

BUSINESS INCUBATORS AND THEIR ROLE IN ACHIEVING ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR: THE COCA-COLA COMPANY IN BABYLON AS AN EXAMPLE

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ABSTRACT

This research sought to identify the extent to which the members of a research sample understood the topics of business incubators and entrepreneurship. It explains the role of business incubators in achieving leadership for the company. In addition to identifying the difficulties facing business incubators that prevent them from achieving leadership, the study population may consist of individuals working at the Coca-Cola Company in Babylon, which includes 1,000 male and female workers. A stratified random sample of the 10% of the working individuals was chosen. The study sample became 100 people, and when the questionnaire was distributed, it was 99 questionnaires being retrieved, and when the data was collected, it was found that there were two excluded forms, making the net number 97 items suitable for analysis and discussion. The researchers adopted the descriptive analytical method. Field data was collected through a questionnaire that was built and developed to measure the research objectives. It consisted of three axes. The first axis dealt with the difficulties facing Entrepreneurship, the second axis touched on services that support business incubators, and the third axis included entrepreneurs' proposals to support business incubators. The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) program and the descriptive statistical methods were used to analyze the data, in addition to adopting the inferential method to measure the research objectives and test hypotheses. The research reached many conclusions, the most important of which are: All correlation coefficients are greater than 1%, and this is the evidence of the validity of the questionnaire items. The company is constantly studying the market situation in order to collect information about the marketing environment. The company is conducting research studies on any new production line it seeks to open in the future.

Keywords: Business incubators, Entrepreneurship.

INTRODUCTION

The incubation process allows entrepreneurs to preserve capital and obtain external support to accelerate the growth of their business. Through business

incubation, the Enterprise Center captures the uniqueness of each entrepreneur and provides customized support and services to maximize the business potential. The ultimate goal of incubation is to launch profitable and sustainable entrepreneurial companies. Graduation is collaboratively determined based on the mastery of essential job functions; for most companies, this will be done within four to six years. Entrepreneurship refers to an individual or a small group of partners who take an original path to create a new business venture. An aspiring entrepreneur actively pursues a particular business venture and is the entrepreneur who bears the greatest amount of risk associated with the venture. As such, this person will also be the one who benefits most if the project is successful.

The first section: Research Methodology:

First: The research problem: The Coca-Cola Soft Drinks Company is one of the new projects that opened its doors in Iraq in 2010, and each of these projects seeks to achieve entrepreneurship. The research problem can be crystallized more clearly by asking the following main question: How can business incubators be a way to achieve Entrepreneurship at Cocaco? In order to answer the main question, the following sub-questions must be answered: 1. What are business incubators and what are their types? 2. What is entrepreneurship? What is its importance? 3. What is the role of business incubators in achieving entrepreneurship at Coca-Cola Company in Babil Governorate?

Second: The importance of the research: This is evident in:

1. Shedding light on the concept of business incubators and their types.
2. Entrepreneurship is a strategy that all companies seek to achieve
3. This study is consistent with the development plans in Iraq and in private sector companies specifically.
4. Business incubators are one of the most important basic and supportive foundations for entrepreneurship.

Third: Research objectives: This research seeks to achieve a set of objectives, the most important of which are:

1. Explaining the extent to which the members of a research sample are aware of the topics of business incubators and entrepreneurship.
2. Clarifying the role of business incubators in achieving entrepreneurship.
3. Identifying the difficulties facing business incubators that prevent them from achieving entrepreneurship.

Fourth: Research hypotheses: Based on the research problem, the researchers presented the following hypotheses:

The first hypothesis: Do companies face many difficulties when opening a new production line?

The second hypothesis: Do business incubators provide services that support the entrepreneurship?

The third hypothesis: Can entrepreneurs' proposals be used to solve the entrepreneurship problem?

The second section: The Theoretical Framework of Research:

The first requirement: What are business incubators?

First: The concept of business incubators: Business incubators work with companies in their early stages to get them beyond their embryonic stage. They provide support and training to new businesses that have a promising idea, as well as to entrepreneurs who are still at the idea stage. Business incubators are designed to help early innovators achieve a minimum viable product (MVP) and create an achievable plan to take that product to market (Al-Mubarak; 2020, p.76). If a startup has already developed an MVP or launched its product, it likely will not qualify as an incubator candidate. A business accelerator is best suited for those at an advanced stage of development. In addition to mentorship and investment opportunities, the business incubator provides startups with access to logistical and technical resources as well as shared office space. Since every company develops at its own pace, (Anderson; 2022, p.91), an incubator program can last anywhere from several months to a few years. In each case, the goal is to provide startups with the tools and knowledge they need to get back on their feet. Some incubators operate as non-profit organizations, while others provide seed capital and support in exchange for equity positions (i.e. ownership) in companies. A business incubator is a workspace created to provide startups and new projects with access to the resources they need, all under one roof (Chanda; 2022, p.12). As defined by (Eshun; 2021, p166), business incubators are institutions that support entrepreneurs in developing their businesses, especially in the initial stages. These are organizations geared towards accelerating the growth and success of startups and early-stage companies. The incubation process is usually done by organizations that have experience in the world of business and technology.

Second: Types of incubators: There are a number of business incubators that focused on specific industries or a specific business model, which earned them their special name. These are:

1. Accelerator – A business incubator focused on early-stage startups (Peters; 2024, p.91).
2. Corporate Accelerator – A program for a larger company that operates similar to a seed accelerator (Ramkissoon; 2024, p.26).
3. A specific type of seed accelerator that is often a branch or a program of larger companies operating as seed accelerators, sponsored by an established for-profit company (Eodorakopoulos; 2024, p.622).
4. Startup Studio – A business incubator that includes interactive investment companies (Tietz; 2022, p.27).

5. Venture Builder: It's similar to a startup studio, but it builds companies internally (Verma; 2023, p.51).

Third: The goal of business incubators: Business incubators support the development of startup companies by providing them with advisory and administrative support services. According to the International Society for Business Innovation, the primary goal of an incubator is to produce successful, financially viable companies that are able to survive on their own. Early incubators focused on technology companies or a combination of industrial and service companies, but newer incubators work with companies from diverse industries (Voisey; 2021, p.468).

Fourth: Advantages of Business incubators: Business incubators have many advantages that can support, the most important of which are (Robinson; 2022, p.13):

1. Guidance, advisory boards and services.
2. Business development program (workshop, discussion and management training).
3. Availability of capital sources (loans, grants, and network of potential investors).
4. Assistance with core business operations (accounting, market research, marketing, and legal compliance).
5. Business essentials, such as wifi, office space, equipment and administrative support.
6. Connection with like-minded strategic partners to build business.

The second requirement: Entrepreneurship:

First: The concept of entrepreneurship: Entrepreneurship is the ability and willingness to develop, organize, and manage a commercial project, along with any of the uncertainties surrounding it, in order to achieve profit. The most prominent example of entrepreneurship is starting a new business (Fisscher; 2021, p.39). Entrepreneurship linked to land, labor, natural resources and capital can generate profit. Entrepreneurial vision is defined by discovery and risk-taking and is an indispensable part of a country's ability to succeed in an ever-changing and more competitive global marketplace (Lee; 2021, p.15). An entrepreneur is defined as a person who has the ability and desire to establish, manage, and succeed in an emerging project while bearing the risks he takes to achieve profits. Entrepreneurs are often known as a source of new ideas or innovators, bringing new ideas to the market by replacing old ideas with a new invention (Zainol; 2022, p.49).

Second: Characteristics of entrepreneurship: Not all entrepreneurs are successful; there are specific characteristics that make entrepreneurship successful. A few of them are mentioned as follows:

1. Ability to take risks - Starting any new project involves a significant amount of risk of failure. Therefore, an entrepreneur needs to be brave and able to evaluate and take risks, which is an essential part of being an entrepreneur (Boiton; 2022, p.87).
2. Innovation- The entrepreneur must be highly innovative to generate new ideas, start a company and make profits from it. The change could be the launch of a new product into the market or a process that does the same thing but in a more efficient and economical way (Ferreira; 2021, p.63).
3. Quality of vision and leadership - For an entrepreneur to succeed, he must have a clear vision for his new venture. However, to turn the idea into reality, a lot of resources and personnel are needed. Here, the quality of leadership is crucial, because the leaders move their employees and guide them towards the right path to success (Yılmaz; 2022, p.78).
4. Open-minded – In business, every circumstance can serve as an opportunity and be used to the company's advantage. For example, Paytm realized the risk of demonetization and recognized that the need for online transactions would be greater, so it took advantage of the situation and expanded significantly during this time (Alpkan; 2020, p.732).
5. Flexible- An entrepreneur must be flexible and open to change according to the situation. To be at the top, an entrepreneur must be equipped to embrace the change in product and service, when needed (Amo; 2022, p.91).

Third: The importance of entrepreneurship: Entrepreneurship has a great importance, which is evident in (Antoncic; 2021, p.53):

1. Job creation - Entrepreneurship generates job opportunities. It provides entry-level employment, required to gain experience and training for unskilled workers.
2. Innovation - It is the innovation center which provides new product projects, market, technology, goods quality, etc., and increases the people's living standard.
3. Increased standard of living – Entrepreneurship helps improve a person's standard of living by increasing the income. The standard of living means the increased household consumption of various goods and services for a certain period.
4. Supporting research and development – New products and services must be researched and tested before launching them into the market. Therefore, the entrepreneur also distributes funding for research and development with research institutions and universities. This promotes research, general construction and development of the economy.

Fourth: What industries do small entrepreneurs work in? A recent survey of small business owners conducted by Guidant Financial found that the top three industries for startups are:

1. Food and restaurant operations
2. Retail sale
3. Business services

Other leading industries included health and fitness, finance, insurance, and law. No matter what type of project a small entrepreneur is involved in, it is important that they prioritize innovation and perseverance (MARWA; 2021, p.69).

The third section: The Practical Aspect of Research:

Introduction: This section deals with the practical framework of how to build the study tool to collect the information necessary for research and the scientific procedures used to ensure the validity and reliability of the study tool, as well as depicts the procedures for applying the field study and the appropriate statistical methods to analyze the data obtained.

First: Research population and sample:

Research population: Coca-Cola Soft Drinks and Mineral Water Company: A local company that opened in Babil Governorate is the first production line for soft drinks in Iraq in metal and glass containers while indicating that the production capacity of the line reaches approximately 386 million liters annually. Iraq has prohibited the import of these drinks from abroad and confirmed that it has provided job opportunities for more than 1,000 people in the governorate. The company's headquarters, located on Al-Hillah Al-Diwaniyah Road, is considered the first of its kind in Iraq. **Research sample:** The study population in the company was 1,000 people. A 10% random sample was chosen to make the research sample 100 individuals. A 100-item questionnaire was distributed, and 99 questionnaires were retrieved. Regarding study and work, two questionnaires were excluded, making 97 questionnaires suitable for analysis.

Second: Design of the study tool:

The researchers relied on the questionnaire method as a basic tool for collecting data and as a basis for knowing the opinions and trends of the research sample, as the questionnaire is considered one of the important and basic tools for collecting data in the field study. This is due to the researchers' ability to control the questions and facts to be collected from the study population.

The questionnaire was divided into three parts as follows:

The first section: It is related to questions relevant to the difficulties facing entrepreneurship and included 7 paragraphs.

The second section: It regards the questions related to the services provided by business incubators, which included 7 paragraphs.

The third section: It regards the questions related to the entrepreneurs' proposal to support the incubated production line to help them overcome the problems that the parent company may face. It included 7 paragraphs.

The answers in the first and second sections were closed answers according to a five-point Likert scale (strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, and strongly disagree).

The researchers calculated the weighted average of the sample's answers to the questions in a form similar to the Likert scale, which is considered one of the best methods for measuring the attitudes. The weighted average is used if the variable takes values that differ in terms of their importance, so this importance must be taken into account by giving each statement the appropriate weight for its importance. The researchers gave the appropriate weight to the importance of each statement in the questionnaire, as follows and as shown in Table No. 1:

Table (1): The five-point Likert scale items

The weight	Phrase
5	Very agree
4	OK
3	knowI don't
2	not agree
1	Not agree at all

Source: Prepared by the researchers based on a five-point Likert scale

Third: Analyzing and testing the correlations between the study variables

This research aims to explain the Pearson correlation coefficient for each item of the questionnaire, as revealed in Table No. 2.

Table (2): Results of the correlation coefficient for the difficulties facing entrepreneurship

Significance level	Correlation coefficient	T
%1	0.87	1
	0.92	2
	0.83	3
	0.89	4
	0.86	5
	0.85	6
	0.89	7

Source: Prepared by the researchers based on the results of the electronic calculator

It is clear from Table No. 2 that all correlation coefficients are more than 1%, and this indicates the degree of validity in the questionnaire items. Table No. 3 lists the results of correlation coefficient for the services provided by business incubators.

Table (3): Correlation coefficient results for the services provided by business incubators

Significance level	Correlation coefficient	T
%1	0.91	1
	0.85	2
	0.86	3
	0.83	4
	0.81	5
	0.87	6
	0.82	7

Source: Prepared by the researchers based on the results of the electronic calculator

It is clear from Table No. 3 that all correlation coefficients are more than 0.5, and this indicates the degree of validity in the questionnaire items. Table No. 4 illustrates the results of correlation coefficient for the proposal of entrepreneurs.

Table (4): Correlation coefficient results for the entrepreneurs' proposal

Significance level	Correlation coefficient	T
%1	0.85	1
	0.82	2
	0.93	3
	0.81	4
	0.84	5
	0.88	6
	0.85	7

Source: Prepared by the researchers based on the results of the electronic calculator

It is clear from Table No. 4 that all correlation coefficients are more than 1%, and this indicates the degree of validity in the questionnaire items.

CONCLUSION

This research sought to know the role of business incubators in achieving entrepreneurship, and the results concluded that all correlation coefficients are greater than 1%, and this is the evidence of the validity of the questionnaire items. The company is constantly studying the market situation in order to collect information about the marketing environment. It is working on conducting research studies on any new production line that it seeks to open in the future. The company's goal in general is to achieve entrepreneurship. While, the company is seeking to obtain a patent by launching its new product. The researchers also presented a set of proposals, the most important of which are: Providing facilities by the local government for any company seeking to serve the community, providing financial facilities by banks to support companies, conducting research studies for any product that the company is working on offering in the company. participating in seminars, courses and conferences to get to know the

entrepreneurs, and producing a new product that is unparalleled in the market in order to obtain a patent.

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