



# Prioritize of Strategic Entrepreneurship Dimensions of Sports Manufacturing Industry of Iran

Rahim Ramzanijad<sup>1</sup>, Esmail Malek Akhlagh<sup>1</sup>,  
Seyed Morteza Azimzadeh<sup>2</sup>, Mohammad Reihani<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>University of Guilan, Gilan, Iran, <sup>2</sup>Ferdowsi University of Mashhad, Mashhad, Iran,  
<sup>3</sup>Department of Sport Management, University of Guilan, Gilan, Iran

## ABSTRACT

The purpose of this research is to prioritize of strategic entrepreneurship dimensions of sports manufacturing industry of Iran. The methodology of this study is a descriptive survey. The first group of research population was the sports industry product experts who were selected through purposive sampling for developing of research instrument; and the second group was all manufacturers of sports enterprises' owners of Iran (N=1500), which 253 people were selected for available. For gathering of data, a revised questionnaire Ireland et al. (2003) was used. To prioritize, the factors of test Friedman at level of  $p \leq 0.05$  were used. The results indicated that dimensions such as creativity and innovations, entrepreneurial culture, entrepreneurial leadership, strategic management of resources, and entrepreneurial mindset were most important aspects of strategic entrepreneurship. Based on the findings, it can be suggested that managers can exploit emphasized on creativity and innovation as one of the important dimensions of strategic entrepreneurship.

**Keywords:** Creativity and innovations, Entrepreneurial culture, Sports manufacturing industry

## INTRODUCTION

Entrepreneurship and strategic management are considered as two dynamic processes in the performance of companies which can create value for companies and finally be effective in gaining a competitive advantage. Although entrepreneurship and strategic management are both dynamic processes, those companies that seek to create a sustainable value and wealth cannot only focus on entrepreneurship and strategic activities (Ireland et al., 2003). Therefore, strategic entrepreneurship is introduced as a concept that is effective on the level of achievement of today organizations in competitive transactions with other competitors, and it is believed that strategic entrepreneurship enables industries and companies to respond appropriately to continuous environmental changes faced by many organizations and to develop competitive advantages. In fact, strategic management makes

organizations to develop and use competitive advantage in a certain environmental space, whereas entrepreneurship promotes seeking a competitive advantage by innovation in product, market, and process (Kuratko and Audretsch, 2009). Hence, strategic entrepreneurship is considered as an interaction between entrepreneurship and strategic management and can affect the industries that are competing in economic sections (Ireland and Webb, 2009). Thus, the strategic goal of companies shall be continuous discovery and take advantage of entrepreneurial opportunities for developing a competitive advantage.

The sports industry is one of the industries that have become an active industry in the past two decades. Sports was the most effective factor in economic growth and the most lucrative industry in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. As a result, the trend toward investment in sports, or in other words, sports industry

ISSN 2231-3265

International Journal of Health,  
Physical Education, and  
Computer Science in Sports  
Volume No.22, No.1  
Journal Impact Factor 2.477  
A Peer Reviewed (Refereed)  
International Research Journal

**Address for corresponding:**  
Mohammad Reihani,  
Department of Sport  
Management, University  
of Guilan, Gilan, Iran.  
E-mail: Mo.reihani@yahoo.  
com

as one of the lucrative industries is more and more increasing. Different sports products are an important segment of the sports industry. This industry has a dynamic nature so that its operating environment, structure, and technologies used in production and properties of its products are changing with a rapid pace. Accordingly, development of a competitive advantage for such products as sports products which are dominated by well-known brand markets is very crucial for the survival of manufacturers of these kinds of products. Hence, gaining a competitive advantage and identification of factors that help its promotion has become one of the most important interests of sports managers in competitive markets today and if they cannot manage different activities better than other companies, they will not have a good economic future (Foong Yee, 2008).

However, such developing countries as Iran are faced with some risks and restrictions in enjoying the economic benefits of the sports industry. As a result, the said industry has fallen more than other industries due to environmental risks, and it is very essential for manufacturing companies of sports products to overcome such risks and uncertainties. In fact, if active companies fail to adopt proper strategic approaches to design, implement, and supervise, this industry will not achieve a sustainable competitive advantage. Therefore, using a strategy that is seeking opportunities and competitive advantage at the same time and through which the industries would be able to use existing advantages while seeking future advantages may be required as an efficient strategic approach. Hence, the present study is prioritized of strategic entrepreneurship dimensions of sports manufacturing industry of Iran.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The methodology of this study is a descriptive survey. The research population is divided into two groups. The first group is composed of elites of sports manufacturing industry. From these elites, 15 were chosen purposefully for making the tools of research and explaining a conceptual model. The second group is composed of all manufacturers of the sports industry, i.e. 1500 companies. The owners and managers of these companies were chosen as research samples (253 subjects) and were sampled randomly. Two questionnaires were used for data collection. The first questionnaire measured

the demographic characteristics of sample population with 5 questions. The second questionnaire is a strategic revise entrepreneurship questionnaire Ireland et al. (2003) with 24 questions in five dimensions including entrepreneurial mindset (5 questions), entrepreneurial culture (4 questions), entrepreneurial leadership (4 questions), strategic management of resources (4 questions), and creativity and innovation (7 questions). The validity of the questionnaire was confirmed by university professors using content validity method and analyzed using factor analysis. The reliability of the questionnaire was also confirmed by Cronbach's alpha of 93%. Descriptive statistics (Excel software) was used for analyzing the demographic characteristics of research sample and to prioritize the factors of test Friedman (SPSS software) at the level of  $p \leq 0.05$  were used.

## RESEARCH FINDINGS

The description of demographic characteristics of research sample showed that the average age and work experience of the research sample in the field of sports manufacturing industry were 36 and 11, respectively. Of 253 participants, 248 (95%) were men and 5 (5%) were women. The percentage and frequency distribution of job positions of research sample included owners (27.3%), company managers (9.5%), marketing manager (23.7%), and sales manager (39.5%). Furthermore, the percentage and frequency distribution of sports manufacturing industry included sports shoes (18.6%), sports clothing (22.1%), sports equipment (22.9%), and all manufacturing fields (32.8%). Finally, the frequency percentage of all technologies used for economic activity included social networks (51%), email (15.8%), website (14.6%), weblog (10.3%), and none (8.3%).

The results indicated that dimensions such as creativity and innovations, entrepreneurial culture, entrepreneurial leadership, strategic management of resources, and entrepreneurial mindset were the most important aspects of strategic entrepreneurship (Table 1).

## DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The results showed that creativity and innovation dimension had the most important role in explaining strategic entrepreneurship to explain competitive advantage. In

**Table 1:** Comparing the priorities of strategic entrepreneurship dimensions

Priority	Dimension	Average rating	Chi-square	df	Significance
1	Creativity and innovations	3.18	9.898	4	0.04*
2	Entrepreneurial culture	3.10			
3	Entrepreneurial leadership	2.98			
4	Strategic management of resources	2.90			
5	Entrepreneurial mindset	2.77			



this regard, Porter stated that innovation and competitive advantage were interrelated, and companies created competitive advantage by understanding new methods in value chain to deliver values to customers (Porter, 1985). Furthermore, Weerawardena and O’Cass (2006) showed that innovation density had a positive and significant effect on competitive advantage. Ireland and Webb (2007) also believed that achieving a sustainable competitive advantage resulted from using new methods and ideas and also the development of innovation. Further, some researchers concluded that having a strong competitive advantage and development of a company’s status greatly depended on using and creating creative skills and developing innovative capabilities (Castro et al., 2012).

The entrepreneurial culture dimension had the second priority in explaining the strategic entrepreneurship to explain competitive advantage. These findings are consistent with the findings of Wong (2011). Ireland et al. (2003) also showed that leaders were responsible for creation and development of entrepreneurial culture, i.e., a culture in which effective use of strategic entrepreneurship is encouraged.

The entrepreneurial leadership dimension had the third role in explaining strategic entrepreneurship to explain competitive advantage. In this regard, Ireland et al. (2003) asserted theoretically that entrepreneurial leadership creates an ability to manage resources strategically and create advantages. Some researchers also stated that entrepreneurial leadership was the ability to influence others for strategic management of resources to emphasize both the behaviors that seek opportunity and behaviors that seek advantage (Rowe, 2001). Further, Monsen and Boss (2009) stated that effective entrepreneurial leadership was the key element of strategic management in all organizational levels. Therefore, it can be concluded that it is essential for an organization to have those people who can encourage others to be more innovative, risk taking, and initiator than other competitors to develop opportunity- and advantage-seeking behaviors at the same time.

The strategic management of resources dimension had the fourth role in explaining strategic entrepreneurship to explain competitive advantage. With regard to this hypothesis, Gungor (2012) showed in his study that leverage of resources and capabilities, and in general, strategic management of resources had a positive and significant effect on innovation and advantage. Further, the finding of the present research is in line with that of other researchers who believed that innovative capabilities and value creation would not lead to success without strategic management of resources. On this basis, it can be said that human, social, and financial capitals, and all tangible and intangible resources lead to creation of value and competitive advantage in an organization only when they are collected and integrated properly.

Finally, entrepreneurial mindset had the fifth role in explaining the strategic entrepreneurship to explain competitive advantage. This hypothesis is consistent with the concerned relationship in the theoretical model presented by Ireland et al. (2003). Gupta et al. (2004) also believed that entrepreneurship mindset was one of the key elements of strategic management. Therefore, it can be said that existence of those people in an organization who can identify opportunities faster than other similar organizations is essential. This leads to the identification of such resources as knowledge, skills, and new resources, which can be used for achieving a competitive advantage after these resources are collected, integrated, and transformed into capabilities.

Based on the findings, it can be suggested that sports managers can exploit emphasized on creativity and innovation as one of the important dimensions of strategic entrepreneurship because sports with a great emphasize on creativity allows customers to change their demands. Therefore, strategic entrepreneurship is one of the ways that keeps companies in competition. Hence, it is suggested that sports production managers of Iran use strategic entrepreneurship, which uses a set of organizational actions with strong and positive capabilities and helps a company’s attempts to have a better performance compared to other competitors.

## REFERENCES

- Castro, G.M., Verde, M.D., Lopez, N.E. and Gonzalez, J.C. (2012). The moderating role of innovation culture in the relationship between knowledge assets and product innovation. *Technological Forecasting and Social Change*, 1-13.
- Chew, D., Yan, S. and Cheah, C.Y.J. (2008). Core capability and competitive strategy for construction SMEs in China. *Chinese Management Studies*, 2(3), 203-214.
- Foong Yee, W. (2008). Influence of brand loyalty on consumer sportswear. *International Journal of Economics and Management*, 2(2), 221-236.
- Gungor, H., Selim, S., Eren, M., Sule, E. and Hale, C. (2012). The effect of entrepreneurial marketing on firms’ innovative performance in Turkish SMEs. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 58, 871-878.
- Gupta, V., MacMillan, I.C. and Surie, G. (2004). Entrepreneurial leadership: Developing and measuring a cross-cultural construct. *Journal of Business Venturing*, 19, 241-260.
- Ireland, R.D. and Webb, J.W. (2007). Strategic entrepreneurship: Creating competitive advantage through streams of innovation. *Business Horizons*, 50, 49-59.
- Ireland, R.D. and Webb, W.J. (2009). Crossing the great divide of strategic entrepreneurship: Transitioning between exploration and exploitation. *Business Horizons*, 52, 469-479.
- Ireland, R.D., Hitt, M.A. and Sirmon, D.G.A. (2003). Model of Strategic entrepreneurship: The construct and its dimensions. *Journal of Management*, 29(6), 963-989.
- Kuratko, D.F. and Audretsch, D.B. (2009). Strategic entrepreneurship: Exploring different perspectives of an emerging concept. *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice*, 33(1), 1-17.

- Monsen, E. and Boss, W. (2009), The impact of strategic entrepreneurship inside the organization: Examining job stress and employee retention. *Entrepreneurship and Practice*, 33(1), 71-104.
- Porter, M. (1985), *Competitive Advantage: Creating and Sustaining Superior Performance*. New York: The Free Press.
- Rezaian, A. and Naeiji, M.J. (2011), Strategic Entrepreneurship and intellectual capital as determinants of organization. *Journal of Global Entrepreneurship Research*, 1(2), 3-19.
- Rowe, W.G. (2001), Creating wealth in organizations: The role of strategic leadership. *Academy of Management Executive*, 15(1), 81-94.
- Tong, X. and Hawley, J.M. (2009), Measuring customer-based brand equity: Empirical evidence from the sportswear market in China. *Journal of Product & Brand Management*, 18(4), 262-271.
- Weenwardena, J. and O'Cass, A. (2004), Exploring the characteristics of the market driven firms and antecedents to sustained competitive advantage. *Industrial Marketing Management*, 33(5), 419-428.
- Wong, M.A. (2011), The evolution of entrepreneurial culture: Two competing perspectives. *USASBE\_Proceeding*. p1264-128.