

The Effect of Applying Business Incubators on Enhancing the Innovative Performance of Investment and Privatization Projects in Saudi Sports Clubs

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Abstract

The importance of the new business systems that work on developing the concept of institutional support for the new projects has emerged. Within this context, business incubators are considered one of the most effective and successful systems in implementing development programs and supporting creativity and innovation. Therefore, business incubators have become on the list of development priorities and the formation of new projects. The purpose of the study was to identify the effect of applying business incubators on enhancing the innovative performance of investment and privatization projects in Saudi sports clubs, to achieve the objective of the study, the descriptive approach (survey study method) was used. Some officials of the Ministry of Sports, chairmen and members of sports club councils, executive directors, activity managers, financial managers, and members of various committees participated in the study. The study population categories were used to select the study sample intentionally. Two questionnaires were used to obtain data from (430) participants in the study. The results showed that there is an effect of applying business incubators on enhancing the innovative performance of investment and privatization projects in Saudi sports clubs. Business incubators can be applied to support the innovative performance of investment and privatization projects in sports clubs. However, the study also highlighted challenges and barriers faced by business incubators in the Saudi sports sector, such as a lack of awareness, insufficient logistical support, limited resources, and a shortage of skilled individuals. The absence of regulations governing incubator operations further hampers their progress. The study also provides insight into the implications of the application of business incubators to enhance innovative performance and future directions.

Keywords: Business Incubators, Innovative Performance, Investment, And Privatization Projects in Sports Clubs

INTRODUCTION

The significant economic growth and the comprehensive development strategies implemented by numerous countries since the early nineties [1]. it is crucial to rejuvenating the economy and technology transfers [2]. As a result, the operational mechanisms of business incubators have emerged as a leading practical solution adopted by many nations [3]. Incubators play a pivotal role in fostering social and economic growth by establishing a conducive environment and optimal working conditions to nurture the development of small and medium enterprises of various types [4]. particularly those in the technology and industrial sectors. They offer opportunities for development and growth, including technical, financial, and advisory support, and facilitate the connection between the project and the market [5-6].

Business incubators have been recognized as one of the most successful and effective systems developed in the past two decades for implementing development programs and generating new job opportunities [7]. As such, they are considered a priority in development and new project formation [8]. Essentially, a business incubator

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is a dynamic process designed to foster the growth of business projects, particularly those in their early stages, enabling them to survive and thrive [9]. The primary reason for establishing business incubators is to combat the high failure rates of new projects in their infancy [10]. They play a crucial role in supporting the growth of new projects by helping them navigate the challenges of establishment and launch, as well as product development and marketing [11]. Business incubators typically offer services, including shared infrastructure to minimize initial project costs, business advisory services for administrative, legal, and financial matters, and training and learning opportunities [12].

Innovative performance is a blend of abilities, efforts, and personal traits that can generate unique and beneficial outcomes for the individual, organization, or society. It pertains to the creative thought process individuals employ to tackle problems, which is a crucial aspect of innovation. Experience and motivation also play significant roles in innovative performance [13]. It is a vital driver of organizational creativity. To achieve their objectives, deliver their specialized products and services, and ultimately excel, organizations require individuals with highly innovative performance. The enhancement of innovative performance within organizations is not a choice but a necessity for most organizations. This is due to the need to adapt to technological advancements, changing environments, evolving organizational structures or strategies, competition from rivals who are improving their products, processes, and services, changing customer preferences, and evolving societies that are increasingly influenced by global issues and diversity [14]. Innovative performance is a culmination of all organizational accomplishments derived from efforts to improve and renew all facets of an organization, including processes, products, and organizational structure. New projects must cultivate innovative performance to concentrate more on the development of new products and services, enhancement of existing ones, and the establishment of an organizational structure that caters to the demands of a competitive environment [15]. In essence, project performance can be defined as the final outcome that indicates the degree to which a project achieves innovation-related goals and capitalizes on opportunities based on internal and external factors influencing business performance. The performance of projects hinges on their ability to maintain stability and resilience in achieving their objectives, given their higher capacity for change and adaptability to circumstances and changes, thereby fostering greater innovation and creativity [16].

To achieve the desired distinction for national teams, sports clubs, and practitioners at all levels, the investment and privatization project for sports clubs came to realize the objectives of Saudi Vision (2030) in the sports sector, which aims to build an effective sports sector, by stimulating and enabling the private sector to contribute to the development of the sports sector. The project currently has two main tracks: the first is to approve the investment of large companies and development agencies in sports clubs in exchange for giving them ownership of the clubs, and the second is to offer a number of sports clubs for privatization, starting in the fourth quarter of the year (2030). The project is based on three strategic goals: improving the level of professionalism and administrative and financial governance in sports clubs; raising the level of clubs and developing their infrastructure to provide the best services to sports fans; and raising the level of professionalism and administrative and financial governance in sports clubs [17].

Investment projects within the Saudi sports sector are pivotal in driving development. However, setting up and managing these projects can be challenging, with many failing within their initial years due to various obstacles. To mitigate this, numerous institutions offer business incubators to these projects, helping them overcome potential failure causes and thus, supporting economic development. These institutions also play a crucial role in providing feasibility studies and necessary advice to tackle the administrative, financial, technical, and marketing challenges that projects typically encounter during their establishment phase. Despite the importance of these projects, they still face many problems and obstacles to reach the abundance of economic size, weak innovation, lack of material capabilities, as well as the lack of a human base with a high degree of knowledge, competence and ability to keep pace with the rapid growth, so it was necessary to inform These projects are given the necessary care to be able to face the difficulties that often lead to their failure and demise, and from this standpoint the idea of business incubators emerged as an integrated package of services and facilities , From this point of view and in this competitive atmosphere, the importance of the new work systems that work to develop the concept of supporting the new projects emerged, as the most important reasons for failure in these

projects are due to the lack of supportive and incubating organizations, so the importance of these incubators comes in strengthening the innovative performance of investment and privatization projects Saudi sports clubs.

The Significance of the Research

Studying how business incubators affect investment initiatives in Saudi sports clubs and how they improve their innovative performance is a major undertaking. Because business incubators help these ventures expand and contribute to the national economy generally, this is important. Examining the financial gains made possible by business incubators as well as the possibility for investment projects to develop, grow, provide revenue, and create new employment possibilities are the goals of this study. Its analysis of Saudi Arabia's experience with business incubators and their effect on the success of ongoing investment projects is another significant aspect of the report. That is in line with the nation's initiatives to maintain and expand privatization initiatives. By offering useful data to stakeholders and decision-makers interested in Saudi Arabian sports funding, the study also closes a scientific gap. Considering the paucity of existing scientific studies, it provides fresh directions for research in this field and is an invaluable resource for academics interested in business incubators. As an applied curriculum, it also aims to close the gap between the theoretical and practical frameworks of the research variables and offer a theoretical interpretation of the research aspects of business incubators and innovative performance. Finally, it presents the most recent administrative thought findings on the researched variables.

Objectives

The objective is to assess how business incubators affect the creative performance of investment and privatization projects in Saudi sports organizations. It is crucial to ensure that there is a statistically significant relationship between business incubators and the innovative performance of investment and privatization projects in Saudi sports clubs. which is vital. Additionally, it involves determining whether business incubators could be activated to support the creative performance of investment and privatization projects in Saudi sports clubs.

Research Questions

In light of the research objective, the researcher puts the following questions:

Q1- What is the reality of applying business incubators for investment and privatization projects in Saudi sports clubs?

Q2- What is the level of innovative performance in Saudi sports clubs?

Q3- How much of an influence do Business incubators have in supporting the innovative performance of investment and privatization projects in Saudi sports clubs?

Q4- Do business incubators help support the innovative performance of investment and privatization projects in Saudi sports clubs?

Literature Review

The study Baskaran et al. [19] confirmed that business incubators have a positive impact on the operations of supporting and developing institutions, which achieves comprehensive economic development. The study Oberg [20] and the study Losa [21] results regarding business incubators demonstrated that they support the transfer of knowledge and the development of fundamental ideas and skills to develop business relationships and develop competitive resources. According to a study Gozali [22], business incubators have a beneficial effect on the variables that motivate startups' innovation performance, whether they are in the services or business sectors.

In the study Carreter and Izquierdo [23] supported the use of a variety of strategies by business incubators to support business entrepreneurship goals, these strategies included relationship marketing, psychological commitment, resource integration, awareness, and shared values. An innovative organizational culture supports a high degree of innovative performance among employees, according to a study by Al-Khatib, et al. [24]. On

the other hand, innovation opportunities are constrained in conservative cultures. The study found no proof of a functionality-type mediation effect on the association between organizational culture and innovative performance. Similar findings were made by Ting, et al. [25], who discovered that a company's capacity for innovation is influenced by both the knowledge management infrastructure and its processes. Additionally, they discovered that transformational leadership could alter this connection. Similarly, Zehir, et al. [26] discovered a strong direct relationship between differentiation strategy and inventive performance, which in turn affects organizational performance. However, they did not find any direct influence of independence on innovative performance. The study of Al-Juhani, and Balubaid [27] discovered hierarchical connections and prioritized these factors through ISM analysis. The results provided insightful information to entrepreneurs, stakeholders, and policy makers to improve the performance of business incubators in Saudi Arabia. The results of the study by Kustandi, and Kurniawan, [28] also showed that entrepreneurs in the sports industry in Cirebon who give presentations (55%) have a high level of influence in improving the sports industry.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Participants

The research population was comprised of various leaders in the Saudi Ministry of Sports, chairpersons and board members of sports clubs, executive directors, activity managers, financial managers, and members of various committees. The criteria for inclusion in the study were a minimum of 5 years of experience in their respective fields. The study sample consisted of 430 individuals. A descriptive method was used for the study. The details of the study sample are presented in [Table 1](#).

Table 1. Description of the study sample

No.	Profile	Basic Sample	Sample Survey
1	Leaders in the Saudi Ministry of Sports	51	4
2	Chairpersons and board members of sports clubs	103	7
3	executive directors	49	4
4	Activity managers	90	7
5	Financial managers	48	3
6	Members of various committees	89	5
Total		430	30

Data Collection Tool

The study employed two questionnaires to collect data. The first questionnaire aimed to assess the current implementation status of business incubators. It consisted of 25 statements, with responses recorded on a three-point Likert scale (3 points "yes," 2 points "to some extent," and 1 point "no"). The questionnaire was divided into five sections, including motivations for project support and development, logistical support, diversification of funding sources, knowledge dissemination and development, and difficulties faced by incubators (refer to Appendix A for more details). The second questionnaire aimed to measure the level of innovative performance. It included 19 statements, and responses were also measured on a three-point Likert scale. The questionnaire was divided into four sections, covering supporting creativity and innovation, investing in human resources, providing advisory support, and offering technical assistance to employees (refer to Appendix B for more details). Both questionnaires consisted of two main sections: demographic information and questions designed to measure the research hypotheses. The questionnaire framework was developed based on established research foundations, as depicted in Figure 1. The items in the questionnaires were derived from a pilot study and validated scales. Content validity was ensured through careful review. A three-level Likert scale was used to rate participants' responses, providing a balanced approach to capturing their viewpoints. This approach facilitated clear understanding while maintaining controlled response options. The internal consistency coefficient, assessed using Cronbach's alpha, confirmed the stability and validity of the tools. The reliability coefficient was 0.76 for the first questionnaire and 0.79 for the second questionnaire, which are considered acceptable values for this type of study.

A broad framework for the study is presented in Figure 1, along with the research objectives and the relationship between innovating performance and business incubators, as well as the steps involved in the regression

analysis. To assess the current state of business incubator applications for investment and privatization initiatives within Saudi sports clubs, Q1 is the first question. Finding out how innovatively Saudi sports clubs work is the goal of the second question (Q2). Knowing how business incubators enhance creative performance in investment and privatization projects inside Saudi sports clubs is necessary to answer the third question (Q3). In answering the question (Q4), the association between business incubators and inventive performance was established by multiple regression analysis, which also predicted how business incubators would be used to boost innovative performance in investments and privatization projects within Saudi sports clubs.

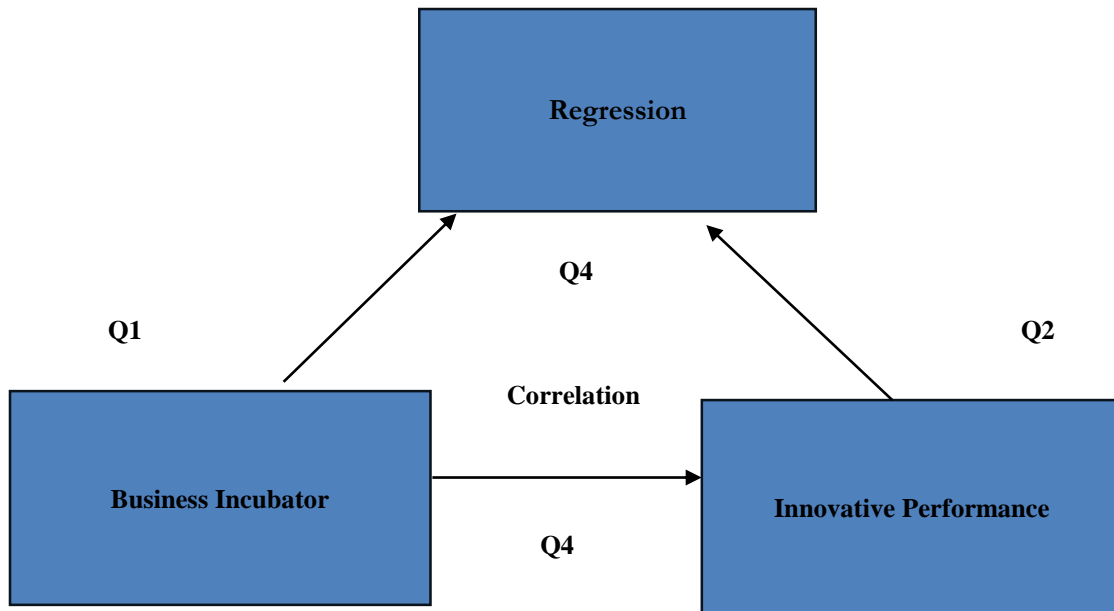


Figure 1. Research framework.

Research Timeline and Statistical Analysis

The baseline study was carried out between 12 Jun and 23 August 2023, the statistical coefficients were computed using IBM Corporation's SPSS 26 social sciences statistical software (IBM Corporation, USA, Armonk, New York). $p < 0.05$, significance was determined. The data was analysed using multiple regression analysis, percentages, mean responses, chi-squares, and the Pearson and Cronbach correlation coefficients.

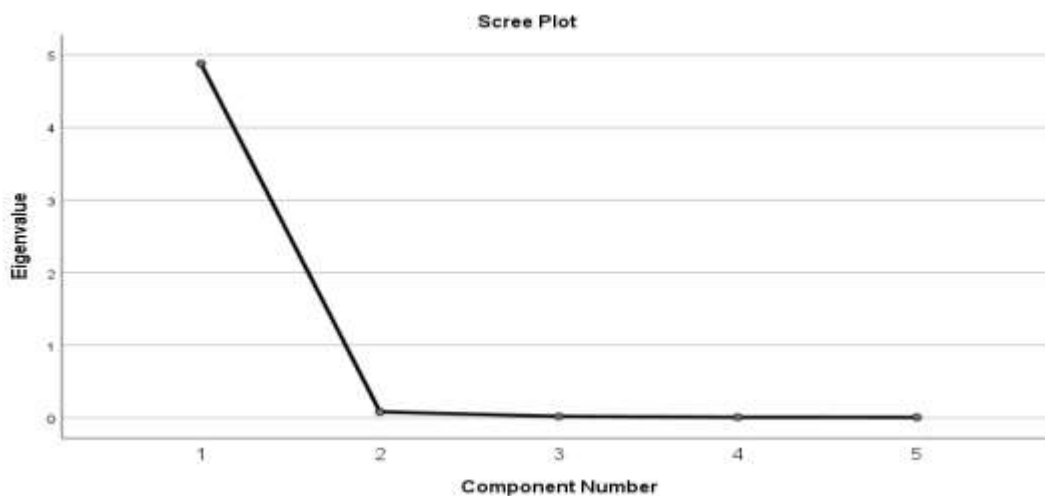


Figure 1. Questionnaire axes: The reality of using business incubators for investment and privatisation projects.

RESULTS

Table 2 shown the answers to the questionnaire on the reality of implementing business incubators for investment and privatization projects in Saudi sports clubs. The average response to the MSDP axis is between (1.29 - 1.67), the average response to the LS axis (1.36 - 1.71), the average response to the DFS axis (1.28 - 2.14), the average response to the DDK axis (1.45 - 1.66), the average response to the DFI axis (1.29 - 1.68). The average response to the questionnaire was 1.54, P = 0.001.

Table 2. Means and Std. Relative weight, average response, and X² of the reality of applying business incubators for investment and privatization projects in Saudi sports clubs (n = 430).

No.	Item	Mean	SD	X ²	sig	Imp. Percentage
The first axis: Motives for Supporting and Developing Projects: (MSDP)						
1-	Incubated projects are provided with bank credit facilities.	1.29	0.59	399.72	0.001	43.00%
2-	Feasibility studies are being conducted to implement the idea of business incubators.	1.39	0.67	284.13	0.001	46.33%
3-	The idea of incubating the project is translated into a plan and the processes that must be initiated.	1.67	0.86	132.93	0.001	55.67%
4-	A work map is available in partnership between the bodies and those in charge of business incubators.	1.49	0.72	189.77	0.001	49.67%
5-	The appropriate climate, requirements and administrative structure are available for business incubators.	1.38	0.73	380.27	0.001	46.00%
6-	There are legislations and laws that regulate the work of business incubators.	1.66	0.84	114.01	0.001	55.33%
7-	Total axis	1.48	0.69	1532.21	0.001	49.33%
The second axis: Logistical Support: (LS)						
8-	Investors from entities and agencies are invited to support projects.	1.50	0.76	213.02	0.001	25.33%
9-	Updated databases are available for employees.	1.61	0.84	170.57	0.001	28.00%
10-	Services are available in the field of conducting the establishment and establishment of projects	1.36	0.71	377.73	0.001	23.67%
11-	An efficient technological system is available to carry out and manage the activities	1.71	0.85	88.39	0.001	28.33%
12-	Total axis	1.55	0.75	871.82	0.001	25.00%
The third axis: Diversifying Funding Sources: (DFS)						
13-	The projects to be incubated are accompanied by the preparation of the work plan.	1.40	0.76	362.46	0.001	46.67%
14-	Initial capital is available to be spent on the founding phase of the incubated projects.	1.28	0.62	446.99	0.001	42.67%
15-	Spatial spaces and appropriate equipment are available for the implementation of business incubators.	2.14	0.60	175.21	0.001	71.33%
16-	There are investment funds working to provide resources to finance incubated projects.	1.71	0.85	87.72	0.001	57.00%
17-	Projects are linked to production sectors, market movement and requirements.	1.38	0.68	309.41	0.001	46.00%
18-	Total axis	1.63	0.60	451.46	0.001	54.33%
The fourth axis: Dissemination and Development of Knowledge : (DDK)						
19-	Innovation and creativity are adopted in marketing practices and production processes.	1.62	0.80	121.34	0.001	54.00%
20-	Modern scientific and technological knowledge sources are available for the application of business incubators.	1.45	0.71	233.66	0.001	48.33%
21-	There is a database to assist incubators in providing appropriate support for projects.	1.57	0.75	135.27	0.001	52.33%
22-	Work is being done to localize innovations in order to support the ideas of entrepreneurs.	1.57	0.84	219.10	0.001	52.33%
23-	Innovations based on research findings are accepted.	1.66	0.83	108.59	0.001	55.33%
24-	Total axis	1.56	0.76	802.89	0.001	52.00%
The Fifth Axis: Difficulties Facing by Incubators: (DFI)						
25-	Complicated procedures and laws.	1.47	0.77	271.83	0.001	49.00%
26-	Unavailability of the necessary financial amount to apply incubators.	1.29	0.61	421.90	0.001	43.00%
27-	Lack of information about the market.	1.65	0.84	123.49	0.001	55.00%
28-	The establishment does not accept self-employment.	1.68	0.87	138.34	0.001	56.00%
29-	Lack of mentoring programs for entrepreneurs.	1.66	0.83	104.24	0.001	55.33%

30-	Total axis	1.57	0.75	971.11	0.001	52.33%
31-	Total questionnaire	1.54	0.70	2461.68	0.001	51.33%
Last Confident = (0.63)		The Pinnacle of Culture = (0.71)				

The results of the questionnaire on the reality of implementing business incubators for investment and privatization projects in Saudi sports clubs are statistically significant (P 0.05), as shown in Table 2. The KMO values for the questionnaire's axes (MSDP, LS, DFS, DDK, DFI) were, however, (0.861, 0.812, 0.828, 0.850, 0.816 and 0.873), respectively. The full questionnaire's KMO values, according to Kaiser (1974), were (0.873), and the results of the Barlett's test of sphericity were significant (P = 0.001).

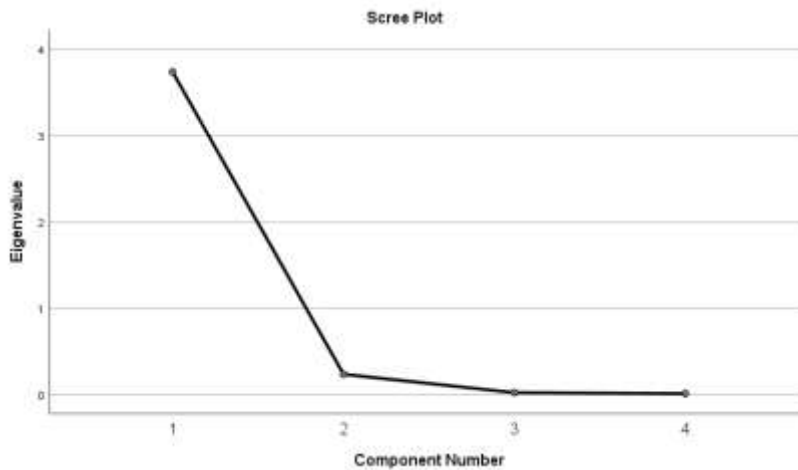


Figure 2. Questionnaire axes: The level of innovative performance.

Table (3) shown the answers to the questionnaire on the level of innovative performance in Saudi sports clubs. The average response to the SCI axis is between (1.62 - 1.87), the average response to the IHE axis (1.36 - 1.50), the average response to the PAS axis (1.58 - 1.92), the average response to the PTSE axis (1.51 - 1.87) . The average response to the questionnaire as a whole was 1.64, P = 0.001.

Table 3. Relative weight, average response, and X2 of the level of innovative performance in Saudi sports clubs (n = 430)

No.	Item	Mean	SD	X2	Sig	
The first axis: supporting creativity and innovation : (SCI)						
1-	Innovation and creativity are adopted in marketing practices and production processes.	1.81	0.87	54.93	0.001	60.33%
2-	Modern scientific and technological knowledge sources are available for the application of business incubators.	1.76	0.89	98.88	0.001	58.67%
3-	The knowledge gaps of workers at the technical and technological levels are bridged.	1.62	0.86	185.81	0.001	54.00%
4-	There is a short-term financing fund for innovators.	1.74	0.90	127.27	0.001	58.00%
5-	Work is being done to localize innovations in order to support the ideas of entrepreneurs.	1.87	0.96	146.15	0.001	62.33%
	Total axis	1.76	0.87	54.93	0.001	58.67%
The second axis: Investment in the Human Element: (IHE)						
6-	Strategies capable of incubating ideas and long-term planning are available.	1.43	0.80	1072.29	0.001	47.67%
7-	Guidance and training programs are available for human resources.	1.37	0.71	362.60	0.001	45.67%
8-	Emphasis is placed on developing human resource knowledge and information.	1.44	0.76	357.77	0.001	48.00%
9-	Human resource skills are continuously developed.	1.36	0.70	299.73	0.001	45.33%
10-	Attention is given to technical and technological training for human resources.	1.50	0.73	373.01	0.001	50.00%
	Total axis	1.42	0.64	195.16	0.001	47.33%
The third axis: providing Advisory Support: (PAS)						
11-	Consultations related to feasibility studies for investment projects are provided to employees.	1.60	0.84	186.06	0.001	53.33%
12-	Legal advice is provided to educate employees about the regulations.	1.92	0.93	87.55	0.001	64.00%
13-	Scientific advice is provided in the field of innovative projects for employees.	1.84	0.89	58.11	0.001	61.33%
14-	Provides financial advice in the field of managing project accounts.	1.62	0.86	181.90	0.001	54.00%

15-	Consultancy is provided in the field of marketing innovative ideas.	1.58	0.82	178.14	0.001	52.67%
	Total axis	1.71	0.83	962.50	0.001	57.00%
fourth Axis : Providing Technical Support to Employees : (PTSE)						
	Technical support is provided in the field of product development and design.	1.67	0.87	139.57	0.001	55.67%
16-	Technical support is provided in the field of quality improvement.	1.51	0.80	241.14	0.001	50.33%
17-	Technical support is provided in the field of developing work and operating methods.	1.87	0.89	48.65	0.001	62.33
18-	Technical support is provided in the field of production cycle.	1.67	0.90	195.44	0.001	55.67%
	Total axis	1.68	0.83	658.62	0.001	65.00%
	Total questionnaire	1.64	0.77	2703.31	0.001	54.67%
	Iast Confident = (0.63)					The Pinnacle of Culture = (0.71)

Table 3. shown The results of the questionnaire on the level of innovative performance in Saudi sports clubs are statistically significant (P 0.05) The KMO values for the questionnaire's axes (SCI, IHE, PAS, PTSE) were, however, (0.896, 0.847, 0.834, 0.857), respectively . The full questionnaire's KMO values, according to Kaiser (1974), were (0.856), and the results of the Barlett's test of sphericity were significant (P = 0.001).

Table 4. Correlation coefficients for applying business incubators and supporting the innovative performance of investment and privatization projects in Saudi sports clubs (n = 430).

Business incubators application		Innovative performance			
		SCI	IHE	PAS	PTSE
1	MSDP	0.908**	0.749**	0.938**	0.948**
2	LS	0.936**	0.792**	0.960**	0.969**
3	DFS	0.855**	0.657**	0.879**	0.889**
4	DDK	0.948**	0.818**	0.969**	0.978**
5	DFI	0.950**	0.780**	0.966**	0.969**

Note: **Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

As can be seen from Table (4) there is a strong direct link with a statistically significant level (P = 0.001) between Implementing business incubators and supporting the innovative performance of investment and privatization projects in Saudi sports clubs. The residuals' moderation of distribution is depicted in Figure 3, and as the data were gathered in the direction of the straight line, the residuals exhibit the characteristics of the normal distribution.

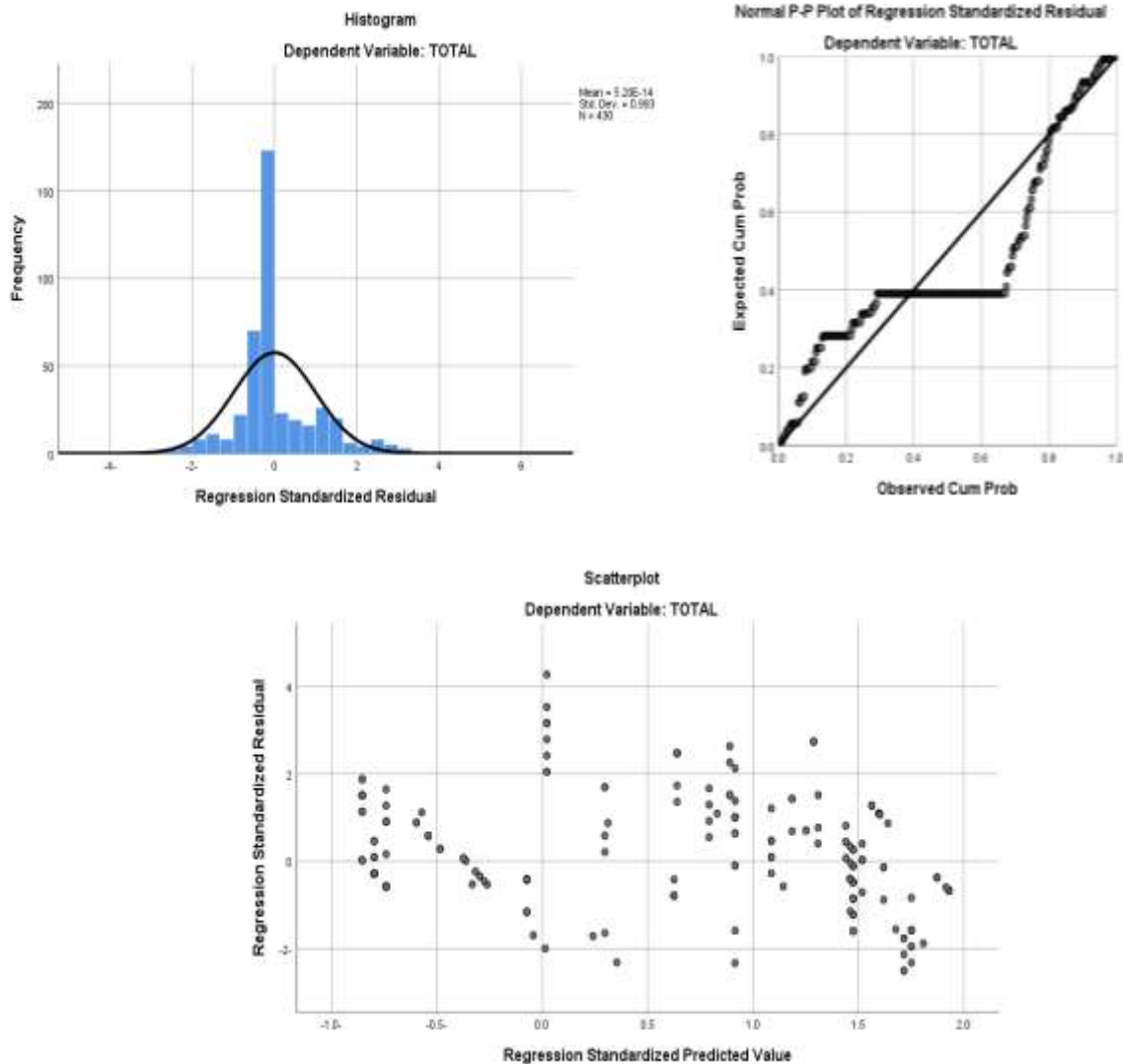


Figure 3. Multiple regression analysis.

Table 5 displays the results of the multiple regression analysis between the axes of the questionnaires for Implementing business incubators and supporting the innovative performance of investment and privatization projects in Saudi sports clubs.

Table 5. Regression Results.

R Square	0.966
F value	2012.792
Significance	0.001
Beta of MSDP	0.587
Beta of LS	1.310
Beta of DDK	1.250
Beta of DFI	0.615

We aimed to investigate the relationship between the implementation of business incubators and the enhancement of innovative performance in investment and privatization projects in Saudi sports clubs. We used a multiple linear regression model to analyze the data, with the variables (Motives for Supporting and Developing Projects, Logistical Support, Dissemination and Development of Knowledge, Diversifying Funding Sources, Difficulties Facing by Incubators) as independent variables and supporting innovative performance as the dependent variable. The results of the regression model indicated that the model is

significant, with a p-value of 0.001. This suggests that the model is valid and there is a correlation between the level of innovative performance and the implementation of business incubators in Saudi sports clubs. The explanatory variables were found to explain 96.6% of the variance in the level of innovative performance, as indicated by the r^2 value, which represents the strength of the relationship between the two variables. The beta values, which explain the relationship between the level of innovative performance and each independent variable, were found to be significant for Motives for Supporting and Developing Projects, Logistical Support, Dissemination and Development of Knowledge, Difficulties Facing by Incubators ($p = 0.001$). However, there was no significant relationship between the level of innovative performance and Diversifying Funding Sources ($p = 0.075$), as it had a higher p-value than the significance level of 0.05. The regression equation can be written as follows: Level of innovative performance = $0.20 + (0.587 * \text{Motives for Supporting and Developing Projects}) + (1.310 * \text{Logistical Support}) + (1.250 * \text{Dissemination and Development of Knowledge}) + (0.615 * \text{Difficulties Facing by Incubators}) + \text{error term}$

DISCUSSION

It is clear from Table 2 that the business incubators for investment and privatization projects in the Saudi sports sector, which are the focus of this study, are not fully operational. This is primarily due to a lack of awareness regarding the importance of these incubators in the development of such projects. Additionally, the investment projects being studied do not show sufficient interest in providing the necessary logistical support to establish and activate business incubators. This lack of support can be attributed to the absence of long-term plans and strategies, as well as a decrease in financial allocations. Furthermore, there is a shortage of administrative, technological, and marketing resources for these business incubators. Despite the significance of these initiatives, they continue to encounter numerous challenges and barriers in achieving economic prosperity. These include limited innovation, insufficient resources, a shortage of skilled individuals with advanced knowledge and competencies to keep up with the rapid advancements in information and communication technology. Additionally, the absence of regulations governing the operations of incubators further hampers their progress. From this perspective, it was crucial to continuously pursue growth in order to keep up with these changes and advancements. The expansion and development of investment projects, privatization, and business incubators are among the most important objectives of economic and social development. This is supported by the findings of the study conducted by Oberg, et al. [20] and Lose [21], which highlight the role of business incubators in facilitating knowledge transfer, fostering the development of innovative ideas and skills, and enhancing business relationships and competitive resources. Additionally, the study by Baskaran, et al. [19] confirms that business incubators have a positive impact on supporting and developing institutions, thereby contributing to comprehensive economic development. This agrees with the findings of the study conducted by Gozali, et al. [22], which suggests that business incubators have a positive impact on the factors that drive the innovation performance of startups in both the business and services sectors. Additionally, it aligns with the study by Audretsch and Belitski [29], which argues that the establishment of business incubators is a strategic choice for building entrepreneurship models. Furthermore, it highlights that the development of business incubators enhances the outcomes of entrepreneurial businesses and their ability to support emerging projects.

Table 3 makes it clear that the general level of innovative performance has dropped. This downturn might be attributed to the disregard shown by some administrative officials for the suggestions and ideas made by employees. These leaders are incapable of holding conversations and are unable to persuade people. Because of this, employees are unable to express their creativity or carry out tasks in a way that advances and enhances their work. Furthermore, leaders refuse to take into account any recommendations and insist on rigidly following all rules, guidelines, policies, and procedures. The adoption of innovative work methods is hampered by this inflexible approach. A few other barriers that could hinder the development of innovative ideas and viewpoints are the fact that some of them require material resources to be implemented [30] and the existence of leaders who value routine work and its protocols over change and progress [31]. A common challenge faced by sports organizations is the necessity to improve their performance in order to adjust to quick changes and highlight the relationship between creative performance within their systems and contemporary management

requirements. This is necessary in order to perceive creative performance as a light of hope and to effectively address the challenges that come with development. These institutions must find solutions to the many issues they face. Therefore, the supply of outstanding laborers and creative individuals across a range of fields should be the primary driver of their future development rather than a reliance on human resources alone. This calls for the diversification of management approaches and the application of fresh, innovative approaches that were not previously used. By doing this, these institutions can raise their level of competition and improve their capacity to handle risks and obstacles in the future [32–34].

Table 4 clearly shows that the degree of innovative performance of sports clubs is highly correlated with the use of business incubators in investment and privatization projects. This implies that the project owners have a strong desire to launch new companies and take advantage of commercial prospects. They place a high priority on innovation in all facets of their business, including technology, goods, and services. Furthermore, the growth of the abilities and traits of those involved in these initiatives, they consistently encourage innovative practices and trends. By fostering an atmosphere that encourages creativity and teamwork, this is accomplished. The end goal is to accomplish these initiatives' goals, which are mostly focused on using business incubators to foster innovation, seize opportunities, and get over barriers. The use of business incubators is closely associated with the degree of inventive performance in sports clubs' investment and privatization projects. Innovation is given top priority in all facets of these projects' operations, including technology, goods, and services. Through the development of the abilities and characteristics of those engaged in these projects, they promote innovative behaviors and trends. This is achieved by fostering an atmosphere that values creativity and teamwork. The ultimate purpose of these initiatives is to accomplish their objectives, which center on using business incubators to foster innovation, seize opportunities, and overcome obstacles [35].

It has been discovered that business incubators foster the exchange of knowledge as well as the growth of fundamental concepts and abilities, all of which contribute to the formation of commercial partnerships and competitive advantages [36]. Furthermore, business incubators foster the growth and development of institutions, which promotes all-encompassing economic development [37,38]. As a result, business incubators must be used as one of the most crucial and up-to-date techniques for achieving innovative performance in projects, which is reflected in the growth of their effectiveness and function in fostering work performance in a manner that promotes advancement, success, and continuity. Regardless of whether a company is in the business or services sector, Gozali et al.'s study [22] indicated that business incubators positively affect the variables that propel innovation success. Furthermore, Audretsch and Belitski's study [29] supported the idea that creating business incubators is a smart way to support entrepreneurial endeavors. It also emphasized how the growth of business incubators improves the performance of venture-backed companies and their capacity to assist new initiatives.

The growth of start-up enterprises and technology entrepreneurs is greatly aided by business incubators, which are universally acknowledged as crucial agents for innovation. Office space, equipment, coaching, financial and administrative support, and other beneficial resources and services are all provided by these incubators. Regional innovation performance is strongly influenced by the efficacy of business incubators, especially in terms of their capacity to support and nurture start-ups [39]. Bismala, et al. [40] state that the creation and expansion of business incubators is intended to lower the early-stage company failure rate by giving them the resources and support they require. Incubators can be extremely helpful in providing early-stage support to small and medium-sized businesses, which are essential for fostering innovation, productivity, competitiveness, and economic development [41]. The managerial effectiveness of these incubators can be improved by linking startups with the best business incubators and putting customized strategies into place [42]. As a result, the use of business incubators can significantly enhance projects' capacity for innovation, resulting in their advancement, prosperity, and sustainability.

Table 5 makes clear how important business incubators are in helping to forecast creative performance in several areas, including operations, technology, and new product and service development. Additionally, they sustain entrepreneurial trends and behaviors by encouraging the growth of distinctive personal traits in persons engaged in these initiatives. Business incubators provide favorable working circumstances and chances for the progress of diverse ventures, especially in the technology sector, which fosters innovation and teamwork. They

link initiatives to the market and offer resources for growth and development, such as financial, technical, and advisory help. The effect of business incubators on inventive performance has been the subject of much research. Studies have indicated that entrepreneurs who take part in business incubators—especially those with university training and managerial experience—have greater rates of their businesses surviving and creating jobs for skilled workers [43]. Business growth has improved as a result of tenants' good evaluations of business incubators' efficacy in terms of programs, human resources, and service quality [44]. It has been observed, nonetheless, that the incubation setting might not have all the tools needed to promote a culture of creativity and learning [45]. A survey of the literature on business accelerators and incubators has identified several typologies and services, with a focus on their function in promoting open innovation processes and aiding in the growth of high-tech businesses [46]. Technology incubators and university business incubators have been proven to boost the probability of undertaking research and development (R&D) activities and releasing new products in Poland [47].

CONCLUSIONS

The study aimed to investigate the impact of business incubators on enhancing innovative performance in investment and privatization projects within Saudi sports clubs. To achieve this goal, a descriptive methodology (survey study method) was employed, involving 430 participants. The results indicated a significant effect of implementing business incubators on enhancing innovative performance in investment and privatization projects within Saudi sports clubs ($p = 0.001$). Business incubators can be utilized to support innovative performance in investment and privatization projects within sports clubs. Furthermore, the regression model results demonstrated statistical significance with a p-value of 0.001, indicating the validity of the model and a correlational relationship between the level of innovative performance and the implementation of business incubators in Saudi sports clubs. The explanatory variables explained 96.6% of the variance in innovative performance. The beta values, which explain the relationship between innovative performance and each independent variable, were statistically significant for project support and development motivations, logistical support, knowledge dissemination and development, and challenges faced by the incubators (probability value = 0.001). However, there was no statistically significant relationship between innovative performance and the diversification of funding sources ($p = 0.075$). Additionally, it is critical to establish a setting that promotes candid communication and strengthens bonds between managers and employees. This can be done by allowing managers to hear what their staff members have to say and consider it. Enhancing the potential for innovative performance can result in better competitive advantages by fostering a culture of creativity and innovation. In summary, the implementation of efficient human resources management strategies in sports organizations is vital for augmenting inventive output and raising the bar for competitive advantage.

Limitations and Future Studies

While this study holds importance, it is essential to acknowledge its limitations. Several limitations should be considered when interpreting the results. Firstly, the reliance on a survey questionnaire may introduce response bias and limit the depth of information obtained. This could potentially affect the comprehensiveness of certain indicators. Additionally, the relatively small sample size may restrict the generalizability of the findings. However, this study can serve as a model for future research that includes larger and more diverse samples across Saudi Arabia. Furthermore, the study's focus on a few sports clubs in Saudi Arabia limits its scope. Future research should aim to expand the study's breadth by including different regions within the Kingdom. This would provide a more comprehensive understanding of the role of business incubators in sports investment projects in Saudi Arabia.

Future studies can also explore other aspects, such as analyzing the relationship between business incubators and innovative performance among employees in various institutions across Saudi Arabia. Additionally, evaluating the role of business incubators in supporting and developing investment projects in different sectors would contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of their impact. Furthermore, it would be valuable to conduct longitudinal studies to assess the long-term impact of business incubators on investment projects in sports clubs. This would provide insights into the sustainability and effectiveness of these initiatives over

time. Overall, while this study has limitations, it provides a foundation for future research to further explore and expand upon the role of business incubators on enhancing the innovative performance of investment and privatization projects in Saudi sports clubs.

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Transparency:The authors state that the manuscript is honest, truthful, and transparent, that no key aspects of the investigation have been omitted, and that any differences from the study as planned have been clarified. This study followed all writing ethics.

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Supplementary Materials:

Appendix A: The appendix includes a questionnaire on the implementation of business incubators for investment and privatization projects in Saudi sports clubs.

Table S1. A survey of the application of business incubators.

No.	Item	Response		
		Yes	to some extent	No
The first axis: motives for supporting and developing projects :				
1-	Incubated projects are provided with bank credit facilities.			
2-	Feasibility studies are being conducted to implement the idea of business incubators.			
3-	The idea of incubating the project is translated into a plan and the processes that must be initiated.			
4-	A work map is available in partnership between the bodies and those in charge of business incubators.			
5-	The appropriate climate, requirements and administrative structure are available for business incubators.			
6-	There are legislations and laws that regulate the work of business incubators.			
The second axis: logistical support :				
7-	Investors from entities and agencies are invited to support projects.			
8-	Updated databases are available for employees.			
9-	Services are available in the field of conducting the establishment and establishment of projects			
10-	An efficient technological system is available to carry out and manage the activities			
The third axis: diversifying funding sources :				
11-	The projects to be incubated are accompanied by the preparation of the work plan.			
12-	Initial capital is available to be spent on the founding phase of the incubated projects.			
13-	Spatial spaces and appropriate equipment are available for the implementation of business incubators.			

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14-	There are investment funds working to provide resources to finance incubated projects.
15-	Projects are linked to production sectors, market movement and requirements.
The fourth axis: dissemination and development of knowledge :	
16-	Innovation and creativity are adopted in marketing practices and production processes.
17-	Modern scientific and technological knowledge sources are available for the application of business incubators.
18-	There is a database to assist incubators in providing appropriate support for projects.
19-	Work is being done to localize innovations in order to support the ideas of entrepreneurs.
20-	Innovations based on research findings are accepted.
he Fifth Axis: Difficulties Facing Incubators :	
21-	Complicated procedures and laws.
22-	Unavailability of the necessary financial amount to apply incubators.
23-	Lack of information about the market.
24-	The establishment does not accept self-employment.
25-	Lack of mentoring programs for entrepreneurs.

Appendix B : The appendix includes a questionnaire on the level of innovative performance in Saudi sports clubs.

Table S2: A survey of the level of innovative performance in Saudi sports clubs.

No.	Item	Response		
		Yes	to some extent	No
The first axis: supporting creativity and innovation :				
1-	Innovation and creativity are adopted in marketing practices and production processes.			
2-	Modern scientific and technological knowledge sources are available for the application of business incubators.			
3-	The knowledge gaps of workers at the technical and technological levels are bridged.			
4-	There is a short-term financing fund for innovators.			
5-	Work is being done to localize innovations in order to support the ideas of entrepreneurs.			
The second axis: investment in the human element :				
6-	Strategies capable of incubating ideas and long-term planning are available.			
7-	Guidance and training programs are available for human resources.			
8-	Emphasis is placed on developing human resource knowledge and information.			
9-	Human resource skills are continuously developed.			
10-	Attention is given to technical and technological training for human resources.			
The third axis: providing advisory support :				
11-	Consultations related to feasibility studies for investment projects are provided to employees.			
12-	Legal advice is provided to educate employees about the regulations.			
13-	Scientific advice is provided in the field of innovative projects for employees.			
14-	Provides financial advice in the field of managing project accounts.			
15-	Consultancy is provided in the field of marketing innovative ideas.			
fourth Axis : Providing technical support to employees :				
16-	Technical support is provided in the field of product development and design.			
17-	Technical support is provided in the field of quality improvement.			
18-	Technical support is provided in the field of developing work and operating methods.			
19-	Technical support is provided in the field of production cycle.			