sustainability principles in

project management. The project managers of NPOs lack sufficient knowledge in understanding the benefits or business case of environmental sustainability, which is assuming greater significance. For example, renewable energy through solar power, energy reduction, waste management, and recycling can help save costs in projects. Furthermore, environmental sustainability can lead to a reduction in natural resource use in delivering projects of all sizes and types. With these advantages, the majority of project managers, according to the mixed method analysis, have little idea that there is a lack of its implementation in project management. Additionally, it is necessary to explore the areas to be developed in the use of natural resources considering waste management, energy and alternative power, and recycling to determine the possible solutions that can enable project managers to deliver as part of NPO projects. All of these aspects of environmental sustainability can help reduce climate change due to the nature of project operations by NPOs. Therefore, environmental sustainability needs greater attention and scrutiny with regard to its implementation in project management in Saudi Arabian NPOs.

6.4.1.1 Reduction in natural resource use

The project managers in NPOs in Saudi Arabia still exhibit a limited application for the reduction of the use of natural resources in current project management practices. The questionnaire descriptive found that a few staff in NPOs did improve environmental sustainability in their NPOs. In the descriptive, several questions were put to the participants regarding the three pillars of sustainability: environmental, social, and economic. The participants were given the options to choose from these based on their current NPO practices. For example, in environmental sustainability, carbon emissions reduction, energy reduction, waste and water, travel and transport, and procurement and supply chain were investigated, as all these elements have an impact on the environment. The results suggest that the supply chain and water recycling contribute approximately 55% to environmental

sustainability, compared with carbon emissions reduction, energy reduction, travel and transport, and procurement, with 23%, 49%, 33%, and 25%, respectively.

According to the interview findings, the majority of project managers did not attempt to reduce natural resource use in project management. Some of them answered that they do not have an idea of the meaning of environmental sustainability and how to implement it in their own project management practices. Specifically, this is relevant in terms of alternative power. For example, one of the interviewees mentioned that the concept of solar power is still relatively new in Saudi Arabia. Conversely, other project managers did indicate an inclination towards comprehensively reducing natural resources. They generally did not want to change the current state of project management, as renewable energy is an expensive tool to initiate into project management, and the cost of maintenance might be expensive. A lack of renewable energy implementation could be due to the high capital costs associated with this option.

In contrast to the above, however, previous studies have been able to draw on systematic research into the rational use of cleaner energy depending on the efficiency of the materials, which can assist in the reduction of emissions, as well as of natural resources for establishing a green project; this can subsequently have a positive impact on traditional project management. Aksorn and Charoenngam (2015) and Martens and Carvalho (2017) discovered that, after integrating sustainability into project management, project managers attempted to reduce the use of natural resources and reduce carbon emissions by focusing on eco-efficiency to minimise negative environmental impacts.

As an example of reducing the use of natural resources, Green Business Parks (GBPs), generally aim to reduce waste and pollution by reusing materials instead of discarding them as waste, or to use them multiple times before discarding them, while any relevant treatment process should be enacted as well (Stewart, 2007; (Hwang et al., 2017). Also, greening project management practices can add significant value to sustainable construction projects, while

implementing the projects within the cost constraints. This suggests that cross-sector lessons can be learnt and replicated in the NPO sector.

Furthermore, Zhang *et al.* (2014) and Carvalho and Rabechini (2017) argued that technological improvements are more influential upon SPM, due to a variety of reasons, such as: increasing eco-efficiency and green procurement and partnership (GPP), Design for Environment (DfE), and environmental technologies (ET) for green projects, which lead to effective use of natural resources. Besides this, Stanitsas *et al.* (2021) examined the quality benchmarks that can aid a project to be sustainable with regards to the ecosystem. Some of these are energy efficiency, fitting renewable energy resources, sustainable use of natural resources, and climate change adaptation/disaster risk management. Other examples that relate to alternative power can be seen in the research of Maqbool and Sudong (2018), who investigated the Critical Success Factors (CSFs) that affect renewable energy projects in developing countries. Through orderly operations in that particular study, CSFs were collected from 41 significant renewable energy projects, which were further reduced to five CSFs. The study highlighted that environmental factors probably affect positivity depending on the projects' levels of success.

Moreover, there are also challenges in regards to water management (Shen, Wu and Zhang, 2011; Kiani Mavi and Standing, 2018). The water crisis is considered a major problem in the sustainability of projects; for example, there is a shortage of water due to the population and agricultural growth in Australia. In addition, water pollution resulting from neglect towards the necessary conditions in the infrastructure can lead to laws to protect water from pollution, as happened in China in 2003 under the Law of the People's Republic of China on Environmental Impact Assessment (Shen, Wu and Zhang, 2011). Water is a vital resource, and NPOs need to explore ways to be more efficient in reducing water use while minimising carbon emissions.

In summary, it has been found that project managers have to be aware of the benefits of reducing natural resource usage and the best way to implement this into project

management. For example, alternative power enables reduction of fossil fuel-based energy consumption. It can help reduce costs as there will be less or minimal use of grid-based electricity. Therefore, this suggests that environmental sustainability can lead to economic sustainability. Hence, the three pillars of sustainability are linked and integrated with each other. In fact, in October 2022, the Saudi Government agreed to reduce conventional power due to climate change. This means that, in the future, NPOs will have to replace conventional power and seek support from the government or other sectors to solve any problems related to renewable energy installation. NPOs will be able to sell the extra power (solar power) to the government if their renewable supply is greater than the demand, thereby increasing benefits and reducing costs (Khalil, 2022).

Moreover, project managers have applied strategies in NPOs for waste management that depend on technology. For example, project manager B3 in an NPO explained the aim of depending on technology by no longer using paper and printing. This solution saves natural resources and reduces financial waste. Nevertheless, the decision to go paperless or work online is challenging, given the need to train staff regarding working or using material online. However, the outcome will easily save cost and effort (e.g., saving information in folders and documents online). Meanwhile, interviewee A2 discovered recycling water by a simple method of transferring the waste water from a sink to water trees. In the future, planting trees to combat desertification will be among the strategies of NPOs in Saudi Arabia. The watering of trees was recommended by the Saudi Government on 17 June 2021 as a means to increase the development of vegetation cover and combat desertification, thereby having a positive impact upon climate change (Saudi Press Agency, 2021). Table 6.1 below summarises the environmental sustainability-related findings based on the mixed method analysis, and links these with the SLR.

Table 6.1: Implementation of Environmental Sustainability in Project Management in NPOs in Saudi Arabia

		Implementation in current project management	Quantitative findings	Qualitative findings	Link with SLR
Environmental sustainability	Reducing natural resources	Natural resources	Unknown to the participants due to past dependence on Saudi Government 100%	Unknown to interviewees because their qualifications were based on Social Sciences and Islamic Studies. Also, for similar reasons as in the quantitative findings.	Aksorn and Charoenngam (2015); Martens and Carvalho (2017).
		Alternative power		Few: 1 (B5)/34 interviewees.	Maqbool and Sudong (2018); Khalil (2022).
		Waste Management		Few:1(B3)/34 interviewees.	Zhang <i>et al.</i> (2014); Carvalho and Rabechini (2017); Hwang <i>et al.</i> (2017).
		Recycling Water		Few: 1(A2)/34 interviewees.	Shen, Wu and Zhang (2011); Kiani Mavi and Standing (2018); Saudi Press Agency (2021).

2.3.2 Social sustainability

As NPOs focus on society, they have already developed strong links with it, which can improve social sustainability by developing relationships with both internal and external stakeholders for a long period of project management. In fact, in the past, NPOs received orders from respective governments to work with particular communities. Furthermore, through ‘freedom management’, many project managers of NPOs in Saudi Arabia have to engage with society before formulating strategies, and then determine how to assist it, as the government stopped support of NPOs from 2017 (King Khalid Foundation, 2018). Regarding social sustainability, NPOs in Saudi Arabia have found some solutions that can impact positively on project management. In this regard, one solution that project managers have focused on is for volunteers to work in NPOs, as volunteers can aid society free of charge and make a significant contribution (Saudi Policy Government, (2019) (Report from Saudi Policy).

6.4.2.1 A stronger relationship with stakeholders

Stakeholders can help NPO project managers by guiding them with regard to how to achieve their SPM aims. This includes communicating or meeting with representatives from society, government and funders to explain the strategies of SPM in the NPO. The descriptive findings show a high proportion of ‘yes’ responses regarding NPO development of relations with internal and external stakeholders, and this was maintained through community engagement, relationships with suppliers, as well as training and education as a part of SPM. This means that NPOs can directly communicate with different levels of stakeholders to discuss their needs and find solutions to assist them.

In particular, in the interview, many project managers considered external stakeholders, particularly their community, as an important factor in realising their needs and understanding how to obtain them. At the beginning, NPO project managers coordinate with the community to see how they can help and support them. NPO project managers are

available to serve the community in many ways, such as social innovation where NPOs provide experienced trainers. In addition, NPO project managers worked as mediators between society and other sectors. For example, they sought to answer the poor people's needs for social innovation for free. Furthermore, respondent A22 elucidated that project managers can find the services or products they need from society and, in turn, offer some training courses to improve the community's skills. This helps to decrease unemployment rates and make society less dependent on NPOs.

Moreover, this is relevant in regard to internal stakeholders, as sustainability is a new topic in NPOs. It is beneficial when many employees increase their efficiency to apply SPM by training and learning. For example, one of the project managers (A23) explained that, after obtaining training courses in SPM, the whole process of project management in the NPO changed. In addition, interviewee B6 explained how the staff members in NPOs were developed and trained after the cessation of government support, and mentioned partnerships with other NPOs that had already succeeded in the implementation of SPM. Therefore, engaging communities in planning and decision making right from the start is important. If they want some support or improvement, the NPOs should help them. Also, the internal stakeholders need to improve their efficiency while integrating sustainability into their project management by relying on the training of SPM with the government providing some free courses.

A considerable body of literature regarding SLR has been published on how communities can impact SPM, and many authors have emphasised the engagement of stakeholders while applying SPM. In one investigation into society engagement, it was concluded that consultants in social service is one way to efficiently implement the projects (Silvius *et al.*, 2017). If there is a lack of engagement with the community, all projects may be steered in the in the wrong direction. Furthermore, Pade-Khene, Mallinson and Sewry (2011) focused on Information and Communication Technology (ICT) projects, with civil citizens needing to engage to enable the effectiveness of ICT projects.

Baba *et al.* (2021) explored community engagement while overlapping with SPM with extractive industries needing to approve four conditions: a) the perspective that local needs are a central consideration; b) value creation with a horizon beyond the project; c) value creation aimed at fostering local capabilities; and d) a focus on ensuring the independence of local communities. In this regard, it will be more attuned for a new standard of sharing in the community with extractive industries. Separately, regarding the internal stakeholders in relation to improvement in SPM, it has been discovered that training staff helps in the achievement of SPM toward the agreed targets (Robichaud and Anantatmula, 2011; Hwang and Ng, 2013; Banihashemi *et al.*, 2017). Meanwhile, project managers must undertake training related to SPM to increase their knowledge whilst also implementing SPM to the fullest degree correctly (Hwang and Ng, 2013; Banihashemi *et al.*, 2017). In addition, Robichaud and Anantatmula (2011) have presented alternative methods for training, whether on-campus, at the workplace, or online; for example, online training could assist many workforces in improving their knowledge.

In summary, it has been demonstrated in this research that the reason to create NPOs is to assist the community. However, due to the importance of stakeholders to NPOs during SPM, there are some requirements to achieve sustainability. *First*, project managers need to cooperate with the community or society representatives to introduce the services and products that NPOs will provide. NPOs must also consider any future suggestions from stakeholders (internal or external) in order to help them. For example, some NPOs work as mediators with the government or private sectors to help society develop small businesses, such as home-made food sold at charity events. *Second*, if the community needs some training, project managers should recruit people to conduct the training without charge through courses from the Government website, which any Saudi citizen can take and complete. Table 6.2 below summarises the findings and discussion based on the mixed method analysis and their links with SLR.

Table 6.2: Social Sustainability Discussion Content

	All Stakeholders	Quantitative findings	Qualitative findings	Link with SLR
Social sustainability	External Stakeholders	Most interviewees deal with all stakeholders as well as Saudi Government; also their qualifications are mainly in the Social Sciences sector or Islamic studies.	Many participants apply and are interested in communicating with external stakeholders to determine the terms and requirements (A8, B8, and A22) for achieving SPM in NPOs.	Pade-Khene, Mallinson and Sewry, (2011); Gilbert Silvius <i>et al.</i> (2017); Baba et al. (2021).
	Internal Stakeholders		Many participants improve their skills by training staff: A23, B6, for obtaining SPM in NPOs.	Robichaud and Anantatmula (2011); Hwang and Ng (2013); Banihashemi <i>et al.</i> (2017).

2.3.3 Economic sustainability

Economic sustainability is the main target to extend the life of NPOs following the Saudi Arabian government’s decision to stop funding to these organisations since 2017 (King Khalid Foundation, 2018). This policy change has brought economic sustainability to the top of the agenda for NPOs. Also, the government’s request to increase the number of NPOs from less than 1% to 5% as part of Saudi Vision 2030 is another area of concern. Thus, the analysis

of economic sustainability in this study considers two main points: methods of increasing the income of NPOs and strategies for surviving by saving costs.

6.4.3.1 Income management

Income generation contributes greatly to the stability of the NPOs and allows them to undertake their activities without any financial pressures. From the questionnaire findings, more than half of the responses highlighted the belief that increased income can be the main reason or driver for improving sustainability for all projects in NPOs. In the descriptive, the majority of the participants indicated they would develop income generation and profitability methods as part of their sustainability agenda. In the interview findings, the majority of the interviewees also focused on implementing income management for the delivery of SPM. Specifically, many NPO project managers decided to reduce the percentage of donations and increase income coming from investment projects. Moreover, one of the creative solutions was social investment, which relates to learning what the market needs and providing it at a cheaper price with less profit than competitors. Therefore, the financial return supports NPOs in this instance. Correspondingly, there is another aspect of economic sustainability which involves monitoring of the community needs and then setting up investment projects to cover those needs and generate income for the organisation. Consequently, most of the project managers succeeded in identifying community needs and providing the services to the local communities, thus making sure that there was continuous income generation for financial sustainability.

However, in general, there is still a limit in benefits from investment management for project managers in NPOs, due to the absence of interested persons or specialists in the investment field or alternative solutions in the event of being unable to employ staff from the investment field. Indeed, contracting with investment offices is the most appropriate solution, although NPOs' project managers, unfortunately, did not do this, which was detrimental with regard to directing them to the available investment opportunities.

These results are similar to what was found in the SLR regarding the importance of the advantages of income management. Yuan (2017) concluded that the government faces challenges in SPM of the railway among shareholders between the three dimensions of sustainability, including economic sustainability. Accordingly, the government needs to engage the shareholders to enhance financial performance. In addition, Stanitsas *et al.* (2021) stated that SPM in construction projects can be applied economically, which leads to an increase in productivity in a particular period by focusing on key economic factors that are embedded in the financial performance, as well as economic and political stability, cost management plans, and resource planning. Furthermore, Wang, Wei and Sun (2014) explained that more attention to quality control during applied sustainability in project building will decrease the charges of maintenance and life cycle replacement costs, whilst they also indicate that it improves the economic performance of the project for better long-term results.

The most obvious finding to emerge from this study is that income management plays a role in stabilising income in NPOs in investment work. It also creates job opportunities in investment management for local people. Some NPOs procure the highest-paid experts in investment or get advice from the investment office in the presence of funders to cover the cost. Along with benefiting from volunteers in partnerships, it helps to monitor and implement pre-planned investment projects. As a result, investment management can offer NPOs good opportunities and benefits from a sustainability perspective.

6.4.3.2 Cost management

Cost management poses challenges in NPOs due to non-stable incomes. Hence, many leaders have searched for ways to save costs during the life cycle of project management. In the descriptive findings, many participants indicated a willingness to improve cost management and financial performance. Furthermore, in the interview, project manager members discussed ways to save costs. For example, interviewee A1 mentioned fixed cost

salaries and staff transfer to move away from working full time to part time. When still in need of full-time employees, interviewee A8 found some funders or the private sector to cover the job's salary during his work in an NPO. Also, in terms of income management, some leaders found sponsors to work as experts in investment management in NPOs. In addition, they secured indirect support from the government to allow their organisations to recruit volunteers to cover temporary projects.

This is why several authors approve cost management strategies and apply them to project management (e.g., Hwang and Ng, 2013), such as on green construction projects that have a feasibility study regarding the cost of tools in new systems and technologies. Additionally, Swarup *et al.* (2011) stated that cost and schedule performance are key matrices for projects, and there is always a comparison of actual versus targeted cost and scheduled figures that can affect analysis and decision making. In a similar case, in relation to ethics in project management, Martens and Carvalho (2017) conducted a descriptive of project managers regarding the key factor of sustainability in project management being economics, with challenges that involve cost management, and financial performance, which can affect compliance issues and ethics due to corruption scandals. Hence, all the stakeholders have to engage ethically in their practices.

Costs are a concern for NPOs because financial waste causes instability in the organisation in the long run. Therefore, many project managers changed the nature of work from full time to part time and benefited from volunteers and indirect governmental support. These were some of the measures to help manage increasing costs and give volunteers an opportunity to contribute in terms of social responsibility. The organisations also searched for supporters to cover fixed and variable future costs and increase income to reduce financial waste. Table 6.3 below summarises the findings and discussion that relied on mixed method analysis, and links with the SLR.

Table 6.3: Economic Sustainability Discussion Content

Economic sustainability		Quantitative findings	Qualitative findings	Link with SLR
	Income Management	Many answers from participants indicated that economic sustainability can be applied and advanced in their project management.	Several interviewees focused on income management by contracting with an investment office or creating a new job in investment management (A9, A4) that allowed them to complete their project process.	Wang, Wei and Sun (2014); Yuan (2017); Stanitsas <i>et al.</i> (2021).
Cost Management		The majority of interviewees found many solutions to reduce the types of cost, such as transfer of work from full time to part time, and benefitting from volunteers and indirect governmental support (A1, A8).	Swarup, Korkmaz and Riley (2011); Hwang and Ng (2013); Carvalho and Rabechini (2017).	

6.5 Project Management in NPOs

The three pillars of sustainability must be effectively integrated into the project management process during its entire life cycle in order to deliver sustainable project management from a holistic perspective. This particular section aims to answer the following research question:

What is the current state and practice of sustainable project management in Saudi Arabian NPOs?

The project management aspect in NPOs involves two main themes: impact of leadership and SPM in the whole life cycle. Furthermore, types of sustainability have been discussed in relation to both the current and future state of project management. With regard to sustainability, many points about project management were discussed in the interviews; for example, decision making and responsibility for project management, as well as arranging and completing sustainability projects with consistent planning and implementation, as well as what can be predicted and how to deal with it. Without project management, no type of sustainability can be applied, and these two aspects are the main pivots of change in any NPO in Saudi Arabia.

2.3.4 Leadership in NPOs

Leadership is the most important aspect with regard to implementing SPM in NPOs. Leaders can interface the new topic such as SPM while integrating sustainability into project management. They are also responsible for securing the best deal that can work with SPM and how NPOs can achieve their vision by implementing SPM. Leaders can influence the board of directors' decisions in NPOs by overlapping sustainability with project management to allow the top management to develop their plans and strategies in line with SPM. In addition, leaders can provide training and courses to assist staff members in merging sustainability into project management in NPOs. Leaders can impact NPOs positively or negatively depending on their knowledge and skills to achieve SPM. Indeed, some leaders might have limited

knowledge as well as skills in SPM, such as environmental sustainability, waste management, and alternative power. Hence, NPOs could severely struggle to complete their project management in terms of both fixed and variable costs. In contrast, leaders who come from social backgrounds and have social experience might have a significant positive impact on the performance of NPOs. Overall, knowledge and skills are the main factors in leadership that help to effectively integrate SPM in NPOs.

According to the questionnaire responses, participants, in their management capacities, were the only authority to change the process from one way to another. They found new ways to integrate sustainability into their project management by enhancing staff training and implementing appropriate project management. Some questions in the descriptive recorded participants' selections with high percentages (i.e. a Likert scale measurement between 'strongly agree' and 'agree'). For example, with regard to determining whether the project manager influences all project plans and strategies in the NPOs, a high proportion of participants chose 'strongly agree' or 'agree'. Moreover, many participants responded similarly with regard to the leadership's commitment to integrating sustainability into project management.

Likewise, the interview answers showed that leadership meant leaders applying sustainability into their project management to improve operations in NPOs. To elaborate further, this section examines the concept of leadership in light of the triple bottom line as follows. *First*, in environmental sustainability, many leaders have limited knowledge, as the mixed method analysis has shown. For some leaders, cleaner energy is still new in Saudi Arabia. This explains why the Saudi Government arranged with the US to shift into solar power in October 2022, Khalil (2022). Other interviewees had heard about alternative power, but they worried about future maintenance issues and high initial purchase costs. As a result, leaders need to implement environmental sustainability into project management in a way that saves costs and makes maintenance easy in the future. *Second*, in social sustainability, leaders implemented it in their project management by engaging internal and external

stakeholders. Thus, they created a plan to help NPO leaders avoid any issues in the future. Also, they realised what holistic stakeholders needed and how to achieve it by following the right procedures. Generally, the board of NPO directors aims to assist the community and offer social programmes to serve it for a long time without obstacles. Therefore, when managers integrate sustainability into social projects, they focus on the different needs of society and involve them from the start to plan according to those needs. This helps to resolve future problems that may cause conflict with the community. Also, developing projects which do not meet their needs or deviate from the planning goals are solved by correction and improvement. *Third*, in economic sustainability, leaders work to overlap economic sustainability with project management, following the Saudi Government's reduction of funds from 100% to 27% (First Voluntary National Review *Towards Saudi Arabia's Sustainable Tomorrow*, 2018).

Based on the mixed method analysis, many leaders in economic sustainability focus on two key concerns: income generation and cost management. Increasing income allows them to survive as NPOs. For example, many NPOs received less donations from government and thus asked funders to increase their contributions. Other NPOs established investment properties to cover the costs of the organisation, or connected with investment offices to guide them with regard to their budget. Although leaders may call for the fund to be expanded, they worry about reducing costs. In this case, they reduce anything that negatively affects the budget. For example, some leaders changed work shifts from full time to part time. Also, they used alternative power and moved online instead of using paper. When they integrated sustainability into economically sustainable projects, NPO leaders were concerned about two issues. The first was how to create investment projects that support the community for a long time, and the second were the tools and methods that can be used to reduce fixed and variable future costs.

This is why many authors in the SLR agreed that leadership impacts on project management in NPOs. Leadership is an important factor in construction project management

factors in particular, as it can improve project managers' knowledge, skills, and competencies, which are essential to achieve project targets (Banihashemi *et al.* 2017). Consequently, it can improve the whole project management by overlapping with sustainability. Yazici (2020) argued that the integration of sustainability practices (stakeholder management, time management, quality management, communication, and human resource management knowledge areas) into project management can potentially assist project managers in achieving success in their projects. In NPOs that are unable to complete their work, they realise that the implementation of sustainability into project management could invigorate the entire organisation. In fact, leaders explore the improvement of project management across the entire triple bottom line.

In the end, leadership is one of the primary targets to improve NPOs' performance when integrating sustainability into project management. Leaders are able to establish a strategy or edit the current strategy to add sustainability into project management. Also, they can transfer the plan from a theoretical basis to a practical basis in NPO project management.

2.3.5 SPM in the Project Life Cycle

Project life cycle means organising and improving the process of SPM in NPOs from beginning to end. It is divided into four stages: initial stage, planning stage, execution stage, and closure stage. During the project life cycle, the SPM could be implemented by considering these four stages to improve the process of distributing responsibilities among staff.

In the online descriptive, the majority of participants approved the introduction of some details in each stage of the project life cycle while integrating sustainability in project management. In the initial stage, participants said that project managers could develop a broad vision and future plans to be sustainable. Similarly, they expressed their commitment to implement sustainability when designing project management. Here, project managers can provide some KPIs to measure project management. In the planning stage, many participants said that top management needed to engage stakeholders to achieve the plan. Additionally,

they signalled the need for designing procurement routes regarding SPM requirements. In the execution stage, some requirements were examined to shift the project from theory to practice. Accordingly, many participants realised the importance of this transfer, and its impact in the executive stage. Finally, in the closure stage, some indicators are needed to improve it.

In the interview analysis, the interviewees considered the overlap of sustainability and project management in the four phases of the project life cycle. They followed these stages to achieve two key goals: to apply project management based on agreement and to consider the quality from the beginning to the end. For instance, interviewee A16 clarified the process of a project life cycle in their NPO by using the plan in the beginning and then transferring from theoretical to practical alongside monitoring the SPM, and then closing the project with some measurements to decide if the project followed the plan or not. Besides this, B2 mentioned that sustainability must be in all phases of the project life cycle from planning, initial, monitoring, and closure; if it is not present from the beginning, it is not possible to obligate employees to implement sustainability into later project management phases.

Several studies have revealed that one way to structure SPM is to consider the different project phases (i.e. initiation, planning, execution, and closure) individually and the life cycle as a whole (Sabini *et al.*, 2019). To conclude this section, the project life cycle is essential to integrating sustainability into project management. The four stages help to improve the planning and operational management aspects until the application is completely carried out as planned. An example of their implementation is given by Robichaud and Anantatmula (2011), in their focus on cost constraints involved in the project of converting traditional buildings to green buildings by adding sustainability perspectives in four steps (feasibility study–design–implementation–closeout).

The interviewees mentioned that the project managers have to organise SPM during the fourth stage of the project life cycle. That tends to clarify the policy and process in NPOs. Also, the SPM life cycle could explore the responsibility to apply SPM in each stage of the

project life cycle, given their positions in NPOs. If there is a need for any update or editing during any of the steps of the project life cycle, only the leadership or directors should have permission to edit the stages. Table 6.4 below summarises the findings and discussion, which relies on the mixed method analysis, and links with the SLR.

Table 6.4: Project Management Discussion Content

Project Management	Leadership	Quantitative findings	Qualitative findings	Link with SLR
		SPM Life Cycle	Many of the answers from participants indicate strong agreement to application and development in their project management.	Several interviewees discussed how leadership can integrate SPM and then transfer from theoretical to practical SPM in NPOs.
			Several interviewees discussed project life cycle stages and organising the operation of SPM and clarity of responsibility among the staff in NPOs (A16, B2).	Robichaud and Anantatmula (2011); Sabini, Muzio and Alderman (2019).

2.3.6 The New Framework for Implementing SPM

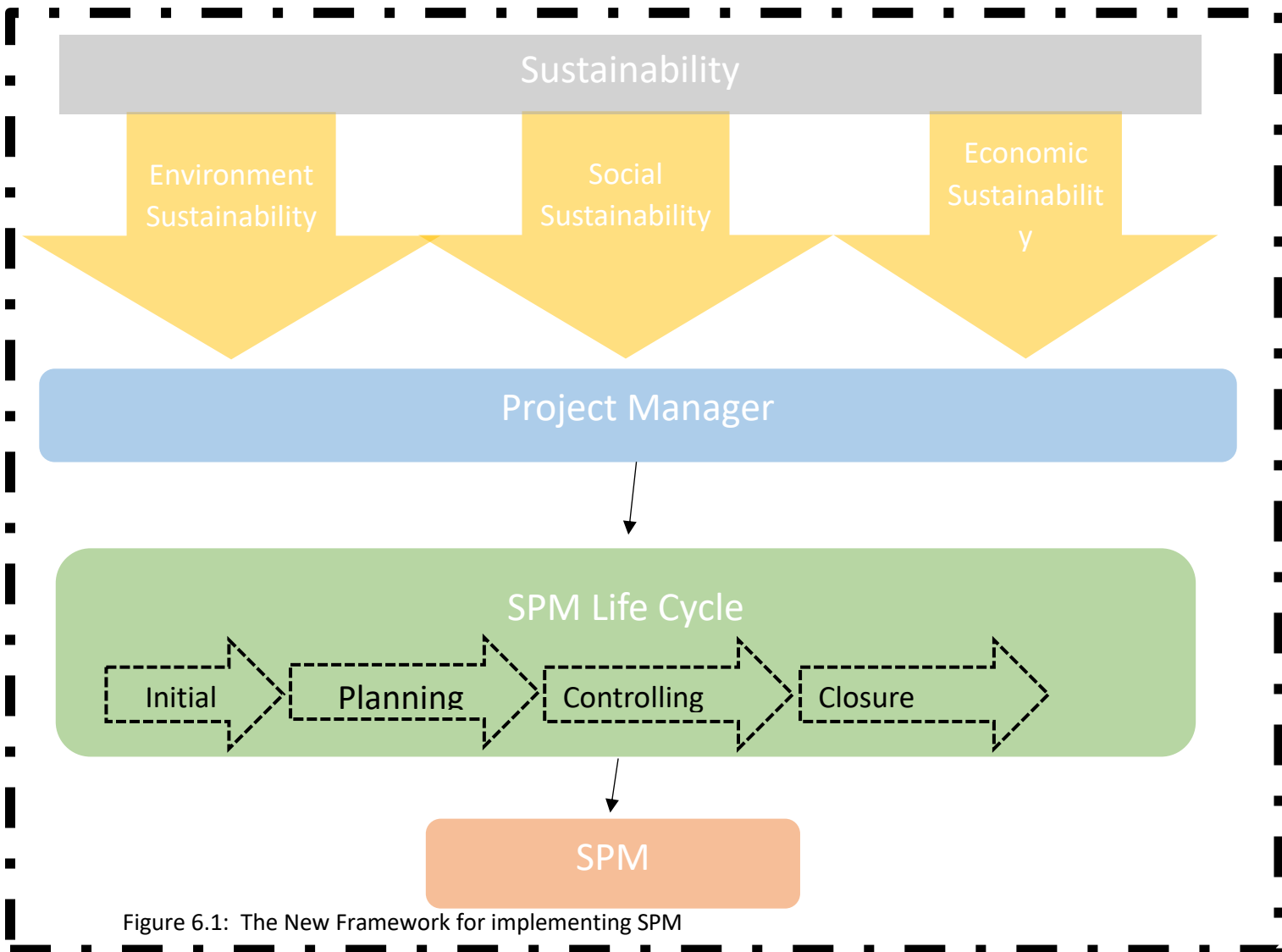


Figure 6.1: The New Framework for implementing SPM

This framework can guide NPOs in Saudi Arabia to implement the dimensions of sustainability, beginning with environmental sustainability, wherein NPOs can save natural resources by using alternative power and practising waste management, for example by depending on technology (using online accounts or email) rather than hard-copy prints. For

social sustainability, it helps to explain what internal and external stakeholders need and how to provide it for free. As for economic sustainability, the strategy and process can be implemented in NPOs in Saudi Arabia without any major issues; namely, by increasing income and saving cost. Besides these factors, leadership can guide and organise the steps of sustainability. What comes after leadership is the sustainability project life cycle that can organise the process of SPM from beginning to the end. It can also clarify responsibility among stakeholders and measure SPM in NPOs to examine whether the strategy that has been applied is as per the original plan, and whether any future edit or change is needed as well as how to implement it.

Discussion Summary

This summary chapter provided an account of the research undertaken in this study. It highlighted the key phases of the research that involved sustainability and project management phases in NPOs in Saudi Arabia. The outcomes were underpinned by a mixed analysis of descriptive questions and semi-structured interviews, consolidated by an SLR. SPM priorities were determined, which then informed subsequent phases of the research by helping to address the research questions and research objectives. Also, some future recommendations were proposed to monitor how contributions could benefit NPOs in Saudi Arabia.

Chapter 7: Conclusion

This chapter presents the theoretical and practical contributions of the present research. It guides policy implications in NPOs to integrate SPM effectively. Moreover, it highlights the research's limitations and proposes a number of recommendations for future work. Overall, this research explores the integration of sustainability in NPOs' project management in Saudi Arabia. It discusses the extent of integration and develops a framework that can be adopted by NPOs to ensure that sustainability is properly integrated into project management.

In terms of structure, this research is divided into seven chapters. Chapter 1 focuses on the background, aims, objectives, and research questions related to SPM in Saudi NPOs . Chapter 2 consists of a content-based analysis of the systematic literature review (SLR) on SPM. Chapter 3 justifies the use of a mixed research method and formulates the questions to address the research objectives and collect data in Saudi Arabia. Chapter 4 presents the descriptive analysis, while Chapter 5 discusses and analyses the interview findings. Chapter 6 discusses the key findings of the mixed analysis and then compares them with the existing literature. Finally, the present chapter concludes with answers to the research questions and provides policy implications to encourage NPOs to apply SPM in their organisations It highlights limitations and suggests directions for future research.

7.1 Discussion of the Research Questions

This section presents the answers to the research questions (RQs) put forward in Chapter 1.

2.3.1 What is the level of understanding the concept of ‘sustainability’ among project management employees of NPOs in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia?

The concept of SPM has been examined in the discussion section in Chapter 6. This SPM concept can be understood using the systematic literature review and mixed analysis.

1. In the begin, many authors in the systematic literature review focused on environmental sustainability in terms of structures, green buildings, and green project management (see Chapter 2). However, in the social sector, there have been limited studies in this field. For example, Tam (2010) is the only author to explain sustainability project management (SPM) as meaning to serve society (see Table 2.6). Therefore, project managers should learn about SPM from those three perspectives: environmental sustainability–social sustainability–economic sustainability.
2. The mixed analysis provides a different view of the SPM concept. Hence, based on the key findings from descriptives in NPOs of Saudi Arabia, participants in Non-profit Organisations (NPOs) understood SPM, following which they could increase their opportunities. Thus, it was a key business activity in NPOs in Saudi Arabia.
3. However, in the interview findings, project managers for NPOs in Saudi Arabia have limited knowledge of SPM; they believe that SPM refers to financial resources that is a part of economic sustainability.

In the end, knowledge of SPM significant impacts project management skills which, in turn, affects the strategy of NPOs. In terms of environmental sustainability, project managers are

required to recognise possible opportunities and their potential to benefit project management by reducing use of natural resources. Then, through social sustainability strong relationships are created with different requirements among stakeholders, Last, economic sustainability is about increasing funding and reducing costs.

2.3.2 How does the project management process play a role in integrating the principles of sustainability in Saudi Arabian NPOs?

The policy of SPM in Saudi Arabia is still largely unimplemented, because even though the Saudi Government prepared its Vision 2030, opportunities for NPOs to implement sustainability into their project management were not always available.

1. In the systematic literature review, several authors agreed that the government has a dominant role in implementing SPM within the country based on the clarification of the policy among organisations regarding the project of interest (Weerawardena *et al.*, 2010; Vifell *et al.*, 2012; Hwang *et al.*, 2017; Yuan 2017). However, regarding the policy in Saudi Arabia, regulations in NPOs continue to indicate a lack knowledge about sustainability in project management. According to a report by the King Khalid Foundation (2018), the policy among NPOs and in the government remains somewhat weak despite the fact that sustainability plays a part in all aspects of project management. The findings of the King Khalid Foundation's (2018) report confirm that there are issues in empowering NPOs, as well as the restrictive legislation for the NPO sector, and a striking lack of accurate, detailed information on NPOs.
2. According to the descriptive's findings (Microsoft Form Online), many participants from diverse NPOs had different SPM measurements and different implementation processes in their project management. Hence, participants applied SPM when they received policy direction from the

government, such as environmental sustainability, and sustainability policy.

3. Furthermore, in the findings from the interviews, a large number of project managers worked within certain limitations to serve their NPOs. For example, the majority of interviewees explained that financial support was suspended in 2017. This was due to the fact that the Saudi Government wanted to transfer NPOs from government dependency to independent (self-funded) status.

To conclude this part, policy in Saudi Arabia must create the tasks and duties while applying SPM, particularly in the following three aspects: 1) encourage NPOs to work without any restrictions from the Saudi Government—for example, with regard to investment and partnership; 2) provide facilities from the government, such as tax free, soft loans, and free real estate; and 3) dedicate more attention to providing online training to aid the staff in applying SPM in NPOs. The significance of the consideration of SPM due to in the Saudi Government’s Vision 2030 is that it has made certain commitments to make project management sustainable in the country’s public sector, private sector, and Non-profit Organisations (NPOs).

2.3.3 What is the current state and practice of SPM in Saudi Arabian NPOs?

The first research question aimed to examine the impact of knowledge of SPM on project management practices in NPOs in Saudi Arabia. The second discussed the country's SPM policy . Before discussing this research’s contributions, it would be helpful to consider some conditions that link SPM to NPOs in Saudi Arabia. However, the lack of knowledge about SPM impacts project management practices. This suggests that the project managers do not

know how to implement holistic sustainability in project management, and hence cannot apply it.

Other worthy considerations regarding the reorganisation of practical aspects in NPOs are divided into several conditions:

- 1- Environmental sustainability: NPOs have to understand the utility for their projects such as using solar power, using technology rather than hard paper copies, and recycling water. Such utilities can help toward realising Vision 2030.
- 2- Social sustainability: top management, or the highest level of authority in NPOs, have to create a strong relationship despite conflicting needs among internal and external stakeholders. Hence, it can provide for their needs and organise the responsibilities that will help towards applying SPM in NPOs.
- 3- Economic sustainability, where NPOs are required to diversify the job. For example, they can add workers who hold degrees in any type of management or investment management, or those who have good experience in the given field. Likewise, because governments add some priority when individuals or private sector entities work as volunteers in NPOs, the latter must take this opportunity to work through the project management process for zero cost.
- 4- Other requirements can aid NPOs in implementing SPM. For example, the Saudi Government could consider introducing policies that allow them to deal with NPOs with greater flexibility. For instance, they could give permission to invest more readily, while funders could assist NPOs to use available opportunities to increase their income.

Likewise, the private sector should support NPOs by teaching NPO staff, covering the cost of teaching them, or assisting them to increase their income, which is a part of social responsibility, and part of indirect support from the Saudi Government.

2.3.4 How can a strategic SPM model be developed for embedding sustainability into project management processes?

The framework in Figure 6.1 will guide any NPOs in Saudi Arabia to implement SPM. The first stage is recognising the opportunities to apply SPM (environmental sustainability, social sustainability, and economic sustainability) in NPOs for a range of activities. Second, the leadership in NPOs should synthesise the processing of SPM within the project life cycle from beginning to end. They should also clarify responsibility among stakeholders, and measure SPM in NPOs to examine whether the strategy that has been applied is as per the original plan, and whether any future edit or change is needed, as well as how to implement it. Moreover, the conceptual framework shown in Figure 6.1 represents a guide to implementing SPM in NPOs in Saudi Arabia.

7.2 Contributions

This section presents the theoretical and practical contributions made by this thesis to the areas of sustainability in project management/sustainable project management SPM. .

2.3.1 Theoretical contributions

This research interprets the implementation of SPM in NPOs of Saudi Arabia, relying on the policy which has already been explained in research question 2. The theory is explained in this part, followed by the practical aspects.

This section presents the theoretical and practical contributions of this thesis to the area of sustainability in project management/sustainable project management (SPM) in non-profit organisations (NPOs).

Overall, from the *theoretical* aspect, the systematic literature review (see Chapter 2) established that the trend has been for authors to focus on one type of SPM, which is environmental sustainability, across countries. Indeed, most publications have looked at green management, environmentally friendly buildings, and the construction industry. Some of the authors have combined economic sustainability with environmental sustainability. Hence, economic sustainability requires further investigation to understand the relationship between cost reduction and increased income, as well as financial performance in both profit and non-profit sector organisations.

In contrast, there is still limited knowledge about social sustainability internationally, which is a third dimension of sustainability. Meanwhile, publications regarding SPM in developing countries are still limited in their focus, which includes limited research on Saudi Arabia, whose government began executing its plan to achieve SPM by Vision 2030 across the whole project management spectrum, whether public, private, or non-profit organisations (NPOs).

The purpose of this research is to fill the gap of SPM in the social sector; specifically, NPOs in Saudi Arabia. Indeed, SPM in NPOs is a relatively new phenomenon worldwide, requiring systematic literature reviews, as SPM from previous studies generally focuses on environmental sustainability. SPM in Saudi NPOs receives significant attention due to the country's Muslim culture, as the religion can drive social responsibility, which is at the heart of the work done by NPOs. One target from Vision 2030 is integrated sustainability in all types of project management, whether public, private, or non-profit organisations (NPOs).

Most of the previous studies reviewed have adopted a single method approach, which has a number of inherent drawbacks. However, in the present study, a mixed methods approach was adopted to achieve its aims and objectives. This study applied a combined method of initially measuring the implementation of SPM in NPOs within Saudi Arabia through an online descriptive, and then by using semi-structured interviews. By analysing the

combined method, this research identifies key factors that can improve the overall project management of NPOs.

The extent to which key findings from the descriptive and interviews are applicable vary depending on the particular NPO, as well as the type of SPM. For example, income management falls under economic sustainability, and the participants in the mixed analysis had applied several plans to cover this element. Similarly, NPOs in Saudi Arabia have to clarify their strategies for involving SPM (environmental, social, economic) from the beginning to the end. In addition, NPOs need alternative plans to deal with future crises, such as lockdown because of COVID-19. For example, NPOs can transfer the work from the workplace to the employees' home by using online work. These suggestions can assist NPOs with current issues such as the Saudi Government's reduction in support since 2017, whereby NPOs have to find solutions to survive.

Finally, it investigates adoption of SPM with regard to two different aspects – *sustainability* (environmental and social-economic) and *project management* (leadership and the project life cycle) (see Figure 6.1).

2.3.2 Practical contributions and recommendations for SPM

This section explains how to implement sustainability in current or new project management within NPOs. Project managers should divide project management in NPOs into three dimensions of sustainability:

- **Before explaining the application of SPM in NPOs of Saudi Arabia, there are some elements which need to be implemented at the start.**

1- The strategy must be clear from the top management of NPOs in Saudi Arabia to apply SPM.

2- The alternative plan must be clear, so as to deal with any crises in the future.

3- If any unacceptable conflict between the strategy and implementation in NPOs exists, it is upon the board of directors to make a better decision to achieve their targets.

4- The policy from the Saudi Government must be clear with regard to the task and duties, whether inside or outside NPOs, such as enhancement of individuals and the private sector to expand their business or benefits, calculating volunteers' hours as credit for future needs, uniting the NPOs whatever their activities are under one ministry, and making NPOs completely independent without control from the Saudi Government.

- **In the practical contribution of SPM to NPOs:**

1- **Environmental sustainability:** this research discovered that the main issue within environmentally sustainable project management in Saudi Arabia is a lack of implementation of SPM in NPOs. According to the findings from the descriptive and interviews, project managers in the study had limited knowledge about the benefits of using environmental sustainability. Hence, their actions were the result of individual judgements. In the systematic literature review, insofar as project managers consider ecosystems within project management, the outcome is to reduce dependence on natural resources, reduce emissions, reduce waste, and raise the quality benchmarks. Therefore, environmental sustainability indicates the need to make positive modifications in project management based on three main elements:

i) *Alternative power:* use solar power to tackle the current issue of the high cost of classic power, or shift from the current classic power to solar power. Initially, this can be expensive compared to the more traditional methods of generating power, but will be cheaper than classic power in the long term. The Saudi Government is obliging the public and private sectors, as well as NPOs, to switch to modern solar power by 2030 (Reuters, 2021).

ii) *Waste management*: one suggestion is that technology can be used instead of traditional media, such as printing on paper. This will inevitably save cost and effort (e.g., saving folders and documents online/cloud/learning online, as explained).

iii) *Recycling water*: one of the proposals is using waste water from mosques' sinks to water trees. In fact, on 17 June 2021, the Saudi Government introduced a law requiring all sectors to plant trees to increase vegetation cover, and combat desertification to contribute to the fight against climate change (Saudi Press Agency, 2021). Hence, previous studies indicate that environmental sustainability can have a positive influence on project management.

- 2- **Social sustainability**: this research facilitates the interconnection of complex phenomena among all stakeholders in socially sustainable project management. This is necessary to develop and explain what is required in order to achieve the deliverables or outcomes sought. Here, strong communication with all stakeholders assists in mitigating risks and issues as NPOs move towards independence from the Saudi Government (King Khalid Foundation, 2021). It has been shown from previous studies in the systematic literature review that an efficient way to achieve SPM, particularly social sustainability, is understanding the stakeholders' needs. Also, one of solutions to improve the skills among all stakeholders is to provide training and learning opportunities for them.

Indeed, social sustainability has two key points. *First*, internal stakeholders must consider any project that is set up. They must adopt sustainability and establish how to deal with it in the long term, as well as any expectations that may arise in the future, and determine alternatives available in the event of changes. Furthermore, employees may require training to implement SPM with a higher level of efficiency, as required by external stakeholders (this is a new policy from the Saudi Government as part of Vision 2030). Regarding

internal stakeholders, all staff require continual professional development training, which the Saudi Government provides free of charge in a number of different subject areas (Zaidh, 2021). Furthermore, Zaidh (2021) agrees that training can improve the project management process in NPOs.

Second, external stakeholders are required to know the needs of both the community and representatives of government agencies and supporters, as well as how to deal with them. For example, if a community is unable to pay its bills, NPOs can act as an intermediary between the government and the community to provide these services for free. What is unique is that sustainability depends on the project's work in the long term.

Project managers who work for NPOs have to expand and develop their working relationships with different authorities and stakeholders (governments, community, funders, volunteers, staff in NPOs). This will improve the services between stakeholders, and it could increase the efficiency and quality through a mutual understanding of what is required. Based on Saudi Government policy (2019) and *The Kingdom shares the world's celebration of "lovers of giving"* (2021), it can be argued that the new system of volunteers in Saudi Arabia encourages people to join NPOs by understanding the volunteer's duties, worktime in NPOs, and clarifying the consequences after work in NPOs.

- 3- **Economic sustainability:** The purpose of this research is to discover the extent of actual economic sustainability of NPOs in Saudi Arabia. In the systematic literature review, several authors clarified economic sustainability between saving on costs and expanding the income that leads to SPM. Otherwise, in the mixed findings, the outcomes indicated that all participants believed that the main challenges they face while implementing SPM in NPOs are fixed variables, and future cost, and then increasing funding. In this regard, project managers must diversify investment to increase income, as well as find ways to reduce the budget for fixed

and variable costs. In order to survive, NPOs need to complete their project management.

Economic sustainability consists of two elements. *First*, it increases income, whilst it is necessary to provide jobs in order to specialise in investment management or contracts within investment offices to identify the best investment opportunities. Added to this is seeking support for these opportunities within the private sector as a social responsibility, which comes from indirect government support (NPOs). *Second*, it helps to reduce costs. Project managers at NPOs must reduce financial waste in a variety of ways. For example, one of the suggestions explained that reducing work from full time to part time, together with searching for supporters, helps cover fixed costs or costs related to investment.

Furthermore, the Saudi Government is providing non-monetary rewards for volunteers to work in NPOs. One of the proposals mentioned that there has been the need for salaries as incentives, and that the private sector has now been allowed to cover the salaries of NPO employees. In return, the government has given volunteers and corporate supporters special benefits.

To conclude, the significance of implementation of SPM in NPOs of Saudi Arabia is that NPOs need to integrate sustainability into their project management to:

- 1- Assist the policy makers in Saudi Arabia which has already set out Vision 2030, meaning integrating sustainability project management (SPM) in public, private, and NPO sectors in Saudi Arabia (First Voluntary National Review Towards Saudi Arabia's Sustainable Tomorrow, 2018; King Khalid Foundation, 2018, a 2021).

- 2- Survive as NPOs given the reduction of support in 2017 from 100% to 27% as the maximum (King Khalid Foundation, 2018).
- 3- Discover alternative income rather than depending on Zakat (2.5% yearly from a Muslim's wealth) or other donations.
- 4- Assist the Saudi Government to increase the number of NPOs from less than 1% to 5% to achieve Vision 2030. Also, increase Gross Domestic Product (GDP) from 0.13% to 5% (Balkhi, 2017; King Khalid Foundation, 2018; Wag Spa, 2022).

- **What are the implications for SPM in Saudi NPOs?**

This research can inform and help NPOs in Saudi Arabia to manage the transition following the cut in support from the government since 2017. By guiding the new conceptual framework can distribute the responsibilities and duties in NPOs, and it could divide the work based on the staff's position in NPOs. Religious beliefs can also reinforce these values (Zakat-volunteers). These high moral standards can be leveraged to supporting SPM efforts to enhance and sustain quality of services in this important sector.

The lack of research on how to facilitate SPM in different sectors, in addition to the clear aim of Saudi NPOs to cooperate with Saudi Vision 2030, increases the significance of this research. Adopting a mixed methods approach by engaging participants in all phases of developing the framework increases its potential to transfer a positive impact into the real world.

Any NPO in Saudi Arabia that is trying to cope with the Saudi Government's cuts to support since 2017 can benefit from this study. The duties in NPO organisational structures can be distributed by directing the new conceptual framework, and new conceptual framework may split the work depending on the staff members' positions within the NPOs. Religious convictions can support these principles (Zakat—volunteers). The SPM's efforts to improve and maintain the quality of services in this crucial area can be aided by these high moral standards.

Beyond the obvious goals of Saudi NPOs to support Saudi Vision 2030, there is a dearth of research on how to facilitate SPM in various third sectors (NPOs), which strengthens the significance of this study. Its potential for generalisability is increased by using a mixed methodology and including participants in all stages in constructing the framework.

7.3 Limitations

The current research is not exempt from limitations. *First*, due to the global COVID-19 pandemic, data collection was challenging. This could be specifically attributed to related international travel restrictions (no site visits were carried out during this research).

The pandemic also hindered the researcher from organising face-to-face interviews. Thus, the majority of interviews were conducted by telephone or through online meetings. Face-to-face interviews could have helped strengthen the depth of interviews and increase the number of interviews, but the whole country was in lockdown for more than eight months (before moving to 25%–50% capacity in the workplace). *Second*, during COVID-19, some NPOs were closed, although interviews were still attempted in order to clarify the specific reason for the closure (for example, bankruptcy). However, no NPOs agreed to participate in an interview when they were closed. *Third*, the majority of interviewees were not business graduates, but almost entirely graduates of the Social Sciences or Islamic studies. In this case if someone had a level of education in a management or project management major, they could find a better answer based on their subjects of study. *Fourth*, because of issues that arose during distribution of questionnaires, there was a need to distribute them in multiple locations within the study area to make up for the resultant shortfall in valid responses. Despite this, the study was unable to cover all NPOs (of different sizes) in Saudi Arabia that could provide unique responses. It was difficult to find people sufficiently qualified to satisfy the requirements of the research in one location. *Fifth*, the Saudi Government regularly changes the rules for NPOs. For example, regarding interviewees, any investment in project

management from NPOs must be approved by the government before its commencement. This has led to a delay in investment which has made it difficult for NPOs to work in this field.

7.4 Directions for Future Research

The present research opens the door for future research in the area of SPM. *First*, one of the research's aims was to interpret the integration of sustainability into project management in the third sector, i.e. NPOs in Saudi Arabia; therefore, it would be interesting for future research to be carried out to investigate SPM in other sectors such as profit organisations and governments.

Second, the current study gives further validation and credibility to the use of mixed methods as it is both a quantitative and a qualitative study. This approach was followed in order to obtain a variety of results while focusing on one method a quantitative or qualitative study.

Third, the findings also presents the possibility of extending this research by examining private and public sectors in Saudi Arabia by relying on the researchers' targets which will highlight a different consequence .

Fourth, this research was written during the COVID-19 pandemic. Therefore, the post-COVID impact on SPM could be an interesting area for research. Project managers in NPOs should now be aware of crisis management and how to deal with global and local crises, whether short term or long term.

Fifth, the present research has focused on NPOs in Saudi Arabia, so there are gaps regarding cultural differences in SPM. Different countries across the Gulf region or in other parts of the Middle East with differing cultural backgrounds may have different attitudes towards adopting SPM. For example, the Saudi Government' Vision 2030 has a supportive attitude towards SPM and encourages companies in all sectors to use it.

Sixth, this study shows that NPOs in Saudi Arabia are still in the early stages of development, and that they can improve performance of project management before the Vision is completed in 2030.

Finally, sustainability still has limited knowledge in other types of management in NPOs of Saudi Arabia such as sustainability supply chain management.

7.5 Concluding Remarks

Within my four-year PhD programme, I had the chance to investigate SPM in NPOs and explore how it could be implemented through SPM in NPOs within Saudi Arabia. I completed this research by basing it on the existing literature and interviewing practitioners in NPOs. I hope that it can provide other researchers and practitioners with further thoughts and views about SPM implementation, particularly at the current early stages. I believe that SPM has a promising future for facilitating better NPO performance and it may improve the associated policy in Saudi governance. More research can be carried out to expand this promising research domain.

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Chapter 9: Appendices

9.1 Appendix 1:

Research Methodology Question:

Questionnaire

Exploring the integration of sustainability in project management within the Saudi Arabian non-profit organisations (NPO) sector

Dear Participant

My name is Mohammed Alharithi and I am a PhD student at the University of Southampton, UK. I would be very thankful if you can complete this questionnaire please, which should take about 7-8 minutes of your time. This doctoral research study aims to explore to what extent sustainability is integrated into project management practices of non-profit organisations in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

Participation in this research study is voluntary and you are allowed to withdraw from it at any time by informing the researcher at the contact details below. The data gathered and processed in this research will be kept confidential and handled in compliance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). All the data will be saved in a password protected location and only the researcher and the supervisors will have access to it. The analysis of the data and findings will be reported in an anonymous way, so that no personal details of the research participants are shown in any of the research outputs.

Please complete the questionnaire by 1st September 2020. If you have any question or issue, please contact me by email or telephone as set out below.

Yours sincerely

Mohammed Hussain Alharithi

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Supervisors: Dr. Jack Gong, Dr. Serkan Ceylan, Prof. Steve Brown

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12 University Road, Highfield, Southampton, SO17 1BJ, UK

A. Background information

NPO name:

Your Job title: **Department in NPO:**

Number of years associated with NGO **Qualification**

B. Level of understanding of ‘sustainability’ among employees of NPOs involved in project management

1. Are you aware of the concept of ‘Sustainability’?

هل مصطلح الاستدامة معروف:

- Yes نعم
- No لا
- To some extent مستحيل
- Not sure غير متأكد

2. Which pillar of sustainability is most important for your NPO?

أي

عنصر من الاستدامة مهم في المنظمات الغير ربحية

- Environmental. البيئة

- Social. المجتمع
- Economic. الاقتصاد
- All three. الكل

3. Do you think your NPO is aware of the potential risks associated with sustainability in project management?

هل تعتقد أن المنظمات الغير ربحية الخاص بك على دراية بالمخاطر المحتملة المرتبطة بالاستدامة في إدارة المشروع؟

- Yes نعم
- No لا
- To some extent مستحيل
- Not sure غير متأكد

4. Do you think your NPO is aware of the opportunities associated with sustainability in project management?

هل تعتقد أن المنظمات الغير ربحية الخاص بك على دراية بالفرص المرتبطة بالاستدامة في إدارة المشروع؟

- Yes نعم
- No لا
- To some extent مستحيل
- Not sure غير متأكد

C. Current state of sustainability in the project management practices of NPOs

ج- الوضع الحالي للاستدامة في ممارسات إدارة المشاريع الخاصة بالمنظمات غير الربحية

5. Do you think that project management has a role in delivering sustainability?

هل تعتقد أن إدارة المشروع لها دور في تحقيق الاستدامة

- Yes نعم
- No لا
- To some extent مستحيل
- Not sure غير متأكد

6. There is commitment to integrate sustainability in project management in my NPO.

هل هناك التزام بدمج الاستدامة في إدارة المشاريع في المنظمات الغير ربحية الخاص بي

- Yes نعم
- No لا
- To some extent مستحيل
- Not sure غير متأكد

7. Does your NPO have a publicly available sustainability strategy?

هل لدى المنظمات الغير ربحية استراتيجية استدامة متاحة للجمهور

- Yes نعم
- Under development تحت التطوير
- No لا
- Do not know لا أعلم

8. Which of the following policies does your NPO have? (Please tick all that apply)

(أي من السياسات التالية يمتلكها المنظمات الغير ربحية الخاص بك؟ (يرجى تحديد كل ما ينطبق

1. Environmental policy سياسة البيئية
2. Sustainability policy سياسة الاستدامة
3. Waste management policy سياسة النفايات
5. Travel and transport policy سياسة النقل والمواصلات
6. Water management policy سياسة إدارة المياه
7. Sustainable procurement policy سياسة المشتريات المستدامة
8. Biodiversity policy سياسة التنوع البيولوجي
9. None لاشيء مما سبق

10. Any other (Please mention)أخرى

9. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements? (Please tick the option that applies)

؟ إلى أي مدى توافق أو لا توافق على العبارات التالية

Statements صياغات أو التباين	Strongly Agree أويد بقوه	Agree موافق	Neither Agree nor Disagree محايد	Disagree غير موافق	Strongly Disagree رافض بقوه
Sustainability is integrated into the NPO's strategic plan/organisational strategy. تم دمج الاستدامة في الخطة الإستراتيجية / الإستراتيجية . التنظيمية للمنظمات الغير ربحية .					
The leadership/senior management is fully committed to sustainability agenda of the NPO. تلتزم القيادة / الإدارة العليا تمامًا بجدول أعمال الاستدامة الخاص بالمنظمات الغير ربحية .					
Sustainability is key to the business activities and decision making of the NPO.					

<p>الاستدامة هي مفتاح الأنشطة التجارية واتخاذ القرار في المنظمة غير الربحية.</p>					
<p>The NPO provides sufficient financial and managerial resources for the implementation of sustainability in projects.</p> <p>يوفر المنظمات الغير ربحية موارد مالية وإدارية كافية لتنفيذ الاستدامة في المشاريع.</p>					
<p>Current organisational structure for implementing sustainability strategies in project management is effective.</p> <p>الهيكل التنظيمي الحالي لتنفيذ استراتيجيات الاستدامة في إدارة المشاريع فعال.</p>					
<p>There are effective procedures and knowledge in NPO for measuring the carbon footprint.</p> <p>هناك إجراءات ومعرفة فعالة في المنظمات الغير ربحية لقياس البصمة الكربونية.</p>					
<p>The NPO measures the impact of project outcomes on the society.</p>					

يقيس المنظمات الغير ربحية تأثير نتائج المشروع على المجتمع.					
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10. Who has the operational responsibility for implementing sustainability in projects within your NPO?

من يتحمل المسؤولية التشغيلية لتنفيذ الاستدامة في المشاريع داخل المنظمات الغير ربحية الخاص بك؟

11. In which of the following areas does your NPO ensure that strategies are developed for sustainability of projects? (Please tick that mergad)

في أي من المجالات التالية ، يضمن المنظمات الغير ربحية أن الاستراتيجيات قد تم تطويرها لاستدامة (المشاريع؟) يرجى وضع علامة على هذا المرقد

Sustainability Theme	Sustainability areas	Yes	No	Do not know
عناصر الاستدامة	فروع الاستدامة	نعم	لا	غير متأكد
Environment البيئة	Carbon emissions (انبعاثات الغاز)			
	Energy consumption استهلاك الطاقة			
	Waste and recycling النفايات وإعادة التدوير			
	Water			

	المياه			
	Travel and transportation السفر والمواصلات			
	Procurement and supply chain سلسلة التوريد والمشتريات			
	Biodiversity التنوع البيولوجي			
Social المجتمع	Employees' engagement مشاركة الموظفين			
	Health and safety الصحة و السلامة			
	Community engagement المشاركة المجتمعية			
	Relationships with suppliers العلاقات مع الموردين			
	Training and education التدريب والتعليم			
	Quality of life جودة الحياة			
Economic الاقتصاد	Cost management ادارة التكاليف			
	Financial and economic performance الأداء المالي والاقتصادي			
	Income generation			

	توليد الدخل			
	Profitability الربحية			

12. Is there an integration of sustainability in the project management processes of NPO?

هل هناك تكامل للاستدامة في عمليات إدارة مشروع المنظمات الغير ربحية

- Yes نعم
- No لا
- To some extent مستحيل
- Not sure غير متأكد

13. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements related to sustainability in each phase of project management? (Please tick the option that applies)

إلى أي مدى توافق أو لا توافق على العبارات التالية المتعلقة بالاستدامة في كل مرحلة من مراحل إدارة المشروع؟

Project management phase	Statement	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
	مفاهيم	أوافق بقوة	مؤيد	محايد	غير موافق	معارض او رافض بقوة
مراحل إدارة المشروع Initiation الإدخال	Project manager influences in the initial stage of the project, providing an					

	<p>holistic view and long-term orientation of sustainability.</p> <p>يؤثر مدير المشروع في المرحلة الأولى من المشروع ، مما يوفر نظرة شاملة وتوجيهًا طويل المدى للاستدامة.</p>					
	<p>There is emphasis on sustainability in the project design stage.</p> <p>هناك تأكيد على الاستدامة في مرحلة تصميم المشروع.</p>					
	<p>The NPO has set KPIs to measure sustainability performance of its projects in a holistic way.</p> <p>حددت المنظمات الغير ربحية مؤشرات الأداء الرئيسية لقياس أداء الاستدامة لمشاريعها بطريقة شاملة.</p>					
<p>Planning التخطيط</p>	<p>NPO engages local community and society to</p>					

	<p>plan the project and its deliverables.</p> <p>المجتمع NPO يُشرك المحلي والمجتمع لتخطيط المشروع ونواتجه.</p>					
	<p>NPO designs better procurement routes in projects to consider the environmental dimension.</p> <p>بتصميم طرق NPO يقوم شراء أفضل في المشاريع لمراعاة البعد البيئي.</p>					
<p>Execution التنفيذ أو المعالجة</p>	<p>NPO considers sustainable indicators for the execution phase of projects.</p> <p>تعتبر منظمة غير ربحية مؤشرات مستدامة لمرحلة تنفيذ المشاريع.</p>					
	<p>Sustainable capabilities can change due to the impact of dynamic variables: technological advancement and people perceptions.</p>					

	<p>يمكن أن تتغير القدرات المستدامة بسبب تأثير المتغيرات الديناميكية: التقدم التكنولوجي وتصورات الناس.</p>					
	<p>Sustainability practices in project management are regularly monitored.</p> <p>تم مراقبة ممارسات الاستدامة في إدارة المشاريع بانتظام.</p>					
<p>Closure الإخراج أو الإغلاق</p>	<p>Introduction of a Mine Closure Model (MCM) based on PM principles, to manage the closure process and assist the governing body with the sustainable asset life cycle management.</p> <p>تقديم نموذج إغلاق على أساس (MCM) المناجم مبادئ إدارة الأصول ، لإدارة عملية الإغلاق ومساعدة الهيئة الإدارية في إدارة دورة حياة الأصول المستدامة</p>					

<p>NPO considers sustainable indicators for the decommissioning phase of the project.</p> <p>تعتبر منظمة غير ربحية مؤشرات مستدامة لمرحلة إيقاف تشغيل المشروع.</p>					
<p>Status of project sustainability is shared with external and internal stakeholders of the NGO.</p> <p>تتم مشاركة حالة استدامة المشروع مع أصحاب المصلحة الخارجيين والداخليين في المنظمات غير الحكومية.</p>					

D. Drivers and Barriers to Sustainable Project Management

14. What are the drivers for sustainable project management in your NGO? (Please rate the below factors according to their level of importance): 1 = Not important, 5 = Very important

ما هي دوافع الإدارة المستدامة للمشروع في منطمتك غير الحكومية؟ (يرجى تقييم العوامل التالية وفقًا لمستوى أهميتها)، 1 = غير مهم، 5 = مهم جدًا

Drivers الدوافع					
Climate change تغير المناخ					
Doing the right thing فعل الشيء الصحيح					
Motivation of the individual project manager تحفيز مدير المشروع الفردى					
Comply with policies and regulations الامتثال للسياسات واللوائح					
Stakeholders' pressure ضغط أصحاب المصلحة					
Internal policies السياسات الداخلية					
Increase in project quality زيادة جودة المشروع					
Cost savings توفير التكاليف					
Long-term project success نجاح المشروع على المدى الطويل					

Enhanced reputation سمعة محسنة					
Healthier and comfortable environment for people بيئة صحية ومريحة للناس					
Responding to criticism in the media الرد على النقد في وسائل الإعلام					

15. What are the barriers to sustainable project management for your NPO? (Please rate the below factors according to their level of importance): 1 = Not important, 5 = Very important

ما هي العوائق التي تحول دون الإدارة المستدامة للمشروع لمنطقتك غير الربحية؟ (يرجى تقييم العوامل التالية وفقاً لمستوى أهميتها) ، 1 = غير مهم ، 5 = مهم جداً

Barriers الحواجز					
Lack of knowledge and understanding نقص المعرفة والعلم					
Lack of funding and resources نقص التمويل والموارد					
Low Return on Investments عائد منخفض على الاستثمارات					
Lack of time قلة الوقت					

Lack of leadership قلة القيادة					
Stakeholder engagement مشاركة أصحاب المصلحة					
Lack of policy عدم وجود سياسة					
Priority to core business الأولوية للأعمال الأساسية					
Priority to triple bottom line (time, cost, quality) الأولوية للربح الثلاثي (الوقت ، التكلفة ، الجودة)					
Lack of technological infrastructure نقص البنية التحتية التكنولوجية					
Any other (Please mention) أخرى (يرجى ذكره)					

16. Identify the stage of sustainability implementation in project management of your NPO.

؟الخاص بك NPO تحديد مرحلة تنفيذ الاستدامة في إدارة مشروع

- لا توجد خطة لاعتمادها الآن وفي المستقبل . No plan for adoption now and in future .

- Will adopt in the future. ستعتمد في المستقبل
- Recent and ongoing implementation. التنفيذ الأخير والمستمر
- Made significant progress in implementation. أحرزت تقدما كبيرا في التنفيذ

17. Please add any further suggestions comments related to sustainable project management in NPOs in Saudi Arabia.

الرجاء إضافة أي تعليقات اقتراحات أخرى تتعلق بالإدارة المستدامة للمشاريع في المنظمات غير الربحية في المملكة العربية السعودية؟

Thank you for completing this questionnaire

Interview Protocol

1- Are you aware of the concept of 'sustainability' or 'sustainable development'?

هل أنت على دراية بمفهوم "الاستدامة" أو "التنمية المستدامة" مجموعة تعريفات في ملف ترجمة إدارة المشاريع

2- How would you define sustainability?

كيف تعرف الاستدامة

3- What does sustainable project management (SPM) mean to you in the context of NPOs?

؟ ماذا تعني الاستدامة بالنسبة لك في سياق المنظمة غير الربحية

4- Which of the three pillars of sustainability (or all three) does your NPO address? And how?

؟ أي من الركائز الثلاث للاستدامة (أو الثلاثة جميعها) تخاطب المنظمة غير الربحية؟ وكيف

5- Is sustainability integrated into strategic and operational decision making during project management? If not, why not?

؟ هل الاستدامة مدمجة في صنع القرار الاستراتيجي والتشغيلي أثناء إدارة المشروع؟ إذا لم يكن كذلك ، فلماذا

6- Who has the responsibility to implement sustainability in project management of your NPO?

؟ من يتحمل مسؤولية تنفيذ الاستدامة في إدارة مشروع المنظمات الغير ربحية الخاص بك

7- How would you comment on the leadership for integrating sustainability in project management within your NPO?

؟ كيف تعلق على القيادة لدمج الاستدامة في إدارة المشاريع داخل المنظمة غير الربحية الخاصة بك

8- Who are your stakeholders? Are all the relevant stakeholders engaged for sustainable project management? If not, why not? How do you engage them?

من هم أصحاب المصلحة؟ هل تم إشراك جميع أصحاب المصلحة المعنيين من أجل الإدارة المستدامة للمشروع؟ إذا لم يكن كذلك ، فلماذا؟ كيف تشركهم

9- How do you integrate sustainability in all the phases of the project management process (Initiation, Planning, Execution and Closure—whole life cycle of the project)?

كيف تدمج الاستدامة في جميع مراحل عملية إدارة المشروع (البدء والتخطيط والتنفيذ والإغلاق - دورة الحياة الكاملة للمشروع)؟

10- What are the drivers for sustainable project management in your NGO?

ما هي دوافع الإدارة المستدامة للمشروع في منطقتك غير الحكومية؟

11- What are the barriers to sustainable project management for your NPO?

ما هي العوائق التي تحول دون الإدارة المستدامة للمشروع لمنطقتك غير الربحية؟
أهم عائق جائحة كورونا إدارة المخاطر

12- What are the critical success factors for integrating sustainability into project management (if there are any)?

ما هي عوامل النجاح الحاسمة لدمج الاستدامة في إدارة المشروع (إن وجدت القيادة- اتخاذ القرار- المسؤول المباشر للمشروع - أصحاب المصلحة)؟

13- Is there anything further that you would like to state with regards to integrating sustainability in project management of your NPO?

هل هناك أي شيء آخر تود ذكره فيما يتعلق بدمج الاستدامة في إدارة مشروع الخاص بالمنظمة الغير ربحية

Thank you.

Survey Questions in Microsoft Team:

<https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=-XhTSvQpPk2->

[iWadA62p2OZMO6bBSM9BohvdGNq-0JtUMFZIUe1TT1NESjFOVINVRU9PTIcyVldJSS4u](https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=-XhTSvQpPk2-iWadA62p2OZMO6bBSM9BohvdGNq-0JtUMFZIUe1TT1NESjFOVINVRU9PTIcyVldJSS4u)

Date: 26 July 2020

Whom It May Concern

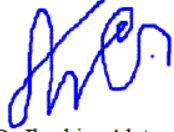
Re: Alharithi Mohammed (PhD Student at the University of Southampton)

Mr Alharithi has asked for being engaged in his survey collecting data for completing a PhD, which I was glad to participate and deeply considered the content of the provided, mixed method (structured & open questions as interviews), materials particular regarding translation to Arabic. As I understood this was regarding: (I) examining the understanding of sustainability in Saudi NPOs; (II) exploring the character of integrating sustainability; (III) analyzing the present sustainability. (IV) discovering the drivers and barriers of sustainability and (V) developing a framework for that.

I understand that Mr Alharithi needs this in order to provide it to his supervision team. Therefore I am happy to support his request since he has shown acceptable materials and confident that he is able to go further in completing and obtaining good results.

Should you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely



Dr Ibrahim Alatawi

Head of Accounting Department

College of Business and Administration

Albaha University, Saudi Arabia,1988

Email: ialatawi@bu.edu.sa



Date: 8 December 2020

Whom It May Concern

Mr Alharithi has asked me to participate in his study collecting data for completing a PhD, which I was please to participate and deeply considered the content of the provided, mixed method, materials particular regarding translation to Arabic. I understand that Mr Alharithi needs this in order to provide it to his supervision team. Therefore I am happy to support his request since he has shown acceptable materials and confident that he is able to go further in completing and obtaining good results. Should you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

Dr. Mohammed Ahmed Alomair

Assistant Prof in Accounting Department
College of Business and Administration
King Faisal University, Saudi Arabia
Email: MOMAIR@KFU.EDU.SA

المرفقات:

التاريخ:

الرقم:

www.kfu.edu.sa

Date: 25 July 2020

Whom It May Concern

Regarding: University of Southampton PhD Student request: Mr. Mohammed Hussain Alharithi Passport Number: Y438357 for conducting pilot study at University of Jeddah.

Mr Alharithi has requested the cooperation of University of Jeddah to collaborate in collecting data for field pilot study. I'm writing this letter to inform you that we are pleased to accept his request and allow him to conduct the study He will be allowed to collect data regarding project management sustainability different attributes and settings within the context of Saudi nonprofit organization such university of Jeddah.

This letter is given to Mr Alharithi based on his request to be provided to his academic supervision team.

Should you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours faithfully



Abdulrahman Alharithi

Vice Dean

College of Computing and IT

University of Jeddah

University of Jeddah, Saudi Arabia,

Email: Alshdadi@uj.edu.sa

9.2 Appendix 2:

The Thematical analysis combine with descriptive analysis to lead final develop theoretical framework from page 259 to 285:

	Descriptive Code	Interviewee	Sample Responses	Descriptive Analysis
1. Concept SPM	Comprehensive Understanding SPM 15%	B3	<i>"sustainability is divided into three elements; the first element is social sustainability and the goal is to prepare long-term programmes that serve the community in all age groups. In order to cover the costs of these programmes, we rely on economic sustainability, which is to reduce costs and to discover investment strategies".</i>	<i>The Questions from: 7(7.1 & 7.2 & 7.3) - 8 - 9 - 10 11- -12- 13 (13.1 & 13.2 & 13.3 & 13.4 & 13.5 & 13.6 & 13.7) Previous questions were answered by participants who worked in nonprofit organizations in Saudi Arabia primarily in the field of project management. The highest percentage of sharers who are familiar with SPM is over 70%.</i>
		A4	"We are very interested in publishing content related to the concept of sustainable development. We have three pillars, as I mentioned, which is the economic pillar, the social pillar, and the environmental pillar. For example, in our programs we try to target social programs that do not have any environmental damage and do not have any negative effects on The internal community, whether at the level of the organization or the surrounding society is organized, we also try to have this initiative or this project or these programs have good economic effects in terms of economic benefit and economic benefit, or what is called	

			a good economic return, from a social point of view yes, We aim to develop all segments of society."	
		A2	"SPM mean involves environmental sustainability e.g watering trees, soical sustainability e.g do 17 of sustainabile global goals, and economic sustainability e.g how survivuos these projects upon on Gov support, funders, donations,and paernrship."	
	Limited Understood SPM 75%	A7	"sustainability in general has two forms; it is the sustainability of the organisation, and it means its internal operations or the sustainability of services or the charitable mission of the organisation. As for the sustainability of projects, it means providing services and programmes to the community of all age groups. This indicates the provision of financial sources of government or private investment and support in order to contribute to achieve goals and serve the community".	
		A11	"sustainability in our organisation actually has three main pillars, which are: the sustainability of the operations in the project; the sustainability of the services provided by this project; and the sustainability of giving and the impact after the project; these are the three concepts in our understanding of the concept of sustainability. The project is originally based on the public interest, the social benefit, so the sustainability of this benefit is the basis for everything".	

		<p>A10</p>	<p><i>"Concept SPM how to provide services for documents with different level of segments whether kids, teenagers, and adults,(social sustainability)."</i></p>	
<p>A8</p>	<p><i>"Concept SPM mean two points: sustainability organisations, based on their targets and results, also in term of growth the quality and raise the money. Second, sustainability team: is essential to connect the values among the pervious points in sustainability organisations, (social sustainability, and economic sustainability)."</i></p>			
<p>B6</p>	<p><i>"Concept SPM is the wayto providing the financial resources that are necessary for the continuity of the organisation. Obtaining financial resources varies from the previously unlimited governments support, and now the support is possible in a small percentage. Donations and philanthropists have made up small proportions with the Corona virus pandemic. Therefore, the successful components of SPM are investments. So, to cut down the budget for the salaries of employees, we hire volunteers. We also have investments in cooperation with the municipality to win commercial contracts, (economic sustainability)".</i></p>			
<p>A5</p>	<p><i>"in NPOs SPM mean the as an individual part of the community you should care about; in NPOs, we face a great financial challenge, because we do not have sustainability in finance. With the Corona virus pandemic the situation has become very worrying for the implementation of our development programmes, and they are even</i></p>			

			<i>stopped, because we do not have stable financial resources,(economic sustainability)".</i>	
		B5	<i>"this charitable association relies on the donations of benefactors, as well as on support from the government, and the association believes that there must be sustainability and there should be stable sources , (economic sustainability)".</i>	
		B1	<i>"Sustainability means that the organization owns a group of endowments that generate continuous funds, so that the level of donations does not remain high or low, and it also has a social investment, (economic sustainability)".</i>	
		A22	<i>"With regard to the sustainability of projects, we have at least the for-profit organizations in the Balqarn governorate specifically, and by virtue of that I mean my presence in such and such a side of the non-profit organizations in the governorate, if you talk about products and projects, it depends primarily on the quality of the project and its sustainability as long as possible as a length of time, I mean, It will last for at least a decade or two, (social sustainability)."</i>	
		A19	<i>"I mean, we as charitable associations and institutions may often focus on what is related to financial sustainability in organizations,(economic sustainability)".</i>	
	Unaware SPM 10%	A15	<i>"frankly, we do not know about the sustainability in general; our concept is how projects could be sustainable. For example, whenever there are enough donations, whether we support the community. Otherwise, we stop, we find programmes, and then we look for</i>	

			<p><i>the poor and needy. The second motive commitment to Civil Legislation, on the importance of our homeland, the preservation and development of our land. Third, we also have a goal motive, that sustainable development is also about achieving balance, achieving justice, achieving community justice, social justice."</i></p>	
		A6	<p><i>"one of the most important motives is the clarity of vision and plans, which facilitates the implementation process and the result is the success of the project. For example, the funders are Abdul Latif Jameel, Al-Rajhi, and King Faisal NPOs, who would help to establish a project. Nevertheless, it is not yet known if they will support this project on a yearly basis. From the beginning, the vision is clear, that the project must be sustainable; unfortunately many times, people create projects that do not have a vision of sustainability".</i></p>	
		B2	<p><i>"The existence of such a matter will make the religious motive first, and the second motive is the very great need to build a culture of financial sustainability with our projects, and for others it means that in the end we want you to switch from a product to a, sorry! From consumer to producer."</i></p>	
		B4	<p><i>"Exaggerating the social impact of this project, so that instead of affecting twenty individuals, it will affect two hundred over five years instead of what became one year."</i></p>	
		B10	<p><i>"The motives are the goals. For example, we have the development of the concept of citizenship, but it is a conscientious,</i></p>	

			<i>legal and human motive. Also, one of the motives is the love of volunteering."</i>	
	Barriers SPM	B10	<i>"the financial obstacle is the main one we face in supporting our projects and programmes, as you know with the Corona crisis. As for the employees' salaries, the majority are volunteers, but they serve us for a temporary period and we cannot commit them to a specific time, so if there are no financial incentives or appointment of employees with salaries and support for them, NPOs will struggle to ensure the steady continuation of the projects".</i>	
		B7	<i>"one of the obstacles to the achievement of SPM is the lack of income from donors and benefactors. Thus, in our current projects, we have focused on investments in order to contribute to the diversification of sources of income. The other obstacle is the delay in making a decision. With the Corona pandemic, there has been a complete closure of the state, so the senior administration cannot take the necessary decisions, so there is a delay in the implementation and delivery of the project".</i>	
		A23	<i>"one of the main obstacles in SPM we faced was the financial source. With Corona, the financial support decreased significantly, so we were unable to continue the project; as also, some of our simple investments stopped with the pandemic (real estate investment), so we could not cover the costs of our sustainable programmes and we could not cover the interests of society."</i>	

		<p>A12</p>	<p><i>"the regulations and systems to achieve SPM in our NPO have become better than before, but they are still limited editing from Saudi Government. Hence, We are still committed to follow the ministry's decisions, meaning that they do not give us all the powers".</i></p>	
		<p>A8</p>	<p><i>"attracting human competency is an obsession and a great danger if an NPO is not interested in this aspect, because there will be financial and administrative waste, so human competency is important in any department to raise the quality of the project and the outputs to achieve the success of the SPM".</i></p>	
		<p>A14</p>	<p><i>"the obstacles may be the lack of competencies and appropriate advisors who are able to make and take the appropriate decision, as well as the obstacles that may be the lack of empowerment of some NPOs from some government agencies. The another obstacle may be that there are some initiatives that require a high budget, perhaps that many donors may not agree to implement or even support these initiatives, for not developing an economic feasibility study."</i></p>	
		<p>A13</p>	<p><i>The motives for the lack of money, as sometimes you find an organization that wants to have sustainability, but it does not find sufficient resources to finance a source of sustainability, that is, if the association wants to have an investment or it will have such-and-such, then one of the obstacles is funding in fact, you will not find enough money for this. The second matter is the members of the Council Management sometimes, if they do not have sufficient awareness, means that they are an</i></p>	

			<p><i>obstacle in the sustainability of projects, I mean, I give you examples, I mean, we have two levels of decision making, one level for small projects and one for large projects. The board of directors that is responsible for large projects means that it only accommodates ordinary, traditional projects, if we submit to it sustainable projects and their ideas are new and the quality of what they accept.</i></p>	
		B6	<p><i>Of course, I imagine the first of these is leadership, the leadership's lack of understanding of the issue of sustainability or its importance, and awareness, awareness is very important, the leader is strong looking for organization, when he is in need, he is in fear, when he is in trouble, for example the expiration of the financial resource, some associations work, but the operating bill is more From the size of the project, they are delusional, so they start looking for sources that contribute to stability, for example, sustainability in project management.</i></p>	

	Descriptive Code	Sub Code	Interview	Sample Responses	D	Descriptive Analysis
Implement SPM in NPOs		solar energy	B5	<p><i>"the importance of solar energy is still new to us, but we are in the process of establishing this project in our future projects".</i></p>		<p><i>According to the survey(16.1 & 16.2 & 16.3 & 16.4 & 16.5 & 16.6 & 16.7 & 16.8), the highest probability of</i></p>

Environmental Sustainability						implementing environmental sustainability into a project management process is less than 50%.
	Reducing Energy Consumption	B3	<i>"in the field of quality and institutional excellence; We took into account a number of environmental considerations, which people usually do not take into account, such as rational consumption of electricity".</i>			
		A8	<i>"Sustainability is still not clear to us, but in terms of savings, we have converted ordinary lighting to LED, so that it contributes to reducing the cost of lighting".</i>			
	Waste Management	A2	<i>"of course, four projects have been implemented accordingly, and now the Ministry of the Environment and the Ministry of Islamic Affairs have signed an agreement to benefit from ablution water in all mosques throughout the Kingdom; God willing, the association will have a role to play due to its previous experiences, and it will be one of the auxiliary resources, such as these projects".</i>			
B3		<i>"we take into account a number of environmental considerations, which, for example, other charities usually do not take into account; I mean, for example, the issue of waste paper...right now we focus on online rather than paper".</i>				

			A16	<i>"Environmental sustainability is that which depends on the environmental environment, for example, energy recovery, but it is little, but in Saudi Arabia it focuses on community sustainability and financial sustainability, so I think the endowments focus more on financial sustainability than sustainability."</i>		
Social Sustainability	Community Needs	A22	<i>"The sustainability of the society means knowing what the society needs and providing it in the most appropriate way. For example, people with disability usually face difficulties in finding a job, so we formed partnerships with some companies to help them in this matter through education and training and, after completion, they are employed by the company".</i>		There is an over 80% percentage (17.1 & 17.2 & 17.3 & 17.4 & 17.5 & 17.6) of participants who integrate social sustainability into the project management, whether they are internal stakeholders or external stakeholders.	
		B8	<i>"one of the projects that served the community is to change the poor families to become productive families. The idea was, families cook certain foods and we provide them with places to sell their products without fees, so they receive the profit and we act as an official legal cover for them. This project has been going on for five years since its inception".</i>			
		A8	<i>"what is related to programmes and projects that serve the community: we have a unique idea that serves the community. For</i>			

				<p><i>instance, in the past, the NPO provided limited productions and the person came to receive it from the NPO; however, in cooperation with the markets, they were given vouchers instead. Thus, it saved the costs of shipping and storages. Also, this provided more options than before to provide the needs of the poor with better services".</i></p>		
			A11	<p><i>"The need is one of the basic motives, and the desire is one of the basic motives in, and the need is different from the desire, that is, when we say the needs of the beneficiaries other than the desires of the beneficiaries, and these two terms are known in project management, one of the things that drives sustainability is the issue of maximizing the effects, and these are among the basic things we have in Donors. And it can be discussed a lot about maximizing the effects, also what is the issue of integration, and integration is considered a kind of sustainability for us, and the fifth issue is partnerships, partnerships are one of the motives of sustainability."</i></p>		
			A1	<p><i>"The community involves stakeholders and community leaders, businessmen. You see this as a very strong support for the sustainability of the project. If businessmen and the community are present and strong in the project, then we create a project based on the opinion of the businessmen community. All segments of society are targeted by a project and involved in the project. This is one of the strength factors for project sustainability."</i></p>		

		Training & Education	A23	<p><i>"...because I work in a small organisation [and I am] directly responsible for all the projects. It was agreed to add sustainability in the projects. So, I tried to take some training remote courses in the field of sustainability to learn about sustainability and how it could develop income as well as reduce expenses...there are other benefits or examples such as the transfer from the system of working hours to the completion of tasks only".</i></p>	
	B6		<p><i>"We found out that some organisations were still negatively affected, especially after full government support was stopped in 2017. So, we decided to work in partnership with some associations to educate and develop them in the field of sustainability and change the idea from dependence on the government to self-income".</i></p>		
	B7		<p><i>"After the Corona pandemic, it was just as strong as before the pandemic. There were programs, applications on mobile phones, communication through people on an ongoing basis."</i></p>		
	A14		<p><i>"Workshops or training courses are held on the scale of non-profit associations, in order to ensure the sustainability of these associations. Associations were found to function, associations were found to be a</i></p>		

				<p><i>tributary to government agencies and the private sector in supporting and serving the community. It is the duty of all members of society to support these associations, and strive to ensure their development and development, and this will be done through training courses and workshops that talk about and deal with sustainability issues in all its aspects; Because really, as we mentioned, associations are the cornerstone of building society."</i></p>		
			A9	<p><i>"Training and rehabilitating the children of the beneficiary families. All the proceeds from the endowments go back to the association's programs, activities, and support for the community."</i></p>		
		Passion and Need	B1	<p><i>"in another motive, which is passion, I know a number of people who left very prestigious high positions in state jobs and moved to the non-profit sector as they love charity work, and have a strong desire for it. For example, those who set up a charity to support autistic people; a colleague of mine is a doctor who established an autism centre...he has an autistic son. Hence, a certain need or a particular problem needs to establish NPOs".</i></p>		
			A8	<p><i>"we discovered that the beneficiaries needed a house, so we created the first NPO upon government approval. Then we recruited employees who were</i></p>		

				<p><i>expert in this field. Finally, we acted as a mediator between NPO and funding bodies, donations, and facilities from the government to complete this project by sustainable means".</i></p>		
			A1	<p><i>"in our strategy, the first step focused on society's needs. After that, we established a feasibility study because the NPO was created to assist the community. In the next step, we integrated sustainability in these projects to provide benefit to society as much as possible. Hence, the SPM lifetime started from 10 or 15 years".</i></p>		
	Economic sustainability	Income Management	A4	<p><i>"one of the most important elements that contribute to financial sustainability is social investment is to solve social problems or fill social needs or deal with social needs commercially and as an investment. Our goal is to invest first and then solve the social problems. We usually invest by solving social issues".</i></p>		<p><i>More than 70% of (18.1 & 18.2 & 18.3 & 18.4) participants realized the importance of integrating economic</i></p>
			A5	<p><i>"we relied on investments as a source of fixed income, although unfortunately we only have real estate investments that were affected by the Coronavirus pandemic and some investment in buildings stopped during the pandemic which affected our programmes in the association by having to suspend them".</i></p>		<p><i>sustainability into project management.</i></p>

			B10	<i>"The only current resource other than handouts is businessmen, merchants, owners of commercial establishments, so they sometimes cover, for example, a program. For example, we have a program here, Aseer. Subsidy coverage Subsidy, for example, gold or silver, or, for example, subsidy, coverage, coverage, coverage, coverage, coverage, costs because it means waste, which can be scarce"</i>		
		Volunteers	A14	<i>"Volunteers contribute mainly to the continuity of the organisation; without them, we cannot complete the project, because they are key element to success, not much work can be done without them".</i>		
	A2		<i>"The new system clarified to the volunteers their rights and duties, as well as the privileges they obtain when they apply for a job. For example, many volunteers carry out some charitable work for free, especially as the new recruitment system gives priority to some people with voluntary work. This will also enhance their CV. In the past, it was unfortunately unclear; volunteering was only religious matter".</i>			
	B5		<i>The association made sure that it supported the volunteers with symbolic amounts, so that the work would continue, and there are people who are not looking for this symbolic amount, but they seek to provide a service for the Qur'an.</i>			

		Descriptive Code	Interviewee	Sample Responses	Descriptive Analysis
Implement SPM in NPOs	Project Management	Decision Making	A16	<i>"sustainability is integrated with decision making, meaning that no decision is taken unless we are sure that we are able to cover the financial needs of the project or the decision that will be taken".</i>	Majority of sharers (from different questions of survey) believe that decision making was an essential aspect of SPM
			B10	<i>" decisions that serve the organisation and society are taken so that the plan and vision are clear to the organisation, whether the human care stay in or leave the organisation, but the organisation's policy is made every four years, so it is more important that SPM decisions are taken in the right manner."</i>	
			A10	<i>" we have decisions issued by the Board of Directors, but finally we formed an Executive Committee so that we reduce the Board of Directors to attend meetings, and so that we do not take up their time. We have the Executive Committee, which implements programmes and takes small decisions. This team was responsible for the outcome after making decisions".</i>	
			A19	<i>He pointed out "...because we are dealing with stakeholders, meaning that we are in a state of decision making and strategic making, while making the decision, whether strategic or operational, it must be in his opinion with regard to sustainability, and the involvement of those with our staff (by this I mean in this organisation); whether beneficiaries, donors or employees in this aspect is important, so that the decision is a</i>	

				<i>sustainable strategic decision, and not based on reactions".</i>	
			A21	<i>"... sometimes we are preoccupied with other priorities. Also, sometimes we have cash in our account and so the topic is not present with us, nor at times when we have to stay away from financial resources to think about this topic. We made sure that we leave our file with a strategy that we have in the plan (the NPO plan) on the subject of financial resources, regardless of our financial situation".</i>	
			A3	<i>"one of the important things is the integration of sustainability into strategic decision making, but this depends on the lifetime of the project as well as on our priorities. It is possible that the project may be eligible for the integration of sustainability, but we have not decided to integrate it based on our views towards this project".</i>	
		Responsibility to Implement SPM	B2	<i>"From my point of view, the project manager is not responsible for the tasks of managing the project. Rather, he is only required to implement the project as explained previously. The main responsible parties are the members of the board of directors or the general manager who draw up the project plan, integrate sustainability into it, and appoint a project manager to implement this task".</i>	<i>Participants in the sustainability themes have already responded (social sustainability internal & external stakeholders).</i>

			B6	<i>"Responsibility for SPM is always hierarchical, starting with the first decision maker, and subsequently in descending order. I see that today the maturity of the general assembly and the boards of directors, down to the managing director, to the CEO, to the department concerned with this, is the responsibility, meaning it is more and greater at the top of the pyramid".</i>	
			B4	<i>"I see it as the director project manager, responsible for planning the vision, sometimes it can be an individual or it can be a team, because they are the ones who are sitting and working on the idea, and they are mostly the ones who understand the dimensions of the project, understand its secrets, how to build its sustainability".</i>	
			A17	<i>the executive manager of the entity is the one who holds the responsibility for SPM. The senior management team has to set the general framework, facilitate procedures, give support through them, and agree on general frameworks. Mostly it serves a specific project, that is, it lays down a number of plans. As for who is responsible, it is the executive manager, who makes the plans, i.e. according to the data available to him".</i>	
			A12	<i>"the responsibilities are distributed according to the tasks, meaning in the decision itself, whether it is at the level of the decision maker or the decision implementer".</i>	
			A21	<i>"the responsible [individual] depends on the type of project and the task</i>	

				<p><i>is not limited to a specific entity such as the executive or senior management. The resulting negligence or defect shall be a mistake by the supervising authority, but if there is a problem beyond its control, it is necessary to verify who is responsible for it. It is not a specific administration or person".</i></p>	
		Impact Leadership	A9	<p><i>"As for management, I am telling you it is a very effective element; because he directed himself as the leader and his interests and conviction in SPM, a conviction of this idea conveys it to the board of directors, then the board of directors is convinced by the general assembly".</i></p>	<p><i>Participants in the sustainability themes have already responded (social sustainability: internal stakeholders).</i></p>
			B3	<p><i>"the leader is considered the mainstay in integrating sustainability in project management as a NPO. The leader helps to integrate sustainability into the NPO's strategy, alongside vision. They can also motivate, develop and train employees and those related to the organisation by recognising the importance of sustainability and how it is integrated into projects in general. Besides, the leader can intervene in all delicate and general tasks and turn them into sustainability according to previously defined plans and strategies".</i></p>	
			A19	<p><i>"there must be a commitment from the leadership and the boards of directors, with regard to the sustainability report. I believe that they have a key role in this area, if there is no belief in the senior management and boards of directors regarding the sustainability system in the</i></p>	

				<p><i>organisation, it certainly will not be of interest from the executive management, the issue becomes random, and the institution will not be able to achieve tangible results and impact, I mean. It will not be able to achieve a social return for this aspect".</i></p>	
		A6	<p><i>"leadership is an important key to integrating sustainability into project management because a topic like sustainability is new. Thus, the role of the leader is to identify sustainability, how it is integrated, and what the final outcome is when integration is done. Since it is a new topic, the leader follows up and discusses the appropriate ways to integrate sustainability and solve problems that he may face in the future. Moreover, the difference between the leader and the manager is that the manager carries out the tasks as they are and the leader creates new ideas that contribute to the improvement and development of the organisation in new ways, such as implementing the integration of sustainability in project management in non-profit organisation".</i></p>		
		Stakeholder's Engagement	B9	<p><i>"we take into account the opinions of all stakeholders, because they give advice that NPOs did not pay attention to, and thus facilitate the important ideas that lead us to success of sustainability in the project management".</i></p>	
			A11	<p><i>"all stakeholders are involved, because the project will eventually be</i></p>	

				<p><i>available to serve them. For example, we have a representative from the Ministry of Social Development, as well as a representative from the community and an executive team to take over the task of the SPM. All of them participate in the planning and implementation of the project, and are involved in the decision-making and implementation responsibilities".</i></p>	
			A22	<p><i>"the principle to involve all stakeholders due to their diversity of experiences and interests towards the project. For example, when we discuss sustainable project management, especially before the implementation phase, we take opinions and ideas or even previous experiences, what did they say and what are the obstacles they encountered, and the result contributes to improving and developing the implementation of SPM".</i></p>	
			B7	<p><i>"the participation of stakeholders is not absolute in a way, but is considered according to the specialisation, in addition to the fact that the final decision is in the hands of the members of the board of directors; this is our policy. We do not accept any of our stakeholders to share our plans and goals that we are working to achieve SPM".</i></p>	
			A13	<p><i>"in reality, the board of directors and the executive team meet to take decisions related to the NPO without any type of stakeholders. The real situation in the field is that the donor institutions do not present a proposal, but rather provide</i></p>	

				<p><i>conditions for the grant. Thus, in order to get the grant, you must settle these conditions, so if you settle them, you will not get the grant in the first step"</i></p>	
		A5	<p><i>"an explanation of some of the stakeholders is taken into consideration as the beneficiaries, so they participate with us in any decision making about SPM. As for others, for example, donors or volunteers, this may be taken as advice and may be accepted or rejected. So the beneficiary is the only person who participates from the stakeholder group".</i></p>		
		A21	<p><i>"it depends on the specialisation and the majority of stakeholders are volunteers, so they only have a small influence in the organisation. Therefore, it is necessary to summon only those with specialisation and experience to involve them, but others are not necessary, and it will not benefit the NPO or organisation in anything, as the regular programmes are well-known and do not require any additional effort".</i></p>		
		SPM Life Cycle	A16	<p><i>"the project life cycle is an important element from planning to closing. This is because we established sustainable projects, including plans, goals, and others, and then applied them on the ground. For example, we supported an NPO in a hospital by covering the salaries of employees. We searched for commercial companies that provide certain services to the hospital free of charge. Therefore, we established the</i></p>	<p><i>The majority of participants who working in project management field in NPOs were integrated sustainability into the whole project life cycle in all four stages (Initiation- Planning- Execution- Closure).</i></p>

				<i>idea of sustainability in the hospital with the support and search for commercial companies to support the programme".</i>	
			B2	<i>"the issue of initiation is the construction of the project document, and it is a reflection; that is, if we wrote it in the document and planned, we will find it in the follow-up and in the implementation and in closing. It is a reflection, not something original, but rather a reflection of the plan, if we put it in the planning and did not put it in the document, we cannot oblige the executor or the one who follows up and controls, or the one who closes such a case."</i>	
			B4	<i>"planning is the most important stage, because if SPM is integrated from the beginning, it will be easier in the following stages, from initiation, implementation, follow-up, monitoring, and then closing. If it has not been prepared, sometimes SPM needs its own input, and this input comes from the beginning of the project, from the time of thinking about it and planning, so that we can see the result".</i>	
			B3	<i>"the culture of the NPO focuses on two aspects, namely planning and implementation, in order for them to obtain financial support from the benefactors, so there is a weakness in the quality of the SPM, and there is a lack of standards that measure the project's tool. Monitoring is weak; it depends on the efficiency of a manager if he or she can see the project through to the end".</i>	

			A12	<i>"my point of view is indeed that SPM must go through all stages from the beginning to the closure; there is no project, meaning now, and the reason is that the issue is foreign to us and we are still in the process of preparing for it".</i>	
		Critical Success Factors	A9	<i>"I focus greatly on leadership, whether it is executive leadership or top management. Leadership is the basis for the development of a NPO, and without that, if the leaders are not in agreement to integrate sustainability into project management, they will not it is being worked on".</i>	Participants in the sustainability themes have already responded.
	A15		<i>"Critical success factors in the sustainability of project management are leadership decision making – direct manager or directly responsible for the project – stakeholders. However, more important than these in my opinion is management, which is important in the reform of the project, especially as senior management gives support for the project".</i>		
	A19		<i>"I think one of the challenges is not to the commitment of the boards of directors or the executive management to SPM. Also another impact is the aspect or financial resources. The last impact is setting goals in the wrong way; for example, they might create some projects to support society; however, the community is not interested in such projects or does not need them".</i>		

			A20	<i>"the critical success factors in integrating the sustainability of project management are leadership, decision making, direct responsibility for the project, and stakeholders. Provided that they stem from a realistic need."</i>	
			A11	<i>"I say project management, frankly, is a major factor in success, meaning that our project management adopted the scientific methodologies of management, and this was the biggest factor in the success of sustainability and projects, in addition to the owners, adoption, adoption of our leadership, they adopted this topic, supportively very strong, one of the governing factors is empowering and qualifying the team, meaning our team must go through stages of rehabilitation and development annually, so it does not stop at one point. Every year it is required to go to the best point; these are things that really help in the success and sustainability of project management".</i>	
		Risk Management	B6	<i>"I imagine that the Corona pandemic brought many disadvantages such as we could not work. Hence, there must be alternative plans to complete our SPM in our organisation. One of the alternative plans is the transfer of education from face-to-face to online courses. For instance, in the past we spent a lot on course costs; we spent tens or even hundreds of thousands of Riyals on them. [1 pound = 5 Riyals.]. However, through the use of</i>	<i>Participants in the sustainability themes have already responded.</i>

				<i>technology, with the example of Zoom, we spent a minimal amount to deliver these courses".</i>	
			B5	<i>"most of the projects and programmes stopped, knowing that we tried to transfer the lessons and courses online, but we could not, and the reason was first due to a weakness in the network, and also the beneficiaries of the organisation are not good at dealing with technology".</i>	

- Integrate sustainability themes into project management themes through a multiple method approach (descriptive analysis and semi-structured interview) to build a new thematic framework:

Knowledge			
	Environmental sustainability	Social sustainability	Economic sustainability
Concept SPM	Project managers had a lack of knowledge due to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Following the Saudi Government until 2017 (funded 100%). Their background in the Social Sector. 	Project managers believed that the second level after understanding economic sustainability is social sustainability, which could improve knowledge and skills in NPOs.	Due to NPOs being made dependent, project managers interpreted SPM as a means of growing and expanding their income.
Applying SPM			
Project Life cycle	Since project managers do not have the knowledge to apply environmental sustainability approaches (alternative power- waste management - recycling water) to their project management, they will be unable to reduce the	In NPOs, project managers are the primary point of contact for implementing social sustainability, and organising and arranging duties and tasks between	After a reduction in funding from the Saudi Government, project managers' only choice is economic sustainability determine is income management in order to keep the NPOs working and

	use of natural resources in their projects.	external and internal stakeholders in stages.	reduce the fixed, variable, and future costs of their projects.
Leadership	Leadership is essential to integrating SPM in NPOs, both theoretically (strategies-visions-alternative plans) and practically (to complete their duties and tasks/improve their skills/interface obstacles/prepare themselves for future challenges).		