INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF SOCIAL AND MANAGEMENT STUDIES (IJOSMAS)

Vol.6 No. 5 https://www.ijosmas.org e-ISSN: 2775-0809

The Role of Project Management Offices in Managing Organizational Change for Strategy Execution Effectiveness

Meiko Tourista[1], Arlies Meta Nugraha[2], Evi Erfiyana[3]

[123]Doctorate Candidate in Kazian School of Management, India

Corresponding email: meiko@tourista.net

Abstract

This study addresses the persistent challenge of strategy execution effectiveness in organizations, by investigating the evolving role of Project Management Offices (PMOs) in managing organizational change. Traditionally viewed as governance entities focused on project monitoring and compliance, PMOs are increasingly repositioning themselves as strategic enablers that integrate project governance with change management to bridge the gap between strategy formulation and execution. Through a comprehensive literature review, this research develops a conceptual framework positioning PMO services as antecedents, organizational change management as a mediating factor, and strategy execution effectiveness as the ultimate outcome. The findings reveal that embedding organizational change management into PMO functions significantly enhances an organization's capacity to realize strategic goals, emphasizing the people dimension of change as crucial to sustaining strategic initiatives. While limited by its descriptive methodology and reliance on secondary data, this work offers valuable theoretical insights and practical implications for organizations seeking to harness PMOs as catalysts for strategic transformation. It underscores the imperative for PMOs to adopt a service-provider mindset that proactively addresses the people side of change, advocating for a symbiotic partnership between PMO professionals and change managers. Ultimately, this research serves as a call to action for senior leaders and practitioners to reconceptualize PMOs not merely as administrative units but as vital agents of strategic change, where successful execution is as much about people engagement as it is about technical rigor.

Keywords: *Project Management Office, PMO, Organizational Change Management, Strategy Execution Effectiveness*

1. Introduction

Effective strategy execution remains one of the most persistent challenges in organizational management. While many organizations demonstrate competence in strategy formulation, research consistently shows that a large proportion of strategies fail during implementation, resulting in lost value and diminished competitiveness. This "execution gap" is particularly evident in emerging economies such as Indonesia, where volatile environments and organizational complexities exacerbate execution difficulties.

Project Management Offices (PMOs) have traditionally been perceived as governance structures responsible for monitoring projects, enforcing standards, and ensuring compliance. However, contemporary perspectives highlight an evolution of PMOs into strategic partners that support portfolio alignment, decision-making, and organizational transformation. Despite this shift, empirical evidence on how PMO services directly contribute to strategy execution effectiveness remains scarce.

One critical yet underexplored dimension of this relationship is organizational change management. Successful execution of strategy often requires significant behavioral, cultural, and structural change. Without deliberate management of these and organizational aspects, even well-designed initiatives risk failure. While both PMO functions and change management practices have been studied individually, the interaction between the two in enabling strategy execution has not been sufficiently addressed in the academic literature.

This study seeks to fill this gap by investigating the role of PMO services in managing organizational change and their influence on strategy execution effectiveness. Specifically, it develops a framework that positions PMO services as antecedents, organizational change management as a mediating factor, and strategy execution effectiveness as the outcome.

The contribution of this research is twofold. Theoretically, it advances understanding of PMOs not merely as administrative units but as strategic enablers that integrate project governance with change management to drive execution. Practically, it offers insights for organizations in Indonesia and similar contexts on how to design and leverage PMO services to strengthen strategic outcomes.

2. Literature review

This section provides a comprehensive review of existing research on PMO overview

2.1. PMO Definitions

Axelos (2013) Portfolio, Programme and Project Offices defines P3O as The decision-enabling and support business model for all business change within an organization. This will include single or multiple physical or virtual structures, i.e. offices (permanent and/or temporary), providing a mix of central and localized functions and services, and integration with governance arrangements and the wider business such as other corporate support functions.

While Project Management Institute (2025) Project Management Offices: A Practice Guide define PMO as PMOs are organizational entities, typically established as departments or teams, primarily tasked with centralizing activities related to the management of portfolios, programs, and/or projects. The nature of these activities can vary according to the unique needs of each organization.

The modern PMO should have a services provider mindset. According to Project Management Institute (2025) below are the characteristic of of a PMO established with a service-provider mindset:

- Customer focus. Prioritize understanding and meeting the needs of internal customers. Place customer needs and satisfaction at the forefront of all operations. Proactively engage with customers to understand their individual needs and offer solutions.
- Value delivery. The primary goal is to deliver value to the organization. Success is measured by customer satisfaction and value delivered, not just project outcomes or process adherence.
- Specialized expertise. PMOs offer specialized knowledge in project management. This expertise is a service provided to various departments and teams within the organization.
- Service offerings. Like external service providers, PMOs should have a clear catalog of services they offer to their internal customers.
- Scalability. PMOs can often scale their services based on organizational needs, offering more intensive support for high-priority projects or scaling back for departments with high project management maturity.
- Proactive engagement. PMOs proactively engage with customers to understand their needs and offer solutions, rather than simply reacting to requests.
- Relationship management. PMOs focus on building and maintaining strong relationships with their customers, a key characteristic of successful service providers.
- Performance metrics. Like other service providers, PMOs should measure and report on their performance, demonstrating their value to the organization.
- Continuous improvement. PMOs regularly refine and adapt their services based on feedback and changing organizational needs, much like external service providers evolve to meet market demands.

2.2. PMO Services

Project Management Institute (2025) define there are 26 most common services could be performed by a PMO as follows:

1. Advice to executive level: Providing strategic guidance and advice to senior executives on portfolio, program, and project management
2. Benefits realization management: Managing and measuring the realization of benefits from an organization's portfolio of programs and projects to ensure they deliver the expected value to the organization
3. Foster project culture: Promoting project management culture within the organization to enhance project awareness, support, and collaboration
4. Governance oversight: Establishing and maintaining governance frameworks to ensure portfolios, programs, and projects are managed in accordance with organizational policies and standards
5. Organizational change management: Managing the impact of organizational changes on programs and projects to ensure smooth transitions and minimize disruption
6. Portfolio management: Overseeing the selection, prioritization, monitoring, and overall management of programs and projects within the portfolio to ensure alignment with strategic objectives and optimal resource allocation

7. Strategic planning support: Providing support for strategic planning activities to ensure programs and projects align with long-term organizational goals
8. Knowledge management: Capturing, organizing, and sharing portfolio, program, and project management knowledge; lessons learned; and good practices to foster continuous improvement and organizational learning
9. Methodologies and frameworks management: Developing, implementing, and maintaining standardized methodologies and frameworks to ensure consistency and quality in portfolio, program, and project management
10. Resource management: Allocating and managing resources effectively across projects to ensure optimal utilization and minimize conflicts
11. Systems and tools management: Managing and maintaining systems and tools to support effective portfolio, program, and project management
12. Training and development: Offering training and development programs to enhance the skills and competencies in portfolio, program, and project management within the organization
13. Audit assessments: Conducting thorough audits and assessments of projects to ensure compliance with standards, identify issues, and recommend improvements
14. Change control management: Overseeing the change control process to manage changes in programs and projects, ensuring minimal disruption and alignment with objectives
15. Customer relationship management: Maintaining and enhancing relationships and interfaces with project customers to ensure their needs and expectations are met throughout the project life cycle
16. Data analytics and reporting: Providing data analytics and reporting services to monitor project performance, identify trends, and support informed decision-making
17. Issue management: Identifying, tracking, and managing issues that arise in projects to ensure they are resolved promptly and do not impact success
18. Mentoring and coaching: Providing mentoring and coaching to project managers and teams to enhance their skills, knowledge, and performance
19. Performance management: Monitoring and managing the performance of programs and projects to ensure they meet their objectives and deliver expected outputs and outcomes
20. Program management: Managing and coordinating multiple related projects as a program to deliver benefits and achieve strategic goals
21. Managing and coordinating a project to deliver specific objectives within scope, time, budget, and quality constraints
22. Project support services: Offering comprehensive technical support to project managers, including assistance with project planning and task coordination, while working under the guidance of the project manager
23. Quality assurance: Ensuring that project deliverables meet defined quality standards through systematic quality assurance processes
24. Risk management: Identifying, assessing, and managing risks throughout the program and project life cycles to minimize their impacts on success
25. Specialized services: Providing specialized services customized to meet the unique requirements of individual projects; PMO team members possess the expertise and resources necessary to

support project managers in activities where they may lack specific technical or domain knowledge

26. Stakeholder engagement: Identifying and managing stakeholder expectations and engagement to ensure their support and involvement in projects

2.3. Change Management

Prosci (2022) Definition of Change Management, defines change management as the application of a structured process and set of tools for leading the people's side of change to achieve a desired outcome.

Project Management Institute (2021), A Guide to the Project Management Body of Knowledge (PMBOK Guide) -- Seventh Edition and The Standard for Project Management describe change management as A comprehensive, cyclic, and structured approach for transitioning individuals, groups, and organizations from a current state to a future state with intended business benefits.

2.4. Change Management Model

Creasey, Tim (2021) The Importance of Integrating Individual and Organizational Change, explains that organizational change is the collective result of individual change. Thus there no successful organization change without individual change.

Hiatt, Jeffrey M (2006) ADKAR: A model for change in business, government and our community, outlines five specific and sequential outcomes an individual must achieve for a change to be successful:

- Awareness: The person understands the why behind the change—the business reasons for it and the risks of not changing.
- Desire: The person has the personal motivation to support and participate in the change. This involves addressing the "what's in it for me?" question for each individual.
- Knowledge: The person has the information and training on how to change and how to perform their job in the new way.
- Ability: The person is able to actually perform the new skills and behaviors required for the change. This takes knowledge and puts it into action.
- Reinforcement: The change is sustained over the long term. This involves actions like recognition, rewards, and feedback to ensure people don't revert to old habits.

Kotter, John P (2014) Accelerate : building strategic agility for a faster-moving world, explain that there are eight accelerators in leading change, there are:

- Create a sense of urgency around a Big Opportunity
- Build and evolve a guiding coalition
- Form a change vision and strategic initiatives
- Enlist a volunteer army
- Enable action by removing barriers

- Generate (and celebrate) short-term wins
- Sustain acceleration
- Institute change

Prosci (2024) Change Management Process, explain that there are 3 phases in Change Management Process; Prepare Approach, Manage Change and Sustain Outcomes. Each phases has activities as follows:

- Prepare Approach:
    - Define Success – to define what the outcomes of the change
    - Define Impact – to define who has to do their jobs differently and how?
    - Define Approach – to define what will it take to achieve success?
- Manage Change:
    - Plan and Act – to prepare what an organization will do to prepare, equip and support people and execute the plan.
    - Track Performance – to track the execution performance
    - Adapt Actions – to define adjustment needed to achieve the outcome as defined
- Sustain Outcomes
    - Review Performance – to review whether the outcome has been achieved
    - Activate Sustainment – activities in ensuring the change would be sustain
    - Transfer Ownership – transferring ownership and responsibilities in sustaining the outcomes to operations (Business as usuals)

2.5. Organization Change Management

Organization change management defined by Prosci (2024) Understanding Organizational Change Management Strategies as a structured approach for preparing, equipping, and enabling people to adopt and use change effectively in their daily work. By prioritizing the people side of change, organizations can turn potential disruptions into opportunities for growth.

Association of Change Management Professionals (2025) Standard for Change Management Second Edition, defines change management as the practice of applying a structured approach to the transition of an organization from a current state to a future state to achieve expected benefits.

Project Management Institute (2013) Managing Change in Organization: A Practice Guide defines Change management as a comprehensive, cyclic, and structured approach for transitioning individuals, groups, and organizations from a current state to a future state with intended business benefits. It helps organizations to integrate and align people, processes, structures, culture, and strategy.

Moran, J. W. and Brightman, B. K. (2001) describe organizational change management as the process of continually renewing an organization's direction, structure, and capabilities to serve the ever-changing needs of external and internal customers

According to Burnes (2004) change is an ever-present feature of organisational life, both at an operational and strategic level.

2.6. Change Management Office

Creasey, Tim (2022) The Change Management Office (CMO) explain that CMO is a structure to support change management in the organization, usually in the form of a change management office (CMO), center of excellence (CoE), community of practice (CoP), or some other entity dedicated to change management

Gonçalves, V., & Campos, C. (2018). *The Human Change Management Body of Knowledge (HCMBOK®)* define CMO CMO is an organizational function that has gained strength as the practice of managing the human factor in change processes is recognized as a discipline essential to the success of organizations.

Project Management Institute (2025) interprets that CMO is a PMO that focuses on Managing organizational change, ensuring that the organization can adapt to new strategies, technologies, or business models. Prosci (2020) found that 50% of CMO is under PMO or Strategy, Transformation, Planning, and those are the most effective location for CMO

2.7. Strategy Execution

Hrebiniak (2013) argued that many companies are able to formulate great plans but fail when it comes to converting them into action, because implementation of the strategy is a complex and often misunderstood activity and managers tend to have more knowledge about the formulation of strategies than about how to implement them. Bossidy and Charan (2002) contended that strategies often fail not because they were poorly conceived, but because they were inappropriately executed. Besides, formulated strategies have no value unless they are effectively implemented (Noble, 1999).

However, Thompson Jr, Arthur A; Peterar, Margaret A; Gamble, John E; Strickland, A. J. (2022) elaborates that the managerial approach to executing a strategy always has to be customized to fit the particulars of a company's situation. So there's no definitive managerial recipe for successful strategy execution that cuts across all company situations and strategies or that works for all managers. He also mentioned that Good strategy execution requires a team effort. All managers have strategy-executing responsibility in their areas of authority, and all employees are active participants in the strategy execution process.

Karkukly, W., PMP, A., & Lecoeuvre, C. P. L. (2014) suggests that PMO can influence the alignment of the CM and PM framework to better deliver on a change, a project and or a program. PMO is the link between business and technology and between strategy and projects; therefore, it contributes to establishing governance framework and contributes to organization strategy. PMO can contribute to establishing standards for project and program, and to incorporate CM standards.. They also suggested incorporating OCM reporting as part of overall PMO dashboard reports.

Al Ameri, T. Z. A. (2016) confirms the strong interrelationships between meeting and achieving an organization's strategic plan execution. Moreover, the emerging values from the project execution could be an advantage for the project-based governing bodies of the PMO units. While Prosci (2020) also found that effective change management could increase the possibility to meet strategic objectives up to 88%.

3. Findings

The synthesis of the reviewed literature reveals a significant paradigm shift in the role and function of the Project Management Office (PMO). Traditionally regarded as a compliance-oriented, technically focused unit responsible for governance, standardization, and reporting, the PMO is now evolving into a vital catalyst as a strategic enabler of organizational transformation. It recognizes that effective strategy execution depends not only on robust methodologies but also on how people perceive, internalize, and sustain change.

3.1. The Shift Toward Strategic Enablement

The literature consistently shows that PMOs are moving from a narrow operational focus toward strategic alignment and value creation. Scholars such as Karkukly and Lecoeuvre (2014) emphasize that PMOs act as the link between strategy, governance, and execution, contributing to organizational alignment and capability building. In high-performing organizations, the PMO is embedded in enterprise decision-making, connecting the corporate vision with program and project portfolios.

This shift redefines the PMO from an administrative function to a strategic capability hub—one that ensures the organization's initiatives collectively deliver business value. However, this redefinition also introduces a human imperative: strategy execution is ultimately carried out by people whose beliefs, motivations, and behaviors determine the sustainability of outcomes.

3.2. The Indispensable Nexus: Integration of Change Management within PMO Services

A central finding from the literature is that PMOs achieve higher effectiveness when organizational change management (OCM) is embedded into their service offerings. Prosci's (2020) global research demonstrates that projects applying structured change management are 88% more likely to meet or exceed their objectives. Similarly, the Project Management Institute (2025) urges PMOs to adopt a service-provider mindset—one that focuses on customer satisfaction and value delivery rather than mere compliance.

The literature review provides compelling evidence that many of the core services a PMO can offer are intrinsically linked to OCM. Services like stakeholder engagement, communication, and relationship management are not just project tasks; they are the very building blocks of a successful change initiative. This is a profound realization: by embedding these services into its operational framework, the PMO can directly influence an organization's readiness for change.

3.3. The PMO as the Ultimate Bridge for Strategy Execution

Synthesizing these findings, we arrive at a powerful conclusion: the PMO, by intentionally and holistically integrating OCM into its framework, becomes the ultimate bridge for closing the persistent strategy-execution gap. A PMO that recognizes its role in managing both the technical and human dimensions of change is no longer just a support function; it is the very engine of strategic realization. The literature suggests that such a PMO contributes to a robust governance framework that does not merely oversee projects but actively shepherds the entire organization toward its strategic destination. This finding is of paramount importance, for it provides a clear and actionable path for organizations to leverage their PMOs as a central driver of sustainable growth and competitive advantage.

3.4. Research Limitations

This study is grounded in a descriptive approach based on an extensive review of existing literature. While this methodology provides a strong theoretical foundation, it inherently limits the research's scope. The primary limitation is the lack of a primary empirical data collection. This means the findings, while critically synthesized from a wide body of knowledge, are not supported by new, firsthand data from a specific industry or organizational context. As such, we cannot draw definitive statistical correlations or generalize our conclusions to specific populations with the same confidence as a quantitative or mixed-methods study.

Furthermore, the existing literature on the precise intersection of PMO services, organizational change management, and strategy execution is still evolving. While we have identified a compelling relationship, the nuances of this dynamic may vary significantly across different organizational cultures, sizes, and industries. This study does not account for these contextual variables, which could influence the effectiveness of a PMO's role in change management. The absence of a "one-size-fits-all" recipe for strategy execution, as noted by scholars like Hrebiniak, underscores the need for future research to explore these complexities through empirical investigation.

Future research should therefore adopt mixed-method approaches, combining case study evidence and quantitative validation, to explore how PMO-led change management operates across industries, maturity levels, and national cultures.

3.5. Practical Implications

The findings from this research are intended to be a guiding light for practitioners—a conversation starter, not a definitive manual. The most significant practical implication is the call for a strategic realignment of the PMO's mandate. Business leaders and senior management should recognize that their PMOs are not merely administrative cost centers but are potential engines of strategic transformation. The findings suggest that by formally expanding the PMO's services to include key components of organizational change management, such as stakeholder engagement and communication, organizations can dramatically improve the success rate of their strategic initiatives.

For PMO professionals, this research offers a compelling justification for advocating for a more strategic role within their organizations. The findings provide a theoretical basis to argue for increased budget, authority, and responsibility in areas related to change management. The recommendation to incorporate change management metrics into standard PMO dashboards is a tangible, actionable step. This can help PMO leaders demonstrate their value in terms of a project's human success, not just its technical completion. In essence, this work encourages PMO leaders to be proactive change agents, not reactive project administrators, and to embrace a mindset that prioritizes the people side of change as much as the technical. It is a heartfelt call to action for all who believe that good strategy deserves brilliant execution.

For the Change Management Professional, this research offers a profound contribution to the practice of change management, elevating it from a supplementary function to a strategic imperative. The key implication is a call to intentional partnership. Change management professionals should recognize that their human-centric expertise—in communication, engagement, and stakeholder empathy—is most powerfully realized when integrated with the structured governance of the PMO.

Instead of operating in a parallel silo, this research suggests a symbiotic relationship. By proactively engaging with the PMO, change management can embed the "people side of change" directly into the very project frameworks that drive strategic execution. The PMO, with its oversight and authority, can serve as the essential conduit for securing resources and formalizing change management as a core, measurable component of project success. In a human sense, this collaboration is about mutual respect and shared purpose: the PMO provides the robust, systematic "how," while change management professionals provide the insightful, human-centered "why" and "for whom." Together, change management and PMO professionals can co-create an environment where change is not something that happens to people, but something that happens with them.

For those who shape the strategic direction of an organization, this research serves as a poignant reminder that a brilliant strategy is an inert artifact without brilliant execution. The most significant practical implication is the need for a human-centered approach to strategic formulation. The findings compel strategy professionals to move beyond purely analytical models and to embrace a more integrated, executable view of strategy from the very beginning.

This means inviting the PMO into the strategic dialogue not as an afterthought, but as a critical partner in translating vision into reality. The PMO's unique vantage point—spanning multiple projects and portfolios—provides invaluable insight into the organizational capacity for change. By collaborating early, strategy professionals can design strategies that are not only ambitious but also inherently achievable and considerate of the human effort required to bring them to life. This is a call for empathy in strategic leadership—to recognize that the success of a plan is contingent upon the people who must enact it. By leveraging the PMO as a bridge, strategy professionals can ensure that their visions are not just intellectually sound, but are also imbued with a clear, empathetic pathway for their successful realization.

4. Conclusion

The journey through the literature has brought us to a clear and compelling conclusion: the traditional Project Management Office, confined to the technicalities of project execution, is no longer sufficient for the complexities of modern business. This research underscores a fundamental shift in the

PMO's role from a static, administrative body to a dynamic, strategic enabler. By synthesizing existing knowledge, we have argued that the PMO's true potential is unlocked when it intentionally and holistically integrates organizational change management (OCM) into its core services.

Our findings highlight that the PMO is uniquely positioned to act as the vital bridge between a company’s grand vision and its on-the-ground reality. It is a dual-function engine that drives both the structured, technical aspects of a project and the people, behavioral side of change. The evidence suggests that by managing these twin imperatives, the PMO becomes an indispensable asset in enhancing an organization’s ability to execute its strategy effectively.

This study's limitations, primarily its reliance on a descriptive literature review, underscore the need for future empirical research. We hope that this work inspires a new wave of studies that can quantitatively and qualitatively explore the nuances of this PMO-OCM synergy across diverse industries and cultures.

In the end, this research is a call to action for all stakeholders—from PMO professionals and change managers to senior executives. It is a reminder that in a world where "change is the only constant," the most successful organizations will be those that empower a central function—the PMO—to not only manage projects but also to compassionately and effectively guide their people through the transformational journey. The ultimate success of any strategy, it seems, rests not just on the brilliance of its design, but on the human touch applied in its execution.

References

1. Al Ameri, T. Z. A. (2016). The Roles of the Project Management Office In The Execution of the Organizations Strategic Plan
2. Association of Change Management Professionals (2025) Standard for Change Management 2nd Edition
3. Axelos (2013) Portfolio, Programme and Project Offices defines P3O
4. Baweshkha, M. A. (2024). *Integrating project management office and organisational change management processes for better implementation and adoption of e-health strategy in Saudi Arabia* (Doctoral dissertation, RMIT University).
5. Bossidy, L., & Charan, R. (2002). Execution: The discipline of getting things done. New York: Crown Business.
6. Burnes, B. (2004) Managing Change: A Strategic Approach to Organisational Dynamics, 4th edn (Harlow: Prentice Hall).
7. Creasey, Tim (2021) The Importance of Integrating Individual and Organizational Change https://www.prosci.com/blog/the-importance-of-integrating-individual-and-organizational-change
8. Creasey, Tim (2022) The Change Management Office (CMO), https://www.prosci.com/blog/change-management-office
9. Gonçalves, V., & Campos, C. (2018). *The Human Change Management Body of Knowledge (HCMBOK®)*. Auerbach Publications.

10. Hiatt, Jeffrey M (2006) ADKAR: A model for change in business, government and our community
11. Hrebiniak, L. G. (2013). Making strategy work: Leading effective execution and change (2nd Ed.). FT Press.
12. Karkukly, W., PMP, A., & Lecoeuvre, C. P. L. (2014). the Integration of Change Management and Project Management-The Role of the PMO. *PM World Journal*, *3*(12).
13. Kotter, John P (2014) Accelerate : building strategic agility for a faster-moving world
14. Moran, J. W. and Brightman, B. K. (2001) 'Leading organizational change', Career Development International,
15. Noble, C. H. (1999). The eclectic roots of strategy implementation research. Journal of Business Research.
16. Project Management Institute (2021), A Guide to the Project Management Body of Knowledge (PMBOK Guide) -- Seventh Edition and The Standard for Project Management
17. Project Management Institute (2013) Managing Change in Organization: A Practice Guide
18. Project Management Institute (2025) Project Management Offices: A Practices Guide
19. Prosci (2020), Best Practices in Change Management 11th Edition
20. Prosci (2022), Definition of Change Management, https://www.prosci.com/blog/definition-of-change-management
21. Prosci (2024) Change Management Process, https://www.prosci.com/blog/change-management-process
22. Prosci (2024) Understanding Organizational Change Management Strategies https://www.prosci.com/blog/what-we-mean-by-organizational-change-management
23. Thompson Jr, Arthur A; Peterar, Margaret A; Gamble, John E; Strickland, A. J. (2022) *Crafting and Executing Strategy - The Quest for Competitive Advantage: Concepts and Cases*, McGraw Hill LLC