



# Topology of Project Management Office in United Arab Emirates Project-Based Organizations

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**Abstract:** Majority of projects failed due to mismanagement factors such as funds, planning, time, and resources. With the adoption of Project Management Office (PMO) in an organization, it able to manage the projects practises through a distinctive office dedicated to project management with specific roles and functions that should be followed by the project officer for all the projects. The positioning of PMO in the organisational structure and its job responsibilities, are critical factors in project success. This paper presents a study to uncover the topology of PMO in the project-based organizations in United Arab Emirates (UAE). This qualitative study was conducted through interviews with twenty professionals working in PMO from four companies in the UAE. Based on the findings from the interview sessions, PMOs can be divided into three types: supportive, controlling, and directive. The result indicates that the type of PMO chosen have a significant impact on the efficiency of the project delivery. While controlling PMO approach, it is desired to "clear-house" the activities, processes, procedures, documentation, and more, the organisation requires that the help be used in addition to providing it, supportive PMO is the best choice if the goal is to establish a "rein in" of project management data that all project managers within the firm may freely access. Furthermore, Directive PMO goes beyond simple control and "takes over" projects by providing the necessary resources and project management expertise. According to the findings of the interviews, the PMO performs a variety of functions, including project support, training, lesson-learned maintenance, project management tool and software support, project control, inter-project communication, managing shared resources, and encouraging good project management and decision-making. PMO forecasts future resource requirements, plans for strategic, non-billable, and billable usage, and assigns appropriate resources to appropriate projects at appropriate times. This improves resource utilisation efficiency, and significantly lowers project resource costs.

**Keywords:** Topology, project management office

## 1. Introduction

United Arab Emirate (UAE) is one of the Middle East's fastest growing economies, and managers have always been viewed in terms of people development (Alhammedi and Memon 2020). Over the last decade, the UAE has seen rapid development in infrastructure projects, particularly in Abu Dhabi and the Dubai Emirates, which are quickly becoming two of the region's most appealing business hubs. Several megaprojects showcase the country's economic and infrastructure growth. Every year, visitors from all over the world flock to the region, making it a well-known tourist destination. The government will announce a number of projects in the coming years, many of which are already

underway in the country. Although the majority of projects are completed on time, there have been reports of delays and challenges in the project management process. Creating public projects is regarded as a significant challenge. Standard methods of implementation, such as planning, procurement, monitoring, and control, necessitate a significant amount of time and a high level of management ability. Despite being completed on time and within budget, many projects in the UAE have encountered issues during project management activities. One of the major projects completed in the country was the construction of the world's tallest building, the Burj Khalifa. According to reports, the project began in 2004 and was completed in 2010. These six years have taken longer than expected, and there have been cost variations. The global economic downturn of 2008 stymied project execution. In addition, labour issues and other deviations from the plan hampered project execution. At the time, many other projects encountered the same problem as this one (Foreman, 2011). Dubai waterfront projects have also been pushed back due to a variety of internal and external factors. The two most important factors influencing project management processes were the projected budget and overall supervision. Several sector projects have been halted or suspended until further notice, despite the fact that some areas remain open. Dubai Maritime City projects were also impacted by cost fluctuations and a drop in demand. These project management failures are primarily caused by a lack of proper requirement analysis, forecasting, and estimation (Frasca, 2011).

Public entities have demonstrated less effectiveness when compared to private companies (Esquierroet al., 2014). Project-based organisations became more aware of the value of effective project management approaches and tools; they recognised the need for a systematic method of implementation and practical support for project management fields of application. Project execution, on the other hand, is viewed as a business strategy and a competitive tool by many public organisations in the UAE. Many studies have found that an effective project management office has an impact on project operations by following a standardised set of procedures and operations. Furthermore, many mega-companies (i.e., intercontinental or multinational) have entered the Emirate project market, bringing a diverse set of management applications and tools with them. Furthermore, implementing an effective PMO may make managing multiple projects at the same time easier. If the project execution process is not properly planned, it will face numerous challenges. The purpose of the Project Management Office (PMO) is to ensure that concurrent project processes are carried out correctly and accurately reflect the objectives of the organisation (Almansoori et al. 2021a). A critical issue that must be addressed is the lack of a master plan. The researcher is intrigued by the fact that people always want projects to be completed on time, even if the project is going in the wrong direction. This is because some powerful people with political clout frequently award contracts or services to people of their choosing. Employees in charge of completing the work will attempt to be responsive, beginning with little or no planning. Furthermore, many construction projects in developing countries, particularly in the public sector, appeared to have poor pre-construction planning. This demonstrates poor project management because, now that the project needs to be upgraded, more resources will be needed to complete the work. The frequent changes in the field necessitated and demanded the introduction of new trends and technologies, which were frequently orchestrated by powerful affluent clients who preferred distinguished and extraordinary project designs.

Furthermore, inexperienced managers are forced to work under intense pressure, which has a negative impact on the fundamental completion of projects that are linked to the planned timelines. These challenges are identified by the researcher, which leads to the selection of a topic for analysing the impact of the project management trend PMO in UAE government entities. According to the researcher, an effective PMO provides practical solutions to project management practises because the Project Management Office is all about making the best use of available resources to ensure the successful completion of a project. A century ago, the idea of the Project Management Office (PMO) was first introduced to manage complex projects within organisations. The United States Army Air Corps created the first PMO in the 1930s to track the progress of aircraft (Almansoori et al. 2021b). Now, despite the fact that many project management techniques are used in the UAE, an effective PMO has been shown to be a reliable entity in overcoming such project failure issues around the world. Implementing a proper PMO framework within a project-based organisation has been viewed as a critical solution to failed projects and an improvement in project completion within the organization's strategic plan. However, it is critical to understand and comprehend whether the areas mentioned in this study were thoroughly investigated in order to address the PMO's lack of experience. Other areas requiring PMO attention are identified and addressed, as are PMO failures in the aforementioned areas.

The project management office (PMO) is a tool used for coordination to bring a close relationship between the organization's strategy objective and the operational aspects of turning an idea into reality (Almansoori et al. 2021c). The implied importance of having an effective PMO within an organisation can be fueled by a desire to have more and more efficient control over the organization's projects. When multiple projects are running concurrently within a company or organisation, the development of a proper PMO model can become a necessity rather than an extravagance. Given the recent dramatic fluctuations in the UAE project sector, the need for an effective project management office was unavoidable. As a result, this research paper investigates the various types of PMO and their roles in order to promote effective PMO implementation in order to achieve successful project outcomes in the UAE.

## 2. Literature Review

The PMO's responsibilities vary depending on the organization's structure and operations. The PMO's responsibilities can range from project management support functions to direct project management. As a result, various PMO models were proposed by various researchers.

### 2.1 PMO Typology by Hubbard & Dolles

PMO models proposed by Hubbard and Dolles include Enterprise PMO, Division PMO, Business Unit PMO, Project PMO, Project Office, Project Support Organization, and Project Management Centre of Excellence (PMCoE). The position defines the PMO's roles and responsibilities, which can be represented as a pyramid. According to them, the CEO reports to the Enterprise PMO, which has final authority over strategic planning, project selection, and prioritisation. The Division PMO reports to the Enterprise PMO and is in charge of tactical planning and project portfolio management. The PMO for the business unit is in charge of operations master planning and project/program management. A project PMO oversees a large project from start to finish. The Project Office is in charge of reporting to the project manager, documenting the project, and possibly supervising it. The Project Support organisation oversees administrative tasks and reports on the status and progress of multiple projects. Despite not managing projects, PMCoE develops project business management standards, practises, and competencies (Hubbard & Dolles, 2015). There is no mention of how to select the best model based on the requirements in this typology.

### 2.2 PMO Typology by Englund, Graham, and Dinsmore

According to Monteiro, Santos, and Varajao (2016), who evaluate the typology put forth by Englund, Graham, and Dinsmore, the office, once established, can adopt one of three fundamental designs depending on the range of roles assigned to the unit. In this situation, the PMO can provide support, encourage excellence in the way the organisation manages its projects, or manage the project independently. In these situations, the office is known as a project support office, a project management centre of excellence, or a project management office. As opposed to a centre of excellence model PMO, which seeks to develop novel strategies, train staff, and guarantee that standards are met, a support model PMO acts as an internal consultant for the company. The unit has the power to choose project managers, prioritise projects, and guarantee that these projects are in line with the organization's overall vision, mission, and purpose as a full-authority project management office.

According to the research findings, the Enterprise and Support PMO models were the most commonly used PMO models. The enterprise PMO model is concerned with overall project management and administration. Project Management Center of Excellence is the third most commonly used term in the description of PMO models. This is a model in which the unit is tasked with learning new skills and coming up with new ways to improve project success rates. Scholars also use the terms Project Office and Project Support Office, with the former overseeing projects and the latter providing in-house consultant services as projects progress. A closer examination reveals that, while the terminology varies, the functions assigned to these models are largely the same.

### 2.3 PMO Typology by Garfein

Garfein proposed four different PMO models. The first model in this typology is a Project Office, which is primarily responsible for project management oversight. A fundamental PMO model is also included, which is in charge of defining the standards for choosing projects to be taken into consideration and then monitoring the overall performance of the project as it moves forward. This typology also specifies a more developed typology in which the unit makes sure that the projects are in line with the corporate strategy. The final model in this typology is an enterprise PMO, as stated in the previous typology (Garfein, 2005).

### 2.4 PMO Typology by Letavec

Internal PMO, external PMO, and enterprise PMO are the three basic structural models of the PMO. The Letavac (2006) also explains some other relevant models. For example, a Strong PMO Model serves as the primary project and programme management body. The Knowledge PMO establishes standards for employee training. Consulting PMO Model analyses the organization's needs through a unit within the organisation and provides the necessary assistance. For businesses that cannot afford full-time PMO staff, a hybrid model based on both strong and consulting factors is proposed (Letavac, 2006).

### 2.5 PMO Typology by Salameh

According to Salameh (2014), it is essential to look into the various options for establishing a PMO while creating a framework. He went over each model and explained how it might be applied at work. According to Salameh, an organisational unit is the most typical type of PMO. This model is also referred to as a divisional or departmental model. The goal of this PMO model is to assist other organisational departments. 54 percent of the entities reported

using this kind of PMO model, according to the research done for this article. The second model, according to Salameh (2014), is project support or a control office. A 44 percent usage rate of this model was found in the organisations surveyed. It provides all-around support for initiatives carried out within the specific organisation. The enterprise PMO, which is Salameh's third type of PMO, is in charge of matching corporate projects with their strategies. He asserts that companies in the government, manufacturing, and information technology sectors use this model most frequently.

Salameh's requirements also include a fundamental PMO model, the Center of Excellence. In this case, he indicates that the model of the centre for excellence aims to set high standards, improve PM methodologies, and develop better tools. The goal is to increase the likelihood of project success. Approximately 35% of the organisations that responded to his survey used this PMO model. Finally, Salameh's requirement includes project-specific PMO, which would be used once and then disbanded until the next project came along. This model was used by 31% of organisations for the establishment and operation of PMOs. Salameh's description of the PMO topology is summarised in Table 1.

**Table 1 - PMO Typology by Salameh**

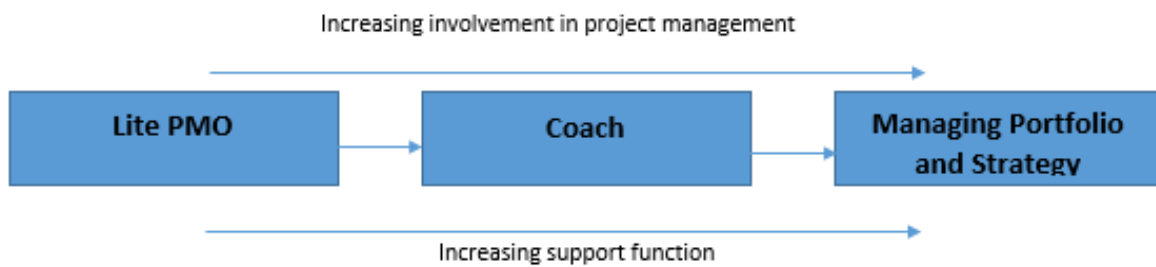
Type of PMO	Functions
Departmental PMO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Setting standards</li> <li>• Managing the portfolio of projects</li> <li>• Managing the process of delivering the project</li> <li>• Providing support and administering</li> </ul>
Project Centre of Excellence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Managing knowledge</li> <li>• Setting standards</li> <li>• Managing the process of delivering the project</li> <li>• Providing support and administering</li> <li>• Managing talent</li> <li>• Managing the portfolio of projects</li> <li>• Involvement in strategic planning</li> <li>• Managing performance</li> </ul>
Enterprise PMO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Managing talent</li> <li>• Involvement in strategic planning</li> <li>• Managing performance</li> <li>• Managing change process</li> <li>• Managing knowledge</li> <li>• Setting standards</li> <li>• Managing the portfolio of projects</li> <li>• Managing the process of delivering the project</li> <li>• Providing support and administering</li> </ul>
Project Support Office	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Providing support and administering</li> <li>• Setting standards</li> <li>• Managing the process of delivering the project</li> <li>• Managing the portfolio of projects</li> </ul>
Project Specific PMO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The entity sets standards for project management within the organization</li> <li>• Manages the portfolio for projects</li> <li>• Administration</li> <li>• Governance management</li> </ul>

## 2.6 PMO Typology by Kumar and Priyadarshini

Kumar and Priyadarshini (2016), also, discusses the types of PMO as adopted by organizations. These authors introduce very unique terms to make reference to the models which they consider as being the most critical for an organization to consider during establishment. The first model, according to Kumar and Priyadarshini, is known as Lite, Light, or supportive PMO. Whereas other scholars claim that the establishment of PMO models is done in such a manner that the organization can choose any models and go for it, Kumar and Priyadarshini argue that the models of PMOs grow over time upon establishment. In other words, Lite PMO is the very first stage of establishing the unit. It is the most basic form which then develops and grows over time. This basic form only engages in training personnel, guiding them on the best practices when it comes to manage the project, and consulting. In many organizations, the researcher indicates that Lite PMOs only store information about different projects.

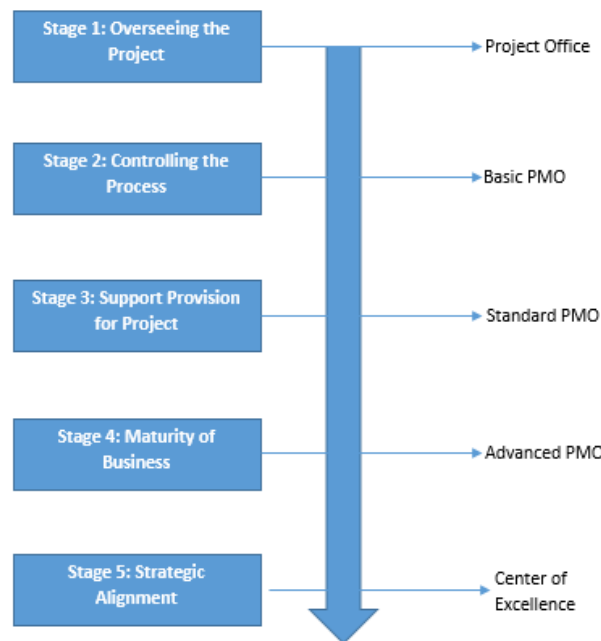
Kumar and Priyadarshini indicate that, after the lite stage, the PMO unit grows into a coaching model. This model is also referred to as the controlling or the hybrid type of PMO. The coaching model of PMO is basically concerned with improving communication and supporting those running the projects within the organization once they arise. In the very last stage of advancement, the PMO grows into a 'manager' model which is also referred to as a directive or a heavy kind. At this stage of development of the PMO model, the unit is concerned with creating more proactive approaches of project management. In essence, it takes responsibility for the project outcomes and success. In some instances, and at the discretion of the organization management, the manager model of PMO can actually run the project in the actual sense.

Evidently, the research presents the model in a form of a maturity process where one type of PMO gives way to an advanced one as the unit grows. In this case, as the unit advances the functions included within it change. These functions, according to the authors, change from providing support to strategic alignment and, finally, portfolio management. The implication here is that the project models appear in such a manner that they can comprise a PMO lifecycle. In this case, the progress can be shown in Figure 1



**Fig. 1 - The development of a PMO**

The expansion of a PMO within an organisation must be gradual in order to respond to the changing needs of the entire entity within which it has been established. However, arguing that all PMO units must follow that growth model is untenable. Some businesses may be able to immediately establish a sophisticated PMO unit. This phenomenon may occur in large organisations with extensive project management requirements that are also technologically advanced. The PMO's gradual growth model is more suitable for medium-sized businesses. A more elaborate figure depicting the progression of the PMO models is depicted in the conceptualised figure 2.



**Fig. 2 - The five Comprehensive Stages of a PMO**

According to the representations in figure 2, there are five comprehensive stages of progression in terms of PMO models in terms of competencies. In this case, stage 1 includes the most fundamental functions of the project management office. To advance to the second stage, the unit must demonstrate that it has completed all of stage 1's

capabilities. The same is true for all levels of advancement, including 3, 4, and 5. If the PMO needs to be updated to the fifth level, capacity must be built in tandem with levels 1, 2, 3, and 4 in a logical sequence.

### 3. Research Methodology

The process of gathering, analysing, and presenting evidence in order to answer research questions or meet research objectives is known as research methodology. In other words, research methodology is the process by which a researcher studies research problems in order to find solutions. The researcher(s) select an approach appropriate to the study from a variety of research methods in all types of research. The research methodologies are divided into six layers, starting from the outside: research philosophies, research approaches, research strategies, research choices, time horizon, and techniques and procedures (Saunders et al 2007). Research methods are classified into three types: qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods (Cresswell 2014 and Bachayo et al. 2022). In this study, the qualitative research method was used. This will allow the researcher to take a more comprehensive look at the research problem from a variety of perspectives, as well as provide a more complete picture when analysing results with descriptive data. In general, qualitative research is an exploratory technique used to gather general knowledge, reasons, and expert opinions (specialized people who are aware about the objective of the study). Data was collected using survey forms. The surveys are divided into two categories based on two major factors: instrumentation and time span. Questionnaires and interviews fall under the instrumentation category, while longitudinal and cross-sectional surveys fall under the time span category (Sincero, 2012).

The process of analysing qualitative data is methodical. The qualitative research process does not have to follow any specific patterns in order to analyse the data. However, each study must employ a strategy for incorporating relevant data from a large descriptive data set (Patton, 2002). McLellan et al. (2003) There are five different kinds of qualitative data analysis. The former is used to categorise and analyse verbal or behavioural data, while the latter is used to reformulate and revise primary qualitative data. When the data is in the form of natural conversation and text, discourse analysis is performed. For more complex data, coding, mapping, and interpretation are all required steps. The framework analysis method is used in such cases. Grounded theory is a method for developing theory by focusing on a single case and relating it to others. Three steps are involved in the implementation of qualitative data analysis. The first phase entails developing and applying codes or themes based on the collected data, either manually or automatically. There are no specific techniques for analysing qualitative data; the researcher is entirely responsible for this. Before summarising the data, the next step is to identify the relationships between the themes. In the summary, either the respondents' feedback or the researcher's words are used to represent it (Dudovskiy, 2018).

### 4. Demographic Profiles of Respondents

PMO experts from four companies were consulted: Masdar Abu Dhabi Future Energy Company, Al Mansouri 3B Group, Abu Dhabi Securities Exchange (ADX), and Gulf Falcon Company (GFC). The data collection process involved a total of 20 people. This study addresses each of these respondents individually in order to protect their anonymity. Sieber (1992) defines anonymity as the absence of identifiers that indicate which individuals or organisations provided which data. The pseudonyms 'R' and 'nth root' are abbreviations for the words 'respondent' and 'the nth number of the interview session,' respectively. Table 2 displays four demographic profiles of these respondents, including their designation, age, length of service, and educational level.

**Table 2 - Demographic profiles of respondents**

Case Study	Company Name	Respondent	Designation	Age	Length of Service (in years)	Education Level
1	Masdar Abu Dhabi Future Energy Company	R1	Director of Support Services	49	9	MBA
		R2	Senior Manager of Project Management	39	10	MBA
		R3	Senior Manager of Project Management	43	15	MBA
		R4	Program Manager	44	11	Master
		R5	Senior Engineer	40	8	Master
2	Al Mansouri 3B Group	R6	Director	45	12	PhD
		R7	Senior Manager	38	9	MBA
		R8	Senior Manager	37	9	MBA
		R9	Engineer	30	6	Master
		R10	Senior Engineer	40	12	Master
3		R11	Directive PMO in IT	42	20	MBA

	Abu Dhabi		departments			
	Securities	R12	Senior Manager	43	15	Master
	Exchange	R13	Senior Manager	41	13	MBA
	(ADX)	R14	Senior Manager	37	8	MBA
		R15	Senior Manager	39	9	MBA
		R16	Director	41	13	PhD
	Gulf Falcon	R17	Director	43	15	PhD
4	Company	R18	Senior Manager	45	10	Master
	(GFC)	R19	Senior Manager	44	9	Master
		R20	Manager	41	7	Master

According to Table 2, these respondents' designations fall into five categories: director (5 respondents), senior manager (10 respondents), manager (2 respondents), senior engineer (2 respondents), and engineer (1 respondent). All respondents are between the ages of 30 and 49. The minimum period of service is six years, and the maximum period of service is twenty years. The shortest length of service is held by the youngest respondent (30 years old) (6 years). The oldest respondent (49 years old) did not, however, have the longest length of service. This is due to the fact that the oldest respondent has only 9 years of service. A 42-year-old respondent has the longest length of service. Aside from that, the majority of respondents have a master's degree, with three having a PhD.

## 5. Classification of PMO

The interviewees were asked to express their thoughts on the various types of PMO in project-based organisations. The response was divided into three types during the thematic analysis process: support, control, and direct. According to the analysis of the interview data, there are various types of PMO in project-based organisations. Table 3 summarises the main themes that emerged from the data, which classified the types of PMO in project-based organisations into three main categories: support control and direct.

**Table 3 - Classification of PMO**

Respondents	Type of PMO		
	Supportive	Controlling	Directive
R1			/
R2	/		
R3	/		
R4	/		
R5		/	
R6		/	
R7	/		
R8		/	
R9	/		
R10	/		
R11			/
R12		/	
R13		/	
R14		/	
R15			/
R16			/
R17	/		
R18	/		
R19	/		
R20	/		
<b>Total</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>4</b>

Table 3 shows that the supporting type of PMO is more commonly used in the UAE, while the controlling and directive types are less used. Face-to-face interviews were conducted with respondents who participated in data collection, and several aspects of PMO were discussed. Respondent 1 (R1) stated among the respondents, "In Masdar Abu Dhabi Future Energy Company was more of a directive and support bringing the together enable us to observe the benefit of project management." This finding was bolstered by the study of Monteiro, et al., (2016), who included only two items in his study to include project management organisation support and control. Aside from that, R1 respondent

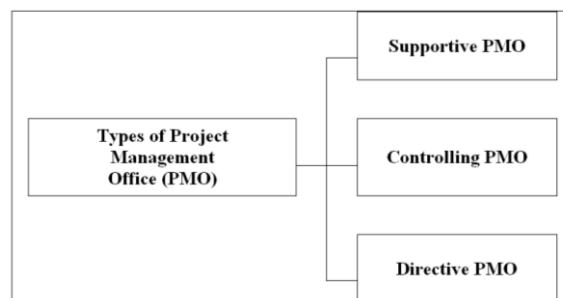
stated, "Our company has three PMOs in the organisation". A corporate PMO unit that reports to the CEO and handles strategic, non-core business projects, as well as two PMOs for each of our two main business units: Masdar Clean Energy and Masdar Sustainable Real Estate. Each PMO is in charge of thoroughly researching the given project, developing the implementation plan, going through the necessary steps for approval, budgeting, and resource allocation, and then passing it on to the Project Delivery teams for execution, with continuous follow-ups and frequent reporting to executive management on the status of these projects. PMOs also handle administrative work for these core business units, such as financial tracking for the entire portfolio, internal/external audit leads for that specific unit, and all types of reporting to the Board of Directors and management." According to the research of Pemsel and Wiewiora (2013), Sokhanvar et al. (2014), Tsaturyan and Müller (2015), and Unger et al. (2016), this statement highlighted the inclusion of features of directive controlling and supportive in their organisation.

Similarly, Respondent 6 (R6) stated, "More features of directive and support project management office revealed where continue to show that PMO's of various types provide the management experience and resources to manage the project." The projects are assigned to professional project managers from the PMO. This adds a lot of professionalism to the projects. Because each project manager originates and reports back to the directive PMO, high consistency of practise is ensured across all projects. This is useful in larger organisations that frequently matrix out support in various areas, and where this setup would be appropriate." The finding is consistent with the study Aubry et al., (2010); Monteiro et al., (2016); Salameh (2014). Respondent 11 (R11) stated during the interview that "there are different types of PMO, for example, the Directive PMO is effective because it controls the execution." More governance and resource management are implemented. Furthermore, project outcomes are as anticipated." Silvius, (2021) confirmed that effective and high-quality project management is achievable through the implementation of a directive project management office; similarly, the interviewees agreed that the implementation of a directive PMO can effectively manage the project's quality. At the same time, it has the ability to control the execution. This is especially effective for larger companies that frequently matrix support in areas where this setup fits the culture, tools and techniques that provide quality tools and techniques (R1, R6, and R11), while Supportive PMOs provide a consultative role for projects by providing templates, best practises, training, access to information, and lessons learned from previous projects. This type of PMO acts as a repository for projects. The PMO provides a low level of control. (R2, R7, and R12) The thoughts of these interviewees are consistent with Silvius's (2021) previous study, in which he concluded that the concept of a PMO is still in development and the clarity of its role lacks consensus.

Respondent 2 (R2) mentioned that supportive project management offices (PMOs) in our company typically provide functional support (e.g., infrastructure, document management, training, etc.) to a single complex project or programme. They effectively establish fundamental standards and supervise planning and control activities for a single project." According to the interviewee, "there are various types of project management organisations PMO, one of which is supportive" (R9, R10, R17, R18, R19, and R20). It also stated that "controlling and directive are active types of PMO" (R5, R8, R13, 14, R16 and R15) The above findings, when combined with Silvius's (2021) previous studies, have strengthened the facts about project management organisations as a whole.

However, there are some suggestions for improving the company based on the responses. "The company must have better and more clear segregation of duties amongst the members of the PMO," the suggestions for the directive and supportive PMO for improvement. (R1). "It would be beneficial if the organisation used a platform to manage the project, allowing links between the project, performance, budget, reports, and KPIs." This is especially true for large organisations with numerous projects." (R11). "Increasing PM awareness throughout the company to ensure better collaboration from other departments"" (R15). "The company needs more control over the projects because they are frequently out of our hands." (R2).

In summary, as illustrated in Figure 3, there are three basic types of PMO organisations, each with varying degrees of control and influence over projects within the organisation. A company must determine which type of project office is required in order to have an effective project office. These are PMOs that are supportive, controlling, and directive.



**Fig 3 - Classification of PMO**



## 6. Categorisation of PMO Roles

This section presented and discussed the open-ended questions related to the interview respondents' feedback on the role of PMO in organisations. The goal of the open-ended feedback for the open-ended question was to delve deeper into and identify the role of the PMO in an organisation, as well as to improve the tool: 'How effective is the role of the PMO in your organisation?' Table 4 displays the respondent's responses.

**Table 4 - Classification of PMO roles**

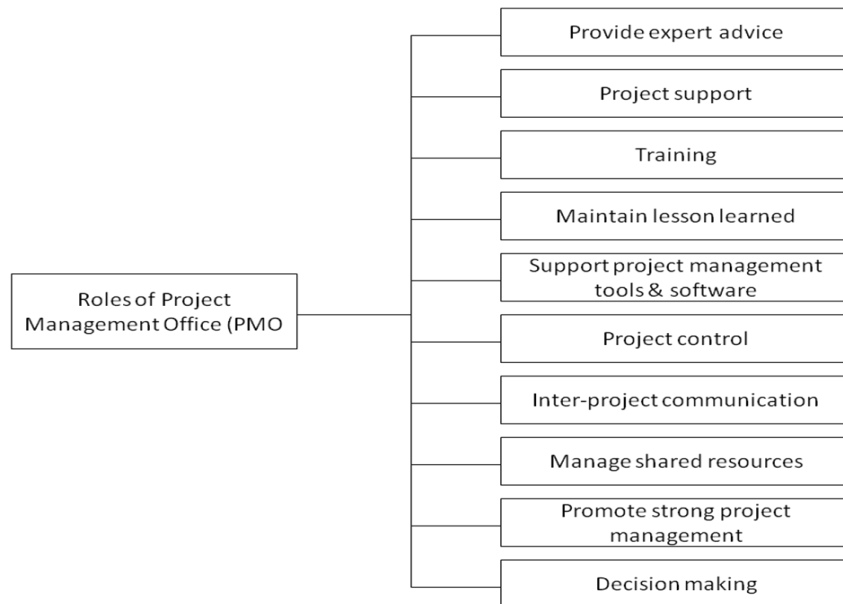
Respondent	PMO Roles									
	Provide expert advice	Project support	Training	Maintain Lessons Learned	Support Project Management Tools & Software	Project Control	Inter-Project Communication	Manage Shared Resources	Promote Strong Project Management	Decision Making
R 1	/	/	/	/	/	/		/		/
R 2		/	/	/	/			/		/
R 3			/	/	/			/		/
R 4	/	/	/	/	/	/		/		/
R 5			/	/	/			/		/
R 6	/	/	/	/	/	/		/		
R 7		/	/	/			/			/
R 8		/	/	/	/	/		/		/
R 9										
R 10		/	/	/						
R 11						/				/
R 12	/	/	/	/	/					
R 13	/	/	/	/	/	/		/		/
R 14		/			/					/
R 15	/					/		/		/
R 16	/					/		/		/
R 17		/	/	/				/		
R 18		/	/	/				/		
R 19		/	/	/				/		
R 20		/	/	/				/		
Frequency	7	13	15	15	10	8	1	15	9	11

Table 4 shows that 15 of 20 respondents indicated that the most important roles of the PMO in their company are to provide staff training, maintain lessons learned, and manage project share resources. It demonstrates that the lessons learned in training and maintenance are important in an organization's PMO. "Providing training and maintaining lessons learned can help develop a project manager's competencies, enhance his/her ability to lead and manage both project execution and team dynamics," according to some of the related responses. Projects can thus tap into internal potential, with staff whose key skills and knowledge can be used to complete tasks and assist one another" (R20). The interviewees all agreed that the PMO's support project is an important role in the organisation. This statement demonstrates that support projects play an important role in project management for the PMO. The following statement is paraphrased: "The role of project support is to provide necessary project management support in the form of guidance to an organization's project managers." (R1).

Respondent 13 (R13) stated during the interview that the "PMO is also responsible for coaching new project managers on various ways an organisation can run projects." Silvius (2021) agreed that the roles of the project management office are still evolving, and that the responses R1 and 13 cannot be excluded from the roles. Regarding the theme decision making, the majority of respondents believe that decision making is one of the PMO's roles. Respondent 10 stated, "There is a strong need for a PMO in most organisations, including mine. Decisions are made with the help of the PMO." Our company is extremely dynamic, with the goal of generating profitable commercial returns for our sole shareholders. Members of the core business units are extremely busy with their tasks and frequently dive deep into their responsibilities. We require a dedicated team to monitor progress and take a step back to gain a more holistic view of the entire portfolio." This role assists the organisation and the PMO in ensuring that decisions are

made by the appropriate people based on accurate information. Audits or peer reviews, developing project and programme structures, and ensuring accountability at all levels are all part of the decision-making role.

Other roles highlighted by respondents include providing expert advice, project support, training, maintaining lessons learned, supporting project management tools and software, project control, inter-project communication, managing shared resources, promoting strong project management, and decision making. Figure 4 depicts a summary of the PMO's role in the company. The results show that the majority of the respondents in this interview agree that the most important roles of the PMO in managing and controlling an organisation are training, maintaining lessons learned, managing resources, and decision making.



**Fig. 4 - Roles of PMO**

In terms of its role, the Project Management Office provides standards and guidelines for project execution. They set measurable goals that align with the overall vision of the organisation and ensure that all deadlines are met. According to the study's findings, the PMO may play a very strategic role for the organisation by managing and directing the organization's overall business and operations. The nature of the business, the type of organisational structure, and the location of the PMO within the organisation all contribute to this variation. The semi-structured interviews for this study yielded a total of ten PMO roles, including project expert advice, as stated by R1,R4,R6, R12, R13, R15, and R16. PMOs became necessary as organisations handled an increasing number of more complex projects (Chiang and Nunez, 2009; Dai and Wells, 2004; Desouza and Evaristo, 2006). While the primary responsibility of the PMO has historically been to support and improve organisational project management procedures (Stanleigh, 2006), certain organisations place a high value on auditing projects (Morris and Pinto, 2004). Unger et al. (2012), on the other hand, claimed that it is unclear how PMO duties will affect value creation. They even claimed that there is no empirical evidence that incorporating PMOs into project management improves project or organisational performance. Given the wide range of PMO activities and goals, it is understandable that there is a scarcity of empirical evidence for PMOs in general. This study aimed to close this gap by investigating the functions of PMO in project-based companies, particularly in the UAE environment. It is widely agreed among R1, R2, R4, R6, R7, R8, R10, R12, R13, R14, R17, R18, R19, R20 that the project management office provided project support, training, lesson learned maintenance, project control, inter-project communication, managed shared resources, promoted strong project management, and decision making.

Carboni et al. (2013) previously discovered that the project management office (PMO) in businesses is a key player in project management standards, techniques, and procedures. Silvius, (2021)., on the other hand, concluded as an existing gap that little is known about the PMO's role in sustainable project management. According to our literature search, there are no studies that link the concept of sustainable project management to the function of the PMO in organisations. Silvius (2021). According to his research, the foundation of a PMO's role in sustainable project management is the incorporation of sustainability issues into the organization's project management methodology or standard. Unfortunately, general project management standards and literature currently lack guidance on how to practically implement an organization's sustainability goals and policies. PMOs have the ability to lead in this area, but they must first improve their skills in sustainable project management. This revelation, along with the research produced in his study, shows that a PMO can play an important role in the sustainability of projects and project

management, assisting businesses in moving toward more sustainable practises. Table 5 summarises the total of ten PMO roles identified in this study.

**Table 5 - Identified PMO roles**

PMO Roles	Support
Project expert advice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Providing technical assistance with project management fundamentals such as project estimation, development schedule, project scope development and scope change assistance, procurement, and project management standards..</li> </ul>
Project support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Supports project managers and teams to ensure project success..</li> </ul>
Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Providing project managers with training in project management practises and methodology.</li> </ul>
Maintain lesson learned	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provides documentation at each stage of development for monitoring and knowledge transfer between departmental project teams..</li> </ul>
Support project management tools and software	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Integrated project management software that divides a project into phases and tasks, assigns a schedule, budget, and resources to each task, and tracks task progress throughout the project.</li> </ul>
Project control	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Monitoring, controlling, reporting, and providing information such as transparency and controlling project performance to project managers.</li> </ul>
Inter-project communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Open communication between project management teams can benefit from lessons learned, project risks, and other project experiences.</li> </ul>
Manage shared resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To manage resources and ensure that agreements are provided in accordance with organizational priorities.</li> </ul>
Promote strong project management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Creating a culture that results in successful projects with corporate head office support and concrete project management processes.</li> </ul>
Decision making	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To track Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and forecasting for projects, programmes, portfolios, resources, and risks, and to generate reports for various levels of management to assist them in making timely decisions.</li> </ul>

## 7. Conclusion

Through interviews with twenty professionals working on various PMO modules in the UAE, this study evaluated the different PMO types and roles. According to the results of the interviews, PMOs can be divided into three categories: supportive, controlling, and directive. The type of PMO you choose will have a big impact on how well your project office runs. While controlling project management offices are used in organizations when it is desired to "clearing-house" the activities, processes, procedures, documentation, and more, the organization demands that the help be used in addition to offering it, supportive PMO is the best choice if the objective is to establish a "rein in" of project management data that all project managers inside the firm may freely access.

And examples of requirements include the use of other PMO-controlled systems of rules, adherence to governance, and the adoption of specific techniques, templates, and forms. Additionally, Directive PMO is a type that goes above and beyond simple control and actually "takes over" the projects by providing the resources and project management expertise required to manage the project. According to the findings of the interviews, the PMO plays a variety of roles, including providing project support, training, lesson-learned maintenance, supporting project management tools and software, project control, inter-project communication, managing shared resources, and encouraging sound project management and decision-making.

A PMO plans for future resource needs, anticipates strategic, non-billable, and billable usage, and assigns the right resources to the right projects at the right times. It enables a PMO to take a proactive approach, boosts resource usage efficiency, and significantly reduces project resource costs. Consequently, in a project-based organization, one of the main roles of the PMO.

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