

Management Strategies and Their Impact on Organisational Dependencies in the Middle Eastern Countries: A Case Study of IBM In Saudi Arabia

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Abstract

This paper examines how management strategies influence organisational dependencies within multinational corporations operating in the Middle East, focusing on International Business Machines Corporation (IBM) in Saudi Arabia. A particular focus is placed on the roles of human resource management (HRM) and managerial leadership in strategy initiatives and implementation. This research draws exclusively on secondary data, including prior empirical studies and academic literature. An inductive thematic analysis is employed to systematically identify and interpret recurring patterns related to managerial, organisational and cultural challenges affecting strategic performance. This allows for the integration of insights concerning future managerial decisions and organisational adjustments necessary to address existing operational deficiencies within the Saudi Arabian context. The findings indicate that the primary causes of strategic management failure include weak leadership capabilities, ineffective project management practices, deficiencies in cross-cultural management, and misalignment between organisational objectives and available resources. Additionally, limitations in training and development provision, reliance on outdated HR strategies and limited cultural inclusivity further exacerbate HRM-related failures. These issues undermine strategic alignment and organisational effectiveness within the Saudi Arabian business context. This study contributes to the strategic management and international HRM literature by highlighting the significance of culturally responsive leadership and adaptive HR practices in multinational organisations operating in emerging markets. The study recommends the implementation of transformational leadership approaches, enhanced training and development initiatives, strengthened cultural literacy, and the use of 360-degree feedback mechanisms to mitigate managerial shortcomings and support successful strategy execution.

Keywords: strategic management, organisational culture, Middle East leadership, workforce talent.

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1.0 Introduction

Management strategy is a series of techniques for directing and controlling businesses to achieve a set of predetermined goals. The management strategy influences the goal setting, business administration, leadership and operational activities in the organisation (Rafiki, 2020). According to Ebad (2018), an effective management strategy promotes objectives of the organisation and establishes a timeline to achieve short, medium and long-term accomplishment. Conversely, the absence of a well-formulated strategy leads to the ineffective achievement of goals with unclear direction in the company (Alsayat and Alenezi, 2018). In this context, this paper discusses the failure of management strategies in the Middle Eastern countries and identifies their effect on the businesses' interdependencies based on the organisational behaviour of IBM in Saudi Arabia. It is found that a lack of empowerment and accountability is the main cause of such failures and consequently, undermines leadership effectiveness in the IT sector and prevents organisations from achieving their desired goals (Hamlin et al., 2024). Moreover, miscommunication in a different national culture and lack of clarity in the action of the strategy fail to meet the alignment with the organisation. All these misalignments pose significant risks to the business and can act as a domino effect on the business' interdependencies (Zheng et al., 2025). It is important to identify factors contributing to management strategy shortcomings for future businesses and developments, to assess and eliminate such risks prior to implementation of the management strategy in this region. Such measures can further prevent business losses and protect customer loyalty. To provide greater depth to the analysis, a solid theoretical background is considered such as Taylor's Scientific Management theory (1911), Hofstede's cultural theory

(2011) and Schwartz's theory of Basic Human Values (2006). This is a cross-sectional case study with an interpretative research approach, using qualitative secondary data followed by an inductive thematic analysis. Recommendations and future research opportunities are provided, along with a possible model to follow.

The aim of this paper is to investigate the reasons for failures in management strategies in the Middle Eastern country of Saudi Arabia and the impact on the business operations of IBM with a strong emphasis on businesses' interdependencies. The paper has four key objectives. First, to investigate the reasons for failure in management strategies in the IT sector of IBM in Saudi Arabia. Second, the paper seeks to identify the challenges faced by management and HR professionals at IBM while implementing a new strategy. Third, it evaluates the barriers faced by the employees in the training and development program provided by the organisation. Fourth, suitable practices to meet the challenges faced by management and HR professionals in implementing new strategy are provided.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Organisational Profile of IBM

IBM is a global technology and consulting organisation that delivers hybrid cloud, artificial intelligence, and enterprise services to clients worldwide. The corporation operates within the Information Technology services industry, generating revenue across four key segments: software solutions, consulting services, infrastructure offerings, and financing activities (IBM, 2020a). Their business model centres on innovation, digital transformation, and strategic partnerships to drive organisational value through data-driven and cloud-based solutions (IBM, 2020a). The company's organisational culture is characterised by a pronounced commitment to innovation, client-centred service delivery, and continuous professional development. It emphasises ethical conduct, respect for individual employees, and a broader organisational purpose that extends beyond profit generation to creating sustainable global impact (IBM, 2020b).

In Saudi Arabia, IBM maintained a long-standing operational presence with activities primarily delivered through collaborative arrangements with local partners, most notably Saudi Business Machines (SBM), which functions as a key distributor and service representative. This partnership enables IBM to align with local regulatory frameworks and market conditions but also introduces a high level of inter-organisational dependency that can complicate strategic coordination and accountability (SBM, 2020). While IBM's global strategy emphasises innovation, agility, and decentralised decision-making, the implementation of these practices within the Saudi context is influenced by hierarchical organisational structures and culturally embedded leadership norms (Aseri, 2015; Alkandi and Helmi, 2024). Consequently, this misalignment between IBM's global strategic orientation and the local operational context in Saudi Arabia causes strategic implementation gaps, challenges within HR practices, employment of a skilled expatriate workforce, retention of local Saudi nationals, adapting leadership approaches, and aligning management practices with local cultural demands, thereby heightening risks to organisational effectiveness and business interdependencies (Khan and Varshney, 2013; Alghazi et al., 2017; Basahal et al., 2020; Mahmoud et al., 2024).

2.2. Factors Influencing Strategic Management Failure in the Saudi IT Sector

To explore the failure of management strategy in Saudi Arabia based on the business perspective of IBM, several studies, although limited in number, have been reviewed. The IT sector in Saudi Arabia faces challenges and uncertainty which create unstable and evolving business requirements. Bradshaw et al. (2019) argue that effective budget management is critical for the successful delivery of high-profile IT projects and electronic services. However, these objectives may not be achieved when project managers and implementation teams lack the authority, autonomy, and organisational support to make timely decisions and respond to changing requirements. Consequently, strategic management processes become less effective in defining and maintaining clear project requirements. On the other hand, Ghardallou et al. (2020) indicate that ineffective organisational leadership is a major contributor to the failure of management strategies within IT organisations operating in Middle Eastern countries, including Saudi Arabia. When organisational leaders fail to provide strategic direction and effective decision-making, IT projects are more likely to experience unclear objectives, poor coordination, and unsuccessful implementation.

Furthermore, mismanagement of different cultures, as commented by Omer et al. (2020) is yet another factor that triggers failure in management strategies in global organisations such as IBM. Cultural diversity

itself is not a barrier to effective management; rather, challenges arise when organisational leaders fail to manage cultural differences through effective communication, coordination, and employee engagement. As a result, misunderstandings and inconsistent interpretations of strategic objectives may occur, weakening collaboration and reducing the effectiveness of strategy implementation. Consequently, decision-making becomes less effective, as communication among team members is hindered, thereby affecting the successful execution of management strategies (Liu et al., 2018; AlSaied et al., 2025).

2.3. Organisational and Workforce Management Challenges in Saudi Arabia

Samarin and Al-Asfour (2023) indicate that from the managerial perspective, the issue in the businesses of Middle East is the urgent need to reinvent the HR function and affiliate it as the radical part for the businesses. The challenge of reinventing the HR function has progressed in Saudi Arabia since 2015, and it is considered as one of the most important factors which signals less satisfactory HR output in the IT industry.

Although leadership development is commonly supported through HR initiatives, leadership capability extends beyond the HR function because it directly influences strategic decision-making and organisational performance. Karali (2020) argues that ineffective leadership limits managers' ability to communicate a clear vision, motivate employees, and implement organisational change successfully. Consequently, organisations may experience lower employee commitment, higher staff turnover, and reputational challenges. In response, leading organisations are investing in leadership development programmes that strengthen strategic capability, improve employee engagement, and support long-term organisational objectives.

Furthermore, Alghazi et al. (2017) highlight another aspect, the conflict of interest in the organisational culture versus the national culture. It is found that 83.12% of the employees working IT firm including IBM do not have a clear, complete and stable requirement in the workforce and conflicts seldom arise with their colleagues. In addition, 80.19% perform poor planning according to (2012). Moreover, Tlaiss and Elamin (2016) add that the generational transition and demographic changes have a major impact on the workforce of Saudi Arabian organisations. Younger employees increasingly value flexible working arrangements, career development opportunities, participation in decision-making, and a better work-life balance than previous generations. Organisations that fail to adapt their management practices to these changing workforce expectations may experience reduced employee engagement, lower retention, and greater difficulty implementing organisational change. Consequently, flexible work practices and adaptive management approaches have become increasingly important within Saudi organisations (Siddique et al., 2016; Alotaibi, 2023).

2.4. Effects on the businesses' interdependencies

Alrubaishi et al. (2020) declare that in organisations of Saudi Arabia, the lack of alignment with the business strategy and the unavailability of human resources are some of the main reasons for failure in IT projects and their management. For example, Aldossari and Chaudhry (2024) suggest that workforce instability in Saudi Arabia is partly influenced by the continued reliance on a predominantly male labour force, limiting organisations' access to the full range of available talent. In the IT sector, this may create skills shortages and place additional pressure on recruitment and workforce planning. As a result, organisations may face difficulties in securing the human capital required to implement strategic initiatives effectively, thereby reducing the likelihood of successful strategy implementation. Syed et al. (2018) conducted a survey with the participation of 300 HR professionals from different IT organisations of Saudi Arabia to identify the challenges faced when implementing new strategies and demand for accelerated leadership requirements. It is found that the human resource management stands at the centre of the changes for the organisations, and achieving the transformation in work practices to create innovative responses is related to the cultural element, as derived from the survey conducted. Qureshi (2018) further explains that long-standing practices and cultural habits of the employees create a demand for transformation to achieve successful business.

2.5. Barriers faced by the employees in training and development programmes

According to Kumar et al. (2019) one of the major barriers faced by the employees of IBM operating in Saudi Arabia is the lack of expertise within the talent pool to provide training and development programs. The organisations in Saudi Arabia face strategic failure due to the complex and sophisticated demand of premium grade employees in the companies. The workforce of Saudi Arabia comprises approximately 11 million employees, compared to the overall population of the country which is over 32 million people

(Gastat, 2025). Yet circa 35% of the workforce are women and the rest men (Gastat, 2025). The root learning credential of the labour force are non-cognitive skills on which the employers consider them (Statista, 2020). Despite the pressure that the Saudi Arabian government faces to employ internationally experienced talent with a stronghold on innovation to deliver effective training and development programmes to the employees, the Saudi organisations are reluctant to this aspect, most prefer and require male Arabic national speakers (Alhaider et al., 2025). This means that for the experienced expatriate employees the job market is not as accessible, and similarly, for expatriate females it seems relatively impossible because the national culture of Saudi Arabia has legal and cultural constraints to hinder their growth in employability options (Alasmrai, 2016; Eger et al., 2022). On the other hand, Kumar et al. (2019) show that the employees face problems in time management due to the involvement of new training and development programs simultaneously along with the working schedule. Other barriers are the national restriction in the workforce and discrimination against candidates according to gender and age. The official national policy of replacement of foreign workers along with the national members of Saudi Arabia have developed their Saudi labour law where the expected retirement age was set at 60 years old (Leeth and Leeth, 2015; Asfahani et al., 2023).

Saudi Arabia remains a controversial business environment with potential development yet not debated deeply by researchers. It can be noted that issues related to the lack of empowerment, lack of leadership, involvement of different cultures and mismanagement with the national culture, the flexibility demand to create innovative work practices, lack of internationally experienced talents to deliver effective training and development programmes can be the main reasons for strategy failures in Saudi Arabia.

3. Theoretical background

3.1. Management strategy reviewed through Scientific Management Theory, Leadership and HR practices

Scientific Management Theory, developed by Taylor (1911), emphasises the optimisation of organisational efficiency through systematic task analysis, standardisation of work processes, and close managerial control over employee performance. Waring (2016) explains that the theory applies scientific and engineering principles to workplace operations, particularly in structured and process-driven environments. Similarly, Paramboor and Ibrahim (2018) highlight core principles such as the separation of planning from execution, task specialisation, scientific selection of employees, structured training, and performance measurement based on output efficiency.

From a leadership perspective, Scientific Management assumes a directive and hierarchical leadership style, where senior management is responsible for designing workflows and setting performance expectations, while employees are expected to execute predefined tasks (Tompkins, 2023). This reflects a top-down leadership approach in which decision-making authority is concentrated at higher organisational levels, and compliance with standardised procedures is prioritised over individual autonomy. In relation to HR practices, Taylorism is closely associated with structured recruitment, skills-based selection, and formalised training programmes designed to ensure employees can perform clearly defined tasks efficiently. HR functions under this model are primarily administrative and operational, focusing on workforce optimisation, performance monitoring, and compliance with organisational standards rather than employee empowerment or participatory decision-making (Ludwikowska, 2023).

In the context of IBM operations in Saudi Arabia, elements of Scientific Management can be observed in the organisation's reliance on standardised global delivery frameworks, performance monitoring systems, and structured IT service processes designed to ensure consistency and efficiency across regional operations. Such systems reflect HR practices centred on measurable performance outcomes and controlled task execution, as well as leadership practices that emphasise process adherence and operational efficiency.

However, when applied in a multicultural and rapidly evolving IT environment such as Saudi Arabia, this approach may create tension between efficiency-driven structures and the need for flexibility. A highly standardised management system can limit employee autonomy and reduce responsiveness to local client requirements, particularly when teams are culturally diverse and operate across different expectations of communication and decision-making (Senyapar, 2025). This also links directly to leadership effectiveness within IBM Saudi Arabia. Where leadership is highly directive and process-driven, there may be limited scope for adaptive decision-making at team level, which can affect employee engagement and

responsiveness. Similarly, HR systems focused primarily on control and standardisation may not fully support the development of cross-cultural competencies, employee empowerment, or flexible working practices, which are increasingly required in contemporary IT service environments. Therefore, while Scientific Management Theory provides a useful lens for understanding efficiency-oriented structures within IBM, its application also highlights the need for more adaptive leadership approaches and more strategically oriented HR practices to balance operational control with organisational flexibility in the Saudi Arabian IT context.

3.2. Hofstede's cultural dimensions for Saudi Arabia

Unsuccessful management strategy could be related to the national culture of Saudi Arabia as explained with the help of Hofstede's cultural model (2011). It is important to acknowledge that the author analysed the influence of national culture on management practices by conducting an empirical study at the large multinational IBM across 66 national subsidiaries (Hofstede and Minkov, 2010). This model shows the value of a workplace improved by the culture of the nation. The theory collectively programs the mind and distinguishes the members of the group to categorise people from the others (Sabri et al., 2020). Based on the six dimensions of national culture of this model, the application for Saudi Arabia compared with the USA highlights that the power distance of Saudi Arabia has a high score (90) which indicates that the extent of the power is distributed unequally in the local environment. The hierarchy in the local organisation is considered to reflect the inherent inequality, and the leader is a benevolent autocrat which influences the working conditions as indicated by the high score in this dimension. It also expresses the attitude of the culture towards inequality among the people. As such, by Hofstede's model (2011), there can be cultural reasons for failure in practicing the Taylorism management theory (1911), at the IBM's operational level. The model shows that despite gaining a positive return, IBM may fail due to the cultural imbalance in the organisation in accordance with the national culture of Saudi Arabia. Additionally, the high uncertainty avoidance score (69) shows that Saudi Arabia requires rigid codes of behaviour and beliefs. There may easily be intolerance of unorthodox behaviours and ideas, which is opposite a diverse culture that IBM encourages (Global Data, 2022).

3.3. Management strategy reviewed through Schwartz's Theory of Basic Values

Schwartz's Theory of Basic Values (2006) provides a useful perspective for understanding how individual values influence workplace behaviour and managerial decision-making. The theory identifies ten universal human values recognised across cultures, organised within a circular motivational structure that reflects the compatibility and conflict between different values. According to Sagiv et al. (2017) these values represent beliefs that guide individuals' attitudes, behaviours, and priorities across different situations, influencing both personal and organisational decision-making.

Unlike Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions (2011), which explains cultural characteristics at the national level, Schwartz's theory focuses on the values held by individuals. Consequently, the theory is particularly relevant to organisations such as IBM operating in Saudi Arabia, where employees from different national and cultural backgrounds work within the same organisational environment. While Hofstede explains the broader cultural context in which organisations operate, Schwartz's framework provides insight into how the individual value preferences influence employee behaviour, collaboration, and responses to organisational change.

Within the IBM Saudi Arabia case study, this theory helps explain why employees may respond differently to strategic initiatives despite operating under the same organisational policies. Employees whose values emphasise openness to change, self-direction, and achievement may be more willing to adopt new technologies, innovative working methods, and organisational transformation. Conversely, employees who place greater importance on security, conformity, and tradition may prefer established procedures and demonstrate greater caution towards organisational change (Claxton et al., 2022). These differences do not imply resistance to strategy implementation; rather, they illustrate how individual value priorities shape employees' willingness to engage with change.

The theory also provides insight into leadership and HR practices within IBM Saudi Arabia by showing that effective leaders' practices recognise that employees can be motivated by different value orientations and therefore require different approaches to communication, participation, and performance management.

Similarly, HR policies relating to recruitment, employee development, performance, or rewards should accommodate diverse motivational values to encourage employee engagement and organisational commitment. Failure to recognise these differences may reduce collaboration, limit employee participation, and weaken the implementation of organisational strategies.

Nevertheless, Schwartz's theory contributes to understanding the interaction between organisational and national culture in Saudi Arabia. Although Saudi society is often characterised by relatively conservative cultural values, multinational organisations such as IBM operate within a global organisational culture that encourages innovation, collaboration, and continuous improvement (IBM, 2020). The challenge for management is therefore not the existence of conservative cultural values themselves, but the ability to balance local cultural expectations with IBM's global organisational values. The successful alignment of these values is more likely to facilitate effective communication, employee engagement, and successful strategy implementation across culturally diverse teams.

4. Methodologies.

This study applied the realism philosophy where the interpretivism research approach was adopted because interpreting the relevant information has provided justifiable and beneficial solutions to the real issue of failure in strategic management in the Middle Eastern countries (Saunders, 2016). An exploratory research design was employed to allow flexibility in identifying the effect of failure in strategic management and business dependency. The secondary qualitative data were collected from local articles and journals to identify the reasons behind strategic management failure in the business aspect of IBM operation in Saudi Arabia. The data were analysed using the inductive thematic analysis, and from the grounded theory perspective, this qualitative study is a narrative analysis element, based on ontological assumptions.

4.1 Research approach:

An inductive approach was used for this study to collect data from secondary sources such as local articles, journals and online materials. This is an advantage that has offered flexibility in selecting and interpreting the qualitative data relevant for this study (Ciesielska and Jemielniak, 2018). The collected data were used to examine and refine existing theoretical perspectives identified in the literature. The deductive research approach was not considered because this emergence and interpretation of theories is required, rather than hypothesis testing, which was not aligned with the objectives of this study (Fife and Grossner, 2024).

4.2. Research philosophy:

Several types of research philosophies including positivism, realism, pragmatism and interpretivism were reviewed. For this study, interpretivism was selected because it relies on the idea of interdependence of reality from the human mind while recognising the role of interpretation in knowledge development. The philosophical stance was based on the assumption and development of the knowledge derived from secondary data sources (Zangirolami et al., 2018). This approach allows for the identification of themes related to leadership, human resource practices, and cultural dynamics within the IBM Saudi Arabia context. The study does not test any predefined hypothesis.

4.3. Research design:

An interpretivist research design was adopted in this study to support flexibility of the secondary data collected. This design enabled the exploration of multiple dimensions related to strategic management failure in IBM's operations in Saudi Arabia. On the other hand, a conclusive research design was not used because it focuses on the extent of certainty and quantification, rather than in-depth understanding of underlying issues (Yadav, 2022).

4.4. Data collection:

For this qualitative research, all the data were collected from secondary sources of data, based on the content of the discussion (see Table 1 below). They are different types of sources, with different target audiences to form clearer opinions by comparing information from previous research, and from actual local news. As noted by Bingham (2023) this is an advantage because it has further supported the interpretation of a certain action or behaviour to a broader evaluation and picture of the research interpretation, wherein the focus is on strategies failure in the particular business context of Saudi Arabia. This approach has contributed to producing practically applicable insights suitable to answer the questions raised in this study.

Table 1.

Secondary Data Sources

Journals
Alfaadel, F. (2012) Success and Failure of IT Projects: A Study in Saudi Arabia. Available at: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/262295440_Success_and_failure_of_IT_projects_a_study_in_Saudi_Arabia
Ebad, S.A. (2018) Influencing Factors for IT Software Project Failures in Developing Countries-A Critical Literature Survey. JSW, 11(11), pp.1145-1153.
Ghardallou, W. et al. (2020) CEO Characteristics and Firm Performance: A Study of Saudi Arabia Listed Firms. The Journal of Asian Finance, Economics, and Business, 7(11), pp.291-301.
Qureshi, M. (2018) Interdisciplinary Journal of Contemporary Research in Business. A Study of the Contemporary Issues of Human Resource Management in the Retail Sector of Saudi Arabia. Vol. 4, NO. 9.
Magazine Articles
Leeth, J. and Leeth, J. (2015) Workforce Planning Policies Challenge HR in Saudi Arabia, SHRM. Available at: https://www.shrm.org/resourcesandtools/hr-topics/talent-acquisition/pages/workforce-hr-saudi-arabia.aspx
Newspapers
Arab News - Worldwide Latest Breaking News & Updates. Established in 1975, the Saudi-based Arab News is the Middle East's newspaper of record and the biggest English language daily in the Kingdom.
Saudi Gazette - Global News Website, it covers the latest and breaking news of Saudi Arabia and the world all the time, with politics, business, technology, life, opinion and sport.

Source: (Author)

4.5. Access, ethics and limitations

Challenges were encountered in conducting this research in obtaining and maintaining the security of the data regarding the cultural aspect of Saudi Arabia and failure of IT companies. Therefore, the collected data from secondary sources were protected following the GDPR 2018 regulation. According to the GDPR 2018, the data collected regarding a company need to be protected from third party access (ICO, 2018). Accordingly, this regulation was followed to maintain the authenticity and access the data with valid procedure.

Some limitations were identified during the process of collection of data from secondary sources. The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has received comparatively limited attention in Western research, so appropriate information takes time to be found. It is noted that Saudi Arabia has one of the world's lowest rankings on press freedom, with a ranking of 170 out of 180 countries on Reporters Without Borders' 2020 World Press Freedom Index (UK Parliament, 2020). Lately, the country is found in high national development and future projects, compared to other Middle Eastern countries that show advancement towards implementing changes to the social and cultural lifestyle, such as Bahrain, UAE or Kuwait. The paper is also limited by the research particularity that is focused on the case study of IBM in Saudi Arabia and does not intend to debate other areas or business sectors. There is also limitation by the interpretivism research approach that, along with an inductive analysis design, target to produce a description and perception of the research answers.

5. Data Analysis

5.1. Method: Inductive thematic analysis

As this research is based on qualitative data, the suggested suitable method of analysis is *thematic analysis*. This method offers flexibility (Braun and Clarke, 2006). Critiques of this method argue that it is this flexibility that is the weakness of this method because it can lead to untrustworthiness and inconsistency (Finlay, 2021). However, the objective of this approach is to produce a description and perception of answers as derived from secondary data, and so the risks are mitigated. With this method the data is further generated into patterns and themes.

For this case study, the inductive thematic analysis is approached. Morgan and Nica (2020) state that compared to the deductive thematic analysis, where the data is analysed using a predetermined plan, the inductive thematic method develops the structure of the analysis using the actual data itself. This is a

strength that intensifies the study. Proudfoot (2022), explains that in the inductive approach the themes are vigorously connected to the data since they emerge from it, thus eliminating any potential bias or knowledge from the researcher's side. This results in a balanced approach maintained between the Western perspective and the actual data itself. This way the paper is strengthened by consistency and trustworthiness. Additionally, according to Kiger and Varpio (2020), the effectiveness of this method increases with the themes being further related to the specific questions raised by the research. As this paper explores the reasons behind the failures of the management strategies and the possible effects on the business' interdependencies in the Middle East, with a realism interpretative approach focused on IBM in Saudi Arabia, the inductive thematic analysis method provides the researcher with an all-encompassing analysis that integrates and tailors all the diverse points of view that have been discussed in the previous sections of the study: the literature review and theoretical background. Therefore, it supports the presentation of a holistic point of view with relevant supportive thematic discussions on the major findings. The inductive thematic analysis comprises six stages: data settling, coding, searching and reviewing themes, defining and naming themes and presenting the report (Braun and Clarke, 2006) as presented in the following sections.

5.2. Thematic analysis

After careful consideration and strictness to collect only the relevant and updated secondary data, the researcher is strongly familiarised with the material to be analysed.

Coding

This stage identifies and extracts raw data from the literature review and theoretical background presented previously, with reference to the research questions:

- *What are the reasons for failure in management strategies in Saudi Arabia?*
- *What is the impact on the business interdependencies in Saudi Arabia?*
- *What challenges does HR face when a new strategy is implemented in Saudi Arabia?*
- *What are the barriers faced by the employees in training and development programme?*
- *What can be an effective solution to manage the failures in IT sector in Saudi Arabia?*

This is performed by determining the words frequently used, sentences, phrases, texts, patterns, as detailed in the below sections.

Code 1: Management strategies failure

The lack of leadership is one of the delimiting factors restricting and affecting the perpetuation of a resilient, convenient, and unidirectional leadership to guide and supervise the workforce of IBM. Added to this, the lack of coherence in the managerial tactics to lead the organisation, disorients the scopes of accomplishing all the organisational tasks, as well as managing the human resources efficiently. It is also observed that the leadership is driven and illustrated with a strong mission and purpose in the Saudi Arabian organisation (Ghardallou et al., 2020). Furthermore, the actual implementation of the leadership with the strategic moves, determined will-power, resiliency and patience to navigate across the challenges and internal organisational crises, as well as the flexibility to adapt to the evolving needs of the customers, markets, within the company itself, seem to lack in IBM Saudi Arabia. In addition to this, the lack of effective managerial procedure in facilitating tailored and coordinated functionalities that encompass outsourcing of raw materials to the delivery of the end products to the desired customers is also eluding the scopes of driving effective managerial procedures across the organisation (Ebad, 2018).

Code 2: Non-alignment of strategies

The non-alignment of the organisational objectives with the resources available in the organisation ranging from human resources, financial resources, other intangible and tangible resources result in significant failures in IBM management. Often the discrepancies between the goals and the efforts towards the accomplishment of the organisational goals suffocate the management resulting in a lack of the strategic direction of the organisational decision-making system (Alrubaishi et al., 2020).

Code 3: IBM Leadership strategy

The leaders do not designate their responsibilities clearly, nor allocate proper and convenient resources to the employees, a lack of sound guidance and direction of the employees, teams and across all the levels of the organisation. This inadequacy on the part of the organisational leaders to ensure a good direction to the employees and failure to imbue workplace satisfaction to the employees significantly deteriorates the employee morale and imprints a poor and dissatisfying organisational impression on their mind (Samarin and Al-Asfour, 2023).

Code 4: Failed Human Resources Strategies

The need to reinvent the HR strategies in the IT sector of the Saudi Arabian organisations implies the existing faults in the operational dynamics and functional capabilities of the people management strategies. Although Tlaiss and Elamin (2016), observe that the IT companies have been endeavouring to refurbish the HR processes to retain the employees' motivation, they lack those strategic, structured, contingent, and decisive managerial tactics to induce a fully capable and competent workforce functioning. To continue, the failure of the HR-oriented management strategy discourages the employees from functioning and take responsibility effectively because they are not positively influenced either motivated by the leaders or the managers on the organisation side. This inevitably deteriorates the morale and the interest of the employees. Al-Asfour et al. (2019) argue that the employees are not encouraged to develop their professional efficiencies and capacity to accentuate their working proficiency according to the contemporary demands and organisational needs. The authors further note that the skills gap heightened by the lack of qualified labour capital often challenges the businesses in Saudi Arabia in fulfilling the organisational projects and other commercial commitments. Alalshiekh (2018) confirms that this not only strands the companies in terms of success and reliability in the international front but also deteriorates the internal efficiencies and capabilities of the organisation. Therefore, it is evident that the outdated functional strategies and long-standing practices of the HR and incompetent measures to deal with the human capital of the IT sector in Saudi Arabia are restricting proficient nurturing and retaining of talents.

Code 5: Recruitment strategy issues

Budhwar et al. (2019) suggest that the IT sector in the Middle East is increasingly recruiting home country employees who speak Arabic language but consciously neglecting the aspiring candidates who could not speak Arabic. Therefore, these recruitment strategies are supporting inequality in the organisation as well as delimiting the scope of employment for international employees. As such, the IBM organisational culture is underpinned by limiting attitudes on the professional competencies and illustrates one of the reasons for the management failure coupled with the failures in the endeavours of the HR (Siddique et al., 2016; Alotaibi, 2023). This can be because the national culture of Saudi Arabia illustrates a culture of legal constraints that impede the growth and development of the employability options. The internal culture dynamics of the organisation that fails to integrate own culture can create potential conflicts within the organisation (Alasmrai, 2016; Eger et al., 2022). This can be one of the major constituents for the failure of the HR management with respect to the workforce in the organisations in Saudi Arabia.

Code 6: Lack of talent pool

The main barrier that IBM in Saudi Arabia faces is the lack of a sufficiently skilled talent pool and this has created a major issue in offering effective training and development program. The organisation is found to face strategic issue because they have shortage of skilled people in the IT sector. As commented by Stachová et al. (2019) an organisation with lack of talent pool suffers from hiring of best candidate which further hampers the creativity and innovation system of the business. The company faces pressure due to the complicated rules of Saudi Arabian government in employing internationally experienced employees, and an uneven access to jobs and opportunity faced by potential applicants.

Code 7: Inefficient Training and development

Kumar et al. (2019) explain that the IBM employees in Saudi Arabia have been facing challenges to perceive effective training and developing programs due to the rigid and complicated HR-oriented processes, which are mostly outdated or not convenient in addressing the needs, demands, and issues of the workforce. Moreover, the fact that the gender inequality is rampant in the Saudi Arabian organisation also implicates a major gap in fostering a diversified and gender-inclusive workforce in the organisation. The training sessions become costly since they need to be organised multiple times in repeated sessions, minding the mixture of men and women employees, and trainers' and coaches' availability (AlDossari, 2016; Aldossari and Chaudhry, 2024).

Code 8: Poor cross-cultural management

According to Qureshi (2018) the leaders of the organisation practice culturally insensitive management when dealing with the cross-cultural workforce, substantially contributing towards management failures. This is because the interactions with the employees, exchange of organisational information, mutual trust,

and dependencies, as well as the inculcation of respect amongst each other for the differences that the employees must have due to the different personal orientation, are not administered proficiently in the organisation. This disparity within the internal ambience of the organisation also disrupts the IT organisations especially IBM to implement and foster adequate management techniques. In addition to this, their cultural affiliations and values along with no efforts on the part of the organisational authorities to alleviate the cultural differences or induce measures to foster cultural literacy surfaced another source of internal disharmony, which ultimately led to failure in the management strategies. Alghazi et al. (2017) discussed in the literature review, state that due to the communication confusedly conditioned by the diverse cultural background of the workforce, the HR-related functional dynamics have been failing repeatedly. Furthermore, the difference in the organisational and national culture of the IT sector including the IBM is creating conflicts in the views, opinions, thinking and cultural perceptions between the employees and management.

Code 9: Taylor Scientific Management theory

The Taylor Scientific Management theory (1911) is used for analysing and improving the workflow in organisations. The main objective of this theory is to improve economic efficiency and manage labour productivity (Paramboor and Ibrahim, 2018). Based on this theoretical perspective, in Saudi Arabia, organisations such as IBM can improve the management functions by implementing a structural system that would help in developing various groups and departments and further organising and prioritising each task and activity for each team and each team member. Furthermore, this theory can guide the management team to focus on the performance of the employees and helps in performing efficiently in their role (Rickaby et al., 2020). The focus of the theory is to organise and adjust the daily activities of the business, whereas IBM's focus is to integrate their working procedures and meet the business' objectives properly, which are suitable and practised in the US or Europe. Yet, this may not be suitable in an environment such as Saudi Arabia, especially at the beginning of the strategy implementation.

Code 10: Cultural differences

The Islamic and Arabic culture and their underlying principles that are predominant in the national culture of Saudi Arabia seem to restrict the perpetuation of the modern and upgraded HR functionalities that cater to the demands and needs of the employees. Therefore, the socio-cultural differences in the organisation lead to the unstable cultural value orientation between the cross-cultural employees and the managers (Leeth and Leeth, 2015; Asfahani et al., 2023).

According to **Hofstede's model** (2011) Saudi Arabia's high score on the Power Distance dimension suggests that the society welcomes a hierarchical structure where all the people have a place, and it does not require further explanation. A hierarchical organisation is ideally led by a benevolent autocrat, centralisation is common, reflecting internal inequalities and subordinates expect to be told what to do. Saudi Arabia is considered a collectivistic society and loyalty in a collectivist culture is paramount, therefore, it over-rides most other societal rules and regulations. In collectivist societies offence leads to shame (Karandashev, 2020). Moreover, it is argued that management encompasses the coordination and oversight of groups, with employer–employee interactions and communication grounded in ethical principles. Saudi Arabian society exhibits a strong normative orientation, wherein individuals emphasize the demonstration of absolute truth. This orientation is accompanied by a deep respect for tradition and a pronounced focus on the rapid attainment of success (Abdulrahman et al., 2018).

Schwartz's model- Schwartz's theory (2006) identifies ten values that are presented in a circular structure such as achievement, power, conformity, tradition, self-direction, stimulation, and others. As mentioned by Sagiv et al. (2017) this theory is regarding basic human ideologies, so, it can be said that managers of organisations in Saudi Arabia including IBM can implement this theory for using these values to solve the discussed challenges faced in both management and HR functions of the company. These human values can provide important direction to the managerial approaches of IBM, which can encourage employees to perform their work without facing barriers. Schwartz's model (2006) indicates a conservative, traditional environment, with conformity and security dominants (Sabri et al., 2020).

5.3. Deriving themes

The codes generated are summarised in the Table 2 below to derive the themes for further analysis that can answer the research questions raised in this paper.

Table 2.

Inductive thematic data analysis and themes formulation

Codes	Themes	Summary of the theme	Content	Research Question
Management strategies failure Poor Cross-cultural Management Cultural differences (Hofstede, Schwartz) Non-alignment of strategies	Theme 1: The probable reasons behind the incompetency and ineffective management strategies leading to management failures in the IT sector operating in Saudi Arabia especially in the IBM.	This theme focuses on management failures such as lack of leadership, cultural issues, cross-cultural issues in context of IBM of Saudi Arabia which has created barriers in developing new strategy.	-reasons for failure in management strategies; -impact on the business interdependencies in the Saudi Arabia	What are the reasons for failure in management strategies? What is the impact on the business interdependencies in Saudi Arabia?
Codes Failed Human resource strategies IBM Leadership strategy Recruitment strategy Issues Poor cross-cultural management	Themes Theme 2: The reasons behind the HR-oriented failures in the management strategies in the IT sector in IBM Saudi Arabia.	Summary of the theme This theme captures the reasons of failures of HR professionals such as ineffective management, demoralising staff, lack of motivational factors and others.	Content -challenges faced by HR when a new strategy is implemented in Saudi Arabia	Research Question What challenges does HR face when a new strategy is implemented in Saudi Arabia?
Codes Lack of talent pool Inefficient Training and development	Themes Theme 3: Challenges faced by the employees during training and development program in the IT sector of Saudi Arabia in the context of IBM Saudi Arabia.	Summary of the theme This theme encompasses the challenges faced by employees during the training periods such as lack of support, unsolved doubts, due to ineffective strategy in recruitment.	Content -barriers faced by the employees in training and development programs.	Research Question What are the barriers faced by the employees in training and development program?
Codes Scientific Management theory – Taylorism	Themes Theme 4: Ways of meeting challenges of management and HR professionals in IBM, Saudi Arabia	Summary of the theme This theme suggests solutions for mitigating the issues faced due to national culture of Saudi Arabia in IBM using proper performance management and other strategies.	Content -An effective solution to manage the failures in IT sector in Saudi Arabia	Research question What can be an effective solution to manage the failures in IT sector in Saudi Arabia?

5.4 Themes summary

Using the above coding, the data can be thematised into four major themes. The structure model is formulated and shown in *Figure 1* below.

- 1) The first theme formulated is *“The reasons behind the incompetency and ineffective management strategies leading to management failures in the IT sector operating in Saudi Arabia.”*
- 2) The second theme is *“The reasons behind the HR-oriented failures in the management strategies in the IT sector in Saudi Arabia.”*

These two themes ascertain that the failure of management in the organisation, as well as the failure of the HR-oriented functionalities in the Saudi Arabia organisations, are recognised and unfolded in diverse ways that work behind the reasons of failing functional capabilities and adequate strategic measures. The reasons for the management failures, as stated by Rafiki (2020) which is derived from the literature review, in the IT sector operating in Saudi Arabia include: lack of efficient leadership, lack of coherency in the managerial tactics, lack of flexibility and adaptability to cope with the emerging trends of the contemporary IT management. Moreover, Tlaiss and Elamin (2016) sustain that the inefficacy and incompetency on the part of the IBM managers to drive tailored and coordinated functionalities worked against the success of the management in the organisations. In addition to this, Kumar et al. (2019) confirm that ineffective and insensitive management to deal the cross-cultural workforce, no proper prioritisation of the tasks, conflicts in opinions of the employees due to differing cultural affiliations, the non-alignment of the organisational objectives with the resources available in the organisation also form the reasons of management and HR-

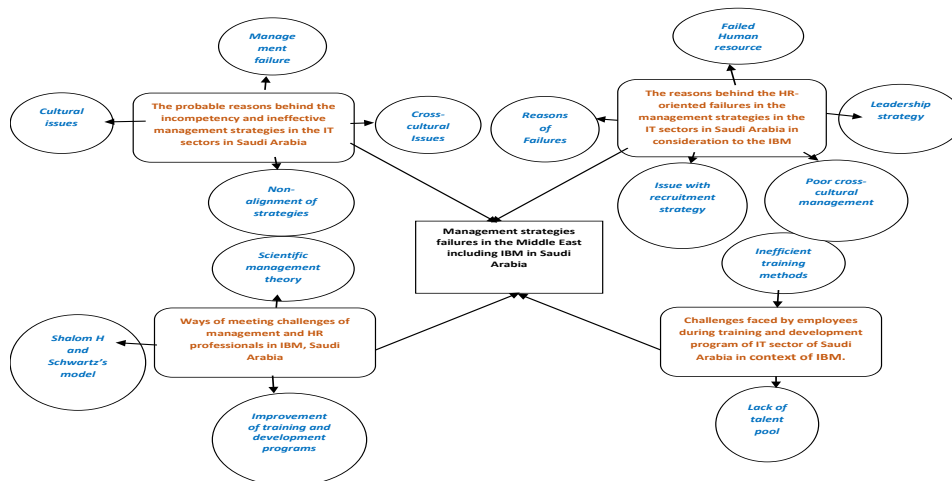
oriented failures in the organisation. On the other hand, the secondary data reveals that the failures of the management strategies in the HR and other managers in IBM in Saudi Arabia showcase the conflicts and hierarchical bureaucracy in the organisation emerging out of formal communication and orthodox discriminatory attitudes to the employees who are not inclined towards Islam or could not speak Arabic (Alasmrai, 2016; Eger et al., 2022).

3) The third theme is “*Challenges faced by employees during training and development program of the IT sector in Saudi Arabia in the context of IBM*”; and

4) The fourth theme is “*Ways of meeting challenges of management and HR professionals in IBM, Saudi Arabia*”

have been formed to further probe deep into the specific issues of the employees in the Saudi Arabian organisation and devise strategies for the same. The reasons for these HR-oriented failures include loopholes in the operational dynamics and functional capabilities in the HR strategies, ineffectiveness and inaccessibility of the training and development programs for the employees to develop their professional competencies and employability skills, as well as outdated functional strategies and long-standing practices of the HR in the IT sector of the Saudi Arabian organisation (Leeth and Leeth, 2015; Asfahani et al., 2023).

Figure 1. Themes structure model



Sources: (Authors)

6.0. Discussion of the Key Findings

This study discusses the failure of management strategies in the Middle Eastern countries and identifies its effects on the businesses' interdependencies based on the organisational behaviour of IBM in Saudi Arabia targeting the objectives of this paper. Based on the inductive thematic analysis, it can be revealed that the key findings are:

I. Strategic Management Failure Factors

The probable reasons behind the management failures unveil in the form of various factors that counteract the achievement of organisational success, as well as the commercial success. This research finds that the management failures are caused by the lack of leadership, cross-cultural management issues in the context of IBM in Saudi Arabia which have created barriers in developing new strategies. Alfaadel et al. (2012) find in the paper “Success and Failure of IT Projects: A Study in Saudi Arabia” that the management failures in the organisation arise from the lack of definite and proper project goals resulting in the organisational missions being affected through unavailability and inaccessibility of adequate and timely resources to facilitate initiation and completion of the projects undertaken by Saudi Arabia. The authors also emphasise the fact that the incompetent, uncoordinated, and inexperienced leadership in leading the organisational projects, coupled with poor planning and execution form major factors behind the management failures in the organisation. Additionally, Alghazi et al. (2017) in the paper “Aligning business strategy with IT strategy

from business model to enterprise in Saudi Arabia public sector”, confirm that the inadequate cross-cultural management also surfaces greater differences amongst the organisational members that delimit the perpetuation of the effective exchange of information and facts across all organisational members.

The fact that less emphasis is placed on project management implies impoverished prioritisation of the tasks, which nonetheless is challenging while implementing a management strategy, further responsible for incompleteness of IT projects on time, and thereby project failures on the part of the organisations in Saudi Arabia including IBM. Budhwar et al. (2019) observe in the research “The state of HRM in the Middle East: Challenges and future research agenda” that the HR managers of the organisations could not align strategies well with the functional dimensions of the business. This mostly happens as the HR managers induce people management techniques through the narrow administrative strategies, which results in a fragmented and incoherent operative mechanism, which is why the functional mechanisms remain loosely connected to one another.

Similar findings are revealed by Alsabban (2019) in his study “A Study on Analysing Mega-Project Failures In Saudi Arabia By Using Agency Theory”, where the employees are facing problems in procuring effective and reliable training and development program which is restricting them to foster their utmost professional competencies and capabilities to fulfil their designated roles and responsibilities. This is because they are not trained with the skills requirements to develop their career path skills nor are they given on-the-job training, which is delimiting them to exhibit their responsibilities adequately. Therefore, the entire internal capabilities of the organisation that are mainly driven by the employees suffer from substantial backlog and low confidence of the employees to engage and work passionately and dedicatedly towards completion of the IT projects of the IBM.

II. Theoretical Factors of failure

Schwartz’s Basic Value theory (2006) reveals basic human ideologies under several distinct values such as achievement, power, conformity, tradition, self-direction, stimulation, and others. This theory provides insights into the ways that values vary between and across cultures and describes potential patterns of conflict between values (Sagiv et al., 2017). In this context, Saudi Arabia fails under a conservation society value which prioritises loyalty and obedience through conformity, self-control and security which are against openness to change value, as found in the study “How Culture Shapes Our Moral Identity: A Cross-Cultural Investigation in Saudi Arabia and Britain”, by AlSheddi (2017). Since culture influences people’s moral identity, this variation of values and morale can lead to failure for IBM in Saudi Arabia.

Equally, Hofstede’s cultural model (2011) shows that Saudi Arabia’s culture and society are much based on tradition, beliefs and masculinity, with a high-power distance dimension. The notion of poor cross-cultural management is relevant across the organisational culture of giant IBM, compared to the national Saudi Arabian environment because the national culture of the countries that foster the Islamic culture attempt to enhance their corporate and national culture. In detail, religious values may influence the moral acumen, understanding, and moral conduct and Islam rigorously impacts social and moral course in Saudi Arabia (Almalki, 2023). Morality in Islam, based on the Middle East local law – Islamic law, is seen as a series of statutes, obligations, and trustworthiness, while benevolence, piety, justice, honesty, awareness of sound conducts such as manners and gratitude, politeness, courtesy, are among the values they learn. These can be interpreted as ethics or moral concepts.

Akbar (2018) further explains that the western concept of morality as right or wrong does not cover the whole concepts of morality in Islam. In comparing morality in Islam and western culture, all categories are found in western cultures but, there are some differences: some Islamic moral values are not considered moral values in the west. For instance, Saudi business is relationship oriented, their preference is those who they know prior to doing business, - in respect to honesty, loyalty and gratitude- compared to western orientation where this can be seen as nepotism and facilitating this aspect can further classify the business as corrupted (Leeth and Leeth, 2015; Asfahani et al., 2023). This creates negative impact on businesses operating in Saudi Arabia and generally in the Middle East countries, such as IBM.

Taylor Scientific Management theory (1911)

IBM’s focus on operational processes together with a strong organisational culture were influenced by the Saudi Arabian national culture. Due to the working cultural difference between women and men the human

resource department could not develop a junction between the machines and human performance in their routine tasks. Consequently, due to the failure of the organisation in providing an efficient training and development program to all the employees, the adoption of the scientific management theory fails in its operations. Kaur et al. (2020) suggest that the focus of the theory is to perform the daily activities by dividing individual work in the production floor. So, the attention of IBM to impose standardised working methods by adopting this management strategy theory could not emphasize this aspect.

III. Saudi business environment factors

On a realistic perspective, the researcher's findings further reveal that the Saudi business culture has a unique etiquette and learning the characteristics and how to approach things in the Kingdom's environment is crucial to perform in business successfully (Boshers, 2020). Their local business culture is based on trust, consensus, hospitality, transparency and ethics, and the country offers distinctive opportunities for those willing to decipher the local business ethos and rationale. In this context, AlDossry (2020) explains that the Saudi business culture is not created out of economic necessity: the focus of their work is not about productivity, it is achieving it and establishing good relations. Concurrently, AlEmam (2020) in the article "Saudi women rising up in business in line with Vision 2030" highlights the evolving role of women in the Saudi business landscape because of recent institutional reforms. Increased female participation in the workforce reflects broader socio-economic transformation aligned with Vision 2030, yet cultural expectations and organisational practices continue to shape professional advancement. These dynamics suggest that while the Saudi business environment is undergoing progressive change, traditional values remain influential, requiring multinational organisations to adopt culturally responsive leadership and management strategies to ensure effective engagement, inclusion, and sustainable performance.

Saudi Arabia has been doing business for decades with the outside world, yet the most successful sectors are the oil industry, petrochemicals, engineering, real estate, private education, healthcare, building materials, luxury goods and agriculture. The majority of these are state-owned – approximately 180 companies, including ministries (Amico, 2017). The rest of them are owned by family groups and private sector. Majid (2017) explains that most of the investors or private businesses go for a joint venture based on a contract agreement, because, based on the local Middle East law- Foreign Ownership Restrictions, one of the partners must be local/ national and own at least 51% of the share. As of this point, since their power, interest, mission and values are different, most businesses fail. Bereta (2018) explores another option, the franchise. McDonalds and Burger King are an example, but these adapted to the specification of the area in respect to customers' tastes, market behaviour and consumer trends. The food and beverage sectors experience a market growth in the region. Overall, the researcher's findings from the Saudi business perspective can be interpreted and accounted for as major importance, they may be generalised into practice and treated as successful triggering factors for businesses to succeed, reduce or eliminate the risk of failure and affect the businesses' interdependencies.

7.0. Linking Theory to Practice – Key Recommendations

I. Strategic and HRM

From the above discussions, several recommendations are drawn, from both the strategic and operational perspectives. These include short-, medium and long-term strategies used as HR-oriented techniques in the Saudi Arabian organisation. Others include a need to introduce a greater scope of upgrading and fostering employee-centred HRM practices aimed at retaining and sustaining a strong and dedicated workforce (see Table 3).

Short-Term: Feedback: Anonymous, culturally sensitive employee feedback channels should be introduced to mitigate discomfort associated with hierarchy and authority, foster transparency and employees' engagement (Mao and DeAndrea, 2018). This is essential in collectivist cultures where direct upward feedback is culturally constrained.

Medium-Term: Hybrid Leadership Model (Transformational–Paternalistic) - a hybrid leadership framework that combines Transformational elements (vision, empowerment, innovation) and Paternalistic leadership traits valued in Saudi Arabia (guidance, protection, moral authority) can balance future-focused change with cultural values enhancing employees' motivation, performance and quality of work life and organisational effectiveness (Abd El-Gawad et al., 2020; Altheeb, 2020; Mahmoud et al., 2024).

Strategic Workforce Localisation with Capability Transfer - IBM should shift from compliance-driven Saudisation to capability-based localisation, pairing expatriate experts with Saudi nationals through structured mentoring and project co-leadership. This reduces dependency risks while preserving technical expertise (Afriyie, 2019).

Table 3:
Key recommendations with examples

	Strategic	Operational
Short term	360 feedback can be an option that the business can use for improving their HR tactics implementation. The use of this model can allow the company not only to monitor the activities that are performed by the employees, but it also helps in determining the most efficient employees that further allows in retaining the capable employees that directly improve the performance of the firm (Garvey, 2019). Additionally, with the use of this feedback model, it becomes easier for the management to communicate with the employees. This, on the other hand, can enable the management to assess the issues that are faced by the workforce. Further, the senior management can develop the right policies and align them with the leadership pattern that is preferred by the employees. The 360-degree feedback makes it easier for the employees as well to express their views to the senior management, helping to build relations. The use of the feedback model helps in not only ensuring that the communication process is enhanced, but it also helps in determining the way the activities are performed.	HR could conduct a survey amongst its employees and obtain an insight into the recurrent demands and grievances of the employees across all levels of operations and put substantial efforts to cater to their problems. This would be mainly done to rebuild the confidence and motivation of the employees in the organisation.
Medium term	The IT organisations in Saudi Arabia could practice transformational leadership to encourage, inspire, and influence the workforce along with transforming the organisational culture with relevant changes in the HRM of the organisation to overcome the fissures that can disrupt the effective HRM management. Therefore, the transformational leadership must be aimed at mitigating all those loopholes and worn policies and procedures coupled with refurbishing worn traditional HRM. This would help the companies in renewing and reinforcing the HR-oriented functionalities in the IT sector of Saudi Arabia and thereby help to facilitate contingent and adequate leadership and managerial strategies to guide and direct, as well as motivate and encourage the employees to accomplish the organisational objectives cooperatively (Li et al., 2019). For example, one of the leading retail organisation, Marks and Spencer has incorporated transformational leadership style to refurbish and induce dynamic changes in an all-encompassing manner and instill a renewed growth and development (Marksandspencer.com, 2019).	Training is an essential part of employee enhancement and management. The use of different training processes develops different skills of employees, which not only allows a business to improve their performance but it develops the employees' performance, which further strengthens the relationship with the senior management (Nassazi, 2013). The risk of HR tactics failure minimises with adequate training. The use of training sessions can convey the mission and vision of the firm amongst the employees, which further guides them in determining the way they must act or perform and contribute towards the betterment of the process as a whole. The use of training activities also enables the leaders to identify whether the efforts that are made by the employees in meeting the business goals and at the same time, it facilitates the assessment of the actions performed to meet the HRM policies or not. For instance, Nestle considers training and developing the workforce to be important practice to equip the workforce with essential skills and competencies. Thereby, Nestle has successfully built a motivated, dedicated, and skilled workforce (Nestle-cwa.com, 2021).

Long term	The employees as well as the managers should approach openness to the essential cultural literacy. This is because by achieving the essential components of cultural literacy that empowers the person to recognise the cultural differences accept the differences through mutual understanding and respect is essential for the IT sector in Saudi Arabia. Moreover, with the help of cultural literacy the cultural sensitivity and outlook of the organisational members would be widened and would help the person to overcome the narrowed cultural perceptions, indoctrination, and preferences and adjust and adapt themselves in an organisational environment infused with multiculturalism (Gualandi, 2015).	Alongside continuous training, development programs must be initiated for the employees to ensure that they are all offered equal and consistent assistance and guidance from the higher management as well as encourage the employees to facilitate their personal and professional growth through organisational experiences. Therefore, heightened facilitation of convenient training and development programs for IT employees would help in enhancing and accentuating the internal competencies and capabilities of the company. This would ultimately drive successful people management and retention, thereby validating and upholding managerial proficiencies (Rogers, 2020).
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Sources: (Authors)

II. Organisation and Culture

An adoption of an organisational culture through analysing the Competing Values Framework (CVF) is necessary this is also suggested by Quinn and Cameron (1980). This can be obtained by conducting the Organizational Culture Assessment Instrument (OCAI) to assess the organisational culture of companies. Consequently, the CVF considers the scores obtained and provides the type of organisational culture from two dimensions: Internal-External and Stability-Flexibility. In the case of IBM, their organisational culture has been assessed by the researcher using OCAI. The highest scores obtained reveal that IBM's Now (actual) culture is a culture of Hierarchy (280) and Market types (190). In CVF, this means that this culture addresses a process-oriented culture that is structured and controlled with rigid frameworks of power, with underlying policies, procedures and formalised workplace, efficiency through routine work and precision of duties dictated by management– see figure 1 below.

NOW culture

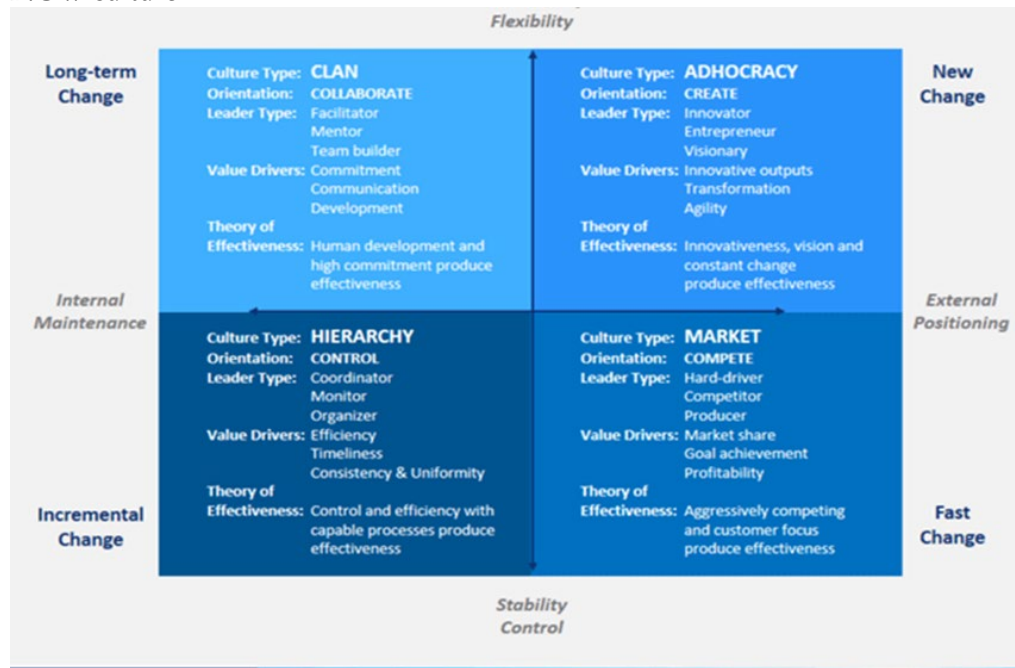


Figure 2. CVF IBM culture -NOW (Source: Authors)

On the contrary, the resulted Preferred (expected) culture is the Adhocracy (180) and Clan (175) types. Therefore, from the context of CVF, the preferred IBM organisational culture in the Saudi Arabian environment is the entrepreneurial culture that would reflect dynamism, innovativeness, and creativity at the workplace- see figure 2. So, this implies that this is a possibility to be considered by businesses when working with Saudi employees instead of a hierarchical organisational culture that provides little to no opportunities to develop professional competencies on the part of the employees. Henceforth, if the

organisational members are provided with the adequate resources that they need to procure to develop the professional edge and improve their performance, it would inevitably reduce the staff attrition rate and consequently the HR failures to retain the workforce (Allen, 2008). Further, this can result in the successful management strategy implementation and meet the business purposed objectives.

Preferred culture

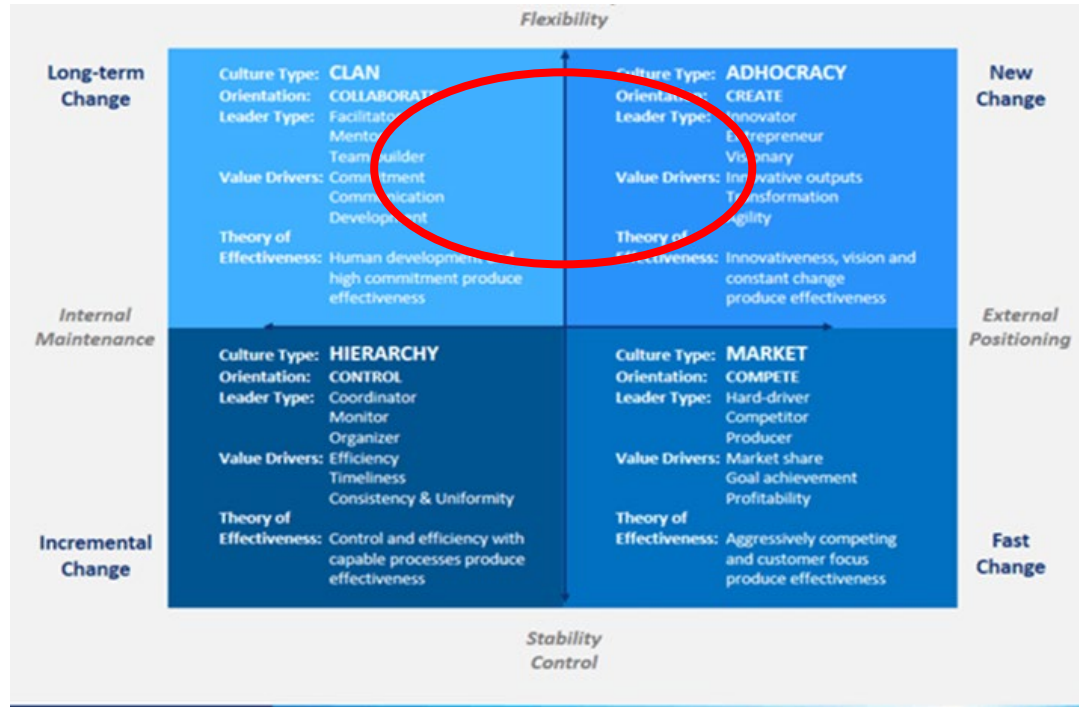


Figure 3: CVF IBM Preferred culture (Source- Authors)

This latter one is a suggested cultural model that can be applicable in practice for IBM and generally considered for other similar businesses prior to expand and to operate in an environment such as Saudi Arabia's or other countries in the Middle East. Possible implications for IBM when using this model include the following: first, this model would enable the organisation to balance innovation and flexibility (adhocracy) with stability and control (hierarchy), which could enhance strategic execution by encouraging innovation within clearly defined structures, thereby reducing resistance to change while maintaining accountability. Second, the model would support improved leadership effectiveness, cross-cultural integration, and employee engagement by aligning global corporate values with local cultural expectations, ultimately strengthening organisational performance and reducing the risk of strategic failure (Zeb et al., 2021).

8.0. Conclusion

It can be concluded from the preceding discussions that the research study on management strategy failures points towards the lack of effective leadership and guidance as well as a deficit of proper Human Resource Management as the result of major failures in the organisation. The fact that the convenient and unidirectional leadership devoid of effective managerial procedure in facilitating integrated and coordinated functionalities across the organisation, the inefficient prioritisation of the organisational activities attribute incompleteness of IT projects on time and thereby leading to project failures, as well as ineffective cross-cultural management (Alfaadel et al., 2012; Qureshi, 2018; Budhwar et al., 2019). The wide disparity that lies in the efforts towards integration of the different cultural affiliations result in internal disharmony which ultimately led to failure in the management strategies in Saudi Arabia (Alghazi et al., 2017). These reasons can answer to the research questions *What are the reasons for failure in management strategies?* and *What is the impact on the business interdependencies in the Saudi Arabia?* raised by this study.

Besides these, the other factors behind the failure of the management strategies and initiatives and implementation of the reliable and resilient HRM are the non-alignment of the organisational endeavours and organisational capabilities with the organisational resources (Alrubaishi et al., 2020). It is found that

aspects of the insufficient and ineffective HRM include outdated HR management and infrastructure, not enough motivation and encouragement provided to the employees to foster the utmost workplace dedication, inadequate leadership, cultural preferences and prevalence of orthodoxy in the organisation (Tlaiss and Elamin, 2016). Apart from this, conflicts arising due to the failure of integration of the westernised Human Resource managerial tactics and strategies with the overriding force of the Islamic and Arabian cultural tenets ingrained into the different levels of organisation structure and organisational culture along with the disoriented professional schedule for the employees, as well as ineffective cross-cultural management of the multicultural workforce (Leeth and Leeth, 2015; Al-Asfour et al., 2019; Alalshiekh, 2018; Siddique et al., 2016; Asfahani et al., 2023; Alotaibi, 2023).

All these reasons as stated necessitate the fact that indeed the organisational culture, as well as different facets of functional techniques especially that of the HR systems need an overhaul of the organisational systems. These overhauling and transforming of the dynamics of the different IT companies operating in Saudi Arabia encompasses for not only the development and sharpening of the managerial personnel but also calls for proactive dealing and catering to the employees interpersonally. Thus, this may answer the research question *What challenges does HR face when a new strategy is implemented in Saudi Arabia?*

The answer to the research question *What are the barriers faced by the employees in training and development program?* is that the lack of accessibility of proper training and development programmes on the part of the employees restricted opportunities of developing and fostering the professional competencies and efficacies to excel and attribute success to the IT projects in Saudi Arabian IT organisations, as evidenced by (AlDossari, 2016; Aldossari and Chaudhry, 2024).

Lastly, it is suggested that all the recommendations provided for the IT sector especially IBM would enable the company to overcome the shortcomings and faults persisting in the management strategies of the organisational functionalities and culture of the company. Henceforth, the research findings would empower the IT sector of the Saudi Arabian organisations to recognise its ingrained and major managerial issues and work diligently, skilfully, and responsibly in mitigation of those problems. This can clarify the answer to the research question *What can be an effective solution to manage the failures in IT sector in Saudi Arabia?* Finally, the research objectives are met, and this research can potentially address the research gap discussed in this study. The findings can be generalised, and businesses may apply these in practice. Since the paper applied the realism philosophy methodology, with the interpretivism research approach, all relevant data are interpreted to give justifiable and beneficial solutions to the real issues by highlighting reality from a different perspective and unfolding new perceptions.

8.1. Limitations and future research direction

Due to the limitations of this paper, other perspectives could not be debated, however, it would be beneficial to research and contrast other aspects and viewpoints from areas where rigorous national cultures and beliefs could either interfere or have an impact on the business operations in Saudi Arabia. Some of these distinctive contexts could be; APJ -Asia Pacific Japan or CIS - Commonwealth of Independent States, former Republics of Russia- Belarus, Uzbekistan, Armenia, Moldova, Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan and many others. Another avenue for future research involves replicating the present study across different sectors, such as education or hospitality, to examine potential similarities and differences in the findings. On a different note, another option for the future extent of this research could be unveiled further through examining in greater depth the different tenets and techniques of e-HRM and Artificial Intelligence that could be used to enhance and modernise the HRM processes in the Saudi Arabian organisations. Therefore, the research could be carried out to explore ways in which the varied dynamics and functional measures could be incorporated by the HR managers and strategy managers to improve the existing parameters of the HRM and management and foster greater employee development and engagement at IBM and other IT companies in Saudi Arabia.

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Figure 1. Themes structure model (created by the authors).

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