

Development and innovation keys to business competitiveness: Challenges for strategic management**El desarrollo y la innovación claves en la competitividad empresarial: Retos para la dirección estratégica**

MURILLO-SÁNCHEZ, Itzel†, ANTONIO-VIDAÑA, Paula Rosalinda*, ROJAS-PATIÑO, Nancy and ALCUDIA-CHAGALA, Lorena

Universidad Tecnológica del Centro de Veracruz

ID 1st Author: *Itzel, Murillo-Sánchez* / ORC ID: 0009-0003-1175-2072

ID 1st Co-author: *Paula Rosalinda, Antonio-Vidaña* / ORC ID: 0000-0002-1175-0611, CVU CONAHCYT ID: 673436

ID 2nd Co-author: *Nancy, Rojas-Patiño* / ORC ID: 0000-0001-8838-4122

ID 3rd Co-author: *Lorena, Alcudia-Chagala* / ORC ID: 0000-0003-1912-1622, CVU CONAHCYT ID: 367120

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Abstract

Factors such as financing, capacity and technological knowledge in the MIPES have been very important weak points that hinder the development of innovation in various aspects, bringing with them unfavorable changes in consumer behavior and in the research and development of new products by micro and small businesses. The SDGs as part of sustainable development; Objectives 8 and 9 are related to this research because both consider that microenterprises play a fundamental role in promoting innovation and promoting local development. However, they face a series of challenges that limit their growth and their ability to contribute significantly to economic, technological and social development. The objective of this document is to identify the main opportunities, challenges and strategies that contribute to strengthening the innovation capacity of MIPES, for its improvement and thereby promote its economic growth in the current business environment. A mixed approach was used, resulting in the detection of determining factors in development and innovation, its impact and adoption for the MIPES.

Innovation, Technology, Microenterprises, Strategic Management

Resumen

Factores como el financiamiento, capacidad y conocimiento tecnológico en las MIPES han sido puntos débiles muy importantes que obstaculizan el desarrollo de la innovación en diversos aspectos, trayendo consigo cambios no favorables en el comportamiento del consumidor y en la investigación y el desarrollo de nuevos productos por las micro y pequeñas empresas. Los ODS como parte del desarrollo sustentable; objetivos 8 y 9 se relacionan con esta investigación pues en ambos se consideran que las microempresas desempeñan un papel fundamental en el fomento de la innovación y la promoción del desarrollo local. Sin embargo, estas enfrentan una serie de desafíos que limitan su crecimiento y su capacidad para contribuir de manera significativa al desarrollo económico, tecnológico y social. El presente tiene como objetivo identificar las principales oportunidades, desafíos y estrategias que contribuyen a fortalecer la capacidad de innovación de las MIPES, para su mejora y con ello fomentar su crecimiento económico en el actual entorno empresarial. Se utilizó un enfoque mixto, obteniendo como resultado la detección de factores determinantes en el desarrollo e innovación, su afectación y adopción para las MIPES.

Innovación, Tecnología, Microempresas, Dirección estratégica

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* Correspondence to Author (e-mail: paula.antonio@utc.edu.mx)

† Researcher contributing as first author.

Introduction

According to Rios R., et al. (2022), they mention that innovation is one of the most efficient strategies in companies, however, there are conditions that limit its implementation. One of the common elements observed in these instances is the scarce technology that they possess for their performance, a situation that represents the problem for which they have limited competition to offer products and services that are characterised by having a degree of innovation or competitive distinction. Within the Global Innovation Index 2019, Mexico is in the 56th position, which evidences its distant position with respect to the first places at the international level (WIPO, 2019).

This data shows that Mexican companies still have an area of opportunity in terms of improving innovation levels, as a large number of companies lack the capacity to adopt modern technologies due to a lack of technical and technological knowledge, which limits their operational efficiency and their ability to compete and innovate in the market.

According to Tello C, (2014) micro and small enterprises (MSMEs) are important actors in the productive development of Latin American countries and the world because of their contribution to employment generation, their share in the total number of enterprises and, to a lesser extent, their weight in the gross domestic product. Its production is mostly linked to the domestic market, so that a significant part of the region's population and economy depend on its activity. At the same time, in contrast to what happens in more developed countries, the share of MSMEs in exports is quite low as a result of poor performance in terms of competitiveness, which is also expressed in the marked productivity gap with large companies.

Business failure refers to the cessation of a firm's operations due to a series of problems that impede its ability to operate profitably or sustainably. The term encompasses a variety of situations in which a company faces significant difficulties and is unable to remain successfully operational. Business failure can manifest itself in a variety of ways, such as bankruptcy, liquidation, suspension of operations or forced sale of assets.

For Zmijewski P, (1984) business failure starts from the moment the company files for bankruptcy, without the need for the judicial authority to declare it. Among the most recognised causes of business failure are the maintenance of losses in consecutive financial years, which can be caused by the absence of strategies in the departments that form part of the company, financial ignorance, or the lack of interest in investing in development and innovation. According to Gómez G., and Murillo M, (2019) business failure, despite its negative connotation, is crucial in the business world for several reasons, it serves as a catalyst for learning, innovation and the development of resilience.

Theoretical framework

Microenterprises play a key role in generating employment, fostering innovation and promoting local development. However, they face a number of challenges that limit their growth and their ability to contribute significantly to economic, technological and social development (Tregear, 2021). In the article by Acosta J, (2015), it is established that every company, every business project must base its continuity on the maintenance and growth of its competitive advantage.

He explains the concept of innovation and organisational culture as complementary elements, taking into account that a strong involvement of the business management is necessary. If a company wants to consider a long-lasting and sustainable project, it must seek its competitive advantage in the market through better products, customer satisfaction, satisfaction of latent needs, search for new markets, etc., all in an efficient and profitable way, not only in the short term, but also on an ongoing basis.

According to Corma C., et al. (2022), innovation is understood as the conversion of ideas and knowledge into products, processes or improved services for the market, thus satisfying the needs of citizens, companies and public administrations. In the economic sphere, we consider innovation as the transformation of technological knowledge into GDP.

According to Ramos, M (2019) at present, innovation is considered one of the most important sources of competitive advantage for companies, as it leads to the continuous improvement of products and processes that allow them to be more efficient, have faster growth and greater profitability than those companies that do not innovate (Ramos M, 2019).

According to Hernández G., et al (2021) defined innovation, in its broadest sense, as the driving force for economic development and can manifest itself through the creation of new products or improvements to existing ones, new production methods, new market openings, development of new sources of raw materials and new forms of industrial organisation.

According to Ramos V, (2015) it is stated that the conception of innovations will depend on different factors among these the culture of the company, the vision towards this objective, as well as the openness and positive attitude of the members of the organisation, as these constitute a fundamental pillar to generate business innovation. Organisational culture is defined as "the fundamental values, beliefs and principles shared by the members of an organisation".

In the article written by Delfín L, (2016) it is stated that the development of a company is established with reference to its greater or lesser productivity, and productivity is understood as the ability or faculty to produce, which implies the recognition of the state and the way in which the various inputs were used in the production process. In this sense, productivity condenses the central problem of the economy: to make a better and greater use of the available resources. Thus, any economic system would aim to obtain higher productivity, which together with sustainability is a necessary role for decision making in the production of innovative articles with a sustainable approach that lead to business development.

There are a number of concepts that complement the definition of business development according to Ramirez R, (2017), it is stated that, to describe quantitative measures of a growing economy, it is not only to focus on the rate of increase of real income per capita, but the economic, social and any other changes that result in the growth of a company executed by the Directorate or Management.

All those companies that do not have strategic investments to innovate are considered as not powerful in promoting business and technological development (Tregear, 2021).

Ansoff (1965) as one of the first authors concerned about the subject who, like Porter (2008) and Ghemawat and Collis (2001), cited in Martínez H., et al (2011), mentioned that it is necessary to know the context, characteristics and needs so that the company can position itself in the best way, identifying the competitive advantages in such a way that it can be innovative in its proposals.

According to Burbano A, (2017), the strategic management of the company becomes a highly complex phenomenon, having as its centre the way in which the organisation seeks to adapt to its environment, in competition with other organisations, in a systematic and permanent way. In this way, business strategy faces uncertainty about the possible actions and reactions of the other companies with which it competes, both in factor and product markets.

According to Arano C., et al. (2011) it is understood that strategic management is the process of formulating strategies for the development of the organisation, seeking to obtain a greater market share (strategic competitiveness) and above-average returns. It is one of the main activities carried out by the senior managers of an organisation.

It also states that strategic management is the set of decisions and actions used to formulate and implement specific strategies that will enable the organisation to adapt to its environment in a competitively superior way, in order to achieve the organisation's goals. In this sense, it is understood that strategic management is the process of formulating strategies for the development of the organisation, seeking to obtain a greater market share (strategic competitiveness) and above-average returns.

Somohano, (2017) mentions that according to (Ralston, Blackhurst, Cantor and Crum, 2015) the ECR paradigm (traditional behaviour-result structure approach), companies create their competitive advantage depending on the nature of the industry in which they compete, in response to market conditions that modify the company's behaviour and have a positive impact on profits.

He also says that (Goddard, Tavakoli and Wilson, 2009) assert that competitive conditions in the industry are determined by aspects such as concentration, economies of scale and barriers to entry. These and other aspects could shape the level of innovation in the sector that influences firms' behaviour and decisions, their organisational structures and, ultimately, business performance.

Bernal J. and Rodriguez I. (2019) conclude that ICT and innovation is the way to make firms more productive, and bring them into the field of competitiveness at the international level. Entrepreneurial freedom is a new concept that must begin to be developed in companies because for them there should be no limits or borders that allow global exchanges. Information and Communication Technologies allow companies to evolve and achieve a sustainable competitiveness that allows development.

Today we talk about ICT, innovation and competitiveness as the key to business success regardless of the type of industry or size, because these are transversal tools that add value to companies and institutions in different economic sectors.

According to Rodríguez R. and Quintero S. (2022), the capacity for innovation in the company is a valuable asset for generating competitive advantages and is necessary for strategic implementation, i.e. it is the basis of the company's main processes. It is present in different organisational practices, such as the development of new products, the incorporation of new technologies into products, the generation and adoption of processes to meet future needs and to respond appropriately to changes in the environment and competition.

Considering that the capacity for innovation in the company will lead to the strengthening of the infrastructure for processes and the generation of new products in a demanding and responsible market, the micro-entrepreneur must strategically direct each action that leads to business development, supported by strategic plans and tools.

Finally, Macías-Arteaga and Mero-Vélez (2022), point out that strategic planning is an indispensable tool for companies in the 21st century as it plays a fundamental role, in the true understanding that it is about keeping the organisation always adapted to the changing environment in order to achieve the planned development and growth objectives that allow it not only to achieve high performance, but also to remain competitive over time.

To which Muibo et al. (2022) indicates that companies must design strategies and approaches that incorporate competitive factors, business performance objectives and action plans, as well as adopt unique characteristics that can provide them with a competitive advantage in the market, so Izquierdo et al. (2023) indicates that one way to differentiate from the competition is the acquisition of new technologies, but on the other hand highlights the need to provide budget to train employees and achieve an increase in their labour skills, which leads to a direct increase in their performance and competitiveness in general, with reference to this issue, Calle (2022) concludes that staff training in the areas of innovation and digitisation are necessary to cover a labour profile that responds to the demands of the same companies and a rapidly changing market.

Methodology used

The methodology used focuses on a mixed analysis, in terms of the quantitative approach was considered for this study, the area of Orizaba and Ixtaczoquitlán, Veracruz, the design of the instrument was built with five variables to measure the degree of innovation, market, processes, goods or services, human resources and MSE 4.0, it had a confidence interval of 95%, by obtaining responses from more than 370 surveys, with a margin of error of 5%, as well as assuming expected proportions of 50% Antonio et al.

The sample corresponded to 426 managers of micro and small enterprises, Posada et al. (2018) as it aims to extract information related to the research topic in order to understand ideologies and knowledge of various authors.

In a concatenated manner, it is possible to establish that although the phenomena triggered by the pandemic have driven innovation in micro and small enterprises, adapting changes in their product production processes as well as in their marketing and distribution, they still do not consider the insertion of technologies, Although they have made incursions into the use of technologies for their business management, there is an area for improvement in their use for innovation, which is why interaction with the educational sector is important, as students in their entrepreneurial and academic training are trained to be creative and innovate, which is why innovation is developed according to the educational programmes and student initiative.

It was found that the primary activities of micro and small enterprises are in the areas of customer service, marketing and sales, logistics and supply, and the activities on which innovation and development are based are technological development, human capital management, creation of new products, sustainability and finance.

The above focuses on innovation for the satisfaction of social needs, so it is necessary the participation of entities to achieve a relevant linkage to the needs of each one, considering the university to help micro and small enterprises to apply their knowledge in praxis.

Finally, strategic management in its decision making must consider its resources, stakeholders, technological tools and global context.

Therefore, a proposal was generated which, together with the theoretical contributions and the needs detected in the surveys, proposes that for a micro and small company, it should strengthen and interact with the government, educational and social sectors in order to be at the forefront of both market and social demands; likewise, the directors, as part of their planning, should apply strategic tools as shown in Illustration 2, that allow them to strengthen their marketing, innovation and development processes, analysing jointly each of the variables that allow them to contextualise their competitors according to the products and services they provide and thus innovate in the three competitive vectors, such as the satisfaction of needs, use of distribution channels and product varieties, which can be established in the model as parameters.

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Conclusions

Innovation is a strategic and determining element for the competitiveness of companies and, therefore, for business economic development and even of a country, since micro and small enterprises represented 99.6% in 2015 (Ministry of Government, 2015), being important for strategies that allow innovation and development to be competitive, without forgetting that business management is essential, having vision, implementing technology, strategic plans, complying with the legal formality for its operation and generating internal and external resources.

In conclusion, it is essential that countries and companies are aware that one of the key factors for recovery after an economic crisis such as the one they are currently going through is innovation, as it can be categorised as a driving force for economic progress.

Variables	ORDINALS		NUMERALS				Product n		
	Variable	Categories	(competitor A)	Weighing score	Final score	...	(competitor A)	Final score	
PARAMETER 1	Need (healthy/food)	Nutritious	lettuce, carrot, apple, walnut.	0.3	2	0.6		3	0.9
		Hygiene	Washing and disinfecting has regulations	0.3	3	0.9		3	0.9
		Points of sale	shopping center, establishment and branches.	0.2	1	0.2		2	0.4
		Practicality	takeaway packaging with separation and cutlery.	0.2	1	0.2		2	0.4
					1	1.9			2.6

Figure 2 Competitive model for detecting innovation opportunities redesigned from the MPC Model and Martinez (2011)

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