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Abstract- Saudi Arabia has come a long way in developing its economy with Vision 2030 as its goal to achieve economic transformation. Prior to implementing Vision 2030, Saudi Arabia had faced many issues which led to the imbalance of its economy. Instigating Vision 2030 led to a drastic change in the tourism sector. Attracting international investments led to focusing on various sectors like renewable energy, entertainment and so on. Even though the tourism sector lacked diversity initially, after the implementation of Vision 2030, non-related economic segments flourished.

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Economic Transformation in Achieving Sustainable Development before and after the Kingdom's Vision 2030 (A Case Review for Saudi Arabia)

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I. Introduction

In contemporary times, sustainable development has emerged as a worldwide imperative as nations endeavor to achieve equilibrium between economic advancement, ecological preservation, and societal welfare. International organizations such as the UN have developed plans and goals to reach by 2030, propelling economic, climate, and societal transformation. These goals and frameworks have been the guiding factor for various plans implemented by governments such as Saudi Arabia. This Kingdom has positioned itself as a pioneer in economic transformation and sustainable development through its ambitious Vision 2030. This vision encompasses various components, such as economic diversification, privatization, global investment attraction, and the Public Investment Fund's (PIF) role expansion. However, the ultimate goal of this plan is to establish a prosperous and diversified economy, highlighting the plan's orientation towards the region's economic transformation. Therefore, expounding on the theme of the Kingdom's economic transformation through analyzing its economy pre- and post-implementation of Vision 2030 will highlight its commitment to sustainable development and the issues it must address to achieve these outcomes.

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II. Pre-Implementation

Before the execution of Vision 2030, Saudi Arabia's economy mainly depended on oil profits. This reliance made it susceptible to changes in the price of these commodities worldwide, leaving the Kingdom's government vulnerable to high expenditures (Moshashai etal., 2020). Increased spending by the government often leads to increased economic instability, budget deficits, and diminished reserves. In particular, this high expenditure increased the population's reliance on a consistent provision of public employment opportunities andassociated income (Moshashai et al., 2020). This resulted in slow private sector business growth, limiting investments, economic growth, and diversify-cation of the nation. From a financial standpoint, the lump sum transfers and subsidies utilized as an approach by this government to refrain from altering the consistent provision of employment and income resultin deadweight expenditure due to the inefficient allocation of wealth (Moshashai et al., 2020). Therefore, before the implementation of Saudi's Vision 2030, it heavily relied on one sector of the economy, which led to various economic issues that necessitated more sustainable approaches.

Additionally, Saudi's tourism sector was one of the primary focuses of this visionary plan. Before the implementation of this plan, tourism in the Kingdom was primarily centered on religious pilgrimages, with most visitors traveling to the country for religious reasons (Abuhjeeleh, 2019). This was propelled by the predominant Islamic culture in the nation that affected various aspects of society. However, other forms of tourism were limited due to the strict laws enacted in this country, discouraging other forms of tourism. Un-resolved human rights issues, such as systematic discrimination against women, mandatory dress codes for women, and a prohibition of alcohol, are some factors that discourage tourism in the region (Abuhjeeleh, 2019). To achieve the desired outcomes of this sustainable plan, the governmenthad to implement various regulatory changes that would lead to tourism being one of the primary contributors to the Kingdom's

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economy. Generally, tourism performance varied significantly after the implementation of this plan, leading to economic diversification and transition.

III. Post-Implementation of Vision 2030

The Kingdom's government established Vision 2030 in 2016, intending to convert the nation into a prosperous and diversified economy after realizing the need for economic diversification. One of the economic transformations that have taken place in the Kingdom is the privatization of some sectors of the economy. According to Ismail, Baig, & Batool (2022), privatizing state-owned firms was an integral approach in the government's 2030 plan. The country's unique nature of firm ownership that enabled the continuous provision of public employment and income to the masses necessitated a customized approach in this region. The unprecedented IPO (initial public offering) of Saudi Aramco, the Kingdom's state-owned oil corporation, marked the beginning of the process (Chaaben et al., 2022). Additionally, this IPO highlighted the government's commitment to economic openness and raised significant cash in addition to garnering international attention. The government has since then sold its holdings in several industries, including telecommunications, healthcare, and education. Due to the investment of money, knowledge, and innovation, these industries offer better services and are more competitive (Mustun, 2022). Therefore, the first step of the Kingdom's economic transformation was the abolishment of the overreliance on the oil economy and increased privatization of companies.

Attracting international investments was the other key aspect of this sustainability plan contributing to the Kingdom's economic transformation. The Kingdom decided to capitalize on its geographical advantage, youthful population, and economic changes to establish itself as a worldwide investment powerhouse. The Public Investment Fund (PIF), which significantly contributed to luring international investors, was extended and given more funding to help make this possible (Topal, 2019). The PIF made significant investments in several industries, including tourism, renewable energy, and technology, fostering economic diversification and creating job possibilities. This fund has also led to some notable investments, such as commitments to SoftBank's Vision Fund, the purchase of a Tesla interest, and investments in businesses like Uber and Lucid Motors (Topal, 2019). Therefore, increased investment is the other significant economic transformation that has taken place in the Kingdom since the implementation of the 2030 plan.

Additionally, this Vision focused on the growth of non-oil businesses, particularly tourism and entertainment. The Red Sea Project, NEOM, and Qiddiya are just a few of the massive tourism projects the Saudi government launched to boost travel (Ghanem & Alamri, 2023). These programs seek to promote Saudi Arabia's rich cultural legacy and natural beauty, attract foreign tourists, give Saudi citizens job opportunities, and more. By providing tourist visas and relaxing travel restrictions, Saudi Arabia has made itself more accessible to visitors from other countries. These initiatives seek to develop distinctive tourist attractions and add to economic diversification. To achieve the outcomes of these initiatives and portray a better image of the Kingdom, regulations such as those on cinemas, driving for women, and martial certificates for hotel check-ins have been lifted (Abuhjeeleh, 2019). Therefore, the flourishing of non-oil economic sectors after the implementation of this plan has led to economictransformation in this region.

The implemented Vision also acknowledges the significance of human capital development as a catalyst for economic change. An effort was made to improve educational and skill-training programs, assuring a workforce that is prepared for the economy of the future. Improvements in education quality, creativity, and entrepreneurship were the emphasis of programs like the King Abdullah Scholarship Program and the National Transformation Program (Ghanem & Alamri, 2023). By investing in education and skill development, Saudi Arabia hoped to produce a talented workforce capable of fostering innovation and advancing non-oil sectors. Saudi Arabia sought to lessen its reliance on oil, diversify its economy, entice foreign investment, boost tourism, and create a highly skilled workforce by implementing several pre-implementation plans. These initiatives provided the groundwork for the phase after adopting Vision 2030, marked by notable advancements and new developments in economic transformation and sustainable development (Mustun, 2022). Generally, implementing this plan has led to investment in human capital, a significant driver of economic transformation.

Furthermore, the Kingdom has made significant progress in producing renewable energy. The nation has adopted numerous measures to encourage solar and wind power and has set lofty goals for renewable energy capacity. The Kingdom's aims for renewable energy are being helped by initiatives like the Sakaka Solar Plant and the Dumat Al-Jandal Wind Farm, which also help the country rely less on fossil fuels (Chaaben et al., 2022). The transition towards sustainable energy sources offers prospects for the generation of employment, transfer of technology, and attraction of investments in the renewable energy industry. This endeavor is consistent with the overarching goal of Vision 2030, which seeks to promote economic diversification, foster innovation, and establish a more vibrant and competitive commercial landscape. Generally, the shift to renewable energy production highlights the economictransformation of this region post-implementation of the Vision.

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IV. Challenges

Saudi Arabia must overcome obstacles to attain sustainable growth despite the advancements gained. The need to have a robust ecosystem for innovation and entrepreneurship is one of the significant problems. Even though efforts have been made to aidstart-ups and small enterprises, more has to be done to simplify rules, expand finance options,and promote an entrepreneurial culture (Mustun, 2022). Ensuring social inclusion and overcoming socioeconomic inequities are additional challenges. While Vision 2030 seeks to increase employment possibilities and raise living standards for all Saudi nationals, there is a need for focused programs to assist underserved groups and deal with income inequality. This initiative involves expanding access to affordable housing, healthcare, and education. The Kingdom must also keep up its efforts to address environmental problems. Although renewable energy has advanced, Saudi Arabia remains a significant oil producer and consumer. To reduce carbon emissions and their adverse environmental effects, it is essential to establish sustainable practices across all industries and speed up the switch to renewable energy sources. Additionally, there is still some skepticism about the Islamic laws governing this Kingdom (Abuhjeeleh, 2019), which pose a danger to investors and economic segments such as tourism. Therefore, addressing these issues will significantly benefit the Kingdom and its progress in economic transformation.

V. Conclusion

Economic transformation is one of the predominant themes in KSA after the implementation of Vision 2030, presented by analyzing its economy pre- and post- implementation. This analysis highlights the Kingdom's commitment to sustainable development and the issues it must address to achieve these outcomes. Before the implementation of this visionary and sustainability-oriented plan, this region's economy relied on the oil segment of its economy, which led to the persistent economic issues it was facing. These issues include high government expenditure and overreliance on public employment and income. Additionally, the Kingdom's tourism sector lacked diversity and was centered on religious tourism. However, after the implementation of this plan in 2016, other non-oil-related economic segments, such as tourism, entertainment, and energy production, flourished. Additionally, the privatization of business, development of human capital, and increased investments became the primary focus of policymakers and initiatives. These shifts have led to tremendous economic transformation in the Kingdom. Despite the progress made regarding economic change, this Kingdom must address some of its challenges.

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