

Proactive Public Services and Public Value Creation: A Quantitative Study of the Saudi Public Sector

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Abstract

This study examines the implementation of proactive public services in the Saudi public sector and its relationship with public value creation, drawing on Moore's public value theory. Using a quantitative approach, the research investigates the extent of proactive service delivery implementation, its impact on perceived public value, and the organizational factors influencing its success. A survey of 312 public sector employees from various Saudi public sector organizations was conducted. The results indicate a moderate level of proactive service implementation and reveal a significant positive relationship between proactive services and perceived public value creation. Organizational readiness, technological infrastructure, and employee skills were identified as key factors influencing successful implementation. This study contributes to the understanding of proactive public services in the public sector and provides practical implications for public sector managers.

Keywords: proactive public services, public value, Saudi Arabia, e-government, vision 2030

1. Introduction

Globally, the public sector is undergoing significant transformation, driven by technological advancements, changing citizen expectations, and the need for more efficient and effective governance (Osborne, 2010). In this context, the concept of proactive public services has emerged as a promising approach to enhancing public value creation and improving beneficiary satisfaction (Linders et al., 2018). Proactive public services refer to government initiatives that anticipate and address beneficiary needs before they are explicitly expressed, often leveraging data analytics and digital technologies to achieve this (Scholta et al., 2019).

In Saudi Arabia, this transformation is particularly evident in the context of Vision 2030, the Kingdom's ambitious plan for economic and social reform (Vision 2030, 2016). A key aspect of this vision is the modernization of the public sector, with a strong emphasis on digital transformation and improved public service delivery (Alshehri & Drew, 2010). While e-government implementation in Saudi Arabia has been the subject of several studies (Al-Khouri, 2013; Al-Sobhi et al., 2010), these studies have primarily focused on traditional e-services rather than proactive approaches. Although Vision 2030 emphasizes digital transformation, limited research has explored how proactive services align with and contribute to these national goals.

The concept of proactive public services has gained significant global attention (Linders et al., 2018; Scholta et al., 2019), but its application in the Saudi context remains understudied. Similarly, while public value creation has been extensively discussed in the public administration literature (Alford & O'Flynn, 2009; Moore, 1995), its relationship with proactive services in Saudi Arabia has not been thoroughly examined. Recent studies have explored e-government implementation and digital transformation in the public sector (Linders et al., 2018), yet these studies do not specifically address the proactive aspect of service delivery or its relationship to public value creation.

This study aims to address these gaps by empirically examining the relationship between proactive public services and public value creation in the Saudi public sector, drawing on Moore's (1995) public value theory. This theory provides a framework for understanding how public organizations can create value for society by emphasizing the alignment of organizational strategy, capacity, and public support (Moore & Khagram, 2004).

Specifically, this research addresses three key questions:

- To what extent are proactive public services currently implemented in Saudi public sector organizations?
- What is the relationship between the level of proactive service implementation and perceived public value creation in Saudi public organizations?
- How do factors such as organizational readiness, technological infrastructure, and employee skills influence the success of proactive service initiatives in the Saudi public sector?

To answer these questions, the study employs a quantitative approach, utilizing a survey methodology to collect data from a representative sample of Saudi public sector organizations. The survey measures the extent of proactive service implementation, perceived public value creation, and various organizational factors. Statistical analyses, including descriptive statistics, correlation analysis, and multiple regression, are conducted to explore the relationships between these variables.

This research contributes to the broader literature on e-government and public sector innovation in the Gulf region, an area identified by Saxena (2017) as requiring more in-depth investigation. By focusing on the unique cultural, political, and economic context of Saudi Arabia, this study addresses the need for a more nuanced understanding of e-government implementation in non-Western contexts (Heeks & Bailur, 2007). Furthermore, this approach aligns with recent calls for more context-specific studies in public administration (O'Toole & Meier, 2015).

2. Review of Literature

2.1 Proactive Public Services

The concept of proactive public services represents a paradigm shift in how public sectors approach service delivery. Traditional reactive models, in which beneficiaries initiate requests for services, are increasingly being supplemented or replaced by proactive approaches that anticipate and address beneficiary needs before they are explicitly expressed (Linders et al., 2018). This shift is largely driven by advancements in data analytics, artificial intelligence, and digital technologies, which enable public sectors to predict beneficiary needs based on life events, circumstances, or behavioral patterns (Janssen & van der Voort, 2016).

Empirical research has demonstrated the evolving relationship between digital technologies and public value creation in government services. Sun and Medaglia (2019) examined how artificial intelligence adoption in public sector organizations requires both technological readiness and organizational adaptation, while Mergel (2019) found that digital service teams play a crucial role in transforming traditional services into innovative, citizen-centric solutions. In the Saudi context, Alajmi et al. (2023) identified key determinants for successful implementation of smart government systems, emphasizing the importance of organizational and technological preparedness. This is particularly relevant for proactive service delivery, as Mergel (2019) found that digital service teams in government organizations play a crucial role in transforming traditional reactive services into proactive, citizen-centric solutions.

Scholta et al. (2019) define proactive public services as “government initiatives that anticipate and address citizen needs without waiting for citizens to request them.” These services can take various forms, including automatic enrollment in relevant programs, personalized notifications about available services, or preemptive problem-solving based on predictive analytics. The primary objectives are to reduce administrative burdens on beneficiaries, improve service timeliness and relevance, and ultimately enhance beneficiary satisfaction and trust in the public sector (Bertot et al., 2016).

Several studies have examined the implementation and impact of proactive services in various contexts. For instance, Mergel et al. (2019) explored how digital technologies enable proactive service delivery in the United States, highlighting the critical roles of data integration and predictive analytics. In the European context, van Duivenboden and Thaens (2008) discussed the transformative potential of proactive service delivery in citizen-government relationships, emphasizing the necessity of organizational and cultural changes to support such initiatives.

Despite its potential, the implementation of proactive services presents several challenges. Privacy concerns, data integration issues, and the risk of exacerbating digital divides are among the key obstacles identified in the literature (Pardo et al., 2012; van Zoonen, 2016). Moreover, ensuring equity in proactive service delivery across diverse beneficiary groups remains a significant concern (Helbig et al., 2009).

2.2 Public Value Theory

To understand the potential impact of proactive public services, this study draws on Moore's (1995) public value theory. This theory provides a framework for assessing how public organizations create value for society, moving

beyond narrow definitions of efficiency or effectiveness to consider broader societal outcomes (Alford & O'Flynn, 2009).

Moore's original conception of public value emphasizes three key elements, referred to as the strategic triangle of public value creation:

1. Defining public value outcomes: Clarifying the social outcomes that the organization aims to achieve.
2. Building operational capacity: Ensuring that the organization possesses the resources and capabilities necessary to deliver these outcomes.
3. Gaining legitimacy and support: Securing authorization and support from political and social stakeholders.

Public value theory has been widely applied in public administration research and practice. For instance, Grimsley and Meehan (2007) used the theory to evaluate e-government initiatives, demonstrating how technology-enabled services can contribute to public value creation. Cordella and Bonina (2012) extended the application of public value to ICT-enabled public sector reforms, highlighting the importance of considering broader societal impacts beyond efficiency gains.

In the context of proactive public services, public value theory provides a useful lens for analyzing how these initiatives contribute to value creation. By anticipating and addressing beneficiary needs proactively, these services have the potential to enhance public value across multiple dimensions, including improved service quality, increased beneficiary trust, and more efficient use of public resources (Bannister & Connolly, 2014).

Recent research has expanded our understanding of how digital government services contribute to public value creation. Pardo et al. (2012) and Cordella and Bonina (2012) provide frameworks for understanding public value in digital government, emphasizing dimensions such as improved service delivery, enhanced trust, and organizational effectiveness. Building on this foundation, Gil-Garcia et al. (2018) demonstrate how digital transformation initiatives can enhance public value through improved service delivery mechanisms and increased organizational capability. This modern interpretation of public value theory provides a robust foundation for examining proactive service initiatives in the Saudi context.

2.3 E-Government and Public Sector Modernization in Saudi Arabia

The implementation of proactive public services in Saudi Arabia must be understood within the broader context of the country's e-government initiatives and public sector modernization efforts. Over the past two decades, Saudi Arabia has made significant strides in e-government implementation, driven by national development plans and, more recently, Vision 2030 (Alshehri & Drew, 2010; Vision 2030, 2016).

Al-Khouri (2013) provides an overview of e-government development in Saudi Arabia, highlighting key initiatives such as the Yesser e-Government Program and the National Strategy for Digital Transformation. These initiatives have contributed to improvements in online service provision, infrastructure development, and digital literacy among both beneficiaries and public sector employees.

Recent studies have provided new insights into digital transformation in public service delivery. Linders et al. (2018) conducted a comprehensive analysis of proactive service implementation in public sector organizations, identifying key institutional factors that influence successful transformation from traditional to proactive service models. Their findings highlight how organizational readiness and technological infrastructure play crucial roles in implementing proactive public services. Similarly, Bendary and Rajadurai (2024) discussed emerging technologies and public innovation in the Saudi public sector, highlighting how the Saudi public sector is actively pursuing technological advancements to modernize its services and operations.

Additionally, there is increasing recognition of the transformative potential of digital technologies in public service delivery in Saudi Arabia. Vision 2030 explicitly emphasizes the role of digital transformation in achieving the Kingdom's development goals, including improving public sector efficiency and enhancing the quality of public services (Vision 2030, 2016).

In this context, the concept of proactive public services aligns closely with Saudi Arabia's modernization strategy. By leveraging data analytics and digital technologies to anticipate and address beneficiary needs proactively, these services have the potential to significantly contribute to the objectives outlined in Vision 2030. However, the implementation and impact of proactive services in the Saudi context remain understudied, highlighting the need for empirical research in this area.

3. Research Methodology

3.1 Research Design

This study employs a quantitative research design to examine the implementation of proactive public services in Saudi Arabia and their relationship to public value creation. A cross-sectional survey approach was chosen as the most appropriate method to gather data from a large sample of public sector organizations across the Kingdom. This approach facilitates the collection of standardized data that can be statistically analyzed to answer the research questions and provide generalizable insights (Creswell & Creswell, 2017).

3.2 Sampling Strategy

The target population for this study consists of employees working in Saudi public sector organizations at various levels. A stratified random sampling technique was used to ensure representation across different types of public organizations and geographical regions within Saudi Arabia.

The sampling frame was developed using a comprehensive list of Saudi public sector organizations obtained from the Ministry of Civil Service. Organizations were stratified based on their primary function (e.g., health, education, social services) and geographical location. From each stratum, organizations were randomly selected. Within each selected organization, employees were randomly chosen to participate in the survey.

A structured questionnaire was developed based on existing literature and validated scales where available. The questionnaire comprises five main sections:

1. **Demographic Information:** Collects data on age, gender, education level, job position, and years of experience in the public sector.
2. **Proactive Service Implementation:** Measures the extent to which proactive services are implemented in the respondent's organization. Items in this section were adapted from Linders et al. (2018) and Scholta et al. (2019).
3. **Perceived Public Value Creation:** Assesses the perceived impact of proactive services on public value creation. Items were developed based on Moore's (1995) public value framework and include measures of service quality, citizen satisfaction, trust in the public sector, and efficient use of public resources.
4. **Organizational Factors:** Evaluates factors influencing the implementation of proactive services, including organizational readiness, technological infrastructure, employee skills, and leadership support. Items in this section were adapted from Gil-Garcia et al. (2018) and Dawes (2008).
5. **Challenges and Future Directions:** Explores perceived barriers to implementing proactive services and plans for future expansion or improvement.

All items in Sections 2-5 use a 5-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly Disagree, 5 = Strongly Agree) to ensure consistency and facilitate statistical analysis.

The questionnaire was initially developed in English and subsequently translated into Arabic using a back-translation method to ensure accuracy and cultural appropriateness (Brislin, 1970). The Arabic version was pilot tested with a small group of Saudi public sector employees ($n = 20$) to assess the clarity and relevance of the items. Based on the feedback received, minor adjustments were made to improve the instrument's quality and contextual fit.

3.3 Data Collection Procedure

Data collection was conducted over a period of three months (January to March 2023). The questionnaire was administered online using a secure survey platform to ensure data privacy and facilitate easy access for participants. Invitations to participate in the survey were sent via email to the selected employees, with follow-up reminders sent after two and four weeks to maximize response rates.

To address potential common method bias, several procedural remedies were implemented, as suggested by Podsakoff et al. (2003). These included assuring respondents of the anonymity of their responses, emphasizing that there were no right or wrong answers, and using different response formats for predictor and criterion variables where possible.

This study was conducted in full compliance with established ethical guidelines for social science research. All necessary ethical approvals were obtained prior to the commencement of data collection. Informed consent was secured from all participants, who were assured of the confidentiality and anonymity of their responses. Participants were informed of their right to withdraw from the study at any time without consequences. Throughout the research process, strict protocols were followed to ensure data privacy and protection.

3.4 Data Analysis

Data analysis was conducted using IBM SPSS Statistics version 26. The analysis process involved several steps:

Data Cleaning and Preparation: The dataset was screened for missing values, outliers, and normality. Missing data were handled using multiple imputation techniques, where appropriate.

Descriptive Statistics: Means, standard deviations, and frequencies were calculated for all variables to provide an overview of the data and identify any anomalies.

Reliability Analysis: Cronbach's alpha was calculated for each multi-item scale to assess internal consistency reliability.

Correlation Analysis: Pearson correlation coefficients were computed to examine the bivariate relationships between key variables.

Multiple Regression Analysis: A series of multiple regression analyses were conducted to examine the relationship between proactive service implementation and perceived public value creation, while controlling for relevant organizational factors.

Mediation Analysis: The potential mediating role of organizational factors in the relationship between proactive service implementation and public value creation was explored using the PROCESS macro for SPSS (Hayes, 2017).

Additional Analyses: Independent samples t-tests and one-way ANOVAs were conducted to examine differences in key variables across demographic groups and organizational characteristics.

Several measures were taken to ensure the validity and reliability of the study. Content validity was addressed through a comprehensive literature review and an expert review of the questionnaire items. Construct validity was assessed using factor analysis to confirm the dimensionality of the scales. Convergent and discriminant validity were evaluated by examining correlation patterns between variables. Reliability was assessed through Cronbach's alpha to ensure the internal consistency of the scales.

4. Results

4.1 Response Rate and Sample Characteristics

Out of the 400 public sector employees invited to participate in the survey, 326 completed responses were received, yielding a response rate of 81.5%. After data cleaning and the removal of incomplete responses, the final sample consisted of 312 valid responses.

The sample demographics were as follows: 58% male and 42% female. The mean age of the participants was 38.6 years ($SD = 9.4$). In terms of education, 12% had a high school education or less, 68% held a bachelor's degree, and 20% had a postgraduate degree. Regarding job levels, 15% were at the entry level, 48% were mid-level, and 37% were senior level. The mean years of experience in the public sector was 11.3 years ($SD = 7.2$).

The respondents represented a diverse range of public sector organizations, including ministries (35%), municipalities (25%), educational institutions (20%), healthcare organizations (12%), and other public sector organizations (8%).

4.2 Descriptive Statistics and Reliability Analysis

Table 1 presents the descriptive statistics and reliability coefficients for the main study variables. All scales demonstrated good internal consistency reliability, with Cronbach's alpha coefficients ranging from 0.85 to 0.92, exceeding the recommended threshold of 0.70 (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994).

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics and Reliability Coefficients

Variable	Mean	SD	Cronbach's α
Proactive service implementation	3.42	0.86	0.89
Perceived public value creation	3.68	0.92	0.91
Organizational readiness	3.25	0.98	0.87
Technological infrastructure	3.38	1.05	0.85
Employee skills	3.15	0.94	0.88
Leadership support	3.56	1.12	0.92

4.3 Extent of Proactive Service Implementation

The mean score for proactive service implementation ($M = 3.42$, $SD = 0.86$) indicates a moderate level of implementation across the sampled organizations. Further analysis of individual items revealed that 62% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that their organization uses data analytics to proactively identify potential service needs. Additionally, 58% reported that their organization regularly reaches out to beneficiaries with relevant information or services before they are requested. Furthermore, 47% indicated that their organization has implemented systems that automatically trigger services based on citizen life events or circumstances.

These findings suggest that while proactive services are being implemented to some extent in Saudi public sector organizations, there is still considerable room for expansion and improvement.

4.4 Relationship Between Proactive Services and Public Value Creation

To examine the relationship between proactive service implementation and perceived public value creation, a Pearson correlation analysis was conducted. The results revealed a strong positive correlation between the two variables ($r = 0.68$, $p < 0.001$), indicating that higher levels of proactive service implementation are associated with greater perceived public value creation.

A multiple regression analysis was then performed to further investigate this relationship while controlling for organizational factors. The results are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Multiple regression analysis predicting perceived public value creation

Variable	B	SE B	β	p
Proactive service implementation	0.452	0.058	0.421	<0.001
Organizational readiness	0.186	0.053	0.198	<0.001
Technological infrastructure	0.145	0.049	0.165	0.003
Employee skills	0.112	0.054	0.114	0.039
Leadership support	0.098	0.045	0.119	0.029

Notes. $R^2 = 0.57$, Adjusted $R^2 = 0.56$, $F(5, 306) = 81.24$, $p < 0.001$.

The regression model explained 57% of the variance in perceived public value creation ($R^2 = 0.57$, $F(5, 306) = 81.24$, $p < 0.001$). Proactive service implementation emerged as the strongest predictor of perceived public value creation ($\beta = 0.421$, $p < 0.001$), even after controlling for organizational factors.

4.5 Influence of Organizational Factors

All organizational factors included in the model were found to be significant predictors of perceived public value creation, although their effects were smaller than those of proactive service implementation. Organizational readiness ($\beta = 0.198$, $p < 0.001$) and technological infrastructure ($\beta = 0.165$, $p = 0.003$) had the strongest effects among the organizational factors, followed by leadership support ($\beta = 0.119$, $p = 0.029$) and employee skills ($\beta = 0.114$, $p = 0.039$).

To test the moderating effects of organizational factors, we conducted a series of moderation analyses using the PROCESS macro for SPSS (Hayes, 2017). Here, we present the results for organizational readiness as an example moderator shown in Table 3.

Table 3. Moderation analysis—organizational readiness as moderator

Variable	B	SE B	t	p
Constant	3.674	0.041	89.61	<0.001
Proactive service implementation (PSI)	0.498	0.048	10.37	<0.001
Organizational readiness (OR)	0.221	0.043	5.14	<0.001
PSI \times OR (interaction)	0.089	0.038	2.34	0.020

Notes. $R^2 = 0.53$, $F(3, 308) = 115.76$, $p < 0.001$; interaction effect: $\Delta R^2 = 0.01$, $F(1, 308) = 5.48$, $p = 0.020$.

The significant interaction term ($p = 0.020$) indicates that organizational readiness moderates the relationship between proactive service implementation and public value creation.

The study tested six hypotheses examining the relationship between PSI and PVC, with all but one hypothesis supported. While H4 was partially supported and H6 was not supported, the remaining hypotheses demonstrated significant moderating effects on the relationship between PSI and PVC. Table 4 provides a summary of the hypothesis testing results.

Table 4. Summary of hypothesis testing results

Hypothesis	Description	Result
H1	PSI positively affects PVC	Supported
H2	OR moderates the relationship between PSI and PVC	Supported
H3	TI moderates the relationship between PSI and PVC	Supported
H4	ES moderates the relationship between PSI and PVC	Partially supported
H5	LS moderates the relationship between PSI and PVC	Supported
H6	OC moderates the relationship between PSI and PVC	Not supported

These results provide a clearer picture of the relationships between our variables. Proactive service implementation is strongly and positively related to public value creation ($\beta = 0.421$, $p < 0.001$). All organizational factors, except organizational culture, have significant moderating effects on the relationship between proactive service implementation and public value creation. Organizational readiness and technological infrastructure have the strongest moderating effects, followed by leadership support and employee skills. The model explains a substantial portion (57%) of the variance in public value creation, indicating good predictive power.

These findings offer valuable insights into the dynamics of proactive service implementation and public value creation in the Saudi public sector, highlighting the critical role of organizational factors in this relationship.

5. Discussion

This study aimed to examine the implementation of proactive public services in the Saudi public sector and their relationship to public value creation. The findings provide valuable insights into the current state of proactive service delivery in Saudi Arabia and its potential impact on public value creation. This section discusses the key findings in relation to the research questions and the existing literature.

The results indicate a moderate level of proactive service implementation across Saudi public sector organizations. This finding aligns with the broader trend of e-government development in Saudi Arabia noted by Al-Khouri (2013) and reflects the ongoing digital transformation efforts outlined in Vision 2030 (2016). However, the variation in implementation levels suggests that some organizations are more advanced in their proactive service initiatives than others.

The relatively high percentage of organizations using data analytics for proactive service delivery (62%) is encouraging and indicates a growing recognition of the potential of data-driven approaches in the public sector. This trend aligns with global developments in smart governance and data-driven decision-making (Gil-Garcia et al., 2018). However, the lower percentage of organizations with automated service triggering systems (47%) suggests that there is still room for more advanced forms of proactive service delivery.

These findings highlight the need for continued investment in technological infrastructure and data integration capabilities to support more sophisticated proactive service initiatives. As suggested by Pardo et al. (2012), overcoming data integration challenges is crucial for realizing the full potential of proactive services.

The strong positive correlation between proactive service implementation and perceived public value creation provides empirical support for the potential benefits of proactive approaches in public service delivery. This finding is consistent with the arguments put forward by Linders et al. (2018) and Scholta et al. (2019) regarding the value of anticipatory governance and proactive service delivery.

The regression analysis further reinforces this relationship, with proactive service implementation emerging as the strongest predictor of perceived public value creation, even after controlling for organizational factors. This result suggests that investing in proactive service capabilities can yield significant returns in terms of public value creation, supporting the theoretical propositions of Moore's (1995) public value theory.

The specific aspects of public value creation enhanced by proactive services, such as improved service quality, increased beneficiary satisfaction, and more efficient use of public resources, align with the multidimensional nature of public value, as described by Alford and O'Flynn (2009). This finding underscores the potential of proactive services to contribute to broader societal outcomes beyond mere efficiency gains, addressing a key tenet of public value theory.

The significant contributions of organizational readiness, technological infrastructure, employee skills, and leadership support to perceived public value creation highlight the importance of organizational context in the successful implementation of proactive services. This finding is consistent with the broader literature on e-government implementation, which emphasizes the role of organizational factors in technology adoption and success (Dawes, 2008; Gil-Garcia et al., 2018).

The mediation analysis revealing significant indirect effects for organizational readiness and technological infrastructure provides nuanced insights into how these factors influence the relationship between proactive service implementation and public value creation. This suggests that, while proactive services directly contribute to public value creation, their impact is partially facilitated by organizational readiness and adequate technological infrastructure.

These findings have important implications for public sector leaders and policymakers. They suggest that to maximize the public value created through proactive services, attention must be paid not only to the technical aspects of implementation but also to broader organizational factors. This aligns with Moore's (1995) emphasis on building operational capacity as a key element of the strategic triangle in public value theory.

6. Challenges and Future Directions

The challenges identified by respondents, particularly concerns about data privacy and integration difficulties, echo those found in previous studies on e-government implementation in Saudi Arabia and elsewhere (Alshehri & Drew, 2010; van Zoonen, 2016). These persistent challenges highlight the need for continued efforts to address privacy concerns, improve data governance practices, and enhance interoperability between different government systems.

The resistance to change reported by respondents underscores the importance of change management strategies in the implementation of proactive services. This finding aligns with Nograšek and Vintar's (2014) emphasis on the human and organizational aspects of e-government transformation.

On a positive note, the future directions indicated by the respondents suggest a strong commitment to expanding and enhancing proactive service capabilities. The planned exploration of artificial intelligence and machine learning aligns with global trends in smart governance (Sun & Medaglia, 2019) and indicates that Saudi public sector organizations are looking to leverage advanced technologies to improve service delivery.

The recognition of beneficiary co-creation as an important future direction is particularly noteworthy. This aligns with emerging concepts of collaborative and participatory governance (Lember et al., 2019) and suggests a potential shift toward more beneficiary-centric approaches in proactive service design and delivery.

7. Limitations and Future Research

While this study provides valuable insights, several limitations should be acknowledged. First, the cross-sectional nature of the data limits the ability to infer causality. Future research could employ longitudinal designs to better understand the causal relationships among proactive service implementation, organizational factors, and public value creation over time.

Second, reliance on self-reported data from public sector employees may introduce potential biases. Future studies could triangulate data from multiple sources, including objective measures of proactive service implementation and feedback from beneficiaries, to provide a more comprehensive perspective.

Third, while this study provides a broad overview of proactive services in the Saudi public sector, it does not delve deeply into specific types of proactive services or their implementation across different sectors (e.g., healthcare, education, social services). Future research could focus on sector-specific analyses to uncover nuanced insights into the implementation and impact of proactive services in varied contexts.

Finally, the study's focus on the Saudi context, while valuable, may limit the generalizability of the findings to other countries. Comparative studies across diverse national contexts, particularly within the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) region, could provide further insights into how cultural, political, and economic factors shape the implementation and outcomes of proactive public services.

8. Conclusion

This study examined the implementation of proactive public services in the Saudi public sector and their relationship to public value creation, guided by Moore's public value theory. The findings indicate a moderate level of proactive service implementation across Saudi public sector organizations, with a strong positive correlation between proactive service implementation and perceived public value creation.

The study underscores the critical role of organizational factors—particularly organizational readiness and technological infrastructure—in mediating the relationship between proactive services and public value creation. Key challenges, including data privacy concerns and integration difficulties, were identified as barriers that must be addressed to fully realize the benefits of proactive services.

The results provide empirical support for the potential of proactive services to enhance public value creation, aligning with Saudi Arabia's ongoing digital transformation efforts. These findings affirm the relevance of public value theory in understanding and guiding proactive service implementation while emphasizing the importance of considering the unique organizational and cultural contexts in which these services operate.

For policymakers and public sector leaders in Saudi Arabia, this study offers evidence-based insights to inform strategies for implementing and expanding proactive public services. This suggests that investments in proactive service capabilities, coupled with efforts to enhance organizational readiness and technological infrastructure, can yield significant returns in terms of public value creation.

As Saudi Arabia continues to pursue its Vision 2030 goals, proactive public services emerge as a promising avenue to enhance public sector efficiency, improve service quality, and elevate beneficiary satisfaction. However, achieving these outcomes will require sustained efforts to overcome challenges, build organizational capacity, and adapt to evolving technologies and beneficiary needs.

Informed consent

Obtained.

Ethics approval

The Publication Ethics Committee of the Canadian Center of Science and Education.

The journal and publisher adhere to the Core Practices established by the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE).

Provenance and peer review

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Data availability statement

The data that support the findings of this study are available on request from the corresponding author. The data are not publicly available due to privacy or ethical restrictions.

Data sharing statement

No additional data are available.

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