
Incubation Programs in the MENA Region: An Assessment of Existing Literature

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Abstract:

Incubation is a notion that has drawn a lot of interest from scholars, practitioners, and policymakers in the last three decades. Nonetheless, incubation research has generally concentrated on advanced economies and has been theoretical and static. In this work, we first conduct a thorough literature assessment on incubators and incubation programs in the MENA region, and we suggest three explanations for the lower effectiveness of these programs compared to advanced economies. We present three main conclusions that restrict the incubators' ability to perform to their fullest. Our research adds to the literature on incubation programs by providing context for entrepreneurial ecosystems in the MENA area. We also offer policy recommendations for these nations in terms of empowering the incubators.

Keywords: Entrepreneurship, Incubation, Programs; Literature Review, MENA Region.

Jel Classification Codes : L26; C80.

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1. Introduction:

The introduction to Entrepreneurship plays an essential role in economic development through elevating the standard of living. By the creation of new businesses and job opportunities, entrepreneurship has the power to enhance the quality of life for individuals and communities, while also providing paths for wealth creation. By improving employability, entrepreneurship drives economic competitiveness, resulting in better products and services, and ultimately, more satisfied consumers.

Entrepreneurs benefit greatly from incubators, which not only improve their business readiness but also their psychological preparedness to overcome the fear of failure and start their own business (Deghani, 2024). Over the years, there has been a sharp increase in interest in the incubator phenomenon worldwide, its consequences for entrepreneurship, and the creation of supporting policies to help local businesses. The incubators has surged dramatically; it started in the US and swiftly expanded to EU and Asia. Worldwide, there are around 7000 incubators, most of which get funding from regional or federal governments (van Weele et al., 2017)

As a result, these players in the entrepreneurial ecosystem have been referred to by a wide range of similar labels, including Science Parks, Research Parks, and Business Incubators. Due to this wide expansion, a broader range of incubator models have emerged, frequently with cover mostly the same goals and activities and a diverse array of sponsors such as businesses, investors, academic institutions, and local government agencies.

Because of the variation in the performance and success of incubators and incubator enterprises, as well as the implications of what works with corporate strategy, university and governmental policies, and managerial practices, incubators have proven to be an interesting field for scholars.

Recent research on incubators and incubation programs in the MENA region has seen a shift of focus from developing a framework to analysing the process (Spigel & Harrison, 2017), and a number of scholars have started to focus incubator and their role in development of the entrepreneurial ecosystem among the MENA countries.

Nonetheless, there are still three significant issues with the reviewed literature. Firstly, there is a dearth of systematic studies on incubation programs to investigate their function and impact on the ecosystem. Previous studies have looked at particular components of incubation programs in isolation, but a comprehensive understanding of these programs is needed to understand not only how resources are allocated and interact, but also how entrepreneurial ecosystems are governed. Third, when comparing the MENA countries collectively to developed economies, there is a dearth of research on incubation programs that highlights their key characteristics. It is challenging to offer specific policy recommendations for these nations due to the inadequate theoretical foundation of the received literature.

This article's purpose is to fill in the gaps. First, we do a thorough analysis of the research on incubation programs, concentrating on the MENA region. A summary of the literature on the evolution of incubators around the world and in the MENA. After that, we carried out a systematic literature review. Together, these two evaluations offer crucial insights into the unique traits of the incubators in both emerging and developed economies, illuminating the associated policy consequences. In conclusion, we offer our insights and policy recommendations to support the efficient management of the incubators in the MENA regions.

2. Incubation story:

Incubators had their roots in the 1950s, specifically in the founding of Stanford Research Park in 1959, which served as a catalyst for the development of the Silicon Valley and the Industrial Center in Batavia, New York (Mian et al., 2016).

In this research, we are looking at the incubators and incubation programs in the MENA countries. The countries, including MENA, have been defined differently based on the international organization and their objectives. We have adapted the International Monetary Fund definition of MENA countries, which includes the following countries: Algeria, Bahrain, Djibouti, Egypt, Islamic Republic of Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, Sudan, Syrian Arab Republic, Tunisia, the United Arab Emirates, West Bank and Gaza, Yemen (International-Monetary-Fund, October 2023).

3. Why MENA?:

The Middle East and North Africa (MENA) area has had rapid economic expansion in recent years, along with robust job creation and falling unemployment. Innovation and entrepreneurship are some of the most important forces behind social and economic progress.

Thus, startup incubation is a crucial instrument for fostering competitive businesses, releasing human creativity, and producing long-term employment. Incubators play a crucial role in the growth of new economic sectors by introducing entrepreneurs to information and communication technologies, which boost output, expand an enterprise's market reach, and ultimately improve chances and possibilities for success.

4. What is an Incubator and what is an Incubation program?

Incubators are defined differently, and these definitions have changed over time. An incubator, for instance, is defined as a program created to speed up the successful development of entrepreneurial companies through a variety of business support resources and services developed or orchestrated by incubator management and offered both in the incubator and through its network of contacts by the International Business Innovation Association (InBIA) of the United States (Soetanto & Jack, 2011).

Young businesses are fostered by incubators, which support them in surviving and expanding during their most vulnerable stage—the startup phase. Incubators offer coordinated exposure to vital business or technical support services, financial resources, and practical managerial help. In addition, they provide equipment access, flexible and extendable space, and shared office services to startup companies—all under one roof.

The organization known as the business incubator is responsible for providing the early stages of a business project with the necessary support services, including a location, necessary recommendations and instructions, a suitable space, and all necessary assistance for the incubates (Mian, 2014).

Services like providing office, mentorship, and Marketing (Hansen et al., 2000); Early firm governance, giving the necessary advice and recommendations, supporting, connecting it to the right networks, and providing the necessary guidance and recommendations are all important, especially in the early years of a company's startup (Mian, 1997).

According to Voisey et al. (2006) as: "an exceptional and extremely adaptable blend of staff, facilities, and methods for business development intended to foster and boost startups and small enterprises by assisting them during their initial phases of growth and transformation" (p. 456).

BI offers a wider range of services and resources for business growth to entrepreneurs. These include online tools, drop-in services and facilities, networking, mentorship, and advice (infoDev, 2014).

According to European-Commission-Enterprise-Directorate-General (2002), A business incubator is an establishment that offers a full bundle of services, such as office, business support services, and networking and clustering opportunities, to help successful firms create an enterprise faster and more efficiently. Through the offering of a 'one-stop-shop' service to their incubatees and the ability to share costs and lower overhead, business incubators greatly enhance the chances of young firms surviving and expanding.

A prosperous business incubator will produce a consistent stream of new companies with above-average potential for creating jobs and wealth. Differences in stakeholder objectives for incubators, admission and exit criteria, the knowledge intensity of projects, and the precise configuration of facilities and services will distinguish one type of business incubator from another (p. 9).

TableN°1: Definition of Incubator

Source	Definition	Reference
International Business Innovation Association	A program designed to accelerate the successful development of entrepreneurial companies through an array of business support resources and services, developed or orchestrated by incubator management, and offered both in the incubator and through its network of contacts.	(Colbert, 2010)
World Bank	The business incubator is a physical space or facility that accommodates a business incubation process.	(infoDev, 2014)
Sarfraz A. Mian	The business incubator is the organization that provides the logistic requirements to the business project in the early stages, such as place and the required recommendations and guidelines; a suitable space and all required assistance in the early stages for the targeted firm; the required support for the firm in the early stages.	(Mian, 2014)
European Commission	A business incubator is an organization that accelerates and systematises the process of creating successful enterprises by providing them with a comprehensive and integrated range of support, including: Incubator space, business support services, and clustering and networking opportunities.	(European-Commission-Enterprise-Directorate-General, 2002)

Source:Data collected by the authors.

5. Evolution of Incubation

There are different types of incubators around the world, they come in a variety of forms, models, stages of growth, and service catalogs that represent changing trends derived from practical experience. Trends began to emerge in the 1950s, when shared office space, enterprise agencies, and industrial incubators were all connected to the evolution of the incubator concept. Business centers and scientific parks were introduced to the incubator ecosystem in the 1980s, and by the mid- to late 1990s, physical, specialized, technology-related, sector-related, and virtual incubator models evolved, increasing the types and variety of incubators available (Verma, 2004).

As this paper shows, no one model can fit all business situations, economic conditions, and cultural contexts.

Table N°2:Incubators evolution adopted from (Bruneel et al., 2012)

	First generation	Second generation	Third generation
Services provided	Office space and shared resources	Coaching and training support	Access to technological, professional, and financial networks
Rationale	Economies of scale	Accelerating the learning curve	Access to external resources, knowledge, and legitimacy

Source:Data collected by the authors.

6. Classification of Incubators

The analysis of relevant literature, both grey and academic, indicates that incubators and incubation programs differ in their income generation strategy, sponsors, location, selection technique, and assistance provided throughout a startup's lifespan and development.

Despite the growth of incubators around the world and in the MENA region, not all incubators are the same; these incubators could be classified based on their Objectives (not-for-profit, for-profit), Configuration (residential, virtual), Business model (property, venture capital), Lead sponsors (university, corporate (private), public), Type of incubated enterprises (mixed, industrial, technology, life sciences ... etc.), Stage of startups (idea, early stage ... etc.) (Unescwa, 2013).

7. Method:

We conducted a systematic literature review to consolidate and synthesize results from primary research on specific questions (Tranfield et al., 2003). Our focus is on studies of incubation programs and incubators in the MENA countries and shed light on future research initiatives.

We selected the Web of Science as our main search database for both literature reviews, covering publications from 2004 to 2024. One of the largest databases available for scholarly research, it contains a significant number of well-known and influential journals. For two key reasons, it was very important and relevant to incorporate the gray literature in these reviews. First off, according to (Rutter & Excellence, 2013), the subject of incubation is new and has to be contextualized. Second, the majority of case-based reports that make up the literature on incubators are directed at practitioners.

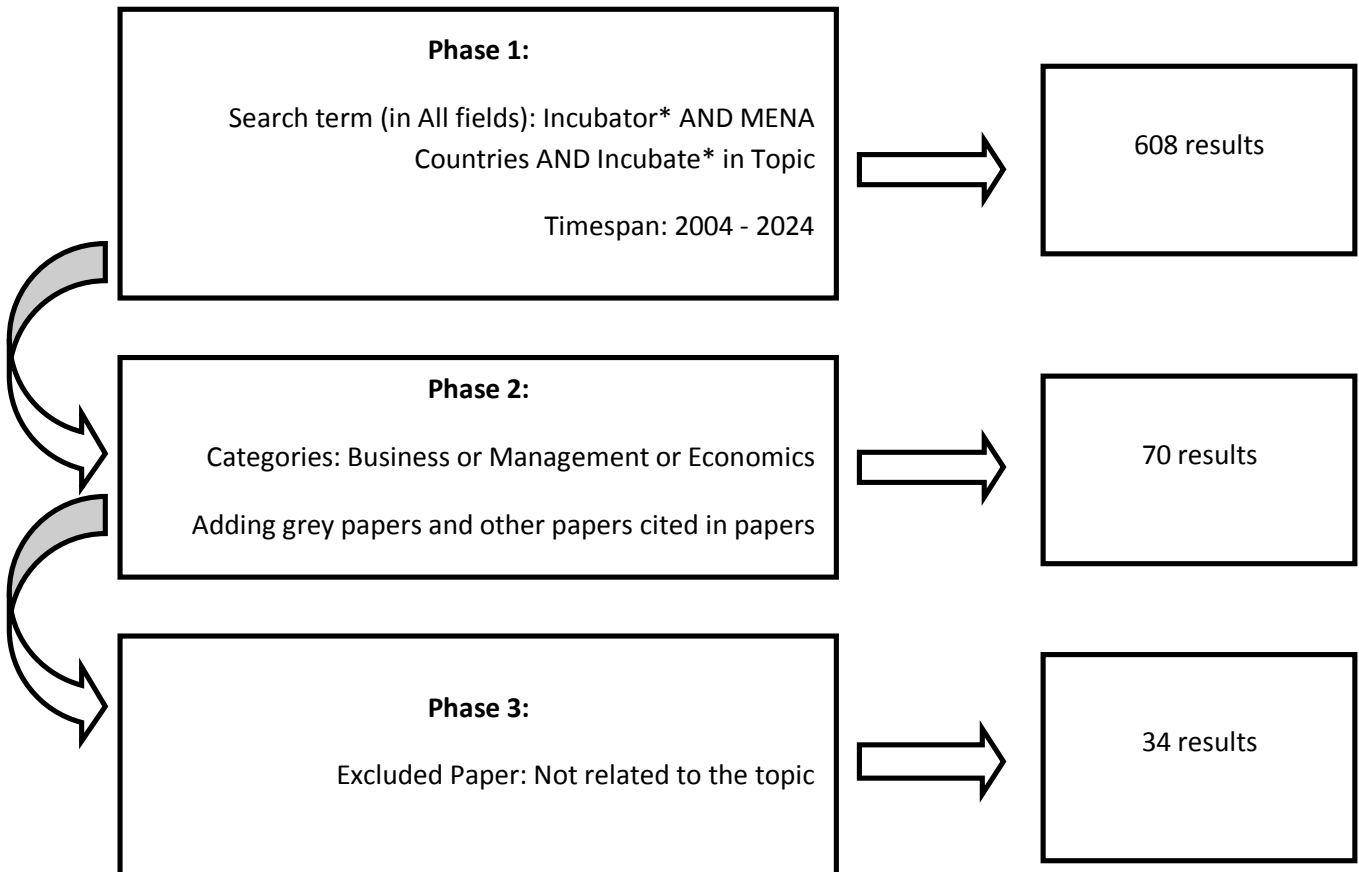
We tried not to leave out any potentially important comments and wanted the review to be as inclusive as possible. In order to increase the level of thoroughness, two more databases, Google Scholar and ProQuest, were used. We also use snowball approaches to find more papers by looking through the references of the received papers. We now go into the thorough review processes, our methodology, and the arrangement and display of the review findings.

In the next section, we summarized the results, and we also touched on the distinctiveness of incubation in MENA as they were covered in this research. Our search strings in the Web of Science database is ((in All fields: Incubator* AND Incubate* in Topic *) AND (MENA OR Arab OR Middle East and North Africa OR Algeria OR Bahrain OR Djibouti OR Egypt OR Islamic Republic of Iran OR Iraq OR Jordan OR Kuwait OR Lebanon OR Libya OR Mauritania OR Morocco OR Oman OR Qatar OR Saudi Arabia OR Somalia OR Sudan OR Syrian Arab Republic OR Tunisia OR the United Arab Emirates OR West Bank OR Gaza OR Yemen OR Palestine OR Dubai OR Iran OR UAE OR KSA OR GCC OR Syria)). After gathering the initial results of our query, the results from 2004 to 2024 were included, then based on focusing more; other categories rather than Business, Management, and Economics were excluded. At the end, after going through the rest of the papers, there are 34 papers related to the topic of this research.

We first systematically reviewed studies on incubation programs and incubators. With the suggestions from the review panel, which consisted of experts from academia and industry, we focused our review on the following research questions: (a) Why are incubators important? (b) Why do incubators in the MENA region seem less effective compared to those in developed countries?"

Fig N° 1: Phases of collecting the papers on the topic

Source :Data collected by the authors.



After a preliminary search of the above keywords, we found very little empirical research in the MENA as the research context. This confirms the importance of such a study and the need to study more about the entrepreneurship ecosystem in the MENA region. Also, among the MENA region countries discussed in the previous section, there is a pattern of assessing and studying the role of incubators in specific countries, not all countries.

8. Incubator Success Construct:

As we discussed, there is little research that specifically addresses the success and failure factors for incubators. However, one significant article (Dietrich, 2010) shows that the following are critical elements in the failure of incubation activity.

According to Dietrich (2010), Misunderstanding and unrealistic expectations can lead to ineffective project design and execution. Also, it could put pressure on the management team when it comes to making

decisions. To ensure successful outcomes, stakeholders must understand the incubation system, set realistic expectations, and bear in mind the total goal of incubation programs. All effective incubation initiatives must be incorporated into the broader regional environment. To ensure incubation success, financing must be supplied on a long-term and practical basis. Understanding the market, especially the incubation model is crucial for success.

We talked about what are the factors contributing to the failure of incubators, but there are other scholars and industry experts who worked on the other side, which is success factors. According to Voisey et al. (2006), setting clear metrics for success, providing entrepreneurial leadership, providing value-added services, a rational new-company selection process, and ensuring member companies have access to necessary resources (see p. 458).

According to InBIA (2015), successful business incubators have a strong commitment to industry best practices, are set up for long-term viability, hire and compensate management based on their skills, have a strong board of directors, and make sure management prioritizes helping clients when allocating time.

After reviewing the factors contributing to the success and failure of incubators, let us focus on the context of this study, which is MENA countries. According to (Ismail, 2020), "copying and pasting" incubation programs without taking into account local settings and demands is a risk to the success of the incubators. MENA economies have distinct circumstances and contextual restrictions that must be addressed while designing incubation programs. Incubation research that focuses on developed economies may fail to meet the MENA region's unique issues and prospects. To guarantee relevance and success, programs must be designed to take into account region's particular problems, limits, and resources. (Ismail, 2020)

Continuing our systematic review, three independent yet interdependent themes have been shown to play an important role in the success or failure of incubators in the context of the study. Before jumping to the themes found among the regional literature, it is important to mention the factors leading to success of incubators is a topic that is not well studied, not only in the MENA region but internationally.

9. Management Capabilities:

Hannon (2003) asserts that because business incubation managers must fulfill a wide range of responsibilities, their managerial and leadership skills have a huge effect on the efficiency and performance of the incubators.

The findings indicate that "human resources" are the most significant aspect of an incubator, followed by technological, financial, and organizational resources. Highly-skilled managers and staff are the foundation of all

firms, and incubators. A skilled manager fosters entrepreneurial development and innovation by connecting members of the Triple Helix system (government, academia, and industry). (Reza Kiani et al., 2019)

As mentioned, Alhakimi (2021) worked on incubators in Yemen and demonstrated that the inability of the incubator's team to adequately support the development of SMEs and their lack of entrepreneurial experience have a huge effect on startups' capacity to maintain growth and promote economic development. Also, the limited availability of experienced mentors and professionals within the incubation ecosystem can exacerbate these challenges. (Elmansori & Arthur, 2015)

In Saudi Arabia, most of the incubators are not autonomous entities with independence but rather part of universities. This restricts the services they can offer and their decision-making in general. (Binsawad et al., 2019)

According to Ghasemizad et al. (2011), who worked on improving the effectiveness of incubators in Iran, improving organizational procedure, which is a type of management-related topic, is improving the incubator's effectiveness.

Education, legitimacy, access to funds, and entrepreneurial culture are all impacted by institutional inequalities in developing nations, and these factors are crucial for entrepreneurship. These gaps cause financial shortages, restricted networks, and knowledge gaps, among other detrimental externalities for entrepreneurship. (Mrkajic, 2017)

An incubator with more longevity often has a higher success rate than one with a shorter lifespan. This is likely due to their experience in managing such entities. According to AL-Mubaraki and Wong (2012), incubators that have been around for a longer period of time typically function better. These incubators can improve their operations, create useful networks and resources, and build strategies thanks to the expertise they've gathered over time.

This experience may help the incubator's ability to successfully assist and develop client businesses. We know that the incubation programs in the MENA region are not that old phenomenon, and based on the work we can conclude that this is one of the factors affecting the performance of incubators. (AL-Mubaraki & Wong, 2012)

Ghasemizad et al. (2011) defined the organizational procedure as Establishing written regulations to support startups who have graduated from the incubator and putting into effect written regulations to support startups currently stationed. These are just a few of the procedures that go along with aligning the incubator's goals with the startups', explaining laws and regulations to the startups, and giving them comprehensive information about the incubator's activities, stages, services, and evaluations.

10. Access to Finance:

Most incubators in the region are not investing in startups, but through their connection and networks, they help incubators meet the right investors. In some cases, and in some countries, there are incubators that invest a limited amount in their startups. Incubators depend on sponsors to supply essential resources, including funds and infrastructural support. Particularly in settings lacking institutional support, incubator sponsors' goals and level of access to resources might differ greatly. (Mrkajic, 2017)

The lack of investment could be seen in different parts of the region, from Iran to Jordan and from Jordan to Egypt and most of the other countries but not some countries like Saudi Arabia. According to Ismail (2020) in Egypt, Alhakimi (2021) in Yemen, and Sanyal and Hisam (2018) in Oman, Startups encounter difficulties in obtaining finance, and It is challenging for them to expand and build their enterprises within the incubation program due to limited access to financial resources. The incubator must solve these issues by providing initial cash and connecting entrepreneurs with investors.

Incubators in Iran may have the same issues in delivering appropriate financial resources to their tenant startups. Access to funds is critical for the growth and development of startups. Incubators are facing challenges in obtaining adequate financial resources to fund and maintain their tenant enterprises. (Reza Kiani et al., 2019)

According to Binsawad et al. (2019), in Saudi Arabia, most incubators are supervised by universities, which are not independent organizations, and because of this, their finances are limited. However, there are other aspects in which incubators are performing acceptable and one of them is providing an acceptable level and duration of coaching and mentoring hours, the number of services and supports offered by them, and the incubator's connection and network to the other players in the ecosystem which plays a role of investment is strong enough which they do not have a problem with connecting startups to the investors in the ecosystem. (Siddiqui et al., 2021)

11. Institutional Framework:

Based on the ease of doing business Worldbank (2020), economies are graded from 1 to 190. A high score for ease of doing business indicates that the regulatory climate is more favorable for establishing and running a local company. This is one of the most reliable and in-depth reports on the overall economies of countries and regions; you can see the ranking for most of the MENA region countries.

Table N°3 Ease of doing business (Worldbank, 2020)

Economy	globalRank	Rank within group	Starting a business	Dealing with construction permits	Getting electricity	Registering property	Getting credit	Protecting minority investors	Paying taxes	Trading across borders	Enforcing contracts	Resolving insolvency
UAE	16	1	1	1	1	2	3	2	6	9	1	5
Bahrain	43	2	6	4	9	3	6	4	1	6	4	2
Morocco	53	3	5	3	3	9	9	3	5	3	5	4
Saudi Arabia	62	4	4	5	2	4	5	1	7	7	3	17
Oman	68	5	3	7	4	6	14	9	4	4	6	7
Jordan	75	6	11	15	8	8	1	12	8	5	10	9
Qatar	77	7	10	2	5	1	9	17	2	10	12	12
Tunisia	78	8	2	6	6	12	7	8	12	8	8	3
Kuwait	83	9	7	9	7	5	9	4	3	15	7	10
Djibouti	112	11	12	12	15	14	12	11	17	13	16	1
Egypt	114	12	9	11	11	16	4	7	19	16	20	8
West Bank and Gaza	117	13	19	16	12	11	2	14	13	2	13	17
Iran	127	14	20	10	14	7	7	16	18	11	9	13
Lebanon	143	15	14	17	16	13	12	14	14	14	14	14
Algeria	157	16	15	14	13	19	17	19	20	17	11	6
Iraq	172	17	16	13	17	15	18	13	16	19	18	17
Syria	176	18	13	18	19	18	16	10	11	18	19	15
Libya	186	19	18	18	18	20	18	20	15	12	17	17
Yemen	187	20	17	18	20	10	18	18	10	20	15	16

Source :Data collected by the authors.

The table makes it clear that the general climate in the region is not conducive to starting and operating a business, though this is not always the case throughout. This demonstrates incubators' significance and their pillar-like role in launching and nurturing new businesses.

According to Entezari (2015), Elmansori and Arthur (2015), and Dris et al. (2022), bureaucratic and regulatory obstacles impede their development and ability to function. Entrepreneurs at incubators may encounter difficulties due to intricate administrative processes and restrictions and a high number of policy-making institutions. These difficulties impede the ecosystem's expansion and growth, which has an influence on its efficacy and capacity of incubators and the ecosystem in general.

According to Dahms and Kingkaew (2016), incubators should take into account institutional variations among nations, particularly in the context of this research, to boost the concept's adoption. As mentioned before, this result highlights how crucial it is to comprehend and consider the unique institutional settings and traits of

other nations. To increase their acceptability and efficacy, incubators operating in developing nations must tailor their plans and methods to the distinct institutional structures, legal frameworks, and socioeconomic circumstances of these regions.

As mentioned earlier, incubation and startup are both relatively new topics in the MENA region, and this could affect both the macro and micro levels. Khorshed et al. (2014) demonstrated that Saudi Arabia has difficulties due to its lack of experience and knowledge in assisting and growing small and fledgling companies.

The institutional framework is a key factor in determining the goals and capacities of business incubators. Institutional gaps and slacks lead to serious problems, including market and governmental failures, which impede the establishment of new Incubator businesses and restrict potential entrepreneurs. (Mrkajic, 2017)

For new startups and entrepreneurs, the bureaucratic procedures and regulatory framework may provide difficulties. It makes the case that laws and policies that promote incubators are essential to their success. (Khorshed et al., 2014)

According to Sanyal and Hisam (2018), both incubators and startups may encounter difficulties in recruiting and overseeing their employees due to strict labor laws in Oman, which are not only limited to Oman but are also happening in most of the MENA countries.

Cultural factors are also part of the institutional framework that affect the success of incubators, as mentioned by Khorshed et al. (2014). Social and cultural obstacles such as obstacles relating to gender that affect female entrepreneurs and success of incubators hosting them or incubators managed by female managers.

The study shows that there is no acceptable level of relationship between incubators and other players in the Yemeni startup ecosystem. The general support and resources made available to incubators and their companies are hampered by this lack of cooperation and coordination. (Alhakimi, 2021)

12. Concluding remarks:

Firstly, this paper, which focuses on incubation programs and incubators, takes a process perspective to review previous research systemically. Then, the study focused on the incubation programs and the challenges and limitations that they face in the MENA region compared to the developed economies. Third, by emphasizing the similarities among these countries, this paper integrates single-country research on incubation programs in the MENA region. By emphasizing commonalities, the framework becomes more broadly applicable to a greater number of emerging economies. Our suggested shared characteristics among emerging economies are their management skills, financial accessibility, and institutional framework.

Entrepreneurship among the economies of MENA, is not as advanced as in the developed countries, Many studies, like the current paper, are essential to find the why and address the issues. Global Entrepreneurship Monitor in 2016 published a report on the state of entrepreneurship among some of the countries in the MENA

region. There are 12 questions asked in the research, but the following four are the ones that are related to the topic of the current study.

Question number one concerns the access of financial support, such as equity and debt, for the start ups, including grants and subsidies. As we extract from the articles, most of the countries in region are not doing well in terms of providing essential financial resources. In the second question, they ask if there are Governmental initiatives and the quality of direct programs to assist start ups at all levels of government (national, regional, municipal). The third question concerns the services which incubators provide like presence of commercial, accounting, and other legal services and institutions that allow or promote the emergence of small, new, and growing business entities. Moreover, the last question is about the ease of access to physical infrastructure and physical resources, communication, utilities, transportation, land, or space – at a price that does not discriminate against new, small, or growing firms (GEM, 2017).

Table N°4 Entrepreneurial Framework Conditions for MENA Region (GEM, 2017)

Country	Financial support The availability	Government programs	Commercial and professional infrastructure	Access to physical infrastructure
Egypt	3.9	3.3	3.9	6.5
Iran	2.9	2.2	3.2	6.3
Jordan	4.1	3.7	4.8	6.3
Lebanon	5	3.9	5.4	3.7
Motocco	3.6	3.7	4.7	6.6
Qatar	4.5	5.4	5.2	6.6
Saudi Arabia	3.9	3.4	3.9	6.8
Tunisia (2015)	4.2	3.6	5.8	6.7
UAE	4.4	5.6	5.6	7.3
avg MENA	4	3.9	4.7	6.3
avg GEM	4.2	4.3	4.9	6.5

Source :Data collected by the authors.

Beside the GEM report which covers a limited number of countries in the region, majority of incubation program research has been theoretical in nature, with little focus on MENA region countries.

13. Policy implications:

We offer a series of policy recommendations in light of the comprehensive assessments of the literature on incubation programs in advanced and MENA region economies.

First, access to finance is one of the issues that not only incubators face but startups and entrepreneurs to start their entrepreneurial journey. Incubators are one of the very first players in the entrepreneurial ecosystem of all countries, and access funds will enable them to first offer their services, also, enable them to provide pre-seed funds to their startups.

Second, the management of incubators plays a huge role in the success of the incubatees. The managers play different significant roles, from screening the request to joining and evaluating their request, nurturing and helping them in different stages until their graduation from the incubator.

Third, the government should establish an incentive program for private incubators and boost their presence in the broader entrepreneurship ecosystem in order to lessen reliance on public incubators and government support. This could be done by individual efforts of each country or by regional efforts.

14.Future Research:

Our knowledge of the services and value offered by the incubation process, as well as the mechanics of startup growth and support, has been consolidated and considerably improved over the past few decades by research on incubators and incubation programs. Although the majority of papers concentrate on developed nations, more attention needs to be paid to the economies of developing countries and the MENA region.

As previously mentioned, most studies are national; however, regional studies are strongly advised to comprehend the factors that contribute to incubator success and why incubators are not as beneficial as they are in other countries.

Finally we tried to combine the results of three studies. Firstly, GEM (2017) report, Worldbank (2020) and the current study which shows the reasons why incubators not reaching their potential.

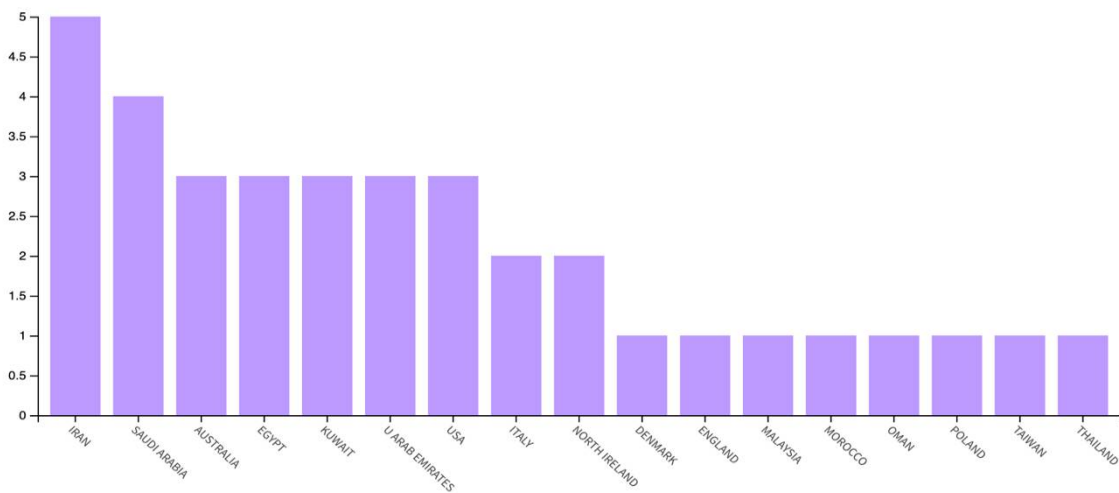
The GEM used a scale of 1 to 9 which 1 is highly insufficient and 9 is highly sufficient. We turned these weighted average results which are shown in the table 4 into scale 1 to 3 low, 3 to 6 medium and 6 to 9 high. Also, building upon Worldbank (2020) ranking of ease of doing business in the world, we have broken down the countries' ranks into Low, Medium and High. Stating that High is among the top countries in the world in terms of ease of doing business. At the end, we have added Yemen, Oman and Algeria to the list of the countries and assign a value based on the reviewed papers.

Table N°5 Assessing the Entrepreneurial Conditions for the MENA Region

Country	Financial support The availability	Government programs	Commercial and professional infrastructure	Access to physical infrastructure	Rank in ease of doing business
Egypt	Medium	Medium	Medium	High	Medium
Iran	Low	Low	Medium	High	Medium
Jordan	Medium	Medium	Medium	High	Medium
Lebanon	Medium	Medium	Medium	Medium	Low
Motocco	Medium	Medium	Medium	High	High
Qatar	Medium	Medium	Medium	High	Medium
Saudi Arabia	Medium	Medium	Medium	High	High
Tunisia(2015)	Medium	Medium	Medium	High	Medium
UAE	Medium	Medium	Medium	High	High
Yemen	Low	NA	NA	NA	Low
Oman	Low	Low	NA	NA	High
Algeria	NA	Low	Low	Low	Low

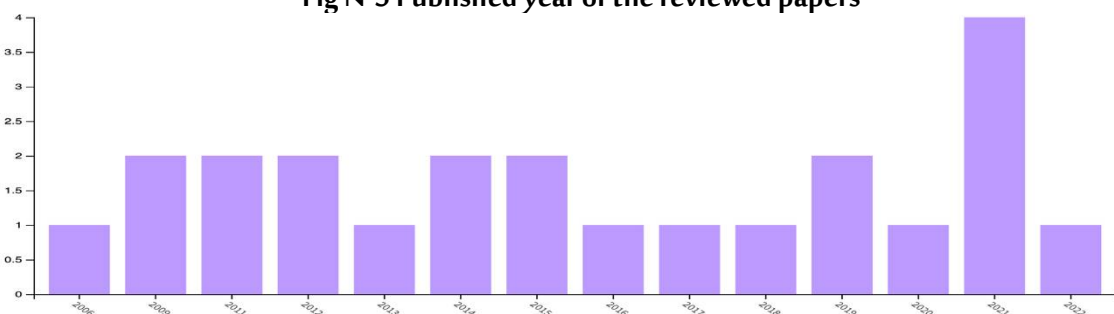
Source :Data collected by the authors.

Fig N°2 Countries of reviewed papers



Source :Data collected by the authors.

Fig N°3 Published year of the reviewed papers



Source :Data collected by the authors.

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