Analyzing the Obstacles of Investment Process in Iraq Using (5 Whys) and Focus Group Discussion (FQD) Techniques

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Abstract. The Iraqi government faces fluctuations in the investment process with oil revenues of the country and other revenues as these revenues cover only the operational budget and salaries of employees. The government seeks to overcome the financial crisis that hit the country through investment and privatization of some projects. The Iraqi plan for sustainable development (2030) Launched by the Ministry of Planning. But the implementation of this plan collides with a series of obstacles. This research aims to analyze the obstacles facing investment projects by using several approved techniques in managing construction engineering projects such as (5 whys) and (FGD) techniques. The open questionnaire was the theoretical source that the researcher adopted to arrive at to identify obstacles, which is conducting personal interviews and field visits and asking several questions to a group of experts in the Investment Authority through which (15) a obstacles was reached that caused delays in the implementation of construction investment projects. The most prominent of these obstacles was routine and slowed procedures Admin. The responses of the experts were arranged in a closed questionnaire form and distributed to the research sample for which a statistical analysis was conducted. These obstacles were arranged based on the importance of relativity in descending order. The researcher concluded that there is a benefit from using techniques that help analyze constraints such as (5 whys) through reaching the main roots and technique (FGD) is a panel discussion for several experts to arrive at through which corrective actions are possible.

Keywords: Investment, economic growth, productivity, job opportunities, investment opportunities, advanced technology.

1. Introduction

The need for investment, in general, arises from several reasons, including the existence of the savings gap resulting from the fact that the capitals required for investment are greater than the capacity of the national economy, as well as the inability to provide the hard currencies necessary for investment, and in this case, this gap can be filled through investment [1]. Supporting economic growth, where investment leads to an increase in the country's productive capacity, which is an effective element in changing the environment of the national economy as well as modifying its economic imbalances [2]. By increasing its size, the rate of economic growth increases by increasing the added value and productivity [3]. Creating additional job opportunities in the local labor market, and developing technical and administrative skills[4]. It encourages local investment by creating new investment opportunities for local companies and increases the country’s exports, which affects the increase in local savings [5]. Transfer of advanced technology where transfer of technology by investment through the adoption of systems and methods of planning, organization, production, marketing, and technical knowledge, which contributes to the transfer of technological progress in the remaining sectors of the national economy [6].
The most important reasons and obstacles that lead to the failure of the investment projects were the reasons (administrative, Legal, economic, financial, documentary credits, technical, infrastructure, other constraints) [7]. The lack of investment projects to accurately define their objectives and the development of strategies, policies, plans, and time programs required for the process of logical implementation of these stages of the project all lead to the delay of the project and financial losses[7]. The process of administrative and engineering planning of the project rules, controls, and indicators must be followed to develop plans for each project according to the circumstances and needs and degree of importance[8]. After the literary reviews of these obstacles facing the investment process, the researcher decided to adopt administrative engineering techniques that analyze and fragment these obstacles to reach the root of the obstacles and monitor appropriate solutions to it as explained below:

A. (5 whys) Technique. The researcher used two techniques (5whys) and (FGD), one of which complements the other, to analyze the obstacles and reach the root causes as shown in Fig. 1. To counter these constraints and attempt to resolve or mitigate their negative effects on the investment process, the researcher used (5 whys) technique. The five techniques reasons are to ask five questions about the causes of the main obstacles and try to reach through these questions to the root causes and develop until appropriate measures are taken to overcome them. There are three essential elements for effective use of 5 whys technique [8]: (1) Accurate and complete data for problems; (2) Full honesty in answering the questions; and (3) Determination to reach the root causes and main causes of problems and their solution [9].

![5 Why Analysis](image)

**Figure 1. 5 Why Analysis.**

B. Focus Group Discussion (FGD) Technique. Focus Group Discussion (FGD) is a qualitative research method and data collection technique in which a select group of people discusses a particular topic or issue in-depth, facilitated by a professional external supervisor. This method serves to solicit participants' attitudes, perceptions, knowledge and experiences, and Practices as shown in Fig. 2. This technique is based on the assumption that the group’s operations are activated, this technique was adopted to subtract and present technical outputs (5 whys) and the root causes of this technique and presenting it to a group of experts and specialists in investment and investment project management to arrive at possible procedures [10].
2. Field Work
The closed questionnaire is the main data source that the researcher adopted to obtain the required information. After visiting approximately (Twenty-six) an investment project in Al-Muthanna governorate, (A hundred) a questionnaire forms were distributed to the research sample to answer (Fifty-three) an obstacle who faces the implementation of construction projects. (Fifteen) obstacles were selected that represent the most important. The results of the analysis of the questionnaire were reached using the social sciences package program (Spss) as shown in Tables 1 and 2. The obstacles were arranged in descending order based on the relative importance of each obstacle.

| RII values | Importance level (IL) |
|------------|-----------------------|
| 0.8 ≤ RII ≤ 1 | High (H) |
| 0.6 ≤ RII ≤ 0.8 | High-medium (H-M) |
| 0.4 ≤ RII ≤ 0.6 | Medium (M) |
| 0.2 ≤ RII ≤ 0.4 | Medium-low (M-L) |
| 0 ≤ RII ≤ 0.6 | Low (L) |

| No. | Obstacles                                                                 | N   | Mean | RII | IL  | Category of obstacles |
|-----|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|------|-----|-----|-----------------------|
| 1   | Routine, slow administrative procedures.                                   | 100 | 4.7  | 0.94| H   | management             |
| 2   | Lack of prior coordination with some ministries and provincial councils    | 100 | 4.5  | 0.90| H   | legal                  |
| 3   | Tribal problems especially in remote areas.                               | 100 | 4.3  | 0.86| H   | others                 |
| 4   | Lack of development of support services such as transportation, insurance, and others | 100 | 4.1  | 0.82| H   | infrastructure         |
| 5   | Difficulty in obtaining vacant locations suitable for investment projects. | 100 | 4.05 | 0.81| H   | legal                  |
6 The existence of excesses on the plots of land allocated for investment projects. 100 4 0.80 H  legal
7 Insufficient financial ceilings in direct execution. 100 4 0.80 H  economical
8 Unstable financing policies. 100 4 0.80 H  economical
9 The length of the procedures for financing the departments of the ministries in the etc.) 100 3.8 0.76 M-H  financial
10 The multiplicity of supervisory bodies 100 3.7 0.74 M-H  legal
11 Weak mechanisms for the private sector. 100 3.6 0.72 M-H  legal
12 Poor services for projects located in remote areas. 100 3.55 0.71 M-H  technical
13 Inadequate sources of funding 100 3.5 0.70 M-H  financial
14 The existence of disputes over the returnees of land between ministries and state departments. 100 3.5 0.70 M-H  legal
15 Limited administrative powers granted to project managers. 100 3.45 0.69 M  management

Symbols represent the following: N= Number of samples, RII= Relative Importance Index, IL= Importance level.

3. Techniques (5 whys) and Focus Group Discussions (FGD) Features and Results

Depending on the results of the statistical analysis obtained, the obstacles were arranged in descending order according to their relative importance, so that the most important obstacles are (routine, bureaucracy and slowed government procedures), as they were used as a model that can be analyzed using techniques (5 whys) and (FGD), a path in which these obstacles go through a series of treatments passing through the root causes and reaching the procedures required to face these challenges as shown in Tables 3 and 4.

Table 3. Root Causes for constraints that were reached from the technique (5 whys).

| Series whys | Root Causes |
|-------------|-------------|
| The authorities intervene between the provincial and governorate councils because the provincial councils are a supervisory body and not an executive authority (why1?) | 1. The existence of disputes over the returnees of buildings and land between ministries and state departments. |
| Lack of prior coordination with some ministries and provincial councils that seek the work of some ministries and intersection in the implementation of projects in the provinces(why2?) | 2. The limited administrative powers granted to project managers that impede the progress of work. |
| The existence of excesses on the plots of land allocated for investment projects (why3) | 3. Weak coordination and follow-up between the ministries and the competent departments when allocating or buying land plots. |
| Delay in land acquisition procedures for projects (why4) | 4. Delay in resolving disputes between the contractor and the employer. |
| Difficult to implement the project because of the difficulty of clearance procedures(why5?) | |

Table 4. Possible Actions that were Reached from the Technique (FGD) to Address Constraints.

| No. | Action |
|-----|--------|
| 1   | Relevant authorities should simplify and facilitate procedures related to obtaining plots of land. |
| 2   | The Municipality of Baghdad and the municipal departments shall prepare the plots of land in Baghdad and the governorates for the implementation of priority projects, while supporting the prices of land allocated for this purpose. |
The Legal Department at the Ministry of Planning should strictly grant the highest rating to the contracting companies and adopt the principle of similar works and technical and practical experience and not rely on the capital of the company only, as this measure gives some companies with high liquidity advanced classification degrees, but cannot fulfill its contractual obligations as it lacks experience and staff Technical and engineering.

4. Discussion and Conclusions

- The delay is part of investment projects in our country, Iraq. In this paper, the researcher wanted to determine the current situation in this field by identifying obstacles to investment in the construction sector by surveying various stakeholders in investment projects where the results show the reasons for the delay and slow implementation of the project, where the researcher found it useful to use some techniques in managing engineering projects that help to analyze the problem, including a technical (5 whys) because it helps the researcher in determining the root cause of the obstacles, and determines the relationship between the different root causes of the obstacle and is one of the simplest tools where it is easy to complete without statistical analysis.

- Many constraints are facing the construction industry and the construction sector and need to study, follow-up, and analysis. Therefore, project management has provided many administrative engineering tools and techniques that enable the researcher to analyze constraints without statistical tools including techniques (5 whys) and (FGD).

- (FGD) technique facilitates the transmission of thoughts and ideas among the members of the seminar, and by drawing on the results of the previous techniques, possible measures can be reached.

- Depending on the type of constraints facing the team, different types of discussion can be prepared for the focus group closely or distant, for example, one focus group, two-way focus group, dual supervisor focus group, responsive supervisors’ group, mini focus group, and focus groups online.

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