

The Reality Of Entrepreneurial Projects

In Iraq

(Analytical Study)

BY

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Introduction

Pioneering projects are among the cornerstones of developing countries, and an important factor that addresses many of the problems of these countries, foremost of which is the problem of unemployment, the dependency ratio, and others. Given the conditions that Iraq has experienced, in order to achieve economic development and address the problems it faced; Entrepreneurial projects can play a major role in order to achieve economic development and address most economic problems, especially that the economic system is oriented towards the application of the free economic system, which targets economic openness with the outside world, which will work to achieve greater benefits for these projects by transferring innovations to the inside and marketing its products abroad.

The Iraqi economy has witnessed a slight development in the establishment and development of pioneering projects after 2004, but there are many obstacles that still prevent reaching the level that makes these projects take their true position, to work on achieving economic development, developing products and contributing to addressing the economic problems that it suffers from. Including the Iraqi economy.

- **research importance**

The importance of research stems from the importance of pilot projects and their economic role, as pioneering projects are distinguished from others as projects aimed at sustainable economic development, through their use of means and methods that carry innovation radically different from traditional projects, which adopt traditional methods and random imitation and cloning of projects without scientific studies.

- **Research problem**

The research problem centers on the low level of pilot projects in Iraq, which is one of the main pillars that achieve economic development, as there are reasons behind this decline that should be identified and known in order to achieve the planned economic goals.

- **Research hypothesis**

The research assumes that there is a significant economic, social and political role for the entrepreneurial projects in Iraq. The increase in the number of entrepreneurial projects will lead to positive economic, social and political effects, especially lower unemployment rates, high growth rates, lower crime levels, and political stability.

- **research aims**

There are several objectives that the research seeks to achieve, as follows:

Identifying the pilot projects and their differences from other projects.

The research aims to analyze the reality of pilot projects in Iraq.

Demonstrating the economic role played by pilot projects in Iraq.

Identifying the most important obstacles that stand in the way of the development of pilot projects in Iraq.

- **search limits**

The research covered the time period from 2004-2019 to study the reality of pilot projects in Iraq.

- **Research Methodology**

The research relied on the inductive approach to analyze the reality of the pilot projects in Iraq and to identify the most important obstacles they face.

1- The concept of leadership and its characteristics:

1-1- The concept of leadership:

In the early twentieth century, the concept of entrepreneurship was associated with the concept of innovation that spread widely in the business world, especially Japanese businesses. Recently, however, entrepreneurship has come to mean being ahead in the field through daring, courage, determination, achieving success, taking risks and achieving excellence (Robert & Michael, 2002: 10).

The concept of entrepreneurship refers to the process of creating something new of value, allocating the time, effort, and money necessary to establish and manage this project, bear the associated risks, and achieve profits that increase the accumulation of wealth (145: 2001, etal, Rachman).

Entrepreneurship is defined as: a title given to anyone who establishes a new project, that would work on an economic addition, and it also includes everyone who manages different resources to innovate a new project or introduce something new, and based on the foregoing; Entrepreneurship is not limited to the people who created projects, but rather includes managers and workers in these projects and organizations, and managers who develop products for their projects, or add production lines in their projects to create a new commodity, develop a new service, or develop the quality of goods. The services provided to the consumer, or the creation of new projects, are called pioneer managers, and they are required to optimally manage their limited resources, in a manner different from the traditional methods used by others (Al-Obaidi, 2021: 288).

Entrepreneurship is one of the old renewable phenomena, which depends on creative and innovative individuals in various works, which can be defined as a group of works that aims to create a modern and scalable project in any economic sector (Dan, 1982:10). The linguistic term pioneer refers to the person who guides the people and leads them to achieve their goals. The concept of entrepreneurship was used for the first time at the beginning of the sixteenth century to denote the risks that accompany exploration campaigns. The concept of leadership developed from the mid-seventeenth century to the end of the twentieth century. Economic and social dimensions, as the entrepreneur: is the person who is able to mix the different elements of production in order to achieve an added economic value greater than the value due before that, by using the same factors of production in devising modern means to implement these works (Al-Kharbouti, 2018: 10).

1-2- Characteristics of Entrepreneurs:

Those in charge of managing pioneering projects share a set of characteristics as follows (Al-Mansur, 2000: 16) (Nicholas, 1994: 44):

A - Personal characteristics: The personal vocabulary grows as an example of an individual's life path, and fuses with his behaviors to become an integral part of it and difficult to change and can be developed, and this depends on its relationship to administrative leadership, as many people interested in administrative behavior believe that these vocabulary arise as a result of developing this behavior This will develop his motives and ways of thinking, and can determine the most important characteristics:

- The need for achievement.
- The desire for independence.
- Self confidence.

- Outlook.
- Sacrifice and altruism.

B - Behavioral characteristics: In general, the individual usually builds certain behavioral patterns of his own, as he adopts hobbies he desires and changes them easily in proportion to changing his personal vocabulary, and when discussing some behaviors that belong to the pioneers of pioneering projects, we must deal with them with caution, because of the sensitive relationship Existing between these behaviors and the pioneering efforts exerted, the behavioral characteristics of entrepreneurs can be divided as follows:

- Technical skills.
- Interactive skills.

C- Administrative characteristics: which are embodied in the managerial skills possessed by the owners of entrepreneurial projects, which are as follows:

- Human skills: which include the human relations that the manager seeks to develop with his subordinates and co-workers in order to serve the project in general.

- Intellectual skills: they include scientific principles and foundations in the field of management and decision-making, after analyzing problems in an appropriate manner, finding relationships between the elements and causes of problems, and identifying their precise details.

- Technical skills: centered on managerial experience and managers' knowledge of technical issues related to production, sale, purchase, warehousing, project financing and other issues related to other technical activities.

2- Concept and types of entrepreneurial projects

2-1- The concept of pilot projects

We can refer to a group of definitions that referred to the term entrepreneurial projects in order to know its difference from other projects, which are as follows:

- It is the process of creating a new institution, organization, or project, or developing existing institutions, organizations, and projects with the aim of responding to a new opportunity and creating a new business or business (Al Kharbouti, 2018: 10).
- They are innovations or advances in a field, as is the case with the Russian precedent in the field of space, and some call it: a term given to someone who manages a completely new project that meets a demand in the market (Jawad, 2000: 11).
- They are those projects that depend on creative ideas with independent creative value, and whose members are characterized by insight and high initiative that enable them to invest the opportunities available in the market in order to activate their ideas and establish their projects (Anwar and Sabah 2010: 151).

2-2 Types of entrepreneurial projects

The concept of pioneering projects is not limited to economic projects, but rather includes all sectors, whether economic, social, political, cultural or other. A pilot project: is a project that contains success, creativity and sustainability in any field in which it works and within any sector, so projects can be divided Entrepreneurship to the following (Al-Obaidi, 2021: 289):

A- Small entrepreneurial projects: Small entrepreneurial projects are distinguished because they constitute an advanced field for improving skills and production and marketing efficiency, and their prominent role in developing ideas that serve these projects and

improving their capabilities makes them sustainable projects and to be the nucleus of larger projects. The criteria used to distinguish small entrepreneurial projects differ from other Other projects (medium and large) from one country to another, it may look like a lot of large or relatively small projects depending on the different criteria used in it, as there is a set of criteria used to distinguish between these projects as follows

- Standard for the number of employees.
- The standard of the size of the capital and the size of the invested capital.
- Revenue criterion.
- Standard of added value.
- Standard for the degree of specialization in management.
- Standard of technological progress level.

These criteria differ from one country to another based on many circumstances, whether economic, social, political or cultural, as well as the degree of economic growth, technical development and population density, so we see that small entrepreneurial projects in industrially advanced countries are large in developing countries, This is reflected in the difference in the concept of small entrepreneurial projects and the difficulty of finding a comprehensive and unified definition that is suitable for all small entrepreneurial projects. There are many different definitions of small entrepreneurial projects, including:

- The US Congress defined small entrepreneurial projects as those projects whose ownership and method of operation are not independent and not controlling in their field.
- Defined by the Industrial Development Center for Arab States as all small entrepreneurial projects that include rural, Bedouin and craft projects, as well as modern small entrepreneurial projects, whether in the form of factories or others.

- The International Labor Organization has defined small entrepreneurial projects as artisanal production projects that are distinguished by specialization in management and are managed by their owner, and the number of employees in them reaches 50 workers, and this is consistent with the definition of the International Monetary Fund, which considers that projects with no more than 50 workers These are small entrepreneurial projects.

B - Medium entrepreneurial projects: Medium entrepreneurial projects also do not have a unified agreed upon definition, but their concepts differ according to the country, development and time, and what applies to small entrepreneurial projects applies to medium entrepreneurial projects.

C- Pioneering large investment projects: which include giant transcontinental companies and all multinational companies, and also differ from one country to another. Examples of this are companies that rely on providing modern electronic services.

2-3- Benefits of Leadership:

There is a set of benefits that leadership achieves in any field in which it is applied, as follows (Al-Mansur, 2000: 16):

- Profit: Entrepreneurs earn profits freed from standard salary constraints and traditional job work.

- Independence: The owners of entrepreneurial projects enjoy almost complete independence and get rid of the regulatory, supervisory and bureaucratic authorities.

- Safety: achieved by the owners of irrigation projects

Adia has a high percentage of lifelong safety by overcoming routine, fatigue, boredom and work pressures.

2-4- Characteristics of Entrepreneurship:

There is a set of characteristics identified by (Danald and Richard, 2001:29):

- The ability to self-control in determining their own destiny and managing themselves.

- High self-confidence and full and effective readiness to take decisions.
- Bear the risks and accept the ambiguities they face.
- Flexibility of thinking and readiness for any failure that occurs.
- Patience and attention to the practical side more than the theoretical side.

And (William et al., 2020:282) added other characteristics to the above, which are:

- Experience in business.
- The age stage, as the ages of the pioneers often range between (22-45) years.
- It is preferable to have a university degree.

3- Obstacles facing entrepreneurial projects:

Entrepreneurial projects face many challenges and obstacles, whether in developing or developed countries, which hinder their growth and development and limit their economic and social role. We can mention the main obstacles as follows:

3-1- Financial Obstacles: Financial obstacles are divided into two categories:

A- Internal financial obstacles: There are two sources for these obstacles, which are (Ali Wasayel, 2018: 184):

- There is no separation between the individual's financial disclosure and the owner of his sports project.

- Neglecting the required reserves, which were confirmed by the accounting and financial rules, which leads to reducing the sources of self-financing available for the pilot project.

B- External Financial Obstacles: Owners of entrepreneurial projects face a great obstacle when resorting to external sources of funding, in the event of insufficient internal funding sources, and inappropriateness of the standards followed in operating banks with the nature and requirements of these projects, to obtain the necessary financing on favorable terms that represent difficulties. Entrepreneurial projects facing (Al-Rubaie, 2006: 8).

3- Economic obstacles:

Project owners face economic obstacles, including internal and external obstacles, as follows:

3-1- Internal economic obstacles: These obstacles revolve around economic issues that stem from within the facility or project, and we can mention the most important of them as follows (Ali Wasayel, 2018: 185):

- Randomness in the implementation of pilot projects, and errors in the process of economic and technical feasibility study, which makes these projects in a position - financial, productive or even marketing - weak and inappropriate to market requirements.
- Excessive and wasteful in operating and investment expenses, which prevents the realization of profits.

3-2 - External economic obstacles: These obstacles include everything related to the economic and investment climate within the national economy, when an economic depression occurs, the pilot projects cannot absorb its effects, or the governments are not interested in these projects to address the economic problems they face (Al-Rubaie, 2006: 8).

3-3- Marketing obstacles: These, in turn, are divided into two parts as follows (Ali Wasayel, 2018: 185) (Abdullah, 2013: 44):

A- Internal marketing obstacles: they are summarized in the following:

- Lack of interest by the pioneering projects in the market for the offered good or service and the demand for it and the changes that are taking place and their effects on the future of this good or service.

- Lack of marketing competencies, as a result of employing incompetent and appropriate workers in terms of qualifications and experience, and this may be due to low wages and incentives that lead to the reluctance of competencies.

- The absence of a network of wholesalers or large companies to purchase the products of the pioneering projects and the reliance on direct dealing with the final consumer, which leads to weakness in the marketing operations.

B- External marketing obstacles: They are represented by the following:

- Low level of financial capabilities for pilot projects, which leads to poor marketing efficiency as a result of their inability to provide sufficient information on the local and international market for goods or services and consumer tastes.

- The lack of regular marketing benefits to familiarize the consumer with the good or service for these projects, in addition to the narrow scope of local markets and the failure to use the modern scientific method in the field of marketing.

- The local consumer's preference for foreign goods and services out of imitation or imitation, which limits the volume of demand for the products of local entrepreneurial projects.

- The lack of sufficient incentives for the products of these projects, which weakens their competition over the imported products, in addition to the deliberate practice of some

foreign companies and governments to adopt a dumping policy for the products of the pioneering projects.

3-4- Administrative Obstacles: Administrative obstacles include a number of points, which we list as follows (Al-Asraj, 2009: 36) (Omar and Ali, 2013: 11) (Ali Wasayel, 2018: 185):

- The use of traditional methods in public administration, and this occurs when the entrepreneurial project pattern of the owner-manager prevails, and there is an integration between the basic functions of management, finance, marketing and others.
- Absence of knowledge and experience needed to manage entrepreneurial projects by their owners, which leads to problems in marketing them and making them more attractive.
- The lack of knowledge of the owners of entrepreneurial projects in the rules and methods of dealing with the official administrative authorities of the state, such as how to use commercial and industrial records, which leads to the length of time required to complete their administrative work.
- The misuse of modern administrative techniques and the absence of an information system make the pilot projects fragile and unable to compete, especially at the beginning of their launch.

3-5- Technical Obstacles: Entrepreneurial projects face some obstacles that lead to their failure, (Salman, 2009: 51) (Al-Asraj, 2006: 6):

- The specific geographical location for the implementation of the project idea, where an unplanned location is often chosen, which leads to the failure of the project after a short period.

- The problem of obtaining production requirements, especially raw materials, which is reflected in the quality of production negatively, as a result of the use of poor or poor quality production elements.

- The difficulty in obtaining modern technology appropriate for the project, resulting from a lack of financial resources or the weakness of their users, which leads to the use of traditional technology, which in turn will lead to negative results on the quality of production, without the difficulty of obtaining the appropriate trained labor for the project other than the inadequacy of the training system And education with the requirements of the labor market and the economic development taking place in the country.

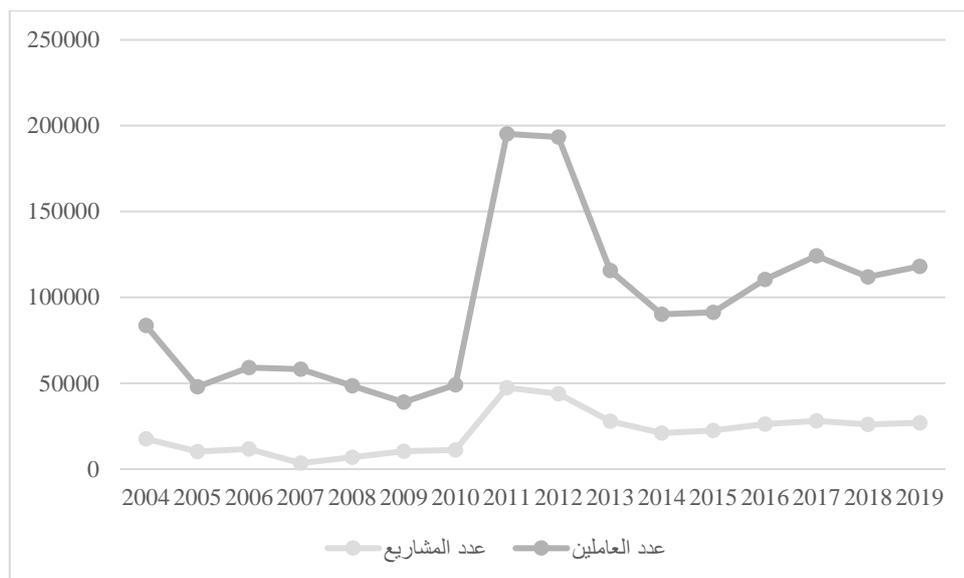
4- Analyzing the reality of the pilot projects in Iraq

The entrepreneurial projects operating in Iraq witnessed a clear development after the abandonment of the socialist system and the shift towards a market economy. The number of pilot projects increased from (17,691) projects in 2004, to (26,992) projects in 2019, as shown in Table No. (1) Despite the decrease in its number in some years, and its suspension from carrying out its economic activities, which is due to the security conditions experienced by the country, as well as the economic conditions. And what followed, or what happened in 2013 and beyond, as well as the years 2008 and 2009 and the solutions of the global financial crisis, which witnessed a clear decrease in the number of entrepreneurial projects operating in Iraq, which was reflected in the growth rate of these projects, as a negative growth rate was recorded for some years.

Table (1) The development of pilot projects and the number of workers in Iraq during the period (2004-2019)

employee growth rate	Enterprise growth rate	Number of employees	number of projects	years
		66006	17691	2004
-0.428	-0.425	37776	10164	2005
0.256	0.148	47454	11672	2006
0.155	-0.703	54796	3463	2007
-0.239	0.993	41724	6902	2008
-0.313	0.498	28651	10340	2009
0.320	0.082	37821	11187	2010
2.908	3.241	147816	47440	2011
0.012	-0.075	149567	43887	2012
-0.413	-0.364	87797	27920	2013
-0.213	-0.247	69083	21018	2014
-0.006	0.074	68648	22572	2015
0.229	0.158	84369	26145	2016
0.140	0.072	96165	28038	2017
-0.106	-0.075	85999	25945	2018
0.059	0.040	91083	26992	2019

Source: Prepared by the researcher based on the data of the Central Bureau of Statistics in the Ministry of Planning for the years (2004-2019).



In blue is the number of projects

In orange is the number of employees

Figure (1) The evolution of the number of pilot projects and the number of workers in Iraq for the period 2004-2019

Source: From the researcher’s work based on the data in Table (1).

The development of the pilot projects operating in Iraq was accompanied by a clear development in the number of workers, who moved from unemployed people to people working in projects that provide goods and services. The number of workers in pilot projects reached approximately (147816) workers in 2011, which is the highest level it reached during the duration of the study, and the reason is due to the relative stability that was achieved in that year, while the year 2009 recorded the lowest level for the number of workers in entrepreneurial projects, reaching approximately (28,651) workers, and this may be due to the impact of the global financial crisis that swept the world at that time.

5- Motives of interest in developing pilot projects in Iraq

There is a set of motives that led to the interest in pioneering projects in Iraq, which are summarized in the following:

- Increasing inflation rates: where the phenomenon of unemployment constitutes a social weight, in addition to the economic burden, the Iraqi economy has suffered from an imbalance in the labor market resulting from the increase in the population corresponding to the decrease in the demand for the labor force (Ahmed, 2009: 8).

- The increase in the number of immigrant citizens and the growing phenomenon of migration and forced displacement: since the eighties of the last century, Iraq has witnessed this phenomenon for political reasons, as well as economic migration that was the result of economic conditions, which made the matter worse and led to an increase in this phenomenon, which resulted from the American occupation Iraq and the deteriorating security situation. The estimates of the International Migration Agency in January 2007 confirm that the number of migrants during the past five years has reached (2.2) million Iraqis inside Iraq, in addition to (2.5) million Iraqis outside Iraq, because the total number reaches (4.75) million Iraqis, which was It is necessary to address and find solutions to this dangerous phenomenon, and there is no doubt that the pilot projects would have helped reduce this phenomenon and limit its repercussions (Sherif, 2015: 2).

- The economic policies followed in Iraq: which aim to shift towards a market economy. The economic system in Iraq changed after 2003, moving from a planned focused economy to a free economy that relies on supply and demand mechanisms and on the existence of a developed private sector that meets the needs of the market, which led to Increasing interest in pioneering projects, considering them as a primary source for developing the private sector (Ali Wasayel, 2018: 188).

- The flight of capital abroad: After 2003, the Iraqi economy witnessed the flight of many capital abroad in search of investment opportunities, as a result of the lack of security, political and economic stability, which led to the interest of the competent authorities in pioneering projects and providing facilities, especially financing ones. , especially the (Tamkeen Initiative) launched by the Central Bank of Iraq, and other initiatives that aimed to support and enable pioneering projects to be an element of attracting Iraqi capitals working abroad (Braihi, 2011: 42).

6- Obstacles to entrepreneurial projects in Iraq

The financial obstacles facing these projects, most of which suffer from this problem, as studies indicate that the financing of many pilot projects is self-financed, and despite some initiatives to address these obstacles, they were shy in front of the large numbers of these projects. There is a clear deterioration in the amount of credit granted to such projects by banks, as loans granted by commercial banks, including Rafidain Bank, amounted to (30%) of the total deposits, in addition to the high cost of these loans, and the necessity of placing strict guarantees by the banking system, especially the guarantee Al-Aqari (Awwad and Sondos, 2012: 148).

- The instability of the exchange rate, which prompted banks to deal in short-term loans, as well as the shocks that occurred in the exchange rate during the past period, and the devaluation of the currency (Al-Nasih, 2008: 164).

- The existence of regulatory and legislative obstacles, as the changing policies have burdened the pilot projects, and added to them more procedures necessary to establish the project, and the length of time required to obtain licenses, and other procedures, which led to

restricting and limiting the possibility of development and maximizing the role of these projects. Reports indicated The Arab Labor Conference stated that projects in Iraq need 150 days to start their actual work, compared to 35-24-17 days in Kuwait, Algeria and Syria, respectively, in addition to the weak legislation related to pilot projects specifically, and the multiplicity of supervisory bodies without coordination between them (Ali Wasayel, 2018: 188).

- Weak support for pioneering projects, most of which suffer from the lack of government support for them. The change in the economic system after 2003 had a clear impact on these projects, as the new governments had to work on developing all private sector projects, which were entrusted with the task of their economic development (Ali and Acer, 2013: 23).

- The Iraqi economy was exposed to the problem of economic closure by most of the neighboring countries, which led to the closure of most of the existing projects, in addition to considering the problem of economic closure as one of the obstacles facing any pioneering project in the future (Ali and Ayser, 2013: 23).

- The deterioration and obsolescence of the infrastructure and basic services of the private sector, especially the poor supply of electric power, which led to a halt, due to the high production costs, which constituted a major obstacle to new entrepreneurial projects (Manhal, 2006: 199).

- The absence of a stable political system, as well as the poor security situation, which contributed to the scarcity and lack of information on entrepreneurial projects, and the absence of a central body documenting such information, as well as the low banking culture of most entrepreneurs, and the difference in information in Scarcity and lack of information on entrepreneurial projects, and the absence of a central body documenting such information, as well as the low banking culture of most entrepreneurs, and the difference in information in

the credit market, with a decrease in the number of commercial banks that promote their banking services, which led to a decrease in dealers relative to Population (Ali Wasayel, 2018: 188).

Conclusions and recommendations

Conclusions:

The decrease in the number of pilot projects in Iraq was accompanied by a decrease in the number of workers in them. In turn, their numbers and economic activity were affected by the security and economic situation of the country, which made them fluctuate from time to time. Their numbers increased as well as their economic role during the years that witnessed security and economic stability and vice versa, as their numbers decreased Its activity declined during the years that witnessed security and economic crises.

- The increase in the number of pilot projects has a positive impact on the number of workers, as the pilot projects may contribute to a decrease in the unemployment rate, which is one of the problems rooted in the Iraqi economy.

- There are many internal and external obstacles, as well as economic and non-economic obstacles, which face entrepreneurial projects in Iraq.

Recommendations:

- The government should pay more attention to pioneering projects, in order to address many economic problems, especially the problem of unemployment, poverty and inflation, through the facilities provided to the owners of these projects, especially financial facilities, as well as educating the community about these projects.

- Forming a specialized committee that works on developing mechanisms to address and overcome the obstacles facing the development of pilot projects, and to involve the private sector in this, as well as civil society organizations.
- Working on creating policies for improving and raising the level of pilot projects in Iraq, especially projects founded by young people.
- Studying the experiences of countries that have achieved remarkable success in pilot projects, transferring and applying these experiences to Iraq, and working to benefit from the lessons that accompanied them.
- Drawing on the expertise of specialized international organizations, large companies, research centers and think tanks specialized in entrepreneurship issues.

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